

# Livingstones

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Livingston Gem and Mineral Society

January 2014

## President's Message

It's the end of the year, and a time to look back at the year that was, and to look forward to the year that will be. Many big changes happened this last year, some bad, but mostly good.

Early in the year we had The Big Move, where we took everything out of the shop in less than a day, so the school could replace the lights and the ceiling, and paint the walls. We also implemented a first aid procedure and form, a discipline procedure and form, along with guidelines for the officers on how to handle complaints. This came in handy as later in the year the board received and dealt with our first complaint.

We bought a very large rock collection, which put The Big Move Part 2 into place when many members showed up with trucks, trailers, a dump truck, and even cars to move the collection to a location nearer the shop. We also passed new safety and code of conduct rules. We had a great show, banquet, Christmas party, and elected new officers. 2013 was a busy and rewarding year and my wish is that 2014 will be even better.

We will be teaching 4-H children again this year on Monday evenings from 6-8. Chuck is finalizing the arrangements, but I will let everyone know when we will begin. Please consider volunteering 2 hours a week to keep the lapidary arts alive, and to give a child a smile and a sense of accomplishment.

*Bryant*



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### Snow day closings?

For information on snow days,  
call Hartland Community Education,  
**810-626-2150**,  
or watch your local news channel.  
If Livingston County schools are closed,  
so is the shop.

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### Workshop Hours

Monday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Friday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Bread and Butter Gemstones

### Is it Jasper? Or is it Agate?

Jasper and agate are the rocks most often dealt with by rockhounds and hobbyists in pursuit of their goals as lapidarists and collectors. Confusion often arises in trying to describe a specimen as jasper or agate. An attempt is made to clear up this confusion here and now!

To begin: Jasper and agate are composed of extremely interlocking quartz crystals called cryptocrystalline quartz. As such, they are both members of the fine grained quartz family commonly referred to as chalcedony. Chalcedony occurs throughout the world in beds, bands, nodules, geodes, botryoidal masses as a replacement of fossils, wood tissue or other minerals, and as a cementing material. It is deposited from silica rich waters often carrying other mineral impurities. It is the presence of these impurities which stain the micro-quartz grains to produce the wide variety of color patterns, banding effect and inclusions that differentiate the basic gem forms of cryptocrystalline quartz - jasper and agate - from ordinary drab chalcedony.

Now, for the difference between the two. In general, agate is a transparent to translucent form of chalcedony in which the coloration takes the form of regular bands, rings, clouds and wispy inclusions or distinct groups. Agate, which contains concentric bands, is referred to as fortification agate. Moss agate contains delicate or wispy or lacy inclusions of colored minerals – sometimes the green mineral chlorite, other times the black mineral pyrolusite, a manganese oxide which penetrated cracks in the silica gel matrix prior to hardening. Now they remain as fine picture-like images. Agate is often named after the geographic area where it is found,

and with a descriptive adjective attached i.e. Priddy Ranch Plume Agate.

Jasper, on the other hand, can be somewhat translucent, but is most often opaque. The coloration of jasper is usually much darker than that of agate and is totally random with respect to distribution and pattern. Finely divided hematite gives the reddish color to jaspers, and another iron mineral, goethite, is responsible for the yellows and browns. Chlorite and nickel minerals contribute to the green coloration. As does agate, jasper comes in many colors and displays an infinite variety of material for cabochons, scenic “pictures” to be framed and other functional or decorative purposes.

They are truly the “bread and butter” gemstones of our hobby.

Via Michigan Mineralogical Society Conglomerate, December 2012



# Thank You!

.....to **Venus Sage** for setting up and decorating for our Christmas Party !

.....and to all the elves who assisted with setup and cleanup !

## 2014 Officers and Chairpersons

President: Bryant Hiiter, 248-889-3974  
Vice President: Gayland Allen, 810-275-3444  
Secretary: Sheila York, 810-695-0509  
Treasurer: Peggy Petito, 248-887-8847  
First year Director: Margaret Edmundson, 248-634-5046  
Paul McEwen, 810-735-5832  
Second year Directors: Ed Oller, 810-241-8801  
Third year Director John Petito, 248-887-8847  
Hospitality: Venus Sage, 810-458-4290  
Sunshine: Isla Mitchell, 248-685-7804  
Shop Chairperson: Chuck Amberger, 248-787-6586  
Newsletter and Membership:  
Isla Mitchell, 248-685-7804  
imvm.1@netzero.com  
Show Chairman and Historian:  
Chuck Amberger, 248-787-6586  
Library: Bryant Hiiter, 248-889-3974  
General Membership Meetings are held monthly  
on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 6 p.m. (Except in January  
and February when board meetings are held in  
the shop at 1 p.m.)

