

Place:
Arden Community Hall
636 Hall Rd
Arden, WA



Club Meetings:
Third Tuesday of The
Month at 6:00PM

The Panorama Prospector

July 2022

PANORAMA GEM AND MINERAL CLUB

Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Meeting

The President, Sheila Stratton, opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. by welcoming visitors.

The club was very happy to introduce two of our scholarship winners for this year. We welcomed Mckennon Floener from Colville High School, who shared about his plans to attend WSU and study Forestry. Next was Malia Langrehr from Kettle Falls High School, who shared her plans to attend Northwest University and study Exercise Science to learn more about how the body works. They both answered any questions that we ask.

Betty Peters talked about their trip in May where they visited several states and spent time with grandchildren. They had a good trip and experienced and saw many interesting things.

Bob Bristow then talked about the field trip to the LaFarge quarry for trilobites planned for July 9th. All those attending are to meet at the Tiger Store at 9:00 a.m.

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Fossil Find

By Lynne Calvert

In March 2021, Roger and I left our farm near Hunters, WA in search for warmer weather. On our way to Arizona, in our truck camper, we took a side trip to check out the mining town of Gabbs, Nevada.

Not sure what was being mined our curiosity was peaked to possibly do some prospecting.

A magnesium mine supported the residence of the town. There wasn't anything there that interested us. The buildings were blasted by wind and sand. Paint was peeling. Devastated mobile homes dotted the landscape. No children played in the yards. No women pushing strollers or walking dogs. We decided to continue on HWY 361 in Nevada towards the "Loneliest HWY in America". The terrain lacked trees for miles, and we passed a small sign with an outline of a tent and a right arrow to Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park. It was getting late, and they had a campground. Should we risk turning around our truck with trailer somewhere along this lonely two-lane highway? Well, yeah. Little did we know the park is miles up a winding road (HWY 844) up to the 7,000 foot elevation.

When we started seeing snow my heart sank because we were trying to avoid cold and snow. The road turned to dirt and there were no signs of civilization. Finally, in the distance, the ghost town in the State Park came into view. We were relieved to see the Park was still open! After driving a few more miles to the campground we set up camp with our choice of campsites since there were NO other campers.

The next morning the park ranger greeted us and explained how we could drive or walk to the Ichthyosaur fossil exhibit. We chose to walk, and the ranger said he'd meet us there to open it. The fossils are prehistoric marine creatures – at 7,000 foot elevation! They were discovered in the 1920s and have been preserved in place. After lunch we toured the ghost town of Berlin. We thought the miners in

Gabbs were rugged – ha! I was astonished people would ever decide to live in such a remote area way up in the mountains and build a town. Roger reminded me that during that time tuberculosis was going around. Many people were told to go to high elevations or die. Currently, with the COVID-19 pandemic prevalent people were taking precautions to stay healthy but it wasn't as drastic as what the people in the past had to do to mete out a living with little resources. The ghost town and mine were interesting to explore.



We chatted with the park rangers who were glad to have customers. They answered our questions and shared more about the residence that lived there in the past and history. One of the rangers told us there are fossils in the park but we cannot take anything. However, there is a path leading out of the park where the girl scouts go to find fossils that are permissible to be removed. We donned our parkas. A two mile walk later we were out of the park and started looking for the unlikely.

We meandered another two miles or so along a creek. I lost interest and decided to add more steps to my “fitbit.” I circled back towards the park and Roger came out of the brush with a fossil embedded in a rock! He was digging on the bank of the creek and had the rock in his hand when the fossil came into focus to his great delight. Our side trip to the park paid off and a highlight of our memories of looking for rocks.



New Petrified Wood Location?

