

WHITTIER

ROCKHOUNDER

GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY

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“How I Spent My Summer Vacation”



Spectacular Nipomo agates with sagenite flowers

ROCKHOUNDER

THE PREZ SEZ:

Where has the summer gone? For the most part it was pretty mild, except for the last week or two. The fires haven't helped. Our annual panning trip had to be cancelled because of them. Oh well that's "water under the bridge".

We need to look forward instead of lamenting about the past. We have a show in a little over a month, another chance to show the public all about our hobby. As in the past we have put on great shows. I believe this show will be as good if not better than the last. And to make a show come off well is to have members to do whatever job that is asked of them to do. Perhaps you may be needed to relieve someone at one of the stations whether it is the sand scoop, sales table, kitchen, door prizes ticket booth, silent auction or greeter. So if you show up right at the beginning on Saturday morning and ask chances are no one will need to be relieved, but don't just go home hang around. You may be needed to answer questions from the public about a display or helping out with security. Later in the day you being there to relieve someone helps keep everyone rested and in good spirits. Besides I sure they would like to look around the show just as anyone else would.

It is also that time in which we nominate people for different board chairmen. Don't be shy, if called, please consider how you can contribute to the club. Not just some of your time, but also your ideas. Fresh ideas are always welcome to hear and who knows, your idea may solve a problem such as how to get more people to join the club and become members.

Later this month we'll have a fieldtrip to Big Bear on the 19th. more on this in the bulletin.

So I hope I'll see you at the meeting.

Joe Goetz

WGMS General Meeting

Thursday, September 24, 2009

at 7:30 PM

“How I Spent My Summer Vacation”

WE all remember the first day of school when we had to write...”How I spent my Summer Vacation”. Well here is the rockhound version of that. Our trip going to Billings Montana and the stops along the way to collect.

Tony & Sandie Fender

WGMS Show Report

The WGMS Annual Gem Show is almost here and your Show Committee has been hard at work with the preparations. Are you ready?

Display cases give you the opportunity to display a collections or show off your treasures. Everyone brings a different point of view to our hobby. When you put your interests on display you are providing our visitors many different ways of seeing our world. Contact Izzy Burns to reserve your show case today.

The Donation Award tickets are winging their way to you as we speak. Please return your money in the envelope provided. The income provided by this fundraiser goes a long way to keeping our club in business for another year. As always, we need your donations of quality items to make this program work. Kathy Valle is the contact for donations and for receiving more donation award tickets.

We also need items to be auctioned off at our Silent Auction table. Kathleen Turner is the person to see about donating items to be auctioned off. Rough and slabbed rocks are popular, as are plants. Even “white elephant” object can do surprisingly well (who knew?).

During the show, people are needed at the Sales Table, Donation Award Table, Kitchen, Silent Auction, and Demonstration Table. Your help is greatly coveted and appreciated.

JValle



Rockgabbers projects on display at Billings, Montana

Rockgabbers

Sandie and I attended the AFMS show in Billings Montana, and we put in a Rockgabbers Case. Several people from around the United States and Canada spoke to us about the program, and admired the projects that we had done and were displaying.

Rockgabbers didn't meet during the summer months, but will meet in September. The meeting is scheduled for **October 3rd** at the home of Kathy & Jerry Turner. The project for the group will be a loop in loop chain.

Jerry makes his chains using fine silver and fuses the joints. This is a new skill for many of us, and Jerry has agreed to teach this workshop. Once all the jump rings are made, weaving them together is not hard, and it makes a beautiful and surprisingly flexible chain. Something we could all be proud to display in our cases at the annual show.

I would also like to display a Rockgabbers case at the show, so if there is anything that you have made at the class, please bring it so we can put together a case.

We look forward to seeing everybody at the Rockgabbers meeting on September 19th.

Tony and Sandie Fender

Board Meeting Scheduled October 1, 2009 at 7:30 PM

The final Board Meeting before the Show is going to be Thursday, October 1 at Jay & Kathy Valle's house. Everyone is invited. It will mostly concern the upcoming Gem Show but Club business will also be transacted.

**Remembering Former WGMS Member
Bruce Buell**

Former Whittier Gem and Mineral Society member Bruce Buell passed away in early August. Memorial services were held August 6, 2009 at Memory Garden Memorial Park & Mortuary in Brea. Bruce was very active on field trips and in the running of the club during the 1960s and 1970s until he retired and moved away. He is remembered fondly by several of our WGMSers.

