



Ore-Cutts

Volume XL, Issue X

October, 2005

Get Yer Kicks on Route 66

By Dick Shields and Wes Lingerfelt, Members, OMS

Much of the fun I find in the fluorescent business comes from surprise. The feeling of wonder viewers get from the other-worldly look of a bright red or yellow fluorescent rock – what causes the color change? – usually triggers a “WOW”. The Barstow River Valley Museum exhibit wasn’t achieving the “wow” level they wanted, so they called on us. Surprise!

Of course, a good project manager has to perform a site survey, which Bess and I managed in 100°+ heat with our panting “coastal dogs.” Pat Schoffstall, Treasurer for their society, laid out the challenge: “When the kids go behind the curtain, we want to hear the WOW!”



Dick (left) discusses the exhibit with Rick Geer (right), Barstow River Valley Museum Director

We settled on a lamp type, terms for purchase, and agreed to install the lamp for them to minimize switching power on and off, and to

add the safe viewing barrier (Lexan instead of glass). Our demonstration rocks, many from the California desert, piqued their interest. With these new tools, they’ll be proud to show you their local prizes. The museum is located just north of I-15 at Barstow Road and Virginia Way.

After dinner, Bess and I drove to a desolate roadside turn-off to rendezvous with another “glow-hounder” for a visit to a famous scheelite mine. With the same lamps we demonstrated at the museum, we hunted until moonrise (who plans a fluorescent collecting trip for a full moon night – oops!). We managed a couple of good balmy hours anyway, and found some rough large enough to sphere.

Two weeks later, BRVM had their lamps ready for installation. I contacted Wes (Bess had obligations) and asked if he would mind a trip to the desert and use of his (considerable) electrical engineering skill? Any chance to collect (*would I mind going to the silver lace onyx mine – does it fluoresce?*) in the desert get’s Wes’s attention. So began our odyssey.

Every rockhound should pay a visit to Diamond Pacific when in Barstow, and we learned that they are again planning to offer Vibra-Dry, an excellent dry tumbling compound. It should be on the market very soon. Bill Depew was packing for a trip to the Denver show, but traded the latest news about new tools, improvements, and rock-gossip. Bill has given up his claim on the Silver Lace Onyx mine, but encouraged us to make a trip there.

We tackled the museum job, providing a new UV protection-coated Lexan viewing screen and reworking the switch that will kill the white light to reveal the fluorescence. Visitors will en-

ter a curtain to shield the ambient light, see the exhibit in white light, then push the button to douse it. WOW. It really works. Bob Hillburn, President, of the society which supports the museum, provided tools and access through the exhibit panels. Bob also had several very interesting local specimens to try. He had a showy colemanite crystal mass from the boron mine that shines white under short wave, and a rich, extremely heavy piece of scheelite that appeared at a local camp site (brought in and later dropped by someone collecting, no doubt). It's exciting to know that such minerals are still present in the Barstow area for collectors to find.



Leave it to Wes to find some prize quality silver lace onyx full of trees and varied color!

The work at the museum was completed so we decided to try our luck at the dumps of the old Calico Silver mine. We arrived about sunset, which didn't leave enough time to search very far up the dump slope. However, it provided an opportune time to break out the fluorescent lamps. Dick discovered a pile of stark white pieces of broken onyx plume crystal mass left there by a previous collector. Low and behold, they fluoresced! The weathered portions showed an orange, caliche-like color, while the fresh breaks showed white to light yellow, and were moderately bright. We stumbled around the desert floor in the dark for about an hour before realizing we'd better get on the road while we could still find it.

We checked in to our room at the unique Route 66 Motel and fired up the air-conditioner. It was an extremely noisy beast that gave us a start every time it kicked on. Imagine if you will

someone taking a pie pan and pounding on it every few minutes throughout the night. Needless to say it was a restless night. The rooms are simple and clean, and the owner has created an historic feel by parking older cars among the bungalows.



