



● The LAPIDARIAN

● Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter Apr 2014, Vol. 3 Issue 4

REMINDERS

- General Meeting, **Thursday May 1st at 7pm**
- **Club Clean-Up – Saturday May 3, 2014 starting at 9am.** Help us get ready for the Art Studio Tour (May 10 & 11th). Please Note: the date given for the clean-up in the last newsletter was incorrect.
- Maple Ridge Elementary School Flea Market, **May 31st** – the Club will be participating. We will have a display and information about the Mine-Ores youth group. Please come out and help if you can.



UPCOMING CLUB SHOWS:

COURTENAY & PARKSVILLE GEM & MINERAL CLUBS; May 3 & 4, 2014, Saturday: 10:00 AM - 5:00PM, Sunday: 10:00 AM - 4:00PM; Courtenay Legion, downtown Courtenay corner of Cliffe and 3rd, 367 Cliffe Avenue, Courtenay, BC; Contact: Russ Ball, 250-703-3444 or [E mail](mailto:Russ.Ball@courtenaylegion.com)

CREATIVE JEWELLERS GUILD OF BC; Artisans Jewellery Show & Sale; May 11, 2014, 10:00AM - 3:30PM VanDusen New Visitors Centre - BMO Great Hall, For more information visit: [Creative Jewellers Guild of BC](http://www.creativejewellersguild.com) or info@creativejewellersguild.com

FIELD TRIPS:

Quartz Crystals: Just east of Bridal Falls (Power Station); Date & Time: May 4, 2014 (Sunday) 9:00 AM; Meeting Location: Rancher's Restaurant at Bridal Falls, 53560 Bridal Falls Road, Rosedale, BC; Material: Quartz Crystals (small clusters), Pyrite Equipment: Rock hammer, chisel, cracking hammer, digging tools, gloves, water-proof boots, warm clothing, packing material for crystals, carrying bag such as back pack Vehicle: Car (full tank of gas) Other: Strenuous 1-hour hike to the site. Bring food, water, back pack.

Be sure to check with the WagonMaster BEFORE you go!! WagonMaster: Trevor Christie 604-794-3668.

Rendezvous Field Trip: Armstrong, Date: May 16 to 19, 2014, Details: For more information visit: [Rendezvous](http://www.rendezvous.com)

Birthstone of the Month: Diamond

She who from April dates her years,
[Diamonds](#) shall wear, lest bitter tears
For vain repentance flow; this stone,
Emblem of innocence, is known.

We continue in exploring the birthstones poem that, according to Wikipedia, was first published in a pamphlet by Tiffany & Co. in 1870. While the author is listed as unknown, the poems are attributed to the Gregorian calendar which is also called the Western Calendar or the Christian calendar. A chart included on Wikipedia shows that [diamond](#) and [sapphire](#) were favoured for April in the 15-20th centuries. Diamond was favoured in the US in 2013 while diamond and [rock crystal](#) topped the list in Britain that year. The Hindu culture also favours diamond. Are they your best friend...



PROJECT

Check out the reasons to improve your wax carving skills, by Jewelry Making Daily (April 7, 2014). The second article is a great project for collaboration between lamp work and wire work, also from Jewelry Making Daily (April 4, 2014).

Wax On, Wax Off: Perfect Your Metal Jewelry Designs Before Touching the Metal with Wax Carving

We've learned broom casting, we've learned mokume gane. We're becoming quite the metalsmiths, aren't we? Time for another advanced metalsmithing lesson. Today, wax carving.



What Is Wax Carving?

Wax carving allows you to build customized metal designs from your imagination, without the forging and forming, sawing and soldering that are usually required to create three-dimensional metal jewelry. You can carve and create wax models of designs and ultimately cast pieces that would be very difficult or nearly impossible to create using traditional metal forging and fabrication techniques--and generally with less waste, which means less expense.

