



Next issue deadline: August 10, 2025
 Upcoming meetings: Friday, September 26, 2025
 Friday, June 27, 2025 (social)
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2025 Hastings Centre Rockhounds Vancouver Buildings' Tour

by Paul Pinsker

After the 2014 and 2018 tours of fine stonework in Vancouver's Downtown, another such expedition was conducted on May 27, 2025, led by HCR club's Paul Pinsker. Note, for brevity (and a lack of photos) some buildings seen on the itinerary are not included herewith.

Vancouver Block Building

Commencing adjacent to Granville Mall and Georgia Street, the eager group needed only to cross Granville to our first stop: the Vancouver Block Building. Completed in 1912, this is a fine example of Edwardian Commercial style. With two facades clad in ivory-toned terra cotta, a two-story penthouse (owner's residence), ornately- detailed cornice, and crowning clock tower, the upper reaches resemble a wedding cake! Terra cotta was popular as it was easy to form into sculptural reliefs, yet has the appearance of cut stone - and glazing could be applied to achieve a chosen tone. Neon elements decorating the clock were added in 1927. The interior boasts marble-panelled walls and marble ceilings and staircases. Also present are contrasting green marble trim and terrazzo flooring and tile patterning.



Vancouver Block Building

The Hudson's Bay Department Store

The Hudson's Bay department store, permanently closing at the end of May, lay nearby across Georgia Street. The mammoth structure was built in stages, first in 1914 with five bays along Georgia and eight bays along Seymour, only achieving its scale in 1927. Our tour focused on the mid-block entrance along Granville. Though secured with a metal grate, the ornate staircase leading to the ground floor displays some of the city's finest, most decorative Tyndall stone panelling. Tyndall stone is a burrow-mottled, fossiliferous limestone found near Winnipeg and more easily found on the prairies.

British Canadian Securities Building

The British Canadian Securities Building, at 402 West Pender Street, has been faithfully restored to its 1912 origin. It has an interesting history of bank battles and court rulings. Now it is an office building, with limited accessibility. The mid-rise (nine storeys) is in the "Chicago Style" with three sections: stone base (granite foundation and trim of Bedford stone

In this newsletter you can expect:

May recap

Vancouver fine-
stone building
walking tour

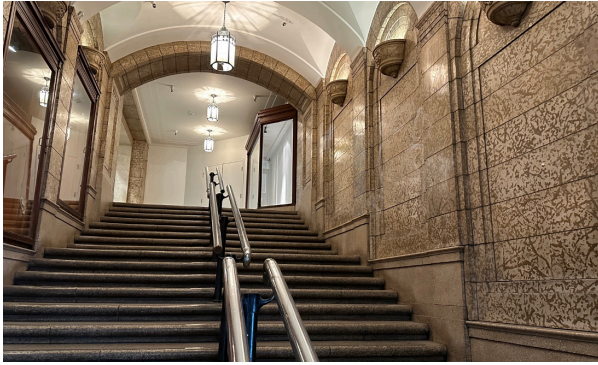
Next up!

Silversmithing
Adventure

Summer break



2025 Hastings Centre Rockhounds Vancouver Buildings' Tour, continued...



Tyndall stone panelling of the Granville Street entrance to
The Bay (now closed)



Foyer of British Canadian Securities Building



Former bank (see vault at rear), now special space for private
events, "The Permanent".

"The Permanent"

At 330 West Pender Street is a neoclassical temple bank opened in 1907 to house the BC Permanent Loan Company. It later served as the Vancouver Branch of the Bank of Canada. In 2013 the building began restoration to become an "event centre"; the building's high quality materials, inside and out, were retained....such as sandstone cladding, reinforced concrete, marble wall treatment, stained glass, and patterned tile flooring. Though "The Permanent" is reserved for private events, we were fortunate to be allowed a look inside since a sympathetic crew was preparing for one.

Dominion Building

From the corner of Pender and Hamilton Streets, our group was able to see two of Vancouver's landmark heritage buildings which we had been able to tour in 2014. Unfortunately, due to security concerns for the revamped private offices, we were unable to arrange clearance to have our tour get inside either the red, mansard-roofed Dominion Building, in 1910 the "Tallest Building in the British Empire", or the domed Vancouver Sun Building, which grabbed the title upon completion in 1912. It is too bad, because these edifices employed high-quality materials, fitting their stature, for columns, facades, ornamentation, etc. The introduction of elevators allowed the designers to dare going to new heights.



The Dominion Building, a red and gold confection

Vancouver Sun Building

The Vancouver Sun Building, originally built for the Vancouver World newspaper, was renamed so in 1937 when purchased by the Vancouver Sun.....Charles Marega of Vancouver sculpted the 9 nude muses supporting the cornice (which scandalized the city).



2025 Hastings Centre Rockhounds Vancouver Buildings' Tour, continued...



The Vancouver Sun Building



The Royal Bank, Hastings and Granville. Grand, highly-carved entrance



Moon Journey, gracing the lobby of Vancouver's Trade & Convention Centre

Royal Bank

The Royal Bank at the corner of Hastings and Granville, a towering mix of Art Deco and Neo-Romanesque design, is a star on every tour. Many consider its main floor banking hall to be the most beautiful interior in the city. It was completed in 1931 and features an elaborately decorated interior, with varied types of marble, travertine flooring, and walls of Indiana limestone. The exterior is comprised of Nelson Island granite at the base and, above, Haddington Island stone (andesite) which many consider the finest building stone available for its durability and ease of profiling or carving. This stone was primary for the Provincial legislature in Victoria and for the local Hotel Vancouver.

Five Sails / Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre

The original Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, aka the "Five Sails" is a hub of downtown activity, visited by myriads of travelers from around the world. So, it is fitting that it be decorated and enhanced by some of the city's finest public works of art. For the 2010 Winter Olympics the lower lobby added a most significant work of West Coast First Nation art, by renown local artist Susan Point. Her "Moon Journey" holds great symbolism for First Nations. Granites are used to portray four whales circling the moon, with dorsal fins doubling as ravens. The number "four" has great significance, representing the four seasons, the primary directions, and the elements – earth, wind, water, and fire.



Fine marble finishings, Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel



2025 Hastings Centre Rockhounds Vancouver Buildings' Tour, continued...



Lobby of the Marine Building, showing elaborate ceiling carving

The Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel

The Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel, the landmark hotel/condominium project by James Cheng Architects, was completed just in time for Vancouver's Olympics of 2010. Some rank it the #1 city hotel in Canada. As so, it is not surprising that it is highly embellished by its finishes and furnishings. Exotic stone treatments are featured, even in the washrooms. Exquisite marble is to be found, such as along the main lobby corridor, whose wall is lined with huge panels of bianco statuario marble from Italy and prepared in China in "book-matching style". The lobby fireplace, check-in desk and other locations show off the black and white zebra marble from China.

The Marine Building

The Marine Building is widely acclaimed as the favourite heritage building in Vancouver. Designed in Art Deco style, lavishly ornamented inside and out, it was completed in 1930 : "the tallest building in the British Empire" (again). As such, elevators were of the highest speed, five times the norm. With the onset of the Great Depression, though, occupancy lagged and the owners tried (and failed) to sell the building to become the new City Hall. Stone, terra cotta, brass, wood, plaster, and glass all feature artistically in the building, most noticeably on a maritime theme. Many designs in the lobby are of marble and/or travertine.



"The Exchange"

The exterior base consists of polished granodiorite from Kelly Island, just off the north tip of Sechelt Peninsula, while the tower is largely of brick.

"The Exchange"

Final stop on the tour was at "The Exchange", site of Vancouver's Old Stock Exchange Building, a 1929 heritage gem, now sprouting a 31-storey office tower. This was nixed from our 2014 tour due to restoration/construction. The old portion is in "modernist gothic" style, clad in terra cotta and brick on a granodiorite base. The compact original barrel vault lobby sports intricate gilt and painted stonework featuring heraldry and other emblems of medieval England, while the ceiling features shields of the provinces and territories. Conservators "brought back" the hidden details of the westerly gable. Walls are faced with polished Tyndall stone from Manitoba. Visitors should also view the public artwork "WAFT", a wavy-patterned flooring of contrasting stone that extends from the large new office lobby right outside to the curb.

Special thanks go out to all who attended: Manda, Vera, Al, Mina, Samiko & husband (and T.J., not pictured above) and particularly all who submitted photos for this article: John Guest, Manda Mok, Mina Kalatita, and me. Thanks in advance to Rocket Editor, Nancy Nesbitt, and anyone who likes this article! Til next time, Paul





Lapidary Friday Night Instructor Selfie!

photo credit: Richard

Visit our workshops and learn from our blindingly-talented instructors!

Remember to visit our [website](#) to confirm workshop scheduling, and monitor your HCR email for last-minute changes.

Schedule

Monday (6:30 pm – 9:30 pm) – **Lapidary**

Instructor: Jo or Renee

Wednesday (9 am – 12 pm) – **Silversmithing***

Instructor: Robert

Wednesday (1 pm – 4 pm) – **Lapidary**

Instructor: David and Steve

Thursday (6:30 pm – 9:30 pm) – **Lapidary**

Instructors: Tim and Daniel

NEW Friday (1 pm – 4:30 pm) – **Lapidary**

Instructors: Richard and Al

*SUMMER - TIME CHANGE Saturday (10 am – 12 pm) –

Silversmithing*

Instructors: Crystal and Robert

*SUMMER - NO Saturday **Lapidary**

Alternate Lapidary instructors are Linda and Alex.

Please note that the schedule is subject to change based on instructor availability. Changes are often announced by email.

***Beginners to Silversmithing** are asked to [contact Crystal](#) before attending. Instruction is available only at the Saturday session and there is a \$35 beginners kit with supplies needed for silversmithing.

workshop rules and regulations



BCLS Membership has its privileges...

Your HCR membership includes a BCLS membership. This is important! To participate in upcoming rockhounding expeditions, you will need to show your BCLS membership card. We also recommend that you visit the [BCLS website](#) for upcoming rock and gem shows from other clubs across the province.

Unfortunately, I missed both the May 19th, 2025 AGM and Auction, as well as the June 14th Abbotsford Rock & Gem Club Outdoor Tailgate and Garage Sale - please [email me](#) photos!

Next up:
1120 Rock Club and Vernon Lapidary and Mineral Club Okanagan Rock and Gem Show
July 11, 12 & 13, 2025
Kelowna, BC [Show Website](#)

Fraser Valley Rock & Gem Club
Tailgate Sale
August 10, 2025
Sunday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Royal Canadian Legion Parking Lot
26607 Fraser Highway, Aldergrove, BC

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club
Rock, Gem, & Jewelry Market
September 13, 2025
Albion Fairgrounds
23588 Jim Robson Way Maple Ridge, BC

Fraser Valley Rock & Gem Club
Annual Rock & Gem Show
September 20 & 21, 2025
Aldergrove Kinsmen Community Centre
26770-29th Avenue
Aldergrove, BC



June Birthstones: Pearl, Alexandrite and Moonstone

Summarized from GIA Education:

It's amazing that something so beautiful results from an irritation to its tissue - but that's how these organic gems are formed! We are grateful to Mother Nature for providing pearls and they are also created through manmade means and "come in a dazzling array of sizes, colors and shapes"

The properties associated with pearls are: purity, humility and innocence. They are also believed to "bestow long life and prosperity."

Pearls are 2.5 to 3.0 on the [Mohs Scale](#) of hardness - comparatively soft - store carefully to prevent scratching and never in a plastic bag — plastic can emit a chemical that will damage their surface.

"Alexandrite is the rare variety of the mineral chrysoberyl that changes color in different lighting. First discovered in Russia's Ural Mountains in the early 1800s, this gem was named after Alexander II (1818–1881).

Alexandrite is said to assist with balance, clarity and prosperity as well as potentially enhancing intuition and creativity.

Relatively hard—8.5 on the Mohs scale, it has excellent toughness and no cleavage therefore it is a good choice for rings and other mountings subject to daily wear. Easy to clean with warm, soapy water, ultrasonic and steam cleaners are usually safe as well.

"Moonstone is the best-known gem of the feldspar group of minerals. It is renowned for its adularescence, the light that appears to billow across a gemstone, giving it a special glow." This glowing beauty is "often associated with love, passion and fertility" and is also believed to bring one good luck.

"Moonstone is a 6–6.5 on the Mohs scale of hardness and has poor toughness. It may crack when exposed to high heat. Therefore, ultrasonic and steam cleaners should not be used on your moonstone. The best option for cleaning is warm, soapy water with a soft brush."

May HCR Meeting Notes:

Renee, provided Treasurer's report.

Sara, Programs - Bob to give Part 2 of his rock identification workshop after the evening's business is complete. June's meeting will be a social and members are to bring their own plates and snacks to share - the club will provide wine. The plan is for a Trivia Night with prizes and a bottle draw.

Friday, August 15 - proposed night to visit Crystal Works. Details to follow...

New email address events.hcr@gmail.com

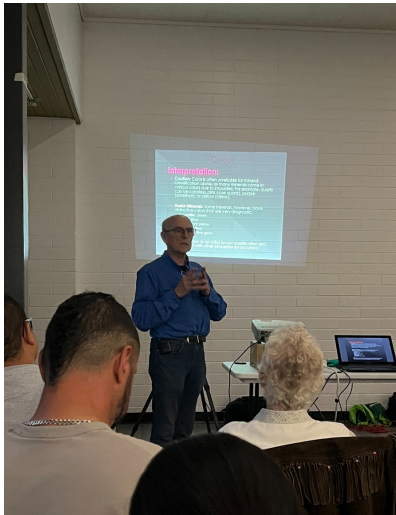
Update to come re Harley's Flint Knapping workshop.

Linda and Board: Suggested and passed - a summer barbecue to be hosted Sunday, August 24th at Trout Lake in the under-cover area. 4:00 - 9:30 p.m. Bring something to barbecue and share. Families welcome.

HCR Tailgate: Suggested and passed - a club tailgate event Saturday, July 19 in the lower parking lot of Hastings Community Centre. The idea is that club members will pay a nominal fee (suggested between \$35 and \$75) to sell their wares off the back of their vehicle or set up a table in their allotted parking spot. Details to follow.

Nickell, Memberships - 247 total members plus 7 new members at June meeting. 75 signed in. Reminder that HCR will host Rendezvous 2026. Contact Nickell if you wish to participate on the organization committee.

Bob delivered the second part to his Mineral Identification talk. Please see Bob for a copy of his handout. He covered quite a bit of ground! Perhaps he will permit you to review his slides if you missed the May session.



Member Submissions

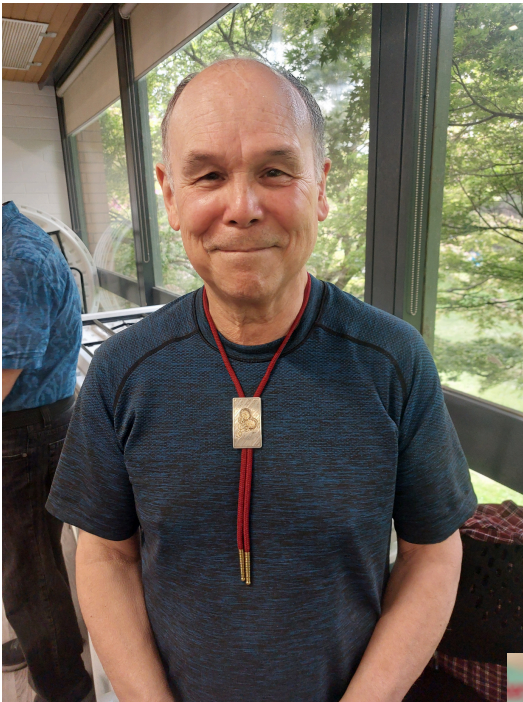


Thanks to Richard for always taking the time to send photos in for our viewing pleasure!

Here's "David's Lightshow"

Ask David how he backlights these beautiful pieces to get that glorious glow... Sorry that this photo isn't particularly clear - but maybe he'll set up at our upcoming Tailgate and you can check these out in person?

There may be a new sheriff? Or at minimum, the bolos are back in town! Watch for members breaking out the bolos at our June social! Mike is featured below (Left) sporting one of his creations, and the tie below (Right), came with the description "from Carmel, California." So, you will have to ask Richard for more details...



What will your bolo tie look like?
Make something special and
share! We'd love to see your
cool creations...



Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway...

Submitted by: Nancy

Many years ago, I had the pleasure of taking a series of Silversmithing classes at Mountain Gems. It was awesome to finally learn some techniques that I'd wondered about since childhood! My dad owned a fishing tackle plant, and we used to go into the shop every weekend and polish dodgers, paint lures, and assemble all kinds of interesting pieces. My fascination with all things silver and shiny began at a very, young age!

After Mountain Gems, I stalled... I had completed a few rings, but could not quite figure out how to continue the craft without a lot of expense and/or hassle (I lived in a small apartment with my two daughters so space was a premium). Fast-forward a few decades later, and I discover the Hastings Centre Rockhounds. WOW! Here was an opportunity to drop in when it was convenient. Pay a nominal fee for the pleasure. Gain access to all sorts of tools and gadgets. But best of all? This took place in a friendly, quiet environment. This inspired me to make one more ring. But I still wanted to challenge myself and create something unique- but wasn't exactly sure

what that might look like. Midori mentioned that she was registered to take a class with Robyn of Little Rock Jewellery Studios. I checked out her [website](#) and immediately signed up for a two-finger-ring class. Admittedly, I was a little nervous, but workshop drop-ins with Crystal and friendly HCR members had encouraged me to take a risk. And I'm happy to report - I completed the project within the allotted time and I'm pretty happy with it! Yes, it's a bit rough around the edges. Sure, there is a slight gap in one of the solders and my polishing could have gone on for longer and with more finesse. But folks, I finished what I started! Which for a 64-year-old, ADHD craft maniac is an accomplishment. I have more projects started than you can shake a stick at - and I'm constantly getting bored with one thing and leapfrogging to the next. So please celebrate this win with me. Here are a few photos for context.

Oh, and ask Midori to show you her locket! She attended an earlier workshop and created a gorgeous and intricate piece that I want to attempt the next time Robyn comes to town. Thanks for listening! I hope you will face your fears and try some new techniques soon.



*Thank you for reading!
next issue deadline: August 10, 2025*

THE ROCKET	HASTINGS CENTRE ROCKHOUNDS
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