



# The SA Gem and Mineral Club

Associated Member of F.O.S.A.G.A.M.S.

13 Bathurst Crescent, Taybank, PE South Africa, 6025

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Est. 1954

## NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2013

### **SUBS ARE NOW DUE!!**

**R130.00 PER INDIVIDUAL, R150.00 FOR FAMILY eg 2 X SPOUSES or FATHER & SON  
R60 for STUDENT**

**Payment can be made at the **NEXT CLUB MEETING** or  
By Direct Deposit manually or by EFT into the Club's Savings Account:**

**SA GEM & MINERAL CLUB ABSA BANK Greenacres Branch**

**Branch Code 632-005 Savings Account No 380 3157 1933**

**PLEASE USE YOUR SURNAME AS REFERENCE FOR DEPOSIT AND  
ADVISE THE CLUB'S TREASURER, DONAé 0837735222**

**LAST CLUB MEETING** : The last club meeting, due to take place on the 28th March 2013, was cancelled because so many members were out of town for the Easter weekend. We managed to inform everyone in good time except Neil Bush, our Honorary non-member, who walked all the way there in that rain and thunder! Sorry Neil!

**NEXT CLUB MEETING** . Will be held at the Training Centre at St George's Hospital at 7.30pm on Thursday the 25th April 2013 in the **PEACOCK ROOM** , not our usual venue the Guineafowl Room. As the March meeting was cancelled, members may still bring examples of the stones for March — Aquamarine and Red Jasper, or any Jasper, and any interesting items beginning with "M" eg Marcasite, morganite etc. - in addition to the stones for April, namely Diamond and Rock Crystal. We will show an interesting programme Colin taped off the TV about the Rubidge family, 'FOSSIL HUNTERS OF THE KAROO'. Colin will have lots of different findings for sale, and the old scrap books and photo albums will be brought along again as members took much interest in these at the last meeting.

**CLUB WORKSHOP** : The end of an era - the premises at 4 Pancras Street have been completely vacated, and the keys handed over to the Trustees. All of the machinery and rough stone has been moved to several alternative sites. A big "Thank you" is due to all who assisted in the move, including Naas Rade-meyer who arranged for the removal of the big saw to Colin's home where it will be overhauled and renovated. The rest of the machinery has been shared out between Colin and Eline. Members can do sawing, shaping etc., at Colin's workshop at 13 Bathurst Crescent, Taybank (Westering), and polishing of smaller items can be done at Eline's home in Bluewater Bay, where other machines including the diamond laps are now. Members are accordingly encouraged to make use of the workshop as usual on Saturday afternoons, and are asked to please phone in the morning before coming to work — Eline 041-4661729 / 0786941012. and Colin 041-3605120 / 0836811039. Colin is also willing to open the workshop on Wednesday evenings, by arrangement as in the past, to encourage working folks to enter club and other competitions. Silver classes are also on offer by arrangement.

**Lapidary Faceting Tumble Stones Identification Collection Mineralogy**

# JASPER

Jasper, a form of chalcedony, is an opaque impure variety of silica, usually red, yellow, brown or green in color; and rarely blue. This mineral breaks with a smooth surface, and is used for ornamentation or as a gemstone. It can be highly polished and is used for vases, seals, and at one time for snuff boxes. When the colors are in stripes or bands, it is called striped or banded jasper. Jasper can be modified by the diffusion of minerals along discontinuities providing the appearance of vegetative growth, i.e., dendritic. The original materials are often fractured and/or distorted, after deposition, into myriad beautiful patterns which are to be later filled with other colorful minerals. Weathering, with time, will create intensely coloured superficial rind.



*Brecciated Jasper*



*Bow drill used for applications including making beads*

Jasper is known to have been a favorite gem in the ancient world. The name means "spotted or speckled stone", and is derived via Old French *jaspre* (variant of Anglo-Norman *jaspe*) and Latin *iaspidem* (nom. *iaspis*) from Greek (*iaspis*, ) from a Semitic language (cf Hebrew 'yushphah). On Minoan Crete, jasper was carved to produce seals circa 1800 BC, as evidenced by archaeological recoveries at the palace of Knossos. Green jasper was used to make bow drills in Mehrgarh (an early civilisation in the Indus valley) between 4th and 5th millennium, being used especially to drill holes into lapis lazuli. Similar drills were found in other parts of the Indus Valley in Iran one millennium later.



*Egyptian jasper scarab with seal on underside*



*Similar to quartz, lucency.*



*Red Jasper*

Although the term jasper is now the ancient *iaspis* was a stone of distinctively green, for it is often compared with the emerald and other green objects. Jasper is referred to in the *Nibelungenlied* (early 12th Century German saga) as being clear and green. The Hebrew word *yushphah* may have designated a green jasper. It has been suggested that the *odem*, the first stone on the High Priest's breastplate, was a red jasper, whilst *tarshish*, the tenth stone, may have been a yellow jasper. The ancient Egyptians wore jasper scarabs as amulets as the stone was believed to increase sexual energy. According to the Bible, jasper was a direct gift from God and would be the first foundation stone of the New Jerusalem. Also, both Indians in Asia as well as Native Americans see jasper as a magical rain stone and also a powerful healing stone.

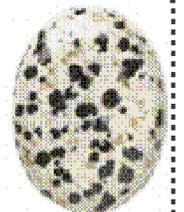


*Leopard Skin Jasper (Leopardstone)*

The classification and naming of jasper presents a challenge. Terms attributed to various well-defined materials include the geographic locality where it is found, sometimes quite restricted such as "Bruneau" (a canyon) and "Lahontan" (a lake), rivers and even individual mountains. Many are fanciful such as "Forest Fire" or "Rainbow", while others are descriptive such as "Autumn", "Porcelain" or "Dalmatian". A few are designated by the country of origin such as a Brown Egyptian or Red African, leaving tremendous latitude as to what is called what. Picture jasper is a petrified or silicated mud that dripped into gas pockets in molten lava. It became superheated and then solidified forming the unusual banded patterns which are typical of this stone. Diffusion from a center produces a distinctive orbicular appearance, i.e., Leopard Skin Jasper, or linear banding from a fracture as seen in *Leisegang Jasper*. Healed, fragmented rock produces brecciated (broken) jasper. The term *basanite* has occasionally been used to refer to a variety of jasper, for example a black flinty or cherty jasper found in several New England states of the USA. Such varieties of jasper are also informally known as *Lydian stone* or *lydite* and have been used as touchstones in testing the purity of precious metal alloys.



*Picture Jasper*



*Dalmatian Jasper*