

SNIPPETS

the bi-monthly newsletter of the Gold Coast Lapidary Club

May – Jun
2026
Issue 508



Welcome to the May - June 2026 edition of Snippets, club newsletter of the Gold Coast Lapidary Club.

EVENTS & NEWS

The Club's Open Day was successfully held on Saturday 21st March. Thanks to all who turned up to prep and support the Club event and provide a friendly atmosphere for our visitors. As a result of the Open day the Club gained 5 new members.



Rod Turville & Michelle

Josh "Smiley" Ford & Gary Gale giving their best for the club

Kim's deliciously bbq'd chicken sticks were enjoyed by all who tried them



Kim and Zoe taking care of the bbq

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The **62nd National Gemboree Festival** came and went at Nambour showgrounds over the Easter weekend (April 3rd - 6th). It's been 52 years since the last Gemboree in Nambour (1974) which was also the 1st time Gemboree had ever been held in Queensland. Gemboree this year was organised by local area lapidary clubs from Nambour, Gympie, Maryborough and Bundaberg.



Quite a few of our members made the 200km journey north from the Gold Coast, some as visitors and some as stallholders with Jan Lippold, Karan Baraket, Zoe D'Orival and Ian Gray all having stalls at the show over the 4 days.

It was a very wet start to the show on Thursday - Friday with only the undercover stallholders spared from heavy rain and the outdoor tent campers being flooded in their tents. Thankfully the weather managed to dry up for the rest of the show and no one developed webbed feet as far as I know. Traders travelled from across the nation to participate and showcased everything from gemstones and crystals to fossils, minerals and handcrafted jewellery. Supporting the traders were demonstrations of live faceting and cabbing, lectures, children's activities as well as judging for the national lapidary competition, with the entries on public display.

Overall, a good event; although some comments were made about the high costs of attending; a \$10 charge for visitor parking plus \$10 adult entry fee and \$5 entry fee for young children... with car petrol and food/drink added in, it's a costly outing for young families.

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Club News

Silent Auction - Congratulations to John Casson as the highest bidder for the following surplus Club equipment:

- 8" Trim Saw \$251
- 8" Saw on a stand \$351

Fundraising raffle - the recent club raffle raised \$206 to be put to general club funds

Club T Shirts - Artwork and design for the new Club T shirts is currently in front of the Committee for final selection. The new T shirts are likely to be available in June.

Current approved grants - Community Services Queensland approved \$2,000 towards the Club's computer backup and sign-in as well as technical upgrades

Grant applications - A discretionary Grant application has been submitted for the Club's annual gem show in May (to cover bin hire, fencing etc), along with a grant application for a new onsite defibrillator to cover community events and normal Club operations.

Club Elections and AGM

Once again reminding everyone that we're on the run home to the club's AGM on 31st May. The good news is that we've received nominations for three of the key positions which keep the club operational and compliant with Queensland's legislation; being the President, Secretary and the Treasurer. Please consider applying to join the team. Nomination forms are on the Club noticeboard.

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Presidents Report

This will be my final report as President, so you can all look forward to more riveting, articulate, and engaging reports from now on!

In all seriousness, it has been a privilege to serve as your President over the past three years. When I accepted the position in May 2023, I made a commitment that every decision I made would pass one simple test: "Is this in the best interests of the club?" I believe I have remained true to that commitment throughout my term.

The past three years have brought a full range of experiences — both the highs and the challenges that any not-for-profit organisation encounters over time. With the support of a dedicated and capable committee, we have successfully addressed all issues presented to us by both State and Local Government, ensuring our continued tenure at Pizzey Park for the next five years and, more than likely, for the next ten years.

I am pleased with the strong financial position the club is currently in, as well as our ongoing ability to provide members with the facilities and welcoming environment they have come to appreciate and enjoy.

Although our constitution prevents me from standing for a fourth term as President, I am pleased to remain on the committee to help ensure a smooth and seamless transition to the incoming committee.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the wonderful volunteers who contribute so much to the daily operation of the club. Without your dedication and support, the club simply would not function as it does today.

I am very confident that the incoming committee will continue to improve and expand the facilities available to members. Plans are already underway for a revamped casting room, along with a submission to Council for the construction of a standalone, purpose-built office and meeting room.

In closing, I confirm that I will remain on the committee to assist with the transition process and continue as the principal contact for the Gold Coast City Council.

I wish everyone many happy and productive years ahead at the club. *I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Club's Annual General Meeting on the 31st of May* where I can thank you all in person for your continued support of your club.

Yours sincerely,

Bruce Harle

President

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Out & About

Fossicking Trips

The latest Club fossicking trip took place over 6th - 8th March in northern New South Wales, covering the areas around Glen Innes, Inverell, Elsmore, Stannifer and Torrington. The trip was timed to coincide with the Minerama gem show and so some of our club members also joined the Minerama self-drive fossicking excursions which were being held as part of the show, offering a great chance to get local knowledge of the fossicking sites.



