



The Pres Box—March 2020

Bill Brown, OMS President

Welcome to March. It is looking to be a beautiful month!!

We didn't manage to stump Wes or Wayne with mystery rocks last meeting, but we had a good time and hopefully we all learned something. :>)

We will have a presentation on Electroforming this month. Dara Rosenwasser will be making a presentation on electroforming at our March 10 General meeting. Should be interesting.

The board meeting will on Tue, Mar 3 from 7 to 9 p.m. If you have a chance, drop by. We usually have a good time and non-board members are welcome. Hopefully I'll be able to get the door open without setting off the alarm.

Our regular meeting will be on Tue, Mar 10. The theme will be favorite rocks or anything. Show off your favorite rocks! The program will be Electroforming presented by Dara Rosenwasser. We plan to have the business meeting last as our speaker needs to get home.

Refreshments will be cake, brought to you by Alexis VanNatta, Sylvia Nasholm, and Margaret Henson..

We will have highway cleanup this month on Saturday, March 14. We will meet at the SE corner of the US 101 – Hwy 166 East intersection at 8:00 am. Hope you can come. We will have a 'door prize' donated by Wes and will

share treats afterwards at the Country Kitchen. Our Monthly Breakfast will be on the 28th (4th Saturday) at the Hometown Buffet in Santa Maria. Breakfasts will follow the order that is shown in the 2019 Red Book (page 11). Please try to join us! "The more the merrier" as the saying goes.

We are firming up our presentations for the rest of the year. We would still like to hear any ideas from our members.

Be safe out there!

Bill

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Greetings go out to those folks who are having Birthdays and Anniversaries in **March**

BIRTHDAYS

Jeannie Lingerfelt	3/7	✕
Krystel Rose	3/8	✕
Bill Hood	3/18	✕

ANNIVERSARIES

None?

Con-

*gratulations! If you don't see your name here when you should, then the information is not in **The Red Book**. Please write your important dates down and give them to **Wayne** so they will be included in the next edition (April 2020)*

MINERAL OF THE MONTH—

Azurite and Malachite

Text by Wayne Mills

Azurite (Blue) and Malachite (Green) are copper carbonate hydroxides with a slight difference in their atomic structure. Although Azurite is rarer, the two sometimes occur in the same rock—Azurmalachite or Eliat Stone as it is known in Israel. In fact, Eliat Stone is the National Mineral of Israel.



Azurmalachite cabochons from the Morenci Mine in Morenci, Arizona
<https://geology.com/gemstones/azurmalachite/>

LOCAL ROCKS--"BUBBLE" JADE

Text by Wayne Mills, Ore-Cutts Editor,

Since March holds St. Patrick's Day, we gotta' go with a green rock, and there are many of those on our Central Coast. The Franciscan Formation represents Greenschist Facies (low temperature, low pressure) metamorphic rocks, and it is notable part of the Big Sur Coastal geology, so that is where one can



Botryoidal jade—Ralph Bishop Collection

find a lot of green rock—Serpentine, Actinolite, Soapstone, Chert and Jade.

At Cape San Martin, just south of Limekiln Beach,

In times past, folks have found this sensuous, soft (to the touch) and curvy form of Jade.

BIRTHSTONE(S) FOR MARCH

FROM: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beryl#Aquamarine_and_maxixe

The traditional Birthstone for March is **Aquamarine** (meaning "sea water"), a pale blue form of the mineral Beryl. Emerald is a green form of the same mineral. These are beryllium aluminum silicates. The blue color comes from the presence of Fe (Iron) 2+ and Fe 3+ ions. The largest gem quality Aquamarine ever found was from the Marambia Valley in Minas Gerais Brazil. It weighed over 243 pounds. Some members of OMS have been to the Blue Lady Mine near Warner Springs in San Diego County, where we found smaller and not quite gem-quality aquas along with quartz crystals.



