

Place:
Arden Community Hall
636 Hall Rd
Arden, WA



Club Meetings:

**Third Tuesday of The
Month. In A Socially
Distanced Format and The
Wearing of Appropriate
Face Coverings.**

The Panorama Prospector

January 2021

Note from the editor – Jim Retzer

I hope this newsletter finds our members and friends doing well. At present I am in Quartzsite, AZ after a trip through Nevada and spending Christmas in Williams, AZ. We have been traveling with a few friends enjoying the sites along the way.

The last few weeks have been a little difficult as I came down with the Covid Virus. It is not bad, just chest congestion and tired. After a week of large doses of steroids and antibiotics I am on the downhill side of it and will be off quarantine in a few days. Carolyn was lucky. She tested negative, but did have bronchitis and is doing fine now. This next week is the Quartzsite Rock Club Pow Wow and the Quartzsite RV Show. It looks like I will be recovered in time for both.

I look forward to seeing you all this spring when hopefully life maybe back to somewhat normal. Oh, by the way I do have 4 buckets of rock and have a couple of trips planned after this little set back.

A Short Rockhounding Trip

By Johnie Pitman

Ginger and my latest rock hounding adventure netted this 3' diameter 200-250 pounder.



The travel distance for this trip was 200 yards to our neighbor's place. I first encountered this brute in 2003 in Salmon, Idaho, when my neighbor asked if I was interested in his father's rock collection. Naturally I said yes. His dad had passed, and they didn't know how to dispose of so many rocks, and they needed to get the place ready to sell. His dad was a rockhound and had a good collection of rocks and minerals. His job had been a mine safety inspector which had given him access to some good specimens. I did buy the collection, but it didn't include this one. They wanted to keep it and display it in their yard.

When I got there, they asked if I would haul this one with the others and drop it at their house, so I did.

My neighbor has now passed also and his wife said I could have it. It was half buried, so Ginger and I dug it up, scooted and rolled it 10 yards to where we could back the car up to it, then waited for our son Tim to come help load it. You might ask why the car

and not the pickup, well the car is much lower to the ground.

We used an old set of tire chains to help in the lifting. If you lay the chains in an X pattern and bolt the four places where the main chains cross. Then you can work the chains under the rock with the four ends out so you can get a good hold on them. Now you can lift with your legs while keeping your back straight. We lifted the rock up 6” and put a block under then lifted another 6” and put another block then it was high enough to get an edge into the car and slide it in.

I’m not sure what the mineral is, so you will have come and see it and give me your opinion, or if you have an idea from the picture you can email it to me.

Johnie

So, you Think You Know What It’s Like to be a Lookout? (Part III)

Following is a reduced version of Chapter 4 in the book being written by Bob Bristow called “A Hobo’s Son and an Orphan Girl.”

By Bob Bristow

Driving in the Dark

Spring Butte was on the southern edge of the Deschutes National Forest. To the southeast, it was desert, to the south and southwest; it was a combination of timber companies and Fremont National Forest. We were charged with maintaining a watch over the State and private timber company’s lands in addition to the National Forest. Outside the National Forest, firefighting was done by the State. We had both a State and National radio. One day, there was smoke coming up from beyond a hill to the southwest. I couldn’t tell how far the hills were because they were off our fire finder map and there was a broad expanse of “jack pine flats” that made estimating distance difficult. We radioed the State fire people in Gilchrist and gave them a good azimuth but a very iffy distance of 15 miles. They said they would go to my distance location and try to signal the lookout to see if they were near the fire. In

