02/19/08 West side board meeting minutes

Stu called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM.

Kathy did not attend as she was having some dental work. A treasurer's report will be presented at the March Meeting in Ellensburg.

The minutes were approved as printed in the Council Reporter.

There was no new news on the pending legislation on collecting in streams. It appears that with the number of meetings and comments on the changes, it will take some time to actually act on the changes, probably in time for next year's activity.

There have been some reports that the BLM has resolved the mineral rights on Saddle Mountain, but nothing official been has released by BLM. It looks like it would be favorable to the rockhounds at this time.

It was rumored that Bob Jackson may be selling his Spruce Claim in the future and some of his collections.

Bob Pattie was asked to check notes from our last regular meeting to see who may have volunteered for an office for this year. (Editorial note; I did not find any information regarding officers for 2008.) We will need to be prepared to make nominations and elect officers at the March meeting. We will need a 2nd VP from the Westside, a secretary, one Westside trustee, and probably two Eastside trustees. We also need to be sure we have a volunteer for the Wagonmaster committee.

Ed Lehman mention that we had a conflict with the Saddle Mountain field trip in May as it conflicted with the regular WSMC meeting in Ellensburg. We thought it probably should be changed to May 31st; we will discuss this at the March meeting and make the final decision.

Stu said he got another call for more locks for the Walker Valley gate; he acquired the locks and will deliver them this week.

Christina Morrissey of the North Seattle club discussed a new product that would allow identification of material in the field. It is a part of the RRUFF Project, it would be too expense at this time but in the future could be a real help to the rockhound. More information about the project can be found on the web at: http://rruff.geo.arizona.edu/

Stu open a discussion on how can we get more juniors involved in rockhounding and in our clubs activities. Some of the suggestion were to visit school, cub and boy scouts units, invite them to rock shows and to have separate clubs or separate part of our meetings set aside for the kids. If anyone had more suggests bring them to our March meeting for discussion.

A motion was made and passed to pay the printing and mailing cost.

Ed Lehman reminder everyone to write to members of congress, both state and federal regarding the lost of access to our favorite collecting sites.

Meeting was adjoined.

Submitted by,
Bob Pattie

Field trip report frm Cedar Ponds 01/19/08

The new collecting season is here. The lower elevation at the Cedar Ponds collecting area compared with many other collecting sites is why this is a preferred site for this time of the year. Cedar Ponds has wonderful Jaspers with plenty of color. Swirls of reds, yellows, blues, and sometimes crystals are mixed together, so when you make something from what you find you have a nice piece of whatever it is you made.

It was cold on Saturday morning, but visions of things were going through my mind so it didn't bother me. It was raining on that cold Saturday morning, but visions of things were going through my head so that didn't bother me. It was almost snowing on this Saturday morning, and being like a kid in a rock shop, I couldn't wait to get dirty.

Marysville Rock Club and the Everett Rock Club hosted this WSMC Field Trip. There was an excellent turnout for the first field trip of the year. With the sunshine sprinkling down on us, we gathered our hunting gear and started up the one mile or so road. We strolled up the road with the first group of 12 or so, Bob strolled up with the last group, and many members were mixed in between. This is an easy area to dig at, with most only needing a shovel, a pick, and something to carry your findings in. The sunshine was pouring down on us, so trying not to generate a sweat is important to stay dry. This area has changed over the last year, and good material was found and taken home. Most Rockhounds had enough by 1:30 and were on the way back to the vehicles. I'm not sure if they had enough material to take back, or if they had enough of the cold, but we had a great day. There was too much snow on the road up to the crystal site, so maybe next time we may get there.

The next Field trip is at Walker Valley on Jan 26th, hosted by both the Marysville and the Puyallup Clubs.

If you missed the Cedar Ponds trip in January, try going to the Cedar Ponds trip Saturday Feb 16, which is hosted by both the Marysville and the Everett Rock Club. Meet at the Jack-in-the-Box in Monroe at 9am. I recommend always calling to confirm a Field Trip, changes do happen.

Respectfully submitted by Ken MRGC

From Stone Age New 02/08

Field Trip Report - Cedar Ponds January 20, 2007

What a beautiful day! The anticipation of going on the first field trip of the year is finally here. Over the past few weeks the weather at times had been not the best for hiking or searching for crystals. Not really what I would want when trying to get a good fossil plate, but just fine for any rock hound to grab a shovel and pick and go get some Jasper. Now, Jasper is found in many places, in a wide variety of colors, sometimes in the float, and sometimes in the harder ground. The Jasper we hope to find at Cedar Ponds is a blend of many colors with interesting patterns.

