

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club

Club News

February, 2021



LGGM Club Memberships

Applications for new memberships are available from January 1st through March 31st. To join the LGGM Club, go online to <https://www.lggmclub.org/> and on the left hand column, click on "Be a Member". Both members and non-members are welcome to attend the presentations at our monthly club meetings when the meetings resume, but only members may attend club field trips.

Memberships from 2020. Due to the cancellation of so many club activities during the Covid-19 pandemic, LGGM Club memberships from 2020 will be rolled over to 2021 at no cost to the member. Please keep your 2020 membership cards for use in 2021. If you would prefer to have a refund of your 2020 membership fee, please contact our treasurer:

Cathy McLaughlin, Treasurer
11595 Owls Nest Rd.
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Status of LGGM Club Activities:

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in statewide emergency regulations and public health advisories against group gatherings. Cancellations include all **LGGM Club meetings**, and **programs**, as well as **classes** such as Rockhounding 101, Mineral Identification, and Basic Wire Wrapping. We will let you know when these events can be rescheduled.

COMING EVENTS OUTSIDE THE LGGM CLUB: (Nearby gem, mineral, fossil and geology events that you may enjoy.)

- **Cañon City Geology Club** <https://www.canoncitygeologyclub.com/> **February 8, 2021** Meeting location: via Zoom, 6:30 PM- Business Meeting; Program immediately following at approx. 7:00 PM - Program Speaker and Subject: TBA
- **Columbine Gem & Mineral** <https://rockaholics.org/> Meetings 2nd Thursday of every month (**February 13th**) at 6:30pm MT. Locations at Salida or Buena Vista (see flyers or website.)
- **Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society** <http://www.csms1936.com> .
 - General Assembly – 3rd Thursday 7pm,
 - Fossil Group - 1st Tuesday 7pm
 - Crystal Group and Faceting Group – 4th Thursday, 7pm
- **Pueblo Rockhounds** <http://www.pueblorockhounds.org> Cancelled until further notice.

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Online Events

- **Rocky Mountain Map Society** For further information see: <http://rmmaps.org/>
- **Western Interior Paleontological Society (WIPS)** See <http://westernpaleo.org/> for more info.

The following are cancelled until further notice: check the following links for information on lecture series when they resume:

Colorado Café Scientifique in Denver, monthly lectures on science topics see <https://coloradocafesci.org/>

Denver Region Exploration Geologists Society (DREGS) <http://www.dregs.org/index.html>

Florissant Scientific Society (FSS); see <http://www.fss-co.org/> for details and schedules.

Friends of Mineralogy, Colorado Chapter <http://friendsofmineralogycolorado.org/events/>

Golden Beer Talks, 2nd Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.), **At Home Editions** <https://goldenbeertalks.org/>

Nerd Night Denver is a theater-style evening featuring usually 3 short (20-minute) TED-style talks on science or related topics; held more-or-less monthly at the Oriental Theater, 4335 W. 44th Ave., Denver; drinks are available; for ages 18+. Admission is \$6 online in advance, \$10 at the door. See <https://www.nerdnitedenver.com/>.

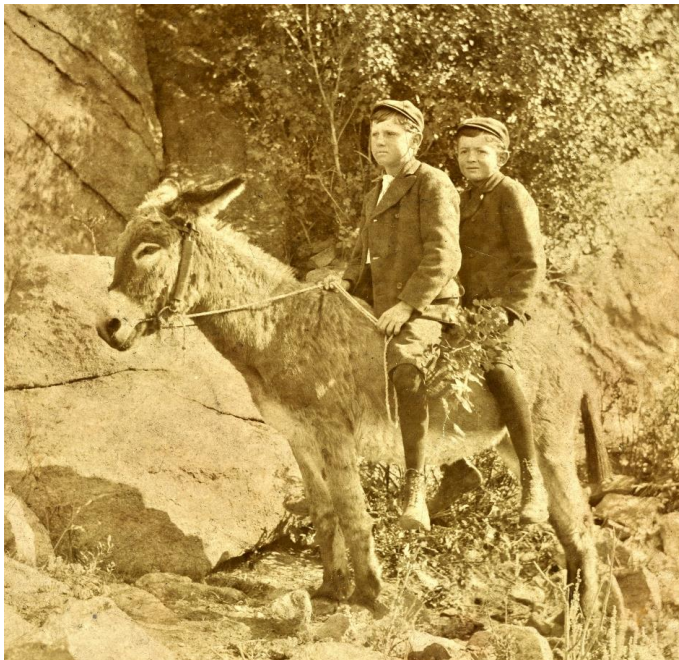
Links to Interesting Gem, Mineral & Paleontology Articles Online:

