

# CENTRAL OREGON ROCK COLLECTORS NEWSLETTER

*It's in our name...It's what we do...We collect rocks!!!*



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## A Visit with Sue and Al Liebetrau

By Nan Johnston



I had a wonderful opportunity to meet with Sue and Al Liebetrau. They and a few others including Paul and Bernice Asmon were the founders of the present day CORC. Al and Sue are delightful and so full of information, that they love to share. They moved to Bend in 2002 from the Midwest, and have traveled to many beautiful places that the world has to offer. They have been married 63 years this summer. Their specialties are rocks and minerals, but especially fluorescence. I asked them a couple of questions and here are their answers:

### What was your vision for the club?

Survival! The club was small and struggling when we came to Oregon and finding a place to meet was always a hurdle to get over. We started out in homes at first. Grow! We wanted the club to grow and expand in knowledge as well as people (today CORC is one of the largest clubs in Oregon).

Hold together, be a team and learn from each other especially those that have the experience and/or have been collecting a long time, and to share our knowledge. Don't be afraid to ask questions and show what you have found, someone will always help you identify it. Be sure to keep track of WHERE you found it.

Go out and collect rocks!!

Field trips are the main stay, they are what the members look forward to the most.

Demonstrations are always a plus as you gain knowledge from one another.

Swap rocks with one another.

Picnics and food always bring people together.

### **What would you tell someone who wants to get into rock collecting?**

Collect all and see what you like, but don't just grab and run. Fill in your holes and leave the land better than when you started.

Read all you can, but be careful of your sources. A couple of good ones are:

Rock and Gem

Rock and Minerals.

Research...find what you like and go for it, know it inside and out.

Get out and enjoy what the earth has to offer.

Organize what you have collected...like where it was found, when and what it is...pictures also help.

As I said Al and Sue are a wealth of information as well as being very kind and loving people. Take time to get to know them at the next CORC meeting. You won't be disappointed.



### **In Honor of Al Liebetrau**



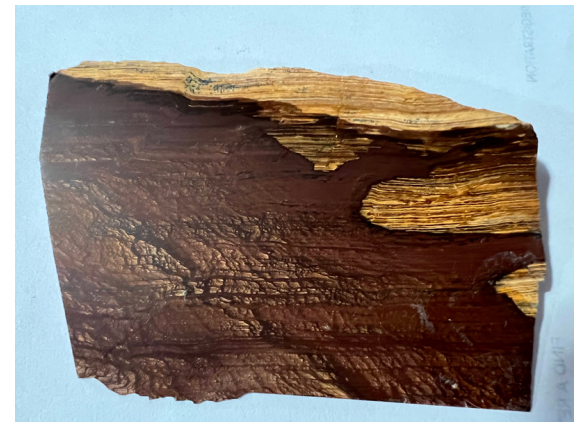
We are sad to say that since this interview, Al has passed away. He was a great friend, husband, mentor, and scholar. To many of us, he was a wealth of knowledge and always willing to share. He had a great love for rocks and minerals. He will be missed by the international community, as well as the Mineral Society members, petrified wood members and local rock hounders. He has touched many lives.

# Biggs Jasper

Biggs Jasper is type of mineral jasper. It is a picture jasper, a jasper that exhibits particular patterns and colors. It exhibits intricate, shell- or layer-like patterns in shades of brown ranging from beige to dark brown.

Biggs jasper was found around 1960 at the bottom of a creek near Biggs Junction, Oregon. More was found in 1966 when US Route 97 was relocated through a canyon south of Biggs Junction. These workers who moved the road found it in a rock cut, collected it and sold it to rock shops. This brought the attention of rock collectors who began going to Biggs Junction to collect it.

Biggs jasper is found between two of the basalt lava flows that once covered parts of the Pacific Northwest. Over thousands of years the volcanic ash decomposed into clay and was deposited by rain water in streams and lakes atop the cooled basalt. Once there is combined with silica and iron from the weathering of the recent igneous rocks, forming a plastic colloid.



