



Rocky

The Rock Rattler

Newsletter of The Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society

P.O. Box 6633, Bossier City, LA 71111

Volume 27, Number 11

November, 2002



President's Message

Happy Fall to you all!

To begin this month's message, I'd like to say a big thank you to all the officers who served in the past year. I know you worked hard to serve the club, and I hope that I can represent and serve the club well in the coming year. With everyone's help and ideas we'll enjoy another great, fantastic year. Feel free to let me know your thoughts on how to make a great club even better. I will be calling on many of you to assist with our various activities. If you have a particular talent or area of interest you'd like to work in, let me know.

Jack Adams will be coordinating our programs, so let him know if you can help in this area. If you haven't yet, please pay your dues for the new club year. Paying promptly really helps Lee Beasley with her bookkeeping. We had several visitors at the last meeting, and hope you will encourage and invite your family and friends to join. That's how our family got started.

My earliest recollections as a rock collector were when I was in second grade. I would collect pretty gravel rocks from our driveway in Haughton and put them in oatmeal boxes to look at from time to time. Unfortunately, many of my treasures from those early days were poured back out in the driveway by my mother. Now I keep everything I collect and Mom doesn't have access. So if you collect rocks in the rough or fashion them with facets, I look forward to enjoying rocks with you during the upcoming year. See you at the meeting!



-Robin House

The Rock Rattler is a monthly publication of the Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society located in Bossier City/Shreveport, Louisiana. The society is affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) and the South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SCFMS).

Club Website: www.geocities.com/arklatexgemandmineralclub

Officers in 2002-2003

President ~ **Robin House** (318) 377-0626

Immediate Past President ~ **John Quade** (318) 949-6493

Vice-President ~ **Jack Adams** (318) 524-0093

Secretary ~ **Pam Hendrix** (318) 326-4931

Treasurer ~ **Lee Beasley** (318) 949-0552

Board of Directors~ **Don Talbot** (318) 687-2356, **Bill Hart** (318) 746-8735

Mary West (318) 425-5652, **Charles Cupit**, and all club officers

Show Chairman ~ **Okley Davis** (318) 949-2518

The Rock Rattler Editor ~ **Miss Brittany House** (318) 949-2008

1151 Hwy. 614, Haughton, LA 71037 email:starlightakh@mindspring.com

The Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society meets at 6:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month at the Bossier Parish Historical Center, Bossier Parish Central Library, 2206 Beckett St., Bossier City, LA 71111. One month in the spring and fall, the club assembles for dinner at a local restaurant or at a cookout site. Contact any officer or the editors for more information or see the meeting announcement in the current Rock Rattler. Permission is given to reproduce this document all or in part with proper credit given. Articles with no byline are by the editor.



The Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit educational organization devoted to promoting interest in the various earth sciences, particularly the art of lapidaries and their related fields. Informational speeches presented at area schools and the presentation of awards and cash prizes at the Public School Earth Science Fair are two of the ways the society achieves its goals. Another contribution to the community is the annual show, held at the Bossier Civic Center, 620 Benton Road, in Bossier City. This "Jewelry, Gem, & Mineral Show" functions as a fund raiser for our group and a venue for the demonstrations of gold and silver casting, jewelry making, bead stringing, faceting, cabochon making, and flintknapping (the art of flaking stone tools such as arrowheads). The monthly meetings (including programs of interest to rockhounds), information from the Rock Rattler, and jewelry making classes through Bossier Parish Community College complete the educational objectives of the club. Membership is \$15 per for an individual, \$25 for families. Subscription to the newsletter only is \$5 annually

Attention!

All members who have Gem Show signs, please turn them in at the next possible meeting to be put into storage at the clubhouse.

Thank you!

Deserve it!

Author Unknown

Ne'er droop your head upon your hand,
 And wail the bitter times;
 The self-same bell
 That tolls a knell
 Can ring out merry chimes.
 And we have still the elements
 That made up fame of old,
 The wealth to prize
Within us lies,
 And not in senseless gold.
 Yes; there exists a certain plan,
 If you will but observe it,
 That opes success to any man;
 The secret is- *deserve it!*
 What use to stand by Fortune's hill
 And idly sigh and mope?
 Its sides are rough,
 And steep enough,
 'Tis true; but if you hope

...Continued pg. 4

BIRTHDAYS!!