about an hour, they called from their truck and said they were on the azimuth and about at the 15-mile mark. They couldn’t see any smoke and were looking for a clearing in the trees. They soon called back and said they were in the middle of a large clearing in the jack pines and would try to signal us with a mirror. Now, I had learned about mirror signaling in the Boy Scouts and had a mirror in my fire kit. However, I thought it very unlikely that I could see a five-by-five-inch mirror at that distance. These mirrors are silvered on both sides and have a small-unsilvered hole in the middle. To use one, you arrange it so the sun is coming through the hole and you can also see the aim point through the hole. The inner mirror allows you to see the sun’s spot on your face. Simply rotate the mirror until the spot on your face is centered on the hole. The sun will then be reflected toward the point you see through the hole. While one of the State firemen was lining up the mirror, the other one was on the radio telling me to look now. Surprise, I could see that mirror as plain as a spotlight at night. It turned out that the smoke was about twice that far and was coming from the Fremont Forest. However, it was a good demonstration of how well an old-fashioned device like a signal mirror can work.

After talking on the radio a number of times, the couple running the State fire station in Gilchrist decided they would like to meet us. They invited Luci and me to meet them for dinner at the only restaurant in Gilchrist. We arrived at their house and were invited in. We found them to be very nice people and they obviously wanted to make us feel at home. They offered us a before-dinner drink. Luci and I accepted even though neither of us had ever had hard liquor. We thought, “In Rome, do as the Romans do.” After a leisurely drink, we went to the restaurant. They ordered steak for all of us and another before-dinner drink. When the steak came, they ordered dinner wine. We told them it was a great meal as we staggered out to their car for the ride back to their place. Once we got back to their home, we were invited in to talk. And have another drink.

We finally told them we had to get back to the lookout and they walked us out to our car (the old Green Dragon). We started the car and ... no lights!

It looked like they were off for good this time. They suggested we spend the night there, but we told them I had to be at the lookout for the 7:00 AM wake-up call and that we had gotten used to driving in the dark. They said OK but we couldn't drive on the highway without lights. They said they knew back roads and would guide us in their car to the road that led from the highway to the lookout. We had a headlamp in the firebox, and I said I would hold it out the window. They had to go north on Hwy 97 several miles to the "back road" they had talked about. Even though it was summer, I thought my arm was going to freeze off holding that light out the window! After they left the highway, they drove slower. However, the road was dusty. The dust here is 8,000-year old volcanic ash from Mount Mazama (Crater Lake). It is extremely fine and hangs in the air like smoke. With the headlamp, all I could see was dust. I turned it off and they stopped to see what the matter was. I told them I couldn't see because of the dust and suggested that I simply follow their taillights. This worked, but it's not something I would like to make a habit doing.

We now had to drive the seven miles from the highway back to the lookout. There was no moon that night so everything in the timber was perfectly black. All we could see was the ribbon of stars above the road. We carefully followed that ribbon trying to stay in the middle. There were a couple of obstacles. There was a culvert that had washed out and we had to go down off the road, across the small streambed, and back up on the road. We both tried to remember each turn and each stretch of straight road so we would know when to go off the road to bypass the culvert. When we got to where we thought the culvert was, we stopped, crossed our fingers, and drove down off the road. Much to our relief, we felt the dip and crunch of the gravel in the streambed. Now there was only one other obstacle. A tree had fallen down and blocked most of the road. Going into town had been no problem; we simply drove off the road on the other side to bypass it. When we got near the place we remembered the downed tree, we drove very slowly. Soon, we heard the scrape of limbs and felt some resistance. We knew we were to the tree and proceeded to drive around it.

The next morning, after some of the liquor had cleared out of my brain, I determined to fix that light! Then it hit me. I had replaced the wiring and added a new switch a few days before. All I would have had to do the previous night was to reach down and flip a switch. At least it was a good lesson on what alcohol can do to your brain (especially when you are a pansy).

