



# LAPHOUND NEWS

VICTORIA LAPIDARY & MINERAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 5114, Station B  
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N3



**Volume 63-4 :: Nov 2020**

**Website :: [www.vlms.ca](http://www.vlms.ca)**

## VLMS Board

<b>President :</b>	Doug MacLeod	<a href="mailto:vlms@vlms.ca">vlms@vlms.ca</a> (250-888-8440)
<b>Vice-President :</b>	Mel Fenton	<a href="mailto:gotstonedjewelry@gmail.com">gotstonedjewelry@gmail.com</a> (250-589-1245)
<b>Registrar:</b>	Becci Simmons	<a href="mailto:membership@vlms.ca">membership@vlms.ca</a> (250-476-2676)
<b>Past-President:</b>	Allana Shilito	<a href="mailto:mrz_p@hotmail.com">mrz_p@hotmail.com</a> (250-857-2153)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Sarah Hamilton	<a href="mailto:secretary@vlms.ca">secretary@vlms.ca</a> (250-974-7272)
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Dave Jackson	<a href="mailto:treasurer@vlms.ca">treasurer@vlms.ca</a> (778-676-1150)
<b>At Large:</b>	Debbie Frank	<a href="mailto:gemfinders@telus.net">gemfinders@telus.net</a> (250-360-6434)
	Rae DeFrane	<a href="mailto:constellocean@gmail.com">constellocean@gmail.com</a> (250-589-9723)
	Brian McMillan	<a href="mailto:soniamac@telus.net">soniamac@telus.net</a> (250-385-2700)
	John Anderson	<a href="mailto:johnsusannah@telus.net">johnsusannah@telus.net</a> (250-812-9303)

## VLMS Committees

<b>Programs:</b>	Karol Jorgensen	<a href="mailto:kmarcj@gmail.com">kmarcj@gmail.com</a> (403-559-6165)
	Arlene Modderman	<a href="mailto:tothetoo@shaw.ca">tothetoo@shaw.ca</a> (250-656-5136)
<b>Librarian:</b>	Kathryn Hawkins	<a href="mailto:librarian@vlms.ca">librarian@vlms.ca</a> (250-652-4940)
<b>Show Chair:</b>	Alanna Shilito	<a href="mailto:showcommittee@vlms.ca">showcommittee@vlms.ca</a> (250-857-2153)
<b>Field Trips:</b>	Sean Maier	<a href="mailto:fieldtrips@vlms.ca">fieldtrips@vlms.ca</a> (250-382-6119)
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Becci Simmons	<a href="mailto:web@vlms.ca">web@vlms.ca</a> (250-478-2676)
<b>Workshop:</b>	Brian McMillan	<a href="mailto:soniamac@telus.net">soniamac@telus.net</a> (250-385-2700)
	Doug McLeod	<a href="mailto:lapidaryworkshop@vlms.ca">lapidaryworkshop@vlms.ca</a> (250-888-8440)
<b>Editor:</b>	Gary Brooke	<a href="mailto:gab.bns@gmail.com">gab.bns@gmail.com</a> (250-475-3440)
<b>Social:</b>	Susannah Andersen	<a href="mailto:johnsusannah@telus.net">johnsusannah@telus.net</a> (250-812-9303)
	Barb MacKenzie	<a href="mailto:barb.mackenzie@shaw.ca">barb.mackenzie@shaw.ca</a> (250-727-0954)
<b>Events:</b>	Nick Aktarian	<a href="mailto:xresos@yahoo.com">xresos@yahoo.com</a> (250-589-1434)
<b>Island Zone:</b>	Dave Jackson	<a href="mailto:dehavillanddave@yahoo.ca">dehavillanddave@yahoo.ca</a> (778-676-1150)
	Sarah Hamilton	<a href="mailto:sarahstarfish@gmail.com">sarahstarfish@gmail.com</a> (250-974-7272)
	Doug MacLeod	<a href="mailto:wesmac12@gmail.com">wesmac12@gmail.com</a> (250-888-8440)



# The Newsroom

## Announcements

### BCLS Membership

The BC Lapidary Society, our parent body, has been in touch with some good news:

*"Due to Covid 19, and in order to help the clubs, the Executive of the BC Lapidary Society has unanimously agreed to waive all dues to the [BCLS](#) and the [GMFC \(Gem and Mineral Federation of Canada\)](#) for the 2021 Calendar year. The BCLS will pay the GMFC dues on each club's behalf, as long as we get the required information to do so."*

This news means that our membership for this year will be rolled over to next year at no extra charge. However, each member does need to fill in this form [Roll-over Membership to 2021](#) by December 31st (please do it now!). Note, to use the link, one must hold the Ctrl button down whilst clicking on the link.

