

Place:
Arden Community Hall
636 Hall Rd
Arden, WA



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

The Panorama Prospector

May 2022

Virginia City Treasures

By: Bob Bristow

My brother had just returned from vacation and was very excited on the phone. He had just found a three-inch diameter ruby in Montana and wanted me to come over right away and see it. It had too much “silk” to facet, but if the rutile fibers would form a star, it would be one of the largest ever found. I hurried the 40 miles to his house and found him finishing a crown on the ruby. Alas, the rutile fibers were too large to form a star, but it was a monster ruby anyway. He had been traveling through southern Montana and had stopped to explore the old dredge tailings near Nevada City. The ruby was in a location where it could hardly be seen, but he spied the hexagonal shape. He had also found many other interesting rocks (and some unfossilized hippopotamus bones). We immediately planned a trip there for the next year.

The next summer, Luci and I got to Nevada City and rented a small cabin with a sod roof. (The grass was about a foot high that time of year.) We immediately saw why my brother had said that if we stayed in the main building, to be sure to get a room on the second floor. A porch went around the building on both floors. At each corner there was a two-storied outhouse. The upper outhouse was directly above the lower one, thus saving considerable lumber. The planning and construction were very good; the upper holes were precisely over the lower ones.

My brother and his wife arrived, and we were off to see some of their discoveries from last year. Just up the road was Virginia City, the first Territorial

capitol. Boot hill had three graves off to one side. They had hanged the three men and believed the robbers would contaminate the good townspeople if buried in the cemetery. We went into an old church to take pictures of the stained-glass windows. They were extremely good and had come from the East Coast by covered wagon in the 1800’s. That night we watched a performance in the old theater. It was very good, but you couldn’t get up after the show started. The old wooden planks on the floor squeaked so loud that it would have stopped the show if someone had walked out.

The next morning, we all went prospecting in the tailings piles. I was surprised at how much good material was laying right on top. The top had been on the bottom before the big dredges turned everything upside down. The heavy minerals now on top included gem hematite several inches long, non-gemmy blue sapphires up to five inches long, buckets of red garnets (all friable called “sugar” garnets), several small, gem-quality dark red garnets, and feldspar cleavages. There were signs that much of the material had come from pegmatites and I could see mine tailings on the surrounding mountains that looked like pegmatites. Just before we returned to the pickup, Luci called from the far side of one of the mounds. She wanted me to come see the neat thing she had found. It was about two-feet long and made of fractured pieces of bright-colored jasper cemented with an orange jasper. A very attractive rock. She wanted to take it, but it was too big for me to carry.

That evening, my brother and I wanted to go back to the tailings. Our wives decided to go shopping in

Virginia City. When we got out on the tailings pile, my brother suggested we try to bring out Luci's jasper. To get to the jasper, we had to cross to the far side of the tailings and then go downstream for about a quarter of a mile. We found the breccia and then tried to figure out how to get it to the pickup. On looking around, we found some barbed wire, an old pick head, and a few dead trees. We decided to use the wire to tie the rock to one of the poles and carry the rock between us. We selected a sturdy pole about five inches in diameter, tied it over the rock, and lifted each end. The pole ends bent up, but the rock stayed put. Even holding the pole ends as high as we could reach wouldn't budge it. Time for Plan B!

We retrieved the old pick head and wired it crosswise to the rock. We found that that would work, but it would be a long walk back to the pickup. About that time, we noticed that it had gotten unusually dark. A big thunderhead was gathering to the west and coming our way. We concluded that it wouldn't be too good to be holding that big iron pick in the middle of a lightning storm. I suggested we go straight to the pickup, which meant wading the stream. My brother agreed and we headed for the nearest point on the road. When we got to the stream, we found that at this point, it was a pond left by the dredging. We put the rock down and I waded out a few feet to see how deep it was. It was about 30-feet wide, but only about a foot deep. After a short discussion, we plunged in and immediately found that there was another two feet of goo below the water. Lightning was now coming down a short distance away and it was beginning to rain. This made us plunge ahead with the rock now being pulled through the mud in the bottom of the pond. We quickly drug the rock up to the road and ran for the pickup. Upon driving back to the rock, we got the rock in the back just as the full force of the storm hit.

We decided to not go back to the motel right away. Lightning was coming down all around us and we hoped to see it strike a sandy area where it would melt some of the sand. We were carefully trying to remember the location of each strike when there was a pounding on both doors. Our very wet wives were frantically trying to get the doors open. When we got

them inside, we found that when the storm hit, they were afraid we had been caught out in it and had been hit by lightning. When they drove up behind us and saw us just sitting there, they were sure one of us had been hit. You can imagine the rest. To pay penitence, I cut the rock in half so each of our wives could have a big chunk of colorful jasper breccia. The figure shows Luci's half.



Jasper in Jasper Matrix

The above was written a long time ago. I understand that the tailings piles have now been graded flat and planted with grass. However, it would still be fun to go poking around the old pegmatite mines!

How Do Crystals Form? 18 Fun Crystals Facts

By: Sheila Stratton

Crystals form in many different ways depending on the item that is crystallizing. Some occur due to rapid changes in temperature or pressure – such as with the production of diamonds – while others form through evaporation or other reactions however, crystals cannot form within a liquid without some sort of core on which to grow.

