

SHOW-ME ROCKHOUNDS

MAY 2006 NEWSLETTER

Dues are \$10.00 per family and \$5.00 for individual memberships. Show-Me Rockhounds is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Association of Earth Science Clubs of Greater Kansas City, Inc. and the Mid-West Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Monthly club meetings are at the Plaza Library in the Large meeting room. Our purpose is to further the study and awareness of the Earth Sciences amongst our membership and the public.

OFFICERS: Marty Mueller, President; Rolland Smith Vice-President
Sharon Penner, Treasurer; Secretary & newsletter, Carol Ferguson.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Hello to May. The "Circle of Life" is among us, from the birth of a pebble pup (a grandchild for Sharon) to the end of a life, our friend Gary Williams.

The last half of April gave us a good field trip out to Lake Kanopolis, where Sharon collected the find for the day and she got the call saying her daughter-in-law was going into labor. Then came the email from Sharon with the news that our club mate Gary Williams had died.

I don't remember Gary ever going on a field trip and there are lots of rock hounds that stay away from the bugs and mud. Gary's interest was in minerals; as he would bring a shoe box with specimens to a meeting, to ask questions and in doing so share parts of his collection with those of us whom had never seen a particular sulfide or a copper based what ever. Gary enjoyed a curiosity towards minerals and their chemical make up, on how diverse atoms would join together into molecules. The wonderment he felt, I could hear in his voice. I have missed several members over the years and now for Gary, I wish you a "Farewell". Bugs don't bite and mud doesn't stick when you rock hound in heaven.

The field trip to Lake Kanopolis turned up several surprises, one which caught both me and David Reed mentally dancing. We are looking in on what is state and what is federal land at the lake. Kansas may not have oppressive rules dealing with collecting fossil material the way the federal government does. I'll say at least that while we had known about calcite filled snails, and those replaced with pyrite; David has found and shared snails that appear to have barite in them.

One of the planned May trips will be to the salt flats in Oklahoma to collect the hour glass selenite that grows there. This trip is to be in conjunction with the IGAMS youth group, so it should be a fun trip; rain or shine, warm and windy, enthusiastic children digging for treasures is always a blessing. Keep an eye open for either May 13th or May 20th. If you are interested, please give me a call 816-333-2328 to get the trip time update. This meeting looks like we're going to cover a lot of ground. Pres. Marty

April Meeting Notes:

Rolland reported that we received \$240 for 12 cases in the show. The new Officers of the Association for 2006-07 are: President-Kim Brown; Vice President-Bruce Stinemetz; Treasurer: Joni Glenn; Secretary-Betsy Michalski. The March show netted about \$4,000.

The April fossil-of-the-month PowerPoint program about the Mongolian dinosaur, Psittacosaurus (sp??), that Rolland put on was interesting. The mythological Chimera resembles this specie. We also discussed the geology of the Lake Kanopolis area in Ellsworth County, KS. Martin brought a large geological map of the area. The map showed

that the fossils, turritelas, crabs, etc., are from the Cretaceous period. The main fossil layer is the Dakota Limestone. There are supposed to be some fossil plants in the top layer which is sandstone. Per Rolland the program for May will be Rollands presentation of the "Paleontology & Geology Of the Silica Shale of Toledo Ohio." Fossil for May will be the "Phacops."

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As seen in the Gemrock 5/04: A jet was flying over Arizona on a clear day. The pilot was providing a running commentary about landmarks over the PA system. "Coming up on the right, you can see the Meteor Crater, which is a major attraction in AZ. It was formed many ages ago when a lump of iron and nickel, weighing about 300,000 pounds, approximating a diameter of 150 feet, struck the earth at about 40,000 miles/hr, scattering white-hot debris for miles in every direction. The hole measures nearly a mile across and is 570 feet deep." From the rear of the cabin, a small voice was heard to exclaim, "Wow! Look! It just missed the highway!" (Rosevill Rockrollers -and seen in Hound's Howl 4/2004)

Calendar of Events:

May 5-7 McPherson, KS Gem & Mineral Swap 4-H Fairgrounds Hickory & Woodside
Contact Marvin Lundquist @ 620-241-7003 or email swederocker@mpks.net

May 6-7 Central Missouri Mineral, Fossil & Gem Society Annual Swap in Rolla, MO
Regional Fairgrounds 12860 S. Hwy 63 Contact Ray Prater @ 1-573-341-2383

May 13?? Or the 20th? **Field trip** to the Jet/ Cherokee Oklahoma area to the salt plains for selenite crystals. Call Martin at 816-333-2328 for more information

May 16th Tuesday SHOW ME ROCKHOUND MEETING 7PM at the Plaza Library—large meeting room.

