

Place: **Union Hall**
Meyers Street
Next to Campus Life
In Kettle Falls



Time: 7:00 PM
Third Tuesday
Each Month
(Jan.-Nov.)

The Panorama Prospector

June 2005

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club

Meeting Minutes May 17, 2005

By Luci Bristow

President Johnie called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Several ideas about reimbursing the Rock Rollers for use of their show cases, tables, etc., was discussed. It was decided that we invite them to a picnic at a central location, Deer Park was suggested, and our club provide the meat. July 23 was a suggested date. The North Idaho Club is also invited. Rex and Mabel will pursue this idea. We will have more information at the next meeting.

President Johnie would like to offer a \$500.00 scholarship to Colville High School as well as Kettle Falls. Margie moved that we give a scholarship to both schools, Colville and Kettle Falls of \$500.00 each to a deserving student. The motion was seconded and passed. This Colville portion of the scholarship would begin next year, in May 2006.

After a discussion, it was decided that we need a membership chairman. Larry moved that we have a membership chairman. The motion was seconded and passed. Luci Bristow will take on this task as part of the secretarial duties. Luci asked for a complete updated list of people receiving newsletters. It was noted that many people receiving newsletters were not paid up members. It was suggested that Joe put a notice in the newsletter asking them if they wanted to remain a member, then perhaps a payment of dues was in order. Luci suggested we send a "gentle reminder" to these members. She will pursue that further.

President Johnie, Joyce and Ray presented a program at Head Start on May 6. They had about 60 children from ages 3 to 5. Johnie said they had a good time with all of those kids!

Johnie will award the Club Scholarship to Jessie Shewell of Kettle Falls High on June 18, 2005.

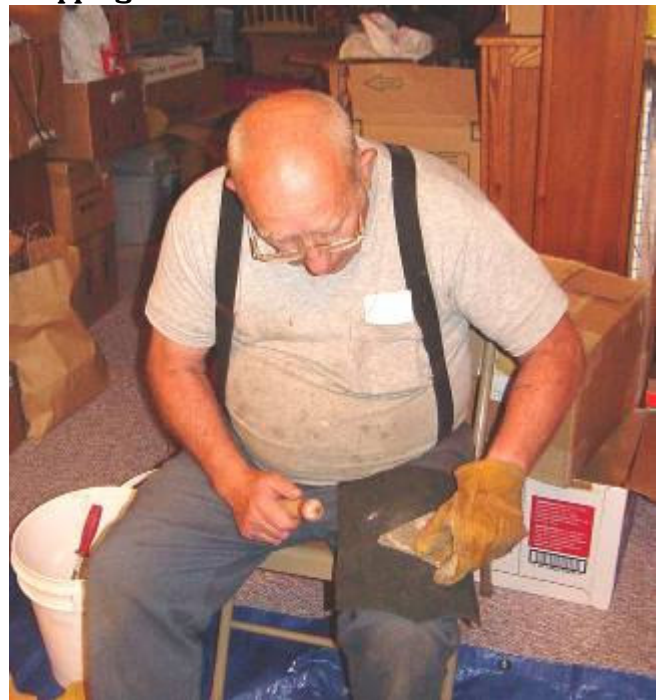
Rex reported on the field trip to the Cleveland Mine. They had about 12 car loads of members, 26 people. They had a great time collecting various types of iron and zinc, high grade antimony and stibnite. They got rained on for lunch! Rex reported that field
(Continued on next page)

Chuck Prentice

Master Knapper

By Joe Barreca

**He keeps breaking glass as he's tapping,
But he's making a point with his rapping.
If you'd like to apprentice,
He's not really a menace.
You've merely caught Chuck while he's
knapping.**



Chuck Prentice using the billet tool

Actually I caught Chuck just after he had a septic system put in for the new house that he's building, and before he went down to Madras Oregon to help set up the 2005 **All Rockhounds Pow Wow Club of America** annual 4th of July gathering, June 29th to July 3rd at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds in Madras Oregon; (call 684 7979) and after several demonstrations at the local schools of the ancient art of stone knapping. Still, he took some time to show me how it's done. After a month or so of daily practice, I might do almost as well.



Tools for knapping

The tools for knapping are simple. For starters, a billet made with a copper pipe end cap, filled with lead makes many of the starting chips. It is not used to directly hit the edge of the piece as much as to catch a lip and pull a chip off the back side. With practice, you can break off chips with a long run toward the center of the back. To give yourself a larger surface to strike, it's good practice to abrade the edge with an ordinary whetstone regularly. To finish the job, Chuck uses a variety of "ishi tools" or pressure flakers. By breaking off chips from alternate sides as you work your way along the edge, you can maintain a uniform centerline. You use consistently smaller points to put a sharp edge on the piece and make groves for binding it to a shaft. Wear safety glasses while knapping. Use heavy leather gloves or a thick piece of leather to protect your hands. A drop cloth to collect the chips is also a good idea. The chips are essentially tiny scalpel blades. Be careful with them.



