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Fossils in Amber

SHELBY HARTMAN:

When tree sap hardens, it becomes resinous amber. Conifers were usually the source of the sap that produced amber, however angiosperms (a flowering plant) also produced sap that eventually became amber. Amber is not a mineral but due to its use in jewelry it is often classified with precious stones. In the past, amber was often melted down to produce very high quality lacquers and varnishes.



The majority of amber is younger than 70 million years but some has been found to be 100 million years old. As tree sap hardened into amber, often insects and other small animals would become entrapped. Most of the fossils found encased in amber are insects but some lizards and plants have been found. Fossils found in amber are very unique and very important to the fossil record. An insect or animal trapped inside amber is usually seen in near perfect detail. Even hairs on the insects are preserved without crushing or distortion. Without the preservation of insects and spiders inside of amber, virtually nothing would be known of the evolution of either of these groups.

The process of preservation includes the decay and dehydration of the organism which leaves a carbonized mass inside a perfect mold of the original organism. Paleontologists have been able to dissect the amber-encased organisms and can often identify muscle groups and internal structures. In some cases even DNA from these amber insects have been identified which

(continued on page 5)

2007 – 2008 Officers and Board of Directors

President – Sandy Ward • 5119 Whiteway Drive, Memphis
TN 38117 • 901-684-1819 •
sandypepperspray@comcast.net

1st VP (Field Trips) – Barry Burns • P.O. Box 666, Atoka, TN
38004 • 901-829-4246 • bburns@utmem.edu

2nd VP (Programs) – W.C. McDaniel • 2038 Central Ave.,
Memphis, TN 38104 • 901-274-7706 • w.c.mcd@
worldnet.att.net

Secretary – Carol Lybanon • 2019 Littlemore Dr., Cordova, TN
38016 • 901-757-2144 • lybanon@earthlink.net

Treasurer – Mike Cannito • 1051 Sandra, Memphis, TN 38122
901-454-9326 • mcannito@memphis.edu

Director (Asst Field Trips) – David Day • 5974 Ivanhoe,
Bartlett, TN 38134 • 901-387-2347 • stonenchanter@
yahoo.com

Director (Asst Programs) – Carl Warren • 818 Hyden Dr,
Clarksville, TN 38043 • 931-647-8845 •
cwarren506@bellsouth.net

Director (Youth) – Mike Baldwin • 367 North Main St.,
Collierville TN 38017 • 901-853-3603 • mbaldwin05@
gmail.com • rockclub@earthlink.net

Director (Asst Youth) – Idaeon Jordan • 104 Plainview,
Memphis TN 38111 • 901-452-4286 • no email address
provided

Director (Librarian) – Ron Brister • 3059 Old Brownsville Rd.,
Bartlett, TN 38134 • 901-388-1765 • ronald.brister@
Memphistn.gov

Director (Membership) – Pam Gurley • 460 E. Swan Ridge
Cr., Memphis TN 38122 • 901-324-7235

Director (Historian) – Cathie Jacobs • 5328 Denwood,
Memphis TN 38120 • 901-680-0686 • jakeandcattoo@
aol.com

Web Coordinator – Mike Baldwin • 367 North Main St.,
Collierville TN 38017 • 901-853-3603 • mbaldwin05@
gmail.com • rockclub@earthlink.net

Newsletter Editor – Shelby Hartman • 5116 Whiteway Dr.,
Memphis, TN 38117 • 901-626-1920 •
magsnewsletter@comcast.net

Show Chairman – Alan Parks • 831 West Powell Rd, Collierville,
TN 38017 • 901-853-6898 • alanparks@bellsouth.net

Rockhound News is published monthly by and for the members of
Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society. Please send your
comments and articles to the attention of Shelby Hartman, 5116
Whiteway Drive, Memphis, TN 38117 or via email at magsnewslet-
ter@comcast.net

President's Corner



Hope all of you are having a great summer! Just remember to be careful while you're rock hunting and enjoying the great outdoors. Drink lots of water...take frequent breaks to rest and cool off in the shade or in an air conditioned space if possible. No big news to share this month but I would like to mention that Alan Parks has hit the ground running as our new Show Chairman...we've already met at the Agri-center for our first show committee meeting and it was really exciting to see this wonderful new space we will be using next year. It's never too late for you to join us and share your ideas and help us make this 30th show the best ever! Contact me or Alan for info about our next meeting. One more thing...anyone interested in the medicinal uses for leeches, see Sherry Baldwin...I understand she's an expert now and she got her training at Twenty-mile Creek!

