



Ore-Cutts

Volume XL, Issue II

February, 2005

Destination Quartzsite!

By Wes Lingerfelt, Treasurer, OMS

It was early in the morning when we started out, around 6 a.m. We had a long way to go on this 12th day of January 2005. The weather had been horrible for a week now and it promises to improve for each day of our planned 6-day trip. The trip from Nipomo to Laughlin, NV was enjoyable for each of us four determined rockhounds. The group included Ralph Bishop, John Von Achen, Marshall Reeves, and, of course, the driver of the big F-350, Wes Lingerfelt. The F-350 has proven to be a true work-horse and friend for many a rock collecting trip.



Dave Lines working on the marble outcropping

Upon arrival at the AVI Casino RV Park we found a good spot to begin our adventure through the many dealers set up there. Not many shoppers were milling about as we listened to the stories about tents blowing away and torrential rains falling. We assured all the dealers we had brought them some good weather with us from California's Coast.

We spent several hours finding some real bargains at this show, called Clouds Gemboree. The merchandise had not been picked over as in prior years when we arrived much later in the month. It was soon time to head for Parker, AZ and our rooms at the Blue Water Casino. We checked in and found a dear friend had flown all the way from Maryland to go hounding with us. Dave Lines had arranged for a second year to join us, bringing gifts from the East Coast for our rock collections. Beautiful Unakite, Potomac Marble, and Blue Quartz were among the treasures carried on the plane from Maryland.

Thursday morning found us up at daybreak and heading for the Coffee Urn's Café in Parker. We all knew it was going to be a rousing time with lots of stories (especially from Ralph), and catching up on the previous year's events. We traveled the 35 miles to Quartzsite, arriving about 8:30 a.m. at Tyson Wells Show to warm sunshine and very few people wandering about. It almost looked deserted, and many people were commenting about the show down the road being renamed "Deserted Gardens" instead of Desert Gardens.

Our plan was to shop Tyson Wells Thursday and Desert Gardens on Friday. It takes the better part of a day just to walk around the shows, let alone stop and dicker with a vendor or two. Thursday was filled with lots of neat stuff to look at, and a few purchases here and there. Many old friends were encountered along the way. At the end of the day we headed home to Parker and the Buffet food line.

A good nights rest (except for Ralph who just had to use the Black light in all the dry washes in the area), and we were back to Desert Gar-

dens Show on Friday morning. All the potential dealers for our August show had been visited and given applications, so we decided to go rocking hounding at the Banded Marble site about 5 miles east of town. We had visited there last year, but lacked tools to do much collecting. We all spent an enjoyable afternoon hammering and pounding the giant wall of marble that finally gave up some nice samples for spheres.

We traveled back to the show area, and ran into a good friend by the name of Gerry Wells. We arranged for him to join us the next day at the Kofa Wilderness Area site of the Birdseye Rhyolite about 35 miles south of town. We had left a huge boulder in the vein last year, and we wondered if it was still there. By golly it was!



Marshall Reeves, Gerry Wells, and Dave Lines freeing the bird's eye rhyolite boulder

We set upon the boulder with new vigor and bigger tools we had brought this time, and in no time at all it was out of the vein and in the truck. Given such success, it was decided to travel back to the shows (Ralph wanted more time at Desert Gardens), and then on to Bouse, AZ for possible Hematite and Sagenite. Dave had visited the Hematite site earlier, and knew the way. We spent an hour or two walking the green desert hills and picking up Hematite. Gerry guided

us on to the North side of Bouse where the Sagenite site lay waiting.

We collected well into the beautiful sunset, and found lots of treasures. I was beginning to get a little worried about the trip home with all the rock and merchandise we had bought. Not to worry though as Ralph had volunteered to be duct taped to the bumper for the trip home. We weren't about to leave any good rock behind. Another good meal at the Indian Casino, a good rest, and Sunday found us back at Desert Gardens. More rock was purchased; more goodies were tempting us at every turn of the aisle.



20 minutes later...

Late in the afternoon we were fairly worn down and running low on funds, so we decided to re-visit the Sagenite location, this time for Ralph to see it also. It was exciting to find the agate that so closely matched that found over in Deming, New Mexico. We loaded more rock, and prospected until dark one more time.

Sunday night found us repacking the truck for the trip home (Ralph is an expert packer). After repacking, the tailgate would just barely close after all our bags were put in the truck. The trip home was uneventful, but nice. A heavy load makes for a smooth ride.

Overall a great trip with many new memories acquired. We arrived home about 2 p.m. Mon-

day the 17th with everything intact. Now, where will I find a nook or cranny to put it?