Rainbow obsidian spear tip

Obsidian, dark volcanic glass, is the favorite stone for arrowheads and spear tips through the ages. It can be found in a range of colors, such as the rainbow spear point in the picture. Suitable chips of obsidian from central Oregon were traded throughout the Northwest. Dacite, a quartz andecite and basite, a dark basic igneous rock, as well as flint can also be used. Harder

rocks such as jasper need to be heat-treated to make them break sharply. Chuck uses an oven starting at 200° and raising slowly 50° per hour to 400 or 500° for 5 hours, then cooling.

Knapping may be the first lapidary craft, with an age of 14,000 years. It takes good training and practice to get the feel for it. Each tribe had its own craftsmen, and its own style. Skilled archeologists can distinguish styles between tribes and even bands of Indians. Today knappers can start with slabs cut with a rock saw, or break off pieces from a larger rock. They can mount stones with the traditional hide glue or as Chuck prefers, use JB Weld, a particularly strong modern glue.

There is a market for good points and a lot to be learned about their origins. I'm also sure that most archeologists would prefer that you make your own. When you are ready, you can try your hand at "speed knapping" during Pow Wow club gatherings.

(Minutes continued from Page 1)

trips are being planned to the Germania Mine, Trout Creek, and Apex Mine. He said he would let everyone know by either phone or e-mail.

Johnie mentioned that he and Ginger were planning on going to Succor Creek on June 8 and 9. He invited anyone that was interested in going to join them. Johnie gave a presentation on grits and polishes. It was very informative and received well. He entertained questions afterward. Thanks Johnie!

SAGO

NATURALS & MORE
SYLVIA ALLEN, C.H., M.H., C.N.

"LOOK GOOD OUTSIDE,
FEEL GOOD INSIDE"

Jewelry Repair & Custom Orders

10% off for cash

Finest Quality Vitamins & Herbals

Homeopathics Aromatherapy

Mail Orders Welcome!

Jewelry

Books

FACETED+
Non-faceted Gemstones

DISCOVER VISA

Hours: 9 to 5:30 Tues. - Fri.
Saturday 10 to 5 Closed Sunday & Monday

Phone 509-935-4388
Toll Free 877-935-2633
110 E. Main, Chevelah, WA 99109

Trapped in Last Chance Gulch

Part 1

By Bob Bristow

The meetings at what was then called the “China Lake Naval Air Station” were over by 4:00 PM and I hurried out to explore the El Paso Mountains SE of Ridgecrest, California. When I first heard of the El Paso Mountains, I thought they must be in Texas. However, they are in the Mojave Desert north of the town of Mojave. There are several roads that cross the mountains and all of them are scenic.

The El Paso Mountains are composed of a mixture of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks. There are outcrops of tuff that vary from white to orange to pink. Large rugged bluffs in only partially consolidated red conglomerate have been used for backdrops in many western movies. Basalt, both as lava and as intrusives mingle with the other rocks. In other words, the geology is a mess. This makes for exciting scenery and many interesting minerals.

There are no maintained roads in the El Paso Mountains. In most cases, the roads follow the bottoms of washes. Figure 1 is at the main road intersection in the mountains. (The picture was taken during a later trip and shows Luci’s little Honda.) The roadbed is sand to pea gravel and anyone caught during a summer cloudburst may be swept away. Figure 2 is a map of the mountains.

I only saw two residences in the mountains. One was on a side canyon to Last Chance Gulch and the other was near the top of the mountains. I stopped to talk to Mrs. Segar. She is an elderly lady living in an old miner’s shack near the top of the mountains. Her son drives up once a week to bring water and new batteries to run her TV. I didn’t stop at the other residence. It was at the old Cudahy Camp. It looked like miners were currently using it.

As I drove around the mountains, I found that my rental Chrysler with front-wheel drive performed quite well and I was able to go anywhere a four-wheeler had gone. I entered Last Chance Gulch at the Figure 1 intersection and headed downstream. There was a small flow of water down the center of the road. If it hadn’t been so hot, I would have thought it was winter.

There was a white crust on each side of the little stream formed by alkali deposits. The streambed passed between two huge rocks just wider than the car and then opened up into a valley about a hundred yards wide. Just past the narrow spot was a concrete pad left from some enterprise long ago. I took the second canyon on the left and zigzagged up the streambed until it ended on the hillside. I was really getting confident in my driving! Above the end of this canyon there are geodes. I found a few and also some very brightly-colored fine-layered rhyolite. It was getting dark by then, so I left more exploring for the next evening.



Figure 1. Stopped at the Head of Last Chance Gulch

Normally, I would have headed home after the meeting the next day. However, I scheduled it for the following morning so that I could explore the rest of Last Chance Gulch. The next

afternoon, I headed back to

the Gulch. On the way, I picked up a couple of bottles of pop and a hamburger. It was a beautiful evening with lots to see. As I descended deeper into the canyon, it became two canyons in one. There was a large upper canyon with a rounded bottom. A second small canyon with near vertical sides had been eroded in the bottom of the larger one. The sides of the lower canyon closed in until there was only the old streambed in the bottom. Periodically, I could see where there had been a road along the sides at one time. The occasional thunderstorm torrents had cut the streambed down below the level of the old road making most of it unusable.

