



THE GOLDEN NUGGET

January 2006
Number 06 - 01



The Official Voice of the Montgomery, Alabama Gem & Mineral Society

January Program

When: Thursday, January 12, 7:00 p.m.
Where: Mureal Crump Community Center
1735 Highland Ave.
Montgomery, AL
What: **Show & Tell!** Every member needs to bring an item they have made or found and tell a little bit about it.



Refreshments



Terry & Becky Fetzer will provide the drinks and David Sherrod will provide the snacks for the January meeting.

We still need people to sign up at the January meeting to provide either snacks or drinks for future meetings.



New Officers for 2006

President: James Easterling
1st V. President: Laura Hirst
2nd V. President: David Sherrod
Secretary: Mary Lou McHugh
Treasurer: Iris McGehee
Directors: Harold Glover
Terry Fetzer

\$ Membership Dues \$

Once again it is time to renew your membership. The dues remain the same as last year, \$12.00 for individuals and \$18.00 for families residing in the same household. Please give your dues to our Treasurer, Iris McGehee, at our January meeting or mail your check to: Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society, P. O. Box 3273, Montgomery, AL 36109.

New members are always welcome. Applicants must attend two meetings or functions before submitting applications. See our club secretary, Mary Lou McHugh, for applications.

THANKS! THANKS! THANKS!

Thanks to everyone who helped in some way with our 35th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show. It proved to be a successful show and couldn't have been so without the help of all. Whether you helped with the setup and takedown of show cases and equipment, with the set up for the dealers' dinner, brought food for the dinner, worked at the demonstration table or information table, or displayed in a show case it was greatly appreciated. Work has already begun on next year's show, and your help will be needed then. Also, remember that next year we will be hosting the Annual Meeting of the SFMS (Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies) on the Saturday (December 2) and Sunday morning (December 3) of our show. Make plans now to help with the planning. Thanks again for all the hard work done during the show.

Jane Barkley & Iris McGehee

Upcoming Shows

Jan. 28 - 29, Venice, FL - Gulf Coast Mineral, Fossil & Gem Club. 34th Annual Show, Venice Community Center, 300 S. Nokomis Ave. Hours: Sat. 10am - 5pm, Sun. 10am - 4pm. Show chairperson: Ralph Marble, (941) 922-2135

Feb. 4 - 5, Panama City, FL - Panama City Gem & Mineral Society. 15th Annual Show. American Legion Building, Bay County Fairgrounds, 15th & Sherman Ave. Hours: 4th, 9:00am – 5:00pm; 5th, 9:00am – 4:00pm. Contact: Al Zar, 850-763-0109, aquezpie@aol.com.

Feb. 10 - 12, Merritt Island, FL - Central Brevard Rock & Gem Club, Inc. Annual Symphony of Gemstones Show. Kiwanis Island Park, 950 Kiwanis Park Rd. Hours: 10th, 1 pm - 6 pm, 11th and 12th, 10am - 5pm. Contact: George E. Tolson, 321-783-4795



Tsavorite



Brilliant green Tsavorite is rather a young gemstone with a truly ancient geological history. Its native country is the bushland along the frontier between Kenya and Tanzania. The sparse mines there are situated in a uniquely beautiful landscape of dry grassland with bare and dry hills. It is a dangerous region, where snakes feel at home and now and then a lion will hunt for prey. It is in this very region, not far away from the Tzavo National park, where our story begins.

Once upon a time, in the year 1967, the British geologist Campbell R. Bridges was prospecting for gemstones in the northeastern part of Tanzania. Suddenly he came across some very odd, potato-shaped stone objects. And like in a fairy tale, he found breathtakingly beautiful green grains and crystal pieces inside these weird objects. Gemological tests showed that he had discovered green grossularite, a mineral which had up to then been considered very rare, which belongs to the colourful Garnet family. The stones were very beautiful and of high transparency, so that his find made experts sit up and take notice. Even Tiffany & Co. in New York expressed their interest in the newly discovered green jewel. But in spite of all efforts it was impossible in those days to get an export license for taking these stones out of Tanzania. Campbell Bridges, however, did not admit defeat. As geologist he knew that those layers in the soil that carry gemstones are generally not limited to just one spot, but usually stretch out over vast areas – and such a layer was what he had encountered according to his opinion. After all, the stone belt, which accommodates most of East Africa's gemstone mines, is truly ancient. It was created many millions of years ago, when the continents were still moving around a lot. In those times the region in question had been part of the bottom of the sea. The sedimental residue was compacted, folded and thus shaped by the movements of the earth plates. The extremely high pressure and high temperatures effected changes in the originally existing stones. Thus new and amazingly beautiful gemstones were created – among them also Tsavorite. But the gigantic forces of Nature involved in the process of creation had already damaged most of the crystals so that we usually only find grains and pieces of them today.

Campbell R. Bridges stubbornly continued his search. His theory that the gemstone loaded vein might even extend into the Kenyan territory finally set him on the right track. In the year 1971 he discovered the brilliantly green gemstone for a second time, this time in Kenya, where he could officially register his find and could start exploiting the occurrence. This was the beginning of a new adventure: in order to protect himself from wild animals Bridges lived in a tree house at first. And as he did not want his treasure to be stolen, he cunningly employed the workers' fear of snakes and had the rough stones guarded by a python snake. It was a beautiful

find indeed. Unfortunately, however, the stone was only known to experts. This changed quickly when in 1974 Tiffany's started a special promotion campaign making Tzavorite well known in all the USA in only a short time. Other promotion campaigns in other countries followed, and soon Tzavorite was a name known everywhere.

Green like Garnet ...

Why is it called Tzavorite or Tzavolith respectively if it is after all a green Grossularite from the colourful [Garnet](#) family? Naming gemstones is performed according to certain rules. Modern mineralogical nomenclature demands that gemstones are given a name ending in "ite". To honour the Tzavo National Game Park and the Tzavo River running through this area, Henry Platt, the former president of Tiffany & Co, who accompanied the gemstones rise to popularity, had suggested the name Tzavorite. Sometimes, however, Tzavolith is used but both denote the same stone. The ending "lith" is simply the Greek word for "stone".

What makes Tzavorite so desirable? First of all there is its vividly brilliant green. The colour scale shown by Tzavorite ranges from spring-like pale green via intensely bluish green to deep forest green – colours which have an invigorating and fresh effect on the senses. The gemstone is also coveted because of its high brilliance. Like all other Garnets it enjoys an especially high light refraction index (1.734/ 44). Not without reason, then, did old legends claim that garnets were difficult to hide. Their sparkling light was reported to be visible even through clothes.

Contrary to other gemstones, Tzavorites are not heated or oiled. This is not necessary for this gemstone. Like all other Garnets it is a piece of immaculate and pure nature. Another positive characteristic is its robustness. Although showing a hardness similar to Emerald - circa 7 1/2 on the Mohs' Scale – it is far less sensitive in its handling. This is not only important for cutting and setting the stone, but also for wearing. Tzavorite is less likely to become damaged or to splinter even as consequence of abrupt or incautious impact. It is excellently suited for the favoured style of "invisible setting", where stones are set closely joined, and which cannot be recommended for Emeralds. Due to its high brilliance, Tzavorite here is an equal match for the classical stones like Diamond, Ruby and Sapphire.

Only occasionally a rough crystal of over 5 carats is found, so that cut Tzavorites are quite rare and valuable starting from sizes of 2 carats on. But the brilliance and luminosity of the stone are displayed even in smaller sizes.

It is really something special, this young gemstone with the ancient history. Its bright and vivid green, excellent wearing and high brilliance at relatively inexpensive prices make it without doubt one of the most convincing and honest gemstones.

© International Colored Gemstone Association (ICA) (<http://www.gemstone.org/index.html>)



Fun Time at Christmas Party

The annual Christmas party was held on December 9th. Those enjoying the delicious food and great fellowship were: Jane Barkley, Mike Berkman, Linda Griebel, Harold and Clara Glover, Monica Hendricks, Randy and Laura Hirst, Mary Holland, Drucilla Hornsby, Iris McGehee, Mary Lou McHugh, and David Sherrod. All, and especially Jane, were delighted when Mel showed up. He was home from helicopter training for the weekend and made it in time to see everyone and enjoy the party.

Iris McGehee



Thanks Ruby!

Ruby Ellington donated her rock and mineral collection to our workshop. Harold and Clara generously volunteered to pick it up and transport it to the workshop.

If anyone would like to drop Ruby a line or two, her address is Mrs. Ruby Ellington, c/o Magnolia Glen, 5301 Creedmoor Road, Apt. 509, Raleigh, North Carolina 27612 and her phone number is 919-787-6313.

2006 SFMS Wildacres and William Holland Workshops



Now is the time to schedule your trip(s) to Wildacres Retreat, Little Switzerland, NC and William Holland School of Lapidary Arts, Young Harris, GA. Applications for the first sessions will be accepted beginning February 17th. Applications and schedules for both workshops are available at the SFMS web site at <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lapidary-workshops.html>. The cost per person is \$310 and includes lodging, meals and class. Some classes may have an additional charge for materials.

Happy Birthday!



Ada Cummings, Annie Easterling, Jean McDonald and Elise Toney.



General Information

The purpose of the Golden Nugget is to inform members of news about gems and minerals along with news about club, state, and regional activities of interest to our members. Most important, the Golden Nugget provides a way for each of us to share information about projects and to pass on tips that will help others enjoy our hobby. Unless members are willing to contribute, the *Golden Nugget* cannot meet this latter purpose.

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Meetings of the Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society are held every 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Mureal Crump Adult Center, 1735 Highland Avenue, Montgomery, AL. The annual gem show replaces the December meeting. Anyone interested in gems and minerals is invited to attend. Field trips, workshops, and classes are held at various locations. These are announced at monthly meetings.

The Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society is a member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

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MONTGOMERY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY MINUTES

November 10th, 2005

The meeting was called to order by Pres. James Easterling. Minutes were approved as published in the Golden Nugget with a correction on the location of the Christmas party.

The Treasurer's Report was read by Iris McGehee and filed with the secretary.

David Sherrod reported on the cookout at Ruby Ellington's home. He also suggested a possible trip to Clio for petrified wood.

It was agreed to renew the Southeast Federation Field Trip membership.

It was moved, seconded and passed to appropriate the amount of \$300.00 to Iris McGehee to help defray the expense to represent the club at the Southeast Federation Annual Meeting in Melbourne, Florida.

President Easterling presented nominations for 2006 officers as follows:

President	James Easterling	Treasurer	Iris McGehee
1st Vice Pres.	Laura Hirst	Directors	Harold Glover
2nd Vice Pres.	David Sherrod		Terry Fetzer
Secretary	Mary Lou McHugh		

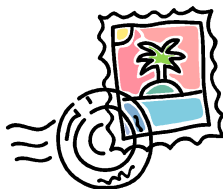
The President reminded members that the Christmas party would be held December 9, at 6:30 at Capitol Heights Methodist Church. Finger food was suggested and a \$5.00 gift relating to the hobby.

Refreshments were provided by Linda Lord and Drucilla Hornsby.

Discussions regarding preparations for the annual show at Garrett Coliseum, December 4-6 was led by Iris McGehee and Jane Barkley. Participation sign-up sheets were provided.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Mary Lou McHugh, Secretary



Don't forget to bring in those stamps from your Christmas cards!



Please verify your address, phone number, email address and birthday at the meeting!

Terry L. Fetzer, Editor
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