



Riablo Riggins

Monthly Newsletter of the Contra Costa Mineral & Gem Society

March 2023

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President's Message



IT'S NEARLY SPRING! Spring has nearly sprung, but as I sit looking out at the rain my thoughts naturally drift to ROCKS. I stopped by the Vacaville Show over the weekend, saw a lot of friends and picked up a few new pieces to add to the hoard! Truthfully, I am buried. How did I get into this position.

I BLAME EVERYTHING ON MY MOM.

She was the one who was the expert rock hoarder. Throughout my childhood, I remember my mom's rear in the air looking for treasure everywhere we went: Glass Beach, Burney Falls, Mono Hot Spring, The parking lot at The GRAND CANYON. For Pete's sake, always in the air. I guess some of it is genetic, my grandmother was also afflicted. They told me that it would skip a generation, alas, it has not. They also said, 'If you can't lick them, then join em.' (As a safety reminder, please do not lick rocks. You do not know where it has been).

This month we are meeting at the **Hoyer Hall, Clayton Community Library, 6125 Clayton Road, Clayton, CA. 6pm**. The City Council has a meeting that should end at 5:30, I hope to meet them as they exit with a small display and handouts. Also, I would like to invite them to

attend our regular meeting. Kelly has been busy this month with the Antioch show and presentations to two groups at local libraries. Your BOD also installed a display at the Clayton Library that has been up all month. We hope to do this again later in the year if you would like to participate. I have helped with a presentation to a Cub Scout group and will have two cases at the Castro Valley Show in Hayward this week end. Tell us about anything you do as a rockhound, you get your name in the newsletter. The BOD meeting was postponed to March 18, and we will have our first Show Committee meeting after. 5358 Clayton Rd, Concord, CA @ 10am. All are welcome to both meetings. We need a volunteer(s) for refreshments at our club meetings. Events: • April 16 is our planned outing to Mariposa, Al has been working to make this a great trip. • Hayward, Turlock, and Santa Clara shows are coming up. • April is the Art and Wine Festival. Mike Hopkins, CCMGS President 2023



General Meeting

April 13th 6:30 PM Hoyer Hall Clayton Community Library, 6125 Clayton Road, Clayton, CA. 6pm.

Speaker

Mathew King Topic :Radioactive minerals and their collection

Snacks

Those asked to bring snacks are.... ELLIOTT, Cheri, ELLSBERRY, Mark, FACCHINI, Primo FEDOROFF, Michael, FELKER, Alan, FENTON, Johanna, FLOWERS, Brenda, FLOYD-SKAGGS, Georgia. FRANCO, Albert, FREIBURGER, Dennis

Remember.... Everyone is invited



Making a Cabachon

In our last newsletter we discussed some of the basic lapidary skills. One of the fundamental skills is to make a cab or cabochon. This editor can guarantee that everyone is capable of making a cab, because she can. Of course she was taught by one of the best cab makers alive at the Antioch club.

Making a cab, when you have the right equipment, is an easily learned skill. The equipment list is substantial..... You will need

- A rock Slab
- A trim Saw, to trim the desired shape from the slab
- A cabbng machine to grind and shape your cab



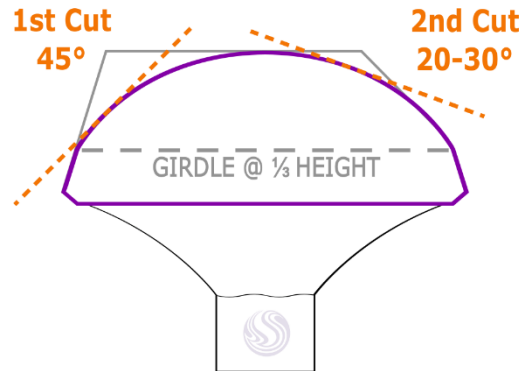
- A polishing lap to add a polish to the stone
With the most appropriate compound for polishing your stone.
- A dopping machine , to attach the stone to a dop stick with wax
- A Dop Stick, Wooden Dowel, 2 to 3 " long
- A permanent Ink marker or a sharp nail
- stencil templates or a paper shape
- Razor blade
- Goggles or eye protection.

