

CRACK 'N CAB

Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY
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3 inch
ROCK HOUND
bumper/window
Stickers
will be on sale for
only \$1 at Club
meetings



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questions,
corrections,
requests, news,
pictures and
suggestions for
our newsletter
and/or web
page

www.gmss.us
contact our
Editor at
editorgmss@gmail.com

Monday, March 21st SPRING AUCTION! Auction Scoop from the Gemguy's Mouth by Bob Livingston

Here us why you SHOULD NOT miss our Spring Auction on Monday, March 21st. I have truly seen, or my trusted sources tell me that you can to bid on: Nice petrified wood thingies, beads, bracelets and necklaces naturally, artsy hobby-related table lamp, display items, super Herkimers in matrix, fabulous polished geodes, mineral specimens that have been under wraps for 30 to 40 years (imagine), cute carvings, still-wrapped inlaid keepsake boxes, some starter stuff for kids to ogle over or show to classmates.

Going further for the more adventurous or one looking for more challenges -- vacuum casting outfit for silverwork, vibrating lapidary flat lap to enhance slabs, brand new 6" true lapidary diamond saw blade, perfect timing for lots of collecting tools, first dibs on some of the nice stuff from the Dottie Ringwood estate, a few items from the Marie Cole estate. Plus great surprises they kept from the Gemguy or lots that you all will bring from your stash.

So --

1. Bring your good stuff to sell or donate to make this fun night even better
2. Bring your wallet and take home some great treasures at the right price
3. Know you are helping good causes as some of the proceeds will end up going to support scholarships, or help finance our probable move down the road etc.
4. Come for the fun and enjoy the refreshments
5. It's Always a Good Time

GMSS Member Auction Rules

1. Only club members can sell items. If you have not renewed your membership, please send your membership dues to our Post Office Box PRIOR to the meeting. Anyone can bid on auction items.
2. The auction begins at 7:30 PM. For those who are selling items please come early to obtain the auction label forms and set up your items on the display tables. The doors will be open by 6:30 PM.
3. Each item must have a completed auction label. Sellers, please provide a description form for each item to be given with the item to the successful bidder, (example: mineral name and location collected).
4. There is an upper limit of five (5) items per seller. There is no maximum limit for the number of items donated to the club.
5. This is not a silent auction. All bids will be indicated by a vocal "Huzzah!" (or equivalent) and flaunting your bidder's ID number on the supplied sign.
6. Any material with a specified minimum bid that does not sell will be returned to the seller.
7. The club will retain 15% of the selling price. The full selling price of the donated items will be given to the club.
8. The highest bidder wins the auctioned item. Runners will deliver each item to the winning bidder and collect a payment for that item. Bidders need not leave their chairs. BIDDERS PLEASE BRING PLENTY OF CASH. Items selling for more than \$15.00 can be purchased by personal checks. All other items will be cash only.
9. Sellers cannot bid on their own items.

President's Message



**John Sweeney - President
March 2016**

President Message

"Ten, ten, ten. Do I hear eleven?
Twelve, twelve, twelve.
Going once. Going twice.
Sold for twelve dollars!"

That's right, it's that time of year again. On March 21st our club is holding its annual auction. Bring in jewelry, specimens and hobby related materials. The more you bring the better the auction. You can donate things to the club or sell them outright at auction. This is a good time to move items you have doubles of and put them in the hands of other enthusiasts. Its time for spring cleaning! Think of it as recycling or a way to provide your self space for new treasures. Remember we only borrow the rocks while we're here you can't take them you. Be prepared to bid. Everything goes. It'll be HUGE; but, only if you help. The auction starts promptly at 7:30.

In other news, we are looking for a nominating committee to help select a slate of officers for next year. This also means we will be looking for a slate of officers for the next year as well. Come on in, the water's fine.

The board is finishing up ironing out a conflict of interest policy for officers and board members. This is to keep us compliant with changes in the tax laws.

The show committee is preparing for our fiftieth anniversary show. Our website is looking good and we're getting more hits on social media sites. There are openings in the currently running lapidary class if anyone would like to join in the class and our search is still ongoing for a new space.

In the meantime gear up for the auction. We'll see you there. Going once, going twice sold!

Secretary's Report



**Cheryl Brown - Secretary
Meeting Minutes**

General Meeting February 15, 2016

We celebrated John Davis' 101st birthday! Happy Birthday, John. Many happy returns!

