NOC NEWS

August/Sept 1997 V. Marks, Editor Volume 16, Issue 7

SEPT. MEETING CHANGED TO 9/9/97 SURPRISE MEETING BY GINNY GRAFTON

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO SEE.

SEPTEMBER 13-14 ANAHEIM
Faceters Guild of Southern Californ
Brookhurst Community Center
2271 W. Crescent Ave.
Hours: Sat 10-6 Sun 10-5
Bob Cardon (714) 925-5165

SEPTEMBER 20-21 REDWOOD CITY, CA
Sequoia Gem & Mineral Society
Red Morton Community Center
1400 Roosevelt Ave
Hours: 10-5 both days
Mary Kelley (415) 366-3285

SEPTEMBER 10-21 PASO ROBLES, CA
Santa Lucia Rockhounds
Pioneer Park & Museum
2010 Riverside Ave
Hours: Sat 10-6 Sun 10-5
Pete Duckworth (805) 467-3413

SEPTEMBER 27 LOS ALTOS, CA
Peninsula Gem & Geology Society
Rancho Shopping Center
Foothill Expressway & S. Springer
Hours: 9:30 - 4:45
Frank Dina (415) 967-3424

SEPTEMBER 27-28 STOCKTON, CA
Faceters Guild of Northern California
Scottish Rite Temple
33 W. Alpine Ave
Hours: both days 10-5
Al Whitney (209) 465-9588

SEPTEMBER 27-28 MONTEREY, CA
Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society
Monterey California Fairgrounds
Hours: Sat 10-6 Sun 10-5
Charlene Stitt (408) 633-0109

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

ANGIE HARWOOD 3RD
DOLORES MAGGS 23RD
DON OGDEN 13TH
LORETTA OGDEN 16TH
DON WARTHEN 25TH
Best wishes for a happy day and year filled with lovely rocks and friends galore.

Your stone is sapphire, flower is aster or morning glory.


sapphire (baguette cut)

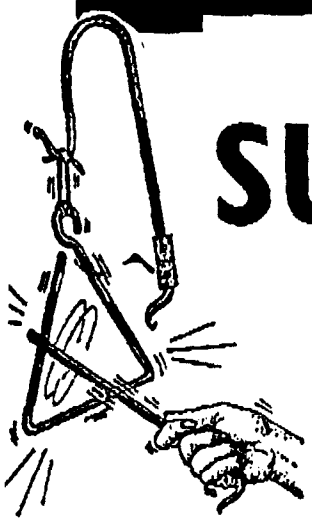

blue star sapphire


star ruby (pink)

HI, TRINI, HOPE YOUR GETTING AROUND ON YOUR CRUTCHES JUST FINE. JUST TO LET YOU ALL KNOW, TRINI HAD SOME FOOT SURGERY. GET WELL SOON!

AUGUST B-B-Q AT PAT AND SANDY MOGAN'S HOUSE. **COME ONE COME ALL ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 17TH AT 2p.m.**

See info and map on next pages.....



SUMMER PICNIC AT THE MOGAN'S

YOU'RE INVITED TO AN OLD FASHIONED SUMMER SUNDAY PICNIC ON THE 17TH OF AUGUST AT 2 P.M.

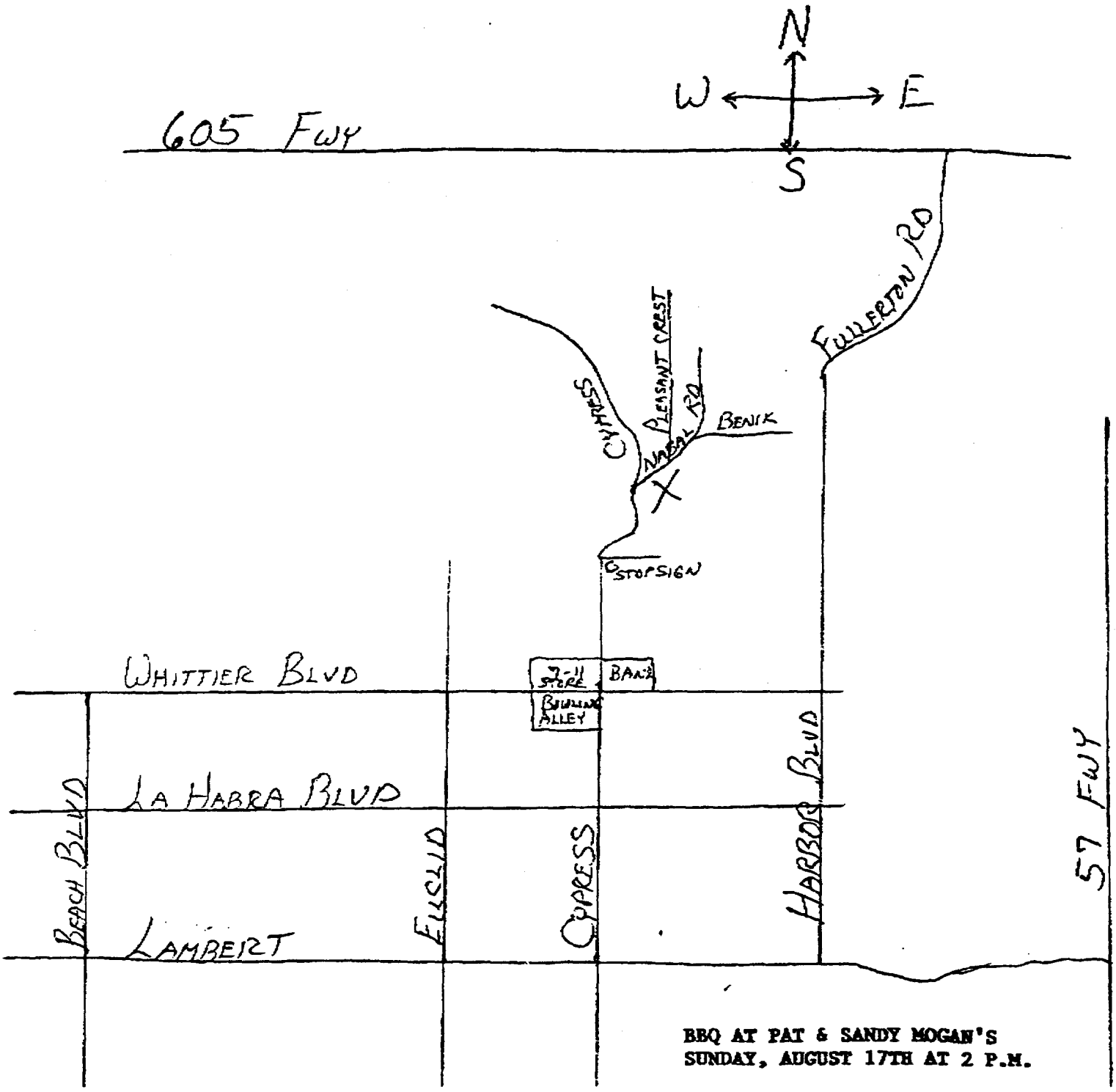
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BRING YOUR FAVORITE SIDE DISH SALAD OR APPETIZER, A LAWN CHAIR AND A PICNIC BLANKET ... AND

PAT WILL BBQ THE BEST BURGERS YOU EVER TASTED. WE'LL HAVE ALL THE BURGER FIXINS AND SOFT DRINKS AND SANDY WILL COME UP WITH SOME SORT OF HIGH CALORIC DESSERT.

PLEASE RSVP BY CALLING SANDY AT (562) 945-1611
OR
CALL (562) 697-4715 AFTER 5 P.M.

WE SURE HOPE YOU CAN COME!!

1520 NABAL ROAD
LA HABRA HEIGHTS



BBQ AT PAT & SANDY MOGAN'S
SUNDAY, AUGUST 17TH AT 2 P.M.

1520 NABAL ROAD
LA HABRA HEIGHTS
(562)697-4715 (H)
(562)945-1611 (W) Sandy

INTERESTING INFO FROM OTHER NEWSLETTERS

FROM OREGON ROCKHOUND 12/95 VIA SDMGS-PEGAMATITE 4-96

HOW GEOLOGIC TIME PERIODS GOT THOSE CRAZY NAMES

from Oregon Rockhound 12/95, Stephen Burinsky, Editor

The three geologic eras are the Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic, from the Greek for ancient, middle and recent life. They are divided into 11 periods, most of them named for places where rock from the period were first discovered.

The Cambrian Period (570 to 500 million years ago) is named for Cambria (or Wales). The next two periods also have Welsh names. Ordovician and Silurian for two Welsh tribes, the Ordovicies and the Siluries.

The Devonian is named for Devonshire, and Cretaceous comes for "creta," Latin for chalk. Creta refers to the white cliffs of Dover.