Paper Thin Tires

One afternoon, a storm came up and started a fire about five miles northeast of the lookout. I was ordered to take care of it and leave Luci in charge of the lookout. I had no trouble finding the fire and was able to drive right up to it. It was in the top of a big ponderosa snag. This time, there were no limbs burning at the top and I could safely go right up to it. All I had to do was cut it down and put out the fire. However, all I carried to cut with was a six-foot long old-fashioned crosscut saw. Now, logging lore states that you cannot use a crosscut saw without a man on each end because you can only pull. If you try to push, the thin blade will buckle and bind. However, the Forest Service had told us one man could use it if he followed the right procedure. I tried their method and it worked great. You make a curved cut through the tree. To start the cut, you hold the saw in the middle and let it sag on each side. You then start sawing using that curve as a guide. After you have a cut an inch or so deep, you can take hold of one end and really go to town. I cut through the tree and it fell with a lot of fireworks from the flaming top. When it hit, the flaming end splintered, and pieces fell into dry brush. This started a number of additional fires, but I quickly cleared an area for a bone yard and pulled the burning wood into it. I waited a while for the chunks of wood to die down before putting them out, one by one. That gave me time to look around and notice the odd-looking stump. It reminded me of the bridge in a Japanese garden. I still wonder what hunters thought when they saw it.

By the time the fire was out, it was getting dark. Since I didn't have lights on the Green Dragon, I wanted to hurry back to the lookout. It wasn't to be. When I started packing the firefighting gear in the back of the Green Dragon, I saw that one of the tires was flat. I had driven about 300 yards off the road

and a small limb had gone all the way into my tire. In those days, I purchased old tires and used them until the inner tube was showing. The inner tube was showing on this tire, but I had crossed my fingers and continued to drive on it. I had a spare tire and a jack, and I should have been able to change the tire in a few minutes. One problem. I had taken out the lug wrench to work on the Olds. It was still back at the lookout. Nothing could be done but walk the five miles back to the lookout to retrieve the lug wrench.

The stick that punctured the tire was only about one-half inch diameter and would normally have been crushed by the tire. I fixed the tire later by inserting a boot. (Boots were common in those days. Now they don't even make them.)

When I got to the lookout, I found Luci worried because she knew I should have been home long before. I told her that I had to pick up the lug wrench and walk the five miles back to the car and finish changing the tire. She said she would go with me. (I don't think she trusted me out in the dark by myself.) I took a flashlight, not for walking, but for changing the tire. Walking in the dark was a snap after driving in the dark. Once the tire was fixed, we still had to drive back in the dark. There weren't any obstacles in this stretch of road so driving in the dark was no problem.

Destroying Tumalo's Water

It was predicted that there would be rain on the 4th. That meant I could take the day off. My folks asked us to go on a picnic with them. We went and the weatherman was wrong. It was cloudy but it didn't rain. We picked a nice place above some falls on the Deschutes River near the little town of Tumalo. We fired off a few fireworks and then I took a Cherry Bomb and wrapped a tin can lid around it and threw it in the pool below the falls. It sank and exploded with a loud thump about a foot underwater. Water and then a bunch of foam rose to the surface. I invited my mother over to see the next one. She said it was too hard to see what was happening in the river so why not throw it in the wooden flume next to the river. The flume was made of two by twelve planks with supports about every four feet. The water in the flume was about a foot deep and four feet wide. It was the water supply for the town of

Tumalo. I threw the Cherry Bomb in and waited for it to generate some foam. When it went "thump," the whole bottom of the flume dropped out. There was no water for Tumalo! Now, my little mother would never think of doing anything only slightly illegal, but instead of going to Tumalo and saying, "Sorry for ruining your water!" she said, "Let's get out of here!" This was my first experience with hydraulic ram. Later, I would use Soviet guns to cause hydraulic ram to blow big holes in F-4 fuel tanks under a US Air Force research contract.

