



LAPHOUND NEWS

VICTORIA LAPIDARY & MINERAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 5114, Station B
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N3



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Website :: www.vlms.ca

VLMS Board

President :	Cameron Speedie	cspeedie@telus.net (250-385-0597)
Vice-President :	David Hosking	dlhosking@shaw.ca
Past-President:	Mike Hill	solarlapidary@gmail.com (250-818-3141)
Secretary:	Alanna Shilito	mrz-p@hotmail.com (250-857-2153)
Treasurer:	Greg Shea	gadrogeek@hotmail.com (250-857-2153)
At Large:	Karen Rowe	krowesmith.kr@gmail.com (250-656-3775)
	David Mullett	davidamullett@gmail.com (250-902-7401)
	Vacant –	

VLMS Committees

Programs :	David Mullett	davidamullett@gmail.com (250-902-7401)
Librarian :	Sylvan Burnside	burnsidesylvan@yahoo.ca (250-360-0418)
	Christine Patton	christinegems@gmail.com (604-537-9170)
Show Secretary:	Alanna Shilito	mrz-p@hotmail.com (250-857-2153)
Show Chair:	David Mullett	davidamullett@gmail.com (250-902-7401)
Membership:	Margaret Braithwaite	margaretbraithwaite@shaw.ca (250-380-2076)
Field Trips:	Gilles Lebrun	(250- 382- 6119)
Refreshments:	Barb MacKenzie	barb.mackenzie@shaw.ca (250-727-0954)
Workshop:	Brian McMillan	soniamac@telus.net (250-385-2700)
	Karen Rowe	krowesmith.kr@gmail.com (250-656-3775)
	Vanessa Steffans	vlms.workshop@gmail.com (250-385-8525)
Editor:	Gary Brooke	gab.bns@gmail.com (250-475-3440)
Sunshine Corner:	Patrick Lydon	perrylydon@hotmail.com (250-472-8554)



The Newsroom

Announcements

Elections

Elections will be held during the February meeting. Interested parties should contact Mike Hill (solarlapidary@gmail.com).

New Members

Three new members were introduced at the January meeting:

Meetings

The next regular members meeting will be held as follows:

Date: February 6, 2017

Place: Burnside Lawn Bowling Clubhouse, 274 Hampton Road, Victoria, BC

Time: 7:30 pm

Field Trips

There will be no field trip in January (as is tradition due to the typically poor weather). The next field trip is to be held in February; it will be announced at the February meeting.

Courses

Currently, there is one Basic Lapidary course and one Basic SilverSmithing course scheduled to start in January 2017. Depending upon interest, we also hope to have an additional Basic Lapidary course starting in mid February and another basic silversmithing course starting in April. Course participants must be members in good standing (annual fees paid in full) and are selected on a first-come-first-serve basis from the active waiting lists. All inquiries regarding courses, should be directed to the workshop managers at vlmsworkshop@gmail.com.

Programs

The program for the April meeting includes a presentation of the history of Island Copper mine by Brian Welchman. This is a must see presentation, Brian has worked as management in mines around the world.

Reports

President

By the time you are reading this we will be into a New Year. To each and every one of you I wish you prosperity, health and happiness. As well I will no longer be Club President (but don't worry – I will still be working for the club in different roles).

We also will be entering into a period of uncertainty with the dramatic shift in leadership south of us. I hope for the best for our friends south of us and take comfort in the fact that I live in a wonderful country, one that is made more wonderful by our sense of inclusion and consideration of others, no matter how different they may be.

Membership

As of January 1, 2017 only 57 out of 140 registered members have paid their annual dues. It is important that members pay in a timely fashion because without payment members are not covered by club insurance at the Workshop or on Field trips. Note, members who have not paid by the end of December run the risk of not being covered by insurance (until such time as they do pay) when participating in activities with other clubs around the Province.

