



The Nugget

Summer Edition

June 2017

Volume 2, Number 2

NMC Officers

(2016-2017)

PRESIDENT: Dennis Kirchner (347) 229-5833; biggiebird@gmail.com

VP OF EVENTS: Elise Gad (516) 487-0187; egads2@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT of LAPIDARY: Jim Sisti (516)524-1214; woodyjim@aol.com

SECRETARY: Barbara Kruger (631) 543-5392; barbara@audiologist1.com

TREASURER: Elaine Grayson (516)574-3008; widgiewu@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Diane Angus; (718) 843-7321; freewolf5879@gmail.com

WEBMISTRESS: Sue Goldman (516) 287-3855; vettedrive@aol.com

ACTING EDITOR & NMC LIASON: June Miller (516) 987-4252; millerjune92@gmail.com

PHOTOGRAPHER: Rose Marie White (631) 368 – 7969; rmwhite@optonline.net

Our location and work sessions: We meet every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the lapidary section at Garvies Point Museum in Glen Cove, excluding holidays. Go to: www.nassaumineralclub.org for information.

PURPOSE OF THE NASSAU MINERAL CLUB: From By-laws: “The purpose of this Corporation shall be to further and promote the study of mineralogy by means of meetings, lectures, exhibitions and field trips; to stimulate interest in all phases of geology, mineralogy, gemology, paleontology and the lapidary arts, and to do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with any of the foregoing or in the advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors or officers.” (Article II, Section 2.01, 3/13/2000)

A Message from Dennis Kirchner, President:

I want to wish our members a happy spring. The months are flying by and we are looking forward to the continued progress our club has been making in so many areas. We are adding to our growing collection of new equipment that helps us learn new techniques relating to lapidary work and jewelry creating, all without breaking the bank! Hope to see many of you at our upcoming workshops.

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Meeting Minutes In Brief

Spring 2017

1. Membership Report: We have an active membership that is growing. Our website, nassaumineralclub.org is reaching out to new members and informing existing members about what is happening at the club.
2. Website – Sue G reported everything is running smoothly. Continue to send her updates to post monthly on NMC’s website: “Summary & Calendar of Events” Her email: vettedrive@aol.com
3. The Nugget – Short pieces by members on gems, minerals, techniques, works-in-progress, jewelry making, etc. are welcome. Send to millerjune92@gmail.com.
4. Tools and Equipment –We are maintaining the existing equipment and expanding the kinds of skills we share with our members. The NMC is planning to modify some tables to allow for better lighting and accommodate more people at our workshops. A plan for the first table modification is underway.
 - a. Workshops: Diane A. Program PP Coordinator of Programs. Email: freewolf5879@gmail.com
 - b. Thanks to Diane A with Chris, Maria and Sue for the polymer clay (Natasha technique) workshop March 25 and to Mike Todd for her informative mineral recognition workshop on April 29.
 - c. Chainmaille Bracelet Workshop on July 8, led by Diane A. Diane A and Jim S are ordering rings and assembling kits. Limited seating. Register and order kits early.
 - d. Boris Goynatsky will be available for a workshop in metal texturing, jewelry design or wax carving late spring-fall, 2017. TBD See Elise
 - e. Cloisonné Enameling Workshop – TBA. See Elaine, Barbara or Ronne.
5. Field Trip – Herkimer Mine
Note: The NMC is planning a possible trip to Herkimer Sept 8-10 or 15-17. Diane A. is responsible for arrangements. Her email: freewolf5879@gmail.com. You must notify her if you wish to use the NMC-shared site for digging this spring/summer. She will contact Eugene Genova at ligeo@aol.com. (631) 929-3538(h); (631) 548-4985(c) for further information
6. Other:
 - a. Field Trips
 - Gilsum Rock Swap/Pegmatite collection – New Hampshire 6/24-25.
 - West Springfield, MA day trip – Bus via LIMAGS - 8/12
 - Local Mineral Shows:LIMAGS – 7/29-30; SG&MC – 12/2-3

