

SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM and MINERAL SOCIETY

Las Vegas, Nevada



The Polished Slab

Volume 65, Issue 3

March/April 2005

President's Message

David Rogers, President

I would like to open my message and welcome all of our new members. We are going to have an exciting year. With the hard work of all our volunteers there will be many new rock hunts. With the addition of many new shop foreman's the access to our workshop will be expanded with a new emphasis on education of equipment usage. Come join us at our shop and learn the skills of a rock hound.

Our club has always been active in local community efforts. We have been partnered with the Ronald McDonalds House of many years. Our members have donated many hand made items to allow the children give their Mothers and Fathers a gift for their Day. It is coming soon so please help our club with a donation. Please contact Frank Auerswald at 365-8306 or our next meeting. I personally want to thank all of our generous members.

Our Burro Creek trip is just around the corner. Please join the club and enjoy or overnight stay at Wickiup Arizona. There will be a sign up sheet at our next general club meeting. Happy and safe rock hunting.

Burro Creek Guide Through Time

Larry Foutz

Those making the annual trek to Burro Creek, Arizona, have a chance to look back through geological time as they follow US 93 through the Miocene volcanic rocks of the Black Mountains—the channel for the Colorado River. A copy of "Roadside Geology of Arizona" by Halka Chronic offers all the details.

Upon leaving Hoover Dam, the highway wanders through Tertiary volcanic rocks, topped with younger volcanic rocks. These banded, contorted, colorful rocks register repeated episodes of bending, breaking, and partial melting through Precambrian time. In this part of the Basin and Range Province (geology-speak for the area that includes Nevada, parts of Oregon, California, Arizona, and New Mexico), intermountain valleys filled with Tertiary and Quaternary sand, gravel, clay, and, in some places, salt.

Look for a good example as the highway enters Detrital Valley at mile 15. Alluvial aprons, called bajadas in the Southwest, slope out from the bordering ranges. The fill in the valley is several thousand feet deep, and somewhere way below its surface lie the great faults along which the mountain blocks rose.

At mile 21 the lava filled and later eroded conduit of a volcano, a volcanic neck, rises quite close to the highway.

The White Hills stand out east of mile 28—not white but much lighter than the Black Mountains to the west. Their massive tan layers of Tertiary tuff front some more dark Precambrian gneiss, a high-grade metamorphic rock that can have many different parent rocks, with the most common being granite, diorite and schist. The buildup of

(Continued on page 2)



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Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

intense heat and pressure over a very long period of time enables the migration of atoms within the rock leading to the formation of mineral bands that are oriented perpendicular to the directions of pressure. This banding develops a crude sort of foliation, typically as alternating layers of light minerals (quartz and feldspar) and dark minerals (hornblende and biotite mica). As gneiss approaches its melting point, the dark and light-colored mineral bands can bend and become quite contorted.

At the south end are reddish and buff colored layers of older, probably Cretaceous volcanic ash, according to the guide book, steeply tilted during both Laramide and Basin and Range mountain building time periods.

South of the White Hills another long narrow range of Precambrian metamorphic rock, certainly the dominant rock type along this route, borders the valley. This is the Cerbat Range. Its high point is pine-covered Mt. Tipton at 2,178.7 meters (7,148 feet), marks the north end of the range. Notice how angular and ragged the rocks that make up these bulbous knobs and boulders. The rough, angular weathering pattern is characteristic of gneiss and schist—metamorphic rocks. You'll see farther south that granite tends to weather with rounded or knobby contours. Bajadas along the Cerbat Mountains make up a low pass that separates Detrital Valley's northward drainage from the southward drainage of Sacramento Valley.

Just north of this divide is the turnoff that leads east to the little town of Chloride.

Cretaceous Tertiary, and Quaternary volcanic rocks make up most of the south end of the Black Mountains, one of the longest ranges in Arizona, 100 miles from northern tip to southern toe. Some of the youngest of the volcanic rocks come close to the highway near mile 67; horizontal Quaternary basalt lava flows that came into being after Basin and Range tilting had taken place. Generally, Quaternary lava flows lie horizontally, while Tertiary volcanic layers tend to be tilted or warped by Basin and Range faulting.

(Continued on page 10)

Slab Saw Day at the Shop

Larry Grillett, Vice President

On Thursday March 10th, several members headed out to the Shop to prepare the slab saws for shipment to Riverside for overhaul. After many years of dependable service, these tired workhorses need a fresh lease on life.

After a short incident stemming from a miscommunication about the shop opening status we were able to address the situation at hand. With our sleeves rolled up, and our mucking boots on, we got busy. There was quite a bit of buildup of sludge in the saws. It was decided that though we are not sending all saws down for repair at this time we could and would certainly clean them all out. After draining the oil (and some water that had gotten in), we started scraping the sand and slurry that was coating the inside of the machines. It was not a pretty sight! Though we were still all part of the "purty" people, you would surely have to consider us the "purty dirty" people. After about 2 hours we had gathered over 40 gallons of "sludge" from the saws.

At about noon, the ladies, "Bless them", went out to pick up some Pizza. "Oh, boy, that tasted good". We sat around and discussed how much fun everyone else wasn't having.

(Continued on page 3)

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Saw Day (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

Now was time to load the machines on the trailer for transportation to Riverside. "Man those saws are heavy". With one man at each corner we were able to lift them up and manhandle them up to the front of the trailer. We were able to load four of the five saws onto the trailer.

Now was time to breakout the pressure washer to see if we could get them any cleaner. After some fiddling around to get the washer working and to mix up some soap solution, we went after the machines. The task was beyond the capability of the washer, because the dirt and grease was very mean, old, and happy to stay where it was. This was going to require some degreasing agents and steam to get them really clean. I checked with a local rental location. Earlier, we had been informed that they had a steam cleaning bay and would clean our equipment for us. Apparently, the "fairy-godmother" department was on break when I called, as I was told that their steam cleaning facility was only for cleaning their equipment and could not be rented out. I then called a mobile service "GreaseBGone" and they agreed to come out the next day and give us an estimate on cleaning the saws.