Sandy Ward

“Best of Show and Found Display Contest” Rules

To display and compete each member is requested to:

1. Bring a single specimen from the location listed in the table on the right (collected on a MAGS field trip or at the same collection site at another time).
2. You must have found the specimen yourself.
3. Specimen must be in original form or, if changed/modified, only through lapidary or prep work.
4. Juniors and adults are combined for this contest.
5. One winner will be selected. Winner will determine by members using a point rating from 3(high) to 1(low).
6. Winner will receive a certificate and entry into the Best of Show event in December. A special prize will be awarded to the Best of Show winner at the December Christmas Party.

Best of Show

Month	Type of Material	Location	Winner
March	Druze Quartz	Missouri	David Day
April	Petrified Wood	MS, TN, AR	Carol Lybanon
May	Quartz Crystal	Arkansas	Wayne Williams
June	Fossil	Vulcan or Dale Hollow	
July	No Display—Mineral Sale		
August	No Display— Rock Swap Fund Raiser for Shop		
September	Agate	Gravel bars or pits, etc.	
October	Fossil	Frankstown or Birmingham Ridge	
November	Geode	Ledbetter or Pharis Farm	
December	Winners from previous months compete for “BEST OF SHOW.”		



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

This month we welcome new MAGS members, Phillip and Kimberly Loveland along with their children, James, Austin, Luke, Flint and Bruce. We look forward to seeing you at the membership meetings, field trips and rock swaps!

members to purchase surplus material from the Frank Theibold Mineral collection. The auction will consist of a pre meeting silent auction, live auction during the meeting and a silent auction after the meeting all pieces will have a minimum opening bid. An inventory of auction pieces is available via email.

Announcements & Tidbits

MINERAL SALE

The July membership meeting will be the first opportunity for MAGS

2008 Adult Program Presentations

July 11

MAGS Mineral Sale

August 8

MAGS Annual Indoor Picnic and Rock Swap

September 11

**Robert P. Connolly, Director
Chucalissa**

October 9

**Alan Parks & Ron Brister
The Geological & Paleontological History of
Nonconnah
Marvin Nutt: Extinct and Extant Plant Life of
Nonconnah Creek**

November 14

TBA

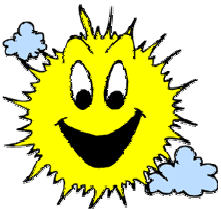
December 12

MAGS Holiday Party

Youth Program Presentations

July	Crafts	The Lybanons
August	Indoor Picnic/Rock Swap with Adults	
Sept	Study of Mining	Alan Parks
October	Civil War Artifacts	Lou White
November	Fossil & Mineral ID	Idajean Jordan
December	Holiday Party with Adults	

Sunshine Report



Frank Walker has been ill. We wish him a speedy recovery!

Pam Gurley

If you have any announcements to include in the sunshine report, please contact Pam Gurley at 324-7235

