



the BEMS Tumbler

May
2008

The monthly newsletter of the **Boeing Employees' Mineralogical Society, Inc.** Seattle, Washington

Next Meeting:
May 8, 2008
7:30 p.m.

**Boeing Recreation
Activity Center**

Room B at
22649 83rd Avenue S.

Just off the Valley
Freeway (Highway 167) North
edge of Kent

The Program will be Char
Jorgenson doing wirewrap

**First Place for Small Bulletins
in the 2007 NFMS Bulletin
Editors' Contest!**



*This month remember
to wish a
Happy Birthday to*
Jim Mayhall on May 2,
Timothy S. Pinkerton on May 2,
Cheryl Edgar on May 5,
Eric Chilson on May 6,
Phil DeLeo on May 8,
Jerry KF Chilson on May 15,
Patricia Morgan on May 16,
Jennifer Russell on May 16,
William Farrow on May 18,
Mike Tanaka on May 23,
Jim Marchand on May 24,
Alan Pagel on May 25,
Cherie Beaupain on May 30,
*and also remember
to wish a
Happy Anniversary to*
Dennis & Carolee Swenson
on May 14 (54 years),
Richard & Mary Whiting
on May 22 (63 years),
Brian & Cherie Beaupain
on May 26



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Tips, suggestions, recipes and experiments printed in this newsletter are the experiences and/or opinions of the individuals submitting them. We are not responsible for their authenticity, safety, or reliability. Caution and safety should always be practiced when trying out any new idea.

When on field trips this organization uses CB Channel 7.

Keith Alan Morgan, Editor

Postal, or Email, Exchange
Bulletins are welcome.
Email preferred.

morgangraphi x@yahoo.com

Officers & Directors 2008

President Malcolm Wheeler, Sr.
Vice President Mike Brimmage
Treasurer Richard Russell
Secretary Pete Williams
Director Bill Cook
Director Dick Morgan
Past President Mike Brimmage
Federation Representative Michael Blanton
Federation Representative Jerry K.F. Chilson
Mineral Council Bob & Jackie Pattie
Refreshment Esther McKain
Membership Keith & Dick Morgan
Health & Welfare Carolyn Sealton
Library Charlotte Churchill
Video Library Stephanie Jurado-Smith
Raffle/Display Keith & Dick Morgan
Field Trip Bill Cook
Tumbler Editor Keith Alan Morgan
Webmaster Keith Alan Morgan
Shop Operations Leslie Brooks
Shop Instructors:
 Casting Joe Poston
 Faceting Cliff Frome
 Jewelry Joe Poston
 Lapidary Dick Morgan

Club eMail address is
morgangraphix@yahoo.com

2008 BEMS Dues are \$15 flat rate Individual, Family, or Retired.

Send or deliver dues to:

Richard Russell

(or pay him at the meeting)

The object of the Society shall be to stimulate interest in the study of the earth sciences, lapidary arts and related subjects.

This Society is affiliated with the *Boeing Company*; the *American Federation of Mineralogical Societies*; the *Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies*; and the *Washington State Mineral Council*.

Every member of the club should be receiving a copy of the Northwest Newsletter. If you are not receiving a copy contact Dick Morgan

To get information to the Tumbler via the Internet send it to **morgangraphix@yahoo.com** Please put Tumbler and subject in the Subject Line. The deadline is the 20th of each month, (except December which varies).

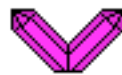
The BEMS external website is <http://www.bemsonline.com>

Stabilize Chrysacola or Turquoise

To stabilize chrysacola or turquoise use both tubes of water-clear epoxy and 1 pint of acetone and be sure that it is well mixed. Use a container that you can seal up like a big glass jar or a three-pound coffee can. Be sure that your rock is clean and dry. Soak in this solution for several weeks depending on rock size. Soak a fist-size piece three weeks. Take out of solution wearing rubber or surgical gloves. Let dry for about 10 days, depending on the size. Cut, grind, and polish as you do any turquoise via West Seattle Petroglyphs, 3/08; via Snoopy Gems, 1/08; from Dops and Digs, 1/95



May



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1	2 Faceting Class	3
4	5 Lapidary Shop	6 Lapidary Casting Jewelry	7 South Sound Show Committee Meeting	8 General Meeting 	9 Faceting Class	10
11	12 Lapidary Shop	13 Lapidary Casting Jewelry	14	15	16 Faceting Class	17
18	19 Lapidary Shop	20 Lapidary Casting Jewelry	21	22	23 Faceting Class	24
25	26 Lapidary Shop	27 Lapidary Casting Jewelry	28	29	30 Faceting Class	31

