

Place: **Arden**
Community Club
Hall Rd
Arden, WA



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

The Panorama Prospector

August 2010

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club

Minutes for July, 2010

By Joe Barreca

Our esteemed president, Johnie Pitman and our secretary, Ginger Pitman were off on a canoe trip, so we had to fend for ourselves. Steve Fox took over leading the meeting and Joe Barreca (that's me folks) took minutes.

Johnie wrote an article published in the Colville Statesman Examiner thanking the Railroad Union for the free use of their building throughout the life of the club until this last June. The Union would not accept a donation, so all we could give them was this tribute.

The trip to the Spencer Opal Mine on the Idaho/Montana border in September is still on the table. Dave Paquette has arranged to reduce the cost to \$40 per person if we can line up 30 people. Member, Dave Russell suggests that there is a good place to camp just north of town. There are also several places to stay on mentioned on, www.spenceropalmines.com. The pictures are great too.

Bill Allen will be grilling up burgers at the August meeting right there at the Arden Community Center. We will have a brief meeting at 5 PM and eat at 6 PM. Bring your lawn chairs. We had a sign-up sheet for the pot luck dishes, but if you didn't attend, come anyway and bring what you will. Also bring a rock to trade.

Rex Barrans reported on our trip to the Keystone and a new discovery at the back of the lower cave. There are *rhombohedral magnesite* (MgCO₃) crystals that are rare and much like garnets. He invited people to take any car to the Sullivan soapstone dig and suggested that we might move the White Stone Quarry trip to Saturday August 7th.

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The White Stone Quarry

Story by Stephan Fox



[Picture of White Stone Quarry by Miriam Clark]

Saturday the 7th of August started off beautiful, and stayed that way all day. A few clouds came along to cool things down a bit and so made collecting much better. At nine AM thirteen hardy souls met at Harvest foods in Kettle Falls. None of us has been to this quarry, although you can see it from highway 25 going up to Northport, across the river. We had to get going on this day to meet up with Don Grubb, the owner, at Sandy's on highway 395. It was here that Peter Fulcher from Trail, B.C. caught up to us. After getting ourselves sorted out we set off for the quarry following Don.

When we got to the quarry Don told us some of its history. He located and filed on the deposit of dolomite around 1961. The people he was working for did not want the claim so he decided to work it himself. The mine itself got started in 1962 and has been in operation since. Don and his partners mine 10 different colored rocks at several quarries including red marble at the Red Marble mine. Here we were looking at a nearly pure white dolomite (dark sunglasses were a must), which has a variety of building uses including tile. As we were collecting all the dolomite we wanted some folks were also lucky at finding some really nice tremolite crystals imbedded in the dolomite. This is a radiating

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Steve Fox reported on the trip to Horseshoe Mountain. They got a lot of pretty quartz crystals, small but clear. Steve notes that there was a lot of firewood around and that the huckleberries looked good, (which is not what they looked like in most places). He also notes that there is a great rock shop on the way to the dig.

Steve also brought a hammer he found that was left at Horseshoe Mt. No one claimed it so we decided to auction it off.

Steve noted that we need to have a booth for the Rock Club at the Northeast Washington Fair, Aug. 26-29 in Colville. There is no charge to have an educational table. Steve will set it up and solicit volunteers.

The 100 year celebration of the Orient School will be held the 14th of August. Joe Barreca was volunteered to set up a table and talk with people about rocks.

Steve also brought some fossilized mussel shells from his trip to Arkansas. This got us into a discussion of the famous diamonds at Murfreesboro, Arkansas. Stan Hanley advised us that Murfreesboro is too hot some times of the year; that all the tools are there to rent; that it costs \$7/person 7AM to 8PM; that it is a dry county (and we are not talking about water); that a little rain in the spring and fall helps; and it is a lot of work. He also advised doing some research on the Internet before you go and that if you are in the area you want to check out Gem Mt. in Spruce Pine N. Carolina where you can find rubies, aquamarine and many other gemstones.



Mike Latapie demonstrated gold panning for us before the meeting. *End*

white crystal (think starburst) and is very unusual. Another mineral all of us were finding was large calcite crystals. If you felt like being part mountain goat, Don knew of a seam that produced some really nice specimens, but you had to go over some rough terrain on the side of the mountain. Been there, done that, don't need the added experience, so I didn't make the trip. But I did see a couple of the calcite crystals that came back and it seemed to be worth the trouble. In the mean time calcite could be found in a variety of places in the quarry.



[Rhombohedral Calcite from White Rock]

While most folks were busy collecting, I grabbed my rock hammer (the six pound sledge I use), a bucket, some water and began wandering. Don told us we could drive anywhere we wanted but I tend to miss a lot while driving, like sometimes the road. Especially when staring at a rock outcrop. It's just safer for me to walk when in a quarry. By walking I found some interesting greenstone (a metamorphic iron), and what looked like drusy calcite on some dolomite. We saw a few places where this drusy calcite was on the rock walls like a stain due to water action.

While Don was off leading the human version of mountain goats he also had Joe and Larry's vehicles blocked, so they were stuck there for a while. In the meantime I headed back down to my truck and lunch. Harold hadn't wandered around much but had worked the deposit where my truck was. Jessie and Vince Davis had gone down a ways from our vehicles with Peter and were digging out some very nice calcite specimens. The crushed dolomite that was everywhere was so tempting and so I filled my bucket up with this stone. I did ask Don if this

was ok with him and he told me to fill up the back of my truck (five gallons are more than enough). He also said that we could make another trip to the Red Marble Quarry, we just had to fill out some waver forms. We will discuss this at the next meeting.



