

THE ROCKET

February 2018

email: Edrocket18@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

February 22, 2018 7:30pm at Hastings Community Center
(but arrive 7 ish for some social time and set up)

Programs Coming up:

February: Sunstones by Gunter Otto

March: Rockhounds Quiz (with prizes) by Paul Pinsker and Linda Foy-presenter
Plus Show-and-Tell (bring your treasures)

Our Annual Gem and Mineral show is coming up. Spread the word, Volunteer and we'll see you there! *Contact Sante for more information.*

HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTRE ROCKHOUNDS Presents



Fossils
Workshops
Spin & Win
Door Prizes
Food
FUN FUN FUN
Bring the kids!

Books
Minerals
Gemstones
Education
Beads
Meteorites
and more!

Gem & Mineral show 2018

March 17-18 BY DONATION 3096 E Hastings St. Vancouver 10 am - 5 pm

Photograph by Stephen Nightingale

WE ARE CELEBRATING! Our Club is 60 this year.

In 1958 our club was formed as a new lapidary club in our neighbourhood.

The Hastings Centre was interested in having our club in the neighbourhood and as part of the centre. Their director, Len Ryan, also expressed a desire that the Hastings Centre be associated with the new name of the club and we became the Hastings Centre Rockhounds.



The colours of our crest “red and green were chosen as being suitable because of the season our club was organized” (between October and the following January).

You saw some of this information in January, but it is worth repeating this year, so we know our club. There is more club history covered in Linda's article on Gem Trees.

PROJECTS -- WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE WORKING ON

This month featuring **Gem Trees by Linda Foy**



When I first joined our hobby club it was very active with all sorts of events and workshops. There were outings all the time and people phoned each other via phone trees to keep each other up to date with all the happenings and to keep contact with each other. There were soapstone carving, enamelling, silversmithing, and gem tree making sessions if not weekly, then monthly (when there was enough interest and an instructor available). We also had regular lapidary sessions.

One interesting aspect of our hobby is that of gem tree making. Ruth Crump used to teach it when I first joined. She had been a long time member, was the president at the time, and had held many other positions. The way she taught us was the quite difficult 'old school' method and it took patience and dexterity along with a few math skills to keep track of the branches. The result was quite stunning, and you can keep adding more branches to make a tall tree. A long time past member of our club, Norma Gill, made many trees like this and has shown them for years in our show. She has also taught the process in our club. When I have taught gem tree making in our workshop I also include this challenging method in the course.

I found the 'old school' method to be very hard on my hands and became frustrated with the process. I thought that there has to be a better way to make the trees that can be simplified. I spent lots of time practicing and experimenting with wire and over time came up with a more simple process. This is quite a few years ago now, but the result was quite cute trees that were about 8 inches max. This is because they were made from one piece of wire; so the size of the tree was determined by the length of wire. The wire was folded and twisted and sometimes it



was quite hilarious because I would get my whole body involved! Sometimes the wire would be four or five times the length of my body and I would brace the wire under my foot to keep it in line!

Over time the method became more defined and refined until I was happy with the results. I would make the 'frame' first and glue on the stones later; there were many times I would go on field trips just to look for 'tree bases'

I would make hundreds of little ones each year for the various gem shows in the metro Vancouver area and I found that people would pick them up by the branch and the little stones would come off. This was especially true when the 527 glue that I used changed their formula.

I contemplated how to keep the stones from falling off and I thought "why can't I use beads"? With

experimenting and trial and error I developed my present 'style' of tree making. There are others doing the same or similar in concept. Now, I still make lots of trees for 'give-aways', and it is very satisfying to know that at least the stones are staying on (or in) the branches. I sell some trees too and most of my friends and family have one in their homes. I experiment with different types of wire and the types of stones available. I am willing to have another gem tree making 'course' if members would like to learn. It is fun and quite satisfying to make a wonderful little tree.



Editor's note: I hope to have a member's project in each edition. This is our newsletter and I would like it to be about our club. Are you tackling an interesting project or do you know someone working on one? Please let me know so we can feature their work in our newsletter.

Workshop Hours

Lapidary:	Monday	6:30pm – 9:30pm
	Wednesday	1:00pm – 4:00pm
	Thursday	6:30pm – 9:30pm
	Saturday	1:00pm – 4:00pm
Metalwork:	Monday	9am - 1pm
	Sunday	10am – 1pm
Silversmithing:	Wednesday	9:00am – 12:00 noon
	Saturday	9:00am – 12:00 noon

What is happening in our Workshops:

Metalworks - in the Beginning.

At last we have arrived and are ready to move metal using Brass/Copper sheet/wire.

We will be exploring the use of Hydraulic Press to form curvatures, press patterns, die strike Indian stamps and even cut and press out intricate items, through the use of pancakes dies. We have already made synclastic and anticlastic bracelets which have been textured through the use of hammers and the rolling mill. Each week we try to introduce a new idea and technique. So far so good...it'll take time to build up the confidence and to learn to share ideas. But we'll get there!

Some of the techniques we will be exploring are: corrugation, etching, roll milling and fold forming. Through the use of anvils/stakes and dapping tools we can duplicate the outcomes from the use of the Hydraulic Press through alternative techniques. I used to say that one could form a curved bracelet from a wood plank/ wood doming block /steel sinusoidal stakes/broad stakes and a telephone book. The fact is you can. It's not always about the tool, more so it's more about the person interacting with the tool.

Our classes are: Sunday 10:00 AM - 1:15 PM and Mondays 09:00 AM - 1:30 PM. And remember there are SilverSmithing classes on Saturdays at 9:15 AM-12:15 and Wednesdays 09:00- 12:00 PM. You might also find me there on the Wednesday SilverSmithing classes because it's Open Studio-time where you can work at your leisure. This is an Instructor-less Open-Studio time. This shop time has also been allocated for Copper/Brass metals, but you should bring your own tooling because we don't want to mix Silver tooling with Copper/Brass metals tooling. If I am there you can use my tools, which I carry with me always- even to Church...

So join us when you have time. Drop in for a chat with people in the shop. I'll give you an over-view of the shop and its presumings...

michael ma

Custodian of the Tools

Upcoming Events of Interest:

Rendezvous : May 18 – 21, Rock Creek, BC - hosted by Penticton Geology and Lapidary Club. At our last meeting Verne recommended registering early, especially for the limited Rock Candy Mine Field Trip. <http://www.bclapidary.com/Rendez.html>

Shows:

February 24 & 25, 2018 Maple Ridge Lapidary Club, Pitt Meadows, BC

March 10 & 11, 2018 Alberni Valley Rock & Gem Club Port Alberni, BC

March 17 & 18, 2018 Hastings Centre Rockhounds, Vancouver, BC

April 6, 7 & 8, 2018 BC Gem Show, Abbotsford, BC

April 14 & 15, 2018 Courtenay Gem & Mineral & Parksville Rock Club Courtenay, BC

April 28 & 29, 2018 Richmond Gem & Mineral Club, Richmond, BC Pitt Meadows, BC

April 6, 7 & 8, 2018

Annual

BC GEM SHOW

and **Tailgate Sale**, Saturday April 7 only
10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Ag-Rec Bldg., CFV Fairgrounds
32470 Haida Dr., Abbotsford, BC

Friday: 10am - 8pm

Saturday: 10am - 6pm

Sunday: 10am - 5pm

Over 40 Dealers

with

Beads, Crystals, Minerals, Gifts
& supplies for the lapidary hobby
as well as Educational & Club Displays,
Demonstrations, Children's activities, Gold
Panning, & Door Prizes

Adults - \$6, Students (6-17) - \$2,

Under 6, Free (accompanied by an adult)

Club Interest: Last month a member inquired about a rock with Green Bay Packer colours for a project. Our club came through! Judy sent a message about Madagascar Ocean Jasper that she has worked with.



And Verne suggested Green banded agate that often has yellow bands. Great Club!

[Here is a follow up on Last Month's Birthstone – Garnets.](#)

Garnets and Olivine are indicator minerals of Kimberlite, the diamond bearing rock that is commercially mined in Canada and elsewhere.

Geologists look for G10 Garnets and follow them back to their source and hope the Kimberlite holds diamonds. This is the exploration process for Diamonds in Canada's North.

2018 Summer Camp Information



We are pleased to announce that the 2018 Summer Camp will be taking place August 6 - August 11, 2018 at Takysie Lake, BC.

For those of you who have yet to experience it, Summer Camp is an opportunity for BCLS members from all over the province to gather, socialize and rockhound in a different area of the province.

Generally, it is four days of organized field trips and five nights of social activities. The Lakes District Rock and Gem Club has again graciously agreed to co-host the event with the BCLS at Takysie Lake, about an hour south of Burns Lake, after last year's event was cancelled due to forest fires. A few members braved the smoke and closed highways last August to check out the area, and were very happy with the resort and the lapidary materials available in the area.

More information about this year's Summer Camp and facilities information can be found by viewing the two links below. Please pre-register with Phillip Crewe by phone or by email before-hand so we have an idea of numbers. Phillip can be reached at 604-526-3045, or by ... this email. (paukenmeister@gmail.com)

General Event Information:

https://gallery.mailchimp.com/dca3433691ff359f6a1513a59/files/117de701-1ac5-48fe-a641-a38828d4e7be/2018_summer_camp_information.pdf

Facilities Information:

https://gallery.mailchimp.com/dca3433691ff359f6a1513a59/files/c9556e4e-055a-4030-9689-689549b275ba/2018_summer_camp_facilities.pdf

Regards,

Phillip Crewe

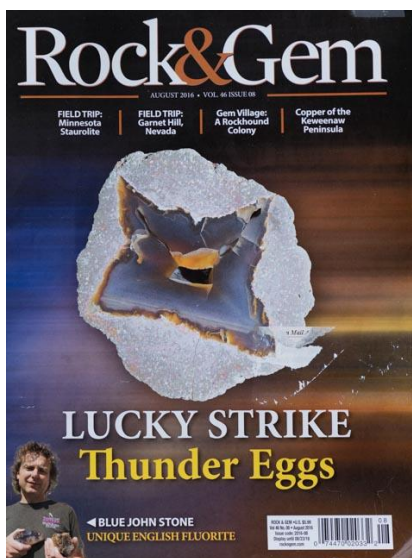
Summer Camp Team

Rockhounding and Field Trips

A Lucky Strike High in Central Oregon

by Paul Pinsker

The cover article of the August 2016 issue of Rock & Gem magazine convinced me that I just had to try my luck 2400m (8000ft) high in the Ochoco Mountains northeast of Prineville, Oregon. My quarry was a bucket of thunder eggs from the Lucky Strike Mine.



Cover of Rock & Gem Magazine, August 2016

Last June wife Joyce and I were coming from the east along US26, having enjoyed the sunset spectacle of the Painted Hills at the John Day Fossil Beds the day before. And before seeing the Painted Hills, I had popped in to see mine-owner Cindy at her place in Mitchell to get directions to the Lucky Strike. In case I struck out at the mine, I bought one-half an egg (and some Blue Mountain Jasper slabs) from Cindy's display.

You can call (541) 462-3073 to check on road conditions, route advice and mine hours, but generally the mine is open daily mid-May to mid-November from 8 to 5. The maps available are of variable usefulness; in our 4WD high-clearance X-Trail we reached the mine with no trouble in about 45 minutes from the turnoff at Mile 49 on US26. We took the Forest Road 250 "shortcut" and it was an adventure – just part of the experience.

Staff up at the Lucky Strike were very helpful, providing equipment, tips on how to extract thunder eggs and, for first-timers, which eggs are most promising. The light snow falling as I began soon gave way to bright sunshine. With a pointed-tip hammer/chisel, in one-hour at the working face I filled two buckets with a baker's dozen of "promising" eggs. At one dollar per pound I paid \$25US.

Before leaving, we were given directions on the best route (under an hour via FR 2745) down to Prineville. There we visited the Quaint Rock Shop and purchased a couple of uncut White Fir Springs eggs and a polished tile of rare Biggs Jasper (Joyce's choice).

There were many exciting moments throughout the summer at our Club's workshop as I sawed the eggs in half; you never know what you will get! Fortune smiled as the Lucky Strikes yielded a variety of colours and patterns, and an absence of fractures.



Paul working at the Lucky Strike Mine

Before sawing, the rhyolite exteriors must be wire-brushed to remove all loose material. Then each egg is sawn in two in the most promising direction by assessing its shape and clues to its interior. Prior to flat-lapping, each “half” must be smoothed around the rim via the grinding wheel, thoroughly wire-brushed to ensure no grit spalls off, then sealed with stabilizer (I used Opticon) and allowed to dry. Beyond the 600 disk I completed the polishing process on our arbors up to the 50,000 level for best results. All phases of this process were most satisfying, and provided fine souvenirs of Oregon’s natural treasures.

Photos: Joyce Pinsker



Results from processing the thunder eggs. The specimens shown are from the Lucky Strike Mine, except the three from White Fir Springs at upper left.

If you’ve been out [Rockhounding](#) or on [a Field Trip](#) in the last couple of years and have something to show we’d like to hear about it. You don’t have to share your secret site but we’d like to know about your finds. If you do have a place you can tell us about we could have some great club sharing.

If you know of someone you’d like us to feature, let me know your suggestions and I can follow up with them.

Thanks, Roz (Editor). Edrocket18@gmail.com



Picture source: <https://www.amazon.com/rockcloud-Amethyst-Decoration-Gemstone-Specimen/dp/B01LZF0PHW>

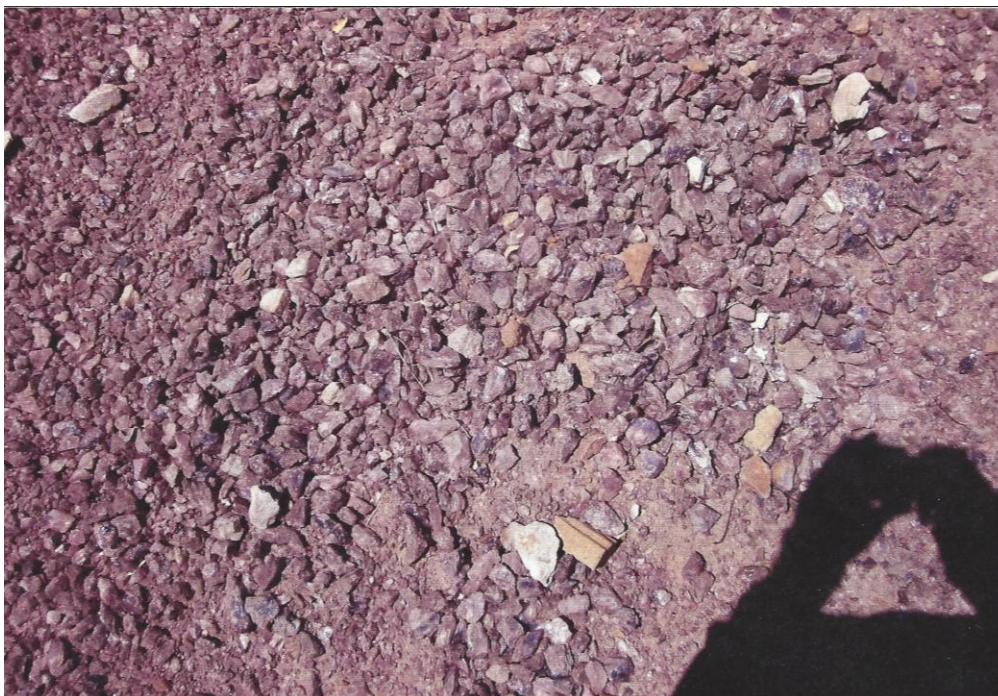
Amethyst is the traditional birthstone for February across many cultures and is recognized as the birthstone for the zodiac sign of Pisces (22 February – 21 March). It is the gemstone for a Wednesday birthdate and a 6th Wedding anniversary. Amethyst is also suggested as an alternate choice for a 4th or 17th wedding anniversary.

Ancient Greeks believed Amethyst protected the wearer from drunkenness and kept the wearer clear headed and quick-witted. The Bible mentions amethyst as one of the 12 gemstones adorning the breastplate of the high priests created during the Exodus.

Amethyst is a variety of quartz with colour ranging deep purple to a light lilac and is usually free of inclusions. It is a 7 on the Mohs hardness scale so it resists most wear. Amethysts don't like thermal shock so don't heat them to high temperatures as they can change colour or break. Don't use steamers either. Amethysts can also fade over time in direct sunlight.

As Rockhounds we are probably more interested in where Amethyst can be found. Brazil and Uruguay are the world's leading sources producing some of the finest stones with the deepest, longest lasting colours. Amethyst can be found in Arizona and North Carolina. According to an article by Bradley S Wilson called Gemstone Occurrences in British Columbia, Amethyst is found in BC in the Slocan Valley near Nelson (light) and near Lemon Creek (pale to medium purple). The Geological Museum at UBC is supposed to have a 10.19 carat, pale coloured amethyst from the Terrace area.

Lapidary Journal and Jewelry Artist, December 2013 issue has an article by Alan Korwin about travelling to a remote site with difficult and restricted access to an Amethyst mine 50 miles outside of Phoenix, Arizona. The area may have been worked since the 18th century Spanish explorers. This picture and caption is from the article. Can you imagine a garden path of this?



Walking on amethyst. Yes, you read that right and your eyes are not deceiving you. My hand-held camera shadow in the corner gives a sense of scale, and this stretches off many yards in all directions. Lower grade crystals have been discarded for years making driveway gravel of gemstones.