Dr. Steven Chamberlain was our guest speaker. He is writing a new book about talc mining in the Balmat mining district near Gouverneur in St. Lawrence County. While books have been written about zinc mining in the area, no one has written about talc mining. Talc is one of the ingredients added to wood pulp to make paper. The talc from mining was also used during World War II for airplane bombing practice because its bright white color made hit locations easily visible.

Dr. Chamberlain enumerated the minerals found in both the talc and zinc mines in the area. He showed beautiful specimen pictures of the numerous minerals. Unfortunately, all the mines are underground, so they are not open to the public.

The business portion of the meeting began with the news that we are still actively looking for a new clubhouse location.

Mark Grasmeyer reported that the bus trip to the Albany Gem and Mineral show was a success. Nineteen people went on the trip and a good time was had by all.

Some up-coming rock events are: the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium, April 14-17; Gilsum, NH Rock Swap, June 25 and 26; and the Herkimer Diamond Festival and Gem show, July 16 and 17.

Sign-up sheets for working our 50th anniversary Gem World show, July 9 and 10, were put out. If you have not signed-up yet, they'll be available at the March meeting. Keith Gilmer is looking for people who would like to fill a display case (or 2) for the show. See him at the March meeting and let him know you are willing to participate.

Cheryl Brown and Donna Dow will bring the snack for the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted - Cheryl Brown

Board Meeting March 1, 2016

The Clubhouse roof is leaking. We are still looking for a new place to meet.

The Donation Committee made recommendations to the Board as to where our annual donations should be made. After additional input and discussion, the recommendations were approved by the Board.

New York State is requiring that all non-profit organizations have a Conflict of Interest policy linked to their Constitution. Due to the fact that the auction will be taking place during the March meeting, the Constitutional change will be included in the April newsletter, presented to the membership for discussion at the April meeting and voted on at the May meeting.

The open clubhouse times are as follows:
Monday 10 – 1 (beginning March 14th)
Tuesday 10 – 1 (beginning April 5th)
Saturday 10 – 1 (beginning April 9th)

If you have taken the lapidary and silversmithing class with John Sweeney, you are welcome to come in and use the club equipment.

Stay tuned for field trip opportunities as the weather breaks this spring. A trip to Ace of Diamonds on April 1st is in the planning stages.

Shannon Phillips is doing a great job with the youth group. The next Junior Rockhound meeting is March 19th at the clubhouse from 10am to 12 noon.

Our March meeting will feature an auction. Items from the collections we have recently acquired will be made available for sale in the auction as well as any hobby related items you would like to bring in. Bring your money and go home with some unique treasures. Get a number from Cheryl Brown that evening before the meeting begins so you can participate in the bidding.

The current board members' terms are ending this year; therefore, a nominating committee must be formed to seek new office holders. Our annual elections are held in June. Due to constitutionally prescribed term limits, the following offices need new office holders: President, Vice President, and Secretary. Our current Sargent-at-Arms is eligible to run for and hold his office for another year. Please contact John Sweeney if you would be willing to serve on the nominating committee.

Respectfully Submitted - Cheryl Brown

Junior Rockhounds By Shannon Phillips



In February, the Junior Rockhounds met to continue work on the Communication badge and begin the Gemstone Lore and Legend badge. The kids brought the research they had worked on in January to present to the group. Ben showed examples of minerals from Pakistan, which he had displayed as a school project and decided to share with the club. Xander shared interesting information about his favorite dinosaur: the Stegosaurus. We all enjoyed learning that its brain was the size of a walnut. Bronwyn and Janaya both researched the mineral apatite because of its range of beautiful colors and from each of their reports the group learned a lot about this lovely mineral. I hope you all got to read Finn's article about amethyst in last month's Crack 'n Cab. After the reports, the kids spent some time researching birthstones and anniversary stones and precious metals. They were able to examine examples of each month's birthstone as raw specimens, polished or tumbled stones, or faceted and set in jewelry. Ronna lent her jeweler's loupe and taught us how to use it to view the smallest stones under magnification.

In March, the Junior Rockhounds will meet on Saturday the 19th. At this meeting, we will begin what we've all been waiting for: Planning a Field Trip! The youth will learn about field trip etiquette and AFMS Code of Ethics for collecting in addition to learning about Herkimer diamonds, their history, and how to collect them effectively and safely. We will also talk about creating a field kit to prepare for our trip on April 16th. All youth ages 5-18 are welcome to join us. Please remember that you must be a club member to participate in club sponsored events.

