



The Nugget

North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



Photo by Jim Roberts

Notes from the President's Desk.....May 2016

Here it is May already, and the NMGMS meeting scheduled for Saturday May 21st will be our last regular club meeting until September. Hard to believe that school will be out in a few weeks and we'll all be off on our summer adventures. Even though NMGMS doesn't hold regular monthly meetings at the Tupelo library during the summer months, the club is still involved in community programs. This year, our organization was asked to participate in the Oren Dunn Museum's summer camp program on June 9th and the New Albany Fossil Road Show at the Union County Heritage Museum on June 11, 2016. Rebecca Vallarian will be heading up the museum program with the "minerals and their uses" hands on display, and Robert Langford will be setting up his Twenty Mile Creek fossil display for the New Albany Fossil Road Show. If any member is available and willing to help out at either of these events, please drop me a line. Don't forget that Robert will also be setting up the fossil id and information station at Twenty Mile Creek again during the summer, so be sure to mark those weekends on your calendar.

NMGMS had a very busy and productive April. We kicked off the month with a very well attended and fun for all Geology Fest and Fossil Road Show at the Oren Dunn Museum in Tupelo. This event was such a success, that the museum has requested we consider holding it annually. Paleontologist, George Phillips and several of the other guest participants are already on board with that idea. The fossil road show is not only a good fund raiser for the club, but it is also a great community outreach resource. This year the Geology Fest had excellent publicity and I would like to thank Rae Mathis, Scott Morris, Richard Cotton, The Daily Journal, the Lee County Courier, the City of Tupelo and all of the others who helped bring this event to the public's attention. Their efforts really helped. I would also like to thank the NMGMS members, as well as the museum personnel, who gave of their time and talents and worked so very hard to put this event together. This year's was the best yet!

Our April workshops at the Link Center were really good ones. NMGMS has some very creative members and I was quite impressed with the beautiful copper work that was done in the fold forming class. Speaking for myself, and I've heard others say this as well, our club workshops are always fun and everyone works well together. Members help each other, share new ideas and techniques, and all come away with a new skill that they can use in their own creative endeavors. The slab saw workshop also went well, and the saws all performed their jobs nicely. I hope members will consider taking advantage of the lapidary equipment that we have running now, even though it is just a beginning, it is still a great opportunity for you to get some slabs cut. Don't you want to see what the inside of some of those rocks look like? Hopefully a summer schedule can be set up; so that you can come in and cut rocks!

Notes from the President's Desk.....May 2016: cont'd

Also in April, NMGMS participated in the "Earth Wide Open" Memphis rock and gem show by setting up an exhibit table. We had a lot of visitors stop by the displays and talk to club members about our field trips and the other activities that NMGMS has to offer. The club managed to gain a few new members too! Some of the volunteers at the exhibit tables, demonstrated a few lapidary/jewelry making techniques, and there were rings, bangle bracelets and earrings available for purchase, all hand crafted by NMGMS members. Thanks to Dana Armstrong's illustrious baking efforts, NMGMS managed to sell a record number of cookies again this year; we sold every single cookie we had! I guess rock hounds like cookies, well who doesn't! I extend my appreciation and say, THANK YOU, to all members who helped at the show.

It looks like May is shaping up to be our field trip month, with two trips to an Alabama coal mine scheduled, one more trip to Twenty Mile Creek, and then the Alabama Gold Camp trip on Memorial Weekend. So grab your boots, a shovel, and a bucket and let's get out there!! Nancy Roberts

Mark Your Calendar! NMGMS May Meeting

The May meeting of the North Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society will be from **1 to 3p.m.** at the Lee County Library in Tupelo on **Saturday May 21, 2016**. The program, which follows the business meeting, will be "Making a Celtic Torque", presented by NMGMS member Robert Langford. Bring a pair of needle nose pliers or chain nose pliers and learn how to make this artistic piece of jewelry.

