



The Cutting Edge

Monthly Newsletter of the Ottawa Lapsmith and Mineral Club

In this month's Newsletter:

President's Message	p. 1
Club News	p. 2
Greetings to Silversmiths	p. 3
Member Profile: Russel Black	p. 4
Auction Highlights	p. 6
Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Geopark	p. 7
Coming Mineral Shows	p. 8
Aurostibite	p. 9
Workshop Schedule	p. 9
Membership form	p. 10

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President's Message

The OLMC is an Ontario for profit corporation. The membership are the shareholders. Every year we must hold an annual general meeting and elect a board of officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. By definition all positions are open. Our Secretary Bill Hendrick is stepping down and will not run again. The job is very light duty involving the occasional correspondence and the occasional Zoom meeting. More importantly, it gives the holder a 25% say in how the corporation is run.

All other club positions are appointed. Our Workshop chair Jean-Guy Bradette wishes to step down. Our membership director Nathalie Bourgette is stepping down. Our dealer chair Vema Ho would like to train a replacement.

Like most volunteer organizations the OLMC has a small group of people doing most of the work year after year. If anyone would like to volunteer, you can consider all positions available.

Kerry Day
 OLMC President

All members are invited to submit articles, proposals, and thoughts that could be included in the newsletters. Also, feel free to send your Classified ads by e-mail to: news@olmc.ca

Workshop News

On March 13, a leak was discovered in the settling tank. Workshop Chair Jean-Guy Bradette put some caulking on it yesterday. If it is found to continue leaking, he will replace the bolted part.

Supervisors are reminded to fill in all the “total” columns of the sign-in sheet, both rows and columns. This information helps when checking the final total.

There is room in the east parking lot for two rows of vehicles as long as there is enough room for the back row to get out.

Workshop fees for members are \$5 for day, \$15 per month or \$120 for the year. You can now pay by e-transfer. Yearly single membership is \$20 from January 1st-December 31st, no prorating.

One of the green rock tumblers has been cleaned and is working again. Club members can book tumblers. All of the grits and polishes are available.

Courses Available through the Workshop

On a trial basis silversmithing is being offered Sunday afternoons.

Cabbing courses taught by Colin Geitzler are also

offered the same days. The two groups use different areas of the workshop, so there should be no conflict. Faceting and carving courses are coming eventually.

Enrol using the sign-up sheet is at the workshop or by sending an e-mail to Workshop Chair Jean-Guy Bradette at jbradette7752@rogers.com. Make sure to include your contact information and what course you want to take.



Annual General Meeting in April

The OLMC will hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in April.

Time: April 13, 2:00-4:00 p.m

Place: OLMC Workshop
136F Billings Avenue, Ottawa

A Zoom meeting will be set up for members who cannot attend in person. The URL will be sent by e-mail to all active members. The AGM hear reports from the chairpersons, including club financial report. Most importantly, it is the time for present members to vote for a new Executive Committee (president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary) from the list of nominees. Any active club member can be nominated.



Lapidary Supplies

Often people ask where to get lapidary machinery and supplies. Many suppliers are located in the United States.

One club member has recommended [Arrowhead Lapidary](#) headquartered in Wellington, Ohio. They sell tumblers, trim saws, carving bits, faceting discs, and all sorts of grits and pastes.





Greetings
and
Welcome!

A silversmith is an artist who works with silver. A goldsmith is an artist who works with gold. At our club, a silversmith is any artist who works with metal. People who make cabochons and free forms may wish to make your own metal settings for your creations. There is no official sign-up process, other than showing up at the workshop and joining the [Silversmiths Facebook](#) group.



Handcrafted rings on coral display

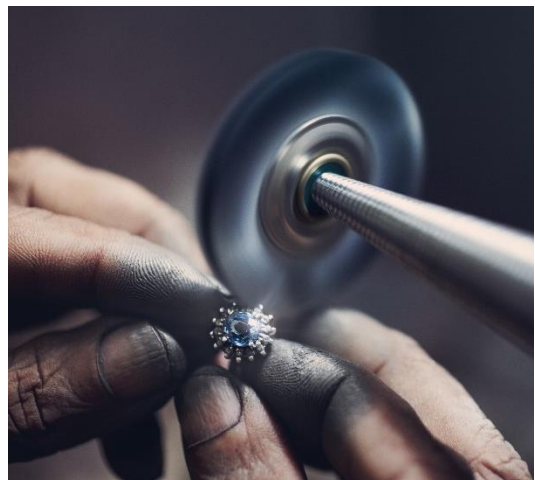
The workshop at 136F Billings Avenue is almost completely functional. Just a few things are missing. Any donations to fill in these gaps would be appreciated.

