

Place: Arden  
Community Club  
Hall Rd  
Arden, WA



Time 7:00 PM  
Third Tuesday  
April - September  
6:00 PM October -  
March

## The Panorama Prospector

July 2018

### Panorama Gem and Mineral Club Minutes May 15, 2018

*by Sheila Stratton*

The meeting was opened with a greeting by Bob Bristol.

Bob introduced the recipient of the 2018 scholarship from Kettle Falls High School, Madeline Neyens. Madeline was accompanied by her father, Lenny Neyens. Madeline shared with the club her plans to attend W SU and study Environmental Conservation.

It was brought up that the Bill Allen Memorial was very nice and that he was such a big part of our club and going to be hard to fill such big shoes. It was also brought up about needing someone to fill in for cooking for the August barbeque. When there was no volunteers, it was suggested that we order fried chicken and members bring side dishes. Sherryl Sinn and Betty Peters are looking into that.

Bob Bristol brought up the Rock Show for next year and the need for a name for the show. Vanita Novak made a suggestion of "Hidden Treasures." Bob had the club take a vote for that and it was passed that "Hidden Treasures" would be the name of our show for 2019.

Bob brought up to discuss future field trips. Bob Bristol talked about the Merikay Mine out of Chewelah. He said that it was a good road and that you could find beryl crystals there. It was decided to have the field trip on Saturday, July 7, 2018. The club will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Safeway Market in Chewelah.

Bruce Hurley talked about an outing to a limestone quarry by Metalline Falls on Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. Must have a permission disclaimer signed by all that attend. It was set to meet at 10:00 a.m. at the train station in Ione. It was suggested to bring water, gloves, eye protection, and snacks. The main find will be trilobites.

*continued page 2*

### Flagstaff Barite

*photos by Magit Neuhaus & Sheila Stratton*



[Jerry Novak above the Columbia River]

On June 5th a dozen or so rockhounds, led by Scott Jackson explored the Flagstaff barite mine on Flagstaff Mountain just outside of Northport, Washington. It was one of 3 field trips since our last newsletter.

The objective was to find barite crystals. Those on Flagstaff Mt. usually come with a side helping of fluorite. The barite crystals are typically yellow and the fluorite are clear. Unlike a lot of fluorite, these do not seem to react to UV light. Curiously though, the barite crystals do seem even more yellow in that light.

The groups was successful in finding good barite crystals. Rick McDougald reportedly found

*Minutes from page 1*

Scott Jackson reminded the club about the outing on June 25<sup>th</sup> to Flagstaff Mountain to hunt for barite and small amount of fluoride. It was agreed to meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Chevron Station in Northport. Scot also mentioned Emerald Creek is open with star garnets. That is located in south Coeur d'Alene. This could be a possible future field trip.

Joe Barraca asked for hands of people that would like to go on field trip to mountain between Republic and Okanogan to look for quartz crystals. There was a show of hands and Joe took names for potential trip.

Bob Bristol asked the people that went to McDermott to give a report on what they found. It was reported that they found lots of agates. Gene Fisher brought up that a rancher complained to them about people digging holes.

Rocks were brought for display by Frank Stratton from their trip to Marysville, Utah, and Bishop, California. Bob Bristol also brought display of rocks.

Refreshments were served.

Silent Auction and Drawing was held.

Bob Bristol showed slides of many years ago when he went to Denny Mountain in Snoqualmie Pass. It contains the largest limestone caves in the state. The big find up there is Raspberry quartz which is very valuable. Going there involves rappelling and very treacherous climbing. Meeting was adjourned.

*end minutes*

some of the best barite. Frank Stratton found a specimen with both good Barite and Fluorite. There is also some malachite at this location and years ago



[ Flagstaff Mt Barite crystals in a vug]  
the mine operator, Roger Olson, (who I hear has

since passed away) showed me some black rocks with a blue sheen on them that was silver ore.

So the site itself has an abundance of minerals. There are at least 6 levels of excavation. The barite ore itself is used mostly for rock drilling. It is heavier than lead and almost twice as heavy as most rocks. So when a slurry of ground Barite is pumped down through a rock bit, it floats other pieces of rock away from the bit and keeps it working smoothly.



[Frank Stratton and Greg VanWeerthuizen]

It's weight might also help with formations of these deposits in cavities on the ocean floor. When a terrane of rock is pushed up out of the ocean, the Barite can continue to be isolated but also twisted in metamorphic whorls which are also attractive but would take some work in the rock shop to bring out its best.



