

The official bulletin of the Dothan Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

February 2012



Words from...

The President

The meeting this month will be on Sunday, February 26. There will be more discussion about the upcoming show and you'll have a final opportunity to pay your membership dues. Bring some extra nice specimens for Show 'n Tell if you can. Joan Blackwell has been asked to write a short article about the show for "The Local" and will need some representative photos to accompany it.

We've received a specific request to help publicize the 33rd Annual Valley and Ridge Gem & Mineral Show hosted by the Rome Georgia Mineral Society (ROGAMS). The March 16 – 18 event will feature minerals, gems, fossils, jewelry, crystals, demonstrations, door prizes, and exhibits and is being held at The Forum in Rome, GA. For details, contact Show Chair, Joe Santamaria at 678-488-9560 or rogams.show@gmail.com. Also, check out their website at www.rogams.wordpress.com. Word has it that dealer space is still available. If you'd like to set up a booth, contact Dealer Chair, Bob Madden at 706-295-3912 or rjmcanoe@aol.com.
JoAn

Membership Dues

Folks, here's a second reminder that it's time to pay your annual membership dues: \$15 for singles and \$20 for a family. Membership Chair, Diane Rodenhizer, will again be collecting payments at the February meeting, or you can mail her a check at: 478 Private Road 1106, Enterprise, AL 36330.

Please get your payment to Diane before the end of February.

Upcoming Shows

February 25	Imperial Bone Valley Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society	Lakeland, FL
March 2 – 4	Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society	St. Petersburg, FL
March 16	Lakewood Rock Hounds	Buchanan, TN
March 16 – 18	Rome Georgia Mineral Society (ROGAMS)	Rome, GA

Source: www.amfed.org/sfms/

Meeting Minutes – January 2012 – by Secretary

The meeting was called to order by our club president, JoAn Lambert, at 2:03 PM.

JoAn welcomed everyone back following the holidays and extended birthday wishes to our January birthday members. Minutes from the Social were approved. Treasurer, Diane Rodenhizer, provided a treasury report which included payment of club insurance for digs. We had a good size group at the meeting, with 26 members and 3 guests in attendance. The group welcomed our visitors Penny Poulos and Ted Tingdale and welcomed back a former member, Steve Ward.

CORRESPONDENCE: The club received correspondence from the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SFMS). JoAn brought some copies of the SFMS Lodestar newsletter and some information about the Mini Miners newsletter. We received a thank you card from the church for our donation. The club also received information on workshops occurring this year. More information about the classes can be found at the SFMS website, <http://www.amfed.org/sfms>. We also received news that a new amethyst dig site has recently opened in McDonough, GA.

OLD BUSINESS: JoAn passed out flyers for the Panama City Gem & Mineral Society show happening January 28 - 29. We discussed which of our club members will be setting up at the show and which of us are just going to shop. (Count me among the shoppers.)

NEW BUSINESS: Arnie Lambert, Show Chair, passed around the committee roster for the April show to confirm that members were still fine with the assignments. He passed out contracts to club members for tables at the show and spoke about the outside vendors he has contacted.

Ellen Webber, a member of the Publicity Committee, gave a recap of their research to date and provided insights as to the types of advertising available in the local area. The committee has explored billboard and banner prices, print and electronic ads, and are redoing the show flyer. Special emphasis is being placed on getting the information out to the schools and local communities. Given the success the club has had with fundraising activities during the year, the group decided to increase the amount to be spent on publicity for the upcoming gem and mineral show. Arnie made a motion that the budget be set at \$1200. Gary Meredith seconded the motion, the members voted, and the motion was carried.

Ken Wilson, our Field Trip Chair, discussed a few places we might want to add to our outing list for the upcoming season. He also provided more information about the new mine that has opened in McDonough, GA.

Grady Dunn requested time in our Program segment to teach a class on intarsia techniques. He said it takes about 40 hours for one very detailed piece, but only eight or so hours for a piece with less detail. Everyone expressed an interest.