By Bob Bristow

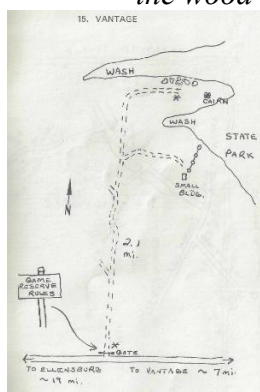
The last week of June, Linda and I attended a conference in Wenatchee. We attended one last year, too, and were hesitant this year because during last year's conference, the temperature peaked at 117 degrees and air conditioners and other electronics failed all over town because they weren't made to manage that kind of temperature. This year was different. A pleasant daytime temperature and cool nights. However, three days of fancy clothes and big crowds made Linda and I want to get away from the city and into the mountains. I suggested we look for Jackson's petrified wood location near Vantage. Linda was ready for another adventure.

But, before describing our adventures, let me give a little background.

Back in the seventy's, I started collecting rock hunting books. One of the books was “The Rockhound's Guide to Washington, Volume 1” by Bob and Kay Jackson, 1974. I went to a number of the locations and collected some great gems. However, one that I never tried was “Location 15. Vantage.” For those of you who want to try this location, here is the map and the text that reads:

“MINERALS: PETRIFIED WOOD

This is one of the best localities for the black-tan-green white colored wood. You will be digging on land adjoining Ginkgo State Park. Be sure to confine your efforts to the area west of the rock cairn, or you will be in the state park and subject to arrest. The wood is in decomposing basalt. Stumps and large log sections are not uncommon. To extract the big pieces you'll need shovel, bar, hammers and gads. If you're happy to collect smaller pieces, no tools are needed, the wood is all over the ground.”



This sounded great, but I already knew where there were logs all over the ground. I had discovered the Saddle Mountains south of Vantage. I began exploring them by starting at some point along the road at the base of the cliffs on the north side, and then climbing the series of cliffs to the top. At the top of a couple of the cliffs, there was a relatively level area with logs all over. One stump stuck up about three feet and was at least two feet in diameter. I couldn't take it. Not only was it too heavy, but it was all opal and was thoroughly cracked. I did decide to try to take a much smaller stump. I was about six inches in diameter with roots that extended out about four or five inches. It was still too heavy to pick up and carry down the cliffs. I carried it to the first cliff and slid it down one step at a time. That worked OK so I was confident on the second cliff. I shouldn't have been! The log got away from me and went rolling down the mountain. I held my breath as it rolled over one cliff after another. Finally, it was past the last cliff without breaking. All it had to do was roll down the slope at the bottom. However, before it stopped, it reached a rock about the size of a car with a flat face pointing uphill. My stump hit that face and shattered into a hundred pieces. Later, I started using the road to the top of the mountain that follows the powerline.

Speaking of Jackson's location, I did do some exploring in the area. I went chucker hunting. I took a road into the BLM area several miles closer to Ellensburg than the road shown on Jackson's map. I then drove north a few miles and made a large circle through the lava fields. At one point, I heard chuckers talking and crept up to the edge of a lava flow cliff. Looking down, I could see a flock of the birds under sage bushes. They were too far away to shoot with a shotgun, so I started looking for a way to get down the cliff and sneak up on them. As I scanned the area, some movement caught my eye. It was a coyote that was also trying to get a meal. I was now stymied. If I scared the coyote off, the chuckers would know I was there. If I didn't keep the coyote away, he would scare the chuckers away! I decided to just stop and watch. You don't often get a chance to have a ringside seat to something like this. The coyote very carefully crept up on the flock. However, the flock had lookouts and one spotted the coyote. One warning chirp and the whole flock

exploded into the air. The coyote tried to grab one, but he ended up going away hungry.

I did find petrified wood while I hunted. Every so often, a chunk would be lying on the lava. I didn't pick up any since I didn't want to weigh myself down. I did take home a few small pieces of brightly colored opal.

Now, back to the present. During the conference in Wenatchee, Linda and I stayed in Leavenworth. So, from Leavenworth, we headed toward Vantage on Hwy 97. On the way, I stopped going along Peshastin Creek at the old townsite of Blewett to show Linda a prime example of an arrastra. (An arrastra is an old gold processing device consisting of a flat rock with a circular groove and a vertical hole in the center, a vertical rod in the hole, a horizontal pole extending out from the pole, a large rock in the groove, a rope holding the rock to the pole, and a method of rotating the rod and pole such that the big rock is pulled over gold ore. The gold is then periodically removed using mercury. A typical example is shown in Figure 2.



