Tumblewood Tales

ELC News, Volume 27, Issue 5, May 2026

Some of the views from our club auction in April

Monthly Meeting: May 21st, 2026

Callingwood/Lymburn Community League

7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

18740 72nd Avenue NW

MEMBERSHIP INFO

The Edmonton Lapidary Club is a registered non-profit society dedicated to promoting the lapidary hobby in Edmonton and surrounding areas.
The meetings are every third Thursday of the month from September to May.
Club activities include educational and social events, field trips, and classes offered by members featuring various lapidary and jewelry design skills.
The club provides a fully equipped lapidary workshop for members' use. Members wishing to use the shop must be certified by the shop foreman after taking the introductory cabochon making course ($60). Current membership is required to access the shop.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

ELC Annual Membership is from January 1st to December 31st:
Family $75.00
Single $50.00
Please submit membership forms and e-transfer funds to etlctreasurer@gmail.com

CLUB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Michelle Morin
ETLCgeneral.inquiry@gmail.com
Vice President: Bruce Smith
Goldbug99@shaw.ca
Treasurer: Clint Morin
etlctreasurer@gmail.com
Secretary: Fiona Jakielaszek
fossilgirl57@gmail.com
Past President: Joan Blize
Newsletter Editor: Nikola Pekas
npekas@gmail.com
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780-459-5960
Routledge.jim@gmail.com
Programs: VACANT
Field Trips: VACANT

AFRC DELEGATES:

Michelle Morin, Dean Chesterman, Jim Routledge

ELC SHOP

Coordinator: Bruce Smith
Cell Phone: 780-908-4699
Goldbug99@shaw.ca
Shop Helpers:
Jim Routledge 780-446-7187
Jake Jakielaszek 780-298-9797
Renata Ruch 780-000-0000
Nikola Pekas 780-221-7021

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership fees include the following:

- Cost of affiliation in the Alberta Federation of Rock Clubs (AFRC) and the Gem & Mineral Federation of Canada (GMFC)
- Liability insurance for members on organized field trips or club events.
- Subscription to our monthly newsletter - Tumblewood Tales
- The AFRC Newsletter
- Access to the ELC Lapidary shop, library, exclusive auctions and member sales

SHOP USAGE FEES

Hourly Rate $10.00
Slab saws $5.00/hr

SHOP DAYS AND LOCATION

Thursdays 11am-4pm
Fridays 6pm-10pm
2nd and 4th Saturday of the month
1pm-5pm
Edmonton Research Park
9403 20 Avenue NW, Unit 112

President's Message for May 2026

I think that Spring has finally arrived in Edmonton and its time to look forward to summer and outdoor activities.

Our April auction was quite successful. I would especially like to extend a huge thank you to all the volunteers who helped make our April Auction such a success. So much work went into the event behind the scenes. From sorting, bagging, labeling, transporting materials, setup, cleanup, repairs, organizing lots, and assisting during the auction itself. Events like this do not happen without an incredible amount of time, effort, and teamwork from dedicated volunteers. Your hard work helped create a fun and successful event for everyone involved, and the club truly appreciates everything you contributed. THANK YOU SO MUCH!

This month we continue preparing for a season of activities and events, and we are always excited to welcome new people into the lapidary hobby. If you know someone who has been curious about rock cutting, cabochon making, or lapidary arts, invite them to come out to a meeting or class. Sharing our passion is one of the best ways to help our club grow.

Please check our upcoming events and classes section! Of Note, our first rock pick of the season at Rolly View on May 31st and our annual potluck picnic and tailgate is on June 6th!

The next meeting is on May 21st, as always at Lymburn/Callingwood Community Hall, 18740 72 Ave NW, starting at 7:00pm. This month's Show and Share them is ODDITIES!

Please note that this will be our last Newsletter of the season and will return in September! Please check your email, our Facebook page and website for upcoming events, classes and activities!

See you out there!

Thank- You

Michelle Morin

President ELC

Upcoming Events

CLUB MEETING ON MAY 21ST 7 – 9 PM

This month's Show & Share theme is "ODDITIES". Bring along your unusual, strange, quirky, or unexpected rocks, minerals, fossils, lapidary creations, or mystery finds. Whether it is an oddly shaped crystal, a rock with a surprising pattern, an unusual cabochon, or something you simply cannot identify - we want to see it!

Meeting location: Lymburn/Callingwood community Hall at 18740 72 Ave NW, Edmonton.

Did you know?

- Ulexite is a borate mineral that forms in arid desert environments and has unique optical properties as naturally formed fibre optics.
- Often nicknamed "TV Rock" because it can transmit light and images along its natural fibres.
- The mineral consists of tiny, parallel fibres that naturally guide light from one end to the other: if you place a properly oriented piece of ulexite over printed words or pictures, their image appears on the top surface of the stone.

Ulexite from Kern County, California, USA. The sample shows transparency along one axis, while it is opaque in other directions. Source: Rob Lavinsky via iRocks.com. CC-BY-SA-3.0.

ROLLY VIEW ROCK PICK ON MAY 31ST, 10 AM – 3 PM

This is a pick-and-pay event. Items picked are $1 per pound, or $100 per car load (car is defined as a standard size vehicle). Cash is required.

Come and pick your fill of agates, petrified wood, picture stones, obsidian, thunder eggs and many others.

The Rolly View rockpile is on private property that is also a working ranch. There are large animals on the property, and several ponds. Please do not bring family pets. Items that you should bring include, appropriate outerwear for the weather, gloves, appropriate shoes (fully enclosed), a water spray bottle (for wetting rocks), water to drink, and a picking pail or bag.

There will be some knowledgeable club members out there that will be able to help you identify or judge the quality of your pick.

A BBQ lunch will be provided – RSVP in advance so we know how many people will be attending.

For additional information, directions, or a map to the location, please contact the club by email: ETLCgeneral.inquiry@gmail.com

ANNUAL ELC POTLUCK PICNIC AND TAILGATE ON JUNE 6TH 11 AM – 3:30 PM

Kingswood Park, St. Albert. Bring a family sized dish to share, your own dinnerware and drinks. Tailgate sale in the parking area after lunch.

Bring a family-sized dish to share along with your own dinnerware, beverages, lawn chair, and favourite rocks or lapidary treasures. This relaxed summer gathering is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with fellow members, show off recent finds and creations, and enjoy the club community outdoors.

Following lunch, members are invited to participate in our popular Tailgate Sale in the parking area. Buy, sell, or trade rocks, slabs, rough material, lapidary supplies, specimens, tools, jewelry, and other hobby-related items with fellow club members.

To help support ongoing club activities and fundraising efforts, a 15% contribution from tailgate sale proceeds will go back to the club.

RUNDLE PARK ROCK PICK ON JUNE 13TH 12 – 3 PM

Members and guests are invited to come out for a casual rockhounding and nature walk along the river valley trails and gravel areas. This is a great opportunity to learn about local rocks and minerals, meet other club members, and practice spotting interesting materials in the field.

Suitable for beginners, families, and experienced rockhounds alike.

Participants are encouraged to bring:

- Weather-appropriate clothing
- Good walking shoes or boots
- Water and snacks
- Small collection bag or pail
- Gloves and basic rockhounding tools if desired

Please note:

- This is an outdoor walking field trip with uneven terrain in some areas.
- Participants attend at their own risk.
- Children must be supervised by an adult.

Meet-up: far west end of the Rundle Park parking lot

ELC SHOP OPEN HOUSE AND PARKING LOT EVENT ON JUNE 20TH 10 AM – 4 PM

More news coming soon as we await on approval from property management.

SHOP TIMES FOR MAY AND JUNE

Shop access is always available upon request with 1-2 days of notice

Thursdays 11 am – 8 pm (exception **May 21st** as shop will close at 4:00pm for club meeting)

Friday evenings 6 pm – 10 pm

Saturday afternoons 1 pm – 5 pm on May 27th, June 11th and June 25th

NEW! Stay connected and never miss a club activity! The Edmonton Lapidary Club now has an online Google Calendar where you can easily keep up to date with meetings, classes, shop times, special events, field trips, and club activities throughout the year.

If you are interested in using this new tool, please contact the club by email and we will be happy to share the calendar link and help you get connected.

UPCOMING CLASSES

Please register by contacting etlcgeneral.inquiry@gmail.com.

May 30th 1 – 3 pm *Stretch Bracelets*: Make gemstone stretch bracelets in this fun and beginner-friendly class! Each participant will design and make three unique gemstone bracelets using a variety of colourful natural stone beads.

This class is perfect for beginners, families, teens, and adults, no experience required. Learn basic bracelet design, bead selection, and assembly techniques while creating wearable pieces to take home or give as gifts.

All supplies, tools, and materials are included at $20 for ELC members, and $30 for non-members. Registration Closes on May 28th at 4 pm.

June 7th 12 pm – 6 pm *Silversmith Copper Heart Pendant*: Students will create a beautiful copper heart pendant featuring a small round cabochon while learning introductory silversmithing and metalworking techniques.

Suitable for beginners. All tools, materials, and safety equipment are provided at $100 for ELC members, or $125 for non-members. Registration Closes June 5th 4 pm.

June 21st 10 am – noon *Local Rock Identification Introduction Class*: This class provides instruction on how to do basic rock identification in the field. The cost is $30 for members or $40 for non-members. Registration Closes June 19th 4 pm.

June 28th 1 – 4 pm *Wire Wrap Heart Pendant*: Students will create a copper wire heart pendant featuring a decorative wire design and gemstone bead centerpiece.

This is a beginner-friendly class will teach students introductory wire wrapping and jewelry assembly techniques while creating a stylish wearable pendant to take home.

All tools, materials, copper wire, and beads are provided at $30 for ELC members or $45 for non-members. Registration Closes June 26th 4 pm.

Fundraising Activities and Member Support Needed

The Edmonton Lapidary Club is beginning preparations for several upcoming fundraising activities, and we are looking for support from club members to help make these projects successful. These initiatives help raise funds to support club operations, equipment maintenance, classes, and future activities.

2027 Calendars

Planning has already begun for our 2027 fundraising calendar, and we are looking for beautiful specimens, lapidary creations, jewelry, and interesting rock material from members that can be professionally photographed for inclusion.

We are especially looking for:

- Polished specimens
- Cabochons
- Jewelry pieces
- Unique rough material
- Display-quality minerals and fossils
- Interesting lapidary projects

If you have a piece you would be willing to loan for photography, please contact the club. Items will be handled carefully and returned promptly after photography sessions are completed.

Important Deadlines:

- Member specimens for photography are needed by the end of June
- The calendar must be finalized and ready for printing by the end of July at the latest

Early submissions are greatly appreciated and will help provide time for photography, layout, editing, and production.

Treasure Pails for Events and Outreach

The club is preparing “Treasure Pails” for future fundraising events, outreach activities, and public engagement opportunities. We are seeking donations of small, polished stones,

tumbles, mineral specimens, fossils, and other rock-related treasures that can be included in the pails.

Please contact the club email address etlcgeneral.inquiry@gmail.com to become involved.

Slab Cutting for Future Auctions

We are also beginning to prepare slab material for future club auctions and fundraising events. Members are invited to donate rough rock suitable for slab cutting and cabochon material.

We are looking for:

- Agates
- Jaspers
- Petrified wood
- Thunder eggs
- Obsidian
- Other lapidary-quality rough material

In addition to rough material donations, we are also looking for volunteers willing to help cut slabs at the shop. To support this effort, no saw fees will be charged for approved fundraising slab cutting sessions.

This is a great opportunity for members to help convert donated rough material into auction-ready slabs that will support future club fundraising efforts.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the club through donations, volunteering, and participation. Every contribution helps keep our community strong and active.