Aquamarine crystals from Erongo Mts., Namibia. Photo from <https://news.minerals.net/post/shades-of-blue>

BITS AND BYTES

Nice video (21 minutes) on polishing an Australian Opal from start to finish

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43-Ju5vJxjA&feature=emb_rel_pause

Emerald Hollow Mine in North Carolina is the only place in the U.S. where the public can dig for **emeralds**.

<https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/north-carolina/emerald-hollow-rock-ranch->

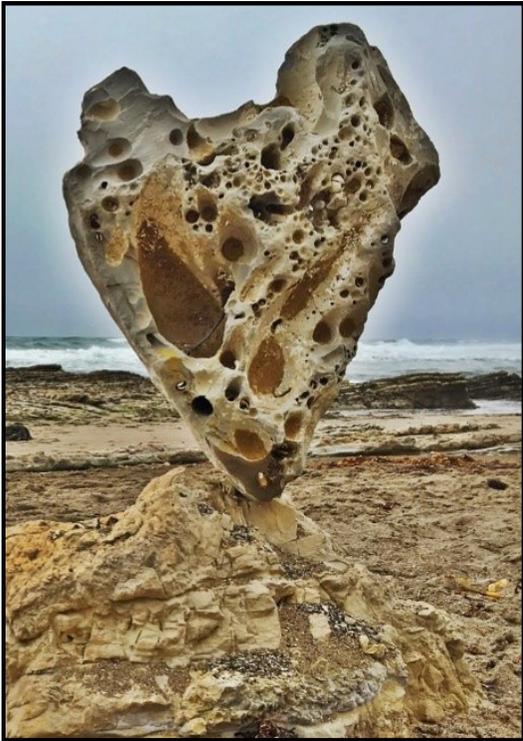
Pictures of Cady Mountain Agates

<https://www.rockhoundingusa.com/gallery/cady/index.html>

HEART(s) of STONE!

Wayne Mills, OMS

I did not get all my hearts into the article in the February bulletin, so here are some more. When the SLR Posse was down on Hazard's Beach in Montano Del Oro, they found this big guy (about 18 inches from tip to lips), and Lori fell in love with it and carried it in her backpack back to the car (quite a hike).



Here are some hearts that adorn the hearth of Kathy, the rock stacking lady from Atascadero



And here are a few of mine including a whale-bone heart, (perhaps) from Jalama Beach.

and hearts beneath the feet of El Tigrito, a cat from Oxajaca, Mexico Below are a few of the man-made hearts I have found whole metal detecting.



"THOSE WERE THE DAYS - THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES"

by Ralph Bishop, Honorary Member, OMS

I woke up one morning with a stretch and a yawn to the golden blush of a sunrise. I had left an oldies radio station on the night before and the first tune of the morning was the jaunty bittersweet lament "Those were the days my friend, we thought they would never end". Little did I know that tune would set the tone for the rest of the day. I got up and made my way to my morning constitutional. On my way past the bookshelf a beam of sunlight snuck past the curtain and illuminated my high school picture. I sang along "Those were the days" - the 60's: Hot cars, like the Beach Boys "I got around", the summer of love, and in my case rocks - I rocked out with wild abandon. As I walked into the bathroom I switched on the light and there was my image in the mirror. Gawd! A white haired bewiskered old scutter who looked like Gabby Hayes from an old John Wayne movie.

As I sat down in the thinker's position my mind wandered. In those days rock hunting was considered a very wholesome family oriented hobby. There was a rock hound on every block and a rock shop in every town. Yes, those were the days. The Forest Service and BLM would grade access roads every year for our convenience. The Fed's were friendly members of the greatest generation and understood the land under their control was by and for the people; after all they had fought for that right. Agate, Jasper, Jade, Rhodonite, Bone, Wood and fossils were all easily accessible in an easy days drive. Santa Maria, CA, a town of about 50 thousand had 2 rock clubs and two gem shows annually. The year my mother was show chairman we filled the Convention Center with 150 display cases from far and wide and many dealers. Yes, those were the days I thought. The American dream: And I was one of those who lived during the best of times.

