



The LAPIDARIAN

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter

August 2013, Vol.2, Issue 8

BACK TO SCHOOL... how about back to the Lapidary Club?

For those of you who have taken a summer vacation, it's time to come back to the Club. The kids will be back in school, everyone will be back into their regular routines so make sure that you include time for working on your favourite projects in your schedule.



The first thing to mark on your calendar is the **Welcome Back Friday BBQ on September 6th**. The cost will be a Special \$2 per person for a burger, chips and drink and the members of the executive will be contributing salads and dessert to complement the regular menu. Hope to see you all there!

REMINDERS



- Next General Meeting is Thursday **September 5**, 2013 at 7pm
- 2014 MRLC Rock & Gem Show Meeting Wednesday **September 11**, 2013 at 7pm. Everyone is welcome!
- Fraser Valley Rock & Gem Club *Annual Rock & Gem Show* September 21 & 22, 2013, Saturday & Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm Old Age Pensioners Hall, 3015 273 Street, Aldergrove, BC, Demonstrations, Displays, Dealers, Admission by donation. Contact: Rozalia Brown, 604-794-7296 or [E mail](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The Fall Library Display starts on October 1, 2013 and runs to October 31, 2013. As most of you know, this is an opportunity to showcase our Club in a community setting. We usually have 4 display sections adjacent to the check-out desk in the Maple Ridge Public Library – a very visible location that everyone has to walk past. If you would like to display your work you must bring it to the Club by Friday, September 27 at 8:30pm. Ken R usually helps to organize and set up the display at the Library. If you have some time to help Ken with set up at the Library on October 1st, please contact Ken. Thanks Ken for all your work on this now and in the past. Thank you also to members who share their work and help to set up and take down the display.



Here are some upcoming field trips. As always, check the BC Lapidary Society website for more information:

[http:// www.lapidary.bc.ca/trips.html](http://www.lapidary.bc.ca/trips.html)

- **Field Trip: Garnets** - Harrison Lake, September 8, 2013 (Sunday) 9:00 AM. Meet at the Happy Prospector, 3005 Hot Springs Road, Agassiz, BC. Bring a rock hammer, bucket, chisel, sledge hammer, digging tools, gloves. Car (full tank of gas), four wheel drive & high clearance vehicle required. Bring food, water, back pack, insect repellent. Be sure to check with the WagonMaster BEFORE you go!! Cam Bacon 604-854-1711.
- **Field Trip: Crinoid Fossils** - Chilliwack Area, October 6, 2013 (Sunday), 9:00 AM. Meet at Burger King, Cottonwood Mall, Chilliwack. Bring a rock hammer, bucket, pry bar, digging tools, waterproof boots to wade the creek, gloves. Car (full tank of gas). Bring food, water, back pack, insect repellent. Be sure to check with the WagonMaster BEFORE you go!! Bob and De Morgan 604-599-6938

How well do you know our local area?

Last month's photo also features a river, but which one? It's a little hazy due to early morning fog.

This hazy morning view is of the Stave River, north of the Lougheed Highway, looking northeast.



MRLC members - Do you have summer photos of your rock hounding (or rock candy hunting) trip that you'd like to share? Please send a jpeg or tiff to the Club email and your photo may be highlighted in the newsletter.

Birthstone of the Month: Ruby

Wear a [sardonyx](#) or for thee,
No conjugal felicity;
The August-born without this stone,
'Tis said, must live unloved and lone.

According to Wikipedia the poem above 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 in the 15th-20th century the August stone was [sardonyx](#), [carnelian](#), [moonstone](#), [topaz](#). Britain includes peridot with sardonyx in 2013 while the Hindu culture lists ruby as the stone of choice. Which of these beautiful stones do you wear as your birthstone?



Photo from: uwaterloo.ca

PROJECT

This month's project from Jewelry Making Daily (August 16 2013) looks at soldering versus fusing metals. Do you have a preference or do you use both techniques?