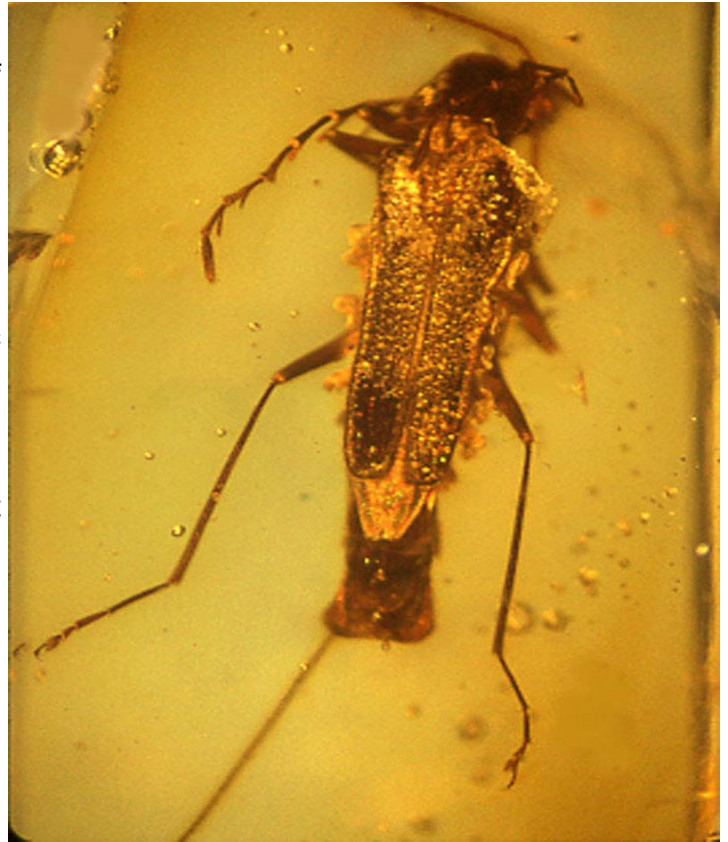


MAGS member, Alan Parks, presents the Ronald McDonald House of Memphis a check from the 2008 show's admission proceeds. This represents the 7th year MAGS has made contribution with the aggregate total around \$10,000.

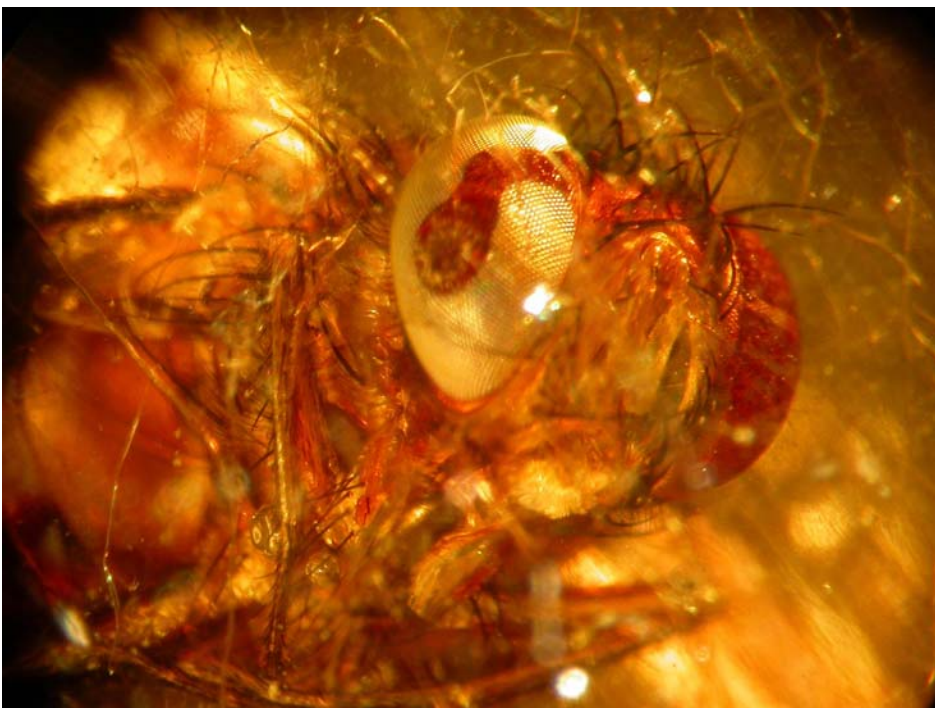
“Fossils In Amber” cont’d from page 1.....

makes it possible to compare ancient DNA with that of contemporary insects. They have even been able to extract and reactivate bacterial spores from inside 40 million year old bees.