Our Club hosted this Field Trip, and what fun I had, and everyone else appeared to be having fun too. We met at the Jack in the Box in Monroe at 9:00am. We had members from a few other clubs, and some new rock hounds who had not been on a "Rock Expedition" before. Maybe you thought you might go, but then didn't know what to bring. The most important thing to bring is a good attitude.

You won't go wrong with a shovel, a pack or bucket, and a willingness to learn. On the www.mineralcouncil.org website there are sample tool kits of what you may want to bring, depending on the type of trip you are doing.

The group drove past the entrance to the Jasper area, we stopped and parked there. The group drove up a short distance with Ed, and hunted for a fossil find. After spending some time looking for fossils, they came back and hiked the 1 mile to the Jasper area. The road still had ice & snow in many, or a lot of places, so we didn't get to the crystal area. Crystals may be hard to see through a layer of snow and ice, I'm not sure, just a hunch. We didn't wait for the group to get back from searching for fossils; we were excited to start looking for the Jasper. The road or trail had snow on it, so anyone following could just follow the imprints, kind of like tracking Big Foot. Sometimes I wonder if it is the digging and searching, hoping to find something, or if it is the friendship and fun of being around other Rock Hounds that I enjoy more. The most common area for digging has good tree cover, so snow & ice was no problem at the dig site. Some of the group left about 2:30, while others still had visions of the big dig on the brain. The day went by fast, the weather was perfect, and many of us hiked out at dark. Some of the best things of this trip happened towards the end of the day, and you would need to be there to get that feeling.

Respectfully submitted by Ken, MRGC
From Stone Age News 02/07

BC Wagonmasters Announce Field Trips for 2008

March 15 (Saturday) Harrison Lake fossils.
Up the west side of Harrison Lake are some clam and belemnite fossils available for collecting. The clam fossils are plentiful, and are just about "all-you-can-carry".....belemnites not so plentiful.

Tools are usual clothing, hammers, and larger boulder cracking hammers, and chisels if you have them to bring. Bring a lunch/snack and your camera!

Meeting place is the parking lot of the Sasquatch Inn at 9:00AM.

This is on Highway #7 at the town of Harrison Mills. This is west of Agassiz. ***DO NOT GO TO THE TOWN OF HARRISON LAKE**** The Sasquatch Inn is precisely at the exit to the Hemlock Valley Ski area.

If you don't know how to find this, please consult a map!
The location is some 30+ KM off of the main highway on gravel backroads, fully passable by cars. Please have ample fuel, and some snacks & beverages.

The leader for this trip is Gord Pinder from Maple Ridge club, 604-870-4779

April 27th Nicomen Plateau,
Shaw Springs area: Located between Lytton, and Spences Bridge.

This area is many square miles of volcanic area with agates sprinkled around. Bring your hammer, cracking hammer, squirt bottle, food, and

appropriate clothing & footwear. Again, all vehicles should have no trouble navigating the backroads, and some people camp out in the area.

The meeting place is the Lytton Esso on highway #1, at 10:00AM

The leader for this trip is David Hunter, 604-826-5303

As always, the trips may be changed, or due to weather or road conditions may be cancelled at the last minute. Please check the BC Lapidary Society web site for updates!

Summer Camp
Stuart River Campgrounds,
Fort St. James, BC
August 3 - 8, 2008

Fort St. James is located on the south-eastern shore of Stuart Lake, at the head of the Stuart River, 160 kilometres northwest of Prince George on Highway 27, off Highway 16 just west of Vanderhoof. One of the province's oldest communities, it originated as a trading post, established in 1806 by Simon Fraser for the North West Company. In 1821 it was taken over by the Hudson's Bay Company...

Tail-Gate Sale:
Last September we organized a Tail-Gate sale, originally planned to be held at the parking lot of the Hastings Community Center. Due to the Vancouver Civic Strike, the Hastings Community Center was closed…..so, I moved the Tail-Gate sale to a Burnaby community center, which just happened to be having their own Tail-Gate sale anywhere….

We had about 14 club members bring items out for the Tail-Gate sale, and we assisted in filling 41 of the 42 dealer spaces at the center. A big thank you to everyone who brought out items to sell! I'm calling this a success for a first time event, and I will organize another one for either the spring of 2008, or again in September, maybe both! I apologize if anyone missed the event due to the change of location.

As it turns out, the logistics of using the Burnaby center might work out in our favor. They have multiple events like this each year, and they asked us to participate in their "craft" oriented sale. They provided some people to bring out tables, and they managed the parking lot security and directing of traffic. The center had a food vendor , plus washrooms, handy for both the buyers, and the vendors!