The main mining work along the Gulch was a series of adits about 50 to 100 feet above the stream level. There did not appear to be any way to get to most of these adits except by swinging over the side of the canyon on a rope. I would have liked to explore some of the adits but there was no time. As I continued down the canyon, the sand in the streambed became more and more coarse and I sank in deeper and deeper. I finally realized that if I had to stop, I would sink down and would not be able to get started. Oh well, all I had to do was keep moving at a good speed and eventually I would come out at the end of the canyon on the highway east of the El Paso Mountains. This

plan was short lived. I rounded a corner and there was a big landslide that filled the whole canyon floor.

I stopped the car and, sure enough, sunk down to near the tire rims. When I got out, I stuck my hand straight down in the pea gravel. It went down a good 10 inches. I spent about an half hour breaking off desert scrub brush and sticking it under the tires. I got about three feet. To make matters worse, I was taking medication that made me require water whenever I exercised. The second bottle of pop was gone and I could already feel the dehydration. There was no way I was going to get that car back up the canyon that night. By now it was dark. I started down the canyon to find the highway and a ride back to town (about 40 miles). Starlight allowed me to walk in the sand, but it was not light enough to see a rattler if one were there. As I hiked through an especially narrow part of the lower canyon, there was a sudden flash of light. In a sudden panic, I looked at the sky to see how many stars were blotted out by a thundercloud. While I was looking at the sky, another flash lit up the canyon. I prayed that the water would come down some other canyon. Then in the distance, I heard the soft pat-pat-pat of

helicopter blades and realized that the flashes were coming from an aircraft strobe. One emergency down, but more to follow!

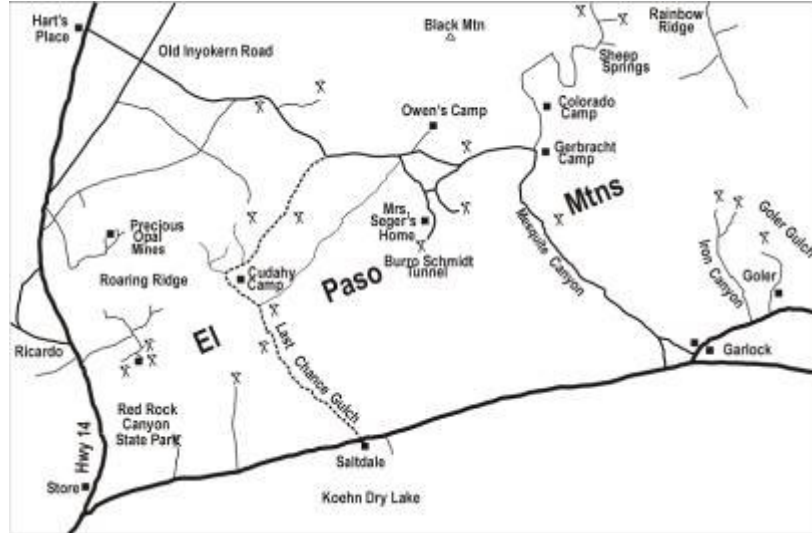


Figure 2. Map of the El Paso Mountains

After about four miles of hiking down the canyon and climbing over rocks in the dark, there was the highway. Saved at last. One problem, it was now late at night with few cars on the road and no one would stop for me. After hiking down the road several miles, an old broken-

down pickup stopped with a couple and their small boy. They were locals and said they stopped because nobody stopped for strangers along this road. They took me all the way to my motel. I tried to re-imburse them in some way, but they said just pass on the favor to someone else.

The next morning, I called to delay my flight home. The towing company said they would have someone right over to pick me up. Three hours later he arrived. The driver apologized and said as he was heading to pick me up, a call came through from the Highway Patrol requesting aid in getting a car up out of a deep canyon. I told him I had requested a truck with four-wheel drive because we had sand to go through. He confidently told me a four-wheel drive was not needed. With the towing package on the back, he could go anywhere. He also said he had been in Last Chance Gulch before to retrieve a stolen car. As we went further down the canyon, the driver became silent. After a bit, he said, "You know, we'll have to go out the lower end. We can't get back out this way!" "Well," I told him, "It looks like we're both stuck. The lower end is blocked by a rockslide."

Next time: A costly rescue and a pocket full of precious opals.



Mineral Identification
Mineral/Mine Locations

Bristow Enterprises
 PO Box 1165
 Chewelah, WA 99109
 Bristow@theofficenet.com
 www.minrls.com

SAPPHIRES and TSAVORITES

Steve & Deb White
 (509) 738-2195
 Kettle Falls, Wa.



SapphiresandT Saviorites@yahoo.com