I contacted "H2O Environmental" about picking up the sludge. They let me know about their various schedules and it appears that if we can move the sludge from the 5 gallon buckets to a 55 Gallon drum, we can save a few hundred dollars. It looks like another work day is in the planning stages to get that done. We will need a wide mouth funnel to facilitate pouring the sludge from the buckets to the drum. Then, we can address the old sludge pile. Since it is mostly solid at this point (and can't be poured into the drum), we will shovel it into the emptied buckets and seal them for pickup.

All in all, we had a very productive day and I would personally like to thank all who showed up:

Dave Finch
Bill Robinson
Charlotte Robinson
Jim Grothuesmann
and, of course,
Ed Rupperecht

I'd also like to give a special "thank you" to Lynn Manthey for delivering his trailer for us to use, for this project.

The Polished Slab, March/April 2005

The Wild Wild Pot Luck

Charlotte Robinson

As most of you know Charlotte Robinson is the Chairperson of this year's Awards Pot Luck lunch. Virginia Johnson is the co-chairperson.

From here on I'll refer to Charlotte as the trail boss because she has chosen as this year's theme the Wild, Wild West, so mark your calendars. The date is Dec. 11. Lunch time is: 1:00-4:00 Setup is: 12:00-1:00 Breakdown is: 4:00-5:00

We are very pleased with the voluntary offers of assistance from some of the members.

Beth Jones will be in charge of ticket sales. Charlotte is in charge of the program.

Mary Beth Paladino and the Pebble Pups will supply the decorations and the centerpieces. Carol McGovern will be in charge of the cattle auction and door prizes.

It's a BYOB for alcoholic purposes.

We have secured the Teamster's Meeting Hall at 700 N. Lamb Blvd. It has a kitchen. We will also have off duty Metro Officers providing security. We are looking for two volunteers to be committee chairmen for setup and takedown.

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"RockHounds: The Movie" Coming to a Gem & Mineral Show Near You

Press Release Submitted by Dave Finch

Dallas, TX - Explorer Multimedia Inc. has just finished the new documentary film "RockHounds: The Movie." While following the exploits of "rock hounds," the documentary showcases the fun, adventure and even the wackiness of the hobby of gem & mineral collecting.

The independent film will now begin to tour on the film festival circuit throughout the country

In addition, the producers are also hoping to distribute the film to Gem & Mineral Shows that are interested in screening it. "While the film serves as a great introduction to the hobby of gem and mineral collecting, we believe it will also be appreciated by life-long rock hounds," said director Todd Kent, "For a lot of people gem and mineral collecting is a passion. This definitely comes through in the film."

"A wide range of diggers appear in the movie," said producer and geologist Devin Dennie, who

also appears in the film, "from young children to college students to adults, rock hounds are a diverse group."

Shot in three states, the film covers digs of fossils, crystals and more with an emphasis on the people who share this great adventure. Any gem and mineral societies that are interested in screening the documentary can contact the producers through the film's website <http://www.rockhoundsmovie.com>. "We hope to distribute to as many gem & mineral shows as we can across the country," said Kent, "We also plan to approach museums and other organizations about exhibiting it."

Explorer Multimedia Inc. is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation responsible for the TV series "North Texas Explorer" and the upcoming "GeoAmerica." For more information consult their websites: <http://www.explorermultimedia.org> and <http://www.rockhoundsmovie.com>.

Class Schedule

- Cabochon** Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 12 until 4; and Monday and Wednesday from 7 until 9
Call Ed Rupprecht at 459 8747 to schedule
- Beading** Every other Monday from 7 until 9. Call Jaen Rupprecht at 459-8747 to schedule
- Silver Smithing** Every Tuesday from 7 until 9. Call Frank Auerswald to schedule
- Wire Wrapping** Saturdays. Call Jaen Rupprecht at 459-8747 to schedule.

Shop Schedule

Monday: 12 to 4, and 6 until 9
Tuesday: 12 until 4
Wednesday: 12 to 4, and 6 until 9
Saturday: By appointment. Call 459-8747 to schedule.

Instructors

- Cabochons:** Ed Rupprecht 459-8747
Faceting: Larry Grillett
Wirewrapping: Jaen Rupprecht 459-8747
Beading: Jaen Rupprecht 459-8747, Maxine Riggs 431-4523
Silver Smithing: Frank Auerswald

March/April Birthdays

Richard	Antonick	Mark	Harmer
Gary	Balon	Rick	Kasky
William	Bischoff	Carol	McGovern
Helen	Cervantes	Bernard	Paladino
Heriberto	Corn	Elana	Paladino
John	Cripe	Robert	Skulsky
Larry	Foutz	Thom	Slaughter
Sue	Goodloe	Nancy	Tatom
Diane	Hale	Tad	Wadleigh

Welcome New Club Members

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| Joanne | Campbell |
| Sandra | Cuddy |
| Ivan | Erwin |
| Cliff | Jackson |
| Robert | Kimble |
| Colleen | McGraw |
| Holly | McNaught |
| Norma | Sigretto |
| Murray | Smith |
| Barbara | Stevens |
| Beth | Suslo |

Upcoming Field Trips

Bruce Wingate, Field Trip Chair

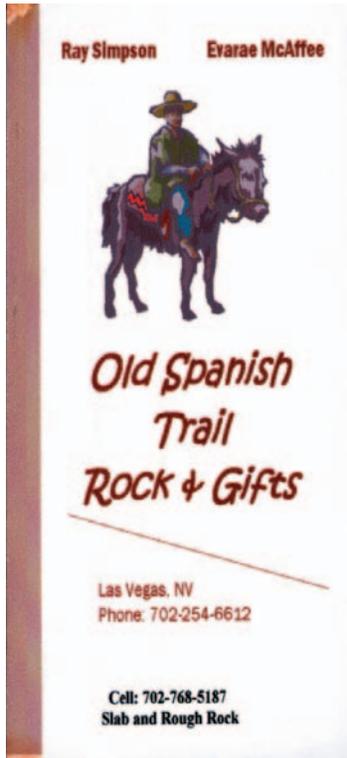
Date	Destination
April 13-17	Burro Creek, Arizona.
May 21	Sperry Wash, near Tecopa, California. Agate, palm, wood, talc mines.
June 18	Enterprise, Utah. Indian Blanket Jasper. This is a fee site.

