



# THE GOLDEN NUGGET

May 2006  
Number 06 - 05



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

## May Program

**When:** Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Mureal Crump Community Center  
1735 Highland Ave.  
Montgomery, AL  
**What:** Video: Gemstones of America



## Refreshments



Harry Corbin will provide the drinks and Randy (not Laura!) Hirst will provide the snacks for the May meeting.

Next month's snacks will be provided by Frank Rowell, drinks, and Jean M<sup>c</sup>Donald, snacks.

Please remember to bring paper plates, napkins and cups. Ice is available at the community center.

## Happy Birthday!



Harry Corbin - 11th

Iris McGehee - 25th



If you have any suggestions for places we can go to on a field trip, please contact David.

If you or someone you know would like to teach a workshop, please contact one of the club officers.

Also, if you see any articles you think might be of interest to the other members of the club, please send them to me so I can include them in the newsletter.



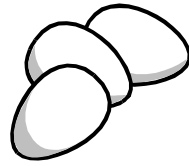
## Workshop Saturdays

Remember the workshop is open on the first and third Saturdays of each month. It's your workshop, so take advantage of the opportunity to utilize the facility. You just might enjoy it!

Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Remember those who have given the supreme sacrifice so that we can enjoy our many freedoms!**  
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# The True Story of Thunder eggs



Way back in the days of Paul Bunyan there was a huge logging camp in Central Washington under the direction of Paul himself.

Sourdough Sam, the cook, has worked long years without a holiday so Paul decided it was time he had a break. Well, Sourdough Sam went to Europe, tasted all the good food there, but one day in Paris he tasted a cream puff for the first time. He could hardly wait to get back and make them for the men in the logging camp. He made thousands and thousands, but while they were waiting to go into the oven, Paul's secretary, Inky something or other (can't remember his last name) came by. He looked at them, tasted the cream and realized that if the loggers got a taste of these, nothing would keep them away from civilization any longer.

Therefore, Inky what's his name squirted as many as he could with green ink. He needn't have gone to all that trouble though, for the fires in the oven were very slow in getting going as they were using help-petrified wood. When they did burn though, it was with a fierce heat, and after going to all that trouble Sourdough Sam found to his disgust that all his cream puffs had turned to stone.

He was hopping mad, called for his flunky and said, "Go and bury all those cream puffs in the middle of Oregon where no one will ever find them." This he did, but you and I still find them to this very day. If you are lucky enough to find one with green "moss" inside you will know that was one squirted with green ink by Paul Bunyan's secretary. And that, folks, is the one and only true story of the origin of "thunder eggs".

Source: "Rolin' Rock Club Newsletter"(Spring 2001), via "The Rocky Ledger" (April 2001), via "MWF Newsletter" (March 2001), via "Huntin' and Diggin" (May 1997), via "Slab-Gab" (June 1997)



## With all the coal in the United States why aren't more diamonds found here?

By Andrew A. Sicree, PM National Newsletter Editor



Diamonds are pure carbon. Coal, however, is a complex mixture of large organic molecules consisting mainly of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen with some nitrogen, sulfur and other elements. A coal bed forms from a thick layer of plant matter, which has been buried, compacted, and turned into a rock. In Nature, diamonds form in the Earth's mantle under very high pressures (54,000 times atmospheric pressure). In order to be turned into diamond, coal would have to be pushed down to depths of at least 100 miles. None of our coals were ever buried anywhere that deep. Even the anthracite, or hard coal, from eastern Pennsylvania was never buried any deeper than about three to six miles. So don't go looking in the coalfields for diamonds.

(continued on next page)

Diamonds are as interesting to the mineralogist as they are to the jeweler. They are important to earth scientist because they carry information about the nature of the Earth's mantle where they formed. (The mantle being the part of the Earth's structure which lies between the Earth's crust and it's core-under most continents, it starts about 20 miles down and continues to 1800 miles in depth.) The most common way diamonds can be carried out of the mantle is during a volcanic eruption of a very unusual igneous rock call kimberlite. Kimberlite is typically a gray or bluish rock with large crystals of dark brown mica, the mineral phylogophte, visible in it. Kimberlites may also contain small crystals of bright green diopside, blood-red pyrope garnets, and glossy black ilmenite, as well as other high pressure minerals, along with fragments of the Earth's mantle in the form of xenoliths (i.e., "Strange rocks"). Diamonds are also found in another unusual mantle-derived igneous rock called lamproite. They also occur in meteorites and in rocks, which have bee shocked by the impact of large meteorites, too, but not as large gem-grade specimens.

Diamonds are a high-pressure form of pure carbon. Temperature is also important: typically, diamonds form only in those parts of the mantle where the pressures are greater than 54,000 atmospheres and the temperatures are less than about 1300°C (2370°F). Graphite, which is also pure carbon, is the truly stable form of carbon at the surface of the Earth. Because diamonds form in the mantle, the fact that we find them on the surface implies that rocks can escape from the Earth's mantle to its surface. The magma, which solidifies to form kimberlite, must move rapidly from the Earth's mantle to the surface, and cool quickly, if diamonds are to avoid being converted into graphite. It has been calculated that a kimberlite eruption may occur at twice the speed of sound! Clearly you wouldn't want to be nearby when one blew, but there have been no known kimberlite eruptions during historic times.