My contemplation finished I made my way along the coon-trail between my hoard of rocks on the way back to the couch. Another song came on: Bob Hope, another bittersweet lament "Thanks for the Memories". I almost stubbed my toe on a rock so I picked up a memory. Although my memory has become somewhat foggy I remember every rock and the day I found it. I suppose you could say love is forever at least in my case.

I sat down on the couch cradling a memory: an uncut specimen of an agatized articulated set of 5 whale vertebrae. I chuckled. The pet rock is quite the memory, clear as a bell the bitter with the sweet. It was the first time my mother let me camp alone overnight. I was probably 12 years old. Mon-

tana Del Oro was a beautiful beach where especially good Whale bone that eroded from the sea cliffs of the Monterey Formation. It was a crisp day but tides were good. They ranged from 6 feet to minus 1.6 feet. The Pacific tides can be a rock hounds best friend or worst enemy so you'd better know them like the back of your hand.

Mom dropped me off and I set up camp in the high beach willows and collected dry drift wood for a fire. For most of the day the high tide washed the high gravel bars. It was a nice day but a ho-hum day of collecting. But by the sound of the gravel being sucked out by the rip tide the low bars should be good for collecting. Well, they weren't so I moved to the south end of the cove. Here the once horizontal layers of Monterey Shale are tipped up to an almost vertical position due to the fault activity (the surfers call them "razor blades") and creates long alley like slot coves between them. The gravel in this zone is all flat due to the juxtaposition of the shale formation to the wave action. At the head of the slot a gully that runs through an old Chumash Indian village and dumps onto the beach. On occasion flat chert percussion flakes and arrowheads are found in the slot. The wave driven turnover in these slots is remarkably intense and the gravel scoots instead of rolling. The sun was dipping when I saw a glint of yellow scooting seaward in the backwash of brown gravel. I had to chase and dove to get it but I was after all young and stringy. In my hand was a beautiful Willow Leaf point, only slightly water worn.

By now I was wet and the sun was dipping so I went back to camp and changed pants. I decided to watch the sunset from the playa bench above the cove. The trail from the cove to the bench seemed timeless. How many Chumash for how many thousands of years walked the same path to their village overlooking the eternal "mother of all waters" as the Chumash called the sea? I sat down next to a badger mound. The soil was dark, a sure sign of a village that depended on a marine diet. As I brushed the dirt 3 chert percussion flakes appeared: two were the normal black but one was yellow. I rolled the flakes and the point in my hand. It was the same chert that is found in Monterey Formation 1/2 mile from the cove. As the waves crashed 50 feet below and the sun dipped toward the sea I wondered who was the rockhound who collected this special chert how many thousands of years ago and possibly sat where I sat flaking the Willow Leaf, listening to the same waves, watching the same sunset. The sun grew red and sank lower toward a low fog bank; It will be cold tonight I thought.

As often happens the sun flattened when it hit the fog bank then took a mushroom shape and was gone in about ten minutes. I made it back to camp and fired up the drift wood which, because of the salt, burned green, blue and yellow. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 10**



Remains of lovely geode cake donated to Wes Lingerfelt by a member of the San Joaquin Valley Gem & Mineral Society in thanks for his judging at their show.

ORCUTT MINERAL SOCIETY
Board Meeting
Nipomo Chamber of Commerce
February 4, 2020

The February Ore-Cutts incorrectly reported that CFMS approves Bylaws changes. The Secretary of State does (that is why Bylaws changes take so long!) The January and February bulletins also had the wrong dates (2019, instead of 2020) for the minutes.

Meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by President Bill Brown.

Members Present were Bill Brown, Jeanne Watkins Brown, Betty Campbell, Jan Ferguson, Sally Griffith and Renae Sutcliffe. Absent were Wayne Mills (on club business), and Dick Bazzell. Fred Cambell, Betty's husband was a guest. Jeanne Brown kindly took the minutes of the Board Meeting in Wayne's absence.