Refreshments are courtesy of Alison Schuchs and Nancy Roberts.



Special Freeform Cabochon Demo!

Charles Carter, from the Georgia rock and mineral club, will be in the Tupelo area for a field trip on **Saturday, May 21st**. Charles has offered to set up his cabochon machine in our Link Center room and do a "freeform" cabochon demonstration for us. This will take place over at the **Link Center at 6:30p.m.**, after our regular club meeting at the library. Here's a chance for you to see a cabochon machine and lapidary artist in action. Take a look at our slab saws too, while you're there. I will be going over to the Link Center after the meeting. Come and join me! Seating is limited, so drop me a line, if you're interested.

We will be **in room #136**; it's a small room off of a little hallway. It is just past the drinking fountain on your right. You will enter through the door under the carport on the east side of the Link Center. It is a glass alcove that has the mailboxes in front of it. The outer door stays locked after 5p.m.; there will be someone posted to open the door for you.

Photo of Cabochons by Roger Lambert

NMGMS Field Trips: Robert Langford's Summer Schedule



Photo of ID Station by Jim Roberts

Mark your Calendars for a Special 2016 Fossil Collecting Activity

Registered Professional Geologist, Robert Langford, will be present at the W. M. Browning Cretaceous Fossil Park located on Twenty Mile Creek at the Hwy 45 Bridge near Frankstown, in Prentiss County, Mississippi on a voluntary basis to help novice fossil collectors to identify their fossils and to promote the NMGMS by handing out NMGMS information fliers. Family groups and Home Schoolers are very welcome. Boy Scouts, are you working on a BSA Geology Merit Badge? BSA Geology Merit Badge Forms are available.

Robert's summer Saturday schedule will be as follows:

May 28, 2016 June 18, 2016 July 23, 2016 August 20, 2016

List of Things to bring:

Families are in for a treat. This site is extremely wet; be prepared to get very wet. The creek bed is rocky and there is some glass and wire. So have the kids wear shoes that they can wear into the water and a swimsuit. They will also need to bring a change of clothes, towel, sun screen, lunch, and water to drink.

You will need sieving screens that can be made from window screening attached to a frame, but many people use kitchen colanders or the screens you get in summer beach sand toys, just something to let the sand and water through so you can sort through the coarse material to find the fossils. Bring a trowel or a scoop and a couple of small plastic bags or boxes (egg cartons or yogurt cups with lids will do) to keep your fossils safe.

If you need additional direction to the W. M. Browning Cretaceous Fossil Park, please contact Robert Langford at rlangford@cobbenv.com.

Alabama Gold Camp:

NMGMS field trip to the Alabama Gold Camp has been scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend, May 28 and 29. All junior members (Rockheads) are especially urged to attend, since this will fulfill part of the requirements for the "Gold Panning and Prospecting" FRA badge. There is plenty of information on the camp's website: <http://www.alabamagoldcamp.com/home>. If you plan on staying in one of the cabins or a campsite, reservations must be made at least a week in advance. I talked to the manager and she suggested, since Memorial Weekend may be a popular time, you should make reservations as soon as possible. The nearest motel is in Lineville, but it has terrible reviews. There are plenty of motels east and south of Birmingham, but would involve a longer drive to the camp. Nancy and I plan to drive over Friday the 27th with our pop-up camper and stay in their campground. This should be a fun trip for everyone; check out the Gold Camp's Facebook page for lots of reviews, pictures, and videos. Jim Roberts

Meeting Program Reviews:

2016 NMGMS Geology Fest & Fossil Road Show



Photos by Nancy Roberts

Hammer and Fire Shape Copper Cuffs and Earrings

By Beverly Pettigrew Kraft

Okra and English peas were the inspiration for fire patina copper earrings accented with glass pearls at a recent NMGMS copper class.