The following article is from a short biography from the April 1960 edition of the WGMS 'Rockhounder'.

Rocky People

Bruce Buell was born and raised in Oregon, where there is excellent rock hunting, but at this time he had not become a rockhound. He did, however, at an early age become interested in chemistry and music and studied both all the way through high school and college. There was a three year interruption while he was serving in the army during the war. During this period, he also married an Oregon girl, Anne.

Upon returning from overseas, he resumed his college education and by 1949 he had an M.S. degree and three children. It was then he moved to Southern California to join the Union Oil Co. Research Center where he has been now for eleven years.

Three years ago in June, he took his family, now increased to four children, to Garnet Hill near Lucerne Valley, at his son, David's insistence, and from that time hence has been an avid rockbound.

After visiting two other clubs he went on a trip with Walt Abramson and upon his recommendation joined the Whittier Club. He has concentrated upon personally-collected gemstones or minerals and is partial to fire-agate and petrified woods. He is interested in all phases of rock hunting and in the future- who knows?

May we add to Bruce's story above that he has been an active member of our club from the start. He joined in 1958, was Field Trip Chairman in 1959, and this year is a Director. He heads the new Club Project Committee in its first

year and started the program off with an intarsia reproduction of the club emblem which is now in the process of being made in petrified wood. The second project which will start in the near future, is a round table study of mineral and gem identification which will be expanded into a program that should interest all of the newer members and include the participation of the older members.

In 1963 he served as President for the WGMS.

Bruce retired from Union Oil Research, where he spent most of his career as a spectroscopist. He spent his retirement years in Hemet, CA. His joints and hearing were affected by the years and he ultimately gave up on having a telephone.

He is survived by wife Anne, 4 children and 11 grandchildren.

If you wish to send a card or condolences to the family please send your correspondence to Bill & Izzy Burns and they will be sure it gets to the family.

Bill & Izzy Burns
1038 BRADSHAWE AVE
MONTEREY PARK CA 91754-4912

THE ROCKHOUND

- He is a special breed. He is a hunter, collector, and craftsman.
- He loves nature’s hills, but is always trying to bring them home with him.
- He appreciates nature’s beauty, but is never satisfied until he has polished it.
- He is a safety-minded citizen, but is willing to scale a mile-high cliff for that special rock specimen.
- He has the swapping instinct of a pack rat, the immunity to rain of a duck, and the perseverance and patience of Job.
- He is a person who searches for, finds and cherishes forever those bits of chemical beauty, rocks, minerals and traces of former life, fossils which afford him a glimpse of infinity on a shelf.

From Archeological & Geological Society, et al Burro Express 3-95 via The Rockpile, 9/06 via Strata Data 8-09



One-Day Field Trip to Big Bear Lake Area

Date: September 19, 2009

Time: 9:00 AM

Meeting Place: Big Bear Resource Center on north side of Big Bear Lake.

Things to bring: Bring water and lunch, snacks, etc. Cameras are never a bad idea (you never know what you may see and Big Bear is a beautiful area).

Useful Tools: Collecting bag, rock hammer, 1/4" screen, small digging tools

Since it will probably still be warm in September, we have decided on a field trip to Big Bear Lake. There will be several possible materials to collect including agate, jasper, marble and quartz crystals. Gold panning may be offered as well (depends on how time flies). We are meeting at the Big Bear Resource Center at 9:00 AM and will leave from there. High clearance vehicles are NOT needed and some hiking may be required to get to some of these locations.

For more information contact Joe Goetz at (626) 914-5030.

Directions: Take the 210 Freeway to Hwy 330 north to Running Spring. Follow Hwy 18 east to Big Bear Dam. Continue on Hwy 18 on the north side of the lake (stay left - do NOT cross the dam). Go through Fawnskin to the BLM Big Bear Resource Center.

Family Game

Write your answers to the below quiz on a separate paper so everyone in the family can do the quiz. Compare your answers. After you do the quiz, see who is the smartest in your family.