1. Diamond crystals are formed when pressurized molten lava cools rapidly.
2. Chemists working through Purdue University, New York University and

Argonne National Laboratory created crystals of DNA large enough to see without a microscope.

3. The provincial mineral of Ontario, Canada, is the amethyst.
4. “Crystal” glasses commonly used in dinner ware are actually not made with true crystal, despite their name and appearance.
5. Researchers discovered the largest crystals in the world in a mine in Chihuahua, Mexico. The largest of the gypsum crystals discovered measured over 36 feet long and 6 feet across.
6. If the ocean evaporated, the crystallized salt left behind would measure 4.5 million cubic miles.
7. In addition to their use in jewelry and for decoration, people have also used crystals for their positive “energy” and as good luck charms.
8. The oldest recorded objects on Earth are zircon crystals from western Australia. Researchers estimate these crystals date back over 4.4 billion years.
9. Scientists have discovered silicate crystals within icy comets, and they believe these crystals formed through exposure to solar flares.
10. The crystal gypsum is commonly used in drywall, so you may have gypsum in your home right now.
11. The bedrock beneath the streets of New York City contains a variety of crystals, including opal, garnet, tourmaline, beryl and more.
12. In the year 1885, during construction in New York City - near Broadway and 35th street – laborers discovered a 10-pound garnet beneath the ground. The garnet sold for just \$100 – after adjusting for inflation that amount equates to just \$2,300 today!
13. Researchers now believe the planet’s core consists of an aggregation of iron crystals. Original theories led researchers to believe that the core consisted of a single iron crystal 1,500 miles wide.
14. The largest diamond ever recorded was discovered in South Africa in 1905. The diamond, known as the “Cullinan diamond,” measured a whopping 3,106 carats.
15. The Cullinan diamond was eventually into over 100 individual stones and is now part of the British Regalia. The royal family set the largest stone – at a modest 530 carats – into a royal scepter.
16. Though crystallized snow contains only water, as it collects on the ground, it picks up many pollutants such as soot and mercury.
17. Sugar is one of the most common crystals used today. The average U.S. citizen consumes approximately 130 pounds of sugar per year.
18. A pink diamond by the name of “The Sakura” set a world record in May when it sold at auction in Hong Kong. A private buyer purchased the diamond for a whopping \$29.3 million.

Field Trip

Noble Serpentine at the “Wild Turkey Mine” May 21, 2022

Meet at Safeway in Chewelah by 9am,
We Will Leave the Parking Lot at 9am Sharp.
Remember this is a private mine and the
Cost is \$1 a pound for material you want to take
home.

Identify the “Rock or Mineral”

Last Month’s Rock or Mineral:



Actinolite - It is an intermediate member of the Actinolite-Tremolite series, where Actinolite has a greater presence of iron over magnesium, and Tremolite has a greater presence of magnesium over iron. It is commonly found in metamorphic rocks, such as contact aureoles surrounding cooled intrusive igneous rocks. It also occurs as a product of metamorphism of magnesium-rich limestones. Actinolite rarely forms good crystals. It is most frequently found as radiating fibrous to asbestiform masses. Chemical formula – $\text{Ca}_2(\text{Mg}_{4.5-2.5}\text{Fe}_{0.5-2.5})\text{Si}_8\text{O}_{22}(\text{OH})_2$. It ranges from green, green-black, grey-green to black in color with a vitreous to silky luster. Its Mohs hardness is 5-6 and has a specific gravity of 3.03 – 3.24 and produces a colorless streak. Actinolite commonly occurs in the crystalline schists, being often the chief constituent of green-colored hornblende-schists and greenstones.

A compact and tough form of Actinolite is Nephrite Jade.

I have collected a good amount of fibrous green Actinolite from the deposits located in along State Highway 2 east of Wrightwood, California on the north slope of the San Gabriel Mountains in San Bernardino County, California. The material in this location can also be found as massive acicular crystals.

This Month’s Rock or Mineral:



Upcoming Events in Our Area

6/3/2020 6/5/2022

Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club Show
Swiss Park
9205 198th Ave E
Bonney Lake WA

6/4/2022 6/5/2022

Coeur d’ Alene Rock & Gem Show
Kootenai County Fairgrounds Jacklin Building
4056 N. Government Way
Kootenai County Fairgrounds Jacklin Building
Coeur d’ Alene, ID

6/16/2020 6/19/2020

Prineville Rockhound Pow Wow
Crook County Fairgrounds
Prineville, OR

6/17/2022 6/19/2022

**Lower Umpqua Gem & Lapidary Society
Annual Father’s Day Weekend Rock & Gem
Show**
Reedsport Community Center/City Hall
451 Winchester Ave
Reedsport, OR

8/19/2022 8/21/2022

Puyallup Valley Gem & Mineral Club Show
Gem Show in The Trees
Tacoma Sportsmen’s Club
16049 Canyon Road East
Puyallup, WA

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

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

This has resulted in the modification of our club meetings and club 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 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