

THE ROCKET

February 2024

deadline for next issue
March 8, 2024

Club email: secretary.hrc@gmail.com
Newsletter email: Edrocket18@gmail.com
Roz MacLean – editor

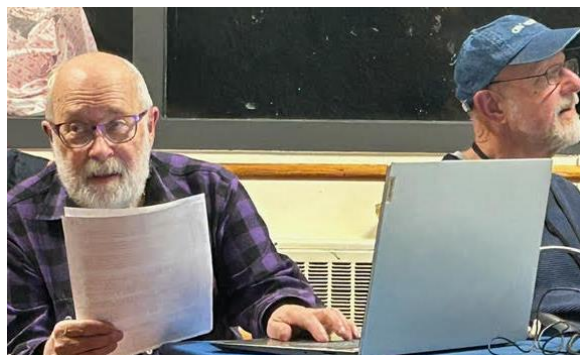
Future Meetings: Our monthly meetings are on the fourth Friday of the month.

Next Meeting: Friday – February 23 at 7PM
at Hastings Community Center Hall

This meeting can be a “hybrid meeting.” For those unable to attend in person, please contact our secretary, Crystal, for a zoom link for the meeting.

Program (February 23)

Oliver Harwood has been working with stone for 30 years as a sculptor and will share some insights into working large scale, tool use and some of the interesting stories along the way. Attending Art school in Halifax, he first experienced the joys and challenges of working stone. Soon he was in Italy, carving at marble studios and enjoying the fine food and wine. Oliver has completed several public art pieces, has taught many stone carving courses and runs a sculpture studio in East Vancouver. He will bring some of the tools he works with to the meeting.



Program from last meeting (January 26)

David Myers and Paul Pinsker showed us how they are creating microphotography using two different microscopes (USB or wireless) and their rock samples.

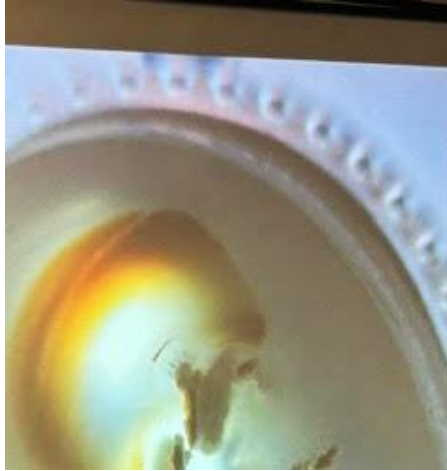
David Myers makes “rock art” photographic prints from deep inside his rock samples. Using the microscope camera, he can focus on different phenomena within his samples. He tries many photography variables such as unlit, lit, natural colour, colour adjusted or reverse colour. David showed us how each

technique can change the look of a rock sample. We saw many wonderful and even other-worldly looking photos, and learned about another way of viewing our own samples.

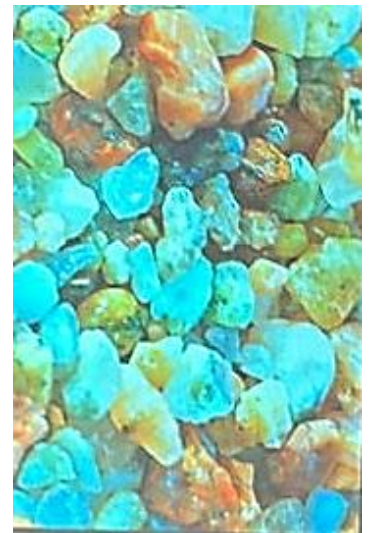
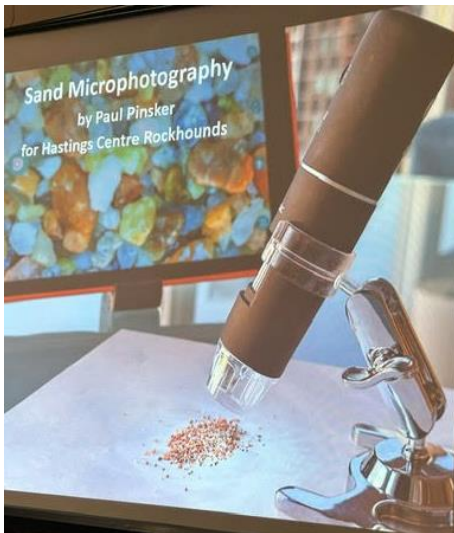
Paul Pinsker uses microphotography on sand from various locations. He showed us yet another way to look at the huge range of earth’s treasures. Paul’s photos showed us different types of sand and which rock particles are giving us the colour and texture of the sample. Sand is a specialized sub-hobby of rockhounding that was featured in Rock & Gem Magazine in July 2023. Paul told us there is an International Sand Collectors Society and even The Sand Paper. We saw some amazing photos of microscopic rocks, collected by Paul, from around the world.

