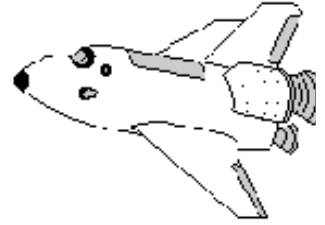
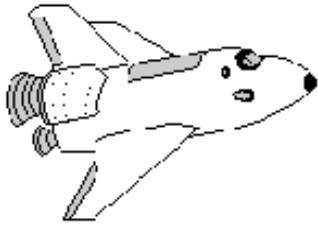


ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



The Monthly News Bulletin of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society, Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 48 No. 2

"We'll go to the Moon for a Rock"

February 2016

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Meeting Feb 23, 2016, 6:30pm



Rockhounding in the Great Northwest

Mike Harrison will share some of his rock hunting experiences and opportunities while living for two years in Rockhound Heaven - the Great State of Washington.

See Page 3 Below for Mike's bio.



Mount Ranier



Dues are payable now

Visit us at www.huntsvillegms.org/ and www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleGMS



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President Mike's Notes

Happy February! I can't believe how lucky I am to not only be a member of the Huntsville Gem and Mineral Society but to be honored to be elected as your president. And I do mean that from the bottom of my heart. We have done so much in the past few weeks! The volunteers (and there are many!) have cleaned the old equipment that we are keeping, built and rebuilt the tables to hold all of the equipment, received and installed the new arbors and saws and rebuilt the jewelry cabinet so it can be locked! The jewelry and metal working team has completed the first round of certification process for members and have many more activities and projects planned for the upcoming months. We had several visitors to the January meeting (which was awesome, thanks to Bill Friday) and packed!. And we have a great year planned for the club! I look forward to seeing you all on February 23rd.



Minutes of the January 26 2016 HGMS Meeting

President Mike Harrison opened the meeting at 6:31p.m. He recognized our 3 visitors.

Old Business

- We approved the minutes of the December 1st, 2015 Christmas dinner meeting.
- The board presented the proposed 2016 budget in the January 2016 newsletter. As there were no corrections or questions, we approved the new budget.

New Business

Field Trips

Brian Burgess reported that we are sponsoring a Dixie Mineral Council field trip to the Hogg Mine on April 16th, 2016.

We need membership support for this trip! Sign up tonight! He reported that several trips are in the works:

- Coon Creek in McNairy County TN to dig for fossils. This trip needs a minimum of 15 people and must be prepaid.
- Meteor impact site in Clarksville, GA to look for shatter cones. Brian is working with Charles Carter (of the Georgia Gem & Mineral Society).
- Richardson Landing sand/gravel bar in the Mississippi River, TN north of Memphis to dig for agate and dinosaur bones. There will be a 1/2 mile hike to the site. Brian is working with the Memphis Gem & Mineral Society.
- Return trip to Jim Lacefield's Cane Creek Preserve for the Pebble Pups. Chris Kalange provided a good overview. Brian is working on a couple more trips. If you're interested or if you have suggestions, see him tonight or email him. There will be other Dixie Mineral Council trips advertised each month.

Lapidary Shop

Bill Friday reported that the new grinders, sanders, and polishers are in place. There are some leaks and one motor is slow starting. The polishing side of the lab is ready. We have 4 new saws; and we kept 5 of the old ones - the two 6" and the two 10" trim saws and the 24" saw. We replaced the old transformer oil with new mineral oil. We'll be recovering the mineral oil for reuse. The 24" saw has oil already. We keep this saw locked. The lap lab is open every Tuesday/Wednesday night. Brian thanked everyone who helped install the new lab equipment. Bill will have sign-up sheets for lab users to volunteer to clean up the lab.

Jewelry Activity Group

Mindy Schell reported that the first meeting of 2016 is Tuesday, February 9th at 6p.m. The kit is \$3.00. You can bring your own tools or you can borrow ours. The first group of metalsmithing students has been certified. The second group starts a project this Thursday. The third group starts safety class this Thursday. We want to start an intermediate group. There will be a meeting on February 2nd from 5-7p.m. to discuss an intermediate group. If you don't have a senior center key (swipe) card, see Mindy.

Key Cards for Senior Center

We are now required to use the Senior Center key cards for access to the building. Its consistent use shows the city of Huntsville and Madison County that the Center is fully involved in helping its members, which helps justify their lines in the City and County Budgets. Get yours from Mindy Schell or Bill Friday.