### Club Events

#### **2021 VLMS Rock and Gem Show – Leonardo Da Vinci Centre – March, 2021**

The BCLS printed calendar includes the 2021 show dates for each of the member clubs including ours. The calendar states that individual shows may be cancelled if Covid 19 still persists.

### Meetings

Due to Covid 19, the next member's in-person meeting has not been scheduled at this time. A virtual meeting is in the works

### Field Trip

No field trips scheduled until further notice.

### Courses (Silversmithing)

Wendy has been working on a possible Zoom-type meeting for a silversmithing project workshop. However, no dates have been set as yet. When meeting requirements have been finalized, then past

metalsmithing attendees will be contacted first to gauge interest. Also, Cari and Allison (co-owners of the Westcoast Creative Spirits store in Langford) have expanded their business and are offering Covid-friendly courses and workshops in silversmithing. Check out their website to view availability and possible changes amid current restrictions.

## Reports

### **President (Doug)**

BCLS has rolled over 2020 dues to cover 2021. Our insurance policy will be kept up. Becci has sent out (by email) a VLMS registration or re registration form to cover for 2021. Please fill it out as soon as possible as they need to be turned in to BCLS by Dec 31st. to keep up our insurance policy. She also stated that membership cards will be mailed out in December.

The BOD meeting this month will discuss how we will handle our Annual General Meeting in January. It will probably be a virtual meeting. The program will allow each member to click on their vote choice. If there are any By Law changes or changes in the election of the Executive at least fourteen days notice will be given by email.

Especially due to the recent upsurge in Covid 19 it remains there is no more information as to when the workshop or full meetings will resume.

Thank you to those who responded to the Comments & Questions. Further to the question for more books or information for Rockhounding on the Island the Parksville club has good information on their website under General Club Details then Field trips. <https://pdrockandgem.org/>

I hope everyone is continuing to stay safe and happy.

### **Workshop (Doug)**

There is nothing more from Silver Threads other than they will look at when we can return to the shop sometime in the New Year.

### **Island Gemboree**

There has been no activity in the Island Zone due to Covid.

### **Membership (Becci)**

No report submitted.

### **Field Trips (Sean)**

No report submitted.

### **Social Committee (Susannah)**

I connected with Gilles today, November 19th. He is healthy; his surgery revealed no cancer, he is walking 3 km a day as part of a regular schedule and, as well, to do his errands. Doctors have given him a lot of tests (including some in Vancouver which he refused), but to date they have revealed nothing. Gilles has a "few issues" but none that he considers life-threatening. He hopes to spend a

quiet Christmas, as things are limited because of Covid-19, and will keep in touch with us. Also, the word is that Brian and Rose went out and got married over the summer...congrats to you both.

### **Library (Kathryn)**

No report submitted.

### **Editor (Gary)**

The time has come for me to take a step back. Thanks for the opportunity to do some writing – it has been fun.

## **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 !!!!



## **The Great Gold Panning Expedition**

It was the end of October and Covid was weighing heavily on the minds of Lappy and the gang. They had heard the ominous projections of a “second wave” and a “winter spike” in the rate of infection. It was enough to scare everyone. Lappy sensed that more restrictions were coming and therefore he decided to plan an excursion for the group that may be their last for awhile – a gold<sup>1</sup>-panning trip to the San Juan Ridge area north of Jordan River. They planned for the weekend so as to eliminate any worry about logging traffic on the roads – of course, while that may be true, at this time of year one needs also to be worried about hunters and wood gatherers. Undaunted, Fin, Dottie, Pippa and Charlie had signed up for the trip and Fin had arranged for a van to take the group out to the area early in the morning and return for pickup later in the day. Fin, somewhat apprehensively, had assigned Roddy the task of looking after the Esquimalt K-9 unit for the day ... he was keeping his fingers crossed that it would be quiet and uneventful. Roddy, on the other hand, was visualizing some major crime occurrences in the area in which he would be called upon to safeguard the community.