Lapidary Class Hours:.....Monday.....7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
 Lapidary Shop Hours:.....Tuesday.....9:00 am to 6:00 pm

More Field Trip info can be found on Page 9
 More Show info can be found on Page 10

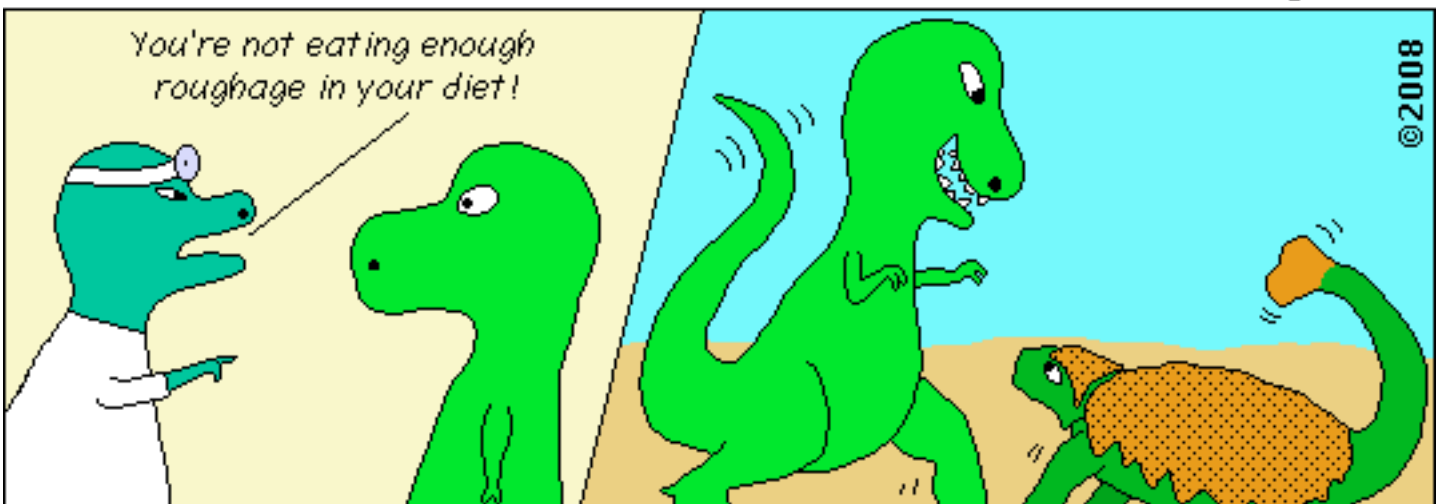
Jewelry Shop Hours:.....Tuesday.....9:00 am to 6:30 pm
 Jewelry Casting Hours:.....Tuesday.....9:00 am to 6:30 pm (Casting Information All Day)

Faceting Class Hours:.....Friday.....4:30 pm to 8:00 pm

South Sound Show Committee...1st Wednesday.....11:00 am to 12:00 Noon
 BEMS Board Meeting:.....Tuesday (9 days prior to General Meeting).....9:30 am to 10:00 am
 BEMS General Meeting:.....2nd Thursday.....7:30 pm to 10:00 pm

Fossil Food Fun

by **KAM**



The Tumbler has received One-Time Rights to publish this cartoon

BEMS Board Meeting Minutes April 1, 2008

by Keith Morgan, Editor

Members present

*President Malcolm Wheeler**Editor/Webmaster Keith Morgan**Library Charlotte Churchill**Shop/Raffle Dick Morgan**Field Trips Bill Cook**Mineral Council Bob & Jackie Pattie**Guests Karin Wheeler & Pat Morgan*

Meeting started at 9:50 AM.

The Rec Center will have a new lock & combination May 1.

BEMS members will need a new ID with their BEMS number on it.

Preparations for this year's South Sound Show is doing well. We have seven signed contracts.

Les Brooks is in the hospital for gallbladder problems.

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM.