Death in the Family

Luci's adopted father was much older than her mother and in ill health. Eventually, a call came in from Headquarters in Bend that he had died. Unfortunately, I was not in the lookout to take the call. I had taken some time off to go hunting with my hound. I walked down to the foot of Spring Butte and out into the jack pine flats. I was about a mile from the lookout. I suddenly knew Luci was in trouble. I couldn't hear anything, but I could feel it. I started running for the lookout and then up the steep side of the butte. Soon, my legs turned numb and I lost all feeling in them. I felt like I could now fly. However, I knew from experience that in about a quarter mile I my legs would turn to jelly and I would collapse. By now, I could actually hear Luci calling for me. I finally made it to the lookout and collapsed on the bottom step. I had pictured Luci hanging from the railing 35 feet in the air and here she was looking fit at the top of the stairs and asking me why I was lying on the stairs. She said she had not intended that I should kill myself, only come as soon as possible.

The nearest Guard was Mike, and Headquarters sent him to man the lookout while I took Luci into her mother's home in Redmond. We took care of things and went back to the lookout. Mike was in an emotional state. He had become convinced he was going crazy. He had been hearing things inside the lookout. He knew that there couldn't be anything there, but the noises continued. These noises kept on for a full day. Finally, he looked in the garbage can and moved the branches in the bottom. We had forgotten to tell him that I had just caught a golden-mantled ground squirrel and put it in the garbage can prior to taming it.

Identify the “Rock or Mineral”

Last month’s rock or mineral:



Some of the largest and most lustrous crystals of Huebnerite come from the Yaogangxian Mine, Hunan Province, China. In Bolivia, stubby and often twinned crystals come from the Siglo Veinte Mine, Llallagua, Potosí Department; and prismatic and columnar crystals from the Himalaya Mine, Mt Illimani, La Paz Department, Bolivia. In Peru, sharp, deep red and often translucent crystals come from the Huayllapon Mine, Pasto Bueno District, Ancash Department. Lustrous crystals with beautiful Quartz come from the Huanzala Mine, Huallanca, Huánuco Department, Peru; and from Mundo Nuevo, Huamachuco, La Libertad Department, Peru.

In the U.S., Huebnerite was found in Colorado in the famous Rhodochrosite locality of the Sweet Home Mine, Alma, Park Co., Brownish crystals were found in Howardsville, in the Animas District, San Juan Co., Colorado, and acicular sprays of bladed crystals from the Adams Mine, near Silverton, both in San Juan Co., Colorado.

This month’s rock or mineral

Huebnerite is the manganese-rich end member of the Wolframite series. It is not always distinguished individually and is sometimes just classified as Wolframite. An increase of iron in its structure tends to give it a more black color, decrease transparency, and increase its density. Huebnerite is named after German metallurgist and mining engineer Adolf Hübner.

Huebnerite has a chemical formula of $MnWO_4$ and is in the Monoclinic crystal system with crystals forming most often in long prismatic columnar groups, blocky and chisel-shaped crystals, and flattened tabular crystals. Crystals are often striated lengthwise and may be twinned as repeated twins with V-shaped notch in the center. It is mainly opaque but can be transparent in thin splinters or when backlit.

It has a Mohs hardness of 4 – 4.5 with a specific gravity of 7.1 – 7.3.



Membership Dues:

\$20.00 per household per year is due to the club Treasurer Frank Stratton on the third Tuesday of November for regular members. Dues can also be sent to: Panorama Gem and Mineral Club c/o Johnie Pitman, 701 B Williams Lake Rd, Colville, WA 991114.

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

Contact: Rick McDougald
pres-pgmc@hotmail.com

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).

A Quick Note from The Editor

The restrictions put in place because of the Covid Virus have interrupted and changed many of the plans of the club and its members.

This has resulted in the cancellation of the club’s activities until further notice.

It is hoped we can resume a somewhat normal schedule of events soon, but until then stay healthy and safe.

Refreshment Schedule for 2020

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

January – N, O, P
 February – Q, R, S, T
 March – W, A, B, C
 April – D, E, F, G
 May – H, I, J
 June – K, L, M
 July – N, O, P
 August – Club Picnic
 September – Q, R, S, T
 October – W, A, B, C
 November - D, E, F, G
 December – Christmas Party

Panorama Gem and Mineral Club: Organizational Chart

Officers

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