



Ore-Cutts

Volume XL, Issue IV

April, 2005

Finding Needles in the Desert

By Dick Shields

Bess and I feel very privileged. As of this month, our Arizona mining friends have honored us with the right to sell wulfenite needles and “fuzzy tabs” from the Purple Passion Mine. These are extremely rare forms of wulfenite, known to occur only here and in France.



In the center of this vug is a beautiful example of the wulfenite needles from Bill Gardner's personal collection

Bill Gardner and Ed Davis named the claim for the purple fluorite that gives a distinct hue to the country rock. Wulfenite collecting is a popular hobby in Arizona (and among mineral collectors world wide). Wulfenite occurs normally as distinctive flat tabs of yellow to red-orange translucent crystals, and good examples of those can be found at Purple Passion. Some are water-clear, but the mineral is soft ($2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 on the mohs scale) and very rarely are the crystals large enough to yield facetable material. The largest tabby wulfies at Purple Passion Mine are less

than an inch long, but who can say what still lurks below the ground? Another distinctive feature of Purple Passion wulfenite is that some opaque tabs fluoresce a dull orange under long wave UV light!

“Accicular crystals” is the proper name for the needle form, shown enlarged 30 times in this picture from my microscopic digital camera:



The same needles as on the left, magnified 30X

Bess and Bill spent an entire day last week examining material that Bill stockpiled at his house over the years of collecting at Purple Passion. I couldn't be there to hear the giggles of delight, so I called several times to Bess's cell phone and she put me on speaker so I could share in the fun!

Wulfenite, a lead molybdenum crystalline mineral, is named for its discoverer, Franz Xavier Wulfen, an Austrian Jesuit mineralogist who lived from 1728-1805. The type locale is in the Karnische Alps in Austria. The only other location from which we have found descriptions of needle and fuzzy tab wulfenites is Rhone, France, at Lantignie Mine (Websites of Note).

You can find numerous examples of the tabby wulfies on the web, so I won't print any of the showy ones here. Instead, I'll give you one example that I confirmed glows orange under LW UV light. From this angle, it resembles one of Ralph's science experiments or a pig that took the cheese bait!



Tabby Purple Passion wulfie that fluoresces orange

The other unusual crystal from Purple Passion is the "fuzzy tab" type, or "epitaxial wulfenite on wulfenite". They are the result of a later generation of crystals growing as needles on the C faces of existing blades. Bill has some photographs on his web site that demonstrate how it looks (Web Sites of Note). Here is an example:



Fuzzy tab blades enlarged 30X

The secondary growth can develop into full blown needles and become a bristle brush-like crystal. Bill showed me several excellent examples of the needles growing into a vug that re-

sembles a forest like this one magnified 30 times. We didn't have a tripod, so I put my hand on the table near the specimen, and rested the camera (as steadily as I could) with the other. What a result!



A forest of wulfenites in a vug from Purple Passion

Bill and Ed have authorized us to market these specimens on our web site and on eBay. So, if you are interested in seeing (through a stereo microscope or high power camera) some "from the wild," give us a jingle (do phones do that any more?) or drop us a note at dick@rmsgraphics.net.

Bess is thoroughly enjoying the process of discovery - she's like a kid in a candy store!

Check our OMS web site at <http://omsinc.org> or send email to info@omsinc.org.

A Good Trip to Lucy's

By Wes Lingerfelt, Treasurer, OMS

It was very early in the morning and the dew was still on the grass. Marshall Reeves and Ralph Bishop showed up on time as did Dee Dee Magri, Sharon Duncan and Harold (Lucky) Virgin. The six of us piled into the big F-350 Crew Cab truck and headed for the meet point of CA166 and US101. The rest of the group was there waiting and so we loaded Bob Bullocks' Chevy 2500 HD truck with Geary Sheffer, Wayne and Todd Mills and Josh Simonson. Along for the trip were two guests, Erica and Keith in their small red convertible, as well as John and Matkuda Belzel in their van.

A pleasant trip of about 3 hours length ensued with a quick restroom break in Maricopa, and a visit to the local rock shop owned by Sandi Smith. We enjoyed the many wild flowers blooming along the hills and valleys and the huge bug splats on the windshield that comes with a good rainy season.

