



Ore-Cutts

Volume XL, Issue I

January, 2005

Baker Egg Mine

By Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS, and Editor, *Ore-cutts*

Last year's visit with Paul Colburn, the Geode Kid, whetted our appetite, and we were eager to learn more about the whole concept of lithophysae formation. This year we visited Paul with our oldest daughter's family in tow. Michelle, Frank, and our grandboys, Brandon and Garrett, headed west from Boerne TX to join us.

We all stayed at Rockhound State Park during our Deming adventures. The campground is surrounded by thunderegg deposits, and we were here for nodules. Paul and his partner, Chris Blackburn, have a shop only two miles from the campground.



Baker Egg Mine

Paul invited us to collect at his Baker Egg Mine, and printed out a map with more explicit directions to assure that we wouldn't get lost in the desert wilderness. Although the adults were eager to absorb as much information as possible from the expert himself (without exhausting him in the process), our two grandsons soon tired of the factual overload, and escaped to Paul's yard in search of treasure and lizards.

The Baker Egg Mine is open pit mining for lithophysae, more commonly known as thundereggs (from Greek, meaning "stone bubble"). Material was pushed out of the open pit by Paul and Chris after harvesting what Paul needed for his continuing research projects. It is this mine-run material that we would sift through for our beauties.



Multi-node egg with druzy light magenta stalactites

Reaching the mine is quite an adventure. We gassed up the Sequoia in Columbus (about 30 miles south of Deming) before heading west to the mine. There are NO gas stations, snack shops, latrines, or water fountains from here on out. The mine is a stone's throw from the US/Mexico border, so INS balloons, patrol cars, and tracking devices are very apparent. We left the paved highway (two lane) to follow a BLM (one lane) dirt road for miles, being careful to follow Paul's map, watch for cattle crossings, gates, forks in the road, etc. as markers to the mine (watch your odometer carefully).

Perlite at the main collecting site is a clear indicator that this is the nodule area. It's just a matter of sifting through the mounds of debris, and setting aside the harder objects. As the "blobs" dry out, a bubbly skin is apparent (almost botryoidal in appearance).



Reverse of the same egg showing botryoidal skin

Even though our grandsons smashed some of the nodules, we encouraged them to have the professionals at Red Roof Rock Shop in Deming do the cutting on more promising nodules. After all, about one in ten of the little nodules is a beauty, and it would be a pity to smash that one special one to smithereens.

For courtesy sake, please contact Paul, owner of the mine, before collecting. Paul will provide a map of the coordinates. DO NOT enter the active mine pit under any circumstances. Paul is generous to allow collecting on the mine run material, but asks that people not enter the active mine area.

Paul continues his research in formation of lithophysae. His reference materials occupy a whole wall of his workspace, and he deftly locates references and citations with ease. "Does the material decompose to potassium feldspar?... the perlite and kaolinite connection. Ah, I have the answer right here..." Paul remarks as he reaches for a 4" thick chemical composition of minerals manual. What an amazingly organized mind!

We finished at the mine, headed back to the campground and fired up the UV lamps for a fluorescing adventure of our nodules, but that is another story. The whole family thanks Paul for generously sharing his knowledge about lithophysae, allowing us to visit his digs, and encouraging us to cut some of our own thundereggs. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to the Baker Egg Mine!

Resources:

- Basin Range Volcanics Geolapidary Museum at 6235 Stirrup Rd SE, Deming NM 88030.
- Luna Mimbres Museum in Deming is the recipient of the Geode Kid's extensive collection, a world class display. It is well worth stopping to see! 301 South Silver Avenue, Deming NM 88030 (505) 546-2382
- How to cut thundereggs instructions are on Paul's web site. And, join Paul's Geode Kid news club by writing him an e-mail expressing your interest in his fascinating research. <http://www.zianet.com/geodekid/howtocut.htm>

OMS enters 2004 CFMS Bulletin Competition

Each year the editors of *Ore-Cutts* are allowed to submit one article per author, and two complete newsletter issues for awards consideration to the CFMS Newsletter Competition. This year the following articles and bulletin issues were submitted:

