

August 2022



# OCMS SHALE MAIL



**Welcome to an in-person meeting Friday  
August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:30 pm!**

**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)

[CLICK FOR MAP](#)

## 2022 Calendar

**Aug 12**-Meeting at Chester Senior Center.  
**Sept 10-Saturday** Rock Barbecue at Chester Pavilion, NOT FRIDAY!  
**Oct 14**-Meeting, Senior Center  
**Nov 11**-Meeting, Senior Center  
**Dec 09**-Meeting, Holiday, Pot Luck Dinner & Mineral Chinese Auction.

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## Mailing Address:

254 Rt. 17K, Suite 204, Newburgh, NY 12550-8300

## President's Message!

By: Mike Tedford

Welcome OCMSNY members and new members to our live meetings. The next meeting is August 12<sup>th</sup> at the senior center.

We have had very hot and dry weather, suitable for visiting caverns, mines, streams and museums. My own plans were changed due to the heat. We do remain interested in planning field trips or other activities according to members interests. Please take time to say hello to other members that you might want to join in an activity.

Thank you to Doug Francisco, who spoke at our July meeting, complete with slides. E gave a first hand view of his mining years at Sterling Hill Mines (for the NJ Zinc Company) and currently volunteers at exhibits and tours there. The fifth oldest mine in the USA started as a quarry and grew to 35 miles of tunnels in 6 levels mining the veins of zinc and iron as pumps for water and air allowed.

### ***OCMSNY July 08,2022 Meeting Minutes***

Meeting hall and OCMSNY attendance sheets were completed, Name tags were issued. There were 25 attendees.

The Chester senior center COVID 19 precautions were observed including sign in, hand sanitizers, social distancing, and some attendees wore optional masks.

Meeting preparations included refreshments, Name badges, and the raffle table, There was no zoom component to the meeting,

OCMSNY president Mike Tedford called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 PM, welcoming the attendees.

Doc Bayne invited the club to attend tours and events at the Sterling Forest Visitors center. and brought an announcement/open invitation for 7/24/22.

Members confirmed they are receiving the emailed Shale Mail , and there were no minutes from June since the club held the mineral show and sale instead of a regular business meeting.

## Minutes of the Meeting!

By: Mike Tedford

Ron Nelson read the balances of the main checking account and show account.

Ron Nelson reported the Annual Mineral Show and Sale June 4 & 5, 2022 at Museum Village with record number of vendors, attendees and revenue.

Mike Tedford thanked all the members for their efforts and support in making the show/sale such a popular and successful event.

Ron Nelson has reserved the Chester barbecue pavilion for our rock barbecue on the Saturday following Labor Day weekend, We were reminded we will not have a business meeting or speaker both in September and December.

Ron Nelson has the photographers' show photos on his laptop and if you bring in a thumb drive Ron will transfer the photos to your drive.

Gary, Ron and Mike again discussed the options for ordering patches and hats in a side meeting. Mike Tedford will contact the original vendor Stadri for a reorder.

Our July speaker was Doug Francisco a retired miner at Sterling Hill Mine and still volunteers for tours exhibits, His slides showed first hand the mine map and diagrams, entrances, locker room, tunnels, tools and equipment, blasting procedure and techniques and more authentic details than could be imagined or described. Truly impressive.

More possibilities of field trips were discussed briefly. More than one person can be an event coordinator. Keep an ear out for possibly tagging along on a trip with any other club.

Our website and Facebook page continue to be updated.

Refreshments and raffle of 14 unique mineral specimens ensued and members stayed in discussions after the meeting adjourned.



# August 12<sup>th</sup> Lecture

By: Kenneth Daubert

Our meeting will be August 12<sup>th</sup> at the Senior Center. Kenneth Daubert will be lecturing us on the Amity Spinels. Unfortunately we are unable to zoom our meetings but the live meetings are fun so we hope to see you all there Friday night! Here is a little bit about Kenneth!



I was born and raised in Warwick, NY. My parents were born and raised in the area as well. Dad on a black dirt farm in Little York. Mom on a farm in Edenville.

After graduating Warwick HS in 1975 I traveled from Key West to Boulder, CO. I enjoyed many interesting jobs along the way, from Lob-



ster boat to assisting a Clinical Hypnotist. Headed back to NY to settle down. Married to Cathy, my wife of 43 years and raised two children. After many different truck jobs went back to school and received a Bachelors degree in Geology from SUNY at Stony Brook in 1983. After a 2 year career at an Environmental Test Lab in Long Island I changed careers and worked as a School Bus Transportation Supervisor for the next 35 years. Now retired I work part time at



Sterling Hill mine, NJ as tour guide and special projects.

