

THE STONE CHIPPER

THE 615TH MEETING OF THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, **JUNE 28TH, 2007, 7:30 P.M.**, AT THE AGMS CLUBHOUSE, 6719 BURNET LANE, AUSTIN, TX. PHONE: (512) 458-9546.



The June program will be announced at the meeting.

**AGMS Annual Show
Gem Capers 2007
Palmer Events Center**
Show Dates: November 30th,
December 1st and 2nd 2007.
www.AustinGemAndMineral.org

THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.



All American Club
Awards
AFMS Gold &
Trophy 2002
AFMS Gold 2003,
2004
SCFMS Gold
2002, 2003, 2004

The AGMS is a member in good standing of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies and the American Federation of Mineral Societies. Its editors are also members of SCRIBE. The club address is 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, Texas 78757, and phone (512)458-9546. **The AGMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.** Visit our website at www.AustinGemAndMineral.org. Contact Craig Brandt for website updates.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the AGMS is to promote interest and education in the various Earth Sciences and other related subjects.

MEETINGS

The Society meets the fourth Thursday of every month except November and December. November or early December is show month and the meeting, if any, is held after show setup on Thursday before the show. December is the Invocation of Officers meeting held on a date and at a place determined by the officers. Board meetings are called as needed. All members are welcome to attend. Society Officers are listed on the back page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for information.

DUES FOR 2007

Membership dues are:

\$15.00 annually for an adult \$20.00 annually for a couple \$4.00 annually for juniors

THE STONE CHIPPER

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President's Message



I finally had some feedback at our May meeting on some ideas I had put forth for the society a couple of months prior. One member was interested in planning a mineral-based mural for the large, blank wall on our parking lot side of the building. There is considerable potential for this, which I feel would/could enhance the appearance of our property. I will keep you all updated on this, and anyone else interested in helping with this project should contact me.

A number of our members appeared to be heading off to the Roswell, New Mexico show early in June. I would guess meteorites and such would be a big item at this location. Those of you who attended will have to share your experience at our next meeting, as well as any "alien-related" souvenirs you may have picked up. Also, if anyone attended the Fort Worth show, we would appreciate hearing about that, and any shows you may attend (everyone wants to hear about shows that are promising).

Should we not have a presentation for the meeting, or at any time during the year, I would propose we have a sort of fact-finding and brain-storming meeting. In it, we could get input from members to share their thoughts regarding where we believe our society and hobby was, is, and may be in the future, as well as what changes we think are needed, problems/issues, and other constructive input in an attempt to assess where our hobby is, and needs to be. There have been editorials on this in past *Mineralogical Records* which we could include as a possible starting place, or an outline of specifics. I just saw a brief show this Saturday or Sunday morning about rubber band balsa wood airplane model builders and flyers in Bedford, Texas. The sad thing is, their ranks have been shrinking for some time, and there are only a small handful remaining. We don't want the same thing to happen to our hobby, if we can help it. So put your thinking caps on, and maybe we can get some good discussion going on the subject. I would think there are numerous ways we can heighten people's awareness of minerals. Possibly through an exhibition at one of the local art galleries (or even the UT Blanton Art Gallery), of minerals as art, or something similar to our exhibit at the airport.

In closing, we have some incredible members who continue to do above and beyond what we lesser mortals do. **Dee Fly** seems to be in the middle of just about everything, and her husband **Murry** is getting into the act with offering to put in a new front fence and gate, with the AGMS providing materials and equipment. **James Lopez** is another of those incredible people, who just goes and does things as needed. We were discussing a problem with one of the toilets, and what we may need to do, and by the time we finished the discussion, he had fixed it (at least enough to buy it a little more time). He fixed the saw shed door, does work on some of the machines/saws, and countless other things that need doing around the building. And the **Dows** have been tirelessly handling the *Stone Chipper*, winning awards for the layout/content, and all the grunt work that goes into it as well. They say enthusiasm is contagious. If so, we all ought to be infected by now. So a big thank you to all the hard workers out there, as well as those of you who put in all the smaller, but no less important efforts for the AGMS. If anyone gets bored during these hot summer months, I recommend going down to the building (coordinate with someone who has a key) and see what needs doing. I guarantee there will be something either inside or outside that could use work.