May 19-21 Midwest Federation Show in Southgate, Michigan

June 9-11 Rocky Mtn Federation Show in Stillwater, OK; Charles Ramming 1-405-624-3448

June 9-11 Missouri Mines Annual Swap @ Missouri Mines State Historic Site in Park Hills, MO

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Show Me Rockhound Friend Passes Away:

GARY Wayne Williams, 69, of Raytown, MO, passed away at Research Medical Center, Monday evening, April 24, 2006. Gary was born in Joplin, MO to James and Faye Williams on November 22, 1936. He worked for the United States Postal Service for 38 years until he retired. Gary pursued his love of nature, travel, museums, history, trains, and collecting historical artifacts throughout his life and particularly after retiring. He also had a passion for good music, especially jazz and show tunes from the 1950's & 60's. Gary could be found most every Saturday evening at one of a number of local jazz establishments both performing and enjoying his favorite music with friends and bandmates. His quirky sense of humor and interesting perspectives on life will be sorely missed by all who knew and loved him. Gary is survived by his wife of 29 years, Nancy of the home, three children: Kathy Smith (husband-Kenneth), Debra Shultz and Michael Morgan, all of Kansas City; four grandchildren; and a host of friends and acquaintances made over a lifetime. Memorial service will be noon, Thursday, April 27, 2006 at the Floral Hills Funeral Home, 7000 Blue Ridge Blvd.

Published in the Kansas City Star on 4/26/2006. A sympathy card was sent to Mrs. Williams from the Show-Me Rockhounds. Rest in Peace, Gary.



MARBLES

by Jud Milburn

Marbles are, without doubt, among the oldest—if not the oldest-play-thing in human culture. Clay and stone marbles are found in Indian graves all over America. The ancient Chinese worked agate and jade into marbles. Glass and clay marbles have been found in Egyptian tombs. The Romans introduced them into England.

In modern times the production of marbles centered during the 19th century in the Austrian Alps and Southern Germany; stone, agate, alabaster, onyx and glass were the common material used. Imitations in the U.S. and elsewhere followed. Hand methods of making marbles tended to disappear when marble machines were invented about 1900.

Chalk marbles were used by poor boys of the 18th and 19th centuries because they were cheap, being rough molded and dried. They are generally gray-white or yellow-white, made of compacted calcium carbonate with varying amounts of silica, feldspar, and/or other material impurities. The basic calcium carbonate is derived chiefly from fossil seashells. Blackboard chalk is made of refined calcium carbonate.

Clay marbles were very inexpensive and common in the 19th century. They are found in great numbers on Civil War battlegrounds, lost by soldiers who whiled away spare time playing games with them. They were rough shaped from wet clay, mostly hydrated silica of aluminum, and fired in kilns; some were left in natural colors, and others were dyed solid, mottled, spotted or marked with lines. Ohio was one center of their production.

Stone marbles were made in great numbers in the German provinces of Saxony and Thuringen in the 19th century. They were rounded mechanically by being rubbed between larger heavy plates of stone and wood. The common stone material was quarried out of local deposits of calcareous limestone. Most of them show the layers of sedimentary deposits.

Agates are among the most beautiful of marbles, showing solid or banded colors of red, brown, white, and green chalcedony. This semi-precious material is fine grained and takes a high polish.

(Marbles continued.....)

Some agates, depending on the luck of the cut, show white or yellow spots at one or both ends. These were called "bull's eye". They were made mostly in Germany.

Like all "earth" marbles, pottery marbles or Benningtons were crude and irregular. They are distinguished by small "eyes" over their surfaces caused by bubbles forming on the colored glaze of brown, blue, green, or mottled. The marble base is clay, mostly hydrated silicate of aluminum. They were thought to be made by the Bennington Pottery Co., but most of them were made in Germany in the 19th century. They are being reproduced today. They were known as "Bennies—".

China marbles are made of mostly porcelain or pure white clay, the material of which fine dishes, cups and saucers were made, hence, the name "china". China marbles are found in several forms; unglazed marked, glazed plain, and glazed marked. The various marks were hand painted—series of lines or parallel bands in colors of black, blue, red, or green, bull's eyes, and floral designs. They were often called "chinas" and were made in the last century.

Swirls, among the most beautiful marbles, were hand-blown glass and have a pontil at both ends. The large ones were not for boys' games, but for decoration. Most of them were made in Germany. The glass consists of silicon dioxide, boric oxide, aluminum oxide, etc.. Each marble was originally a segment of glass cane which had been built up of colored rods embedded in clear or colored glass, one end of the cane was heated, one segment twisted in a spherical shape, then broken off. The pontils were ground down when the marble had cooled.

Sulphides are unusual marbles made in Germany between 1860 and 1920. They are of clear glass with a center figure made of china, clay, gypsum, kaolin, or similar material. The white figure is surrounded by air, which gives it a silvery appearance.

The first glass marble made by machines competed with the attractive agates and were called "imitation agates" or aero agates. The colors were dark red, brown, green, blue, and purple mixed with small streaks of white. There were also plain white mixed with clear glass. These first appeared in the 1890's.

Milk glass was a popular substance for Victorian bowls, water glasses, kerosene lamps, etc., so it is not surprising that it was used for marbles. Milk glass is an opaque or translucent white glass made from silicon

dioxide or boric dioxide mixed with stannic oxide. They are still manufactured but the ones shown in the exhibit (at Stillwater, OK, Public Library in 1982-Ed.) are 50 to 100 years old.