[Metamorphic Barite]

Other stories of Flagstaff are in the newsletters for September 2009, October 2012 and May 2015 on our website, [PanoramaGem.com](http://PanoramaGem.com)



## Jim Creek Mining Area



[Frank Stratton rockhounding Jim Creek]

This trip actually happened on June 5th a little before the one to Flagstaff Mt. The pile of ore that Frank is sitting on is limestone with deposits of lead (galena) and zinc (sphalerite). The Metaline Falls area is the second largest producing lead and zinc structure in the United States. Recently ore is being shipped from Metaline to Trail BC, the largest lead smelter in world. The Jim Creek mine, just north of Ione Washington, is one of a cluster of mines nearby that include the Utacan (AKA Corzine) and Coffin Lead mines and the Rusmeir Brothers feldspar mine.

The ore from these mines is typically 1 part Zinc to 3 parts Lead. Galena, the crystal form of Lead, is shiny when first exposed. It makes a nice yard rock but beware that it tarnishes to a dull lead color when left in the sun and rain. It is not terribly dangerous if you don't handle it too much and wash your hands.

Some nearby rocks are also heavily sprinkled with iron pyrite which does not tarnish easily and sparkles in the sunlight.

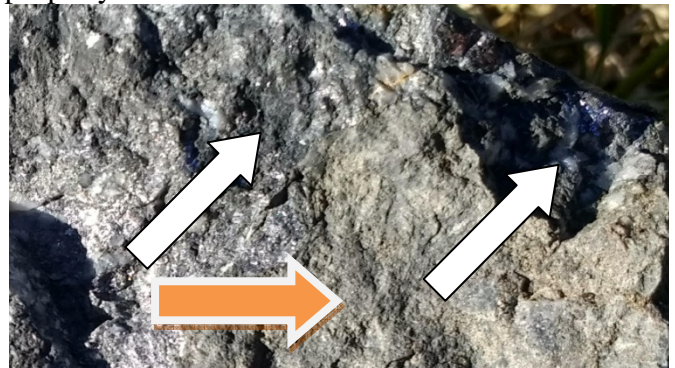
The Jim Creek Mine was developed in 1950. There are two shafts one 38 feet and the other 178 feet with drifts at 50 feet and 150 feet. A crew of 10 people once worked at the mine. The tailings are

still rich with ore samples but the shafts are filled with water and dangerous to explore.



[Scott Jackson and Jerry Novak near the creek]

The nearby Utacan Mine, about a mile away, was developed in 1957. Despite a lot of effort to build a sawmill to cut timbers and material for a building, there is no record of production from this mine. Core drilling was reported to have identified over 62,000 tons of ore running 8% minerals in 14 different veins. Harsh winters and muddy springs hampered development. Reports of production stopped in 1960, about the same time that a new company took over the Jim Creek property.



[White arrows show new break, orange is tarnished]

It is a little hard to show on a small picture but the newly broken lead/zinc ore is bright and even had some blue color to it. The older face of this rock is weathered so the shine is gone. The bottom line is that if you want your fresh pieces of lead to stay bright, spray a protective coating on them or keep them in a dry place.

The Jim Creek area is very brushy. There are good rocks on the ground but they are harder to find than in some places.



## The Merikay

by Joe Barreca



[Folks gathered at Safeway. Bob Bristow talking]

The club met at the Safeway parking lot in Chewelah on July 7th for one of our favorite field trips. The mine they are headed for is commonly called the Merikay. We are not sure who Merikay was but the brothers, Earl and Perry Cannon, who discovered the mine soon after WWII called their company Merikay Mines and this mine the Merikay. The property turned out to be owned by the Northern Pacific Railway, one of many lands given to the railroads in a checkerboard pattern of mile-square parcels that still shows in forest land ownership today. Hence one of the names of the mine is the Railway Dike, another, understandably, is the Cannon Mine.

Interestingly enough, the mine was originally patented as a uranium mine. Because of the defense need for uranium, the Cannon brothers got a Defense Minerals Exploration Loan to explore the site, which they did by crosscutting it with a bulldozer. The Merikay turned out to be the most major producer of beryllium ore in the State.