[Minutes Continued next page]

*[Minutes Continued]***Other Announcements**

- Mike Soroczak announced that we received a thank you card from the Tupelo, MS G&M club for the equipment we donated to them. You're invited to read the card tonight.
- Charlie announced that the faceting class is in the works. If you're interested, see him tonight. He'll make a list of students, and when he's ready, he'll call everyone on the list. Mike Soroczak volunteered to donate a second faceting machine. The club owns an Omni machine by Jersey instruments. Charlie is trying to find all the pieces.
- Myra Soroczak, our Program chair, asked for input/ideas for programs you want to see and any program you can present.
- Mindy Schell announced that we need an Auction chair for the auction coming up in April. If you have donations, please see Mike Harrison. or Mindy. If you're interested in chairing the auction, see Mindy; she'll pass on information she gleaned while chairing the auction for the last 2 years.
- Jim Treadway announced that the Trinity Marketplace will be March 4th and 5th at the Trinity United Methodist Church on Airport Road.

2016 Membership Renewal

Bill Friday reminded us that a few members haven't yet paid their dues for 2016. Caryl Nixon has the 2016 membership cards. She'll issue your card(s) to you tonight. We don't have name tags tonight but we'll have them next meeting. Mike Harrison reminded us that our Club is a great bargain! We charge only \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families, compared to much higher fees for many other G&Ms.

Science Olympiad

Lowell Zoller announced that the UAH Science Olympiad is coming up on February 20th, from 8:30a.m. – noon in the Shelby Center on the UAH campus. He asked for volunteers and distributed a sign-up sheet. The competition is for middle and high school students. If you can volunteer, see Lowell tonight.

Program

Bill presented a program on dinosaurs with special emphasis on bones, skeletons and speciation through geologic time. He showed some examples. Next month, Mike Harrison will present a program on rock collecting in the northwest.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44p.m. New members chose door prizes. We enjoyed refreshments, and members toured the new lap lab.

Submitted by Recording Secretary Leslie Malakowsky

HGMS Presentation ~ “Rock Hounding in the Great NorthWest”

by Mike Harrison

Mike Harrison will be making his presentation on 23 February 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the Huntsville Senior Center, 2200 Drake Avenue, Huntsville, AL. Mike has 40 years as an engineer in the aerospace industry. He has worked as a Design Engineer, a Produceability Engineer, a Quality Engineer, a Program Manager & Scheduler for Lockheed Martin, Phillips Petroleum and the Boeing company, designing tooling, composite components, structure, and metallic structure for airplanes, satellites, rockets, missiles, unmanned and manned spacecraft as well as wind tunnel models. Mike has recently returned from a two year assignment in the Seattle, Washington area with the Boeing company. Knowing Mike's incredible background, HGMS membership recruited and voted Mike in as the President of the Huntsville Gem and Mineral Society. His passions are rockhounding, designing & creating, as well as pursuing minerals and precious metals in his spare time. Welcome home Mike.



Scholarship Drawing for William Holland Lapidary School and Wildacres Art Center

<http://www.lapidaryschool.org/classschedule.php> / <http://amfed.org/sfms/wildacres-retreat.html>

Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society offers two partial scholarships for members to attend one of the two premier art schools in the Southeastern United States—William Holland at Young Harris GA and Wildacres at Little Switzerland NC. Two additional names will be drawn for first and second alternates. If you are interested in applying for a scholarship, please indicate this prior to the February 24th HGMS meeting to Bill Friday 256-527-8227 / bill.Friday@earthlink.net or Mike Harrison 256-797-2534 / wm.harrison.123@gmail.com

A Request from the Program Chair, Myra Soroczak

At the February meeting, I will pass out sheets which have three columns, and I need each of you to fill out one of the lines on a sheet. The three columns are for [1] Member name, [2] Program(s) you would like HGMS to present, and [3] Program(s) that you could present.

Before the February meeting, think about what programs you would like HGMS to have at our meetings this year. We might not get all the programs pulled together this year, but the last time we did this (back in 2010), we pulled program ideas from the list for 3 or 4 years. By filling out this portion of the sheet, you will help us provide programs that we know will be of interest to our members. Don't worry if someone else has already listed the topic, knowing several people are interested will likely move that topic forward in our planning.

Also think about programs that you could present. Some of you may think you don't have anything to offer, but you are wrong about that. All of us know about something that others know little or nothing about. All that is required is that the topic have some slim thread that ties it to rocks, minerals, or gems. If you know a little about something, one way to learn more is to research it to present to others. For instance, what is your favorite mineral; why? Where did you find your best rock ever; did you buy it or did you hike to wherever to find it? Have you found a great rock and mineral museum or found a wonderful book or two on rocks? What does your workshop or craft room look like; what organization method do you use? Maybe you have a technique to teach or demonstrate.

See what I mean. Give some thought before the meeting and be ready when the 3-column sheet is passed your way. If you can't make it to the February meeting, don't worry, I'll likely pass the sheets out again in March.

Myra Soroczak, Program Chair

From Your Friendly Food Lady

I wish to thank everyone who has generously provided refreshments for our meetings. Without our volunteers' contributions, we wouldn't have our yummy goodies at the close of our meetings. I especially appreciate the assistance I have received from Pat and Linda McKinney, Shelley Curran and Chris Kolange, and any passerby who has pitched in while setting up and clearing away the refreshments.

