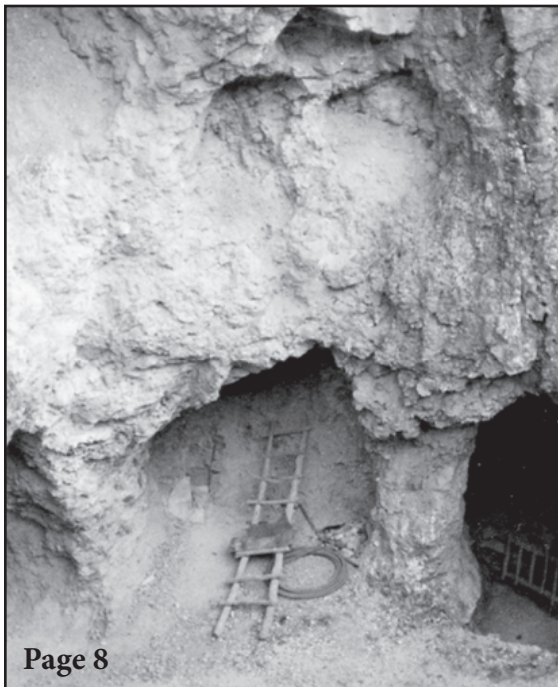


B.C. Rockhounder



Page 8

Contents

President's Message	pg 3
Vancouver Island Gemboree – Collective Impressions	pg 4
Jade Trade Chips Away at a Bit of China's Soul	pg 6
Welcome to Magdalena; the Land of Opals	pg 8
Gold Panning	pg 12
Ticks All Around	pg 12
Scientist Identify Crystal	pg 13
The Abbotsford Club Experience 2007	pg 14
Abbotsford Show Features Pacific Rim Minerals	pg 15
Iron: Not Just Your Basic Base Metal	pg 16
Our Mineral Afflictions	pg 17
Safety in the Workshop and in the Field	pg 18
The Art of Mosquito-Swatting	pg 19
Phantom Crystals	pg 20
Pit Stop at Monte Lake	pg 21
Club News/Rendezvous 2007	pg 24

Published Quarterly by the British Columbia Lapidary Society

20739 39 Avenue, Langley, B.C. V3A 2V7
Tel: 604-532-0582
Email: bcls@cia.com
www.lapidary.bc.ca

Editor: Win Robertson

Email: winrob@shaw.ca
Tel: 250-376-4878
Mail: #62401 Ord Rd.
Kamloops, B.C. V2B 7V8

Design and Layout:

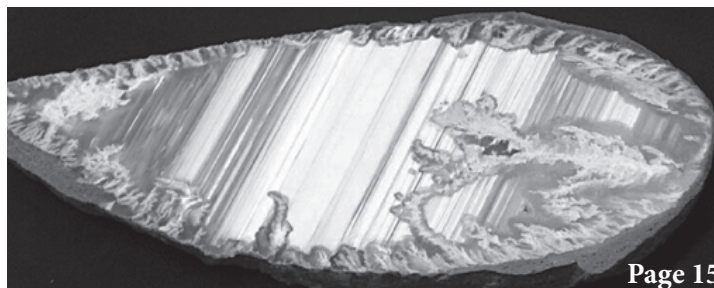
Quinn Gregory
Kamloops, B.C.
qgregory@telus.net

Printing:

Sure Kamloops Print & Copy Center
North Shore, Kamloops

Submission Guidelines:

Text: Word Document
Article Photos: 300 dpi (min) 4"x6"
Cover Photo: 300 dpi (min) 8.5"x11"
Please contact Quinn Gregory for details.



Page 15



Page 14

PRECIOUS OPALS



**From Canada's 1st Precious Opal Deposit
located west of Vernon**

- **Opal Cutting Shop**
- **Retail Store**
- **Opal Digging Trips**



OKANAGAN OPAL INC.

7879 Hwy 97 - 4 miles north of Vernon • (250) 542-1103 Fax: (250) 542-7115
email: okopal@junction.net www.opalscanada.com



**Quinn
Gregory**
graphic design

E-mail: qgregory@telus.net
Phone: 250.319.9694

President's Message

Walter Pinder

Another Rendezvous has come and gone. I can honestly say that I think this was the best one I have been to since I started rockhounding. Hats are completely off to the Interior Zone for the fabulous event. Everything went very smoothly and the banquet was excellent. The diabetic's carrot cake came as a complete and very welcome surprise. Mike Bolivar's hospitality and generosity was fantastic and oh boy was that ever a really neat toy he has!!!

I was very pleased to see so many people in attendance for this rendezvous. It is a credit

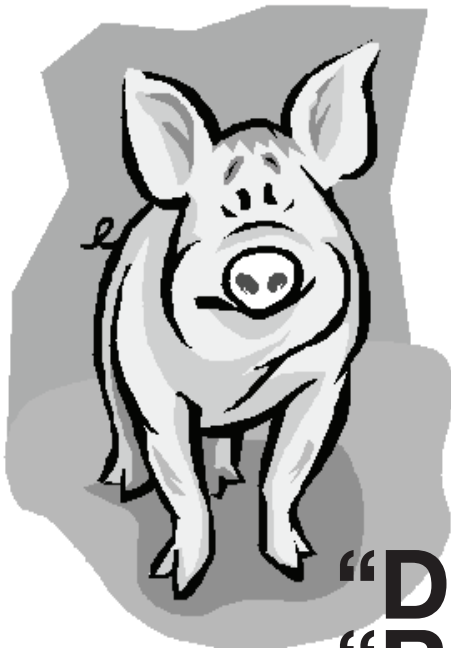
to all of the active clubs that provide enthusiastic guidance to the many people who "just love pretty rocks". We all benefit by sharing our enthusiasm with others and this in turn fires the inspiration and imagination to create, collect, and understand the geology, minerals and rocks and help create the art of lapidary.

I would like to thank and welcome Pat Bodin to the executive. Pat's hard work and enthusiasm (there's that word again) are in keeping with the best of Society traditions. I would also say thank you to Harley Waterson for his leadership of the last 2 years. Time really does fly along. Also would like

to give a large thank you to Cam Bacon and all the other Gem Show committee members for all the hard work they do in order to put on the best gem show in Canada. Please remember to encourage those folks to continue on and also please remember to offer help and support to keep the show the best in Canada.

I will close by saying that over the next two years I hope to visit each of the member clubs and I look forward to serving all of the membership of the Lapidary Society. See you on the next field trip or at the GMFC show in Winfield.

Regards, Walt Pinder



Lapidary Society Executive

President
Past President
1st Vice President
2nd Vice President
3rd Vice President
Treasurer
Executive Secretary
Recording Secretary

Walt Pinder
Harley Waterson
De Morgan
Elizabeth O'Hea
Pat Bowman
Diane Bowman
Debbie Dixon
Terry Bacon

**“Don't be a
“Rock Hog”**

Take only what you can use
and Leave the rest for others.

Vancouver Island Gemboree

Collective Impressions

Jan

**Part I: The Expensive
Adventures of Jack & Jan
(& their first outing of 2007
in the “R V Enterpoop”,
not to be confused with the
“Starship Enterprise”)**

Our story begins with the departure (on time, for a change) of the Enterpoop and her crew from the Boyes’ driveway. All went well, and uneventfully, on this glorious Friday, June 1, 2007. The highway traffic was not busy and the vehicle gave no problem, though a little underpowered on the hills.

About 2km before the Qualicum Beach/Coombs-Exit 60, there arose such a clatter and thumping and shuddering under the truck, we were seriously concerned. We brought it to a halt and investigated the source of the problem. The left front truck tire had de-laminated, though not deflated. Seeing that, we decided to limp closer to the Exit, where there would be a better place to get out of traffic.

At the top of the off ramp, Jack pulled off, loosened the left front tire bolts, and proceeded to struggle with getting the spare out of its secret storage area. Rusty bolts, heavy weights and poor design, but he got it done.

Meanwhile Jan, dressed in Jack’s screaming Orange jacket, directed

traffic around the site—not wanting an errant auto to drive over his legs. One of them tried, I am sure, but most folks were polite and delayed turning into the off ramp lane until past us. While Jack was taking off the defunct tire, Doug Murray recognized the jacket and pulled off to render assistance. Bless him. The two of them prepared to replace the old tire with the spare tire. OH, OH! No Go. The holes in the spare rim were 1/8in too small for the bolts. Besides, the tire looked to be not in good shape.

We had never had occasion to examine it since buying the truck 2

years ago. Time to bless Doug again. He has a cell phone. We do not. Did the “call BCAA” thing. They are very busy people. Tried many times. Eventually got an answer. They must be in some other country, as their knowledge of Vancouver Island is not good. Absent actually.

It took a long time to get the situation through to the operator/dispatcher. He/she wanted to know where we were going, which we felt was not pertinent to the problem. Eventually, the dispatcher figured out the right thing to do, and found us the phone number of a tire supplier in Qualicum, a

THE GEODE MAN

**17315 29th Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V3S 0E8**

Cut Geodes

Thundereggs

Brazillian Agate

Montana Soapstone

Slabs, Rough & Polished

Please phone for an appointment

Ivan & Wendy Leversage

Telephone:

604-535-9005

fellow who had the right size tire and could take the delaminated one off, and mount the good one.

Doug drove Jack and the bad tire over there, and drove him and the good tire back to the bottom of the exit ramp. While Doug got on the road again, Jack wheeled the tire up the hill and mounted it on the truck. Hooray!. Stowed all tools and battened all hatches, belted in and turned the key. Click, Click, Bad word. Thank goodness the battery in the camper was good. Jump started the truck from the camper battery, stowed it in the back of the truck, and got on the road again. The rest of the drive was tense, waiting for another disaster, but we arrived OK and set up camp. Saturday morning, Val & I had planned to do the Tourist thing in Duncan, and check out the shops,

while the guys were pounding rocks in isolated places. Because the truck had no spare, it could not be used on field trips. We do not like to gamble like that. It is too big to carry home. Instead, at 9:00am, Jan and Val went to the Ford dealer, hoping to get a rim that would fit. Nope. They do not make them that size anymore. He told us that the rim we had with the "too small" holes was a '99 and our truck is a '94. However he phoned "Maxwell's" in Cobble Hill, who happened to have a rim that would fit our truck.

Out to Cobble Hill we drove. Found Maxwell's, bought Rim. Hmm, \$60 for the tire in Qualicum, \$60 for the Rim in Cobble Hill. But he didn't have tires. Back to Duncan but stopped at the Farmer's Market for an hour before I dropped Val at the camp so she

could tend to her dog who had been in the car while we were away.

I headed to Canadian Tire, and requested the tire that I knew would fit, from the bottom of the pile. They told me to come back in 45 minutes, so I went shopping. Found stuff I just had to have for the RV Enterpoop. Back to the service desk, the tires had been balanced on the rims and the new tire was mounted on the "new to us" rim and put on the truck. Paid the Bill. Gulp. Thank goodness for VISA.

While I was there, in came Murdo Smith from Victoria Club, and Neil from Cowichan Club-Wagonmaster of the Copper Canyon trip. Murdo had a flat up the canyon and his "micky mouse" spare went flat when he reached Canadian Tire. Neill was taking care of the folks in his

Continued on page 23

asianaspect.com

Asian Aspect

since 1991

"anything but diamonds!"



STUDIO 398.5299
CELL 305.5299

robstemp@hotmail.com

WIDE VARIETY OF GEMSTONES - ROUGH/SLAB/CAB/FACETED
MAWSITSIT, MAMMOTH IVORY, DIAMOND BITS/BLADES
CARVED SCULPTURES & UNIQUE JEWELLERY

asian contact
available



1413 PAXTON RD
WILLIAMS LAKE BC
CANADA V2G 3G1

Robb Stemp

Jade Trade Chips Away at a Bit of China's Soul

Hotan, China Prospectors line the banks of the Yulong Kashgar River here, overturning boulders, boring into banks and panning pebbles in a scene out of the California Gold Rush.

The object of their desire on this arid outpost in far western China is not gold, however, but jade, which holds a near-mystical grip on one of the world's oldest civilizations.

"Gold is valuable," says a Chinese proverb. "Jade is invaluable."

And these treasure hunters aren't looking for just any jade. Over the centuries, Hotan has gained a reputation for producing some of the highest-quality stones in China.

But as growing numbers of searchers comb this washed-out riverbed and surrounding mountains, some experts worry that China is losing a piece of its soul.

The priceless treasure, they fret, is rapidly falling prey to the greed, corruption and environmental degradation that tears at so many corners of Chinese life.

The problem isn't so much the small-time freelancers such as Umerjan, 33, who said he had worked his homemade pick and sieve here every day for the last two years without a major find.

"I really want to hit that lucky strike," said Umerjan, who gave only his first name. "So far it's nothing but small pieces."

It's more the heavy-equipment users who carve scars in the earth, upsetting nature's balance and threatening to deplete a resource that has brought joy to generations. Authorities implemented new rules this year, revoking all outstanding licenses and making commercial excavation along the river illegal.

But bulldozers and other excavators continue to work early in the morning or late in the evening, residents say, without much

interference from local officials. Fresh tracks of heavy equipment are visible in the wet sand.

