

"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

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RMFMS - 1st Place, Small Bulletins, 1998
RMFMS - 3rd Place, Small Bulletins, 1997, New Editor
RMFMS - 2nd Place, Small Bulletins, 1992
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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 Carol Hickle #794 - 3342

and LUNCH: 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 Olinger, 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

What an excellent meeting we had on Sunday, 3 October. I was so very pleased the way all of our members participated in the little contest. I do believe that every one enjoyed themselves. Not only did we have fun, but we all learned a little in the process. After all - learning is what it is all about. We especially want to THANK our two Guest Judges, George Anderson and Lila Marquart. Didn't they do a wonderful job?

In addition, we had a great run-down on our Annual Gem and Mineral Show. I found it interesting that our attendance was actually up over last year. Shows you what the news media knows. And we were also able to introduce our new Show Chairperson (please excuse the politically correct identification) Debra Martineson (Boy - I hope I got that right).

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

- 7 November 1999 - Meetings will start with an Early Class at 1:30 PM and a 2:00 PM Regular Meeting. The program will be fluorescent rocks. Everyone is asked to bring their own rocks that glow (or they think they glow, or you want to find out if it glows), and your instruments. This will be a free-for-all. It should be fun. Bring a guest and your own knowledge and experience concerning fluorescence and enjoy.
- 5 December 1999 - This will be our annual Christmas Brunch. ***This is new - so pay attention.*** Our Brunch will now be in the CHAMBER/CONGRESS room of the Bismarck Best Western Doublewood Inn at 12:30 PM (that is 1230 Hours for you Internationally minded). It will be Buffet, with several items of choice. We will discuss the details at our 7 November meeting. We will need to have a good handle on the attendance, so plan to commit yourself at our 7 November meeting.
- * Sunday 9 January 2000 - **WOW** - If we make it past Y2K we will have a meeting on Paleontology. I am proposing that we skip 2 January since it is the day after New Years. More later. I think this is appropriate since our last meeting would have been in the last Century. No!!! That is not correct. This is not the last year of the Twentieth Century. The last year of the Twentieth Century is the year 2000. The new Century and the new Millennium actually does not start until 1 January 2001.
- I am still working on our program for February and beyond. Any suggestions? I was thinking that another silent auction might be in order.

Yours in Rocks,
Your President, Neill C Burnett

Central Dakota Gem & Mineral Society
Minutes From October 3, 1999

The regular monthly meeting of the CDG&MS was called to order by President Neill Burnett and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The next meeting will be held on Sunday, November 7, 1999 with the early class at 1:30 PM and the regular meeting at 2:00. Remember that November is the first month of the winter schedule with meetings in the afternoon. The November program will be on fluorescence, so bring your UV Lamps and your fluorescent minerals along with any minerals you want to check for fluorescent qualities.

We had 2 guests at our October meeting. George B. Anderson and Lila Marquart. Besides being guests at the meeting, George and Lila acted as judges for our annual ugliest/prettiest/most unusual/favorite rock contest (see results below).

The minutes of the Sept. meeting were read and approved. Treasurer Ray Oliger reported a beginning balance of 189.92 and an ending balance of 338.68. The increase was primarily due to the large number of new members that signed up at the annual show. I hope to get the member roster updated and disseminated before December.

Committees:

Field Trip: No Chairperson. We will be making a hunt for petrified pine cones to the Meyer Ranch on Oct. 10, hope you can make it. We will meet at the park on the west side of Hwy 6, just south of the old Mandan Municipal Golf Course by 9:00 AM, we'll be leaving no later than 9:15 to caravan down. If you live south of Mandan, you can pick up the convoy at Breien as we pass through. Lets find a bunch.

Hospitality: Servers for Nov. are Mr. & Mrs. Ed Horning and Russ Oliger

Library: NTR

Show: Rodney Hickie reported that approximately 230 more people came to this years show than what we had last year, which was a 25% increase. We ended up with only six dealers instead of our usual 9, however all 6 of the dealers were very happy with there sales and will be back next year. **Good News!** Debbie Martineson has volunteered to take the job as show chairman, so we will be having a show again next year. Now we need volunteers for show treasurer and for show publicity, both positions have been held by the same people for many years and they would like a break.