I will have a sign-up sheet at the Feb. 22 meeting (Happy Washington's Birthday!) for people to indicate what refreshments they would like to provide for the Mar. 23 meeting. If you can see the way clear to provide sandwiches, I would really appreciate that; however, even if you just pick up a package of cookies or some chips & dips, they'll be well received. I shall make phone calls and send emails to fill in the blank spaces on the sign-up sheet. Thankfully, I can honestly say that I have never had an unpleasant encounter during my foraging expeditions. We have really nice members! Thanks for making my job easier!

Stay safe & warm, and well fed,

Caryl Nixon, Hospitality Chairwoman

The Newly Renovated and Equipped Lapidary Lab is Open for Business

Yes, we did spend a tidy sum, though well within our budgetary means, but the new equipment— four 14" saws— and ten arbor units— four for grinding with two different grits, four for sanding with two different grits, and two for polishing with two different grits— is comprised of enormously better machines than the ones we replaced. We kept the two 6" and two 10" manual trim saws, but they were steam cleaned. The new completely odorless (actually it is food grade) mineral oil has taken away the need to dump smelly clothes on the back porch upon arrival home. All have been installed, leak checked, re-wired with Ground Circuit Interruptors, and checked out. The sanders are wheels, not belts, so the expected lifetime has jumped from a week till the belts were slick to years before worn out. The polishers are no longer coated with messy, and sometimes damagingly contaminated by coarse grit, but are now also wheels which should last a long time. And wait till you see the shine they give! Each unit has a light, except the new saws, which don't **YET** have windows and so don't need lights.

The new grinder/sander/polisher units are tough, but not indestructible.

Please never touch a wheel with a piece of metal of any kind, even soft copper or especially aluminum. Steel tools will strip the diamond surface in an instant.

Please make sure you wash your stone between each step on the various arbors. These are less susceptible to contamination but not immune.

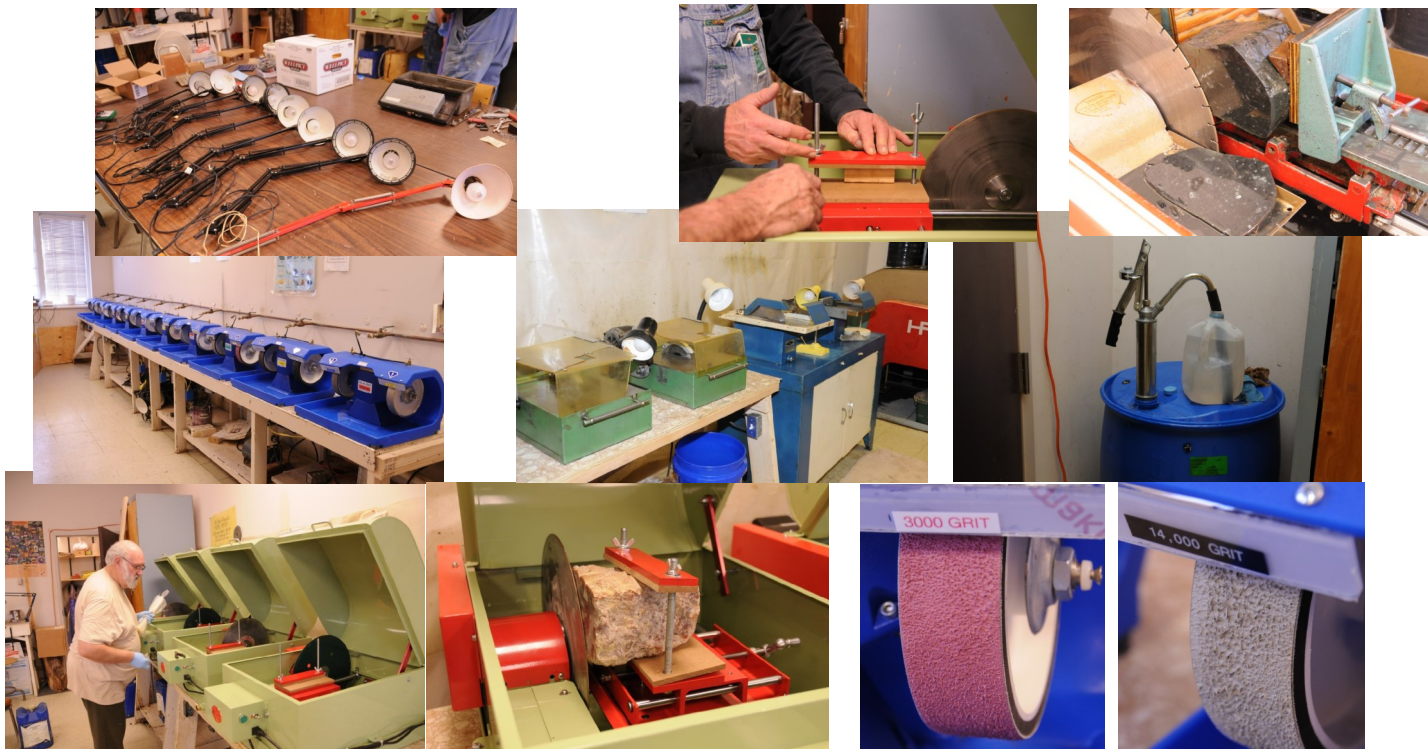
Please always use the complete width of any wheel—don't hold your stone in the center and burn it out, but work also to the sides. But if you catch an edge with a stone or finger there will be a gouge—difficult to smooth in a stone and bloody in a finger—so be careful at all times.

