

May

MAY MEETING - The May 18th meeting will be the fifteenth Anniversary celebration of the founding of Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society. Members who are becoming Life Members this year will be honored. Cakes and punch will be served.

IDENTIFICATION - The Dark Minerals in Rocks

Most igneous and metamorphic rocks contain varying amounts of one or more of the dark-colored minerals. These are often very hard to identify. Four of the most common ones are biotite, hornblende, augite, and tourmaline.

Last month we noted that biotite was a mica and could be quite easily distinguished by its black color, shiny luster, and cleavage into thin sheets or scales. It frequently occurs in granites, pegmatites and schists.

Hornblende is one of a family of minerals known as "amphiboles". They are complex hydrous silicates containing calcium, magnesium and iron. Hornblende is usually black or dark green, glassy-looking, and uneven in fracture. It occurs as prismatic crystals in granites, pegmatites, schists and gneisses.

Augite, which is common in igneous rocks, is the best known variety of another family of complex silicates called "pyroxenes". Good crystals of it are often found in porphyries. It is usually black or dark green, fairly hard, uneven in fracture and glassy in luster.

Hornblende and augite are so similar in appearance that they are very difficult to distinguish from one another without chemical analysis. Cleavage is about the only identifying feature. In augite the cleavage planes meet at about right angles, while in hornblende they give a wedge-shaped appearance.

Black tourmaline, sometimes called "schorl", is often found in granites and pegmatites. Sometimes the crystals are completely enclosed in clear quartz, producing what is known as "tourmalinated quartz". In tourmaline the crystals are hexagonal prisms that have been rounded by pressure so that they appear triangular, with only three curved sides. These sides usually contain striations. The unusual crystal shape and the striations are tourmaline's most distinguishing features. It is hard, quite brittle, glassy-looking, and has no cleavage.

Frank and Eleanor Owens

The Handwork of God
The Handcraft of Man

Spinning worlds, tumbling rocks,
Atoms precisely arranged.

Spinning worlds, tumbling hearts,

GEMS

The Handwork of God!

Spinning wheels, tumbling rocks,
Facets cut and set.

Spinning wheels, turning stones,

GEMS

The Handcraft of man!

-Helen Hancock

Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.
St. Petersburg, Florida

The lovely little "gem" above was discovered at the Gem and Mineral Show in St. Petersburg, Florida, and brought to us by Kenneth and Thea May Kurtz. Thank you.

INGHAM COUNTY NEWS

Wednesday, May 31, 1972

HOLT- DIMONDALE EDITION

DELHI - WINDSOR TOWNSHIPS

DeLashmutts turn rocks into things of beauty

By SHIRLEY BECKMAN
News Staff Writer

To visit the Van DeLashmutts in their attractive Eifert road home, near Holt, is to catch some of their enthusiasm.

This couple, well into retirement, is not spending its time sitting around wondering what to do. Mr. and Mrs. DeLashmutt have a garden, a small greenhouse and a yard full of sweet-smelling shrubs and flowers.

Mrs. DeLashmutt was once a licensed nurserywoman, raising plants for sale and doing landscaping. Her husband, a former Oldsmobile employee, left that job in the

forties to make his living from the land. He operated a sugarcorn for 17 years and worked with his wife in her business.

The DeLashmutts came to Holt in 1934, living first on Aurelius road and then buying five acres on Eifert road. They added on until they have 55 acres. Today they have sold all but five acres.

When the DeLashmutts are not working in the yard, they are likely to be occupied with their hobby of rock collecting.

They are members of the Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral society, joining in 1966. They are life members of the society a status that is

reached after one has been in the club for three years and has reached the age of 70.

The DeLashmutts have traveled throughout the United States, collecting rocks. On a recent trip they went south to Tennessee and Georgia, trying their hand and mining emeralds and rubies.

They have been to Arizona, to a "rock festival", which attracts thousands of rock hounds from all over the country.

A little closer to home, they have hunted rocks in the Cheney limestone quarry near Bellevue and in gravel pits northeast of St. Johns.

Wherever rock hounds go, they go ready to trade and buy and sell their rocks. DeLashmutt says the horn coral and the Petoskey stone are eagerly accepted for trade by people in other parts of the country.

The DeLashmutts, when asked how they get their rocks, answered, "We trade for them, we hunt them". When they go on trips they will bring back specimens for other members of the lapidary society, who do the same thing when they travel.

Mrs. DeLashmutt has a charming double shade lamp in her living room. The translucent cylinders are decorated with pieces of rocks that her husband has cut and polished.

Most of the rock hobby is concentrated in their basement, where DeLashmutt keeps the tools he uses in finishing rocks and making jewelry.

He has part of his collection labeled and displayed in glass cases, arranged so the visitor can see the rock as it looks when it is taken from the ground and then how it looks when it has been cut and polished.

This winter the couple curtailed traveling so they could stay home and learn silversmithing. A member of the lapidary society taught the art to fellow members. DeLashmutt plans to use the craft to make jewelry from his rocks.

"You can do lots of things with rocks," DeLashmutt said and shows the visitor some of the things he has done.

Malachite, azurite, agates, wavelite, Thompsonites are all just words to most people. The DeLashmutts say these terms and know what the rock looks like in its natural form, where to find it and how to make it into something of lasting beauty.



'ROCK' DISPLAY AT SANFORD — Mrs. Frances Krell, secretary of the Clare Rock and Mineral Club, shows Mrs. Bettie Patterson a piece of chain coral on display at the Sanford Centennial Museum. The club's fourth annual rock and mineral show, held over the weekend, attracted 500 visitors. Mrs. Patterson is assistant state director of the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Photos by Roy L. Dodge.



Van DeLashmutt prepares to polish a rock, for use in making jewelry. Mrs. DeLashmutt watches her husband. Both are dedicated rock hounds and members of the Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral society.

SAFETY - We read of persons, sometimes whole families, being suffocated while sleeping in a tightly closed camper with the heater going. Any kind of artificial burning material burns up all the oxygen in a closed area. A one inch opening in a window, door, or ventilator may mean the difference between life or death.

New tents or any type of canvas cover should always be opened and thoroughly aired before using, as the material used in waterproofing the fabric contains poisonous gas fumes when used without thorough airing. These, too, may cause serious illness or death.

William Rogers, Safety Chairman
From the Blue Water Lapidary Society
via The Earth Science News

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