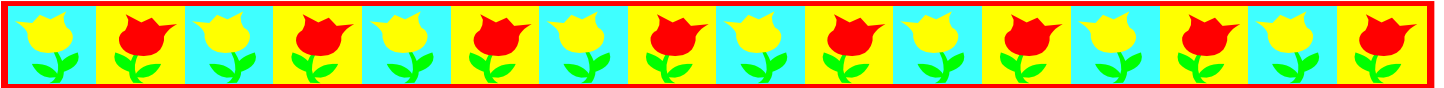




The LAPIDARIAN

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter March 2014, Vol. 3, Issue 3



REMINDERS

- **General Meeting** is Thursday **April 3, 2014** at **7:00 pm** – Speaker Alan Tracy
- **Grab bag filling work bee: Friday, April 4, 2014** at **6:00 pm** at the Club – we still need more bags filled for the BC Gem Show
- **BC Gem Show, April 11-13** – please sign up at the Club to help with Grab Bags and smash rocks and to help set-up on **April 10** and take down **April 13**
- **Club clean-up** Saturday May 9 starting at **9:00 am** – help us get ready for the Art Studio Tour
- **BC Gem Show Raffle Tickets** – There's still time to buy! Tickets are \$2 *ea* and more details are available at: <http://www.lapidary.bc.ca/raffle.html>. Tickets will be available at the Show.



Upcoming Club Shows:

BC Gem Show, April 11, 12 & 13, 2014 - Petrified - Locked In Time. Many Club Displays, Demonstrations Grab Bags, Children's Creative Workshop, Gold Panning and Door Prizes. Hours: Friday: 10:00am - 8:00pm, Saturday: 10:00am - 6:00pm, Sunday: 10:00am - 5:00pm. Admission: Adults - \$6.00, Students (6 - 17) - \$2.00, under 6 (accompanied by an adult) – Free; 3 Day Pass - \$12.00. Tickets are available at the door. Where: Ag-Rec Building, Central Fraser Valley Fairgrounds, 32470 Haida Drive, Abbotsford, BC.



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: Nickel Silicate – Yale; Sunday April 27, 2014, meet at 9:00 am at Rancher's Restaurant, 53560 Bridal Falls Road, Rosedale, BC. Equipment: Rock hammer, bucket, digging tools, gloves, water-proof boots and warm clothing; accessible by car (full tank of gas); bring food, water, back pack. Check with the WagonMaster BEFORE you go. WagonMaster: Bob & De Morgan 604-599-6938.

Birthstone of the Month: Aquamarine or Heliotrope

Who in this world of ours their eyes
In March first open shall be wise,
In days of peril firm and brave,
And wear a [bloodstone](#) to their grave.

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 [heliotrope](#) (also known as bloodstone) and [jasper](#) were the stones of choice in for March in the 15th-20th centuries. Both [heliotrope](#), [aquamarine](#) were the choice for the US and Britain in 2013. Hindu culture is listed as preferring Gold [Siva-linga](#).



PROJECT/INFORMATION

This project from Jewelry Making Daily (March 21, 2014) provides a great way to use opened and dried clay.

Thrifty Metal Clay: Make a Hollow Textured Metal Clay Bead Using Metal Clay Slip

I was thrilled when I first discovered that dried metal clay could be reconstituted into metal clay paste or slip, especially since I'd just found a whole, brand new, but opened and dried-up package of silver metal clay in my studio. Here's a lovely project from our friends at *Metal Clay Artist Magazine* that allows you to be thrifty and make the most of your metal clay leftovers as slip. The application of slip on clay and the texturing involved when building it give the finished piece the look of solid modeled clay--without the expense and weight that would involve. Wonderful! Hope you enjoy it.

Textured Metal Clay Bead

by Joy Funnell, Managing Editor of *Metal Clay Artist Magazine*

Fall in love with this simple project for a hollow bead that only looks like it is made from a lot of metal clay!

Materials:

silver metal clay
silver metal clay paste or slip
cork clay or wood clay
paint brush
cocktail stick or straw
hot plate
straw, hole and shape cutters
hairdryer (optional)
metal clay rolling, cutting, and shaping tools of your choice

Tips, before you begin:

- This project is good for using up paste, which is made from scrap pieces and filings, as you want a textured surface. So it does not matter if it has any small lumps in it.
- Adding the paste with thick "splodges" in places will increase the texture.
- When using paste over cork clay, it will take longer to dry than normal, so make sure you dry it well before firing.
- If you want to cut several shapes out all at once when you roll out the clay, use a fresh wet baby wipe to cover the shapes and keep them from drying out while you work.
- If your holes are wider than the end of the head pin, use a decorative bead on each end for a better fit.



Photos by Joy Funnell.

Steps:



1. Make a shape using cork clay (or wood clay) and put a cocktail stick into it while still wet so the shape is easy to handle. Dry thoroughly. Cork clay is best left to dry naturally for at least 48 hours. For this project, I made a heart shape.



2. Paint on the first coat of silver paste thickly, making sure you leave a hole at the top and bottom of the bead. Dry. If you use a hairdryer for about 5 minutes and then finish drying over a hot plate, you can get a reticulated effect on the surface as the top skin dries faster than the paste underneath. Try varying the time using the hairdryer to see what different effects you can get.



3. Repeat for four or five thick coats until you have at least 1mm thickness and dry thoroughly. Note: You can make metal clay paste by adding your unfired filings and dried bits to a small container, adding a few drops of water, and mixing. Add more water until the paste is the consistency that you like. Sometimes large dried chunks of metal clay need to soak to break down. (Editor's tip: You can also grind down large dried chunks using a mortar and pestle.)



4. Roll out silver metal clay to .75mm thick (3 cards thick). Cut two shapes to go over the bead holes and another shape for decoration if you want.

5. Using a straw or a hole cutter, cut a smaller hole out of the center of the bead hole covers. You could texture the shapes when you roll the clay out or use something to add texture afterwards.



6. Add the first bead cover on the surface of the bead where you are going to place the circle using a little water and also some syringe clay if desired. Then remove the cocktail stick and repeat on the other side of the bead for the second one. I used a ball-headed burnisher on the circles while still wet to decorate them.



7. Add the decorative shape if desired. I used a cocktail stick to add lines to the heart decoration and made a small depression with the ball-headed burnisher where I want to add a stone later.

8. Dry thoroughly.



9. Optional: To set a fireable stone (I used a 3mm lab-grown ruby), extrude a small amount of syringe clay into the recess made earlier and gently press the stone into it, allowing the clay to rise a bit around the stone and create a bezel. Dry.



10. Refine your piece. Make sure you have no sharp edges anywhere and that you are completely happy with it before firing.

11. Fire according to the manufacturer's instructions of your particular clay (the cork or wood clay inside will burn away); then polish. Add patina using liver of sulphur to bring up the texture on the surface and then polish the bead back to a nice shine, so it is just dark in the recesses.

12. Ball up a length of round fine silver wire using a torch (I used 1.5mm diameter wire) to make a headpin (or use a commercial headpin) and make a loop to serve as your pendant's bail.

13. Add a chain and sit back and admire your work.

Thanks to *Metal Clay Artist Magazine* and Joy Funnell for this pretty, versatile, thrifty project!



Alternative design: Make a ball to hang directly on a chain like a slide bead.

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club

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