Please use only as much water as you need during grinding to wet your stone—too much will cause splashing outside the pan and make a puddle on the table and floor. Turn off your unit water at the wall valve when you finish a step. And if you are the last to leave the lab, turn off the main supply valve by the sink.

Plug in the dop iron when you arrive if you plan to mount a stone, and turn off the iron when you are the last to leave. Clean up any chips from the saw tables and mop up any oil spills. Turn off all lights when you leave.

We are bringing back the Certified User List, which will be checked during the day by the Senior Center Program Manager Becky Rollston and in the evenings by the lab hosts. Your membership card will indicate your level of training for lapidary and metal-smithing.

Use your bar-coded key card to enter the building day or night. True, you can sneak in, but the attendance records are a critical factor for keeping the Senior Center funded and open. Do your part to help out. If you don't have a key card, ask Mindy Schell or Bill Friday during an open lab or a meeting, or Becky Rollston during the day.



Lapidary Primer, by Bill Friday

Select a stone with a pleasing color or pattern on the outside, with evidence that the color goes through the center, checking for serious cracks. Decide the orientation for your first cut.

If the stone cannot be easily and securely mounted in a vice, consider cutting it in half manually on a 10" trim saw.

Mount each half on a block of wood (at least 1-1/2" wide) with white Elmers glue (not too much), and with the bottom edge of the rock no lower than the bottom edge of the block.

If you have a stone from which a slice has been previously cut, also consider mounting it on a wood block as above.

Set the stone, or wood block, in the vice with enough sticking out the left side to make multiple cuts. If the stone is on a wood block, stick the edge of the block off of the left side of the vice about 1/4".

If the stone hasn't been previously cut, use the cross vice screw to have the saw remove a thickness of slab such that the next slab will be larger than the smallest cabochon you wish to make.

Use the vice to advance the slab 1/4" (6 turns of the screw) to 5/16" (7-1/2 turns) per cut.

Select the area(s) from which you want to cut your cabochons, looking for pleasing patterns and colors. Use a template (lower left cabinet) and a scribe - an aluminum wire or black Sharpie (this won't wash off in the oil) felt tip marker to mark your pattern. Making the first cut in the center may waste the rest so look to maximize the amount of useable surface.

Remove excess material outside your pattern (don't cut into the marking) on the slab with the 6" trim saw. Never use excess pressure on the blade, as this will drastically shorten the expensive blade's useful life. This isn't a race.

The rough cab must be completely cleaned of oil and soap. Mount the cab with dop wax using a stick which is around half the diameter of the cab. The rock must be heated sufficiently that a bit of wax will melt and flow over the surface. The stick must also be heated in the wax cup. Remove most of the excess wax, set the stick in the center of the stone, move the stone and stick to the glass below the iron and wait till the wax is completely hard.

Start at the coarsest grinder (80 grit), trim to the outer edge of your marking (not too much pressure), then continue grinding to achieve a domed surface, leaving the lower 1/16" of the edge untouched. Wash the stone after each step, proceeding through the succession of finer grinders, sanders, and polishers. When finished, you will have a jewel ready for mounting.



HGMS Jewelry Crafts

Our goal is to get HGMS members together to share what we know. Some of these are considered rare and lost arts in regards to jewelry development, design, and the very many different types. We are quite lucky to have a handful of Advanced Artists in HGMS who are generous with their knowledge and time to educate our HGMS Jewelry Craft members as well as a number of us that are beginner students but want to make a difference by volunteering however we can. If you are a part of our Jewelry Activity Group or Metal-smithing Group students, please thank your instructors for their selfless energy towards classes and assistance. Also, if you would like to volunteer to help with the organization, please contact me.

Thank you, Mindy Schell—mindy.schell@yahoo.com

[Editor's Note—Thank You Mindy for being the Spark Plug]



HGMS Jewelry Activity Group (JAG)

On 9 February 2016 we kicked off our first Jewelry Activity Class. Deb Neis instructed us on how to make earring wires with fancy spirals and jump rings. More monthly Jewelry Kit Classes are currently in coordination. Future classes include a Viking Knit by Kathy Bowman; Bead Knotting by Sheila Tesh; and more wire-wrapping by Myra Soroczak. If you are interested, check out our Facebook page at <https://m.facebook.com/HGMS-Jewelry-Activity-Group-857234527677766/>

HGMS Metalsmithing / Silver Group

On 7 February we started Safety Classes and skill-based project instruction for three different groups of beginner metal-smithing students. We have completed this iteration of instruction and for those that have completed certification, signups for a Spinner Ring Class have started. The metal-smithing group is for HGMS members 18 years old and up.

