

Worthens Open Lapidary Shop for 'Rock-Hounds' in B'ham

By Helen Bishop

While a lapidary shop is one which you might expect to find in the far Western states, or along the Eastern coast, Birmingham may be surprised to know that such a shop, with a trained lapidary at work, exists here.

Called the Michigan Lapidary Supply and Research Company, the completely equipped shop with minerals of every description lining the walls and displayed in showcases, is owned and operated by Charles Worthen, 211 Aspen road, assisted by Mrs. Worthen. The little building at 195 Pierce street grew out of a hobby which he has developed in the past few years, of collecting his own minerals and the costume material and grinding out cabochon and faceted stones.

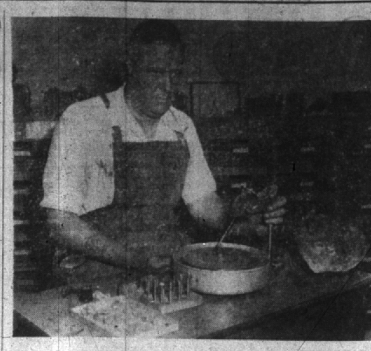
"Any sort of gem or mineral material which can be ground can be made into a polished or faceted stone," he told us. "In addition, unusual rock formations, petrified wood and moss petrified in rock may be brought in and polished for use as book-ends, paper weights, or simply as objects of unusual natural beauty. Worthen is a member of the

Michigan Mineralogical Society, and his private collection can only be partially accommodated at the place of business. Many of the different rough minerals are imported by the Worthens from different parts of the United States and from all over the world.

Included in the specimens lining the walls are huge rocks of gray-black Ceruss Obsidian from Utah; a petrified dinosaur bone, also from Utah; rock quartz crystals; large amethyst crystals, pieces of moss agate and other agates, and hunks of brilliant aqua blue rock known as Chrysocholla, to name only a few.

"When these minerals are to be made into stones, they are slabbled first by a lapidary," Worthen remarked in explanation of how the lovely ringstones are made from these raw boulders. "Slabbing is done on a diamond saw, which neatly cuts off a slice of the rock. Ordinarily, if the lapidary intends to make the slab into stones, he will cut it 3/16 of an inch thick."

After the piece is slabbled, he made into stones, they are slabbled first by a lapidary, Worthen remarked in explanation of how the lovely ringstones are made from these raw boulders.



About to proceed with the operation of adding facets to an amethyst he is cutting, is Charles Worthen, lapidary, who recently opened a shop at 195 Pierce, in order to make a business of his hobby of cutting and shaping minerals into beautiful gemstones, and to supply other lapidaries with the materials they need for this unusual trade.

fully marked stone arising from the rock. The lapidary wets the cut slab to make this natural design come to life as it will when it is polished to a mirror finish. All rock hounds use the trick of wetting their finds to see just what they have obtained in unusual design, we were informed.

The grayish Ceruss Obsidian, known as night blooming snowflake, now shows that all through the central part of the black rock are either tiny snowflake designs or larger grayish flakes. The dinosaur bone, rough and homely on the exterior, reveals that inside its color ranges from deep red to darkest wine, with a fine overcast tracery of black, and a bright orange-red where the marrow originally ran. Chrysocholla, the intensely blue jagged rock, now slabbled, reveals that tiny green moss plants have been imbedded in it centuries ago, shading the slab from the deepest green to the lightest azure blue, some of it transparent. The delicate tracery of the moss and the transparent portions in many instances seem to reveal a tiny landscape design.

"The opaque minerals, and those which show tracery and strange lights in them, are generally made up into cabochon stones," Worthen said. "Faceting is reserved for transparent gems. Cabochons are those with an entirely smooth surface, generally

lapidary, a cabochon can be turned out in about 10 minutes," Worthen said, "although it takes an amateur quite a bit longer. "Faceting the clear crystalline stones takes quite a bit longer, and requires more tools and a great deal more precision. My students can cut a cabochon during their first class, but must have a good deal of practice before attempting a faceted stone."

Worthen is shown in the picture above doing the precision faceting of the stone he is working on mounted on a doping stick. The mechanism centered on the table is the facet head used for calculating angles of the facets. Shown also are the rough amethyst crystals as they are mined several other mineral pieces, and two small amethysts already faceted.

Aside from Worthen's collection of minerals, the shop carries supplies for amateur and professional lapidaries, and many pieces of rough mineral collected in Michigan.

"The only collector's item that comes from here is the mineral known as Calcite, which is mined here in crystal form, and is peculiar to Michigan. We ship this out to many, many collectors," Worthen told us.

In addition to the many other rock specimens of interest at the shop, they have a special collection of fluorescent rocks, which contain "absorbite," a fluorescent mineral. When exposed to a Minn-erlight, to black rays and red rays, to black rays and red rays with a cold light marking crystals and veins in the rock.

Kept busy slabbling rocks for "rock hounds," making up stones, and shipping out minerals to collectors, Worthen and his wife still find time to make visitors to their unusual shop feel at home, and have even made amateur collectors of a few.

STATE OF MICHIGAN—In the Probate Court for the County of Oakland. As a session of said Court, held at the Probate Office in the City of Pontiac, in said County, on the 10th day of June, A.D. 1947.

Present: Hon. Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.

In the Matter of the Estate of George A. Waldorf, deceased.

Ceylan N. Woodruff, Executor of said estate having filed in said Court his Final Account and petition praying for the examination and allowance of the final account, determination of the heirs of said deceased, assignment of the residue of said estate, and the discharge of said executor.

It is Ordered: That the 7th day of June, A.D. 1947, at six o'clock in the forenoon, at said Probate Office, he and is hereby appointed by the Court to be the executor of said estate.

ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate.

OLIVER H. KIRK, Attorney, Birmingham, Michigan. 13-14-15

Girl Scouts Raise \$464.40 in Drive

In spite of threatening skies and cold winds, 300 intermediate Girl Scouts tended the line which marked the "Mile of Pennies," Saturday, June 14, to collect \$464.40. The funds collected in this part of the annual Girl Scout fund-raising campaign will be used to carry on the Girl Scout cabin at Springdale Park, and to provide training for leaders to teach scouts woodcraft, handicraft, and world friendship.

The Girl Scout Council, on behalf of the Scouts, wishes to thank the citizens of Birmingham for their generous contribution.

The Penny Drive, in conjunction with a letter campaign, from which contributions are still being received, will enable the Council to give the Scouts an adequate program for the coming year.

Game Men to Check On Pheasant Hatch

The peak of southern Michigan pheasant hatch is expected this week end, and conservation department game men will be watching to discover the effects of the late spring's cold weather and excessive rain.

Breed counts later this month and in July will be depended upon for estimates of the crop that will be available to gunners next fall.

Port Huron Plans Blue Water Festival

The Blue Water Festival gets under way at Port Huron this year July 9, and continues on through July 13. Douglas W. Nash, Sr., secretary of the festival association reports.

Planned for opening day is the Grand Coronation Ball, with dancing under the stars to Ray Robin's orchestra, and fairground entertainment with clowns, high wire acts, etc. Thursday, July 10, is children's day at the festival with free acts and entertainment and evening dancing, and Friday

marks the start of the Michigan Amateur Open Golf Tournament at the Black River Country Club. Saturday, July 12, the golf tournament will be continuing and will be started with a skeet shoot, the start of the Port Huron Mackinac Sail Boat Race at 1:30 p. m., a horseshoe pitching contest, a Mardi Gras and parade, and the state-wide drum and bugle corps contest and band drill. Professional and amateur outdoor races start at 2 p. m. Sunday on the St. Clair river, and the day is further marked with an other skeet shoot, and a church service in the Pine Grove Park, under the auspices of the Ministerial Association, followed by dancing under the stars.

From where I sit... by Joe Marsh



Crazy Hat Wins Refrigerator!

One of those "Breakfast in the morning" radio shows came to Capt. City last week, and Sarah Carey won first prize for wearing the craziest hat in the audience. It was a full-sized refrigerator! (The prize, not the hat.)

"Glad them hats of hers paid off at last," says Ed, treating the whole thing like a joke. But you could see he was proud of Sarah.

From where I sit, there's another thing Ed can be proud of: the way he's put up with those hats of Sarah's, with never a criticism; just

as she's put up with Ed's pipe and the other little freedoms he enjoys. They've got that refrigerator home now, stocked with beer; and we're going over tonight to drink a toast—not just to Sarah's hat, but to the fact that she's a happily married couple, who've learned to live with one another's differences in tastes—whether it's a taste for hats or beer!

Joe Marsh

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- That while we are glad to install special accessories (when available) which add to the appearance, usefulness, comfort and convenience of the new car, no customer is required to purchase any extra equipment which he does not desire.
- That we are doing everything in our power to help eliminate black market operations in our industry.
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