Minutes of the January general meeting were accepted as printed in the Ore-Cutts.

Treasurer's Report will be presented at the General Meeting. Betty is working through learning Quick Books. 11 members have paid their 2020 Dues.

Correspondence—we received a check for \$10 from Pat Nuernberg to cover postage on her bulletins. We also received some club bulletins as part of our bulletin exchange program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Bulletin (Wayne) is out, and looks good. Contact Wayne Mills with any questions or delivery problems.

CFMS—(Renae) next Board of Directors meeting is June ---- at the CFMS Show in Lodi.

Membership—(Wayne) 11 members have paid their 2020 dues.

Field Trip—(Sally) Next Field Trip is march 21 to Ralph Bishop's Museum. Meet at his house at 10:00 am. On May 16, we will go to Ozena for pink and black meta-granite. Meet at 101/166 East at 8:30 am.

Adopt a Highway (Wayne) Next Clean-up is March 14. Meet at SE corner of Highway's 101/166 East at 8:00 am.

Annual Awards Banquet (Dyanna) Scheduled for Saturday, December 12, 2020 at Madonna Inn.

Breakfast—(Bill Hood) Saturday February 22 at Country Kitchen in Arroyo Grande at 8:30 am. March Breakfast is Hometown Buffet in Santa Maria at 8:30.

Education—(Wayne) No report.

Library—(Alexis) No Report

Sunshine—(Margaret Henson and Dyanna Cridelich) No report.

Scholarship—(Jeanne Watkins Brown) Jeanne is gathering information and contacting local educational facilities. Best response so far is from Arroyo Grande High School.

Show—(Bill Brown) Show dates are August 7-9, 2020. Additional insured for Lucia Mar School Dis-

trict has been sent to McDaniels Ins. Co.

Old Business—Jeanne Watkins Brown reviewed the programs she has proposed for our General meetings this year.

No New Business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Jeanne-Watkins Brown, for Wayne Mills, Secretary,
OMS

ORCUTT MINERAL SOCIETY
General Meeting
Oasis Sr. Center, Orcutt, CA
February 11, 2020

Meeting was called to order about 7:05 pm by President Bill Brown

Mike Henson led the invocation, Bill Brown led the Flag Salute

We had about **24 members and three guests**: Fred Campbell (former member who renewed his membership at the February meeting), Robyn Burgess (Truman's daughter, and one of our dealers), and Barbara Bella.

Wayne Mills read the minutes of the **February Board meeting** that were graciously taken by Jeanne Brown upon Wayne's absence (on club business) from the Board meeting.

Correspondence: We had several exchange bulletins (Wayne requested these), requests for donations from the Salvation Army, and a note from Pat Nuernberg enclosing \$10 for postage for her bulletins.

Betty Campbell presented the **Treasurer's report**, and mentioned that she is still learning Quick Books. Betty's report was accepted as presented.

The **Annual meeting** is set for December 12 at the Madonna Inn. It need not be mentioned again until about September.

The Ore-Cutts is out by mail and e-mail. Folks with questions or comments are invited to contact Wayne Mills. Our article deadline is the 20th of the month prior to our next meeting.

CFMS—Renea had no report. Wayne mentioned

that Camp Zyzzx is full, but Camp Paradise (Earth Science Summer Camp) is still ahead (Late August, Early September). Wayne advised watching the CFMS Website (cfmsinc.org) for applications for this event

Membership—Betty Campbell said that we now have 20 paid memberships for 2020. This total includes Kim Noyes and Fred Campbell who rejoined us at the February meeting.

Sunshine—No report except that Wayne checked on Dick Bazzell (whom we have not seen for a while), and he is doing OK.

Field Trip(s)—Sally Gee reported that we have a field trip on **March 21** at 10-12 at the Ralph Bishop Museum, and a Field trip to Ozena for pink and black meta-granite (and great hamburgers at Ozena Bar & Grill) on **May 16**.