New Business: Russ Oliger made a motion that Ray Oliger and Mike Knudson be named as delegates to the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies Show and Convention in Tucson, Arizona in November. Motion was seconded by Alice Burnett. Motion carried. Have fun at the show guys, wish I could be there this year but alas. Motion was made by Neill Burnett to reconsider the location for the annual Christmas Lunch. Some of the reasons for this is that the Royal Fork will not reserve a room for us, which means that even if we get the area we want, if they are busy the will put the overflow into the same room we are in. Some of his suggestions were the new Hotel Bismarck, the Best Western Doublewood and any of a number of other places that will

reserve a separate room for us. A final decision will be made in November and published in the "Diggins".

Members were ask to think about making a change to our By-Laws to allow members who are dealer to be able to set up at our annual show. There would have to be several stipulations on this but the primary reasoning for allowing members to be dealers is the decline in the number of dealers who are willing or able to be present during our annual show. Some of the stipulations are:

Members would still have to help with set-up and tear-down.

Members would have to pay the same rate as any other dealer to set up. NO MEMBER DISCOUNTS!

Members who normally have show cases, would still have to have their cases on display and would still have to participate in other club activities.

You should be thinking about this as it will come up in discussion at a future meeting and it is not a small thing to be changing the By-Laws.

Door count for October was 32 Adults and 6 Juniors. The Adult door prize was won by Agnes Berg, it was a Teepee Canyon Brooch. The Junior door prize was won by Laura Ellis, it was a heart pendant.

The meeting was adjourned and the program ensued. Judging results by our two esteemed judges (George B Anderson and Lila Marquart) are as follows:

Prettiest Rock:	Ugliest Rock:	Favorite Rock:	Most Unusual Rock:
1st Rodney Hickle	1st Harold Brady	1st Russ Oliger	1st Gary Ellis
2nd Jim Nevland	2nd Alice Burnett	2nd Alice Burnett	2nd Ryan Knudson
3rd Alice Burnett	3rd Ray Oliger	3rd Jim Nevland	3rd Ray Oliger

And the Grand Prize winner, who was also first in Favorite Rock was Russ Oliger with a Forty pound chunk of Australian Tiger Iron that had been polished on one face.

Respectfully Submitted

Russell W. Oliger, Secretary.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES



2- Sara Atwood
4- Alice Burnett
15- Duane Robey
20- Paul Shock
22- Ray Oliger
23- Laura Ellis
26- Robert Randall
28- Gen Buresh
30- Mike Liffbrig
16- Bob Sprong
1- Steve Newstrom
15- Robert Medley

4- Rodney & Carol Hickle
10- Richard & Anna Hoerner
15- Ted & Verna Giese
27- John & Karen Atwood
31- Harold & Emma Brady

Hints: News You Can Use

The Breccia has not tried these hints and advises caution and common sense when trying any new procedure or material. Credit is given when possible. The Breccia welcomes comments, corrections, and contributions.

- **When polishing hard-to-reach places** with your flex shaft, take a Q-tip, cut it in half, insert it in the hand piece, and charge it with polishing compound. The cotton ends will produce a very high polish and will last an amazingly long time.
- **If your diamond charge lap is dirty and slow in cutting**, clean it with Twinkle, available at most supermarkets. It will not only be cleaner, but it will look and probably cut like new.
- **If you are running into difficulty getting a good polish on turquoise**, use a piece of organdy on the wheel. It seems to be more effective than felt.
- **If you use 1/3 lacquer and 2/3 thinner**, you can dip polished silver articles in it and the polish will last indefinitely. This coating also keeps silver from staining the skin, as it manages to do to some people.
- **A small amount of dish washing liquid in your cutting oil** will let a diamond saw cut cleaner and will also make it easier to clean.
- **Shape a wooden match to a point**. Use it to pick up damp Bon Ami or other gentle cleanser, then rub the hard-to-get places on your silver project.
- **Don't know what to do with those cabs, tumbled rocks, or small mineral specimens?** Glue them to magnets and use them to post notes on your refrigerator.
- **If you run out of ultra-sonic cleaner**, while cleaning your jewelry, try denture cleaner. Original source unknown, via Rock Chip Reporter 6/95
- **To put an extra high polish on a cab or a flat**, first polish in the normal manner, then buff with a used sheet of *Bounce*, or a similar fabric softener sheet. A used sheet seems to work better than a new one. I have not tried other brands, but I believe the results would be the same. This trick has worked for me on several different materials. The result is a noticeably increased shine. I do not know if it is the chemical agent or the texture of the sheet... whatever the reason, it works! T-Town Rockhound, date unknown
- **When was the last time you took a look at your electric motors?** Take a little look then clean off the outside and blow out the dust from the inside. Check the wiring that may have become oil-soaked and check if the insulation is bad. Check the oil and grease cups over the bearings or at the shaft ends. While you are at it, see if the drive pulleys are still tight and aligned with the machine pulleys.
- **Make your own jewelry cleaner**. Mix 1 cup white vinegar, 1/4 cup ammonia, 1/3 cup dish detergent. Soak your jewelry in the solution for a few minutes, then scrub with a soft toothbrush. Rinse under running water. Air dry on a towel. Do not soak pearls, opal, amber, ivory, jade, lapis or emerald. Just dip these in the jewelry cleaner, scrub, rinse, and air dry on a towel. Turquoise should only be wiped with a damp cloth and polished with a soft towel.

VIA-BRECCIA

CDGMS DUES FOR THE YEAR 2000 ARE DUE!

PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES TO TREASURER

* RAY OLIGER 516 N 20th St. BISMARCK N.D.

58501

What an old man told of the last free Indian in Kansas



ROY WENZL

Roy Wenzl can be reached at 268-6219, or rwenzl@wichitaeagle.com.

A long time ago I knew an old man who knew how to find things.

Look with your eyes open, he said. Read the ground like you read words on a page: stop your eyes and look at every inch. If you only glance at the ground, your eyes skip over the arrowheads, and you walk right over them. Arrowheads are hard to see, especially for somebody who ain't lookin' for them.

I thought about the old man the other day at the river. We climbed over the dike west of I-235, and walked along the water. My son chased frogs. I walked the sandbar, reading the ground. I wanted skipping stones for the boy, good flat ones that fly across flat water.

I found the knife because the old man had taught me how to look. It was hard to see, hiding out in the open, pink flint lying flat on pink river gravel.

I called my son over. He was happy. I had told him about the old man.

It's a spear point, I said. Look at the V-shape. But then I turned it over and saw that it was concave on one side and flat on the other. The old man would have said it's the broken-off tip of a skinning knife.

He would have said more: Pink flint doesn't grow in Kansas, so this would be an import. The Indians used to trade along rivers and trails, all the way from Canada to Mexico, west coast to east. How old this flint would be, who knows. Maybe 150 years, maybe 1,500, or older.

He would have said this one was made by one of their older men. It took a flint maker years to learn how. It was like being a diamond cutter, hitting a flint nob with a hammerstone and then snapping flakes off the blade edges with an antler tip. A bad stroke with the hammerstone, a bad poke with the antler tip, and you shattered the blade. To shape something this pretty, you had to be pretty good.

We used to find things, he and I

Arrowheads, spear points, drills, awls, chunks of pottery, hide scrapers, hoe heads. We'd hunt them when we went fishing. We'd drop two throw-lines into the Big Blue, and then drink beer and find lost civilizations. The old man would look across the bottomland and pick a spot on the upland just above, and we'd walk it, stepping slow between rows of milo or corn. He found the village sites that way, and we'd come home with hands and pockets full of flint, big tomahawk heads, cooking stones, hammerstones.



Flint knife

How do you know where they lived, I asked him. How do you know where to find them?

You think like they did, he said. If I was an Indian, I'd make a village here, on this ground.

Close to the river but above the mosquitoes, in the breeze but out of the wind, high enough where I could see the Pawnee or the Comanche coming at me from any direction.

He was no Indian, but wished he was.

He said he'd been born in the wrong century. He didn't like the 20th. He



Sheryl Wenzl/Special to the Eagle

Permission to print Mr. Roy Wenzl's beautiful article was given by phone. He stated he would be honored by my using it in my bulletin, in fact would be honored if others were to reprint it. Oct. 4, 1999 The Wichita Eagle.

Pearl Burden, editor QQ

VIA-QUARRY QUIPS

like, to be that last Indian.

It's been 15 years.

I was with him when he passed, my wife's father. Cancer wasn't fun, he said. Given a choice, he'd rather fish.

