

# **THE HISTORY OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION**

Compiled by:  
Mignon Wagnor, 1943-1992  
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## **1943-1952**

The South Central Federation had its beginning in December, **1943** in San Angelo, TX, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. (Bill) Curry. The Organization was named "THE STATE MINERAL SOCIETY OF TEXAS". W. E. Curry was elected the first President, and Mrs. Viola Block was the first Secretary/Treasurer. The first convention and show was held in **1944** in San Angelo, TX, in the Ball Room of the Plaza Hotel.

Our information on the first few years is rather scanty, but we do know that it was decided at the first show in San Angelo to hold annual conventions and shows. No show was held in **1946** due to the polio scare, so the 1947 show and convention may be considered as the first annual event of the Federation. It was during this convention, the organization affiliated with the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineral Societies.

The annual conventions and shows were held alternately between San Antonio and Austin from **1947-1951**. Finally the tradition was broken and The Fort Worth Gem & Min. Club, Fort Worth, TX hosted the **1952** convention and show.

## **1953-1962**

A joint convention and show was held with the Rocky Mountain Federation in the Auditorium Annex in Houston, TX, which was hosted by the Houston Gem & Min. Soc. At this convention the organization changed its name to TEXAS REGIONAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC. The Federation was chartered under the new name on **April 8, 1953**. Due to attaining the status of a Regional Federation, membership with the Rocky Mountain Federation was discontinued.

In **1954** at the show held in Odessa, TX, the Federation voted to become a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, making it the 6th Regional Federation. Also at the convention the Federation changed its name to SOUTHWEST FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES.

The first Federation bulletin that was kept in the Federation files was published by the Secretary/Treasurer, Pearl Wasser. It included a short note on the show in Odessa and a promise to: TEXAS FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC. (TFMS) at the ninth annual convention and show in Corpus Christi, TX. Nine clubs were now affiliated with this Federation.

In **1956** one club withdrew from the Federation and four new clubs joined. This brought the total club membership to twelve with a total individual membership of more than 500. The Federation was a non-profit organization and had been so declared by the Internal Revenue Department.

New clubs continued to join the Federation in 1956-1957, bringing the total to sixteen. One of those clubs, the Dallas Gem & Min. Soc. would host the Federation convention and show in 1958. A good part of the entire State was now represented at these yearly meetings.

The 1958 convention and show was the first time the Federation had hosted a combined American (AFMS) and Texas Federations show. The host club was the Dallas Gem & Min. Soc. The Federation logo was adopted at this convention. This logo was submitted by the Gulf Coast Gem & Min. Soc., Corpus Christi, TX. One of the clubs represented at this show was the Rollin' Rock Club, that unique club where members meet only once a year (officially) at the annual TFMS show and convention. The Rollin' Rock Club had increased its membership from 65 to 138. The next Federation Newsletter that we have a record of was written before May 1958, as the last sentence states, "so long---see you in Dallas May 1". This newsletter informs of the activities and progress of the Federation.

By the end of 1959 the Federation had grown to twenty clubs with a combined membership of 1381. In May, 1960, membership had increased to twenty-one clubs and to a total membership of 1578. At convention time in June, 1961, twenty-seven clubs were affiliated with the Federation.

The Federation Slide Program Library was officially established in 1962. Thirty-one clubs were now affiliated with the Federation.

### 1963-1972

At the Federation show in Amarillo, TX, in May, 1963, the Constitution was changed to permit clubs from Arkansas and Louisiana to join the Federation.

March, 1964, the second combined AFMS/TFMS Federations convention and show was held in San Antonio, TX. This year the new AFMS Scholarship Fund had grown to \$2,946.86. The TFMS had done their share in contributions to that fund.

Club membership had now grown to forty-five clubs by April 1966. Very special exhibits, competitive exhibits and field trips were being scheduled during this time.