January: "Woodward Ranch Adventure" by Bess Shields

February: complete February *Ore-Cutts* issue (secondary submission choice by our club)
"Collecting Eggs with the Kid" by Ralph Bishop
"Maintaining Super Abrasive (CBN or Diamond) Wheels" by Wes Lingerfelt

March: "Fluorescing the West" by Dick Shields

April: complete April *Ore-Cutts* issue (mandatory submission month for all clubs)
"Die Hard Rockhounds" by Wayne Mills

September: "Learning Rockhounding in the California Gold Country" by Mike and Margaret Henson

November: "My tour around the world in 56 days" by Sir Paul Howard
 "North to Alaska, Part II" by Sharon Duncan



Bess, Kay, Ralph, and Dick, four of the 2003 CFMS Bulletin Contest Awardees

Remember, every OMS member is invited to submit articles to the *Ore-Cutts*. The editors are ready, willing, and able to assist you in developing and fine-tuning your articles, and pictures. Awards for articles appearing in 2004 will be given at the CFMS Show on June 10, 11, and 12 in Roseville. We hope to have a big turn out, and hope to see you there.

Fluorite in the Float

By Dick Shields, Member, OMS

Ask the locals, because they will know where to find the good rocks. We joined forces with our oldest daughter's family to have a day searching for fluorescent rocks in the Deming NM area.

We started with a trip to Luna Mimbres Museum, where we viewed some of Paul Colburn's fluorescent materials, and his lifelong collection of lithophysae are on permanent exhibit. The helpful docents suggested a trip to the fluorite fields north of town, and drew us a map.

Next stop was lunch, and the "fields of fluorite" were suggested by the waiter. The folks at Red Roof Rock Shop had told us about the fluorite and psilomelane deposits north of town the previous day. So, three recommendations were

plenty to motivate us. We decided to take our own trip into the field for collecting.

North of Deming we followed Highway 180 for one mile, then turned east on Highway 26 for five miles to a BLM road to the north. That's where we found a treasure trove of material!

Creek collecting, and river bank bashing entertained Brandon and Garrett. My first discovery was a 3" crystal showing some greenish color. A quick trip to the fluorescent viewing box confirmed my suspicion – fluorite! Apparently these crystals washed down from the hills to the north where 15 separate fluorite mines were worked in the past.



All of these crystals react to long wave UV light with a bright blue color

Michelle turned babysitting duties over to me, then laid down on the warm riverbed sand for a nap. Gramma Bess hiked to the top of the foothills, and found plenty of psilomelane and druzy crystals. Her 80+ pound backpack full of rocks included plenty of fluorescent material. Frank brought in a spherule piece of cream-colored dendritic material. The grandboys found a pile of fluorite that they brought back to the car. The family successfully filled the Sequoia with psilomelane, fluorite, calcite, jasp-agate, and numerous pebbles-of-unknown-parentage.

That night, a wave of the Way Too Cool UV lamp revealed plenty of fluorescent materials from our trip that day. We also showed the grandkids the Baker Egg Mine nodules which react with green light under short wave.

We 4 guys decided to go out for a second day to collect more fluorescents. By the end of the day, Gramma and Michelle had the in-town

duties and laundry accomplished. It began to snow (Garrett's first white Christmas)! We arrived back cold, hungry, tired, wet with melting snow, wired, and eager to check out the collecting day's bootie.



Fluorite Ridges north of Deming

The Deming washes contain an amazing number of fluorescent materials in the float; just wait for the rains to turn up new material!

The Wanderer

Have Rockhounds, Will Travel

No matter where we travel, I make sure we stick in a few pieces of trade material. The specimens don't take much space, and you'd be amazed at the array of materials you can obtain in the trade. I once traded a piece of serpentine for a fistful of garnets at the annual Gem Show in Fredericksburg TX. Both of us were happy with the traded minerals, and came away with new collecting locale information.

One constant in the rockhounding world is the generosity of fellow collectors. Some of our locally common minerals are rarities in other parts of the country. I enjoy the barter game, and the best part of the trade is coming away with something new and exciting for our collection. Self-collected materials only cost the price of gas to reach the roadhead, and the time spent walking to the collecting site. We can afford to be generous with trades since the cost of the minerals was nearly free. We provide specimen collection data to accompany the traded pieces.