The group was thrilled that Bruce Lott, President of the East Alabama Gem & Mineral Society, attended our meeting to present Joe Cody with the 1.2 lb beryl and aquamarine crystal he found on the Hogg Mine dig in November. For those who might not know, Joe got sick during the dig and was not able to extract the crystal. Laural Meints worked for two days trying to get it and another crystal out of the hillside, but to no avail. At her urging, however, the folks at the Hogg mine agreed to make sure Joe got his crystal, and they did. Huge kudos to Chris Painter and the Hogg Mine folks for their efforts. What an awesome gesture on their part. While Chris could not make the meeting, he did send his regards with Bruce.

SHOW & TELL: We did not have our usual heavily laden tables full of Show & Tell items, but there were a few remarkable pieces. Grady brought some marcasite concretions from an old state mine in Mississippi. They had beautiful pink and purple hues when held up to the light. He also passed around a couple of amazing examples of his intarsia work. Ken brought a tray of very nice cabochons. TJ Moore displayed his version of "Excalibur". He made a flint knife and sunk it into a natural hole in a piece of petrified wood collected during a club outing. (I hope the picture does it justice because it was gorgeous.) Joe brought an arrowhead a friend found, and wife, Margie, brought some agatized coral and citrine crystals.

PROGRAM: No program was presented. However, Arnie brought in a Genie Gem Maker that was part of the Curtis Bane collection he purchased. Since he already had one, Arnie auctioned the Genie at the meeting. Bill Tharpe had the highest bid and will be putting Curtis's Genie to good use. Refreshments were provided by Brooke Brown and Jeff DeRoche. Door prizes went to Aida Ward, Brooke, and visitors, Penny and Ted.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Leduc

Club Meeting – January 2012



Large crowd of members and visitors...lots of folks milling around sharing information and ideas. The presentation of Joe's beryl was both gratifying and heartwarming. Congratulations, Joe! A small collection of Show and Tell, but some real stand out pieces.



Panama City Gem & Mineral Society Show – January 2012

“Something for everybody” could have been the theme for the Panama City show. Jewelry and beads...fossils and minerals...demonstrations and discussions...a steady flow of foot traffic and a memorial to a true rockhound.



Learning Series: Alabama's Rocks and Minerals – The “Super Sites”

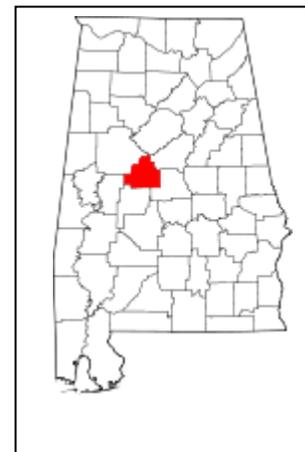
Bibb County

Comprising approximately 625 square miles, Bibb County lies in the central area of the state. It is bounded to the south by Perry County, to the west by Hale and Tuscaloosa Counties, to the north by Jefferson and Shelby Counties, and to the east by Chilton County.

Much of the county is characterized by level and moderately sloping, broad ridges with terraced streams consistent with the East Gulf Coastal Plain, however, the northeast part of the county lies in the Alabama Valley and Ridge section.

It is extremely rich in ore, coal, clay, and timber and since its founding as Cahawba County in 1818, Bibb County has contributed many resources to the growth of Alabama and the nation.

Today Bibb County is home to some of the South's most treasured places: Tannehill and Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Parks, Talledega National Forest, Oakmulgee Wildlife Management Area, and the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge.



Super Site Selection Criteria

Bibb County was selected as a Super Site for this series on the basis of information reported in *Rocks and Minerals of Alabama – A Guide for Alabama Rockhounds (Circular 38, 1966)*. The guide identified two minerals—barite and fluorite—as being prominent in prospect pits scattered throughout the woods in a community called the “Sinks Area”, located approximately 10 miles west of Centreville, just off Hwy 25. Additionally, barite rosettes and sand concretions were reported outside Centreville near the intersection of US Hwy 82 and AL State Hwy 25.

Featured Rocks and Minerals

Barite (BaSO_4) – barium sulfate. Formed by the chemical reaction of soluble barium bicarbonate with sulfate-bearing waters.

The name “barite” is derived from the Greek words βάρος for *weight* and βάρυς for *heavy*, due to its unusual heaviness for a non-metallic mineral.