- a ventilation system for the MAP torches
- adjustable stools or small secretary chairs for the workbench
- the bench blocks got lost somewhere with the moves and storage

There is no separate fee for using the silversmithing equipment but consumables, such as silver, must be financed out of pocket. The club is starting to build an inventory of basic items for sale, including bezel wire, drill bits, and saw blades. The group is in the process of setting up a beginner class that will eventually be mandatory for people who have no previous silversmith experience.

A qualified silversmithing supervisor must be on duty for anyone to use the silversmithing equipment. Two new supervisors, Don Alp and Karla Fox, are bringing lots of expertise and experience to the club. Don is an accomplished silversmith who loves to teach and share his skills, and he will be starting up some classes, projects, and demos in the near future. Karla specializes in enamelling and will be offering courses in the Spring for those wishing to expand their jewelry making repertoire.

The club needs more volunteer supervisors to be able to offer more open workshop times. If you are interested, then please tell Janet Borzecki.



Stock image of a silversmith at work.

Member Profile: Russell Black

How He Joined the Club

I'm a carver. I started out wood carving since I was six years old. I still have the scar on my finger from it. Then I picked up some carnelian and I was trying to shape the carnelian into a hummingbird to be worn by my wife. I was having a heck of a time, ruining all my tools, all the bits that I bought. The diamonds were just stripping off. My wife had gone to the Ottawa Gem and Mineral Club, the show, and she met Dirk [Schumann], one of our old members. He convinced her that I should go the next day to see him. So, I did, and that's how I became involved with the club.

I went down and met Dirk and Anna [Grealy] and Steve Souliere (at the old Bell Street location). They showed me how to use the machines. That's how it started.

Why learn silversmithing?

I learned how to silversmith with Christine [Galipeau]. My wife Beverly wanted to learn, so I took her with me. And silversmithing is a great way to set your cabs. And then Karl [Schutt] said, "Do you want to learn how to facet?" He said, "I normally teach faceting to a crowd and I charge this much." Karl and I sat down with the Raytech Shaw, and Karl showed me how to facet, and away to the races. I've done over 600 stones now. During the winter I can sit beside a south-facing window and sit on my faceting machine and not make any dust and the noise is low, and I can work there when I want to.

With the faceting, I bought a bunch of faceting material off of John Tristram, before he passed. I had done some work for him, so he wanted me to come down and pick out some stuff out of his shop. I bought a pound of peridot crystals that he had collected in Arizona.

I've been cutting garnet and peridot and quartz. The garnet is a purply-red, and I have some that is a blood red which is the pyrope. And I also have some orange that I bought off eBay but the quality is not very good. And Jennifer [Latham] brought me some Tsavorite. Those are worth quite a bit more.

I cut a red Mexican opal that Jean-Guy [Bradette] had picked up for me on one of his trips. It turned out to be a one and a half carat Mexican opal with brilliant flash. I looked it up and it runs at \$150-to-\$300 per carat. I figured, "Well, that's neat". I put it in a plastic bag and I put a potential sale price on it, because I don't get to sell my stuff a lot.

Artistic Challenges

This winter before Christmas I had an idea of challenging myself to make one silver



Club Member Russell Black was the OLMC President from 2011 to 2014.

pendant a day, with stones I already had. I saw a person had done this on YouTube, so gave that to myself as something to do. The family really liked those Christmas presents.



Carved faces by Russell Black

and moved it, it looked like when you're looking in the ocean and you see the sand underneath, and the sandbar is moving. I gave it away.

The Current Projects

I have some yellow chrysoprase that I cut today that I'll make into some small cabs. Those are for when I start to do silversmithing again, silver work again. I'll do a multiple-stone setting. I have an idea for a multiple-stone setting of a cab. I wanted the yellow chrysoprase in it, and I'll put some other stones in for accent.