Upon arrival at Lucy Tunnell's we were soon climbing all over the huge rock pile like flies on a new cow pie. Our guests wasted no time in gathering all the rock they could handle as did the Belzel's, and they decided to take their leave and go on to other endeavors. We missed them in the group photograph taken later in the day.



Where's Wes? He wouldn't have stopped just to take a picture, or?

I decided to see if there was any more rhodonite down in the swimming pool hole. It took a lot of effort to clean out a space to work, but I was soon mining deeper and deeper into the hole. Clunk! AHH! What a good sound that was! But to my disappointment it was a flat skinny piece so I threw it out of the hole. Onward I dug, expecting Ralph Bishop to wander over and pitch in a little digging as relief. But NO! Ralph was only interested in Silver Picking this day. He played with Ralph the dog and had a very laid back day.

Bob Weikert, Lucy's friend, had a travel trailer load of Petrified Algae known as Stromatolite from Minnesota. John Belzel picked out the best piece of Stromatolite and Ralph, Sharon

and others purchased slabs and polished pieces that were made to kill for.



Ralph acting like Ralph (one's the dog)

Anyway, I'm in the hole digging and finally I found a piece we had missed on our first time digging out the Rhodonite. It was worth the effort.



Ah, there he is...Wes in his element (near rhodonite)

About this time Ralph discovered a stash of Copper World Mine Malachite and Azurite that Lucy had hidden in the shed. We poured over the stash and picked out a few nice pieces and approached Lucy and asked, "How Much?" She shyly replied, "Well, I need 50 cents a pound for that!" Ralph and I looked at each other and said, "Lordy, Mercy! We done died and gone to heaven!" Ralph started throwing it out like a Badger cleaning out his den. We

loaded the truck and settled up with Lucy. You sure can get a lot of rock for only 25 cents and/or 50 cents per pound.



Dee Dee weighing out...carefully!

We decided to have a sit down lunch at the neat little restaurant around the corner from Lucy before heading home. We had a great time, especially when the waitress challenged Ralph and Marshall to find all the mistakes in the menu she had given out. It was great fun! We made our way back to the coast with enough sunlight still present to unload and divvy up the rock to the various vehicles.

What a great trip! What a great day! Thanks to our Wagonmaster, Bob Bullock, for a wonderful memory. I can hardly wait until the next time.

Web Sites of Note:

April 2005

Bill Gardner Wulfenite Photos:

<http://www.fluorescents.com>

Tim Jokela's Micromount Web Page:

<http://www.micromounts.com/>

Glendale Community College wulfenite page:

<http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/earthsci/imagearchive/wulfenite.htm>

Chris Auer's Wulfenite Home Page

<http://www.wulfenite.com/>

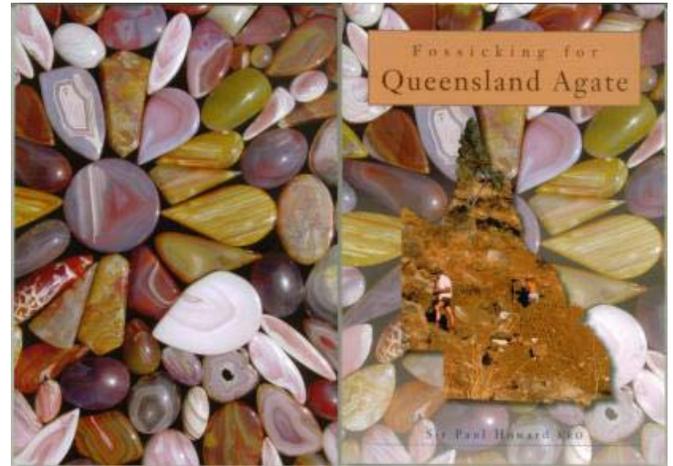
California Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

<http://www.cfmsinc.org/>

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

<http://www.amfed.org/>

Gift from Down Under



The cover of Sir Paul Howard's new book

The newest addition to our OMS Library is a gift from Sir Paul Howard called, "Fossicking for Queensland Agate". Contact Wes Lingerfelt if you wish to purchase a copy of this beautiful coffeetable book.

The Wanderer

Pilgrimage to Purple Passion

What better way to spend a Saturday than digging at the mines? Dick and I traveled to Wickenburg AZ in search of fluorescent rocks with three friends in tow (and our Westies, Angus and Violet). Richard and Sue Schmid (and their Westie, Annie) are novice rockhounds, and snowbirds from Wisconsin. Jim Suehr is a genius at mineral identification, and sells his beautiful specimens at Quartzsite each January, and at gem shows on the east coast during the summer.