This schedule may be subject to change due to the availability of access, and to changing weather conditions.

If you are unable to make the club meeting, you can call me at 702 547-6590 to sign up or find out about the next field trip.

If you are unsure about making a trip, you can call the day before, or show up at the meeting site on the day of the trip.

If any member has a suggestion for a field trip, please contact me.



One Free session for SNGMS Members



History Museum and BLM Offer SNGMS Members Field Trip Opportunities

Bruce Wingate, Field Trip Chair

A California museum and the Bureau of Land Management offer field trips to sites throughout central California.

The Buena Vista Museum of Natural History and the BLM have a non-technical program for anyone high school age or older with an interest in recent history, really ancient history (paleontology), minerals, or geology.

The schedule:

Apr. 22-24: Mojave Desert Symposium, Zzyzx
The San Bernardino County Museum is sponsoring a 3-day symposium and a Saturday-Sunday field trip through the mining districts of the Mojave Desert. Members of the BVNHM and BLM employees will be presenting papers at that symposium. For more information, contact: Bob Reynolds, (909) 781-9318 or bobreynolds@lsa-assoc.com; or William Presch, wpresch@exchange.fullerton.edu.

Jun. 11: Johnsondale — California Hot Springs
This program examines the history of the western face of the Sierra Nevada and the roof pendants in the Johnsondale area, the North Branch of the Kern River and the Kern River Fault. Return to Bakersfield by way of California Hot Springs.

Sept. 10-11: Southern Death Valley

Start at Searles Lake and the Trona Pinnacles, take 4x4 roads over the Panamint Mountains into Shoshone for an overnight stay. Includes a stop at Tecopa Hot Springs and a visit to the Amargosa Opera House.

Sept. 30-Oct. 2: Mother Lode-Part 1: Southern Mines

This 3-day field conference examines the mines, geology and mining history between Maricopa and Jackson. There will be a Friday Evening Lecture Series in Jamestown at the Community Hall from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday's trip will be from Jamestown through Columbia, then on to the Hidden Treasure Mine and to the Westpoint Mining District via the Chaw Se Historic Park (petroglyphs, grinding stones). Sunday's field trip starts in Coulterville and examines the mining areas of

(Continued on page 7)

Board Meeting Minutes for February/March 2005

Charlotte Robinson, Secretary

Board Meeting February 2005, President David Rogers presiding.

Board voted to publish newsletter every two months to save us money and have bigger fonts and more stories. The Polished Slab will be March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, November/December. We need to mail out at least 250 pieces of mail to receive the bulk mail rate. It does not save us any money by sending your Slab email or US mail. If you get both, share one with a friend or neighbor.

Scott Edwards is the new Webmaster

Discussion was held to place Polished Slabs in various places around town; Clare Brennamen volunteered to be in charge of this.

The field trip to Buffington Pockets was cancelled due to rain washing the road out.

Frank Auerswald brought up discussion about our club taking the responsibility for the Heritage Show to be held in the fall, tabled for further discussion.

The July meeting may be moved to July 11, as the 4th is the first Monday of the month. To be decided at April meeting.

We finished up the meeting working on the budget to be presented at the March meeting.

Board Meeting, March 15, 2005 Vice-President Larry Grillett presiding as President Dave Rogers was out of town on business duties.

Request from shop committee to close work shop while there is maintenance and other work being done. Voted on and passed.

Larry Grillett read a proposal, for Wes Bryant of some of the rules the shop committee has come up with, more information to follow from the shop committee in the next newsletter.

Bruce Wingate will have an organized field trip Saturday, April 16th at Burro Creek for people that are interested. Sign up at the April general meeting.

Scott Edwards, Webmaster needs information for the website. Call him at 579-4979 if you a committee chairperson or have information for our website.

Information given to board that saws will be delivered to Riverside California on March 18 to see if they are repairable.

What's even bigger than a 13-foot high Columbian Mammoth with 10-foot long tusks?



A 48 foot long Ichthyosaur, of course.



The Nevada State Museum's natural history galleries tell the violent story of Nevada-volcanoes that is, and include minerals, gems, and paleo specimens.

The history galleries explore the human side of the shaping of Nevada.

Visit the Nevada State Museum
700 Twin Lakes Drive
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Meeting Minutes and Notes for February/March 2005

Charlotte Y. Robinson, Secretary

General meeting minutes for February and March 2005

Surprise, surprise you have been saying to yourself where is that darn Polished Slab, my neighbor must have stolen it just to see where our next field trip is going to be so he can go steal our rocks! I want to get you started off on the right foot before we begin business and tell you that the board voted to change the format and mailing of the newsletter for two months at a time and not every month. This move will save our club a ton of money and that is money we can spend on equipment and not postage. We promise that the fonts will be bigger, more stories, and I can't tell you that they will get any better, just bigger so here we go. If you receive a Polished Slab on your e-mail and one in the mail, it is not costing or saving us any more money as we need at least 250 newsletters a month to have the bulk rate and save us a ton of money so do not despair when you get both, share one with a friend, neighbor or leave one at your doctors office.

Field Trip Opportunities

(Continued from page 5)

La Grange, Homitos, Bear Valley and Mt. Bullion. The Sunday field trip ends with a stamp mill demonstration in Mariposa and a visit to the State Mining and Mineral Museum.

The fine print:

You must complete a registration form, which is available online at www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield/georreservationform.htm.

Fees are \$10 per person per day, or \$25 per vehicle per day, whichever is less. Please make your check payable to Buena Vista Museum of Natural History and mail with your form to: BVNHM, 2018 Chester Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93301. Credit card payments can be made by calling (661) 324-6350, which is the general information number.

The point of contact is Dr. Gregg Wilkerson, BLM, 3801 Pegasus Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93308. (661) 391-6081 or (661) 391-6070. Gregg_wilkerson@blm.gov.

David Rogers got our February meeting underway and Mary Beth Paladino reported on the Pebble Pups activities. The children are very active making many different things with their rocks and gems (now you call them what you want and I will call them rocks) They would like to ask for small stones for crafts or Apache Tears if you have any extra that you would like to share because they form them in groups of three and attach a card to them telling the legend of the tears (Ha – you ask what is the legend?). I don't know but we will have Mary Beth tell us at the next meeting. The Pebble Pups then take the tears to their school and share them at show and tell with their classmates. The Pebble Pups will be doing the decorating and centerpieces for our Christmas and Awards party that is written up in our Slab in a separate article.

As you know we are fickle folks and can change our minds in a moments notice. Do you know what a dull life this would be if we all loved purple as I do? Mercy I can just see Bill in Purple pants, socks and a pink shirt so we decided we wanted a change, not in his wardrobe but the party. The membership voted to have a Christmas potluck this year and everything is well under way, Virginia Johnson co-chairwoman has written a piece for the Slab so be sure to read it and give her a call. We plan on breaking all attendance records this year.

Jaen gave her report about classes and now that the rain has left and the green chartreuse is flying all over, our club members can get out more and start taking some classes that they have wanted to take for sometime. Jaen has made many improvements to the workshop. We have always had sodas that you can purchase for 35¢ while you work to keep you cool, and a new silversmithing class is under way along with a faceting class. A note along the way, Bill and I will be going to our home halfway between Gallup and Albuquerque New Mexico the last two weeks in June and if anyone has any materials that they would like picked up for them at Indian Jewelers Supply or Rio Grande Supply, please make us a

(Continued on page 8)

Meeting Minutes and Notes for February/March 2005 (cont.)

(Continued from page 7)

detailed list and enclose your money and we will be glad to pick those up for you. I ordered four each of Rio's catalogs and a blank order pad and we will have these at the April meeting.

An announcement was made that we have a new workshop committee that has come forth and is going to get Ed some much needed help. Wes Bryant will be the new shop superintendent with Bill Robinson as vice-shop superintendent. Other shop foreman will be Ed Rupprecht, Larry Grillett, Carl Fields, and Lynn Manthey. It's going to be an exciting time for the shop as many changes are planned. All of the big saws that were outside have all been mucked and cleaned out and are in Riverside, California as we speak at the "saw hospital". A big thanks goes out to Larry Grillett, Ed Rupprecht, David Finch, Bill Robinson and Jim Grothuesmann as they toiled for hours cleaning out those dirty saws. Wes Bryant was out of town due to the passing of his mother. We are going to have to call on our members to come back and use the shop more as the equipment is being repaired, cleaned up and getting ready for some new items. All of the foreman will be profuse in the use of all machines and will be tracking the use and care of the machines. All members must be certified on all the equipment that they will use and a card will be given to them to present when they go to use the shop. The members that are already in the know will be given a 10-minute shop test and they will be grand fathered in for their cards. We hope to have new timers put on the machines so we can better monitor their use, determining the wear and tear on them as how to better keep them in good condition. More news will be reported by the shop committee. Please plan on filling out the shop information sheet that we will have at the April meeting, as we want you as club members to give us an input on your shop.

The budget is almost finalized for the club members and David Finch, Larry Grillett and Dave Rogers really put their heart and souls into this budget and did a magnificent job getting it ready to vote on. David Finch reported on the financial aspect of the club and we are on the straight and

narrow of things. The budget was presented at the March meeting and approved.

Bruce Wingate has some really exciting trips planned for us this summer. The February trip had to be cancelled because who would have ever thought that any road in Las Vegas could wash away, and one of them was ours! In March we are going to Lida Junction and now the granddaddy of them all (in my opinion at least, maybe not yours) we will be going to Burrow Creek, Arizona in April. On Wednesday the 13th many of the club members will start arriving and we stay until Sunday afternoon the 17th. It is a dry camp at the BLM site out of Wickiup and the club reserves the group shelter so if you don't want to spend everyday out in the wilds, there is always a group, eating, drinking, playing cards and just being merry. There are a couple of mini motels in Wickiup, a few miles from the campsite. Bruce will supply you with all you need to know at the April meeting or you can call him at 547-6590. May 21 we are going to Sperry Wash near Tecopa, California and we are going to meet up with the Pahrump rock club, with our own Carol McGovern in charge of the Pahrump club. We will meet many new friends and plan on eating our box lunches with them so come prepared and sign up for a fun day. In June we are going back to Utah for Indian Blanket Jasper, they are the most beautiful yard rock you will ever find so bring your big buckets.

If you do not own a rock club sticker for your auto, we sell them at the meetings for \$1.00 each. I need one on each window so our neighbors will know why Bill won't wash the truck, he doesn't want it to look citified.

While Bill and I were at Quartsite, Arizona for the pow- wow we ran into David Otteson of the Tonopah Otteson fame and we asked him if we could camp out at his Broken Arrow mine for a three day, dry camp turquoise hunt and we are welcomed with open arms. He said he would talk to Lynn and see if we he could take us out to the white turquoise site. There are motels available

(Continued on page 9)

Better Believe That Ticks Live in the Desert

Bruce Wingate, Field Trip Chair

Believe it or not, ticks do live in the desert. With all of the recent rains, not only will allergies be worse for some people, insects will also probably be more rampant.