I have been picking up rocks since I could walk.(First, out of self defense, I have 2 older Sisters) then out of curiosity and fascination.

My presentation will focus on the local history and Geology of the Amity Spinels. I will tell their story from the 1800s to present day and the characters involved. I Will present a short power point along with the 5 minute Glen Rhein Amity Spinel video.

**Also included** will be Amity spinel specimens from my collection as well as some free specimens for our members.

# ROCK BBQ - CHANGE OF LOCATION!



**Come Join the Fun!**

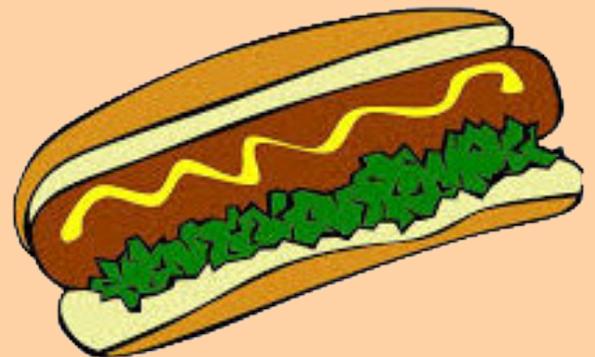


Please note our September meeting will be our Rock Barbecue on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at the pavilion behind the Chester Senior Center



**Visit with Friends!**

and uphill from the athletic fields. That is the Saturday following labor day. The pavilion there has charcoal barbecue. Last year our members brought an excellent assortment of dishes to enjoy. Please sign - up for what pot luck side dish, beverages, salad or desert you might bring to augment the OCMS-provided, burgers and hot dogs. If you want to barbecue your own entree the charcoal will be starting around noon.



**See You There!**

# Mining at Sterling Hill !

By: John Pacut

Doug worked at Sterling Hill for 12 years from 1974 - 1986 when it was shut down. He started out as a helper, moved up to a drill runner. Drill runners always worked in pairs together. Eventually he worked his way up to be a miner which increased his pay 25 cents an hour. The mine was basically 35 miles of underground tunnels equaling 2 empire state buildings deep. Over the years a thousand different men worked there to remove the zinc deposits.



Most of the shafts were at a 57 degree angle. The average temperature year round was around 55 degrees. Addits were the entrances to the mine. Ore cart tracks followed all of the shafts so that the ore could be taken out. Most of the men would have their own lamps that they would get from the lamp room which were charged over night and they would stay lit for 10 hours.

There was a change house where wet cloths could be put in baskets to dry and street cloths could be put in lockers.

## ***Formation of zinc:***

Brass is made up of zinc and copper and was particularly wanted during WW1 and WW2 that's why zinc mines were needed so badly during this period. During the Precambrian period this particular mine was under the sea because of tectonic shifts and seismic shifts. Salt water seeped into the mantle creating steam and volcanic smokers forming the black ore down 13 miles and folded and flowed onto itself.

300 Million years ago, mountain building

occurred when the mantle rose bringing the mantle closer to the surface. 3 different ice ages along with natural erosion exposed the outcroppings of the ore closer to the surface.

When the Dutch first settled here they thought the zincite was copper but, they were wrong. In the 1700's the Huguenots came and did a lot of iron mining. There are over 400 miles of iron mines in NJ alone. They used charcoal to separate the minerals but later on, coal was used to make the kilns hotter and remove the iron. Franklin marble was the host rock for the zinc ores.

During the early 1900's, Edison electrified lights, not only did this allow miners to use electricity to see but it also made it easier to see the zinc ores which fluoresced. Early mining was hard, back breaking work for the most part, it was done only by hand tools and the backs of men. Men learned to drill patterns in the rock and to use dynamite to blow sections in the mine.

In the 1500's they were surface quarrying, In 1913 the first shaft was drilled to 1850 feet deep and a new mill was created to process the ore. In 1932 a new shaft was drilled. They used magnets to separate the magnetite from the ore. In 1958 the new mill crushed everything that was underground to the size of your hand. Later on it was put on a conveyor belt so it could be crushed smaller, then smaller again until it was like sand.



# The Colorful Jaspers of Oregon

*This article was posted by: Keith Chip Allen on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 10:10 pm.*

“Toto, I don’t think we’re in Kansas anymore” (pic 1). No, we’re in Oregon to look at some of the beautiful Jaspers that come from there.

