



Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc.

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Print Post Approved No. 224952/00012

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Newsletter - July 2021

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President's Notes:

Hello Everyone,

As much as I wish I could give you good news that the Covid-19 - Delta outbreak is now under control, it appears just the opposite.

The lockdown of Greater Sydney (and that includes Wollongong and Shellharbour) is now tighter and I expect will continue for much longer than originally thought.

After so much effort to open the club we will need to start all over again, but when? If there is any breakthrough Romina will be in touch.

If there is any good news, it was the NSW Chief Medical Officer a couple of days ago saying that there are no cases of Covid-19, amount those who have been fully vaccinated in intensive care.

Stay safe and well,

Cheers

Chris

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**COMING SOON TO A
SCREEN NEAR YOU!**

**Get ready for an online
AUCTION!**

It's time to do some online "*wallet fossicking*" with the ILC! In the not too distant future, ILC will be putting up some items for auction that only financial members of the ILC can bid on for a set period of time. More details will be provided soon!

To the right is a sneak peak of what one of the items on auction will be. Stay tuned to find out more!



An easy way to be notified of this online auction is by liking and following the ILC's Facebook page that can be found on the below link!

<https://www.facebook.com/IllawarraLC>

ILC Business Meeting and Social Night



The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 18th August 2021, starting at 7pm, followed by the Social meeting in the clubrooms at 51 Meadow St, Tarrawanna (Covid lockdown, results pending, an email will be sent out).

Last month's business meeting (16th June) was attended again by 15 ILC members. Minutes from the meeting are available at the club in the Silver room (when it is open again).

In June's newsletter, I mentioned that at the business meeting, our *keeper of the books*, Janelle, indicated that there were many long overdue library books. It seems that now there are five people who have overdue library books. Thank you to those who brought them back! Just a reminder, the borrowing period for a library book from the club is 3 months. The library should be open when there is a class on at the club and also at the Business and Social meetings.

President Chris, inducted new member Samantha W into the club, welcome Samantha!



For anyone who missed the talk at our Social evening, you certainly missed a very informative and hands on talk. Our very own club member John Finkernagel, gave us a fantastic talk and demonstration about the Aboriginal Tools he creates. He showed us many examples of what he has made with many different materials!



Thank you, John for putting together such an interesting and informative presentation and thank you to all who came along and joined in!

If anyone has any obsidian they would like to pass on, John may have a particular interest in it!

What's on next...

Our next social meeting will star none other than our President, Chris! He will talk about the trials and tribulations of his "second home", Mudtank and the Zircons he fossicks for. (I'm sure he'll mention what tasty Wine he brings too...)

ILC Mineral Group

As it is highly likely that July's class will be cancelled due to Covid. The next Mineral Group Class is *supposed* to be held on Wednesday 25th August, 2021. But it now seems that this may or may not be the case, due to Covid yet again. Noel will let the members know what is going on as he finds out.

The last class was held on the 26th of May and was well attended. Details of this meeting can be found in last month's newsletter.

It was previously decided that there was to be a full day Working Bee on a weekend day in July to clean up the mineral show cases at the front of the hall. A time for this will be decided, seeing as the club is currently closed due to Covid.

A note from Noel *"Something that you all know or have guessed. It is highly unlikely that our next meeting will be held in July and quite probable that it won't be held in August either. That means that I can't give you any information about the rest of the year until Gladys gives a date for lock-down end."*

All I can say to you is stay safe, stay well and use the lock-down time as best you can."



WAI 8: For those following the WAI each month. Last month we had WAI 8. The only clue given for WAI 8, is that, "it is a gemstone". There were a couple answers that were not consistent with the shape such as Garnet and Spinel. However, if you were to have said that the WAI 8 is a Zircon, you would have been correct!



WAI 9: On to the next WAI, to the left we have the new WAI9 for the month from Noel.

Once again, Noel has only given the Mineral Group only one hint for the WAI of the month. The hint for this month's WAI9 is....
"The shape is the give away."

The photo for WAI 9 looks pretty good, I wonder if this kind of photo would get a place in the end of year photo competition that members of the Mineral Group take part in. Members of the Mineral Group, have you found the perfect specimens to take photos of yet? Lockdown might be a good time to go "fossicking" around your house to find some :)

If you are interested in learning more about minerals in person, join the Mineral Class every fourth Wednesday of the month (covid pending), everyone can attend and it is definitely very interesting!

Fossicking/DIY Trips

The club didn't have any fossicking trips away last month. So, I've decided to talk more about the last trip we had in April 2021 to a private property near Tambar Springs/Coonabarabran. It will give new and existing members who haven't been on this trip a rough idea of what goes on.


For many, many years, ILC members have made their way to a private property near Tambar Springs for the annual fossick of Drusy Quartz, Stellerite and Heulandite. According to our Secretary, John, the club has been going there for 30 years – WOW! Generally, when you hear a club member say that they, “went on the club trip to Tambar”, this is the place/trip they are referring to. From Wollongong, it takes about 7 hours give or take, to Coonabarabran or Tambar Springs.

In the past, it was popular for members to have stayed at the pub in Tambar Springs and a few in Coonabarabran. The pub was closed on and off for a time since 2019 and now has new owners and has had some renovations done. In 2019, it was the first time we were able to stay on site, while a couple of our members stayed in



Figure 1 Tambar Springs Hotel 2018

Coonabarabran and made the 40-minute drive to the site. Once there, it took about 30 minutes to drive through the property to the fossicking site. For those who don't have a 4wd, it may be a good idea to talk to some people on the trip who are not staying on the property and see if you can jump in the back of their vehicle (if they still have their back seats haha).

IT'S HOT TONIGHT. 
THINK I'LL SLEEP WITH AN OPEN SWAG.



34 mosquitos liked your post

For those who stay onsite, it basically means “rough camping”. This means BYO everything, toilet included! Camping on the property, requires a tent or depending on your vehicle, a 4wd type camper trailer. Caravans are not suitable at all and a 4wd is a must!

Pieces of Stellerite and Heulandite are not as easy to come by and are found in particular locations on the property. However, due to past fossickers, there is a lot of Drusy to be found on the surface, in some cases it is just a case of turning rocks over, there are definitely still some nice pieces to be found like this. Otherwise, some good tools to bring along might include, a shovel to get your hole started, a pinch bar (optional), a geologist pick or similar, a chook scratcher, a brush to gently reveal the Drusy, newspaper or something to wrap up the specimens, a bucket, water, sunscreen, a UHF radio is a good idea and I would strongly recommend snake gaiters.





Figure 2. Dirty Drusy

Figure 3 shows you what some clean Drusy looks like, with some pieces it takes quite a bit of cleaning and some dirt is just stubborn and will unfortunately remain. If you would like to see your Drusy BLING, hold it in the Sun. It is a very beautiful site to see! It has a Mohs hardness of 7.

Figure 4 is an example of Stellerite. It is getting harder to find Stellerite that is in good condition. A lot of Stellerite that is on the surface has been damaged or has faded because it has been sitting in the Sun. If you would like to find a nice specimen, you will have to gently dig for it. It has a Mohs hardness of 4.5



Figure 4. Stellerite

While you're out that way, there are plenty of other things to do. Some of them include: The Crystal Kingdom Museum, it is located across the road from the caravan park in Coonabarabran. It is definitely a fantastic place to visit and has a beautiful display of exquisite specimens, some that you are able to purchase. I highly recommend it!

Coonabarabran is also very popular for those who are into Astrophotography, so if you are, don't forget your camera!

The Siding Springs Observatory is another great place to visit as is the Warrumbungle National Park. I have yet to visit the next place, but I hear the Sandstone Caves are worth a visit too!

Figure 2, shows a piece of Drusy that has come out of the ground. It is caked with dirt and the Drusy can't really be seen. Some Drusy you find on the surface can be partially clean, have Lichen growing on it, or still be caked with dirt, so much so, that you might miss it altogether. You won't really know what it looks like until you clean it and a lot of the time, cleaning occurs at home.



Figure 3. Clean Drusy

Heulandite is something else that can be found on the property, but not as easily as Drusy. Like Stellerite it is quite soft. It has a Mohs hardness of 3.5 – 4. Below is a photo of a very beautiful specimen that can be found in the Crystal Kingdom in Coonabarabran. I'm not sure if you can still find specimens like this on the property, but I'd sure like to find out!



Figure 5. Heulandite Specimen

Member's Works & Achievements



Joan, Greg,
Chris and Marie.
Concentration plus!
Thursday
Silverwork '21



Aira looking for
inspiration
for her next project.
Lynn working on her
1st Chainmaille '21
necklace



Aira
showing off her
"Crown Jewels" '21



A closeup of
Aira's
exquisite
chainmaille '21

Aira's "Crown Jewels" consist of handmade glass earrings made by Jennifer Bult. A wire wrapped Dichroic glass pendant by Veronica Baker and a bronze and sterling silver Chainmaille necklace made by Aira herself. Photos courtesy of Lynne and Aira – thanks! :)



Some of Aira's cute
creations for the club
table at the end of year
exhibition.



Whether you're a new or existing member and you're interested in learning silverwork, don't be shy, come and join other members at the club and learn something new, everyone is welcome! Or, if you are interested in learning to make some great things for the club table with Maureen and the gang, come and join them on Thursdays at 9am. For a list of when classes are on and when covid is not an issue, please click on or copy and paste the whole link below into the address bar of your browser:

<https://www.illawarralapidaryclub.com.au/activities/classes/>

Your Club needs your help!



Back in March, when we had the AGM, all positions were declared vacant. Unfortunately, not all of the positions declared vacant, were taken up again. Therefore, there are still some spots within the club that we would love members to volunteer for.

One specific spot we need to fill as a priority is a very important one, this is the role of **Grants Officer**. The role of the Grants Officer is to look for, respond to and write grant applications for funding for the ILC. Please consider volunteering for this role, your club would really appreciate it!

The following positions also currently require filling:

- Grants Officer (as mentioned above)
- Assistant Programme Secretary
- Assistant Competition Officer
- Membership Renewals Officer
- Assistant Library Officer

Please let us know if you can fill any of these positions, your help would be appreciated by your club!



Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc. 2021 Exhibition



Last month I mentioned this as well, but we are still in need of help for our upcoming Exhibition in November. We missed out on having one last year, so I am sure everyone is very excited and looking forward to our exhibition this year!

The Committee and other helpers have been working away in the background to make the exhibition go smoothly. This includes, covid-19 plans, advertising, communicating with dealers and a lot of other jobs and decisions, however, to be successful, the more people that volunteer to help out before, during and after, the more smoothly it will go. Even if you can help out for a short period of time, it would be greatly appreciated! There are all sorts of different jobs to do during the lead up to the exhibition and also during the days of the exhibition including the setup before it opens to the public, helping out on the day and also helping out when the exhibition is done and dusted.

If you are able to help out at a specific time on the weekend of the Exhibition, please put your name on the sheet on the **silverwork room doors**. If you are able to help out but not sure when, pop your name on the bottom of the sheet with your number so that you can be contacted if needed. As the club is currently closed due to covid, you can email the club or call a committee member and let us know that way.

If you are interested in setting up a showcase, let Co-ordinator Chris Hatton know, so that he can keep a spot for you.

Donations of rocks or items of lapidary are always welcome and should be dropped into the Club rooms (when it is open). Items for lucky door prizes and the kids' games are always appreciated.

Every Thursday (covid pending), Maureen will be working on jewellery and items for the Club table. If you can, come on in and lend a hand, your help is needed and very much appreciated.

For those wishing to enter the Competitions, it's a good time to get those projects underway. An entry form can be downloaded from the website and entries should be given to Eva. The following is the link for the form on the ILC website: <https://www.illawarralapidaryclub.com.au/forms/>

Guessing Competition Tickets can be purchased at the club. The cost will be \$2 each, or 3 for \$5. Please consider picking up a ticket book or two, to sell for the club (when the club is open).

The Winners will be drawn the weekend of the 6th/7th of November.

The Results will be on ILC's Facebook page. The prizes which were in last month's newsletter will also go up on the ILC's website and Facebook page.

Gemboree 2022 Mudgee

Dates: Fri, 15 Apr 2022 – Mon, 18 Apr 2022

Location: Australian Rural Education Centre (AREC)

The Gemboree in 2022 is something that the Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc. will be part of, that means if you (any member new or existing can put their hand up to participate) are interested in travelling to Mudgee around Easter time next year, you can be part of it too! Volunteers will also be needed a couple days before the show starts. A group from ILC went up to Mudgee to have a look at the showground where the Gemboree would be held, they reported back that there is PLENTY of space for traders and tailgaters inside and out and lots of parking spots too! Camping spots for the ILC will be close to the front gates to assist us with our task. It would be a good time to go, as next year, it is closest to us, Last year it was in Tas, 2023 it will be in QLD, 2024 it will be in SA, 2025 it will be in Victoria and 2026 it will be back in Tassie!

What is ILC going to be doing at the Gemboree 2022 you ask?

ILC is in charge of escorting people to their camping spots when they arrive.

On Sunday morning, the Men's Shed will be providing breakfast.

If you would like to volunteer and help out club out, please let us know, the more the merrier! Even if you are only interested in going overnight, book now to avoid missing out.

The following are excerpts from two of the Gemboree newsletters. I must say newsletter #6 seems to actually be one of the most popular newsletters I have received. I believe I received it a total of seven times from various people at the time of its publication :D

Issue #5

A REMINDER that ENTRY FORMS for all sections must be received by the Competition Committee by Saturday 5th February, 2022, together with a flat entry fee of \$5 per competitor. Entries from overseas competitors will be free. A stamped self addressed envelope must be sent with the entry form. Be sure to look at all conditions as some entries are also due to be posted for judging by Saturday 5th February, 2022. The competition form has all the sections which cover areas like - cabochon cuts, opal sections, carving/cameo, intaglio sections, scrimshaw, spheres, facet cuts, tumbled stones, polished faces, gem trees (photo below), novelty gemcraft, all sorts and varieties of jewellery, then various showcases for fossils, minerals, etc. with entrants competing for a myriad of trophies.

It will be great to meet people and fellow lapidarists in person and I hope you all make the effort in under a year's time to visit Mudgee on the Central Tablelands of New South Wales and its picturesque environment.

*Alan McRae, FAIHA – GEMBOREE 2022
e-newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer*

Issue #6

There will be a special GEMBOREE 2022 Mudgee Presentation Dinner which will be held on Saturday 16th April, 2022, at 6.30pm in the Small Pavilion on site. It is a three course meal at a cost of \$35.00 per person. A form appears on the back page of this newsletter. Your application needs to be in by the 12th February. After reading the full form and how to pay, if you have any questions please get in touch with Marcia Hill – Mobile 0477770441 or email her at snoopy39@bigpond.com.

With the passing of Ernst Holland the position of 2 External Trader Chairman is being taken over by Robert Porter of Bathurst. His phone is 0427 259617 and email is rallybeebird@gmail.com if you need to contact him.

*Alan McRae, FAIHA – GEMBOREE 2022
e-newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer*

Dates to Remember

Your Club	Other Clubs
<p>21st July: Cancelled due to covid 7 – 8pm: Business Meeting 8pm: Social Night</p> <p>28th July: Cancelled due to covid 6.30pm: Mineral Group</p> <p>18th August: Covid Pending 7 – 8pm: Business Meeting 8pm: Social Night</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>A “talk on Mud Tank and Zircons by our very own President, Chris! Don’t miss out!!</p> <p>25th August: Covid Pending 6.30pm: Mineral Group Class - DVD</p> <p>15^h September: Covid Pending 7 – 8pm: Business Meeting 8pm: Social Night - Auction</p> <p>22nd September: Covid Pending 6.30pm: Mineral Group</p> <p>6th – 7th November: Annual Exhibition, Dapto Ribbonwood Centre</p> <p>28th November: Open Day – Christmas Market 9am – 2pm</p>	<p>25th & 26th September: Gemkhana Hawkesbury District Agricultural Showgrounds 40 Racecourse Rd Clarendon (DIY trip)</p> <p>Competition entries via express post, to be received by Friday 20th August 2021 https://gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au/gemkhana/</p> <p>October 2nd – 3rd: Lower Clarence Arts and Crafts Association 54th Annual Open Jewellery, Woodwork and Patchwork/Quilting Exhibition They are open for entries if you are interested. https://ferrypark.net/</p> <p>16th & 17th October: Central Coast Crystal, Gem & Jewellery Show. Mingara Event Centre, Wyong Rd Tumby Umbi. Sat 9am to 5pm Sun 9am to 4pm.</p> <p>30th & Sun 31st October: Canberra Lapidary Club Gem Show Spring Show: Sat: 10am to 5pm Sun: 10am to 4pm</p> <p>For all dates, please check with the show’s organisers to ensure they are still going ahead. Covid may find some cancelled.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>For all DIY and Club trips, please add your name to the trip book or let David know via the club’s email address when each trip is coming up.</p>

Buy/Sell/Swap

Do you have anything to list in the buy/sell/swap section?
Please send us as email to have it included in the next newsletter!

How does it work?

If you are interested in advertising/buying something,
please email illawacq@illawarralapidaryclub.com.au
a photo (if possible) of the item you would like to buy/sell/swap with a
short description and the price if applicable.

Anyone interested in the item, will need to
email: illawacq@illawarralapidaryclub.com.au.
Your email will then be forwarded to the person advertising.

Your personal details will not be put in the newsletter.

Disclaimer: Buyers enter into private sales/swaps with sellers.
In the case of an issue arising no liability will be held by The Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc..
The buyer/seller are responsible for any portion of these transactions, claims, liability, damages, losses, costs, and any
expenses arising from or in any way connected with such right, claim or actions.

Hopefully, everyone is getting their newsletter via email, if not and you are reading a hard copy, please add the club's email address (see below) to your Address Book or Contacts. Also, if you have changed your email address, please let us know by sending an email to: illawacq@illawarralapidaryclub.com.au so you can continue to receive updates about events and our newsletter.

If you would like to submit articles, tips and tricks, step by step photos of what you've been working on, or anything lapidary related to the newsletter. Please send an email to illawacq@illawarralapidaryclub.com.au with the subject "newsletter submission". We would love to include it!



Have you seen the Illawarra Lapidary Club on Facebook yet? If you haven't, do a search for the Illawarra Lapidary Club or click/copy and paste the link below and check us out! <https://www.facebook.com/IllawarraLC>

6 year old me after finding
a cool rock on the ground:



Second weekend in isolation...
feeding the ducks.



May your rough always shine, Romina :)