Wayne Orlowski sent us this intriguing link to paleontology expeditions:

Ever dream of hunting dinosaurs? The **Bighorn Basin Paleontological Institute** offers a unique opportunity to work alongside scientists in the fossil-rich, rugged landscapes of southern Montana and northern Wyoming. If you are interested in an unforgettable adventure find out how you can [become an Expedition Crew Member](#) below!

https://www.bbpaolo.org/public-expeditions?utm_term=OZY&utm_campaign=daily-dose&utm_content=Sunday_12.27.20&utm_source=Campaigner&utm_medium=email

Geology-themed Poetry



Photograph courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum

Brothers

The photo you left
from gold rush days
turned up today.
It lasted over a century.

I would say go
to Cripple Creek,
again, grab
some gold.
Have some fun—
ride a burro,
and look down
the winding trail,
to a time that didn't
last long enough.

By Steven W. Veatch

The latest installment of **“Bench Tips”** by Brad Smith: (www.BradSmithJewelry.com)

BEZEL CLOSER

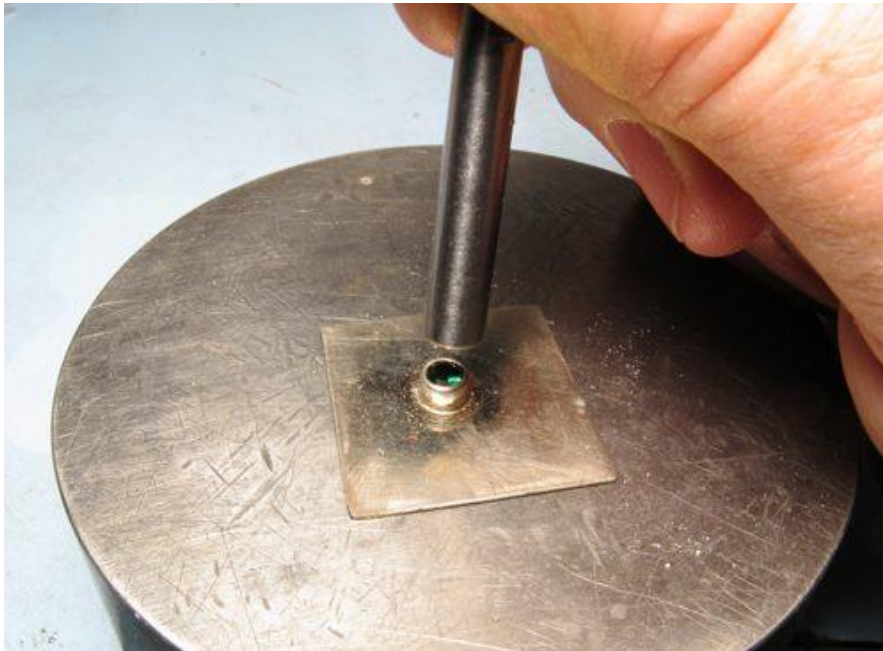
A bezel closer is a steel punch that makes quick work out of pushing the metal down over a round stone and burnishing it. It works with regular bezels, with tube settings, and with prong settings. Stones can be set in as little as 30 seconds.

