

# MILLENIUM DIGGERS CLUB NEWS

VOLUME 6

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ISSUE 1

## *Club meeting:*

**2nd Tuesday Each Month  
7pm – 9pm  
Keizer / Salem Senior Center  
930 Plymouth Drive NE  
Keizer, Oregon**

## *Officers:*

**Presidents: Ted Staley,  
Ed Johnston  
Reminders Calls: Lynn  
Baustian  
Treasurer: Ouida Staley  
Secretary: Robin Callander**

## **February:**

**Happy Birthday From The Millennium Diggers  
Duane Fugitt, Wayne Nisbet, Alice Baustian, Keri Elrich**

- **Things to remember...**
- **2005 Club Membership is due, This will be the last Newsletter from your 2004 year membership.**
- **We need Goodies for our meeting raffle, if you have something please bring it.**

**Club outing for February 19th. We will meet at Walmart in NEWPORT, at NOON. Bring containers and rain gear. Dry clothes would be a good idea too!**

**We would like to thank Gibby for bringing in his Treasures from his seashore explorations.**

**And also to thank Laurie for her contributions to this Newsletter.**

## TREASURY REPORTS

I am starting the Membership Ties Program fresh. and have been inputting all the renewal information for the 2005 Club memberships.

The Bank Statement from Jan 11, 2005 states the club has \$1,234.37.

This is where I will start from in the new accounting for the year.

With the up coming GPAA Gold Show, I will be purchasing business cards for our raffle tickets and will be printing the application forms for the show. Just to let you know this takes a lot of ink. The Treasurer's report will always be from the previous month. A report will be given to anyone who requests it and will also be available at the meeting.

Hope we have a good year!  
Ouida Staley, Treasurer

Some pictures from the Rice Museum January outing.



**Rice NW Museum  
of rocks and  
minerals,  
Hillsboro OR**



This museum is currently composed

of the former house, and land of the Rice's who started collecting samples before selecting this lovely, peaceful site. It has been designed as a museum right from the start, contains two floors, a gift shop, a trail among some very large sample and a rock pile for the "youngsters" to enjoy.



The Rice's started collecting for several years before starting up the museum, mostly from around the world. Since 1996 the original collection has been graciously added to by rock hounds of the North West, collectors, and NASA by way of donations and loans. These displays are rotated and exchanged every 6 months to 1 year, keeping every thing fresh and new.

I have been informed by the curator ( Rudy W.Tschernich, who is very informative and willing to answer your questions) that the newest section ( the former workshop) will included more rocks from the Northwest and show how the samples are found in the earth.

This should be informative as the treasured find is very different than how it ends up in a museum.

The Rice's work shop used to house a giant mud saw that could cut over 6' diameter slabs. WOW!!

The most wonderful feature of this museum is the variety and perfection of natural forms for any given sample and its size.

The largest single display is about fossils. Here you will find the dinosaur egg that was featured in National Geographic on Titanosaurs. There are fishes, lobsters, crabs, shells, corals, ferns, leaves, nuts, cones and trees. I have never seen so many different kinds of tree fossils. I'm not talking trunks or limb casts. I do believe every major tree family is represented. The colors and patterns of the preserving silica is also fascinating. My favorite is the candlewood, which does look like a thick or thin candle put into a hollowed out limb or trunk and glued to the side.

For the gold seeker there is are impressive displays on both floors of flakes, nuggets and crystals from many locals to ancient gold beads and a gold jewelry ring from a Byblos tomb. The differences in sizes (small flakes approximately 1/32<sup>nd</sup> of a inch to about an inch) and colors is impressive (palest yellowy silver to rich golden yellow). The crystal form of gold (yes it has a crystal form, it is just very rare to be found this way as it usually get beat up by stream action into nuggets and flakes) is impressive as is the electrum form. There is gold in matrix also.

Agates and jaspers are plentiful, but these displays show the beautiful pale lavender, mauve, cream and rose shadings to perfection.

The quartz room has a most impressive display of the many varied twinnings of crystalline quartz. I'm talking the forms you only read about in books but never have seen in real life. Plus the unusual overgrowths, inclusions and sizes of some of the crystals.

For Jade lovers there is the most delicate carved multi-tiered arrangement I have ever seen. It must be 2 ½ to 3 feet tall. How many years did this take? How many carvers? There are also carvings in turquoise, amethyst, tigers-eye, lapis lazuli, chrysanthemum stone and nephrite. Not your usual assortment of carvings.

Then there are samples of copper bearing minerals, fluorescent and phosphorescent minerals, volcanic rocks and sedimentary rocks...and...and...

Now I know where I can bring my own samples of NW rocks I've been collecting.



By Al'aura Jusme

## Oregon coast fossil hunting

There are a number of locations to hunt fossils, but knowing exactly where is the trick. Most descriptive locations just get you into the general area. Some are quite a ways inland.

Trying to read a geological map, if you're not a geologist, is also quite a trick. All those strange words tend to get one quite lost and frustrated ... just ask my husband.

**Fossil** -- Latin- Fodere, "to dig" Fossilis to dig out or dig up

Fossils are not found on just any old beach. Mudstones, siltstones, weak shales, and limestones offer the best hunting. To be a fossil the animal or plant has to be rapidly buried at some point, either causing death or soon after death. The covering material can be volcanic (ashes from Mt. Vesuvius), lava (which didn't burn the enclosed item to bits, and not often found), liquids, tree resin (amber or copal) bogs or best of all muds, silts and fine grain sandstones (rapid rise of water or drop in land level resulting in drowning) as seen on our coast.

The matter can remain (Direct form) or be dissolved and leave an impression of what once was (Indirect form).

If it dissolves it forms a hollow cast which can be filled in later by various materials

If it remains behind it can go one of 3 routes. The hard parts can 1) recrystallize, make a mold, or make a ghost 2) be replaced or 3) dissolve at a later stage and make a mold.

Then there are more name for the different kinds of fossilization.

Needless to say, finding and unaltered part is rare.

I am not a big fossil collector, I mostly look, and most of the fossils I have collected are the bivalve or another snail variety. Feeding tubes and paths are the most interesting. Having never found a nice vertebra, leaf or skeleton I wish you all well. I'll bring some nice picture references from some of my classes and Moore's book.

### **Here are few helpful tips from the school of hard knocks.**

Most fossils on the Oregon coast are found in a water environment and are quite frail. They like to crumble to bits when you touch, or hold them. A few are good and sturdy.

If you find that fossil that has been calling to you is under the high tide mark, and is currently playing hide & seek with you between waves be very careful in extracting it. The water logged silty mudstone / shale (that's the dark gray to black rock) is going to crumble into little bits in your hand – along with your find. Use a long flat head screwdriver, chisel or some such tool to dig lines around the fossil, and then to under cut it on a flat plane only, no curving, lifting or prying. Make the surrounding background mass much larger and put immediately into a smaller bucket of water. Better have the lid to that.

You might also want to put the sample into a rock sealer as soon as possible. Sealer is a liquid that fills in pores, gouges, cracks and so on within a rock sample.

Try not to be so engrossed in your find that you forget the sneaky waves.

Fossils that are ½ to ¾ exposed are easier to extract but harder to find. Fossils that have weathered out are the easiest, but hardest to find. It figures.

Do not rinse a **dried** out fossil off in water ... it will crumble. Blow it off or use a soft brush.

By Al'aura Jusme