



The Cutting Edge

Monthly Newsletter of the Ottawa Lapsmith and Mineral Club

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President's Message

Our 2025 show was sparsely attended in spite of a large advertising effort. We had 1910 visitors, down from 2144 in 2024 and 2290 in 2023. It could have been a perfect storm of beautiful weather, closed streets, closed bridges, poor parking at the sportsplex and three other mineral shows in town. At the Fish Pond, 185 bubbles of polished rocks were purchased. The Club Creations booth also did very well, more than double the revenue from last year.

Door prizes that were not picked up by their winners will be stored at the workshop on the glass cabinet in the meeting area. The two grand prizes will be in the locked cabinet. When the winners arrive to claim their prizes, supervisors please cross off the names from the list.

Planning for our November online auction has started. Club members are restricted to submit five auction lots and five "Buy It Now" lots. The cut off date for physical submissions is November 1.

Russ Black will trial a Faceters meeting every Thursday evening, 6-9 PM, from October 09-30. It is not a course, but Russ will provide instructions. The \$5 workshop day fee applies. Reserve a spot by e-mailing Russ at russblackatlarge@hotmail.com.

Robert Vogel will restart Tuesday lapidary 10 AM - 2 PM starting October 07.

The Christmas party will be December 13, 4:00 – 9:00 pm, at 380 Springfield Road in the Rockcliffe area.

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



GEM SHOW & SALE

SEPT. 20-21 SAT. 10 AM - 6 PM
SUN. 10 AM - 5 PM

WWW.OLMC.CA



Clockwise from top left: Rain Kazymierchyk and Pierre Burgoyne at Admissions; Vema Ho and Stéphane Jetté greet vendors during setup; Grand door prizes: labradorite and sterling pendant and matching earrings donated by JayBee Jewelry Design; Brazilian agate;; Door prizes donated by generous vendors; Young man observing microminerals under a microscope.





Clockwise from top left: Museum of Nature mineral display; Kat Schroeder takes a question on the Titan; Big fluorite slab from Terra Rock; Joy McDonnell at her table; Vicki Jasperse at Club Creations; Visitors learn flat lap technique



Augite

Augite also known as augurite is a common rock-forming pyroxene mineral with formula $(\text{Ca},\text{Na})(\text{Mg},\text{Fe},\text{Al},\text{Ti})(\text{Si},\text{Al})_2\text{O}_6$. The crystals are stubby monoclinic and prismatic, but they may also be needle-like and dendritic. It has a Mohs hardness of 5.5 to 6. Augite has two



Sample of augite; Photo Credit: Rob Lavinsky, iRocks.com – [CC-BY-SA-3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/), CC BY-SA 3.0

prominent cleavages, meeting at nearly 90-degree angles.

Augite is in the pyroxene group [formula $\text{XY}(\text{Si},\text{Al})_2\text{O}_6$], that has diopside and hedenbergite on the ends, but augite can contain much more aluminium, titanium, sodium and other elements.

The colour can be black, brown, greenish, or violet-brown. Thin sections are colorless to gray, often with a zoning pattern.

Augite is an essential mineral, used to classify igneous rocks high in magnesium (mafic). It also forms in relatively high-temperature metamorphic rocks such as mafic granulite and metamorphosed iron formations. It is found with associated minerals such as orthoclase, sanidine, labradorite, olivine, leucite, amphiboles, and other pyroxenes.

Occasionally, samples appear shiny, explaining the mineral's name given by Abraham Gottlob Werner in 1792, from the Greek word augites, meaning "brightness". However, ordinary specimens have a dull dark green, brown or black luster.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augite>

Province ready to build Ring of Fire access road

Ontario Indigenous Affairs Minister Greg Rickford [announced](#) on September 10, that the government is investing nearly \$62 million in Geraldton to rebuild segments of existing road that will become the eventual long road to the mineral-rich area known as the [Ring of Fire](#) located 500 kilometres north of Thunder Bay.

The road would connect the provincial highway to Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation, currently only reached by air or winter road.

