



## **OCTOBER 2020 MONTHLY BULLETIN**

A non-profit group founded in March 1956, organized to educate the general public and members' knowledge of Mineralogy, Gems, Jewelry Making, Fossils and related earth sciences.

**MEETINGS:** The meetings are the first Tuesday of each month except June, July, August and December. The Clubs annual holiday party is in December and the annual picnic is in June which includes a silent auction. Visitors are always welcome.

The meetings are at Hope Chapel (formerly Indian Creek Community Church), 12480 Black Bob Road in Olathe, Kansas. We meet on the lower level in room **018**. 6:30 to 7 PM is not structured, as member's fellowship and have a raffle. At the end of the raffle anyone who purchased tickets - and did not win anything - can go take one item from the table. The meeting starts at 7 PM followed by the guest speaker. Information is available at our website: [olathegemclub.com](http://olathegemclub.com).

DUES: \$10.00 per year for individuals / \$5.00 per year for minors / children under the age of 12 are free.  
(Due by May meeting, and delinquent by September meeting)

### **OFFICERS and CHAIRPERSONS 2020 – 2021:**

President: Norman Onnen (816)645-1333

Vice President: Lisa Hulbert (913)223-1028

Secretary: Alison Betts (913)962-9584

Treasurer: Barbara Crompton (913)492-6783

Website and Editor: Dan McDaniel (913)963-5357

Membership Chairman: M John Robinson (913)669-8284

Field Trip Coordinator: Leslie Hartman (785)380-6016;

Field Trip Assistant: Larry Wells (913)787-5138

Programs: Lisa Hulbert, VP

Librarian and Historian: Norman Onnen (816)645-1333

Gem Show Chairman: Norman Onnen

Raffle: Lisa Hulbert

Association Delegates: Norman Onnen & Chet McLaughlin

Alternate Assoc. Delegates: Vicky Ritter & Mandy Lorenz

## **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:**

### **OGMS Meetings**

October General Meeting – **Cancelled** As for our club monthly meetings, the church remains closed to outside groups meeting in their facilities. (Other clubs within the Association continue to have the same restrictions). We have notified the church that we desire to meet at their location again once the virus re-opening procedures allow for us to be included. In the meantime, we will strive to engage our membership in field trips, Bulletin postings, etc. as conditions permit. All suggestions are welcome and solicited.

### **Nov. 6-8, 2020 Gem and Mineral Show - **Cancelled****

As many have recognized, the Nov. gem and mineral show has now officially been cancelled by Shows of Integrity (they changed their website indicating this last week). Presently the Association (of which our club is a member) continues to plan for and organize the March 2021 gem and mineral show.

### **Mozarkite Swap Results**

In July, several of our club members met with a Southern California rockhound traveling through Kansas City who wished to trade CA minerals for Mozarkite. This individual takes his daughter to and from college in Indiana and has indicated that he was pleased with the trading and meeting our members and that he is interested in doing this again. We will alert OGMS members when the next visit will occur - and he is interested in more than just Mozarkite.

### **Active Gem Shows**

It is recognized that some OGMS members went to Lincoln, MO to the Mozarkite show (Sept. 18-19) so some shows continue to occur.

On Sept. 26-27, it is confirmed that the Nebraska show will occur in Omaha at a Ramada Inn. Please go on line for details.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

**From Lesliee** -- October we will have our last field trip either through HAMM or another location. November and throughout the next few months we will be taking a break for the holidays and the cool or cold weather. In the meantime, I will be working on the next set of field trips for next year when the weather permits it.

**August 22, 2020** - Olathe, KMPS, and Show Me groups went to HAMM in Olathe, KS. The weather started out cool then throughout the day it became much warmer into the upper 80s. We had 18 people show up for this field trip and 3 became members that day; a father and son and another adult. We all divided up and went to different locations and we all found different fossils. One location became a very popular area for most of the group that members keep going back to. This hill had several layers, but one layer seemed to be filled of fossils with a surprise of calcite. This calcite was clear and not broken. We came out with large chunks and bags and buckets of small chunks. Many members didn't want to leave and would love to visit again.

