

WHITTIER



ROCKHOUNDING

GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY

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A Trip to the Past



This is a line-cabin seen while hunting agate near Turkey Flats in New Mexico. There is something subtly wrong with it - maybe it is the roof. Must have been awesome when the tree snapped off and landed where you see it. However, note the excellent construction of the log walls which might have prevented the occupants (if any) from being killed.

ROCKHOUNDER

THE PREZ SEZ:

It seems the year is just flying by, it is May already. This month is we need to vote on changes to the by-laws, so please come to the meeting, so your voice can be heard. Believe it or not summer is just around the corner.

We do not have meetings in July and August; however a lot still goes on. There will be cases to repair or build new from scratch. There will be stones that need (probably just begging) to be ground and polished. And before you know it the show will be here and the theme is "Amazing Agate". As you know, the variety of such material is astonishing!

I shouldn't get ahead of myself, we still have May and June to go before summer officially arrives. The fieldtrip for the May is to the Paul Bunyan agate area, north-north-east of Barstow. It may be hot at this time of the year or we may be surprised and it could be very pleasant. There is plenty of agate to collect. The material is quite hard and takes a beautiful polish. This would be a good start for your case in the up in coming show.

The May program is an interesting one; you'll have to read Marcia's report on it (see page 4). For me it is hard to imagine that I was barely born when these pictures were taken. And some of the places you may even recognize as we go to these locations even today. So I strongly hope you'll want to come to our regular meeting later this month.

Somewhere, anywhere in California
Joe Goetz

(If you find yourself lost sometime, don't panic because you're really having an adventure)

WGMS General Meeting

Thursday, May 24, 2007

at 7:30 PM

A Trip to the Past...Someone Else's Past

This is a slide show that came to me via my mother. My mom had gone to a service celebrating the 110th anniversary of the Little Church on the Hill in Oakhurst. She sat next to a lady and while talking about kids, mentioned that one of her daughters was a rockhound.

After the service the lady went home and got slides from the trash as she'd thrown them out, found my mom again, and asked Mom if I'd like them. Mom got them to me and they wound up being a field trip of Jeannette and Ed Volontarios of Bakersfield and Agnes and Louis Cunningham of Chicago during 1956. Besides the slides there is a narration that Jeannette and Ed included.

I enjoyed it - hope you do to.

Marcia

Rockgabbers!

The April project was a curb link chain. Some people chose to make a necklace, some made bracelets, and some made ankle bracelets. There were a variety of different sizes of links that were made. **Travis and Melissa** joined us, and made a very pretty fetter and three-curb link chain.

The next meeting will be on May 19th at the Turner's home

The May project is to finish up previous projects and get ready for the CFMS show in June. Rockgabbers has reserved a case for the show, and we will be demonstrating during the show.

As always we conclude our work sessions with a pot luck dinner. I look forward to seeing everybody at Rockgabbers.

Tony Fender

Fractured Definitions Trilobite

Trilobites were invented on October 6th 1337 B.C. by Stephen Spielberg to be used as extras in his critically acclaimed film Harry Potter and the Cambrian Explosion, based on the book by George Bernard Shaw. Trilobites are small and furry, and reproduce if you get them wet after midnight. To keep themselves entertained, trilobites draw on Precambrian rocks with their feet, some of their most famous works include the Ediacara Fauna and the Burgess Shale.

Trilobites were hunted to extinction by the dinosaurs who consumed them as a tasty mid-morning snack. The Last Trilobite - played by Daniel Day Lewis in the film of the same name - eventually died of ennui in Belgium.

Klingons wear dead trilobites on their foreheads as punishment to the species for squealing at them before their extinction.