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- 7/29 - 7/30/17 LIMAGS 36th Annual Gem & Mineral Show 10:00 - 5:00
Mattituck Jr/Sr High School
15125 Main Road
Mattituck, NY 11952
Info: Eugene Genova at ligeo@aol.com
- 8/12/17 ANNUAL LIMAGS Bus Field Trip All Day
East Coast Gem & Mineral Show
West Springfield, Mass.
Information: nassaumineralclub.org

Residency Program

- 9/4-10/2017 EFMLS WILDACRES WORKSHOP One Week
(See p.12 this issue for background information and registration form)
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Upcoming Events at NMC

- 7/8/17 Jump Rings/Chain Maille Bracelet Workshop ~ 3 hrs
NMC at Garvies Point, Glen Cove, N.Y.
Contact Diane A at nassaumineralclub.org for information
- 9/8-10 or 9/15-17(?) Proposed Trip to Herkimer Mines (September - tbd)
Contact Diane A. at nassaumineralclub.org if interested
- Fall: Cloisonne Enameling Workshop – (tbd)
Contact Elaine G. at nassaumineralclub.org if interested

SAFETY TIPS

Based on suggestions by Ellery Borow, Safety Chair, AFMS, AFMS Newsletter - 9/16)

Particulate Matter

Have you wondered why so much work with minerals – cutting, grinding and carving, for example, is done using water? While the answer may be obvious, it's worth a mention here, because your health as well as others near running lapidary machines could be affected.

In a nutshell, water is used to control dust particles and small chips from entering the air around the work space. You have probably seen Brownian motion in shafts of bright sunlight in rooms that have limited ventilation. On heavy machinery, water douses flying chips formed by cast iron cutters that are used to crack geodes and larger chunks of minerals. In general, it's used to irrigate machinery wheels that “alter, separate or play with” the shape of hard rock in nature as well as in the workroom. This includes wheels mounted on smaller grinding and polishing machines that produce micro-sized particles which would otherwise become airborne. There are a number of ways to protect yourself and others from the fallout of small and large airborne particulate matter. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) – gloves, long pants, long sleeves/protective outerwear. The use of a mask and eyewear should be routine. Safety should also include protecting others in the vicinity if you are working on a machine. Ellery Borow recommends positioning yourself as a possible shield and rigging barriers of fabric or tarp to avoid particles from becoming projectiles, especially if children are nearby. Always make sure to check the water supply and drainage system when you use cutters and grinders.

The need to abide by these standard safety regulations is especially important because of the possible negative, cumulative and irreversible effects on our respiratory systems.

Got a Good Sole?

Important advice for members going to Herkimer mine and similar outdoor destinations!

Ellery Borow, AFMS Newsletter – 4/17

Apart from donning safety glasses, gloves, protective clothing, insect repellent and sun screen, diggers should come equipped with sturdy footwear with deep treads to ensure a safer experience when mining. Tread pattern on soles must allow the foot to get a good grip on slopes and hold firmly in all directions. Flexibility and resilience of the sole material is another concern. The best shoe/boot depends on the terrain's composition and abrasiveness. If walking involves getting wet, especially over mossy rocks and slippery decomposing surfaces, Ellery Borow recommends a soft sole with great gripping power although his best recommendation is to try to keep one's feet dry under any circumstance. A final caveat: Consider wearing strong or safety toe footwear to protect against dropped rocks, abrasive, rocky surfaces and biting insects in “critter inhabited” areas.

We Think You Would Enjoy Our Club!

By Leona Keeley

The vitality of any club depends upon several factors: an interesting purpose, and the enthusiasm of the members to learn and use their talents to encourage and teach others.

The bylaws of our club states: “The purpose of the Nassau Mineral Club is to stimulate interest in all phases of geology, minerology, gemology, paleontology and the lapidary arts.”