At a recent inter-club field trip to Kramer Junction, we took a sphereable chunk of brecciated jasper from Figueroa Mountain. After the tailgate swap, we came away with a 10 pound hunk of honey onyx. The fellow who wanted

our jasper valued it in a way that we didn't (since the jasper is SO abundant here on the central coast). The onyx piece he traded was commonplace in his home turf, and he said that he was embarrassed to even think anyone might want it. Both of us came away feeling like winners, and found a new appreciation for our homeland minerals and their value.



Slab of honey onyx with bands of color

The next time you take a trip, go visit the relatives, or spend a weekend at a spa, be sure you stick a few local rocks in the trunk. After all, you never know where you'll run across a fellow rockhound who wants to trade.

Happy Hunting,
Love, Bess

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

Orcutt Mineral Society

Board Meeting

Sierra Vista Community Center, Santa Maria CA

7 December 2004

Call to order at 7:10 p.m. by President Debbie Hood. Members present were Sharon Duncan, Bill and Debbie Hood, Wes Lingerfelt, Wayne Mills, Bess Shields, and Lucky Virgin. Guest was Dick Shields. **Treasurer's report** was read by Wes Lingerfelt and accepted as read. Wes asked Board members for

assistance in fine-tuning the 2005 Proposed Budget since it will be presented at the Annual Banquet on Saturday for approval by the general membership. Wayne Mills moved that annual dues be raised to \$18.00 per year for adult members, and \$9.00 per year for junior members. The motion was seconded by Sharon Duncan, and the motion passed. It will be presented for approval by the general membership at the Annual Banquet on Saturday.

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

Committee Reports:

Annual Awards Banquet: Debbie Hood asked Wes Lingerfelt to print agendas, and proposed budgets for the Annual Banquet. Debbie asked Bess Shields to buy poinsettia table decorations/door prizes.

Budget and Audit: Wes Lingerfelt will remind Don Nasholm to audit the 2004 books in January.

Bulletin: Bess Shields reported that the CFMS competition articles have been submitted, and the awards will be made at the Roseville Show next summer. Bess submitted ten articles and bulletins for consideration.

CFMS: Wes Lingerfelt announced that he plans to put show flyer information on our OMS web site. Due to modifications of the Public Lands Advisory Committee, our operating regulations will need to be changed. Wes will propose the needed amendment at the Annual Banquet for a vote by the general membership. Wes announced that exhibitor and pre-registration forms for the Roseville Show are available on the CFMS web site.

Education: Debbie Hood received a call from Virginia Sousa about starting a junior rockhounding program. At the Annual Banquet, Debbie will ask for a volunteer to head this project, and to work with Virginia.

Sunshine: Debbie Hood reported that Helen Smith is doing much better. Bess Shields reported that Al Wilcox had his back operation, and will return home in a few days to recover.

Correspondence:

- *Rockonteur* from Santa Lucia Rockhound Club.
- *Dinny's Doins* newsletter.
- Sun Valley Indian School newsletter.
- *Lapidarian* from Santa Cruz Mineral & Gem Club.
- *Yellowstone Deposit* newsletter from Billings, Montana.

Old/unfinished business:

Debbie Hood received the contract for our Mussell Center room use.

New business:

1. Josh Simonson was presented for membership consideration. Josh was accepted as our newest OMS member.
2. Dick Shields has prepared the 2005 calendar, and is working with Sharon Duncan to flesh out the field trips, speakers at General Meetings, displays at meetings, etc. The calendar will be put on the OMS web site once it has been finalized.
3. Wes Lingerfelt needs current member e-mail addresses for inclusion in the 2005 Red Book.
4. Ken Kreh submitted a Political Action Plan that Debbie Hood read to the Board.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. by President Hood.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Orcutt Mineral Society

Annual Meeting

Maria del Sol, Santa Maria CA

11 December 2004

The Annual Business Meeting of the Orcutt Mineral Society was held at Maria del Sol, 1405 Main Street, Santa Maria CA on 11 December 2004. The meeting was presided over by President Debbie Hood who opened the meeting at 12:35 p.m. The invocation, "Growth and Service", was given by Bess Shields. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Wayne Mills. There was a quorum present for voting purposes.