Refreshments for March are cakes provided by: Alexis VanNatta, Sylvia Nasholm, and Margaret Henson.

Adopt-A-Highway— Meet at the SE corner of 101/166 East at 8:00 am on Saturday, March 14.

Education- Wayne Mills reported that he gave a presentation to the San Luis Gem Club on his 2009 trip to Brazil. It seemed to be appreciated by the members present.

Scholarships—Jeanne Watkins-Brown is still determining the best institution for our Earth Science Scholarship Funds.

Property-- (Geary Sheffer) No report

Library—(Alexis VanNatta) No report

Door Prize--(Renea) As usual, she had several nice prizes to hand out.

Breakfast-- February 22 at Country Kitchen in Arroyo Grande at 8:30 am.

Show--Our treasurer has the quote for additional insured (\$491) for our show, and has remitted that amount to McDaniels Insurance. Wayne is helping Bill send out the Show Contracts.

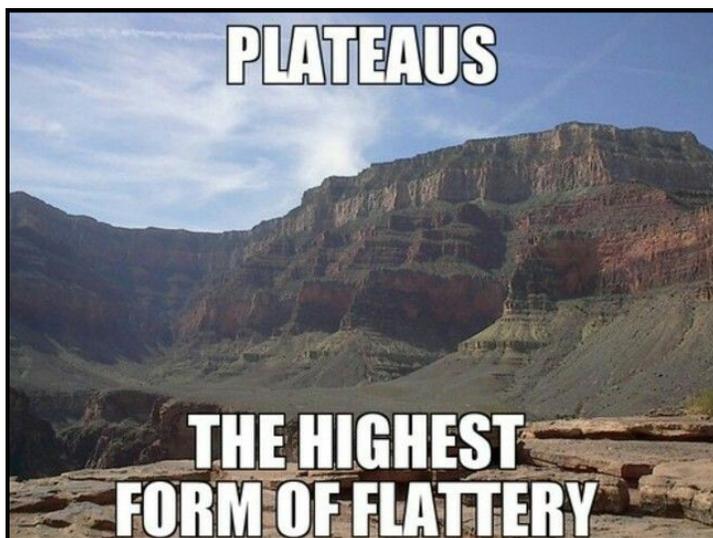
Old Business—Wayne Mills asked Bill Brown for a list of committee chairs for our show and general meetings. Bill said he would start making calls. This information is required for the Red Book that is due out in April.

New Business—Our program for March is Electroforming metals by Dara Rosenwasser, a well-known local metal artist from Cal Poly University. In April, Jim Mills will talk to us about the death of the dinosaurs.

Meeting adjourned about 8:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Wayne Mills, OMS Secretary



<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/e8/a6/da/e8a6dad7ee4f2604e20527c6eed299f5.jpg>

SAVE THE DATE

March 21— OMS Field Trip to Ralph Bishop Museum, Santa Maria 10 am to 12 noon

April 18-19—Paso Robles Fairgrounds. Santa Lucia Gem Show 10-5 both days.

May 16-- OMS Field Trip to Ozena Meet at 101/166 East at 8:30 a.m.. Details to follow.

August 7-9— OMS 53rd Annual Gem Show plan to help set-up August 5-6 and clean-up August 9-10.

OMS CALENDAR

MARCH 2020

Tuesday, March 3 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.	OMS Board Meeting, Nipomo Chamber of Commerce meeting room. All members are welcome at this meeting.
Tuesday, March 10 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm	General Meeting —Luis Oasis Senior Center. Program —Dara Rosenwasser of D.Lea Design Studio on Electroforming (adding copper) to jewelry Display —Homemade jewelry or Anything Refreshments-CAKE (M. Henson, S. Nasholm, A. VanNatta)—
Saturday, March 14 8:00 am	Highway Clean-up at southeast corner 101/166 East
Saturday, March 21 10 am to 12 noon	Field Trip to Ralph Bishop Museum (see Red Book for address, or e-mail Editor.)
Saturday, March 28 8:30 a.m.	OMS Monthly Breakfast— Hometown Buffet, Santa Maria

APRIL 2020

Tuesday, April 7 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.	OMS Board Meeting, Nipomo Chamber of Commerce meeting room. All members are welcome at this meeting.
Tuesday, April 14 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm	General Meeting —Luis Oasis Senior Center. Program —Jim Mills on Dinosaurs Display —Fossils or Anything Refreshments—COOKIES (Azevedos, J. Brown, D. Nasholm) —
Saturday, April 18-19 10-5	Santa Lucia Club Show, Paso Robles Fairgrounds
Saturday, April 25 8:30 a.m.	OMS Monthly Breakfast— Dennys, Santa Maria

KID'S COLUMN

Ideas for making a rock collection.

You can collect a variety of rock types of the **same color** (green, red, purple...)

You can collect rocks of the **same shape** (hearts, circles, diamonds...)

You can collect a **variety of crystals**— there are over 3000 known minerals, many of which occur in crystal form.

You can see **how many different kinds** of rocks or minerals you can find **at one location**. (Like jasper, chert, serpentine, chalcedony and mushroom rhyolite at San Simeon State Beach)

You can collect **rocks of the same origin** (Igneous, Metamorphic or Sedimentary, or agate, jasper, petrified wood, etc.).

One of my favorite displays is **rough and finished** rocks, one polished and one unpolished of each type of rock.

One neat way to **store your collections** is in egg cartons, (assuming your specimens are all about the size of an egg). You can put labels on the inside cover and store a lot of rocks in a small space this way. Once, a few years ago, I was inspired to make a **“crocodile rock” collection** from an egg carton. I put a head and tail out on it and rapped it with bubble wrap (back and tail) and painted it after this. I thought it came out kind of neat!

2020-OMS OFFICERS		
President	Bill Brown	(805) 481-1811
President-Elect	Jeanne Brown	(805) 481-1811
Secretary	Wayne Mills	(805) 481-3495
Treasurer	Betty Campbell	(805) 929-5344
Imm. Past Pres.	Wayne Mills	(805) 481-3495
2020-OMS BOARD MEMBERS		
	Dick Bazzell	(805-757-9123
	Jan Ferguson	(805) 474-9977
	Sally Griffith	(805) 928-6848
	Debbie Hood	(805) 481-6860
	Renea Suttcliffe	805) 929-2783
CFMS FEDERATION DIRECTOR		
	Renea Suttcliffe	805) 929-2783
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OMS Membership \$24.00 for Individual, \$34.00 per couple, \$5.00 Each Additional Family Member, \$5 for Juniors under age of 18. One time initiation fee for new members is \$10.00. OMS Membership Chairperson is: ?		
OMS Webmaster –Bill Brown– (805) 481-1811 Check out our OMS web site at: http://www.omsinc.org or send e-mail to: info@omsinc.org .		
Ore-Cutts Editor/Publisher		
Wayne Mills	(805) 481-3495	wwmills50@hotmail.com



Get your folks to play “Crocodile Rock” for you on You-Tube!

CFMS SHOWS

MARCH (2020)

March 6, 7 & 8: NEWARK, CA

Mineral & Gem Society of Castro Valley
Newark Pavilion
6430 Thornton Avenue
Hours: Fri 10 – 4, Sat 10 – 6; Sun 10 – 5
Contact: Cathy, (510) 305-4196
Email: cdmiller59@gmail.com
Website: www.mqscv.org [Show Page](#)

March 7 – 8: VENTURA, CA

Ventura Gem & Mineral Society
Ventura County Fairgrounds
10 West Harbor Blvd.
Hours: Sat 10 – 5; Sun 10 – 4
Contact: Richard Slyker, (805) 312-8467
Email: info@vgms.org
Website: vgms.org