The working end is a concave cavity that fits over the bezel or prong setting and is pushed and twisted to capture the stone. Sets can be purchased but are expensive and contain many sizes you will probably never use. If all you need is one or two sizes, here's how you can make them yourself.

Find a round steel rod or bolt a little larger in diameter than your bezel cup or prong setting. Cut a 5 inch length. File both ends flat. Locate the center of one end, center punch a divot, and drill a small pilot hole about 5 mm deep. Remember to use a little oil as lubricant when cutting steel. Select a ball bur a bit larger than the bezel. Enlarge the pilot hole to a full hemispherical cavity. Test for proper fit with your bezel. Bezel should first contact the cavity about a third of the way in. When the size is correct, polish the cavity using Zam on a length of chopstick in your flexshaft. If the tool is not polished, it will leave scratches on your bezel or prongs.

When using the tool, the first step is to capture the stone correctly. I usually work by hand and push the punch straight down over the bezel or prongs. This causes the metal to start bending over the stone. Next, if it's a small stone, I inspect with a lens to be sure the stone is staying level. This is repeated until the stone is seated on its bearing and can't move anymore.

Next you want to force the metal down onto the stone uniformly all the way around. While this can be done by hand, I often gently tap the punch with a hammer. Finally, I burnish the bezel by twisting the punch around.





BENCH SHEARS

When cutting sheet metal, it's quicker and easier to use a set of shop shears as compared with using a hand saw. The cut is not as precise, but many times you don't need that. Shears will easily cut up to 24 gauge sheet, and some will cut 22 or even 20 gauge.

Current prices for shears run from \$13 - \$36 in jewelry catalogs, and the Joyce Chen scissors recommended on some jewelry blogs run more than \$20. But we found a cheaper alternative at the 99 Cent Store - some gardening utility scissors that were only \$1.07. I buy a half dozen of them at a time for use in my jewelry classes. They're great for cutting bezels, trimming around a bezel cup and cutting a piece off a larger sheet.



Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books
www.Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith

Happy hammering,
- Brad

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The Bill Sutton Story: Hard Rock Days During the Depression

By **Steven Wade Veatch**



Connecting with the past of Cripple Creek, a place that means so much to so many, came closer when I looked at a collection of photographs and ephemera that belonged to William W. “Bill” Sutton, who had donated this collection to the Cripple Creek District Museum. Sutton’s collection takes us back in time—over eight decades—to Cripple Creek during a part of the Great Depression. And the photographs bring back a group of men who were largely forgotten by history.

Figure 1 Photo of William W. Sutton. He was well-grounded in western mining and came to Cripple Creek to work on a gold mine. Photo date circa 1932. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Bill Sutton came to Cripple Creek in 1932—when the Great Depression was underway—to start a mine. It was a hard season for finding work. Because of the difficult times, there was renewed interest in the Cripple Creek mining district. The great gold camp carried with it the promise of something better, and men came looking for opportunities. Bill Sutton was one of these men and was ready to start work on the Geophysical mine, a new location on Carbonate Hill, northeast of Cripple Creek.

After Sutton arrived in Cripple Creek, he reported to Charlie Kuhlman, who had achieved a solid reputation in the district as a gold miner. Sutton’s first encounter with Kuhlman was tense. Kuhlman

took one look at Bill Sutton and said, "You won't last a week." Sutton recalled, "I fooled him and stayed three years" (Sutton, n.d.).



Figure 2 William Sutton standing in front of Charlie Kuhlman's house where he lived for 16 months. Photo date circa 1933. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Sutton roomed with Kuhlman in his rundown home on Crystal Street in Cripple Creek. Sutton wrote, "Al Mousseau and I lived with Charlie Kuhlman in his old shack and lived on boiled cabbage, black beans and sowbelly" (Sutton, n.d.). Kuhlman, who was born in Langendier, Germany in 1880, came to the district as a teenager in 1897, and latched onto mining like a bulldog with a fresh bone. He started out as a blacksmith in a mine and ended up as a gold miner.



