

The Sierra Pelonaagram



December 2014

... Member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Society Inc. ...

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club is a non-profit organization founded in 1959 with the objective to sponsor activities and promote interest and education in: mineralogy, lapidary, geology, paleontology and related subjects.

December

Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel 20th
Nancy Hilliard 1st
Bob Krug 7th
Morgan Langewisch 14th
Jon Meredith 15th



January

Austin Williams 5th
Jud Figatner 10th
Bonnie Forstner 14th
Diane Henry 30th
Larry Holt 29th
Debbie Meredith 11th
Martin Schreiner 9th
Bruce Velie 3rd



Welcome New Members

Lynne Alexander, Bob and Margie Krug (and son William), Linda Castro and Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel. May your membership with us be a long and happy one!

CFMS shows can be found at cfmsinc.org. I am unable to copy a listing as they have changed permissions



Officers:

President – Bill Webber
Vice-President – Ron Lawrence
Secretary: Heidi Webber
Treasurer – Ron Rackliffe
Federation Director (CFMS/AFMS) – Shep Koss

Chairpersons:

Claim - Mike Serino
Donation Rock Table - Akiko Strathmann
Equipment - Bill Webber
Field Trips – Open
Historian -Open
Hospitality – Tina White
Membership – Open
On-Line Presence (website) - Larry Holt
Pelonagram Publisher, Editor – Heidi Webber
Programs – Shep Koss
Publicity –Bruce Velie
Storage - open
Sunshine - Brigitte Mazourek

The Sierra Pelona Rock Club, is a member of the California and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. (CFMS/AFMS). The general club meetings (Open to the public) are at 7:30 PM, on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at:

**The Clubhouse of the Greenbrier
Mobile Estates EAST
21301 Soledad Canyon Rd
Canyon Country, CA 91351**

Contact the Club or the Sierra Pelonagram Editor at:

**Sierra Pelona Rock Club
P.O. Box 221256
Newhall, Ca. 91322**

Or e-mail: hwebber@pacbell.net

Visit the *SPRC* website <http://www.sierrapelona.com/>



Message from the President

Well, another year, another President of the Sierra Pelona Rock Club. The year has flown by once again. We have welcomed many new members to the club. We had our first ever joint camping trip with the Community Hiking Club. We had several great workshops at our home and the wire-wrap sessions are hugely successful.

So a fond farewell as President, I have a feeling I will be back! Greg Langewisch has been a great president in the past, and will be a great one in the future.



Holiday Party

At the Holiday Party, we welcomed a new board, to take their positions in January. Greg Langewisch is President, his second time around. Trina Aeen is stepping into the vice-President slot, Ron Rackliffe is remaining as Treasurer, Shep Koss likewise is staying on as Federation, and Tina White will be Secretary. A big welcome to all for their involvement in making the SPRC the best club out there!

Another great pleasure was bestowing Ron Lawrence with a lifetime membership. The only other current holder is Frank Hummelbaugh. I think Ron was pleased. Iony Panaitescu made a beautiful wooden plaque as Ron's lifetime certificate. Big thanks Iony!

We also welcomed 5 new members to the club, Lynne Alexander, Bob and Margie Krug, Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel and Linda Castro.

At this point, we ended our brief meeting and chowed down to a variety of delicious dishes brought by the membership. Sarita Hyde once again had the tables decorated with lovely centerpieces which were later auctioned. With full bellies, we moved on to the auction.

Greg Langewisch was the auctioneer this year, and he kept the items moving and with many hands in the air bidding on new treasures. The club did pretty good, too!

The silent auction was also a hit. Thank you all who participated, both in donations and bidding.

So to those of you who couldn't make it, you missed a great day, but maybe next time. We always have fun, right?





Rhodochrosite

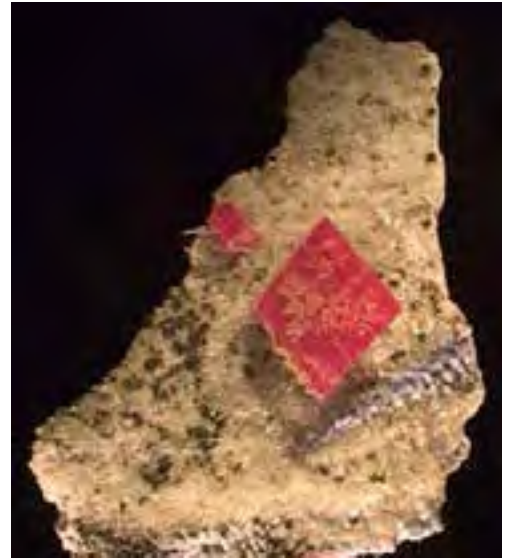
Rhodochrosite is a manganese carbonate mineral with chemical composition $MnCO_3$. In its (rare) pure form, it is typically a rose-red color, but impure specimens can be shades of pink to pale brown. It streaks white, and its Mohs hardness varies between 3.5 and 4. Its specific gravity is between 3.5 and 3.7. It crystallizes in the trigonal system, and cleaves with rhombohedral carbonate cleavage in three directions.

