

Millennium Edition

WHITTIER

ROCKHOUND
GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY

*Taqua Nut Carving
with Todd Schowalter*



Hummingbird and flower carved from Taqua Nuts

September 2001

ROCKHOUNDER

FROM THE DESK OF THE PREZ:

Greetings WGMSers,

I hope you all have had a pleasant Summer. Two WGMS Potluck/Swim Parties were enjoyed, one in July at **Vern & Sylvia Cliffe's** Sierra Madre home, and the other in August at **The Valle's**. Both were excellent social occasions with lots of food, and a few adventurous types braving the swimming pools. The **Valle Family** has been busy with preparations for the upcoming marriage of **Jay Valle** (me) and **Kathy Piechota**. There is still much work to be done before we "tie the knot".

In August we lost long-time member **Darryl Futrell**. He was just 64 years old. **Darryl** brought his own curiosity and knowledge to our meeting where he was a regular attendee. He was an expert on tektites and meteorites, and has been a featured speaker on several subjects over the years. Until his eyesight left him, he took family and friends on field trips and attended many of the club events. **Darryl's** family will be providing some of his collection of tektites and meteorites for a memorial case at the **WGMS October Gem Show**. His humor, intelligence and dry wit will be missed.

Two of the **MAIN PRIZES** for the upcoming **WGMS GEM SHOW** are here, due to the fine efforts of **Joe Goetz** and **Vern Cliffe**. We have a **Magellan GPS-315** and a **Fisher Gold Bug Metal Detector** in hand. **George Cyrog**, whose hand-crafted rings are legendary, has also promised a gold and jade ring as a **MAIN PRIZE**. Word has already gotten around and the original 1500 donation award tickets are already gone. A new booth will be in the connecting hallway this year. USGS maps, pamphlets and books will be on display and available for purchase. **Sylvia Cliffe** is reserving display cases and they are filling up quickly. If Sylvia doesn't contact you first, call her and let her know you need a case.

Joe Goetz and **Art Ragazzi** are heading up the **2002 Nominating Committee** and they will be looking for a people to be on The Board.

JValle

**Taqua Nut Carving
September 27 General Meeting**

Todd Schowalter is a carver of vegetable ivory, known as Taqua Nut. (See the Taqua Nut article on page 7 and picture on the cover.) You may remember Todd from his carving demonstrations at past WGMS Gem Shows. He will be our featured speaker at the September General Meeting.

Jack Zywocienski

What you need to know about the show display cases

It's almost SHOW TIME and there's a need to fill about FORTY show display cases. If I haven't contacted you by the time you read this, PLEASE call me at (626) 355-6964.

The club has uprights and slant cases and you may have a choice of one or the other.

For those of you who need to make liners, here are the measurements of the various sized cases:

WGMS UPRIGHTS

Bottom - 45-5/8" x 21-1/4" Back - 45-5/8" x 23-3/8"
Sides (2) - 21-1/4" x 23-3/8"

UPRIGHT FOLDING CASES

Bottom - 46-1/4" x 23" Back - 46-1/4" x 22"
Sides (2) - 23" x 22"

SLANT CASES

Bottom - 46" x 22" Back - 13" x 46"
Sides (2) - 22" x 15" x 5" 21-1/2" x 2-1/2"

Looking Forward to a Great Show!!

Sylvia Cliffe

**Show Theme: “Shades of Jade”
Jade from around the world**

Progress has been made in the planning process for the display of Jade at our October Show. The exhibits will include jade specimens from **Don Wobber**, the sculptor/diver who is famous for finding and retrieving large specimens of Jade from the ocean floor in the vicinity of Jade Cove on the coast of California. Don has confirmed that we can “borrow” several interesting carvings and other specimens for our show. We will be making a trip to his location to pick up the display items in October shortly before the show and return them after the event. Don Wobber is an extremely generous person, too bad his kind are in such short supply.

At this time other contacts are being pursued to expand our show with associated fields which should make our show one of the more outstanding club shows for the year. Please keep this in mind when you receive your Donation Award tickets in the mail – should help you sell them to your neighbors and friends.

