

Place: Arden
Community Club
Hall Rd
Arden, WA



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

The Panorama Prospector

July 2011

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club Meeting Minutes June 21, 2011

By Luci Bristow

Vice President Bob Bristow greeted all the club members. President Johnie and Secretary Ginger were away enjoying a family reunion in South Dakota. Luci welcomed everyone. She greeted all and introduced Barbara Meyer, wife of new club member Gene Meyer. We are happy to have Ray Arquette returning to join the club. Luci asked for volunteers for dessert for the July meeting. Gloria Squires, Bev Bockman, Jan and Neena will be serving next meeting. Thanks!

Sylvia and Bill were not present. They were celebrating their granddaughter's 13th birthday and Bill will be cooking for about 80 people. Treasurer's report will be given at the July meeting.

The August meeting will be our annual picnic. Bob asked the club if they would be interested in a tailgate/trading event. General consensus was that it was a good idea.

We will discuss the picnic further at the next meeting. Luci told the club about visiting Steve Fox who is in the Veterans Hospital with a swollen foot. He has some diabetes problems. He was in a cheerful, optimistic mood. He will probably be there for another two weeks. He did say, however, that it looked like he would not be able to conduct field trips for the rest of this summer. Scott stated that there would be more discussion at the July meeting concerning field trips. We will be continuing them.

Chuck Prentis announced the POW WOW meeting in Madras, OR. The field trips begin on June 29 thru July 3rd. Dave Paquette stated that he had taken his father for a jaunt on Father's Day and they found some great crystals at Priest Lake.

Bev Bockman stated that the North Idaho Rock Show did very well. They had a good crowd. Bob announced that at the July meeting we will continue to share our personal adventures. Ladies – please remember that we want to hear your side of the adventure too!

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Thulite Dig near Riverside

By Joe Barreca



Here's how it looked at the Tunk Mt Thulite dig on June 25th. That pickup truck was the only vehicle allowed in and the one that carried most of the rocks out. There were a lot of people since the Rock Rollers had invited us to come along. Luckily, there was a lot of Thulite and several other kinds of rock in the quarry. At \$1/#, we all ended up coming away with more rocks than we expected to buy.

Site operator, Jim Lande met us down at a park next to the store in Riverside where he had everyone sign waivers of liability. He had polished samples of the rocks from his quarries. This quarry has Thulite, a form of Zoisite, hardness 5.5 to 6. It takes a good polish. He also had some Zebra Rock, that came from another quarry and cost .50¢/#. There was another dig the next day for that, but he had some in his truck and we all bought a few pieces. The rock that really caught our eye though was Iolite. Iolite is a variety of **cordierite**. "It has a delicate and quite pretty violet blue color that is unlike other gemstones, although it has been compared to a light blue sapphire. It is this reason that it is

sometimes known as "water sapphire". Although the color is attractive and popular, iolite is not extremely rare and is therefore affordable." (galleries.com) It can also exhibit Pleochroism where two or three colors can be seen in the same stone. This was the real gem (literally) of the dig and Jerry Novak came home with some nice pieces. It has a hardness of 7.5 and can be cut and polished. There were also reportedly garnets in the same pit, but I didn't see that anyone found them.

Mostly it was about Thulite. And it is a really pretty pink stone often set off by a surrounding layer of olive green.



Quite a few guys took their turns breaking this piece out from the wall. I'm not sure that they actually got it out of the quarry or could afford it if they did. Jim said the vein ran for a good distance in a layer of sedimentary rock on the east side of the Okanogan River.