The Jurassic is named for the Jura Mountains in Germany, and the Permian for Perm in Russia's Ural Mountains.

The Triassic got its name because it was easily divisible into three parts. And the Carboniferous is named for carbon, because most coal deposits date to that period.

The most recent periods are Tertiary and Quartenary named for types of rocks dated t those times. They are divided into epochs, whose names all end in "cene," a Greek root meaning recent.

Pleistocene is from the Greek for most recent. Preceding it are the Pliocene, Miocene, Oligocene, Eocene and Paleocene, for the most recent, less recent, little recent, early recent, and oldest recent.

ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	M YRS AGO	LIFE FORMS
Cenozoic	Quaternary	Holocene	.01	Post glacial
		Pleistocene	2	Ice age
	Tertiary	Pliocene	6	Age of mammoths
		Miocene	25	Spread of anthropoid apes
		Oligocene	37	Origin of modern mammals
		Eocene	54	Origin of giant mammals
		Paleocene	65	Origin of early mammals
Mesozoic	Cretaceous		136	Extinction of dinosaurs
	Jurassic		190	Height of dinosaurs
	Triassic		225	Mammal-like reptiles
Paleozoic	Permian		280	First modern insect
	Carboniferous		320	Earliest reptiles
			345	Earliest amphibians
	Devonian		395	Earliest seed plants & fish
	Silurian		435	Earliest land plants
	Ordovician		500	Earliest vertebrates
	Cambrian		570	Earliest invertebrates
Precambrian			4,500	Origin of life; algae, worm

Identifying True Amber (Succinite)

By Garry Platt, garry@gplatt.demon.co.uk

Since the screening of 'Jurassic Park' interest in the mineral amber has grown significantly. Unfortunately so has the quantity of fake amber coming on to the market. Some of these pieces have insect inclusions skillfully placed in the body of the matrix.

The British Natural History Museum recently discovered that a bee preserved in amber thought to be one of the oldest known examples of this particular species was in fact a fake and probably no more than 150 years old. Evidence of this nature; should alert all collectors to the possibility of being misled or simply cheated.

In some cases copal, which is tree resin which has not yet fully fossilized to amber and may be anything up 3-4 million years old is described as true amber. Debate still rages in the UK about certain Kenyan and South American deposits as to whether they should be called copal or amber.

There are a number of simple tests that can be carried out on amber to check its authenticity. I have listed here all the basic methods I have come across. More sophisticated and complex tests are possible but they require access to laboratory equipment. These more complex tests include Refraction Index, Precise Specific Gravity and Melting Point.

When examining a specimen you should try at least 3 of the following methods detailed here. If the item in question fails any one of the tests, it could well mean the piece is not true amber.

HARDNESS

Amber has a hardness on Mohs scale in the region of 2 - 3. Using appropriate scratch sticks it should be reasonably straightforward to test the sample under question.

HOT NEEDLE

Heat a needle point in a flame until glowing red and then push the point into the sample for testing. With copal the needle melts the material quicker than amber and omits a light fragrant odor. Amber when tested does not melt as quickly as the copal and omits sooty fumes.

SOLUBILITY

Copal will dissolve in acetone. This test can be done by dispensing the acetone from an eyedropper onto a clean surface of the test specimen. Place one drop on the surface of the test piece and allow to evaporate, then place a second drop on the same area. Copal will become tacky; amber will remain unaffected by contact with acetone.

UV LIGHT

Copal under a short-wave UV light shows hardly any color change. Amber fluoresces a pale shade of blue.

FRICTION

Rub the specimen vigorously on a soft cloth. True amber may omit a faint resinous fragrance but copal may actual begin to soften and the surface become sticky. Amber will also become heavily charged with static electricity and will easily pick up small pieces of loose paper.

TASTE

An antique trader who specialized in amber beads introduced this test to me. She explained that one of the most reliable tests she used was to taste the amber specimen after washing it in mild soapy water and then plain water. Whilst she could make no distinction between copal and amber, she could easily identify plastics and other common substitutes because of their unpleasant or chemical taste. Amber has hardly any taste at all. As a method for identification I have not seen this procedure recorded elsewhere. I can vouch for its effectiveness as a non-destructive method of differentiating between amber and certain other substances often misleadingly labeled amber.

FLOTATION (Specific Gravity)

Mix 23gms of standard table salt with 200ml of luke warm water. Stir until completely dissolved. Amber should float and some copals together with various plastics sink.