Figure 3 Al Mousseau, a Detroit who worked with and lived with Sutton and Kuhlman, poses for the camera. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.



Figure 4 This local boy was Sutton's neighbor. During the Depression young men found their way into a world of mining in Cripple Creek that was larger than they could imagine. Photo date circa 1933. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Officers of the Geophysical mine arrived in Cripple Creek in 1932 to meet and look at their investment. They were a diverse bunch, but a competent team. The mine had to be developed on a shoestring budget. The stakes were high. If they failed, they would lose all the money they had invested. As night fell on the day of their meeting, the men didn't know enough to admit failure and so decided to go ahead with developing the property. They believed the district was still viable, with plenty of unknown and untouched ground. The men buzzed with energy and ideas. They were living an adventure story while looking for the sunburst dazzle of gold. With the future in front of them, they felt they had the luxury of time to find gold in Cripple Creek's ground.



Figure 5 Photograph of the seven-person Geophysical mine group. Left to right: Bill Sutton, Al Mousseau, Karl Jorn (geophysicist), Charles Sutton (president), Mr. Williams (vice president), Mr. Hegee (secretary/treasurer), and Charlie Kuhlman. This group financed and operated the Geophysical mine on Carbonate Hill from 1932 to 1933. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Sutton, Kuhlman, and Mousseau began the hard work of developing the mine. With the help of Karl Jorn, a geophysicist, they located they platted out the mine on the ground.

Once the mine was located, they set up the gin pole that served as a temporary headframe. Gathering steam, Sutton climbed to the top of the gin pole and attached guy wires to stabilize it. Below the gin pole the men built a wooden foundation, in the form of a framed rectangle, that they assembled with bolts and iron pins on the ground.

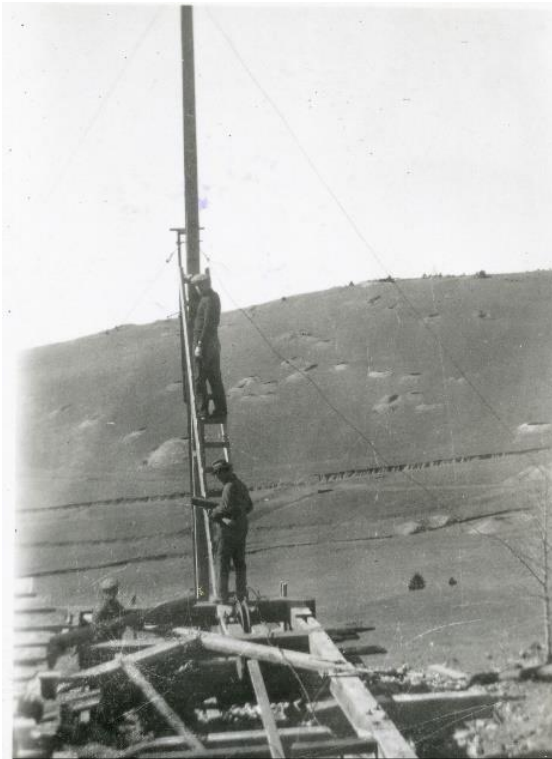


Figure 6 Wooden planks form a foundation around the mine shaft. Two men are setting up the gin pole. Photo date circa 1932. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.



Figure 7 Sutton sits on top of the gin pole and attaches the guy wires to stabilize it. Photo date circa 1932. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Next, it was time to sink a small shaft to find the ore. There is a special intensity that descends on miners as they dig a gold mine. Attention is focused, tension mounts, and the work is hard. With picks and shovels, Sutton, Kuhlman, and Mousseau started digging the shaft. They drilled the hard rock by hand. When the drill steel dulled, they carried it three miles down to Cripple Creek where it was sharpened, and then carried it back to the mine. These three men also walked the same three miles from home and back each day. No one had a car.



