



April 2010

The Rockhound's Bark

News

The next meeting will be held at the Museum on April 24, 2010 .

Attention New Members: The presentation for April is "Introduction to Rockhounding. This presentation will cover "where, how and what" for collecting Minerals, Agates and Fossils in Nova Scotia and will include a handout on locations, tides and good websites.

The Wire wrap class will be held on May 16 at 1600 Bedford Highway, Suite 205 from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm and the cost will be approx \$35 for materials (I will not have the exact price until I pick up the sterling silver wire). Coffee and tea will be provided and if you would like to bring lunch there is a fridge and microwave

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

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

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees were due in January. Please bring application form to a meeting or mail it to Terry along with \$20. We would like to be sure we have your most current information.

MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING

By Arlene Driscoll

Old Business

The new website is still not up and running as I have not been able to get help with the code to set it up. I am hoping to be able to do something soon. The www.nsmgs.ca site is now showing up on Google so people should now be able to get to that site. Once the new site is functional we can link the two sites.

The wirewrapping class planned for March 20 was cancelled. A new class will be scheduled.

The TD Bank account was closed and a new account will be opened at the Sackville Credit Union with \$1900 being transferred to the new account.

Terry presented financial statements to the membership .

Bill presented a recommendation for a change to the constitution to cover club liability. Motion was made by Bill and seconded by Terry and the motion carried. (Constitution with changes appears in this newsletter)

New Business

Bill would like to set up a schedule for volunteers at the Parrsboro Show, Please let Bill know when you may be able to work.

Bill will be going to Black Rock Light on May 8 . If anyone would like to join him, let him know and he can give you the details.

Bill and Terry will do a presentation on rocks and minerals for new members. Gilles will help if required. We will have a question and answer session in May . Please submit your questions to Arlene or Bill in advance so that members with expertise in that area can be prepared with an answer for the questions.

Prospectors Association is planning a Gold Panning outing on May 8. Check with Fred Walsh if you are interested.

Vanessa has ordered the Mineralogical Record for the club.

Dispensing the Collection What to Do When You Inherit a Collection

By Bruce Siegfried for *The Mountain Gem*

Often times, people contact our club members or the museum we sponsor, wondering just what to do with a collection they have inherited. How can they dispose of a collection that they know little, if anything, about?

They are concerned with knowing:

1. How does one *identify* 'boxes of rocks,' perhaps even a profusion of them dumped together?
2. How do you assign *monetary value* to rocks, minerals, and gems?
3. Who would *buy* this collection, and how do I *find* that person?

Even a surviving spouse who belongs to a club—and has been left with lots of stones wonders: "What will I do now?" For sure, these issues are not easily addressed. Here is what we can say; these are some suggestions to help you find that illusive place to start. Adjust the plan to your situation, one that fits you best. When a long-time collector dies, with an extensive collection, it presents a difficult problem for the family. At first, just dealing with the loss of the loved one is enough. Eventually though, the time comes to "do something" with the collection.



Now as a collector myself, I realize that most collectors have the same goal. They reason: "Having put much time, effort, thought, and money into my collection, (not to mention love), I would like to leave it ALL to ONE close family member, good friend, or worthy organization. Someone who not only appreciates it, but will keep it intact." If you find someone like that, good, case closed, end of matter. Often, however, this proves to be a fantasy. Ideally we all would like to have that child who loves the hobby as much as we do, and would be happy to receive the collection. Seldom are such events so ideal. As you know by now, the real and ideal are usually not the same thing. Let's face reality. Most who inherit a collection view the collection as someone else's hobby. It is not their hobby. Their interest in it may be minimal at best. Thus, their feelings toward the collection are rarely the same as the person who put it together over many years, with much care and effort. Hence, they are not prepared to give it the room in their lives it would demand of them. (Not to mention the space it would claim in their homes.) Two easy choices first present themselves. And they come about from lack of action, from procrastination, more so than any conscious thought and decision making effort.

