

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

October/November 2008



Meeting October 21, 2008

Minutes by Ginger Pitman

The Oct meeting was well attended plus Vanita introduced 7 visitors, we hope they will return and felt welcome. Next meeting drinks will be brought by Steve F. and eats by Bev, thank you both.

Sylvia was not feeling well so our treasure's report was given by Bill and speaking of the treasury: Nov is the month our dues are due. \$15 a person or family. Pay to the club and Sylvia will collect at the Nov 18 meeting. To maintain our scholarships as we have been, we will need \$1500, we can get off to a good start at the Nov meeting which is our auction, so bring rocks, etc to donate and sell plus money for buying.

It was announced that David Porath has some equipment for sale and Harold knows of a rock collection we may buy so these will be looked into.

Joe gave us a short talk on some of the exchanges he has gotten from other clubs as his idea of rock and map exchange with other clubs around the country has been going well. We hope Joe will have time to display these at the Christmas Party so we all have time to see and discuss his samples.

Joe had an impressive slab of slate with pyrite crystals in it he found at a quarry near No Name Lake. We hope it is on next year's field trip schedule.

We as a club need to thank Rex for the work, time and leadership he put into this year's trips. It makes the summer very exciting and we can hardly wait till spring so we can go again.

(Continued on page 2)

The Sunday Mine

By Joe Barreca

The best thing about the Sunday Mine is probably this view from the upper adit. The picture is a little hinky from photoshopping three pictures together but you get the idea. The view looks across the Columbia River just north of the bridge at Kettle Falls. Under that water is Hudson Bay's Fort Colville, established in 1825. A generation later in 1852, a soldier at the Fort panned some gold out of the Columbia River touching off a gold rush that carried on and off for another 60 years, much longer than the fort itself.

The Sunday Mine was worked from 1912 till probably 1918. It is said to have produced several ounces of gold per ton from the best quartz veins. It is a steep hike coming up from the mouth of Gold Edge Mine Road. It is probably easier coming along the railroad track behind the Boise Avey Brothers Mill in Kettle Falls, but there were some legal issues for the National Park Service about having people park on railroad property and walk along the track. There is a steep trail coming up after crossing the railroad track to the upper adit of the mine. The adit itself is closed from a cave in, so there is a tailings pile to check out but not much else. This mine is on a very steep side hill. It is not a hike for the timid or tired. Still it is amazing to think about what people went through to run this mine as far up on a steep mountain as it is. The upper adit is several hundred feet above the track.

Almost 100 feet below the track and well-hidden in the brush close to the beginning of the trail off Gold Edge Mine Rd is another adit. Ranger (cont. Page 2)

(Minutes continued from page 1)

Steve Fox gave a report on 2 field trips, one to Horse Shoe Mt. where you can find quartz crystals and at a new site near by he found some fluoride crystals too. The second was up Sherman Creek where there are diopside crystals.

One long lost hat was returned to a member after being lost at Emerald Creek, we know our hats are not in high demand, they are returned to us, but the member was glad for the return, thank you.

There were two members selling at the Marcus Ciderfest; our sign looked good and withstood the pouring rain.

Bill, as show chairmen, reported we have the hall rented and the dealer letters were sent. Our spring show will be Mar 27-28 with set up on Thursday the 26th. Other show business was a discussion on what our new florescent display could look like, it was voted to proceed with a research into the cost.

Oct is the meeting for officer nominations with voting in Nov and new officers taking over in Dec. Nominated for Pres was Johnie Pitman; for Vice Pres was Steve White; for Secretary Ginger Pitman; Treasurer was Bill and Sylvia Allen; for Trustee Steve Fox or Dave Parquet. Any new nominations can be made before the final vote so feel free to let your voice be heard. The rock hammer raffle goes to the scholarship fund so buy your tickets.

Our Christmas Party will be held Dec 16 at the Colville Library meeting room at 6 pm, featuring a potluck dinner and gift exchange if you want to bring one and get one.