"Hotan jade isn't like coal or oil it's a very special resource that's been with us for thousands of years," said Wang Shiqi, a geology professor and jade specialist at Peking University. "If we continue unlimited exploitation, we're in danger of irreparably damaging Chinese culture."

According to state-run media, more than 80% of Hotan's jade has been exploited, with some reports suggesting it may be gone in three to five years. As many as 20,000 people and 2,000 pieces of heavy equipment are said to be working the area, leaving gashes in the ground as deep as 30 feet.

The hold these rocks have on the Chinese psyche in their various shades of red, green, white, gray, topaz and black is deep and dates to prehistoric times. Hotan jade is famous for its size and its white sheen; the latter is

LAIRD EXPLORATION LTD.

Mineral Properties
Exploration Management

James Laird President

604-921-4031

Lairdex@telus.net

P.O. Box 672 Lions Bay, BC V0N 2E0

dubbed “sheep fat,” a reflection of the mutton-obsessed culture in this part of the country.

One Hotan piece, a sort of Hope diamond of the jade world, weighs in at 11,795 pounds and is carved to depict an ancient emperor leading flood-control efforts. It resides in the Forbidden City in Beijing.

Archeologists have found jade items dating back 5,000 years, and written reference to Hotan’s treasures go back at least 2,000. Some sources say the Jade Road has a far longer history than its more famous cousin, the Silk Road, with Hotan a crossroads for traders linking Mediterranean buyers with eastern Chinese sellers.

Generations of Chinese emperors received Hotan treasures as tributes, bolstering its reputation as one of the embodiments of Chinese culture and civilization, along with calligraphy, painting, porcelain making and China’s other great arts.

For many people, however, the mineral goes beyond mere collectible or art object, taking on near-human qualities. Confucius identified 11 jade virtues as a model for human behavior, and its famed purity is a metaphor for female virginity. “Remain as pure as jade,” generations of Chinese mothers have cautioned their daughters.

As newfound wealth has transformed Chinese society in recent decades, imperial collectors have been supplanted by a new group of elite. At a high-end shop in Kashgar, jade dealer Ye Sanfei said demand is often driven by government officials, especially those from Beijing, along with a growing number of nouveau riche entrepreneurs.

In an economy well lubricated

by bribery, officials often prefer to receive presents instead of cash, experts say, and what better way to shower influence on gatekeepers than with a timeless gift of jade?

Hotan jade, which can sell for up to \$120 a gram, accounts for 10% of the \$1.2-billion annual jade trade, according to the China Precious Stone Assn., a trade group.

The wares lining Ye’s shop range from small pendants selling for well under \$100 to a carved boulder priced at \$35,000. As with most things in China, however, bargaining is expected.

The high prices are the stuff of dreams for the poorly dressed diggers working along the Yulong Kashgar, or Jade Dragon, River. Many console themselves with stories of friends of friends who

found pieces the size of fists, basketballs, watermelons.

“It’s more about luck than skill,” said Musajan, 47, an ethnic Uighur who uses one name, as he unwrapped a plastic bag containing several pieces of white, green and brown jade worth a few cents each.

The methods of these dreamers vary widely. One family of four armed with shovels and picks dug horizontally into the riverbank, supervised by a fifth family member kibitzing from beneath a parasol. Farther along, several solo figures dug pits with their bare hands, with little apparent urgency.

Farther upstream, another team repaired a diesel engine it was using to pump a gush of river water at the ground in hopes of unearthing buried treasure.

Continued on page 22

GeoGem Lapidary Services (Canada)

“AAA” Quality precision faceting and cab cutting at affordable prices.

No order too small

**75 Facet styles available
Rough or recuts welcome
Quality discounts available**

Many fine gemstones in stock for all your jewelry needs.

Contact us for price lists on finished stones or cutting of your rough into fine quality finished stones.

Rough for faceting available - quantity discounts

David S. Barclay Ph/Fax (250) 766-4353
Box 42015, RPO North Email: davebarclay@telus.net
Winfield, BC V4V 1Z8 website: www.geogem.com

Welcome to Magdalena; the Land of Opals

Randy Lord

The main economic activity in the town of Magdalena in the state of Jalisco, Mexico, is stated on the above highway sign at the entrance to town. In 2006, while enjoying the sun and surf on the west coast of Mexico, I had the opportunity to visit this historic mining district and enjoy a beautiful, unchanged, colonial town where everyone had an precious opal or two in their pockets.

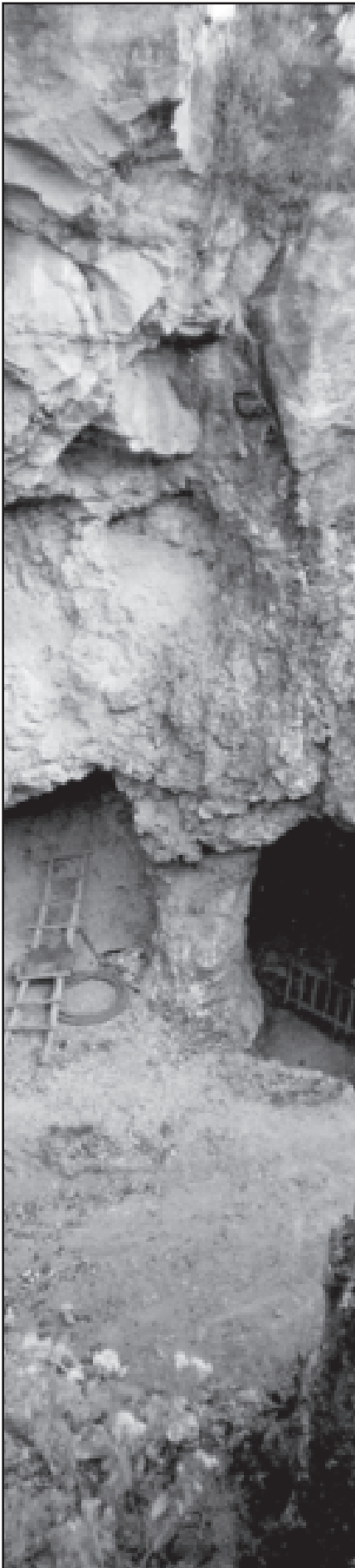
Many years ago, my prospecting partner Bruce, had given a ride to a young Mexican hitchhiker and was rewarded with some flashy stones. Mostly yellow and orange base precious opal showing a bright red and green play of color, it was explained that these had been mined in the area so 20 years later we began a quest to see the source.

Boarding a cheap, last minute non-stop flight to Puerto Vallarta , a 2-week car rental was negotiated at the airport then a 4 hour drive south on Highway 200 found us at a rented house on the beach in the small seaside village of La Manzanilla. After a few days of body surfing, snorkeling, and enjoying a Mexican rodeo, three of us packed tents and a cooler and headed for the opal mines.

Driving Highway 80 east from Barra de Navidad on the coast, the two-lane highway passed through

lush coastal areas with coconuts and papayas across two small mountain ranges. Six hours of driving by sugar cane fields found us closer to Guadalajara and much more traffic was encountered. We were able to circle clockwise on a perimeter road around the main city then headed 90km northwest on a Cuota (toll) highway. This US style, 4 lane split highway cost about \$10, had negligible traffic, fresh blacktop and with ample shoulders and good fencing the little rental Hyundai flew.

Needing a break partway to Magdalena, I decided to pull over for a driver change and to stretch the legs. Noticing a black, one-meter wide vein situated 20 meters away, I had to have a look. Large fragments the size of microwave ovens had been broken off by road construction, so lacking a hammer, I dropped one on a rhyolite boulder and like magic, shards of silver sheen obsidian scattered in the dust and weeds. Another one-meter wide vein exposed nearby appeared similar and road cuts for the next 30km showed many interesting silica formations. After collecting 10kg at the first site, we felt that the rental car springs should be saved for more important items, like beer and opals.



La Unica Mining Caves

Driving into Magdalena that evening, reading the Land of Opals highway sign and spotting the Hotel Opalero (opal miner) gave us inspiration to head north of town to a mine site with a lot of history. After asking directions from some local farmers we arrived at dusk at the La Pata de Gallo (crows feet) mine and like all good canucks, set up camp in a pit and built a fire. In the morning, the mine site proved to be a semi-active operation utilizing a trackhoe with a hydraulic breaker and dynamite. We explored various pits and trenches but no miners showed up and the roads showed only critter tracks in the volcanic dust. Common opal was predominant but precious opal stayed true to its name and was much harder to find. Its scarcity was probably the reason the miners were not present.

After breaking camp late in the morning we headed back into town and stopped at a major opal shop on the main street called OM, Opalos de Magdalena (www.opalodemexico.com.mx). We inquired if it was possible to visit their mine site to dig for opal and camp overnight. For a small fee we obtained permission and were given a note to borrow hand tools from a resident caretaker. We drove north 10 km over cobblestone and gravel roads to the small village of

Santa Nina and found La Lupita as described. Silica was everywhere with obsidian nodules scattered over the ground and in a large excavation, agate and opal veins were exposed. A small shrine to their local saint had been erected on site and we explored without tools for the afternoon. Visiting the mine owner nearby, he gave us sledge hammers, pry-bars, and chisels as well as a taste of the fine local Tequila and a tour of his magnificent garden.

After camping for the night we explored the main pit with tools and found some sections where precious opal had filled many tiny vesicles. Despite the large amount of silica present we considered this to be a tourist dig. We also noted many more mine sites in the local hills but decided to head to downtown Magdalena for more information. We stopped first at the OM shop and while there, many local miners came by to sell their wares. We decided to hang around. Many beautiful parcels changed hands and even mineral specimens like fluorite and calcite were offered. Finally 3 brothers and their father invited us to La Unica (the only), one of the pre-eminent and original mine sites in the area. We jumped at the chance.

Following their jeep south of town through sugar-cane fields and

along gravel roads we arrived in their village and had lunch. While there we were shown a beautiful water-filled globe about 8 inches in diameter that held stunning fiery-opals glued on a tree like peaches. As our rental car could not access the mine site, we all piled in the jeep and headed up a local mountain through the scrub pine and oak woodlands.

We were driving up the flank of a major volcano and the road was at times steep and loose. Arriving at the mine site, an open pit the size of a stadium greeted us and miners were at work everywhere. Some were tunneling in the debris that had been removed



Base Camp in La Pata de Gallo.



La Unica Miner

in years past in order to retrieve opal that had been overlooked. Others were drilling and blasting in the lower areas of the pit. The 3 brothers took us on a tour of the area and some remarkable similarities were noted from volcanic hosted opal occurrences both here in BC and in Mexico.

The igneous volcanic rocks in the Magdalena region cover the whole spectrum. Basalts, rhyolites, trachytes, pearlites, zeolites, obsidian are all present. The high-silica environment and localized temperature pressure gradients are reflected in the wide dispersion of past, present, and producing mines, numbered at over 300! At every location we visited, a wide sequence of volcanic activity was apparent. Veins of agate, nodules of obsidian, pearlite and zeolites were always present. The nature of opal to occupy open spaces is the key. Vesicular and fractured material must be broken repeatedly as precious opal may be present next to common opal or hyalite.

Some zones at La Unica contained many zeolites, others had obsidian, pearlite, agate, and much common opal. Oxidation and flow banding of the rhyolite was evident while scoria, volcanic conglomerate and tuff were all visible. Various forms of silica had taken the opportunity to infill fractures and vesicles alike. I was fortunate to find specimens of precious opal laying on the surface and the brothers were great hosts allowing us to take it. Driving down the mountain at the end of the day we encountered vaqueros (cowboys) riding horses driving cattle by fields of agave cactus. Back in town an elderly Mexican gentleman cowboy rode up to us on his bicycle and



Rock Pick and Agate.

from his pocket showed a piece of flashing red opal the size of a pencil eraser that he wanted \$1000 US for. It was a prize piece, but out of our budget. Driving our rental car back to Magdalena we noticed plumes of smoke and found that the sugar-cane fields had been set on fire with flames up to 10m high licking the roadway.

That night we decided to splurge on a hotel room at the Hotel Quintas Minas (five mines) and stayed in luxury. The main fireplace in the hotel lobby was faced with agate, obsidian and opal. The next morning we went back to OM and were shown the equipment and techniques of the owner and master opal-cutter, Juan Jose Virgen, but that will be another article. At the local Zocalo (main square), we fanned out to look for items. Many vendors, buyers, and locals congregate there and never have I seen so many people wearing optivisors. Many packages with different grades of opal were offered, however

it is definitely buyer beware.

The Mexican market values clear, crystal precious opal the most. Many precious opals are cut with matrix material and these look fine and make a good gemstone. However, some are fabricated using plastic or epoxy that is tinted and swirled to look like authentic matrix. My partner purchased a package of these matrix solids and another vendor pointed out that they were in fact agglomerates. Rainbow obsidian was overpriced but in general the prices for precious opal are fair, after serious negotiations of course, and there are not many scam artists.

While most connecting roads in Mexico are two-lane blacktop, many villages have unusual road surfaces. Some have concrete-blacktop-gravel-mix, and on occasion you will encounter paving-stone roadways. These can disable a standard vehicle very quickly. Tire repair shops and excellent mechanics are abundant though.

Pemex, the national oil company, has attendants who will fill the gas tank, check tire pressure and fluid levels however, unless you have been driving through bug-storms, the windshield will not get cleaned.