For more photos see next page. *Photos by Tim Haslam*

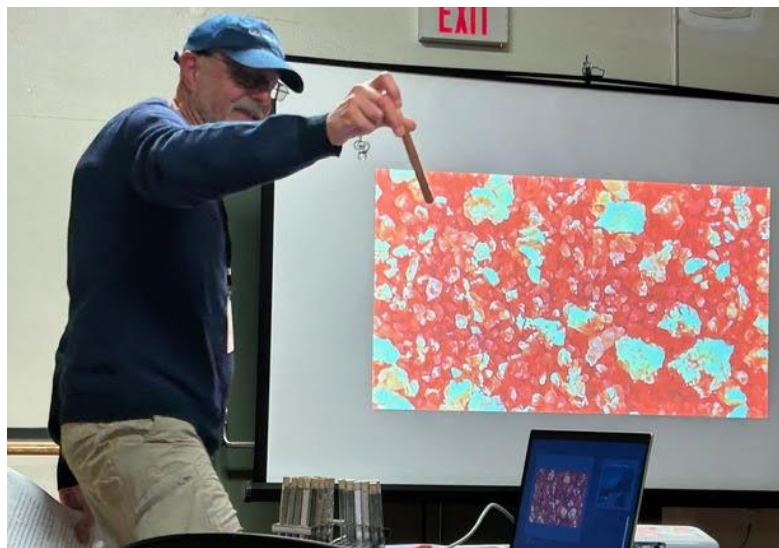
Microphotography by David Myers



Microphotography by Paul Pinsker



Photos by Tim Haslam



A reminder to renew memberships: all memberships are by calendar year and due by January. You must be a member in good standing to use the workshop. This means you must have a current membership and have attended 2 out of the last 3 general meetings. Memberships are available only at general meetings except for months without a general meeting (only December, July and August).



If you are a member in good standing and have taken the required lapidary workshop training course, you can drop in at the workshops and use the equipment on a first come, first served (shared) basis. Be prepared to work on another project if you need to wait to use a particular piece of equipment.

Shown below are the regular workshop hours. Changes are often announced by email. Some short programs are announced at meetings, maybe in an email, or in this newsletter.

Lapidary:	Monday	6:30 pm - 9:30 pm	Richard
	Wednesday	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	David
	Thursday	6:30 pm - 9:30 pm	Tim
	Saturday	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Robert
Silversmithing*	Wednesday	9:00am – 12:00 noon	Robert
	Saturday*	9:00am – 12:00 noon	Crystal and Robert

***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 News

To register for these two extra classes contact Crystal, our club secretary (for contact see page 1) **People must sign up ahead for each session**, but will be able to attend multiple times.

Torch-on Enamelling classes. Maximum number is 6 attendees. \$10 for materials, \$3 for the workshop.

Friday, February 23rd	9am - 12pm
Friday, March 22nd	9am - 12pm
Friday, April 26th	9am - 12pm

Ad-hoc Silversmith on the enamelling days (will only open with 6-12 people registered)
\$3 workshop

Friday, February 23rd	1pm - 4pm
Friday, March 22nd	1pm - 4pm
Friday, April 26th	1pm - 4pm

- If Silversmith workshop registrations do not meet the minimum requirement, it may be cancelled, Crystal will notify registrants if that happens. -

Our Club Show!



March 16,17, 2024, **Hastings Centre Rockhounds**, Hastings Community Centre

This show is how we support our yearly club activities

We will need everyone to volunteer for something at the show.

Crystal sent an e-mail on February 14 with links to online signup lists. We will need help for the set-up/take-down, greeters, demonstrators, helpers in the auction, spin & win, grab bags, and refreshments.

We also need some food donations for the day of the show, please see the list of what we need. If you're making your own food, please label them with the ingredients.

Crystal's e-mail also had copies of the flyer and poster for our show. Spread the word.

WE WILL ROCK YOU



There will be plenty to see & do. Together we can make our show a great success and have a lot of fun introducing our hobby to the community.

There are 16 Cases to fill with what we have been doing. Talk with Sante to reserve a case and talk with other club members about filling a display case. People can share. The cases will be locked the whole time and there will be security on site.

