



# LAPIS

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“SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE”

VOLUME FORTY FOUR - NUMBER FIVE FEBRUARY 2009



Happy New Year and  
Welcome to 2009

## CLUB NEWS

The next General meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 8 pm at the Club rooms - all members welcome.

The surprise guest speaker will have some unique specimens from another country. This is too good an opportunity to miss. Do not forget to bring your loop.

## New Members

We would like to welcome our newest members –

- Margaret Ting – Eastwood
- William Wacksmann – North Ryde (Junior)

We wish them many long hours of enjoyment cutting gemstones and enjoying the other aspects of our Club.

## PRESIDENT’S REPORT

*Happy New Year to All!*

I hope that all Club-members have enjoyed the holiday break and are looking forward to a creative year ahead. Over the coming year we plan to hold a number of interesting weekend workshops that will give us the opportunity to expand our lapidary skills into some new areas.

We were recently advised by the Federal Government that our 2008 Volunteer Grants Program application was unsuccessful, but it was

good to learn that some other NSW lapidary clubs, notably Bankstown, Central Coast, Orange, Manning Valley Rockhounds (a new club at Wingham), and the Australian Facetors Guild were successful this year.

**TAKE NOTE!!** – the surprise guest speaker at our February General Meeting will present one of the most fascinating talks that you will ever hear and you will get to see some amazing samples that you are unlikely to ever see again – even in a museum. You will kick yourself if you miss it. **Be there!!**

Brian Burns

## FROM THE COMMITTEE:

### **Librarian Report**

#### **Late Returns**

There are still a few late return books/DVD's listed in the Library Loan Book. Please have a look in your book/DVD collections to see if any late return items for the Club library exist. If so, a prompt return will be most appreciated by other prospective borrowers.

If you still have an outstanding item/s from the library please expect a call from the Librarian requesting the return of the books or DVD's

### **Cutting Room**

The 100 Diamond grinder is now repaired and is fully operational

### **Day Time Meetings**

The following Saturdays have been listed as daytime meetings for 2009.

Please note your calendars so that you do not miss them.

9 May 2009	3.00pm
13 June 2009	3.00pm
18 July 2009	3.00pm
15 August 2009	3.00pm

The December meeting is on 12 December 2009 and will be held during the Christmas Party.

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### **Cold Drinks**

A range of soft drinks are now available at the Club. They are in the fridge and will cost you \$1.00 per can – it is an honor system.

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### **Gem & Lapidary Council Snippets**

**Cabochon Judging Course** will be held on Saturday & Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 the venue will be at our Club rooms, at Beecroft.

If any Member of the Northern Districts Lapidary Club would like to become a Judge, to assist the Gem & Lapidary Council, the committee will consider sponsoring you.

There is also a **Faceting Judging Course** which will be held in May 2009. This course will be run by Nelson Robertson.

### **GEMBOREE 2009 Horsham Victoria**

Members who are interested in attending the GEMBOREE and wish to stay on site or be an off site visitor will need to complete the registration form and send it to the organisers as soon as possible. There are forms on the notice board in the Cutting Room for those members who are going. Ensure that you state that you are from Northern Districts Lapidary Club – NSW and you wish to be placed next to fellow members of our Club.

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**Due to popular demand the "Pre Exhibition Book Sale" will continue all year round.**

The bookcase is back in the Clubrooms so that members can purchase their books and when they

have finished reading them return them to the club so that others may do the same. The same costs/conditions will apply. It is requested however, that "books" be limited to novels etc NOT magazines.

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### **CASTING WEEKEND – 28 February and 1 March 2009**

In these workshops you learn or improve your skills in the art of casting. Casting is turning wax or a natural thing into silver. The workshops are fun and exciting and the things you can make include; rings, pendants, brooches and little "objects" to put around the house. If you want to come, make sure you put your name down in the clubrooms.