A significant feature of Mexican roads are Topes (speed bumps) on the entrance and exit of most towns and villages. They generally require the vehicle to be going slow as they are tall and steep. Local drivers will try to drive around if possible and as they know the system better, follow their lead. Driving these mountain roads require skill and attention. Passing lanes do not exist, but the truck and bus drivers have a system of indicating when it is safe to pass. It is wise to keep your window down to listen for vehicles as many locals driving fancy pick-up trucks will tail you and pass anywhere. On this trip, driving over 2000km on many different roads, there was never a concern or problem, however use caution and respect. Farmers driving tractors, cowboys on horses, trucks loaded with sugarcane, motorcycles carrying families, animals and pedestrians can be found anywhere.

Near Magdalena, the huge volcano of Tequila is a prominent feature at 2987 meters / 9700 feet high and its effect is more widespread than just hosting opal mines. The town of Tequila is located 30 kms from Magdalena and its distilleries produce many famous brands. Sugar-cane fields are common in the rich bottomlands but elsewhere the agave cactus is cultivated. These splendid blue-grey cactus plants occupy a large percentage of the landscape and they contribute greatly to the local economy.

The life of an agave cactus is long for an agricultural crop. After planting, it takes 5 to 10 years until harvest and the fields must be tended with the cactus trimmed and weeded then replanted afterwards. An insect pest similar to the pine beetle here in BC is gobbling up agave plants and causing concern to the farmers as they do not have a solution to their bug problem either. The blue grey agave fields have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site but the bugs don't know this yet

Like fine Tequila, good quality precious opal is not abundant and

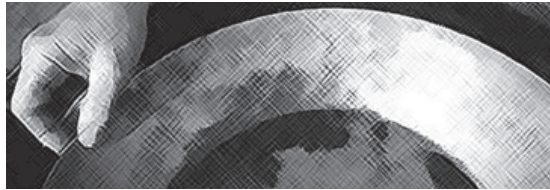
commands respect and value. Luckily the area of Magdalena provides both in a beautiful part of Mexico that is easy to visit. It is not necessary to camp out as accommodation is available in most towns. Bugs are few, no scorpions were encountered and while days were warm and comfortable, nights at 2300 meters/7500 feet in the mountains are cool. The friendliness of the people and the unchanged splendor of these heritage towns make a visit here an opaleros delight!

La Unica Mining Pit.



Miners and Buyers.

Gold Panning Instructions



Before you actually start to process your first pan full of material, look around for the best location for panning. Select a spot where the water is a minimum of six inches deep and flowing just fast enough to keep the muddy water from impairing your vision of your pan and a place where you can sit down comfortably.

STEP A. WASHING OFF LARGER ROCKS AND MOSS

1. Fill pan 3/4 full of gravel, then submerge it deep enough so it is just under the surface of the water. Give the pan several vigorous shakes back and forth and from side to side, but not too vigorous as to wash material out of the pan.

2. Change from the shaking motion to a gentle circular movement, so the material starts revolving in a circle. This process will cause most of the dirt and clay to dissolve and wash out of the pan. If roots and moss surface, work them over your pan with your fingers to dissolve any lumps. Pick out the larger rocks after making sure that they are washed clean.

Repeat processes 1 and 2 of step A to get the smaller rock to the surface and to cause the heavier concentrates to settle.

STEP B. WASHING OFF LIGHTER SAND AND GRAVEL

1. Hold the pan just under the water and tilt it slightly away from you. Begin to swirl the water from side to side, with a slight forward tossing motion. Take care, but with sufficient force to move the

surface and the lighter gravel out over the edge of the pan.

2. Leveling the pan from time to time and shaking it back and forth will cause the light material to come to the surface and the gold to settle to the bottom.

Repeat process 1 and 2 of step B until there is only about two cups of heavier material left in your pan. This material is usually called "black sand," or "concentrate."

STEP C. WASHING OFF BLACK SAND AND CONCENTRATES

At this point it is better for the beginner to raise the pan completely out of the water, leaving about an inch of water in it. Tilt the pan slightly towards you and swirl the water slowly in a circular motion to check the pan for nuggets and pieces that are easily picked out by hand.

Then submerge the pan again in water and repeat process 1 and 2 of step B for final concentration. This is the most critical part of panning. Make sure this final process is accomplished with as much diligence as possible so you

Continued on page 36

Ticks all Around

By Carol Strom,
Yellowhead Lapidary Club

We had a great field trip for Agate on Saturday April 28. The hunting area was on the road between Westwold and Douglas Lake. Beautiful weather, sunny but not too hot, great companions, picnic good as usual. Everyone found some Agate. Husband and I brought in probably 5 lbs of which maybe 1lb is tumbleable. Coffee break at the Westwold Cafe was a hoot.

We stopped for coffee around 2:00 and had the restaurant all to ourselves. Everyone put in their order for coffee and sweets and the fun began. Husband noticed a tick on the Vice-President's Mrs., I noticed a tick on my Husband and soon it was - ticks all round with everyone on guard! At one point I ducked out a back door and found 5 ticks inside my outer shirt. Folks were not so surreptitiously scratching and combing fingers through hair and "other areas". Bills were paid probably a little sooner than normal and we headed outside.

Once outside some serious critter hunting took place. There was Mr. President beside his truck, bare

Silver & Metal Settings
Lapidary Supplies
Minerals
Jewelry
Slabs

DESAUTELS ROCK DEN

By Appointment
604 467 5445
Maple Ridge

ched, doing the tick hustle. Not so far over was Mr. Vice-President, sans shirt, undershirt to the world, with him and his Mrs. poking and prodding in nooks and crannies.



We had our camera with us and didn't think to record this event

for posterity, as we were very very busy ourselves.

The ride home was a real laugh. Our hands took on a life of their own, roaming over our bodies. Of course "husband" decided it was a good time to "spook" the "wife".

HUSBAND - "You know those little Buggers can hide between your toes"

WIFE - "You know, like, just shut up and drive faster"

HUSBAND - "You don't even feel them crawling all over you"

WIFE- "You know just shut your face and put the peddle to the metal"

HUSBAND - "You know they crawl up into your hair and suck your blood until they are like balloons"

WIFE - "You know, if you say you know, one more time, I'm going to kill you.

Continued on page 36.

Scientists Identify Crystal as Oldest Known Solid on Earth

Scientists have found a crystal believed to be at least 4.3 billion years old, making it the oldest known solid on Earth. And they say the crystal's sparkling facets contain hints that oceans, continents and perhaps even life itself developed much earlier than previously thought.

The grain of zircon, hardly wider than a human hair, was born in a molten fury not long after Earth formed. It was discovered inside younger stone in what is now Australia.

"It represents a significant advance in reconstructing Earth's Dark Ages," said geologist Alex N. Halliday of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. He was not involved in the research.

Zircon is a durable crystal made of silicon, oxygen and zirconium, among other elements. The oldest grain identified is one of a dozen very old crystals extracted from the Jack Hills section of northwestern Australia.

Two studies of the grains were conducted independently by international research teams. Their results were published in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature.

One study reports that the oldest zircon is at least 4.3 billion years old. The second study puts its age at up to 4.4 billion years old.

"We are pretty confident," said T. Mark Harrison, a UCLA geochemist and co-author of one of the studies. "Two studies conducted independently apparently have come to the same conclusion."

Both research teams dated the zircon grains by analyzing their isotopes of uranium. Uranium decays into lead. By calculating the ratio of uranium to lead, they determined that a dozen of the grains were very old indeed.

Both teams used a high-resolution ion microprobe and a mass spectrometer to analyze the crystals.

Earth is believed to have formed into a terrestrial planet 4.56 billion years ago when swirling space debris and gas clumped together. The researchers said the zircon crystals grew from molten granite that formed at high temperatures more than 10 miles below the Earth's surface.

The oldest crystal's geochemical properties offer a glimpse into Earth's early conditions.

Researchers said the zircon's high level of heavy oxygen isotopes suggest it was cooled by surface water after it formed. If correct, this means that oceans appeared 200 million to 300 million years after Earth's formation.

In this water, they speculate, simple life might have spawned. Current research holds that life appeared on Earth 3.9 billion years ago.

Rockhound Shop

777 - Cloverdale Avenue, Victoria, B.C. Canada
V8X 2S6

Owner: V.I. Rockhound Shop Ltd.
(Tom & Gerry Vaulkhard)

Email: info@rockhoundshop.com
Tel: (250) 475-2080 (Tues - Sat.) Fax (250)
475-2083

The Abbotsford Club Experience Rendezvous 2007

Anne Williams

Rendezvous this year took place in south Cariboo country near Roe Lake, an area of seemingly-landscaped pale green hills, chestnut-coloured cattle and large comfortable looking log cabins. Oh! And lakes. Lots and lots of lakes.

Our format for this annual get together remained the same as other years, (but then why change it if it works?) Following registration on Friday afternoon, chatting, reminiscing, exchanging rocks and generally swanning around having coffee and cookies took place in the community hall.

Our first field trip on Saturday was to be to Needa Lake for agates. It got off to a rocky, rather shaky (and dusty) start. Our group was large (over 20 vehicles) and by the time the last vehicle got out of the gate, our wagonmaster was probably half way to our destination. Some of us never did catch sight of the front of the convoy. Fortunately we had our very own Randall and Simone deFehr, who knew a great deal about the locale and were able to find us a site which turned out to be lucrative and fruitful for agates of all sizes, just waiting to be picked up and drooled over. Our day was certainly not wasted and everyone returned home well satisfied.

On Sunday our field trip was for datolite (or was it howlite ??????????) This proved quite hard to find, whatever it was. After walking about two kilometres between a railway track and Lac la Hache, some hardy rockhounds started digging, but



This is the Saturday trip that got left behind. Randall led us up Windy Judson Rd. where we found pieces and nodules of agate in many places. Very fun trip and great people to be with.

datolite was scarce. I sat on the actual track and ate lunch, thinking this was a first for me, and all part of the fun. Others were more persistent, and their efforts were rewarded. The name Kelly comes to mind!

The Saturday night auction was as much fun as usual. It's always great to spend money on something you don't really need, and certainly don't have room for. On Sunday evening the local ladies prepared a wonderful roast beef dinner, and received a well deserved standing ovation for their hard work

On our last morning we had the mother of all breakfasts, to warm us up and send us on our way. I'm sure a jolly good time was had by all.

Dinner on Sunday night. Very Bountiful...



Dessert for all who were still hungry. (Carrot Cake and Cheese Cake)

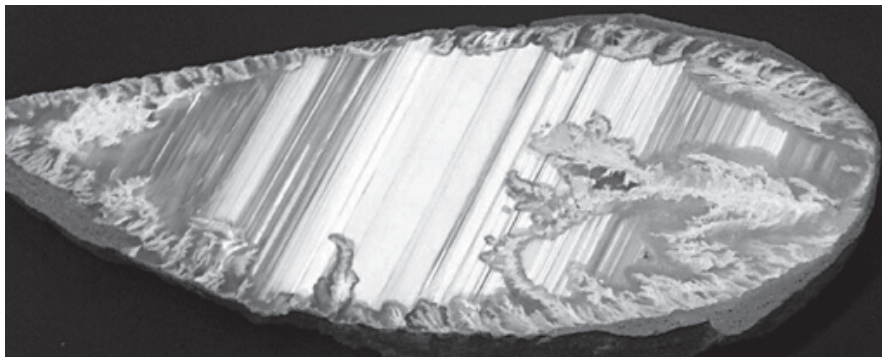
Abbotsford Show Features Pacific Rim Minerals

John Bowman

The 2007 Lapidary Society show in Abbotsford has concluded with some great displays, lots of dealers, and good attendance to make it another successful event. This year's theme was minerals of the Pacific Rim. While there were lots of those, there were also minerals from all over the world and a good selection of specimens from our province.

The item that caught your eye as you entered the show was the beautiful jade eagle, which was displayed courtesy of Jade West. The carving was exquisite, as the photo shows. Another major special display was a few showcases of fantastic agates from the Shaw Springs area. These were some of the best specimens ever collected by the Shaw family from that locality, featuring excellent banding and large sizes. Among the special displays were at least two from Hastings Club members. John Prychun had an excellent display of Vietnamese minerals, while Karl Friedmann had his informative ammolite case on display.

There was an incredible display of fluorite specimens included



Shaw Springs Agate.



Stamp Collection.

in the special displays that was one of the better specimen cases I have ever seen at the show. Other cases included a variety of Chinese fluorites, a nice case of Black Tusk Quartz specimens, and materials from the Okanagan Opal claim. A display of stamps and corresponding specimens that had been put together by the late Phyllis Richardson was included in the Special Displays in memory of Phyllis, who had passed away during the previous year. There was also a case of opal specimens, a collection of Montana agate, some gold specimens from the Lilloet area, rock carvings and jewellery.

Besides the special displays, there was the usual excellent assortment of displays put in by the various clubs from around the province. This included an excellent case of nephrite jade cabs from around the world, displays of petrified

wood, the beautiful carved stone jewellery of Guenter Otto, some nice picture jasper cabachons, and a case of "rock oddities" that told the story behind various specimens. There were also some nice cabs of flower stone on display, some nice framed intarsia work, and a good collection of Buse Lake blue agate specimens. The Thompson Valley club did well when it came to the People's Choice award taking home the top two prizes.