The hunting pack (only Jim looked in the right place)

Before reaching the Purple Passion Mine, we stopped at mile 2.2 to collect local geodes. They fluoresce minty green, and are abundant on the roadcut. Another 7 miles up the dirt road, and we arrived at Purple Passion.

“EVERYTHING I put in the box seems to glow” was the comment of Sue. She had never been out on a fluorescing trip, and discovering glowing specimens in our daylight fluorescent viewing box fascinated her. Sue and I found clusters of crystals (smoky, amethyst, and clear quartz) that will make nice “deskdecorations”. Jim came up with the find of the day, a thick-willomite piece that will go into his private collection.



Monarch mine vug with malachite needles and azurite-covered quartz viewed at 30X

After skipping right over lunch in our enthusiasm to explore, collect, and identify specimens, Dick had a hard time convincing us that we needed to move on to the Monarch Mine. It is uphill about 2 miles of intense 4-wheel driving, and features copper minerals, tiny vugs with gold, silver, and malachite and azurite over quartz needles. Sue and Richard scrambled over the piles of heavy ore in search of blues and greens indicating the presence of malachite and azurite (their favorites). Richard took photos of Wickenburg to the southwest, and of far-off Phoenix on this unusually clear day.

Sue and Richard headed back to Phoenix in mid-afternoon for a social engagement. Dick, Jim, and I decided to hit just one more mine:

Hogan Claim where Jim found a multi-colored keeper.

Dick and I dragged our tired bodies down the mountain, and headed back to Phoenix as Jim returned home to Quartzsite. There's nothing more satisfying than being dog-tired after a successful, hard day at the mines!

Happy Hunting,
Love, Bess

Orcutt Mineral Society

Board Meeting

Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA

1 March 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Lucky Virgin.

Minutes of the previous General Meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report was read by Wes Lingerfelt, and accepted as read.

Committee Reports:

Abused Children: Debbie Hood raised additional funds at last month's General Meeting Special Crystal Raffle.

Adopt-a-Highway: Marshall Reeves announced that the next cleanup was scheduled for March 19th, but has been rescheduled to April 16th. The Bakersfield Tailgate Show is on March 19th, and many of the cleanup crew plan to be in Bakersfield.

Education: Wes Lingerfelt had back-to-back Rock Talks on 16 February at Nipomo Elementary. June Apperson, and Bess Shields helped answer questions from the 156 kids who participated. Wes talked on 22 February at Oceano School, and reported that the teachers learned as much about rocks as the students.

Field Trips: Bob Bullock is taking us to Lucy Tunnell's Rock Pile on March 12th. Members should meet at the Mussell Sr. Center by 7:00 a.m., and don't plan to return until well after dark.

Property: Geary Sheffer invites members to help with the annual locker cleaning on April 9th at 9:00 a.m. Breakfast will follow at Federico's Country Kitchen in Santa Maria.

Redbook: Wes Lingerfelt has the Redbooks ready, and will be handing them out at the March General Meeting.

Sunshine: Debbie Hood reported that Kay Vollmer is now in Country Oaks Care Center, and is doing well. Bob Bullock is having surgery on 22 March. Debbie Hood faces surgery on 9 March.

Correspondence:

- *Dinny's Doin's* newsletter.
- Sun Valley Indian School newsletter.

- *Pick & Shovel* from San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society.
- *Rocky Review* from Conejo Gem & Mineral Club.
- *The Agatizer* from South Bay (Torrance) Club.
- *Rockonteur* from Santa Lucia Rockhound Club.
- Reno Gem & Mineral Society Show invitation.
- American Lands Access Association newsletter.

Unfinished Business:

1. Library displays will be put up in local libraries prior to our August Gem Show. Marshall Reeves will put up the Lompoc display. Lucky Virgin will assemble the Nipomo display. Bess Shields will do the Main Library, Santa Maria.
2. Marshall Reeves submitted copies of the Raffle Reconciliation for 2004. Copies were received from Board members, and one copy will be filed with the March minutes.