**S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G**

## It's all in the Spelling

CARAT—a standard unit of mass used for precious stones, especially diamonds, is equal to 200 milligrams

**KARAT** – a unit of proportion of gold in an alloy equal to  $1/24$  part of pure gold.

CARET – a mark on printed or manuscript material to show where something such as a letter or word should be inserted. In the United States, the caret is usually made just under the line. Other cultures invert the caret and place it above the line.

CARROT – Bugs Bunny's favorite food !

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## Our Mission

The Livingston Gem and Mineral Society is a nonprofit organization and member of the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Our purpose is to promote, through educational means, public interest and increased knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, archaeology, paleontology, and the lapidary arts.

## Upcoming Events

**March 2-3, 2014**

### **The Roamin Club Special Auction,**

Sat 11 - 6; Sun 12-6, Schoolcraft Community College , Livonia, MI  
Contact: Todd Gall or Don Brown (248) 348-5001, (234) 421-8159

**March 11, 2014**

### **Michigan Mineralogical Society Social and Swap**

7 p.m., Cranbrook Institute of Science, 39221 N. Woodward Ave. Bloomfield Hills, MI  
Contact: Millie Hurt, 248-3998-6693

**March 14, 15, 16, 2014**

### **Michigan Gem and Mineral Society Annual Show**

Jackson County Fairgrounds  
American One Event Center, 200 West Ganson, Jackson, MI  
Information: Sally 517-522-3396, or [www.mgmsrockclub.com](http://www.mgmsrockclub.com)



## 2014 Dues are overdue

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Tear off and mail to Peggy Petito, Treasurer, LGMS, 9525 E. Highland Rd, Howell, MI 48843

### **2014 Livingston Gem and Mineral Society Dues**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ adult member ..... \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ family membership .....\$15

number of children 9-18 years \_\_\_\_\_ number of adults \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ annual workshop fee .....\$10

(each member who uses the shop must pay this fee)

\_\_\_\_\_ total payment

Please note any changes in address, email address or phone number \_\_\_\_\_

newsletter preference: \_\_\_\_\_ printed \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_ shop mail folder

## Psilomelane

by Rose Marion, [Wire-Sculpture.com](http://Wire-Sculpture.com), July 6th, 2012

Psilomelane, also rarely called psilomelanite and black hematite, is an umbrella name for manganese oxides, which are black stones. The name was chosen in 1758 and comes from the Greek for "smooth" (psilos) and "black" (melas – like melanin gives a dark pigment). I'm sure you've seen this stone if you've been to Tucson or any large gem shows: psilomelane looks like a black, almost metal, slice of wood. Gem-quality psilomelane, often called crown of silver psilomelane or silver crown psilomelane, is polished so you can see silvery "wood grain" or "tree rings" on a jet-black background. Some people even call it "black malachite," although the two stones aren't related. The name comes from the Silver Crown Mine where it is found in Chihuahua, Mexico, which has been open rarely in the last 100 years, closing due to WWII and multiple cave-ins. While there was much mining in the 1950s and some in the early 2000s, it is still a rare find on the lapidary market.

The silvery portions, which can look black, silver, or blue depending on the angle of light, are made up of pyrolusite, which is a different manganese oxide. Pyrolusite is used in making other alloys, creating chlorine, and used in disinfectants, taking green and brown tints out of glass, and in calico printing and dyeing. It is not magnetic, despite its hematite-like appearance. It can even be used in batteries, although artificial substitutes are more common.

Psilomelane is softer than quartz, about a 5 to a 6 on Mohs scale. It's often found in grape-like botryoidal formations.

Besides the Silver Crown Mine in Chihuahua, Mexico, there aren't many active centers of gem-grade psilomelane mining. Augusta County, Virginia once had a mine, Crimora, which is now abandoned. Psilomelane has also been found in Arizona, New Mexico, Montana, and Arkansas in the US, and in small pockets of Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe.

Sometimes you will see psilomelane stones that have clear parts between the "grain," even druzy on occasion. This clear area is chalcedony, and some call it manganese oxide in quartz. Chalcedony psilomelane can turn into beautiful cabochons. Metaphysically speaking, psilomelane is said to aid in understanding our emotional patterns and empowering us to re-engrave those grooves.



**Livingston Gem and Mineral Society**  
9525 E. Highland Road  
Howell, MI 48843-9098



*No general meeting*

*Board of Directors meeting  
at noon on Tuesday, January 21, 2014  
at the shop*