#### **Things to bring to lost wax casting workshops:**

1. Small methylated spirit lamp. The finer the wick the better, as heat is more easily controlled
2. **Lecron Dental Tool**. This tool is the most necessary tool for working wax.
3. Wax knife or small paring knife or small old kitchen knife or scalpel.
4. Two small sewing needles, one medium and one fine, set in cork "handle".
5. Cheap small paint brush also one about 0.7 to 1 cm wide.
6. Approx. 10cm (4") length of wooden dowel stick, diameter of students finger size. (Oil stick with any vegetable oil.)
7. Small piece of nylon panty hose.
8. Methylated Spirits.
9. 50 grams sterling silver casting granules or 50/50 scrap and new sterling silver. (Fine silver can also be used)
10. Wax to make item to be cast. (Some is available for purchase from NDLC)
11. Old toothbrush and/or nailbrush
12. Little container to melt wax in, over your spirit lamp i.e. cut down beer can with wire saucepan type handle attached.
13. Tripod to sit on if possible
14. Any old dental tools you can get hold of.
15. Small Water bowl for melt/pour exercise.
16. Old wooden or nylon breadboard or piece of perspex for working surface.
17. Plasticine not Blue tack, or Modelling clay.

18.1 Small bottle of eucalyptus oil (for smoothing wax)

NOTE: Please bring all of the above items or you may have difficulty producing a satisfactory result.

Any questions please ring Jean Macleay on 4353 0240

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### HANDY HINT No 27

#### **An easy way to wash your stones after taking them out of the tumbler.**

Do the initial wash with a sieve and bucket to catch most of the grit. Then spread the stones out on a piece of shade cloth about a metre square laid on the grass. Use your hose to wash the stones. It is very effective at cleaning all the grit or polish off the stones and is also good for the lawn.

### HANDY HINT No 28

#### **Have you ever used the clock system?**

When working a cabochon mounted on a dop stick use a felt marking pen and put a mark on the dop stick. As you look at the stone, with the dop stick pointing away from you, call this mark 12 o'clock.

Suppose you have some grinding marks about 5 mm in from the edge of the cab at 4 o'clock. After working the stone to try and remove the grinding marks you know exactly where to look to see if you have been successful.

### HANDY HINT No 29

**The traditional marking pen** used to draw the outline on a slab before cutting it to shape has been a piece of aluminium rod sharpened to a point. This has been OK in the past, but, with increasing age and decreasing eye sight something better was needed.

Pens used to write on CDs are excellent. They are cheap, don't dry out, are readily available from Officeworks or computer shops and other places. They don't rub out or wear away as you work the stone. BUT take care to only use them

on the outline of the stone where the markings will be ground away. Be careful also with a porous stone.

### HANDY HINT No 30

#### **Dop sticks**

When I first started in lapidary meat skewers were commonly used as dop sticks. They were about 6 mm (or 1/4 inch in real measurements) thick. The next step was to use 9 mm (3/8 ") dowel.

BUT, with increasing arthritis and thumbs that don't always work I have now found that 12 mm (1/2") dop sticks have a lot of advantages. If you are working a small stone then cut the end of the stick down to a taper to suit the stone.

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### *Chef's Corner*



#### **Dad's Favourite**

1 cup coconut  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 cup chopped dates  
4 ozs (125 grams) butter  
1 cup S. R. Flour  
1 egg

Sift flour and add coconut, dates sugar and melted butter. Mix well. Add lightly beaten egg. Combine thoroughly. Press into a well greased 10" x 12" swiss roll tin. Bake in a slow oven approx. 20 minutes or until cooked. When cold cut into fingers.

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### **The Christmas Party**



The Christmas Hampers were won by Jean & Bert Deane and Dorothy & Norm Savage.

Santa was very busy at the Christmas Party which was held at the Deane's residence. The weather was on our side and in the shade of the trees made for a very pleasant afternoon.

The picnic lunch was great and I am sure nobody went hungry



Larissa and Stella Carroll sitting on Our Santa's lap  
(Stella is still awaiting the birth of her third child)

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## Beechworth

While most of us know Beechworth for its wonderful bakery and the great delicious baked products that can be bought there, it is more famous for its history in the Gold Rushes of Australia.