Our motel has world-wide fame for capturing the flavor of 1940's United States travel

The next day was breakfast at IHOP followed by a return to the dump of the Calico mine at the entrance to Mule Canyon Road. The weather was ideal for collecting – a gentle breeze and temperatures in the low seventies. Another WOW! How could we be so lucky? The weather can be scorching in early September. We spent a couple of hours searching the steep slope of the dump and the wash extending from the dump.



Wes knew the right place to hunt was deep in the tailing pile; Dick went downstream after fluorescent float

By late morning we gathered our onyx finds and discussed travel plans. Our direct route home would take us back over Tehachapi Pass,

but we had time for exploring, so we set off northward from Kramer Junction to the desert country near Red Mountain. Our route back would be California Hwy 178 through the southern Sierra Nevada range past Lake Isabella and along the Kern River, to take in the scenery (and Dick had never driven that route).

We were in search of the famous Atolia Gold mine district and the possibility of finding scheelite. We arrived in the late morning and drove off the highway into the clusters of mine dumps and rock piles. The area is riddled with deep pits and unmarked entrances to vertical shafts. Night collecting there will require a safety monitor with a flashlight. Also, the route in is confusingly complex. A trail of bread crumbs will be very helpful!



An abandoned wooden loading chute in the Atolia District had some scheelite but collapsing tunnels near it

We found one high pile of what appeared to be river rocks all neatly piled and apparently washed clean. Wes salvaged a piece of granite hoping it would make a good sphere.

Since we had the daylight viewing box, we searched the dumps and brought back many samples to the car to be tested for that special glow. It was somewhat disappointing to find only minimal glow in most of the rocks we tried. We soon realized that in order to find the desired treasure we would have to return and spend some time searching in total darkness.

We continued north on Hwy 395 past the roads to Trona (Wes's destination next week) to the junction with Hwy 178. Wes had not been

over this road in many years and, not having to watch the road, he concluded that it was nice to be a chauffeured tourist and see all the great scenery. We stopped in several of the pullouts along the twisted and narrow road to take pictures of the fast flowing Kern River. It's hard to imagine that much water disappearing from the riverbed just a short distance past downtown Bakersfield.



Kern River shows a strong current for September, great for the kayakers and rafters

Overall it was a fun trip with a little mix of business and pleasure. It's always good to spend time in the desert or mountains looking for treasure.

Lapidary Techniques

Saw Muckin' Ain't Fer Prissies

By Dick Shields, Member, OMS

Bess was up to her elbows in "rock saw-dust", but I didn't have the heart to take a picture. It would have been a classic, but I know better when I get *that look*.

That's not the real news. We found out that Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have had a direct effect on the California lapidary hobby: they drove up the price of saw oil. Wes Lingerfelt is our source of oil, non-PCB transformer oil from Bakersfield. Wes used to pay \$1.40 per gallon, but demand has pushed the price to \$5.85 per gallon today. Another WOW, but not the kind we were looking for. On the bright side, kitty litter is still about \$5 for 50 pounds.

So, next time you ask for a quick saw cut, the price may just have to be slightly higher than the usual buck.

Upcoming Events**FAVORITE FINDS**

Bea and Sherm Griselle, of the Santa Lucia Rockhounds, will discuss favorite specimens from their private museum of rocks, minerals, and fossils to the Orcutt Mineral Society October 11th meeting. Some of you may have visited their museum two years ago during a field trip to their 72-acre ranch west of Paso Robles.



Examples of biconoids like those found in Templeton

Bea and Sherm joined the Santa Lucia Rockhounds in 1992, and have been collecting ever since. They have also been active in club activities over the years. They were co-chairs of the CFMS 2001 statewide show in Paso Robles held at the California Mid-State Fairgrounds. They have served in many club positions, including President, Vice President for Programs, Treasurer, and newsletter co-editors. Currently Bea manages the clubs' permanent display booth at the Paso Robles Pioneer Museum. Their article on biconoids was published in *Rock and Gem Magazine* in September 2001.

Their presentation will focus on specimens from their collection that have special meaning for them, and indicate the wide range of their rockhound interests. Come join our two friends from the Santa Lucia Rockhounds, and enjoy an interesting and fun-filled evening.

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

The Wanderer**Duty**

Each one of us has a different interpretation of "duty". I believe it is our duty as rockhounds to pass our knowledge on, listen to others, serve our rock community, and enjoy ourselves.

I enjoy talking to small groups. Big groups scare me, but in small groups I get the chance to be impromptu. This leads to some interesting discussions. I recently connected with a family whose ancestors settled this part of the world, and humbly live on "the ranch". They shared stories about rockhounding sites on the property, and family adventures. Giving "Rock Talks" is a two-way street: you talk, then you listen, and the stories that bubble to the surface are amazing!

Have you ever entered a new club, and been snubbed by people who are too busy to welcome a newcomer? Let's strive to welcome, and listen to the newbies in our midst. There are valuable life lessons to be learned. One fellow I recently met was responsible for building Thule Air Base, Greenland in the 50's, and brought back garnets that he is faceting some 50 years later. Another gal ran a trading post in the four corners area, and sold rock specimens in her shop. Still another brings huge pieces of jade to our club meetings that he collects on the coast north of Cambria. Just open your ears, and listen to the amazing stories.

Serving our rock club comes as second nature once you jump into the ring. Start with a committee, like Adopt-a-Highway. Move on to librarian or field trips. And, finally take the big plunge, running for Board Member. Your voice and opinion will be valued, and it is time well spent supporting an activity that you enjoy. The club would not be the same without your special skills, and expertise.

I enjoy working with my "grumpy old men (and a couple of ladies)" at OASIS Sr. Center every Monday and Friday afternoon. The group has been active for years, and members are still



in the process of mastering the art of silversmithing. Each piece is lovingly created BY HAND, the old fashioned way. The bonding, sharing techniques of the trade, and joking about boos are invaluable learning experiences.

Is duty an obligation, a burden, or an honor for you? Without each and every one of us "doing our duty" we would not be a rock club, just a bunch of rock collectors. What's your story? I'm listening, and I'm interested.

Happy Hunting,
Love, Bess

Orcutt Mineral Society

Board Meeting
Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA
6 September 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Lucky Virgin. Board members present were: Lucky Virgin, Sharon Duncan, Wes Lingerfelt, Bess Shields, Sylvia Nasholm, Geary Sheffer, Bob Bullock, DeeDee Magri, Debbie Hood, and Wayne Mills. Guests were: Dick Shields, and Bill Hood.

Minutes of the previous General Meeting were approved as read.

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

Committee Reports:

CFMS Director: Wes Lingerfelt said that the AFMS Rockhounds Hall of Fame were announced in the AFMS newsletter.

Field Trips/Safety: Rob Bullock researched the tides, and they will be cooperative during the Saturday field trip to Refugio and Gaviota beaches. However, Rob will not be able to lead the trip since he'll be in Texas. Someone needs to show up on Saturday to poll members, and see if the trip will still be "a go".

Membership: Sharon Duncan presented the name of applicant, Linda Kolasinski. Debbie Hood moved that Linda be accepted for membership. Wes Lingerfelt seconded the motion. Motion passed. Wayne Mills presented the name of applicant, Rod Goodenough. Wayne moved that Rod be accepted for membership. Debbie hood seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Scholarship: Wayne Mills thanked the Ore-Cutt for great coverage of the scholarship winners.

Correspondence:

The following newsletters were received:

- *Rockonteur, Sun Valley Indian School, Dinny's Doin's, Tumble Rumble, Lapidarian, Rocky Review, The Agatizer.*

- Letter from the State of CA concerning Non-profit Raffle Reporting
- Cloud's Rock Show ad.
- Trona Show ad.
- Thank you was read from James Greene.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Lucky Virgin will be recovering from knee surgery, and will not be at the General Meeting next week, so Sharon Duncan will step up to the plate.