Words Of Caution by John M. Wright, Chair, AFMS Conservation & Legislation

When you head out this spring on a field trip or any other type of outing that involves federal lands, don't be surprised to find roads blocked by gates or earthen structures and many parks, camp sites, and trails closed. In spite of congressional legislation that requires proposals and recommendations for road closures based on in-depth studies and public hearings, the U. S. Forest Service has more-or-less chosen to ignore the congressional mandate and is pursuing a course that is indiscriminately restricting the public from vast areas of federal lands. Trying to understand the rationale they use in choosing areas to be closed is impossible and reminds me of a game kids play called "pin the tail on the donkey".

During the early 1980's the U. S. Forest Service began to make changes in their philosophy for the management of forest resources. In all fairness, I want to acknowledge up front that in large part this was because of reductions in federal funds; however, in recent years the reduction in funds has become a scapegoat for placing millions of acres off limits to the public because of pressure exerted by well-financed special interest groups. These restrictions may very well come back and bite them in the backside, but that will be of little consolation for us as our tax dollars will be used to correct the mistakes.

The following USDA News Release is the new philosophy in a "nut shell" so to speak. It also contains the website for a more detailed version:

*News Release**USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C.**Release No. 0721**USDA Forest Service Releases Five Year Strategic Plan*

WASHINGTON, October 29, 2007 - U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell announced today the release of the agency's strategic plan for fiscal years 2007 - 2012. The plan includes Kimbell's emphasis areas of climate change, water and involving youngsters in forest activities.

"Forests play a unique role in meeting our Nation's future challenges associated with climate change, renewable energy, and sustaining abundant flows of fresh water to the American people," said Kimbell. "Because issues related to climate change and looming water shortages will take many years to resolve, the Forest Service is committed to instilling stronger land ethics in future generations."

The Forest Service Strategic Plan for FY 2007 - 2012 provides a clear yet broad direction to carry out its mission of natural resource management while focusing on critical programs and activities.

The Forest Service strategy includes the integration of environmental, social, and economic issues into its management decisions while accounting for present and future needs.

The Forest Service Strategic Plan can be found at: <www.fs.fed.us/publications/strategic/fs-sp-fy07-12.pdf>

So what does this mean for you? Ultimately it will mean fewer places for field trips and other outings as competition is increased for access to private property as trail bikers, 4-wheelers, hunters, campers, etc. are displaced from federal lands and seek out new areas for their pursuits. It will also mean higher prices for lumber and wood products, fuel, and minerals used to make our lives more productive and comfortable.

The underhanded covert methods being used for taking away public access to federal lands without public approval or hearings will continue unless we take a stand. Become involved and let your opposition be known. We are not alone in this fight and can increase our leverage by joining with other groups that are opposed to the road closures and limiting the public's access to lands controlled by the Forest Service. Find a way to become aware of, and to keep yourself up to date on these important issues in your area. I recommend that you or your club join the American Lands Access Association and also the BlueRibbon Coalition (sharetrails.org). These are two of the better ones for keeping informed, but there are many more and some of them may be located in your immediate area.

BEMS General Meeting Minutes April 10, 2008

by Pete Williams, 2008 Secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:30. President Malcolm Wheeler presiding.

There were 8 guests in attendance.

Minutes were approved as written. 61 people were in attendance.

Tumbler Editor's Report: There was an error in the Tumbler last month. In the list of names of people who had not paid were some members who had recently paid. This was a timing error. The Tumbler could use more articles submitted from members. Submitters receive free tickets to the raffle.

Webmaster's Report: Charlotte submitted some pictures of the last South Sound show for inclusion on the web site.

Treasurer's Report: Bills are being paid. Some badges still need to be picked up. Names will be put in the next Tumbler to remind people.

Shop Reports: More young people are coming into the shop on Monday nights. Faceting classes are going well. One new student has started. The next opening will be in about a month. If interested, please add your name to the waiting list.

Library: Postcards were sent to people who are late in returning books. Charlotte mentioned a children's book called *Dino Poop*. Other children's books are available in the library.

Health & Welfare: One card was sent out last month. One was sent out this month to Les Brooks who recently returned from the hospital.

Federation Report: Next weekend is the mid-year meeting in Kenniwick.

Field Trip Report: The Pow Wow club is having a field trip to Saddle Mountain and the Diatom pits on 4/19-20. The Tumbler lists upcoming field trips.

Mineral Council: The last meeting in Ellensburg was canceled due to excessive snow. There is a field trip planned to Saddle Mountain in May. Members are cautioned to still stick to the areas not restricted.

South Sound Show: About \$1500-\$1600 has been collected with 30% of the vendors responding. More volunteers are needed to help with planning.

Old Business: There will be a new lock on the front door beginning around May 1. Members need to write their BEMS ID on their membership cards. Spouses of members need to use the members ID with an S in front. Malcolm will provide a web site where retirees can find their BEMS ID.

New Business: A new club officer position is needed to manage the club's videos and DVDs. Stephanie Smith volunteered for the position. Thank you Stephanie

Program: A video was shown of True North Gems mining for rubies in Greenland.

Raffle: David Wiest won the special.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45

Displays:

Eric Chilson - Topaz, cabochons, naturlite, coral, Hart Mtn. jasper, Greenwater agate.

Rich Russell - Green river petrified wood & Greenwater thundereggs.

Carolyn Sealton - Finished & unfinished casting in bronze, copper, silver & gold.

Bob Bird - Bolos & belt buckles of various material.

Ed Laville - Smack'em rocks.

Bob Pattie - Misc. jewelry.

Roger Glasscock - Geodes.

Richard Morgan - Booklet from the South Sound Science Fair.

The 2008 South Sound Regional Science Fair by Dick Morgan

On March 23 at Pacific Lutheran University, Pat & I set up a display of rocks, fossils and minerals for the benefit of the students participating in the South Sound Regional Science Fair and others attending the show.

This is where the members of various school science programs go to be judged against each others science projects. They are judged on presentation, knowledge and that their data has been done to completion.

This was my third year helping out & Pat's second. Our purpose is to provide a presentation with specimens and information to educate and entertain the person's waiting for the judging to finish. With explanations about geology, rocks, fossils, minerals and coming up with answers to the questions asked the students and adults, we were there from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. We gave away over 400 polished rocks. It was an enjoyable time, but it felt good to get home and put my feet up.

Clean Druzy Specimens

To clean and shine most druzy specimens, use Easy Off oven cleaner (fume free is OK). Spray the specimen and then leave it overnight in a closed container or bay before rinsing. This even works on iron stained quartz crystals.

via West Seattle Petroglyphs, 3/08; via The Glacial Drifter, 6/00; via Gem Cutters News, 6/00; via The Nugget, 1/00; from Breccia, 2/98

From Atop The Rock Pile



By Malcolm Wheeler, Sr., 2008 BEMS President

The sun is finally shining on our wonderful state

All that is green isn't just plants ..

I'm green with envy watching rock hounds looking for new rocks and gems...

We may not have EMERALDS in our state tho there is a beryl mine in Teanaway valley... who knows maybe one of you may find an EMERALD there...

So as the new hunting season starts again make me Emerald green with envy with what you find...

Young Richard's Almanac by Dick Morgan

In this day and age of every youngster having to be a winner, not keeping score in sporting events, not using red pens to mark errors, is an act of hate towards the youngsters that do not get the results and rewards that they earned by working harder, studying longer and showing neater work than the others. How can you have good workers coming out of schools when they get no credit for doing better than others? Also those that lose later in life may not know how to cope with losing.

Use FDA approved water containers or get the military MWC steel/plastic cans. Contrary to internet myth; the FDA approved plastic containers do not leak dioxins. The plasticizers are mentioned in the urban legend about dioxins (<http://urbanlegends.about.com/library/bl-microwave-dioxin2.htm>). Keep them covered so the sun doesn't cook them and change the water every time you come across good water. I don't care what you keep water in, it will taste of the container; the warmer you let the water get, the stronger the flavor. A trick I learned in college (Temple) where the water was notoriously bad, is that water always tastes better when drunk from a glass bottle. Fill the glass bottle half full, shake it vigorously for a few seconds and drink. I use a large insulated drink cooler, you know, the round ones you see on construction sites and at sports games. They come as large as 10 gallons. Mine is an igloo that has a press-on insulated top. If you can get blocks of ice, they work best and last longest. Put as many blocks as will fit in the cooler (or fill with ice cubes) then fill with water. Even in the back of my pickup, with a dark blue camper cap in Utah and Nevada, the water stayed cold for days (family of 4 drinking it too). Every few days add more ice instead of water. Unfortunately the ice cubes do not last as long as the blocks, still good for a few days. You do have to unload the drink cooler every time you get back, but the emergency water in the jugs only need to be topped off. If I'm using the jugs for washing water or emergency drink water I don't really care what it tastes like.