The Hastings club cases included Nick's river bar case with a few of his carvings, Diane's ocean jasper cabs, Liz and Karl's display of fossils and coral, Joseph's Montana agate cabs, Lillian's silver jewellery, and my field trip case. We had a good display but we could use a few more cases if people want to join in to display in next year's show.

The show also featured the usual Spin and Win, grab bags, a large number of demonstrators explaining how to do virtually every part of the lapidary hobby, and children's activities. I did not get a lot of time to check out all the dealers but managed to make a few quick trips around to see what people were selling. I was

looking for fluorite specimens and bought a nice Mexican specimen from the couple from Quebec who always have a good variety of materials for sale. I also bought a beautiful slab of rainbow fluorite from Dave Barclay. I agonized over a specimen from Illinois that had nice zoning in it but I managed to agonize long enough for someone else to buy the one that I was looking at. I am hoping to put together a nice fluorite specimen case, however, after looking at the fluorite case that was in the special display, I realized that my collection has a long way to go.

One unfortunate note was an incident involving people trying to break into one of the showcases. They were not successful because a member of our club happened to come along at the right time and noticed the damage to the case before it was broken into. It may be that we will have to make some changes in our cases to make them harder to break into as the current design was not done with security in mind.

I always come away from the Society show impressed with the



Jade Eagle

creativity of the members of our clubs. People are always coming up with new ideas on what to do with rocks and new ways of displaying their materials. Thanks to all of the members of the show committee, especially our Show Chair Cam Bacon, for all of the hard work that goes into putting on a major show like the Abbotsford event.

Now it's time to get out in the nicer weather and look for some nice materials to put in our showcases for next year. See you out there.

Iron: Not Just Your Basic Base Metal

Andrew Alden

Iron is serious stuff. It not only makes up the Earth's core, but it is the base of civilization. Iron was long ago categorized as a base metal, as opposed to the noble metals like gold and silver, but in fact its fundamental role makes it a "base metal" in quite the other sense.

Only meteorites give us plain, solid iron, and they're very rare. Tools made from meteoritic iron are an expensive curiosity. To get useful amounts of metal requires ore and ways to smelt it. Earth is fortunate to have enormous bodies of iron ore, but they occur only in peculiar and extremely ancient settings. Whereas the human Iron Age began about 3,000 years ago, a tiny fraction of our lifetime as a species, Earth's Iron Age lasted over two billion years.

Some 4 billion years ago, during the Early Archean era, the first blue-green algae or cyanobacteria went about their lives.

This was a time when the atmosphere was a choking mix of nitrogen and carbon dioxide. In the shallow anoxic seas lapping upon the early continents, the cyanobacteria were in Fat City with the world to themselves, breathing carbon dioxide and making oxygen as a waste product. Ferrous iron in the water scavenged that poisonous waste, turned into solid minerals—magnetite and hematite—and settled in vast, thin layers.

For over 2 billion years this went on, until the iron ran out, and then the oxygen bubbled up into the atmosphere. The clear, oxygenated atmosphere we know dates from about 1,700 million years ago, after two-thirds of Earth history. The vast layers of iron minerals stayed behind in the banded iron formations, or BIFs. Those are the algal legacy that we mine today. Nowadays, such iron deposits can form only in the airless bottoms of bogs. "Bog ore" was the main source of iron in ancient and medieval times.

BIFs aren't very pretty, but in a few places this material has been altered into spectacular tiger iron like the example shown in the Rock Picture Gallery. Old iron mines are rarely preserved, but there's a good example at the Soudan Mine in northern Minnesota, where the Mesabi and Vermilion Ranges have supported a great industry for well over a century. (That mine is being recycled as a physics laboratory, too.)

As the premium ores gave out and techniques arose to cope with lower grades, the iron industry changed into the dull, mammoth-scale undertakings in regions like Western Australia, the largest ore exporter in the eastern hemisphere. Now iron ore is a matter of

Continued on page 36

Our Mineral Afflictions

When I consider the hardships we sometimes endure for the sake of a decent field trip, and yet how desperately we yearn for that trip, this hobby begins to look like a pathological obsession. Bad weather, worse terrain, long hours traveling, bugs, injuries, no trespassing signs, and heavy loads would make a normal person hesitate to pursue this pastime. To many of us, however, these impediments are trivial annoyances compared to the exciting prospect of that great mineral find. For those who consider our preoccupation to be a curious disorder, I will describe some of the forms taken by our mineral afflictions:

Orthopedic Injuries:

- Blunt trauma: from missing the chisel with the 3 pound hammer.
- Amputation: from missing the chisel with the 4 pound hammer.
- Acute low back strain: suddenly develops before dividing specimens with your collecting partner to carry back to the car.
- Rubber-neck strain: common when your collecting partner is having a great day.
- Lock jaw: Never develops in collecting partner who has to tell you about his great day.
- Shoulder separation: self-inflicted injury when arm isn't long enough to reach to back of mineral pocket.
- Cold shoulder: often encountered when asking other collectors to share locality secrets.
- Fractured toe: from kicking boulders that will not split

after beating on them all day.

- Fractured skull: from intentionally banging head on quarry wall when another collector discovers the pocket you just walked by.
- Tennis elbow: serves you right; you should have been collecting minerals anyway.

Cardiologic Disorders:

- Palpitations: experienced on arrival at collecting locality.
- Murmur: subtle but ominous crowd noise, following arrival of too many collectors at a locality.
- Angina: chest pressure experienced under enormous slab of rock that has fallen onto you.
- Cardiac arrest: when beautiful specimen shatters during trimming.

Skin Disorders:

- "Sandruff": gritty scalp condition resulting from carrying specimens in hat earlier in the day.
- Sunburn: application of sunblock forgotten, since it's usually dark during early AM field trip departure.
- Green discoloration: happens to you when your collecting partner has great day.
- Abrasions, lacerations, blisters: inevitable "badges of honor" from good trip.

Gastrointestinal Disorders:

- Ulcer: secondary to nutritious "meals" consumed on field trips.
- The "dumps": usually strikes just as you settle down to collect at a remote locality.
- Heartburn: develops as other collectors edge closer to your good spot.

- The "gas pocket": one reason why your collecting partner may move off to a separate part of the quarry.
- The "blast": see "gas pocket" above.

Neurologic and Psychiatric Disorders:

- Tremor: trembling hand that causes you to drop your best specimen of a delicate mineral.
- Seizure: when Customs official confiscates Mount Saint Hillaire specimens on your way back into U.S.
- Stroke: good excuse for missing work so you can go out collecting.
- Amnesia: suddenly develops when asked where you found those nice babingtonites.
- Delirium: acute confusional state with disorientation and hallucinations, when pressed for details about those babingtonites.
- Coma: occurs while driving home after long day of collecting.
- Depression: begins after the first big snow, lasts until the final thaw.
- Rockhounditis: complex disorder dominated by all of the above, punctuated by periods of lucid satisfaction.

Kaleidoscope Gems

Goldsmith:

Stone setting,
Custom stone cutting
Rings are our specialty

We buy used gold, nuggets, lapidary stone
and equipment

Call Ken 604-936-4672
Evenings or weekends



Safety In The Workshop

- Don't have loose clothing around any moving machine parts and keep guards on equipment at all times.
- Wear safety glasses while grinding and using any pickle or acid compounds.
- Wear a filter face mask if required.
- Don't spill water on any electric motors. Electricity and water don't mix.
- Keep fingers and hands clear of sharp moving parts.
- Wear rubber gloves if handling any acids or pickling solutions.
- Use tweezers when handling hot soldered jewelry.
- Have a first aid kit near by at all times.



LAPIS GEMS LAPIDARY
Precious, Semi-precious Stones & Minerals

Mohammad Yazadeh
M. Homayon

27 Roy's Square
(Yonge & Bloor)
Toronto, ON. M4Y 2W4

Tel: (416) 944-3123
Fax: (416) 944-3309

Safety In The Field



- Take every precaution while on field trips like making sure you have the right gear like gloves, boots, drinking water and basic supplies.
- Fill in your holes after digging and beware of overhanging rocks and ledges that could collapse while digging below.
- Don't go into old mine shafts as most are unstable and air quality can never be guaranteed.
- Always wear safety glasses when breaking or chiselling on rocks.
- Watch out for snakes and spiders because as a rock hound you're more prone to finding these critters than others.

KEN DEWERTSON

Authorized Dealer For

TESORO

Metal Detectors



#338-2330 Butt Road
Westbank, BC V4T 2E3

Home: 250-707-0618
kdewerson@shaw.ca

- Always close gates after you and always take your rubbish home with you if there isn't a proper place to leave it.
- Always tell someone where you are before you leave in case something goes wrong!
- Always have a firstaid kit close by.
- If you haven't been to an area before draw yourself a map or have a map with you so you don't get lost. Mobile phones don't work everywhere!
- Wear a good hat and sunscreen so you don't get sunburnt.

Never forget: FOOD, SNACKS, DRINKS & MEDICATION.

Disclaimer: It is your responsibility to ask permission from any private property owner at any location when searching for gemstones before you enter any such property.

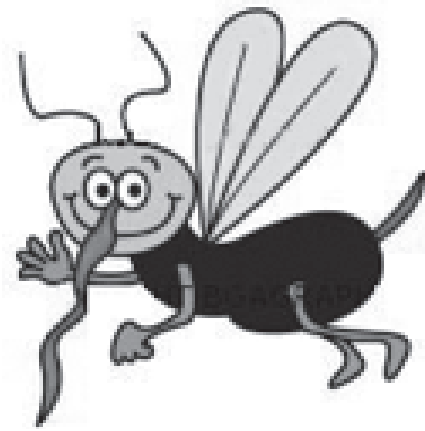
The Art of Mosquito-Swatting

Larry Gedney

This article is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Larry Gedney is a seismologist at the Institute.

It won't be long now until we find ourselves in mortal combat with our constant springtime foe, the mosquito.

The big, slow-moving early adults are relatively easy prey for an experienced mosquito- swatter,




but they get smaller, faster, and meaner as summer comes on and the mosquito kids leave home.

For years, I have tried to perfect the one-handed, mid-air grab, but succeed only occasionally. Now I find out that I may have been doing it all wrong.

According to George Gray, professor emeritus at University College in London, swatting should be a two-handed operation. Gray, in an article in Nature magazine, was experimenting with flies and not mosquitoes, but there may be some similarities.

Gray explains that if you approach a fly with hands to either side, moving back and forth slowly, this flusters the creature because it doesn't have the brainpower to keep track of both hands. A fly can avoid only one threat at a time, and when it sees two, its central nervous system overloads, and it can't decide which direction leads to safety, so it becomes immobilized.

I intend to see if this works on mosquitoes this spring, but suspect that I will be going back to the one-handed, mid-air grab technique. Mosquitoes rely little on eyesight to find their target, and depend primarily on tracking heat, moisture and carbon dioxide given off by warm-blooded animals



CENTURY STONES

GARY RICHARDS
email: centurystones@shaw.ca
604 944 6131

By Appointment

Professional training courses leading to "Accredited Gemmologist (C.I.G.)" by home study and extension courses

- Diamond Expert (C.I.G.) Certificate •
- Fine Jewellery Appraiser Program •
- Gem Study Tours •

•

For more details visit our inter-active website
GEMOLOGY WORLD at www.cigem.ca

• For brochure and more info write to C.I.G., P.O. Box 57010, Vancouver B.C V5K 5G6 or phone (604) 530-8569 or toll-free 1-800-294-2211.



Canadian Institute of Gemmology

Phantom Crystals

Doris Kemp

Mineral such as quartz, calcite and fluorite frequently exhibit growth outlines of crystals within crystals. A good example is a quartz crystal showing a drusy quartz face within the crystal or a small slab of an amethyst crystal phantom

The earlier formed inner crystals are called phantoms because of their ghostly appearance. During the growth of a crystal, impurities from the growth solution may at various intervals cover the crystal faces and become inclusions. These thin layers of included foreign material delineate the phantom surface of an earlier crystal form. Numerous quartz phantom? often occur within a single crystal and are frequently coated with chlorite, clay or hematite.

Changes in the color of a growing crystal may also produce a phantom, corresponding to the outer crystal, but may differ if a change occurred in the growth environment. Striking amethyst phantoms are sometimes enclosed in colorless quartz crystals. If the layer of foreign material covering an inner crystal is dissolved, the inner and over-coated crystal can sometimes be separated from the outer crystal and may be separated as a result of erosion or as a result of vibration when a crystal is sawed by a diamond saw.

It is reported that in nature there are many cases of a diamond crystallizing around another diamond to enclose a phantom crystal. The inner diamond often differs in color and habit from the outside crystal. Some natural diamond crystals are coated with

graphite and then enclosed in a secondary diamond growth. After the first diamond formed, a change in environmental conditions occurs which probably caused the diamond to be partially converted to graphite. When conditions under which carbon can crystallize as diamond are restored, a second diamond forms to enclose the graphite coated diamond. The Template..... via Rock Rollers....

Aquamarine

Blue beryl, or aquamarine, Has a clarity, luster, and sheen.

So it seems somewhat duller

When merely a color:

Light blue, with a smidgen of green.