The boy asked if he could have the knife. Yes. You get that and stories, too. We walked home, stepping slow under the I-235 bridge over the river. The cars whooshed overhead, at speeds so fast that drivers and passengers could see the sandbars only in a blur. I told the boy that when I rode around the home county with his grandfather, we generally stopped at rivers. We'd get out and look. Arrowheads, mammoth teeth, deer antlers, shark teeth, beaver sign, ceremonial knives from forgotten religions, he'd found it all. That old man could read a strip of ground like I can read a newspaper.

Sometimes we found nothing.

No matter.

We never turned.

THE MINERAL THAT WON WWII

FROM: Gems 1/92 via The Rockhounds 9/97
by Faye Lawellen VIA-QUARRY QUIPS

An advance in technology is useful only if the material it requires is available. High-tech warfare, for instance, with airplanes and telecommunications playing prominent roles, had its first full, deadly flowering in World War II. Millions of people from scientists to buck privates, contributed to the Allies' victory. But all their efforts could have – been wasted for lack of one ordinary mineral – mica.

Mica, a silicate containing aluminum and potassium, has a crystalline structure that allows it to be split into thin, flexible sheets, as many as a thousand to the inch. Its high melting point and poor conductivity of heat and electricity make it an ideal insulator. During World War II mica was used in airplane spark plugs, condensers for electrical devices, and radio tubes, as well as in tent insulation and shields to protect machine parts from sand and mud. The Asheville, North Carolina, Citizen-Times was not exaggerating in November 1939 when it said, "Without mica, modern war cannot go on."

North Carolina took particular interest in these matters because it was the center of America's mica-mining industry, accounting for more than half the nation's production. In the state's early days settlers in its mountainous western regions used thin, sheets of the transparent mineral (loosely referred to as "isinglass") to make windows for their cabins. Later on sheet mica was used in stove doors and electrical devices and as a thermal insulator in buildings, but most of it came from India, Madagascar, and Brazil, where labor was much cheaper.

That all changed when World War II began. Demand for electrical-grade sheet mica soared as American manufacturers scrambled to equip the Allied armies. At the same time, foreign supplies were greatly reduced as the war made shipping hazardous. Domestic mica production changed from a sideline of farming mountaineers to a systematic business. When the United States entered the war, holes appeared in every back yard and tobacco field across western North-Carolina's Spruce Pine district as local residents, outside entrepreneurs, and government agents joined in the search for the suddenly precious mineral.

In June 1942 the War Production Board established the Colonial Mica Company to encourage and coordinate production. It rented equipment cheaply to miners, bought their output, and resold it to private companies. In July 1942 there were forty-one active mica mines in North Carolina; by January 1943 there were three hundred, employing a thousand men. But even working three shifts, they could not keep up with the demand. Miners were granted draft deferments, and North Carolinians were sent to mines from Canada to New Mexico to teach their skills and increase output.

Getting the mica out of the ground was only half the story. To be converted into usable form it had to undergo cleaning (known as cobbing), classification by color and grade, splitting (known as rifting or peeling), and trimming. Rifting and trimming, done with razor-sharp knives, required split second timing and excellent eye-hand coordination. Judgment and experience were the most important qualities. Often the best workers were the handicapped (blind people, with their highly developed sense of touch, were unmatched at sorting sheets of mica by thickness), women, children, and the elderly – which was fortunate in view of the available wartime labor force. Even with skilled workers, only about 10 percent of the mica mined was suitable for making sheets. The rest was ground and became a component in scores of products, from paint to bricks to the lake snow used in movies.

After the war, demand continued to increase, as mica was needed for radar equipment, Geiger counters, proximity fuses for guided missiles, and other applications-in-electronics, including television sets. Foreign supplies were once again available to industry, but the U.S. government continued to buy up domestic production, in order to build a stockpile and preserve the skills of miners and other workers in case imports were cut off again. By 1962 the stockpile had reached twenty-five thousand tons, easily enough to last half a dozen years. So the government closed its Spruce Pine purchasing depot, and mica mining died out in the North Carolina mountains.

Today advances in microelectronics and space age ceramics are making mica obsolete. Mining and splitting mica are dying crafts, like running a steam locomotive. But people in Asheville and Sylva and Swannanoa won't soon forget that America's war machine once depended on mountaineering in the Tar Heel State. ♦