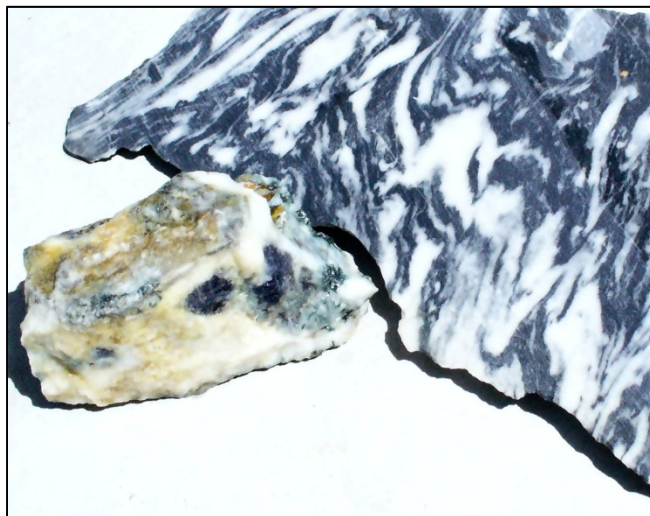
The view to the west was great but we were warned not to get on the outside of the berm between the dig and the steep hillside. It was good digging in the berm or the rock face.

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Joe would like your stories for our newsletter. Those features are always most interesting.

We were honored to have Mike Furner at our meeting to talk about his opal collection. He gave a very interesting and informative presentation. He certainly has a good knowledge of opals. We were also honored that he became a member of our club.
Thanks Mike!

End



[Blue Iolite in rock on left, Zebra Rock on right]

There were some lessons learned from this trip.

1. Carpooling was great in Scott's big truck. Four of us fit with room for his dog, Duchess, who made herself comfortable.
2. Starting out early is generally a good idea, except when you are meeting with a big crowd of rockhounds from way out of the area. We waited at least two hours at the park till everyone arrived and the paperwork was finished.
3. Leaving early is also nearly impossible when there is only one truck at the dig and everyone has to weigh out before it comes down the hill with your rocks.

In conclusion, although big crowds are good for Jim Lande, we would be much better off scheduling our own trips over there and not getting too many other clubs involved. The next time we want some Thulite, we should contact Jim Lande, 509-826-4940, lampedc@yahoo.com. For more pictures of the dig, you can go to our website, www.PanoramaGem.org.

Johnnies Jabber

Johnie Pitman

On June 19th Ginger and I left for Custer, South Dakota to go to her family reunion. Well, according to Bill and Silvia and some books that I have, south western South Dakota has a lot of good rockhounding opportunities. One of those locations is Tepee Canyon which is about sixteen



miles west of Custer according to my book, since we were coming from that direction we decided to try to find the area. We knew we needed to go north off highway 16 and when we thought we were about the right distance from Custer there was a good gravel road called Mud Springs Road so we took it for a couple of miles. We parked and started to look around and there was an agatey/cherty material everywhere but we knew it wasn't the good stuff so we only loaded about 60 pounds, I think it will tumble alright. Ginger



found an unusual 40 pounder that she just had to have and she had carried it up hill for 2-3 hundred yards so yes it is in our yard. We decided we weren't in the right place so we went into Custer

to Scott's Rock Shop to see what Tepee Canyon agate really looks like and to get better directions. The fellow at the rock shop said we had come about a mile too far and was very helpful in directing us to the right area, so we went back out and found a good spot for the camper and started busting rocks. The deposit was in sedimentary rock that I would call silt stone and the out cropping had been bulldozed for about a quarter of a mile. The agate is in nodules in the silt stone, so you find the nodules and brake them open to see if there is any red fortified agate inside. Most of the nodules were filled with a gray/brown jasper but occasionally there would be small bits of red agate. Later in the week I was in another rock shop in Custer so I ask if he ever went to Tepee Canyon for agate and he said no, you won't find anything there anymore. I didn't tell him that we had about thirty pounds in the camper.



The reunion was good and when it was over we headed to Fairburn, S.D. to look for more agate. Ginger's sister and her husband came also and we spent most of two days looking through the agate field for the famous Fairburn agate. The agate field there is about 30-40 acres and each day there were 6-8 vehicles that came to look for agates. In order to get to the agate field you had to ford French Creek which was running 8 inches deep and 25 feet across, but that didn't stop anyone. There was a lot of nice agate and jasper but we didn't find any of the really good material, so we only brought home about 40 pounds. Now I've got to get the tumblers going to see what all this stuff looks like polished.

