

Volume 52, Issue 6, June 2006

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**Mascot of the Arlington Gem and Mineral Club**  
is an affiliate of



**South Central Federation of Mineral Societies**



**American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**

## June Program

Dr. James L. Carter will talk on Lunar Islands.

**July** – Show and Tell. Our members will show what they have found or made.



Rockhound Club News of the Arlington Gem and Mineral Club  
 1408 Gibbins Road, Arlington, Texas 76011

## Palmaceae, Deep in the Yegua of Texas

by Vernon Bryant

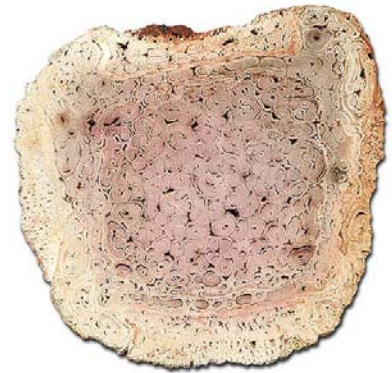
The love affair of rock hounds for petrified palm wood began in the early nineteen forties when the discovery of fossil palm root specimens in California and Wyoming was publicized. Why the palm family was so popular then, and continues to be today, is a mystery, but nevertheless it is true.

It was ten years later, in the early fifties, that my activities as a rock hound changed abruptly. I met Bud Harris. He was at a rock show in Dallas, Texas, standing outside the exhibit hall, showing cone-shaped pieces of petrified palm wood, explaining that he had knocked them off the bottoms of some palm stumps. Naturally I wanted to know where the stumps were, and was told they were still in place, waiting to be collected!

Before this time the only fossil palm I had seen were some specimens of roots found in California, and I was greatly interested in this new find. On seeing my interest, Harris invited me to go with him to the location.

On the following weekend I went to the home of my new friend, who lived and conducted a fish bait business on the banks of the Colorado River in Austin. His constant search for minnows and other fish bait carried him into good rock-hunting country.

We started out at daybreak, and our first stop was at a ranch about a mile from LaGrange. He took me to a gully in a wooded area, and what I saw was truly amazing. Looking down the dry ravine I could see fossil palm stumps everywhere. Most of them were on the floor, but some were sticking out



of the walls. A few were broken, but most of them were intact. There were other varieties of petrified wood, but it was badly fractured.

Seeing my excitement Harris said, "It's too hot to do anything today. When it gets cooler in the fall we will come back and get some of these stumps."

"That time is today," I replied. "I just can't leave without taking at least one piece."

Although it was blazing hot, Bud helped me get out two of the smaller stumps, weighing about 100 pounds each. (One of these turned out to be especially beautiful, with the image of a squirrel with a bushy tail.) We then drove to the ranch house and paid the asking price of five dollars for each stump.

From there we went to another ranch nearby, and also a couple of places near West Point, finding fossil palm wood in each location. However, we left it in place.

*continued on page 2*

## Show Volunteers Needed

by Kris Galbraith

We're getting close to several key deadlines and lots of jobs are still empty. No matter what your capabilities, we can find something for you to do. There is a sign-up sheet on the show bulletin board. Please sign up!

We still need donations for the silent auction.

There will be a show meeting June 8<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. Please show up and volunteer.

## Just a Thought from Your President

by Rick Litsinger, President AGMC

Well, the chili cook-off was not as great a success as I would have liked it to have been. Joyce and Delbert Speed, and my wife, Robin, and I were the only entrants. With only having two pots of chili we decided to call off the judging and just enjoy. We had a total of 22 people to partake in the festivities.

John Finch, the son of past member, Jim Finch, has donated his father's equipment, supplies and rocks to the club. Jim Finch had passed away some 15 years ago and his son, John, is moving, so he donated his father's lapidary equipment to the club. All equipment, rock rough, and supplies will be auctioned off at the silent auction at our 2006 show.

We are working on how to use the engraving machine so we can get the name tags out to those who need them. Harold Hoskison uses the same machine at his

church and has volunteered to show four of our members how to use it. I am sorry that it has taken so long, but now that we will have four members who will know how to use the machine, we should have badges for those who need them soon.

Elaine Collins said that the member directory should be available to the members by next meeting. Once I have the directory I will be able to set up a calling committee to remind members about up-coming events or other happenings.