The Nassau Mineral Club has had many talented and generous people who have led the club in various areas of interest: faceting, cabuchon polishing, wire wrapping, microminerals and field work. We have a workroom equipped with machines to cut, shape, polish and bake stones, metals and enamels. We help one another and sometimes bring in outside professionals to teach. The club alerts members to field trips and gem shows.

Two members who regularly volunteer to teach the public about science and attract new members at gem shows are Joe Austin and Leona Keeley. Using specimens from the far outposts of space to the depths of the earth's crust and oceans, they share their love of science with members of the club and visitors to gem shows, where they regale the visitors with mineral specimens and fossils prior to introducing them to the benefits of belonging to a science club.

“Have you ever held anything from Outer Space?” intones Joe, offering one of his meteorites for a visitor's examination.

“Have you ever seen a million-year-old insect imprisoned in a rock?” asks Leona, inviting a young student for a peek through a microscope at an ant inside a piece of amber.

Leona, a former marine biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, later went on to teach science in middle school for 22 years. Read all about Joe’s interesting background and life in this issue’s **“Spotlight On...”** feature that follows this article.

Both have enjoyed contributing their talents and experiences to the Nassau Mineral Club. They bring their collections of minerals, seashells, fossils, and jewelry to the Queens County Farm Fair each September, to excite visitors and interest them in the mineral club. “We're like a traveling museum”, says Joe. “But the visitors are allowed to touch the specimens!”

Leona offers special interests for children. “If you can attract the child, you can also pull their parents over to your table, too. Then you can hand them a club brochure!” Often the child will go home with a science project done at the NMC table. “Last year, a parent thanked me for having a different project each year!”, says Leona.

Everyone likes “Free Stuff”!

Sometimes visitors want to talk about their own experiences in science. Last year, a man ran home to pick up a specimen and return to show it to Joe and talk to him about it!

Scientific and craft projects are good exercises for the brain! They keep the frontal cortex of your brain healthy! Scientist say that this type of activity may delay the onset of dementia in the older person.

Preparing an exhibit is hard work for the exhibitor, but lots of fun for the visitor. It sometimes takes Leona a month to prepare for her projects for children at the fairs and shows.

But the look on children's faces when they see the project and complete it, is worth it!

“Interested in joining the Nassau Mineral Club? I have some brochures here...!”



In this section, we feature some NMC members who shed light on who we are and what we're about.

Spotlight on: JOSEPH AUSTIN



For nearly three decades Joe Austin has been an integral part of Nassau Mineral Club. Upon joining, he was immediately recruited to be its meeting organizer and later elected president, a position he held for many years. His longstanding involvement in promoting the club's goal of educating the public about minerals, and enlightening NMC members with presentations on topics of interest, has led to a burnished notoriety over time. At mineral and gem exhibitions he's regularly greeted with handshakes and smiling faces by members, professionals and vendors as he and others welcome visitors to the NMC booth and encourage them to join the club. A born teacher, he captures the curiosity of children and parents alike with intriguing questions: "Have you ever wondered what a piece of star feels like?", or, "Interested in seeing some natural rocks that glow blue and green in the dark?" He was recently honored by the historical Queens County Farm Museum for educating visitors over many decades on behalf of NMC.

Not surprisingly he's also one of a handful of mentors who conduct workshops on lapidary at our Saturday meetings where ideas are shared on everything from mineral identification to faceting gemstones. He always takes time to show new members how to cut and polish a cab or wire wrap, and his personal trove of lapis lazuli, malachite, labradorite, turquoise, faceted stones and Ethiopian opal are proof of the

skill used in their selection and finishing. *Insider's Tip:* Buy Ethiopian opals for their quality and affordability before the country's harvest comes to an end. The best Ethiopian stones today are among the world's finest. They rival Australian opals which are now almost exhausted. By comparison, Mexican opals have a higher moisture content and are more likely to crack or craze unless dried very carefully over time before being set in jewelry.

