

Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club of Dallas, TX

Chips and Chatter



Member: South Central Federation of Mineral Societies



Affiliated: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



May 2021

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1st Place, 2019 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin
1st Place, 2020 SCFMS Mini-Bulletin
1st Place, 2017 AFMS Mini-Bulletin

GOLD, GOLD, GOLD!

Don Shurtz, Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas

Pictured to the right is the Dragon's Lair Gold specimen currently on display at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science. It contains 921 troy ounces (63 pounds) of Gold and is the second-largest piece of gold in existence. It was found in the Royal Nickel Corporation's Beta Hunt Mine, Kambalda, Western Australia. But there is a story behind this spectacular gold specimen. The specimen is currently owned by The Pinnacle Collection

For as long as the Royal Nickel Corporation's Beta Hunt Mine had been open, it produced primarily Nickel. Some minor amounts of other metals (including gold) had been found, but mostly Nickel. Now Nickel is nice, but production costs in the mine were not going down, but the price of Nickel on the open markets had been decreasing. A decision

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had been made to sell the mine. For six months the owners had negotiated a deal with another company to sell the mine, but the negotiations were always towards a lower price. A deal was finally reached and would close on September 3, 2018. On September 2, 2018 (Father's Day in Australia), it was business as usual for the miners. One final explosive blast was planned on that "last" day. No one expected it, but the blast opened up a huge Gold Pocket which became known as the "Father's Day Pocket". The amount of Gold in the pocket was estimated at over \$15 million. Needless to say, when the potential buyers for the mine arrived on September 3, 2018, they were not so politely told that the mine was no longer for sale.

The blast that opened the Father's Day Pocket exposed many notable gold pieces, but in particular, were two very large gold specimens. The smaller was named Warren for the mine foreman, Warren Edwards. The larger piece was named King Henry for the miner that drilled the holes for the dynamite that opened the pocket, Henry Dole. Both large specimens went to the Australian Mint in Perth for their initial examinations and display. Both were examined in detail. The King Henry piece, the largest known gold specimen in existence in the world, was estimated to have 1402 troy ounces of gold. The Warren piece, the second largest known Gold specimen in existence in the world, had an estimated 893 troy ounces. Not too bad for a Nickle Mine, bringing down both the largest and second-largest Gold Specimens in existence in a single mining blast! The outline to the right shows the approximate size of Warren on top of King Henry. Both pieces have about the same length, but the girth of King Henry is bigger. The purity of the Gold in both specimens was about 0.95 fine (23 karat). It was believed that the larger of the two pieces would likely become an Australian National Treasure and would remain in the National Mint. Both pieces were retained by the Mint while geologists and other experts examined the pieces with numerous techniques and finally decided that both were likely to have contiguous gold and not likely become two or more pieces as they were cleaned for display. Thus, the King Henry specimen would be retained as a National Treasure (the mine would be compensated for the piece). The Warren piece was returned to the Royal Nickle Corporation. The owners wanted to sell Warren but they were also under pressure to crush Warren to extract the gold for more operating revenue. However, a potential buyer offered them sufficient incentives to keep the piece intact until they could obtain a final export clearance. Both pieces were displayed at the 2019 Tucson show in their "raw" state, then the Warren piece was sent to China for the 2019 Hunan Gem and Mineral Show while the King Henry Piece was sent to London, England for display at the Gold Investor Conference. The Warren piece was then delivered to the Collector's Edge in Colorado for initial cleaning. (*Editor's note – We introduced the Collector's Edge in prior editions of the Chips and Chatter for their work with Rhodochrosite at the Wutong Mine in China and the Sweet Home Mine in Colorado*). Collector's Edge spent over 300 man-hours cleaning the Warren piece. They primarily worked with air scribes – tiny air-powered vibrators using a small stylus or chisel. The air scribe is one of the main tools used to clean fossils. They also used hydrofluoric acid to dissolve some of the quartz. After the initial cleaning and quartz removal, the Warren specimen again went to Tucson for the 2020 show. The piece was then returned to the Collectors Edge to finish the cleaning. As they worked, they noted that a figure of a Dragon was emerging from the top of the specimen. Mythology tells us that Dragons stayed at their lair where all the gold they accumulated was stored. It seemed appropriate to rename the specimen as the "Dragon's Lair" specimen.

Black outline – King Henry



Grey outline - Warren.

The Dragon's Lair Gold specimen is now on display at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science. All of the quartz and gold removed by air scribes during cleaning are displayed with the specimen. This process caused some gold not directly attached to the specimen to be removed – i.e., quartz pieces attached to the specimen but also attached to small gold pieces not attached to the specimen. However, if that is not enough, the specimen is displayed one case away from another Pinnacle Collection specimen – the Ausrox, a 51.3-pound Gold Nugget named Ausrox. Ausrox was also found in Western Australia. Thanks to King Henry and Dragon's Lair gold pieces the Ausrox was demoted from third largest to the fifth-largest Gold nugget in existence.