Wes Lingerfelt presented information he received on Directors and Officers Insurance. Rob Bullock moved that we spend the necessary \$250 to protect our Board and Officers against lawsuits. Motion was seconded by Sharon Duncan. The motion passed.

Lucky Virgin announced that he has reserved Pioneer Park for our picnic next June, and a room at Mussell Sr. Center for Board and General Meetings.

The Program for next week's General Meeting is a talk on "Fluorescent Rock Collecting" by Dick Shields.

Displays will be on Fluorescent Rocks.

Refreshments will be cakes and cupcakes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. by President Virgin.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Orcutt Mineral Society

General Meeting
Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA
13 September 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by President-elect Sharon Duncan. Flag salute was led by John Belzel. Invocation was given by Mike Henson.

Minutes of the previous Board Meeting were approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report was read by Wes Lingerfelt, and accepted as read. The final Gem Show financial report was read.

We had 29 members and 5 guests present. Guests were Irv Sly, Pat Towers, David Durbin, Erica Erskine, and Keith McKay.

Committee Reports:

Abused Children: Debbie Hood is selling chances for \$1.00 to win a crystal cluster. Thanks to Kathy Collison for donating \$20.00 to the fund. Kathy raises money by accepting donations from her customers in support of the charity.

Adopt-a-Highway needs a volunteer to head the committee.

Breakfast: Ken Kreh reported that the last Breakfast at Francisco's was outstanding.

Bulletin: Bess Shields invited members to join the email delivery of our monthly newsletter, and save the club \$.63 for each issue we don't have to mail.

Field Trips: The September field trip was cancelled. We will be going hunting at Clear Creek in October.

Membership: Wayne Mills announced our two new members, Linda Kolasinski and Rod Goodenough. Welcome!

Refreshments: DeeDee Magri thanked Jan Ferguson, Margaret Henson, Sharon Duncan, Christine Classon, Ken Kreh, and herself for supplying refreshments this month.

Sunshine: Debbie Hood reported that Lucky Virgin's knee surgery went well.

Correspondence:

- Correspondence from James Greene.
- State of California nonprofit raffle registration confirmation for 2006 Gem Show.
- Cloud's Gem Show advertising.
- BLM newsletter.
- *Pick & Shovel* newsletter.
- *The Agatizer* newsletter.
- *Rockonteur* newsletter.
- Searles Lake show advertisement.
- *Tumble Rumble* newsletter.
- *Dinny's Doin's* newsletter.
- *Rocky Review* newsletter.
- Sun Valley Indian School newsletter.
- *Lapidarian* newsletter.
- Museum of the Americas information.

Unfinished Business:

1. Highway Cleanup will be this coming Saturday. Please check the calendar for further information.
2. The Paso Robles Gem Show is this coming weekend. Check the sign-in table for further information.

New Business:

1. Sharon reported that a nominating committee needs to be formed. Members who volunteered to serve on the committee are: Christine Classon, John Belzel, and Bill Hood. They will present a list of people at the October General Meeting who have shown interest in running for office.
2. Debbie Hood announced a coffee table/display table for sale, and asked interested people to contact her.
3. Wayne Mills proposed a donation to Red Cross for Katrina Relief Fund. Bill Hood moved that OMS donate \$200.00 to the Red Cross. Motion was seconded by Wayne Mills. The motion passed.
4. Kathy Collison announced that Los Alamos Days will take place on September 24-25. OMS Members are welcome to sell their rocks, fossils, etc. at her shop during the event.

5. Kevin Cochran is selling magazines for his school, including *Lapidary Journal* and *Archaeology*. Please see him during refreshments if you are interested in ordering magazines for his project.

Following refreshments of cake and cupcakes, Wes Lingerfelt held a slide show of his recent dig at Holbrook, Arizona. Dick Shields then presented the scheduled talk on "Fluorescing". Dick demonstrated various fluorescent minerals, and some that also phosphoresce. Everyone took a peak in the portable fluorescent viewing box to check their own rocks for fluorescent properties.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m. by President-elect Duncan.

Respectfully submitted,
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Web Sites of Note:

October 2005

Red Mtn. Ghost Towns:

<http://www.ghosttowns.com/states/ca/redmountain.html>

Mining Adventures:

http://www.caltelephone.com/lamps/mining_destinations.htm

Pegmatite International:

<http://pegmatology.com/>

Indian Jewelry:

<http://www.indianvillage.com/stories/IndianJewelry.htm>

Datolite:

<http://www.saint-hilaire.ca/en/datoli.htm>

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies:

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

So this woman rushes home, screeches her car into the driveway, runs into the house, slams the door and shouts at the top of her lungs.

"Honey, pack your bags. I won the lottery!"

"No kidding!" the husband shouts back.

"What should I pack, beach stuff or mountain stuff?"

"It doesn't matter!" she yells back. "Just get out!"

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.

2005 OMS Board Members

Geary Sheffer	(805) 925-8009
Sylvia Nasholm	(805) 481-0923
Robert Bullock	(805) 928-6372
DeeDee Magri	(805) 595-2755
Wayne Mills	(805) 481-3495

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

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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.

Two rockhounds were following the California gold trail when they arrived in Nipinnawasee. They began to argue about how to pronounce the town's name, so when they stopped for a snack, they asked the blonde counter attendant, "Could you please pronounce where we are...very slowly?"

She leaned over the counter and said, "Burr, gerrr, Kiiing."



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) 929-4525
President Elect	Sharon Duncan	(805) 478-9359
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

October 2005 Calendar

Tuesday October 4, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Tuesday October 11, 2005 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: "Sherm and Bea Grisille's Collection" • Display: Favorite Rocks from 2005 Field Trips • Refreshment: Pies.
Saturday October 15, 2005 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Clear Creek -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot A long day to hunt in a prized California gem collecting area. We can find botryoidal jade, orbicular pieces of jasper, chatoyant material, serpentine, cinnabar, and turtle jade. Bring lunch and sturdy shoes for short hikes. We'll eat dinner on the way home. Contact Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday October 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.

November 2005 Calendar	
Tuesday November 1, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting.
Tuesday November 8, 2005 7:00PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program: CFMS Video on "Tourmaline" • Display: Crystals • Refreshment: Cookies
Saturday November 12, 2005 8:30AM - 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Avila, Cayucos, and Morro Bay -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot Observational trip to a classic location. Bring a lunch and bottled water. Some hiking required. Contact Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday November 19, 2005 8:00 AM -10:00 AM	OMS Highway Cleanup -- Intersection of Highway 101 and 166 After the cleanup we have coffee and pastry at "Francisco's Country Kitchen" in Santa Maria. Contact Lucky Virgin at 929-4525 for details.
Saturday November 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.

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

December 2005 Calendar	
Tuesday December 6, 2005 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting
Saturday December 10, 2005 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM 	Annual Meeting -- Maria Del Sol, 1405 East Main Street, Santa Maria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffet Luncheon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Members \$7.25 ◦ Guests \$14.50 • President's Annual Report • Awards • Installation of Officers • "Sweet Adelines" Christmas Performance Bring canned goods for Goodwill and donations for the Abused Children Fund Call Bill and Debbie Hood at 481-6860 for details.
Saturday December 17, 2005 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM	Field Trip to Refugio and Gaviota Beaches - Meet at Mussell Senior Center. Entrance fee required for an all-day pass covering both parks. Bring a lunch - the beach concessions only operate in the Summer. Contact Bob Bullock at 928-6372 for details.
Saturday December 24, 2005 8:15 AM - 9:15 AM	OMS Monthly Breakfast - "Francisco's Country Kitchen" in Santa Maria is cancelled. This happens too close to Christmas! Call Ken Kreh at 343-7749 for details.

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED