



# Ore-Cutts

Volume XXXVIII, Issue II

February, 2003

## Story of the Giant Crystals

An interview with Leela Hutchinson, by Dick Shields

“The cave has a tiny opening, and is extremely hot. As I slipped into the opening my first impulse was to panic, to quickly plan a way out. But I relied on my rock climbing training and exercised ‘being present’. It was like returning to the womb.”

The result for Leela was an incredible journey into the Cave of Dreams and Cave of Giants in Mexico’s Naica silver mine, near Chihuahua. I first read the amazing story of giant selenite crystals on her web page, [www.crystalsnow.com](http://www.crystalsnow.com), and seized an opportunity to interview her last month in Santa Barbara. She offered a fascinating description of this world-class Mexican treasure.



Leela with a few of Richard Fisher’s photos from Naica

Leela traveled to Naica two years ago with Richard Fisher, a canyon explorer from Tucson, AZ, who manned the cameras. They wore special clothing from “Railriders” that is well suited for hot, damp climates.



Leela in the Cave of Giants, photo by Richard Fisher

She said the 200 year old Naica mine, owned by the Penoles Mining Company based in Mexico City, produces lead, zinc, and silver, and therefore Director of Security Enrique Ale-

jandro escorted the exploring party. Using his old pickup truck, they drove for an hour down to the 1300 foot depth through a long, spiral tunnel. The ambient temperature was "cooled" by ventilation to 105° for the miners' survival.

Once inside the Cave of Dreams, she found it difficult to balance on the sharks-tooth crystals, especially because of the disorienting, intense heat (120°-140°). She remarked about the total absence of sounds, deadened by the hot-to-touch crystal faces.

The Cave of Dreams and Cave of Giants were discovered in April-May 2000 by Penoles miners. Geologists and cave explorers will be excited to learn that Leela's contact in the Department of Tourism for Chihuahua has told her about another new cave, even deeper in the mine, which has just been opened. The heat in the new cave is even more intense than the Cave of Giants, so it may never be fully explored using current tools at the mine. This story is so hot I haven't even had time to write to the department myself!

Leela also shared that the Penoles Mine managers may soon announce a plan to open the mine for scientific study and limited expeditions. I will try to learn all I can about the new plan and share it in our newsletter in the future.

Incidentally, if you were wondering, the Cave of Swords, discovered in 1910, is indeed part of the mine. It's at the 400 foot level.

Leela is asking our readers to consider the effects of opening the mine to outside atmospheric condition – will the crystals still build, now that the environment has changed?

I realize we've only been allowed a glimpse of a crystal filled world of amazing proportions. Leela may be able to find time for a meeting with our club to share more pictures and experiences (I did invite her to speak when we can arrange it). I'm looking forward to this rare treat!

### **New Benitoite Gems**

By Wes Lingerfelt

These stones were extracted from a small specimen acquired in an estate sale lot of rough

stones piled on the ground. The estate was priced at \$1600.00 and the value of these two stones alone could easily exceed \$1900.00 as they are flawless and of good color. The stones were faceted through arrangements made by Mr. Rick Kennedy of the San Jose, Ca. area.



Jeannie Lingerfelt's Surprise

The large one is .96 cts and the smaller one is .84 cts, a large size for this type of extremely rare stone. The moral of this story is "You never know what treasure might be hidden within those ugly rocks". My spouse is very happy right now and will be even more pleased once these are set in a nice setting.

### **Ventura Gem, Mineral, Lapidary, & Fossil Show**

The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society, Inc., is holding their 41st annual show March 1 — 2, 2003 (10:00 AM — 5:00 PM, Saturday; 10:00 AM — 4:00 PM, Sunday) at the Ventura County Fair-

grounds in Ventura, California. The show is free. Kids will enjoy a "petting zoo" of dinosaur bones and casts, grab bags, and a variety of kids' activities. There will also be demonstrations of lapidary arts and exhibits from wonderful private collections of rocks, minerals, fossils, and lapidary work. Donation award prizes and a silent rock auction will be held continuously throughout the show. Approximately 15 dealers in fossils, minerals, lapidary equipment, slabs, etc., will be on hand, along with a country store featuring rummage sale items, used books and magazines, and plants. For further information (or to enter a display), contact Jim Brace-Thompson, show chair, at (805) 659-3577, email [jbrace@juno.com](mailto:jbrace@juno.com).