Choice #1. Don't do anything! Let the collection languish in storage. Maybe out in the garage, or down in the basement, or worse—in some rental storage unit, possibly for many years. This will usually result in losing the labels. As the boxes fall apart, leaves, dirt and dead bugs will pile up, till you end up with one big mess! A mess that someone eventually dumps outside, they throw it away, or give it away. I have seen several of these conclusions for nice collections. Some are put into a dumpster.

Choice #2. This one also takes place naturally enough. Dispense the collection among family and friends, and their children. Let them take what they want. They might want to keep a few as reminders of him or her; it may have been the collector's favorite, or they may have dug the specimens themselves, or they cut and polished the stone. You can do this over some several months until the collection just naturally wanders off. Somehow, somewhere, it is gone, and that takes care of that. Would a grandchild be able to handle the collection and appreciate it? Perhaps you will be satisfied with choice #1 or choice #2. But I feel there is a viable third option. You may consider something better. Far better is the day this idea presents itself—to dispose of the collection in an *orderly manner*.

But HOW?

Soon after making that decision, the challenge becomes evident. How will you do it? Some ideas follow; pick and choose, adjusting them to your circumstances. Ultimately you must decide what is best for you and for the collection. The problem so often starts with the fact that the collection and hobby was known by just that one person. The collection proved to be his or hers alone. This person knew all the details; what it is, where it came from, and the value as well.

BUT ALL TOO OFTEN, THE PERSON DOESN'T RECORD ALL THESE IMPORTANT DETAILS! In my personal collection, I list all the names and locations of each stone in triplicate. Great, you say. On the other hand, I abhor values. To me, if it is pretty and I like it, I don't care whether it is worth fifty cents or twenty dollars. So no one knows the value of my thousands of specimens. Others do the same, omitting details, whether carelessly or purposely, they often leave scant information behind. As a consequence, surviving family members are left in the dark while trying to understand the collection. It is hard for them to relate to the fact the one 'pretty rock' is worth only \$1.00, while another, not near as nice, is worth perhaps \$50.00. Plain, dirty rocks may be very beautiful inside, and quite valuable. My first recommendation, (if you don't want to sell it all quick and

Dispensing the Collection (continued) What to Do When You Inherit a Collection

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cheap), is to divide it into three easy and practical parts. Simply put, here they are:

1. **Keep some to remember the person by**
2. **Sell the best**
3. **Dispose of the rest; give away to interested person, or children, or throw in the woods, or line the driveway**

What follows is a more detailed explanation of this plan.

1. KEEP SOME—for yourself and other family members. You can do this in connection with having “something to remember him (her) by.” To remind you of him and his treasured hobby

- A. One mineral that each person views as their favorite.
- B. Something the collector person was especially fond of.
- C. Something he or she personally collected on a favorite field trip or vacation.
- D. Something that person thought of as their favorite or special piece.

2. NOW SELL THE BEST, those that have exceptional value or beauty. I will discuss several options for this in the rest of the article.

3. DISPOSE OF THE REST, the leftovers. Here are some good possibilities.

- A. Sell it cheap and quick. OR
- B. Even better, my personal favorite: donate it to your local club or museum. It's a tax deduction. They will be happy to get it and gladly put it to good use. Perhaps they will put a few specimens on display. Or in the gift shop to raise funds. Or use it as door prizes at the club meetings. At times they give some to young ones who are 'pebble pups', leading them into a lifelong hobby, all from the gift of a few nice specimens. Also, they occasionally auction items off to raise funds for their club. At times, generous souls donate an entire collection to a club or museum.

But lets us now assume you desire to sell the entire collection yourself. This is the final avenue we will discuss. You will have two problems to deal with.

1. How do you find a buyer?
2. Just as important, how do you attach a dollar figure to the collection?

I have seen people selling such a collection at the local flea market, or at a gem and mineral show. However, the problem arises that the prices of many of the specimens are either too low, or too high. This results in the 'good stuff' that is priced too low rapidly disappearing. Now the best part is gone without much money in return. The rest may now be hard to sell. To avert such a disastrous outcome, could you invite one or two longtime club members/experienced collectors, to help out; a neutral third party to aid in pricing. Remember though, prices are not arbitrary for rocks and minerals. They are not set, at fixed rates or standardized prices. Proof of this is soon seen at shows. You often see a mineral or gem for sale at one price, but a few tables later you will see the same stone for a much different price. The price a mineral brings today often is not the price it will sell for tomorrow.

Ten different collectors would value a stone at ten different prices. Values are subjective. To make matters more complex, it is likely that twenty different varieties of amethyst, from twenty different countries, in twenty different grades will fetch twenty different prices. So get those suggested prices from someone knowledgeable to begin with, then you can adjust them up or down according to what you think. Selling at a show may not be your ideal or practical solution. Here are some alternatives, along with their strong and weak points for consideration.

1. A dealer—He has an idea about what price specimens are currently bringing. However, because he deals in minerals and gems to make a profit, he may only offer you a fraction of their worth. To cover his expenses and make a profit, at most he might offer you a third of their worth. Probably less.
2. A collector—He might not know the exact worth of rocks, but he will usually pay a bit more because he usually buys at the retail level, and he wants the collection for his own enjoyment. You likely know several collectors in your area.
3. The Internet—sell it on eBay® if you want to, if you can do all the work. You must measure, describe and picture each item, and then post it. It's good to tell what it is and where it is from, and you should have an ideal of its value. You must know exactly what you have and post it properly. You should get good prices for the really good specimens. The more common material may be harder to sell. You can sell miscellaneous boxes, but the Internet is probably not practical for large collections.
4. Ads placed in one of our hobby magazines or club bulletins—here you will find those interested in the very thing you have. You must prepare mailing information describing the material you have, and list it in accurate detail. You will deal with distant people over a period of many weeks to several months.

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5. Estate Sale—try inviting hobbyists through several clubs, those within a few hours travel distance from your home. Invite them to come over for a 'special day'. You must be ready for them. Price the material and put it out in the open. Select a day when the weather might be nice, and there are no local shows or field trips in progress. It must be advertised sufficiently, so let the clubs announce it at a couple of their meetings and put it in their newsletters. Give good descriptions and accurate directions to your place. The material must be clearly labeled and presented in an orderly fashion.

6. An auction—similar to last one, invite most clubs and collectors in your area and get a decent auctioneer. You must live in an area that has favorable numbers in the hobby. You must reach them with the news. Flyers sent to clubs for their meetings and at region shows work well for this purpose.

7. One man put all he had on a huge set of tables and said you could have your choice for eight dollars for any specimen. He sold all those worth that much and more real quickly. What he did with the rest I never heard.

8. Another person put an ad for a Yard Rock Sale—by appointment in club bulletin of a large club.

9. I am thinking of making up a series of Riker Mount Boxes that are several inches high. While still alive I can choose attractive specimens as gifts for my close friends and relatives. Any way you choose, be sure to properly promote what you have; specimens and equipment need clear and complete descriptions, or at least as much as you know, so buyers can be confident in what they are buying. Let people know way ahead of the planned event. I know of an older couple from Canada that sells minerals every year in Quartzsite and a few other shows. They are steadily disposing of their huge Canadian collection. The children did not want it. To empty their backyard will take a while, they have already been selling for more than twelve years. They figured it would take twenty years to sell out their entire collection. My wish is for shows to allow collections to be sold on a "Consignment Table." Maybe even a rock shop or dealer would be willing to do this, splitting the revenue with the collector's family. Remember, it is good to team up with someone who knows rocks and minerals and the hobby. Make sure specimens are clean and orderly, displayed in boxes or trays.