~Alan Cherepon, President



Library News

Our Library is continuing to receive donations. As in the past, the duplicate items will be available for purchase by club members once they are processed. Any items left will be placed in the silent auction at the show. Anyone having ideas on book purchases/magazine subscriptions please speak with one of the librarians. Suggestions are always welcome. Don't forget that check out privileges are only for club members and just for one month at a time. If more time is needed we are just a phone call away so don't forget to grab your books as you head out the door for the next meeting. Happy reading!

~Diann Hill, co-librarian

NOTE: Please send notices of changes of address or to report errors on the mailing list to: **Bob Greenway**, treasurer. To get signed onto the AGMS email list and/or to receive the newsletter via email, please send a note to the editors.

~The Editors



May 2007 Meeting Minutes

Program: Dr. Pamela Owen, Senior Paleontology Educator at the Texas Memorial Museum, and a former recipient of an AGMS scholarship award, presented a program on saber-toothed cats in Texas.

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Alan Cherepon. Dee Fly moved that the minutes of the April meeting be approved. Bob Greenway seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Treasurer: Bob Greenway had nothing to report, but he announced that a faceting class will be starting on Saturday, to continue each Saturday for five weeks.

President: Alan Cherepon asked if anyone had a response to the ideas he had thrown out in the *Stone Chipper*: mural on the outside wall; "Wall of Fame" to recognize members who have received national and international honors; and a letter to the Texas Memorial Museum asking them to reconsider their plan to eliminate the fluorescent exhibit, or to at least include it in their revolving exhibits. Alan asked that anyone interested in working on these project contact him after the meeting.

Building: James Lopez and Richard Dorsey are working on issues with the roof. The shed was painted. Work is needed on the fence and gate in the club parking lot.

Website: The negotiations with a provider fell through, and the board is working on choosing a new provider.

Education: Nancy Keller is stepping down as Education chair and Joyce Hrapsky has agreed to take that position.

South Central Federation: Alan said that we need to get our recommendations and input to the South Central Federation. Paul Good is the editor, but he can't handle everything. We need a volunteer.

Field Trips: Gene Healy is stepping down as co-chair, but there are three others left. Clifford Strieber said that the next trip is to the TXI quarry in Midlothian on June 23rd, where you

can expect to find calcite crystals, marcasite rosettes, and shark teeth. TXI needs to know by June 21st how many will attend. Details will be on the web site.

Newsletter: The Dows were not present. Dee Fly said that to get on the newsletter list or yahoo, etc., email the editors.

Sunshine: Alan said that **Charles Covill** had a ruptured appendix and was still in ICU. Kathleen Howard said that she is being given magazines and periodicals, mostly technical, by her employer and will donate them to the club.

Nominating: Susan Postlethwait said there are four positions open on the board. The terms are for two years, and the board meets eleven times a year. Anyone interested should speak to her or any member of the board.

Exhibitor and Judging Seminar: Ron Carmen said the dates for the seminar have been set and that a flyer is ready to be distributed to all clubs.

Membership: Ron Guzman said there are 57 members present and one visitor. He said that members who do not have a name tag should sign up to get one. He also announced that the New Braunfels rock shop will be closing, and they have equipment for sale.

Adjournment: Fran Ellis moved and Ron Carmen seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed.

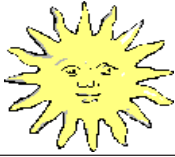
~Pauline Denson, Secretary

Fossil SIG News



The speaker for the **June 19th** meeting will be our very own **Dr. Jim Sprinkle**, the First Yager Professor at The University of Texas at Austin, where he has been teaching since 1971. During his long research career, he has published two monographs and a lab manual, plus 141 journal papers, book chapters, popular articles, and abstracts. His talk will be entitled "**Update on Early Ordovician Echinoderms from NE Utah and SE Idaho.**"

~Diann Strout



Sunshine Committee

We're sorry to report that once again, **Charles Covill** suffered another hospital stay. Charles had a ruptured appendix and spent over a week in the hospital. Fortunately, he is finally doing better and was sent home to recuperate. We all wish him a speedy recovery and a quick return to the club!

~The Editors

Please send sunshine news to Kathleen Howard.

Field Trips



Instead of Clifton, the AGMS field trip will be to the TXI Quarry at **Midlothian**, Texas. Midlothian is southwest of Dallas, about 170 miles from Austin. Possible finds are shark teeth, marcasite rosettes and a variety of calcite crystals in concretions.

The field trip is on **Saturday, June 23rd**. We will be in the quarry from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., so we will **meet at 9:45 a.m.** The meeting place will be TXI's employee parking lot.

Directions: Take I 35 from Austin to where it splits (about 35 miles past Waco) into West and East. Take I 35 W for 30 miles and, just past Alvarado, exit to Hwy 67. Turn right onto Hwy 67 toward Midlothian and go approximately 13 miles to Ward Road which is about a mile this side of Midlothian. Turn right on Ward Road and the parking lot will be on your immediate left. The entrance to the quarry is about a quarter-of-a-mile farther down Ward Road.

The liability release form can be signed when we meet or I can mail one in advance. In any event, TXI needs to know by June 21st how many participants will attend (no one under the age of 7). So, if you are planning to go, please let me know before that time. They require hard hats and safety glasses be worn in the quarry and shoes not be open-toed. If you do not have a hard hat or safety glasses, they will furnish them.

Regarding equipment, a rock pick is about all you would need. However, if you have a 2 or 3 pound crack hammer bring it, since some of the concretions are large.

~Clifford Strieber, Field Trips co-member



Our thanks go to the following for their continued support of the A.G.M.S. by printing out the newsletter for us each month:

**Horizon Environmental
Services, Inc.**
James M. Wiersema, Principal

A.G.M.S. Calendar

- Jun 13,20,27 - Workshop Open 5:00-8:00 p.m.
- Jun 13 - Faceter SIG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Jun 19 - Fossil SIG Meeting
- Jun 20 - Show Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- Jun 23 - Field Trip to Midlothian, TX
- Jun 27 - Clubhouse Clean Up (volunteers needed)
- Jun 28 - Club Meeting 7:30 p.m.
- Jul 03 - Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- Jul 11 - Faceter SIG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Local Show Announcements

Aug 18-19

Bossier City, LA

Ark-La-Tex Gem & Mineral Society

www.larockclub.com

Aug 25-26

Jasper, TX

Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society

seadigest@aol.com

~www.rockngem.com

Important Announcement!

July's *Stone Chipper* will be compiled and edited by guest editor Rusty (Aleta) Wallace. Please send all newsletter items for July to her.

The Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History

The spectacular Tiffany diamond, one of the largest fancy yellow diamonds ever found, is on display on the second floor now through mid September 2007.

It was discovered in 1877 in the South African Kimberly Diamond Mine. Weighing 287.42 carats in the rough, it was cut to a cushion shaped brilliant of 128.54 carats with 82 facets.

It is displayed in the "Bird on a rock" brooch setting designed by Jean Schlumberger.

The temporary exhibition celebrates the opening of the New Acquisitions Case, dedicated to displaying gemstones acquired by a newly established fund, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation Endowment. Go see it and enjoy!

~From the Rockhounder, 5/07, via The Shin-Skinner News 5/07

The Beilby Layer Author Unknown

What is the Beilby layer? It is a phenomenon that brings about a polished surface. Sir George Beilby discovered that during polishing, the surface of gemstones actually melted and flowed as a "glassy" layer over very fine scratches. He proved it by noting a certain scratch pattern, polishing the surface, and then recovering the scratch pattern by etching away the polished surface with acids.

In 1937, a Mr. Finch, using another technique, confirmed this finding. He reported that there were two types of polish: the Beilby flow and the surface that has such fine scratches that it appeared polished. The latter existed on those materials that were unable to flow in the Beilby manner.

The Beilby layer can occur in three ways. First as an amorphous layer much like glass, e.g., the polish on zircon and spinel. Secondly, as an amorphous layer, but parallel to crystal planes and crystallizing again in these lines, e.g., calcite. In the third case, the layer forms by flowing but immediately crystallizes identically to the underlying material, e.g. quartz.

