

THE COCHISE COUNTY ROCK

Monthly Newsletter of the Sunsites Gem & Mineral Club

<https://sites.google.com/site/cochisecountyrock/>
<http://picasaweb.google.com/cochisecountyrock/>

“Finding and Grinding Rocks in Cochise County, Arizona since 1965”

February 2015

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The next **GENERAL MEETING** of the Sunsites Gem & Mineral Club is on Monday, February 9, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sunsites Community Center.

PROGRAM:

John Townley currently resides in Pearce, AZ

He bought his first mineral specimen (fluorite) in London, U.K in 1971. That was the beginning of a 10 year study into the aesthetic and sculptural phenomenon of the crystalline world. Seeing so many specimens stored away in boxes, he began a quest to marry specimens to wood and stone and steel that these crystal forms could be held up to the light so that their beauty might shine and the viewer be left in wonder and awe. To date, he has set perhaps 2,000 pieces, sold in galleries, shows and schools in the U.S. and Europe.

From 1971-1977, Mr. Townley completed the Waldorf Teacher Training at Emerson College, Sussex, U.K. as well as the sculpture training course. At Englebert, Germany he completed the 2 year traditional German guild furniture making apprenticeship. He had a custom furniture shop in Santa Fe, N.M. in the 1980s and established a sculpture school in Sapello, N.M. From 1992 to 2001 he taught in the Waldorf Schools in England and throughout the U.S. As well as in the N.M. prison system and 10 years teaching carving in the N.M. public schools through the N. M. Arts Division. To date he has taught wood and stone carving to several thousand children and adults.

Mr. Townley’s PRESENTATION WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 7PM, followed by a short break with the General Business Meeting following.

The Field Trip to 3 Sisters was a HUGE success with 28 members & guests present. Everyone came down the mountain with lots of "square round rocks" (i.e. garnets). Photos from the 3 Sisters Field trip may be viewed on our Picasa site (<http://picasaweb.google.com/cochisecountyrock/>)

Meeting Minutes to be approved from the Gem and Mineral Club on 1/12/2015

Elliott Hendricks, president, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Twenty-two members present and three new members.

Treasurer Walter Sigel reviewed the annual report which was approved. He then went over the budget for 2015. We have added a provision for fuel compensation for scouting trips by the field trip coordinator. \$250 is allocated for the year and may or may not be claimed. The amount budgeted for lapidary supplies was lowered by \$50. The budget as approved shows a deficit of \$200.

Elliott announced that Cheryl will no longer serve as hospitality coordinator. The position remains vacant. The coordinator will ensure that those who sign up to bring food items are reminded and serve as backup when plans change. Bette will assume those duties until someone elects to serve. Tony Crumly will provide drinks.

Don Hammer and Irvin Pontious will coordinate the lapidary shop. Don says the shop should be operational before the next meeting and meet times will be announced. The cost to users will remain at \$2.00 a visit. This will allow members to cut into rocks and ultimately polish promising pieces. No experience is required.

Zoe Schnabel will no longer produce the newsletter. Rhyna Giudice, Bette and Elliott will produce the next few as a cooperative effort until Rhyna feels comfortable assuming the task.

Our President will try to explain the geology and mineralogy points of interest, especially the nature of the upcoming field trips.

Tony ran the raffle and refreshments were provided by Bette and Rhyna.

Respectfully submitted by Bette Greene, Secretary.

OFFICERS 2015

President:	Elliott Hendricks	520-824-4774
Vice President:	Tony Crumly	520-826-2566
Secretary:	Bette Greene	617-688-1474
Treasurer:	Walter Sigel	520-826-1009
Del. At Large:	Carl Schnabel	520-826-0100

Hospitality Coordinator:	Cheryl McLaughlin	520-507-1750
Speaker Coordinator:	Don Hammer	520-384-3105
Field Trip Coordinator:	Carl Schnabel	520-826-0100
Newsletter:	Rhyna Giudice	520-826-0200

DUES ARE DUE!

Walter would like to remind everyone that if you have not paid your 2014-2015 dues, please do so! The deadline is next month in March and if you are delinquent you will be dropped from the membership, not allowed to participate in field trips or use the lap lab and you will no longer receive the monthly newsletters.

Yearly Single Membership \$15.00

Yearly Family Membership \$25.00

CLUB CALENDAR

February

9th General Membership Meeting

26th Board Meeting

March

9th General Membership Meeting

April

2nd Board Meeting

13th General Membership Meeting

May

11th General Membership Meeting

28th Board Meeting

June

6th Picnic (Tentative)

FIELD TRIP:

The field trip is scheduled for Sunday February 15th.