If only there was a book to look up how many were made, in what year, and the value, like so many other hobbies. So, whether you are disposing of a collection due to old age, ill health, financial need, quitting of the hobby, or inheriting it through the death of a family member, HOW are you going to do it? For many, the best course will be one of those mentioned or a mixture of these approaches. Remember that old rock hounds are sharp and limit their spending. Remember the simple plan: keep a few, give family members a few, sell the best, donate some, and get rid of the rest cheaply and quickly. Parts of this formula should work well for you. My wife always says that she'll have jewelry made out of her favorite gemstones when she inherits my collection. I personally hope my two daughters will take something that is special to them. I brought them up around rocks and they know a good deal about them. Maybe one will want the amethyst crystals, and the other will take the azurite and malachite specimens she has always admired.

May you live long and keep your collection for many more years. At this moment you at least have the beginning of a plan, as I have endeavored to answer the question: How to dispense of a collection?

Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society Constitution (as Revised March 2010)

NAME: The name of the Society shall be "The Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society", hereafter referred to as "the Society".

AIMS AND PURPOSES: The aims and purposes of the Society shall be

- a. To encourage and promote the study, display and responsible collecting of minerals, rocks, fossils, and gemstones.
- b. To encourage and promote lapidary work and related skills among Society members and others.
- c. To maintain liaison with government bodies that have jurisdiction in any facet of the Society's activities.
- d. To promote conservation and safe practices in all matters connected with the Society's aims and purposes.
- e. To engage in fund-raising activities in support of the aims and purposes of the Society.

MEMBERSHIP: Membership shall comprise all who are in accord with its aims and purposes and shall consist of:

- a. Ordinary member who have paid the membership dues established by the Society for the current calendar year.
- b. Member Emeritus (or Honorary Members) elected at the Society's discretion who are exempt from paying yearly dues.
- c. By reading and signing the Membership Application, members agree to abide by all conditions of membership and release the Society and its members from any liability associated with Society activities

REGULAR AND ANNUAL MEETINGS: Regular meetings of the Society shall be held at such times and places as may be designated by the membership, but there shall be an Annual Meeting held each year in the month of November for the purpose of

- a. Receiving a report of the Executive Committee
- b. Receiving an audited financial statement from the Treasurer
- c. Electing officers of the Society and chairpersons of Standing Committees
- d. Dealing with any other business which may be desired

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: There shall be an Executive Committee of the Society comprising the Society's President, Vice President, most immediate Past President still active in the Society, Treasurer and Secretary, together with the Editor of the Society's Newsletter (*The Rockhound's Bark*) and the chairpersons of standing committees.

QUORUM:

- a. At a regular meeting of the Society or any other meeting, including the Annual Meeting, the time and place of which have been notified to the membership in the Society's newsletter or otherwise not less than a week prior to the meeting date, the membership present shall constitute a quorum, providing it includes a member of the executive present to chair the meeting.
- b. At a meeting of the Executive Committee a quorum shall be a majority of its membership but shall include the President or Vice President.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- a. The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the chair but normally prior to each meeting of the Society.
- b. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to fill a vacancy in its own membership from among other members of the Society for the Society for the unexpired term of the person replaced.
- c. The Executive Committee shall:
 - i. Conduct all necessary business of the Society between its regular meetings.
 - ii. Authorize needed expenditures of sums not to exceed \$50.00 each or \$100.00 total and report all such expenditures at the next meeting of the Society.
 - iii. See that plans are in hand for forthcoming meetings and activities of the Society and oversee the work of all the Society's Officers and Committees.
 - iv. Keep the insurance coverage of the Society under review and see that adequate coverage is maintained, reporting any perceived inadequacies to the Society.
 - v. Appoint a Nominating Committee who shall present at the Annual Meeting of the Society a proposed slate of Officers and Chairpersons of Standing Committees as may be required to fill existing or anticipated vacancies in these positions, all those proposed having been approached and having indicated their willingness to serve if elected.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES: All members of the Society shall be eligible for election to any office except that no person shall be eligible for election to the same office in which he or she has just served for four successive years. Normally terms of office shall be two years except that to ensure continuity in the Executive Committee, the Nominating Committee may at its discretion nominate persons for one year so that not all members of the Executive Committee would find themselves reaching the end of their term of office in the same year.