Rockhounds

By Phyllis Dodge

This poem was contributed by Mary Ratcliff who got it from her father, Eugene Knapp who died in 1971. We don't know much about Phyllis Dodge except that she lived in Sweet Home, Oregon.

**The old man stood by the riverside
Bent over double, as if in pain.
He suddenly fell to his knees – and cried-
Clutched at the gravel- then rose again.
I hurried over to help if I might,
although a doctor I feared he'd need.
I said "Say, mister, you feel alright?"
He jumped - then chuckled "Yes, indeed,
I'm a rockhound.**

**The young man scaled a towering cliff
so steep! As I watched, I held my breath.
With each move that he made, it seemed as
if surely he must plummet to his death.
He sprawled face down on the tiny shelf
It seemed he was just hanging by his socks!
I said "Say friend, shall I go for help?"
"Get out of the way – I'm after rocks."
Said the rockhound.**

**The woman danced at the ocean's rim,
Seeming to taunt each rolling wave.
She apparently didn't intend to swim.
I couldn't tell if she was mad or brave.
A sudden wave threw her down, and then
Buried her – I feared she was gone.
As I stooped to help her she said "Say friend-
find your own beach to hunt agates on –
Poachin' rockhound!"**

**The western preacher, on his knees,
Shoveled clay from a deep square hole.
What was it he dug so industriously –
A grave for some poor departed soul?
Thinking that I perhaps could help,
I took the shovel from his hand.
He gave an outraged little yelp
"Go dig your own hole for carnelian,
Lazy Rockhound!"**

The Timber Mountain Expedition

By Joe Barreca



[Jerry Novack checking the view and clutching a rock]

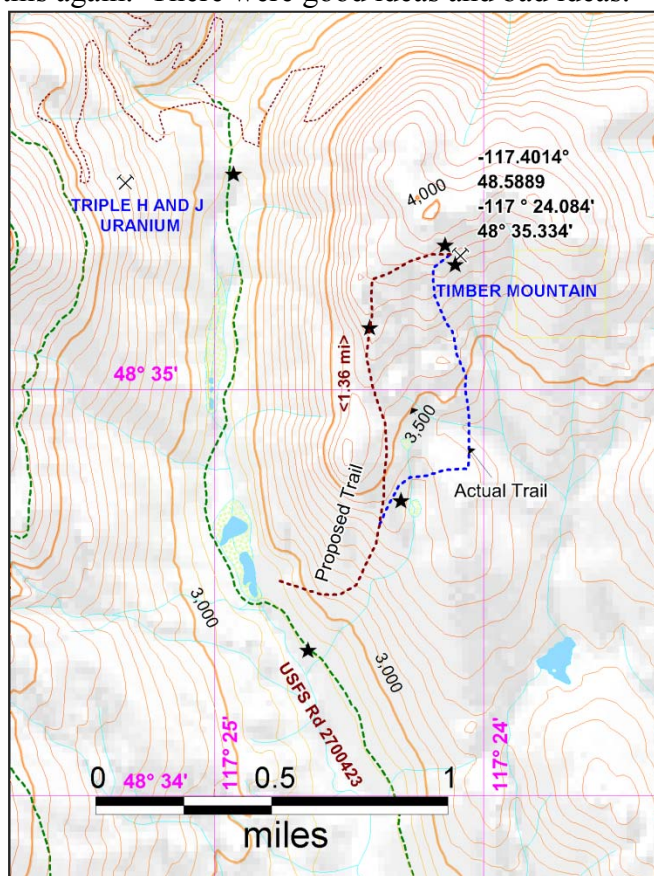
It took some real doing to find someone else to hike with me in search of the Timber Mountain Mine. Luckily (for me at least) I found Jerry Novack. We did find some rocks but the thing we were happiest about was that we both made it back in one piece.