TIERNEY CRYSTALS & CRAFTS

PETRIFIED WOOD, MINERAL SPECIMENS,
QUARTZ CRYSTALS, AMETHYST, TUMBLER STONES,
BRAZILIAN AGATE



MAILING ADDRESS
SUITE 101-3351 KINGSWAY
VANCOUVER, B.C.
V5R 5K6

SHOWS & BY APPOINTMENT

FRANK & BETTY TIERNEY
TELEPHONE (604) 435-6777

Pit Stop at Monte lake (or I'll do anything for Agate...)

Bill Needoba

Whenever Mary and I travel to my home-town of Armstrong we always manage to make a rest stop at the Monte Lake pull off, where the road has cut through the hillside creating a cliff of basalt. Mary always smiles when I suggest this as she knows I want to stop for more than just a rest.

For those who've never stopped there, it's at the southern end of the lake and is a favorite spot for rock-hounders looking for the green-skinned nodules of agate. Often you'll see people in the ditch and at the bottom of the cliffs chipping away at the rock.

On our most recent trip in March we made our stop and joined 3 others already digging along the ditch. I came along a recent rock fall and began turning rocks over looking for the tell-tale green orbs. I was having some luck finding a handful but I was occasionally interrupted by the tinkling of pebbles coming from the cliff up above. This was soon catching my full attention and I started wondering where this was coming from. I climbed out of the ditch and onto the roadside to have a good look for their origin. No sooner had I spotted the source near the top of the 50 foot cliff than a large portion of the cliff- a few ton of rock - slipped down and crashed onto

the exact spot I had been 30 seconds beforehand. I looked around to see if any of the others had noticed and they were all looking my way - especially Mary who had also heard the noise.

I tentatively went to investigate the new pile of rubble. There were quite a few nodules showing and I started retrieving them - all the while keeping one eye on the cliff above. As I continued my search more pebbles continued to trickle down - I decided to cut my odds and call it a day. It was time to continue onwards, anyways.

Upon thinking about my experience afterward it became clear how unstable that rock site is. The cliffs are about 50 feet high: the top 20 or so feet is solid basalt rock with the bottom 30 feet comprised of a more decayed volcanic matter. I believe this is what contributes to its instability and accelerates the erosion of the cliffside.

I've often seen rockhounders climbing the lower soft part of the cliffs, chipping away, looking for

agates. After observing my falling rocks I'm amazed no one has been hurt there. If you're ever stopping at Monte Lake to check out the cliff for agates, please take extreme care. The cliffs are not stable, especially after rains or thaw, and one never knows when the rock above may decide to let go. It's good advice to be very, very careful and alert wherever you find yourself rockhounding below cliffs.

PS: from this experience I've also confirmed that the agate nodules worth keeping are in the solid basalt that comprises the top portion of the cliff, not in the softer material below. Therefore don't go climbing and digging in the soft material looking for agates. They're unlikely to be found in that material and will only be helping to undermine the basalt above. If you must - only search through the rock that has already fallen - and keep your eyes and ears open!

Advertising by Dealers enables us to provide this publication at a reasonable price. Please support them! Tell them you saw their ad in the BC Rockhounder.

B.C. Rockhounder Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ PC: _____

Email: _____

I have enclosed \$_____ for _____ year(s) subscription (\$12.00+\$8.00 for mailing per year)

Please make cheque/money order payable to the BC Lapidary Society.

Mail to: The BC Rockhounder 20739 39 Avenue, Langly BC V3A 2V7

“Jade” continued from page 7

using to pump a gush of river water at the ground in hopes of unearthing buried treasure.

“We small people trying our luck don’t really hurt the land,” said Han Ping, 63, partially submerged in a hole dug by hand. “But the big machines, which are often gone by the time I arrive in the morning, hurt the environment and even flood the village.”

Behind the increasingly frenetic search are the skyrocketing prices of the last decade, with reports of twentyfold leaps within a few years. A carved white jade cup from the 18th century, scheduled for auction by Christie’s in Hong Kong in November, is expected to fetch \$1.3 million to \$1.9 million.


Dealers complain that the growing demand has also inspired a trade in more sophisticated counterfeits. But then, jade’s

history and high value have meant a centuries-long association with theft, deceit, avarice, questionable claims and ne’er-do-wells.

Imperial tomb robbers have long targeted jade talismans, believed by some dynasties to ward off decomposition and ease passage to the afterlife. At times in China’s history, the mineral has played a prominent role in witchcraft and traditional medicine.

“Jade is a cure for whatever medical problem befalls you,” reads a sign in the Zhongjian Hotan Jade shop in Kashgar, a claim that customer Liu Xiaohu, 34, a supermarket owner, finds perfectly reasonable.

“I believe it will cure everything,” he said. “I’ve heard when jade touches your skin, it sucks out the poisons.”



SCRIBE

Trudy Martin (403) 287-1570
martintm@telus.net
110 Lissington Drive SW
Calgary, Alberta
T3E 5E3

SPECIAL CONGRESS REPRESENTING INVOLVED BULLETIN EDITORS



**PICKET
FENCE
graphics**

**Located in Kamloops
serving all of BC
250-319-3097**

SCREENPRINTING EMBROIDERY DESIGN

T-Shirts Sweatshirts Hoodies Hats etc.

**All Promotional Products
at Competitive Rates to serve
Your Club or Event**

**A PROUD SUPPLIER OF
THOMPSON VALLEY ROCK CLUB**

picketfencegraphics@shaw.ca

“Gemboree” continued from page 5

convoy, as a good Wagonmaster should do. Went out and got in the truck and belted in and turned the key. Nothing. Not even a click.

I asked the young fellow who had worked on the truck to come and try it. He also had nothing. So he got the big battery they keep for jumpstarting, hooked it up. I turned the key. Nothing. Many tries. Still nothing. He got the test meter. Dead battery. In I go to request a battery, Please. Gulp again. More VISA, and batteries are not cheap. It took a while but eventually that was dealt with and installed. Such a nice young man, I should have got his name. I feel like I have friends all over the Duncan/ Cobble Hill area now, behind all the service desks, and in the garage at Cnd Tire.

I got back to camp just as the Hill 60 gang was unloading the truck at 2:00pm.

Part II: The “Doings” at Gemboree 2007

We arrived and set up camp a little late (see above) but the grills were still cooking up hamburgers and hot dogs, the salad was crisp and fresh, and there was cake. Ulla and Mike were the primary organizers, and they and their crew of Cowichan Club volunteers had done a wonderful job of setting up a welcoming area in the Duncan Exhibition Grounds, in the Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast shelter. It was decorated up to be Party Central with coloured lanterns, tables with bright plastic cloths and pots of flowers, the coffee pot always on and the hot water for tea as well. Cold drinks available, and if you had brought your own beverage of choice, there were 2 refrigerators to keep things cold. The tables for the

Silent Auction items and the Bucket Draw were around the perimeter of the shelter. It was a great place to settle in and socialize. Michele Heath was doing registrations at a table by the shelter entrance with a bunch of specimens from the field trip locations for folks to see. Off in a fenced grassy area beside the shelter, they had constructed a fire pit for the evening — sit around the fire and socialize“ sessions. Also within the grassy area were some folding tent shelters with the Rock Auction tables loaded with rocky offerings under them. Big trees all around provided lots of much appreciated shade for those of us who were camping and each tree had its camping vehicle under it. It was really a nice spot on such a sunny hot weekend, with shady places to park cars for those who had cars to park in them and it was nice for the dogs

Continued on page 35.



Mountain Gems Ltd.

Lapidary & Jewellery Supplies

New & Used Equipment

Sterling Silver/Gold-Filled Metals

Cut Stones

Classes in Silversmithing & WireWorks

Minerals Crystals

Books

4611 Hastings Street, Burnaby, BC Canada V5K 2K6

604-298-5883

Fax: 604-298-2669

Toll Free: 1-888-593-1888

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Saturday & Sunday 11:00 am - 5:00 pm
Closed Monday, Holidays & Holiday Sundays

info@mountaingems.com

www.mountaingems.com

Club News

B.C. Rockhounder

Alberni Valley

Rock & Gem Club Show

Port Alberni ushered in the first of the island shows for 2007. Weather wise, they always have a surprise in store and this year we were treated to torrential rain. As usual it didn't dampen the spirits of rockhounds at all and the final attendance reached 1365.

The cases with all the new ideas and material are always of high interest. Ripple Rock's Tracey had done a wonderful job with fresh water pearls. Five lovely necklaces in various colours were suspended from the top of the case. Other necklaces were stretched across a raised velvet cloth or nestled in shells. It was a very clever arrangement.

Cowichan Club, recipient of the "People's Choice" award had some splendid silver pieces. A necklace of small blue cylinder beads, both patterned and plain, was separated by silver balls with a gorgeous embossed silver seahorse at the base. A big fat frog also in silver was held by red and black beads. Wide silver bracelets showed a turtle with cut out pattern and one with a scene embossed on the side. Love the silver inlay dragonfly and the fish.

Max brought his favourite pieces of porphyry. Flowers of all sizes stand out against backgrounds that range from black to gray to green. Rice rock held various sizes of rods. Single cabs can boast huge

chrysanthemums-like flowers or so small they resemble a starry night sky. Chinese writing, a bouquet of flowers, the choice is only limited by one's imagination. The flowers themselves can be chalk white with a sharp outline, clear, muted, misty or blurred.

Karl and Jan Maldaner had some lovely pieces on a deep blue cloth. Three cabs of tiger eye made a stunning necklace. A large cab of blue lace agate was set in a triangle of fairly thick silver wire. A silver bezel held an oval of snowflake obsidian. There was one very unusual cab that resembles the chevron pattern in muted pink and blue on a milky background. As for the opal I'm surprised it's not on Jan's finger!

Congratulations to the Victoria Club on their 50th anniversary. The case both honored former members and showed fine samples of material and jewelry. Love the geode with a candy caramel center and that pyrite. There was a framed picture with rhodonite and amethyst flowers as well as a very delicate silver chain that held blue tiger eye.

Parksville's case was very inventive. The Periodic Table of the Elements was displayed along with items that corresponded. Just push a button and you will know what a particular item (bone, toothpaste, glass, water, etc) is made of, as the element lights up on the chart.

Jonanco's quilters showed a sample of their place mats, apples and the

blossoms were in the center and shades of two patterns around the side as well as one of pumpkin and squash with a colourful yellow and green border. There was a small Danish wool picture showing a cabin in surrounding landscape. Carvings of a walrus and a parrot were in soapstone.

A case of enhanced crystals was very interesting. Aqua aura is enhanced with gold, tangerine aura enhanced with gold and iron. It is a pale orange colour. The angel aura is enhanced with platinum and lavender tanzanite is enhanced with platinum and indium.

Lorne and Robert Hamilton, Ripple Rock's northern members, brought some of their lovely crystals of forest green epidote, minute crystals that blanket the matrix and some the epidote fans on quartz. There were epidote clusters on quartz as well as quartz clusters and crystals. There were lots of sizes from huge or medium to tiny, both single and clustered. Flashing blue, green and red lights lit up the corner quartz crystals.

The **Vancouver Island Faceters** showed off their excellent craftsmanship. Love the names of the cuts, beautiful work deserves a beautiful name. Michelle Heath had done "Morning Glory" in lavender CZ. "Stars in My Crown" was by Doris Meyer in pale yellow CZ. "Starburst" by Phil Watson was the brightest of the bright orange CZ. The Emerald Cuts by Ken Glatiotis were in amethyst and kunzite and Corner Emerald was a deep green Mt. St. Helen's by Gordon Billings.

Courtenay Club was telling us "Rocks Are Beautiful". They proved their point with a selection on black

velvet or rose quartz, epidote, ocean picture, porphyry, and jade as well as slabs and polished pebbles.

Port Alberni's "Blue on Blue" showed the prettiest crinkly blue cloth to hold the blue samples. There was a Mt. St. Helen's mottled blue sphere, a sodalite cab and sphere, a lapis pendant, a dumortierite slab with a bluejay, blue lace agate, and copper sulphate crystals and opal to mention just a few.

Herb and Joan showed us where "Dendrites Are Found" or specifically in all kinds of agate, sandstone, rhodonite, dolomite, jaspers and as pure silver and copper. Their case was dedicated to the memory of Laferne Ethier, a loving friend and avid rockhound.

At the demonstrator's table I sat with Sharon and Jim Landsborough and played at making some small trees. It was much more interesting to see Sharon make a chain. She used two square and three round links to make an 18 inch necklace, a real beauty. She was also experimenting with "Wiggly with a Twist" that is made with one round and one square link. It was looking very interesting.

Jim had a fine complement of his faceted stones for everyone to see. He was working on Hexaround in pale blue CZ. Elsewhere in the hall, Karl was on his faceter, but I talked so much I can't remember what he was working on. I know Shelly was busy painting a barn owl and Joan was working on a silver bezel for a shiny black cab.

In the side room **Bob Meyer** had the sphere machine working. A nice piece of mahogany obsidian

was taking shape. Also in the side room the "Please Touch" table, lots of interesting books and "Critters" the "Pebble Count" for the kids.

The "**Rockhound Restaurant**" had the usual fine fare from Poached onyx pears and leaverite cookies to a full meal including petrified wood Toebone steak.

