

January 2022



# OCMS SHALE MAIL



**Welcome to our hybrid Meeting Friday  
January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:30 pm!**

If your joining us in-person see you at: 81 Laroe Rd Chester, NY (Town of Chester Recreation Senior Center), (From KINGS HWY, Turn left on Laroe Rd by UPS office building)



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# President's Message!

By: Mike Tedford



# Meeting Min. Nov.12<sup>th</sup> 2021

By: Mark Kucera

Please join our OCMSNY January 14, 2022 meeting at the senior center this Friday. After a 630 PM business meeting, Doc Bayne will present life in Lakeville. We are planning a full-scale live meeting following the senior center guidelines of wearing masks. The agenda includes committee reports, old business, new business, and filling in some vacancies in our officer line up. We will also have refreshments and a mineral raffle.

Our December meeting featured a bountiful pot luck dinner and a holiday raffle with over 80 items. OCMSNY members and officers all deserve credit for adapting to accomplish a successful year of activities, speakers, mineral show, etc.

There were discussions of filling the positions of Secretary, VP Programs, and how we might accomplish the tasks of meeting minutes, scheduling programs and field trips. Gavin Hannah expressed interest in expanding his efforts in settling vendors on show day. Frank Vigilante expressed interest in organizing some field trips. Mike Tedford said that meeting minutes might be accomplished adequately by annotating meeting agenda as a starting point. Gary Kerstanski volunteered to take on the scheduling of program speakers. In retrospect, I believe these volunteers should be encouraged and recognized with official titles and that meeting minutes deserve a bit more attention than annotating meeting agenda. I hope we can fill out our officer ranks at the upcoming January meeting.

The November meeting was held as a hybrid meeting with twenty-three members at the



Senior Center in Chester, NY and five more on Zoom remotely. Mike Tedford welcomed everyone. He gave an introduction for Alex Kerstanski's lecture. He also asked if everyone was getting the Shale Mail. He reminded us that annual dues are due.

**Minutes:** The meeting minutes for the October meeting went out with the November Shale Mail. The minutes were accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report was read by Ron Nelson and accepted.

### Committee Reports:

**Show:** Ron mentioned that Naomi Hanson is now the director at Museum Village. The June show coordination will start up again soon.

**Webmaster:** No report.

**Newsletter:** Mike had already asked if everyone was receiving the Shale Mail. No problems reported this month.

**Field trips/digs/misc:** No field trips planned near term.

**Upcoming shows:** The Morris Museum in Morristown, NJ is holding a show on the weekend after Thanksgiving.

**Old Business:** Nothing offered in addition to the above.

**New Business:** Mark Kucera asked if we plan to continue sponsoring the two pages (The Location - Amity and Mineral - Warwickite). The cost per page has increased from \$100 to \$120 per year. Vote was taken and passed to continue supporting the two Mindat pages.

**Program:** Alex Kerstanski did a presentation recounting his Geology Field Camp, part of his SUNY Binghamton geology degree program.

# The Geology Field Camp Experience Plus Iceland!

By: Mark Kucera

Whether it was out of mercy or out of knowing the audience well, Alex kept the lecture on the lighter travelogue side of things, narrating slides. The heaviest comment I recall is talking about using a Brunton compass to take strike and dip measurements for mapping geological features. He did show some geological features that maybe pushed onto the technical side. He did also mention an average of six or eight miles of hiking per day under conditions certainly far from level at sea level. His occasional photo of a cactus plant maybe also implies there was more hazard involved than the glorious scenery would depict. Not inherent in visiting multiple National Parks, but as luck would have it, Alex also happened to be in the area during what may end up in the history books as the worst wildfire season ever. It sounds like their three weeks of planned camp sites got changed on short evacuation notice more than once due to wildfire encroachment. So, what was meant to be a field application of geology classroom principles maybe had some survival factors added to it.

I won't pretend to be able to recount all the great photos he showed but some highlights included:

Fossilized ripple marks with Alex's explanation of the indications from symmetry; wildfires both distant and closer than comfortable; glacial topography features; cacti hazards; rock formation cross stratification bedding; hot springs in Wyoming; chromite mine environment; residual snow in a glacial valley (remember this is Summer – but at significant elevation); bison, hot springs, Old Faithful in Yellowstone NP; Grand Teton NP; Crater of the Moon National Monument, Idaho showing different types of lava; Butte, MT and Glacier NP and stromatolites in MT. The last station for the geology field camp was Block Mountain in MT.

Alex also managed to squeeze into his Summer a trip to Iceland. He showed more photos including the capital of Reykjavik, the Gullfoss (Golden Falls?), some columnal jointing and photos of the South shore.

**After his presentation, Alex took questions.**

We certainly appreciate Alex recounting his Summer activities during the presentation and wish him the best completing his degree in a tough academic environment. We have had numerous geologists speak to the club over the years. Alex will be the first actual geologist that is an active member in recent years to my knowledge.



**Raffle:** A mineral raffle was held after the lecture of around sixteen items.

**For the good of the Club:** As always, we enjoyed refreshments brought in by the Nelsons.

**Next Meeting:** The Holiday Party and Chinese Auction is planned for next month. There will not be a speaker program.

# Life at Lakeville

By: Doc Bayne

**Lakeville was once a thriving community built to accommodate the employees and managers of Sterling Iron Works. There was a company store, a hotel homes and industrial buildings. Join Doc Bayne, local historian and educator, and learn what life was like for the miners and the families that lived in Lakeville 100 + years ago.**





# 2021 Christmas Collage!



# Birth of A Rock-Hound

By: Brigget Nesteroke

As a child under 12ish, I had a wonderful childhood in that I grew up without a television (still do not have one) which then meant that I and my siblings had to entertain ourselves and we did. From early morn to dinner time (we had to be called home because we were too busy playing often skipping lunch). We were outdoors whenever possible. We would roam through the woods discovering all sorts of things such berries to eat, different leaves on trees or holes in the ground large, small, or medium, or we would build forts with rocks that used make a boundary line for farmland. Moving rocks around to build a fort also meant recognizing the differences in the rocks we handled. Some rocks were heavy, others broke easily, others did not break easily, some rocks had sparkly stuff on it or different lines of different colors and so on. As junior high and then high school approached so did more homework and less play time; then it was off to college and a career in teaching. In College, I took a geology course which fascinated me and especially the field trip that we took.



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Greg and I took a trip to Hawaii after we were married in 1976 and we explored the big Island of Hawaii snorkeling in clear blue water which was like being in a fish tank as well as exploring the volcano and the lava tubes and the rain-forest in which we discovered ferns taller than us. It was customary to bring home a souvenir, BUT the "Made in Japan" souvenirs that had HAWAII printed on them was NOT my cup of tea AT ALL. I wanted something original, something that really meant Hawaii. An Orchid would die so would the Ley flower. So, what else could a souvenir be - - but a piece of lava- - genuine Hawaiian Lava.

When we bought the house we currently live in we also had a broken-down rock wall on our property and those rocks helped make flower beds, BUT every rock was inspected and I found, crystals, and fossils and other rocks with peculiar rock markings that went into my "rock garden". SOOO EXCITING!!!

When Greg and I go for walks, our heads are always down looking for what we can find (sometimes it is interesting mushrooms another whole different topic) and on this one trail, a former railroad bed, we usually find coal and we bring that home just in case we need it. However, sometimes we find interesting rocks to put in the rock garden. And whenever we go anywhere we bring home rock souvenirs, such as different colored marble from the Marble Museum in Proctor VT (to see the white Marble Church and white Marble Bridge near the church in Proctor (near Rutland VT) is a sight of beauty; or granite from the granite mine in Graniteville, VT or a piece of rock form Cadillac Mountain in Maine, and so on.

# January Babies

By: Alison Pacut

## The January Birthstone Poem

“By her who in this month was born  
No gem save garnets shall be worn  
They will ensure her consistency  
True friendship and fidelity.”



