

Vista Gem & Mineral Society, P.O. Box 1641, Vista, CA 92085

To contribute articles and event notices, email to: Rockorder@sbcglobal.net



THEY'RE BACK!

Back from the Outback and back here once again to wow us ... this time with their tales of adventure in the "Opal Capitol of the World" ... Coober Pedy!

Leslie Neff and Larry Hoskinson, who told us about Boulder Opals in June of last year, will be back again January 18 to present "A Tourist's Guide To Finding Opal in Coober Pedy, Australia."

This entertaining program will begin with a general introduction to

Coober Pedy and continue with a 120-slide presentation. Included will be various opal mining techniques and useful travel information on how to get from Sydney to Coober Pedy ... and around there once you arrive.

The program will conclude with slides of rough and finished opal and a demonstration by Larry on how to find opal using a black light. Displayed for perusal will be samples of both rough and finished opal, books, and maps.

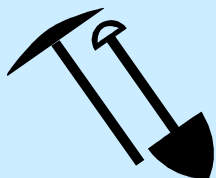
Questions will be encouraged.

Leslie and Larry, who are members of the South Bay Lapidary and Mineral Society in Torrance, brave the hazards of the Australian Outback every year in search of opals. This jog down from Hermosa Beach on the California freeways should be a piece of cake for them! At least, we hope that it will be. You can visit the SBLMS Web site at palosverdes.com/sblap/.

Don't forget to pay your dues for 2007!

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STONE OF THE MONTH

IOLITE

Iolite is a popular and interesting gemstone and is the gem variety of the mineral cordierite. It is also called the gem of the Vikings. When the Viking explorers ventured far out into the Atlantic Ocean, way from the coastline that could help them determine their position, they had a

secret weapon: iolite. The Viking mariners used thin pieces of it as the world's first polarizing filter. Looking through the iolite lens, they were able to determine the exact position of the sun and navigate their way safely to the New World and back.

The property that

made iolite so valuable to the Vikings is its extreme pleochroism. It is

Continued...



A second grade science teacher explained to her class about magnets, and showed how they could pick up nails and bits of iron.

Then came the question period. The teacher asked, "My name begins with an 'M' and I pick up things. What am I?"

A little boy volunteered, "You are a Mother."

From the Santa Clara Valley Gem and Mineral Society newsletter

IOLITE *(continued)*

seen as three different color shades in the same stone. In viewing an iolite stone, the colors violet blue, yellow gray and light blue can be seen, all as a result of pleochroism. For example, a cube cut from iolite will look a more or less violet blue like a sapphire, from one side, clear as water from the other and a honey yellow from the top. In the past, this property led some people to call iolite 'water sapphire', though the name is now obsolete.

Although pleochroism may

have been helpful in navigation but it certainly makes life difficult for the cutter. If iolite is not cut exactly in the right direction, no matter what the shape of the raw crystal, its color will not be shown to its best advantage.

The name iolite comes from the Greek word 'ion', which means violet. If cut properly, it is usually purplish blue. Iolite is not extremely rare, which makes it affordable - the richer the blue, the better the quality. It is mined in India, Mozambique, Brazil, Madagascar and Burma.

Iolite is relatively hard but it should be protected from blows. With its attractive color, and reasonable price, it may become a jeweler's staple in the future.

Variety of: Cordierite – Magnesium Aluminum Silicate

Color: Various shades of yellowish gray to blue to a blue violet

Index of refraction: 1.52 – 1.57

Hardness: 7 – 7.5
Cleavage: Poor in one direction

What makes Silver Tarnish?

Silver does not oxidize or rust upon exposure to air. Compared to most other elements it is not particularly reactive. It does react to sulfur or sulfur compounds, like hydrogen sulfide in the air, forming tarnish - a compound that is mainly silver sulfide. Silver is also tarnished by many sulfur-containing organic compounds, including proteins like albumin or egg whites. Another threat to the family silverware is posed by rubber bands, which are vulcanized with sulfur compounds.

To clean silver cheaply, place two ten-inch of heavy aluminum foil into a bucket containing 1/4 cup of Spic and Span dissolved in a gallon of water.

-- From Nodule Nocker News, 9/95

From the President

Another year is gone and the club has had lots of ups and a few downers. We lost some very important members but we also gained a lot of new members. We had a very successful show and were fortunate to have so many helpers. Our Christmas party was also a huge success with everyone having a great time and bringing lots of good food. I hope that this coming year will be a great one and with all the positions filled and a great lineup of programs already on schedule, it should be a year to look forward to.

Thanks to some very dedicated members and lots of hard work, the lapidary school is doing extremely well and we continue to recruit new members with every class. Quartzite is coming up and I know a lot of us will be there for the fun and the prospect of buying a few good rocks and seeing some old friends that we, unfortunately, only see once a year.

I also want to thank all the volunteer workers that helped make the past year such a good

one and look forward to your continuing support while serving as your president for the coming year.

Ray Pearce, VGMS President

COMING EVENTS

Quartzsite, AZ

Jan. 1 - 28 Desert Garden Rock,

Mineral and Jewelry Show
Exit 17 off I-10, 2 blocks east of Love's
9-5 daily, Free

Prospector's Panorama,

Gem and Mineral Show
Exit I-10, go to center of town. At the stoplight turn south on Hwy 95, cross bridge, first right turn and Prospector's is on the left. Free

Jan 5 - 31 The Main Event,

North of I-10 at exit 17. Swap meet.

Jan 19 - 28 Tyson Wells Sell-a-Rama,

SW corner of I-15 and Hwy 95. One big swap meet.

Jan 24 - 28 Q.I.A. Pow Wow,

Q.I.A. Bldg, 235 E. Ironwood Dr.,
9-5 daily. Free Scores of dealers in rocks,
Gems, findings, jewelry, slabs beads and more.

Jan 26 -28; Redlands, CA, The Mineralogical Soc. of Southern CA;

42nd Pacific Micromount Conference, San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree La; Fri 7 - 10, Sat 10 - 10, Sun 9 - 12

Feb 8 - 11 - TUCSON Gem and Mineral Show

Kim Hutsell (619) 294-3914

Feb 16 - 25 - Indio, CA; San Gorgino Mineral & Gem Society, Riverside Co. Fair & National Date Festival,

Gem & Mineral Building #1, 46-350 Arabia St; 10 to 10 daily



AND A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

By 6:15 PM all the club worker bees were at the Senior Center with armful of presents, foods and decorations to get ready for the annual Christmas Party.

Young and old enjoyed the camaraderie, the delicious dishes prepared by our members and



friends and of course what everyone waits for, the gift exchange. As always, our Master of Ceremonies for the gift exchange, Ray Pearce, did a great job keeping things moving.

Our new board was presented to the membership by Dick Knox and a good time was had by all. Thanks to all of you who attended.

What Are Our Members Up To?

Brad Etter, one of our members, was really busy last month. He was being Santa -- the real Santa, I mean. Brad belongs to the Amalgamated Order of Real Bearded Santas, an international organization based in Riverside of "real bearded gentlemen dedicated to the joy of being Santa." For the past 18 years, Brad has donned his Santa suit and listened eagerly to children who warm up to him easily. He spins sweet stories about Rudolph, Mrs. Claus and the toy-making elves. He sings Christmas songs and even performs some magic.

He prefers being Santa to working on the space shuttle at Convair, where he worked until 1993. Brad is one of 1,000 people that make up the group, which was started 12 years ago when 10 Santas from around Southern California were selected to appear in a German mail-order company commercial. Brad starts growing his beard in June and just before the Christmas season, his wife starts bleaching it to the perfect shade of white. How much more real can you get!

-- From North County Times, December 24, 2006

The Rockorder
Bulletin of Vista Gem & Mineral Society
P.O. Box 1641
Vista, CA 92085-1641

Membership in this Society is open to anyone interested in mineralogy, gemology, and related educational subjects. Regular meetings are held

The **3rd Thursday** of each month except July and August at

Gloria McClellan (Senior) Center
1400 Vale Terrace
Brengle Terrace Park
Vista, CA
7:30 P.M.

Please send exchange Bulletins to:
 Cherie Wilson
 4904 Amador Dr.
 Oceanside, CA 92056-4969

Vista Gem & Mineral Society
Officers for 2007

PresidentRay Pearce 726-7570
 1st Vice President Barbara Gelman
 2nd Vice President..... Cherie Wilson 941-7073
 TreasurerMary Anne Mital 758-4599
 CFMS Rep Fred Wilson 433-8446
 County Council Rep Ray Pearce
 Secretary Debbie George,

Committee Chairpeople

Programs Carolyn Jungwirth
 PublicityLois Harr 724-0395
 Bulletin Co-editor.....Dawn Zimmer
 Bulletin Co-editorAleta Dirdo 726-4486
 Lapidary SchoolFred Wilson, Ray Pearce
 Educational SvcsCarolyn Elliott 295-6505
 SunshineCarol Pelly 630-5674
 Field Trips Ray Pearce 726-7570
 Field Trips Monte Hazen 940-0379
 Hospitality Ruby & Ernie Schmidt 724-4737
 Hospitality Sue Wilson 433-8446
 Hospitality Ellie Page
 Membership Sharron Smith 724-8673
 Finance Director Calvin North 433-9527
 Ways & Means Laura Stearn

Application for Membership Vista Gem & Mineral Society

All information for club use only

Date _____

 Last Name First Nickname

 Spouse and Children

 Street Address City Zip Phone

 E-mail address

Are you willing to take part in Committee work? _____

Please list any special talents and abilities _____

Dues (includes bulletin): Family (husband, wife & children under 18) \$25.00 year
 Couple \$22.00
 Single member \$12.00

Please make checks payable to Vista Gem & Mineral Society
 P.O. Box 1641, Vista, CA 92083-4599
 For more information phone (760) 724-0395 or (760) 758-4599

VISTA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1641
VISTA, CA 92085-1641



Jan – Quartzite Shows

Jan 18 – VGMS meeting

Jan 26 – Redlands

Jan 26 – Feb 11 – Tucson
Gem & Mineral Shows

Feb 16 – Indio Date Festival