1. Agates are named agates because:

- A. They are named after the man that discovered them.
- B. Because of their color
- C. The name of the place where they were found

2. Copper

- A. It is named after its color
- B. It is named after where it was found
- C. It is named after Mr. Copper who discovered it

3. Rhodochrosite

- A. It is named after where it was first found
- B. It is named after Mr. Rhodes, a famous man who lived in Africa
- C. It is named after its color

4. Hiddenite (a gemstone)

- A. It is named after Hiddenite, a town in North Carolina
- B. It is named after a Mr. Hidden who owned the mine, and 'discovered' it
- C. It is called Hiddenite, because it hides and is hard to find.

ANSWERS from Family Game

1. C - They are named after a river in Sicily, the Achates River. Do you know what agates are composed of?

2. B - Copper is a name derived from a Latin/Greek word meaning a metal from Cyprus, which is an island in the Mediterranean Sea.

3. C - It is named after its rose color, from the Greek word rhochros, 'rose colored'.

4. Hiddenite is named after A.E. Hidden, who owned the mine in North Carolina where it was first found and named.

From Arrowhead News, Indian Mounds Rock & Mineral Club 2-09 via The Strata Data 8-8-09

A Rockhound's Vacation

This summer we had a rockhound's dream vacation. We spent 6 weeks traveling the Western States and collecting rocks. Our trip started out on Friday, July 10th driving to just east of Cedar Breaks National Park, to visit friends.

On Saturday we met up with Art and Ginger Ragazzi to collect Septarian Nodules from Muddy Creek. In Gem Trails of Utah it tells you to stop at Joe's Rock Shop and get permission, we did and also received a very detailed map of where to collect. We drove to the site and started looking, Joe's D-6 had been digging before us and left us quite a find; off to the side was about 300 pounds of Nodules, some missing parts, others solid, so we proceeded to collect these. We stopped back at the Rock shop on our way out to let Joe know that we had left the area. We did this because they were expecting thunderstorms that afternoon and the mud is very treacherous and you will be stuck until it dries out. During lunch we decided the next day to look for Brian Head Agate.

Sunday morning was another beautiful day; we went to meet Art and Ginger at their condo in Brian Head. Ginger told us to look out the window and there was the agate there by their condo. Ginger wanted to explore the road cut a block from their house so we started collecting there and found some nice fist plus size pieces of agate full of color. We then followed the directions of where the collecting areas were and proceeded to collect there. Site A in the book was okay, but the pieces were only fist size. Site B was disappointing, and we did better on the north side of the road, instead of the south like the book states. On our way back to the condo we stopped at a construction site that looked promising. IT WAS! It seems the seam of agate runs through the town of Brian Head and this site was in the middle of the seam. We are ***not*** exaggerating when we say the boulders were the size of Volkswagens. There were no "little" pieces so out came the hammers and gads, we found some cracks and broke off 50 to 150 pound pieces! What a way to start a trip, two days out and over 300 pounds of rock apiece! When we got back to Sandie's friend's cabin, they were very impressed with the agate, and made plans to collect some themselves the next weekend.

On Monday we took a little side trip to Bryce Canyon just to see the sights, since it had been about 10 years since we had last been there. That afternoon we took Sandie's friends to the Brian Head site for their very first rock collecting experience and they filled the back of the car in no time, amazed at how beautiful the agate was. Luckily, Sandie's friends were heading back to Duarte, so they took our rock home.

We then drove onto Idaho. Driving through Salt Lake City was a bit hard as they were doing major road construction and lanes kept shifting and changing. We stopped in Idaho Falls and visited with Steve Howard, the owner of the Prudent Man Agate Mine, we talked with him and looked at the Agate

and yes, got some, Sandie fell in love with a 30+ pound piece that has green plumes and Steve “threw in” the 3 pound red/pink piece that Tony liked. We tried to talk him into taking us to the mine, but he said there was a heat wave coming and he didn’t want to collect at that time. Steve did tell us that the mine is between Arco and Mackay. We then headed north to Montana.

We drove to the Spokane Bar Sapphire Mine just outside of Helena, Montana, along the Missouri River at Canyon Ferry Lake. We talked to them about collecting Sapphires there, somewhere to camp and Sandie told them of her adventures of collecting at Yogo Gulch 50 years ago. The people at the mine told us of a Forest Service Campground about 10 miles away, in the forest and a little cooler. At the time, Helena was having a heat wave with record breaking temperatures of 96 to 101. The campground was a nice place beside a stream with about 18 camping sites.