On a recent exploratory trip near Goodsprings, my daughter, Sarina, came back with a tick. The area we were hiking in had lots of low shrubs and bushes, a good environment for ticks to live in. Areas with little or no plant

(Continued from page 8)

Meeting Minutes (cont.)

in Tonopah and it is a medium drive out to the site where we will be camping. It really is a small world still as Lynn Otteson the papa of all the children who bought up all the land with the mines and my grandfather were friends in Gallup, New Mexico where my grandfather owned an Indian trading post so we really are kindred spirits. Bruce is working on this trip, as it will be an exciting adventure. We found a lot of turquoise at the mines we went to last year.

Our website has a new Webmaster Scott Edwards and he is re-creating our site so do not despair if you try to get on and it hasn't been perfected yet. It is part of the new changes for our club. He would like all of the committee chairpersons to write a short article and get it to him so our website will be something that will entice people who read it to come to our meetings and join the club. This is not a request, it is a must if you want our site to do its purpose, let's get those emailed or written to Scott! If you do not send them we will announce those who are not doing their share of the work. Larry Grillett our Vice-president is working on our new membership list and that should be ready soon. If you know someone who has not received their Polished Slab or a change that needs to be made, please email Charlotte Robinson or Larry Foutz at the email addresses published in the Slab.

Vice-President Larry Grillett ran our March

(Continued on page 11)

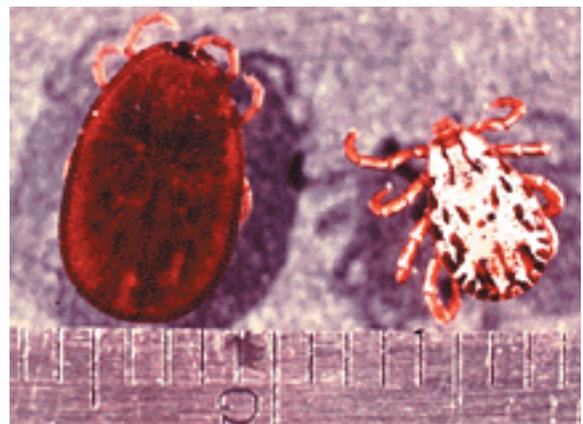
growth should not be a problem.

Two types of ticks reside in desert areas. The hard tick, the type that carries Lyme Disease, lives on deer and will usually be confined to higher altitude, wooded areas. The soft tick is a common external parasite that lives on tortoises and small rodents. ' An adult is about 1/4" long is a dull, gray brown in color. Unless it has just fed, the body is flat.

This species of tick causes Relapsing Fever. Most of the cases of Relapsing Fever occur in the late spring to early summer and most in the mountainous areas of the western states. Reported cases are very low, mostly due to misdiagnoses or being unreported. According to the Nevada State Health Division, in Clark County, there were two cases in 1989 and one in 1991. During the same period, 7 have been reported in Washoe Co., 4 in Douglas and 2 in Nye.

The symptoms of Relapsing Fever include high fever, severe headache, rapid pulse, muscle pain, weakness, weight loss and coughing. These may last for about 3 to 6 days. If left untreated, the same symptoms abruptly occur about 7 to 10 days later. Subsequent relapses are less severe. In rare cases, if left untreated. Relapsing Fever can result in death.

The normal preventative procedures for the soft ticks would be the same as for hard ticks. Use repellent and wear light colored clothing and check yourself for ticks upon return



The tick on the left is a hard tick, while the tick on the right is a soft tick

Layers and Light Create the Fire in Fire Agate

Tom Simondi

Submitted with permission from the author by David Rogers

Fire Agate is a layered stone. The layers are small enough that light entering them forms interference colors known as “fire.” The gem is thought to be formed when hot water saturated with colloidal silica and iron oxide invades cavities in country rock and begin to cool. Chalcedony with iron oxide begins to grow on any available surface (the iron oxide gives the basic brown color to the gem). As the solutions began to precipitate and grow layers of silica and iron oxide would be deposited depending on the relative level of those elements in solution and underlying conditions. These alternating silica and iron oxide layers (Schiller layers) cause the brilliant fire in the gem. As iron oxide ran out in the solution colorless chalcedony continued to grow.



Cutting Fire Agate essentially reverses nature’s process by grinding and polishing away layers, following natural contours, until only the fire is visible. As you might imagine, however, one layer too far and the stone is ruined.

Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

Cretaceous are even more steeply tilted or quite obviously folded and faulted because they have come through not one but three mountain building episodes: the Laramide orogeny of late Cretaceous to early Tertiary time and the Mid-Tertiary and Basin and Range orogenies of Tertiary time. In much of southern and western Arizona, most of the Quaternary volcanic rocks are black or dark gray basalt, whereas most of the Tertiary ones are thick buff-colored or pinkish beds of volcanic ash welded into tuff.

At mile 67 the highway turns eastward through some of this tuff material that burst forth in an explosive eruption so hot when it touched down that it welded together instantly. Vertical cooling cracks then broke it into columns and formed avenues for erosion.

After joining I-40 in Kingman, we leave it at mile 71 as US 93 curves southward down the valley of the Big Sandy River, between the gneiss and granite heights of the Hualapai and Aquarius Mountains.

Although the Hualapai Mountains to the west are very old Precambrian gneiss, younger Precambrian granite intrudes their north end, weathering in typical granite fashion into bare, rounded knobs. Further south, some knobs of Tertiary granite jut through the gneiss.

(Continued on page 11)

The Polished Slab, March/April 2005



Directions for Cutting Fire Agate

(Notes my father left)

Inspect the rough stone by wetting with water under a bright light. Direct light is ideal. (The stone is fragile so hold it over a padded surface.)

Observe the depth and location of color layers. The gem material (fire layers) are usually covered by chalcedony. Trim away excess chalcedony by sawing, grinding, or sanding.

Sawing should be used only for the top portion of chalcedony which has no color. Leave 1/8th inch for grinding.

For grinding, use a 100 grit wheel. Grind for not more than four or five seconds. Stop and examine for signs of fire under bright light. Shape the stone in any direction the fire indicates. Do not overheat the stone.

Remember -- Grind slowly and inspect often!

When you are satisfied that you have exposed all the fire, grind on a 600 grit wheel to eliminate scratches. Then start with 325 diamond paste, moving to 600, then 1200, 3000, and finally 50,000.

Reminder: In all of the above steps of grinding use plenty of water. **Do not overheat.**

Meeting Minutes (cont.)

(Continued from page 9)

meeting as our president was out of town on work duties. Our meeting started out late with members straggling in due to a bad accident involving a policeman on the interstate so everything was shut down tight so Larry proceeded as people came in. We had 91 members and guests present.

Frank Auerswald gave a report on the Heritage Museum show that is held the end of September and the first of October. They would like us to take a leading role in the show so further discussion will be continued in the next two months. It would take a great effort on our clubs part to pull it off but if it could work out, it would be a great moneymaker for our club and give us a venue for bigger and better things in the future.

Sharon Rogow and her assistant, Carol Leo reported on the show to be held the 3rd, 4th and 5th of June coming up. There are going to be many changes in the shows format as several diverse people will be in charge of the tasks that need to be performed. Our particular show will be on the second floor this year and Sharon and her crew have come up with many different ideas of how to have the sand pile as it is a money making effort but messy messy messy! (let us not forget heavy). Sharon needs all of our help so please give her a call and volunteer to help out. She will be calling you also so please give some time for your club.

Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 10)

In the Aquarius Mountains to the east, the reverse is true: similar Precambrian granite makes up most of the range, with some older gneiss here at the north end. Both granite and gneiss are similar to the rocks of the inner Gorge of the Grand Canyon.

Sediments that fill the valley of the Big Sandy River are both Tertiary and Quaternary. Flat-topped hills on either side of the highway are remnants of former floodplain and alluvial apron sediments. The highest ones probably date back to Pliocene time when streams in this region had

(Continued on page 13)

Diamonds or Levis?

Charlotte Robinson, Sunshine Chair

The club voted at our general meeting to hold a potluck for our annual Christmas party this year rather than going to our previous place. Our theme or the party will be "Wild Wild West". We will have a prize for the person who best represents the old West. It is not where you have a party; it is how much you enjoy the party you attend. We want everyone to come dressed in any shape or form of the old West and enjoy an honest to goodness old time hoe down.

Carol McGovern will be in charge of the cattle auctions and Virginia Johnson will be the co-trail boss. We would like all of our members to think old West and donate some items for table decorations, Now don't tell me you don't have some old relic hanging around you could let us have for our tables (now just keep your person opinions to yourself) so we can have an atmosphere of days of yesteryear. If you just want to lend us something for the evening that will be all right too.

If we are to have a successful party we need all our partners to help us out regardless if you are 9 or 90 all we ask is a little of your time. We are looking at several locations and dates right now and Virginia and I will be getting back to you soon. It is not to early to start working for Christmas as everyone books early so we want to have as many members and their guests come this year and have a record breaking party and you can wear your western duds and those diamonds or gems with your levis.

Volcanic or Sedimentary Action Processes Mineral Rich Fluids Into Geodes

Ed Echleri

Submitted with permission from the author by David Rogers

Geodes are formed over millions of years through either volcanic or sedimentary processes. During both processes cavities are formed which fill with mineral rich fluids supplying the medium for crystal growth. Over time the host material erodes away leaving the geode. The geodes in this gallery were formed by both methods.



Septarian Nodule

Septarian Nodule, Utah.

During the Cretaceous period the Gulf of Mexico extended up to Southern Utah. When the Gulf of Mexico receded mud balls formed around tiny creatures who died. In time the mud balls dried and cracked. Calcite from decomposed shells was carried down into the cracks of the mud balls forming calcite crystals. (It is believed that the creatures inside the mud balls were ammonites.) The exterior of the Septarian Nodule consist of bentonite clay (shale). Aragonite separates the shale from the calcite centers.

Dugway Geode, Utah.

During the Miocene period volcanic activity occurred in western Utah and deposited rhyolite. As the rhyolite cooled gas bubbles formed cavities. Over millions of years ground water circulation deposited mineral rich fluids inside the cavities.

The most common mineral found in Dugway Geodes is quartz. Other minerals include amethyst, water, calcite, or barite crystals.



Dugway Geode # 1 with calcite and quartz crystal



Dugway Geode #2 Geode with banded quartz crystal



Dugway Geode #3 with amethyst, and quartz crystal

Indiana Geodes, Indiana

Indiana Geodes occur in Mississippian limestones. The geodes started out as growths of gypsum that were gradually encrusted with silica. Over time the gypsum that remain in the center of the silica dissolved leaving a cavity.

Other Indiana Geodes started out as an open space inside fossil shells that formed a cavity. Ground water circulation deposited minerals inside the cavity.

The most common mineral found inside Indiana Geodes is quartz, and calcite. Other minerals found include millerite, celestite, strontianite, barite, and amethyst.



Indiana Geode with quartz and Calcite



Other Half of Indiana Geode with quartz and Calcite

Mexican Coconut Geodes, Chihuahua Mexico

Mexican Coconut Geodes are volcanic in origin. The cavities were formed in cooling lava by gas pockets. Over million of years ground water rich in silica filled the cavities creating medium that allowed crystal growth. This crystalline structure is typically harder then the host rock. Over time the host rock erodes leaving the geode.

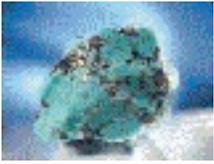
Mexican Coconut Geodes contain calcite, quartz, smoky quartz, or amethyst.



Mexican Geode with Quartz and Calcite Crystals



Mexican Geode with Smoky Quartz



Valuable Turquoise Mined for Eons

Submitted by David Rogers

- **Chemistry:** $\text{CuAl}_6(\text{PO}_4)_4(\text{OH})_8 \cdot 5(\text{H}_2\text{O})$, Hydrated Copper Aluminum Phosphate
- **Class:** Phosphates
- **Uses:** as an ornamental stone for carving and jewelry.
- **Specimens**

Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 11)

not yet begun the great down-cutting that followed regional uplift and diversion of the Colorado River to this side of Arizona. As the Colorado River cut down, so did its tributaries.

Gravel on these Tertiary surfaces reflect the make-up of the adjacent mountains with varying proportions of granite and gneiss pebbles corresponding with the proportions of granite and gneiss in the Hualapai and Aquarius Mountains. A close look at these rocks will show that their color varies from light to dark gray with different quantities of glassy quartz, white feldspar, and bright flakes of mica (muscovite), as opposed to black mica (biotite), and black rod like crystals of hornblende.

Farms along the valley of the Big Sandy River are maintained with groundwater that has flowed from the surrounding mountains through the Tertiary and Quaternary gravel aprons that surround them. Some of this water emerges as springs at the edges of the river.

Sandy, silty Tertiary sediments in bluffs along the river are still in their original position. The soft rock collapses easily when the river or its tributaries undermine it. There are places where water has cut-into the surface, exposing in the cross-sections in the fine Tertiary siltstone are filled with much coarser, even cobbly Pleistocene gravel, reflecting both the uplift of Pliocene time and the vastly increased rainfall and heavy runoff

(Continued on page 15)

Turquoise is a valuable mineral and is possibly the most valuable, non-transparent mineral in the jewelry trade. It has been mined for eons since at least 6000 BC. by early Egyptians. Its history also includes beautiful ornamental creations by Native Americans and Persians. Its popularity is still quite strong today. Although crystals of any size are rare, some small crystals have been found in Virginia and elsewhere. Most specimens are cryptocrystalline, meaning that the crystals could only be seen by a microscope. The finest turquoise comes from Iran but is challenged by some southwestern United States specimens. Turquoise is often imitated by “fakes”, such as the mineral **chrysocolla**, and poorer turquoise specimens are often dyed or color stabilized with coatings of various resins. The name comes from a french word which means stone of Turkey, from where Persian material passed on its way to Europe.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- **Color** is of course, turquoise, but this color actually varies from greenish blue to sky blue shades.
- **Luster** is dull to waxy, vitreous in macro-crystals.
- **Transparency** specimens are opaque.
- **Crystal System** is triclinic; bar 1
- **Crystal Habits** include crystals rarely large enough to see, usually massive, cryptocrystalline forms as nodules and veinlets.
- **Cleavage** is perfect in two direction, but is not often seen.
- **Fracture** is conchoidal and smooth.
- **Hardness** is 5 - 6
- **Specific Gravity** is approximately 2.6 - 2.8 (average)
- **Streak** is white with a greenish tint.

(Continued on page 16)

Page 13

Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 13)

of Pleistocene time.

When it is flowing, the Big Sandy wanders back and forth across its bed, creating a braided channel, with shifting islands of sand and gravel temporarily blocking or diverting its flow. The river has a fairly low gradient here, which encourages sideways cutting rather than downward. Farther downstream near milepost 136, it is partly block by hard ridges of gneiss that make up the southern end of the Hualapai Mountains. It does break through these ridges, but down cutting is slowed by the hardness of the rock.

South of Wickiup the Aquarius and Hualapai Mountains converge, and the vast expanse of Tertiary basalt that covers the Aquarius Plateau east of the Aquarius Mountains seems to spread westward, reaching the highway at mile 135. There is a sudden change in scenery, with steep-walled narrow gorges incised into nearly flat-lying basalt layers. Gravel visible in road cuts is composed almost exclusively of well-rounded basalt fragments.

The highway crosses a tongue of the Aquarius lava flows near the Burro Creek Bridge. The breathtaking view down-canyon shows layers of gray lava, darkened by desert varnish, alternating with lighter layers and random patches of tuff. Some of the lava flows show some columnar jointing caused by shrinkage of the rock as it cooled. Cracks and crevices in the basalt are coated with white calcite deposited by groundwater, a coating also evident on many of the loose lava blocks. In the basalt itself can be seen tiny rod-shaped crystals of black hornblende. Much of the basalt also contains small round vesicles formed as bubbles of gas were trapped in cooling lava. To the west are the gneiss ridges of the south end of the Hualapai Mountains. Way down below is our destination, the Burro Creek campground.

Just past our campsite a few miles south the route enters some of the granite of Arizona's Central Highlands. These rock reveals all stages of disintegration from original blocky masses

(Continued on page 16)

A Gem of a Show

Sharon Rogow

On June 3,4,5 on the second floor of the South Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, Paradise Rd. @ Desert Inn Rd, the SNGMS will once again grace the Intergem Show.

The promoter will be called in March to remind him to send the promotional postcards **IN ADVANCE!**

We circulated a list for volunteers at the last meeting and did not get nearly the support that the Holiday Party in December, a longer way off than June, did.

Of course, we don,t have as much food at the show, so maybe we should have pizza, baked goods and other yummys. Who will chair the food committee?

We also need help with loading, unloading, set-up, tear-down, wheels, selling, membership, showcases, geode saw, raffle and some others categories which I am sure that I have forgotten.

Actually, I have five or six volunteers who have made a committment verbally, so we are going to run the show by committee. To these wonderful people, I THANK YOU!!

However, we need many more helpers, so I am asking you all to set aside these days or parts of these days to devote some time and make this a super successful show.

E-mail me at Sharon@beadlover.com to indicate your time frame and activity preference. Half day shifts would be greatly appreciated .

Also, please feel free to make any suggestion to improve the show. Note: only volunteers get the goodies!!!

Valuable Turquoise (cont)

(Continued from page 13)

- **Associated Minerals** are pyrite, limonite, Quartz and clays.
- **Other Characteristics:** color can change with exposure to skin oils.
- **Notable Occurances** include Arizona and New Mexico, USA; Australia; Iran; Afghanistan and other localities in the Middle East.
- **Best Field Indicators** are crystal habit, hardness, luster, color and associations.

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Time Travel (cont.)

(Continued from page 15)

separated by joints, to bulbous, flat faced but round cornered rock clusters, to partly fallen piles of well-rounded boulders. Little by little, the boulders flake away, leaving only sandy mounds. Later the mounds acquire a cover of soil able to support vegetation. This type of disintegration, known as spheroidal weathering according to the guide, is typical of even grained intrusive rock and occurs throughout Arizona wherever granite is found.

Meetpoint Faceting Class Begins 7 April

Larry Grillett

Introduction to Meetpoint Faceting Class, *Instructor:*

Larry Grillett

Length: 8-12 weeks

Dates: Thursdays 6:00p to 9:00p. Start Date: **April 7, 2005**

Location: SNGMS Workshop 4777 E Harris (*directions below*)

Cost: \$75.00

Materials needed: Notebook, Writing instrument, Stiff Toothbrush

Materials provided: Instruction, Faceting Machine, Laps, material, inspection loupe

Class is open to all SNGMS members.

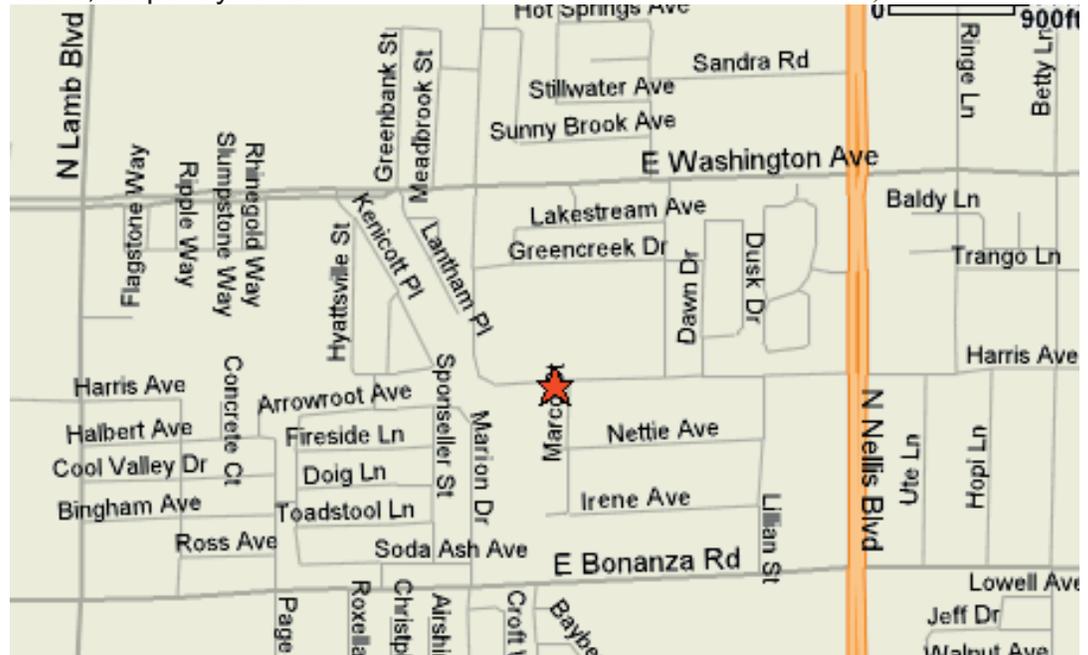
Reserve your spot by emailing vp.sngms@cox.net, or calling 702-506-7888. Guaranteed space will be based on earliest request. Space is limited to 6 students, so please reserve early.

Workshop is located between Washington and Bonanza, and between Nellis and Lamb.

From Las Vegas, take Washington east to first Stop sign beyond Lamb. Turn right at the stop sign., proceed around a left heading curve to first house on the right (across from the school)

From Henderson and Southeast, take Nellis Blvd north to Harris (first light beyond Bonanza). Turn Left on Harris and proceed to last house on the left (across from the school)

The workshop is a large “Quonset” type building in the rear yard of the house at 4777 E Harris (you should be able to see it from the road).



Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society

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HTTP://www.sngms.com

E-mail: admin@sngms.com

The Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was organized to educate ourselves and the community in the science and arts related to rocks, mineral, gems, fossils, and nature in general. Fostering an understanding and appreciation of the physical world, we can use it and protect it for future generations. We are incorporated for the purpose of promoting an active interest in Geology, Gemology and facilitate an improvement in knowledge of the art of cutting, polishing, collecting and displaying gems. We began in 1932, and became the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society in 2003. The very first Polished Slab was published in 1940 by Paul Mercer.

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Club Gemstone: Turquoise

Club Colors: Turquoise and Silver

Club Logo: Arrowhead

Club Motto: Rocks-R Us

Annual Dues

Individual: \$15.00

Family: \$20.00

Club / Membership Name Badges are available at \$15 each

Meetings: 7:00 PM the first Monday of each month at the Senior Center 450 Bonanza at Las Vegas Boulevard Las Vegas, Nevada 702-229-6454

Visitors are always welcome. Please bring a friend or two.

First month free for club members.

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The Polished Slab, March/April 2005

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