March 13, 14 & 15: VICTORVILLE, CA

Victorville Valley Gem & Mineral Club
44th Annual Rockhound Tailgate
Stoddard Wells Road/Dale Evans Pkwy
Hours: 9 – 5 daily
Contact: Ruben Martinez, (760) 429-8263
Email: rmstonewalk54@gmail.com
Website: vvgmc.org [Show Page](#)

March 14 – 15: TURLOCK, CA

Mother Lode Mineral Society, Modesto
Stanislaus County Fairgrounds
900 North Broadway
Hours: 10 – 5 daily
Contacts: Bud & Terry McMillin, (209) 524-3494
Email: bud.mcmillin.B7YJ@statefarm.com
Website: motherlodemineralsociety.com

March 21 – 22: SAN JOSE, CA

Santa Clara Valley Gem & Mineral Society
Santa Clara County Fairgrounds
344 Tully Road
Hours: 10 – 5 daily
Contact: (408) 265-1422
Email: info@scvgms.org
Website: www.scvgms.org

March 29 – 29: ANGELS CAMP, CA

Calaveras Gem & Mineral Society
Calaveras County Fairgrounds
101 Frogtown Road
Hours: Sat 10 – 5; Sun 10 – 4

Contact: Robin Williams, (209)-728-8277
Email: robinski@yahoo.com
Website: www.calaverasgemandmineral.org

March 28- 29: ROSEVILLE, CA

Roseville Rock Rollers Gem & Mineral Society
@the Grounds
800 All American City Blvd
Hours: Sat 10 – 5; Sun 10 – 4
Contact: James Hutchings, (916) 995-7380
Email: jhutchings22@hotmail.com
Website: www.rockrollers.com

APRIL (2020)

April 3 – 5; VISTA, CA

Vista Gem & Mineral Society
2040 N. Santa Fe Ave., Vista, CA 92083
Hours: 9 am-5 pm each day
Contact: (760) 659-6545,
vistarocksgms@gmail.com
Website: www.vistarocks.org
Great show with about 75 vendors.

April 4 – 5: CHICO, CA

Paradise Gem & Mineral Society
Silver Dollar Fairgrounds
2357 Fair Street
Hours: Sat 9 – 5; Sun 9 – 4
Contact: Trish Haggerty, (530) 966-5112
Email: hagboyz5@gmail.com
www.paradisegem.org

April 4 – 5: RENO, NV

Reno Gem & Mineral Society
Reno Convention Center
4390 S. Virginia Street
Hours: Sat 10 – 5; Sun 10 – 4
Contact: Daniel Ellis, (775) 229-2442
Email: greybeard65@hotmail.com
Website: www.renorockhounds.com

April 11 – 12: MARIPOSA, CA

Mariposa Gem & Mineral Club
Mariposa County Fairgrounds
5007 Fairgrounds Road
Hours: Sat 10 – 5; Sun 10 – 4
Contact: Meredith Meehan, (559) 868-3535
Email: mgmcc@sti.net
Web Site: <http://mariposagemclub.org> [Show Page](#)

April 18 19; PASO ROBLES, CA

Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Paso Robles Event Center
2198 Riverside Ave., Paso Robles CA
Hours: 10 am – 5 pm
Amazing Agates!
Contact: (805) 610-0603, srockhounds@gmail.com

Web site: <http://www.slrockhounds.org/show.html>

April 25-26; ARCADIA, CA

Pasadena Lapidary Society
Arcadia Masonic Center
50 W. Duarte Rd., Arcadia CA 91007
Hours: Sat 10 am – 6 pm, Sun 10 am – 5 pm
Contact: (727) 512-0381, info@pasadenalapidary.org
Web site: <http://pasadenalapidary.org>

April 25 – 26: LANCASTER, CA

Antelope Valley Gem & Mineral Club
Antelope Valley Fairgrounds
2551 West Avenue H
Hours: Sat 9 – 5; Sun 9 – 4
Contact: Susan Chaisson-Walblom, (661) 406-0143
Email: slchaisson@yahoo.com
Website: www.avgem.weebly.com