How many birthstones does January have? Some sites quote four while others say only one, the garnet. The red garnet is the most common for the month, This is because red is thought to be January's color in the traditional and modern sense. There are three red garnets starting with the most inexpensive, the pyrope garnet. It's red with either a brown or an orange tint, best to look for small stone as these will give the best color. The most desirable of the reds is the almandine garnet which often has a light violet tint but is a pure deep red. The rhodolite garnet is a little more expensive and is a violet red. The spessartite garnet is a red orange, has an exceptional brilliance and is used in high end jewelry. Hessonite is a brown red garnet colored by traces of manganese and iron and is also referred to as cinnamon stone.

A few of the other garnets are grossularite, it's a yellow golden green color, because it contains aluminum and calcium. Tsavorite, is one of the rarest, it's a pale to emerald green color by it's traces of chromium and vanadium. This stone can compete with fine emeralds in color but surpasses the emerald in hardness and brilliance. The demantoid garnet is a rare gemstone display-

ing the luster and brilliance of a diamond. Demantoid garnets are typically only found in small sizes and are very rare and incredibly expensive.

Garnets have a hardness of 7 - 7.5 on the Mohs scale of hardness. They are never treated making them completely natural.

The Italian and Russian calendars name the red zircon as a January birthstone. Red zircon is also known as hyacinth or jacinth however, it is more common in browns and yellows. According to the old Tibetan calendar emerald is the January birthstone. It is actually the green variety of beryl. Emerald is also



among the only four gemstones regarded as stones in our modern day. The Hindu calendar names serpent stone as the January birthstone. Green serpent stone is most likely serpentine, also known as viper stone or snake stone. Serpentine may also be a black stone. Hmmm, really, I became very intrigued by this so I dug a little more.

Dr. Linnea Smith from the Yanamono Medical Clinic in the remote Amazon Basin of northeastern Peru wrote, “The black stone is a fondly held concept in our area, where snake bites are common and sometimes fatal. When one lives far from ambulances, med-flights, hospitals, doctors and when one is confronted with a potentially lethal problem, anything seems better than nothing. Personally I'd rather have anti-venom, Then again if nothing else is available, what is one to do? The placebo effect is undoubtedly real. ...In any case, better that a person stricken by a snake have some hope than feel completely without recourse...”



## January Babies - Cont.

Is the black stone a mineral or a stone? No, the real black stone is not a stone at all but



rather the charred bones of animals. In Africa they use the large dry bone of a cow and cut it into small pieces which are then sanded with sand paper. The thigh bone pieces are then wrapped in foil and charred for fifteen or twenty minutes in the charcoal of a fire.

Dr. Linnea Smith reports that in Peru, a black stone is a small charred cow bone is, “applied to the site of a poisonous snakebite and tied firmly in place. It is left there for several days, during which time it supposedly draws the



venom from the wound. Once the poison is all removed, the ‘stone’ loosens of its own accord and falls off. ...despite the fact that the state nursing course book admits that no evidence has ever been produced to document the effective-

ness of the black stone, each student is required to make one as a part of the first aid module.”

Persian/Iranian writer Kazeini describes the snake-stone as being the size of a small nut. An injury inflicted by a venomous creature is to be immersed in warm water or sour milk. The snake-stone is then dropped into the liquid to supposedly draw out the poison.

Although many people believe in the black-stone as a viable treatment for snake bites there is no scientific evidence that the stone has any healing properties. Perhaps it does or maybe, just maybe, the belief of a miracle venom cure is enough.

Being a January baby myself, I found the research of this topic very interesting. I would one day like to own every color garnet. A red zircon, an emerald and a black stone. I suspect that most of them will be in there raw form, but I would like to collect some that I can wear.

Back to garnets, how about the black garnet. Melonite is a glossy black garnet gemstone that is sometimes referred to as “titanium andradite” due to its titanium content. It is one of the three varieties of the rare andradite garnet



group, and should not be confused with melonite, which is a telluride of nickel. Perhaps if I wear black garnet it will protect me from the effects of a snake bite, or any other kind of bites!

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