The next time lava flowed it the muddy mixture was transformed. As the lava heated the rock the water was removed in the form of superheated steam. The pressure variations caused flexing, reflected in the jasper's many thin, parallel bands. This progressed as a shock wave though the mud, removing iron and depositing that iron as intertwining bands of limonite. The altered rock remained plastic, and subject to local movement as a result of pressure changes. This is what caused the large variety of marbles, rosette-like and picture designs found in Biggs jasper.

Biggs jasper, also known as Beers Mt jasper, is similar to Deschutes jasper. It can be difficult to tell the difference. Deschutes jasper tends to be a little harder and have a tighter pattern. Where Biggs jasper's pattern is more "landscape".



Sources:

*Biggs jasper* - [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biggs_Jasper)

*Deschutes Jasper* - [oakrocks.net](https://oakrocks.net/)



# Field trip to Richardsons Rock Ranch



Our field trip to Richardsons Rock Ranch was a great success. We had about 35 people come and go at this beautiful place in Central Oregon. There were piles and piles of rocks from all over the country, especially from the ranch itself. Though you are not allowed to dig anymore, you can dig through the piles that they have all

around the shop and pay by the pound for most of the rocks. Of course there is a great museum and a gift shop, if that is what you are looking for. They are open 9-5 daily. Definitely the place to visit, take a picnic and enjoy your day.





## The Birthstone for May is: Emerald

Emeralds, like all colored gemstones, are graded using four basic parameters—the four Cs of connoisseurship: color, clarity, cut and carat weight. Normally, in the grading of colored gemstones, color is by far the most important criterion. However, in the grading of emeralds, clarity is considered a close second. A fine emerald must possess not only a pure verdant green hue as described below, but also a high degree of transparency to be considered a top gemstone.

This member of the beryl family ranks among the traditional "big four" gems along with diamonds, rubies and sapphires.



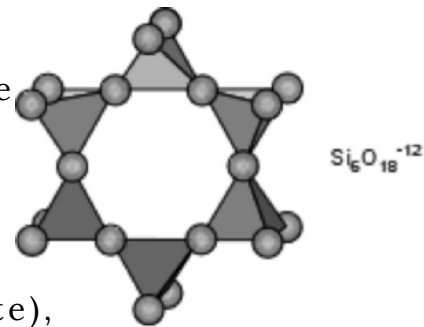
Emerald crystal from Muzo, Colombia

In the 1960's, the American jewelry industry changed the definition of emerald to include the green vanadium-bearing beryl. As a result, vanadium emeralds purchased as emeralds in the United States are not recognized as such in the United Kingdom and Europe. In America, the distinction between traditional emeralds and the new vanadium kind is often reflected in the use of terms such as "Colombian emerald".

Emerald is a gemstone and a variety of the mineral beryl ( $\text{Be}_3\text{Al}_2(\text{SiO}_3)_6$ ) colored green by trace amounts of chromium or sometimes vanadium. Beryl has a hardness of 7.5–8 on the Mohs scale. Most emeralds are highly included, so their toughness (resistance to breakage) is classified as generally poor.

Emerald is a cyclosilicate.

(Cyclosilicate, called polysilicate, compound with a structure in which silicate tetrahedrons (each of which consists of a central silicon atom surrounded by four oxygen atoms at the corners of the tetrahedron) are arranged in rings. Each tetrahedron shares two of its oxygen atoms with other tetrahedrons; the rings formed may have three (e.g., benitoite), four (e.g., axinite), or six members (e.g., beryl). The cyclosilicates have chemical formulas that contain multiples of  $\text{SiO}_3$ .)



Colombia is by far the world's largest producer of emeralds, constituting 50–95% of the world production, with the number depending on the year, source and grade. Emerald production in Colombia has increased drastically in the last decade, increasing by 78% from 2000 to 2010. The three main emerald mining areas in Colombia are Muzo, Coscuez, and Chivor. Rare "trapiche" emeralds are found in Colombia, distinguished by ray-like spokes of dark impurities

## Emerald *continued*

Zambia is the world's second biggest producer, with its Kafubu River area deposits (Kagem Mines) about 45 km (28 mi) southwest of Kitwe responsible for 20% of the world's production of gem-quality stones in 2004. In the first half of 2011, the Kagem Mines produced 3.74 tons of emeralds.