Plans are still in the works for the June shrimp/fish fry. Frank Krystinik said the shrimp has been bought and he and Charlotte are going fishing down at the coast to catch the fish needed. I did a sample poll at the May meeting and only had a response of 10 members interested in the event. Frank set a minimum of 30 to make it a worth-while event.

Now that we have obtained a key piece of club paper work, Sue Lynes will be coordinating with Bill Medford of the South Central Federation in getting our 501(c)(3) status back.

I would like to thank all that came out Wednesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, to get the inside and outside ready for the rock swap on Saturday. We had eight getting the grounds ready and two getting the inside ready. With risk of forgetting someone, I want to thank Larry and Oral Ryan, Dale Miller, George Ricks, Alex Gallia, Sue Potter, Elaine O'Donley, Sam Howeth, Tatiana Andreev, and Rick Litsinger for your sweat and hard work in getting our great facility ready for the swap. Thank you all for volunteering. That is what makes this club the great club that it is.

Just a thought.

*Palmaceae continued from page 1*

Later, when it was cooler, we went back with a trailer and got seventeen palm stumps. We also collected petrified palm from near Carmine and Dime Box. However, La Grange was the favorite location, because the quality was better. For several years I enjoyed going back to get one or two stumps, just what I could load on my vehicle by myself. I took several other rock hounds to the location, and surface material was exhausted many years ago. However, there must be tons of it underground.

The cut surfaces of the material from this area have very distinctive and showy patterns. The vascular channels, represented by characteristic small dots, are clearly visible in all specimens. The basic colors are black and brown or tan. Those that have light tan centers have two outer rings, the inner of the two being brown and the peripheral one being a very light tan or beige. Those with black centers also have the same two outer rings of brown and light tan. However, some of the black ones have light gray patterns extending from the periphery toward the center that resemble billowing clouds.

Fossilized palm wood in Texas gained so much publicity the Texas legislature inappropriately designated it as the official "Texas stone", giving it a connotation much too broad and nonspecific.

Although Palmaceae is the family name, and some paleobotanists have used palmoxylon as the name of one genus, the material still remains unclassified. Since there seemed to be no classification I wrote to Professor Ted Delevoryas, University of Texas, for help. He informed me that there was no reference on fossil palms anywhere, and suggested I contact Professor Barry Tomlinson, Harvard University, the leading expert on living palms. I wrote to Professor Tomlinson. The following is part of his answer: "fossil palms, though commonly collected and easily recognized as to family, are very difficult to work with and it is doubtful if any reliable identification can be given beyond the family level." Then he adds, "Diagnostic characters are few and largely obscured by secondary changes that can occur during individual development. Basically, the anatomy of the trunk varies at different levels and with the ontogenetic age of the palm. Size is a dominant variable." These conclusions are after thirty-five years of study, which began at the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, England.

From my own reference books, and from those in the Dallas city library, it was learned that Texas palm became fossilized in the Yegua formation, of the Eocene epoch, the Tertiary period, about 60 million years ago, at the time the shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico was receding southward. According

to Professor Chester Arnold, University of Michigan, "the most abundant and best-preserved monocotyledons are palms."

Although fossil palms cannot be classified beyond the family level, we can visualize what those in Texas were like in the living state. They were very low, with broad, bulbous bases, the thickest one we collected in the fossilized state being twenty-eight inches in diameter. We can conclude that they were low growing because none have been reported longer than four feet. All of those found have had thick, bulbous lower ends, with smaller, rounded upper ends, indicating they were complete.

Several specimens of fossil palm from Texas will be on display at the next meeting.

### References

- Arnold, Chester A.: *Introduction to Paleobotany*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., page 341, 1947.
- Delevoryas, Ted: Personal communication, 1990.
- Finsley, Charles: *A Field Guide to Fossils of Texas*, Texas Monthly Press, 1989.
- Tidwell, William D.: *Common Fossils of Western North America*, Brigham Young University Press, 1975.
- Tomlinson, Barry: Personal communication, 1990.

## Local (and Not So Local) Events

### Douglas Estate Sale

Dealers welcome on Sunday afternoon (2 PM) for bulk buy opportunity.

#### Rockhound Estate Sale

June 3-4 from 9 - 4 PM  
at 26815 E. 51<sup>st</sup> St South  
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

Hwy 51 (Broken Arrow Expressway) east from Tulsa or Muskogee Tpk from the southeast to Broken Arrow, exit 71<sup>st</sup> st (Kenosha) go east to 193<sup>rd</sup> E ave (County Line Rd). From here go five miles east to 273<sup>rd</sup> E ave (oak grove rd). Turn north (left) and go two miles to E. 51St (Omaha St). Turn west (left) and go 1/4 mile to the fourth house on your right (double wide with circular drive). Immediately on the west side of this is a long private drive, turn right on this drive and proceed to the end of the drive past the second house. There will be signs to follow as well. If you still can't find it, call me at 918-640-9592 for directions. From the Creek Tpk, exit on 71<sup>st</sup> St, go 3 1/2 east to Oak Grove, follow directions from there.

Items at the sale include the following:

Approximately #1000 Of Jaspers And Agates Of All Varieties  
Onyx  
Parrot Wing Jasper  
Rhodochrosite  
Crazy Lace Agate  
Opalite  
Fluorescent Opal Nodules - Lead Pipe Spring (Closed Locality)  
Lots Of High Quality Slabs  
A Variety Of Mineral Specimens  
Apach Tears  
Tumbled Stones  
Howlite  
High Quality Lapidary Grade Petrified Woods  
Pink Chalcedony Roses

Most material will be sold on a per-pound basis, some higher end material will be individually priced as marked. As this is not a garage sale or auction, please refrain from bartering. This is a one time opportunity, when the sale is over, it's over! This is a fund raiser for TRMS thanks to the generosity of children of Pete and Maxine Douglas. Please come out and support our hobby and our society, and take home some great rocks for your collection, and some equipment to make them even prettier!

#### Equipment:

14" Shop-built Slab Saw W/extra Blades  
10" Diamond Pacific Slab Saw  
(2) - 6" Trim Saws (Star Diamond, Highland Park)  
(6) - 2-wheel Arbors W/wheels And Motors  
Invest-n-cast Vacuum (Dual Bell Jar)  
Sapphire Faceting Machine (8") Never Used! Complete With Assortment Of Brass Dops, Lee Indexing Head.  
Cab-o-sander  
Lortone Cabbing Machine W/(2) 8" Expandable Drums  
Combination Grinder/polisher W/vertical Belt Sander  
Jewelers Acetylene Torch  
Misc Tools

This is a one time sale to benefit Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society.

On behalf Of Tulsa Rock And Mineral Society And The Douglas Estate

Virgil G. Richards  
Ft Chair / VP  
Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society

### July Museum Field Trip

Monnig Meteorite Gallery at TCU  
10 AM Saturday July 15<sup>th</sup>

This small but fascinating and elegant museum displays meteorites from the world as well as many from Texas. The core collection was gathered by Oscar Monnig who was the owner of the Monnig Department Stores in Fort Worth. The collection has since been expanded. We are scheduled for a guided tour.

The museum is located in the Sid Richardson Building with entry up a ramp off West Bowie Street just east of University Drive. There should be adequate parking along the street or in the nearby lots as long as they don't say reserved. The visit is for adults or children over 16.

Reservations are not required but a call saying you are coming would be appreciated. Please call Irene Stemple at 817-926-6546

### Professional Jewelry Photography

We have a special opportunity for club members only! A professional photographer is available to shoot your jewelry, faceted



gems and cabs! For a small fee, you will receive a disc with high resolution files for your use in ju-

ried show submissions, magazine articles, websites, etc... All pictures taken will also be used by the club for promoting classes and membership.

Where: AGMC library

When: June 15<sup>th</sup> from 7-10 PM

Cost: \$2 per picture

Please contact the photographer directly for more information or to schedule an appointment on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Melanie Nevins at 817.233.6995

or (preferred) email: nuttycrew@gmail.com.

### Back Yard Sale Lots of rocks

There is going to be a giant rock sale, Saturday, June 10 9AM to 5PM

Keith Harmon; 8316 Oxford Drive; Tyler, TX 75703; 903-581-4068

Keith and Charlotte Harmon have been dealers and friends of many of the clubs in this area for years. They have a back yard and buildings full of top quality rocks and equipment. This is a great opportunity to find that rock you have been looking for.

Tyler is not that far away but with gas prices as high as they are this would be a great time to get with your friends, share the cost and have a field trip.

### June Area Shows

by Grady Shults

9-11 - STILLWATER, OK; RMFMS/  
Stillwater Mineral and Gem Society; call  
(405) 377-4766.

9-11 - ANGELS CAMP, CA; CFMS/  
Calaveras Gem & Mineral Society; call  
(209) 754-4863.

16-18 - CARLSBAD, NM; Roadrunner  
Gem & Mineral Club; call (505) 885-5509

## May & June Programs

by Sue Dale Miller

The May 2<sup>nd</sup> program was very well received by the club members attending. Keith Brownlee gave a PowerPoint presentation on his trip to Idar-Oberstein and his visit with a master carver.

Keith explained the history of the area with pictures of the town now and wood cuts of the town as it was hundreds of years ago. Idar has kept a workshop active to show how carvings were made hundreds of years ago. They also have preserved several tunnels for tours. And, they have one area open for self collecting. WOW!

He was able to go into the home and workshop of a master carver. He showed a work in progress and several finished pieces.

I hope everyone enjoyed the program as much as I did. Hope we will have as good a turnout for the June program.

June 6<sup>th</sup> we will have Dr. James Carter, a professor of geology at the University of Texas at Dallas. Dr. Carter is one of the nation's leading experts on the geology of the moon. The program will be "Lunar Islands".

Hope to see you June 6<sup>th</sup> at the club.

## Saturday Summertime Special

by Sam Howeth

Well, as promised, here is the offer to your response. For the Summer schedule, the following classes will be demonstrated for your enjoyment.

**Small Silver Boxes, June 17<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 PM**

**Hollow Silver Beads, July 15<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 PM**

**Silver Buttons, August 19<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 PM**

The classes will be held on Saturday afternoons. A handout will be provided for you to follow and make notes. The cost will be \$10 per person per session or \$25 per person for all three demonstrations.

This will be a demonstration only—so you don't need to bring your equipment. You are encouraged to ask questions regarding the subject during the demonstration. The floor will be open for general silversmithing questions and answers after the demonstration.

Sign-up sheets will be posted to provide me with an idea of how many handouts will be needed and seating arrangements to be made. You do not have to sign-up, although it would be helpful.

Just show up! No limit on how many. No qualification requirements. Your non-member guests are welcome.

Come for the demonstration and stay for the Fish and Shrimp Fry starting at 5:30 PM.

## Fish Fry

by Rick Litsinger, President AGMC

**Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> starting 5:30 PM**

Frank K. will do the fish fry if we have 20 paid members by Tuesday night meeting. He has the shrimp and most of the fish. If we do the fish fry we will need someone to bring a BBQ grill because his is on the fritz. If we do not have enough people he will postpone the fish fry until later in the year.

## Nuggets of Gold: Lessons in Silver

Short lesson series

by Sam Howeth, Silversmithing instructor

## Tumble Polishing Metals

This process of finishing will not remove scratches, pits, or surface imperfections. It will however burnish a smooth surface into a hard and highly reflective surface. Solution provided is to be used with the stainless steel shot.

### Procedures:

1. Place 1/2 to 1 pound of mixed stainless steel shot in a clean barrel.
2. Add solution to the barrel until one third full.
3. Add one to five pieces to be polished. (No Stones)
4. To avoid leaks, depress the bottom of the barrel when sealing with the lid and ring.
5. Tumble 10 to 30 minutes.
6. Remove pieces, rinse and air dry.

### FYI:

The solution may be purchased from most jewelry supply houses or you can make your own for ten cents a gallon. Mix two (2) tablespoons of shredded Ivory soap in a gallon of plain water. Shake well and let sit for 30 minutes and shake again before using.

### Caution:

Do not use a tumbler that has been used previously to polish rocks. The residual polishing grit will scratch the metal.

## June Class Schedule

by Pat Vaughan

### Cabochoon Cutting\*\* OPEN

1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays from 1-4 PM  
\$3.00 per hour equipment usage fee  
Instructor: Dale Miller

### Chainmaking\* OPEN

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday from 10 AM-1 PM  
Instructor: Mary Owren

### Freeform Stone Wire Wrapping OPEN

Saturday, June 10, 9 AM-Noon  
Instructor, Susan Potter

### Glass Fusing & Enameling\* OPEN

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays from 1:30-4 PM  
4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays from 9 AM-Noon  
Instructor: Becky Downey

### Metal Clay OPEN

4<sup>th</sup> Saturday from 9 AM-1 PM  
Instructor: Coleen Fitzpatrick

### Silversmithing

Instructors: Sam Howeth/Rick Litsinger  
Silversmithing Lab Open  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays from 8 AM – Noon

### 103 OPEN

Mondays 7-10 PM  
Open to those that have completed 102

### 201 OPEN

Fridays 7-10 PM  
Open to those that have completed 103

### Wax Casting/Carving OPEN

Thursdays 7-9 PM.  
(open to all levels of expertise)  
Instructor: Karen Rhodes

## DCCCD CLASS SCHEDULE

\*\*Classes subject to cancellation\*\*

### Silversmithing 101A FULL

Wednesdays starting June 14 7-10 PM

\* These classes are open to novice as well as experienced members.

\*\* This class is required before a member can use the saws and grinding equipment.

If you have any suggestions for classes or would like to teach a class pertaining to our hobby please contact Pat Vaughan 1st. VP in charge of classes.

Always check class board for sign-up sheets.

**OPEN** classes currently have space available. Check with the instructor.

**Note:** All classes are \$3.00 per class hour including AGMC members taking the DCCCD/AGMC scheduled classes.

# June 2006

## AGMC Classes and Meeting Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				****Lab Open Wax Carving & Casting 7-9 PM	Silversmithing 201 7-10 PM	****Lab Open 9 AM – Noon Silversmithing Lab Open 8 AM – Noon Cabochons <b>FULL</b> 1-4 PM
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Silversmithing 103 7-10 PM	Regular Meeting 7:30 PM	Silversmithing 101A <b>FULL</b> 7-10 PM DCCCD	****Lab Open Wax Carving & Casting 7-9 PM	Silversmithing 201 7-10 PM	****Lab Open 9 AM-Noon Freeform Stone Wire Wrapping <b>OPEN</b> 9 AM-Noon **Chainmaking 10 AM-1 PM Glass Fusing & Enameling 1:30-4 PM
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Silversmithing 103 7-10 PM	Free Tuesday 7-9 PM for members	Silversmithing 101A <b>FULL</b> 7-10 PM DCCCD	****Lab Open Wax Carving & Casting 7-9 PM <b>***DEADLINE FOR JULY NEWSLETTER</b>	Silversmithing 201 7-10 PM	****Lab Open 9 AM-Noon Silversmithing Lab Open 8 AM – Noon Silver Box Making Demo 2-5 PM Fish Fry starting 5:30 PM
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Silversmithing 103 7-10 PM		Silversmithing 101A <b>FULL</b> 7-10 PM DCCCD	****Lab Open Wax Carving & Casting 7-9 PM	Silversmithing 201 7-10 PM	Glass Fusing & Enameling 9 AM-Noon ****Lab Open 9 AM-Noon Metal Clay 9 AM-1 PM
25	26	27	28	29	30	
	Silversmithing 103 7-10 PM	Board Meeting 7 PM	Silversmithing 101A <b>FULL</b> 7-10 PM DCCCD	****Lab Open Wax Carving & Casting 7-9 PM	Silversmithing 201 7-10 PM	

**Club Mission:**

The objectives of the Arlington Gem and Mineral Club shall be to educate the public in the study of the earth sciences, lapidary arts, designer jewelry and all related fields.

**Yearly Enrollment recommended donation:**

Initial Adult Enrollment	\$35.00 (includes \$5.00 badge)
Adult Renewals	\$30.00 per calendar year
Junior Members	\$3.50 per calendar year

Activities take place at:  
Arlington Gem and Mineral Club  
1408 Gibbins Road, Arlington, TX 76011  
Phone 817-277-2286

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 986  
Arlington, TX 76004

E-mail Address:  
editor@tses.org or webmaster@tses.org

World Wide Web Home Page:  
<http://www.tses.org>

Business Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 PM  
Board Meeting on the last Tuesday of each month at 7 PM.

**The Hound's Tale**

Published monthly by the Arlington Gem and Mineral Club.

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**Ads and Articles**

Lapidary-related ads and articles from Members of AGMC are welcomed. They will be placed on a space-available basis, first in first out. Any articles may be edited for space and content. Non-enrollees ads are accepted after student ads. You must include your name and contact information.

**Arlington Gem and Mineral Club**

*(formerly Texas School of Earth Sciences)*

**P.O. Box 986  
Arlington, TX 76004**



Newsletter is available on our Website at [www.tses.org](http://www.tses.org)

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