Soldering vs. Fusing: Learn the Pros and Cons in Jewelry Making and When to Do Which

Working with a lot of copper wire last weekend, I found myself thinking about the difference between soldering and fusing. I prefer the look of fused wires, the organic "melty" look that fine silver wire can get from the torch (but not so melty that it actually melts up into a ball, oops)--and it's hard to achieve that same look with copper or brass wire, which need to be soldered. Here's a great look back at some differences between soldering and fusing--all using a micro torch. --*Tammy*

Soldering vs. Fusing: Learn the Pros and Cons in Jewelry Making and When to Do Which

by Kate Richbourg

To solder or fuse, that's the question! Literally. It's a question that my students ask quite often. Since fusing and soldering are high on my list of go-to metalsmithing techniques, I want to share some of my observations with you and discuss the differences and the merits of each method.

Soldering involves joining metal using an additional metal alloy called solder. A small bit of solder is placed on the join and heated using a torch. As the solder melts and then cools, the metal is connected at the join to form a solid bond. Copper (even though it is pure), sterling silver, brass, bronze and gold filled are soldered in this way. However, heating these metals forms a layer of cupric oxide, known as firescale, on the surface. This needs to be removed with an acidic solution (called pickle) or by filing and sanding before additional soldering can be done on the piece. This is time consuming but necessary for soldering.

Fusing is a little different. This technique requires the use of pure metals, pure or "fine" silver and 24Kt gold, not alloys. No solder is needed to join (fuse) these two metals to themselves. This time the torch is used to quickly melt the metal, and it joins (fuses) as it cools. Since the metals are pure and contain no copper (the culprit of firescale), there is no discoloration and the metal is as shiny as it was before it was heated with the torch. No pesky pickling is required.

Now let's compare fused and soldered pieces to see how they differ.



This is fused chain. Fine silver is great for making chain, as it is soft and easy to shape. After fusing a ring, the metal seam disappears, so no filing is required. Work can be done rapidly as you don't have to stop and clean your piece before proceeding to the next step. And after the finished piece spends 20 minutes or so in a tumbler, it's shiny and becomes work hardened.



One drawback is getting fine silver to fuse without leaving a tiny lump at the join. Molten metal flows and follows the heat of the torch, so sometimes if the flame lingers in one place, the molten metal can pool at that spot and cause the lump.

Now check out these soldered rings, below. Since they are made of sterling silver, copper and brass, they cannot be fused. If you want to work with metals other than fine silver and pure gold, soldering is required.



This copper ring is ready to solder. The copper solder (this kind already contains flux, so extra flux is not needed) is placed under the join, the piece is heated with the torch . . .

. . . and the solder flows into the join, creating the bond. At this point the seam will still be visible and needs to be filed away. Use a jewelry file or pull out your Dremel to remove the seam.

Next, let's look at a couple of pieces that I fabricated with fine silver and soldered rings.



Check out the fine silver component. See how all of the links are sitting flush together? In order to have a successful fuse, the joins must be flush.



Now here is the piece post fuse. You can really see the melted joins. It's a cool, organic look, but not as clean as the soldered version.



You can see the rings with copper wire solder set and ready to go . . .



. . . and the post soldered version with the rings intact and sturdy joins.

Both the soldered copper and the fused fine silver pieces look great; one is organic (fused fine silver) and one has cleaner lines (soldered copper). In the comparison below, you can see how they look after hammering. These are ready to incorporate into a piece of jewelry.



So, let's sum up. Fusing is best used for making rings and chain. Components can be made with it, but remember that you'll get a "melted" look where the pieces connect together. Fusing only works on pure metals and has the advantage of being firescale free. It should be work hardened in a tumbler to add strength.

Soldering is used to fabricate all types of metal components. You'll need to apply solder and flux before soldering, and after it spends time under the torch, you'll need to pickle (or file and sand) the piece to remove the firescale. The resulting pieces have clean lines and (hopefully) no melted metal.

I hope you'll enjoy experimenting with fusing and soldering as much as I do. Both methods come in handy and produce great jewelry components.

--Kate

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