Amber encased fossils are found in many sites all over the world, including the Baltic Sea coast, the Isle of Wight and New Zealand. Amber found in the Baltic Sea coastal area of Poland is usually brought in by the tides as amber floats in salt water. Amber found in Northern Burma is referred to as Burmite. What is unique about amber from this region is that it is most likely the oldest amber specimens which contain insects — dating back to the Uppermost Lower Cretaceous Age. Plant matter and insects found in Burmite may date back 110-140 million years. However, amber without insects has been found dating back to the Upper Carboniferous period — 345 million years ago! Amber is usually associated with deposits of shale and coal.



Considering how much amber exists, relatively little amber actually contains insects. Museums shops and private dealers often offer amber encased insects for sale. However, as amber fossils can be faked very easily, the buyer should be wary of the potential to be “taken.”



Amber comes in a variety of colors. The color most closely associated with amber is a yellow-orange. It is a color so closely associated with amber that it is actually referred to as “amber.” Amber can range from almost white to yellow to yellow orange, to brown to a color very close to black. There is also green amber and a very rare blue amber that is very expensive and highly prized.

Sources: [1] A Guide to Rocks & Fossils (Busby, Coenraads, Willis & Roots) [2] Wikipedia

July Birthdays



SHELBY HARTMAN:
The birthstone of July is ruby. Known as the gem of Summer, Ruby is the red variety of corundum and is

the sister stone of sapphire. All colors of corundum other than red or white are called sapphire. The red color in ruby is caused by trace amounts of the element chromium. The best shade of red for ruby is often given the name "pigeon blood red", but ruby can be any shade of red up to almost pink. Rubies symbolize love and in the past it was believed they possessed the power to bestow peace and harmony.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Chris Cozart | 19 Ramon Gafford |
| 1 Ravi Tummalapalli | 19 Rachel Huber |
| 4 Don Spencer | 20 Kent Stratton |
| 6 Irma Idell | 21 Zachary Faddis |
| 7 Charlie Thomas | 22 Idajean Jordan |
| 9 Danny Falkner | 22 Jerome Wood |
| 9 Dr. Don Lum | 24 Floy Hawkins |
| 11 Paul Sides | 25 Sherri Baldwin |
| 12 Ron Brister | 25 Dylan Burns |
| 12 Ginny Stanford | 25 Robert Foster |
| 12 Chris Ferguson | 25 Lenora Murray |
| 12 David Murray | 25 Frances Walker |
| 14 Kasia Ferguson | 27 Tim Long |
| 15 Holly Stanford | 28 Beth Day |
| 16 Lelitia Brister | 31 Gerald May |
| 16 George Loud | 31 Frank Schwartz |
| 17 Anna Sisk | 31 John Keegan |

2008 Dates to Remember			
Month	Board Meeting	Membership Meeting	Due Date for Newsletter Submissions
July	July 03	July 11	June 22
August	July 31	Aug 08	July 20
September	Sep 04	Sep 12	Aug 24
October	Oct 02	Oct 10	Sep 21
November	Nov 06	Nov 14	Oct 26
December	Dec 04	Dec 12	Nov 23

Web Site Statistics for June 2008	
a brief look at our website (www.memphisgeology.org) since 1/21/02	
Total Visits & Hits	
Total visits to web site since 1/21/02	329,171
Total hits to web site since 1/21/02	1,246,119
Visits in past 30 days	5,518
Hits in past 30 days	31,992
Average daily visits / hits (past 30 days)	178 / 1,032
Top page views past 30 days	
rocknews0608	615 hits
rocknews1206	600 hits
eris	555 hits
rocknews0602	465 hits
Note: A visit is every time someone comes to our web site. A hit is every page viewed once a user enters our web site.	