[Author Steve Fox with his trusty hammer]

It was time to head home and a Sandy's ice cream cone. There Harold and I met up with Rich, Val, Vince, Jessie, and Mackenzie and got to see a few of their specimens. It was a great day to get out and bust some rock. Don Grubb is a great host and allowed us to have a great time in his mine. We would like to thank him for his time and his expertise. *End of Steve's article.*

Editor's Note:

I would like to put in a word for the "mountain goats" mentioned in this article, of which I was one. Don Grubb would qualify as another since he led the longest expedition. When he told me about calcite crystals and the "diamond mine", he just pointed to a rock ridge at the north end of the quarry and said to go another quarter mile past that. I worked my way around the cliff and came to a shelf that had some pretty nice tremolite crystals. But as I got back, Don was driving up the road with a truckload of rockhounds. Discovering that I was blocked in, I went with the flow and followed them. When I caught up with

Don, the only two rockhounds left with Don were Valrye Langford and her daughter.



[Here's Don giving Val a calcite crystal]

Besides the rhomboid crystals pictured in Steve's article, we reached the place where the "diamond mine" was before a rockfall closed the entrance. Don says it was 1 1/2 feet wide and went further back than they could see. The walls were covered in clear calcite crystals, dogtooth crystals (below) I assume. Now that would be a sight to see.

On the way out we passed a huge boulder made entirely of the rhomboid crystals that was worth picking our way over cliffs, through giant boulders and patches of poison oak to see. [Miriam Clark Picture]



Upcoming Field Trips:

- Aug 22** –Gladstone Mt –Galena, Dolomite Crystals –hard rock tools , 4wd only – meet at Colville Safeway parking at 9 AM
- Sept. 12** –S. Fork Sherman Creek — Diopside Crystals –hard rock tools –any car — meet at Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls at 9 AM

Sullivan Lake Soapstone
Pictures and Story by Miriam Clark
July 25, 2010



Scott Jackson was the first to find soapstone and showed me what we were looking for. From Wikipedia soapstone is described as, “**Soapstone** (also known as **steatite** or **soaprock**) is a [metamorphic rock](#), a talc-[schist](#). It is largely composed of the mineral [talc](#) and is thus rich in [magnesium](#).” To me it feels soapy and smooth and I could definitely tell when I found a piece.



Steve Fox sharing his expertise with Jessie Davis. [left]



[Bruce Hurley]



Jessie and Van Davis getting some pointers from Rex Barrans about where to hit the rock to split it. Jessie worked on that monster all afternoon. Sorry no picture of the actual event. Success was hers.



I happened on Bruce Hurley [left] who was at an area below the main dig. He was photographing a coin on a rock. Well, ok. He explained to me about “folds”. If the rock layers are squeezed together very slowly (think geologic time), they wrinkle instead of breaking. These are my words but thanks Bruce, I just can’t remember yours.



Scott, Jessie, and Van checking out a hard sought after specimen.



Jamie Dahlke and her husband, Dennis, joined us from the Spokane Rock Rollers Club. Jamie spent a good amount of time in one spot and it looks like her treasure bucket is full.

The good sized group, about 20, had a good time and the weather couldn't have been better. There should be a few soapstone pieces showing up at the next meeting.

The Napoleon Mine
Pictures and Story by Joe Barreca

It had already been a long day. Keith Fine and I had found the Bonnie Group. The mine had two short drifts and the main ore was chromium. Luckily, Keith had a big Polaris ATV and we could get around quickly. After that we looked



for one of the two mines called Nancy Creek. This one has radioactive minerals, Autinite, Smokey Quartz, Uranite and Uranophane. When we got near the GPS location, we split up looking

for it. I found an old "Glory Hole" about 10 feet deep fairly quickly but without walkie-talkies we spent too much time trying to find each other. Eventually we did. Another nice thing with an ATV was that we could carry lots of stuff. I had the UV light and we checked out the "Glory Hole". Bingo, there were some nice pops of a light yellow rock that turned bright green under the light, Autenite. We could have driven up in any decent 4 wheel drive but the ATV was fine.

After a brief lunch at the Boyds Tavern, we headed out for the main goal, the Napoleon Mine. This area around Boyds has the Quesnillian Terrane on the Ferry County side of the river and the Slide Mountain Terrane on the Stevens County side. The Quesnillian is argillite, that black rock with white layers that you see around Barney's Junction. It is old sea floor with mineral deposits here and there exposed on the sides of cliffs sometimes 300 feet high.



At left is the entrance to the Napoleon Mine. The audit went back 1,100 feet to a pit where they fed ore from the surface down to the tracks and then to a tram that carried it across

the Kettle River to waiting rail cars. Keith's father worked there and he had some stories about people who lived and died there. The ore body is iron with high sulfides near the bottom and oxide at the top. Red, yellow and blue colors make it a spectacular sight. The land is now owned by Gallatin Northwest out of Coeur d'Alene. There is a cable at the bottom of a steep road to the adit and beyond to the pit. It would be very hard for most club members to visit, but the dramatic hole hundreds of feet across with sheer walls is visible on aerial photography.