November 1
 - Joel Clary

November 4
 - Robin House

November 12
 - Mary West

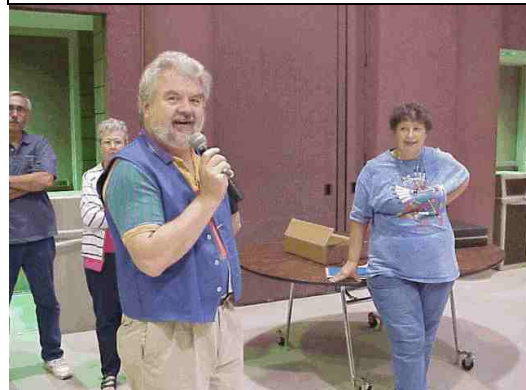
November 15
 - Janet Mitchell

November 20
 - Martha Drace

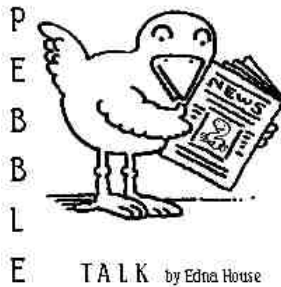
Anniversaries

November 5, 1971
 - Ken and Janet Mitchell

November 6, 1955
 - Will and Edna
 House



Singin' Solo!



Greetings from Pebble Talk!

I hope that all of you are enjoying the wonderful fall (cool) weather. I certainly am. Now I can take out all my sweaters and go out to the mall to wear them (and shop)!

Boy, was it ever surprising to see so many flintknappers at our last meeting! In attendance were

Wil House, Joe Beasley, Leo Perry, Henry Mitchell, and Red

Fluitt. We hope they enjoyed the meeting and we look forward to seeing them at the next tribe meet.

Last week brought a nice surprise call from Myrna Petty. Myrna is one of the original members of our club. She wanted me to know that at the age of 81, she has bought a house. Her grandson Micha will be living with her. Micha was a junior member for many years. We are hoping the two of them will be attending our meetings once again.

There are always a lot of festivals in our area in the fall. The Chip-A-Lottas had a lot of exposure at the one at Bodcau, in addition to last Saturday's chipping flint for the LSUS Pioneer Days. There was a huge crowd and new people wanting to learn to make arrowheads.

There are two events coming up that might be of interest to our members. One is the DeRitter Gem Show on November ninth. Another is the Marksville Indian Food Days on November nineteenth and twentieth. **Wil** is going to be making arrowheads at these events, as we are anxious to be on the road in our fifth wheel once again. We hope to see all of you there.

Roanna Shaw is doing a *super* job phoning our members and encouraging all of them to attend our meetings. She also effectively reports the things that are happening in our lives and helps us to know if anyone is sick. If you have some news for our club, please phone **Roanna**. Her phone number is 746-2092. In addition, I really appreciated **Laura** doing all of the phone calling to cancel our hamburger cook-out. Thank you, **Laura!**

Welcome home, **Bill Hart!** We really do hope your trip was fun, and we are happy to have you back with us. It was so good to have **Jean** and **Milton Bouldree** attend our last meeting. They do not get to attend many of our meetings because of their work schedule. I would like to send a big get well soon message to **Mary Talbot**, who is recovering from surgery. Also to **Cap Foshee**, who has had a heart attack.

I leave you with this OLD Southern Sayin'. . . "IF THE GOING GETS TOO EASY..... YOU MAY BE GOING DOWNHILL!

See you at the meeting!

-Edna H.

. . . *Deserve I t! Cont. Pg 3*

To battle 'gainst impediments
That rudely stop your way,
Go boldly to't
Strike at the root:
You'll surely gain the day.
Prate not about new-fangled plans,-
Mine's best, if you'll observe it:
I say success is *any* man's
If he will but *deserve it!*

Homer and Milton reign supreme
With Shakespeare-worthy band;
And Howard's name,
And Harvey's claim,
Are sung throughout the land;
And Marlborough and Wellington
Illustrious stand in fight;
And Newton gleams
Amid the beams
Of an undying light!
What did they do to gain a name?
What did they do to preserve it
With an untarnished, deathless fame?
They simply *did- deserve it!*

And thus may you- and *you*- and YOU-
From depths the most profound,
Your wishes teach
Success to reach
Up to the topmost round.
But if, from some unreckoned cause,
(Say market overstocked,)
Your hoped-for spoil
Pay *others'* toil,
Think not your efforts mocked:
If Fortune's smile so faintly beam
That you can scarce preserve it,
Remember, there is One above,
Who knows that you deserve it!