The name Jasper is derived from the old French language that means “spotted” or “mottled”. Like agate, a jasper mineral is originated from chalcedony (a type of quartz) and features iron oxides, hydroxides, and other impurities, which create unique color combinations: yellow, brick-red, brown, mottled green, and blue. Typi-



cally, jasper is spotted or striped, and multicolored. An adequate amount of mineral impurities make jasper opaque.



Most jaspers formed millions of years ago when gases in volcano lava had been trapped in rocks. As the gases escaped from the cooling and hardening rocks, hollows and cavities that called vesicles (amygdules) were formed. Progressively

vesicles became filled with silica-rich fluid and other mineral impurities such as iron oxides and hydroxides. Different flow patterns created a variety of jaspers in types and color.

**Owyhee:** This jasper comes from several claims, and goes by several names, though I typi-



cally just call it Owyhee Jasper, the tornado cab pictured is Owyhee. The 2nd picture is a piece of the original find and I’ll share this story shared to

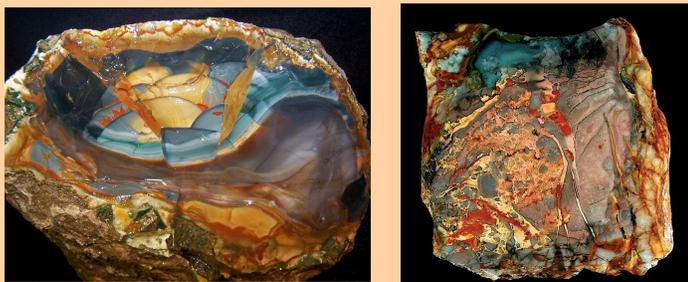


me by Steve Schultz of Silver Streams Northwest, who owns several claims in Oregon.

This is the original material found by 3 men hunting wild horses in the 1960s. They found this material, though they thought nothing of it, a local Boise rock shop started the picture stone craze. One year later, Steve’s dad opened up the first Owyhee Picture Stone claim and Steve has been mining it and several others ever since.

# The Colorful Jaspers of Oregon - Cont.

**Blue Mountain Jasper:** Blue Mountain Jasper is considered to be one of the premium jaspers that has been a favorite with the lapidary community. Known for its blue-green/gray orbs, it is a very hard material that takes a superior polish. It also comes in other shades, mainly brown and olive, and makes exquisite show pieces and finished cabs.



It's found in Eastern Oregon. Most of the time it has orb and/or line patterns in a blue-green color and sometimes other colors like gold, brown, beige, mauve, pink, coral, and red are mixed in.

**Biggs Jasper:** The discovery played a vital role in the evolution of the lapidary field. Many a lapidarist would not be involved with this fine hobby if it had not been for their awe struck inspiration in seeing a polished slab or cab of Biggs Picture Jasper...no other jasper created such a



“gold rush of excitement,” as did the Biggs Jasper discovery of 1964.

A great flood came and destroyed the canyons from the John Day River drainage, the Rufus drainage and Biggs junction drainage. Biggs

Junction, Oregon was totally marooned with no way in or out, except by air. The state relief would bring in bologna and bread.” The road crew was already there working on i-84 and they went to work re-building the washed out bridges. The flood had washed out these unusual looking boulders that were scattered about.

It was then that rockhounds were able to see the huge exposed deposits of Biggs Jasper. The flood waters had washed the dirt away that had concealed their hidden beauty for millions of years. Rockhounds would get the Biggs from the road crews, some road workers became rock-



hounds themselves...by then there was a chaotic rush to get this jasper as it was gaining international attention.

Howard Dolph, was one of the first to get in on the Biggs digs. The initial group was 25 to 30 rockhounds, including Shirts Quant, Hoot Elkins, Isami Sabota, Fred Dormier, and Jack Beers and it soon grew to hundreds. so much so that the road crew was having a hard time doing their work for fear of killing a hounder. So the supervisor demanded all rockhounds leave the area. Someone complained to then Governor McCall, who then interjected and allowed the rockhounds access to get as much of this fascinating rock out as possible before the road was paved. It was a mad rush.

# The Colorful Jaspers of Oregon - Cont.

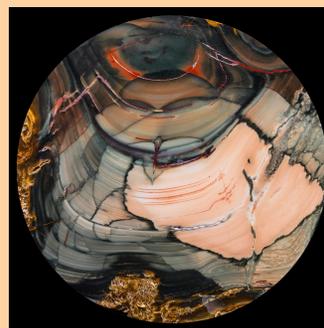
Biggs jasper seems to have developed from the muds of short-lived streams that evolved on the surface of a cooled basalt terrain. The raw materials (plastic colloids, silica, clay and iron) came from the weathering of recent igneous rocks and were deposited in the settling basins of stream channels. Heat and pressure from volcanic activity then served to form jasper, small creeping motions led to the marbled rosettes and picture designs. Biggs jasper is sandwiched between two basalt lava flows that cover Oregon, Washington and parts of Idaho.