The other bit of work I'm doing now is for the native community. I call myself a tool maker with them, because I make drums, rattles, pipes, a lot of stuff. It goes into the community, and it goes all over the place. I have pipes that I made for them that are as far north as above the Arctic Circle on James Bay -- actually, it's around the corner and up at the top of Quebec -- all the way to South America and in to Europe. When I make a pipe, most of the pipes are made with red pipestone, catlinite, but I also make pipes from marble. The marble pipes are quite nice because it contains the heat, and it's quite nice to work with. The marble came from Anna. She came to me and said, "Remember the shooting in Parliament?" They shot many bullets at the guy. They didn't hit him very often, they hit the marble near the library in the hallway, and they had to replace it. These big sheets of marble, which is an inch thick, were being dumped near Anna's house. So, I've been able to make ceremonial pipes from marble from Parliament, and these pipes are getting used all over the place.

I started carving a piece of green and white jadeite from Burma, and I'm making an orchid flower out of that. It looks like a *Cattleya* orchid. Jadeite carves and polishes easier than nephrite. When it's done, I might take some gold leaf and put gold leaf around the edges of the petals to make it stand out a bit more. The other thing I'm carving is a piece of Quebec jade from South of Quebec City in the Appalachian mountains. It's a green and white jade as well. I'm making a leaf out of it that would be a pendant. It is not good jade, but it is nice and translucent. I have about 50 pounds of it.

Janet Borzecki lives close to me. She was walking by one time, and she showed me a compression setting that she did with one of the topaz that I cut, and it was beautiful. I said, "Okay, that's one of my challenge pieces." It was very challenging. She said it was easy, but I broke two stones.

What I find the most challenging, the most rewarding is carving. I carve everything from soapstone all the way up to corundum. Corundum with the diamond and enough water will carve. Anything with a crystal is pretty easy to carve. The difficulty is getting the right polish after. There was a beryl I did, an aquamarine that was slightly included. I carved on the bottom of it, and then I set it in a ring with a high dome. When you looked at it

Highlights from the March Auction

The club’s “Spring Cleaning” auction was held on-line from March 22 to March 30. It featured 131 lots of mineral specimens, rough, slabs, machinery, and unique jewellery made by club members. Thanks goes to Vice-President Matthew Poirier for organizing the auction, and to President Kerry Day for handling receipt and delivery of the lots, and to all of the club members who participated.



Lot 98: Old Lortone arbour



Lot 95: Cripple Creek Jasper



Lot 78: Pyrite after Marcasite



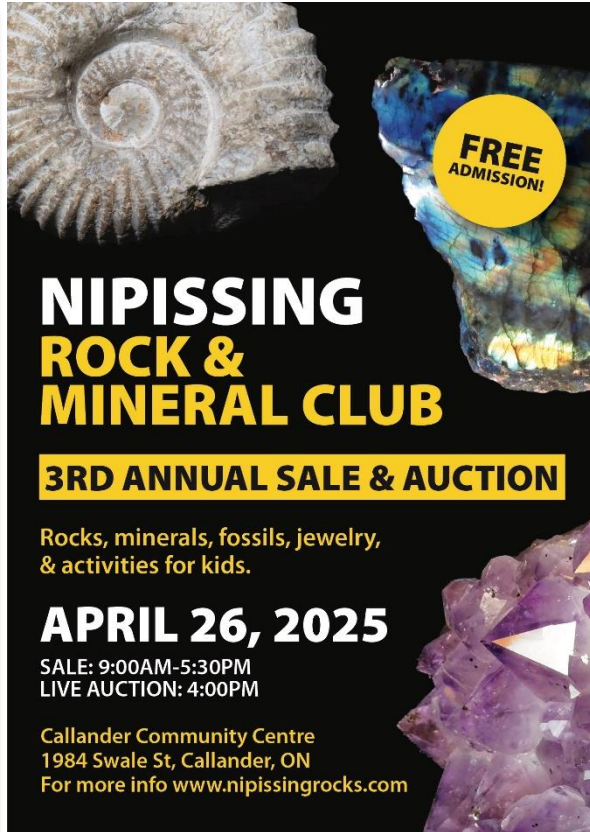
Lot 03: Mineral flat 3



Lot 134: Natural Burmese Jade



Lot 64: Alberta Amber



**NIPISSING
ROCK &
MINERAL CLUB**

3RD ANNUAL SALE & AUCTION

Rocks, minerals, fossils, jewelry,
& activities for kids.