When your wax model is complete, you use it to make a mold, which can be used time and again for casting multiple pieces--or use it once. Wax models can be a step toward the production process but they can also be an arguably easier, less expensive way to create one complex design in metal, one time. But before all of that, you get to enjoy the journey of creating wax models, and it's a really fun, rewarding process. Here's why.

6 Reasons Why Wax Carving Is Really Cool

While watching Travis Ogden's video, [Carve a Wax Model for a Pendant](#) (or a ring or anything), I started thinking about what a cool,

forgiving (see #1), really interesting technique wax carving is. Here are the five main reasons why I think so.

1. You can design, experiment, play, and create with the inexpensive wax until you get your piece just right--cutting away, adding on if you make a mistake--continuing to perfect your design until you have a wax model of it that's just right for casting. Using molten wax to "build up" your wax is like painting, so you can apply dots, lines, or mounds of molten wax to your carved piece wherever you want them. While building up wax is primarily for repairs and fixing mistakes, it can also create unique textures and designs.



2. You know you can use carved wax models to create molds for making rings, pendants, earrings, bangles and cuffs, etc.-- but you can also create models for details and elements used as a part of other pieces.

For example, you can cast multiples of a focal piece and then add them to hand-forged pieces, such as rings and bezels. With this method, you can create versatile suites of jewelry using one element. Say you carve a flower or other design, make a mold of the carving, and then cast the mold with metal. The resulting cast pieces can then be used on earrings, a ring, a cuff, as a brooch, or as a pendant,

creating pieces that are both cast and hand forged. You can also carve secondary elements, like leaves or abstract shapes, each a little different, and then cast a lot of them and use several in each piece of jewelry but arranged differently. Any little things you use over and over in your designs are great candidates for casting that can be used to help you build a cohesive jewelry collection.

3. Another versatile and handy thing about wax carving and creating your own molds is that you can make the same piece in multiple metals--gold, sterling silver, fine silver, etc., and even alternative metals like brass, bronze, and copper.

4. If you're one of those people who is always looking for *something*--a piece of jewelry, a particular type and style of clasp or other finding, a customized component, or a just-right something-or-other for jewelry making--that you just can't find, consider casting. You can easily and inexpensively carve and build the piece you imagine and then use that piece to create a mold, which you can use to cast those customized pieces you can't seem to locate.

5. Wax carving is really, fabulously messy, especially with a flex shaft, creating an opportunity for wild abandon. Wild abandon is a great thing once in awhile! Aren't all the most fun things kind of messy?

6. Sure, you can use a flex shaft to carve and perfect your wax model, as Travis shows in the video, and you'll probably want to, at least for the heavy-duty work at the beginning of a piece. But if you're a little old fashioned like me, you will enjoy the ability to carve the wax using hand-carving tools the way the technique was originally done (which he also covers). Any time I have the opportunity to learn to do something the "old school" way, I take it! There's a really satisfying, craftsman feel to using small blades, files, and picks to whittle your imagination out of a block of wax. If there's a little bit of Michelangelo in you, too, you'll enjoy this technique. Travis covers the tools you can use (and the ones you probably shouldn't use) to carve wax.





In the video, Travis covers types and properties of carving and injection waxes, the tools used to carve wax, and how to carve wax models, as well as how to repair and refine your models, how to prepare and use them to make molds, and how to make rubber molds and investment molds for casting. You'll also see what to do once you have molds and learn about a process called lost-wax casting and other important parts of the casting process, such as porosity, metal thickness considerations, and how to "carve for illusion." If you enjoy melting and recycling your own metals like I do, this is a logical next step in your metalsmithing education, and I'm kind of amazed at how much information Travis shares in less than two hours.

So if you're ready to try something new and expand your mental metal tool box, wax carving is a fun technique to learn! Get Travis Ogden's new video tutorial, [Flex Shaft Essentials: Carve a Wax Model for a Pendant](#) and see what a versatile and fun technique wax carving can be. Soon you'll be well on your way to casting your own jewelry designs.

Jammy

Show Off Favorite Lampwork Glass Beads With This Wire Chain Design

When the weather (finally) starts getting warmer, like it (finally) is now, I switch into my "summer uniform" of a skirt, a T-shirt, and sandals. Such a simple wardrobe leaves lots of room for fun accessories, and I especially love wearing fun necklaces this time of year.

Some jewelry making friends and I are always talking about the fact that we never wear our beloved lampwork glass beads, and last year I got the big idea to (finally) make something with my beloved collection, so that I could wear them and enjoy them. They're also fun conversation starters and make an interesting, eclectic piece of jewelry when combined. So I whipped up a simple necklace with the glass beads on wrapped wire with short lengths of chain in between.

Yeah, that didn't work at all. All those beads together were kind of heavy--too heavy for the simple chain-and-jump-ring contraption I devised for them. Granted, it was a last-minute idea just a few hours before an event I wanted to wear the necklace to, so I didn't put enough thought into it. But since then, I've reconsidered, thanks to a project by Cassie Donlen. Cassie uses sturdy 12-gauge wire to make simple loops for her necklace, which provides the glass beads the support they need. Why didn't I think of that? The larger-gauge wire fits the larger mandrel-sized holes in lampwork beads, too.



Here's the lampwork-bead-and-stamped-wire-swirl segments, which you can combine with chain or wire swirls of your choice to create your own necklace, just in time to show off your lampwork glass beads this year (finally). The rest of Cassie's necklace is made up of shiny, brightly polished square wire spirals (love square wire!) alternated with the lampwork bead segments.

Note: The lampwork swirl segments could easily stand alone, too, two as earrings, one on a chain by itself as a pendant, or even in a bracelet. Either way, your lampwork beads will get the attention they deserve!

Materials (per link):

4" of 12-gauge fine silver (or dead-soft sterling) wire per link

3 5mm x 8mm lampwork beads with a 3/32" hole per link

flush cutters

round-nose pliers

bracelet-bending pliers

fine-point marker

2-hole screw punch or drill of your choice

swirl or other steel stamp

brass or ball-peen hammer

steel bench block

liver of sulfur

fine steel wool pad

Pro-Polish pads

Steps:



Round-nose pliers to make a large loop on one end of the wire.



Place the loop on a steel bench block and flatten just the looped end with a ball-peen hammer. It needs to be pretty flat on the loop's outer edge so you can punch a hole there. Then, use a screw punch to punch the wire round in the center so that the lampwork beads can slide on it.



Warning: The loop tends to gather an open space at the tip after it has been flattened. Use bracelet-bending pliers to push the loop ends closer together. Don't push too firmly, or you'll cause the wire to bend and break.



the loop back on the bench block and use a brass or ball-peen hammer and a swirl design stamp to make impressions on both sides of the loop. This helps to further flatten the loop, making more room for the punched hole.



add three lampwork beads and use round-nose pliers to make a loop of the same size in the opposite direction--as the first loop on the other end of the wire.



use a hammer to flatten the loop. Let the lampwork beads section hang off the end of the bench block so that only the loop is on the block. This allows it to be properly flattened. Hold back the beads with your thumb to protect them from being chipped by the hammer--be careful not to hit your thumb, either!



use the swirl design stamp to make swirl patterns on both sides of that loop. To protect the beads, let them remain hanging off the end of the bench block.



use a fine-tip marker, make a mark on the outer edges of both loops where the holes were punched.



screw punch (or drill of your choice) to make a hole where the marks were. It's important to eyeball the spot before screwing down the screw to determine if there is enough space around the screw to support the hole on all sides.



After you've made all of your beaded links, you can enhance the stamped designs by applying a patina with liver of sulfur. Use fine steel wool to polish the patina off the high areas. You can also polish the links with Pro-Polish pads or by placing them in a tumbler with stainless steel shot for an extra shiny finish.

Jammy

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