New Business:

1. Wes Lingerfelt reported on a new book by Corrine Arheim called "A Natural History of Nipomo Mesa Region". The picture on the back of the publication was taken by Wes, as were all of the sagenite photos. Ralph Bishop supplied the information about sagenite collecting, and local minerals. The book is available for \$18. Wes will supply additional information about how to get a copy for yourself.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. by President Virgin.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Orcutt Mineral Society

General Meeting
Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA
8 March 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Lucky Virgin.

Flag salute was led by Wayne Mills. Invocation on "Rocky Blessings" was given by Bess Shields.

Minutes of the previous Board Meeting, and General Meeting were approved as printed in the *Ore-Cutts*.

Treasurer's Report was read by Wes Lingerfelt, and accepted as read.

Elaine VonAchen reported 33 members and 7 guests were present. Guests were June Apperson, Roger Leeman, Brett Newman, Erica Erskine, Jill Nelson, Keith McKay, and Kelly Nicole Clements.

Committee Reports:

Abused Children: Debbie Hood invites everyone to support the Abused Children Fundraising Raffle at \$1.00 per ticket.

Adopt-a-Highway: Marshall Reeves announced the next highway cleanup will be on April 16th. There will be one participation prize awarded at the cleanup, and one at the General Meeting for those who cleaned the highway.

CFMS: Wes Lingerfelt announced that Zzyzx will occur during March in 2006.

Field Trips: Bob Bullock is taking us to Lucy Tunnell's on 12 March.

Historian: Sharon Duncan invites folks to join her on Sunday, March 20th at 1:30 pm to assemble more OMS historical information.

Library, Books, Videos: Displays will be set up during July by the following members:

- Arroyo Grande Library – Wayne Mills
- Lompoc Library – Marshall Reeves
- Nipomo Library – Lucky Virgin
- Santa Maria Main Library – Bess Shields

Members are encouraged to contact these individuals if they wish to display prized specimens at the Libraries.

Membership: Wayne Mills has 2 applications pending, and will present them at the next Board Meeting.

Refreshments: DeeDee Magri thanked Elaine VonAchen, Sharon Duncan, Jill Nelson, and Jeannie Lingerfelt for bringing tonight's refreshments.

Sunshine: Debbie Hood announced that Kay Vollmer is recovering in a local care facility. Bob Bullock has surgery on March 22nd. Debbie Hood will have surgery on her hand tomorrow.

Correspondence:

- *Dinny's Doin's* newsletter.
- *Yellowstone Deposit* newsletter.
- Reno Gem Show invitation.
- *Rockonteur* from Santa Lucia Rockhound Club.
- *Lapidarian* from Santa Cruz Mineral & Gem Society.
- *Pick & Shovel* from San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society.
- *The Agatizer* from South Bay (Torrance) Club.
- Porterville Area Gem & Mineral Society invitation to tool demonstration event.
- *Rocky Review* from Conejo Gem & Mineral Club.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

1. Lucky Virgin is in need of volunteers to help with Treasure Chest donations, and to work on the Publicity Committee for our Annual Gem Show in August.
2. Wes Lingerfelt made one Redbook correction. Mark through Bill Hood as Board Member, and replace with newly elected DeeDee Magri.
3. Wes Lingerfelt brought a stack of Thank You letters from the kids who attended his Rock Talks at Oceano Elementary School. He read a couple, and invited members to view the letters at the break.
4. Wayne Mills has a display up at Bishops Peak School about Chumash artifacts.

Refreshments were homemade pies.

The program was presented by Bob Bullock on “Seriously Safe”, or taking safety precautions on field trips.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. by President Virgin.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

OMS Membership dues are \$18 per year. Junior Membership is \$9.00. New membership dues are pro-rated from January 1st of the first year.

Official Staff

OMS Purpose

Founded in 1958, and is named after William Orcutt, a geologist and civil engineer who worked in the Santa Maria Valley as a district manager for Union Oil Company in 1888. In 1889, Orcutt discovered the fossil wealth of the La Brea Tar Pits, one of the most significant fossil finds in paleontological history. The Society is a non-profit club, dedicated to stimulating an interest in rocks and minerals. The club offers educational programs, field trips, youth activities, and other opportunities for families and individuals to pursue an interest in collecting and lapidary treatment of rocks, fossils, gems, minerals, and other facets of Earth Sciences. In addition, a goal of this Society is to promote good fellowship and proper ethics in pursuit of the society's endeavors. Operating rules have been set forth to guide the Officers and members of the Society in accomplishing these purposes. Affiliations: California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.



OMS Logo

A rock saw cutting a piece of stone was selected when the first bulletin, *ORE-CUTTS* (namesake, William Orcutt) was first published in 1966. Member Helen Azevedo was the first editor.

2005 OMS Officers

President	Lucky Virgin	(805) 929-9525
President Elect	Sharon Duncan	(805) 929-2209
Secretary	Bess Shields	(805) 937-0357
Treasurer	Wes Lingerfelt	(805) 929-3788
Immediate Past President	Debbie Hood	(805) 481-6860
CFMS Representative	Wes Lingerfelt	(805) 929-3788

2005 OMS Board Members

Geary Sheffer	(805) 925-8009
Sylvia Nasholm	(805) 481-0923
Robert Bullock	(805) 928-6372
DeeDee Magri	(805) 595-2755
Marshall Reeves	(805) 588-8932

Ore-Cutts Editors

Dick and Bess Shields	(805) 937-0357
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Webmasters

Dick Shields	(805) 937-0357
Wes Lingerfelt	(805) 929-3788

Ore-Cutts Photo Credits: “Wulfenites” by Bill Gardner and Dick Shields; “Lucy” by Sharon Duncan and Wes Lingerfelt; “Wanderer” by Dick Shields.

April 2005 Calendar

Saturday April 2, 2005 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Figueroa Mountain -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. Explore old jasper trails, serpentine outcroppings, and wildflowers in full bloom. Fill your gas tank (no services on the mountain) and bring a lunch. Adventure Pass required. Contact Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details..
Tuesday April 5, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Saturday April 9, 2005 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	OMS Locker Cleanup – Meet at Fortress Lockers at 2175 Willow Road, AG (on Nipomo Mesa west of the intersection of Willow Road and Hwy 1). Call Geary Sheffer at 925-8009 for details.
Tuesday April 12, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: “Copper Mining” Video • Display: Favorite Copper Minerals • Refreshment: Cookies.
Saturday April 16, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM New Date due to scheduling conflict	OMS Highway Cleanup -- Intersection of Highway 101 and 166 After the cleanup we have coffee and pastry at the “Francisco’s Country Kitchen” in Santa Maria. Contact Marshall Reeves at 588-8932 for details.

Saturday April 23, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast – “Francisco’s Country Kitchen” in Santa Maria. Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.
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May 2005 Calendar

Tuesday May 3, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Tuesday May 10, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: "Avila Rock" by DeeDee Magri • Display: Bring your favorite rock or mineral • Refreshment: Cakes and cupcakes
Saturday May 14, 2005 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Big Sandy -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. Enjoy a warm Spring day collecting in Salty and Kelly Tapper’s back yard near the San Andreas Fault. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and a good eye for jaspers and fossils. Easy access to an excellent collecting area. Call Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday May 21, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM	OMS Highway Cleanup -- Intersection of Highway 101 and 166 After the cleanup we have coffee and pastry at the “Francisco’s Country Kitchen” in Santa Maria. Contact Marshall Reeves at 588-8932 for details.
Saturday May 28, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast – “Francisco’s Country Kitchen” in Santa Maria. Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.

June 2005 Calendar

Saturday June 4, 2005 8:00AM – 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Brea Creek -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot Explore the northern edge of the San Rafael Wilderness area. Plan to get your shoes wet in the creek, fill your gas tank (no services in the canyon), and bring plenty of bottled water and a lunch. Adventure Pass required. Contact Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Tuesday June 7, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Saturday June 11, 2005 10:00AM – 3:00 PM	OMS Annual Picnic -- Pioneer Park, Santa Maria Meat, bread, and sodas are provided. Bring your own plates and silverware a side dish to share. We also suggest bringing a lawn chair for comfort. Bring rocks for the silent auction!
Saturday June 25, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast – “Francisco’s Country Kitchen” in Santa Maria. Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.

Reserve the dates

Roseville Gem and Mineral Blast

The CFMS show this year is called the Roseville Gem and Mineral Blast and takes place from June 10-12 at the Roseville (Placer County) Fairgrounds.

Orcutt Mineral Society
P.O. Box 106
Santa Maria, CA 93456

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED