CRACK 'N CAB

Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY
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In This Issue

See gmss.us Web Page for more info

Your participation is appreciated. Come join the fun!

Membership Renewals are due!

To submit questions, requests, news, pictures, suggestions or to volunteer to help the club Hospitality Comittee via email or at the next Club meeting

October 17 Meeting
Speaker - Dr Linda Ivany
Presentation Topic
"How we know the climate is changing"

Dr. Ivany is a Professor of Sciences, Director of Undergraduate Studies Department of Earth Sciences, Syracuse University. She is the co-founder of CNYPaleo see http://paleo.cortland.edu/cnypaleo/index.html
She is a past President of the Board of Trustees of the Paleontological Research Institute, Ithaca, NY.
She is very well published.
see http://asfaculty.syr.edu/pages/ear/Ivany-Linda.html
Dr. Ivany is an amazing women and scientist.

Professor Ivany's work fits broadly into the fields of earth history and paleobiology. Most research projects lie at the intersection of marine paleoecology and paleoclimate, and relate to how ecosystems and their component taxa evolve and respond to changes in the physical environment on a variety of temporal and spatial scales.

She has particular interest in the biotic and climatic evolution of the early Cenozoic, with longstanding projects in the molluscan records of the US Gulf Coastal Plain and Antarctica. Work on the chemistry of Permian and Cretaceous bivalves relates to paleoseasonality and the oxygen isotopic composition of seawater. Research on growth rate and lifespan explores the evolution of life histories in deep time, including the evolution of extreme longevity.

President's Message

Mark Grasmeyer
President
October 2016

Hi GMSS Rockhounds! I think we are all looking forward to a great Fall Season in Central New York. Our biggest challenge in the next few months is finding a new location for our Clubhouse. So, in between trips to the apple farm and football games keep your eyes "peeled" for a new spot for our meetings. If you see a property that looks good give one of the officers a call.

We have a few interesting events coming up between now and the holidays.
-First of all, we have been invited to give a demo/talk at St. Camillus Rehab Center on Fay Road in Syracuse. This opportunity came to us from a connection Sharon Thomson has with the Activity Department.
-Of course, the holidays will be kicked off by our Holiday Celebration. This Season's event falls on Sunday, December 4th at the Traditions At the Links, N Burdick St, East Syracuse. Look for more details at our October Meeting.
-Last, but not least, several of us are attending the Eastern Federation meeting in Rochester, NY. We will give the membership a full report on what's new around the East Coast.

See you on the 17th…

Secretary's Report

General Meeting
September 19, 2016

Len Sharp was our guest speaker. He presented an interesting topic about the extinction of the dinosaurs. He had participated in an expedition to the Caribbean in search of the 'smoking gun' which served as proof that an asteroid was the cause of their extinction. A drill core was found which had a green band in it, which contained material associated with an asteroid collision.

This was our membership renewal meeting. Thank you to all who have recently joined the Society and to all who have renewed their membership. If you have not renewed your membership yet, you can either bring it to the October meeting or send in your check to the Post Office box address at the end of this newsletter.

Our new officers were sworn in with Dick Lyons officiating. They are:

Mark Grasmeyer – President
Harold Jones – Vice President
Judith Jones – Secretary
Linda Sweeney-Clark – Treasurer
Ed Suchon – Sargent-at-Arms

Congratulations and thank you for volunteering! Mark Grasmeyer presented a 'Thank you for your service' plaque to outgoing President John Sweeney. We appreciate all you did, John!

Mark Grasmeyer, Linda Tanner, and Dan and Ann Andrianos went to the West Springfield show. They reported that it was a great show as usual.

We are looking for a volunteer to coordinate our Club's hospitality committee. The duties are to form a committee of people to:

1) arrange (and later restore), the furniture and fixtures of the meeting room to accommodate the assembly meetings
2) arrange for snacks at meetings
3) greet and register members and guests
4) assist with other duties assigned by the President during meetings

Please contact Mark Grasmeyer, if you are able to help.

Linda Tanner and Donna Dow volunteered to provide the snack for the October meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cheryl Brown

GMSS Board Meeting
October 4, 2016

Membership dues need to be collected at our October 17 meeting. New cards will be bought to cover the next few years. We have a membership of 74.

Three vendors will not be returning to show in July but we have 21 vendors on a waiting list to choose from.

We are still looking for a new place to call ours, any information on a new location will be helpful. Remember we are looking for at least 2000sf and enough parking for everyone and quests.

We need the recipe for the German Potato Salad served at the annual Picnic. This is a must have for our next potluck.

We have been invited to give a hands on presentation at St. Camillus Rehab Center in Syracuse.

Christmas party will be Sunday December 4, 2016 at Traditions at the Links. 11 till 2.