We will meet at 9:00 a.m.

Take Interstate 10 to Exit 281 on to South Route 83, on the right hand side there is a parking area, this is where we will meet to begin our adventure!

There has been a request for a Sunday trip to this site. If there is a problem with the Sunday field trip, then please attend the General Meeting and we will discuss it.

The field trip will be to the Helvetia Mining District. We went there last May and everyone wanted a return trip in cooler weather. This area boasts some of the most historically prolific mines. Many are now abandoned but the tailings piles remain. Some of the minerals to be found include calcite & quartz, lots of copper ores which include chrysocolla, malachite and bornite as well as green epidote and pyrite.

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Upcoming Events:

Tucson Gem & Mineral Show starts on Jan 29 and runs through Feb 15. Visit the W 22nd St Mega Tent. Free Admission. Meet the cast of the TV show “Prospectors” selling their finds. Vendors will also be at the Kino location, free as well. Check out EonsExpos.com

61st Annual Gem and Mineral Show by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society is proudly presenting “Minerals of Western Europe” at the Tucson Convention Center. Feb. 12-15, 2015. For more info visit www.tgms.org

Amethyst: SiO₂. Amethyst is a violet variety of quartz which and owes its color mostly to iron impurities and other trace elements. It occurs in hues from a light pinkish violet to deep purples and may also exhibit red and blue colors. Arizona is the proud home of Four Peaks Amethyst, regarded as producing some of the highest quality Amethyst gemstone material in the world. Birthstone of February.

Helvetia Mining District

Named by miner Ben Hefti in honor of his native Switzerland, Helvetia became a boomtown in 1875, when two entrepreneurs discovered vast reserves of copper ore in the northern end of the Santa Rita Mountains.

Omega Copper Co. and Columbia Mining and Smelting Co. were the first major developers of the Helvetia Mining District. The first mine, Old Frijoli, was located in 1880 by Bill Hart and John Weigle. Other mines included Old Dick, Heavyweight and Tally-Ho discovered by L. M. Grover. The first smelter was completed in 1882 and by 1883 twenty claims had been recorded in what became known as Helvetia Copper Group.



Unfortunately, that same year, the depression of copper prices and poor management caused the mining operations to cease production. It would be nearly a decade before a second boom would begin, thanks in part to Thomas Edison's newest invention – the light

bulb. Demand for copper wiring soared, sending miners back to work and new developers to the area.

By 1899, the Helvetia Copper Company of New Jersey was operating the largest mining camp in Pima County, employing nearly 500 men. Within a dozen years, several permanent company buildings, a line of tents, adobes and grass shanties to house workers, 4 saloons, a hotel, post office, school, Chinese laundry, shoe maker and butcher shop had sprung up from the dirt. Two Tucson stage lines regularly carried passengers to and from Helvetia.



Workers, organized by the Western federation of Miners, were paid \$1.25 to \$1.50 a day for surface work and \$3.00 a day to work underground. It was the merchants, however, who made money, grossing \$10,000 a month at the peak of mining activity. Helvetia became the third largest school district in Pima County, with nearly 100 students enrolled in the tiny school house during one year. Disaster befell the Helvetia Mining District in 1900. In December, with the smelter running at full capacity, a large mass of slag ran onto the wooden floor of the building, igniting timbers and burning it to the ground. The fire served a crushing blow to the Helvetia Copper Company, and although the smelter was rebuilt in 1902, the company never recovered.

The Michigan and Arizona Development Company acquired controlling interest in the Helvetia Copper Company a year later and built yet another smelter. Work was concentrated on the most profitable claim, keeping the business alive until 1911, when the low price of copper forced the mine to close and its machinery to be sold.

Sporadic mining activity continued throughout the 1920's, with small, intermittent shipments of ore by lessees. In late 1923, with fewer than 10 students left in the local school, it was shut down for good and the city fathers moved away.

Copper production hit a small peak between 1944 and 1947, and it's estimated that by 1950 the Helvetia Mining District had produced 17,000,000 pounds of copper worth approximately \$4,000,000.

There was little activity at the site in the 1950's and by 1960 Helvetia was occupied by transients living in the abandoned buildings, including the Rosemont Hotel. The old structures were bulldozed a short time later. **The information below was copied from this website:** <http://rosemontcopper.com/historic-mining-district.html>