Club Events and Field Trips

Send us your Field Trip suggestions! For information about travel arrangements, meeting times and car pooling, contact Mark Grasmeyer text or voice 317-1350. You can get info at any Club Meeting. Trip details are subject to change, so it is best to contact Mark before an event. **In case of bad weather and a club event is postponed, a notice will be sent to your email address, if we have it, posted on our web site <http://www.gmss.us/> and on local TV stations.**

Current Club and General Rock-Mineral-Fossil-Lapidary Events see updated events list at <http://gmss.us/events>

March 19-20 Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club 47th Annual Show at the Athens Township Vol. Fire Hall, 211 Herrick Ave. Sayre, PA <http://chehannarocks.com/show.html>

Apr 2-3 New York Southern Tier Geology Club Annual show, Johnson City Senior Center, 30 Brocton ST

Apr 2-3 Buffalo Geological Society 46th Annual Show at the Hamburg-Erie County Fairgrounds, 5820 South Park Ave. Hamburg, NY

Apr 14-Apr 17 43rd Rochester Mineralogical Symposium - 10 Great Invited Speakers, Auctions, Fellowship, Exhibits and Technical Sessions! For more info go to

<http://www.rasny.org/minsymp/43rd%20RMS%20Registration%20Letter.pdf>

Apr 16 10AM Jr Rockhounds – tentative

Apr 18 7PM Group Meeting Rick Moore will discuss "Mineral Evolution"

In 2008, a new theory was proposed that the mineralogy of terrestrial planets and moons evolved as a consequence of changes in various physical, chemical, and biological processes. These changes, in turn, lead to the formation of new mineral species. Rick will discuss what happened along the way in the 4.5 billion years and the 10 "stages" of the Earth's geologic history. Changes occurred in available mineral components and expanded the diversity of mineral species. See

<https://hazen.carnegiescience.edu/research/mineral-evolution>

for background and a preview.

APR 30-MAY 1 THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA - TREASURES OF THE EARTH 2016 - 13th ANNUAL SHOW & SALE at Oblates of St. Joseph, 1880 Hwy 315, Pittston, Pa. 18640 <http://www.msnepa.org>

May 7-8 Finger Lakes Gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show Greater Canandaigua Civic Center, Canandaigua, NY

May 9-15 Spring 2016 EFMLS Workshop at Wildacres, N Carolina See writeup in EFMLS Newsletter - <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/efdec15web.pdf> and <http://efmls-wildacres.org/>

May 16 7PM Group Meeting - Preparing a Mineral or Fossil or general Hobby Related Craft Display for GemWorld50 Show. Creating a display case

May 21 10AM Jr Rockhounds – tentative

May 21-22 Southern Vermont Mineral, Rock & Gem Show - Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-3. Adults: \$5. Kids- free. Co-sponsored by the Southwestern Vermont Mineral & Gem Club. @ Grace Christian School, Kocher DR (across from K-Mart Plaza), Bennington, VT Info: Bill Cotrofeld 802-375-6782

July 9-10, 2016 GemWorld 50th Anniversary **SAVE THE DATE.**

Aug 7 Annual Club Picnic, Sims Store, Erie Canal Park, Camillus

Sep 5-11 Fall 2016 EFMLS Workshop at Wildacres, N Carolina

See writeup in EFMLS Newsletter - <http://efmls-wildacres.org/>

Oct 21 EFMLS Annual Meeting, Rochester, NY

Oct 22-23 Rochester Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show & Sale and 66th Annual EFMLS Convention hosted by the Rochester Lapidary Society.

Events at EFMLS site
<http://www.amfed.org/efmls/calendar.htm>
Rock and Gem Magazine Show List
<http://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=ALL>

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**Its a Fossil-Its a Mineral
Its Ammolite!
By Shannon Phillips**



Ammolite is my current obsession. I first learned about it less than a year ago and since then, I have been fascinated with the gorgeous iridescence and the textured surface of this fossil turned gemstone. Although ammolite is classified as a mineral by the province of Alberta to prevent export complications, it is not a mineral. It belongs to a family of materials called mineraloids, naturally formed or transformed substances that resemble minerals, but lack crystal structure. Some of the world's most beautiful and prized gems, including opal, amber, jet, pearl, obsidian and, of course, ammolite, fall into this category. Each has an interesting story, but let's focus on the lively colors and unusual origins of ammolite. Ammolite was welcomed into the gemstone family in 1981 by the World Jewellery Confederation and is one of only three stones given this designation in the past 50 years.