The steps are really very simple.

1. Put the shape of the cab on the slab.....For your first project an oval is recommended. Place the stencil on the stone, then outline the slab using the permanent market or nail. It is strongly recommended that agate or jasper be used for your first project. Pick a thicker, solid slab with no holes.

2. Using the trim saw cut away most of the excess material on the slab around the proposed cab. Cut the material down to but not inside your lines.

3. Dopping—Using melted cab wax on your dopping machine to attach your preformed cab to a dop stick. This stick should be centered on the back side of the cab, firmly attached and centered. It will act as a handle and will be removed when the cab is finished.
4. Rough forming. Every cab has a flat bottom known as a girdle that prevents the final stone from chipping around the edge. Using the most coarse wheel on the polisher, or cabbing machine, (usually 80 grit) grind a flat girdle at a 90 degree angle around the entire stone on the line defining the outside of the cab. To create the dome, grind the stone at a 45 degree angle from the flat girdle around the entire stone. Move inward toward the center with a decreasing angle, making a full circuit before going closer to the center and decreasing your angle, (see diagram below)



Using the bright light on the machine, check to make sure that the stone has no flat spots and dome is even.

5.Grinding... Once you are happy with a uniform dome shape, use the next grinder wheels, in succession of coarseness from rougher to finer, to perfect and polish the stone. One trick to achieve a more perfect finish is to use the permanent marker to cover the entire surface of the stone, then use to appropriate wheel to take off the ink, insuring that you have hit every spot on the stone, I do this three times on each wheel to insure the final finish. Remember on your Genie, the first three wheels are the grinder wheels. The last three are the shaping wheels

6. Shaping ...The last three wheels are for perfecting the shape and smoothness of the surface of your stone. . Everyone who has made cabs has their own technique in terms of movement, but the key is rapid movement and to hit every surface on the stone repeatedly. I use the permanent marker technique described when grinding.

7.Polishing..... Unless you are seeking a matte finish on your cab, (your choice, you are the artist) the next step is to use the polishing wheel of your machine, or a separate polisher to put a shiny finish on the stone. Check and use the appropriate polishing medium. Tin Oxide seems to work well with agates and jaspers.

8. Removing the Dop Stick... Do not do this till your stone meets your expectations and you do not intent to work any further on it. Place stone and stick in a freezer for a few hours, (how long depends on how thick the wax is. Your cab will either fall off in the freezer, or pull off easily. If it does not return and leave in freezer a bit longer. Overnight will separate most cabs. Use the razor blade to take off the excess and to remove the wax from the Dop stick... the wax is reuse-able.

This list summarizes the equipment and the steps for making a cab at home. Do not expect perfection on your first try because practice is essential to this skill. It outlines the process, but I strongly recommend that one takes an actual course in making a cab. Again, the equipment is a substantial investment and no list can replace the value an actual mentor supplies to this process. Our sister club Antioch has a shop with all of the equipment, teaches classes to members and even will supply new cabbers with a sample slab.

<https://www.gemsociety.org/article/lapidary-fundamentals-cabochon-cutting/>



Another kind of Rock Store

If one remembers when Contra Costa had a rock shop, I fear one is dating one's self...and I am among the dated. The good news is that there is a new kind of rock shop to be found. It is a vendor in an antique mall. One such mall is Antique Corner, 500 Ferry Street in Martinez. One of the featured vendors deals in specimens, from small micromounts to amethyst tubes. Other vendors have a variant of gemstone carvings, new and antique jewelry, and an assortment of other curiosities. If you find a moment check it out!



And the winner is....

The winner of February's Display competition is Donna Albrecht

March 2023



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 1 st Day of Spring	2	3	4 Co-op Seminar
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Daylight Savings Time	13 Rock Meeting	14	15	16	17 St. Patty's Day	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 BOD Meeting

