



SNIPPETS

ISSUE 504

September 2025

In This Issue

- ◇ 60th Anniversary Progress
- ◇ Presidents Report
- ◇ VJ Road Trip
- ◇ Shell Hill
- ◇ Photos General Meeting
- ◇ What's on
- ◇ Schulz Opal Miners



Raffle tickets available 6 for \$5 see Instructors

60th Anniversary Pendant.

At a Facetors group meeting some months ago, Peter Carrol suggested that to help the Gold Coast Lapidary Club celebrate the Club's 60th Anniversary, that members of the Australian Facetors Guild Gold Coast group cut a series of stones to make into a pendant.

It was agreed by members that we cut the 60-degree fan design which is a series of 6 stones to make a 6-petal flower shape. The material used was AAA cubic zirconia in Sapphire blue and Canary yellow in the size of 12 x 9.4mm, size was most critical to design.

Mal Wanchap, John Grice, Rod Turville, Steve Amundsen and Garth Hams undertook to cut 6 identical stones.

John Bostock, the club silver smith instructor agreed to make the setting and set the stones, the result is in the photograph.

Thanks to all for their help in creating this commemorative and unique piece of jewellery.

Estimated Value of item approximately is over \$2000.

Rod Turville



President's Report

The Club certainly keeps me and the committee busy, and I am sure that when I stand down from this role in May next year, I will have to relearn any skills I may have had prior to taking on the presidency.

I am really looking forward to attacking the stones I have amassed over the past two and a half years and wrapping silver around some of them.

The subcommittee organising the 60th anniversary celebration has been very active and the arrangements seem to be well in hand. A special thank you to Ross Cochrane for taking the lead in this project. Wayne Schulz has been successful in obtaining a \$2000 Community Grant which will go towards the purchase of new computers, and has a number of grants applications lodged awaiting approval. I nominated, and Shell Hopkins seconded a Volunteers Award, sponsored by Angie Bell, federal member for Moncrieff. I am pleased to advise that Wayne's nomination was successful and we will attend a celebration ceremony at the end of October.

Due to the dedication of the Committee we continue to keep the Club well placed with all levels of government and enjoy their support. Our Club is seen in a very positive light, servicing the Gold Coast six days and three nights a week. This could not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our instructors and the support of our members.

We recently had a morning tea for Gabriel Curtis, who will be undergoing major surgery and will be away for three months. We all wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to her smiling face lighting up the silver room as soon as possible.

We have managed to secure three sponsors for our new Club T-shirts. They are:

Morrison Watson (our silver supplier)

Gem Cuts Ballina

Australian Jewellers Supply Brisbane

I know current times are hard, so an extra thank you to these businesses for supporting us.

Watch the notice board for clean-up days prior to the 60th day celebration. More hands make light work.

REMINDER

The next General Annual Meeting is in May (8 months away) by which time you will need to have a nomination for president, as I will have completed my term (three years).

Looking forward to seeing you all enjoying the Club

Bruce Harle

The Club would like to thank Mr Ray Sevens MP, Qld State Government Representative for Mermaid Beach, for his kind donation of a 3mtr marquee with the Club Emblem printed on it. This marquee is something that the Club has needed for some time for use during our annual show and open days.



Gold Coast Lapidary Club Inc

Member of Queensland Lapidary & Allied Craft Association Inc.

80 Pacific Avenue, Miami Qld. PO Box 12, Nobby Beach Queensland, 4218. Phone: 5526 1190

The Management Committee 2025/26

President: Bruce Harle	Email: president@goldcoastlapidaryclub.com.au
Vice President: Open	Membership Secretary: Ruth Holliday
Treasurer: Steve Madeley	Publicity Officer: Open
Secretary: Jan Lippold	Email: secretary@goldcoastlapidaryclub.com.au

Committee Members

Garth Hams, Joe Lockley, Josh (Smiley) Ford, Kim Glasby, Ross Cochrane, Wayne Schulz
and Karen Gaunt providing Admin Support

Auxiliary Positions

Gem Show Co-ordinator 2025: Open	Showcase Stewards: Open
Snippets Editor: Wayne Schulz	Librarian: Mal Wanchap, Robert Keane
Membership Secretary: Ruth Holliday	Field Trip Coordinator: Luke Smith
Purchasing Officer: Gabrielle Curtis	Raffle Coordinator: Gabrielle Curtis
QLACCA Delegate: Steve Madeley	Facebook Admin: Vikki Madeley
Maintenance Officers: Steve Madeley, Ross Cochrane and Wayne Schulz	

Judges

Silver Judge: John Bostock	Cabachon Judge: Mal Wanchap
Facet Judge: Open	

HELP NEEDED.