A big thank you to Deb Neis and Shelley Curran for planning & completing the tool and supply lists; Deb in ordering all the equipment/supplies as well as class planning and kit construction; Mike Harrison (HGMS President & Carpenter Extraordinaire) and Karin Bath (Carpentry Foreman) in building the metalsmithing equipment closet; Karin in Metalsmithing Safety Demonstrations; and Deb (Lead Instructor), Kathy Bowman (Project Instructor), and Shelley Curran (Project Instructor) in certifying the many students.

Please remember that the toolboxes are limited and are reserved first for classes. For those wanting to continue with metalsmithing, please start buying the basic tools from the list provided in class starting with the Butane can with Culinary torch head demonstrated. Other torches will be brought into instruction at a later time. We are trying to accommodate the many people in the lab and trying to keep everybody safe so leave those big torches at home until we announce we are ready.

If you are interested in metal-smithing we will be taking signups in March for more classes.



Metal-smithing Lab Schedule (Thursdays at 6 p.m.):

18 February- Open Lab for HGMS Certified Metal-smithers & Ring Shank Demo.

18 February - Catalogue tools and supply discussion with opportunity to buy using group discount.

25 February – Spinner Ring Class (HGMS Certified Metal-smithers). Space limited so reserve your seat now.

Volunteer Positions

Jewelry Craft Program Manager ...	Mindy Schell
Jewelry Craft Treasurer...	Karin Bath
Jewelry Craft Kit Manager...	Shelley Curran

Instruction:

Metal-smithing Lead Instructor...	Deborah Neis
Metal-smithing Project Instructors...	Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran
Safety Instructors	Mindy Schell & Karin Bath
Librarian...	Open
Refreshments	Open

Pebble Pups - How Minerals are Formed

Thursday Feb 18th 6:00 to 7:00pm - SciQuest



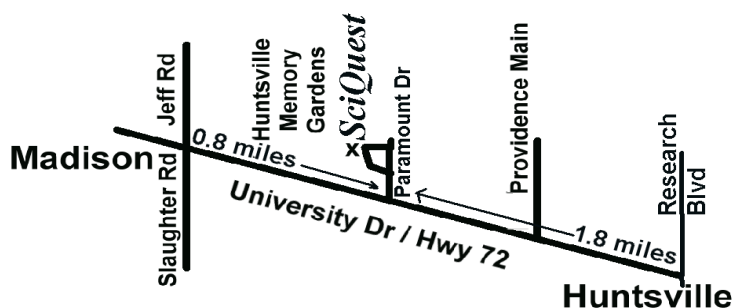
February 18th— HOW MINERALS ARE FORMED

Did you know that Crystals come in seven different shapes? Did you know that Oxygen is the third most abundant element in the universe? Did you know if we had no oxygen that almost half the minerals here on earth would not form? Did you know that crystals form in only two environments? If you are curious and want to know more, come and join us for the February 18th Pebble Pup meeting. There will be examples and some handout goodies.

Please RSVP to Brian by **Feb 15th**,
256-746-0641, bburgess771@gmail.com,



The Mineral Mimetite



March 17th Topic **Yellowstone Park—** **Geology, History, & Wildlife, by Bill Friday**

April 21 - Extremophiles—animals that live in impossible places

May 19 - Radioactive Rocks

June 22 - Electricity and Magnetism

July 21 - Alabama Geology (Jim Lacefield)

The next three months tie together.

August 18 - Weather (Michelle Amin from the NWS office)

September 15 - Erosion: Wind, Water, and Ice

October 20 - Discoveries from Erosion



Wavellite

Kids ages 8 through 12 are invited to join this Junior Rock Enthusiasts Group. All participating families must have Family-Member status (the \$20 rate) in the HGMS and a family member must be present during the meeting. Pups family membership is an additional \$10/year. SciQuest has generously agreed to leave all of their activities up and running for accompanying older & younger siblings. No SciQuest entrance fee for attendees.

Many thanks to SciQuest.

Key Tag now required for entry to the Madison County Senior Center

Each person entering the Senior Center for meetings, HGMS activities, or other purposes within the building, at any time of day, will need a bar-coded key card, to be recorded at the door on the reader. These may be obtained from an HGMS officer at a regular HGMS meeting, at one of the Tuesday or Wednesday evening lapidary sessions, or during the day from Becky Rollston, Senior Center Program Director. Once your tag is recorded by the Center, if you forget to bring it, you may enter your phone number for access. Thanks.