GREAT NEWS – GREAT NEWS – GREAT NEWS

The **GREAT NEWS** is that the three main Donation Awards, or Raffle prizes, have been promised or obtained by three of the society’s loyal members. **George Cyrog** has promised a gold ring with a Jade setting, and having seen his previous rings, this one will be beautiful. Through the tireless efforts of **Joe Goetz** and **Vern Cliffe**, the other two main prizes have been obtained. **Joe** has been able to acquire a hand held Magellan GPS unit, from the Magellan Company valued at about \$200. **Vern** was able to acquire a Fisher “Gold Bug” gold nugget detector from Cal-Gold Company of Pasadena, valued at about \$500. With these three **GREAT PRIZES MAIN PRIZES** all our members can “reach out” to their relatives, neighbors and friends and **SELL, SELL, SELL** Raffle tickets “‘til the cows come home”, or in city talk, “while gas prices remain low”.

Vern Cliffe

A Summer of My Dreams

Isabella and I traveled to Roswell, NM for the Rocky Mountain Fed Show. That was fun. A silent auction, great exhibits, meetings and banquet, editor's breakfast and Rolling Rock Club Meeting, all with many friendly and helpful people; A great party at the home of Hal and Doris Whiting. We visited the alien museum and still are not sure that a weather balloon crashed there in New Mexico. It is a nice place.

Next was the AFMS and SUMS Meetings and show at Arlington, Texas. A wonderful time was had by all. I purchased too many rocks, but they had Texas Palm, agate, coral, Oklahoma Barite roses, and crystals. Izzie came home loaded with gifts, etc. Isabella will have to share all that happened at the meetings.

We, as well as several Whittier Members attended the Paso Robles Show, then we took a trip to Syracuse, N.Y. We took some extra time and saw Niagara Falls - beautiful and interesting. We even went down old electrical power tunnels to the back of the falls and took a "Maiden of the Miss" boat ride. Had a great time. Next was the Erie Canal. We took a ride on it and enjoyed the story of the building of the canal. Isabella wanted to see at least one Finger Lake so went we down there. Another great deal was collecting Herkimer Diamonds (just ask me and I will show you my big hunk of diamonds). That convention was exceptionally exciting - good cracker barrel, beautiful banquet as the Syracuse club celebrated their fiftieth anniversary. The show exhibits from Harvard Museum, Carnegie Institute, Smithsonian and all were great. I learned how to shoe shine polish a cab. I will demonstrate that at the show.

Now we are off to Enumclaw, Washington to be entertained by the NFIVIS and on the rice Lake Wisconsin to join the Midwest Fed for their annual Convention. We can tell you about those at the next meeting.

Bill Burns, Federation Chairman

What is Tagua?

Tagua - pronounced (TAW-QWAH) - is hand carved and polished into miniature animals and figurines with the look and feel of ivory. The average Tagua nut measures between 1 and 2 inches, and in a single year one palm can produce up to 20 pounds of nuts.

Tagua is from a palm like tree which grows to a height of 20 to 30 feet in several tropical regions of South America. Chemically they are pure cellulose and before the nut matures has a milky liquid in the center. When ripe the nuts fall to the ground and are gathered and dried from eight to twelve weeks, after which then become extremely hard. The nut is non toxic and the color varies from white to amber.

The taqua nut is close grain and very hard. The cellular structure and grain is similar to that of elephant ivory, but is more dense and resilient. It resembles the finest ivory in texture and color and is slightly softer than mammal ivory. There are several names for this vegetable ivory nut, but most common is the "Tagua Nut". Its' similarity to elephant ivory has been known by craftsman for years and is frequently passed as elephant ivory on objects fashioned from it and can be very deceptive. It being so much like mammal ivory that pieces carved from it are sold at the same price as elephant ivory and in some carvings much more.

For over two hundred years vegetable ivory has been used by ivory carvers in the making of netsuke's, dice, dominoes, and chess pieces. Other uses found were cane and umbrella handles, pipes, mah-jongg tiles, sewing needle cases and the fine art of scrimshaw. Religious figurines were carved as were many toys. In the late eighteen hundreds up through World War II this ivory nut was used to make some of the finest buttons in the clothing industry.

Ivory carving has flourished for hundreds of years sacrificing elephants, walrus, rhinos and other ivory bearing animals. This is a terrible waste, and has threatened a number of endangered species.

Tagua offers a welcome, moral alternative to ivory trading. Vegetable Ivory is readily available, a harvestable renewable resource, and looks very similar to actual ivory. It offers third world countries a simple alternative to exploiting their natural resources.

Middle of the World Treasures Web Page
<http://www.middleworldtreasures.com/what.htm>

SUISEKI

Article by Frank English

Found on the internet at <http://www.viewingstones.com>

WHAT IS A SUISEKI?

Suiseki ("sui"= water, "seki" = stone) is the Japanese name for those serenely attractive "Viewing Stones" frequently shown in conjunction with miniature trees at Bonsai exhibits. Not just accent pieces for the Bonsai, Suiseki are themselves examples of a classic oriental art form with centuries old standards for judging and display.

Basically, the art of suiseki involves the collection, preparation and appreciation of certain unaltered naturally formed stones. These stones are found in mountain streams, on windblown deserts, along ocean beaches-anywhere the forces of time and nature may have temporarily deposited them. They are chosen from among the countless stones examined for their perceived resemblance to familiar scenes in nature or to objects closely associated with nature.

There are three main category groupings in Suiseki, the first and most popular being SCENIC LAND-CAPE STONES. These may evoke impressions of distant mountains, islands, water-falls, caves, river-formed terraces, lakes and other examples of natural topography. OBJECT STONES constitute another primary grouping. Included are stones resembling man-made objects such as boats, bridges and old Japanese thatched huts. Also prized are animal-shaped stones, bird stones, and stones that resemble fish, insects and human figures. PATTERN STONES make up the third category. They are valued for their unique surface patterns resulting from variations in color, unusual texture and contrasting mineral inclusions. Best known of this group are the beautiful Japanese chrysanthemum stones. Others include tiger-striped stones, celestial (sun/moon/star) patterned stones, and abstract pattern stones.

To the Japanese collector the essence of Suiseki is more than just representational; it is also spiritual. Quoting from a pamphlet of the San Francisco Suiseki Kai, "The contemplation of a stone as a symbol of nature relaxes the mind from pressures of a complex daily life and allows a person to retain his sense of values. The importance of life in its simplest form is reflected through the beauty, strength and character of the stone." In recent years, appreciation for Suiseki as an art form has spread far beyond the islands of Japan. Collectors are active in many countries and exhibits are held in cities throughout the world.

**SOME BASIC SUISEKI SPECIFICATIONS - FOR USE IN
COLLECTING****Mountain Stones - YAMAGATA ISHI**

One or more well-defined peaks-odd in number if more than two. All sides slopedown and outward. Main peak is offset to right or left of center. Height and depth are $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ stone's overall length. Basic outline is that of an asymmetric triangle. Distant Mountain has smooth subtle contours. Near View Mountain shows rugged surface detail.

Island Stones - SHIMAGATA ISH4I

Many features in common with Mountain Stones, though some have lower profiles, steeper sides. White quartz "breakers" at base are a special plus. I personally prefer Island Stones that also show some indication of a cove or landing site.

Plateau Stones - DOHA ISHI

A level plain parallel to the base leads to a peak at one end, approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ the stone's overall length. The plateau joins the peak along an openface diagonal as viewed from the front. Some Dohas, instead of level plains, feature low-lying foothills rising toward a distant peak.

River Terrace/Step-Stones - DAN SEKI

Two or more (more is better) flat parallel levels, including the top as one of these levels. Levels vary in size and in height of vertical rise. Top level has approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total area covered.

Waterfall Stones - TAKI ISHI

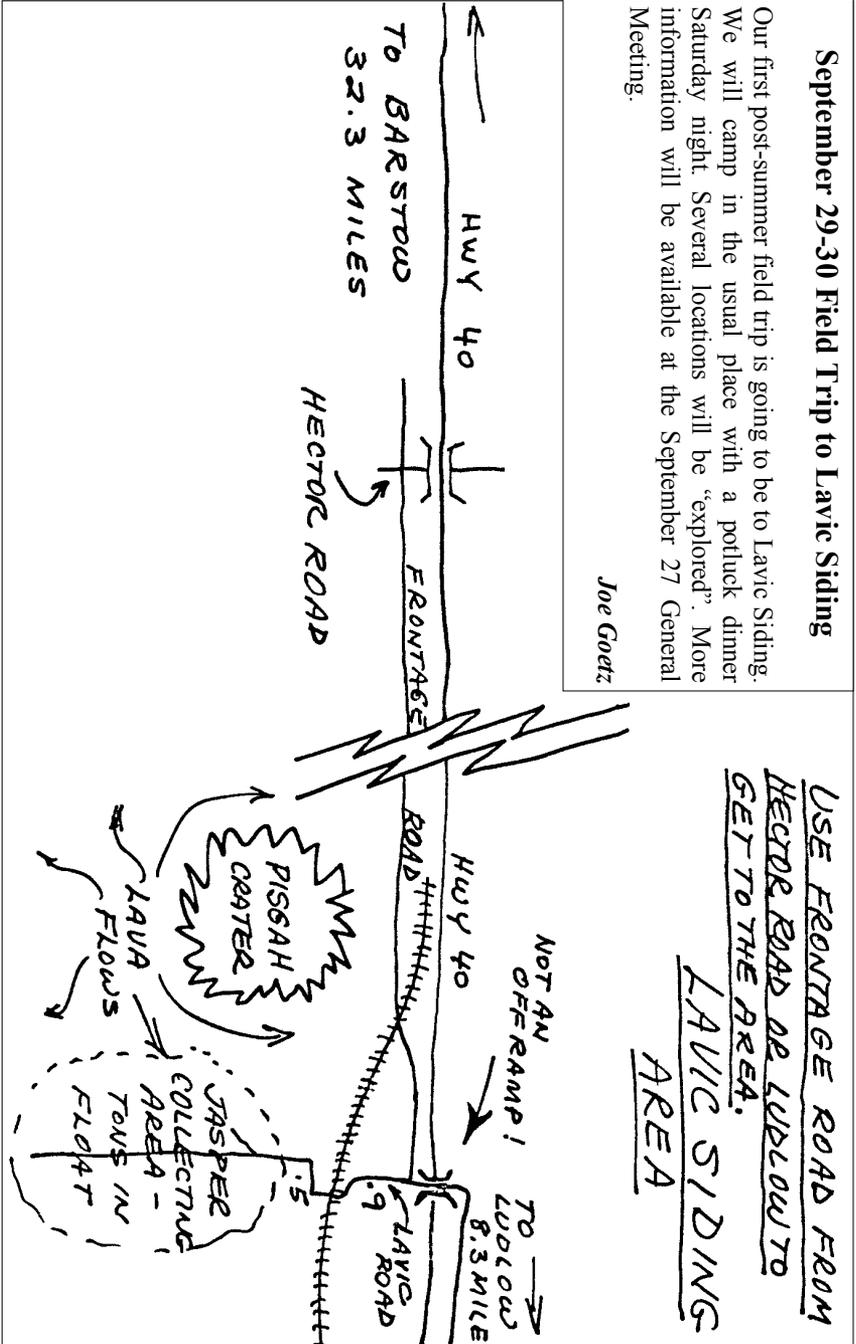
The waterfall is indicated by quartz or other light colored inclusions in a dark background material. Waterfall originates at or near the top, preferable between two peaks of unequal height. Width of waterfall increases as it descends. Waterfall cannot run over and down the back side. Falls are often featured in other Suiseki styles.

From Tumbler, April 2001, CFMS Newsletter 9/01

September 29-30 Field Trip to Lavic Siding

Our first post-summer field trip is going to be to Lavic Siding. We will camp in the usual place with a potluck dinner Saturday night. Several locations will be "explored". More information will be available at the September 27 General Meeting.

Joe Goetz



AFMS "Code of Ethics"

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without permission from the owner.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind such as fences, signs, buildings, etc.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires only in designated or safe places and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks, or other water supplies.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field-trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or federation officers, Bureau of Land Management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use Good Outdoor Manners and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public Image of Rockhounds everywhere.

Revised July 7, 1999 at the AFMS Annual Meeting

In Memory of Darryl Futrell

Monday, August 13, 2001, **Darryl Futrell** passed away due to complications of diabetes. He was 64. His memorial service was held at a family home on Saturday, August 18.

Darryl's family and friends spoke of his devotion to his family, especially his three daughters. He loved children and spent as much time as he could with his grandchildren. He kept in contact with his distant relatives, making journeys across the United States, and even back to Norway, to visit family he had never even met. Darryl's extra-dry wit was also mentioned, as well as his political and religious views.

Darryl was a self-made scientist who was recognized worldwide for his controversial studies regarding the origins of tektites. Briefly, he believed that tektites were formed on the Moon, rather than on the Earth. Believe it or not, in certain scientific circles that is actually a hot topic. He authored numerous articles in support of his opinion, helping to continue the discussion.

Over many years Darryl participated in many activities with the Whittier Gem & Mineral Society. He was a staunch supporter of our youth programs and enjoyed our meetings (go figure!). At the 1998 Gem Show, our show theme was meteorites and we asked Darryl to be our featured docent on stage with the special displays. To add to the display, the Club borrowed a full-size fiberglass model of the Old Woman Meteorite which was placed center-stage. Darryl had a ball with the model. We took it to his house and he posed in various positions, around and under the meteorite to the amusement and embarrassment of his friends and family. (He wanted us to put the thing on his roof for a picture but we felt that was a little too much.) At the show, Darryl was in his element, speaking to all our guests and impressing us all with his knowledge. He stayed on station during the entire show.

During the upcoming WGMS Gem Show, Darryl's family will be providing some of his collection, and pictures for a memorial case. I think Darryl would be pleased to be remembered this way.

Jay Valle

CAMPING HINTS
From "Petroglyphs: June 2001

When using a public campground, a tuba placed on your picnic table will keep the campsites on either side vacant.

- Get even with a bear who raided your food bag by kicking his favorite stump apart and eating all the ants.
- A hot rock placed in your sleeping bag will keep your feet warm. A hot enchilada works almost as well, but the cheese sticks between your toes.
- The best backpacks are named for national parks or mountain ranges. Steer clear of those named for landfills.
- While the Swiss Army Knife has been popular for years, the Swiss Navy Knife has remained largely unheralded. Its single blade functions as a tiny canoe paddle.
- Lint from your navel makes a handy fire starter. Warning: Remove lint from navel before applying the match.
- You can duplicate the warmth of a down-filled bedroll by climbing into a plastic garbage bag with several geese.
- Take this simple test to see if you qualify for solo camping. Shine a flashlight into one ear. If the beam shines out the other ear, do not go into the woods alone.
- A two-man pup tent does not include two men or a pup.
- A potato baked in the coals for one hour makes an excellent side dish. A potato baked in the coals for three hours makes an excellent hockey puck.
- In emergency situations, you can survive in the wilderness by shooting small game with a slingshot made from the elastic waistband of your underwear.
- The guitar of the noisy teenager at the next campsite makes excellent kindling.
- The sight of a bald eagle has thrilled campers for generations. The sight of a bald man, however, does absolutely nothing for the eagle.
- In an emergency, a drawstring from a parka hood can be used to strangle a snoring tent mate.

Safety - Desert Driving

By Chuck McKie, CFMS Safety Chair 2001

You may still be heading out to the desert at this time of the year, so I think you should consider these suggestions. California's deserts are beautifully unique. They contain endless panoramas of some of nature's most exquisite creations, but hidden amongst their quiet beauty are also hostile environments that can trap the unprepared traveler.

This article will give the desert motorist suggestions that can be life saving - especially when driving off the main highways. Before traveling on any desert road, however, have your vehicle thoroughly checked, with special attention given to these items:

Survival Checklist for Your Car

1. Cooling System. Carefully examine all belts and hoses for cracks or leaks, replacing any you may have doubts about. Be sure to carry extras and don't forget tools and water to accomplish a change if necessary. Don't overlook the radiator, which should be properly filled with coolant, and while driving keep a close eye on the temperature gauge, shutting off the air conditioner if the engine heat creeps too high.
2. Tires. Plenty of tread and properly inflated. Don't forget the spare, making sure your jack and tire tools are in good condition. The extreme heat, especially at higher sustained speeds on desert highways, can take its toll not only on worn or old tires, but new ones as well.
3. Electrical System. Check all lighting equipment, making sure it is in good operating condition. Take a close look at the battery. Are the cables tight, and is it filled to the proper level? Don't forget your windshield wipers - in case you get caught in a sudden desert storm.

Away from the main highways, the desert has become a major recreation area for rockhounds, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, and urban dwellers seeking remote areas on weekends. Any of these desert lovers could easily get into serious trouble without proper preparation for what can quickly become a hostile environment.

Here are some of the rules to follow:

Touch Home Base. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.

Carry a Survival Kit. Extra water, extra gasoline, concentrated food, matches, collapsible shovel, blanket, work gloves, hand axe, tire chains, toe chain, flashlight, flares, sheath knife, plastic spray bottle, compass, signal mirror, sand mat, good jack, tools and basic extra parts for your car (hoses, fan belts) and maps of your area.

If the worst happens...

Don't Panic. If you have a breakdown, consider the alternatives. Rig a tent for shade. Collect brush for a signal fire. Inventory your resources.

Stay With Your Car. Your horn can be heard for long distances, and your lights can be seen at night. Your car provides shade and shelter. Remember, it is easier for aircraft and searchers to spot a car than a person.

Don't Park or Camp in Dry Washes. During sudden storms, these gullies become raging rivers of water and debris.

Carry a. Spray Bottle. To conserve your water, spray it into your mouth. If you have plenty, spray your skin to prevent dehydration.

Relax and Conserve Your Strength. Watch for aircraft or others searchers, and be prepared to light your signal fire. Food and water will last much longer if you remain calm.

Source: California Highway Patrol, <http://www.chp.ca.gov/html/desert.html> in The Firing Line, August 2001 Pg. 25

CFMS Newsletter 9/01

September Birthstone

The sapphire, birthstone for September, is a relative of July's birthstone, ruby. Like ruby, it is a form of the mineral corundum, a normally drab gray mineral. Red corundum is called the ruby, while all other gem quality forms of corundum are called sapphires

Typically, sapphires appear as blue stones, ranging from very pale blue to deep indigo, due to the presence of small amounts of titanium and iron within the crystal structure. The most valued shade of blue is the medium-deep cornflower blue. Sapphires also occur in other natural colors and tints - colorless, gray, yellow, pale pink, orange, green, violet and brown -- called fancy sapphires. These different colors are caused by different kinds of impurities within the crystal. For example, yellow sapphires get their color from ferric iron, and colorless gems have no contaminants.

The word "sapphire" has its roots in several ancient languages: the Arabic "safir," the Latin "sapphirus" (meaning "blue"), and the Greek word "sappheiros" for the island of Sappherine in the Arabian Sea where sapphires were found in ancient Grecian times. Ancient Persians called sapphire the "Celestial Stone." It was the gem of Apollo, Greek God of prophesy and was worn by his worshipers visiting his shrine in Delphi to seek his help. It was used by ancient Etruscans as far back as the 7th century BC.

The biggest source of sapphires world-wide is Australia, especially New South Wales and Queensland. Found in alluvial deposits of weathered basalt, Australian sapphires typically are blue stones with a dark and inky appearance. Kashmir, in India, used to be a well-known source of the cornflower-blue stones. In the United States, a major source is the Yogo Gulch Mine in Montana that mostly yields small stones for industrial use.

The sapphire was said to represent the purity of the soul. Before and during the Middle Ages, it was worn by priests as protection from impure thoughts and temptations of the flesh. Medieval kings of Europe valued these stones for rings and brooches, believing that it protected them from harm and envy. Warriors presented their young wives with sapphire necklaces so they would remain faithful. It was believed that the stone's color would darken if worn by an adulterer or adulteress, or by an unworthy person.