Recently the mine has been reclaimed and the club was worried that it would not be able to rockhound there. Fortunately the claim is not staked out for the entrance to the mine and surrounding area, but the claim is further north on the same road. So as Bob was explaining to the group in the first picture, we are free to explore there. The road goes up Sand Canyon into Forest Service land on USFS Rd 952100 into Calispell Basin, where it turns East on 9521188 and then

north on USFS Rd 9521186. The mine is right on the road, so it is easy to get to.

The "official" report from past president, Bruce Hurley states: *"The field trip to the Merikay Mine met at the Safeway parking lot in Chewelah at 10:00 a.m. on July 7. Seventeen people were in attendance. The weather was perfect for the trip and the road was in good condition. Beryl crystals were in short supply on the dump, but could be found in rock removed from inside the tunnel. Good muscovite mica specimens were plentiful, along with occasional small garnets. All attendees left the mine by 3:00 p.m., with no injuries or mishaps having occurred, and everyone with something to take home."*



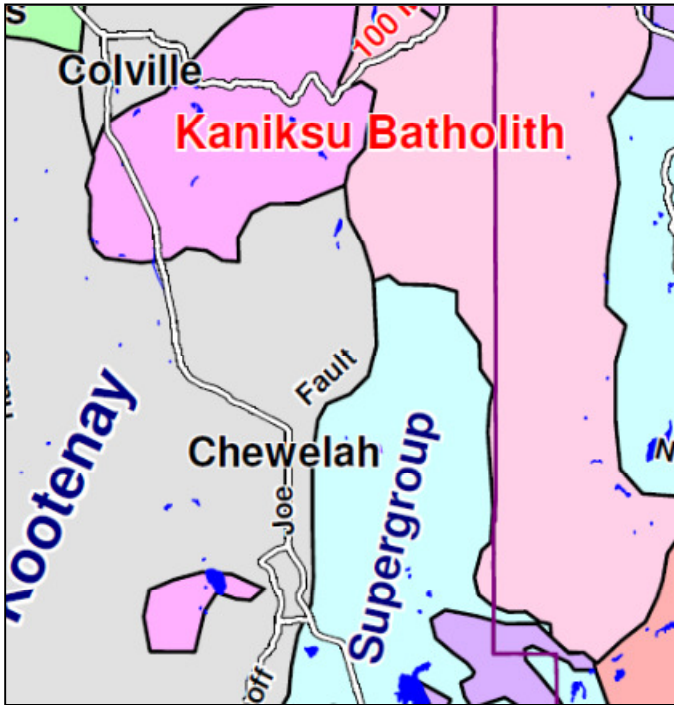
[Frank Stratton inside the mine with others behind.]

A lot of beryl crystals have been found just inside the entrance to the mine, which is nice because you can still see without a flashlight, though a good one is strongly recommended. We don't usually encourage members to enter underground mines. This one is hard rock and fairly stable. It is also very long and tends to be flooded further back, so I doubt very many people went far into it.

A good source of history on the mine is Discovering Washington's Historic Mines volume 6 Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties by Woodhouse, Jacobson and Pisoni. They point out that there are also books of muscovite (mica) 1/2 inch thick and 1" in diameter in the base rock, Pegmatite and that crystals of beryl up to 6 inches across and 10 inches long have been found in the mine. The largest crystals were actually feldspar which were 11 1/2 inches wide and 37 inches long.

## The Kaniksu Batholith and Pegmatite

by Joe Barreca



[Stratigraphic Terranes near Chewelah Washington]

Since the previous article is talking about the Merikay and beryl, this might be a good place for a little geology about the base rocks in that area. Underlying most of the Flowery Trail highway east of Chewelah is the Belt Supergroup, which gets its name from Belt Montana, where it was first identified. The supergroup itself is very old, on the order of 60 million years. North of that group and intruding into it is the Kaniksu Batholith, which is much younger on the order of 29 million years old. A batholith is a large mass of granite. Essentially it is magma that was on its way to the surface and would have erupted as a volcano except that it never made it. Instead it cooled in place over a long period of time.

This slow cooling creates an environment where elements of the same type can crystallize under intense heat and pressure. The granite created under these circumstances is called Pegmatite. " **Pegmatites** are extreme igneous rocks that form during the final stage of a magma's crystallization. They are extreme because they contain exceptionally large crystals and they sometimes contain minerals that are rarely found in other types of rocks." (Geology.com)

You can see from this description why pegmatites can be of special interest to geologists and rockhounds. Basically you have minerals from deep below the surface coming up and coalescing into uniform pieces, often as crystals. Topaz, beryl, uranium and many other precious gems can be found in pegmatites.