Sunset on the road between Inverell and Glen Innes

Located about 4.5 – 5 hours' drive (450km or so) south-west of the Gold Coast the fossicking locations in this area are famous for their ability to produce valuable, facet quality gemstones with sapphire, zircon, black spinel, garnet, quartz (citrine and clear), topaz, tourmaline, beryl (as emerald and aquamarine), fluorite and cassiterite known. VERY occasionally small diamonds are also found, to spice life up. Unlike in Queensland, a fossicking licence is not needed in NSW (unless you intend to fossick in state forest, in which case a \$27.50 permit is required).



Jelly Bean quartz: water worn, rounded crystals

Club members returned from the trip with smiles after finding small sapphires, quartz points with included tourmaline needles, jelly-bean quartz and some cassiterite (tin) crystals.

The next Club outing will be to the Lismore gem festival held on the weekend of 16th / 17th May. More details will be available on the Club notice board and if there's enough advance interest

some car-pooling or a bus can be arranged.

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The provisional plan for this year's fossicking adventures is on the Club website and as shown below. Exact timing will be confirmed on the Club noticeboard. Please do let Luke Smith know in advance if you want to join a trip, so he can get numbers, discuss and make sure of suitability. All trips are weather dependent.

Month	Dates	Trip type	Location	Looking for
January	9th - 11th	Overnight Fossicking	Ewingar State Forest, NSW	Smokey Quartz, Amethyst
February	tba	Day trip - rain dependent	Tweed Valley, NSW (1) Tyalgum pub (2) Hopping Dicks Rd Crystal Shop	Chalcedony, Agate, Jasper
March	6th - 8th	Overnight Fossicking	Minerama Glen Innes Torrington Elsmore stannifer	Sapphire, Zircon, Topaz
April	25th	Overnight Fossicking	Yowah, Quilpie, Chinchilla, Wandoan	Boulder Opal, Petrified wood
May	16th	Day trip	Lismore, NSW - Lismore Gem Show	Gem show
	23rd	Day trip	Brisbane (1) Mt Gravatt Gem Show (2) Ithaca crystals, Mansfield	Gem show / crystal shop
October	tba	Overnight Fossicking	Ewingar State Forest, NSW	Smokey Quartz, Amethyst
November	8th	Day trip	Mudgeeraba - Mudgeeraba gem show	Gem show

Let's Talk about Gemstones

Gemstone Quiz (Answers on the last page)

1. How did the name of Agate originally come into being?
2. Who was the mineralogist who created the Mohs "scratch hardness" test?
3. What country and language does the name Opal originally come from?
4. What chemical element and mineral causes "play of colour" in Opal?
5. Where in Queensland can you fossick for gem quality Peridot?

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Who's in the Club?

This edition we're showcasing **the Club's faceting classes** held during the day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays of every week. The Club has 4 fantastic friendly instructors with years of experience between them who happily donate their time and skill.

- Neil Wright (Tuesday & Saturday)
- Mal Wanchap (Wednesday)
- John Grice (Thursday)
- Rex Keane (Thursday)

Pictured is club instructor Mal Wanchap, with Ailsa, a visitor from Munich, Germany. Ailsa attended our Club classes and successfully faceted a beautiful quartz stone, before her return home to Germany.



The Club's faceting section has three (3) new" state-of-the-art" VJ faceting machines, available to all students who sign up. VJ's are a precision gemstone cutting machine, produced near Childers in Queensland and which allow the production of international standard faceted gemstones. More about the VJ's and the Club's faceting team in the next edition of our newsletter.

If you're interested in becoming a faceting student or are an experienced faceter who simply wants to use the VJ machines, have a chat with any of our friendly instructors to arrange a time.

National Volunteers Week 18-24 May 2026

Photos of some of our volunteers receiving their Certificates of Appreciation. Thank you to each and every one of you who generously volunteers your time and effort to help ensure our club continues to run at its very best. Your dedication and support are truly valued and appreciated.



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Club Quarterly Lookahead

Meetings	
Every Second Tuesday of the Month	Club Committee Meeting
Sunday 31 May 2026	Annual General Meeting
Annual Gem show	
Saturday 20 June 2026	Annual Gem show

The **Club's annual lapidary competition** will be held to coincide with the Club's annual gem show. If you've an interest in having your skills judged to QLACCA standards then don't forget to enter. All entries will be on open display at the Club.

Planning for the club's **2026 Gem show** continues full steam ahead. The Gold Coast Council have approved our show to proceed, and community advertising is being planned with flyers proposed to be placed in Council's libraries, community centres and notice boards in the area as well as local shops.

Volunteers needed: Publicising the Gem Show and creating community awareness is a significant task so if you would like to volunteer to assist with dropping off some flyers then please let any of the Show Committee know (led by Wayne Schulz, with able support from Marina, Shelley, Gaye, Bruce and Ian).

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GCLC Session Times & Instructors – 2026

Most Club lapidary sessions take place on weekdays between 10am and 3pm, but we also have evening cabbings sessions (Monday and Wednesday) and both cabbings and faceting day sessions on Saturday.