Oh! By the way, did I tell you about how green the desert was this year? We saw the weeds and grass grow at least 3 inches per day as we drove the highway to Quartzsite each day. It's truly amazing what 22 inches of rain will do for the desert terrain.



The roadside rest east of Quartzsite is "greening"

Dry Head Agate

By Sharon Duncan, President Elect, OMS, from a presentation given by Ralph Bishop

The Orcutt Mineral Society was once again honored with Ralph Bishop giving one of his special talks on Dry Head Agates at our January 2005 meeting. One could only say that you really needed to be there to feel the full effect of Ralph's presentation on the agates.

At age 21, Ralph spent some time in Oregon, and while he was there he heard of an agate mining claim, approximately 40 miles out on a dirt road between Wyoming and Montana, which was for sale. He decided it was a little more money than he wanted to pay, so Ralph and his friend from Tennessee agreed to become partners on this venture, and purchased the mine.

Since this mine was out in the middle of nowhere, you prayed that you did not encounter any problems as it was a long walk back. There were two routes to the mine. One route took you across the Crow Indian Reservation. One

of the complications of this route was the scattering of dead cars that were everywhere, including the middle of the road. Ralph's preferred route was approximately 150 miles around the other way. It really didn't matter because you still had to improvise or have the proper tools and equipment if anything went wrong with your vehicle or machinery.

The reason the area is known as Dry Head Canyon is due to the fact that there is a cliff which runs along a narrow canyon with vertical sides with an approximate 800 foot drop. Indians, while hunting, would force the buffalo over the cliff, killing them and leaving the heads which over the years, dried, hence the name.



The agates that are found on the prairie in this region are, as Ralph states, "ugly" on the outside, but can be very beautiful on the inside. There was speculation as to what these concretions were really made up of. They are layers of volcanic ash and limestone, and can be banded in yellows and reds, or "tomato soup" colors, or even have crystal pockets in them. Others can just be ugly.

The actual mining was no easy task either. It was a dirty job, but somebody had to do it. And speaking of dirt, they bathed in a 50 gallon drum once the ice had been broken off the top.

After the season was over, which was about two months long, if you were lucky the '69 Dodge truck that Ralph owned was loaded with seven large bags of rocks on the front end to

counter weight the heavy load of rock in the backend.

Ralph and his partner mined the claim for seven years before selling it. It is now currently managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

For more detail, ask Ralph. This was his Primal Rock Therapy!

The Wanderer

Spring Fever

Once again Mother Nature is outdoing herself. Sprinkle a little rain over the desert area, and the green, flowery results occur within just a few days. As I was driving over to Phoenix a few weeks ago, it occurred to me that Rockhounds have their own way of gauging the arrival of spring. First to arrive is the spectacle of Quartzsite, followed shortly by the grand Tucson Gem Show.



Dick discussing price (or, more likely, why rocks glow under fluorescent light) with a Quartzsite dealer

The arrival of “rockhound spring fever” causes a unique reaction. Rockhounds from all over the world have the need to gather, trade, sell, dream, and converse about all-things-rock. There is no scientific name for this phenomenon, but the epidemic breaks out every January and February just like clockwork. Once the rockhound has been somewhat satisfied, and definitely never cured (there will be a repeat of the disease next spring), the mineral collector will return home to regale his cohorts with tales

of Quartzsite. Symptoms range from describing obscure mining information gleaned from old-timers, babbling on about reports of newly discovered digs, and drooling over a vast array of samples gleaned at the magical Quartzsite experience.



A prize Wulfie from Mexico at a desert show last month

Yes, Dick and I succumbed to a slight (one day was not enough) case of Quartzsite-itis. With the help of numerous friends we had met on previous yearly excursions, the urge to buy was relatively small. But, that lingering feeling of “next month in Tucson” is still haunting us. The urge to mingle, trade, gather knowledge, and secure enough materials to last all year needs a cure.

So, as you read this, if it is early February, Dick and I will most likely be taking the Tucson “cure”. Will we see you there?

Happy Hunting,
Love, Bess

Field Trips

Our new Field Trip Chairman is a law officer, owns a BIG truck, and has access to numerous collecting sites on the Central Coast. Rob Bullock is the man for the job, and is ready to lead the next crew of collectors on a trek to either Jade Cove or Lucy Tunnell's. Rob is ready, willing, and able to guide us on...

See the *Ore-Cutts* for monthly field trip information, or call Rob directly at 928-6372.

Orcutt Mineral Society

Board Meeting
Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA
4 January 2005

Call to Order at 6:59 p.m. by President Lucky Virgin. Members present were Bob Bullock, Sharon Duncan, Debbie Hood, Bill Hood, Wes Lingerfelt, Marshall Reeves, Geary Sheffer, Bess Shields, Lucky Virgin. Guest was Dick Shields.

Treasurer's Report was read by Wes Lingerfelt, and accepted as read. The Final Audit Report for 2004 was read, and will be filed with the January minutes.

Minutes of the previous Board Meeting were approved as read. Previous General Meeting minutes were approved as published.

Committee Reports:

Adopt-a-Highway: Marshall Reeves and "the guys" will be in Quartzsite, so the Highway Cleanup has been re-scheduled for Saturday, 5 February at 8:00 a.m., followed by coffee and pastry at Federico's Country Kitchen in Santa Maria.

Annual Awards Banquet: Debbie Hood report that Abused Children's Fund donations were lower this year, and she needs ideas for additional moneymakers. Bill Hood reported that the Annual Banquet will be on December 10th, 2005, and he will contact Sweet Adenines to entertain us again.

Bulletin (Ore-Cutts): Bess Shields is seeking members to join the Ore-Cutt assembly team. There is a possibility that Dick's job may move the Shields' out of state later this year. Dick and Bess will continue to write and edit the bulletin this spring, but training replacements is necessary.

Bylaws: Wes Lingerfelt reported that the Operating Regulations are now current. Changes were voted on, and approved at the Annual Banquet. Copies of the new Op Regs will be available at the January General Meeting for members.

CFMS Director: Wes Lingerfelt read pertinent information to the Board from the January CFMS Newsletter.

Chaplain: Bess Shields is turning over chaplain duties to Mike Henson.

Field Trips/Safety: Dick Shields has set up the field trip schedule for 2005. Dick is turning over the chairmanship to Bob Bullock.

Historian: Sharon Duncan will report her progress at the General Meeting next week.

Library, Books, Videos: Bess Shields will turn over the library duties to Geary Sheffer.

Show: Bess Shields is turning over duties for Demonstrators, Exhibits, and Displays to Lucky Virgin.

Sunshine: Debbie Hood said that Kay Vollmer was in the hospital again with heart problems, but is now resting at home.

Correspondence:

- *The Agatizer* from South Bay (Torrance) Club.
- Sun Valley Indian School newsletter.
- Mineral Information Institute newsletter #23.
- Desert Gardens Gem Show announcement.
- Department of Transportation thank you for our Highway Cleanup participation.

Old/unfinished Business:

(None)

New Business:

1. Wes Lingerfelt will mail out the Gem Show contracts next week.
2. Lucky Virgin will make sure we have Pioneer Park reserved for our June 11th Barbecue.
3. Program for next week's General Meeting: Bob Bullock on "Rockhounding Safety"
Display: Beach rocks.
Refreshments: Donuts from the Board.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. by President Virgin.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Orcutt Mineral Society

General Meeting
Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA
11 January 2005

Call to Order at 7:06 p.m. by President Lucky Virgin. Invocation was given by Bess Shields on "All Our Hearts". Flag Salute was led by Bill Hood.

Treasurer's Report was read by Wes Lingerfelt, and accepted as read. Wes presented the 2004 year end Treasurer's Report.

Minutes of the previous Board Meeting were approved as read.

Elaine VonAchen reported that 27 members, and 7 guests were present. Guests were Bob Wright, Roger Lehman, Huldie Clark, Jim Palomarez, June Appersen, Jill Nelson, and Linda Nadeau.

Committee Reports:

Breakfast: Ken Kreh invited everyone to join him for breakfast at Francisco's Country Kitchen in Santa Maria on the 4th Saturday at 8:15 a.m. (January 22). This is an informal meeting where tall tales, collecting site information, and bonding with fellow rockhounds takes place.

Bulletin (Ore-Cutts): Bess Shields is seeking member articles, and is seeking additional editors-in-training. Please provide your e-mail address since this saves the club 63¢ on each issue.

Show: Lucky Virgin asked members to consider volunteering for the numerous duties that are necessary to have a successful 2005 Gem Show.

Correspondence:

(Show fliers, exchange bulletins, and notices announced under correspondence are available at the head table following the business portion of the meeting, and during refreshment time, for members to view.)

- *Rockonteur* from Santa Lucia Rockhound Club.
- *Dinny's Doins* newsletter.
- Sun Valley Indian School newsletter.
- *Lapidarian* from Santa Cruz Mineral & Gem Club.
- *Tumble Rumble* newsletter from Capistrano Valley Rock & Mineral Club.
- *The Agatizer* newsletter from South Bay (Torrance) Club.
- *Metal Stone & Glass* magazine.
- California State Mining & Mineral Museum membership invitation.
- Mineral Information bulletin #23.
- Desert Gardens (Quartzsite) announcement.
- Dept. of Transportation Highway Cleanup thank you letter.
- Billings Gem & Mineral Club bulletin.
- Snyder's PowWow invitation.
- Mariposa Mineral & Gem Club show invitation.
- Lone Pine Gem & Mineral Society show invitation.

