



# ● The LAPIDARIAN

- Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter September 2014, Vol. 3 Issue 6

## REMINDERS:

- Welcome Back BBQ and General Meeting, **Friday, September 5 at 6 pm.**  
The club will serve hot dogs and hamburgers, a drink and chips for the usual \$5.00. Members are also encouraged to bring a salad and/or dessert to share. There will be a very short meeting to bring members up to date with club activities. Note that there is **no General Meeting** on Thursday September 04.
- Showcase Display in the Maple Ridge Library – October 1 – 31  
Please contact Ken Rimmer if you would like to participate. Ken will collect display items at the club if you cannot meet him at the library when he sets up the cases. This is a regular club activity that takes place each year. The display items will be returned to the club early in November.
- Culture Days Open House – September 27 – more information to follow
- Don't forget that BC Rockhounder Magazine is online. Have you checked it out yet?  
<http://bcrockhounder.wordpress.com/category/field-trips-articles/>



## ANNOUNCEMENT:

Long time former member Eileen Perry passed away on July 13, 2014 at the age of 105.

## UPCOMING CLUB SHOWS:

### COWICHAN VALLEY ROCKHOUND CLUB

August 23, 2014 - Cobble Hill Fair, Cobble Hill, BC

Contact: Brian Sober, 250-715-0115 or [E mail](#)

The booth features Spin & Win for prizes and a fish pond, both for kids. Club made jewelry, lapidary demonstrations, and "rock talk" featuring specimens of Vancouver Island rock.

### FRASER VALLEY ROCK & GEM CLUB

September 20 & 21, 2014 - Annual Rock & Gem Show

Saturday 10:00am – 5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Old Age Pensioners Hall, 3015 273 Street, Aldergrove, BC

Demonstrations, Displays, Dealers. Admission by donation

Contact: Rozalia Brown, 604-794-7296 or [E mail](#)

#### RICHMOND GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

September 20 & 21, 2014 - Saturday 10:00am – 5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Richmond Cultural Centre, 7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC  
Contact: George Howe, [E mail](#)

#### GMFC SHOW & CONVENTION - NEW - MUST SEE

Hosted by the Princeton Rock & Fossil Club  
October 4 & 5, 2014, Saturday 9:00am – 5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm  
Princeton Community Centre, 206 Vermilion Avenue, Princeton, BC  
Dealer space e-mail: [Dave Barclay](#) or [Bernice Witiuk](#)

#### SURREY ROCKHOUND CLUB

October 18 & 19, 2014, 10:00am - 5:00pm  
Sullivan Hall, 6306 152 Street, Surrey, BC  
Demonstrations, Displays, Dealers, Door Prizes, Kids Stuff, Jewelry,  
Used Lapidary Equipment for sale & much more  
For more information call 604-599-6938, or [E mail](#)

#### PORT MOODY ROCK & GEM CLUB

October 25 & 26, 2014, Saturday & Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm  
Kyle Centre, 125 Kyle Street, Port Moody, BC  
Sales/Marketplace, Displays, Demonstrations, Prize Draws, Lapidary Workshop Tour, Kids' Creative Workshop, Rock Smash, Silent Auction, Spin 'n Win, Grab Bags, Food & Beverages  
Admission by donation  
Contact: Rose Kapp, 604-941-3023, or [E mail](#)

#### DELTA ROCKHOUND GEM & MINERAL CLUB

November 8 & 9, 2014 Saturday & Sunday 10:00am – 5:00pm  
South Delta Recreation Centre, 1720 - 56 Street (Tsawwassen) Delta, BC  
Door prizes; rock auctions for children and adults; grab bags; demonstrations; dealers; mineral, rock and gem displays; dealers  
Contact: Mary Cool, 604-943-5518, or [E mail](#)

### Birthstone of the Month: Sapphire

A maiden born when September leaves  
Are rustling in September's breeze,  
A [sapphire](#) on her brow should bind  
`Twill cure diseases of the mind.



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 [Chrysolite](#) was favoured for May in the 15-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Sapphire was favoured in the US in 2013 while sapphire and [lapis lazuli](#) topped the list in Britain that year. The Hindu culture favours [zircon](#).

## PROJECTS:

Check out the Tricked out Pliers Article from Jewelry Making Daily blog August 19, 2014. The second article is how to make lampwork-like glass head pins using enamel and a torch, also from Jewelry Making Daily Blog (August 22, 2014).

# Tricked Out Pliers: Customize Your Tools For Your Unique Metalsmithing Tasks

08-19-2014 by [TammyJones](#)

This article was originally published as one of Helen's "Cool Tools & Hip Tips" articles in *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* as well as in the [Jewelry Making Tools, Tips and More: Cool Tools 2006-2008 eBook](#). Now you can learn more about your tools and how to make them work better for you when you download the second "Cool Tools" compilation eBook, [Jewelry Making Tools, Tips and More, Volume 2, Cool Tools 2009-2010 eBook](#). Master your tools' original uses and learn to customize them to suit your unique jewelry-making and metalsmithing needs--all while you're also learning more about essential metalsmithing techniques and picking up loads of expert tips in one handy eBook.

## Tricked Out Pliers

From "Cool Tools & Hip Tips" in *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist*  
By Helen I. Driggs

As with all tools, pliers are an extension of the hand. Depending on the task, the criteria I use for choosing tools may differ. When purchasing pliers, I first consider the amount of use I will give them. If it's an essential, I wait to buy the best I can afford after evaluating several brands. If it's a junker, import is fine. And sometimes, an off-the-rack tool just won't work for the task at hand. Jewelers and metalsmiths will tinker with things because it's in their nature. So, keeping that in mind, I called on my studio of experts and asked them to let us in on their secret tips or tricks for pliers.



### Tom Herman

"I first took old pliers and forged or ground the jaws into shape. Then, I used a brazing rod to weld the copper in the jaws. I've tried lead solder, but it cracks out after a couple of weeks of use. I first learned that 'any tool is just a blank until you fine tune it for the job you are doing' while working at Van Craeynest in San Francisco. Another saying there was, 'The more accurately you can hold something, the more accurately you can file (or saw or drill) it.' The first step is to admit, I'm a toolaholic. And those two sayings keep me one."

### Alan Revere

Alan's favorite cool pliers trick was this: "Check tip 63 in my book, *101 Bench Tips for Jewelers*." And, he modestly noted, "Not everyone agrees with me."

1. Choose them well
2. Strip off rubber handles
3. Strip off any springs
4. Sand jaws
5. Round sharp corners



Alan says, "Many pliers come from suppliers with cutesy handles and springs that diminish their function. Rubber or plastic handles make it cheaper for manufacturers because they do not need to clean up the handles . . . just cover them in plastic for the hobby market. Aside from the garish and distracting colors they usually choose, the feel of rubber or plastic is downright slimy, just not as nice as metal. You lose the sense of what is going on by having the cushion. So take a blade and strip off the handles. The metal below may be a little rough, but it can be filed down. As long as it is comfortable, that's fine; it does not need to look pretty. Ultimately you have greater control by holding metal handles."

"The other extra that manufacturers often add to pliers is a pair of springs. These are even worse than the handles, because they reduce your ability to get tactile feedback. You must squeeze to overcome the spring and then gauge how much to squeeze further to hold the item. The only advantage of these springs is that they open the pliers. But anyone can figure that out by slipping a little finger inside the handles to open them up. So take a blade and pop these off, too. If there is an

objectionable weld mark, use a grinding wheel (wear goggles!) to remove it."

"Traditional high-quality European tools do not include these two add-ons for good reason. Both diminish the quality and function of a pair of pliers."

### **Robert Beauford**



Robert is a regular contributor to *Lapidary Journal*. He wrote "12 Favorite Tools" (July 2005) and offered one of my favorite pliers tips. He keeps three or four pair of cheap, cut-able, mild steel pliers for the purpose of custom alteration to a specific task. He says, "Cheap ones are best for this purpose, since they don't resist cutting, bending, or polishing. I've cold-forged the faces of the pliers on an anvil to make a curved pair for holding something I've long since forgotten, and grooved them a dozen ways with a file to avoid marring delicate pieces. For holding post earrings, I've angled or curved one face or another to hold objects in place for metal forming." His altered pliers get used again and again. "When you need a specialized pair of pliers, just imagine what it would look like, then make it. To spark your thoughts, I'll suggest that you can file them narrower, shorter, curved, grooved, or differently on each face."

### **And Another Thing**

As I gathered together the information for this feature, I received some brand new Ultra Ergo pliers by EuroTool. I was eager to give them a try because I have a damaged right elbow tendon connection caused by my death grip on the computer mouse. Because of this, extensive looping can be rough for me sometimes. I used the pliers for several evenings of wire-wrapping and really like the way the spring-back feature of the grips kept hand and elbow fatigue at bay. I've got big hands, and the grips on these pliers are long and padded enough not to hurt. The tips are small, short, and strong, and I was able to move 10-gauge wire easily. They are a good fit for me, and you might like to give them a try if you have RSI (repetitive stress injury) issues.

--*Helen*

### **About the contributors:**

Tom Herman lives and works in Rhinebeck, New York. He uses carving, chasing, engraving and saw piercing to produce works rich in intricate, ornate detail. Tom has been working in gold and platinum for over a decade. For more information, visit [www.sevenfingers.com](http://www.sevenfingers.com).

Alan Revere is active in the world of jewelry as a lecturer and instructor on a variety of subjects. His video series, Revere on Goldsmithing, set a new standard in professional jewelry instruction. He is the director of the Revere Academy of Jewelry Arts, Inc., in San Francisco, California. For more information, visit [www.revereademy.com](http://www.revereademy.com).

Robert Beauford began his professional career as a jeweler in 1993 when he moved to northern New Mexico. His work is strongly influenced by an educational and professional background in archaeology and paleontology. For more information, visit [www.robertbeauford.net](http://www.robertbeauford.net).

# Make Lampwork-Like Glass Head Pins Using Enamel and a Torch

08-22-2014 by [TammyJones](#)

A few years after I learned to do it, enameling (by torch) is still my favorite jewelry-making technique, and I'm always looking for new ways to use [enamels in jewelry making](#) and new enameling products to try. So I was really interested when I saw our friend Barbara Lewis of [Painting With Fire Studio](#) post a video on Facebook of her son David Lewis making enamel flower head pins . . . using only 6/20 mesh\* enamel, wire, a torch, and pliers.

First, David made regular round enameled head pins using 80 and then 6/20 mesh. "I had played around with making copper head pins using 80-mesh enamel with much success, but it seemed a bit tedious when I was trying to create larger head pins," David says. "I love the look of 6/20 mesh over copper pendants and beads, so I figured I would give it a shot with the head pins.



*Photos courtesy of Barbara Lewis.*

"One of the first things I noticed when firing was how wonderfully gravity helped in forming the head pin. When the 6/20 is melting onto the copper head pin, gravity has a tendency to pull the glass downward and transform it into a beautiful rain drop of glass. It all seemed so very simple and it truly was!"



After making round enamel (glass) head pins, David was inspired to go one step further and give some shape to the ball of glass on the head pin. "The next step was to create a flower with this lovely gather of glass!" David says. "We have an imported . . . and very expensive . . . brass press in the studio that can squeeze the glass into a flower shape." David knew some of their students wouldn't have room in their budget for such a pricey gadget, so he improvised. "I grabbed some pliers and started pulling at the (hot) ball of glass. With little effort, a flower was created."



You can watch David make enameled head pins and flower head pins in [Painting With Fire Studio's video](#). (Note that the video starts a little loud because of the noise of the flame.)

The end result looks like lampwork glass flower head pins! Though I've only gotten to try lampworking once, I loved it and welcome the opportunity to create something similar using products I already have. Plus the 6/20 mesh enameled head pins--both the round and the flower ones--are pretty and so versatile for jewelry making. "Head pins and glass flowers made with 6/20 Thompson enamel truly make for some exceptional jewelry components," David says. "Even after a design is completed, you can add a bit of color to the composition by wrapping some glass flowers or enameled head pins in just the right spots!"

For more enameling fun, [grab Barbara Lewis's new torch-fired enameling book, \*Mastering Torch-Fired Enamel Jewelry: The Next Steps in Painting With Fire\*](#). (There's a step-by-step tutorial for making enamel flower head pins in it, along with sooo many gorgeous enamel jewelry projects using beyond-basics techniques.) Barbara's first enameling book, [Torch-Fired Enamel Basics](#), is the beautiful book that started my enameling love affair--don't miss the sequel!

*\* Definition of 6/20 mesh enamel: Small pebble-like pieces of glass. All grains of glass will go through a screening mesh with 6 openings per linear inch, but none will go through a mesh with 20 openings per linear inch.*

### Maple Ridge Lapidary Club

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