All Officers and Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall normally be elected to office at the Annual Meeting of the Society, shall assume office immediately thereafter and shall remain in office until expire of the terms for which they are elected.

SIGNING OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY: The signing officers of the Society for banking purposes and the signing of cheques shall be any two of the following: the Treasurer, the President and the Vice President.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

- a. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Society or its Executive, shall oversee all activities of the Society during his or her term of office, and shall call meetings of the Executive Committee as required.
- b. The Vice-President shall assist the President and during his or her absence assume the same duties.
- c. The Treasurer shall
 - i. Receive all monies due the Society and deposit them to the credit of the Society in a chartered bank or trust company.
 - ii. Make such disbursements from these funds as shall be authorized by the Society or its Executive.

Events

**Black Rock Light
Field Trip
May 8, 2010**

**Wire Wrap Class
1600 Bedford Highway,
Ste 205
May 16, 2010**

**Bead Oasis Show at
WTCC
July 16, 17, 18, 2010
www.oasisshows.com**

**Parrsboro Rock and
Gem Show
August 20, 21 22, 2010**

**Deadline for the
May Newsletter is May 15**

**Send submissions to
driscoll@allstream.net**

2009 EXECUTIVE

President:

William Blinn

Vice President:

Fred Walsh

Secretary/Bark Editor:

Arlene Driscoll

Treasurer:

Terry Collett

Librarian:

Herb Malle

Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society (continued) Constitution (as Revised March 2010)

- iii. Present to each regular meeting of the Society a summary of its financial position.
- iv. Prepare and present to each Annual Meeting a audited statement covering the previous year.
- v. Maintain the membership list of the Society and be responsible for the collection of membership dues and recording of their payment.
- d. The Secretary shall
 - i. Record and keep a file of all minutes of meetings of the Society and its Executive.
 - ii. Submit a copy of the minutes from all meeting to the Editor for inclusion in *The Rockhound's Bark*.
 - iii. Keep a master copy of the Society's constitution and of all amendments thereto
 - iv. Conduct correspondence for the Society or its Executive and other materials thought desirable by the Society or its Executive.
- e. The Editor of the Society's Newsletter (*The Rockhound's Bark*) shall solicit and edit materials for *The Rockhound's Bark*, including meeting minutes, and see to its distribution subject to the direction of the Society or its Executive and with their support and assistance as needed.
- f. Chairpersons of Standing Committees shall convene and preside at all meetings of the relevant committee and make such reports on the Committee's work to the Society or its Executive as may be requested or deemed advisable.

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEES: While Committees of the Society may be created or disbanded by the Society at any time it is suggested that included among Standing Committees should be the following, with the understanding that a Committee need consist of no more than its chairperson if that is all that is required, but that other members may be added by the Committee itself, if desired:

- a. A Library Committee of which the Chairperson would normally be the Librarian
- b. A Field Trip Committee
- c. A Program Committee

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION: Any proposal for the amendment of this Constitution shall be presented as "Notice of Motion" at a meeting of the Society at least one month before the meeting at which it is to be considered and that "Notice of Motion" shall be communicated to the membership by means of the Society's Newsletter or in other written form at least one week before the date of that meeting.

DISSOLUTION: In event of the dissolution of the Society all net assets of the Society shall be donated to the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in Halifax, Nova Scotia, for application to the Geology Collections.

QUESTIONS PROPOSED SO FAR FOR MAY

Massachusetts and Connecticut basalts (which may be a bit more mafic than the Nova Scotian basalts) have a very notable presence of Datolite, Prehnite, and Babingtonite. North Mountain basalt shows little or no Babingtonite and Datolite rare amounts of Prehnite. Any ideas about the difference?

How do you make /print specimen identification labels?"

I am interested in knowing where I can find Nova Scotian trilobites to observe, photograph and excavate or buy. I will bring some trilobites that I have for identification.