via The Kyana Gemscoop, 8/07; from Rockhound list server

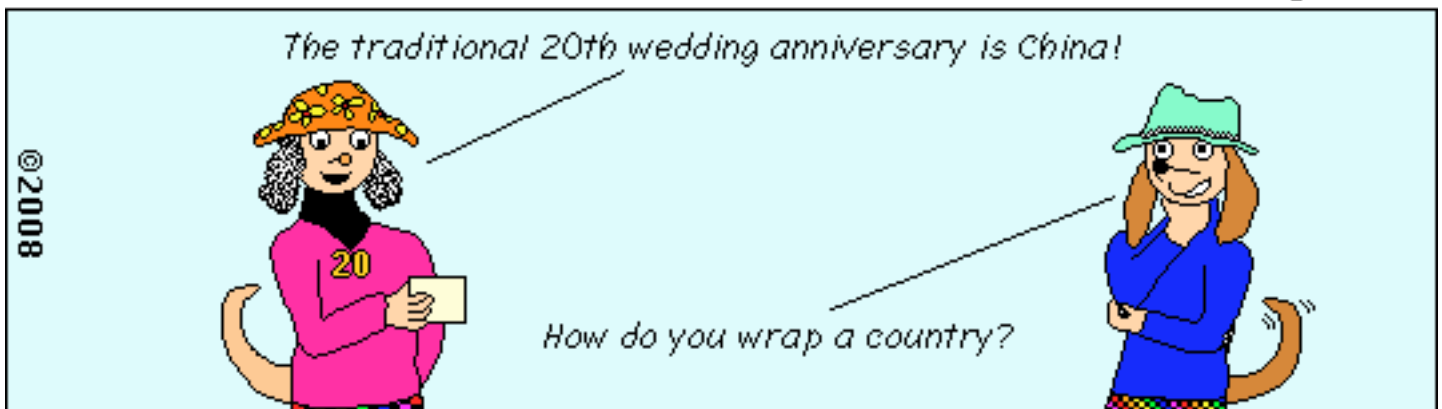
20 years of Mr. & Mrs. Rockhound by KAM

20 years of... wait a minute, that would make me... errrrrrg..., uh, anyway Mr. & Mrs. Rockhound first appeared in the May 1988 issue of the BEMS Tumbler. Not the oldest cartoon I've had published, but the longest series that I'm still doing (even if they don't appear as frequently as they used to.)

It started as filler for an issue of the Tumbler I was guest-editing while editor Norman Steele was on vacation and when he got back he wrote that if I had anymore to send them to him and I began working on more cartoons. Who knew that there were so many jokes about rockhounding?

Mr. and Mrs. Rockhound

by KAM



The Tumbler has received One-Time Rights to publish this cartoon

Capturing Our Hobby With Art by Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Junior Activities Chair

Kids are natural-born artists who take to Crayola crayons like ducklings to water. In addition to being just plain fun to create, artwork can help develop a child's creative brain and hand-eye coordination and, in the adult world, is an important part of earth science and lapidary work. Figures and photos are helpful in illustrating field trip reports, in adding educational value to a display, or in providing blueprints to guide a person through a lapidary project. Developing a child's artistic talents can also lead to a full-time career, as with mineral artists Noel DeDora, Lyn Sylvia Kilian, Saul Krotki, or Gabriele Berndt, or professional mineral photographer Jeff Scovil. Following are ideas for activities to help kids incorporate art into our hobby.

Activity 1:

Drawing Minerals & Fossils. Lead kids in a group exercise drawing diagrams of their favorite minerals and fossils or in drawing the different types of crystal structures. This can be done with kids at all levels, and for the youngest kids, Diamond Dan Productions has really nifty mineral coloring books for sale at bargain prices (for more info, contact Darryl Powell, diamonddan@rochester.rr.com).

Activity 2:

Reconstructing Past Life in Art. Ask kids to bring fossils from their collections or have the youth leader bring different fossils from one fossil locality. Then ask kids to imagine what their favorite trilobite, for example, looked like when it was alive. This can lead into individual or group activities drawing murals or dioramas of ancient life and reconstructions of ancient environments. Kids might draw their own pictures on sheets of paper, or you might get a large roll of paper to create a group diorama. You might also make casts by pressing real fossils into clay to make a mold and then pouring in plaster. When it hardens, have kids paint the casts the colors and patterns they think the animal may have had when it was alive. For instance, do they think a trilobite might have been all black or brown, or might they have had spots or stripes of different colors? Similarly, did brachiopods have stripes or swirls like many modern clams? Have kids look through picture books of modern sea life before deciding on patterns and colors for painting their fossil casts.

Activity 3:

Field Art. Memory is a fickle friend. Thus it's always useful to sketch an area or outcrop where you collected minerals or fossils to show the association of rock types, significant landmarks, specific horizons where fossils or minerals were collected, etc. Such a sketch serves as a handy reminder the next time you visit the locality or as a useful reference tool for others who may wish to visit it. Teach this to your club's kids!

Activity 4:

Maps. It's important to document self-collected material and to supplement labels for individual specimens with maps of where you've found your material, and maps are an art form unto themselves. At the simplest level, they consist of lines, arrows, and print to indicate names of roads, distance markers, etc., but they can also be illustrated to provide visual supplements showing significant landmarks, illustrating what's to be found and where, or showing schematics of the layers of rock at a deposit and which layers hold significant minerals or fossils.

Activity 5:

Lapidary Blueprints. Teach kids to sketch the steps of a lapidary project before they jump in. It's usually easier to do a project if you can "see" the steps in advance and have visual reminders at hand to guide you rather than a dense set of written instructions alone. With a lapidary project, pictures are indeed worth a thousand words.

Activity 6:

Photography. Not everyone has artistic talent. That's why God created cameras! Even those of us who can't draw a stick figure have a way to capture our finds and lapidary work in visual form. Photos can be used in many ways. Most magazines insist that articles submitted for publication be illustrated. Photos breath life into field trip reports and write-ups on how to construct a lapidary project. They also enliven a rock display with shots of sites where rocks were collected. And slides can illustrate talks. Electronic cameras and computers have opened a range of neat possibilities. For instance, you can illustrate a field trip report with photos of a locality and shots of individual specimens collected, and this can be printed in hardcopy form or posted to an individual or club web site to share with plugged-in rockhounds from around the world. Can't identify a fossil or mineral you've collected? Shoot it with your digital camera and post it online to see if anyone else might identify it. I've also seen inexpensive club calendars produced using electronic photos with a Mineral- or Locality-of-the-Month and dates highlighted for club meetings and other club events. And kids can have fun using digital cameras to make rockhound trading cards with pictures of minerals and/or fossils and facts about each. If your kids are like mine, they'll be teaching you new and creative ways to create art with a digital camera!

With activities like these, let's help develop the budding artist residing within each child and show them how to put their inherent artistic inclinations to good work while, as always, having fun!
from AFMS Newsletter, 3/06

Scientists are reconstructing how Neanderthals would have sounded. So far they have produced how a Neanderthal would pronounce "e" & are working on eventually simulating an entire sentence.

The simulation can be found online at <http://media.newscientist.com/data/images/ns/av/dn13672A1.wav>

Maintaining That Sparkle

It's an easy thing to forget but you must agree that we, as gem cutters, see gemstones at their very best. They can never be as clean and shiny as they are after the cleaning they get following their removal from the dopstick. Many of our own stones spend most of their "lives" in little hygienic display boxes where dirt, dust, grease or grime can't violate their beauty.

A gemstone, which has been set in jewelry and actually worn fairly often, well, that's a different story! How often have you seen one of your creations after one of "them" has worn it for six months or so? They show them to us proudly, "See, it's just as pretty as ever!" while we choke and wonder if it really is the same gemstone. I have seen terrific topazes, grand garnets, and beautiful beryls reduced to the appearance of ground glass due to the dirt and grime covering their surfaces. I have seen a \$6,000 diamond solitaire so well "disguised" that even it could not exhibit one single flash of brilliance, fire or dispersion! It's almost criminal and perhaps there "oughta be a law!"

Since there is no such law, we must do all we can to alert people to the benefits of regularly cleaning their jewelry. Perhaps, to be convincing, when a gemstone changes hands, a little demonstration is in order. Have a grimy gem handy and let them examine it before and after cleaning. Seeing is usually believing. As far as cleaning itself is concerned, I usually go beyond the normal soaking in a cleaner or solution of soapy water. I try to get a little brush (toothbrush in a pinch) up at the gem's pavilion and scrub it as well as possible. Even ultrasonic cleaning can't always remove a thick accumulation of grime here. Another soaking and then a good rinse follow this procedure. Some rings will respond to a quick scrubbing with toothpaste, silver in particular, and this will do when in a hurry.