Uranium and beryl are among the minerals found in the Kaniksu Batholith. Most of the batholith is recognized to be in Idaho and further east than this part near Calispell Peak. The few mines that do appear in this part are usually Uranium. But often as in the case of the Merikay and the Golden Anchor, Uranium and Beryl are found at the same location. The Muscovite "books" found in the Merikay are also common in pegmatites.

The following description is from Discovering Washington's Historic Mines volume 6. "Sometimes when magma is forcing itself into the country rock, a cavity is created whereby a pendant of country rock is left hanging from the roof of the cavity that projects down into the magma. This allows contact on five sides of the pendant, with this enlarged contact surface area and the fact that the entire pendant is heated to nearly the melting point, the interaction of minerals between the two masses is greatly enhanced. Then, if this cools very, very slowly, very large crystals of the newly formed minerals can be created.

Such a roof-pendant formation is expressed in the Cannon mine property near the base of Calispell Peak, ... Some of the crystals from the mineral beryl, a beryllium aluminum silicate, are truly huge, having cooled from the melt extremely slowly."



If pure Beryl contains a certain amount of chromium, it is called aquamarine, a semiprecious gemstone. While

aquamarine has not been discovered at the Merikay, there were reports of it further east in the Kaniksu Batholith. So if you are cruising roads in near Calispell Peak, keep a lookout for more great finds.



### Membership Dues:

**\$20.00 per household per year is due to the club Treasurer**

Frank Statton (address below) on the third Tuesday of November for regular members.

Webpage: <http://panoramagem.com/>

Contact: Johnie Pitman, President, 509-413-2768.

We, **The Panorama Gem and Mineral Club**, are a multi-faceted group of mineral-minded people. Our proud members include some real gems, a few fossils, and even some diamonds in the rough. A few have lost some of their marbles, but they know where to get more! A few need to polish their coordination because they are always tumbling! And some are miners who use the "silver pick" as their tool of choice! It should be crystal clear, that we all enjoy this unique conglomeration and above all else we strive to **HAVE FUN**. And we never throw stones (away).

### July Meeting 7 PM

**Bruce Hurley writes: It looks like I will be doing the program next Tuesday night. Jan and I visited Mt. St. Helens two weeks back, but went the back to Windy Ridge, above Spirit Lake. Amazingly, there are still many signs of the damage from the 5/18/80 eruption which give you a different perspective than from visiting the more commonly-visited Johnston Ridge. So, I will be doing a slide presentation called "The Back Way To Fire Mountain" for the meeting.**

### Refreshment Schedule for 2018

Last names that begin with the letters posted bring refreshments for that month

January – W, A, B, C

February – D, E, F, G

March – H, I, J

April – K, L, M

May – N, O, P

June – Q, R, S, T

July – W, A, B, C

August – Club Picnic

September – D, E, F, G

October – H, I, J

November – K, L, M

December – Christmas Party

Windy Ridge, above Spirit Lake



### Panorama Gem and Mineral Club: Organizational Chart

<b>Officers:</b>			
President:	Johnie Pitman	701 B Williams Lake Rd, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-8887
Vice-President:	Bob Bristow	PO Box 1165; 2567 Mud Lake Rd. Chewelah WA 99109	509-935-4375
Secretary:	Sheila Stratton	79 Mary Ellen Rd, Kettle Falls, WA 99141	909-207-8506
Treasurer:	Frank Stratton	79 Mary Ellen Rd, Kettle Falls, WA 99141	909-207-8503
Trustee 2:	Jim Peters	3311 B View Ridge Ln, Valley, WA 99181-9604	509-937-2238
Trustee 3:	Dennis Gibbens	827 Hwy 20 E, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-3532
Trustee 1:	Sherryl Sinn	725 S. Chester, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-6093
<b>Committee Chairs</b>			
Program Coordinator:	Bev Bockman	1750 N Havichur Loop, Post Falls, ID 83854	208-773-5384
Hospitality:	Sherryl Sinn	725 S. Chester, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-6093
Club Shop:	Gene Fisher	295 Gold Creek Loop Rd, Colville, WA 99114	509-684-8546
Historian:	Carol Price	PO Box 77, Laurier, WA 99146	509-684-2857
Newsletter:	Joseph Barreca	2109 Hwy 25 South, Kettle Falls, WA 99141	509-738-6155
Show Chair	(vacant)		