The dealers had a nice mixed bag of goodies that was sure to fill all needs. "**Silver 'n Stone**" showed neat pen stands with the pen mounted on the side. One of Joan's pendants had two overlapping disks, one of copper and one of hammered silver with a high cab of rhodonite centered. Another inventive piece was a silver chain that could be set in a coil of silver to hold it in place. Joan tells me she used 450 feet of wire for stitch markers last year.

Dave Barclay's necklaces included a pie shaped moonstone and another with a silver arc holding five faceted purple stones. Love the angel wing agate.

Ross and Rose displayed their lovely crystals on a fine nylon-net covered soft gray mattress. The crystals shared with hearts of labradorite, clear quartz, carnelian and hematite and a large amethyst pipe in the center.

Millizza's Cave goodies included a single piece with large quartz crystals jutting in all directions. Also lots of small pieces of celestite, sulphur, amethyst, barite, fuchate, rhodonite, pyrite, stibnite and chrysocolla ready to purchase.

Komarovich from Calgary had ropes and ropes of seed beads in every colour as well as large glass beads lined with foil. Tiny pearl ropes are in gray, blue and white. Lava beads are flat and disk like.

Sahara had that lovely pale clear blue larimar from the Dominican Republic. They certainly had material from far afield – Chilian lapis, ocean jasper from Madagascar, Mexican fluorite, Namibian blue chalcedony, Botswana carnelian and Zaire malachite.

Shelly from closer to home had new paintings to admire. A small mouse was building a tunnel on jasper. The great blue heron on marble waded while the tide was out, lovely streaks of blue, pale orange, gray and beige. Two jays were having an argument. The screech owl on agate was not shiny, but very misty in a blue background.

The **Saturday dinner** was the usual fine fare and 53 sat down to dinner. The 50/50 draw was won by Wayne Rodgers and Peter Halliwell and two lucky members won a free dinner. Breakfast on Sunday is always a real treat. WELL DONE PORT ALBERNI!

VICTORIA ROCK & GEM SHOW 2007

The Victoria Lapidary & Mineral Society's 50th Anniversary Rock & Gem Show took place March 16-18 at the Leonardo Da Vinci Hall on Bay Street. The weather was showery to start but it didn't dampen the spirits of those attending. About three thousand came through the doors. There was 23 cases with a great assortment of rocks and related objects, everything from rocks used in

everyday life (tooth paste, talc, etc) to gold, silver and jewels. With 16 dealers from across the country there was lots of variety for everyone from paintings on rock, rock identification. Herkimer and Tzouhalen diamonds were on show. A large workshop upstairs held demonstrators in faceting, silver work, cabbing, opal cutting and dichroic glass jewelry. Elsewhere there were demonstrations in enameling, precious metal clay, wire wrapping carving and intarsia and gold panning. Also a popular spot was the Children's Corner along with the Spin & Win, and a Silent Auction with everything from rocks to jam up for bids. Our major door prize, a 5.4 gram gold nugget in the shape of a heart was won by Hope Yachkeekoot. Barb Smith

BCLS Wagonmasters Fieldtrips Summer 2007

BC Wagon Masters will be asking all participants to "sign-in", acknowledging that the participant is indeed responsible for their own conduct and safety.

Participants must be members in good standing of a club belonging to the B.C. Lapidary Society, be a member in good standing of a GMFC affiliate club, or be a sponsored guest with a club member.

Club members would include our neighbors from the US who belong to the US clubs, and who are always welcome on BC Wagonmaster trips.

Tailgate Sale — September 9

Hosted by the BC Lapidary

Society: A Tail Gate sale at the Hastings Center parking lot near the corner of Renfrew and Hastings street in Vancouver.

This event is a new one, so please come out and sell some rock related items as a vendor, or come out to see what everyone has as surplus goodies!

There will be a minimal charge for a "space" with partial proceeds to go to the Hastings center for the use of the parking lot. Further details will be released over the next couple of months....start thinking about that surplus rock, minerals, crystals or finished items or tools you would like to unload!

The tailgate sale is also open to dealers as well! Please RSVP if you plan to sell items at the tailgate sale.

This is being organized by Harley Waterson, 604-590-3289, or E mail

MacAbee Fossils — September 23

Gordon Pinder is leading a trip to the Macabee fossil location, which is between Cache Creek and Savona.

The meeting place will be the Husky parking lot in Cache Creek at 10:00AM.

Tools are a hammer, brush, knife, and packing materials for your finds. Don't bring newspaper, as the ink may rub onto your specimens.

For more information contact Gord @ 604-870-4779.

Exploration

Adam Villalbazzo from the Surrey club is willing to go on exploratory trips.

Adam is trying to set up a Sat./Sun. overnighiter trip for exploratoration in the Lillooet area and one later in the Vernon area "when the weather is perfect for camping". More

details to follow on the dates.

Contact Adam if you have a location to explore, or want to go out on a weekend to check some areas!

If you are interested joining Adam on any of these trips contact him at 604-599-5495

No trips are yet planned for October, and the WagonMasters will have a planning meeting at the Richmond Gem Club show in October. Likely a Fraser river trip will be organized for October.

For updated information, please visit the BC Lapidary Society Web site and search 'Fieldtrips'

As always, any BC Society member is welcome on field trips, as all are covered by the insurance through the GMFC. US club members in good standing are also welcome on our field trips!

Our neighbors to the south in Washington state also invite the Canadian rockhounds to join their field trips! Please visit the Washington State Mineral Council web site for info on trips: WSMC Field Trips

There are two trips planned to the Idaho Emerald Creek star garnet location. For June 16 & 17, and September 22 & 23. They also have a rhodonite trip to Mt Higgins, which is near to Mt Vernon on July 15.

Another significant get away for Canadians are the July long weekend events in and around Madras Oregon.

You can spend a whole week visiting the show-sale in Prineville, followed by the get together in Madras for tail-gating and field trips, with another tail-gate sale in Sisters Oregon.

Side trips to the local rock shops, plus Richardson's ranch for the thunder egg mine. For those more adventurous, there are sunstone digs in southern Oregon, near Plush.

Just across the border into Nevada are some fee-dig opal mines! Book your own loader scoop of fresh opal gravel, and scratch away for the rest of the day!

For all trips, please ensure that you have ample fuel. Many of the trips go many miles from the initial gathering spot.

Burnaby Laphounds Club

***PLEASE NOTE:** the club MAILING address has been CHANGED to;
**3051 Aries Place,
Burnaby, BC
V3J 7G1**

General Workshops on faceting, woodcarving and silversmithing gather at 7PM every Thurs.

General Club Meetings are held at 8PM on the second Tuesday of each Month in the Multi-use Hall No. 3 at the Bonsor Recreation Centre, 6550 Bonsor Ave., Burnaby, B.C.

Our Spring Dinner at the ABC Restaurant was great fun as usual. Twenty-six members and friends attended; we had a lovely meal, played games and won prizes. It was wonderful to see Frank Chambers and his daughter Wenda, Joyce and Julius Cotter, and Fred Wiley and his daughter Karen.

Please Note: The Burnaby Laphounds will be renting a table at the Bonsor Rec. Centre Craft Sale this November. The sale will be Friday, November 16, 2-7pm and Saturday, November 17, 10am-3pm.

Mary Dyck, Phil Herring and Nancy Herberts will be heading the committee to organize the sale table at the Bonsor Craft Sale.

Shuswap Rock Club

Show & Sale

— July 14 & 15, 2007

- Saturday & Sunday, 10am - 3pm
- Toad Hall (Behind Toby's Restuarant) Trans Canada Hwy, Sorrento, BC
- For more information contact: Pat Boden, 250-675-2849
E mail: patboden@telus.net

“Agates to Zeolites” Gem & Mineral Federation of Canada Annual Gem Show & Convention

— August 18 & 19, 2007

- Winfield Memorial Hall, 3270 Berry Rd. Winfield, BC.(1 block from Hwy. 97)
- Sat. 9am - 5pm, Sun. 10am - 4pm
- Adults \$4, children 12 & under \$2, under 6 free, accompanied by an adult.
- Sun. Aug. 18, 6pm, Awards Banquet followed by the general meeting of the GMFC.
- There will be 6+ dealers at the show. Limited free dry camping at the hall.
- For more information contact: Dave Barclay, 250-766-4353.
E mail: davebarclay@telus.net, Ken Dewerson, 250-707-0618,
E mail: kdewerson@shaw.ca

Surrey Rockhound Club

“Tresures of the Earth” Annual Gem Show

- September 29 30, 2007
- Saturday & Sunday, 10am - 5pm
Sullivan Hall
6302 152 Street, Surrey, BC
- Dealers, demonstrations, displays
silent auction, spin& win.
- For more information contact
Julius Cotter 604-576-8645,
E mail: Alice Clarke,
ag_clarke@shaw.ca

Fraser Valley Rock & Gem Club

“Creative Tresures of the Fraser” Annual Gem Show

- September 29 30, 2007
- Saturday & Sunday, 10am - 5pm
Old Age Pensioners Hall
3015 273 Street, Aldergrove, BC
- Dealers with rocks, crystals,
minerals & gemstones
- Demonstrators & displays
- Admission by donation
- For more information contact
Krista Jones at 604-850-3690

Ripple Rock Gem & Mineral Club

Annual Gem Show

- September 29 30, 2007
- Saturday & Sunday, 10am - 5pm
- Navy League Hall
911 13th Avenue,
Campbell River, BC
3015 273 Street, Aldergrove, BC
- For more information contact
Dorothy Young at 250-286-6870

Courtenay Gem & Mineral Club

On behalf of the Courtenay Club, I'd like to Thank all those members of Other Clubs who came out to support us and assist us at our Show this weekend of 5th and 6th May.

It is so nice to see all the friends we have made through the years, by going to shows at other places, and by meeting you all at our shows. So many of you have helped us in so many ways, and we are eternally grateful. I want to Thank Gwen for joining me in the kitchen when my assistant was running an errand for me. She is such a sweetie.

Thank you all for coming and demonstrating and selling your wares. Sorry I am not going to name names, because there are so many of you, and I might miss someone's name and then you'd wonder why I wasn't thanking you, and I DO thank you. You know who you are. I'll get specific later, when I can think straight again.

Right now, I am tired, and would like to sleep for a week. Thanks Everyone! Janice

Courtenay Show Report

Courtenay Club held their annual show on May 5 & 6. It was held in the Legion, a new site. The building is spacious and well lit, and easily accommodated all the features of the show. I stopped at the cases first and enjoyed a “second time around look”. Courtenay's “Beauty Within” is certainly worth many a look. My favourite is the moss agate, the poppy field and those Brazilian geodes. The D'Esterre Club from Comox had a collection of ocean picture cabs, such lovely streaks of

blue, gray and white, with touches of brown. The bear carving was an unusual shade of blue-green. An item from Iceland was the radiating thomsonite crystals in basalt.

Alberni's “Blue on Blue” showed off a favourite colour of many. There was a Mt St Helen's sphere in paler mottled blue on a darker blue. The Victoria Stone was narrow uneven streaks of blue on a sort of sky blue.

A silver tree enhanced tumbled sodalite. Ripple Rock's Campbell River North material done in shield shape whet the appetite for a field trip to points north. Love the pyrite, dallasite and the dumortierite.

Their pearl display is gorgeous.

What a talented artist Tracey is!

Victoria celebrated their 50th with some spectacular specimens.

Pyrite cubes in a cluster, a beaded necklace of tigereye and a huge 12 sided chunk of rhodonite were just a few to admire. Courtenay declares, “Rocks are Beautiful” and how right they are. Ocean agate, porphyry and a pudding stone I think- it looked like a pudding, to name a few. Don't forget the red tigereye. Parksville's “Periodic Table of Elements” makes one wish they had paid more attention in Chem class in school. It is a clever way to identify everyday items to the chart. Jonanco had a fine variety in their case. There were wooden bottle stops showing the fine grain and colour. A row of intricate beads had colourful designs on the outside. A silver filigree setting showed a rhodochrosite pendent to perfection. Material chosen for colour, pattern and texture made a lovely scenic wall hanging.

Demonstrators included Karl and Danny on the Faceters, and Sharon working on her silver chains, as

well as Courtenay members on the Genie. I also caught Shelly with her paintings and Joan Hoye with her silver work. There were many dealers to check out all the variety, as well as other points of interest. Lewis was in charge of the rock and slab sale table. Touch Stones had two huge samples, Lois's petrified wood and Fred's porphyry. A model of Cumberland's "China Town" was popular as was the Paleontologic Society's showcases and their demonstration. Silent Auction had a fine variety as well. Throughout the day hourly door prizes were announced and of course there was the food. Jan and her crew dispensed first class soup, chili, goulash and sandwiches as well as delicious coffee, tea and goodies. What more could you ask for. Well done Courtenay. Congratulations to your Show Chair and his Crew.

