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The S A Gem and Mineral Club

Associated Member of **FOSAGAMS**
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Phone calls preferably after 17:00 weekdays

NEWSLETTER - MAY 2015

SUBS ARE NOW DUE

R130.00 PER INDIVIDUAL, R150.00 FOR FAMILY AND
R60 STUDENT

Payment can be made at the next Club meeting or
By Direct Deposit 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 TREASURER, DONAE'
0837735222

LAST CLUB MEETING Thursday 30th April 2015 at the Conference Room, St Saviour's Church Hall, Cnr Villiers Road and 1st Avenue, Walmer, at 7.30pm. There was a total of 12 members present. We watched the "The secret lives of caves" which spoke about microscopic life forms in caves and how biology can meet geology.

The members then spent some time looking at some items on display and enjoyed tea, coffee and cake.

CLUB WORKSHOP : Members are encouraged to come and join us for Workshop on Saturdays 2—5pm. Please contact Angie or Reinhardt first.

SOUTH AFRICAN GEM CUTTING CHALLENGE : 24 November 2015. This means we need to get cracking on our Competitions stones.

GEELONG : 30th September 2015. We feel that we need to take this opportunity as a Club. We need a minimum of 3 members entry to achieve the highest aggregate score to bring the trophy home. Let's give it a go....

More about this at the next Club meeting.

Please make use of the Club Workshops on Saturdays.

NEXT MEETING : 28th May 2015, at the Conference Room, St Saviour's Church Hall, Cnr Villiers Road and 1st Avenue, Walmer, at 7.30pm. It's time to bring your *MOSAIC'S* to the meeting, hope you all had fun making them. The birthstone for May is emerald, sapphire and agate. Members are encourage to bring any of these or any other interesting items for the display table.

We will also be viewing a slide show of some of the most beautiful minerals from South Africa and surrounding countries.

Hope to see you all soon :)

Emerald:

Emerald is the most precious stone in the beryl group. The name comes from the old French word 'esmeralde', which was derived from the Greek word 'smaragdos' meaning 'green stone'. By definition, emerald is any medium to dark green beryl coloured by chromium. Green beryl coloured only by vanadium is not considered to be true emerald, but rather as simply green beryl. Since the 1960s, the American jewellery industry changed the definition to include vanadium coloured beryl as 'emerald', but in the UK and Europe, they are still not recognized as such. The historical green colour of emerald is unparalleled in the world of gemstones and it is considered as one of the most 'precious four' of all gemstones, which also includes sapphire, ruby and diamond. Although emeralds are one of the most valuable gemstones available today, most are very heavily included, rendering their resistance to breakage as generally poor.

Although Colombia is the most famous source for 'deep green' emeralds, emerald deposits are mined from many locations around the world. Recent decades have seen emerald production increase as a result of newly discovered deposits in South America, Africa and across Europe. Today, Brazil and Zambia are among the leading producers of fine emeralds, following Colombia. Brazilian emeralds are prized for their excellent clarity and slightly yellowish green colour, while Zambian emeralds are desired for their slightly bluish green colour, which is similar to that of Colombia's 'emerald-green' emeralds.

Oiling is a common emerald treatment and in most cases, it is done right at the mining location. The term 'oiling' refers to the practice of immersing emeralds in a colourless oil or resin (most often cedar oil) in order to enhance colour, clarity and stability. This is also often done using a vacuum chamber to assist penetration. Non-standard treatments go beyond this by using coloured oils and epoxy-like resins.

These treatments dramatically improve the appearance of the gems, but necessitate special care in cleaning and setting. Steam cleaners, solvents and ultrasonic cleaners can remove the oils, making inclusions that were barely visible stand out in sharp relief. Since emeralds can be restored through re-oiling, the damage is considered to be only temporary.

Synthetic emeralds have been available since 1848. In the 1950s, synthesizing methods became commercialized and excellent quality synthetics have been made available since. The term 'Chat-ham emeralds' is often used for lab-grown emeralds. There are also numerous emerald doublets available. In many cases, a natural upper-half is cemented to a glass or synthetic pavilion using an emerald-green paste. With the visibility of emerald flaws from the crown down, once these are set into jewellery, they are often sold as natural emeralds.