More info to follow.

Discovery of Primary Deposit of Rubies Leads to Improved Prospecting Strategies

ScienceDaily (Dec. 13, 2007)
Ruby and sapphire formation occurs deep in the lithosphere in a regime of extremely high pressures and temperatures. Although it is known that most of these gem stones, classified as corundums, were torn from the Earth's crust by a magma generated in the mantle before being transported towards the surface, their exact origin is still uncertain. Thanks to a pooling of results from several international research teams, a databank for compiling the oxygen isotope concentration ratios, 18O/16O, for the corundums of all basaltic-type placers is now available.

This parameter contributes many indicators of the provenance of sapphires and rubies, but researchers still needed access to a primary deposit in order to identify the origin of these precious stones with absolute certainty. This last piece of the puzzle was recently put together by a joint research team from the IRD, the CNRS and the University of Antananarivo who discovered such a deposit of rubies in Madagascar.

Combination of this new field data with the oxygen isotope composition gave the geologists the possibility to determine exactly the origin of all the rubies and sapphires found in alkaline basalts. This information could enable geologists locally to trace the origin back up to the parent-rock and thus increase the possibilities of exploitation of these gem stone deposits.

Rubies and sapphires belong to the corundum mineralogical family. Corundums exist in a wide range of colours. They consist of aluminium oxide crystals containing impurities which give them with their various tints: titanium and iron for the blue of the sapphire, chromium and vanadium for the red of rubies. Humans have been captivated by the beauty of these precious stones for many centuries, yet the original environment of formation of some of them is still a matter for debate. This is especially the case for sapphires found in alkaline basalts, volcanic rocks from which most of the world's commercialized blue sapphires are extracted.

It is the extremely high pressures and temperatures prevailing several tens of kilometers deep in the Earth's crust which generated corundums. Rising magma then brought them up to the surface where the crystals accumulated following the erosion of the surrounding protective rock. Prospectors then find these stones in placers which correspond to sedimentary deposits. That explains why it is extremely difficult to determine the origin of these stones from secondary deposits.

Geologists have nevertheless been attempting for several years to go back up to the primary genesis of corundums, basing their search particularly on the isotope composition of the oxygen (18O/16O) trapped inside these crystals. Compilation of the results of several international teams enabled them to establish a databank of isotopic values for oxygen for the whole of the world's deposits of sapphires and

rubies found in alkaline basalts.

Yet although this parameter enables scientists to make progress towards revealing the genesis of these stones, geological study of a primary deposit is crucial for identifying unambiguously their provenance. In Madagascar, researchers at the University of Antananarivo, from the IRD and the CNRS recently gained access to a well preserved part of ruby bearing rock brought up by magma of mantle origin.

This discovery represents the link that geologists needed in order to confirm the nature of the host-rocks of rubies, and also of sapphires, found in the alkaline basalts. The study of samples taken from the site were successful in indicating the conditions in which these rubies were formed: extremely high pressure of 20 kbar and a temperature of around 1100°C, pointing to a depth of 60 km, were necessary for these precious stones to generate. By combining this new field data with oxygen isotope compositions determined for 150 sapphires from basaltic placers originating from 13 different countries, the geologists succeeded in identifying the precise source of all rubies and sapphires found in alkaline basalts.

In the great majority of cases, the cross-referencing and combining of all these results led to confirmation of the magmatic origin for the sapphires found in these rocks. This result corroborates those from previous studies focusing on the chemical composition of various glasses trapped by these sapphires and which are typical of magmatic environments. Moreover, the existence of sapphires bearing syenite xenoliths confirmed that these corundums were crystallized from a magma whose source was the mantle.

An unequivocal metamorphic origin was also determined for 20% of the sapphires and for all the rubies of basaltic origin, 62 different samples coming from deposits in Asia, Australia and Madagascar. In this second scenario, the parent-rock no longer originated from the mantle but from the deep continental crust in the transition zone between the crust and the mantle. This type of primary deposit is encountered in high pressure and temperature environments which form sizeable outcrops in the ancient basements as in Madagascar.

Understanding the genesis of the rubies and sapphires found in sedimentary deposits could therefore help in the determination of their geological origin and thus increase the possibilities for mining these gemstones. Downstream of the extraction stage, the process could also be envisaged as a method for controlling the trading circuits. However, unlike emeralds, for which this type of study comparing field analyses and isotopic measurements provides the elements for identifying both the geological origin and the geographic location of the primary deposit, sapphires can reveal only their geological origin. A peculiarity which will probably leave part of the mystery cloaking these fascinating stones still intact for many years to come.

From Science Daily online edition