The rich and colourful story of the beautiful city of Beechworth commenced in February 1852, when a shepherd named Meldrum was responsible for finding gold at Spring Creek. The original find is considered to have been at the foot of Newtown Hill, just above the old stone bridge.

Thus started the gold rushes to Beechworth. Industrious gold diggers swarmed to the new field, and soon the banks of Spring Creek were crammed with hastily erected tents and humpies.

The gold returns were very rich, and diggers commenced to explore farther afield for more good fortune. Gold was next found at Pennyweight Flat, then at Reid's Creek, and in 1853 there was a rush to Madman's Gully, and Nine Mile Creek. Nine Mile Creek in particular attracted quite a large population of Scots and

Chinese. In the same year Hurdle Flat and Europa Gully yielded gold, and reef gold was discovered near Buckland Gap.

1854 saw a rush to Woolshed, below the Reid's Creek diggings, and fabulously rich claims were worked.

In 1855 One, Two, and Three Mile Creeks were exploited for the precious metal, and from old records it was estimated that upwards of 2000 men were gaining over 16 ounces of gold each day. Fields at Sebastopol, The Napoleon, and Eldorado were also opened up.

In those glittering days it seemed nature's storehouse would contain gold forever. Some miners found and lost several fortunes. The gold escort which left the Beechworth diggings for Melbourne regularly carried over 14000 ounces of gold each fortnight. From 1852 to 1866 over three million ounces of gold was won and perhaps more which was never recorded.

On the approach into Beechworth from Wodonga stands a monument that commemorates the time in the town's history when a horse was provided with gold shoes for a Mr Cameron to ride triumphantly into Beechworth, accompanied by hundreds of cheering diggers, for his election to the Victorian Parliament as the miners' first member in 1855.

Looking at the quiet town of Beechworth today, it is hard to believe that sixty-four hotels operated there in the 1870s.

Alluvial gold in the Beechworth area was extremely rich, but nevertheless it was eventually exhausted. Then reef mining took over from about the 1870s, and continued on past the turn of the century.

The present town of Beechworth is charming and dignified, and the surrounding country is a favourite with gold fossickers. Locals say the Beechworth area is a paradise for gold seekers, and all equipment can be acquired in the town, including metal detectors.

The Kelly gang of bushrangers is part of Australian folklore, and Beechworth featured prominently in their comings and goings. Joe Byrne, a member of the gang, lived at Woolshed,

and Ned Kelly was imprisoned in the Beechworth gaol.

Taken from "A Prospectors' Guide to Gold in Australia" by N & R Perry

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### Hardness Scale

Mohs is only one scale, the most commonly used by lapidaries, but there are others.

- Mohs:
1. talc
  2. gypsum
  3. calcite
  4. fluorite
  5. apatite
  6. orthoclase
  7. quartz
  8. topaz
  9. corundum
  10. diamond

### A Mnemonic to help you remember Mohs hardness scale

The Girls Can Flirt And Other Queer Things Can Do

a	y	a	l	p	r	u	o	o	i
l	p	l	u	a	t	a	p	r	a
c	s	c	o	t	h	r	a	u	m
	u	i	r	i	o	t	z	n	o
	m	t	i	t	c	z		d	n
		e	t	e	l			u	d
					a			m	
					s				
					e				

**Another mnemonic, to help you remember Geological periods,** Nancy French tells us geologists use to so effortlessly remember the right order for the cumbersome names of the divisions of time from prehistoric to the present?

Well, this could be a clue.....

**Camels often sit down carefully. Perhaps their joints creak.  
Possibly, early oiling might prevent painful rheumatism.**

Running from the *oldest* at the bottom to the *youngest* at the top.

Recent (youngest)

- Pleistocene
- Pliocene
- Miocene
- Oligocene
- Eocene
- Palaeocene
- Cretaceous
- Jurassic
- Triassic
- Permian
- Carboniferous
- Devonian
- Silurian
- Ordovician
- Cambrian (oldest)

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### Birthdays:

Nearly every book you read, will give you a different list of birthstones, but this list is accepted by most people.