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### **Orcutt Mineral Society**

Board Meeting

Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA

January 2, 2003

The Board Meeting was called to order by President Wayne Mills at 7:00 p.m. Board Members present were Bill and Deborah Hood, Wes Lingerfelt, Wayne Mills, Sylvia Nasholm, Marshall Reeves, Geary Sheffer, Bess Shields, Lucky and Lynda Virgin. Guests were Don Nasholm, and Dick Shields.

Minutes of the December 5th Board Meeting, and the December 7th Annual Meeting were approved as published.

**Treasurer's Report:** Wes Lingerfelt presented the Treasurer's Report. It was accepted as read.

Wes Lingerfelt swore in new Board members Sylvia Nasholm and Lynda Virgin. They were not sworn in at the Annual Meeting in December.

### **Correspondence:**

- Tule Smoke Signals newsletter from Tule Gem & Mineral Club.
- Dinny's Doins newsletter.
- Lapidary Journal survey for action by President Mills.
- The Agatizer newsletter from South Bay (Torrance) Club.
- Seaside Gemboree information sheets.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Ore-Cutts:** Bess Shields thanked everyone for article submissions, and has a reserve of usable items for future editions.

**Education:** Bess Shields reported on the December "Rock Talk" which was held at Refugio Beach, and attended by more than 75 students, teachers and chaperones from Buellton School.

**Highway Cleanup:** Marshall Reeves will hold the bi-monthly cleanup at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, January

18th, followed by breakfast at Omelets and More in Nipomo.

**Refreshments:** Wayne Mills still has not found a chairman for this committee. Sylvia Nasholm volunteered to bring donuts to the January General Meeting.

**Gem Show:** Wes Lingerfelt reported that kids in cars have been wrecking the muddy field we use for vendor sites. John Von Achen will plow the field soon.

**Abused Children Fund:** Debbie Hood read a thank you letter from Lisa de Lulb for our donation to the charity at Christmas.

**Field Trips:** Dick Shields will hold a field trip to Jalama Beach on Saturday, January 11th. More information is in the Ore-Cutts.

### **Old / unfinished business:**

Wayne Mills asked to reinstate membership of Patty Finkeldei and Cameron Dyez. Debbie Hood moved, and Marshall Reeves seconded the motion to reinstate. The motion was carried unanimously.

Wayne Mills asked that each officer assemble a notebook with job description, old records, etc. to be passed on to the new officer next year.

**Audit:** Wes Lingerfelt and Don Nasholm will conduct the audit soon.

**Annual Banquet:** Bill Hood reported that December 6th has been reserved at Maria del Sol for the 2003 OMS Annual Banquet. Final arrangements will be made for Sweet Adelines to entertain us again.

### **New business:**

Wayne Mills thanked Debbie Hood for confirming the first 6 months of programs. Debbie, in turn, thanked Dick Shields for arranging the programs before he left office. Debbie still has a few open slots next fall, and asked for suggestions.

Wayne Mills asked the Board to "think big", and presented the concept of obtaining grant monies to secure a permanent OMS facility. Much discussion followed. Marshall Reeves reported that the Gem Show Raffle Tickets are being issued beginning tonight, and at next week's General Meeting.

Wes Lingerfelt thanked everyone for nominating him to the Rockhounding Hall of Fame, and for the article in Lapidary Journal(1/03 issue).

The Program for next week's meeting will be Virginia Rogers of Brazil Jewelers.

Display table will show off the items donated by club members for the 2003 Treasure Chest. Refreshments will be donuts supplied by the Board.

The Board Meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m. by President Mills.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

**Orcutt Mineral Society**

General Meeting

Mussell Senior Center, Santa Maria CA

January 14, 2003

Meeting was opened at 7:05 by President Wayne Mills  
 Flag Salute: Bill Hood. Invocation: Deborah Hood

**Membership:** Linda Virgin announced that we had 27 members and 7 guests. The guests were: Janice, Stan and Brianna Ferguson, Paul Morris, Christine Clauson, Lindsey Laughlin, and Virginia Rogers (our speaker).

**Treasurer's Report:** was given by Wes Lingerfelt. Don Nasholm reported that the audit was finished, and a report would be delivered in February.  
 Minutes of the January Board Meeting: were read by Wayne Mills, and accepted as corrected.

**Committees:**

**Abused Children** - Deborah Hood read a letter of thanks from Santa Barbara Social Services.

**Highway Clean-up** - Marshall Reeves announced a clean-up Saturday, January 18 at 8:00 AM.

**Awards Banquet** - Bill Hood reported that the date for the 2003 banquet will be December 6.

**Budget and Audit** - Wes Lingerfelt, Don Nasholm (see above)

**CFMS** - Wes Lingerfelt (dues are due for 65 members)

**Historian** - Ione Griggs current historian, is unable to attend meetings. Seeking volunteer replacement

**Hospitality** - Lucky and Lynda Virgin (see Membership above)

**Membership** - chairpersonship open. Treasurer announced dues are due for 2003 by March to get into Red Book. Don and Sylvia Nasholm and Wes and Jeannie Lingerfelt are our newest Life Members having been in the society 20 years.

**Property Chairperson** - Geary Sheffer announced there will be a locker clean-up April 5.

**Publicity** - Wes Lingerfelt and Wayne Mills. Wes announced that fliers for the annual show are available.

**Red Book** - Wes Lingerfelt. Send him any corrections, new information.

**Refreshments** - President Mills announced we need a chairperson for this post or we may not have beverages at the next meeting. No volunteers so far.

**Sheriff** - Bill Hood announced everyone has a name badge.

**Gem Show chairmen -**

Barbecue: Lucky Virgin

Country Store: needs volunteer chairperson.

Dealers: Wes Lingerfelt announced 60 contracts have been sent out to last year's dealers. Show fliers are made-please pick some up.

Displays: Bess Shields

Food: Sylvia Nasholm

Inside Show: Wayne Mills

Treasure Chest/Hospitality : DeeDee Magri is accepting new donations (see under Meeting Displays).

Sunshine: Deborah Hood. John Mock is in the hospital for removal of a tumor. Maida Williams who was present at the meeting, was given our condolences for the recent loss of her husband.

**Correspondence:** Club bulletins received were placed at head table for members to review.

**Old Business:** Wayne Mills announced receipt of "Expenditure and Income" sheet from Raffle Chairperson Marshall Reeves. Available for review on request.

**New Business:** None

Refreshments: Sylvia Nasholm brought in doughnuts provided by the club.

**Display:** During the refreshment break, members voted on the "Best Donation" for the club show Treasure Chest. Entries received from Wes Lingerfelt (Magnesite Sphere), Ralph Bishop (Jade), Deborah Hood (Beaded necklace and earring set), Wayne Mills (Sodalite inlay box and pearl necklace, Petrified Wood Bolo, Pin, Carved stone planter, Al Wilcox. After the official count by Truman Burgess and Paul Berthelot, Wes Lingerfelt was announced as the winner of the pretty San Simeon Creek brecciated jasper sphere that he had donated for the prize. Cries of "foul" and "no fair!" were heard from some of the other contestants... Another contest will be held in March with another Lingerfelt sphere as the prize, only Wes will be ineligible to win this one.

**Program:** Virginia Rogers, owner of Brazil's Jewelers in the Village of Arroyo Grande gave the program. Virginia spoke about the tools of the trade for gem identification.

