

# Rockgrinders Gazette

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## Club rooms opening hours

Monday	9am till 1pm
Wednesday	9am till 1pm
Friday	6pm till 9pm
Saturday	9am till 1pm

## New members welcome

Interested in: Lapidary, Fossils, Gems, Crystals, Beading, Silversmithing or Lost wax casting in a relaxed friendly environment? Pop in and have a chat.

To all new members, we trust you will enjoy your experiences with us and benefit from our classes. If you have any questions there is a duty officer who will assist you. All members would also love to help you if they can.

### Membership

Single	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00
Pensioner Family	\$15.00
Pensioner / Student	\$10.00
Insurance	\$5.00 per member
Workshop fees	\$2.00

**NOTE:** You must be an insured member over 12 years of age to use machinery & cutting implements

All visitors are welcome however only members can use machines or gas.

## Silver Classes

Silver Casting Classes have stopped for the year but Barry and Dorothy will be happy to help you learn to cast sterling silver jewellery in the new year.

## Open Day

Just a reminder that our next open day is on Saturday 12th March.



## Lapidary Christmas Party

Our Club Christmas dinner will be held on Saturday 12th December 2015 from 5.30pm cost is \$25.00 per person.

## January Workshop - 23/1/16

Making a copper cuff bracelet on the rolling mill.  
Cost \$10

*All tools and equipment provided  
but bring your own tools if you  
have them.*

*If you have lace or paper cutouts you would like to  
use, please bring them along.*

## New grinding Wheels

The club has purchased new grinding wheels. Our newest wheel is a 60 grit wheel. Take care when working on this wheel as it is very aggressive and can take a lot of stone away quickly. If you have a softer stone the 80 or 100 may be more suitable for your stone.

We have also replaced one of the 100 grit wheels with a 220. The reason for this is that we have been having people queued up waiting for the 220s, as they are the wheels you often have to spend a lot of time on.

Please look after our wheels. We still have a club member vandalising our wheels. Our 100 wheel has been severely damaged by a person just using the centre of the wheel instead of going from side to side. Remember, we have a lovely new set of wheels, look after them.

## Christmas Break

The last day of the year that the club will be open will be Saturday 19th December. The Club will re-open on Wednesday 6th January.

## Air Conditioning

I hope that you have all been enjoying our new air condition. A big thanks to our Patron Bob Thompson for facilitating our new air conditioner.

## Zircon

The traditional stone for December is Turquoise, but one of the popular alternative December birthstones is Zircon. It shouldn't be confused with 'Cubic Zirconia' which is an artificial diamond substitute. Zircons are a naturally occurring semi-precious gemstone with a totally different chemical composition to the man made Cubic Zirconias. Before the invention of Cubic Zirconias, Zircons were a very popular diamond substitute. Zircons are found in a range of colours such as blue, yellow, orange, brown, green, colourless, and red. Blue Zircons are often made by heating brown Zircons.

Zircon often contains traces of radioactive elements in its structure, which causes it to be metamict (Crystalline minerals that lose their crystal structure due to radioactive destruction of the radioactive elements within them.) This unstable form of Zircon, called Cyrtolite, is characterized by rounded, almost dome-shaped crystals which are dull or pitchy in luster. When heated, these metamict Zircon crystals become stable, and revert to their normal crystal structure. Radioactive Zircon that has undergone a metamict process is sometimes called "Low Zircon", and stable Zircon with an intact crystal lattice "High Zircon". Zircons are often found in gravel alongside sapphires. Major sources of zircon are the Chanthaburi area of Thailand, the Palin area of Cambodia, and the southern part of Vietnam.

### Mineral Information

Crystal System tetragonal; 4/m 2/m 2/m
Crystal Habits: dipyramidal and prismatic
Cleavage indistinct in two directions, prismatic.
Fracture is uneven
Hardness is 7.5
Specific Gravity is 4.6-4.7
Streak white



### Metaphysical Information

Folk wisdom grants zircon the power to relieve pain, whet the appetite, protect travellers from disease and injury, to ensure a warm welcome, and to prevent nightmares guaranteeing a deep, tranquil sleep.

### December (Turquoise) Birthdays

Steven McCulloch	Eleni Vassiliou	Scott Wren
Dieter Klepatzki	Joanne Goodes	Leanne Muir
Helen Standing	Steven Bourke	
Casey Conway	Ray Jones	

### Inez's Recipe for Banana Pudding

(It was very quickly gobbled up last Friday at Silver)

<b>Ingredients</b> 1 1/2 cups cold water 1 can condensed milk 1 packet vanilla instant pudding 600ml cream 1 packet milk arrowroot biscuits 4 bananas	<b>Method</b> Beat/mix water & condensed milk (1-2mins). Add vanilla instant pudding & beat for further 2mins. Set in the fridge over night or minimum of 4-5hrs. Whip cream. Once whipped fold pudding mix in. Thinly slice banana. In a bowl -add layers of pudding/cream mix, banana, pudding/cream mix, biscuits, pudding/cream mix etc. Continue to add/repeat layers. Leave pudding in the fridge overnight to set.
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## Friday Night Silver Class

Some members of the club may wonder what actually happens at the Friday night silver casting class. So here is a bit of a run down about what actually happens. Silver casting classes follow a cycle, so if you are going to start at Silver, you need to know where we are up to in the cycle.

**Week One - Investment.** When you arrive at the club the tables are full of trays containing many exciting waxes. If it is your first time, you are advised not to go too crazy with selecting waxes as silver is expensive and on your first time you need to buy extra silver to make your 'button'. The button is the left over silver that everything is attached to. The good news is, you can use your button again, so it's not wasted. I totally ignored that advice and spent a fortune on silver, but AI still give that same advice to all new members.

Once you have selected your waxes, you head off to the Silver room to join them to a 'tree' which you attach to a rubber. Before you attach them to a tree, Barry has to weigh them so he knows how much silver to melt for you. A steady hand is needed for this, if you slip, you can melt the wax instead of attaching it. After the waxes are joined together as a tree, the waxes are sprayed and the rubber is attached to a pot. You mix up some investment following Barry's secret recipe and then fill the pot up with the investment. You then put it on a Gyroc to vibrate the pot to remove any air bubbles in the investment. Once the investment is set, you carve your initials into the investment, remove the rubber and wrap the pot in a damp cloth.

**Week Two - The Pour.** Barry and Dorothy have spent the day at the club looking after the kiln. The pots have been put into the kiln to burn away the wax. When the pots have been in the kiln long enough, Barry and his pour team, melt the silver in a crucible which is placed on one arm of a centrifuge. When the silver is melted, the red hot pot is placed in the other end of the centrifuge, it is wound up and then let go. The centrifuge madly spins around and the molten silver is transferred from the crucible to the pot. The pot is then removed from the centrifuge and the investment is washed out in a large bucket of water. After the investment is washed off, the silver tree is then put into pickle to help clean it up more. After this happens, the silver is usually placed in ceramic shot to continue the clean up process.

**Week Three - Clean up.** The club is a hive of activity with jeweller's saws, files, abrasive paper and Dremels being used. The left over sprue needs to be cut off and put away ready for melting down next time, all the lumps and bumps need to be polished off and surfaces polished. Some people put their silver into the stainless steel shot for further polishing, others polish using the rouge wheels.

**Week Four - Final touches.** During this week, club members are putting their final touches on their silver. Barry is often prevailed upon to assist with soldering jump rings onto pendants or brooch clips onto brooches. Barry and Dorothy are often preparing new waxes for the following week's investment.

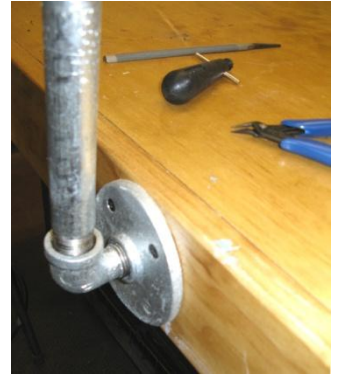




## Brad Smith's Bench Tips

### FOREDOM STAND

A quick and easy way to suspend a flexshaft over your jewelry bench is to use some steel pipe components from your local hardware store. It attaches with a couple screws and only costs about \$10. I use 1/2 inch galvanized pipe and fittings. To build a stand that attaches to the top of your bench, all you'll need is a flange and a thirty inch length of the pipe. If you prefer a stand that attaches to the side of your bench, you'll need a little longer pipe, three foot, a flange, and a 90 degree "street elbow". Finally, make a hook that goes into the top of the pipe to hang the motor from. You can use heavy coathanger wire or 1/8 steel rod from the hardware store.



### BROKEN DRILLS

Have you ever broken a drill bit off in a hole? Sometimes you can grab it with pliers, but other times the steel piece is below the surface in the hole. If this happens, a quick fix is to dissolve the steel in a solution of alum or fresh pickle. The solution will not affect your silver or gold piece. Alum is typically available from a food store. It's used to preserve some foods. Use about a tablespoon per cup of warm water. Submerge your piece so that the partially drilled hole is facing up to let the bubbles float free and not block the hole.

*"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" and "Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry" are available on Amazon*

## November Workshop





## What's On

Events are generally from the Gem and Lapidary Council of NSW

<http://www.gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au/events.html>

Other contributions can be made via email to the club [ctownlapidaryclub@bigpond.com](mailto:ctownlapidaryclub@bigpond.com).

We are grateful for any submissions

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
5th and 6th December 2015	<b>Nepean and District Lapidary Club Gem Show</b>	St. Marys Memorial Hall, Saturday 9am to 5pm Sunday 6th 2015, 9am to 4pm <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nepean-district-lapidary-club/719535098118214">https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nepean-district-lapidary-club/719535098118214</a>
5th and 6th December 2015	<b>Sydney Crystal Show</b> Minerals, crystals, fossils, gemstones jewellery, lapidary supplies and more	, 9am-5pm, at Fraser Park, Marrickville, NSW <a href="http://www.sydneycrystalshow.com">www.sydneycrystalshow.com</a>
<b>Sat 12th December 2015</b>	<b>Campbelltown Lapidary Club Christmas Party</b>	Lot 1 Bensley Rd Macquarie Fields 
Saturday 12th March 2015	<b>Campbelltown Lapidary Club Open Day</b>	Lot 1 Bensley Rd Macquarie Fields
Sat 19 March – Sun 20 March 2016	25th Annual Gem And Craft Show at Armidale Showground by New England Lapidary & Fossicking Club Inc. Free Entry, see a spectacular array of gems, rocks, crystals, jewellery, gifts, craft, beads and lapidary books/supplies/equipment and much more, all on sale at the show. Great prizes. B.B.Q Breakfast & Lunch/Light Refreshments Available	For details or to book – contact the organisers on (02) 6778 4931 email <a href="mailto:nelfc@hotmail.com">nelfc@hotmail.com</a> 19th March, 2016 9 am – 5 pm 20th March, 2016 9 am – 3 pm.
25 March 2016	<b>GEMBOREE</b> The 52nd National Gem & Mineral Show, GEMBOREE 2016 will be held in Ulverstone, Tasmania 25th – 29th March 2016	Full Details at <a href="http://aflaca.org.au/gemboree/">http://aflaca.org.au/gemboree/</a>

### End of Year Break up Dinner for Silver Class