Other Rock and Gem Shows

February 24, 25, 2024, **Maple Ridge Lapidary Club**, Albion Community Centre, Maple Ridge

March 9, 10, 2024, **Alberni Valley Rock & Gem Club**, Alberni Athletic Hall, Port Alberni

March 15,16,17 2024, **Victoria Lapidary & Mineral Society**, Leonardo da Vinci Centre, Victoria

April 5, 6 & 7 2024, **Courtenay Gem & Mineral Club**, Legion Hall, Courtenay

April 19, 20 & 21, 2024, **Richmond Gem and Mineral Society**, Library & Cultural Centre, Richmond

May 10, 11, 12, 2024

BC Gem Show, Chilliwack Heritage Park , Chilliwack



NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

DATE: March 3, 2024

TIME: 1:00 pm

PLACE: Via Zoom

ALL SOCIETY MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS MEETING

EACH MEMBER CLUB IS ENTITLED TO ONE (1) VOTE

The Club Delegate designated to vote for their club must register with the Executive Secretary when they arrive to the meeting.

(February 5 Crystal sent club members the Agenda for this meeting and minutes of the last meeting.)

The British Columbia Lapidary Society hosts the BC Gem Show

May 10, 11 & 12, 2024 Friday 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Saturday 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Sunday 10:00 A - 5:00 PM

Rocklovers-Round-Up Tailgate Sale

One Day Only!

Saturday, May 12, 2024
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Chilliwack Heritage Park, 44140 Luckakuck Way, Chilliwack, BC

Rendezvous 2024

Rendezvous is the **British Columbia Lapidary Society's** annual gathering and features field trips, displays, auctions, and our annual general meeting.

Armstrong, BC, May 17 – 19, 2024
IPE Grounds
3371 Pleasant Valley Road
Armstrong, BC

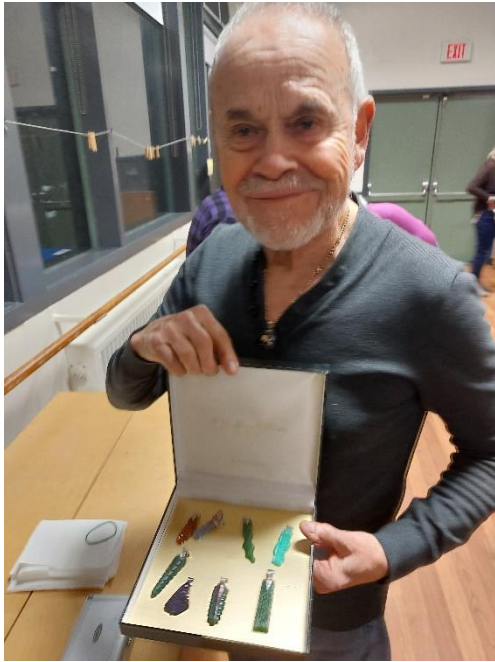
Rendezvous returns to the Interior in 2024 and will be hosted by the Vernon Lapidary & Mineral Club.

It will be headquartered at the Interior Provincial Exhibition (IPE) Grounds in Armstrong, BC.

More information coming

Projects

In December, our club had a table at the Vancouver Gem show held at the PNE. Gunther Otto of our club was demonstrating how to carve rocks and some members started some of their own carving. Gunther finished the carvings later and brought them to our last meeting so people could see the results. *Photos Richard Kotecki*



Also at the last meeting, Tim Haslam had his latest cabochon – a Quartzite star. The quartzite was found on a gravel bar in the Fraser River near Agassiz.

Photo Tim Haslam



Richard Kotecki has been working on many projects, from this blue calcite dragonfly to a new kind of gem tree. This one is BC Ocean Picture Stone. The one on **the next page** is a challenge for you.

Photos Richard Kotecki



If you want to try a complicated design you must please clear it with the instructor first. Working on inside corners especially can damage the wheels if not done properly.

A Rockhounds Challenge for February

Can you name the rocks used to make these hearts on Richard Kotecki's latest Gem Tree?

A Rockhounds Challenge for February

Can you name the rocks used to make these hearts on Richard Kotecki's latest Gem Tree?



Our club activities

Field Trips

Kyle is planning a Field Trip for late February or into March. This first trip will be to Yale Bar. There may be river concerns with heavy waterflows so parents are cautioned. We are looking to find some nickel silicate, and agates etc., and perhaps do some gold panning. Club members are asked to bring gold pans or share. Some can be purchased from Deakin Industries. This field trip should be accessible for all vehicles as it is a short walk from the paved road. People may want to share rides.

Watch your club e-mails to register. Every attendee must be a club member in good standing.

Fold forming with Mike Ma

2 Classes were offered by Mike in early February and judging by the pictures on Facebook, everyone had a great time and made some beautiful creations. I don't print pictures off Facebook. Pictures must be sent by the person who took them or whose Facebook page it is.

Mike did send some pictures of his fold forming work that is representative of what happened in the class. We hope Mike will be able to offer another class in the future.