January	Garnet
February	Amethyst
March	Aquamarine, or Bloodstone
April	Diamond
May	Emerald
June	Moonstone, or Pearl
July	Ruby
August	Sardonyx, or Peridot
September	Sapphire
October	Opal
November	Topaz
December	Turquoise

### What do they mean?

Garnet	constancy
Amethyst	sobriety
Aquamarine	elegance
Diamond	innocence
Emerald	success
Pearl	purity
Peridot	gladness of heart
Ruby	perfection
Opal	hope
Sapphire	prosperity
Topaz	cheerfulness
Turquoise	love & luck

### How to test Amber

To tell the difference between real and fake amber...

In a glass, mix 4 teaspoons of salt in 240ml (8ozs) of water. The real amber will float; the fake will sink.

*The Greeks gave amber the name "electron" since they found when it was rubbed briskly, amber could pick up small pieces of paper. Because of this property, amber is said to have given man his first clue to electricity.*

*Articles taken from Lapidary Hints by Parramatta-Holroyd Lapidary Club Nov 2007*



## Funnies

### **7 reasons not to mess with children**

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, 'When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah'.

The teacher asked, 'What if Jonah went to hell?' The little girl replied, 'Then you ask him'.

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A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work.

As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was.

The girl replied, 'I'm drawing God.'

The teacher paused and said, 'But no one knows what God looks like.'

Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, 'They will in a minute.'

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A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. After explaining the commandment to 'honour' thy Father and thy Mother, she asked, 'Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?'

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest of a family) answered, 'Thou shall not kill.'

●●●●●

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?'

Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.'

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mummy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'

●●●●●

The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture.

'Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, He's a doctor.'

A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'And there's the teacher, she's dead.'

●●●●●

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, 'Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face.'

'Yes,' the class said.

'Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood doesn't run into my feet?'

A little fellow shouted, 'Cause your feet ain't empty.'

●●●●●

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: 'Take only ONE - God is watching.'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples.'

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## DATES OF INTEREST

- Feb 10** NORTHERN DISTRICTS LAPIDARY CLUB  
General Meeting Tuesday 8 pm at the Clubrooms Beecroft all members welcome
- Feb 21 – 22** Cabochon Judging Course – held at Northern Districts Lapidary Club
- Feb 22** Illawarra Club – Annual Rock Swap & Fair  
Stuart Park, North Wollongong Beach
- Feb 28 & Mar 1** NORTHERN DISTRICTS LAPIDARY CLUB  
Casting Weekend
- Mar 1** Lapidary Club of NSW - Open Day & Reunion  
Clubrooms, 136 Reservoir St, Surry Hills
- Mar 1** Newcastle Club – Rock Auction  
Clubrooms, Dora St, Adamstown
- Mar 10** NORTHERN DISTRICTS LAPIDARY CLUB  
General Meeting Tuesday 8 pm at the Clubrooms Beecroft all members welcome
- Mar 13 -15** Minerama – [www.minerama.com.au](http://www.minerama.com.au) (02) 6730 2400  
Glen Innes & Districts Services Club

- 2009 – GEMBOREE – Vic, Horsham – April 10-13**  
**2010 – GEMBOREE – Tasmania – Devonport – April 2-5**  
**2011 – GEMBOREE – NSW – Bathurst - April 22-25**

For information on Interstate and Overseas Gem Shows see back pages of the Gem & Lapidary News available in clubrooms on shelf near library.



### Northern Districts Lapidary Club Shirts

Good quality polo shirts are available from the shop for field trips and future GEMBOREE'S.

They are royal blue with the Club's badge embroidered above the pocket on the left hand side of the shirt.  
Cost is \$38.00. Sizes range from small to XXXL.

If your size is not available in the shop please complete the form below.

Please indicate the size and number you require.

Name:.....

Size:..... Number:.....

Return to Secretary NDLC – PO Box 59, Beecroft NSW 2119

Lapis now available by  or  !!

Members, if you would prefer to receive your LAPIS by email rather than by snail mail please send you email address to Barbara Try. My email is [twotrys@bigpond.net.au](mailto:twotrys@bigpond.net.au)