Lappy and Foxye (with input from Charlie) had done their homework and realized that the geology of the area that lay east of Port Renfrew, bordered by Loss Creek and the San Juan River and that extends as far east as the Sooke River and Leechtown<sup>2</sup> was rich in gold-bearing material. Indeed, the Leech River has a long history as a gold-producer from as far back as 1864. Currently though, Lappy and Foxye, had found that, despite the prevalence of gold in the area, finding a creek in which to pan for gold was a challenge because most that were accessible were almost completely under claim e.g., Loss Creek and Sombrio Creek are almost entirely under claim, as are the Leech River and the Sooke River, and therefore not eligible for public panning. To assist them in their planning, Lappy and Foxye made use of the BC government Mineral Titles website<sup>3</sup> in which maps detailing the locations of all current placer mining claims on Vancouver Island (and indeed BC) could be found. They reasoned that even though Loss Creek was under claim in its entirety (except for a small section near the bridge on Highway 14)

several smaller tributaries that flowed into Loss Creek from the San Juan Ridge were not. Therefore the plan was to “prospect” in the tributaries, where there were no claims, as opposed to Loss Creek itself.

In order to reach the San Juan Ridge, the group took Highway 14 from Sooke to Jordan River – then they turned north on the North Main Forestry Road just opposite the China Beach Provincial Park entrance on the south side of Highway 14. North Main transitions to Jordan West road at the easternmost extent of Loss Creek. Jordan West is the gateway to the San Juan Ridge area – it is a very well kept road and has lots of width. The group was dropped off at the first major creek that intersects Jordan West north of the eastern most extent of Loss Creek. The creek is accessible just below the bridge. The group was eager to get try their “paws” at gold panning.

According to Lappy’s research on the web, gold is often found in places where the creek water slows thereby allowing the heavier gold to drop. Now, this particular creek was not huge in expanse but there was plenty of water that was on its downward journey to Loss Creek. What amazed Lappy and the group was just how rugged the terrain was – the creek was basically in a gorge with steep slopes on either side. The path of the creek was pretty much straight downhill with few places where the creek could meander - this meant that there were no sand or gravel bars around which the water might slow and “drop the gold”. Therefore, the group looked for gravel behind large boulders and began to dig – it turns out that Dottie was a good digger and, with Fin’s help to remove larger rocks, in no time they had dug quite a bit hole that exposed some of the “deeper” gravel samples. They each placed some of this gravel into their gold pans and went to the creek to pan. It took some trial and error before they all could balance the pans in their paws but eventually they were all able to dip the pans in water, swish the gravel around in suspension (this allows the gold to drop to the bottom of the pan) and then it was a matter of removing the big pebbles and stones from the mix. The goal is to remove all of the material until all that is left is the gold and fine sand. Pippa, with her smaller paws, was finding it difficult to control the pan and consequently was getting quite frustrated. Fortunately, Charlie was there to give her lots of encouragement. Lappy was the first one to exclaim that “he might have something” ....they all came over to have a look. The problem (as Lappy explained, based on his visit to the eye doctor a couple of years previous) is that a dog’s vision is somewhat limited in terms of color – they don’t see any red color. So there were many “bright” spots in Lappy’s pan but were they actually gold? Mica<sup>4</sup> is a real trickster in a gold pan – it can appear to be yellow but often requires a magnifying glass to determine that it is “glassy” and not “metallic”. Foxy was quick to point out that whether or not the pan contained any gold it still held several pretty and interesting stones such as garnet<sup>5</sup>, amphibolites<sup>6</sup>, schists<sup>7</sup>, gneisses<sup>8</sup>, and perhaps even some jasper<sup>9</sup>.

The group went through many pans, each drew the attention of all, but alas no one could actually determine if they had found any gold or not. Foxy had brought some small vials (for storing the gold) and she filled them quickly with samples from each of the pans – perhaps she would ask the driver of their van to have a look. Speaking of which .... they heard a car horn, honking in the distance. Time had flown and it was time to pack up and go home. It was a tired group that huddled in the van on the way home – richer in experience but not so much in gold!!

## **Acknowledgements**

Once again I would like to thank all those members who contributed to this Newsletter – it continues to be only as useful and complete as the information you provide.

## Appendix

### 1. Fun Facts - Rocks and Gems (all material obtained from the web!!)

1.



Gold is a bright, slightly reddish yellow, dense, soft, malleable and ductile metal. It is often found in free elemental (native) form, as nuggets (or grains) in rocks, veins and alluvial deposits. Its many uses include jewelry, coinage, and electronics. Gold is found worldwide but as of 2014, the largest producing nation is China.

2.



Leechtown came into existence after gold was discovered on the Leech River in July 1864. Within weeks, thousands of miners, 6 general stores and 3 hotels and 30 saloons formed a thriving town – but within a year, the gold was beginning to run out and the town went into decline. Leechtown is notable for its geologic placement, which is what gives rise to the historical gold finds. The Leech River runs along the Leech River Fault and gives rise to a well-known assemblage of highly deformed schists underlain by gneiss. The gold is thought to be derived from quartz stringers in the schists.

3.



Mineral Titles in BC - MTO Map ([gov.bc.ca](http://gov.bc.ca))

This website allows one to view location and ownership of placer mine claims (and lode mine claims) throughout BC. It shows road systems and gives indications of First Nation territory and government parks and recreation land. It is a must-see for anyone interested in prospecting.

4.



Mica is a group of sheet silicate (phyllosilicate) minerals that includes several closely related materials having nearly perfect basal cleavage. All are monoclinic, with a tendency towards pseudo-hexagonal crystals, and are similar in chemical composition. The nearly perfect cleavage, which is the most prominent characteristic of mica, is explained by the hexagonal sheet-like arrangement of its atoms. Mica is used in a variety of products ranging from drywalls, paints, fillers, especially in parts for automobiles, roofing and shingles, electronics etc.

5.



Garnet - only two species are reported to exist in B.C.: Almandite and Andradite. Perfect, clear-red almandite crystals up to 3cm. in diameter occur in mica schist along the Stikine River. Andradite garnet in fair crystals, but not suitable for cutting, is found on Texada Isl. Garnets are also found in the Shuswap Lake-Vernon area, Revelstoke-Big Bend area, Canoe River-Mica Cr. area, Aiken Lake-Mesilinka River area, Hope-Lytton area, and Prince Rupert - Douglas Channel area. Most of this garnet is high-quality commercial grade, suitable for lapping and grinding.

6.



Amphibolite is a metamorphic rock that contains amphibole, especially hornblende and actinolite, as well as plagioclase. It has little or no quartz and is typically dark-colored and dense, with a weakly foliated or schistose (flaky) structure. The small flakes of black and white in the rock often give it a salt-and-pepper appearance. A holocrystalline plutonic igneous rock composed primarily of hornblende amphibole is called a hornblendite, which is usually a crystal cumulate rock.

7.



Schist is a medium-grade metamorphic rock formed from mudstone or shale. Schist has medium to large, flat, sheet-like grains in a preferred orientation (nearby grains are roughly parallel). It is defined by having more than 50% platy and elongated minerals (such as micas or talc), often finely interleaved with quartz and feldspar. These lamellar (flat), planar minerals include micas, chlorite, talc, and hornblende. Quartz often occurs in drawn-out grains to such an extent that a particular form called quartz schist is produced.

8.



Gneiss is a common and widely distributed type of metamorphic rock formed by high temperature and high-pressure metamorphic processes acting on formations composed of igneous or sedimentary rocks. Orthogneiss is gneiss derived from igneous rock (such as granite). Paragneiss is gneiss derived from sedimentary rock (such as sandstone). Gneiss forms at higher temperatures and pressures than schist. Gneiss nearly always shows a banded texture characterized by alternating darker and lighter colored bands and without a distinct foliation.

9.



Jasper is an aggregate of microgranular quartz and/or chalcedony and other mineral phases. It is opaque, and usually red, yellow, brown or green in color; but it is rarely blue. The common red color is due to iron inclusions. It can be highly polished and is one of the traditional birthstones for March. Jasper is common throughout BC.

