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The LAPIDARIAN

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter November 2013, Vol.2, Issue 11

November



REMINDERS

- The Club will be open Friday afternoon's from Noon – 6-pm for members who want a little extra time to finish Christmas projects
- Christmas Craft Workshop on Saturday **December 7th**, 2013 at 9:30-11:30 am
- Next General Meeting is Thursday **January 9th**, 2013 at 7pm



Upcoming Club Shows: No Shows are scheduled in December



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)

No Field Trips are scheduled in December

2014 BCLS Calendars are on sale now for \$10 each. For more details, visit the BCLS website at: www.lapidary.ca

Birthstone of the Month: Topaz

Who first comes to this world below
With drear November's fog and snow,
Should prize the [topaz](#)'s amber hue,
Emblem of friends and lovers true.

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 November stone was [topaz](#) and [pearl](#). In the US opal and [topaz](#) and [citrine](#) are now the choice. Britain follows the US preference in 2013 while the Hindu culture lists [cat's-eye](#) as the stone of choice. Do you wear other colors of topaz as well as amber?



PROJECT

This month's first project from Jewelry Making Daily (November 15, 2013) walks us through 2 ways to make a pin catch. The second project, also from Jewelry Making Daily (October 16, 2013) provides an interesting ring project

Silver Jewelry Making Details: Two Ways to Make a Pin Catch for a Brooch

I'm a member of several jewelry-making groups on Facebook, and many times in the past couple of weeks, I've seen someone ask how to make a pin back for a brooch. I love it when I can answer someone's jewelry-making question or dilemma with a project from *Jewelry Making Daily*! And since brooches seem to be high on some folks' to-do lists lately, I thought I'd share a couple of ways to make brooch pin backs again, just in case you missed it.

The terminology can get a little confusing sometimes--pin backs for brooches, pin backs for pins. No matter what you call them, pins or brooches, there are two parts that help you wear them: the pin stem and the catch that holds it.



Tammy Jones
is the editor of
Jewelry Making Daily.

Remember, there are two important points to consider when you're making a pin back for a brooch. First, be sure to place it in the upper half of the piece for balance and support, so it won't fall forward when it's being worn. And two, while you're back there, solder on a simple hidden bail, too, so that every brooch/pin can also be worn as a pendant. Jewelry that does double duty is a wonderful thing!

Here are two quick tutorials for making pin backs, the first from *Silversmithing for Jewelry Makers* by Elizabeth Bone.



**Fold Formed Bronze Brooch
by Helen Driggs**

Materials

12-gauge (2.0mm o/d) sterling silver tube
18-gauge (1.0mm) round sterling silver wire
20-gauge (0.8mm) round stainless-steel wire
flat-nose, snipe-nose, and parallel pliers
hard and medium silver solder
torch/soldering setup
flux
pickle
tube cutter
small silver jump ring
hand file, cut 2
piercing saw
emery board

Steps



1. Using a tube cutter and piercing saw, cut a short length of 12-gauge (2.0mm) tube. Holding the tube end-to-end in parallel pliers, file a small flat area along the length of the tube.

2. Clean, degrease, and flux the reverse side of your brooch. Place the tube flat side down and place small pieces of hard solder in position. Solder the tube to the brooch.



3. To form the catch, cut a length of 18-gauge (1.0mm) round silver wire and file one end flat. To give a larger surface area to attach the wire to the brooch, solder a very small jump ring to the filed end using hard silver solder. Check and mark the position for the catch on the reverse of the brooch, then solder the jump ring and wire in place using medium silver solder.

4. After pickling, use parallel pliers to twist

the length of wire to work harden it.



5. Cut the wire, leaving it long enough to form into a catch, and file the end. Use round-nose pliers to curl it down and create the catch.



6. Use flat-nosed pliers to make a 90-degree bend in a length of 20-gauge (0.8mm) round stainless-steel wire. Place the short end through the tube; then, using the flat-nose pliers, bend it twice to form a triangle and bend the end of the wire down toward the back of the brooch causing the pin to lift up. Cut the pin to length so that there is enough wire to hold the pin securely in the catch. File the end of the pin to a point using a hand file and then sand it smooth.



Lexi's Top 10+ Tool and Gift List for Jewelry Makers

What is your favorite jewelry-making tool? I love my various hammers and metal cutters/shears, but my go-to "tool" lately has to be steel wool. Like a really good makeup, steel wool can reveal or conceal, prepare and finish, highlight features. It cleans metal before enameling and it finishes metal after cutting and forming. Plus a pinch of steel wool in a very green pot of pickle will facilitate copper plating. I find myself reaching for steel wool more often than any other single tool in my studio.

Of course, if I had the studio that our friend Lexi has, I'd probably never be able to pick a favorite. With every hand- and machine-finishing tool known to man, a literal wall full of Fretz hammers, and dozens of other cool jewelry-making tools and supplies, her studio is a jewelry maker's dream come true. So what are *her* favorites?

Tammy Jones
is the editor of
Jewelry Making Daily

Lexi's Top 10+ Jewelry Tool and Gift List for Jewelry Makers

By Lexi Erickson

Here in the Rocky Mountains, we've just had our first snow. That means it's time to start thinking about the upcoming gift-giving season, so I sat down last week and started thinking of tools I have that have changed my life as a jewelry artist. What surprised me was that "tools" are not always the actual physical hard, metal tools we all lust over. Tools can be books and DVDs, too, anything that ignites our imagination and creativity. I thought of the things that have impacted me and worked best for me, so here's my list of my Top 10 Jewelry Tools . . . plus a few more, because I couldn't limit myself to 10!

1. Absolutely the best gift you can get or give for jewelry making is a yearly [subscription to Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artistmagazine](#). LJJA is definitely a "tool." I've been reading *Lapidary Journal* all my life, since I was a wee, little kid, and I grew up to be a jewelry artist who loves stones. Never underestimate the power of the printed word to inspire, teach, and create dreams. Each issue is packed with photos, projects, and trends to ignite your creative abilities. Subscribe today so you won't miss my January/February project, which brings out my sparkly (and line-dancing) side!



Photo by Jim Lawson.



Photo by Jim Lawson.

2 and 3. Because I love making jewelry, I would place a new hand tool (or seven or eight) very high on my list. Since you already own [my DVD Artisan Bails](#) (don't you?), you need tools to help you bend metal sheet and heavy wire for the bails.

I highly recommend [Wubbers bail-making pliers](#) for moving metal. I always thought Wubbers were just for wire wrappers and chain maille, but was I wrong! I use mine for bending sterling and copper sheet all the time, and I get consistent results for every bail I make. You won't ever regret the purchase of Wubbers!

4. Bracelets are HOT! So in order to rationalize my enormous collection of fabulous Bill Fretz hammers, I ordered all of his DVDs. I sat down one rainy Saturday afternoon with a bowl of lemon and lime Jelly Bellies and my favorite #1 Fretz hammer for inspiration, and watched [Basic Jewelry Hammering and Forming](#) for three hours straight.

Then I spent the next nine hours in my studio making cuff bracelets. (Whoops! Now everyone knows what I'm giving for Christmas.) So if you aren't on my list, get all his videos and start making your own holiday gifts. And along with this, comes another favorite jewelry-making tool. . . .

5. . . . Fretz hammers! I teach metal jewelry making, and I let my students use my tools . . . except for my [Fretz hammers](#). Is it fair to say I'm *obsessed* with them? Uh, probably. I have my favorites. But I have to say, the #1 hammer is my favorite for gently planishing and creating an elegant texture. My second favorite is the #14 sharp texturing hammer . . . no, it's the #413, which gives me the texture on flat wire I love so much . . . no wait, I love the #403 because it leaves such pretty hammer marks . . . nooo, the raw silk hammer is my true love. . . . Oh, just go get your own, and let me know your favorite 'cause I'm not sharing mine!

6. I haven't gotten a preview copy of this book yet (hint, hint), but I love love, *love* textures and color on metal. So on my Christmas list is the new [Patina: 300 Surface Effects for Jewelers and Metalsmiths](#). OOH I want this really BAD! Even if just 299 of them work for me, I can't wait to read it. You know how much I love texture, and "texture is life"--so the more texture and color I can add to my jewelry, the happier I am. Oh, please Santa, I've been verrrry good!



Photo by Jim Lawson.



7. Well, this list can't be complete without some mention of my favorite technique, soldering. Great stocking stuffers would be any of my soldering DVDs (shameless promotion here). To have my entire written series upon which the DVDs are based, and everything in the world you would ever possibly want to know about soldering, plus articles on all types of torches and techniques and 10 projects (wow!), tell Santa you want the new [Everyone's Guide to How to Solder Jewelry](#). What a deal, its only \$14.99, so get two--one for reading in bed and one for the studio.

(See below and [visit the blog](#) for the rest of the top 10+ tool and gift picks for jewelry makers.)

You know my faves now, so I hope they will help you and excite your creativity. Of course, your best tool is your own creativity, but these choices will certainly expand your creative ideas and push your limits. Have fun!

Lexi

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