After our break Steve Fox gave our program on how to field test the rocks you find. Everyone agreed the easiest way was to ask Rex. Explaining that color was the least reliable but crystal shape and hardness were better. Steve carries a small kit to test for hardness and a small vial of white vinegar to check for limestone or calcite, also a small scratch plate. He also carries a well worn field guide book. If he needs more testing it will be done when he gets home. Thank you Steve for a useful and interesting program we are all waiting for early spring.

(Sunday Mine Continued) Loren Atherley says that this adit is also part of the Sunday Mine. It is a very substantial tunnel in solid rock and no timbering. Neither one of us was equipped to explore it further. But if it is indeed part of the Sunday Mine there are two very curious things about it. First there are
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hardly any tailings in front of it. It does sit just above the old railroad bed and under the new railroad bed. The waste rock could have been used by the railroad. The second mystery is, that it is something like 600 feet below the upper adit. Is there a shaft from the top to the bottom? I show a mine named the I.O.U. at that spot from DNR records.



[The lower adit – either the Sunday or IOU mine.]

Joe's Corner

As editor, I want to explain that I needed to drop everything and write a grant this last couple of weeks, hence the even later than usual newsletter. On the other hand, there is only one more newsletter expected this year so you could say I am stretching out the time.

You could also say I am stretching out the material. Field trips have slowed way down. I would like to have some articles on lapidary, faceting, museums or rock shows in other places. So if you have ideas, pictures etc. send them in to Joe.Barreca@gmail.com.

Thanks again to Steve Fox for writing an article on short notice about diopside. You can see his Marine training shining through on this one. Semper Fi.

Gem Trails of Washington

By Garret Romaine
Gem Guides Book Company
2008 - \$14

It is not often that I review a book in this newsletter, but this is one that has some interesting and contemporary stuff in it. It turns out that I actually corresponded with Garret Romaine in 2006 after Bev Bockman steered him my way while he was researching the book. The format is to have two pages for every rock-hounding spot. One page has a story about the place and usually a picture. The other page has a map of how to get there and another inset showing the spot on a map of the whole state. These maps are excellent. They include a list of minerals, an elevation and GPS coordinates, how hard it is to get there, where to camp and what other sites are nearby.

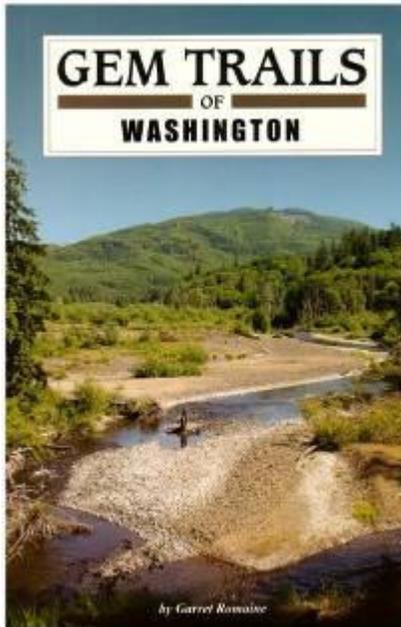
The spots themselves are a mixed bag. For instance, the article on Usk shows the bridge and suggests that you look in the gravel nearby for nice rocks, which is okay I guess, but one of our best spots

on Best Chance Road is only a few miles away.

On the other hand, I did find a number of local spots that I have not been to and we might want to try for field trips. There is a beryl and mica site up Winchester Creek, several mines near Metaline, a spot to find graptolites in the same area and

some interesting panning and galena up Silver Creek.

Romaine is not so clear on what is legal and what is not. He suggests picking rocks along Lake Roosevelt without a hint that it is illegal. He shows camping spots along the SanPoil River that are Tribal fee sites and rock picking may also be illegal on the reservation. He also fails to list us as a local rock club. Still it is a well-done and worthwhile book backed up by the author's own experience.