Door Prizes

The following generous members have agreed to provide door prizes for the club meetings in the months indicated:

November Anonymous
December Party/Auction



Program for November meeting, October reviewed:

October's program was eerie with mysteriously appearing arrowheads. We watched a video about arrowheads, and when the speaker looked for them, they magically appeared- *right at his feet!*

November's regular meet at the History Center hasn't been canceled. The program is unknown as of now, due to the change in officers. Come and see what is shall be for yourselves!



Refreshments

November - **Roanna Shaw**
December - party

Make Your Plans!

November 9 -10 DeRidder, LA
DeRidder Gem and Mineral Society

November 30 - December 1 Mobile, Alabama
Mobile Rock and Gem Society

February 22-23, 2003 Pasadena, TX
Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society
SCFMS Show and Convention

Humor

Don't Ever Argue with
Children
Slabs & Cabs, 9X02

A teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal, its throat was very small.

A little girl said, "Jonah was swallowed by a whale." The teacher reiterated that it was impossible.

The girl said, "When I get to heaven, I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to Hell?"

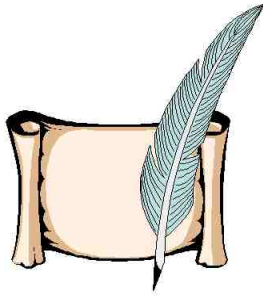
The girl replied, "Then you can ask him."

Application for membership in the Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society

Name(s) _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone # (home) _____ (work) _____ e-mail _____
 Birthday(s) and Anniversary _____
 May we send you the Rock Rattler via email only? _____ Lapidary interests _____

 -Individual _____ (\$15/year) -Family _____ (\$25/year) -Subscription only _____ (\$5/year) #adults _____ #children _____
 Signature _____

Mail to: Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society, PO Box 6633, Bossier City, LA 71111.
 For more information contact club member **Joe Beasley** at 318-949-0552



Minutes of October Meeting, 2002

At 6:30 PM, October 1, 2002, the meeting room at the Bossier History Center was very noisy with a lot of catching up, visiting, and snacking. This pleasant noise was halted by the call to order at 7:00 and the prayer and pledge. Honorary member **Wil House** led the prayer, and President **John Quade** led the pledge.

We started by saying hello to our visitors **Sandie Smoak**, her children, **Julianne** and **Katelyn**, and **Debbie Richardson** and her children, **Hannah** and **Tommy**. All are welcome and we were glad they came.

Secretary **Lee Beasley** made a short report from our treasury, requesting that dues be paid. They are \$20 per individual and \$25 for families. Part of this is going to pay for insurance for field trips. Two dollars for each adult and forty cents per juvenile. **Lee** also had news about the Gem Show- all in all, it made about \$2,000!

Okley talked a little about the Toledo Bend Field Trip, saying there is camping for tents and R.V.s. After we go down there a couple times, **Wil** suggested our club host the Toledo Bend Round Up to show our appreciation.

We held elections, coordinated by **Edna House**, **Bill**, and **Reuben House**. They took care of passing out voting sheets, pens, and making a list of the officers to vote on for this coming year. The candidates for Presidency were **Robin House** and **Jack Adams**. Each made a fine, short, impromptu speech. The vote was 19-10 in **Robin's** favor. Vice-Presidency was voted on next, the candidates being **Wil House** and **Jack Adams**, but at the last minute, **Wil** conceded to **Jack**. There were no opposing candidates for Treasurer or Secretary, so **Lee** and **I** accepted their respective posts for another fun-filled year. A new Board Member was voted on, the wonderful Charles Cupit!

Door prizes were next to give a break from all the voting. **Roger Pitman**, **Sandie Smoak**, **Sandy Pitman**, and **Wil House** all got nice pieces of slab.

Back to the voting, the Ceremony of the Passing Gavel was held and laughed at as **John Quade** became the Immediate Past President and **Robin** took her new post in front of the microphone. **Robin** talked about planning the Christmas party at our next meeting. She also asked us to think about what to bring for our auction.

Brittany House is starting a deadline policy for entries in the Rock Rattler. The 18th of October had been designated, and November's deadline will appear in the November issue of the Rock Rattler so **Brittany** can try to get it our earlier with time to spare.

The program was held as a film on Making and Finding arrowheads, the arrowheads being suspiciously found right in front of the speaker's foot.

When the program was over, sign-in sheet was passed around for present members, ending with a grand total of 35 people! The sign-up sheets for refreshments and door prizes went around as well, and the result of those are held secret and are unavailable (just joking, but we *really* don't know). The mysterious vanishing sign-up sheets will be found out!*

The nomination form for the National Lapidary Arts Honor Society was brought up, and someone well known all over the country and skilled in their art were nominated: **Cap Fouche** and **Ed Akin** in the Fossil category.

President **Robin** talked about up-coming shows that we received brochures on, one of them being at an unknown spot but very interesting.

Wil House told about Flint Knapping demos in the History Center, October 2 at 6 PM. Another would be held at LSUS from 10-4 PM**. At 8:30 the meeting was adjourned with more of that pleasant talking and snacking.

Yours til next time, **Pam Hendrix**

*This is a note from the Editor

**We are unsure about the date.

Aragonite

by Duane Jorgensen, The Rocky Ledger

Who has been to Aragon, presumably the namesake area in Spain from whence aragonite gets its name? But, more importantly, if you have been there, did you see any, or collect any aragonite? Most folks don't think of aragonite as being very common, but in fact it's about as common as pig's tracks in an oak forest at acorn dropping time. Aragonite being the low temperature-at-crystallization or precipitation form of calcium carbonate makes it fairly common, but in forms most folks may not be aware of.

Got hard water? It's in your pipes. Been to Florida? You've probably been stomping all over the stuff, as it's a major component of the carbonate beach sand. In fact, without aragonite, the Bahamas and Bermuda and a number of other tropical islands wouldn't be tropical islands, but shallow spots in the oceans instead. Gather any shells? Yep, it's in there, too. Same goes for corals. Been spelunking lately? Yes, it's there too, in the form of floss fern, stalactites and . . . mites, and a variety of other . . . ites.

Aragonite commonly forms prismatic crystals and belongs to the Orthorhombic system, but when the crystals are twinned they appear to be hexagonal because the "prism " angle is 63 degrees 48 minutes, but much different from the Hexagonal system's 60 degrees. Yes, I'm still spelling degrees because I haven't figured out how to make the superscript degree symbol.

Some of the finest aragonite crystals found "locally" were found in bugs in the weather bed limestone outcrops along Highway 37 north of Bloomington, Indiana. That was a few years ago, and the bugs were featured on the cover of an edition of "Rocks & Minerals" magazine sometime in the late 1960s. Most ardent mineral collectors have one or more of the splendid twinned crystal groups of aragonite from Morocco, and if you don't, you could have gotten a bunch of dirt cheap at the recent "swap" at the Democratic Club, as one of the participant peddlers had boxes of them at \$.50 each or so. Guess it was okay if poor Republicans came too.

There's a funny thing about aragonite. It must not particularly care to be aragonite because even at low temperatures of 100 degrees or less it will convert to calcite, which says that it is metastable under ambient conditions. So, the real question for you mineral finders becomes, "What have I found? Will the true calcium carbonate form please identify itself?" Determining what you've found isn't really all that difficult. First try the famous scratch test to eliminate quartz and other substances. Next, use a drop of vinegar. No 'fizz-no' calcium carbonate. Yes, there are other carbonates that may fizz in vinegar, but they're not common. If it fizzes, take the best crystal (just kidding) and crush or break it and drop it in to see what the cleavages are. If you see the standard form carbonate rhombs, it's calcite. If you have no rhombs, it's aragonite.

Now the big question: what is aragonite good for or used for? If you live on a tropical island, you probably wouldn't be there without it, refer to the above. It makes good cement ram material at times, you can aggregate it if there's nothing better to use, and some is used for high brightness carbonate filler. In general, aragonite is used for the same uses as calcite since they are chemically the same.

The conclusion is that you don't have to go to Aragon to see this famous mineral known as aragonite. Just look around you, and you'll find so much of it you won't need to collect it!