Some environmental assessments have not finished. One draft assessment completed in June, says the road may endanger caribou moving through the region.



The Ring of Fire is an active claim area of around 8,000 square kilometres which contains large amounts of chromite, copper, nickel, platinum, and titanium.

Read more about Ontario's "[Critical Minerals Strategy 2022-2027](#)", that includes some colour-coded maps of exploration projects around the province.

Do-It-Yourself Mosaic

Mosaics are patterns or images made of small pieces of stone, glass or ceramic that are held in place by plaster or mortar, and covering most or all of a flat or curved surface. Some of the earliest mosaics were made of natural pebbles. Traditional mosaics are made of roughly cube-shaped stones or hand made coloured glass or enamel. Mosaics are not limited to ground cover; they can also be used to cover objects. Individual stepping stones are popular.

Practice. Prepare and sort the stones or tiles, and arrange them into the desired pattern or image. You could set up a temporary sand box on some plastic sheeting away to save the work of moving the stones multiple times.

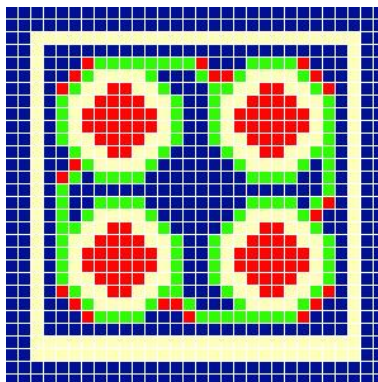
Prepare the ground. The mosaic should sit level with or slightly higher than the surrounding ground so that water does not collect on top of it. Dig out an area at least 30 cm larger than your mosaic on all sides to a depth of 15-20 cm (6-8") for drainage and edging. Put a layer of 15 cm (6") of gravel in the hole, then a layer of 2-3 cm (1 in") of stone dust. Pour dry concrete mix on top in the center, and use a piece of lumber to spread and level the mix to an even 5 cm (2") layer that extends 5 cm (2") beyond the mosaic edge on all sides.

Prepare the concrete (grout). One bag of concrete mix should be enough to create a mosaic about 3 meters in diameter. Use a garden sprayer or a hose with a fine-mist attachment, and lightly mist the concrete mix until its texture changes from a loose powder to a crumbly consistency, not runny.



Things You Will Need

- a pattern or image
- mosaic tiles or stones
- a shovel to dig out the area
- gravel for a paver base
- stone dust
- concrete mix
- a 2x4 piece of lumber (to level gravel and sand)
- a 4x4 piece of lumber (for steady tamping)
- a rubber mallet
- plastic tarp or sheeting
- a garden hose or water sprayer



Draw the mosaic. Measure and mark the mosaic lines. Tools might include two nails and string to draw arcs, or straight lumber for square lines.

Lay down the stones. Starting in the centre, use a garden spade or small shovel to dig a shallow hole in the concrete mix. Bury the bottom third of the stones. Pack the concrete around each stone to keep them in place. The joints between the stones should be tight together. When you are finished laying a small section, place a 4x4 across it and strike it with a rubber mallet to level the stones.

Bind the mosaic. When the mosaic is complete, lay an edging of pavers or bricks or similar barrier to hold the pattern together. Fill in large gaps between the stones with extra concrete mix. Then mist the mosaic to fully saturate the concrete beneath the stones, and cover it with a plastic tarp. Let it cure overnight.

Fill in the gaps. When the concrete and stones are dry, scatter topping mix or stone dust onto the stones, working on a small section at a time. Use a paint brush to spread the mix into the joints between stones. The more topping mix used, the harder the mosaic will set. If in a high-traffic walking area, fill the joints until the mix sits close to or flush with the tops of the stones to avoid a tripping hazard.

Seal the mosaic. Lightly mist the topping mix until it's fully saturated. Allow the mix to absorb the water, then let it cure for 30 to 60 minutes. Use a stiff-bristled brush to dress and shape the joints to your liking. Cover the mosaic with the plastic tarp to hold in moisture while it cures. For a harder cure, uncover the mosaic and mist it a few times over the course of a day or two. Full curing may take a couple of weeks, depending on the weather.

Final cleaning. When it's complete, buff the stones with a damp cloth to remove concrete residue.



From the Library

Gemstones bring a wonderful healing energy to reflexology and acupressure treatment. Each stone has different healing attributes, and some are better suited for certain purposes than others. However, as a basic principle, you can carry out any reflexology or acupressure treatment with any type of stone.

Nora Kircher
Gemstone Reflexology

Better Vision with Gold Dust

[Scientists at Brown University](#) injected gold nanoparticles into the retinas of laboratory mice with retinal disorders like macular degeneration, and found their vision was restored. The nanoparticles in heated by an infrared laser light stimulated the retinal bipolar and ganglion cells instead of the rods and cones. The researchers envision a possible prosthesis for people with retinal disorders, but they would need to wear a small laser device embedded in a pair of glasses or goggles.

This year's Ottawa-Gatineau [Geoheritage Day](#) was held September 27, with three in-person hosted sites: Cardinal Creek Karst in Orleans, Pinhey Sand Dunes in Nepean, and Westboro Beach in Ottawa. This year, the team at Carleton University created an [interactive map](#) showing all sites to help people visit on their own or virtually through the web site.



Care and Maintenance of Your Marbles

The news desk got a question “How do you polish antique marbles?”, and that led to the question “Should you polish marbles?” Here is a summary of an excellent article from [RockTumbler](#) that provides some answers.

Should You Polish Marbles?

Of course, marbles can be polished in a tumbler, though there are many other methods. Marbles that are used in play will get scratches and nicks from collisions. Some collectors prefer these imperfections that add some character and history. If the intention is to trade the marbles, then consider carefully the impact that polishing will

have on the market value. Even new marbles from a factory will have imperfections – small flat areas, roll marks, straw marks. Polishing will remove those telltale marks.

The Risky Process of Tumbling

Tumbling is a chaotic process. Instead of perfect sphere, you are likely to get another shape.

- Small pits and chips may smooth out into a flat spot.
- A glass marble with bubbles near the surface can result in more pits as the surface glass is worn away.
- Variations in hardness of the glass, especially ones with varying colour, can result in part of the marble wearing away faster than another part.
- Some types of glass chip easily, and it will just come out worse after tumbling.



Use of a vibratory tumbler will have less impact than a rotary tumbler, because the erosion action is more sliding and rubbing than crashing and colliding. It is less likely to create more chips in the material. A vibratory tumbler makes it easy to open the lid and make the critical examination of each marble to determine if the grinding and polishing phases are complete.

Phases of Grits and Polish (Vibratory Tumbler)

The first phase is a few hours in the tumbler using 150-22 silicon carbide grit with a small amount of water, and some soft filler material. It is recommended to use ceramic cylinders that are smaller than the marbles. This filler will cushion collisions between the marbles, while also aiding the tumbling action. Tumblers need a certain level of material to work properly, so if you end up taking marbles out, then replace them with more filler.

This **first stage** may take several hours or several days, but the longer it runs, the more likely flat spots will develop. Make sure to check the material regularly and often.

The **second stage** uses a clean tumbler bowl and 600 silicon carbide grit and a small amount of water. This stage may last twelve hours. Keep checking the progress.

The **third stage** uses a thoroughly cleaned tumbler bowl and aluminum oxide polish and a small amount of water. This step may last twelve to forty-eight hours. But watch! If the glass is not polishing well, you can try "burnishing".

Burnishing uses a clean tumbler bowl, shavings from a soap bar (recommended: Ivory brand or borax) about one half tablespoon per pound of rock material. Avoid soaps with added oils, abrasives, and deodorants. Add warm water, and an amount of filler material as needed. Tumble for 30-60 minutes.

To Deck or Not To Deck the Sales Booth

Do you decorate your table with holiday decor? Does it make a difference as a vendor or shopper? Our silversmith group shared their opinions during their meeting on 2022-11-16.

"I have battery-operated fairy lights draped in the front of the table. People like them. Sometimes people get snagged on them, which is a pain."



"I had antique books at one point, and people wanted to buy the books. Now I use wooden crates, a butter box and dynamite those. I've been offered money for them. 'No, they're not for sale. The rest of the stuff is, though.'"



"I had a table cloth, a nice table cloth, and I had people come up to buy the table cloth."

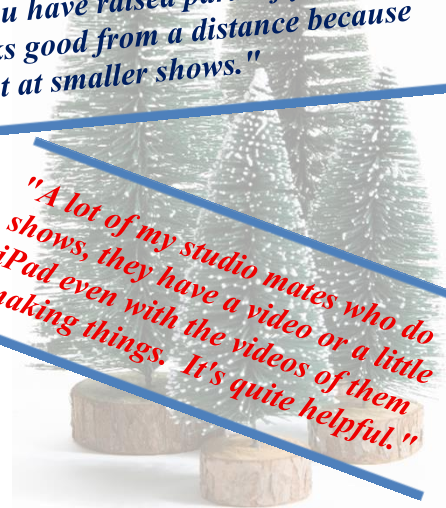
"I used to do it, but it did not make a difference. I had a display case with good lighting for the shows. People are too busy going through things to notice."



"As a shopper, I'm not into any of that. If I saw all Christmassy stuff, I would probably avoid that booth because I would think maybe they're selling x-mas stuff, which doesn't interest me."
"I always find if stuff is flat on a table, it doesn't look good. If you have raised parts of your booth, that always looks good from a distance because people will see it at smaller shows."

"If you have an attractive booth, so that the eye is caught by this attractive booth, then people will come to your booth. My booth was always totally black... and I had small Christmas lights all the way along the top shelf, and some silk poinsettias strategically placed in a corner here and there for that red Christmassy-type look. I think from a distance it was an attractive booth, and it attracted attention."

"A lot of my studio mates who do shows, they have a video or a little iPad even with the videos of them making things. It's quite helpful."



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For Sale: Mr. T Lawrow has a 360-pound jade boulder to sell or have cut. He can be contacted at tlawrow@gmail.com. Serious offers only, please.



2025 GEM STORM

54th Annual Gem & Mineral Show

OCT. 17 - FRI. 5pm - 9pm
OCT. 18 - SAT. 10am - 5pm
OCT. 19 - SUN. 10am - 5pm

EVENT CENTRE,
ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE
100 Portsmouth Ave., Kingston, ON

Show & Sale Featuring Riches from
the Earth & Much More

- Unique Jewellery
- Crystal Treasures
- Minerals, Gemstones
- Children's Mine
- Lapidary & Other Demonstrations
- Exotic Fossils
- Gemstone Carvings
- Jewellery Workshop
- Gemstone Identification
- Hourly Door Prizes

\$5 ADMISSION PER PERSON
Children Under 12 Free
with a paying adult

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Workshop Schedule

October 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Lapidary 5-9 pm (JGB)	2	3	4 Lapidary 10 am-4 pm (JM, EC)
5	6	7 Lapidary 10-2 pm (RV) Silversmiths 6:30-9 pm (DA)	8 Lapidary 5-9 pm (CG)	9 Faceting 6:30-9 pm (RB)	10	11 Lapidary 10 am-4 pm (CG, KD)
12	13 	14 Lapidary 10-2 pm (RV) Silversmiths 6:30-9 pm (JB)	15 Lapidary 5-9 pm (JGB)	16 Faceting 6:30-9 pm (RB)	17 Kingston Gem Storm Day 1	18 Lapidary 10 am-4 pm (SJ, JC)
19 Kingston Gem Storm Day 3	20	21 Lapidary 10-2 pm (RV) Silversmiths 6:30-9 pm (KF)	22 Lapidary 5-9 pm (DP)	23 Faceting 6:30-9 pm (RB)	24	25 Lapidary 10 am-4 pm (DF, NB)
26	27	28 Lapidary 10-2 pm (RV) Silversmiths 6:30-9 pm (DA)	29 Lapidary 5-9 pm (JGB)	30 Faceting 6:30-9 pm (RB)	31 	

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: _____