

Hello Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson,

My name is Jerry (Gerald D.) Barnes. I and my two siblings, Albert H. Barnes and Margaret Owen, are excited about Oregonite being designated as the Oregon State Mineral. Our grandparents owned the Oregonite mine in the 1920/30s+. They mined the ore and made jewelry from it which they sold in their jewelry store (Barnes Jewelry) in Grants Pass, Oregon. Later our father, A. Donley Barnes, took over and managed the Oregonite claim and continues to accumulate ore and manufacture jewelry. Our father was Sheriff of Josephine in the 1940s and Josephine County Clerk in the 1980s. I helped mine the Oregonite ore on many occasions.

Ours is a pioneer family. My Great-Grandfather, Albert Seymour Barnes Sr., a school teacher from New York, brought his family to Southern Oregon via the Oregon Trail in 1882 and homesteaded at Jump Off Joe Creek north of Grants Pass. Albert Sr. was later Sheriff of Jackson County for a term and then operated a mercantile store in the Ashland Plaza for many years before retiring to Grants Pass to live his senior years with his son, Albert Seymour Barnes, Jr. (the Jewelry Store owner) and his family.

The Oregonite Mine Site has been mined out of ore and is unclaimed at this date. Our family knows the location of the mine, but it would be difficult for others to find it. When our father passed away his will divided the Oregonite ore in equal portions among the three of us. We each hold about a quarter-ton of the ore. My brother made jewelry from the ore as a retirement hobby for a period, but at this time one one in the family is using the ore. We have historic documents concerning Oregonite and have many of the finished gemstones scattered through the family. We also have small quantity (and probably the only existing samples) of "Green" Oregonite, a rare form of the mineral from which only a handful of gemstones have been made.

Please let us know how we can be of assistance in honoring the mineral . We do intend to sell a quantity of the ore.

I've attached a copy of one of the old folders from the Barnes Jewelry Store that advertised Oregonite. We have a few of the original copies left.

Best Regards,

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