Given a choice of making folded copper foil leaves or pea pods, Mary Reed of Ackerman and Susan Curry of Mathiston took the vegetable garden path. Folding the copper one way makes an open leaf; folding in the opposite direction produces a pod. While others hammered the veins of leaves, Reed and Curry strung glass pearl accents and curled copper wire to create peas in a pod and tendrils.

Curry mused that peas are better as art. "It's like okra. I love looking at okra, but the thought of eating it turns me pale. I like the shape. The shape is very elegant and graceful. I like the little peas as far as artistic interest is concerned, but as far as eating, forget it."



Susan Curry and Mary Reed look at copper pendant with glass pearls

Fire patina earrings were the second course of a hammered copper class taught by Nancy Roberts and Nikki Kenney at the Link Center in Tupelo on April 16. The pair patiently and carefully guided about a dozen pupils through folding, cutting and shaping copper leaves – or peas.

Producing fire patina was the tricky part. The color develops during the cooling. A few seconds too long under the torch turns the most beautiful rich shades of peacock, pink and sunset gold to ugly brown. There are second chances, of course. A wash in "pickle" solution restores true copper color, then apply the torch again. Kenney said it took her five tries on an earlier practice run to get the color she wanted.

Roberts gave a refresher on making ear wires. With a few skillful bends and snips, she produced a pretty pair. Reed frowned, "One of my loops is bigger than the other one," she said. Roberts, without missing a beat, said, "Nobody looks at both of your ears at the same time."

Hammered copper cuff bracelets occupied the other half of the class. Roberts and Kenney had pre-cut copper strips. They patiently guided about a dozen pupils through folding, hammering and texturing plain pieces of metal into fashion jewelry. Again, the tricky part is in the fire. Annealing the copper, bringing the metal to just the right temperature, makes it malleable. Safety is foremost. Roberts and Kenney reminded pupils how to hold the torch, fire it, adjust the flame and hold the copper with special tongs. Turn off the torch, quickly quench copper in water, dip it in a pickle bath, then polish to remove fire scale. Then fold and texture with a hammer. A bath in liver of sulfur antiqued the bright copper. The last steps were buffing with steel wool and applying a light bit of wax. I kept thinking what an ugly piece of metal mine was, no matter how I worked to apply texture. It got uglier when it hit the liver of sulfur bath. Then the buffing brought out the texture and contrast. I wore it home.



Photos by Beverly Kraft



Field Trip Reviews: Twenty Mile Creek



20 Mile Creek Field Trip and Hotdog Cookout by Jim Roberts

Photo of Jim by Nancy Roberts

The 20 Mile Creek field trip had been scheduled for Saturday April 30th, but as the date approached, the weather forecast grew worse. Rain, thunderstorms and possible flooding were being predicted. Nancy and I decided that the best thing to do was move the trip back to the next Saturday and hope for a better day. Even though the trip was rescheduled, in case some people didn't get the message, we went down to the creek on the 30th, bringing along the grill and all the food. Turned out to be a good thing we did, as quite a few folks showed up. The creek was just slightly high and murky, but nothing too unusual. And the weather... well it did stay cloudy and cool all day, but only a light mist for a minute or two as far as the rain went. Everyone found a lot of shark teeth; I think previous rains must have washed a fresh supply in. By lunchtime the group was ready to eat, so we cooked up the hot dogs and broke open the chips, cookies, and drinks. All in all, a pretty good field trip. Next Saturday it was back to the creek for the "officially" rescheduled field trip. This time the weather was perfect, sunny, high around 80, creek low and clear. Robert Langford set up his canopy and tables for fossil display and identification. I set up the "dining table" and got the grill ready, and the Armstrongs showed up with all the food. By about 10, we had a large crowd, both club members, guests, and some nonmembers who were interested in the fossil collecting. Robert was kept very busy identifying what people were finding; he even wrote up id tags for some of the finds. Needless to say, we had a lot more people to feed this go round; grilled lots of hot dogs, and did very well in money raised for the Rockheads. So even with the rescheduling due to a bad forecast, I think this year's "double" trip was a big success!



