



## **CFMS Newsletter**

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### **CFMS HISTORY**

#### **Intarsia: Did You Know?**

**By Shirley Leeson**

Do you know what “Intarsia” is? It is thin rock slices cut from various types of hard and soft stones that have color that can be used to create pictures. Europeans have been doing this type of art for centuries and called it “Pietre Dure” or “Pietre Tenere,” the first being hard stones and the second soft stones. At one time in the CFMS we had a number of artists who created Intarsia and showed it competitively in our shows. There were a number of clubs that offered classes on the subject. Sad to say, there are few who are doing this type of work and it seems unless someone who reads this takes an interest, it just might be a lost art.



One person some of you may know is Conrad Grudke, who is still involved in teaching Lapidary and Intarsia at Saddleback College in the Los Angeles area. Conrad learned the art from his father William. William wrote a number of articles on the subject for Gem and Mineral magazine in the 1970s and 1980s before the magazine went out of business. He also exhibited his art competitively in the CFMS shows, as did his son, Conrad, later. Over the years there were a number of artists who put their art on exhibit at the CFMS shows and also in competition.

The reason I mention this is the **Oceanside Museum of Art**, located at 704 Pier View Way, about half way between San Diego and Los Angeles, is going to show this art form. This is the first time a museum of art has recognized this form we call Intarsia as “art” and we should all be very proud. After all, Rockhounds have usually gotten a bum rap from the art world. If you would like to see this exhibition, it will be on display **March 3 – May 1, 2009**. Dennis Batt, artist and guest curator will speak on the subject on **April 25th at 2:00 PM**. Dennis had obtained pieces from a number of sources, one being the late Johnny Johnson, an intarsia, owned by San Diego Mineral and Gem. And Dennis has asked for a piece that belongs in the California Federation collection by Amy Spencer. If this is accomplished, it will be included.

To see those people who have created this art form, go to: [www.americanmastersofstone.com](http://www.americanmastersofstone.com). Please check the list of people, and if there is someone you know who is not on the list, please contact me. I'll need the name, and pictures if possible, and if deceased, a contact person who might have the piece/s.

- Shirley