Hastings Centre Rockhounds

We had a **rock auction** at our last meeting, and it was a blast! It is great for those of us who for different reasons cannot make it to the workshop. It gives us a chance to get little treasures made by others, like that Book Holder made by Cliff that I thought was mine, but actually went to someone behind me. What a shame! I came away with a little gem tree that went directly to my living room to decorate my book case. Plus I won two times at the raffle so.. I gave some of my "bootie" to my friend Gladys who had come to the meeting as a visitor. More so, we were enjoying ourselves so much that we decided to join forces and bid for the unknown specimens

in the white bucket (nobody was allowed to peak at what was in there). Well, we got it! And it was heavy! Lots of rocks in there. Being newbeys, we don't know exactly what to do with all this, but my friend Gladys, who by now had signed and paid her membership, headed this week to the workshop and got her first acquaintance with some of the machines, under the patient guidance of workshop master Joseph....and Dan who was also there showing us around and cutting some beautiful slabs. She was thrilled and says thank you to Joseph and Dan (she will be back there soon!)

My real thing is collecting agates and I would like to buy a tumbler- a good used one if possible. If anybody is selling one, please let me know. It would be great if it complies with the three Bs.... BBB which in Spanish means Bueno, Bonito y Barato...something like Best Beautiful Bargain!

So, come and join us for coffee and snacks at our monthly meetings. I especially recommend coming to the auctions!

Port Moody Rock & Gem Club

Annual Gem Show
—October 27 & 28, 2007

- Saturday & Sunday, 10am - 5pm
- Kyle Centre
125 Kyle Street, Port Moody, BC
- Displays, Dealers, Demonstrators, Food & Beverages
- For more information contact Andrew Danneffel: 604-942-0617, adanneffel@automation.com or visit the club web page: www.portmoodyrockclub.com/

Museum Field Trip Review

The "Afternoon at the Museum" field trip to the Pacific Museum of the Earth on the UBC campus was a success. About 15 members from both the Port Moody & Maple Ridge clubs attended. Material on display included several rough diamonds and we participated in 2 rock & mineral identification workshops. Workshop highlights included showing the difference between igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks and discovering through an acid test that many of the fossils from the Harrison Lake area are limestone. The clubs sincerely thank curator Mackenzie Parker for her time.

Basement Work Bee Results

Approximately 8 club members assisted with sorting through 80% of the material in our basement storage locker. The club needs to hold another such event to finish sorting the remaining 20% but also to assist Ken Ayres in moving some final pieces donated to us this past year. We should also organize our small storage room in the workshop. Thanks to all members who inhaled their share of dust on behalf of the club.

Silver Clay Workshop

We are considering hosting a silver clay workshop. Participants would work with special precious metal clay. Upon firing the clay (either using a kiln or torch) the participant would be left with a sterling silver pendant, sculpture, ring, etc. Check out <http://www.silver-clay.com/> for more info. Clay costs \$35 for 18 grams, which would be sufficient for this workshop. This should be the

only cost to participate. If you are interested, contact Andrew. So far the following members have signed up: Tanya Hazzard, Lynne Johnston, Homayoon Behrooz, Claire Horvath, Warren & Shirley Edwards, Andrew Danneffel

Thanks to Claire for scouting this out on behalf of the club. We'll announce more details at a later date.

Wax Carving Workshop

We are considering hosting a wax carving workshop. Participants would carve a shape from a piece of wax for metal casting. If you are interested, please contact Andrew. So far the following people have indicated they would be interested:

Claire Horvath, Ken Ayres

Thanks to Rob Giesbrecht for volunteering to instruct this workshop.

Studio Tour was a great success with over 120 people visiting our workshop. Thanks to all who demonstrated and assisted. Positive feedback received from the Arts Centre Society and ArtsConnect.

Our club set up three display cases at the big Abbotsford Show. Displays included Rock Oddities, Premium Cabochons & Faceted Stones, and Belt Buckles by Neil Schnee.

A field trip to the home of **Frank & Betty Tierney** was held on May 26th. 9 club members attended and were treated to a tour of the Tierney museum, cookies & coffee.

The club has purchased some new tools for the workshop. Lynne Johnston has donated some as well. Special locks have been installed on several drawers and cabinets to secure our new tools and higher quality slabs. The

club has purchased some 325, 600, and 1200 diamond powder for our faceting workshop.

Richmond Gem & Mineral Club

Eric Kemp, Life Member

Holding the black light over his collection of fluorescent mineral collection, Eric couldn't overcome his desire to show us the effect of black light on his teeth.

This original member of the Fluorescent Mineral Society of America ended his speech scaring half our members and impressing the other half.

A member since 1960, Eric was enticed into the world of rock and mineral collecting by his wife, Joan.

During a romantic getaway down the coast of Oregon, they stopped at a local diner to enjoy some coffee and pie. Through the window, they observed a small barn decorated with handcrafted knick-knacks. Curiosity overcame them and they proceeded to enter the barn and browse the wares. The owner of the barn was a taxidermist and a part time rockhound. Between the stuffed bear and wild goose, was a collection of cabochons, rocks and jewelry. The designs and colours on those rocks led to Joan developing rock fever.

Before long, Joan's rock fever, developed into a need for more rock information. Scanning the papers, Joan found that a rock recognition class would be held at the Vancouver Technical School. Dragging Eric kicking and screaming into the session, Joan had no idea that this lecture would change Eric's life forever.

Bill Moldowin, club president

at this time, was presenting the lecture. After meeting Joan and Eric at the end of the session, Bill invited them to a rock hunt on the Fraser River, and Eric has been into rocks ever since.

Eric has held many executive positions over the years.

Besides being President for 2006-2007, Eric has been president twice before. Workshop Chairperson, and Guest presenter for many of our programs. Eric has also played an important part in the BC Lapidary Society. Eric has been president of the society, treasurer, member of the Gem Show Committee and Dealer Chairperson for over nine years. The hardest test of his endurance and management skills was trying his hand at organizing a field trip to Oregon and Idaho, and this was before the need for passports and gas was cheap.

This was a difficult field trip (a prelude to our current summer camps) with a lot of prospecting for good sites.

The rockhounds were able to find good geodes and picture rocks.

Many of us know Eric from taking one or two of his classes. His favourite course is lost wax casting. Eric has also tried his hand at Silversmithing and Lapidary, and was part of the team putting on rock recognition sessions.

Eric has the ability to make aesthetically pleasing silver and gold creations, either through using lost wax casting or by Silversmithing. Eric was also an entrepreneur. As the owner and operator of Creative Fluorescence and Jewelry, Eric had the exclusive distributorship for Garnet Block for Canada and had a good stock of materials including slabs, jewelry

tools, and silver wire and sheets.

As a regular presenter at our club's programs and a contributor to the Pebble Press, Eric has recently provided us with information on fluorescent minerals and provided us with an insight to his mineral hunting trips abroad.

Hunting minerals and going on vacation went hand-in-hand with Eric. Australia was a favourite destination, Mexico was close at hand, and the trips to Japan and Brazil, his most recent, were memorable. Australia, being hot and dry, especially in the opal hunting areas had Eric in Lightning Ridge, a miner's shantytown, playing the role of Hugh Hefner and entertaining the female members of the rock hunting tour in an extremely large hot tub of a local opal dealer, while the male members of the tour tried their luck at finding opal. Eric was also able to bring back specimens of opals and chrysoprase.

Mexico provided Eric with one of his best and favourite mineral specimen, ram's horn selenite that he personally removed from a road cut by the side of the road. Mechanical problems for the tour bus resulted in an unexpected rock hunting trip. The bus driver left them by a bridge over a dry creek bed. Having an hour or two, the group went looking for treasures. Intent on finding valuable and interesting mineral specimens, the tour group scoured the area. Their finds encouraged more searching. Soon, several tour members started to scratch themselves and within minutes the entire tour group was scratching and slapping at various parts of their bodies. Defending this lucrative mineral source was an army of sand fleas, who

couldn't believe their luck; a buffet of Canadian Tourists to feed on..

Japan and its World's Fair in 1970 provided the perfect specimen that allowed Eric to take the time to drift slowly through the blossoms of life, Chrysanthemum Stone.

Brazil was a very enjoyable trip despite the unwelcomed visitation by overly large insects that covered the cruise ship. The food, company and local sites were great, but the nearest mineral collection site was over 400 miles away. Tourmaline, diamonds and emeralds abounded in the various gift shops and sometimes the best hunting comes in an air conditioned, well-lit environment. Eric shared his Brazilian exploits and mineral specimens with us at one of our programs this year. Those of us that have the opportunity to use the workshop will often find Eric hard at work creating jewelry of some kind, whether it may be a cast silver or gold ring, a pendant or cabochon, or answering the many questions put to him. Eric's knowledge, expertise and willingness to help others, have enhanced the life of the club and all its members.

Ripple Rock Gem & Mineral Club

The field trip to our new find of chert at **Strathcona Dam** turned out excellent. We had a very good turn out and with a bit of wedging everyone definitely got enough rock. The small waterfall cascading over the outcrop of chert really contrasted the colors of the banding. The logging road is still 4 wheel drives only but if you would like directions to the site please give me a call. Access may

not be possible in the near future as there are plans to deactivate the road. Thanks to everyone for a wonderful day, Charlie

In company with our Richmond friends Lloyd and Roberta Johnson, Jean and I attended the **BC Gem Show** on Sunday afternoon April 15th. We spend a good portion of our time visiting with old friends. The girls did their best to buy out the place while Lloyd and I viewed the excellent display cases. Tracy did a very commendable job of installing our two show cases. I did not count the number of cases on display but it had to be in excess of one hundred. The Dealers were numerous and had an excellent selection of finished product, rock slabs, raw rock and rock equipment. My favourite dealers were Frank and Betty Tierney of Tierney Crystals and Crafts who had a huge dealer display area with gorgeous Petrified Wood rounds and finish product. This show, probably one of the largest in Canada, is always worth attending even with the increased ferry fares. It is unlikely that one will ever see that many dealers assembled in one location. Mark April 2008 on your calendar and plan to attend. Gordon and Jean Billings

The **Boyes' residence** hosted a combined **North Island Faceting workshop** as well as a Silver Chain workshop on April 22. Sharon Landsborough instructed an enthusiastic group in the dining room while the faceters continued their projects in the ballroom. The "Chain Gang" included Dorothy, Jan, Barb U, Max, Mabel, Rose, Danny, Cathy and Joanne. Their first effort was the "twist chain"

followed by the “Wiggly”, then “S”, then “3 on 2”. A felt pad held the links while a twist tie held the first of the links in the chain itself. A neat little invention to open the links is held on the finger. Soon the group was making great strides and the chain lengths grew as time passed. Meanwhile back in the ballroom Gordon worked on the round brilliant using apache tears, while Wayne used clear quartz to do NPSFG Logo Stone. Karl on his machine had smoky quartz with 1.394 Garnet Crown pattern and I did my same old round brilliant in amethyst on my machine. As usual when we arrived we were greeted by fresh cinnamon buns and coffee. Lunch at noon was a choice of two soups and cheese biscuits. How Jan does spoil us all! It was a very successful day and many thanks go to Sharon for sharing her knowledge and her time and of course continuing thanks to Jack and Jan our perfect host and hostess. Gwen

RIPPLE ROCK GEM & MINERAL CLUB ANNUAL PICNIC

May 26, 2007 Ahhhh! The annual club picnic. What an opportunity to mingle with friends and rock buddies. This year our picnic was a tremendous success with a total attendance 89, including the children. WOW! It was good to see the number of children present, (about 10 I think. Since there was such a crowd present it was difficult to put all the kids in one place at one time), all having a good time.

Thanks to Kevin, Elizabeth, and Sue, for taking such good care of our kids and providing lots of fun entertainment for them. The food was scrumptious, hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken burgers all

grilled to perfection by Emily and Peter, thank-you. Wonderful salads and deserts provided by Ripple Rock Club members filled out the meal.

And as always, our thanks go out to our hosts, Charlie & Lena, for being true hosts and welcoming everyone onto their property, (and there were many of us).

Our Auctioneer, Charlie, regaled us with humour telling us a terrible joke that made the crowd laugh out loud. It was sooo funny! Just ask him about Winnie the Pooh sometime.

There was an excellent selection of material up for auction. Tiger eye, amethyst, chrysoprase, jasper, agate, ocean picture stone, and way more. There was everything from motors and a slab saw, to a shell collection, grits & polishes for tumblers and of course, rough rock, slabs, and a few fossils. At times the bidding got hot and furious, people really wanted what they wanted, which was great for our Club because the auction was a booming success earning the Club a substantial sum of money. Lena & Faye kept Charlie on track and, kept track of the accounting for the auctions. No easy job, I must say.

Rudy Brule, was sorely missed at the picnic by everyone who had known him. He always attended Club affairs and was right in the thick of things.

For those who never met him, Rudy spent numerous years as the Club’s Shop Foreman, volunteering countless hours every week manning the Shop, teaching lapidary and other skills, repairing, servicing & sometimes even building equipment, as well as being the general handyman for everything from soup to nuts. I could go on but you probably get an idea of the kind of a man he was by now. He always had genuine warmth and a smile for everyone. Cheers Rudy!

By mid-afternoon after the auction, people were beginning to straggle off toward home. The only raindrops I saw all day were the ones on our car windshield on the way home.

The picnic was a success and everyone enjoyed the food, the fellowship, and the auction. All round.