**Raffle:** Sandy Berthelot won the prize crystal by having the first ticket drawn. Others seemed happy with their prizes.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Hood for Bess Shields, Secretary, OMS

Check our OMS web site at

[http://home.netcom.com/~shields6/OMS\\_2001.html](http://home.netcom.com/~shields6/OMS_2001.html) or send email to oms@ix.netcom.com.

## The Wanderer

### Fredericksburg, Texas Gem Show

Every January, Dick and I travel north of San Antonio, Texas to the little town of Boerne for our annual family bonding experience with the Kirbys. Nothing beats a pair of grandboy arms wrapped around your neck, and a whispered "I love you" in the ear!

I have mentioned the Fredericksburg Gem Show several times in the past, and enjoyed it again this year. The town was founded by German immigrants, and still retains much of its quaint atmosphere. The townfolk are happy to see you, and assist in any way they can to assure that you enjoy their little corner of the world.

For being such a small club, they sure put on a large show! The local Kiwanis Club runs the kitchen and puts out its ample spread of delicious homemade pastries and desserts, locally made sausages, big piles of biscuits, and enormous pots of coffee. You never stand in line more than a minute or two as the volunteer 'cooks' are eager to please.



Opening a geode for the grandsons

The displays are always interesting. One vendor kept his longwave fluorescent display case under his sales table. He sold fluorescent specimens ON the table, and you could check your purchases UNDER the table. You sure knew what you were buying from that vendor.

Another demonstrator/salesman was a flint knapper who used the most interesting rock and primitive farming tools as backs for the clocks he made as you watched. Some of his unique display case items were found around Fredericksburg and included unspent antique rifle shells, old bridle bits,

amethyst crystals, shards of Indian pottery, and numerous arrowheads.

One vendor came prepared with a wrenching tool to split Mexican cocoanuts and geodes. We bought a geode from the dealer, and in one easy crunch, he divided it into two halves. We took the pieces over to the vendor's portable ultraviolet light where it turned bright, mint green! Needless to say, the Grandsons each got one from Grampa, too.

The most innovative use of technology award goes to the man who hooked up a microscope to a camera, and also projected the image on a large picture screen for everyone to enjoy. He displayed amber with lots of bugs and pollen inclusions, perfect crystals that gave off rainbows, slivers of iris agate, and many other beauties. It was a fascinating, elaborate and expensive arrangement.

We're already planning our January 2004 trip back to Texas, making sure that it's the weekend of the Fredericksburg Gem Show!

Happy Hunting!  
Love, Bess

## Honors for Wes Lingerfelt

Each year the National Rockhound and Lapidary Hall of Fame in Murdo, South Dakota honors top achievers in the field. This year Wes Lingerfelt is being honored for his achievements in Jewelry. Here's the description that appeared in the January 2003 "Lapidary Journal."



Wes Lingerfelt is this year's honored jewelry artist. Lingerfelt is multitasking; cutting stones, designing, making and repairing precious metal

jewelry, and collecting minerals and fossils. He made the jewelry presented to the Russian delegation at the beginning of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, better known as the START talks. He has restored the beauty and sentimental value of many family heir looms. He has taught jewelry making to members of California clubs, and through his expertise has made friends around the world.

Lingerfelt has been successful in his chosen career as a rocket scientist but has spent his leisure time enjoying his hobbies and helping others to enjoy them, too. He gives presentations to elementary school children, helps with field trips and shows, and works for his club and for the California regional federation of AFMS. He has been recipient of the prestigious Golden Bear award twice.

One of the lapidary materials Lingerfelt likes to work with for jewelry or spheres is California's famous, and hard to get, Nipomo agate, noted for its striking marcasite inclusions, which some cutters find hard to work. He also likes Stone Canyon and plasma agate from California and the native brecciated jasper. His workmanship on metal is as meticulous as his work on stone.

Growing up as the son of a jeweler, Lingerfelt became fascinated with stones and jewelry when he was very young. Today he works in many original styles, both in silver and gold, and usually set with beautiful and unusual stones. His jewelry has been sold commercially through C. and G. Gemcraft.

Wayne Mills, President of the Orcutt Mineral Society, claims one of the biggest things Lingerfelt did for his club was single-handedly solve a problem the club once had with the Internal Revenue Service. Surely eclipsing even this, though, is his untiring help to others.

Official Stuff

**OMS Purpose**

Founded in 1958, and is named after William Orcutt, a geologist and civil engineer who worked in the Santa Maria Valley as a district

manager for Union Oil Company in 1888. In 1889, Orcutt discovered the fossil wealth of the La Brea Tar Pits, one of the most significant fossil finds in paleontological history. The Society is a non-profit club, dedicated to stimulating an interest in rocks and minerals. The club offers educational programs, field trips, youth activities, and other opportunities for families and individuals to pursue an interest in collecting and lapidary treatment of rocks, fossils, gems, minerals, and other facets of Earth Sciences. In addition, a goal of this Society is to promote good fellowship and proper ethics in pursuit of the society's endeavors. Operating rules have been set forth to guide the Officers and members of the Society in accomplishing these purposes. Affiliations: California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.



OMS Logo

A rock saw cutting a piece of stone was selected when the first bulletin, *ORE-CUTTS* (name-sake, William Orcutt) was first published in 1966. Member Helen Azevedo was the first editor.

2003 OMS Elected Officers

President	Wayne Mills	(805) 481-3495
President Elect	Debbie Hood	(805) 481-6860
Secretary	Bess Shields	(805) 937-0357
Treasurer	Wes Lingerfelt	(805) 929-3788
Immediate Past President	Dick Shields	(805) 937-0357
CFMS Representative	Wes Lingerfelt	(805) 929-3788

## 2003 OMS Board Members

Geary Sheffer	(805) 925-8009
Sylvia Nasholm	(805) 481-0923
Harold Virgin	(805) 481-0923
Linda Virgin	(805) 481-0923
Marshall Reeves	(805) 733-2775

**Web Sites of Note:**

February 2003

Is Microraptor gui real?

<http://dsc.discovery.com/news/afp/20030120/newdino.html/>

Hot Springs Gazette:

<http://www.hotspringsgazette.com/>

The Virtual Cave:

<http://www.goodearthgraphics.com/virtcave.html>

"Crystal Moonbeams," by John F. Ross:

<http://www.smithsonianmag.si.edu/smithsonian/issues02/apr02/phenomena.html>

Naica Crystal Caves:

<http://www.showcaves.com/english/mx/caves/Naica.html>

Leela Hutchinson's Cave of Giant Crystals

<http://www.crystalsnow.com/>

Build your own seismograph:

<HTTP://PSN.QUAKE.NET/INFOEQUIP.HTML>

Buy satellite maps of earth:

<http://edcwww.cr.usgs.gov/>**HIGHWAY 166 IS CLEAN AGAIN!**

On Saturday morning January 18, 5 intrepid OMS members and 1 guest met at 101/166 East at Oh dark 30 (8:00 AM) to clean our 2 mile stretch of highway. Members present were Marshall Reeves, Don Nasholm, Geary Sheffer, Wayne Mills, Charles Ferguson, and guest Don Roberts. We had nice weather, and the clean-up went pretty quickly. At about 9:40 we headed for Omelet's and More for a little snack and a little chat. Our thanks to all who attended.

Wayne Mills for Marshall Reeves, Adopt-A-Highway Chairperson.

**Qualifications for Being a Rockhound**

Via Clackamette Gem, June 2001

Via Hatrockhound Gazette, August 2001

Via Rockhound Ramblings, September 2001

Via Pick &amp; Shovel (San Gorgonio G&amp;MS), January 2003

1. Love of the outdoors- where else can you find a rock.
2. Strong back or good judgment-rocks gain weight with every step.

3. Sense of humor-being able to appreciate someone else's great find when you just stepped over it.
4. Cheerful-smile even if every muscle and bone in your body aches.
5. Adventurous-daring to take a road, even if it looks like it goes straight up.
6. Persistent-not satisfied until you have turned over every rock in the area twice.
7. Determination-visualizing a beautiful gem cut from a plain ole' rock.

**February 2003 Calendar**

Thursday February 6, 2003 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	<b>OMS Board Meeting</b> -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting
Tuesday February 11, 2003 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	<b>OMS General Meeting</b> -- Mussell Senior Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program: Wes Lingerfelt will present, "How to Tumble (Rocks)."</li> <li>• Display: Bring a fist-full of your favorite tumbled rocks.</li> <li>• Refreshment: Cake and Cupcakes</li> </ul>
Saturday February 15, 2003 7:30 AM - 7:30 PM	<b>Field Trip to Rosamond and California City Area, Mojave Desert</b> -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. A long day but well worth the trip. Car pooling is encouraged. The afternoon will end at Lucy Tunnell's home in Rosamond. Her standard price is 25 cents per pound. Good Café food available near Lucy's.
Saturday February 22, 2003 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	<b>Monthly OMS Breakfast</b> -- Baker's Square, Santa Maria Breakfast location alternates between Baker's Square in Santa Maria and The Girl's in Arroyo

**March 2003 Calendar**

Thursday March 06, 2003 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	<b>OMS Board Meeting</b> -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting
Tuesday March 11, 2003 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	<b>OMS General Meeting</b> -- Mussell Senior Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program: Dick Shields will present, "Fluorescent Rocks"</li> <li>• Display: Green Stones</li> <li>• Refreshment: Pies</li> </ul>
Saturday March 15, 2003 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	<b>OMS Highway Cleanup</b> -- Intersection of Hwy 101 and Hwy 166. After the cleanup we have coffee and pastry at "Omelets and More" in Nipomo. Contact Marshall Reeves at 733-2775.

Saturday March 22, 2003 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Monthly OMS Breakfast -- Girl's Restaurant, Arroyo Grande Breakfast location alternates between Baker's Square in Santa Maria and The Girl's in Arroyo Grande. Call Dick Shields at 937-0357 for details.
Saturday March 29, 2003 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Field Trip to Figueroa Mountain -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot. Explore old jasper trails, serpentine outcroppings, and wildflowers in full bloom. Fill your gas tank (no services on the mountain) and bring a lunch. Wilderness Pass required.

April 2003 Calendar	
April 12, 2003 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Creek -- Meet at Mussell Senior Center Parking Lot Franciscan formation chert, brecciated jasper, and agates. Bring a lunch or eat later in Los Olivos, Solvang, or Santa Ynez.
Saturday April 26, 2003 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Monthly OMS Breakfast -- Girl's Restaurant, Arroyo Grande Breakfast location alternates between Baker's Square in Santa Maria and The Girl's in Arroyo Grande. Call Dick Shields at 937-0357 for details.

April 2003 Calendar	
Thursday April 03, 2003 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	OMS Board Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center. All members are welcome at this business meeting
Tuesday April 08, 2003 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	OMS General Meeting -- Mussell Senior Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program: Wes Lingerfelt will present, "How to Create a Lapidary Display"</li> <li>• Display: One by One Foot Display (practice)</li> <li>• Refreshment: Cookies</li> </ul>
Saturday	Field Trip to Santa Agueda

**AFMS/CFMS Seaside GEMboree**  
 Thursday through Sunday, 5,6,7 & 8 June, 2003  
 Thur-Sat 10 am - 6 pm and Sun 10 am - 5 pm  
 Seaside Park (formerly Ventura Fairground)  
 10 W. Harbor Blvd, Ventura  
 info: [www.afms-cfmshow.org](http://www.afms-cfmshow.org)

Orcutt Mineral Society  
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 Santa Maria, CA 93456

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED