

CENTRAL OREGON ROCK COLLECTORS NEWSLETTER

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



Part 2:

The History of Rockhounding; A Riveting Look at Rock and Mineral Collecting Through the Ages

by Don Gerig, don@rockseeker.com

September 18, 2023

The Multifaceted Uses of Rocks and Minerals

Throughout history, rocks and minerals have played a pivotal role in human civilization. Their applications ranged from crafting tools and weapons to creating makeup, jewelry, and even medicine.

Tools: The Foundation of Progress



ancient knapped stone tool

Before the advent of metals, rocks were the primary materials for crafting tools. The earliest tools, discovered in places like Kenya, were simple and made from knapped rocks. As societies advanced, so did their tools. Flint, with its durability and ability to produce sparks, became a favored material for crafting tools like axes.

The Vikings, known for their seafaring prowess, utilized quartz crystal to create rudimentary optical lenses and relied on Iceland spar, a type of optical calcite, for navigation.

While many Native Americans favored obsidian, with its razor-sharp edges, was a popular choice for tools like knives and scraping utensils, essential for tasks such as cleaning animal hides.

Weapons: Power and Protection

The same materials used for tools were often repurposed for weapons. The sharpness of obsidian made it a prime choice for crafting blades, arrowheads and other weapons. Flint, with its knack for being easily shaped, was also fashioned into weapons. The discovery of a dagger in King Tutankhamen's



tomb, made from meteorite fragments, underscores the lengths ancient civilizations went to in their quest for unique and powerful weaponry.

Jewelry, Makeup, and Aesthetics: Expressions of Beauty and Status

Beyond their practical applications, rocks and minerals have been integral to human expression and adornment. Beads, one of the earliest forms of jewelry, were crafted from a variety of minerals. Ancient Egyptians, with their penchant for grandeur, used malachite to create the iconic black eye makeup known as kohl. Copper minerals like malachite and chrysocolla were transformed into vibrant green makeup, worn by both the ancient Egyptians and Sumerians.

Jewelry wasn't just about beauty; it was also a status symbol. King Tutankhamen's tomb, for instance, was replete with gemstone artifacts, from a solid gold burial mask inlaid with lapis lazuli, obsidian, and quartz to a breastplate featuring a scarab carving made from Libyan desert glass.

Medicinal Uses and Storytelling

The therapeutic properties of rocks and minerals were recognized and harnessed by ancient civilizations. The ancient Egyptians, for instance, used malachite and chrysocolla to treat various ailments, from abdominal issues to dental problems. The copper derived from these minerals was also recognized for its antimicrobial properties and was used to clean wounds.

Beyond their physical healing properties, many rocks and minerals were believed to possess spiritual or protective qualities. Polished jade amulets were worn by early Chinese for health and longevity, while amber amulets in the Baltic region were believed to offer protection against diseases.

Fossils on the other hand, offered a glimpse into the past, inspiring myths,

legends, and the birth of paleontology in the early 1800s.

Rocks and minerals have been interwoven into the very fabric of human history. From shaping the tools that drove progress to adorning the rulers who led civilizations, these natural treasures have played a pivotal role in shaping our past and continue to influence our present.

Look for the next article in this series next month...

**Thank you to Bruce VanderZanden
for sending us this article.**

Lifetime Honorary Award for Del and Clara Walker



Del and Clara joined the club around 2009, and started rockhounding while in the Tualatin Valley Rock Club. They became part of the Northwest Federation and the representatives for our club. When Clara retired in 2002 they got involved with Rocks. They bought out a vendor and acquired their equipment, a Genie and material for making cabs and jewelry. Clara had mentors that taught her the art of jewelry making. Notably Russel Smith and Don Kendal. Del is a creative artist of his own, with oil paintings.

Del, being the social person he is, managed to get them involved with the Prineville PowWow with set up, take down, signing vendors and getting people to join the Northwest Federation.

Clara also created the first spreadsheet for the Treasurer. I, Marty, was the treasurer and knew nothing about setting up a spreadsheet. Fortunately she was a retired accountant and created the spreadsheet so I could figure out how to pay the Federation and to have a somewhat accurate account of the money. We are honored to present Del and Clara with a lifetime award for all of your contributions to the club and rock hounding in Central Oregon.

written by Marty Betsch

Lifetime Honorary Award for Debbie Simon

5/25/1954 - 1/23/2023

Debbie and Dale Simon were part of the first group that started at Ray's Food Market in Redmond around 15 years ago. They lived in California and went to the State of Nevada for rockhounding. Deb gave several programs on rockhounding in Nevada and maps to some of their favorite places. She worked for the State of California in Soil and Property Conservation and so had a knowledge of rocks.



Deb became the club Treasurer and set up the bank accounts. Then she became the club president and worked with others to create the bylaws. This took about 6 drafts to create. Always a person, with Al Liebatrau, to follow the "Roberts Rules of Order".

Another person became president, but had to leave, so Debbie became president again and worked with others to finalize the bylaws. She advocated for us becoming a 501c3, following the rules and we continue today to remain a great club because of her tenacity.

Debbie had physical issues that ended her life to soon and we honor her for her contributions to the beginning of this club. Thanks to her advocacy for wanting this club to succeed.

written by Marty Betsch



Cookies????

Holiday Party

The Holiday Party is our THANK YOU to all the club rockhounds. A time to say thank you to those that may have gone the extra mile and to honor those that had a vision to start the club so we can continue to make it grow today.

What a privilege to come alongside these wonderful people that have become friends.



Thank you Erik for the countless hours on the claim





Thank You Ed (ET)
for bringing your
side by side



Donation from
Sue





*Merry
Christmas*



We are still looking for a
volunteer to
be our Program Chair. This
entails planning
our programs for our meetings
and is a
board position. If interested
please email us
at corc.rocks@gmail.com



2024 Membership Renewals

We are now accepting membership renewals for 2024.

You may now go to our website corockcollectors.com to pay your membership dues online. Click on the Membership page. It will take you to Cheddarup. Follow the instructions to fill out the membership form and make your payment.

Or you may print off the membership form instead and mail it with a check.

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.