"DIGGIN'S FROM DAKOTA"

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE "CENTRAL DAKOTA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY"
P.O. BOX 2445, BISMARCK, ND 58502 - 2445
SERVING: BISMARCK, MANDAN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS IN NORTH DAKOTA

DIGGINS FROM DAKOTA
Jim Ellis Editor
3235 16 St. S.W.
CENTER N.D.
58530

Volume 35, No.1 January 2000

RMFMS - 1st Place, Small Bulletins, 1998
RMFMS - 3rd Place, Small Bulletins, 1997, New Editor
RMFMS - 2nd Place, Small Bulletins, 1992
RMFMS - 2nd Place, Small Bulletins, 1987
AFMS - 2nd Place, Small Bulletins, 1985
RMFMS - 4th Place, Small Bulletins, 1985

DIGGIN'S FROM DAKOTA

Published by: The "Central Dakota Gem & Mineral Society"
P. O. Box 2445, Bismarck, ND 58502 - 2445

In Association With:
Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies
and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Organized: March, 1966

OBJECTIVES

1. To further the study of mineralogy and geology.
2. To arrange field trips to collect minerals, gems, and fossils.
3. To assist its members to improve in the art of cutting, polishing, and mounting gem materials;
4. To provide opportunities for the exchange, purchase, and exhibition of specimens and materials;
5. To share knowledge about gems, minerals, and activities of the Society with the general public.
   — *Article II, CDGMS Constitution*

MEETINGS: First Sunday of each month at the Masonic Center, 1810 Schafer St., Bismarck, ND
EARLY CLASS: One - half hour before each meeting.
ANNUAL DUES: Junior Member - $6.00, Single Membership - $10.00, Family Membership - $12.00
MEETING TIMES: 2:00 PM — From November thru March & 7:00 PM — From April thru October

COMMITTEE PERSONS

PROGRAM: Neill Burnett #223-6758
Jim Nevland # 221 - 2419
HOSPITALITY and LUNCH: Carol Hickle # 794 - 3342
Emma Brady #663 - 3903
HOSPITAL/CARDS: Gen Buresh #663 - 5397
FIELD TRIPS: Steve & Darlene Newstrom #255 - 4675
EDITOR: Jim Ellis # 794-3192
ANNUAL SHOW: Debra Martineson

EARLY CLASS: Harold Brady -#663 - 3903
GREETER: Any Volunteers?
Parliamentarian: Gen Buresh -#663 - 5397
STAMP CHAIR: Doris Hickle -#794 - 3173
LIBRARIAN: Agnes Berg # 442 - 5620
PUBLICITY: Any Volunteers?
HISTORIAN: Betty Mautz -#337- 5775
DOOR COUNT: Any Volunteers?

VISITORS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME !

RMFMS State Director for North Dakota: Ray Oliger, 516 N. 20th St., Bismarck, ND #701 - 223 - 4986

All members are encouraged to submit articles/news items for publication. Material for the Newsletter should reach the Editor by the 10th of each month. Advertisements are encouraged for the Newsletter. ($2.00 for 1/8 of a page per month or $20.00 per year) Permission is granted to reprint non-copyrighted articles if proper credit is given. The "Diggins From Dakota" Newsletter is published monthly.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year. It seems that most of us survived **Y2K**. Not only that, but we had a great December Brunch, elected new Officers and had a terrific Paleontology Class on 9 January 2000. Those of you that missed John's presentation missed a great one. Also, we celebrated Russ Oliger's 39th Birthday. You should have seen the cake Alice Burnett baked for him. Alice told me that this cake did not set a precedence. (Unless someone else wants to bake Birthday cakes!!!! We had one bit of bad news. The Ellis's are moving to Alaska this summer. We will lose a great Rock Family, **and,** The Editor to 'The Diggin's'. Which means = we need a new Editor. ***ANY VOLUNTEERS?***

And now let us review our schedule for the next few months:

- Sunday, 6 February 2000 - Remember, our meetings start with an early class at 1:30 with our meeting starting at 2:00 PM. **PAY ATTENTION NOW** - We will have a *Junior Rock Hound Afternoon*. All Junior Rock Hounds (Pebble Pups) will be expected to show us their favorite rock or collection, and to tell us what **they** would like to learn more about. So Parents!!!! Encourage your youth to plan ahead, come in February, and let us find out how we can all benefit from passing our knowledge and experience on to our youth and finding out more about what interests them. Adults!!!! Bring something that might be of interest to our young people.

- Sunday, 5 March 2000 - We will plan on another member silent auction. This is an opportunity to exchange equipment and specimens, and on top of that, it earns money for our Club. This should be a good meeting. So bring in everything that you would like to sell or exchange. Collections, equipment, doo dads, you name it. Do not forget, the Club takes 25% of proceeds, and we do need funds.

- Sunday, 2 April 2000 - Daylight Savings Time begins. Spring forward, Fall back. So remember to set our clocks. Also - we would like to schedule a trip to the Rock Palace in Parshall, ND. We will need to talk about when and how. So be thinking about this one.

We need program ideas. We would still like to hear from members on their favorite rock, collection or experience. I know that there is a lot of interesting stories to be told, and that you would all like to hear them. So don't be bashful - let us know - and we will design a program around you. We need volunteers for refreshments. Part of the fun of coming to one of our meetings, is to enjoy the goodies afterward.

Yours in Rocks,
Your President,
Neill C Burnett

Lapis Lazuli Powder

by Mark Liccini, Http://www.LICCINI.com
via The Southwest Gem 8/99

What You might do to reclaim a waste product provided you are cutting with Diamond wheels and keep your catch pan clean of contaminants:

Once upon a time, I was cutting Lapis Lazuli with a bank of German automatic cabochon machinery to the tune of 300 kilos a month production. In the factory, one man's job was just to keep the machinery as clean as a hospital. I observed at the end of a day's cutting, a very attractive blue sludge in the catch pans. So I instructed the mechanics each day to scrape it out and spread it out on sheets to dry. Next thing you know, I had a couple hundred pounds of it. Now my daddy told me never throw anything away. I guess we could have sent it out to be reconstituted into plastic like blocks and re-cut again.

But I was reading through a magazine called "Sunshine Artists", like a Lapidary Journal for the Art Shows. And there it is: Lapis Lazuli paint pigment, advertised at like $50-100 for a tiny tube like you buy your Diamond polish paste. As it turns out, Lapis was the original artist's paint pigment for the color blue; it was used by Leonardo da Vinci. Today they use some sort of lab grown synthetic, but natural Lapis dust still remains in big demand to produce certain shades of blue.

I sold the entire batch to the largest artist's paint company and they were flabbergasted. They went on about how hard it was for them to obtain Lapis in pure gem qualities, and how expensive it was for them to grind it up to a powder!

So you may not be able to put together 200 lbs. of it, but certainly you can scrape a few grams from your clean catch pan.

Some time ago I noticed a pretty sludge in the pan on my Pixie and in the pan on my Glass Star machine, particularly when cutting Lapis or Malachite. Since I was doing channel work and intarsia, I started letting the contents of the pan settle when I was through, poured off the clean top water, and then poured off the remains into clean glass jars, which I then put on a shelf. The water evaporated, and I scraped the powder into very small jars, and covered them with their jar tops.

I routinely mix a bit of the powder with epoxy when gluing the mineral inlays into their channels; if there is a small gap up into which the epoxy oozes, the epoxy will have the same color as the mineral. I guess this is also using the powders as a pigment!

I have jars of Lapis, Malachite, Rhodochrosite, magnesite and black onyx powders. You don't need much - a little goes a long way.

Hale Sweeny
LapDigest@mindspring.com, both articles via The Southwest Gem 8/99 Via Pick & Pack

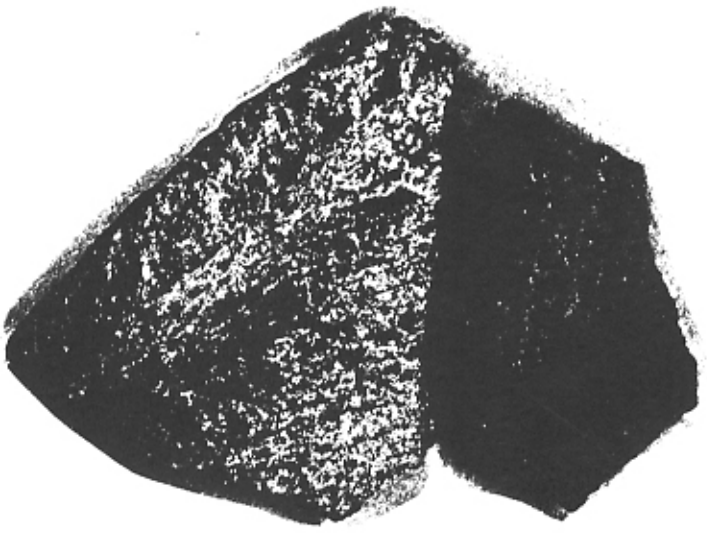
---

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

20-Melvin Berg

20-Anne Ellis

20-Robert Ellis



SILVER

If gold was the metal of royalty in historical times, silver did not go unnoticed and unappreciated. Granted, silver tarnishes and will corrode, but it is still a precious metal.

The ancients knew and valued silver as long ago as four thousand years before Christ. For a time, according to historians, it was even more precious than gold. The Greeks used silver for jewelry and to make battle shields, while the Romans were among the first to use it for money. The Scottish highlanders were particularly fond of silver. During the times of the clan wars and the wars with England, no Scot went into battle without a silver ornament. The ornament was usually a brooch or pin, often set with stones or gems, and was used to fasten the plaid or shawl that was a part of their native dress. It was also a good luck charm, but if the Scot had the bad luck to be killed, the silver ornament was insurance that the warrior would have a decent burial, with the person burying the body expected to do so in exchange for the ornament.

Pure silver, like pure gold, is 99.99 percent silver. Like gold, too, it is too soft in itself to be worked unless it is alloyed with another metal, usually copper. Unlike gold, it does not require as much of a base metal to be worked. Again, unlike gold, silver standards are world wide. In addition, in the United States, Great Britain and the Commonwealth, and other countries, both the quality of the silver and the hallmark (or trademark or name) of the manufacturer must appear on the item.

Fine silver is **sterling** silver. Sterling silver is 92.5 percent silver and 7.5 percent copper. Silver alloys, therefore, have a lower percentage of base metals and a higher percentage of silver than karat gold, making it more apt to be scratched or gouged than gold. It may be marked "sterling", "92.5 fine", or ".925".

The term "sterling" goes back to the fourteenth century and England's King John, who imported Germans to refine silver to a certain standard for use as coins. The Germans came from the east and were called "Easterlings". As a result, the money came to be called "easterling" which was later shortened to "esterling", and finally to "sterling". In fact, in 1300 King John ordered that all silver had to be of "esterling allay", thus establishing England's sterling standard for money.

The other kind of silver you may find in jewelry is coin silver. **Coin silver** is 90 percent silver and 10 percent other metal. It may be marked "coin", "coin silver", or ".900".

The term "coin silver" comes from the fact that coin silver was literally the silver used for coins. After King John established the sterling standard, all Silver technically had to meet the same standard, but if silver were popular for decorative purposes, that meant there was less available for coins. During the Middle Ages, silver for ornamentation fell out of favor except in monasteries. The Renaissance brought a rebirth of the love for it, starting in Italy and France and spreading to England. The appetite was fed later on by the enormous discoveries in the New World, and the Old World could not get enough of the shining metal.

Even so, there was not enough to go around. During the seventeenth-century reign of Charles II in England, for example, silver was so popular that silversmiths resorted to melting down coins to meet the demand. As a result, the mint ran short of coinage despite all the pleas and efforts to get silver turned in to the mint instead of to the smiths. To prevent the use of coin silver, the amount of silver required for articles such as jewelry, candlesticks, silverware, and other decorative

continued on next page.....

SILVER....continued

items was raised, while the amount in coins remained the same. Since all items had to be assayed for silver content before being sold, cheating could be detected -- and the penalties for using the lesser quality were severe.

Coin silver regained popularity during the Victorian period, especially for elaborately initialed link bracelets. In the United States, Indian jewelry made much use of coins until 1890, when laws were passed making their use in jewelry illegal.

The disadvantage of silver jewelry, aside from being subject to scratching and gougin, is that it tarnishes unless it is worn regularly. As a result, some manufacturers in the United States coat or plate the silver with rhodium, an element of platinum. Rhodium plating does not affect the quality or standard, and it insures a bright, silvery finish that does not tarnish.

(Ref. - Jewelry by Edythe Cudlipp) Author not credited in MINERAL MEMOS 5/98
reprinted from OWYHEE GEM 7/98 Via The Glacial Drifter

* [] *

HINT -- EXCESS SOLDER

When you get too much solder on a spot when making jewelry and try to file it off, the process takes time. To get rid of excess solder, with no filing, take a narrow strip of silver 1/8 by 3/4 inches and cut a slit in one end. Heat the piece with excess solder and touch the strip with the slit to the excess solder. The solder will flow up the cut.

from The Rockpile 11/95 and taken from GEM CUTTERS NEWS 12/96
Via The Glacial Drifter

[] [] []

****

The "January Birth Stone" : Garnet

Garnet is not a single mineral, but rather a group of similar minerals known as the "Garnet Group". All the natural garnets are complex silicates that differ in chemical composition, but have almost identical crystalline structure. The almadine, rhodolite, and pyrope garnets are perhaps the most familiar to the average person since their colors range from the brownish red, red to purplish reds, and bright reds to orange reds. Garnets are not only red, they may be orange, yellow, brown, pale green, deep green, violet, purple, or even colorless. Cut garnets can be very brilliant and show rich, lovely colors that look good in both sunlight and artificial light. The symbolism attached to the garnet by some persons are true friendship, fidelity, and constancy.

Garnet is a truly ancient gem, known thousands of years before the birth of Christ. In those early days of civilization garnet, along with other gems, was known as "carbuncle". Although this term was generally applied to any red gem, today only the red cabochon-cut garnets are called carbuncles.. As with most other stones, garnets were considered to have great curative powers, especially against fevers. The wearer of a garnet was supposed to be protected in his travels and kept in good health. The name "garnet" comes from the Latin word "granatus" meaning "like seeds" because garnets in a rock look somewhat like the seeds in a pomegranate.

****