Figure 8 This view shows the pile of tailings that Sutton, Kuhlman, and Mousseau mined. Photo date circa 1932. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

After drilling, the holes were packed with explosives, and then the rocks were blasted. The air got so dense with smoke from the blast that it was blue. Once the dust settled and the smoke cleared, the broken rock was mucked and sent up the shaft in an iron bucket. Because it was a small operation, a hand windlass (manual-powered winch) was used to hoist the bucket, filled with waste rock and any ore, to the surface. When the bucket reached the surface it was upended, and its load dumped (Twitz, 2005). This bucket continued to come up to the surface until the miners cleared the bottom of the shaft of broken rock; then they drilled and blasted another round (Twitz, 2005). This process was repeated: drilling, blasting, mucking, and hoisting. As a result, an expanding lobe of rock tailings projected out from the dumping area.

It was an all-day struggle of backbreaking work as they searched for gold. The crew spent the evenings playing cards, smoking, and telling stories between drinks. As the days wore on, they complained about geological conditions and conclusions.

The days of mining blended together as the men deepened the shaft. When they eventually reached 64 feet, they hit a big vein of pyrite that signaled they were close to gold ore. This fueled Sutton's optimism. In a moment of flashbulb clarity, Sutton knew what they had to do—dig deeper. Sutton wasn't alone in this stance; Kuhlman felt the same way. At the depth of 64 feet, the shaft had passed the point where the gin pole would work safely. To go deeper, they needed to build a solid headframe over the shaft. Sutton and Kuhlman built a two-post gallows headframe since it was easy to erect and its cost was low.

The men of the Geophysical mine drove on the vein an additional 21 feet. At the bottom of the deepened shaft they chipped off fragments of rock and found more pyrite, lots of it, but no gold. It was pin-drop quiet. A cloud of unease hung over the mine. Bill Sutton's face changed, and he said they had "worked like hell seven days a week for an interest in another failure" (Sutton, n.d.). They abandoned the mine in November 1933, and the Geophysical mine faded into the district's whispering rumors of gold.

After they left the Geophysical mine, this same group took up a lease on the old South Burns mine, near the celebrated Vindicator mine, and hired a few unemployed miners. They thought they would have better luck at a developed mine. The South Burns mine, once the property of the Calumet Mining and Milling Company, was purchased by the Acacia Gold Mining Company in 1895 (Hills, 1900).

It was worked by the Acacia company as late as 1926, and then the Nuestra Ventura Mining Corporation took it over for the next two years (Munn, 1984). Sutton's group worked a lease at the South Burns from 1933 to 1935.



Figure 9 A view of the South Burns mine, Cripple Creek Mining District. Photo circa 1970. Gene Mourning photographer. From the Gene Mourning collection. Courtesy of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry.

Sutton and his crew shipped decent gold ore from the South Burns which improved their financial condition. Sutton moved from Kuhlman's place to the boarding house run by Babe Wolfkill and her daughters. A miner named Ed lived at the Wolfkill boarding house while he worked at the Blue Bird mine. In 1934, Ed was killed in an accident at the Blue Bird, and Sutton wrote, "We called his wife and asked where to bury him, and she said to throw him down the first old shaft you come to" (Sutton, n.d.). Sutton emphatically stated this was a true story. Whether Ed was thrown down a shaft, abandoned or otherwise, is not known. We can wonder if Ed's wife ever saw the photo in which one of Mrs. Wolfkill's daughters is holding Ed's arm.



Figure 10 Babe Wolfkill and her daughters standing in the yard of their Cripple Creek boarding house. Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.



Figure 11 A Wolfkill daughter holds the arm of Ed, a local miner. He was killed in the Blue Bird mine in 1934. Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

While working at the South Burns mine, Sutton was able to buy a car, a 1928 Dodge, and drove back and forth to work. With his Dodge automobile, Sutton moved in 1934 to what was left of Altman, one of the towns on the east side of the Cripple Creek Mining District. Most of the town had burned down in a 1903 fire started by arson.