Field Trips

October – an exploratory trip through Port Renfrew to Lake Cowichan was conducted. The objectives were twofold: (i) to determine if there were any new rock hounding sites uncovered due to road construction projects (some Garnets were found in exposed rock faces), and (ii) to scout out prospective gold-panning sites (no panning was done but some sites were determined to be promising).

November – this trip was conducted to Island View beach. Unfortunately, the timing was aligned with “high-tide” which limited the scope of the excursion a bit. Some Dallasite and Jasper were recovered.

Library

We received a lot of over-due books in November. A reminder library books are due each month at our regular monthly meetings. See you all in 2017. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Sunshine Corner

The Victoria Lapidary and Mineral Society had its annual Christmas Party at the Burnside Bowling Club on Monday 5th of December, and despite some inclement weather, we had a good turnout for this lovely occasion. Thanks to Barbara and all her volunteers, the Christmas party was a great success. I have not heard of any new serious health problems and we wish our hearty Treasurer, Greg Shea, a speedy recovery. Over the past year we have lost some prominent members including, John Burns, Dick Roberts and, more recently, Robert Vincent ("Cymba" – an institution at our shows and a great artist).

I would like to wish all our Members a Happy New Year. Please notify me (Patrick Lydon) at 250 472-8554 if any Members have concerns that should be announced in the "Sunshine Corner".

Special Events – 2016 VLMS Members Sales Event: “Rough to Ready”

In October 2016, member's of the Victoria Lapidary and Mineral Society hosted the first ever Member's-only “Show and Sale”. Initially, only member's of the Victoria and Island lapidary clubs

were invited to be vendors in this first-ever event; subsequently, BC Lapidary club members and, finally, non Lapidary club members were welcomed to participate. In the end, more than 25 club members took advantage of the opportunity to show, sell and display their wares and rock related items. Thirty-five sale tables were managed during the event – some members shared a table and some members took full advantage of the two-table (each 6 ft) limit.

A “HUGE” thank-you goes out to Allana for organizing this event, a very big extended thank-you to Nick and Gilles for their generous silent auction donations (that generated the seed money needed to give this event its strong start), and a heartfelt thank-you to Margaret, our club's current membership director for doing double duty during show. Margaret shared a table with Joanne while at the same time providing club information and looking after memberships; she signed up at least one new member and renewed a few existing members – you Rock Margaret! Finally, a special thank-you is in order for the many club members who volunteered their assistance - without their efforts, this event would not have been the success it was.

Door sales, and remaining table fees, from the two day event were submitted to our club's treasurer as a donation towards the next-year's Member's event, which hopefully will have the full approval and support of all of our club's board and members.

Feedback was invited from both show patron's and table vendors. A feedback draw prize (a very large polished agate slab donated by Vanessa), was given away in a random draw of the feedback chits received. The overall flavour of the feedback was that both patrons and vendors favored the very low entrance fee and table costs, and as well, the very generous aisle space. More advertising, food availability, fewer duplicated table wares and more demonstrations or hands on instruction, effectively summarizes from what people wanted to see more (or less) of in this event. Note, some of the comments applied to our main March show, as some feedback referenced both shows.

All in all, this show was a huge success. It showcased the results of our home grown talents and rock related passions. It also provided a venue to share those passions with like-minded and appreciative patrons while providing some members with the possibility of decreasing their increasing amount of hobby output.

Workshop

The workshop is managed on a 100% volunteer basis and involves a commitment of one year (approximately 50 weeks). Workshop managers must be available Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoons (from set-up to close-up – about 3 hrs in total). Current managers and extended support staff welcome other club members who wish to volunteer for this activity. Interested parties must exhibit the ability to instruct in the workshop environment (use of equipment, basic lapidary and/or silversmithing). It is important to understand that the role of workshop manager is provided at zero cost to the club for the weekly volunteer support (minimum of 6 hours). Of course, this does not include the additional hours of email responses, course planning, material printing, material purchases (which are generally all out of pocket until receipts are submitted for remuneration).