APRIL 26, 2025

SALE: 9:00AM-5:30PM
LIVE AUCTION: 4:00PM

Callander Community Centre
1984 Swale St, Callander, ON
For more info www.nipissingrocks.com



43rd Annual
**Sudbury Gem &
Mineral Show**

Northern Ontario's Largest
Gem, Jewellery & Mineral
Show and Sale

July 18 to 20, 2025

Friday July 18, 5 pm - 9 pm
Saturday July 19, 10 am - 6 pm
Sunday July 20, 10 am - 5 pm

- Dealers • Displays • Door Prizes
- Gems • Beads • Handcrafted Jewellery
- Minerals • Fossils • Rock Craft
- Demonstrations • Mineral ID
- Kid's Activities • Metal Detecting
- Outdoor Vendors, Sat. 10:00 to 4:00

Carmichael Arena
Bancroft Drive, Sudbury, Ontario
Barbecue, Free Parking

Sudbury Rock & Lapidary Society

For info, go to <https://scrfm.ca/sppcoming-gem-mineral-and-fossil-show/> or call (705) 522-5140

From the Library:

The day after my defeat in 1965, I came home to find that Margery had placed before my dinner plate a newspaper clipping about a night course in polishing stones for jewellery. I promptly enrolled in classes conducted by Ernie Eaton and his wife Marianne.

By mid-1966, I was enthusiastic about my new hobby (perhaps obsessed would be a better description). As Carr, Montue and I walked the track of the Whitepass and Yukon Railroad outside of Whitehorse, I picked up a shiny black pebble from the gravel.

Lloyd Francis
Ottawa Boy

Australia has World's Oldest Meteorite Impact Crater

Researchers from Curtin University found the world's oldest known meteorite impact crater in the North Pole Dome in Western Australia's Pilbara region.

The meteorite impact occurred 3.5 billion years ago. The previous oldest impact crater is 2.2 billions years old, the Yarrabubba structure also in Western Australia.

The presence of shatter cones indicates intense shockwaves generated during a high-velocity meteorite impact perhaps exceeding 36,000 kilometers per hour.

The high energy released by the collision also altered the Earth's crust and scattered debris around the planet.

<https://interestingengineering.com/science/world-oldest-meteorite-impact-crater-found>

Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark

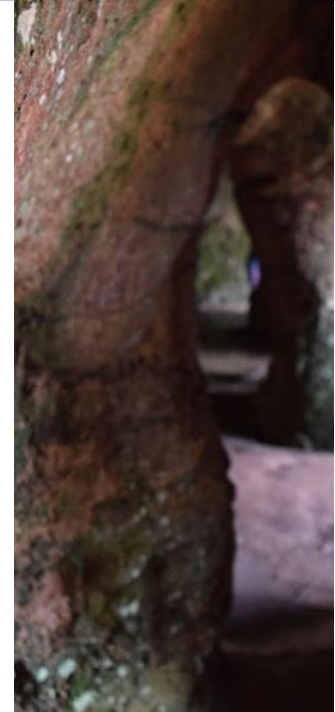
[Grutas del Palacio](#) (Caves or Grottoes of the Palace) UNESCO Global Geopark is a 3600 km sq area located near Trinidad, Uruguay. The centrepiece of the park, which also lends its name, is an area of sandstone pillars about two meters high formed by erosion over thousands of years, and supporting a stone roof about 70 cm thick. The stone formed in the Late Cretaceous Age (dated by dinosaur eggs that had been laid in the sand), and was hardened with iron oxides during the Paleocene Age.

This geopark has rocks and sediments from Proterozoic, Palaeozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic ages in two distinct sectors. The central and southern region has granites, gneisses and metamorphic belts with magmatic intrusions including granodiorites, quartzites, hornblendites, and gabbro dykes. The northern region is a small area of Permian conglomerates and sandstones that belong to the Parana Basin. One can see sedimentation and conglomeration and exposed paleosoils from river action. Just in the last 40 years, Holocene terrace deposits and river erosion have been newly exposed along a lake.