LAPIDARY EQUIPMENT FOR SALE:

Rock Rascal Combination - 6” trim saw (and blade) with side grinding wheel and motor \$75.00

QT6 rock tumbler - hardly used \$125.00

6” flat lap complete with motor and variable speed control and six discs \$50.00

Home made tumbler with a 6 pound and a 12 pound barrel with room for another 6 pound barrel, motor & stand included \$125.00

8” arbour by Dunbar with 80 grit diamond wheel, one expandable drum, 2 extra sanding drums and motor \$300.00

Mini upright grinding outfit - variable speed - with two 5” diamond discs - 260 and 100 grit - hardly used \$150.00

Short wave black light complete with case and minerals \$50.00

2 Riker mounts (display boxes) with glass tops \$4.00 each

Gemstone tray \$5.00

Rock Rascal 6” trim saw with blade and motor \$50.00

8” arbour by Dunbar with 60 grit Nova diamond wheel (hardly used), one expandable drum, 8x1” felt wheel and motor \$400.00

8" poly arbour with 4 drums and 2 polishing heads, no motor \$75.00

Four 3" x 2' show cases with sloped top \$30.00 each

Pendant display stand \$ 10.00

6 pound Hex. Barrel tumbler with stand and motor \$75.00

8" polisher and motor \$25.00

Homemade flat lap with table and 15 polishing heads \$25.00

Contact: Mel Bordass at
250-493-1027 (Penticton)

Spruce City Rock & Gem Club

In Memorium Ian Dominic McEwen

Long time club member Ian McEwen passed away in his home at Fort St. James on May 13, 2007.

Born in Toronto, Ontario, Ian graduated from high school in Kitimat, BC. After attending Le College Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean in Quebec, he served in the Canadian armed forces for two years, then obtained a degree in political science at UBC.

Ian loved rock hounding, hunting wild mushrooms and living in northern BC.

Ian was always generous in sharing his knowledge of good collecting locations, guiding field trips and his knowledge of rocks & minerals.

Ian will be greatly missed by his fellow club members, the members of the Lakes District Club and all the rockhounds who attended the many Summer Camps in the north. He led many of the field trips during the Society summer camps held in North-Central BC as well as providing maps his favorite collecting areas

Thompson Valley Rock Club

On April 21 a group of club members headed out on the north shore of Kamloops Lake. The weather was great. We were checked out by a large herd of Big Horn rams, Blue Birds and Warblers. Oh, and rocks too. Lots of agate, and Mike found a nice sample of amethyst (or was it flourite?). The highlight might well have been rolling a huge rock off the road into the valley below (well, I suspect for the guys it was!).

The **TVRC's workshop** will be closed for the summer. However, if you are interested in attending a workshop session during July and August, please give Jim a call to see if a date and time can be arranged. Jim Lott, Workshop Manager: 554-3931

Condolences. **Tom Salisbury's** father pass away this month. Tom and Bonnie have travelled to Summerland to take care of affairs. Our thoughts and prayers go with you and your family Tom.

Thanks to **Bill Tattrie** for the donation of lapidary equipment. In appreciation, the club donated a shadowbox to Bill with a mounted fossilized salmon (contributed by Ken and Bruce, see photo below.) Bill is a lifetime member of TVRC and will be living at the coast.

The **Yard sale** was a great success, thank you everyone. The BC Gem show was well represented and a special thank you to Jim and Pam Lott for the set up and take down of the displays.

Royanna presented **Justine and Sarah** with gifts for their 1st place finish and the peoples choice awards at the Abbotsford Gem show. Congratulations girls.

The **KEG conference** was a huge success and thank you to everyone



Salmon Fossils collected by Ken Davies and Bruce Ritcey from Kamloops Lake, British Columbia. (Photo courtesy of Una Davies.)

Much younger salmon have been collected from the south shore of Kamloops Lake where they are found in lumpy concretions that weather out of Pleistocene clays. These fossil salmon belong to *Oncorhynchus*, the genus that includes both Pacific salmon and trout. The heads are small, and some possess the prominent hooked jaw characteristic of spawning salmon. Carbon-13 measurements of the bone collagen, however, indicate that these salmon never consumed protein from marine sources. It therefore appears that they are Kokanee, the landlocked and stunted variety of Sockeye. Radiocarbon dates suggest that these fossils are 15,000 to

18,000 years old and, as such, are the only Late Pleistocene salmon in North America.

Victoria Lapidary & Mineral Society

Remembering Field Trips of the Past Years, by Irene Phillips.

For the fortunate members of our group that had camper vans or mobile homes during the time when gasoline was a reasonable price, some of us went on trips which were very interesting.

A good number of us were able to go to Homby Island looking for fossils. Others went to Saltspring for Rhodonite. Some also went to Saddle Mountain for petrified wood when Mt. St. Helens erupted. I remember three men (Wally, John and another person) digging frantically for a large log. Luckily there were three parts of it found making everyone happy.

Another adventure was the camping Gemboree (thought up by a nut, me) who thought it would be great to visit Vernon Lake. Although there was a closure on many of the roads and campsites, due to fire season, we were able to visit a couple of old mine sites where we found some nice pyrite crystals. Thanks to Dick Roberts, our camping experience was successful, even although the wind came during the night and the lake flowed round the wheels of several vehicles.

Trips down south to Tucson and Quartzsite produced good finds for the Wrights, Fords and Taites, to name a few. Gathering to go by bus to the Vancouver Shows were good outings and we found new ideas in lapidary and silversmithing.

When holidays permit and one is near Drumheller, a visit to the area to see fossils makes an interesting visit.

Visits up the Island to various shows are always worthwhile. Though many trips that are far afield may not be practical.

Much can be gained by gathering with Gilles on his monthly field trips, making new friends and learning about new areas on the island. Who knows, but that gold nugget may just be waiting for you. Good hunting!

Vernon Lapidary and Mineral Club

2007 is proving to be another interesting year with eight field trips within the North Okanagan plus Rendezvous 2007 and the Abbotsford Gem Show, etc.

Five classes are being held in our Rock Shop throughout the year, including Cold Silversmithing, Faceting, Opal Cutting and Polishing, Cabouchon and Jewellery Lapidary, plus Wire Wrapping.

A combination of interesting rock/mineral displays, guest speakers, silent auctions and door prizes is bringing an average of 30 - 40 members and guests to each meeting. The Club is also cooperating with Vernon Placer Miners on some joint field trips and meetings.

Our **Mall Sales**, September 27 - 29 and November 2 & 3. Help to make the public aware of the importance of Club's activities to families and

individuals. We continue to assist the Science Centre with some of their programs as well as giving demonstrations and talks at schools.

The Schedule of Activities brochure, that we prepare and distribute at the January meeting and through other outlets each year, has been a good method of keeping the public informed and interested in the Club.



Bob and Chris Yorke -Hardie from the Okanagan Opal Shop giving a course on Cutting and Polishing Precious Opal to Cindie, Anna, Ted and John (taking the picture) at the Vernon Rock Shop.

Yellowhead Lapidary Club

The butterfly has gauzy wings

The firefly wings of flame

The woodtick doesn't use any wings

But he gets there just the same.

The Yellowhead Lapidary Club is doing well.. We had elections last meeting and we ended up with a fine slate of people as the executive.

We hope the high water does not take out too many culverts. We can't get to those rocks with bridges gone.

Our last field trip was a success, complete with woodticks. I think an account on woodticks may

be elsewhere in this paper.

The Yellowhead Lapidary Club was the host for the 2007 Interior Zone Tailgate Sale. From the point of view of the Club and myself the sale was a winner.

There were four Venders, a Club Information Table and a Hotdog Stand. The weather was great and everyone seemed to have a good time. The Club even made a few dollars that will be put to good use.



A lot of visiting & browsing was done



Relaxing in the sun waiting for customers

“Gemboree” contined from page23

who were occasionally confined to the cars. Barny, of course is a different dog and doesn't need to be confined or leashed. He enjoyed playing soccer with anyone who would join him in a match. Aidan sometimes did. Kids and dogs all seemed to have a good time. Friday evening was pleasant, sitting around the campfire. Assorted non-campers headed for their digs before sundown, leaving the serious campfire socializers to hang out with Ulla and Mike. And there were NO, ummmm, don't say it too loud,

Mosquitoes. Charlie said I should insert that Somebody got rather inebriated and to quote him, Somebody said “Did I fall down?” I didn't see Somebody do that, or examine someone's knees up close, so it is only hearsay evidence. However, Somebody looked very tired and sounded slurred to me, before I left the scene. Between the city lights being on all night, and the sun getting up well before “0 darkhundred” in the morning, we got an early start. I

do not appreciate 6:00am, but didn't have a choice. The coffee was on in the shelter, and people were milling around. I made breakfast and packed Jack's lunch and at 8:00am the wagon train left the station. Two trips went out...Hill 60 and Copper Canyon. No one had signed up for Meade Creek. Too easy, I guess. Due to truck troubles, Jack didn't take our truck and had to get a ride up. I spent my morning dealing with truck troubles.

For Sale

- 5 1/4 hp flexible shafts with footpedal. \$125.00
- 1 1/3 hp flexible shaft with footpedal. \$125.00
- 1 10” slab saw (new bearings & saw blade) \$150.00
- 1 sphere grinder 1/2”to 4” \$350.00
- Call Doug at 604-857-9117

Doug Jones, Fraser Valley Rock & Gem Club



Rok Pix Designs

P.O. Box 19 - 1320 Pinetree Way
Coquitlam, B.C. V3B 7M7

SHOWS & PRIVATE VIEWING

1000's of slabs and
custom silver work
Mike McCaffrey

Ph: 604-552-3007
rokpix_designs@hotmail.com

For Sale The Whitesail Opal Claims



- There are 20 units of proven ground comprising one whole ridge of mountain.
- There are precious opal showings over the whole area.
- There is a camp equipped for wall tents, rustic shower, water, outhouse etc.
- There is an established and brushed out trail to camp from a logging road, 2-3 hr. hike to camp. Other trails have been established to various work areas.
- Interested parties can visit the claims in August.

For further information contact:
Bruce Holden 250-335-1802
Randy Lord 604-522-5423

“Ticks” continued from page 13.

By now we're doing 1000 miles per hour, and we each come up with a tick crawling up our necks. Husband stops teasing Wife. Wife puts a hole in the console trying to kill the TICKS FROM HELL.

Home was great. Now normally when a man and a woman get “NAKED” things proceed apace. Well, let me tell you, there was “No Pace” involved. It was every man or woman for themselves. Arms and Legs akimbo, nothing subtle, clothes dropped where one stood. More of the little FIENDS were found, not an easy task. Put this in the theatre of your mind. Husband and wife are 75 and 65 so there are lots of folds, pouches and hidey holes to be checked. Wife said all the hounds of hell weren't letting Husband in the bathroom for a shower first, and then the race was on.

Picture it, all this flab trying to get through the bathroom door at the same time. Ah-h-h-, the shower was great, my skin is still burning from the hot hot water I used and I checked out my bellybutton so well it'll hurt for a week.

Final count 14 for Wife and Husband claims about 19.

Conclusion, ticks are good for you. A real workout, your heart rate elevates, you move your whole body in ways it hasn't moved for years and you get to see your spouse running around the house naked.

Have a great day.

“Iron” continued from page 16.

geopolitics, as the former Soviet Union's production collapses with its government and as the BIFs of southern Africa, India, and South America are mined to fill the gap.

PS: Today it may seem like there is no romance left in iron ore, just big industry and government agencies. But you can relive the days of iron mines and their iron men as you visit historical sites where old techniques and blast furnaces and ironworks from the 19th century are preserved. Visit the great ore ships that still ply the American Great Lakes, or ride the trains that carry the ore. And let us not forget the artisans for whom the industry began—the blacksmith in the village square.

“Panning” continued from page 12.

panning. Make sure this final process is accomplished with as much diligence as possible so you do not to wash out the gold.

If you have a plastic pan, the use of a magnet can be employed to quickly aid in the separation of gold from the black magnetic sand concentrate.

Apply the magnet to the bottom side of the pan and move it in a small circular motion with the pan slightly tilted. This will swiftly isolate the gold from the black sand.

PANNING HINTS

When using a steel pan, make sure to remove all the oil from the pan before you use it. The most common way is to “burn” it over the coals of a campfire using extreme caution. The pan is heated to a dull red glow, then dunked in water. This not only removes the oil but also gives the pan a dark blue hue, which makes the gold easier to see. If any oil is left in the pan, it will cause the fine gold to float, making separation impossible.

Another secret to speed up the final steps is to keep a small squeeze

Notice on Recent Theft

Most of you have heard already of the very disturbing theft of rocks, jewelry and equipment in Parksville.

The home of an elderly former member of the Parksville Club was broken into, and all of her lapidary equipment, slabs, men's and women's sterling silver jewelry and findings were stolen.

Members have expressed outrage in response to the initial notice that was sent out, as suddenly it seems that many of us could be targets for such a crime despite the age and condition of our equipment, and our collections.

Gone is a Lapidary Grind, Sand & Polish unit valued at \$1,250.00 US, and a Trim Saw worth \$850.00. Also gone is a large amount of rocks and slabs from various overseas locations. The Silver

Jewelry includes: men's and ladies rings, pendants, stick pins, letter openers, spoons, and bola slides.

I have a more detailed list of the jewelry and values for anyone who would like more information. Please keep your eyes open for advertisements in the papers offering these things and notify Marion Barclay at marybar@telus.net or 250-248-6177, or Janice Boyes at janboyes@telus.net or 337-8461.

Thanks. Barb W