Feature Article: Visual Inspection of Lapidary Materials

By Nikola Pekas

"Cut a little, look a lot" is a piece of advice often heard from experienced lapidaries. The advice is as good as it is obvious: you can never put back the material once it is removed by cutting or grinding. While cutting, grinding, and polishing techniques are taught and debated in great depth, various ways of looking and seeing are seldom discussed. In this first part of the series, we outline some of the techniques for visually evaluating the rough material and slabs; in the

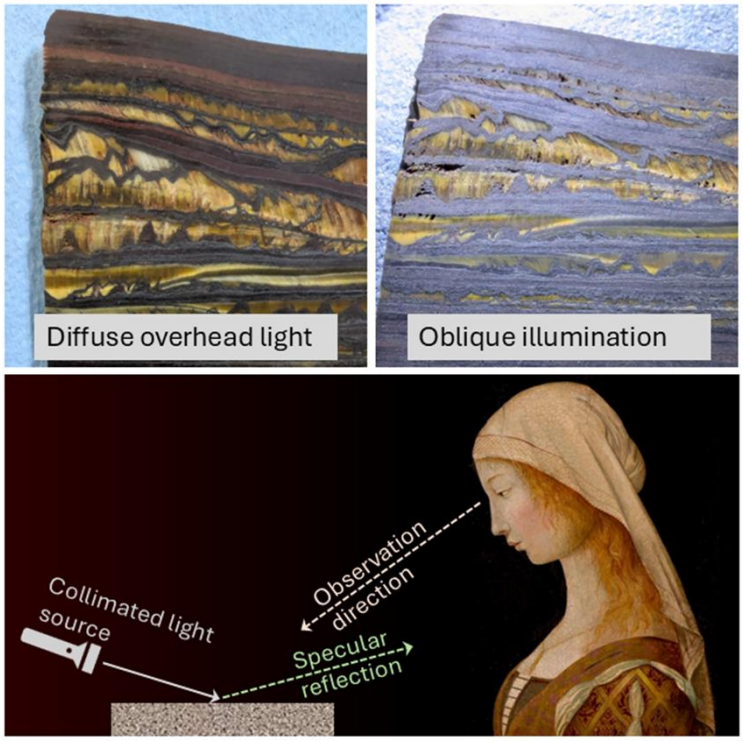
second part, we will focus on appropriate illumination and techniques for evaluating lapidary creations during and after the creative processes such as cabbing or carving.

A good starting point is to briefly consider in practical, non-technical terms relevant qualities of a light source: colour, brightness, and the geometry. The colour of our light source will affect the appearance of the material. Sunlight – whether direct or indirect – and incandescent light bulbs are continuous light sources where all possible colours and colour combinations are available (although their relative distribution may vary) for our material to absorb, reflect, and refract. On the other hand, fluorescent and LED light bulbs often have significant peaks and gaps in their emission spectrum, even when they may appear neutral white to our eyes. As a result, there may be a significant change in appearance of the stone between natural daylight and under each of the artificial light sources.

The first step towards seeing the rough material clearly is removing any surface dirt by washing and scrubbing. If warranted, the weathered and opaque "skin" of the stone can be removed by cutting, grinding, or in some cases by chipping away with a rock hammer – practices known as "windowing". Windows will help us gain a clearer look at the bulk of the material, but might diminish any potential value of the piece as a collector's specimen.

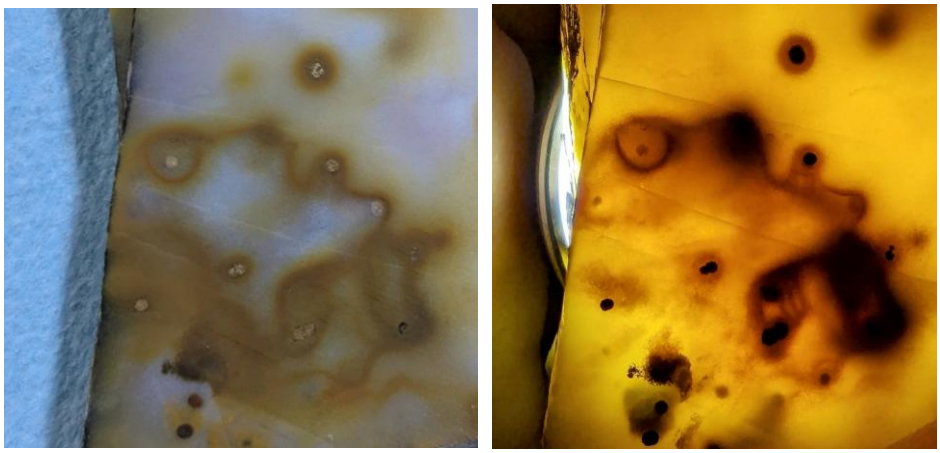
A piece of rough material should always be evaluated for fractures while dry, because water will tend to make fractures less visible. For this purpose, surface of the dry stone should ideally be illuminated by a focused, "point" source (such as sunlight or a flashlight) at an oblique angle to reveal the fractures. Diffuse, "beauty" illumination will make fractures less noticeable.

In case of translucent materials such as agates, placing a strong, focused flashlight or a laser pointer firmly against the stone – and especially against the



Diffuse light tends to hide fractures, porosity, and other imperfections. Directional, oblique illumination will help reveal problems before cutting.

window – will reveal many features of the stone: colour banding, inclusions, and again fractures where the induced glow will tend to abruptly stop. While we may be using modern light sources, the practice of illuminating the stone and studying the resulting glow is still referred to as “candling”. The secret to successful candling is to avoid blinding yourself by the light reflected off the surface – you want to be able to see the glow that originates from the light that made it inside the stone. This is best done in a dark room. The torch should be firmly touching the surface, and it may be helpful to form a seal around the touch point with your fingers. Candling should be done from multiple directions. At this point, getting the stone wet will hide away any fractures, but will reveal what the material might look like polished. Wetting the stone mimics the polish because it minimizes the light that scatters off the rough surface, so it will also improve the amount of the candling light that makes it inside and back outside of the stone, helping us better see inclusions and banding.



The same slab of agate illuminated by overhead light and by a flashlight from the back. Note the appearance of fractures.

After studying a piece of rough by windowing and candling, and looking for fractures, inclusions, banding, and colour patterns, we will be able to make better decisions on how to orient the piece for slabbing or carving.

Slabbed material will reveal even more than a windowed rough, as each side of the slab is practically a complete window to look into and through: look for fractures while the slab is dry, using a directional, collimated light at an oblique angle. Try candling the slab by shining light into any translucent areas, and studying it from the other side. Finally, get the slab wet to increase its translucency and to reveal what the material might look like when polished. It is a good idea to mark any fractures to avoid, and also any desirable features to include, with a permanent marker to guide the trimming and shaping of the slab into cabochons or other works of lapidary art.

Meeting agenda for May

7:00-7:10 Introduction & Welcome

- Guest and new member introductions
- Review of previous minutes
- Additions to the Agenda?

7:10-7:30 Club Business

- Review Action Items - Update
- Upcoming classes – Info
- Upcoming Activities – Picinic , parking lot sale, Ft. Edm Park, Rolly View and Rundle Park
- Auction
- Shop Hours of Operation
    - Changes to current hours
    - Survey Results
    - Shop helpers update, hour changes, coverage
- 2027 club calendar, treasure pails, slabs

7:20-7:30 New Business

- Shop Waivers- reminder
- Shop fees discussion

7:40-8:00pm Club Updates

- Reporting Financials
- Social Committee
- Shop
- Big saws
- Library
- Website, Facebook, Instagram

8:00 -8:30 pm Presentation:

Show and Share: "Oddities" Show off your favorite stones that are somehow odd, and tell us a little about them.

8:45-9:00 Clean Up