Classes & Workshops						
Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9am To 2.30pm				FACETING John Grice Rex Keen		
9am To 3pm			FACETING Mal Wanchap			CABBING Smiley Ford Zoe D'Orival
9.30am to 12	WIRE WRAPPING Karen Baraket					
10am To 3pm	CABBING Tomio Taguchi Dennis Burton	CABBING Robert Keane Ross Cochrane	CABBING Steve Madeley Dennis Burton	CABBING Gary Gale	CABBING Alex Toro Zoe D'Orival	
	SILVER SMITHING John Bostock Gabrielle Curtis Kim Glasby	SILVER SMITHING Vikki Madeley Kim Glasby Steve Madeley	SILVER SMITHING Gabrielle Curtis Vikki Madeley			
Night Classes						
6pm To 9pm	CABBING Mike Beacall		CABBING John Casson		CABBING John Casson TEMPORARILY ON HOLD	
			OPAL Jay Neville			

NOTE: FRIDAY NIGHT CLASSES TEMPORARILY ON HOLD DUE TO LOW NUMBERS.

The Tuesday and Saturday faceting classes are running until July. Sadly, the Casting and Investment area is currently closed while the Club renews the old equipment.

The Club would like to open Saturday and evening classes for Faceting and Silversmithing and encourage anyone that's available to instruct on Saturdays or Monday/Wednesday/Friday evenings to contact the Committee. Training will be arranged where required.

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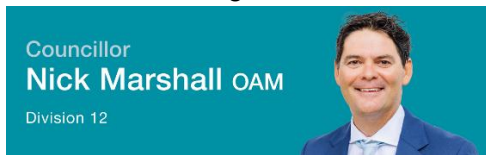
THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Many thanks to our generous Sponsors, supporting the GCLC:

- **AJS (Australian Jewellery Supplies)** - Jewellers Tools & Lapidary Tools
- **Gemcuts** - Lapidary Tools & Jewellery Tools
- **Morris & Watson** - Fabricated metal, Refining, Casting & Bullion supply.

Thank you to Nick Marshall OAM for the successful Discretionary Grant for our upcoming Show material donations totalling \$878.



Thank you to Ray Stevens MP for his continued support and generosity — including printing this newsletter.



Thank you to Angie Bell MP for successful Volunteer Grant totalling \$1,000



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Management Committee Members: 2025/26

Position	Name	Email
President	Bruce Harle	president@goldcoastlapidaryclub.com.au
Vice President	<i>Open</i>	
Treasurer	Steve Madeley	
Secretary	Jan Lippold	secretary@goldcoastlapidaryclub.com.au
Membership Secretary	Ruth Holliday	
Publicity Officer	<i>Open</i>	

Sub-Committee Members

Position	Name
General Support	Ross Cochrane, Josh (Smiley) Ford, Kim Glasby, Garth, Hams, Joe Lockley, Wayne Schulz
Admin Support	Karen Gaunt
Bookkeeper	Glen Ives
Librarian	Mal Wanchap, Robert Keane
Membership Secretary	Ruth Holliday
QLACCA Delegate	Steve Madeley
Facebook Administrator	Vikki Madeley
Maintenance Officers	Steve Madeley, Ross Cochrane, Wayne Schulz
Purchasing Officer	Gabrielle Curtis

Auxiliary Positions

Gemshow 2026

Position	Name
Show Coordinator 2026	Wayne Schulz
Showcase Stewards	<i>Open</i>
Show Judge – Faceting	<i>Open</i>
Show Judge – Silver	John Bostock
Show Judge - Cabachon	Mal Wanchop

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General Support

Position	Name
Field Trip Coordinator	Luke Smith
Raffle Coordinator	Gabrielle Curtis
Editor - Club Newsletter	Ian Gray

Member Contributions – Snippets

If you've a hankering to free your journalistic inner-self or feel like contributing any lapidary or Club related articles, or even have feedback on Snippets and what you'd like to see in future editions of our newsletter, then please do send your pieces/comments in. Either:

- Directly send to the Editor - ianangray@outlook.com
- Or via any of the Club committee team.

Answers to the Gemstone Quiz

1. Agate was given its name by Theophrastus, a Greek philosopher and naturalist. He discovered the stone c. 350 BCE along the shoreline of the River Achates (Ancient Greek: Ἀχάτης), now the Dirillo River, on the Italian island of Sicily, which at the time was a Greek territory.
2. The Austrian mineralogist Friedrich Mohs (1173 – 1819) introduced the Mohs Scale using 10 different minerals of different degrees of hardness (#1 – #10)
3. The English name for Opal is derived from the ancient Indian (Sanskrit) word "Upala", meaning stone.
4. "Play of colour" in Opal is caused by the interaction of visible light with stacked layers of the mineral cristobalite (a polymorph of the element Silica) in the gem. Tiny, ordered spheres of cristobalite cause the light to diffract, producing the brilliant show of rainbow colours that you see in the gemstone.
5. Olivine is plentiful in Queensland in mafic and ultra-mafic rocks, but Peridot (gem quality olivine) is not. There's only one (1) established location in Queensland to fossick Peridot; in the Cheviot Hills, Flinders shire where highly weathered olivine basalts contain occasional, small, gem-quality crystals. There are some rumours of Peridot being found in the Toowoomba ranges, but I have not heard of anyone yet having a successful trip to find the gemstone there.

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