Crystal twinning often is present. It is often confused with the manganese silicate, rhodonite, but is distinctly softer.

Rhodochrosite forms a complete solid solution series with iron carbonate (siderite). Calcium, (as well as magnesium and zinc, to a limited extent) frequently substitutes for manganese in the structure, leading to lighter shades of red and pink, depending on the degree of substitution. It is for this reason that the most common color encountered is pink.

Occurrence and discovery

Rhodochrosite occurs as a hydrothermal vein mineral along with other manganese minerals in low temperature ore deposits as in the silver mines of Romania where it was first found.



The Alma King is the largest known rhodochrosite crystal; it was found in the Sweet Home Mine near Alma, Colorado. It is on display in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Banded rhodochrosite is mined in Capillitas, Argentina. Catamarca, Argentina has an old Incan silver mine that has produced fine stalactitic examples of rhodochrosite that are unique and very attractive. Cut cross-sections reveal concentric bands of light and dark rose colored layers. These specimens are carved and used for many ornamental purposes.



Pink is the most common color of Rhodochrosite. Specimen mined near Silverton, Colorado

Use

Its main use is as an ore of manganese which is a key component of low-cost stainless steel formulations and certain aluminum alloys. Quality banded specimens are often used for decorative stones and jewelry. Due to its being relatively soft, and having perfect cleavage, it is very difficult to cut, and therefore rarely found faceted in jewelry.

Rhodochrosite and silver mining

Manganese carbonate is extremely destructive to the amalgamation process used in the concentration of silver ores, and so until quality mineral specimens became highly sought after by collectors, they were often discarded on the mine dump.

Culture and legend

Rhodochrosite is Argentina's "national gemstone". Colorado officially named rhodochrosite as its state mineral in 2002. Large specimens have been found in the Sweet Home Mine near Alma, Colorado.

The Incas believed that rhodochrosite is the blood of their former rulers, turned to stone, therefore it is sometimes called "Rosa del Inca" or "Inca Rose".



SPRC General Meeting
December 14, 2014
Greenbriar Estates Clubhouse

The meeting was called to order at noon. In attendance were 45 members. This was the Holiday Dinner potluck and a short pre-dinner meeting was called.

Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel, Bob Krug and Linda Castro were given their membership packets and welcomed to the club.

The Election Committee then announced the new board of directors for 2015. Greg Langewisch will be President, Trina Aeen will be vice-President, Ron Rackliffe will remain as Treasurer as will Shep Koss as Federation Director. Tina White is the new Secretary. Welcome to all.

Ron Lawrence said that he plans to take members to collect Ballarat Marble for the January 24th field trip. Details to follow.

The Board of Directors for 2014 then presented Ron L with a beautiful plaque awarding him with a Lifetime Membership in the SPRC. The only other current holder of this honor is Frank Hummelbaugh.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 for the dinner.

Respectfully Submitted
Heidi S Webber



Fordite

I know, Fordite isn't a real stone, but to many collectors this is still a very beautiful and fascinating material. I love the way various colors weave their way through a gorgeous finished cabochon. So what the heck, the following is a short history on Fordite.



*Michael White,
Cabs and Slabs*

Fordite, also known as Motor Agate, is a unique automotive enamel material with an interesting history. The original layered automotive paint slag "rough" was made incidentally, years ago, by the now extinct practice of hand spray-painting multiples of production cars in big automotive factories.

The oversprayed paint in the painting bays gradually built up on the tracks and skids that the car frames were painted on. Over time, many colorful layers built up there. These layers were hardened repeatedly in the ovens that the car bodies went into to cure the paint. Some of these deeper layers were even baked 100 times.

Eventually, the paint build-up would become obstructing, or too thick and heavy, and had to be removed. As the story goes, some crafty workers with an eye for beauty realized that this unique byproduct was worth salvaging. It was super-cured, patterned like psychedelic agate, and could be cut and polished with relative ease!

Wow! "RECYCLE IT!" seemed to be the resounding sentiment. And so it was...

As word got around about this remarkable material, it's been said that rock hounds started showing up at auto factories, offering to help remove that problematic paint!

Sadly, the techniques that produced this great rough years ago, are no longer in practice. Cars are now painted by way of an electrostatic process that essentially magnetizes the enamels to the car bodies. This leaves little, or no overspray.

The old factory methods that created this incredible material are long gone.

The Fordite "mines" are dry, so get some while you still can!

Reference: Fordite.com