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee An Official Field Trip of the Southern Appalachian Mineral Society (Asheville, NC) HOST And An Official Field Trip of the Memphis Archeological and Geological Society

FEE AREA

The Southern Appalachian Mineral Society extends an invitation to rockhounds to visit one of the premier quartz collecting localities in the southeast. The Diamond Hill Mine has been producing skeletal, amethyst and smoky quartz crystals, as well as quartz scepters and an assortment of pegmatite minerals for many years. Come join us!

Assembly Point: Diamond Hill Mine, Antreville, SC on July 19, 2008, 8:30 A.M. (EST)

Directions: The Diamond Hill is located near the small town of Antreville in northeastern South Carolina. **From the north:** Exit i-85 to US 178 at Anderson, SC (exit 21). Drive south on US 178 for approx. 1 mile and then bear right onto SR28. Follow SR28 south approximately 20 miles to Antreville. Upon entering Antreville you will see Crawford's Store on the left. Drive past the store and then watch on the right for Emanuel Baptist Church. Turn right at the church onto SR284. Drive west on SR284 for 2.3 miles watching carefully on the right for Suber Road (S-01-508). Turn right onto Suber Road and follow it approximately 0.7 miles to Diamond Hill Road (on right, gravel, S-I-528). Turn right onto Diamond Hill Rd. and follow it for 1/2 mile. The mine entrance will be on the right.

Fees: Adults pay \$15 per day. Children under 16 years of age pay \$5/day. Also, upon arrival, each participant will be required to sign a waiver of liability.

Bring: Pick and shovel, rock hammer, chisels, and scratching tools. There is ample water on site for screening and washing specimens. Bring a lunch, plenty of fluids, hat, sunscreen, gloves and sturdy shoes. Bring rubber boots and a change of clothes if it is going to be a rainy or wet day. Please be prepared for hot and humid conditions at the mine during this time of year.

Trip Chairman: Tim Barton (828) 885-8248 or Hal Mahan (SAMS President) at (828) 285-9470.

"Field trips are open to all members of associated clubs of the DMC program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee and to all members of SFMS member clubs who have provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance. Because of insurance requirements, members of the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT invited on this or any DMC program field trips!"

MC Program / SFMS Field Trip committee's purpose: To collect field trip information from its member societies; schedule and coordinate field trip dates; disseminate field trip information to all member clubs so that each member society may publish this information as one of their "official" scheduled field trips.

Please reply by e-mail to: dmc@gamineral.org World Wide Web site for the DMC is: <http://www.gamineral.org/dmc.htm>

DMC is a program of the Field Trip Committee of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. Copyright © All rights reserved.

May 2008 Board of Directors Meeting Notes : CAROL LYBANON

The MAGS Board of Directors met May 1 at the Blue Plate Café, 5469 Poplar Avenue. The meeting was called to order at 6:36 P.M. Those present were: Sandy Ward, Lybanon, Matthew Lybanon, David Day, Ron Brister, Mike Cannito, W.C. McDaniel, Idajean Jordan, Mike Baldwin, Pam Gurley, Barry Burns, Shelby Hartman, Alan Parks, and Lou White. The minutes from the March Board & General Meetings were reviewed and approved as submitted. Treasurer's Report: Approved as submitted, subject to audit and some date corrections. Field Trips: The May field trip will take place over the Memorial Day weekend. We will meet on Saturday, May 24, 8:00 A.M., at the Ron Coleman Mine near Hot Springs, AR. Adult Programs: Booked through October; the newsletter has the list through September. The planned October program is the geology and paleontology of Nonconna Creek, presented by Alan Parks and Ron Brister. There was also some discussion about some research on Nonconna Marvin Nutt is interested in. He would like to get the area of interest mapped and have the specimens carbon dated. W.C. McDaniel added that Marvin has found some previously unknown species of orchids. Youth Programs: Mike Baldwin reported that the program slate is set for the remainder of the year (newsletter has list). Ron Brister will take Mike's place at next Friday's Membership Meeting. At our show Mike was approached by a scout leader who wants to bring his pack to one of our youth meetings. Mike suggests either June or August; he would like to give the program presenter at least a month's notice, so that there will be sufficient supplies. The Board thanked Mike for the fluorescent specimens display tent at our show. It produced some very positive feedback. Library: Ron Brister reported that there was no room in the church for an additional cabinet. He suggested, and the Board agreed, that we should acquire a cabinet and put it in the lapidary room. Sandy Ward suggested that we should move the VHS tapes to the lapidary room, or sell or give them away after digitizing the best of them. Ron will prepare an inventory of the tapes. Webmaster: Mike Baldwin has added a membership link to the front page, and hopes people will be able to find the information more easily. Membership: Memberships were presented by Pam Gurley and approved. Rock Swap: Lou White realized that we needed to change the date of the May Rock Swap. The Rock Swap will be at his house on Sunday, May 18. Show: Although attendance was down, income deposits were up. W.C. McDaniel talked to dealers about next year's new location. He got no negative feedback, and most of those he talked to plan to return. Sandy Ward recommended Alan Parks as Show Chairman for 2009; the Board approved the nomination. Barry Burns suggested we offer a prize to the member who has the most member tickets returned. Carol Lybanon suggested we should try to find a dealer to sell rock and mineral supplies, or sell them ourselves. She also