INCLUSIONS

Infrequently amber contains Flora or Fauna inclusions. Correctly identifying the trapped insect or plant should be an excellent indicator of a piece's authenticity. Most inclusions from ancient amber are of species that are now extinct or significantly changed.

POLARIZED LIGHT

Place the suspect piece of amber between two sheets of polarizing glass or plastic. (Kokin Filter Systems who sell lens accessories for cameras sell such products). Rotate one of the polarizing lenses slowly through 360 degrees. In the body of the amber a display of rainbow colors should cycle through the transparent parts of the material. This is due to interference patterns being induced in the polarized light because of the internal strains and stresses within the amber itself. My general experience with this method is that genuine amber and copal always show these color changes, where as some acrylics, polymers and certain plastic do not. Amber that has been drilled and then later filled with a contemporary inclusion and resin also reveals its self via the clear disruption of the color display. Essentially, an amber piece which does not show interference patterns is unlikely to be true amber.

Anyone wishing to find out more about amber in general or these test methods specifically would do well to consult one of three books currently available on amber:

Life In Amber; George O. Poinar, Jr.; Stanford University Press; ISBN: 0-8047-2001-0.

Amber - The Golden Gem of the Ages; Patty C. Rice; The Kosciuszko Foundation, Inc.; ISBN: 0-917-00720-5.

Amber - Window to the Past; David Grimaldi; Harry N Abrams; ISBN: 0-8109-1966-4.

Now back to the bee I mentioned earlier. I am afraid that only the 8th and 9th tests would identify this particular fake. The item consisted of a block of true amber into which had been drilled a hole large enough to receive the dead bee. Resin, which had been melted, was then poured back over the insect, encasing it in an apparently genuine amber prison.

(Slightly edited to fit – Editor)

from Staurolite- Orange Belt Mineralogical Society jul/aug 1997

from CFMS aug97 via ALAA

National Parks Get New Name

From ALAA Issue, 1st Quarter, 1997

In a recent article entitled "The Taking of America", by Karen Lee Bixman, it was suggested that Americans might be loosing control of management of some of our most precious assets, our National Parks. Several National Parks already have entrance signs calling them "International Biospheres", a creation of UNESCO, part of the United Nations. The facts seem to be that because of this UN designation, UN is becoming "advisors" on management of our National Parks.

The ALAA would not be officially concerned except that the management concept of these "International Biospheres" divides them into 3 sections, a wilderness zone, a buffer zone and a cooperation zone. Therefore some or our collecting sites are in "harms way". It is interesting to us that this whole concept was first brought to our attention through an article by June Gulp Zietner in the Lapidary Journal, July 1988 entitled "IS THE ROCK COLLECTOR AN ENDANGERED SPECIES" in which June pointed out that a proposed enlarging our National Parks was a real threat to many popular collecting areas. Now it looks like they may have found a different way to restrict our activities. The ALAA is not certain of just how many of our National Parks have received this designation, but we are told it is quite a number of them. Of note is a Bill in Congress, introduced by Congressman Don Young, (HR 901 in the 105th Congress) which is titled The American Land Sovereignty Protection Act. which would terminate any UN control over or National Parks. Possibly we should support it. JS&BC

BOOK REVIEWS

by Dolly Johnson in *Chips & Tips*, Jan '97

Agates of Northern Mexico, by Ben Cross

The author, Ben Cross, begins his book with a narrative on the people and places in Northern Mexico. The book continues on to describe, in vivid detail, the origin and types of nearly 75 Mexican agates and geodes, including various agate forms from Laguna, Coyamito, Casa Grande, Chihuahua, and other regions. While the author's account of the pioneers of Mexico agate prospecting and trade provides a historical context for collectors, the information on supply, marketing, importation and lapidary treatment are invaluable to today's professional collectors and amateur enthusiasts. And throughout, the text is complemented with an outstanding array of photographs.

Photographing Minerals, Fossils, and Lapidary Materials, by Jeffrey Scovil

A world-renowned gem and mineral photographer, Jeffrey Scovil, guides the reader through the basic concepts of photography and then explores the techniques required to photograph opaque and transparent mineral, fossil, and gem materials. While primarily a work about studio photography, there is a chapter on location photography.

This beautifully designed book features over 150 of the author's own images of gems, minerals, and other geological subjects. Most of the color photographs are selected examples from the collections of other world-class gem and mineral photographers.

via SDMGS, june 1997 an others as indicated