Ausrox is also not without its own story. Ausrox was found in April 2010 by three prospectors working with a small tractor and a metal detector. The prospectors were not associated with any companies, just three men out to make a living. They found the Ausrox in the Eastern Goldfields near Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, Australia. Regarding finding the gold, an interesting story indicated the miners had to dig down three times, a foot at a time before they reached the top of the nugget. However, it turns out it really was a fantasy story. According to a very reliable source (the owner), Ausrox was buried about two feet down. The miner's tractor could dig a hole a little bigger than three feet deep per bucket full. The nugget was found on the first try. They had a very strong gold detection with their metal detector. They unearthed the nugget about the size of a basketball and weighing over 50 lbs. There was some quartz still in the gold, but the gold content turned out to be 51.29 pounds (749 troy ounces). The purity of the gold was about 0.92 fine (22 karat).



Ausrox was first offered to Australian Museums, investors, and government, but was eventually sold to an investor in the United States. There was a lot of pressure from various organizations to keep the nugget in Australia, but in the end, it was a matter of economics. However, it did take over two years for a permanent export license to be procured. During that time there was a lot of discussion on the Internet and print media about declaring the specimen as a National Treasure to keep it in Australia. No one in Australia (including the Australian government) was willing to match the U.S. buyer's offer, so it was sold and exported. During the two years of waiting for the export license, Ausrox was displayed at museums in Melbourne and Kalgoorlie. Ausrox was one of the original pieces on display at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science when it opened in December 2012. Ausrox has alternated between the Perot Museum and the Houston Museum of Natural Science. It was featured at the Munich Mineral Show in 2013. Ausrox was also displayed at the 1st China Mineral and Gem Show (Changsha Show) in 2013. It was sad to see a blank display case at the Perot Museum while Ausrox traveled the world, but being on display at other shows enhanced the prestige of the specimen and the Perot Museum.

References:

- Spectacular rare gold specimens unearthed at Beta Hunt Mine, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/>
- Discovery Channel, <http://www.discoverychannel.com.au/image-galleries/gold-nuggets>
- WA Today, <https://www.watoday.com.au/national/western-australia/>
- Mindat.org, First Changsha Mineral and Gem Show, <https://zh.mindat.org/>
- Wilson, Wendell E, Editor in Chief and Publisher, The Mineralogical Record, March – April 2021, Vol. 52 Num. 2, Copyright © 2021 by the Mineralogical Record Inc.

Pictures and overlay drawing by Don Shurtz

From the Desk of the President

Judy Beck, AFMS President 2020-2021
From the February AFMS Newsletter

Greetings Friends!

Spring has officially sprung here in Kansas, and we are enjoying trees blooming, some sun, and our usual Kansas winds! J. got our camper out for the first time this year, and we enjoyed a quick trip to Kearney, Nebraska to see the Sandhill Cranes. That is a spectacular sight; if you ever get the opportunity go see them!

This month I want to touch a little on communication. It is the primary focus of our ad hoc committees for the Long-Range planning committee. Our website is being designed to be extremely user-friendly for not only our clubs and federations but for people seeking information on how to connect with a show or a club. We are really excited to show you the hard work from this group. At the show in Big Piney, the Junior's committee is going to be presenting information not only on the website side of things but some practical tips for starting a Junior's program in your club. I can't begin to express how thankful I am for this group of people that have stepped up to make a difference in the American Federation!

So, what can you do to help with the communication lines? There are several things that you can do. When you have a change in personnel or any other contact information, please let Cheryl Neary know in the Central Office. She LOVES to hear from you! A BIG thanks to the Midwest and Rocky Mountain for the directories that I received this past month! That is a great way for us to keep in touch! Our newsletter editor, Sue Webb, would love to have your articles about newsworthy items that would be of interest to our readers.

I'm appreciative of the communication I have received from those who reach out to me to share their thoughts and ideas. I read the newsletters that I receive and enjoy them a lot!

Going back to our new website, Lori Carter who has worked tirelessly on building this new site is looking for photographs that we can place on the website. She is looking for pictures that demonstrate educational activities, field trips, shows, and specimens. If you have a great snapshot, send it to Lori at Webmaster2@amfed.org. Be sure and put where the picture was taken, what it is a picture of, and who should receive credit for the image.

I'm heading to my first rock show in over a year this weekend! We're looking forward to the show in Abilene, TX with the Central Texas Gem & Mineral Society. Big Piney continues in their planning process and I sure hope that you all can make it out for our annual convention June 17-20th! I think that Wyoming needs to make Cheryl Neary an ambassador for the state after the wonderful Why-Why-Wy-oming? articles that she has written. She has definitely generated excitement for our show!

Wishing you all a wonderful springtime and many wonderful field trip finds!