Joe Austin's professional career path has been a winding and exciting one. It might have taken a different turn early on had funds for biomedical research been more plentiful when he first graduated with a degree in the sciences. He later added a degree in electrical engineering. At the U. of Pittsburgh, his alma mater, Joe was hired in the 1950s by Dr. Jonas Salk, a still unknown, dedicated immunologist, who was studying the polio virus there. He describes the six years spent in the researcher's histology lab as "inspiring, ground-breaking, and plagued with financial problems". The small group of research assistants, associates and Dr. Salk barely survived on contributions from the March of Dimes, known then as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis (NFIP). Federal funding did not exist. When Dr. Salk found a method to cultivate a non-paralytic virus that led to the production of what is still the world's safest polio vaccine, the resultant fame and funding led him to California and the U. of Pittsburgh team disbanded.

Following the dissolution, Joe became an electrical engineer at Grumman Aerospace on LI. He was assigned to work on the lunar module project in the 1960s during NASA's heyday and perhaps this fueled his abiding passion in cosmology. It was a politically competitive period. There was intense pressure to be the first nation to land a space craft on the moon. Hearing Joe's stories of behind-the-scene incidents that helped lead to America's successful moon landing in 1969 breathes life into the human endeavor behind the headlines. Today, Joe's encyclopedic knowledge of cosmology - outer space - is demonstrated during the informative lecture-discussions he gives on meteorites, comets and their properties for guests at Garvies Point Museum and elsewhere. Currently, he is writing a guide on meteors and comets for young people.

Joe Austin is a quiet, unassuming man who has led a most extraordinary life and continues to contribute into his nineties. We are truly fortunate to have him as a senior member and mentor of the Nassau Mineral Club.

Birthstones for the Months of June, July and August

(Updated from Nugget archives - Vol. 2, Issue 2 (6/05-8/05))

There are three stones typically listed for June – The Pearl, Pink Tourmaline and sometimes, Alexandrite.



The “stone” most often associated with June is the Pearl, which is not a natural stone but a concretion formed by a mollusk. The pearl is made of aragonite, the same composition as calcite. At one time Japan held the market on manufacturing cultured pearls but its dominance is now challenged by other countries, including Sri Lanka, India, Bahrain and islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Gem grade pink tourmaline is mined in California, Maine, Brazil and Africa, among others. It has a hardness of 7 – 7.5. The stone varies in color from pastel pink to hot pink and its cost is based on depth of color saturation. Alexandrite is sometimes included as a birthstone but its rarity and cost may make it less popular than the other June minerals.

The stone for July is the Ruby, with a hardness of 9. The Burma ruby has long been used as the standard of quality for the mineral also known as red corundum. While quantities are still mined in Burma (now



Myanmar), fine rubies are also found in Thailand, East Africa and elsewhere. A stone’s color reflects its origin. Thai rubies are somewhat more purple while those from Africa have a more brownish hue than the red of Burma rubies. Because corundum is the hardest mineral on earth after the diamond, rubies are very durable and can handle daily wear. Synthetic varieties have been manufactured since the late 1800’s.

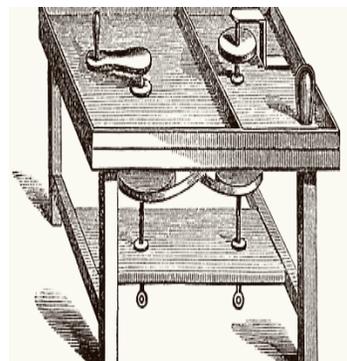
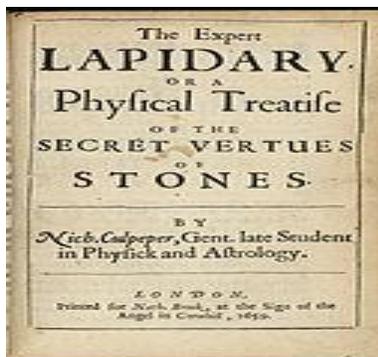
Peridot is the August birthstone. It has a mohs’ hardness of 6.5-7. Fine peridot is a vivid, dark apple green color and

when cut to proper proportions, it is full of life and brilliance. The mineral is often referred to as olivine and is mined on 5 continents. Although gems over 6 carats are quite rare and expensive, the largest found is on view at the Smithsonian and totals 310 carats!