<http://uncyclopedia.org/wiki/Trilobite>

<p>CALIFORNIA FEDERATION of MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES 68th Annual Tri-State Convention and Show Hosted By Palmdale Gem and Mineral Club Celebrating 50 Years in Palmdale Featuring the best in Gem, Mineral, Fossil, Jewelry, Beads and Lapidary Art Over 50 Dealers in the Poppy Pavilion Lapidary Art Demonstrations and Displays in the JP Eliopoulos Pavilion</p>		
		
<p>Special Events Metal Detecting Demonstrations and Treasure Hunt- Classic Car and RV Show—Rusty Relics Antique Cars & Tractor Display Guided Field Trips Daily to Near By Collecting Areas General Admission \$5.00 Adult— Seniors (60+) and Students (15-18) \$3.50 Under 15 Free when Accompanied with a paid Adult Fair Parking \$3.00</p>		
<p>CALIFORNIA FEDERATION of MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES 68th Annual Tri-State Convention and Show ANTELOPE VALLEY FAIR GROUNDS June 15, 16, 17, 2007 9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM Visit www.palmdalegems.org</p>		
		
<p>This Coupon is good for \$1.00 off General Admission when presented at the Show <small>(One coupon per person.)</small></p>		

"Dirty" Field Trips

This is a topic from ROCKHOUNDS email list which I subscribe to. If you like, you might share some of your own "dirty" adventures with us. ED

All field collectors have their favorite war stories about field trips. How they got hopelessly stuck in the mud, how they nearly got killed by a falling rock, about the fabulous pocket of minerals they collected or how hard they had to work to get their specimens and how dirty they got.

Nate Martin, Lexington, MA

The nice thing about owning a portable 14" diamond blade concrete saw is that you can get filthy dirty in any quarry. On my last trip to the Dolomite Products Quarry in Walworth, NY I had found a number of "saw-worthy" vugs containing the water-clear fluorite crystals that the quarry is known for and had spent most of the day creating clouds of dolomite dust while making saw cuts on each side of a crystal bearing vug before doing the chisel work required to pop the piece containing the vug off of the boulder. One large vug containing a cute series of small fluorite crystals all in a row was especially difficult because it was up near my eye level on the rock so that I had to hold the saw up high to make the cuts. That pretty much guaranteed that the entire front me got thoroughly dusted. I always wear a good quality dust mask with the canister filters so that my lungs mostly stay free of the dust and I really needed it that day.

Around 2 PM they kicked us out of the quarry for the day (we had started around 7 AM that morning) so we packed up our specimens and I kind of dusted myself off. It wasn't until we started our 7.5 hour drive back to the Boston area that we stopped at a local fast food restaurant to get something cold to drink (because even with the mask my throat still felt like I had been eating dust all day long). I went into the men's room to wash my hands and was shocked by the vision in the mirror. From head to toe I was covered in gray dust. I usually wear light brown workmen's pants and shirt but they were covered in gray dust. My normally black hair was as gray as my salt and pepper beard, except where the straps for the dust mask had been. The outline of the mask also separated my newly-acquired gray skin from the more normal coloring around my eyes. After about 15 minutes of scrubbing and a clean shirt later I began to look (and feel) like a human being again.

Now the dust is long gone..... but I still have the fluorites and the memory of a good day of collecting.

John McLaughlin, Glendale, Arizona

I think for large group mud fun the annual Trona, California morning mud trip is hard to beat. A thousand or better folks stomping about in two feet of the blackest, gooiest mud to be found. Since the hanksite clusters are in the mud it is necessary to grope about in the stuff for the crystals. It is a natural environment for young children who greatly enjoy getting covered in mud and who are amazed to see their parents also getting gooey. It is a common site to see larger folks forget they are mired in sticky mud and attempt to walk normally. The frequent result is a rapid windmilling of the arms followed by a slow fall into the welcoming mud.

The mix of age groups also adds to the entertainment. One year I watched two large fellows pull a huge cluster of hanksite crystals from the mud and carry it to one of the aisles that separate the mud dumps. They quickly returned to collecting, jubilant in their great find. As they disappeared a three or four year old boy found a geology pick near the crystal cluster and, just like he'd seen dad use the hammer, he began whacking the cluster. I was across the mud and no one else was watching the boy, so the crystals quickly acquired some new shapes and dings.

I've gotten dirtier, but never in such a large, happy group.

Larry Rush

My dirtiest collecting trip.....
(Actually, my wife's dirtiest trip!)

One of our favorite collecting spots used to be a quarry and ledge in Connecticut where large quartz groups could be worked out of a large vein on the side of a hill. The quarry had been long abandoned and collectors had slowly worked the ledge near the top of a steep side well back into the hillside. It had long been known as a good site for large quartz groups, with most of the crystals being coated with tiny milky crystals, giving it the local name of "corn-cob" quartz. As it was a popular spot, it had, of course, been worked to the point where it had become dangerous, with a lot of heavy overhangs and deep holes.

One fine Spring day, after trying the ledge for awhile, we decided it was becoming too dangerous, and we moved slightly downhill and to the left to

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**Field Trip - Memorial Day weekend
May 26 - 28
Paul Bunyan Agate**

The Paul Bunyan Agate area is an excellent camping location with many collecting sites nearby, including the Silver-lace Onyx Mine and Mule Canyon. The famous red plume agate named for this site can still be collected, though the tailing piles have been much diminished. The weather is usually nice - though you should plan for warm weather, last year was cool, so be aware of that possibility too (this is the desert after all!)

On both Saturday and Sunday evenings, we are planning to enjoy a potluck dinner and campfire (Mother Nature permitting.)

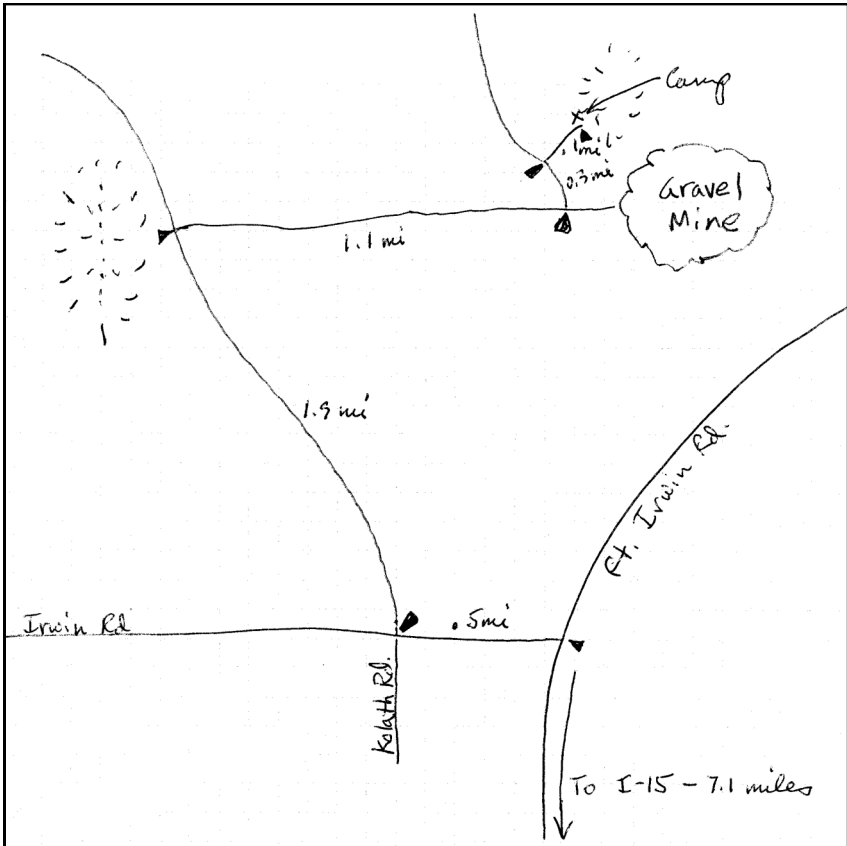
For those who do not wish to camp, Barstow is nearby with motels and restaurants, and this trip is suitable for those who can only come out for the day (Saturday or Sunday). If you are planning a day trip, though, you should contact us so we know you are coming and can wait for you.

Directions:

- Take I-15 past Barstow to the Fort Irwin Rd. turnoff.
- Go left over the freeway (North) for 7.1 miles to Irwin Rd.
- Turn left and go 1/2 mile to dirt road on the right, Kolath Rd on the left.
- Turn right on dirt road and go 1.9 miles to a road from the right at the base of a small hill.
- Go right (it is a sharp turn) and follow for 1.1 miles.
- Turn left and go just 0.3 miles to the turnoff on the right to camp, about 0.1 miles further.

P q v g < " K h " { q w " m p q y " v j k u " c t g c . " v j g t g ' guarantee that you will arrive at our camp, not that you will cover the shortest distance. Look for signs - either the Orange/Blue NOC, or Blue/Yellow PLS/WGMS. They will lead you to camp.

For questions and information contact: Dave Kelty at davidkelty@juno.com.



What's in a Name?

The question was: "Where did Paul Bunyan Agate get its name?"
The short answer: "Don't have a clue."

The first field trip I went on with the WGMS was to the Club Honey Onyx Claim. While sitting around the campfire we began talking about local rockhunting areas and someone remembered collecting a spectacular red plume agate which they referred to as Paul Bunyan Agate. They didn't know where it was precisely but said it was somewhere on the other side of Fort Irwin Road. So, my brother and I went looking along the roads and in all the mines we could find, and we found a collecting place with an beautiful agate that seemed to match the descriptions. Since that time, we have called this place Paul Bunyan Agate. There may be another location bearing the same name more properly, but hey, that's how stuff happens.

JValle

"Dirty" Field trips

Continued from Page 7

see it we could intercept the vein in an unworked area. The overburden of dirt and mud was thick and it took an hour or so to open up a hole big enough and deep enough to hit the vein, but we were successful, and Catherine wriggled into the hole head first to inspect the ledge deep inside. She immediately started to work out nice large pieces of clear quartz, stained black with iron, and slid them back along the hole to me, who (in true gentlemanly fashion!), stood, clean and fresh, in the cool, pure air!

As I was turned around, trying to stack the plates on the steep hillside, I heard a "crump" sound, and looked around to see nothing but a fresh pile of dirt where my wife used to be! The hole had suddenly collapsed, completely burying her from the knees up. I grabbed her feet and pulled with no movement at all. Desperately, I feverishly started to dig with my hands, pushing, throwing, shoving dirt as fast as I could! In a matter of moments, but what seemed like hours, I got enough dirt and mud off of her to pull her loose into the air, where she lay coughing, gasping and sputtering (and swearing), her hair and face covered with dirt and mud! She recovered quickly (except for her mood) and after some rest, and rinsing at the creek below, we packed up and left for home.

But, the gravity of the situation didn't really leave us and we marveled at our luck (and our stupidity) all of the way home, grateful for the second chance she had been given. This should have been the end of a scary story, after a shower, clean clothes, and some rest.

But, showing me, and the rest of the rockhound world, what a true (and not too smart) mineral collector she was, after I had left for work the following day, she went back to that site, alone, and eager, and finished up digging out the rest of the quartz groups!

Luckily, there were no more cave-ins, and she brought home some fine plates, one of which we keep in a prominent place in the house, to remind us of a collecting experience she was lucky enough to survive!

Anita

My dirty trip went like this:

We went rock collecting off a dirt road in Georgia. Sounds like trouble already? You bet! Now, add a heaping dose of rainfall and you get the picture: MUD! Our clothes, shoes, bodies, car engines, were all muddy.

We had already planned to eat at a local barbeque place for lunch. We figured they wouldn't mind our appearance because it was the kind of place that literally had sawdust on the floor.

When about ten of us, covered in mud, entered the restaurant, an older couple was leaving. The man looked at us and then his wife. He said under his breath "And you made ME go home to change!"

We're still laughing about that one, and it was over 15 years ago!

John Alcorn

Tar.

I used to collect some tar seeps near Maricopa and McKittrick, CA. The site looked like a small parking lot. We used a power tool to remove up to four feet of overburden, which at first it was like hammering through a road and it's hardened asphalt.

Then the smell hits you. Hydrogen sulfide, the rotten egg smell familiar to visitors of the Yellowstone geothermal areas assaulted our senses. The stink was only half of it. These tar seeps were only semi-solid, not much different from the conditions that originally trapped the now long dead, current constituents. As a result you became one with the tar (and it with you); automotive grease remover was your only hope for a semblance of cleanliness.

No matter the preventative measure, tar found a way to sneak in. We had tar everywhere, even...well you get the general idea. We had clothes designated tar clothes kept in a special tub in our garage and they were tossed out after no more than two trips. A good day or two after the trip you still stunk to high heaven and the tar was with you even longer unless you had a rather high tolerance for chemical solvents.

It was fun though in a primitive sort of way. We found primarily beetles, but the most fascinating to me was the dragonfly layer, composed of thousands of the insects in one thin section of strata.

Agate

Excerpted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Agate is a term applied not to a distinct mineral species, but to an aggregate of various forms of silica, chiefly chalcedony. According to Theophrastus, the agate (achates) was named from the river Achates, now the Drillo, in Sicily, where the stone was first found.

Formation and characteristics

Most agates occur as nodules in volcanic rocks or ancient lavas where they represent cavities originally produced by the disengagement of volatiles in the molten mass which were then filled, wholly or partially, by siliceous matter deposited in regular layers upon the walls. Such agates, when cut transversely, exhibit a succession of parallel lines, often of extreme tenuity, giving a banded appearance to the section. Such stones are known as banded agate, ribbon agate and striped agate.

In the formation of an ordinary agate, it is probable that waters containing silica in solution -- derived, perhaps, from the decomposition of some of the silicates in the lava itself -- percolated through the rock and deposited a siliceous coating on the interior of the vapor-vesicles. Variations in the character of the solution or in the conditions of deposit may cause corresponding variation in the successive layers, so that bands of chalcedony often alternate with layers of crystalline quartz. Several vapour-vesicles may unite while the rock is viscous, and thus form a large cavity which may become the home of an agate of exceptional size; thus a Brazilian geode lined with amethyst and weighing 35 tons was exhibited at the Dusseldorf Exhibition of 1902.

The first deposit on the wall of a cavity, forming the "skin" of the agate, is generally a dark greenish mineral substance, like celadonite, delessite or "green earth," which are rich in iron probably derived from the decomposition of the augite in the enclosing volcanic rock. This green silicate may give rise by alteration to a brown iron oxide (limonite), producing a rusty appearance on the outside of the agate-nodule. The outer surface of an agate, freed from its matrix, is often pitted and rough, apparently in consequence of the removal of the original coating. The first layer spread over the wall of the cavity has been called the "priming," and upon this base zeolitic minerals may be deposited.

Many agates are hollow, since deposition has not proceeded far enough to fill the cavity, and in such cases the last deposit commonly consists of quartz, often amethyst, having the apices of the crystals directed towards the free space so as to form a crystal-lined cavity, or geode.

On the disintegration of the matrix in which the agates are embedded, they are set free. The agates are extremely resistant to weathering and remain as nodules in the soil or are deposited as gravel in streams and shorelines.

Types of Agate

A Mexican agate, showing only a single eye, has received the name of "cyclops agate." Included matter of a green, golden, red, black or other color or combinations embedded in the chalcedony and disposed in filaments and other forms suggestive of vegetable growth, gives rise to dendritic or moss agate (named varieties include Maury Mountain, Richardson Ranch, Sheep Creek and others). Dendritic agates have beautiful fern like patterns on them formed due to the presence of manganese and iron ions. Other types of included matter deposited during agate-building include sagenitic growths (radial mineral crystals) and chunks of entrapped detritus (such as sand, ash, or mud). Occasionally agate fills a void left by decomposed vegetative material such as a tree limb or root and is called limb cast agate due to its appearance.

Turritella agate is formed from fossil Turritella shells silicified in a chalcedony base. Turritella are spiral marine gastropods having elongated, spiral shells composed of many whorls. Similarly, coral, petrified wood and other organic remains or porous rocks can also become agatized. Agatized coral is often referred to as Petoskey agate or stone.

Greek Agate is a name given to pale white to tan colored agate found in Sicily back to 400 B.C. The Greeks used it for making jewelry and beads. Other than it is today any agate of this color or from Greek/Sicily area of the Mediterranean.

Certain stones, when examined in thin sections by transmitted light, show a diffraction spectrum due to the extreme delicacy of the successive bands, whence they are termed rainbow agates. Often agate coexists with layers or masses of opal, jasper or crystalline quartz due to ambient variations during the formation process.

Other forms of agate include carnelian agate (usually exhibiting reddish hues), Botswana agate, Ellensburg blue agate, blue lace agate, plume agate (such as Carey, Graveyard Point, Sage, St. Johns, Teeter Ranch and others), tube agate (with visible flow channels), fortification agate (which exhibit little or no layered structure), fire agate (which seems to glow internally like an opal) and Mexican crazy-lace agate (which exhibits an often brightly colored, complex banded pattern).

Via the Internet

Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows

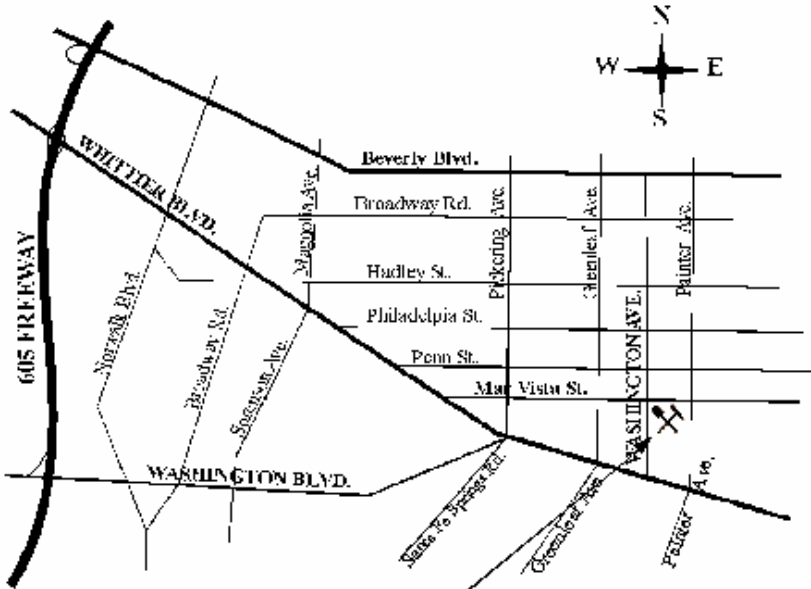
- May 19-20 Yucaipa, CA.** Yucaipa Valley Gem & Mineral Society
Yucaipa Community Center, 34900 Oak Glen Road
Hours: Sat. 9 - 5; Sun. 10 - 4
- May 19-20 Newbury Park, CA.** Conejo Valley Gem & Mineral Club
Bochard Park, 190 Reino Rd., Newbury Park, CA
Hours: Sat. 9 - 5; Sun. 10 - 4:30
- Jun 2-3 Glendora, CA.** Glendora Gems
859 E. Sierra Madre
Hours: Sat. 10 - 5; Sun. 10 - 4
- Jun 2-3 La Habra, CA.** North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society
La Habra Community Center, 101 W. La Habra Blvd.
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
- Jun 15-17 Lancaster, CA.** Palmdale Gem & Mineral Club
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, Hwy. 14, exit Ave. H
Hours: 9-5 Daily
- Aug 3-5 Nipomo, CA.** Orcutt Mineral Society
St. Joseph Church, 298 S. Thompson Ave.
- Sept 22 Los Altos, CA.** Peninsula Gem & Geology Society
Rancho Shopping Center,
Foothill Expressway & Springer Road
Hours: Sat. 9:30am - 4:30pm
- Oct 7 Fallbrook, CA.** Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Society
FGMS Museum, 123 W. Alvarado
Hours: 10 - 4

Well, It's About Time

At three minutes and four seconds after 2 AM on the 6th of May this year, the time and date will be 02:03:04 05/06/07. This will never happen again.

Via the Internet

WGMS MEETING LOCATION!
Whittier Community Center
7630 Washington Ave. Whittier



MAR VISTA & WASHINGTON AVE.  WHITTIER COMMUNITY CENTER

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(see page 4 for information)