Shows and Activities – Upcoming Show and Activity Dates

Please note that many shows are being canceled in response to health concerns associated with COVID-19
Check with the show contact to verify the show status

- MAY 22-23, Tyler, TX, Keith Harmon Show & Sale, East Texas Fair Grounds, keithharmon19@yahoo.com
- MAY 29-30, Fort Worth, TX, Fort Worth G&MC, Will Rogers Memorial Center, www.fortworthgemandmineralclub.org
- JUN 18-20, Big Piney, WY. Sublette County. Rock Hounds, Sublette County Fairgrounds, AMFS & RMFMS Conventions

Ref:

- September - October 2020 SCFMS Newsletter
- Rock & Gem Show Dates, <https://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=ALL>

VISIT AN AREA CLUB

[Arlington Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 1408 Gibbins, Arlington, TX
[Cowtown Gem, Mineral, & Glass Club](#), meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm, CERA 3300 Bryant Irvin Rd. Fort Worth
[Dallas Bead Society](#), meets 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at The Point at CC Young, 4847 W. Lawther Dr., Dallas, TX
[Dallas Gem & Mineral Society](#) meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, American Legion, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas (next to their shop)
[Dallas Paleontological Society](#), meets 2nd Wed. of each month at 7:00 pm, Brookhaven College, Building H, 3939 Valley View Lane, 75244
[Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, 3545 Bryan Avenue, Ft. Worth
[Oak Cliff Gem & Min Soc.](#), meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church, 3839 W. Keist Blvd, Dallas,
[Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club](#), meets the 1st Thur. of each month at 7:30 pm, Garland Women's Activities Bldg., 713 Austin, Garland
[Wild West Bead Society](#), meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30, Wild Beads, 2833 Galleria Dr., Arlington, TX



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ling Shurtz, POGMC President

IGEM was small, but sales were good considering the size of the crowd.

The building rental will be due soon. We need to continue discussions about meeting place and club status.

CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2021

President: Ling Shurtz
1st VP, Programs: Carolyn Grady
2nd VP, Field Trips: Open
Secretary: Cheryl Ogletree
Treasurer and Editor: Don Shurtz
E-mail: don.shurtz@gmail.com,
L.SHURTZ@gmail.com

MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2021

POGMC President Ling Shurtz called the April 1, 2021 club meeting to order at 7:40 pm.

We recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Quorum: We have a quorum

Sunshine Report:

Linda Dallas needs 2 hip replacements
Patti Mitchell is doing OK

Visitors: There were no visitors

Minutes: We reviewed the minutes of the March meetings as printed in the April 2021 Chips and Chatter. Julie made a motion to accept the minutes. Hatt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Don read the Treasurer's Report for April. Cheryl made a motion to accept the minutes. Warner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Old Business:

- IGEM show was successful – small but busy

New Business:

- Next meeting: Taco Tuesday on Thursday
Potluck - to celebrate Cinco de Mayo (one day

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late). A discussion was held about who would bring what – see enclosed Meeting Flyer

- Club meeting place. The room bill will be due soon, and the GAB is not inexpensive (\$600.00 last several years). What options are available.
 - Continue as is
 - New Meeting Place
 - Disband club
- Area shows and events
 - April 7 - 18, Tucson, AZ, JOGS International Exhibits, Tucson Expo Center, www.jogsshow.com
 - April 10 – 11, Abilene, TX, Central Texas G&MS, Taylor County Expo Center,
 - APR 25, Dallas, TX, Dallas G&MS Rock Swap, 10205 Plano Rd, Dallas, 75238, <https://www.dallasgemandmineral.org>

Break

Presentation: The presentation was to be about Uluru/Ayers Rock, Australia. However, the projection light bulb had failed so there was no formal presentation, just a friendly group discussion about this and that.

We held the Door Prize raffle

Ling adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm.

MEETING

Garland Activities Center

The next meeting will be a Potluck Dinner – Taco Tuesday on Thursday celebrating Cinco de Mayo. We will meet on May 6 **starting at 7:00 PM** for an informal mixer with the Taco dinner starting at 7:30. The following meeting will be on June 3, 2021, starting at 7:30 pm.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

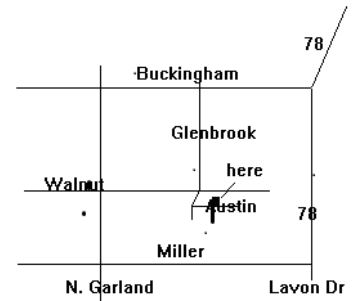
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PLEASANT OAKS GEM and MINERAL CLUB of Dallas



Meetings
 First Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM
 Garland Women’s Activities Building
 713 Austin St., Garland, TX
 (Northeast corner of Austin & Glenbrook)

Membership
 Single Adult: \$16.50,
 Junior: \$5.00, Family: \$27.50
 (Plus badge fee for new members)



PURPOSE: The Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is organized for charitable and educational purposes to promote interest in the various earth sciences, particularly those hobbies dealing with the art of cutting and polishing gemstones, the science of gems, minerals and metal crafts, as well as their related fields. Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club of Dallas is a Section 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization

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 Pleasant Oaks Gem & Mineral Club
 PO Box 831934
 Richardson, TX 75083-1934

To

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 6, Starts 7:00 PM – Taco Tuesday on Thursday Potluck

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