Club Portfolio

A cornucopia of interests is nurtured at NMC!



At left, Maureen S's red plume agate pendant wrapped in copper wire. She learned the technique of wire wrapping at mentor/member Joe Austin's workshop this year.

The creation of unique rings is made possible by applying wire wrapping principles. Maureen incorporated a beautiful sodalite stone into the design of her unoxidized copper-wire ring. The sodalite cabochon was the first piece she finished under Mike T's guidance at NMC. The photos show her progressive work making the ring.



Diane A' designed a set of matching patterned pendant and drop earrings with crystals using the Natasha technique. She made them for the workshop she led on polymer clay jewelry this spring.



Atilio C's wall piece is an example of Arte Povera. He's currently working on constructing organic structures from discarded objects in nature and society. This sculpture is composed of pieces he collected from the banks of the Hudson River.



FYI: Arte Povera - "poor art" or "impoverished art" - was the most significant and influential avant-garde movement to emerge in Europe in the 1960s. It grouped the work of around a dozen Italian artists whose most distinctly recognizable trait was their use of commonplace materials that might evoke a pre-industrial age, such as earth, rocks, clothing, paper and rope. Their work marked a reaction against the modernist abstract painting that had dominated European art in the 1950s, hence much of the group's work is sculptural.

Reference: www.theartstory.org

WILDACRES NOTIFICATION

This news item was published in the February edition of EFMLS News. Several members from our club who have gone found the workshops an enriching experience. The form to register is at: <http://efmls-wildacres.org/resources/WA-Registration-2017.pdf>; Be sure to register for the classes you want to attend. Some fill quickly. The workshops are listed at: <http://efmls-wildacres.org>

EFMLS NEWS

Volume 64, Number 4 February, 2017

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Fabulous Fall at Wildacres by Steve Weinberger, WA Committee Chair

Get ready to be a part of a fabulous fall EFMLS Wildacres Workshop! The dates are September 4 - 10, 2017 and our speaker in residence is Timothy Morgan. The line-up of classes as always is stellar so you can exercise your creative juices and learn (or reinforce) a new skill. See page 11 for the complete list.

...

A week long session at the lovely Wildacres Retreat is \$410 per person which includes your tuition, room and board plus gratuities for the Retreat permanent staff. Meals are served family style in the lovely Wildacres dining room and bedrooms are lovely, each with it's own private bathroom. Classes are held in the numerous, well-equipped Wildacres classroom facilities.

EFMLS has been holding workshops at the Wildacres Retreat since 1973 and over the years, our sessions have grown in both content and variety. Past Speakers-in-Residence have included a variety of museum curators, gem and jewelry experts, authors and mineralogists. Over the years, many of our speakers have asked to come back and we've been delighted to have them because of their popularity. Bob for example is making his 10th? or so appearance with us and he's never failed to enthuse us with his personality and knowledge.

Wildacres sessions include other activities besides classes. Our activity day usually includes the opportunity to participate in an organized field trip, a fun tail gate session where you and your friends can sell or swap items you've brought, a few short educational programs given by some of your fellow participants, or a chance to go off and explore the area on your own. We also have a terrific auction where we sell hobby related items and on another evening a "show and tell" where we can all learn about the "other" classes that were offered during the session and see things that were made in them. We also sometimes have a fun night with humorous stories and skits, musical interludes and horrific puns.

If you've never attended an EFMLS Wildacres Workshop, or if you've been there before, now's your chance. Look over the classes being offered, fill in that registration form (page 12) write your tuition check, and pop it in the mail. The earlier you register the better your chance of getting into the class or classes of your choice!