A member of the orthorhombic crystal system, barite can be a transparent, translucent or opaque mineral with a pearly, vitreous luster. It is a soft specimen (Mohs – 3.0 – 3.5) with brittle tenacity, perfect cleavage and an irregular or uneven fracture. While it streaks white, barite specimens are found in many colors including white, yellow, brown, grey, blue, orange, red, pink, purple, green, gray, black and colorless samples. It may also be multicolored and banded, however, sunlight can cause all colored samples to fade to white or colorless.



Barite has the capacity to fluoresce in UV light causing it to appear yellow, orange or pink. It may also strongly phosphoresce greenish-white, and can even be thermoluminescent at times. Heat affects it in other ways, as well. Barite is insoluble in water, acids and bases, but it is moderately soluble in hot, concentrated sulphuric acid due to formation of hydrogen sulphate. When heated above 1400°C, it decomposes to barium oxide, sulphur dioxide and oxygen.

In addition to its great range of colors, barite has varied crystal forms and habits and is a common mineral of wide distribution. Typically found as thick to thin tabular crystals and as bladed, white masses—usually in clusters with the crystals growing more or less parallel to one another. Occurrences are most often associated with weathered carbonate rocks where the more soluble rocks have been removed, leaving the insoluble barite as irregular masses. Barite often replaces other minerals, and may even replace organic materials such as wood, shells, and fossils.

In Alabama, barite occurs as vein deposits in limestone and dolomite and as secondary residual deposits derived from weathering. These deposits are situated in a 13-county area that extends from Bibb County in central Alabama to Cherokee County in northeast Alabama. Barite was mined in Alabama as early as the 1840s. Mining continued sporadically up until the 1940s with most of the production from Bibb, Calhoun and Shelby counties.

Barite has a number of commercial uses and is found as a chemically inert filler in drilling muds and fluids, as a white pigment in cosmetic products and paints, and as a filling material for polymers and papers. It is also the main source of the barium used in the medical field in conjunction with X-rays.

Fluorite – (CaF₂) – a calcium fluoride mineral.

The name “fluorite” is derived from the Latin “fluere,” meaning *to flow*, due to its use as a flux. (Note: The term “fluorescence” is derived from fluorite. The element fluorine also derives its name from fluorite, a major source for the element.)

A member of the isometric crystal system, fluorite is a transparent mineral with a dull, vitreous luster. It is a moderately soft specimen (Mohs – 4.0) with perfect cleavage, brittle tenacity and a splintery, sub-conchoidal fracture. Fluorite streaks white and specimens are available in purple, lilac, golden-yellow, green, colorless, blue, pink, champagne and brown.

It fluoresces in UV light and may also be phosphorescent. Additionally, it may be thermoluminescent or triboluminescent, and will melt at 1360°. Fluorite is slightly soluble in hot hydrochloric acid and it decomposes in sulphuric acid. Collectors should be aware that some specimens are light sensitive.



Fluorite is found as a common gangue mineral in hydrothermal veins—especially those containing lead and zinc minerals—and in some greisens, granites, and pegmatites. As a component of some marbles and other metamorphic rocks, it is often associated with the minerals calcite, dolomite, barite, sphalerite, cassiterite, quartz, gypsum, and especially lead and silver.

In Alabama, fluorite is most often found in veins and cavities in limestone and dolomite rocks of the Paleozoic region.

Fluorite has numerous uses, but large quantities are used as a flux in the manufacture of steel and aluminum, in the preparation of hydrofluoric acid, and in optical instruments.

Additional Minerals of Bibb County

In addition to barite and fluorite, the www.mindat.org website currently lists the presence of 16 other mineral specimens in Bibb County. They include: calcite, Celestine, goethite, hematite, illite, kaolinite, limonite, marble, marcasite, montmorillonite, petrified wood, quartz (var: chalcedony and chert), rhodochrosite, sphalerite and sulphur.

Over 150 mines are on record in Bibb County; many associated with the iron industry. Most sites are clustered in and around Woodstock at the northern edge of the county and extending along a northeastwardly line from Centreville, which is near the southern edge of the county.

Sources:

<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1196>
<http://www.minerals.net/mineral/barite.aspx>
<http://www.micromountersofnewengland.org/pdfs/Min-Loc1.pdf>
<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1273>
<http://cartweb.geography.ua.edu:9001>
<http://www.mindat.org/loc-65468.html>
<http://www.mindat.org/locdetailed-65468.html>
<http://www.mindat.org/lsearch.php?from=nsearch&loc=alabama>

Who What Where When Why How

February Birthdays

FEB 15 – Steven Ward
FEB 20 – Gary Meredith
FEB 23 – Chris Wisham
FEB 24 – John Webber
FEB 28 – Bill Tharpe

Random Rock Facts

In crystallography, crystal families, crystal systems, and lattice systems are similar, but slightly different. The **rhombohedral lattice system** is one of the seven lattice systems and the **trigonal crystal system** is one of the seven crystal systems. They are often confused with each other.

Crystals in the rhombohedral lattice system are always in the trigonal crystal system. However, some crystals—such as **quartz**—are in the trigonal crystal system, but not in the rhombohedral lattice system.

Amethyst, the birthstone for February, is an example of quartz.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trigonal_crystal_system

Meeting Information

Time: 2:00 PM
Date: Fourth Sunday of each month (except June, July and August)
Place: Fellowship Hall – Tabernacle United Methodist Church
 4329 S. Brannon Stand Road
 (intersection of Brannon Stand Road and Hwy 52)
 Dothan, AL

Officers

President – JoAn Lambert
 334-792-7116

Vice President – Jeff DeRoche
 334-673-3554

Secretary/Webmaster – Pat LeDuc
 334-806-5626

Treasurer – Diane Rodenhizer
 334-447-3610

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 334-503-0308
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Membership Chair – Diane Rodenhizer
 334-447-3610

Show Chair – Arnie Lambert
 334-792-7116

Field Trips Chair – Ken Wilson
 850-547-9577

Hospitality Chair – Meredith Capshaw
 334-684-9448

Club Hostess – Laural Meints
 334-723-2695

Website: www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

Objectives

To stimulate interest in lapidary, earth science and, when necessary, other related fields.

To sponsor an educational program within the membership to increase the knowledge of its members in the properties, identifications and evaluations of rocks, minerals, fossils and other related subjects.

To cooperate and aid in the solution of its members' problems encountered in the Club's objectives.

To cooperate with other mineralogical and geological clubs and societies.

To arrange and conduct field trips to facilitate the collection of minerals.

To provide opportunity for exchange and exhibition of specimens and materials.

To conduct its affairs without profit and to refrain from using its assets for pecuniary benefit of any individual or group.

Classified Ads

Looking for an item to round out your rock collection?

Got a specimen, tool or handicraft for sale or trade?

Submit the pertinent details to me by the 10th of each month and your inclinations will be made known to the membership in the next bulletin.

N. J. Blackwell
 28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C
 Daleville, AL 36322
 Phone: 334-503-0308
 Email: Tfavorite7@aol.com

Annual Dues

Single \$15
 Family \$20

Refreshments

FEB – Diane Rodenhizer

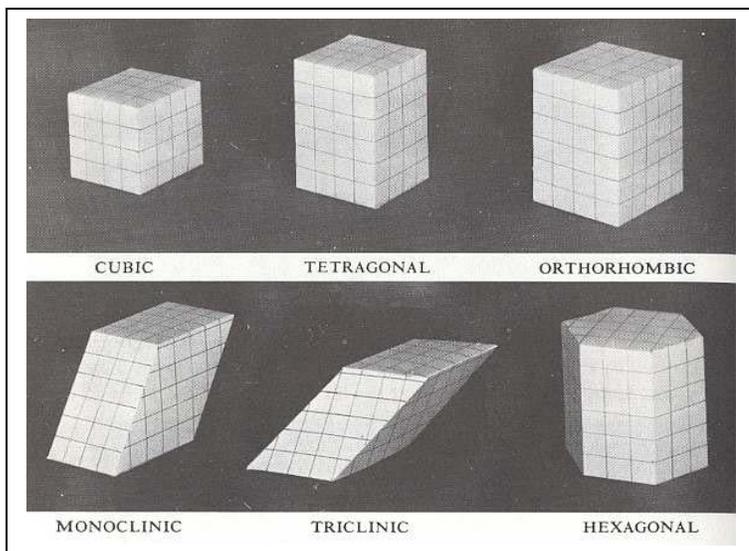
MAR – To be determined

APR – No meeting due to show



Where you might hear...

In three-dimensional space, there exist six crystal families:



Source: http://metafysica.nl/crystal_classes.html

Member of
Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

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