Sapphires were once believed to be protection against snakes. It was said that if poisonous reptiles and spiders were placed in a jar containing the stone, the creatures would immediately die. The French of the 13th century believed that sapphire transformed stupidity to wisdom, and irritability to good temper.

One of the most famous sapphires rests on the Imperial State Crown, worn by Queen Victoria in 1838. It resides in the British Crown Jewels in the Tower of London. This gem is called the St. Edward's Sapphire because it once belonged to Edward the Confessor, who wore the stone on a ring during his coronation in 1042.

*By Marc Airhart, Deborah Byrd, Shireen Gonzaga, June, 1999
Courtesy of Earth & Sky Webpage*

CHUCKLES

Rockhounds never die, they only petrify.
"Petroglyphs" June 2001

Husband to wife, as he is leaving for a field trip: "and honey, if the neighbors ask where I am, tell them I'm prospecting, not 'he's up a creek'."
AFMS Newsletter June-July 01

"There are people in this world who do not love their fellow man ... and I hate people like that."
Tom Lehrer (Internet)

The difference between a "fine watchdog" and a "ferocious beast" depends entirely on which side the fence you're on.
Rockhound Rambling 6/01

When someone says, "It's my fault", you're not supposed to agree.
The Rockatier 6/01

CFMS Newsletter 8/01

CFMS Gem & Mineral Shows

Sept 29-30 **DOWNEY** – Delvers Gem & Mineral Soc.,
Woman’s Club of Downey, 9813 Paramount Blvd.
Hours: Sat. 10 – 5, Sun. 10 – 4

Oct 3-7 **JOSHUA TREE** – Sportsman’s Club,
Sportsmans Hall, 6225 Sunburst Ave.
Hours: Wed. – Sat. 8 – 5, Sun. 8 – 3

Oct 13-14 **TRONA** – Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society
13337 Main Street. Hours: Sat. 8 – 5. Sun. 8 – 4

OCT 20 – 21 WHITTIER – THIS IS OUR SHOW
WHITTIER MASONIC TEMPLE,
7604 GREENLEAF AVENUE
HOURS: 10 – 5 BOTH DAYS.

<See October Bulletin for Later October Shows>

And a Show of SPECIAL interest...

Oct 5-7 **PACIFIC GROVE JADE FESTIVAL**
Featuring Jade Cove Jade and the works of diver/sculptor
Don Wobber and others. (Some of *Don Wobber’s*
creations will be featured in our **WHITTIER SHOW** on
the weekend of October 20th & 21st)..

Vern Cliffe

Darryl Futrell with a few friends at the Meteorite Society



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Bulletin exchanges are welcome and should be sent to the editor.

Affiliations



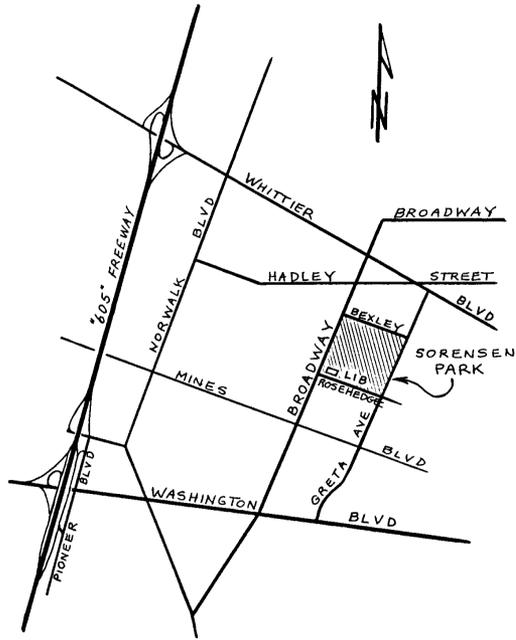
California Federation of Mineralogical Societies
 American Federation of Mineralogical Societies
 Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors



Whittier Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.

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Whittier, California 90608-0865

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Meeting Date: September 27 at 7:30 PM
Location: Sorensen Park (See Map)