Regarding courses, please note that, as in previous years, there is no pre-established and recurring dates for any of the course offerings. The current workshop managers do try to offer at least four basic lapidary courses and two basic silversmithing courses annually. Additional courses, such as beginner's Opal and Wire-Wrapping have occurred in the past year and are possibly going to be

offered again in the very near future. It is incumbent upon members to ensure that their name is on the waiting list if course work is of interest.

Editor

I would like to extend my best wishes to our club Members for the New Year. Hopefully, this year will bring us new and exciting “rocks and gems” but won’t go by quite as quickly as the last. On a more technical note, a decision has been made to “go digital and quarterly” with the Laphound News. Over the next few issues we will be assessing the implications of this decision with regard to duplication and interaction with the VLMS website. If there are topics and/or issues that members would like to see addressed in the Newsletter or the website please let an Executive Member know.

Business

Content in this section is Member-driven. The Newsletter will provide space for Members to advertise their interests to other club members. This could involve buying, selling, or trading materials and/or equipment. It could also involve a desire for collaboration.

Equipment

Lorena would like members to know that all of Gordon’s lapidary equipment, rocks, and assorted items (that were left after the completion of her yard sale) have been purchased by Mike Hill (solarlapidary@gmail.com) and interested parties should contact him.

Crafts

Content in this section is to be tutorial in nature. Knowledgeable members might be asked to submit material or comment on material that is available on the web.

Wire-Wrapping Tutorials – prepared by Dave Jackson and Sarah Hamilton

Wire-wrapping is a fantastic way to make use of all those cabochons we make at the VLMS Workshop. Moreover, it’s a great alternative to traditional silversmithing. You will want to develop your own personal style, but YouTube offers a myriad of tutorials to get you started. Some of these tutorials can drag on endlessly with little benefit and others might be downright discouraging in their complexity. I have picked out a couple good ones to get you on the right path. I’m sure there are other good ones out there but I will highly recommend the [OxanaCrafts](#) tutorials. She has posted many videos and is continuously making new ones.

After watching tutorials from several different artists, I have concluded that some are great at making tutorials, but the quality of work and technique is lacking. Others have superb technique and artistic skill but struggle with producing a useful tutorial. Oxana, on the other hand, does excellent work and her tutorials are well done and easy to follow. She understands that we have a rewind button and avoids endlessly repeating herself.

Tools

Whatever tools you have will work just fine, but before you head to Michaels or a bead shop on a tool buying binge, skim through this link: [Wire Wrapping Basics: Tools](#).

Technique

Below are some useful links to learn some basic weaving techniques:

- [Wire Weaving/Wrapping Patterns Using 2 Base Wires](#)
- [Tutorial Weaving Pattern 4 Base Wires](#)

- [Three base wire waving patterns](#)

Grab some wire and sit down with these 3 tutorials. They are all fun and all useful.

Projects

1. I still haven't made a ring, but this one looks fun and easy: [Beginner Wire Wrap Swirl Ring Tutorial](#),
2. This pendant looks nice and easy ([Basic Wire Wrapped Cabochon Pendant, Thick Gauge](#)), it might be a good one to start with.

Oxana has many project videos to pick from, so have a look at them before you get going. Some are rather difficult. Try not to pick one that will frustrate and discourage you. Good luck, have fun, and resist the temptation to unwrap your work and start over. Someday, you will fondly look back at your first attempts.

Fun Facts

The Laphound News would like to introduce you to two canine friends who are, hopefully, going to help me expose some interesting and educational content concerning rocks, gems, and minerals.

Lappy the Laphound

"All that glitters isn't gold¹
....but it might be opal² !!!!



Foxy the Foxhound

"Diamonds³ are a girls' best friend
....cubic zirconia⁴ ... not so much !!!!



Lappy - loves rocks and gems in their own right but also for the joy, comfort, and wonderment they bring to all people. Lappy is single (no time for girls), is inquisitive and a thoughtful little guy whose motto is: "*to be Lappy is to be happy*". He likes to be out and about, always on the lookout for new and interesting rocks and stones. When he must be inside he is usually on the "web" checking out Opal Auctions and daydreaming about turquoise.

Foxy – loves sparkly and glittery things; in particular, she loves her jewelry and is very proud of her diamond studs and a blue [topaz](#) pendant that she wears around her neck. Foxy is not only gorgeous but she is bright (top of her class) and she is very curious as to why her jewelry sparkles so. Unfortunately, Foxy spends her days cooped up in a condo downtown and is lonely. She does not know Lappy, but I have a feeling they are going to meet.

** 1 - [Gold](#), 2 - [Opal](#), 3 - [Diamond](#), and 4 - [Cubic Zirconia](#)

Lappy visits the Eye Doctor

Lappy: Doc, one of my human friends gave me a couple of rough gemstones for Christmas: a beautiful red [ruby](#) and an equally gorgeous green [emerald](#). But when I received them they both looked grey and I couldn't tell the difference between them even though I did say that they were terrific. I was embarrassed, is there something wrong with my eyes?

Doc: Well Lappy, as a laphound, your eyes only allow you to distinguish between "blues" and "yellows" but not "reds" and "greens". Of course, the human eye, like mine, can distinguish all of the colors.

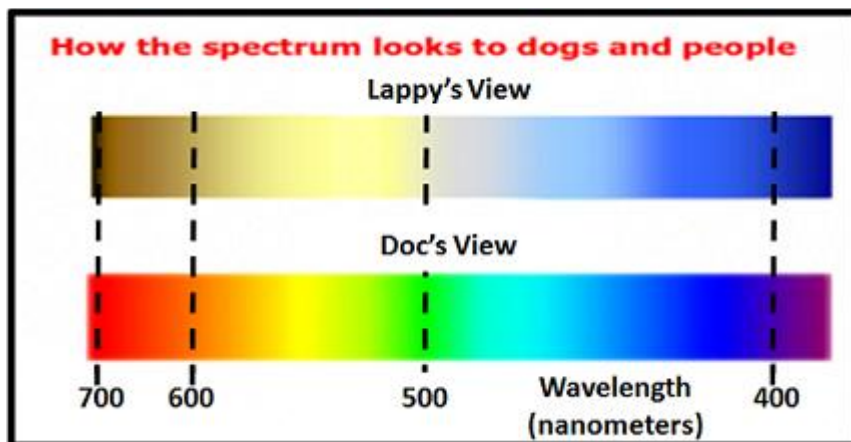
Lappy: Well, that sucks. I guess, in a way, I am lucky because my favourite color and stone is [turquoise](#) but I am not so partial to [citrine](#). Why do the stones appear to be a certain color anyway?

Doc: Well, I don't want to get too technical on you but, visible light is itself colorless to the human eye (and yours as well) but it is really comprised of a spectrum of wavelengths (that is, a combination of different wavelengths each corresponding to a different color). Typically, the energy in the light is apportioned into wavelengths in nearly equal amounts; as such, visible light has nearly equal amounts of all colors and is termed "white" light. A prism bends the light an amount that depends on the wavelength and therefore is able to split the "white light" into all of its constituent color (rainbow) components.

Objects (like your Turquoise stone) appear to be of a certain color (in this case blue) because their molecular structure is such that they reflect energy at certain wavelengths (the wavelengths that make up the "turquoise color") but absorb all other wavelengths. In some cases, depending on how a substance is formed, the molecular structure, has a particular repetitive lattice-type nature (for example, [precious opal](#) and [fire agate](#)) and lends itself to diffraction effects (think prism) that tend to favour different wavelengths (different colors) depending upon orientation.