The Figure 2 arrastra was made from many flat rocks. The arrastra where we stopped was cut from one solid chunk of granite.) Alas! The arrastra was paved over when the highway was widened. I had heard that the rock with the arrastra was going to be removed and displayed on the turnout across the highway. This is a turnout where the old town of Blewett was located with a monument holding pictures of the town. The monument is still there, but the pictures are rapidly fading, and brush is growing up covering much of the monument. Oh, well. Who cares about an old mining artifact, even if it is the only assembled example in the state.

We continued on over Blewett Pass. (This is actually Swauk Pass, but most maps and most people call it Blewett. The real Blewett Pass is to the north up on the side of the mountain. It is a very scenic drive if you have time for the slow road.) Down Swauk Creek, I pulled off Hwy 97 and drove through the town of Liberty to see how it had changed. I first drove through Liberty in 1957. At the end of the pavement, there had been a meadow with a large hole in the middle. The hole went down to bedrock which had been cleaned to the point where gold could be swept into a dustpan. The bottom of the hole was granite that had been smoothed by water. Two large rocks had been left. They were rounded by water and indicated that this must have been a large river at one time. Now, all that is left of the meadow is brush. Back in 1957, I drove on up the dirt road a ways, and saw that the rocks were thin layered shales. My first thought was, "Fossils!" I got a screwdriver out of the toolbox and climbed up the rocks a short distance and pried some apart. They were loaded with maple leaf fossils. I still have some of them.

The next stop on our adventure was at the Ginkgo Petrified Forest Museum. Yes. It is still there. I had heard it was closed, but it is very nice, and it is free. (A donation is gladly accepted!) In addition to the museum, visitors can take trails that lead up the mountainside to view many very large petrified logs.

Now, we were now ready to go look for Jackson's petrified logs. From the museum, we headed west on Jackson's map. He didn't say where in Vantage he started, so we went seven miles from the museum. There was the road, just like on the map. The road north was very rough, but a good driver would have no trouble. The road is on the surface of a lava flow, so to say it is rocky would be a gross understatement. At a very slow walk speed, we drove about two miles. At that point, we could see the road going east for at least another mile and knew we were on the wrong road. Luckily, I had pictures from Google earth and could identify some of the landmarks. Jackson's road was another mile or so west.

We inched our way back to the highway and quickly found the right road. This road looked like it would be much better. It even had a list of do's and don'ts

on BLM land. Surprise! This road was worse than the first one. Don't try it in a two-wheel drive car! Getting back out of one draw, I had to back down and get some speed to make it, even in four-wheel drive. After another hour of driving, we got to Jackson's location. There was no sign of petrified wood, not even a sliver. There was no sign of any digging, either. What we did find was a lot of pigeon feathers. Well, at least pieces of ceramic from what used to be clay pigeons. Another thing we found was small pieces of pure white opal. It has the look of opal that contains areas of color. That is, precious opal. These small pieces had been baked in the desert sun so long that any color had been burned out long ago.

So, we were out of luck again. Not to be completely skunked, I decided to take Linda to a place where I knew there was petrified wood. I crossed the Columbia River and drove past Wanapum dam, up through Mattawa, and up to the old rockhound site on the Saddle Mountains. The road up the mountain has always been rough, but it is much worse now. The BLM has graveled the road. They used very course gravel and dumped it without using a grader. The result was slow, humpy going almost as bad as the cross-country roads we had been on earlier.



The old site hasn't been touched lately. However, we did find petrified wood. Most of it was petrified bog containing small pieces of wood and very colorful. One was the partly rotten end of a five-inch diameter log. Figure 3 is a cut portion. This log was from one of the layers of sand-like tuff located between flows of basalt lava.

So ended another fun-filled outing. We didn't find a new petrified wood site, but we had a good time and found that there is still wood at the old site. If someone would like to try again for Jackson's site, they could try down the wash shown on Jackson's map. We didn't know it, but both Linda and I were

coming down with Covid and weren't feeling like doing much hiking around.

Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Meeting

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Frank gave the financials for the club. He also shared about the new order of hats that have come in and are for sale.

It was brought up that we all need to write up articles for the newsletter. Jim Ritzer wrote the entire June newsletter. We all have stories and experiences that we can share. If you have trouble writing it up, just ask for help.

At this time, a break was taken for refreshments. Door prize drawing was held, and Barb Cozza won the door prize. The silent auction was finished up with recipients paying for their prizes.

Johnie and Ginger gave a wonderful talk on the club history. It was very interesting to hear about the people who had the vision to start a rock club in our area. With a lot of creativity, they got together and wrote up the Bylaws and the way the club would be held, which we use the same format today.

There were 53 people present, maybe the most at any regular meeting!!

Obsidian

By Johnie Pitman

Obsidian forms when a silica-rich magma of granitic composition flows onto the earth's surface, where it solidifies before minerals can develop and crystalize. It might flow into or under water which would speed up the cooling process. It is an amorphous solid or glass rather than an aggregate of minerals.

The silica-rich magmas are more viscous or thicker than low-silica magmas that form basalts (approximately 50% SiO₂). The higher viscosity reduces the ability of atoms to migrate through the melt to a growing crystal. This along with a rapid cooling rate prevent crystal growth. Most obsidian, rather than being all glass, contains microlites, or tiny crystals in the glassy matrix. Spherulites of

feldspar fibers with crystalline silica are common; they represent very rapid crystallization prior to the chilling of surrounding glass. Lithophysical cavities (stone bubbles) are formed by gases escaping from the obsidian lava flow, with the gases also supplying the chemical constituents for the minerals lining them. This is what defuses light and gives off a sheen or glitter.

Some types of obsidian are: clear, snowflake, mahogany, rainbow, silver sheen, gold sheen, spider web, and flame.

Identify the "Rock or Mineral"

Last Month's Rock or Mineral:



Montana Agate – Montana Moss Agate is found along the Yellowstone is a semi-precious stone that is river and its tributaries, mainly between Sidney and Billings Montana.

As with other agates Montana Agate is a form of chalcedony that has a waxy luster and is semi-transparent to translucent. The main color ranges from white to gray but can be found in grayish-blue or shades of pale brown to almost black.

Its most recognizable feature is the moss-like, fern-like, or tree-like inclusions. These can be black, brown, or red and sometimes orange and yellow. These colors are caused by embedded minerals. Iron oxides and hydroxides give the yellow, brown, and red colors, copper oxide gives the green and red, and manganese oxide give the bluish and brown colors.

Montana Agate shows some wonderful tree and fern forms as well as mountain scenes.

This Month's Rock or Mineral:

Do to the limited extra space in this months newsletter there will be no Rock or Mineral of the Month.

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/>

Facebook Group: [Panorama Gem & Mineral Club](#)

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

It is a pleasure to note we are back in full swing. All meetings and outings are back to normal. Thanks to all for their support and participation during the pandemic.

On another note, we are always looking for newsletter inputs from our members. If you have an idea for an article, please forward it to Jimrocks@recycledhistory.com

Refreshment Schedule for 2021

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

President:	Sheila Stratton	skstratton@hotmail.com	509-207-8506
Vice-President:	Bob Bristow	bristow71@outlook.com	509-935-4375
Secretary:	Glynis Hull	gghull@comcast.net	
Treasurer:	Frank Stratton	frstratton@outlook.com	509-207-8503
Trustee 1:	Jim Peters	jimnbetty17@gmail.com	509-992-6921
Trustee 2:	Scott Jackson	free2rockhound@yahoo.com	509-680-4896
Trustee 3:	Greg Cozza	troller@hotmail.com	509-710-0375

Committee Chairs

Program Coordinator:	Sheila Stratton	skstratton@hotmail.com	509-207-8506
Hospitality:	Betty Peters	jimnbetty17@gmail.com	509-992-6921
Historian:			
Newsletter:	Jim Retzer	jimrocks@recycledhistory.com	509-738-2503
Show Chair	Johnie Pitman	jgpitman@outlook.com	509-684-8887