Capturing the Wild Diopside By Stephen Fox

It was a cool, bordering on cold, rainy October day at the Marcus Ciderfest. Not a very good day for me as my tent had collapsed due to the rain and had bent and broken the frame bad enough that it could not be repaired. And with no sun my wares could not sparkle and dazzle people as they walked by, and therefore not be able to entice them to part with their hard-earned coin. Even though people were great that braved the rain, I just could not shake the gloom descending into my bones. I was beginning to feel the need to track down something elusive, small, and green with just the hint of being dangerous. I knew that I would need some help in this hunt, but who?



[Diopside from Minedat.org – Museum Quality]

Soon Johnie came to my rescue and gave me a much-needed break. As I was heading back to my booth I spotted just the person who might be brave enough to tackle what might become a quest. Sitting in the beer garden, nursing a warming brew, and being at ease with the world around him, Ray looked like just how I felt, ready to go after something wild, and possibly deadly. I put my proposition to him and a feral smile slowly lit up his face just thinking of the possibilities, as he said "I'll think about it." I said I would meet him Wednesday in the parking lot of Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls, if he was interested. I knew I had him hooked and he would be there.

Getting back to my booth, I was extolling the charms of my wares so quickly with a customer that I was not able to enlist Johnie into the hunt as he hurried back to his own tent. As the day wound down I began to have my doubts that only Ray and myself could handle the hunt for the elusive diopside. Sunday came and the unease I felt grew stronger. So I began to make phone calls. Some folks were unsure as they may have thought it a little too dangerous to go where there may be hungry

deer hunters, frustrated bird hunters, and drunk (“Where the hell am I?”) beer, uh bear chasers about to collide. Still there are some brave souls ready for some serious action.



[Harold, Ray and Steve]

Wednesday Morning came along with some sunshine (God doesn't let rockhounds have a bad day) and warmth. Coming into the parking lot with all the proper equipment was Res, ready to down any runaway crystals. Next came Harold, and with the smell of the hunt in his nostrils not even a bad knee was going to stop him. Last came Ray, still with a gleam in his eye that spelled doom to any ornery crystals. Soon we were on our way to South Fork Sherman Creek Road.



The drive would be a slow, short five miles from the turnoff to the rock face, where the wild diopside would be hiding, ready to strike. Even though these crystals resemble small pieces of green pencil lead, they can be and are very striking. Getting out of our vehicles we stared at the rock wall where our quarry waited and hid. I pointed out some promising areas where to dig into the host rock, and led the assault onto the rock bastion.

Ray took the lower areas while Rex went to higher ground. I found myself between them with Harold guarding our backs in case the diopside tried

to attack the rear and so was working the tailings below us. After deciding we were safe, he moved on up where the taking of the wild diopside was proving to be a real challenge.

At first, digging into the host rock was proving less than productive. So I began moving some more dirt and exposed more of the host rock. As Rex and I began to dig into this new strata we were rewarded with the capture of many fine specimens. In the meantime Ray was starting to have some success and I believe Harold wrestled a few crystals into his pocket. The hunt began to take its toll. Slowly we were being forced back to our waiting vehicles for more frequent drinks of water and a brief respite. Finally, we knew that what remained hidden within its rock bastion would have to wait another day. We are not finished with the wild diopside, not as long as the thirst for high adventure remains unquenched.

Pondering the Pend Oreille

By Joseph Barreca

On October 11th, 2008, I went on a geology tour of the Pend Oreille Valley with local geologist Bill Swartz. If you look at a map of the valley, you can see the creeks coming in on either side all run from North to South. But the Pend Oreille River itself runs from south to North. Not only that, but on the north end it channels through a massive rock wall where Boundary Dam backs it up to a depth of several hundred feet into Zee Canyon. Although now under water, Zee Canyon is as narrow as 15 feet and 300 feet high. The water shot through it with such velocity that in places it rounded corners vertically instead of horizontally.



In a slate quarry near Noname Lake we found this slab with large square pyrite crystals imbedded in it. All of these mysteries merit more investigation. A page follows showing the whole tour. Many more pages will eventually be written about the places on that tour.