Opalescent glass marbles are a refinement of milk glass. These marbles are trans-opals. They come in various colors, mostly varying intensities of white. In the exhibit you will notice the red glow in the shadow of each marble under light.

as seen in THE SHAWMISH ROKTAWK 11/96

THE ROCK PILE

I'll tell you what I often do, When I am tired or feeling blue;
I like to take a chair-or box; And sit beside my pile of rocks.
I get a thrill as I begin to think of places I have been To gather these, my treasures
here, In various spots both far and near.
Although I've sat here oft before, Each time I find in this rock store
Some hidden gem I did not see. Which somehow hid itself from me.
You'd be surprised the peace of mind This simple act helps me find.
So, I advise you, when you're blue. To do this thing I often do
You'll find relief from toil and care; You've left them at the
rockpile there. *Rock Rollers, 05/05*

MISSOURI — *The Cave State*

A cave is a natural underground opening large enough to explore. Therefore, a cave may be a rock shelter, or a pit opening in the bottom of a sinkhole, or a cavernous, many-roomed passage deep in the earth.

Missouri presently claims nearly 5,000 caves including 26 commercial caves open to the public. Kentucky, Virginia, and several other states also have many caves and a vast amount of speleological material is published and available. (Speleology is cave science; speleologists are scientists or researchers. A spelunker is a cave enthusiast, explorer; a "sport caver"). Everyone — including spelunkers and speleologists — is welcome in the large commercial caves of Missouri but not so in the wild undeveloped caves on private property. True, although non-commercial caves are not open to the public, permission from the owner can usually be gained for visits. But woe to ye who trespass — ye shall be prosecuted — usually by a shotgun blast from the north-forty corn field!

Once entrance is gained, caving can be a safe, interesting, and challenging activity. (Three of the largest caves in Missouri are wild caves — each is wet, muddy, long, and each displays some of the most fantastic cave formations to be found in the state). In spite of news stories, people are seldom lost in caves. Danger is being trapped in a flooding cave or slipping and falling into a sinkhole entrance.

There is life in caves. Bats are abundant and often come out in the evenings to catch insects. Salamanders, blind fish and crayfish, crickets, beetles, flies, and other insects also inhabit caves. A cave can be a true paradise for a biologist or an entomologist. Snakes, sometimes found in or near cave entrances, seldom go inside a cave because the temperature is not conducive to their survival.

Caves are used for storage, for shelters or "barns," for growing mushrooms, for aging wine, for field and laboratory experiments, for

defense efforts and for enjoyment. Missouri's caves are now recognized as a portion of Missouri's wealth in natural resources.

There are large organizations of cavers in the state and members of these groups work continuously to preserve, protect, and survey caves. Several scientific studies are developed in relationship to speleology and currently include an extensive study of the underground rivers and big springs systems of the state.

Missouri's folklore is rich in the literature of caves. Mark Twain cave for example; numerous Onyx caves, mined when selling cave onyx for decoration seemed profitable — Lewis and Clark Cave; dozens of caves called "Indian Cave." Caves were used to hide stills, bandits, outlaws, Jesse James, odd religious sects, Klansmen, posses, run-away children, stolen animals, secret building projects, young lovers, and pony-loads of silver. With darkness and dampness and bat-citizens, caves just naturally developed a bad reputation. .

- 1) Tourism is a major industry in Missouri and caves provide a source of income to the state as well as to the individual proprietor.
- 2) A state law prohibits the breakage of cave formations.
- 3) Most caves contain living formations which require millenniums of lime to develop.

A popular slogan reads:

*"Take nothing but pictures,
leave nothing but footprints."
Don't be a litterbug!*

Many cave explorers are discouraged by deep mud, water, darkness, unfriendly owners, crawlways, dead animal remains, deep shafts, low ceilings or prohibitive sized entrances. Others allow these conditions to be challenges to their ability and endurance as good speleologists. For beyond these discomforts lie beauty, space, unseen sights and unlimited natural resources. After all, man must learn by passing from known to unknown.

TANZANITE FIND

The largest known (to date) tanzanite crystal was discovered this summer (2005) near Mt Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. The gem material, only found in the Merelani Hills near Mt. Kilimanjaro was first discovered in 1967. Since then, cut and polished gemstones have been selling for \$200 to \$2,000 per carat.

The new stone, weighing 16,839 carats (6.6 pounds) is the size of a brick! The huge gem was named "The Mawenzi" after the second highest of Mt. Kilimanjaro's three peaks. It was found in one of the mine shafts as part of normal mining operations. The crystal has been described as being of excellent gem quality and clarity.

Before this discovery, the largest crystal found was a mere 3.2 kilograms, but it broke as it was being removed from the mine shaft.

The Mawenzi will be put on display before being cut up and the pieces faceted and sold. Start saving your pennies....the cut stones are sure to go in the \$2,000 per carat range.

adapted from the Bloomberg Report Via Gem Cutters News, 9-05