The next morning (early) we went to Spokane Bar ready to dig gravel. We had a choice first buying a bag of Spokane gravel or Lewis and Clark gravel. Sandie asked about El Dorado Bar gravel and the owner stated, ”We call it Lewis and Clark”. So we got a bag of Lewis and Clark/ El Dorado Bar gravel and two 5 gallon buckets of dig yourself. Instead of two buckets they told us to take 2 of the empty sacks on the porch and fill those...it turns out the sacks hold 3 – 4 gallons of gravel. Unfortunately, Sandie developed heat exhaustion and we had to stop for the day. We went back to the mine and asked if we could come back the next day to pan out our diggings. The owner said he needed his bucket back and when we told him we had our own bucket, the answer was “See you tomorrow”.

We went back the next day (again early) and started to pan out our findings; we did a “first pan” of some of our diggings and found a few small sapphires. Once again, Sandie wasn’t feeling well so we stopped about noon and went back to camp.

Sunday we went on a tour of Montana Gold Country, near the town of White Sulphur Springs. This was very much a boomtown and very important part of Montana’s gold rush. There are still several commercial mining operations and many personal mining in this area today. Driving through the dredge tailings and seeing all of this area was very reminiscent of the Gold Country of California. We did stop and pan in one spot, but alas, no gold.

It was now time to move on and head toward Billings to collect Montana Agate. We took “the road less traveled” instead of Interstate 90/94 we took highway 12, less traffic, less big rigs, better view of the countryside. We stopped at the town of Forsyth, along the Yellowstone River and spend two days there collecting agates (maybe one true Montana Agate) and petrified wood along the Yellowstone River. From here we decided to go to Glendive and try our luck.

After speaking to fellow rockhounds in the campground at Glendive, the next day we drove to Savage, Montana to visit Tom Harmon, the authority on

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A Rockhound's Vacation

(Continued from page 11)

Montana Agate. We visited his rock shop/museum and spoke to him about collecting. He then took us to the Yellowstone River near his shop and told us how to find the agate. We searched and then did find a small piece of orange/clear with black. We drove to the state line with North Dakota so that Sandie could add one more state to her goal of visiting all 50 states. The next day we tried our luck hunting around the Glendive Area. We looked, but none of "the agate" was found.

Our adventure continued with a side trip to Devil's Tower. You know how you always have those places you want to visit, but they are just "that far" out of the way?? Well this is the way it has always been for both of us. So we decided that we were close enough to visit. We drove to Boardus, Montana and stayed there. The next day we drove to Devil's Tower and visited. Some of the wildlife at Devil's Tower is exciting too. They have Prairie Dog Town; it is on the road to the tower. The Prairie Dogs are very cute and will bark at you. The park is everything you expect it to be than then more. It is truly a fascinating place.

That afternoon we took another side trip to Sturgis, South Dakota, where they have a bike gathering the first week in August. We were a little early, but the small town had many bikers already. On the way back to Broadus, we stopped at Belle Fourche, South Dakota, the geographic center of the United States.

The next day (Sunday, July 26) we drove and met fellow rockhounds, Don and Cheri George and John and Suzy Martin, at the Little Big Horn Battlefield. We toured the Battlefield, not looking for any rocks, and drove onto Billings, Montana where the AFMS show was to be.

Monday found all six of us exploring the Pictograph State Park, with a little rain, and Pompey's Pillar, where William Clark signed his name to a sandstone pillar on the Yellowstone River near Billings. From the top of the Pillar, We could spot a promising gravel bar and the roads to get to it. We left the park, and found the gravel bar and started to look. Once again we found agate, and wood, but THE AGATE was still elusive. On the way back to the car, Sandie looked down and saw a vey good prospect. Noting there was a fracture in the center, she tapped one end and it broke in two pieces, revealing a beautiful fortification limb cast. Yeah!

Tuesday found us searching the gravel bars near Billings, finding only petrified wood. We have come to the conclusion that if you want to find Montana Agate, you need a boat to get to most of the gravel bars.

Wednesday, July 29th was set up day for the AFMS show. We put in two cases, one of Rockgabbers projects and one of our work. The show had many beautiful cases. Some of our favorites were the Harmon Family case of Montana Agate and sapphire jewelry, a case of carved stones as sea life that

was set up as an aquarium, the AFMS Past President's case and the show chairman's case, an upright case half filled with Montana Agate rough that he collected in one day a week before the show!

