

HUI PŌHAKU 'Ō HAWAII

Rock & Mineral Society of Hawai'i, Inc.



Meeting Times

MEETING

Wednesday
January 22, 2020

6:15-8:00 pm
Makiki District Park
Admin Building

Next Months Topic
February to be
decided

LAPIDARY

Every Thursday
6:00-8:00pm
Cleanup @ 7:45pm
Makiki District Park
2nd floor Arts and
Crafts Bldg

MEMBERSHIP

DUE COSTS 2020

Single: \$10.00
Family: \$15.00

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Hawai'i, Inc.
P.O. Box 23020
Honolulu, HI
96823-3020

WHITE MINERALS



CERUSSITE

Cerussite is a colorless carbonate of the Aragonite mineralogical classification.

It appears as elongated, twinned, reticulated, tabular crystals.

Collector specimen localities include Namibia, Mexico and Australia.



NATROLITE



Hydrous Sodium Aluminum Silicate

Natrolite is a common member of the zeolite group that is known for its needle like crystal habits.

Natrolite occurs with other Zeolites in the basaltic igneous rocks.

Favored collection specimens are found in France, India, Quebec and Australia.

Natrolite is also very hard to distinguish between similar minerals like Mesolite and Scolecite

Little Plains Quarry
Tasmania, Australia

Santa Eulalia Mining District
Chihuahua, Mexico



HEMIMORPHITE

**Square white crystal is Dolomite **



Hemimorphite is a sorosilicate mineral- which has been historically mined from the upper parts of zinc and lead deposits.

Hemimorphite most commonly forms crystalline crusts and layers forming granular, striated, needle and fans shaped crystals

Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Museum—Shared by Carrie Tome

In May of 2018, my brother and I visited the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Museum. I was made aware of this place by Debbie, our R&M Treasurer, who emailed me a link to their website. I initially thought it was a joke-how can there be pearls growing in Tennessee of all places. After further reading, I found out that pearls were indeed being grown here and is actually Tennessee's official state "gem". The pearl farm is the only freshwater pearl farm found outside of Asia and is located in Camden at the Birdsong Resort and Marina, a campground found along the Kentucky Lake. It's a little over 90 miles west of Nashville, the home of country music. It wasn't hard to find although I was somewhat skeptical as we drove through the countryside on one lane roads. Find it we did and what a lovely side trip it was.

The founder of the Tennessee River Freshwater Farm is John Latendresse (1925-2000). He is long considered to be the father of American Freshwater pearls. His wife Chessy, is originally from Japan and her mother was a certified gemologist working in the pearl industry. Chessy was a pearl stringer and supported her husband in learning the culturing technique which they eventually brought over to the US. Formation of the Kentucky Lake after the installation of the hydroelectric Kentucky Dam provided abundant plankton to support the growth of the mussels. The demand for mussel shells by Japan made it a perfect business setting. In 1954, the Tennessee Shell Company Inc was formed and by the 1990's several tons of mussel shells were being shipped to Japan annually. Upon arriving in Japan, the shells were processed to become the nuclei (singular: nucleus) in the pearl cultivating process.

Pearls are formed when an irritant (i.e. nucleus) enters into the mollusk (mussel, oyster or clam) and a fluid is produced by the organism to coat the irritant. Many layers later, this nacre coating results in the formation of the pearl and this process can take up to 2 years to obtain a size that is considered to be jewelry ready. Nacre is composed of platelets of aragonite, a mineral that many in the R&M club will be familiar with and is one of the three common forms of calcium carbonate (the other two forms being calcite and dolomite). Implantation of nuclei has been documented as far back as the 13th century in China where tiny metal Buddha figurines were used as nuclei to produce blister pearls. In Japan, Kokichi Mikimoto (1858—1954) produced the first cultured pearl and today, Mikimoto pearls are synonymous with luxury pearls.

There are many different types of pearls named after their area of origin. Akoya (Japan), South Sea (Australia, Indonesia, Philippines), Burmese / Myanmar and Biwa are few. Pearls can also be named after their color such as black, blue and rainbow pearls are examples as such.

Tennessee River Freshwater Museum

Pearls are named after their growth process : Mabe pearls which have a flat side with no coating due to the nucleus being glued to the inside of the shell) and the three quarter / half pearls have a flat side similar to a mabe due to a blemish being sawed off. For freshwater pearls, nucleation is done with small pieces of mantle from a donor mussel being inserted into the mantle tissue on both sides of the shell covering its internal organs. Mussels are nucleated with many pieces resulting in a large number of pearls being produced in one organism. Unlike other types of pearls, the mantle nuclei eventually dissolve leaving a pearl that is a solid nacre. Freshwater pearls are the least expensive and most abundant pearls can be found in a variety of shapes and colors (white, cream, light and dark pink, purple, green and blue). Today, most freshwater pearls originate in China.

The current owner is Robert Keast who runs the farm on a 58 acre lot. In December 2016, fire totally destroyed the pearl museum so at the time of visiting in May of 2018, whatever was in storage was being shown in the building as it is no longer a working farm. There were several showcases along with displays of pearl production. The pearl farm does still sell their pearls but mostly to Tiffany's.

We had a lovely time visiting the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Museum and although small, I highly recommend taking the time to drive through the lovely countryside to see what was once the only freshwater pearl industry outside of Asia. An interesting side note , our tour guide turned out to be the great grandson of Fleet Admiral William Halsey, the same person that the Navy housing next to where I live was named after. (Halsey Terrace).

DIRECTIONS

The Birdsong Resort and Marina is located 9 miles north of Interstate 40 (exit 133-Birdsong).

255 Marina Road, Camden, Tennessee.

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The Rock & Mineral Society meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month (except for adjusted dates in November and December) at the Makiki District Park, 6:15-8 pm. Enter from Keeaumoku Street. Parking is free but limited.

The Newsletter is published monthly, some days prior to the meetings and is distributed in electronic format by email (Adobe Acrobat PDF file attachment). Printed copies are "snail" mailed to those who do not have email. The electronic format usually contains full-color images; the print version may be limited to B&W due to reproduction costs.

DOOR PRIZES

Please note that we have instituted door prize drawings at our monthly meetings. Because of Hawaii's gambling laws, these drawings cannot be conducted in the common "raffle" format where tickets are sold. Rather, each paid member attending the meeting will receive a drawing ticket upon request. A voluntary donation of \$1.00 is requested and encouraged. Drawings will be conducted at the end of the meeting with available prizes awarded in random order. You must be present to win. Please remember: if you win a prize, please bring one to the next meeting. This helps to keep our drawings going. Thank you.



DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR DUES FOR 2020.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

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