April, 1968, the North Texas Gem & Min. Soc. hosted the annual Federation convention and show. The first annual Editor's Contest and Breakfast was held at this show. Bob Goodson of the Levelland Gem & Min. Soc. served as Bulletin Editor's Chair. The first place winner was Angie Oldfield, Editor "Galco Pebble Pater", Galveston County Gem & Min. Soc..

During the convention at Lubbock, In April, 1969, official documents were presented by Mignon Wagner, chairman of the special committee for the state gem/state stone, showing that blue topaz and petrified palmwood had been chosen as the Official State Gem Stone and State Rock, respectively.

At the AFMS/TFMS show in Fort Worth, TX, June, 1970, the name was changed to SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC., (SCFMS). One special exhibit, at this show, was "The Moon Rock".

The SCFMS convention and show traveled for the first time out of Texas for the April 1971, show, hosted by the Gem & Min. Soc. of Louisiana. April,

At the Federation convention, May, 1972, plans were made to improve the Federation bulletin and to have a judges training seminar in the future.

### 1973-1982

In 1973 the SCFMS was presented with a 100% plaque for their contributions to the American Federation Scholarship Foundation. This was the year the Federation had 42 clubs with over 3,000 members.

The delegates at the 1974 convention voted to change the fiscal year of the Federation to coincide with the American Federation's fiscal year, November 1 to October 31.

President Lester Sunvison resigned as the Federation President in 1975. Mignon Wagner, Executive V. P., chaired the meeting. Mrs. Wagner was the first woman to become president of the Federation.

The National "Gem Capers" of 1976, was a combined AFMS and SCFMS show and convention, which was held in Austin, TX. This was the year of our country's Bicentennial year and the theme for the show was planned around the occasion. The delegates voted to establish a paid office for an Executive Secretary for the Federation. Also, the delegates voted to honor the following members with Life Membership in the SCFMS: J.J. Brown, Austin, TX; W.V. Vietti, Houston, TX; Ed Immel, Llano, TX. Four more clubs joined the Federation. As of December 31, 1976, there were 4,361 members in the SCFMS and 43 clubs.

Changes in the Federation Directory were made in 1977. It was agreed to discontinue publishing individual names and publish only a directory with club information in it. It appears that The AFMS Scholarship Award Honorees Plaque had its beginning at the Federation's conventions this year.

There weren't many changes in the Federation during the years of 1978 through 1981. The Federation had bids from clubs, in 1980, to host the convention and show for five years in advance.

In 1982 the combined AFMS & SCFMS show was held on July 8-11, 1982, in Houston, TX. By this time the SCFMS had given more, percentage wise, to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation than any other member Federation.

**1983-1992**

(Note: Beginning with 1983, the History for the years of 1983-1997, were taken from Newsletters and other sources to bring the SCFMS History up to date, by Paul W. Good)

Bids for future Federation shows were accepted through 1989 at the **1983** show in Dallas. (Seven years in advance is very impressive).

At the **1984** convention, it was moved that the Federation adopt an Endowment Fund for the purpose of helping keep the Federation solvent.

Rules were set up at the **1985** convention for the newly formed SCFMS Endowment Fund. Individuals contributing \$100.00 will become PATRONS of the SCFMS, and would be presented with an Endowment Fund pin and a certificate. This year was the first time in which all women were elected to the Executive Offices of the Federation.

During the **1986** convention, it was announced that 24 individuals had become PATRONS of the SCFMS Endowment Fund. A PATRON club was established also. Clubs who contribute \$100.00 plus \$1.00 per member will be recognized as PATRON CLUBS, and will be presented with a certificate.

By **1987**, the Endowment Fund Treasurer reported a balance of \$9,516.44. He also reported 35 PATRONS and 8 PATRON CLUBS had received their certificates.

From **1988** through **1990**, it was "business as usual" for the Federation. The Endowment Fund PATRONS and PATRON CLUBS continued to be added. A judges seminar was held October 13-14, 1990 with 29 people present.

At the **1991** Convention, the first Gold Sparkplug Award was presented to "Mr. Rockhound", Ed Immel, for all of his outstanding achievements.

The following year, **1992**, Mignon L. Wagner, Past President of the SCFMS, was the second person to receive the SCFMS Golden Sparkplug Award.

**1993-2002**

The SCFMS celebrated its **50th Anniversary** in **1993**, in Arlington, TX. The convention and show was hosted by the Arlington Gem & Min. Club. The History Book of the SCFMS from 1943 to 1993 was on display for all to see.

The Endowment Fund, as of June 30, **1994**, had increased to \$41,720.55.

As the year of **1995** came to a close, Wes Hjernevik became the 100th PATRON in the SCFMS Endowment Fund. This fund continues to grow thanks to all the clubs and individuals who have contributed to it through the years.

At the **1996** convention, a show bid was received from the Arlington Gem & Min. Club to host the 2001 combined AFMS & SCFMS Convention and Show. Emerson Tucker, Treasurer of the SCFMS Endowment Fund, reported the account is now past the \$50,000 mark.

The AFMS celebrated its 50th Anniversary in **1997**. The Texas Federation, which later became the South Central Federation, became a member of the AFMS family in 1954. Five people from SCFMS have held the office of AFMS President so far:

**1971-72 #25 Ed Immel**  
**1977-78 #31 Don Langston**  
**1983-84 #38 Bill Cox**  
**1989-90 #44 Eugene Powell**  
**1995-96 #50 Edward O. Ries**

The SCFMS reached the 1400% of support to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation. This meant that the SCFMS Clubs had donated an amount equal to \$14 for every member in the Federation. The Federation succeeded, after many years, to be able to provide a Group Liability Insurance Program available to all SCFMS Clubs.

The Federation gained four new clubs In **1998**: Central Texas Gem and Min. Soc., Abilene, TX; Hot Springs Geology Club, Hot Springs, AR; Longview Gem and Min. Soc., Longview, TX; Southmost Gem and Min. Soc., Harlingen, TX. One club was reinstated this year: Fredericksburg (TX) Rockhounds. This brought the total to 39 clubs with a current membership of 3742 members. The total individual PATRONS reached 115 at the end of the year.

Several of our SCFMS Clubs reached higher percentages in **1999**, by contributing to the AFMS Scholarship Fund. The Ark-La-Tex Gem and Min. Soc. topped the list with 4200%. Other clubs reached high percentages of 3700%, 3400% and 3200% etc.

The year **2000** was a good year for the SCFMS Clubs. Seventeen clubs received several awards in various categories in the AFMS Bulletin Contest. Five clubs received awards in the 2000 All-American Club Award contest, which was 50% of all entries from all Federations. At the 2000 SCFMS convention an approval was given to go forward with the plans to establish a lapidary (not limited to lapidary) school for the SCFMS in Paris, TX. The school is similar to the schools that had been established in other Federations. The Endowment Fund PATRONS had now reached 127.

The year of **2001** brought disappointment to the Federation when the Paris Junior College stated that they were not going to allow us to have our “Rockhound Academy” at their campus. We will continue to look for another place. The Federation hosted the first American Federation Convention and Show of the new century, which was a great success. Several SCFMS Clubs took home a lot of trophies and awards from the show. We were sorry to lose two clubs this year: Tarleton Geological Soc., and the TX Big Bend Gem & Min. Soc. disbanded. We gained one club: The Austin Paleontological Soc. The Endowment Fund Patrons continued to grow this year to a total of 138.

During the year of **2002** we had the following clubs to join the Federation: Toledo Bend Lake Gem and Min. Club, Burkeville, TX; Wise Co. Rock, Fossil and Min. Soc., Decatur, TX; Heart of Texas Gem and Min. Soc., Waco, TX, and San Antonio Geological Soc. San Antonio, TX. Three clubs disbanded during the year: Cross Timbers Gem and Min. Club, Stephenville, TX; Galveston Co. Gem and Min. Soc., LaMarque, TX, and Magic Valley Gem and Min. Soc., Edinburg, TX. The SCFMS met in Tyler, TX, for its annual Convention and Show. Due to the generosity of several clubs and individuals, the Endowment Fund went over the \$100,000 mark. At the AFMS/NWFS Show, eight Clubs brought home Awards in the bulletin contest. The Federation brought home the Trophy for the most entries percentage of clubs/members per Federation for the third year in a row. Four clubs were presented with awards from the AFMS All-American Clubs Awards program. In November, 2002, Ron Carman, SCFMS Past-President, became the 6th person from the SCFMS, to be elected as the AFMS President.

### **2003-2012**

February, **2003** the SCFMS Convention and Show was hosted by the Clear Lake Gem and Min. Soc. at the Pasadena Convention Center, and it was a great success. The Federation celebrated its 60th year. The Magnet Cove Gem and Min. Soc., Malvern, AR withdrew from the Federation. We are always sad to see a club withdraw or to disband.

The Gem Min and Lapidary Soc. of Central LA was welcomed into the Federation in **2004**. The BIG EVENT this year, was the Federation Show, hosted by the Houston Gem & Min. Soc.

In **2005**, Keith Harmon, SCFMS Past President, challenged all Regional Federations to make up the difference in the available funds for the 2005 AFMS Scholarship awards. A total of \$12,000 was needed to meet the difference. The SCFMS donated \$11,011,34. The total from the six Federations was \$23,998.96. Congratulations SCFMS Clubs. The Federation welcomed the Northwest LA Gem & Min. Club, Keithville, LA in December.

In **2006** and **2007** it was “business as usual” for the Federation.

On **March 8-9, 2008** the Austin Gem & Min. Soc. in conjunction with the SCFMS, hosted an Exhibitors and Judges Seminar, in Austin, TX. Eleven people were in attendance and it was enjoyed by all. The Houston Gem & Min. Soc. hosted the AFMS/SCFMS Show in Humble, Tx on September 26-28. The Houston/Galveston areas were hit with “Hurricane Ike” a couple of weeks before the show. The hurricane didn’t stop the Houston club from putting on a great show, even though many of the HGMS members were without power and their homes were damaged. The AFMS annual meeting was canceled because they were concerned about finding lodging. The SCFMS did have their annual meeting. Awards from the AFMS & SCFMS competition were presented to the Editors and Authors at “The Breakfast with the Editors.” All-American Awards and the Exhibiting competition were presented at the Awards Banquet. I believe everybody had a wonderful time. Thanks Houston.

It was “business as usual in year of **2009**. At the AFMS Convention and Show, Emerson Tucker, SCFMS Past-President, became the 7th person from the SCFMS, to be elected as the 64th AFMS President.

In **2010** the Federation lost two clubs during this year: The Heart of Texas Gem and Min. Soc. and the Toledo Ben Lake Gem and Min. club.

With the January-February, **2011**, the SCFMS Newsletter was mailed to the Federation Clubs, Officers and Committee Chairs via e-mail, rather than sending it via US Mail. It is much cheaper to send it this way and seems to be working out well. The Federation met in Alpine, TX on April 15-17, 2011 for this years Show and Convention and Show. It was hosted by the Chihuahuan Desert Gem & Min. Club. Despite the threat of nearby fires, It was a wonderful show and it was nice to go to west Texas for a change. It was reported at the show that the SCFMS Federation had contributed \$94,120.71 to the AFMS Scholarship Fund since its beginning, on March 28, 1964. That is a remarkable amount. The SCFMS is the smallest Federation of the seven Federations, which make up the American Federation.

At the **2012** Annual Convention, bids were submitted for the Federation shows for 2013 and 2014 Shows. In 2013 the show will be held in Bossier City, LA. The 2014 show will be in Baton Rouge. The 2015 show, which has been planned for some time, will be the AFMS/SCFMS combined show in Austin, TX.