One of the most interesting, if not also most disappointing, pseudomorphs is that of graphite after diamond. For instance, small octahedrons of graphite have been erupted in rocks in North Africa. Because graphite is hexagonal and diamond is isometric, these are thought to have been diamonds, formed at great depths, but converted into graphite as they were carried upward slowly by the process of obduction.

Interestingly enough, kimberlites are more common than many might suspect. Kimberlites and related rocks have been found in Arkansas, New York, Kentucky, Wyoming, Colorado, and elsewhere. They even occur at three locations in Pennsylvania. Two of these kimberlites were encountered in coal mines in Indiana County, Pennsylvania, and have not yet been detected on the surface. But the third kimberlites can be seen on the surface near Masontown in Fayette and Greene Counties. These kimberlites have been determined by Dr. Bikerman of the University of Pittsburgh, to have formed about 147 million years during the Late Cretaceous Period. While in theory, any kimberlite could carry diamonds; only one kimberlite in a hundred is diamondiferous. No diamonds have yet been found in any kimberlite in Pennsylvania, but we keep looking!

Source: PICK & PACK (March 2003), via PM Newsletter (V32N1)



## **Southeast Federation (Phase 1)/AFMS Convention**

Hosts: Middle Tennessee Gem Society

Nashville, Tennessee

Show: August 18-20, 2006

Convention: August 15-20, 2006

## **Southeast Federation (Phase 2)**

Hosts: Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society

Montgomery, Alabama

December 1-3, 2006



## Upcoming Shows

**May 12-14, 2006**, Marietta, GA - Georgia Mineral Society. 38th Annual Mothers Day Weekend Gem and Mineral Show. Cobb County Civic Center, 548 Marietta Parkway (at the intersection with Fairgrounds Road). Hours: 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 14<sup>th</sup>, Noon - 5:00 P.M. Auction on 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M. Jay Gorday @ 770.986.0822 or mayshow@gaminal.org. Website: [www.gaminal.org](http://www.gaminal.org).

**June 3-4, 2006**, Birmingham, AL - Alabama Mineral and Lapidary Society. 33rd Annual Tannehill Gem and Mineral Show. From Birmingham: Take I-20/59S. To Exit 100. From I-450: Take Exit 1 and follow the signs. Hours: Both days, 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Contact: Rick Kittinger at [rick.kittinger@bellsouth.com](mailto:rick.kittinger@bellsouth.com).

**June 10-11, 2006**, Alexander City, AL – Lake Martin Rock & Gem Club. 44th Annual Gem & Mineral Show, Windcreek State Park.

**June 9-11, 2006**, Charlotte, NC - Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club. 39th Annual Gem Jewelry, Mineral Show and Sale, Charlotte Merchandise Mart, 2500 East Independence Blvd Charlotte, NC. Hours: 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 10<sup>th</sup>: 10:00 A.M. - 7 P.M.; 11<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Admission; \$3.50 for Adults, Seniors & Students \$2.50. Club web site [www.CharlotteGem.com](http://www.CharlotteGem.com).



## General Information

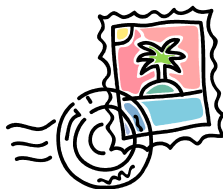
The purpose of the Golden Nugget is to inform members of news about gems and minerals along with news about club, state, and regional activities of interest to our members. Most important, the Golden Nugget provides a way for each of us to share information about projects and to pass on tips that will 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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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**Don't forget to save and bring in those stamps and Box Tops for Education too!**

# MONTGOMERY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY MINUTES

April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006

The meeting was called to order by Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee. Iris explained that James Easterling is working on the status of the plant in Selma. A deadline has been set for May 1. Fire watch is being maintained at this time. A motion was heard that Iris continue to act as president in his absence. It was seconded and approved by members present.

Two visitors were present: Julie Tatum and Ethel Fitzpatrick.

Minutes from the March meeting were approved as published in the Golden Nugget.

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

David Sherrod is looking for places suitable for field trips. He announced that the Shark Tooth Creek location is now charging \$15.00 for admission.

It was announced that the workshop is open Saturday.

Iris expressed the need for a telephone committee. Linda Lord volunteered after her June 1 retirement. Frank Rowell and Clara Glover volunteered to serve with her.

Harold Glover gave a report on the status of the working equipment in the workshop.

Iris stated that Dr. Robert Cook has been secured as speaker for the Southeast Federation banquet in December.

Refreshments were furnished by Linda Lord and Drucilla Hornsby.

Ronnie Williams and his wife provided a program on knapping. They brought an interesting assortment of rocks and explained techniques used to get a good product.

There being no further business, the was adjourned.

Mary Lou M<sup>c</sup>Hugh, Secretary



## Club Officers

President: James Easterling, 875-3089  
1st Vice Pres.: Laura Hirst, 590-6946  
2nd Vice Pres.: David Sherrod, 285-5537  
Secretary: Mary Lou M<sup>c</sup>Hugh, 272-1817

Treasurer: Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee, 262-7275  
Director: Harold Glover, 285-3501  
Director: Terry Fetzer, 271-6849



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