

LAPHOUND NEWS

VICTORIA LAPIDARY & MINERAL SOCIETY

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The Newsroom

Announcements

Google's G-Suite

We have a Google G-Suite account! After a somewhat long process we (VLMS) have recently been approved for a free Google G-suite account. In more normal times that would be a US\$200-400 value. Google offers it to us for free due to our registered non-profit status. The practical upshot of this is that

1. We can create email addresses using our name@vlms.ca domain, and benefit from the superior spam filtering and email search and management that Google offers. I've created new positional emails for the club. This will allow for easy transfer of correspondence as members take on club duties and then in the fullness of time pass those duties off to other members.

Here are the emails for the elected and appointed board members. If you are emailing us on club business, please use our club emails rather than our private emails.

Elected Positions



President

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Librarian

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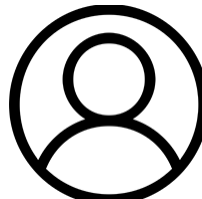
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Workshop

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Intermediate Island Zone Representative

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Webmaster

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2. We have cloud storage where we can gather together our documentation in a way that it is accessible to all members at all times and we can collaborate from wherever we happen to be in creating new documentation. This will insure against documents and club history becoming lost or the hostage of any single computer drive.

3. We have access to google meet to hold virtual meetings of up to 250 members. This is particularly timely with many of our members being in high risk groups for Covid19. As a board we are beginning to learn how to use this effectively.

Club Events

Meetings (Doug)

Regular meetings will recommence when Covid-19 permits. Alternatively, BOD meetings will recommence when we get efficient enough to hold a virtual meeting using the Google G-Suite capability that Becci has set up for us. Also looking ahead, maybe this year we could have a Society picnic when allowed - some parks have group spaces that can be scheduled for events (e.g., the covered space at Island View Beach or the Sooke River Campgrounds). I will look into this. If anyone else has other location ideas, please forward them to me president@vlms.ca. Of course, food preparation and Social Distancing (and any other precautions) will need to be determined closer to the time.

Field Trips

The field trips have been temporarily shelved as I have been directed to cease all field trips (and any other group outings), for the immediate future due to corona virus concerns. This restriction will last until the ban on groups is lifted by the government. However, anyone wishing ideas and advice for personal rockhounding excursions (not sanctioned club activities – that means no insurance) should contact Sean.

Courses

Upon closing the shop for Covid-19, we had finished one-half of the courses in progress at the time. Courses will be on hold until the restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 are relaxed to the point where it is safe to resume.

Reports

President (Doug)

VLMS has had many successful enjoyable years for all with many putting in a lot of hours of volunteering. As happens over time our ByLaws and Operating Manual need a lot of reviewing to get back in line with what is already there as well as updating to involve more of today's members in all areas of the Societies operations keeping within the bounds of B.C.'s Societies Act. All activities of the Society must be carried out by those either elected by the Members or appointed by the Board of Directors with proper planning and reporting being carried out.

To accomplish this, our Webmaster/Membership Chair Becci Simmons, with her computer experience, has done an excellent job setting up Google's G-Suite for us. This will allow us to keep all of our minutes, accounting, planning and archiving past records in one place that is easily accessible as well as training the Board of Directors to use Google Meet to hold virtual BOD meetings. We have had a couple of Virtual trial meetings which went well. If anyone who has not already been involved would like to try this contact me at president@vlms.ca with a subject to talk about and a group to participate. i.e.: Sean and Field trip regulars. An email notice would be sent out with the time and a link to join. It is possible to join in if you find out about it and join while it is progress.

In the next while I suggest the BOD familiarize themselves with the Bylaws and with the content of the Operating manuals with a view to making suggestions for updating them for today's needs. After all BOD members have connected with Becci for a familiarization session on G-Suite and Virtual meetings I will set one up.

In these unusual times I hope everyone is staying sane, safe and social distancing. Wishing everyone well and will be glad to get together safely ASAP.

Bus Trip to the Abbotsford Show (Doug)

Those who had paid for the trip have either been refunded or asked for their monies to be held until a trip can be scheduled. (It is in an account I was not using). If anyone changes their mind I can refund anytime preferably by an e-transfer.

Membership (Becci)

We had one new member join last month. The demographic breakdown of our current membership numbers is as follows:

Memberships: 84 (Single, Couple, Family)
Members: 143
Adult Members: 123
Junior Members: 20

Field Trips (Sean)

I did manage to get out looking for agates on a local beach (Agate Beach) and actually managed to find an agate there as shown below.



Social Committee (Susannah)

On March 10, 2020, I sent condolences on behalf of the VLMS by email to the guest book for the funeral of Voldemars (Wally) Priedolins - our sympathies go out to his daughters Sandra McCaffrey and Linda Brubaker. Wally used to be a long time member of the club, and passed away January 30th, 2020. However, his funeral information was only entered in the Times Colonist at the

beginning of March. Wally was to be featured in the VLMS Memory Table at the March show; however the show was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have also called a few members to see how they were doing during the pandemic. On Friday, April 3rd, 2020, I called Gilles LeBrun, who was at VGH for day surgery, due to be admitted within 5-9 days. On April 14th, 2020, I sent a get-well card to Gilles at home and then on April 17th, 2020, I received a call from Gilles, thanking me for the card. He said that, "Life is very good", and that he has been out twice since the surgery for groceries etc. He said that there would be no involvement with VLMS for at least 4-5 months.

Library (Kathryn)

I hope this newsletter finds everyone safe and healthy during these unusual times – I look forward to when we can safely get together again. There is not a lot going on with the library currently, although we have a few more additions to our inventory from books donated. My favorite is a copy of "The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Fossils". It is a small book but has over 800 pages and includes almost 200 pages of colored photos. If you have any suggestions for books or topics to add to our library please let me know.

Please remember to check for any outstanding VLMS Library books that are overdue and have not yet been returned – in time our meetings will resume and the opportunity to return the books will be realized. Also, once our Rock Shows commence again, we will welcome any donations of books or magazines to support book/magazine sales at the shows in support of new library acquisitions.

Workshop (Doug)

Reopening the shop will take considerable planning and negotiating with Silver Threads. We will not be able to observe Social Distancing between the Genies as they are now placed and with the other counter surfaces in the shop being so low, it may be necessary to install a temporary riser on the lower counter in front of the windows. This would allow us to spread the Genies out but require us to store the least-used equipment. Another option would be to schedule shop times with reduced numbers of participants thereby enabling proper Social Distancing. Users would then have to book time in advance for specific hours per week, which in turn, will increase the number of hours needed. I am prepared to negotiate with Silver Threads to see if it is possible to keep our rental cost close to what they are for as long as it takes to get back to a normal schedule.

Editor (Gary)

Most of the information presented in these newsletters is solicited. Please note, the Fun Facts section of each Newsletter involves the evolution of several fictitious characters (of the canine variety) in storylines that are designed to highlight mineral and gem-related terminology and facts for Members. Since the characters are NOT re-introduced with each edition, new Members might find it more satisfying to read previous editions (all available on the VLMS website) in order to fully appreciate the nuances of each of the characters and hence the stories themselves.

Covid Corner

Members were invited to submit short descriptions of what “lapidary” activities they had undertaken during the corona virus shutdown. Alas, only two submissions were received.

Dorothy Bodman

Over Christmas I had borrowed the club’s rock tumbler and become hooked!!! Just before all this Covid business came about I had got my own tumbler...thank goodness. I have since tumbled 16 lbs. of rhodonite, some of which I had cut and shaped at the club. What came about at the end was a surprise, from the black outer to a amazing array of pink, with gold and black threads like tree branches and roots, even some with moss green and mauve colors in it. Then I turned my attention to the glass (12lbs.) that I had collected at various local beaches over the years; after tumbling, these turned out some beautiful Ocean Gems, with all the colors cheering the heart and spirit, amid these changing times. I thank my Dad and Mom for teaching me to appreciate the simplicity of rocks and associated beach treks.

Sean Maier

Sean rediscovered this photo when reorganizing thousands of pictures in his personal inventory. It is apparently a carving of an early rock hound who, based on a hint of a smile, just found a cool specimen. Would anyone care to guess what the name of host rock in which the carving has been made?



Fun Facts

Lappy the Lapphound

" All that glitters isn't gold
....but it might be opal!!!!



Foxye the Foxhound

" Diamonds are a girls' best friend
....cubic zirconia... not so much !!!!



Cabin Fever

Foxye and the gang had been doing their part to contain the Corona virus. However, things seemed like they were starting to unravel – everyone was becoming frustrated with the lack of face-to-face social interaction. Of course, those that were able (Foxye, Dotty, Pippa, Charlie, and Bonnie) had been self-isolating. Charlie had a bit more freedom because she lived on her own up near the University – she could sneak out for walk on the chip trail or slip over to Henderson Park for variety. However, Foxye, Dotty and Pippa had found their daily walks severely curtailed and, of course, couldn't walk together in any case – they were all becoming more and more anxious about the whole affair and it was beginning to show in their daily Facetime calls – patience with one another was in short supply these days.

Alternatively, Chief Inspector Bailey-Cooper and Inspectors Lappy and Roddy were on the front-lines so to speak and required to report to work – although crime was down, in general, during the pandemic. Lappy and Roddy had been assigned patrol duties in and around public parks, playgrounds, and beaches to ensure that both canines and human-kind were practicing safe-practices in terms of masks and separation. Lappy didn't like wearing a mask but those were the rules – Roddy, on the other hand, had come to the conclusion that his mask made him look "less intimidating" (it hid some rather shoddy dental work and cut down on the slobber) so he was quite happy. The Chief Inspector was on-duty if called upon, but did not venture out of the office if at all possible. Instead, he concentrated on an old "cold-case" from the years preceding his tenure with the Equimalt K-9 unit. Both the work and the living arrangements had begun to wear on Lappy and to some extent, Roddy (although sometimes with him it was hard to tell). You see, both were required to bunk down in unused cells at the station – it was a precaution, of course, but one that had severely curtailed Lappy's interaction with Foxye and Roddy's interaction with his wife Bonnie and their young child – Roddy Jr. Lappy had to stay at the station because it was determined that his home situation (he lived with a bunch of guys in an old house in Gordon Head) put him at risk to contract the virus. To make matters worse for Lappy, in the current situation, there was no escaping Roddy's constant chatter, his unkempt and slovenly ways and, even worse, his snoring – without Bonnie around to keep him on the straight and narrow, Roddy had really gone to the "dogs". On the other hand, the Chief Inspector was allowed to go home each day as he lived on his own in a condo at Bear Mountain – he looked forward to, and maybe even longed for, the nightly Facetime calls with Dotty. Facetime and Google Meet had become lifesavers for the group as a whole.

Charlie had sensed that Pippa was spiraling into a sense of deep despair so she decided to initiate a game in which everyone could participate via Google meet. On successive evenings, each player would post pictures of two mineral or gem samples - it was then up to the other participants to provide their best guess as to the names of the materials involved. Typically, the player posting the pics would also provide one or two clues to get everyone started. Dottie was at a disadvantage, of course, because she had no interest in rocks and things; much to her glee, she was allowed to team up with the Chief

Inspector. Likewise, Roddy and Bonnie formed a team. Charlie was the first player to post her pics. One restriction that Charlie imposed was that the unknown samples could be found in British Columbia.

Charlie's Pictures:

1.



Charlie's clues for this sample are:

1. Named after a famous landmark
2. Tetragonal crystal system
3. Mohs hardness scale of 6-7, white streak
4. Found west of Lytton in Stein Valley

2.



Charlie's clues for this sample are:

1. Typically imbedded in large-crystal, igneous rock structures (veins), formed underground
2. Found in several locations in BC including the Kootenays, Cassiar (northern BC) and near Tete Jaune Cache (central BC).
3. Hexagonal crystal system, Mohs hardness 7.5-8, white streak

These two samples completely baffled the team of Dottie and the Chief Inspector who were discussing the problem via Facetime. Dottie mused aloud about her Jade¹ ankle bracelets and wondered whether Jade might be a match for Sample #2.

Chief Inspector: "That is a reasonable guess, Dottie. Sorry, I cannot be of much help – I have been searching the web and found something called Antarticite² which looked like it might qualify for Sample #1 but it has a trigonal crystal system so I guess not. We will have to keep looking."

Roddy and Bonnie were also stumped by the two samples. For his part, Roddy could not think of a single landmark. Bonnie mentioned Amazonite³ - she had read the name somewhere but couldn't remember the context.

Roddy: "Sweetheart, the Amazon is not in BC, it is in Africa."

Bonnie held her tongue. With respect to the second sample, all Roddy could offer was that it looked like a piece of glass – I bet Charlie is trying to trick us, he claimed.

Foxy noted that quartz⁴ had similar physical characteristics to the second sample and could assume various colors – could it be a variation of quartz? She knew that Sample #1 was definitely not quartz because of the tetragonal crystal system. She also knew that Brazilianite⁵ had similar coloration to Sample 1 but Brazil really wasn't a landmark per say – nor, to her knowledge, had anyone ever found Brazilianite in BC.

Lappy had also wondered about quartz for both samples (he wasn't up on crystal systems like Foxy) but more-or-less discarded the idea based on color. Lappy scanned the web for clues. He checked out Dawsonite⁶ and Laplandite⁷ (just because) but decided neither really fit the bill for Sample #1. For the second Sample, Lappy was zeroing in on Apatite⁸ – it was typically green, it had the right crystal system and the correct streak.

Pippa seemed energized by the Charlie's new game – she had been thinking a lot about Charlie lately and was totally bummed that they could not see each other due to the virus. Pippa was a bit self-conscious about the fact that she had just taken a course in the subject matter and felt a bit more pressure to come up with some reasonable guesses. Pippa had a feeling that Charlie's samples would have been selected in a way to give her a reasonable chance of identifying them. Pippa pondered the clues – Charlie was a Chihuahua – could the landmark clue refer to something to do with Mexico? Pippa scanned the web but could not find anyway mineral or gemstone that matched the criteria and that had anything to do with Mexico. She did find some information about Sturmanite⁹ that matched Sample #1 in crystal system – Pippa had no idea if “Sturman” was a landmark. In any case, the streak was wrong. With regard to Sample #2, Pippa wondered about some form of garnet¹⁰ or emerald¹¹. She would have to check their physical characteristics.

Acknowledgements

Once again I would like to thank all those members who contributed to this Newsletter and in particular to Dorothy Bodman and Sean Maier for providing the content in the Covid Corner section. With regard to the Fun Fact's section, Charlie has indicated that all VLMS members are welcome to supply their best guesses for Samples 1 and 2 – please email your guess to laphoundnews@vlms.ca. All guesses (including the correct answers) will be published in the August Newsletter. The game will continue at that time.

Appendix

Fun Facts Rocks and Gems (all information obtained from Wikipedia on the web)

1.





Jade is an ornamental rock, mostly known for its green varieties, which feature prominently in ancient Asian art. The term *jade* is a general term applied to two different metamorphic rocks that are composed of different silicate minerals, namely (i) jadeite, and (ii) nephrite. Jade has been a favorite carving material for many centuries.


2.





Antarcticite is an uncommon calcium chloride hexahydrate mineral that forms colorless acicular trigonal crystals. It is hygroscopic (absorbs moisture from the air) and has a low specific gravity of 1.715. It was first discovered (1965) in Antarctica where it occurs as crystalline precipitate from highly saline brine found in ponds within Victoria Land. It has more recently been found in California, the Bahamas and South Africa.


3.  Amazonite is a green tectosilicate mineral that is a variety of the potassium feldspar called microcline. Its name is taken from that of the Amazon River, from which green stones were formerly obtained, though it is unknown whether those stones were amazonite. Green and greenish-blue varieties of potassium feldspars are designated as amazonite.

4.  Quartz is rich in silicon and is the second most abundant mineral in Earth's continental crust, second only to feldspar. There are many different varieties of quartz, several of which are semi-precious gemstones. Since antiquity, varieties of quartz have been the most commonly used minerals in the making of jewelry and hardstone carvings, especially in Eurasia.

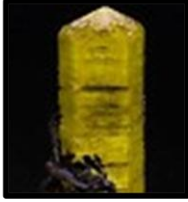
5.  Brazilianite (originally found in Brazil) is a typically yellow-green phosphate mineral, most commonly found in phosphate-rich pegmatites. It occurs in the form of perfect crystals grouped in druses and is a hydrous sodium aluminium phosphate. Brazilianite has a vitreous luster has a white streak, and the mineral is translucent to transparent. The color of brazilianite ranges from dark yellow -green to a pale yellow.

6.  Dawsonite is a mineral composed of sodium aluminium carbonate hydroxide. It crystallizes in the orthorhombic crystal system. Interestingly enough, it is not mined for ore. It was discovered in 1874 during the construction of the Redpath Museum in a feldspathic dike on the campus of McGill University on the Island of Montreal, Canada. It is named after geologist Sir John William Dawson (1820–1899).

7.  Laplandite is found primarily in igneous rocks i.e., inclusions in pegmatites, primarily in the Kola Peninsula in Lapland. Laplandite is orthorhombic and the shape of the crystal is bipyramidal – it is similar in structure to olivine or aragonite. Laplandite is a biaxial mineral. Because of Laplandite's sodium solubility, it has been designated as a candidate for extracting soda from the rocks in which it is found.

8.  Apatite is a group of phosphate minerals usually referring to hydroxyapatite, fluorapatite and chlorapatite. Apatite is most commonly found in sedimentary, metamorphic, igneous, and volcanic rocks. Apatite can form in sedimentary processes, igneous processes (e.g., Pegmatite), metamorphic processes, and in hydrothermal vents, as well as production by biological systems.

9.



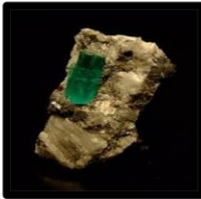
Sturmanite is a rare sulfate mineral. It crystallises in the tetragonal system and it has a Moh's hardness of 2.5. Sturmanite has a bright yellow to amber colour and falls in the ettringite group. It was named after Bozidar Darko Sturman (born 1937), Croatian-Canadian mineralogist and Curator Emeritus of Mineralogy, Royal Ontario Museum. It was first identified in 1983 after being found in a Kalahari manganese field.

10.



Garnets are a group of silicate minerals that have been used since the Bronze Age as gemstones and abrasives. Garnet species are found in many colours including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, pink, brown, black and colourless, with reddish shades most common. The mineral's luster is categorized as vitreous (glass-like) or resinous (amber-like). They crystallize in the cubic system with a Mohs hardness of about 6.0 to 7.5.

11.



Emerald is a gemstone and a variety of the beryl (beryllium (Be) aluminum silicate) mineral group. It is colored green by trace amounts of chromium and sometimes vanadium (V). Emeralds are found worldwide but the main deposits are found in Columbia, Brazil, and Zambia.