Start Gathering Donation Items for the April HGMS Fund Raising Auction

Last year's Auctions were the best ever, certainly because of the very dedicated work performed by some special people, but their accomplishments would have been impossible if donations hadn't started coming in early, allowing the cataloging and valuations booklet to be ready well before the Auctions. Mike Harrison is heading up the Auction organizing this year—many thanks for stepping up. So go through your collections and select some of the good stuff of which you have a bit of a surplus. Much of the progress we made recently in upgrading the lab, starting jewelry and metal smithing activities was made possible by the proceeds from the auctions. We are preparing to start faceting and upgrading the library—so please give generously. And please sign up to help in any of the many support opportunities—Mike can't do it along. Thanks

Rome GA Gem & Mineral Society Spring Show

Don't miss one of the South's premier mineral shows!

The 2016 Valley and Ridge Gem and Mineral Show March 18, 19, & 20, 2016

The Forum * 301 Tribune St * Rome, GA 30161 * (706) 291-5281

Fri-Sat 10am-6pm * Sun 11am-5pm Free Admission!

Mineral/Fossil ID, Prizes, Exhibits! Minerals, Gems, Fossils, Meteorites, Jewelry, and Crystals for Sale. Register to win this fabulous Grand Prize at the Show!

WOW! More free rocks! Bring the show flyer to the show and we will give you a free mineral or fossil specimen. Download the flyer [HERE](#).

Show Information: Jose Santamaria, Show Chair * 678.488.9560 * rogams.show@gmail.com

Dealer Information: Jeff Deere, Dealer Chair * 770.655.2298 * Jeff.Deere@brownind.com

<https://rogams.wordpress.com/gem-and-mineral-show/>



FIELD TRIP FOLLIES - Brian Burgess

I know it is the beginning of the New Year and everyone was still taking a big breath after the holidays. I am hoping this is the reason for the sparse response to the field trip signup sheets. I will place them on the table at the February 23rd meeting for you to scan and sign. I need to know the interest so I can finalize dates for the field trips.

HGMS Sponsored DMC dig - Hogg Mine April 16th, 2016 is all set and needing signed-up helpers

Below is a list of possible field trips:

- Cane Creek Canyon Nature Preserve – A Saturday in May (This is a Pebble Pup trip, but HGMS is invited.)
- Coon Creek Science Center—amazing fossils— I need at least 15 members interested and they need to pre-pay before I schedule. \$15 for four hour dig and \$10 for 2 hour dig
- Richardson Landing - North of Memphis near Millington on the Mississippi River. Agates & fossils—This will be sometime in the summer when the river is low enough for access. Free
- Mason Mine Franklin NC – Primarily a sapphire mine. The cost is \$20 per person.
- Wells Creek Impact Crater, TN – Meteor Impact Shatter cones—Free
- Clarksville, Ga – Kyanite \$10 per person
- Stringfield Quarry in North Huntsville—geology & some fossils /minerals—Free



Hogg Mine April 2010

Please let me know your interest so the planning can begin!



Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc



The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve
DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee
Copyright © All rights reserved.

An Official Field Trip of the Georgia Mineral Society (Atlanta, GA) (HOST)

An Official Field Trip of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society

Clarksville, GA—Saturday, March 12, 2016—10:00 AM

Fee: \$10 per person

TRIP: This location was a popular collecting location many years ago but had not been visited for a long time. Jim Haeger was instrumental in getting the site reopened a few years ago and since then it has been a fun and productive site.

COLLECTING: Kyanite blades and cobbles, small mica books, and graphite specimens (rare). The kyanite ranges from gray to pale blue and may contain graphite. Some of the blades can be polished and, because of the graphite, they have a curious depth and shimmer when they are polished.

BRING: Material is plentiful and weathering out onto the surface. Bigger blades and cobbles are found by digging. Scratching tools and baggies are all you need for surface collecting, shovel and pick for digging. All holes must be re-filled. This site can be muddy at times, so a change of clothes would be good too.

FACILITIES: There are no facilities at the site, but GMS members will have free water and snacks available for everyone.

CHILDREN: This field trip is suitable for children but they must be supervised at all times.

PETS: Because this is a working farm, pets are not allowed.

SAFETY: There are electrified fences on the farm so do not touch any fences. Field trip leads will open and close gates. This is a working farm and there may be animals present – do not approach any of the animals. Do not enter pastures where animals are present.

DIRECTIONS AND WHERE TO MEET:

We will meet at 10:00am Eastern time at Ingles Market (the only Ingles in Clarksville), 199 East Louise St (US Old/Historical 441), Clarksville, GA 30523, Coordinates: 34.603124,-83.517801

- 1) From Atlanta, take I-985 North towards Gainesville
- 2) I-985 will transition to GA 365/US 23
- 3) Continue on GA 365/US 23 to GA 197
- 4) Take GA 197 north to Clarksville (about 3.5 miles)
- 5) Ingles is on the right, we will meet in the parking lot close to the highway.