Looking for 2 or 3 members who would like to be involved in the maintenance of the clubs machines and equipment. This is not a full time role and I am in the process of making a rolling roster for equipment to be worked on, as well as looking at new motors for most of the cabbng equipment.

I will do a demo morning for training so you get an idea of what is done and how. I am physically struggling with it and need to step back for my own health and safety however I will be around to assist where required. Please contact Wayne 0417961865, or leave a message.
email : wschulz907@gmail.com



	Classes & Workshops					
Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10am To 3pm	CABBING Tomio Taguchi 0410148038 Mike Beacall 0403545381	CABBING Robert Keane 0417141950 Ross Cochrane 0418189941	CABBING Steve Madeley 0419021253	CABBING Gary Gale 0403043412 OPAL	CABBING Alex Toro 0411805378	CABBING Smiley Ford 0427308058 FACETING Neil Wright
	SILVER SMITHING John Bostock Gabrielle Curtis 0474031934 Chika Murata	SILVER SMITHING Steve Madeley Vikki Madeley 0418915075 Kim Glasby	SILVER SMITHING Robert Keane 0417141950 Gabrielle Curtis Vikki Madeley		CASTING & INVESTING Peter Markwell 0451461590	
		FACETING Peter Carroll 0418982549 Neil Wright	FACETING Mal Wanchap 0410249392	FACETING John Grice 0400755698 Rex Keen 0412056931 Neil Wright		
Night Classes						
6pm To 9pm	CABBING Mike Beacall 0403545381 WIRE WRAPPING Temporarily on Hold		CABBING John Casson 0451818343 OPAL Jay Neville 0433691025		CABBING John Casson 0451818343	

VJ Facet Machines

Thank you to Garth Hams for running us up to Childers, to collect 3 brand new Facet Machines from Matt at VJ Faceting. Mal and Wayne accompanied Garth and Matt gave us a run down how to set them up and maintain them. I think Mal was more interested in how to get his dog to come back with us without Matt or Garth knowing. Nice dog. We managed to leave without a photo and a quick email to Matt asking for a selfie with a new machine was rejected as he had no more assembled ones there. It was an uneventful trip thankfully and we suffered some rain showers to keep the windscreen clean on the way. Our return ran into the south bound traffic from Brisbane and a few heavy showers had the brake lights glowing and speed reduced as a result.



I recently had to travel back home to my originating area, the Riverland in South Australia, and on returning to Adelaide my brother in-law took us to Shell Hill. This area is about 110 kl north east from Adelaide.

Unique to South Australia, Shell Hill is over 5 million years old, a deposit of oyster shells that were in some places 6 metres thick. Shell Hill was formerly part of a shallow sea occupying the Murray basin. It is situated on the banks of the Marne River, the hill gets its name from the deposit of oyster shells. Due to storms and slow sinking of the Basin the oysters would die and be covered by another layer, building up over thousands of years.

The oyster shell deposit remained untouched until the 1930s when an enterprising man named Clarke found a use for it. A crushing plant was set up in the gully below turning oyster shells into a fine powder (carbonate of lime) which, although not much good as a fertiliser helped to sweeten land in the heavy rainfall areas. Also used as super phosphate, fertiliser, for farming and as a road base material.

After a few years, work ceased but the plant re-opened in 1942 turning the shell by hand into shell grit. The crushing plant finally closed in 1946. The small Mound that survived is all that remains and is now protected.

Wayne Schulz



Oyster Shell Deposit



Shell Hill

Thanks to SA Tourism

Thank You Cr Nick Marshall OAM

The Gold Coast Lapidary Club wishes to thank Division 12 Councilor Nick Marshall for including a short story on the Club in their Quarterly Community Newsletter. A great return of Interest from the community



General Meeting

Our August General went off well and was attended by 34 members and 1 Mcaw, Sparkles, which gave us a quorum, and we were able to do some business. Raffles were drawn with Gary winning 3 of the 6 prizes which made for some good-natured ribbing over the sausage sizzle, free by the way, and an abundance of cakes and biscuits. This mixed together created some great social interaction with the members that were there.

Whilst we were happy to get a Quorum, 25, we would encourage members to attend these meetings and support the clubs activities and projects.. Support for 2 hours every 3 months is not much to ask when you take into account what the club provides for all its members.



Bruce receiving the Club Pendant



Gabriel chatting with Sparkles



Joe, John and Karen socialising



Garry taking out 3 Raffle Prizes



Thank you all for attending

Your Club

Saturday, 25 October 2025

- Gold Coast Lapidary Club 60th Anniversary Function

Friday 14 November 2025

- Clean up day 830 to 12

Saturday, 15 November 2025

- Open Day

Saturday, 20 June 2026

- Show Day

Faceting on Saturday

Niel Wright has taken on the job of instructing Faceting on Saturdays and is very keen to have some students so don't hold back, lets keep him busy.



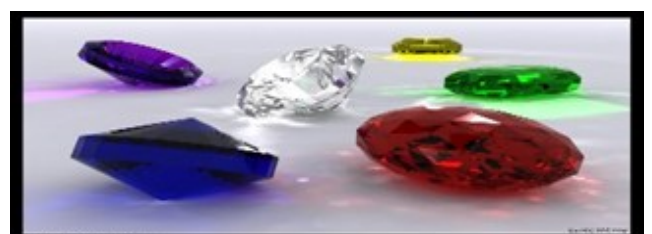
Gabriel and Gaye with a prize



Viki and Sparkles with the first Prize Donation



Steve BBQ Master



Schulz Opal Miners

In 1970 my father who was an orchard manager met a couple of seasonal workers who got him interested in looking for Opal at White Cliffs NSW. So he packed up mum and 5 kids in the valiant and we went to make our fortune. It turned out to be a bit harder than that as we fossicked around the mullock heaps from mines years ago. The whole area was a scene from the moon with long deserted mines everywhere and no barriers to stop you from sliding down one if you made a mistake.

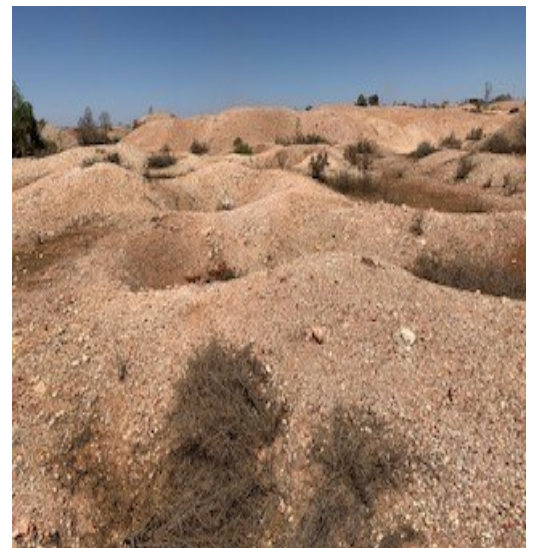
We were aged 15 to 6 years old and were given a serious talk about going on the inside of the heaps where the shafts were, yet we tentatively skirted the top edges for about 3 feet looking for the elusive opal. The first year we found some really nice pieces as well as a lot of chips which was enough to encourage dad to return next year. He apparently put a bit of research into it this time and as I had learnt welding at school he had me weld up lengths of pipe into 4 connectable ladders about 8 feet long each. His intention was to go down some shafts and find what the old miners had missed. Confidence.

We arrived at White Cliffs, in 1971, with ladders on the roof and first day out dad selected a suitable shaft. After slipping and sliding on the inside of the mound the ladder was put down about 20 feet, then volunteers were called for, Wayne grab the torch and go and have a look. I just looked at him and he said “well I have to stay here in case something goes wrong”. So down I went with my young brother, we were 14 and 7 years old.

Well first thing we hit was spiderweb which felt like rope and the imagination took off on how big was the spider that set it. The bottom of the shaft had old bones from foxes and kangaroos that had fallen in and again the brain went to were they old miner bones. Dads comforting calls coming down “what do you see” and “don’t worry about the bones”. It was so dark in the shaft that the torch light was like a candle. We had a quick look about and decided that no opal was in the shaft and scurried out. After a chat dad decided that the girls should experience a one of event, so I took my 2 sisters down for the tour, the second time was easier by far however my sisters were not impressed and did not want the experience. So, mining opal in old shafts was given a miss and dad decided to gather some information from the locals at the pub.



The Schulz opal miners 1970



White Cliffs Landscape

Time Out.

Peter Carroll one of our facet instructors has decided that it is time to hang up his quills due to health and personal commitments. Thank you Peter for your committed service as an instructor to the Club and we are looking forward to seeing you doing your own thing when you can.