**September 5, 2020** - Olathe, KMPS, and Show Me groups went to two different quarries, one in Burlington, KS and one in Waverly, KS. The weather was warm and got even warmer to the point the sun seemed to be directly pointed right on us. I heard it was 91 degrees that day and for that weekend, but for the following week, there was rain and the temperature went down into the 60's of chilliness. All 9 of us did survive the sun with finding fossils. A new family showed up for this field trip came out with a good number of fossils. This trip was set up for a member in the Olathe group so if anyone who knows of any other locations they want to go to, just let me know. I am looking into another around Ottawa.

**September 19, 2020** - Olathe, KMPS, and Show Me groups went to the Whetstine Quarry in Troy, KS. The weather was just perfect, couldn't ask for a better day. The first group of people showed so I took them to the quarry to start the fun looking around. Then I went back to get the new family who signed up to become our new members. A total of 10 of us were there searching for fossils and rocks. We all had a great time together. We had time to talk, walk around, find some unique fossils, and joke around. One member found an ammonite but unfortunately it had to be left behind because the rock was way too big to carry and break. I promise next time and all future field trips to bring my sledge hammer. I am willing to go back to meet anyone later if they must come late for a field trip also. I am willing to stay all day at a field trip too because it gives me more time to find things. The other field trips, we have been leaving by 2pm but this one we didn't leave until 4:30pm. One more surprise at this location, was an area that some stuff was dumped off which out these items were nice kid books that were in great condition. On behalf of Olathe, I went around town of Topeka where I live and put these books into 3 different boxes for children to come and get them for free.

Watch for pictures on Facebook of these field trips.

If anyone has any location to visit let me know and I will check it out for a field trip possibility. [hartman.12345@hotmail.com](mailto:hartman.12345@hotmail.com) or text me at 785-380-6016.

## **A Senior Adventure**

Packed to within an inch of the rooftop of a rental car, Alison Betts, Barbara Crompton, Gary Monroe, and Mike Purduski left Kansas City on September 1. We drove straight through with a brief stop west of Salt Lake City for a couple of hours of downtime. Our destination was the high desert site for the famous black opal of Virgin Valley, Nevada. Royal Peacock Opal Mine has a well-appointed campground complete with two cabins (we had reservations for these since February), large RV hookups, smaller campers, and primitive camp sites with showers and flush toilets available.

After unpacking foodstuffs and gear at the cabins we did a little dirt road exploring. Everyone found obsidian chips, evidence that the Native Americans had lived in the region. What we didn't expect was the 'low tire' indicator that flashed on. Oh my, the front passenger tire was going flat! Back at the campground Alison tried to call out on the 'pay phone', a very different model than we were accustomed to seeing. Forty minutes later she still couldn't make a call go through. On top of that, we were in a 'dead area'. No cell services. Then it was discovered that there was no spare tire, jack, or repair kit in the car. So, getting a resolution to the problem would have to wait until the next morning. At least we had a great dinner. Each cabin is stocked with microwave, hot plate, toaster, coffee maker, frig, outdoor grill, silverware, pots & pans and AC. Remember we were in the high desert and lucky us... (just kidding) ...it was unseasonably hot for September.

The next morning Gary and Mike headed up to the mine to dig in the wall for opals. The owner of Royal Peacock learned of our plight and loaned Alison the use of the landline phone to make calls to the car rental company. Finally, five hours later it was established that a tow truck was in route and expected to arrive about 6:30 pm. Another van was being held for us at the Reno airport. Alison and Barbara packed light overnight bags for the trip. Meanwhile the guys had finished collecting for the day and we got to see their finds. Opal when it is taken out of the wall of ash and clay is immediately placed in water. The petrified wood is kept dry.

Barbara and Alison survived the tow truck ride of 360 miles to Reno and arrived at the car rental site within minutes of their closing, 11:30 pm, to learn they had no knowledge of the exchange. Alison kept her wits about her and finally we had a replacement, a newer model but still no spare tire or jack. The unsolicited comment from the agent was the first car was at the end of its use and should never been rented to us.

For the third day of prospecting Alison and Barbara joined Mike at the wall. Gary stayed back in camp to write an article about our adventure. Temps were reported to be about 104 degrees that day. Sure, it a dry heat, but it is probably the most difficult part of this experience. You are constantly drinking water, lots of water. Where you work the wall there is very easy access, no large hole or steep trails. The car was parked a couple hundred feet away. I heard there were about 55 people in the mine with us, but

there is such great placement that it felt like only 10. There are tailing piles positioned away from the wall. The Royal Peacock is a fee dig, one price for the wall and another for the tailings. The mine supervisor is on site almost all the time and is quick to make suggestions and 'find' something right where you are working that you can take home.

Virgin Valley is a long two-day drive from Kansas City but with four drivers very manageable. We called this A Senior Adventure because the median age was over 65 years. The campground was very family friendly, clean, and equipped for all levels of camping. We all enjoyed the cabin experience, you bet. This is the easiest prospecting I have ever done. Who is ready to hunt for black opals? – Barbara Crompton



Alison and Barbara – Hard at work???

## **NEWS, VIEWS AND REVIEWS**

### **Leavenworth, KS and Colorado Gold**

In the 1850's the civilized frontier (financial, supplies, support, etc.) resided in the likes of Kansas City, Lawrence, KS and Leavenworth, KS. This was a time of rapid prospecting for gold in the Colorado Rockies, and a time in which the prospectors used their raw gold finds as swap for food, supplies, etc. - often to their disadvantage in the immediate establishment of value in meeting their present needs. To obtain real cash value for their gold they would have to send the findings back east where it would be assayed and cashed in for established government prices - a procedure that could take months. One of the back-east locations for this to occur was a shop in Leavenworth, KS operated by Emanuel Gruber and brothers Austin and Milton Clark. As more and more gold was found by more and more prospectors they decided to open a similar and more convenient operation in Denver in 1859. Recognizing the miners and prospectors immediate and more timely need for ready cash, the threesome, operating as Clark, Gruber & Company, started a private mint in which the gold they were handling could be refined and minted in various denominations. The first gold coins started rolling out July 20, 1860, eventually in two and a half, five and ten-dollar pieces. In three months more than \$120,000 worth of gold coins were minted, and soon paper money was issued. In 2-1/2 years more than \$600,000 in gold coins was

processed. So successful was the operation that the government decided to establish the federal mint and purchased the company in 1862. (This remains as one of three Federal mints still in operation today. NEO) ("It Happened in Colorado", J. A. Crutchfield). - Norm O.

**Part 2 - Do you know what this stone is?**



One of our members, Larry Wells polished this one. I will tell you that this stone is (drum roll please)

## **Polka Dot Agate**

Credit Geology.com

Polka dot agate is an orbicular agate produced from the Priddy Agate Beds of central Oregon. It has an appearance that sounds just like its name. It is a semitransparent to semitranslucent agate with suspended round "dots" of contrasting colors. It is a favorite [Oregon gemstone](#).

Polka dot's base colors range from blue to white to pale yellow. The dots can be almost any combination of yellow, orange, red, brown, or black. Nature has also marked some specimens with black dendrites. Other specimens are cross-cut by intrusions of brown jasper. The diaphaneity ranges from almost transparent to almost opaque. This color and geometry make some of the most interesting and beautiful types of agate that you will ever see.

The dots in the agate range in size from nearly invisible up to about 1/4 inch across. Most of them are completely agatized, but some appear to be a soft iron oxide material similar to limonite or hematite. Most of the dots are sharp, concentric spheres. Others are spherical but with a slightly irregular outline.

Thank you for sharing with us Larry.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Shows: Note that many annual gem and mineral shows have cancelled. Rock & Gem magazine (the magazine officially recognized by the Rocky Mountain Federation) now has a header at its "Show Dates" column, directing readers to check the status of shows, but it does not indicate any cancellations.

### **September 26-27, 2020 – Still occurring at this time**

Nebraska Mineral and Gem Club

Omaha, NE Omaha Gem and Mineral Show. Ramada Plaza. Sept. 26 and 27, 2020.

### **October 10-11, 2020 - Cancelled**

Topeka, KS. Topeka Gem & Mineral Society 64th Annual Show. "Green with Envy". Agricultural Center. Oct. 10 and 11, 2020.

### **October 17-18, 2020 - Cancelled**

Des Moines, Iowa. 2020 Gem, Jewelry, Mineral & Fossil Show. Iowa State Fairgrounds. Oct 17 and 18, 2020.

**November 6-8, 2020 – Cancelled** Kansas City Gem and Mineral Show. KC Expo Center. Nov. 6-8, 2020.