CONTACT: Charles Carter, GMS Field Trip Chair

Home: 770-998-7949 **Cell:** 770-891-5947 fieldtrips@gamineral.org

Kyanite Cobble



2016 Agate Expos LLC—Cedarburg WI—Jul 8-10

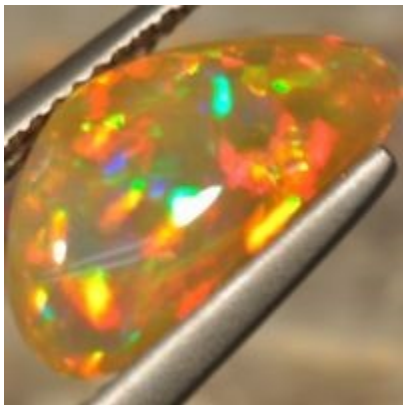
The 2016 Agate Expos LLC show will be held July 8-10, W68N611 Evergreen Blvd. Cedarburg, WI 53012. This is an every four-year event since the first in 2008. Cedarburg is 20 miles north of Milwaukee. The website is <http://www.agateexpos.com/>, which has all the pertinent information for those interested. A second info site is [facebook.com/AgateExpos](https://www.facebook.com/AgateExpos), which has many photos of fine agates, plus news about some of the presenters who will be speaking during the event. Gene Mueller of The Gem Shop, Inc in Cedarburg wrote an article in the December issue of Rocks & Gems entitled "Orienting Agate -Tips for Cutting Banded Specimens"

Welo Opal—Care and Handling

For those of you who have become fascinated with Welo Opal, here is an article from The American Opal Society July 2010 issue of The Opal Express.

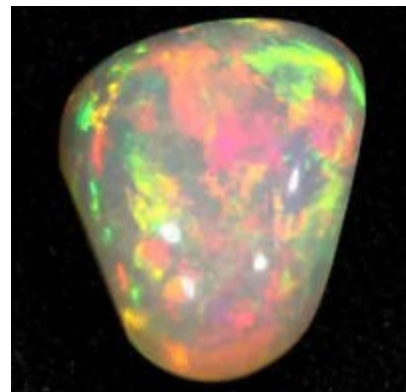
Welo Opal Cutting Tips By Steve Newstrom In the last few weeks I've gleaned some new insights for cutting the new Welo opals. So I've updated the previous instructions I've provided on Welo Opal cutting/carving. Most of the opal from Welo is hydrophane opal. Hydrophane opal quickly absorbs water changing from crystal/semi-crystal to almost water clear. The play-of-color, though not entirely disappearing, fades out. But luckily this is only a temporary problem... when the finished cab or carving is left to dry for 3-4 days, the colors return to normal. Some of this opal goes through a stage when drying, where the base color becomes VERY milky. This opal may require a longer drying time to return to it's original colors... up to 2 weeks.

When cutting this material I use Elmer's Glue-All to glue the stone to a wooden dop stick. Allow the stone dry overnight, then coat the non-waterproof glue with a coating of clear fingernail polish to make it waterproof. I use a 220-grit diamond grinding dry wheel to rough grind the stone...dry. Opal's relatively soft and a 220-grit diamond wheel cuts fast enough and also doesn't leave the deep scratches (and won't be as likely to chip) that an 80 or 100-grit wheel will...especially when working dry. Watch for heat and dust (use a mask if you're doing a lot of opal cutting: opal dust can cause silicosis), but with light pressure on a diamond wheel, opal doesn't heat much. But it is important to check your stones temperature often as Welo opal can be heat sensitive. This opal can also be dopped using super glue and aluminum or brass rods. Stones can be removed easily by heating the dopping rods and loosening the super-glue...careful of stones temp. I like to rough grind dry, to properly orient the stone. But once that is completed, I go to water-cooled cutting using a 320 grit belt...for more shaping of the stone. 600grit will remove any flat spots and course scratches...then onto 1200-grit and 3000- grit...polish using your favorite method for opals. Remove the fingernail polish



with acetone (careful acetone is VERY flammable). Soak in water 2-3 hours and the stone should fall off of the stick. If not let the stone soak overnight. **Carving Tips:** I like to carve Welo dry, using a combination of Cratex points and felt buffs with diamond compound. Cratex can be used dry (careful of heat) and you won't have color change problems found when cutting wet. But the commercial color-coded diamond compound in syringes will dye the opals. The 1200 grit blue compound will produce opals of a nice robin's egg blue...so I mix diamond powder with baby oil for the 1200, 3000, 14,000 and 50,000 grit stages. If you'd like a different consistency try Vaseline, melted bees wax, Crisco or vegetable oil. Keep in mind this is just one of many cutting techniques that will accomplish the same thing...a beautiful, well cut

opal cabochon. The important things to remember are: cut slowly, avoid overheating your stones, smooth out flat areas and polish your opals well...checking carefully for scratches.



Welcome New HGMS Members

Wendy & Jonathan Lear

Jeffrey Rothermel

Linda Sue Reed & Thomas Peters



February Birthdays

1 Briley Poff	10 Tony Smith
2 Julie Eve	11 Karin Bath
2 Michael Cape	16 Porche' McDonald
5 Alli Curran	17 Dave Kalange
6 Mike Goode	17 Don Cooper
6 Savanna Emerson	18 Wayne Falkenberg
7 Antonio Bedard	19 Ethan Hunneycutt
7 Lester Bartel	

Anniversaries

2 Dorthea Chism
12 Don & Marie Aldridge
19 Steven & Christine Tate
20 Ben Hunneycutt & Brandy Hyatt

March Birthdays

5 Allison Kowalczyk	19 Ben Carroll
8 Virgil Fischer	20 Robert Broussard
15 Carol Roden	22 Gene Powers
15 June Kalange	22 Susan Hessler
15 Victoria Bedard	29 Linda McKinney
18 Michael O'Dell	29 Mario Bedard
18 Ola Ann Lee	30 Chelie Britt

Anniversaries

7 Barbara Deckelman
14 Ben & Monika Carroll
18 Robert & Gayle Joyce
22 Wayne & Rhonda Hall
24 Margaret & Jerry Olson
31 Wendell & Mary Lou Allen

January 2016 - Senior Center Lapidary Lab Schedule

Lapidary, Silver Jewelry and Wood Carving

To use lapidary equipment, you must be certified unless a licensed instructor, is present - currently: B. Friday, J. Treadway, Chris Kalange

Monday	7:30am- 9:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary, certified HGMS 60+
	9:00am- Noon	Silver Jewelry - Ron West, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	Noon -4:30pm	Open Lab: Lapidary, certified HGMS 60+
Tuesday	7:30am-9:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary, certified HGMS 60+
	9:00am—Noon	Silver Jewelry - Ron West, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	Noon -3:00 pm	Silver Jewelry- Terry Clarke, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	3:00pm—4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary, certified HGMS 60+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Lapidary & Jewelry - certified HGMS 18+
Wednesday	7:30am –4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified HGMS 60+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Lapidary & Jewelry - certified HGMS 18+
Thursday	7:30am –4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified HGMS 60+
	9:00am-11:30am	Silver Jewelry- Ron West, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	Noon-3:00pm	Wood Carving - Copeland, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	3:00pm-4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary certified HGMS 60+
	6:00pm—9:00pm	Metal Smithing Limited Classes— HGMS 18+
Friday	7:30am - 12:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+

2016 HUNTSVILLE GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

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Librarian: Leslie Malakowsky, 256-755-0479

Club Publicity: Jennifer Pinkley 931-233-0420

Education & Craftsmanship: vacant

Field Trips: Brian Burgess, 256-746-0641

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(William Holland offers a class for this)

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Show Volunteer Chair: Lori Willhoite 256-340-3448

Show Vendor Chair: Lowell Zoller, 256-534-8803

Show Publicity Chair: Tony Smith, 256-852-3210

Show Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194

clarag1964@gmail.com

PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY: The Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society is a non-profit educational organization for people interested in mineralogy, geology, paleontology, and related lapidary arts. Its primary purpose is the education of the members and the general public in these areas. This purpose is accomplished through programs, shows, lectures to school children and organizations, and exchange of rocks, minerals and artifacts.

DUES: Annual dues are \$15.00 per person, \$20.00 per family, and are due on January 1st of each year

Membership Applications may be found at our webpage www.Huntsvillegms.org, at meetings, or the lab

MEETING PLACE: Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center, 2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL at 6:30pm.

DATE: Fourth Tuesday of each month except for June picnic/rock swap, Christmas Dinner and major holidays.

Federation Liaison:

Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society, 2705 Jarvis Street S. W. Decatur AL 35603, Attn: Charlie Willhoite

This Society is affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies , the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and the Dixie Mineral Council

**Federation Newsletters:**

SFMS: www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html

AFMS: www.amfed.org/news/default.htm

DMC: http://www.amfed.org/sfms/_dmc/dmc.htm



2016 CALENDAR

- 23 Feb '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm
- 22 Mar '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm
- 23 Apr '16 - Annual Fundraiser Auction - **Saturday**
Jaycees Bldg, 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL **9:00am**
- 24 May '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm
- 11 Jun '16 - Annual HG&MS Picnic - **Saturday**
date is tentative, location to be determined, details as they are available
- 26 July '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm
- 23 Aug '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm
- 27 Sep '16 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

See Pebble Pups Schedule on Page 7

Deadline for Next Newsletter— March 12, 2016
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Rocket City Rocks & Gems

Bill Friday, Editor
2508 Excalibur Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35803

HGMS February 2016

Dated Material
Do not Delay