We then spent the next four days meeting with and talking to rockhounds from all over the United States and Canada. We even met and talked with old Whittier members Dan and Diane Stevens who now live in Idaho. We share rock stories with them and they show us some of the rock they have collected from around where they live. The Banquet Saturday night was very enjoyable with a Montana Agate bolo tie at every place setting.

Sunday night started our "Race to Nipomo" to make it there by Thursday to set up for the Orcutt Show. We hoped to get as far as Bozeman that night.

About 10 – 15 miles outside of Billings it started to get very windy and started to rain, then it immediately turned to hail, this was a little unnerving as it was about 80 degrees outside. The winds increased to the point where the hail was coming at a 90 degree angle to us. It was so windy, tree branches were breaking off and flying across the highway and then the hail was so hard we couldn't see the hood of the motorhome, we pulled over to the side of the road and the wind picked up even more! Just as fast as it started it was over and we could see the cars on the side of the road and some motorcyclists climbing out of the ditch they had crawled into. We think that we had just gone through a tornado! The rest of the drive to Bozeman was uneventful, for which we were very thankful.

The next day we drove through Idaho to the Snake River Gorge and Hell's Gate State Park. We stayed the night here and spent time with Tony's youngest daughter Libby and her dog Chip. The Lava flows that formed the canyon here have left cliffs that resemble the rock of Gibraltar, only black. Maybe on another trip we can spend more time here.

We continued heading west and drove through the Columbia Gorge. This has always been one of our favorite drives in this area of the United States. It is just amazing to see complete harbors 100 miles from the ocean and see 100 foot barges going up and down the river.

Near Portland we came to I-5 and started heading south for Nipomo. At about Santa Clara we got onto Hwy 101 and made it to Nipomo on Thursday afternoon. We set up our case and set out our demonstration stuff for the 3 day show. We were very glad to make it to Nipomo on time. The next three days were spent Demonstrating silversmithing and fold forming, seeing friends and chatting with people and having a great time.

After the show, we wanted a little down time, so we drove to Buellton and spent 3 days there before heading home. What a great trip this was!

*Tony, Sandie
Bunker and Qana*

Upcoming CFMS Gem Shows

- Sept 12-13 Vista, CA.** Vista Gem & Mineral Society
Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum, 2040 N. Sante Fe Ave.
Hours: Sat. 10-5; Sun. 10-4
- Sept 19-20 Paso Robles, CA.** Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Pioneer Park & Museum, 2010 Riverside Ave.
Hours: 10 - 5 both days
- Sept 26-27 Downey, CA.** Delvers Gem & Mineral Society
Womens Club of Downey, 9813 Paramount Blvd.
Hours: Sat.10 - 6; Sun. 10-4
- Oct 3-4 Fallbrook, CA.** Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Society
Fallbrook Gem & Mineral Museum
123 W. Alvarado Street
Hours: 10 - 4 both days
- Oct 10-11 Trona, CA.** Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society
Searles Gem & Mineral Show Building, 13337 Main Street
Hours: Sat. 7:30-5; Sun. 7:30-4
- Oct 17 Woodland Hills, CA.** Woodland Hills Rockchippers
First United Methodist Church, 22700 Sherman Way
Hours: Sat. 10-5
- Oct 17-18 Whittier, CA. Whittier Gem & Mineral Society**
Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave.
Hours: Sat. 10-5 both days
- Nov 7-8 Lancaster, CA.** Palmdale Gem & Mineral Society
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, 2551 W. Ave. H, Hwy 14
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
- Nov 7-8 Ridgecrest, CA.** Indian Wells Gem & Mineral Society
Desert Empire Fairgrounds, 520 S. Richmond Rd.
Hours: 9 - 5 both days
- Nov 14-15 Victorville, CA.** Victor Valley Gem & Mineral Society
San Bernardino Co.Fairgrounds, 17800 - 7th Street
Hours: 9-5 daily

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



Editor: Jay Valle, 1421 Latchford Avenue, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745
Home: (626) 934-9764; E-Mail: res19pnb@verizon.net
Bulletin exchanges are welcome and should be sent to the editor.

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