Photos by Nancy Roberts

NMGMS Participates! 2016 MAGS Show

It was another fantastic show put on by the Memphis Archeological and Geological Society, and NMGMS had three tables set up this year for our club's exhibit. The main exhibit table contained a display of fossils and a few minerals that were collected on club field trips. The Twenty Mile Creek shark teeth are always a big hit! Participating members worked on making rings and a few bracelets, many of which the club managed to sell. Lots of cookies were sold too! All in all, it was a really fun weekend. You meet lots of great people at the rock and gem shows, and have the opportunity to renew old friendships with members of other clubs. Hey, for two days, we could "talk" rocks, ooh and aah over many beautiful specimens, and enjoy the company of fellow club members. Nancy Roberts

Photos by Jim & Nancy Roberts

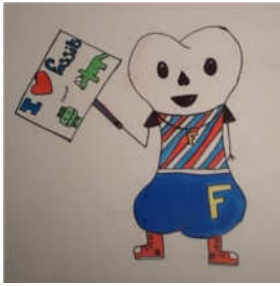


NMGMS Workshops: Using the Slab and Trim Saws



Several members gathered at the slab saw workshop to check out the club's lapidary room and to see the "new" saws in operation.

Photos by Nancy Roberts



Rockheads:

Mascot by Remy Collins

Rockhead Officers:

President,

Konrad Armstrong

Vice President, James Carr

Secretary, Marion Carr



May 2016

www.amfed.org/fra/fra_badge.htm

Adult Youth Advisor: Jim Roberts

latergator2003@yahoo.com

Photo taken from the Sacred Heart School's FB page



Rockhead Presents at School

NMGMS Rockhead, Konrad Armstrong, recently did a minerals presentation for the 3rd grade science class at Sacred Heart Elementary School in Southaven, MS where he attends school. Konrad's presentation covered various minerals and their properties. Students were also given some shark teeth to take home. I'm sure Konrad's presentation was excellent and thoroughly enjoyed by the students. Thank you, Konrad, for sharing your knowledge and interests with your fellow students. Nancy Roberts



Next Rockhead Meeting: May 21, 2016

photo by N Roberts

The next Rockhead meeting will be from 1 to 2p.m. in the conference room at the library on Saturday, May 21. You'll be in for a treat! Mr. Jim will have a mock setup, so you can try your hand at gold panning. If you happen to have a gold pan, bring it along to the meeting. Note: If you are planning to go on the field trip to the Alabama Gold Camp, this will be good practice! So, Rockheads, go for the gold!

Safety: Work safely so you can do it again By Mike Schuchs



Electricity, it's our cheapest servant. It makes life comfortable and easy. It burns down hundreds of houses and kills hundreds of people every year. Try to imagine lapidary work without electricity. Rubbing rocks together by candle light would get old quick. Here are a few basic rules to working safely with electricity in the lab:

Make sure the plug and receptacles are clean, dry and undamaged. The fire damage pictured above was from grit preventing proper contact for the blade. (Photo by Mike Schuchs)

Make sure the cord is rated for the load. An extension cord that is too long, or is made from wire that is too small, will burn up the device you are trying to power. This damage will occur without tripping a breaker. An overloaded cord can get very hot and ignite the insulation, if the cord gets hot in use it is undersized.

Make sure there are no cuts, exposed wires or crushing damage to the cord before plugging it into the receptacle.

Keep the cords off of the floor and dry. Keep the cords away from the cutting oil in the saws.

Make sure there is a GFCI plug between the cord and the receptacle.

Get the most out of your servants without them turning on you!



Bead Soup: A place to talk "shop"! Photo by N Roberts

RECYCLE WITH A PURPOSE By Nikki Kenney

Newspapers, empty cardboard and plastic containers, pop bottles, etc., are no longer collected just to wait for the weekly truck to pick them up. To me they are useful tools that have many uses.

I needed small cards to display a few pairs of earrings for sale. I saw the pretty cards that displayed other earrings which would be in the same case as mine. I didn't have paper stiff enough for the purpose, and I didn't want to just use plain white paper, then I noticed that the inside color of a few hanging file folders, that weren't being used, might fill the bill. I cut them into a size suitable for my earrings, punched each one with two small holes to hold the earrings, and one larger hole to hang the cards on the display carousel, and I wasn't embarrassed that my offering didn't look as nice as the others. I later found a few file folders in attractive colors that would work as well. I now have a goodly supply when I need them again. I also saved one of the cards to use as a template. More tips to come next month!



SFMS Second Quarterly Meeting, June 3 and 4, 2016

Event Schedule:

Friday, June 3, 2016, 7PM, "Cracker Barrel" Meeting. This informal meeting for sharing of ideas and issues will be held at the Georgia Mineral Society Clubhouse, 4138 Steve Reynolds Blvd, Norcross, GA 30093.

Saturday, June 4, 9:00 AM, Quarterly Meeting of the SFMS. Registration starts at 8:30 AM. This is an Executive Session of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies. All members of the SFMS and Member Clubs are eligible to attend, however only Officers, State Directors and Club Presidents or Alternates are eligible to vote on issues. This meeting will be held at the Georgia Mineral Society Clubhouse, 4138 Steve Reynolds Blvd, Norcross, GA 30093.

Saturday, June 4, approximately 12:00 PM, the Annual Picnic and Auction for the Georgia Mineral Society. The Club has invited the SFMS Quarterly Meeting attendees to join them for their annual Potluck Picnic and Auction. This is a live auction with at least 200 lots, including mineral specimens, cutting materials, fossils, and more. The event will be held at the Pinckneyville Park in the Danny Cochran Pavilion. Pinckneyville Park is located at: 4707 South Old Peachtree Road, Norcross, Ga.

For Federation news, please check out these websites:

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

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



Show Dates:

May 28 & 29, 2016; Gulfport, MS

Harrison County Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show, Sat. May 28, 9am-5pm

Sun. May 29, 9am-4pm. Held at Joppa Shrine Temple, 1.5 miles north of I-10 at Exit 41.

Organized by: the Harrison County Gem & Mineral Society. Gulfport, MS

Dealers, demonstrations, displays & kids' activities. Adults \$5, Children under 12 free Free parking

Website: gulfportgems.org

June 4 & 5, 2016: McCalla, AL. The 43rd Annual Tannehill Gem, Mineral, Fossil, & Jewelry Show. Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society. Location: Tannehill Historical Ironworks State Park, Alabama. Saturday June 4 and Sunday June 5, 9am to 5pm 12632 Confederate Pkwy, McCalla, AL 35111 The show is free with paid admission to the park. We will have door prizes, children's games and demonstration classes.

I-59/20 to exit #100 or I-459 to exit #1 and follow the signs to Tannehill.

Show Chairman: Cathy Kellogg at tannehillgemshow@gmail.com. <http://www.lapidaryclub.com/>

More Upcoming Events:

The New Albany Fossil Road Show will be held on June 11, from 10 until 2, at the Union County Heritage Museum, 114 Cleveland Street New Albany, Mississippi 38652
For more information, contact Jill Smith 662-538-0014 www.uchheritagemuseum.com

April 16, 2016 Copper Fold Forming Workshop Photos:

Photos by N Roberts



Photos by Beverly Kraft



NMGMS Meeting Minutes:

The North Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society did not hold a regular club meeting in April, so there are no recorded minutes for this month.

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Editor's Note: I saw this somewhere (too many rocks in my head to remember where!) and got a good chuckle out of it:

If you've seen one rock, you've seen them all. Tell that to a Rockhound!

If you know where this came from, let me know, so I can give it the proper credit.