

Minutes of the 01/18/05 Westside Board Meeting

Stu opened the meeting at 7:35PM

Kathy gave the treasurer's report

Old business:

Walker Valley Lease

The Mineral Council and DNR have agreed on the language in the lease for Walker Valley. The Mineral Council cannot reduce the \$100K auto liability, it must remain in the lease since it is the standard requirement on all DNR lands. A motion was m/s/p to have Stu and Mike Messenger sign off on the lease.

Ed Lehman received a small refund from our insurance company.

Bob Pattie wanted information on our liability insurance policy to pass along to the Boeing club.

New business:

Ed will need more maps for the Everett show. A motion was m/s/p to have Bob Pattie print 100 color maps by the next meeting. It was requested that the back cover sheet be a heavier stock for better wear.

Bob Pattie volunteered to serve the remainder of Stan Brook's term as trustee.

Gael Guerard of the Issaquah and East KingCo club volunteered to serve as our new secretary

The Emerald Creek star garnet collecting area in Idaho will close in one or two years. This is primarily for safety reasons since the area is becoming dangerous with overhangs and deep pits. A new area about a mile away is being considered as a replacement but the digging cannot take place in the creek as it has at the old site. The new site will have a sluice for screening the garnets. As more information becomes available it will be reported here.

Ed Thomas asked to have a detailed meeting agenda printed in the newsletter whenever possible, especially for the three combined meetings. This way the members will have an idea of the topics to be covered.

Wagonmaster's:

Ed presented the 2005 field trip list. It is very preliminary at this point and trips may be added or dropped in the coming months. The Mt Higgins trip will have to be earlier in the year since it is likely that August will be at a high fire danger.

Ed Lehman reported that the access to the Peek-a-Boo trail area may be getting higher priority. Apparently people have been asking when the road would be repaired and the state may be considering moving up the project.

Mike Messenger will be setting up a website for rockhounds to exchange information, rumors, and speculation about new, old, and "lost" collecting localities. It is hoped that this will become a central repository of current locality information.

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by Glenn Morita

True Blue Beryl

First there were diamonds in the early 1990s, then emeralds in 1998, and now deep velvety blue beryl in 2003! The gemstone discoveries in Canada just keep on coming.

A specimen of the new blue beryl was first found in 1976, but was not identified at the time. The rediscovery was made in August 2003 by Bill Wengzynowski, President of Archer Cathro & Associates, and Dr. Lee Groat, Professor of Earth Science at the University of British Columbia. Using research money from True North Gems Inc. and others, their team was out prospecting for more emerald localities when they came upon glittering blue rock bits. At the time, they were about 100 kilometers northwest of True North Gem's existing emerald project, Regal Ridge, in the Yukon Territories.

At first, the team's blue specimens were thought to be a second occurrence of maxixe beryl, first discovered in Brazil. However, physical test results showed that True Blue Beryl, unlike maxixe, is stable in the presence of light and does not fade over time. Also, Brazil's maxixe is almost pure $\text{Be}_3\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}$, and its color is due to natural irradiation. Canada's blue beryl is very high in iron, sodium, and magnesium, and its color is due to substitutions in the crystal lattice, probably of iron.

In fact, True Blue Beryl is a new type of aquamarine. However, compared to aquamarine, it is generally more blue, has higher refractive indices, greater specific gravity, different absorption spectra, and is very pleochroic. True Blue Beryl has the highest iron content reported for

beryl, or for gem beryl, for that matter.

Geologically, True North Gems describes the environment as “a swarm of closely-spaced quartz-carbonate-tourmaline veinlets that cut a Mississippian (320 Ma) fluorite-bearing syenite rock”. The veins range from 0.5 to 20 cm in thickness; the blue beryl crystals range up to 2.5 cm across. It appears that the beryl has replaced tourmaline! Not a bad trade, perhaps.

Sources:

“There Are Gems in Those Hills”, article by M. Munro in Regina Leader Post, 8/03.

“True Blue Beryl Fact Sheet”, on True North Gems Inc. website.

(Note: Pictures of small gem crystals of True Blue Beryl may be seen by going to the company website:

<http://www.truenorthgems.com/s/Home.asp> and clicking on “Photo Gallery” in the menu on the left of the screen. —Pegmatite Editor)

Via BEMS eTumbler 1/05 from The Pegmatite, 1/04

Trip to Timberwolf

By Spence Seymour

It was early morning hours and time was running short. Never being to this site, Deb and I finally made it to the summit at about 4 p.m. There must have been and simpler approach to the unit.

It seemed that all the road marker numbers were where they weren't supposed to be. Taking the Bethel Ridge Road seemed to be the right way. However, a mile or so in the road to me didn't seem to make sense, like it was taking us down instead of up in the direction of the sun where that tall mountain ridge was. After a few turn backs we seemed to be heading in the right direction. We made it to the top and found the spur road to Timberwolf.

We saw this enormous rock ridge to the north east of us and a forest service cabin on the left. We decided to go up into those rocks to collect. Not finding anything but a bucket full of clear calcite and one butterfly calcite, we decided to come down off the mount and make camp. That seemed to go pretty well and it is a good thing we had long johns on. At a little over 6,000 feet during August in the Cascades temperatures can drop into the 20's and snow sideways and up.

The next morning arrived. It is Sunday and we have just the early part of the day to find these beautiful Quartz Crystals with water inclusions. So we got out the map that Keith Ikerd had gave to me, only to realize that we were collecting on the opposite side of the mountain. I felt real stupid then, when the directions were in front of me the whole time.

We drove the car all the way to the top where the Timberwolf monuments stood. Looking down over the ridge it looked like to me that there had been some activity done in the past.

We drove on down about a quarter of a mile from the top, went over the bank to a trail and we just started digging. We found a vug and some very nice small quartz crystals on plates. They cleaned very well with Muriatic Acid.

Just down the mountain from where we collected is where the good stuff. It will be there next summer when we get there.

Not only is collecting fun and the air fresh to breath, Timberwolf provides a wide area to view and observe for mountain goats, mule deer, Rocky Mountain elk and migrating eagles, hawks and falcons.

Be sure to bring plenty of water and your camera.

from Quarry Gems 10/04

Metal Chunk on Mars Confirmed as Meteorite

* 18:20 18 January 2005

* NewScientist.com news service

* Kelly Young

The Opportunity rover has found the first meteorite on the surface of Mars, scientists confirmed to New Scientist on Tuesday.

Scientists first spotted the unusual pitted rock sitting by itself near the rover's discarded heat shield earlier in January. An instrument that measures thermal emissions scanned the rock from afar and it appeared to be made from metal, suggesting it was a meteorite.

Then, on 15 January, Opportunity extended its instrument arm to the rock. It used its Mossbauer spectrometer to confirm that the rock was made of iron and nickel, showing that it must indeed be a meteorite that had fallen from the sky.

"This is a wonderful surprise," says the rovers' lead scientist, Steve Squyres, at Cornell University, New York, US. "I didn't see this one coming."

Prior to the NASA mission, engineers had not foreseen the need to test the rovers' grinding tools on meteorites. In recent days, Honeybee Robotics, which made the grinding tool, conducted the first tests on an iron-nickel meteorite borrowed from the American Museum of Natural History in New York. After an hour of grinding, one-quarter of the grinding head had worn away.

For that reason, Squyres said they would not use the real tool on the Martian meteorite. The tool is usually used to remove the dust and outer layers of rocks to unmask their underlying features.

Moving on

The concentration of meteorites on the Meridiani plains - where Opportunity has roamed since January 2004 - will reflect how active the surface processes are, as these would cover the rocks from space.

If researchers can find more meteorites, they may learn more about the erosion and movement of surface materials. Opportunity will now head south, where many small rocks litter the surface.

On the other side of Mars, Opportunity's twin rover, Spirit, has not seen any rocks that appear to be meteorites. But only about 2% of the meteorites found on Earth are made of iron and nickel - the rest are made of rock, making them harder to discern against a background of other rocks.

Squyres told New Scientist that the rovers may already have passed meteorites without knowing it. "There're so many rocks there," Squyres says, "I don't think we've really gone through our images."

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