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The day was sweet, the fire beautiful but the fog and its bitter cold moved in. The night was nearly sleepless, wet and the fire only smoked the next morning. I stayed in the sleeping bag until the fog burned off at noon. The romance of camping had been dampened. I could hear the gravel as the tide waned. I was still damp and uncomfortable but I got up on the Playa and walked south from the main cove. Here I climbed over one razor blade after another, one slot to the next. There was a lot of abalone shell but no bone. I was a sopping mess covered with slime of kelp and sea lettuce when I came to a wide slot that I'd never gotten into before. This day the waves were mild and I could drop onto the gravel beach but I knew I didn't have much time. At the head of the slot was an opening to a sea cave so I ducked into what was much larger than I thought it would be. It was about 30 feet in diameter with a vault ceiling at about 10 feet. Plant roots hung down dripping water and Wow, there were large abalone on the walls. Then looking up I saw a series of fossil whale vertebrae with one side of ribs running across the shale wall. It was like nothing I'd ever seen before but too high to access. The tide was starting to move so I thought it was time to leave. But I decided to look at the gravel one more time. There below the whale wall was a set of 5 articulated vertebrae that must have eroded out of the wall. A wave came into the opening so I grabbed up the bone that now sits on my living room floor – as I found it. The waves came up to my knees and I climbed up the seaweed covered razor blade. I was a wreck by the time Mom showed up at the main cove. I must have smelled really bad and I had to get a blanket out of the trunk to cover the seat. I showed Mom what I'd found but I could tell she wasn't pleased with my first camp out. She made mention of my causing her to sprout white hair.

When I got home I showed it to one of the club's senior rockhounds and asked how I should cut it. He said, "that is one humdinger of a bone; the vertebrae all in a row. I would think twice before cutting it. You know it's beautiful the way it is but if you cut it you can't put it back". Well, I took the wisdom and remembered it decade after decade. Yes, "Those were the days my friend we thought they'd never end" and sitting there stroking my pet whale – "Thanks for the memories".

And what of Montana Del Oro today? Well, no more rock hunting according to the young Rangers. You are only allowed on two coves and there are signs telling what you can't do. You must stay on designated trails. The sea cave is collapsed. I was so fortunate to live during the golden age of rock hunting. **Those** were the days.

VENTURA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

58th annual
**Gem, Mineral,
Fossil & Jewelry
Show**

MARCH 7 & 8, 2020
Sat. 10 am - 5 pm • Sun. 10 am - 4 pm

Gems & Minerals • Fossils • Jewelry • Healing Stones
Exhibits • Dealers • Kids' Activities • Demonstrations
Silent Auctions • Raffle • Country Store • Plants

FREE
Admission

Ventura County Fairgrounds
10 W. Harbor Blvd.
Ventura CA 93001
Visit us at vgms.org

**VENTURA
GEM & MINERAL
SOCIETY**

**Orcutt Mineral Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 106
Santa Maria, CA 93456-0106**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



The ORE-CUTTS (named after, William Orcutt) was first published in 1966. Member Helen Azevedo was the first editor. The Orcutt Mineral Society was founded in 1958, and was also named after Orcutt who was a geologist and civil engineer who worked in the Santa Maria Valley as a District Manager for Union Oil Company in 1888. In 1889, William Orcutt discovered the mineral and fossil wealth of the La Brea Tar Pits on the property of Captain Alan Hancock in Los Angeles. The La Brea Tar Pits are one of the most significant fossil finds in paleontological history.

OMS is a non-profit organization dedicated to stimulating an interest in the earth sciences. The club offers educational programs, field trips, scholarships, and other opportunities for families and individuals to pursue an interest in the collecting and treatment of lapidary materials, fossils, gems, minerals, and other facets of the Earth Sciences. In addition, another 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 aims. Affiliations of the OMS include American Federation of Mineral Societies, and California Federation of Mineral Societies.