On a relative scale, a dirty gemstone is much like a shirt or blouse which has had 1/4" of dirt troweled over it. We wouldn't think of wearing that in public or private! Even so, many of "them" think nothing of wearing their jewelry in that condition.

via West Seattle Petroglyphs, 4/08; via Carny Hound, 2/08; from S.C.R.I.B.E. CD, 08

Carving Is Not Just For Gems

Since prehistoric times, man, Paleo and Neolithic, has hammered out tools of stone to cut wood, to kill animals and to work skins. The idea probably came from desperate throwing of stones to down something good to eat. But early man was observant, of necessity, and recognized that stones were broken naturally into sizes and shapes that answered his needs. The first lapidary, breaking stones himself, to the sizes and shapes he wanted, set the stage for everyone who works stone. He made sharper ax heads, lighter arrowheads and sturdier scrapers, but he recognized the beauty of the stone as well as its utility. If a tribe's medicine man wanted fetishes, the lapidary became a stone carver. Then his wife, tired of braiding or tying pretty stones into necklace forms, probably asked for a hole drilled into a pretty rock or two she had picked up while digging shellfish, he became a bead maker. Some of the pretty river stones, already naturally sculpted and polished, were easily carved into amulets and seals. The Stone Age people learned to differentiate stones and developed techniques for working them. Stone adornments excavated at Shar-i-Sokhta in eastern Iran are dated back to 2,800 BC. Soft stones included alabaster, limestone, and lapis lazuli, while hard stones were carnelian and rock crystal.

That stones tumbled in a gravelly stream were prettier, and thus the value of polishing with a harder stone may have been noted. The cabochon was probably the first formally recognized man made shape, a simple cabochon being a rounded convex top with a flattened back. The shape is suitable for agate, jade, cat's eye stone and moonstones, harder to work but beautiful when finished. A double cabochon has a rounded back, lower in height than the front; it is commonly used for star stones because it may increase the distinctness of the star and the extra carat weight is a definite plus to the Ceylon native cutters who cut most of the world's star stones since a pale stone may have its color deepened by doubling. A hollow cabochon is where the back of the stone is concave, it is used where the color is too dark as with many garnets. The hollow allows more light to show through. The lentic cut is a rather shallow double cabochon with the top and back of even height, used for many years for small moonstones. The lapidary has moved from just stone carving into carving gems.

via Golden Spike News, 2/08; from PGGS Petrograph 2/05

A Wealth Of Difference

Gold Filled: A layer of gold backed with another metal such as chrome, nickel, copper or silver.

Gold Plate: The process of placing a base metal, such as copper, in a bath and sealing the two metals through electroplating.

Gold Leaf: A sheet of gold varying from four to five millionths of an inch in thickness used for gilding and other purposes.

Liquid Gold: Finely divided gold suspended in a vegetable oil and used for gilding ceramics.

Vermeil: 14-Karat gold overlaid on sterling silver.

Sterling Silver: Silver of a purity of 925 parts per 1,000. The content is 92.5 percent silver and 7.5 percent of another metal, usually copper.

Silver Plate: silver that has been coated over a base metal such as copper, nickel-silver, or brass in a dipping process that included sealing the two metals through electroplating.

via West Seattle Petroglyphs, 3/08; via Snoopy Gems, 1/08; via Hound's Howl, 12/07; from The Mountain Gem, 11/97

Field Trips

The club or clubs sponsoring the field trips are shown in italics. When known I have listed a phone number and contact person for each sponsoring club below the listed trips. If you are not a member of the sponsoring club, you should phone and ask permission to go on their field trip.

Some trips have fees to non club members, so they can be a day member, and be covered under club insurance. The usual fee is \$.50 a day.

Information from the Washington State Mineral Council webpage (<http://www.mineralcouncil.org>).

May 17 & 18 *North Idaho - Saddle Mountain & Diatom pits - Petrified wood & opal* - Will need digging tools - Meet at 9 am at Lepricon Market
Diane Rose - (208) 667-8591 or rockinroses2@msn.com

Arizona Ironwood

The rich dark heartwood of the Arizona ironwood tree is one of the most beautiful woods in the world. Its grain structure and soft satin finish set it above all others, including the romance woods of the orient. The tree which produces this fabulous wood is native to the Southwestern desert, ranging across the southern half of Arizona into Upper Sonora, Mexico. The ironwood tree seldom grows above an altitude of 2500 feet and is most commonly found in dry foothill country edging the desert. The tree is very sensitive to frost, and any area sustaining it is usually considered suitable for the growing of citrus. The ironwood tree is a spiny, semi-evergreen that often achieves a height of 30 feet. The tree is very slow growing and a large tree is probably several hundred years old.

Depending on local conditions, it requires from fifty to a hundred years or more for an ironwood tree to cure properly after it dies. The best wood for working is usually obtained from trees that have cured in a standing position. Fallen trees are subject to the attack of carpenter ants, termites, worms, and the action of sand and running water. Seldom is a usable log found on the ground.

Ironwood is very dense and is one of the hardest woods in the world. Its specific gravity is 1.2, and the wood sinks in water like a rock. While very hard, ironwood is also brittle and can withstand but little side pressure without splintering. Special tool steel points are used when turning the wood, and pieces shaped by hand are formed with a rasp.

One point that should be emphasized is that curing cracks and checks are characteristic of the finest wood. The great density of this wood is such that during the years required for complete curing, many shrinking cracks occur. These lines, that in other woods would be considered imperfections, should be regarded with the same respect given to matrix lines in the finest turquoise. Only very small pieces can be cut of ironwood that do not show a small crack or checks.

Articles made from ironwood, such as arrowheads, hoes, etc., have been found in prehistoric ruins dating from 1000 to 3000 years ago.

via Breccia, 2/08; via Rocky Review, 3/04; via The Agatizer 1/04; via West Seattle Petroglyphs; from Snoopy Gems

Hidden Dangers

Acetone: An industrial type solvent containing harmful vapor.

Hydrogen sulfide: By-product of sulfur and water. Deadly poison!

Manganese: In dust or vapors, it can damage the nervous system.

Quartz, agate, sandstone, granite, chert, flint: All are of the silica rock family. The dust from this family contributes to silicosis of the lungs.

Styrofoam: When heated or burned, it releases toxic gases.

Abalone: Grind and polish only when wet. Be aware that any odor detected is highly toxic.

Malachite: Work wet, as the dust created when working dry is toxic.

Lead: Known to enter the body from dust, fumes, and water. It can damage the brain and neuromuscular system.

While it is not healthy to fear everything, one should be aware of hidden dangers in apparently innocent looking material that we all use extensively in our hobby. If you are using a material that is new to you, read the labels and heed any warning. We want all lapidarists to remain a healthy lot and continue to live long, active lives!

via Breccia, 4/08; via The Franklin County Rockhouser, 3/08; via Strata Gem, 10/07; via Rock Chips, 6/06; via Gems of the Rogue, 10/05; from Calgary Lapidary Journal

Polishing Hard to Reach Places

Agates can be cut and polished on diamond, but we prefer to use Carborundum grinding wheels and polish with cerium oxide on hard felt. You can also use leather or poly-pads. Try a little red rouge when polishing. It seems to give a more glassy finish. One thing to remember is to get rid of all scratches from the grinding stage with a 600 sanding disk or belt before preceding to the polishing step.

via West Seattle Petroglyphs, 3/08; via SCFMS, 5-6/00; from The Backbender's Gazette, 4/00



Shows

May 17 & 18: Saturday 10 am-6 pm; Sunday 10 am-4 pm

Hatrockhounds Annual Gem & Mineral Show

Hermiston Convention Center

4155 Hwy 395

Hermiston, Oregon

May 24 & 25: Saturday 9 am-6 pm; Sunday 9 am-5 pm

Bitterroot Gem & Mineral Society, Mineral & Fossil Show

Hamilton Senior Center

820 N. Fourth & Adirondac

Hamilton, Montana



Internet Addresses

Dwarves Earth Treasures: Jeffrey A's Online Museum & Rock Shop
<http://www.sailorenergy.net/Minerals/MineralMain.html>

Sticks In Stones Lapidary
<http://www.sticks-in-stones.com/index.html>

The Mineral & Gemstone Kingdom
<http://www.minerals.net/>

Amethyst Galleries' Mineral Gallery
<http://mineral.galleries.com/>

Mineral Statistics & Information from the USGS
<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/>

Mineral Identification
<http://geology.csupomona.edu/alert/mineral/minerals.htm>

Snow Flakes & Snow Crystals
<http://www.snowcrystals.com>

San Diego Natural History Museum sites
Mineral Matters
<http://www.sdnhm.org/kids/minerals/index.html>

Fossil Mysteries
<http://www.sdnhm.org/exhibits/mystery/index.html>