Commercial mining of ammolite began in Canada that same year and continues to this day. Ammolite was formed in marine shale on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains. As ammonites inhabiting the shallow sea that covered the region died, their shells settled at the bottom of the seaway where they were covered with sediment, mostly layers of ash from the volcanic activity in the area. The primary distinction between these ammonite shells and others found worldwide is that the iridescent surface of the preserved Canadian varieties is thick enough to be cut and polished.

While iridescent ammonite shells can be found at multiple locales, the fossilized shell commercially mined and marketed as ammolite is restricted to Calgary, Alberta, Canada. In this location and only a handful of others on a smaller scale, the ammonite shells were sealed in mineral-rich sediment, which prevented the outer layer (nacre) of the ammonite shell, composed primarily of aragonite, from converting to calcite. Gem quality ammolite is found in two stratigraphic zones, one thirty meters deep and the other 65 meters deep, which makes pit mining the most viable largescale mining method. One company, Korite, produces most of the ammolite on the market (around 90%). A handful of other claims exist in the area and are worked on a small scale. There are no commercial occurrences outside of Alberta.

Ammolite's value is based on several factors. One is its iridescence, which is caused by the diffraction of light from tightly packed plates of aragonite crystals. This diffraction means that every color of the spectrum is possible in ammolite, although the most common colors are red, green, and, to a lesser extent, gold. The most desirable pieces have vibrant colors that display changing colors as the angle of light changes. Chromatic shift and rotational range are the other two factors when considering the quality of a piece. Chromatic shift is the change from one color to another depending on the angle of light and the viewer's position. Dramatic changes of color are the most desirable. Rotational range indicates that strong colors can be seen throughout a 360 degree range of motion, which is not the case with many pieces of ammolite.

The nacreous layer is so thin, usually between .5 and .8 mm, ammolite is often sold as a doublet, attached to a backing of shale, or as a triplet with a backing and a dome of quartz or synthetic spinel. The material is so fragile that in all but the most remarkable pieces, it must be stabilized with epoxy resin or another treatment in order to be worked.

The gem is especially popular in Japan and with tourists to the Alberta province.

Ammolite is fossil, mineral, and gemstone all in one which makes it special, a rare natural occurrence. With its range of rainbow colors and spectacular patterning, ammolite makes an interesting collector specimen and an alluring set stone. While it is widely available now, the supply won't last forever, which, for me, is as good a reason as any to stock up on as much ammolite as I can.

Sources:

Dryden, T., & Brown, L. A. (n.d.). Ammolite Value, Price, and Jewelry Information. Retrieved February 29, 2016, from <https://www.gemsociety.org/article/ammolites-jewelry-and-gemstone-information/>

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Mychaluk, K. A., Levinson, A. A., & Hall, R. L. (spring 2001). Ammolite: Iridescent Fossilized Ammonite from Southern Alberta, Canada. *Gems & Gemology*, 4-25. Retrieved February 28, 2016, from file:///home/chronos/u2c70ca40bea78958ffec35cf7ebf0f5bce1a6462/Downloads/SP01 (1).pdf

GemWorld News From Judy Cook

Fun For Kids! Activities Designed for the Young and Young at Heart.

Sluice

Prospectors use a sluice to find gold and precious stones. You can try your hand at searching for minerals and polished stones with GMSS's GemWorld sluice.

Soapstone Carving

Use your imagination to design and carve your own soapstone figures using safe and simple tools.

Jewelry

Create bracelets, necklaces, anklets (or whatever) using simple techniques and real natural beads.

Treasure Hunt

Get a form at the Club Booth
Find each of the colored gem signs to get a prize.

New Speaker! Dr Lisa Amati State Paleontologist of New York



She will be speaking at our show, GemWorld 50 on Saturday July 9th. Her presentation "Paradise Lost - the Ordovician of New York" is based on her research on how animals responded when the environments changed from warm and tropical to less than ideal.

Dr Amati was appointed by the New York State Board of Regents last summer as State Paleontologist. She is responsible for curating the New York State Museum's paleontology collection, conducting paleontological field and laboratory research, overseeing the development of research grants and participating in the development of public and educational programs.

Dr Amati is the 2nd woman to serve as New York State Paleontologist. The first woman was Winifred Goldring from 1939 to 1954. Dr. Amati was previously an associate professor of geology for eleven years at SUNY Potsdam.

The Learning Center at our show offers an array of fabulous speakers and presentations which are free with admission to the show! It is a great opportunity to learn and meet some really interesting people.

Caves of America by Len & Susan Sharp

So happy to announce that Len and Susan Sharp, club members and nationally recognized earth science teachers with numerous awards over the years, will be speaking at GEMWORLD 50 both on Saturday July 9th and Sunday July 10th!!!

"Caves of America" will be the topic on that Saturday.

Len and Susan will discuss the Carlsbad Caves National Park in New Mexico, Howe Caverns located right here in New York, the Luray Caverns of Virginia and the Jewel Caves National Monument in South Dakota.

Sunday, Len and Susan will discuss the rocks, minerals, fossils and geologic history of selected National Parks including the Grand Canyon, the Petrified Forest and Dinosaur National Monument.

Len is a retired Earth Science teacher at Liverpool High school, he had almost 40 years of teaching at that level. He is a Presidential Awardee in Science Teaching (cited by Bill Clinton 1996). He

was awarded the National Science Teacher's Association Distinguished Teacher. He is past president of the Science Teachers Association of NY and the National Earth Science Teachers Association. He is the co-author of a national textbook used for high school earth science. He is involved with continuing science education for adults and seniors. Len has explored and hiked through all 50 states and has done exploration on all seven continents.

Susan is a teacher of Earth Science and Astrobiology at Phoenix High School. She has received many career distinctions including the 2011 National Association of Geoscience Teachers Outstanding Earth Science Teacher for NY State, the 2008 TACNY Outstanding Teacher Award. She won the National Science Teachers Association/Toyota TAPESTRY grant awards in both 2005 and 2011. The list goes on.

Learn first hand about these Caves of America and the National Parks geologic history by the couple that have been there and studied and explored them.

The Learning Center on the upper level of the SRC Arena will be offering many fascinating presentations, all free with admittance to the show.

From Dick Lyons

The family of Harry Perkins will have a booth at our show under the business name of H & I Rock Shop. This will be the last time they will have a booth at our show.



Helping out at GemWorld 50

The list of opportunities to volunteer at our show includes: the set up on Friday for the club booth, youth area, display cases, and helping dealers check in and set up. I would also like a few volunteers to make announcements. A new area to volunteer is passing out the handouts as people enter the building. The SRC ticket takers can be too busy at times to do this job.

**From Judy Cook
Annual James Campbell Memorial
Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show**

It was Frigid but it was Fun! The club, on one the coldest days ever, journeyed on our annual bus trip to the New York State Museum in Albany. It was not only a wonderful show, but we had the added benefit of exploring the museum. So many exquisite specimens on display in the mineral section. Tom Huff, one of the demonstrators at our show has a couple of beautiful stone carvings on display.



Junior rockhound - John on the bus, all bundled up, his glasses totally steamed before journeying back to Syracuse. Joanne and Ed Suchon checking out the mineral exhibits and trying to stay warm.



John Davis – Happy 101st!





Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse

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Crack 'N Cab
Newsletter of Gem & Mineral Society
Syracuse, NY
Web - <http://www.gmss.us>

Eight people organized the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse in 1951. Since that time it has grown in membership to include adults, families, and young folk. The Society was incorporated in 1969 under the same name.

The objectives of the Society are to stimulate interest in mineralogy, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. Member interests include collecting, identification, and display of minerals, gems, fossils. Members share and develop their artistic skills in jewelry design and creation.

Our monthly meetings provide social and educational experiences. Field trips give collectors chances to find specimens and enjoy the of outdoors, exercise and time with old and new friends.

We meet on the third Monday of the month (NOT in July, August, December) at 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse (Shoppingtown Mall on the 2nd floor near Sears).

Visitors are ALWAYS welcome

Annual member dues:

Adult \$10 • Family/Couple \$15 • Junior \$5 • Life \$5

If you would like to join or renew your membership, download the application form (PDF) [click here](#) or get a form at a meeting or send to the address at the top of this page and we will mail a membership form/card to you.

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