Since the 15th century, one of February's birthstones has been **HYACINTH or JACINTH**

Looking into that birthstone brought some surprises. Many sources say the name is no longer used in the gem trade, but the name is still important for its historical uses.



The name appeared in the book of Exodus in the Bible as one of the gemstones on the breastplate of Aaron, but gemmologists aren't sure what that stone was; The name has been translated from the original to Hebrew as *leshem* or *ligure* which is a yellow stone, or to Greek as *hyacinth* or *jacinth*. A brilliant yellow stone available in biblical times was Zircon. In modern gemmology Jacinth is an orange- red transparent variety of **Zircon**. Scholars are divided about the source of that name. It is from either the Persian **zargun** meaning gold colour or the Arabic word **zarkun** meaning cinnabar or vermillion.

Photos: <https://geology.com/minerals/zircon.shtml>

Zircon as a gemstone was another surprise to me. I thought it was another fake rock. It turns out I was under the same illusion as many other people. Zircon is NOT cubic zirconia, the synthetic gemstone used as a diamond simulant. Zircon is a naturally occurring silicate mineral (ZrSiO_4) common throughout the world. It has been used as a gemstone for over 2000 years and occurs in a wide range of colours. It is present in most soils and rocks as tiny particles. Gem quality zircon crystals over several millimeters in size are rare.

Zircon crystals come in many colours from naturally yellow, red, green or brown to heated and irradiated colourless, grey, green, and blue. Blue is the most popular colour and is also a birthstone for December. Rose Zircon is a birthstone for October according to the International Gem Society (IGS). Some associate Jacinth with the Archangel Zuriel and the month of September while others associate Jacinth with the Apostle Simeon. Zircon (no colour mentioned) is a birthstone for 1 pm but no Zodiac, day of the week or Anniversary has claimed Zircon.



In the Middle Ages Zircon was thought to induce sound sleep, drive away evil spirits and promote riches, honor and wisdom according to the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). In the 1880's it was a favorite in English estate jewelry. The Curious Lore of Precious Stones claims that even earlier, amulets of Jacinth were worn to protect travelers against the plague and any wound or injuries during their trip. Also, the stone was thought to bring a warm reception at the inn and protect the wearer from lightning.

Zircon/jacinth needs a bit of protection too. Modern wearers have been cautioned by some not to expose their blue zircon jewellery to the ultraviolet radiation in tanning beds or under the lamps used to cure acrylic fingernails. The blue can degrade to brown in minutes. It may be reversible, but why risk it.

Zircon is considered to be a good stone for faceters after they've practiced on quartz, beryl and tourmaline. Geology.com and IGS warn though that the heat-treated gems can be brittle and the facet edges of these gems can get nicks and chipping.

Use warm water, mild detergent and a soft brush to clean and never use ultrasonic cleaners. Wrapping and keeping the jewel away from other jewellery is a good practise. Zircon has a Mohs hardness of 7.5 and is

suitable for most jewellery, but rings should probably use a more protective setting. Zircon that is faceted is usually “eye-clear” i.e. free of inclusions. Cloudier Zircon that is usually not faceted is available and was popular in Victorian times as mourning jewellery.

Zircon can be found all over the world but the primary sources of gem quality crystals are the gravels in Sri Lanka and Myanmar, and in Cambodia and Thailand. Some orange gem quality zircon has been found in New South Wales, Australia (see the top left photo) Zircon has been found in many of the United States and in Quebec and BC. According to alpinegems.ca, Blue River, BC and Blu Starr Claims in Passmore, BC have produced zircon crystals that have been faceted or could be faceted.

Zircons crystals don't get as large as other crystals. Faceted zircon can be up to 1 to 10 carats. Yellows and oranges are up to 5 carats and red and purples are usually smaller. Zircons also look smaller than other stones of the same size. According to GemSelect.com Zircon is “about 50% denser than diamond - if you have a diamond and a zircon of similar size, if the diamond weighs 1 carat, the zircon will weigh about 1.5 carats.”

There are not many famous jewels with zircon or jacinth identified, but one is known and it is unusual. In Victorian times it was a fashion to give acrostic jewelry where the first letter of the jewel was used to spell a name or message. Alexandra of Denmark (1844-1925) married Queen Victoria's son who became King Edward VII. Her engagement ring was a gold ring with a beryl, an emerald, a ruby, a topaz, a **jacinth** and another emerald. The first letters of the stones spelled “Bertie”, her name for her husband. Now there is an idea we can use with any of our stones and some silversmithing.

Drawing of Queen Alexandra's Ring from <https://www.ripeinsurance.co.uk/valuables/royal-engagement-rings/>



Jacinth is second from the left.

From Richard Kotecki