Of course, that isn't the whole story because our eyes still have to process that reflected or diffracted color – our retinas are made up of what are called "cones" that are sensitive to the wavelengths contained in the light. In your case, the physical makeup of your retina (two types of cones) is insufficient to allow you to be sensitive to differences in wavelengths between "reds" and "greens". Your eyes were designed for herding reindeer and hunting rabbits in the dark, not for hunting rocks. The human retina has three types of cones and that gives us a response to the full spectrum of colors.

Unfortunately, Lappy, your color scale is not quite as vibrant as mine. Did you know that, for humans, any color can be cast in terms of different amounts of Red, Green, and Blue?



Lappy: Wow, I did not know that. So the base color of a stone is a result of a reflection process but "flash of color" is related to a diffraction process Cool! I guess that explains why I only ever see yellow (and occasionally blue) flashes in my [Welo opal](#). Man, sometimes, I wish I was a human.

Doc: My advice (free in this case) is to be careful in what you wish for Lappy. Sometimes, at the end of a long day, I think my life would be much simpler if I was a laphound. Given your interest in colorful things, perhaps you should just wish for a pair of human eyes – but you would probably have to give up hunting rabbits!!

Lappy: Okay, thanks Doc. I can't wait to get home where I can Goggle "spectrum of wavelengths"you lost me a bit there.

Foxy Learns a New Word

Over the holidays, Foxy received a sizeable piece of [labradorite](#) as a Christmas gift. She likes the "bluish" tinge to the stone but noticed straight-off that when she tilted the stone at certain shallow angles she observed a bright play of light. When she "Googled" labradorite she discovered that it possesses a property known as "iridescence". Foxy learned that iridescence is a phenomenon associated with certain surfaces that appear to gradually change colour as the angle of view or the angle of illumination changes (e.g., like soap bubbles, butterfly wings and sea shells). It is often created by structural coloration (microstructures near the material surface that interfere with light). Foxy can't wait to impress someone with her new stone and the new elements of her vocabulary.

Note: all of the technical information presented in this section (and below in the Appendix) was obtained from the web i.e., Wikipedia. For those interested, there are many more sites that deal with the subject matter and in much more detail that quoted above/below – just Google it!!!

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those members who contributed to this Newsletter – it will only be as useful and complete as the information you provide.

Forum

Editorial Comment

I have come to realize that, In the age of the "disposable item", it is somewhat sobering (and a bit unnerving sometimes) to think that any naturally-occurring, untreated rock or gem that we cut and polish was likely formed millions (possibly billions) of years ago, is quite unique, and is therefore "irreplaceable". It can be "substituted for" but never replaced. It brings to mind that old saying: ***measure twice, cut once!***

Appendix

1. Gold –



Gold (Au) is a bright, slightly reddish yellow, dense, soft, malleable and ductile metal. It is often found in free elemental (native) form, as nuggets (or grains) in rocks, veins and alluvial deposits. Its many uses include jewelry, coinage, and electronics. Gold is found worldwide but as of 2014, the largest producing nation is China.

2. Opal –



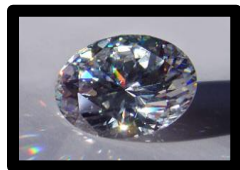
Opal is a hydrated (up to 10% water) amorphous form of silica. It is deposited at a relatively low temperature and may occur in the fissures of almost any kind of rock. Common opal occurs in a variety of colors (e.g., white, blue, green, pink, yellow, or grey). Common opal is found worldwide including right here in British Columbia.

3. Diamond –



Diamond is comprised of carbon (C) atoms arranged in a face-centered cubic crystal structure that is very stable. Diamond is known for its hardness and has relatively high optical dispersion. Roughly 49% of diamonds originate from Africa, although significant sources of the mineral have been discovered in Canada, India, Russia, Brazil, and Australia.

4. Cubic Zirconia –



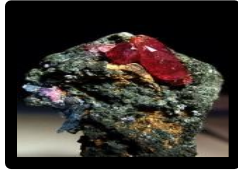
Cubic zirconia is the cubic crystalline form of zirconium (Zr) dioxide and rarely occurs in a natural state. Synthesized CZ is hard, optically flawless and can be made in a variety of different colors. Because of its low cost, durability, and close visual likeness to diamond, CZ is an important commercial competitor for diamonds.

5. Topaz –



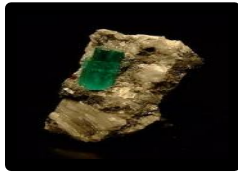
Topaz is a silicate material of aluminum (Al) and fluorine (F). Pure topaz is colorless and transparent but impurities cause it to occur in a variety of colors. Topaz is commonly associated with silicic igneous rocks e.g., granite. Topaz can be found worldwide, including locations in Utah and Texas; Brazil is the world's leading producer.

6. Ruby –



Ruby is a pink to blood-red colored gemstone, a variety of the mineral corundum (aluminum oxide). The red color is caused mainly by the presence of the element chromium (Cr). Its name comes from *ruber*, Latin for red. Rubies are predominantly found in marble deposits along the southern slopes of the Himalayas.

7. Emerald –



Emerald is a gemstone and a variety of the beryl (beryllium (Be) aluminum silicate) mineral group. It is colored green by trace amounts of chromium and sometimes vanadium (V). Emeralds are found worldwide but the main deposits are found in Columbia, Brazil, and Zambia.

8. Turquoise –



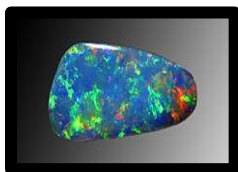
Turquoise is an opaque, blue-to-green mineral that is a hydrated phosphate of copper (Cu) and aluminium. It is rare and valuable in finer grades and has been prized as a gem and ornamental stone throughout history owing to its unique hue. Turquoise is generally found in dry climates: USA, Mexico, Chile, Afghanistan, China, and Tibet.

9. Citrine –



Citrine is a yellow-to-golden member of the quartz mineral group. Citrine has been called the "stone of the mind", as ancient cultures believed that it was associated with psychic power. Natural Citrine can be found in Madagascar, France and Russia. However, much of the world's treated Citrine (from Amethyst) comes from Brazil.

10. Precious Opal –



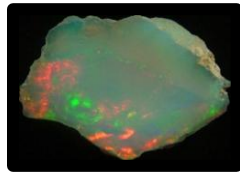
Precious opal is defined as opal with a bright, internal play of colours that may be red, orange, green or blue. This play of colour is caused by diffraction of white light by regular packing of silica microspheres within the mineral structure. Opal is found in Australia, Africa, Europe, and North America. Precious opal can be hosted in two major media: sediment (Australia) and volcanic (North and South America).

11. Fire Agate –



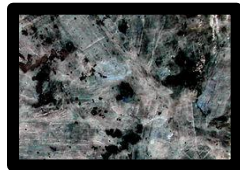
Fire agate is a variety of Chalcedony (Quartz family). It has a translucent deep reddish-brown base, with flashes of orange, red, green and gold. The colors are caused by light interference on thin layers of iron oxide or limonite crystals within the Chalcedony. Fire agates are found in Mexico and south-western US states.

11. Welo Opal –



Welo opal is a relatively new variety of precious opal found in Welo plateau region of Ethiopia. It is a hydrophane opal which when soaked in water can temporarily lose its colour. Welo opals are amongst the brightest opals in the world and show their colour in almost all kinds of lighting conditions.

12 Labradorite –



Labradorite is a feldspar mineral and occurs as clear, white to gray, blocky to lath shaped grains in common mafic (rich in magnesium and iron) igneous rocks such as basalt and gabbros. Labradorite can display an iridescent optical effect known as "labradorescence". It is found in Labrador, Canada and has also been reported in Norway and other locations worldwide.