



## **Miami Mineralogical and Lapidary Guild**



*Where South Florida Really Rocks!*

### **THE GEODE – The MMLG Monthly Newsletter**

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February 2022

### ***We're cautiously optimistic!***

If the COVID pandemic continues to diminish, we plan to resume our regular in-person activities shortly. Specifically, we hope to resume our monthly general meetings, starting in mid- to late March. Our Board of Directors will make a decision by the end of this month – to be announced in the March issue of the GEODE. As well, we've made plans to hold our Spring Gem-and-Mineral Show on May 21 & 22 at EVELYN GREER PARK in Pinecrest. If circumstances change, we will communicate our revised plans via email and our website: [miamigemandmineral.com](http://miamigemandmineral.com).

***Our national umbrella organization is the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.***



***Here is the latest update to our AFMS Code of Ethics for ROCKHOUNDS:***

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the "Golden Rule," will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.

## Montana Agate—An American Gemstone Treasure

Lynn Baldwin

From Ezine Articles.com Expert Lynn Baldwin via *The Opal Express*, October 2021, vol. 24, #10, p. 4

Since the time Man descended from the trees, personal adornment in the form of jewelry has been part of every culture. Each person wishes to express herself or himself in an individual manner, and jewelry allows us one means to accomplish that goal.

Usually, when someone thinks about gemstones, the big four come to mind. These are diamond, emerald, ruby and sapphire. One might also consider opal, garnet, and a few others, but typically it would end there. Of the gemstones just mentioned, all but the opal would be cut as faceted stones, and allow little in the way of individuality.

The opal would be the only gemstone in the list to be cut cabochon. As defined by the *American Heritage Dictionary*, this means a highly polished, domed, unfaceted gem.



Image: SAGemsGallery  
Montana Agates

The opal is the only stone of the previously mentioned gemstones to offer much in the way of exclusivity, as no two opals are ever the same. This property alone allows an opal to be chosen to reflect its owner, and to assure a one of a kind piece of jewelry. Unfortunately opal has a big drawback. It is a fairly soft and brittle gemstone, and must be worn carefully or you risk breaking it.

So far, virtually everyone is aware of the previously mentioned gemstones. Something to consider though is that this barely scratches the surface of the potential gemstones available to be used in various ways as personal adornment.

For instance, there are a great number of agates and jaspers (topics for another day) that are cut for use in jewelry about which almost no one knows. One of these that I would like to discuss is Montana agate.

Found only in America along the Yellowstone River and its tributaries in Montana and Wyoming, Montana agate is truly an American treasure. It was formed millions of years ago in holes left in lava flows. The lava has since weathered away and the agates are found in the gravel beds along the river.

With more variety in its colors, types, and figures than agate from any other known deposit in the world, Montana agate is especially wonderful for jewelry use. Historically it has typically been cut in standard sizes and shapes as cabochons and set as pendants, pins, rings, or bracelets.

There are, however, many modern lapidaries (a person who cuts, polishes, or engraves gems) who choose to cut these gemstones as free forms, as carvings, or even to facet them, which maximizes the potential and beauty of each stone. Just as in the opal, no two pieces of Montana agate are alike and this guarantees a totally exclusive and personal piece of jewelry from each one.

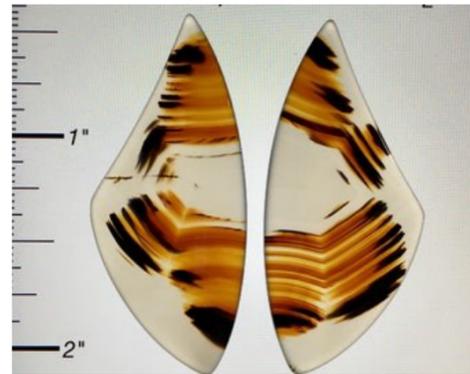


Image: HarmonAgates

Montana Agates

Long a favorite of hobbyist and professional cutters alike because of the beautiful and highly variable patterns and durability, Montana agate is a very hard and tough stone that wears well in jewelry. A classic scenic agate, it produces luminous and lustrous gemstones with evocative scenes of lakeshores or mountains as well as figural gems. With many of these agates, in order to appreciate their subtlety, you will have to view them against the light. No two are ever exactly alike, not even matched pairs.

Agate, the Mystical birthstone for the month of September and the birthstone for the Zodiac sign of Gemini, is believed by many to possess unique properties that protect its wearer from dangers and promotes strength and healing.

Lynn Baldwin is the owner of <http://www.fine-find.com> and has been involved in collecting, cutting and carving fine gemstones, including Montana agate, for more than 30 years.

Article Source: [http://EzineArticles.com/expert=Lynn\\_Baldwin](http://EzineArticles.com/expert=Lynn_Baldwin),  
[http://www.cabbers.com/cabs/agates/montana\\_agate2.shtml](http://www.cabbers.com/cabs/agates/montana_agate2.shtml)

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## Mineral History Nugget



Gemstones, minerals, and the gem cutter have always played important roles throughout history. During WWII, there were hundreds of experienced American mineral collectors who, although too old to qualify for military service, played a highly important role for the security of our country. They cut quartz crystals for frequency control in communication instruments and radar. The quality of the quartz crystal from Arkansas was considered finer than Brazil's, and the Arkansas mines came under federal control during the war.

Sapphires were cut to make bearings for precision instruments used in airplanes, bombers and battleships. In 1940, America was completely dependent on Europe for sapphires. When the war came, an American company, Linde Air Products, created the synthetic sapphire. The stones were used only for the war effort and not for jewelry

Optical calcite was an essential component of the Norden bombsight, one of America's most closely guarded secrets during World War II. It was used to calculate the trajectory of bombs dropped from high altitudes and enabled American military aircraft to hit ground targets with precision during daylight raids. A major deposit of high grade optical calcite is located a hundred miles east of San Diego, CA and is still accessible to modern day rockhounds.

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***We hope that you enjoy a safe Presidents' Day holiday!***