In the east in the Chamangá Protected Area, there are remnants of a black gabbro quarry abandoned in the late 1990s. The stone was deposited around 1.78 billion years ago. The quarry extracted large blocks of this ornamental stone, polished them in an industrial process, then exported the blocks to Europe and Asia. People can tour the site with permission from the owners as one of the geotourism circuits offered by the Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark.

On the borders of the Paso del Palmar Artificial Lake and the Río Negro in the west is the "Stone Lizard" and other evocative rock formations. They are made of sandstone accumulated from mountain rivers that flowed north 280 million years ago.

The Don Ricardo Spa is a tourist site on the right bank of the Porongos stream near Trinidad. It is named after the owner who donated five hectares to the Flores Municipality for public recreation. There are barbecue grills, a rest stop, camping space, and lifeguard service in the summer. This area is part of the Piedra Alta Terrain aged from 2,100 million years ago, time of the first Snowball Earth. It features an abandoned gravel quarry with a floor of fresh granite rock, where water pools to form shallow lakes home to various plants and animals. There are quartz minerals and white feldspars that experienced some alteration. There is also abundant biotite mica. Plus, there is some Quaternary aged brown clay deposits.



*Top: sandstone pillars in Grutas Del Palacio.
Above: gabbro blocks at an abandoned quarry
Photos from <https://www.geoparque.uy>*

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Image By David Hospital - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, [Wikimedia](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aurostibite.jpg).

Aurostibite

[Aurostibite](#) is an isometric gold antimonide (AuSb₂) member of the pyrite group that was discovered in 1952. It has a Mohs hardness of 3 and specific gravity of 9.98, compared to pyrites hardness of 6 and specific gravity of around 5. The colour is white to gray, sometimes with an iridescent tarnish. It is found in hydrothermal gold-quartz veins where there is a lack of sulfur but

contain antimony and related minerals. Aurostibite can be found around Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, and the Timiskaming District in Ontario. Antimonides are rare and are normally placed in the sulfide class.

Workshop Schedule						
April 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Lapidary 10am-2pm (RV) Silversmiths (JB) 6:30-9pm	2 Lapidary (JGB) 5:00-9pm	3	4	5 Lapidary (EC/JM) 10:00-4pm
6 Silversmiths (JB) 12:30-3pm	7	8 Lapidary 10-2pm (RV) Library 2-6:30 Silversmith(DA) 6:30-9pm	9 Lapidary (JGB) 5:00-9pm	10	11	12 Lapidary (CG/KD) 10:00-4pm
13 Annual General Meeting 2-4pm	14	15 Lapidary 10am-2pm (RV) Silversmiths (KF) 6:30-9pm	16 Lapidary (JGB) 5:00-9pm	17	18	19 Lapidary (RB/JC) 10:00-4pm
	21	22 Lapidary 10am-2pm (RV) Silversmiths (JB) 6:30-9pm	23 Lapidary (CG) 5:00-9pm	24	25	26 Lapidary (SJ/NB) 10:00-4pm
27 Silversmiths (DA) 12:30-3pm	28	29 Lapidary 10am-2pm (RV) Silversmiths (JB) 6:30-9pm	30 Lapidary (JGB) 5:00-9pm			



OLMC Membership Application

New Membership Membership Renewal

Individual **\$20**

Family (2+ persons in the same residence) **\$30**

Benefits:

Monthly Newsletter

Newsletter advertisement: \$25 per year for members or \$55 for businesses
(Ten quarter pages per year over ten newsletters).

OLMC online auctions

OLMC field trips

*More information can be found at <https://olmc.ca>
You can also go on our Facebook page: [OttawaLapsmithMineralClub](#)*

Names(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____

Please specify your e-mail address to receive OLMC's newsletter:

Do you require a receipt?

Yes

Payments are payable by **cash, cheque** to Ottawa Lapsmith and Mineral Club, or
E Transfer at treasurer@olmc.ca with the application form

Please mail your membership form and fees to:

Ottawa Lapsmith and Mineral Club
PO Box 57012, Ottawa RPO Gladstone, Ottawa, ON, K1R 1A1

Please note that all membership information is used only for administrative purposes.

Administration use only

Card provided: Yes No

Supervisor signed: Yes No

Date: _____