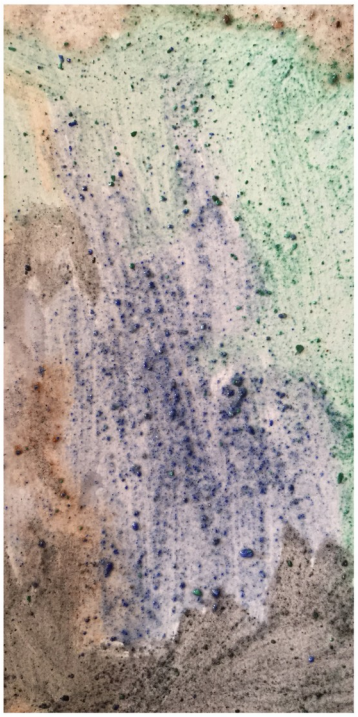
We will be paying for kids to get in free for the Museum of the Earth trip.
We need supplies for our youth group.

We will need to start making arrangements for this year's major field trips. We need to discuss carpooling or bus arrangements. We need 57 to fill a bus.

We have several people going to the Eastern Federation meeting in Rochester, and an update will be discussed at the October 17th meeting,

Judith Jones(JJ)
Secretary GMSS

Junior Rockhounds



The Junior Rockhounds started the new "year" by meeting at the Clubhouse to explore minerals found and used in household items as part of the Earth Resources badge requirement. The activity started with a group of minerals, which the kids identified. Next, we looked at a collection of household items and matched the mineral to the items that can be found around the house. Some of the connections we made were fluorite to toothpaste, calcite to Tums, and galena to a decorative duck sculpture.

After the matching, the kids worked on creating "paint" from minerals. We mixed ground up minerals including malachite, lapis, and jasper with corn syrup and a little bit of water and used the paint to make pictures. The kids had fun thinking about their everyday encounters with minerals. We also had the pleasure of welcoming two new members to our group.

The next Junior Rockhound meeting is scheduled for October 15. Because of a breakdown of the sluice at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, we will not be volunteering there this month. Instead, we will be taking an informal field trip to Herkimer Diamond Mines. We will not be arranging a group visit ahead of time, so meet up at the mine on your own schedule. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Shannon at 607-749-3214 by phone or text. If you text, please identify yourself in the message.

The November meeting of the Junior Rockhounds will be postponed until **December 3**, when we will take a group field trip to the Museum of the Earth in Ithaca. Details forthcoming!

For Rock-Mineral-Fossil-Lapidary Event updates see http://gmss.us

Send us your suggestions for field trips and meeting speakers! Contact Harold Jones at vp@gmss.us or talk to him at a Club Meeting.

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.

Nov 15 Beginner Wirewrapping Class

by Linda Boronczyk. Runs from Tuesday, November 15th – to December 6th from 6pm-8pm Course consists of 4 weekly (Tuesday) classes

You will learn to create a wire cage with bail. Class fee is $40 plus materials.
For information or to join the class, call Linda at 487-5202 or sign up at the October meeting.

Common but Far from Ordinary: Common Opal
By Shannon Phillips

Last fall I inherited a box of common opal. Until I received this box and read its label, I was unaware of common opal, having only known its precious counterpart. The stone is waxy and a not entirely attractive color of green. Although I was curious about it, I set it aside and haven't thought of it much since. While purchasing beads, however, I discovered for sale pink opal. I ordered it, not quite knowing what to expect because the price was low. When it arrived, I had a string of pretty pink opaque stones, consistent in color, but entirely lacking the qualities of color play that generally characterizes opal. With a second reason to pursue my original curiosity, I set out to discover what common opal is and how it differs from its precious counterpart.

Common opal, sometimes called potch, is not significantly different from precious opal, which is the stone with intense color play that is most commonly identified with the name. Both stones, classified as mineraloids because of their lack of crystal structure, are formed of hydrated silica. If not for the water content, which typically ranges between three and twenty-one percent, the silica could have formed into cryptocrystalline quartz, also known as chalcedony. The water molecules prevent this transformation and provide opal with its unique gem qualities. The way the miniscule spheres of water are arranged determines the play of color, or lack thereof, that opals display. Uniform arrangement of infinitesimal (one tenth of a micron) spheres produces the pleochroism that makes precious opal so valuable. Common opal lacks this arrangement and the molecules of silica are often significantly larger than those of water. Common opal can form anywhere in rock, specifically sandstone, that contains fissures that are filled with water that evaporates, leaving silica-rich deposits. This process is repeated over time until eventually the silica becomes a solid mass: opal.

Although common opal is found world-wide, there are few types that are considered attractive visually appealing enough to be used in jewelry. However, attractive common opal does exist. There are two main sources for this material. The first is Mexico, which produces a variety of common opal called fire opal. The name tends to invoke images of the bright flashes of color that define precious opal when, in fact, the moniker is derived from the range of oranges and reds that are characteristic of this stone. Fire opal can be transparent or translucent. Finer stones, those with greater transparency and few inclusions of matrix material, are often faceted. Other stones are made into cabochons, sometimes in freeform shapes that best display the unique depth of color these stones can display. Fire opals are often frequently sold in the matrix, which sometimes serves as the best setting for this fiery stone.

The other types of common opal used in jewelry are blue and pink opal, typically mined in Peru. Neither of these stones present pleochroism, but both do display soft attractive colors that make fine cabochons and beads. Like fire opal, these stones contain crystalline silica structures that are larger than the lattice spheres of water. These opals are harder and more stable than precious opals, which are subject to crazing and fractures as the water they contain evaporates over time. There are three grades of blue and pink opal. The first grade has a uniform color without traces of matrix material. This grade of stone is used to create lovely cabochons. The second grade can exhibit uneven color and may have matrix inclusions. It is often tumbled or made into beads. This is the grade of pink opal that I purchased for my beading project. The third grade, called mine run, contains inclusions and may have colorless patches, making it much less attractive.

The future of common opal as a gemstone is rather bleak. Because it is often found in the same area as copper, the mining of opal has become secondary to the more lucrative copper operations. Lee Horowitz, M. Ed, CAGS, Gemologist of Peru Blue Opal Ltd., believes that as first grade opal declines in availability, it will eventually be replaced with dyed mine run material imitating the top grade grade. If you

decide to purchase a piece of jewelry made from common opal, beware of dyed second or third grade material if you are paying a first grade price.

Common opal is not nearly as attractive or famous as its flashy sister. It is an interesting collectors specimen, especially because it would be fun to collect it from locations all over the world. I've started with a piece of the green common opal I inherited. I enjoy the pink opal beads I'm using because they're pretty and inexpensive. Common opal, ordinary as it may be, just proves that value truly is in the eye of the beholder.

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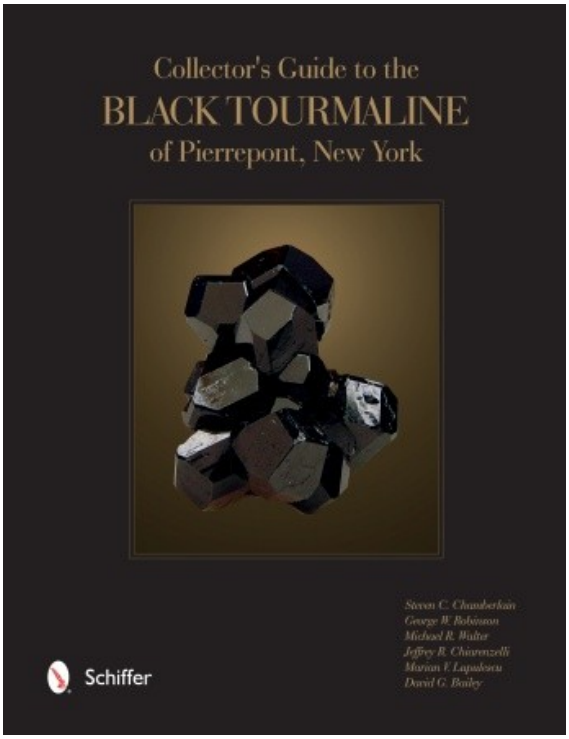
New Book from Club Member Dr Steven Chamberlain

Our new book published by Schiffer books, Collector's Guide to the Black Tourmaline of Pierrepont, New York, by Chamberlain, Robinson, Walter, Chiarenzelli, Lupulescu, and Bailey, will be released on November 28th. It can be preordered on Amazon.com for example. My expedited author's copy looks great. This might be a nice Christmas present possibility for some of our members.



Book Review for "Collector's Guide to the Black Tourmaline of Pierrepont, New York"
Steven C. Chamberlain, George W. Robinson, Michael R. Walter, Jeffrey R. Chiarenzelli, Marian V. Lupulescu, David G. Bailey

Since its discovery by a teenager in 1859, thousands of specimens of lustrous black tourmaline crystals from Pierrepont, New York, have found their way into both museum and private mineral collections worldwide. Pierrepont is a classic American mineral locality and a popular site for field collecting, and the discovery of new collecting sites there in the past decade has only enhanced its importance. Yet no detailed scientific research has been published until now. The six authors represent a team with comprehensive skills to tackle this study, which covers the locality's history, geology, and mineralogy. The origin of the mineralization, the true nature of the black tourmaline, and the extensive suite of accessory minerals are presented in detail. The authors also resolve identification questions about the tourmaline and its many accessory minerals.

Dr. Steven C. Chamberlain has produced 380 scholarly articles, including five in Science or Nature. He has chaired the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium for 30 years and is coordinator of the Center for Mineralogy, New York State Museum.

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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

Annua 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 US mail your an application/renewal card to you.

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