I have been trying to find this mine for the last couple of years. Last year I succeeded at finding that there is no road, trail or deer path that goes there. This was not going to be any ordinary field trip. It was going to take all day starting with a campover the night before. We would need flagging to find our way back – or if worse came to worse- for someone else to find us. We would need water, food, good maps, a GPS unit, sturdy shoes and clothes...

First I had to assure myself it was worth it. So I got back on line to <http://www.mindat.org/loc-15304.html> where it listed minerals from Cannon, B. (1975): Minerals of Washington, p.43,72. Yep, there was supposed to be good stuff there: Albite, Epidote, Chondrodite, Grossular (Garnet), Zoisite (maybe), Titanite, Microcline.. I had already been to the nearby High Noon Uranium mine and knew that there was a lot of pegmatite in the area, the kind of rock where big crystals sometimes grow.

What I didn't notice was that the location of the mine on mindat.org was about 5 miles different than the location I had from the government minerals database. I found that out today while writing this article. I also learned a lot of other things on this expedition to nowhere

which may be helpful if I ever do something like this again. There were good ideas and bad ideas.



1. Making a map was a good idea, especially with the contours on it and the GPS grid.
2. Not taking a GPS position at the car was a bad idea. Of course you know where you are when you start out but you need to know where you want to get back to when you do.
3. Not taking a regular compass was a bad idea. The compass page on my Garmin GPS Map 60CSx is about useless. It was however spot on for location.
4. Check your GPS often. It really can pick up satellites in dense woods. We started at the lake on Rd 2700423. We veered off course on the blue line thinking that all we needed to do was keep the hill to the right of us. When we ended up looking over a whole different canyon, we got out the GPS.
5. Question the map. In thick woods, little hills and valleys are lost until you are right on them. The map will not show all of them.
6. Bring lots of flagging. I had a bag full but left a partial roll in the car. You start out all gung ho on flagging but when your supply is running low, your flags get to be further apart.
7. Use a metal water container. I had one but thought the bigger plastic bottle would hold more and be lighter. A couple hours later I noticed that the bottom of my pack was wet.

Turns out the other stuff in the pack must have punched a pinhole in the bottle. I had to put it in upside down to keep what water was left.

8. Walking sticks are not just for sissies. Climbing over logs and rocks, things give way. You want those to be the logs themselves, not your knees. A walking stick can keep you from slipping too far when the terrain is rough.
9. Pack extra batteries. I didn't actually run out, but both the camera and the GPS use AA batteries, why not have some backup.
10. Cell phones work on top of hills better than they do in valleys. It was cool to be able to call home from the mountain top (even if it was the wrong mountain.)



Okay, I already admitted that we were on the wrong mountain. But we did find some unique stuff. Left to right – a rock with smokey crystal included in it, a rock with mica that looks almost like obsidian, a piece with very large mica flakes stacked on each other, a rock with the red color of the garnet we hoped to find and lots of little crystals inside.

We also found blue flagging going across the area we were interested in. We wanted to know if someone had claimed it. (At least they would know exactly where the mine is.) I called the DNR who sent me to the BLM. The DNR only does sand and gravel and rock quarries. The BLM evidently handles a lot of mineral rights in the National Forest, where we were. They are very helpful but need to know what section, township and range you are asking about. The number for the Spokane office is 509-536-1200.

Field Trips Coming Up

July 24 Sheep Creek: Gold panning. Meet at Harvest Foods in Kettle Falls at 8 a.m.

August 6 Sullivan Creek: Gold panning. Meet at the Colville Safeway. 7 a.m.

August 21 Flagstaff Mtn: Barite, and very nice metamorphics (large yard rocks), copper minerals. Bring: Strong back, sledge hammer, chisel, bar, TNT useful but not legal. 9 a.m.