Sutton's accommodations were primitive in Altman. He called his place the "Pilch" and "batched" there for another year while he operated the South Burns mine (Sutton, n.d.). His Altman place must have been terrible for him to call it the Pilch. A pilch is a wrapper worn over an infant's diaper.



Figure 12 A photo of Sutton's ramshackle home in Altman that he called the "Pilch." Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

According to Sutton, "we finally shipped enough ore to get all the stockholder's money back and closed her [South Burns mine] down" (Sutton, n.d.). After the Sutton group gave up their lease and left in 1935, the South Burns mine produced gold ore for the Acacia Gold Mining Company through 1936. In 1937, Golden Conqueror Mines leased the South Burns and mined a large body of ore. Acacia Gold Mining Company operated it from 1938 until 1947 (Munn, 1984).



Figure 13 A group of gritty mining men who lived in Altman and worked with Bill Sutton during the Depression at the South Burns mine. Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum



Figure 14 Texas Art Roer and Clem Anette, both Sutton's neighbors in Altman, relax by their car. Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.



Figure 15 Ben McPherson, a weathered and salty miner, was Sutton's neighbor in Altman. In the photo he wears a top hat, has one hand in his pocket, and a cigarette in his other hand. His downward gaze is sharp. Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

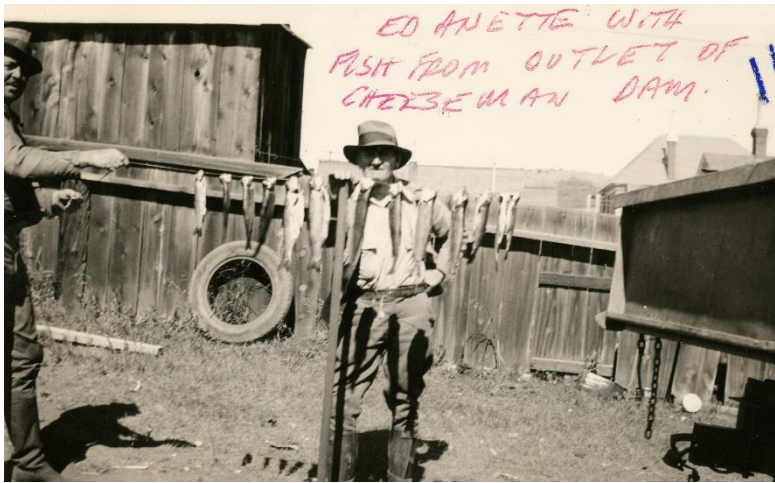


Figure 16 This photo shows good fishing below Cheesman Dam for Ed Anette, who was Sutton's hoistman on the South Burns mine. Born in Kansas in 1875, Anette was in Cripple Creek as early as 1900. Photo date circa 1934. Anette lived in Altman. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

Bill Sutton and his crew spent their Depression-Era days chasing ore and most of their nights cursing their lack of finding it. Cripple Creek, though, offered them many diversions. Sutton described Cripple Creek as a "fun place . . . where the sky was the limit" (Sutton, n.d.). Saloons were busy and dance halls hummed. One favorite diversion was gambling. Bets were placed on donkey races, boxing matches, and everything in between.



Sutton and his South Burns group wanted to make a good bet and improve the odds to win. To help win the bets they made on the local boxing matches, they brought in a young prizefighter by the name of Chief Stanley Fell to fight all of the local young mining toughs who stepped into the ring with him. Fell's hometown was Lamar, Colorado. He was 6 feet 2 inches tall and weighed 200 pounds. He fought in the 1931 Kansas State Amateur Championship Tournament as a heavyweight. Fell later went professional and was managed by Hoot Burger. He won the 1934 Colorado Heavyweight Title against Carl Walker, at the match in Lamar, Colorado.

Figure 17 Chief Stanley Fell, a boxer the Sutton group "imported to fight local boys in the ring." Photo date circa 1934. William Sutton collection, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

As the depression deepened, Charley Lehew, owner of the Cripple Creek Auto Company and the local Buick agent, wanted to stage events to bring people and their money to Cripple Creek in the summer. He decided to hold a donkey race: the "Grand Donkey Derby Day Sweepstakes." Lehew, with his business partner, Bryan Jones, started the Donkey Derby Days in 1931. Lehew, Jones, and Mr. Lynch of the Palace Hotel started the "Miles High Club" to support the event (Summers, 2011).

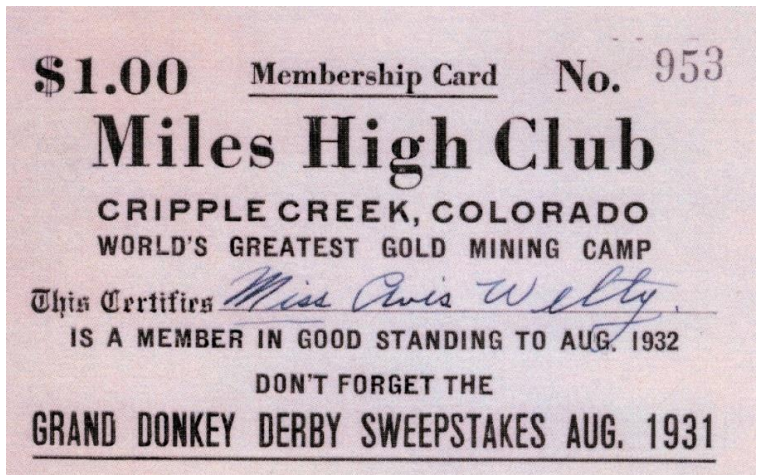


Figure 18 Avis Welty's membership card in the Miles High Club. This club was organized to support the Donkey Derby Days. The club later changed its name to the "Two Mile High Club" and continues to take care of the Cripple Creek donkeys. Courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

In addition to the donkey race, Lehew and Jones included a boy's relay race, a girl's chariot race, a tug-of-war between Cripple Creek and Victor businessmen, saddle-horse races, stock-car races, and a boxing match (Summers, 2011).

After the success of the donkey races, Lehew built a racetrack and added car races. According to Sutton, Lehew "furnished the shovels, picks, dump truck, and kept a keg of good old Cripple Creek whiskey for all who worked on the racetrack" (Sutton, n.d.). Sutton said Lehew held the auto races first, then the donkey races followed. Sutton never missed a Donkey Derby Days event while he was in Cripple Creek.



Figure 19 A parade down Cripple Creek's Bennett Avenue to celebrate the start of the Third Annual Donkey Derby Days. Photo date 1933. From the Wilkinson Family collection, Cripple Creek District Museum, CCDM 2000134.

Bill Sutton's three years of working in Cripple Creek came and went, and we are as close to knowing Sutton's story as we can come. After the crew ended their lease on the South Burns in 1935, things changed. Some of the people in this story stayed, others left.

Bill Sutton slipped away into the long ago, and what happened to him after his three years in Cripple Creek is not known. Chief Stanley Fell left boxing and Cripple Creek to work at the CF&I steelyards in Pueblo. Fell died in 1986 in Pinedale, Wyoming. In 1936, Charlie Kuhlman married Gladys Adams. Kuhlman remained in Cripple Creek the rest of his life and died there in 1965. Ben McPherson later moved to Goldfield, where he lived with his wife and daughter.

All of Sutton's outfit had lived on the excitement of gold mining during those Depression years. Sutton's manuscript and his photos conjure a story of men who belong to another time. Because of Sutton's donation to the Cripple Creek District Museum, we get to hear their story and meet those men while we learn about their mining adventures in Cripple Creek.

Acknowledgments

I thank Shelly Veatch and the Colorado Springs Oyster Club critique group for reviewing the manuscript, and Dr. Bob Carnein for his valuable comments and important help in improving this paper.

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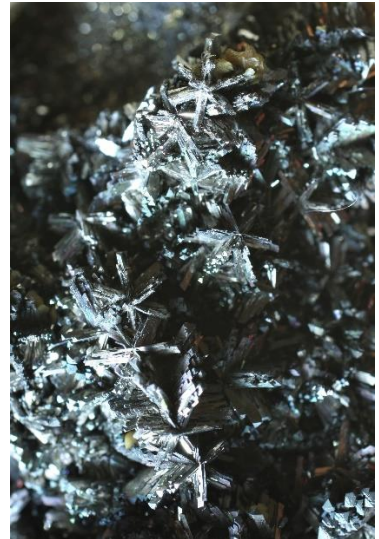
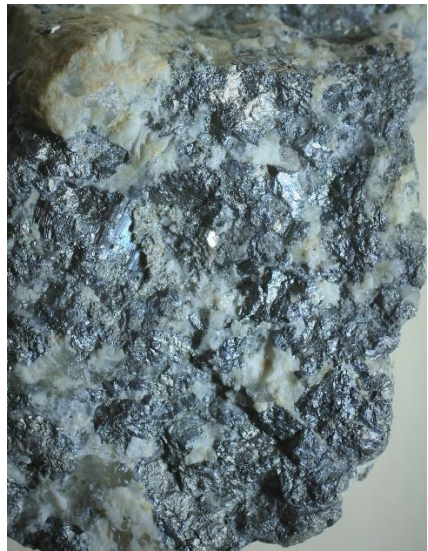
Monthly Mineral Quiz

Last Month's Mineral: Fluorite, CaF₂.



The mineral for January was one that you will do doubt encounter, whether you collect your own minerals or purchase from dealers, or both. It's number 4 on the Mohs hardness scale and is common as cubic, or less commonly octahedral, crystals. Its octahedral cleavage, vitreous luster, transparency or translucency, and specific gravity in the range of 3.2-3.5 all help with identification. Although much fluorite is some shade of purple or violet, beware that the color varies a lot from place to place—it's a good example of a mineral for which you should not rely on color for identification.

This Month's Mineral.



February's mineral, in specimens from (left to right) Ontario, Mexico, and Peru (Carnein photos and collection)

The mineral for February is a common constituent of the gangue assemblage in many ore deposits. (Gangue minerals are the worthless material deposited along with the ore minerals.) Its metallic luster, silvery color, hardness of 5 1/2-6, and SG of about 6 all help with identification. Striated, monoclinic crystals are common, and star-shaped twins, like the ones in the right-hand photo above, make especially attractive specimens. Eckel (1997) lists dozens of Colorado localities, and, in some places, it may have enough gold or silver as an impurity to be used as an ore. What is it?

Eckel, E.B., 1997, *Minerals of Colorado, Updated and Revised by R.R. Cobban, et al.*: Golden, Colorado, Fulcrum Publishing.



The Lake George Gem and Mineral Club is a group of people interested in rocks and minerals, fossils, geography and history of the Pikes Peak/South Park area, Indian artifacts, and the great outdoors. The Club's informational programs and field trips provide opportunities to learn about Earth science, rocks and minerals, lapidary work and jewelry making, and to share information and experiences with other members. Guests are welcome to attend, to see what we are about!

The Club is geared primarily to amateur collectors and artisans, with programs of interest both to beginners and serious amateurs. The Club meets on the second Saturday of each month at the Lake George Community Center, located on the north side of US Highway 24 on the east edge of town, sharing a building with the county highway shops. **In the winter, we meet at 10:00AM. From April through October, we meet at 9:00AM, to allow more time for our field trips.**

Our organization is incorporated under Colorado law as a nonprofit educational organization, and is a member of the Colorado, Rocky Mountain, and American Federations of Mineralogical Societies. We also sponsor an annual Gem and Mineral Show at Lake George, where collectors and others may purchase or sell rocks, minerals, fossils, gems, or jewelry. Annual membership dues (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31) are \$15.00 for an individual (18 and over), and \$25.00 for a family (parents plus dependents under age 18). New memberships and renewals are only accepted Jan 1 through March 31 each year.

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