Old / unfinished business:

1. Marshall reported that wildflower money was appropriated for the Highway Cleanup project.
2. Rob Bullock reported that the field trip was canceled due to rain.
3. Sharon Duncan will call interested members to help her work on the Historian Book.

New Business:

1. Wes Lingerfelt reminded members that their \$18.00 dues are now due. Please see Wes, and pay, so he can assemble the RedBook. Please provide Wes with any changes to your e-mail so it can be reflected in the new directory.
2. Wes Lingerfelt is passing around a box full of 2005 Gem Show flyers. Please begin passing them out to friends, family, stores, doctors, etc.
3. Wes Lingerfelt reminded members that the new Operating Regulation copies are available to take home, and are located at the hospitality table.
4. Marshall Reeves proposed that members pay \$1.00 for each ticket to win a special crystal. All of the monies raised will go into the Abused Children's Fund.

Following the break for refreshments (donuts provided by the Board), Ralph Bishop presented an entertaining talk and hands-on display of "Dry Head Agate Mining".

The raffle was held after the program. Meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m. by President Virgin.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Arthur Lester Riggle

January 4, 1917 to January 11, 2005

Arthur Lester Riggle, passed away on January 11, 2005, after suffering a stroke on September 29, 2004. Those that knew him have special memories of him and the impact he had on their lives. His memory and his legacy will live with each of us forever.

It was Art's wish to be cremated and not have a funeral service. It was difficult for him to attend funerals for his special friends and family and say "Good-bye" publicly and he didn't want anyone to have to do it for him.

Those wishing to leave something in his memory could send a donation to the American Stroke Assn., 816 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles CA 90017 or to the Visiting Nurse Association (Hospice) of the Inland Empire, 222 E. Main St., Barstow CA 92311 or charity of your choice.

Gem Show

Displays, Demonstrations, and Exhibits

If you plan to display your beauties at the Gem Show this August, please contact Lucky Virgin to request an application. Lucky will be sending out applications to returning demonstrators, exhibitors and those displaying. If you are new to the crew, or haven't participated in this activity recently, please see Lucky. The club does have some display cases available for members to use, but the committee assembling the units require reservations. Lucky can be reached at 929-4525.

Web Sites of Note:

February 2005

Mineral Information Institute:

<http://www.MII.org>

Arizona Mineral Museum:

<http://azminfun.com>

Let's Talk Gemstones - Benitoite:

http://www.attawaygems.com/NMFG/let's_talk_gemstones_benitoite.htm

Tucson Gem Show:

<http://www.tucsonshowguide.com/tsg>

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

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: "Quartzsite" and "2005 Officers and Board" by Wes Lingerfelt and Dick Shields; "Dry-head" by Wes Lingerfelt; "Wanderer" by Bess and Dick Shields.

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.

Red Book Updates

Please contact Wes Lingerfelt if you have any corrections to the Red Book. Do you have a new e-mail address? Has your phone number changed? Would you prefer to receive calls on your cell phone? Call Wes with updates at 929-3788.

February 2005 Calendar

Tuesday February 1, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Saturday February 5, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM New Date this time only!	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.
Tuesday February 8, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: "Hazardous Waste Disposal for Rockhounds" by Wes Lingerfelt • Display: Naturally Hazardous Rock • Refreshment: Cakes and cupcakes
Saturday February 13, 2005 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Jade Cove -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. Observational trip to a classic location. Bring a lunch and bottled water. Some hiking required. (Note: this trip may change to Lucy Tunnell's) Call Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday February 26, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast - "The Girls" in Arroyo Grande. Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.

March 2005 Calendar	
Tuesday March 1, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Tuesday March 8, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: "Rockhounding Safety" by Robert Bullock • Display: Favorite Jaspers • Refreshment: Pies.
Saturday March 12, 2005 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Field trip to Carrizo Plains -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. Trace the San Andreas Fault from Highway 166 north through the Carrizo Plains to Soda Lake. If we are lucky, we'll hit the highlights of wildflower bloom. Bring lunch and water. Short hikes possible. Call Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday March 19, 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 March 26, 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.

April 2005 Calendar	
Saturday April 2, 2005	Field Trip to Figueroa Mountain -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	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.
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 23, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast – "The Girl's" in Arroyo Grande. Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.

DUES are DUE

If you have not already paid your 2005 Orcutt Mineral Society dues, please mail them to Wes Lingerfelt, OMS Treasurer, PO Box 106, Santa Maria CA 93456, or give him a check in exchange for your new membership card at the February General Meeting. Dues are \$18.00 per adult member, and \$9.00 for junior members.

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