suggested that the Youth Program should set up its own booth. The Agricenter will give us greater visibility, better lighting, extra room for the rock zone, and RV access and parking for dealers. Alan will present the committee structure to the Board next month. Alan also plans to send our dealers a detailed information package, to make the transition to the new facility easier. Mike Baldwin suggests recycling election yard signs to promote the show. New Business: David Day asked what the procedure would be to set up a small group that would come to his house, so he could show them new rock carving equipment and how it works. The Board told him to publicize the idea to determine interest. Mike Baldwin is interested in restarting the micromount group at the lapidary room to meet quarterly with a nominal charge to help pay rent. The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 P.M.

May 2008 Membership Meeting Notes : CAROL LYBANON

The MAGS Membership Meeting was held at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church on May 9 and called to order at 7:30 P.M., by W.C. McDaniel. He announced that Sandy Ward was sick and he would conduct the meeting in her absence. There were 37 members and 17 visitors. The visitors were: Kristen and John Matthew Erickson, Diane Wade, Carole Ornelas, Will, James, and Ann Beutelschies, Phillip, Kim, James, Austin, and Luke Loveland, Robert Gray, Carrie Armus, and Rex, Nicholas, and Ryan Armstrong. Pam Gurley welcomed visitors and handed out new member packets. W.C. McDaniel directed the youth membership to their program, then announced that the new phone directories were available at the check-in table and that each family would be allotted one directory. David Day announced the May field trip would be to the Ron Coleman Crystal Mine near Hot Springs, Arkansas, Memorial Day weekend. Jim Butchko gave a brief report on the 2008 Show. He advised that attendance was down by about 100 people, and attributed this to the weather. He thanked everyone for their help and said that fewer grab bags were sold this year but the profit was roughly the same. He collected club ticket money. W.C. McDaniel announced that Alan Parks would be the 2009 Show Chair. Alan said he is excited about being the Show Chair, and is looking forward to the new venue at the Agricenter and working with the membership. He will put together a Show Committee and encouraged those interested to join. He said he would like the committee to be in place by the June board meeting. W.C. said the 2008 Show vendors and visitors were told of the new location and he had received a very positive response. Lou White informed the membership that the May Rock Swap would be at his home and briefed everyone of the location & time. W.C. McDaniel encouraged everyone to attend the June Rock Swap at the home of Charlie McPherson. Paul Sides spoke briefly regarding a June field trip to Crowley's Ridge. The Adult Program speaker was Barry Gilmore, who provided a very informative and interesting presentation on opals. Barry Burns, David Day, W.C. McDaniel, and Wayne Williams had displays. Wayne was the winner. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.



Happy 4th of July!

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Graphics provided by www.GraphicsFactory.com

MAGS Clubhouse Activities

On the dates to the right, the club room will be open for:

- Equipment Orientation at a cost of \$10
- Equipment use by those who have already completed orientation
- Members can bring in materials to be cut for a fee.

Saturdays
11:00 am—1:00 pm
July 5, 12, 19
Sundays
1:00 pm—3:00pm
July 13, 20

ROCK SWAP!

Saturday, July 12 / 10:00am to 2:00 pm
9869 Taylor Drive, Olive Branch, MS
(662) 890-4126

The next rock swap will be Saturday, July 12, at Jim and Hasami McNeil's home. The McNeil's will provide the hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone else please make a side dish or dessert. The McNeil's will have things to swap. It's more fun if you bring something to sell or trade. The next rock swap will be Saturday, July 12, at Jim and Hasami McNeil's home. It will be from 10:00 till 2:00. The McNeil's will provide the hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone else please make a side dish or dessert. The McNeil's will have things to swap. If you wish to sell or swap come prepared with your display table.

Directions From Memphis

From I-240 turn south on Lamar (hwy 78) (Exit 21 I believe). Go to Exit 6 in Olive Branch (15-20 miles). Turn on Exit 6 (Bethel Road and Hacks

Cross). At stop sign turn Left on to Hacks Cross. Go approximately 0.4 mile to stop light (the cross road is MS-178). Turn left on 178 and go approximately 0.6 mile. Turn left on Dorothy (you should see a brick development sign saying Lees Crossing, Fairfield Estates), go approximately 0.1 mile. Turn right on Loftin and go approximately 0.3 mile. Turn left on to Taylor Drive and go approximately 0.1 mile (second driveway on left)

From Hwy 385 (Bill Morris Parkway)

Take 385 to the Hacks Cross exit. Turn right onto Hacks Cross travel approximately 5-10 miles. At stop light at Hacks Cross and MS-178. Turn right on 178 and go approximately 0.6 mile. Turn left on Dorothy (you should see a brick development sign saying Lees Crossing, Fairfield Estates), go approximately 0.1 mile. Turn right on Loftin and go approximately 0.3 mile. Turn left on to Taylor Drive and go approximately 0.1 mile (second driveway on left)

The main purpose of Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society is to promote and advance the knowledge of the Lapidary Sciences in the mining, identification, cutting, polishing and mounting of gems, minerals and fossils to the utmost of our geological and lapidary capabilities.

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AFMS NEWSLETTER AWARDS: New Editor 7th—95 • Small Bulletin Honorable Mention—04, 05, 06 • Adult Article 10th—04; Honorable Mention—05 (x2), 06 (x2) • Junior Article 3rd—98; 8th—03 • Special Pub 4th—03

SFMS NEWSLETTER AWARDS: New Editor 1st—86; 2nd—88, 97 • New Editor (Explorer) 4th—03 • Certificate of Excellence—89, 90, 91, 92, 93 • Large Bulletin 1st—87 • Small Bulletin 1st—04, 2nd—06, 4th—03, 3rd—07 • Special Publication 2nd—03 • Art 77, 80, 81, 82, 86 • Junior Article 1st—03, 07 • Adult Article 1st—06, 2nd—89, 90, 04, 06; 3rd—92; 4th—85, 04, 07; 5th—91, 03, 07; 6th—87; 8th—04, 07; Honorable Mention—03, 04, 07 • Adult Poetry—07

DUES: \$20 (Family); \$16 (Single); \$8 (Junior)

JULY 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- July 3** **6:30 p.m.** **Board Meeting: Blue Plate Café, 5469 Poplar Avenue**
- July 11** **7:30 p.m.** **Membership Meeting, Shady Grove Presbyterian Church, 5535 Shady Grove Road**
- July 12** **10:00 a.m.** **MAGS Rock Swap**
- July 19** **8:30 a.m.** **DMC Field Trip to Diamond Hill Mine in Antreville, SC**



MAGS Rockhound News
5116 Whiteway Drive
Memphis, TN 38117