Distinguishing properties of the Beilby layer: It is very thin and usually slightly harder than the underlying material, probably due to packing of molecules by pressure. There still remains some controversy over the existence of the Beilby Layer. Some argue that the "flow" is not true melting, but rather a migration of molecules under pressure. Polish seems to be the result of a combination of temperature, polishing agent, and pressure and varies from material to material. But does it really matter, as long as we get a good shine?

~From Geolap News 8/97, via CentrILL Gems, 3/07, Rock Collector 5/07, Stoney Statements 5/07

Show Committee Minutes Synopsis May 16, 2007

- Exhibitors application form modified into a form for the demonstrators. New demonstrators – Patty Barnes on polymer clay; Moon Strump lampwork and her husband chain maille; and Ernest Lundelius, Jr., PHD – Austin Geological Society.

- Diann to get in touch with Linda McCall. Contact Ernest Lundelius if she is unable to get with lady at UT – Pam Owens.

- Allan Posnick advised he could bring in Ice Age specimens. Asked to do a 15 minute talk for each bus of school kids on Friday.

- Wing made a see-through tumbling bin with Styrofoam beads to show how rocks are tumbled.

- Mac's daughter is working on the show pin but she has been out of town.

- Wing is going to repair the Wheel of Fortune.

- Susan has not heard back from the Patillo's regarding the material that was used in the display cases at the Corpus Christi show. Richard Dorsey needs to call a work party and just use the same material that was previously used.

- Next meeting date is June 20th.

~Dee Fly, Show Secretary



**Another Hardness Scale,
Besides Mohs**
By Clyf Bourne
Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club

The Mohs Hardness scale is pretty familiar to us all. We run into it soon after we start to get interested in learning about mineralogy and our hobby. We find out that a mineral's "hardness" can be an important attribute in identification.

Friedrich Mohs, a Frenchman, invented the scale 150 years ago. He had the idea to list ten minerals by degree of "hardness." Talc, very soft, easily scratched, he placed "1" on the list. Next he selected "gypsum", a little harder. Finally he had the list:

1. Talc, 2. Gypsum, 3. Calcite, 4. Fluorite, 5. Apatite, 6. Orthoclase, 7. Quartz, 8. Topaz, 9. Corundum (ruby and sapphire), and the hardest, 10. Diamond.

The utility of Mohs scale is in determining the order of hardness of the listed minerals; it is also called "the scratch test." That is; a given mineral (material) can only be scratched by a harder mineral. Thus, by performing a series of tests with an assortment of known materials, the relative hardness of unknown specimens can be found. This could be the determining factor in identification of say, a diamond is. (This is more difficult with present day "synthetics.")

Keep in mind not to use fine surfaces in any test; rather select an inconspicuous, non-prominent area for testing. If one does not have items of known hardness, the fingernail (2.5) lies between gypsum and calcite, a copper penny (3.5) falls between calcite and fluorite, and a glass or knife blade (5.5) is between apatite and orthoclase. A steel file can be scratched by quartz.

But remember, Mohs scale is only relative. Don't you wonder how much harder (or softer) one item is when compared to another?

The Absolute Hardness Scale says that if talc, the softest mineral is assigned a hardness of 1, then gypsum, which is three times as hard as talc, should be assigned a hardness of

3. The other hardness values are assigned in the same way; relative to the hardness of talc. To wit:

Absolute Hardness Scale	
1 Talc	72 Orthoclase
3 Gypsum	100 Quartz
9 Calcite	200 Topaz
21 Fluorite	400 Corundum
48 Apatite	1600 Diamond

Wow! From this we can see that diamond is four times harder than a ruby and eight times harder than topaz. We've always been told diamond is the hardest. Now we can see, by how much it surpasses the others. For us, hardness is mainly a consideration when working with gemstones. Any polishable mineral is fine for a collector but wearable jewelry requires something at a hardness of 7 or above on the Mohs scale.

My, you see how useful Mohs still is. Easily memorized too: The Geologist Can Find An Ordinary Quartz (that) Tourists Call Diamond.

I am indebted to the source: <http://www.galleries.com/minerals/hardness.htm>. ~From The Shin-Skinners News, 5/07

Texas Dinosaurs Solution (from May)

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Texas State Dinosaur is the PLEUROCOELUS.

Exhibitors and Judges Seminar

The Austin Gem & Mineral Society, in conjunction with the South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies, will host an **Exhibitors and Judges Seminar** on Saturday and Sunday, **March 8th and 9th, 2008** here in Austin, Texas at the AGMS clubhouse on 6719 Burnet Lane. Every member of the AFMS is invited to attend. The fee is **\$15** to cover the cost of refreshments and printing costs and will begin each morning promptly at 8:30 a.m.

Topics to be covered include: preparing a display for exhibiting, AFMS uniform rules for exhibiting, how exhibits are judged, and what makes a good display.

For additional information and copies of the application form, please go to our website at www.austingemandmineral.org or phone 512-458-9546. To register, send in your fee along with your name, address, phone, and e-mail to: AGMS, Attn Exhibitors & Judges Seminar, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX, 78757. Also please indicate if you are primarily interested in learning to judge or exhibiting, as well as if your primary interest is in fossils, minerals, lapidary, jewelry, or other.

~Ron Carman and Susan Postlethwait

Field Trip Etiquette

By Mark Carter

1st VP, Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club

For collectors who love the thoughts of field trips I take this opportunity to outline some absolute essentials of being a good collector, club member, citizen and yes, even a human being. The lack of common sense threatens our hobby and along with increased legal exposure for hosts, may essentially put an end to field collecting in our generation.

1. Be invited. (Sign up and attend. Obtain property owners permission. Respect claims.)
2. Be prompt and punctual. (Don't show too early or heaven forbid one minute late.)
3. Be polite to all members, hosts and property owners.
4. Collect only what you need within reason.
5. Take care of fences, gates, trees, plants, livestock and everything.

6. Respect the Holy Grails of forbidden collecting - parks and historic sites.
7. Always collect in such a way as not to pose a threat to yourself or any other collectors.
8. If you've collected in an area before, make sure novices understand what and how to collect there.
9. If you're working a good area give the less knowledgeable collector a chance to collect when you're tired. (Who knows, you may be old one day and one of these young collectors now will help you out with physical strength you no longer have?)
10. Take care of what you collect. (Identify and store appropriately).
11. Be a good guest. (If you've brought goodies for you bring some to offer your host.)
12. Take care of yourself; watch your hydration, sun and weather exposure.
13. Unless special circumstances have been arranged, **DO NOT HAVE A FIRE!!**
14. Pick up more trash than you brought.
15. Monitor other collectors to keep them safe.
16. Never undercut a bank.
17. Never allow your tailings to fall down on another collector.
18. Always work carefully overhead.
19. Know what you're looking for and do your homework.
20. Treat everyone the way you would like to be treated!
21. Know and bring equipment you need.
22. Have appropriate transportation.
23. Be able to be flexible if plans change.
- 24. Don't complain about the field trip unless you're willing to plan the next one and settle for the same PAY as the field trip leader. [SC editors' emphasis :)]**
25. Enjoy the outing even if NOTHING is found.
26. Share excesses with youth or those unable to attend.
27. Let others know where you have gone so someone knows where you are and when you will return.
28. Watch out for inherent risks, (snakes, cactus, poison ivy, etc).
29. Park cars legally and sensibly.
30. Watch children and consider carefully taking your pets.
31. If you do take pets, clean up after them.
32. Use common sense!!
33. Don't let "after collecting revelry" become disturbing to those around you.

This is a rather lengthy list, I know. But in my many years of collecting, I've seen each one of these ignored and this lack of respect is slowly diminishing our areas available to enjoy our hobby. The conventional wisdom held by many of our law making bodies is that there is no place for collecting. Let's not be responsible for strengthening that argument.

~From *Chips and Chatter*, 6/07

Courtesy

By Trudy Martin
Calgary Rock & Lapidary Club

Come to the meetings,
Be early not late.
Our members are friendly,
The programs are great.

While the meeting's in progress
It's not very polite
To talk with your neighbors
On the left and the right.

Please save all that chatter
Until coffee break time,
Then talk all you want
Because it won't matter.

~From *Calgary Lapidary Journal* 10/04, via *Quarry Quips* 1/07



SHOP TIPS

Diamonds

It is said that Alexander the Great found a valley full of both diamonds and poisonous snakes. No one could work out how to retrieve the jewels until Alexander had the idea of throwing raw meat, to which the diamonds attached. When eagles flew down for the meat, Alexander's men just had to follow them to their nests.

It sounds like fantasy but diamonds are attracted to fat, and the story reminded people of how to tell real diamond from fakes. DeBeers still practices Alexander's trick in their South Africa mines today. They use "grease tables" and only the valuable stones stick.

~From *The Rockpile* 2/07; *Thomas Dialog-Financial Times* 3/06,
via *The Pick and Dop Stick* 4/07, *Quarry Quips* 5/07

Volunteers

A fire started on some grassland near a farm. The county fire department was called to put out the fire. The fire was more than the county fire department could handle. Someone suggested that a nearby volunteer bunch be called. Despite some doubt that the volunteer outfit would be of any assistance, the call was made.

The volunteers arrived in a dilapidated old fire truck. They rumbled straight towards the fire, drove right into the middle of the flames and stopped. The firemen jumped off the truck and frantically started spraying water in all directions. Soon they had snuffed out the center of the fire, breaking the blaze into easily controlled parts.

Watching all this, the farmer was so impressed with the volunteer fire department's work and was so grateful that his farm had been spared, that right there on the spot he presented the volunteers with a check for \$1,000. A local news reporter asked the volunteer fire captain what the department planned to do with the funds. "That ought to be obvious," he responded, wiping ashes off his coat. "The first thing we're gonna' do is get the brakes fixed on our fire truck!"

~From *The Flint Gemstones*, 11/00, via *Glacial Drifter* 11/00, *The Roadrunner*, 1/07

S.C.F.M.S. News



Attention All Clubs

As far as I know, the Federation is looking for a club to host the 2009 and 2010 shows and beyond. How about the delegates, which is usually the club president, come to the Federation's annual meeting prepared to host a show during those years. This year the Arlington Gem & Mineral Club will host the 2007 show. Houston Gem & Mineral Society has agreed to host the 2008 show, which will also be in conjunction with the American Federation.

Mary Trammel, SCFMS Show Coordinator, would sure be happy to give you some information on having a show.
~SCFMS Newsletter 5-6/07



A.F.M.S. News

AFMS Code of Ethics

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas. I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind - fences, signs, buildings.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.

I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc. I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.

I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.

I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and Will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.

I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.

~www.amfed.org

THEY CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

By Laura Dow

There has long been an unknown in the diamond industry – the source of so called "Carbonado" or Black Diamonds. Most diamonds are found in or around eroded kimberlite ores. They were formed in the deep, high pressure zones in the Earth's lithospheric mantle and brought to the surface by the eruptions of deep rooted (90 miles down or more), volcanoes. The cooled volcanic pipes are a rock called kimberlite. These diamonds are typically 1 to 3.3 billion years old.

Another rare type of diamond is found at the sites of meteorite falls and is formed due to the extreme pressure of impact. These are known as "microdiamonds" or "nanodiamonds."

Black diamonds, in contrast, are not found in kimberlite, but are in seemingly unrelated geologic locations. Most are found in Central Africa and Brazil. There were many conflicting theories on their formation, none of which accounted for all the properties of the stones.

Recently two researchers from Florida International University analyzed the hydrogen found in black diamonds. They theorize that the amount of hydrogen present indicates that these diamonds formed from the interstellar clouds of a supernova explosion. They would have made their way to Earth as smaller parts of meteor bodies falling all over the planet.

So, for an "out of this world" keepsake, consider the Carbonado Diamond ring, if you can find one!

Sources:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbonado>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diamond>

http://www.livescience.com/environment/070108_spacey_diamonds.html

"It is not the man who has too little, but the man who craves more, that is poor."

~Luceaus Anneas Seneca 8B.C. - 65A.D

"The best things in life are not *things*."

~Bumper sticker

THE STONE CHIPPER
DAVID & LAURA DOW, EDITORS
6719 BURNET LANE
AUSTIN TEXAS 78757



Address Correction Requested

Austin Gem and Mineral Society

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**JUNE
2007**

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