Mining techniques in Colombia have evolved over the centuries. Emerald deposits are frequently mined by strip mining a series of terraces, a technique that has been used since before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century. The Spaniards also attempted to drive tunnels into the host rock to retrieve emerald crystals, a technique that was revived at Chivor in the 1960s.

According to Keller (1990), when mine terraces are worked with strip mining methods, soft rock is removed by either hand tools or else scraped by a bulldozer. The use of dynamite is common, despite the brittle nature of emerald crystals. Emerald deposits are easy to spot as they are found in white calcite veins running through soft black shale. The workers surround the bulldozers watching for the telltale white streak of a calcite vein. Once a deposit is spotted, they work the spot to remove emerald crystals with small picks.

When emeralds are found, they are collected in bags and later sorted. While rare, the miners can miss large crystals and end up selling a bag of \$5,000 emerald tailings with a \$500,000 emerald inside, though do not expect this to happen often. Material that has been sorted is flown to Bogotá for grading and marketing.

Treasure-seekers often sort through the leftovers of the mining operations in hope of finding something worthwhile leftover. They skirt the mining camps, jam the streambeds, and rummage through the black shale looking for emeralds.

Conditions - Life at the Colombian emerald mines is reminiscent of the American Wild West. Although miners are paid very little, many remain on the job because one day a month they are allowed to pocket any emeralds they find, a practice called "picando". Illicit mining, alcohol-fueled fights, gem heists, prostitutes, and an atmosphere of desperation haunt the camps where guards armed with rifles patrol the perimeter. Transportation to and from the mines is done by helicopter since the area is full of smugglers and armed guerrillas

### Sources:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerald> Emerald crystal from Muzo, Colombia

Emerald crystal from Muzo,

<https://www.britannica.com/science/cyclosilicate>

<https://emeralds.com/education/mining-locations/early-mining-history-techniques/>



## Field Trip Dates

**Saturday, May 13th Beers Mt/China Hollow** This will be a guided trip to Rufus for Beers Mt Jasper and China Hollow jasper and agate. It is a paid dig. \$5/lb for Beers Mt Jasper, \$2/lb for China Hollow jasper and agate. We have a limit of 25 cars, so please start thinking about carpooling. We are meeting at 6:45 AM at the Safeway parking lot in Madras where we will sort out the carpools. Please bring food and drink. Those that would like to camp or stay the night closer to Rufus, we need to be at the rock store at 8:30 AM. They will take us all out together. The rock shop address: 462 1st St, Rufus. If you are looking for campgrounds, please search for the towns of Rufus and Biggs. There are also campgrounds across the Columbia River Gorge in Washington.



Left:  
China  
Hollow  
agate



Right:  
China  
Hollow  
agate &  
Beers Mt  
jasper

**June 3rd-4th** The Snakeskin Field Trip to Rome, Oregon has changed from May 20th. There will be a sign-up sheet at the May 17th meeting.

**Sunday, June 11th Pole Creek** Petrified wood, jasper and crystals.

**June 17th-18th** Ed Taft is planning a trip to the Spectrum Mine in Plush for Sunstones. It is a free dig weekend. Anyone who would like to go please contact Ed or the club email and we will forward it to Ed. **This is not a club field trip.**

**Saturday, July 15th Fire Opal Dig** Between Bly & Lakeview.

**Sunday, September 10th White Fir Thundereggs**

**Saturday, October 14th Club Claim** Agate

## Next Club Meeting Date

**May 17th**

"Things to know about Cab making" by Jeff Payne  
**Show & Tell for last names starting with T-Z**

Doors open at 5:30 PM for visiting  
Meeting starts at 6 PM

\*Those that won a door prize last month please bring a door prize this month.

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**Meetings are held every third Wednesday of every month from March through October at the OSU Extension Service Building  
3800 SE Airport Way Bldg 3 "The Annex"  
Redmond, OR at 6:00 PM. The only exception is August when CORC has its annual picnic. In November, CORC has its annual holiday party. The club does not meet from December through February.**

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Meeting minutes can be found at [corockcollectors.com](http://corockcollectors.com)

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## Upcoming Area Rock Shows

- May 13-14 Hatrockhound Gem and Mineral Society**  
Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center Hermiston, OR  
Contact Person: Mike Filarski (541)571-2593  
[stonemorlin1@netscape.net](mailto:stonemorlin1@netscape.net)
- May 19-21 Mt Hood Rock Club's Rock and Gem Show**  
Kliever Memorial Armory, Portland, OR  
Contact Person: Darrell Engelhard [mhrcdc@gmail.com](mailto:mhrcdc@gmail.com)  
[www.mthoodrockclub.com](http://www.mthoodrockclub.com)
- May 27-28 Clackamette Mineral and Gem Corp**  
Clackamas County Fairgrounds Canby, OR  
Contact Person: Karen McAllister (503)351-9918  
[gmarktmc@gmail.com](mailto:gmarktmc@gmail.com), [www.clackamettegem.org](http://www.clackamettegem.org)
- June 15-18 Prineville Rockhound Pow Wow**  
Crook County Fairgrounds Prineville, OR  
Contact Person: Jim McCoy [jimmcoy57@yahoo.com](mailto:jimmcoy57@yahoo.com)  
Field Trip Contact: Joe Van Cura [jvancura@peak.org](mailto:jvancura@peak.org)

**For more Rock Shows please check out February's Newsletter or our website**



### **REMINDER:**

Please mail membership form and check to:  
Central Oregon Rock Collectors (CORC)  
P.O. Box 6265  
Bend, OR 97708

Annual membership dues are \$20 for individuals, \$25 for household  
and \$5 for juniors.

You may find the form on our website at [corockcollectors.com](http://corockcollectors.com)

**OR**

**You may now go to our website [corockcollectors.com](http://corockcollectors.com) to pay your  
membership dues online. Click on the Membership page.**

Club website: [corockcollectors.com](http://corockcollectors.com)

Please join our Facebook page:  
Central Oregon Rock Collectors

If you have any  
ideas for field trips please  
email Ken Lawson & Suzie  
Meeker at  
[corc.rocks@gmail.com](mailto:corc.rocks@gmail.com)

### **CORC Board Members**

April Anable  
President

Patricia Moreland  
Vice President

Tonia Smith  
Secretary

Nancy Johnston  
Treasurer

Tonia Smith  
Co-Newsletter Editor

Nancy Johnston  
Co-Newsletter Editor

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Suzie Meeker  
Co-Field Trip Chair

Gale Rivera  
Co-Program Committee Chair

Marty Betsch  
Co-Program Committee Chair

Barb Thompson  
Claims Chair

April Anable  
Social Media & Webmaster

If you would like to reach any of the board members please email them at  
[corc.rocks@gmail.com](mailto:corc.rocks@gmail.com)

# Business cards and announcements

The new owners and others who have been helping clean up, repair and prepare the World-Famous Petersen Rock Garden & Museum (and Peacock Sanctuary) near Redmond are seeking volunteers to help out the weekend of May 21st as they plan to reopen by Memorial Day.

Read more: <https://ktvz.com>

Ed Taft plans on being there around 9 AM.

## **CigarboxRock**

The temporary office is a "job shack" located at 63271 Nels Anderson Rd.

Give us a call before coming in! Currently open: Monday-Friday  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

CORC members receive a discount at CigarboxRock!

**CBR@BENDNET.COM**

Call (541)389-9663 or visit our website, <https://cigarboxrock.com>

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**Classified Ads:** If you have a rockhound-related item you wish to advertise, send the announcement to Tonia Smith and Nancy Johnston at [corcrocks@gmail.com](mailto:corcrocks@gmail.com)