**Morrisonite:** The most beautiful in the world "Morrisonite Jasper" with dark brown, tan and purple cores was found in 1947 in the Owyhee desert canyon, Southeastern Oregon. Morrison Ranch Jasper "Morrisonite" has been a sought after lapidary material since the 1950's.

One of the most outstanding ornamental gem stones found was named after James Morrison, who for a half century has made his home in a canyon of the Owyhee river some six or eight miles above the discontinued post office of Watson. During those years Mr. Morrison has explored much of that rugged area known locally as the Owyhee breaks. Deeply interested in Indian lore, Mr. Morrison has accumulated a large collection of Indian artifacts most of which he found at old campsites and in caves along the river.

land on his ranch. A Boise rock shop owner, Dudley Stewart, was prospecting in the Owyhee Breaks in Southeast corner of Oregon. While scouting, he came upon an small thin older gentleman living like a hermit in a stone, one room house along the Owyhee River. Over time, they became friends. One day, while visiting, James showed this beautiful jasper he had found and where he discovered it. Dudley soon after coined the name, "Morrisonite" in honor of his friend James Morison. The Morrisonite madness began.

**Kaleidoscope Jasper:** The Kaleidoscope discovery was made on the winter of 2007/2008 on a prospecting trip by the Rhode family. The deposit quickly proved beyond a doubt to be one of the most significant deposits ever discovered in the northwest by its vast varieties of color and patterns. It is because of the hundreds of colors and patterns that they chose to name it Kaleidoscope Jasper. Kaleidoscope means a College Of Colors, that pretty well sums it up.



Morrison lived alone, never married and had no family. He eked out a subsistence living off the

## Fossil News

Online News has some extremely interesting stories in their feeds. Are you into fossil discoveries? Well you never know where amazing fossils will be found. Check out these stories, just click on the photo to be magically transported to the story!



## Family Adventure



It's almost AUGUST!! Have you come and visited us yet? Whether it be for mining, camping or both – we're here for you all Summer and into Fall!

We are a great destination for your Herkimer Diamond mining adventure, whether you are near or far! You do not have to be a camper to mine. Our Camp Store is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and we let you mine until Sunset here at Crystal Grove! Mining rates range from \$10 to \$12 depending on your age, we do have tools here to rent, but suggest bringing your own if you have them!

Did you know that we have a full amenity campground here? We offer primitive tent sites, sites with 15 amp electricity, 30 amp electricity (we can accommodate up to 40 ft) and cabins! We have full bathhouses and offer showers on-site for campers.

We are situated in Central, New York in the small town of St. Johnsville, NY. Our small community has basically everything needed to enjoy a few days away. We are just a short driving distance from restaurants, produce stands, gas stations, general stores and the best ice cream around! 🍦

Don't forget us when you're booking your next adventure! You can always find more information, make reservations and more on our website at [www.crystalgrove.com](http://www.crystalgrove.com)

**OCMS members** are covered by Society-sponsored insurance.

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**Orange County Mineral Society, Inc. Officers:**

President:	Mike Tedford	(845) 542-6441	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Mike</u></a>
VP/Programs:	Gary Kerstanski		<a href="#"><u>Click to email Gary</u></a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP:	Alex Kerstanski	(845) 978-4141	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Alex</u></a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> VP:	Ryan Richardson	(845) 629-5120	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Ryan</u></a>
VP Emeritus/Historian:	Frank Clyne	(845) 361-4710	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Frank</u></a>
Treasurer:	Ron Nelson	(845) 469-9080	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Ron</u></a>
Min.Show Chairman:	Ron Nelson	(845) 469-9080	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Ron</u></a>
Membership Com Chair	Brigitte Nesteroke	(845) 386-4119	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Brigitte</u></a>
Secretary:	Position Open		<a href="#"><u>Click to email</u></a>
Shale Mail Editor:	Alison Pacut	(845) 902-8562	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Alison</u></a>
Webmaster:	Heather Shields	(845) 649-9623	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Heather</u></a>
Field Trip Leader	Frank Vigilante	(570) 618-2770	<a href="#"><u>Click to email Frank</u></a>