Prior to the business and entertainment portions, a buffet of baked ham, roast turkey, accompanying dishes, and desserts was prepared by the chefs of Maria del Sol.

Debbie introduced our guests, then presented the Sweet Adelines, who entertained us with numerous holiday tunes.

The President's Annual Report was given by outgoing President Debbie Hood. Debbie cited membership growth, a strong financial balance, successful Gem Show, and stimulating monthly meetings as strengths this year.

Wes Lingerfelt presented the yearly budget for 2005. Wayne Mills moved that the proposed budget be

adopted, and was seconded by Bob Bullock. Motion passed.

Due to modifications of the Public Lands Access Committee (PLAC), our operating regulations need to be modified. Bob Bullock moved that the modifications be made, and that copies of the new "op regs" be available at the January General Meeting. Motion was seconded by Lucky Virgin. Motion passed.

A motion to increase dues to \$18.00 per member per year was made by Elaine Von Achen, and seconded by Truman Burgess. Motion passed.

Debbie Hood presented officer bars and pins to the outgoing Board members.

Bess Shields presented the CFMS newsletter awards to contributing authors for their 2003 submissions. Lucky Virgin presented the Golden Bear award to Debbie and Bill Hood.



Lucky Virgin presenting the Golden Bear Award to Bill and Debbie Hood

Debbie Hood installed the 2005 Board members.



The 2005 OMS Officers and Board Members

Lucky Virgin said a few words about his upcoming calendar, and invited members to contribute their time and talents to the numerous OMS projects. Lucky drew tickets for the door prizes, 10 large poinsettia plants that adorned the dinner tables, and adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

USED COW FOR SALE

We heard that a local car dealer, who was known to have taken advantage of some people in the community, wanted to purchase a cow from a farmer. So the farmer priced the cow in a way the car dealer could understand:

- Basic cow: \$499.95
- Shipping & handling: \$35.00
- Extra stomach: \$79.25
- Two tone exterior: \$142.50
- Deluxe dual horns: \$59.25
- Automatic fly swatter: \$74.55
- Four spigot/high-output drain system \$210.55
- Automatic fertilizer attachment \$278.80
- Farmer's suggested price: \$1,379.85
- Additional dealer adjustments: \$300.00

TOTAL LIST PRICE (including options): \$1,679.85

Web Sites of Note:

January 2005

Prehistoric quarry sites in Tahoe CA area:

http://www.obsidianlab.com/basalt/bas_taho.html

Geothermal and Hydrothermal glossary:

http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/Glossary/ThermalActivity/description_thermal_activity.html

Map to the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine:

<http://www.lost-dutchman.com/dutchman/maps.html>

Potentially active volcanoes of western US:

http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/LivingWith/VolcanicPast/Places/volcanic_past_new_mexico.html

The National Wilderness Preservation System:

<http://www.wilderness.net>

Atlas maps:

<http://nationalatlas.gov>

New Mexico Rocks & Geological Sites:

<http://www.nmsu.edu/~redtt/Resources/html/ROCKS.html> California Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

Official Stuff

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.



Orcutt Mineral Society, Inc.
SANTA MARIA, CA

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 Elected 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: "Ore-cutts Competition" and "2005 Officers and Board" by Bill Hood; all other photos by 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.

January 2005 Calendar

Tuesday January 4, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Saturday January 8, 2005 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Field Trip to Jalama Beach -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. We will depart at 0900. Entrance fee for each vehicle at Jalama. Walk over beach sand and rock to a travertine outcropping. There is oil on the beach so bring old shoes for the walk. Bring a lunch or eat in the Jalama Café on the beach. Call Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Tuesday January 11, 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: Beach Rocks • Refreshment: Donuts from the Board.
Saturday January 15, 2005 8:00 - 10:00 AM Postponed to February 5th	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 January 22, 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.

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.

	ble. 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.

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 January General Meeting. Dues are \$18.00 per adult member, and \$9.00 for junior members.

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.

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 • 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 possi-

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED