
The Rockhound's Bark

The Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society Newsletter

April 2005



ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Meetings are held the last Saturday of each month, September-November and January-May, 7:30 - 10:00 p.m. in the auditorium (Lower Level) of the N.S. Museum of Natural History, 1747 Summer St., Halifax. Dues are \$20/year, payable in January of each year.

2004-2005 EXECUTIVE

President:	Ronnie Van Dommelen
Vice President:	Fred Walsh
Secretary:	vacant
Treasurer:	Terry Collett
Bark Editor:	Ken McKenzie
Librarian:	Doug Bowes

SOCIETY'S MAILING ADDRESS

The Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society
c/o NS Museum of Natural History
1747 Summer Street, Halifax, N.S., B3H 3A6

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

May 20, 2005.

NEXT MEETING

by Ken McKenzie

After this month's meeting, Doug Bowes will give a talk on gravity separation: "GRAVITY SEPERATION is used world wide to separate gems, minerals and precious metals. This presentation will describe the theory and equipment used. A demonstration of gold panning techniques will follow. Members will be invited to participate."

There will also be an auction of specimens by Everett Hawkes, which were on display last month. Everett has generously offered to donate 50% of the proceeds to the club.

MINERALS OF THE MONTH: NATIVE ELEMENTS

By Ronnie Van Dommelen

When an element occurs naturally on Earth, in the form of a mineral, we call it a native element.

There is something very special about the native element minerals. Perhaps it is their simplicity. Whatever it is, many of these minerals are very highly regarded as mineral specimens. You will usually find several elements in they very best mineral collections and they can be among the most valuable specimens too.

1. While native silver specimens are highly sought after, most silver obtained in the world today is found as an impurity from mining what other mineral?
2. Which element, while common, is rare in its native form on Earth but has been found in basalt at Disko Island, Greenland.

3. Native lead is found at several locations in this Scandinavian country, including Langban, a world famous locality with nearly 270 different minerals.
4. Which native element forms two different minerals? What are they?
5. Fake specimens of two native elements have been discovered in recent years. Silver from Germany and this other mineral from Italy.
6. This native element has no crystal system, cleavage, or fracture at room temperature.
7. The best known crystals of this native element were found in New Brunswick. More commonly it forms silvery granular masses. It was mined, along with its sulfide, in Nova Scotia and used during WWII to harden the alloys used to make shell casings. What is it?
8. Rare cube shaped crystals of this metallic native element, which is even more expensive than gold, are found in Russia.
9. While it can be found as a native element, this metal is more commonly found as a constituent in the minerals sylvanite and calaverite.
10. This common native element has been found in the Bay of Fundy basalts and other places in Nova Scotia.

Remember to bring in the answers to the quiz and a specimen or a photo of a great specimen.

Answers to March's Quiz on Fluorite:

1. All, 2. T, 3. Limestone and granite, 4. T, 5. Abrasive, 6. T, 7. A purple and white banded fluorite found in the Britain and used (more than a century ago) for carvings, 8. Hexagonal prism, 9. T, 10. Frequently (calcite, galena), Sometimes (topaz, gypsum).

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

By Ronnie Van Dommelen

For May, Terry Collett will talk about the chemical stability of mineral specimens. Many

minerals, even if they were formed millions of years ago, can degrade in your cabinet over a short period of time. The minerals of the month will be the zeolites stilbite and heulandite.

MARCH MEETING

by Fred Walsh

The meeting started at 7:50 PM. 26 members and guests were present.

Old business:

A correction from last newsletter, the library will be named The Ted Harrington Andrew Brock Memorial library. As you can see we are in desperate need of a secretary, anyone out there!!!! Motion to accept the minutes as amended made by Everett Hawkes, seconded by Dorothy Roberts, and carried.

New business:

Mail: GMFC, Calgary Rock and Lapidary club, and Canadian Treasure Seekers.

The material that is on show is to be auctioned off at the next meeting, Everett Hawkes to split with the club 50/50.

Everyone seems to be happy with the new electronic format of the newsletter, and thanks Ken McKenzie for the great job.

Field trips in May or June, dates to be announced. If you want to go on an early field trip contact Ken McKenzie.

Motion to adjourn meeting first Terry Collett, seconded by Ken McKenzie, at 8.15 PM.

FIELD TRIPS

by Ken McKenzie

The early trip to Amethyst Cove, which was discussed at last month's meeting, has been cancelled because I recently suffered an arm injury. Terry and Ronnie are still interested in going later in the season, so let them know if you're interested in joining them.

Other field trips are being planned, and hopefully will be discussed at the next two meetings and announced in the next *Bark*.

MINERAL DISPLAY AND TALK

By Ronnie Van Dommelen

In May, Halifax is hosting a large national conference jointly for the Geological Association of Canada and the Mineralogical Association of Canada and two other groups. A few of the events will be of great interest to club members, including a mineral display and a public talk. On the conference website, it is unclear that the Pinch Collection display is free to attend, but I have checked with an organizer who said that it is. For more info see: <http://www.dal.ca/~hfx2005/> and <http://www.dal.ca/~hfx2005/pdf/EdGEOEnglish.pdf>

Pinch Collection

In the early 1990s, the Canadian Museum of Nature acquired the William Pinch mineral collection, considered one of the finest private collections in the world. The Pinch collection consists of approximately 11 000 specimens. At Halifax 2005, five displays will show rare minerals from the Montereian Hills alkaline intrusions; asbestos and its beautiful minerals from Asbestos, Quebec; specimens of Canadian gold and silver; samples of nickel, copper, lead, and zinc, and minerals representative of the regions of Canada. The collection will be on display from 9 AM to 6 PM on May 16-18, on the floor (not the MacInnes Room as stated on the website) of the Student Union Building on University Avenue.

Public Talk

Public Address by Dr. André Lalonde, University of Ottawa
7:00 pm, Wednesday, May 18, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History

Dr. Lalonde, whose lecture is titled "The Benefits of Minerals to Canadians", will explore the diversity and splendour of minerals, and the remarkable place they have earned

for themselves in the heart of our society, in such diverse uses as toxic waste clean-up, time-release drugs, composite materials, glossy paper, computers and even in our bones.

I attended a talk by Dr. Lalonde a few years back. He is an exceptional speaker and extremely interesting. I think this is something everyone will enjoy. As an aside, he also has a mineral named after him – lalondeite

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

by Ken McKenzie

I occasionally receive e-mails directed to the club and answer the straightforward ones myself. The strictly commercial ones are tabled at meetings. Below are some that could be best answered by members, so please reply directly to the author.

I will be on holiday in Prince Edward Island in May. I collect stones and minerals as a hobby. Can you recommend a few places to visit as it will be my only visit? If you can't it's ok.

William Dickson
Montrose, Angus, Scotland
billyd402000@btinternet.com

Hello, my name is Jason Robicheau and I live in Nova Scotia. I am interested in taking a course in Lapidary. Are there any in our area?

Jason Robicheau
jdlr64@hotmail.com

We got your name from the Canadian Rockhound on the internet (Nova Scotia Mineral & Gem Society). We cut and polish stones, singly, by lap, and also by tumbling. We order from suppliers in Ottawa, Calgary, and Montreal for lap supplies, settings, findings, etc. We would like to know if there are any such suppliers in Halifax, or Nova Scotia in general. Another lapidary friend of ours thought there was a supplier in Dartmouth,

but didn't have enough info to be of any benefit. We live in Miramichi area of New Brunswick, and we don't know of any suppliers in N.B. either. If you or anyone in your society knows of "down east" suppliers, we would appreciate hearing from you.

Drew & Kay Dolan
gofton@nbnet.nb.ca

Hello Ken,

I came across your email address while on the net trying to find a source for Nova Scotia agate. I live in the United States and I wish to purchase or trade agates from your country and would like to know if you can put me in contact with rock shop owners or collectors in your country.

thank you,
Vaughn Nagel
gems24@prodigy.net

PHOTO CONTEST

by Ken McKenzie

Dorothy Roberts came across these old club photos from many years ago. Can anyone identify the people or approximate dates?

