

November 2010



The Rockhound's Bark

News

The next meeting will be held at the Museum on November 27, 2010. The theme will be our Annual Show and Sell.

Elections will be held in November for all executive positions. We need volunteers for the positions of president (see notice on the back page of the newsletter), treasurer, secretary and newsletter editor. All positions will be vacant as of November so please give some consideration to taking on one of these jobs.

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 OCTOBER MEETING

By Arlene Driscoll

Old Business

Bill welcomed the new members in attendance. He also noted that John had not been reimbursed for the magazines yet.

Banner for shows was priced and will cost around \$70. Motion to purchase by Doug and seconded by Debbie. Ken MacKenzie pointed out that we have to have the disclaimer on the banner stating that the image is being used with permission of Dept of Natural Resources.

Bill welcomed Victor back after a years absence.

Reminder that elections will be held at the November meeting. Herb is willing to serve as treasurer and then we will need someone to take over as librarian.

New Business

Next meeting is the Annual Buy, Sell and Trade. Reminder that 10% of the proceeds of all sales go to the club.

Presentations to the club. It was suggested that we could pay an honorarium to people to do a presentation at the meetings. In January Emma will do a PowerPoint presentation on the Parrsboro show.

A ROCKHOUND'S MID WINTER DREAM TUCSON & QUARTZSITE, ARIZONA

By Arlene Driscoll

As the thermometer drops, all but the heartiest rockhounds in the colder parts of the world have put away their hammers for the winter. For the next four months or so, they will have to give up their favorite pastime and spend time cleaning and preparing the finds of the summer for display or further work.



South America just to name a few.

For some, however, the excitement is building for the pilgrimage to “rockhound heaven”, Tucson and Quartzsite, Arizona. For the months of January and February, mineral shows abound in both places and surrounding towns. Mineral dealers, miners, gold prospectors and jewelers head for the desert after the hubbub of the holidays has passed. Here they will find the biggest variety of specimens that many of them have ever seen. Vendors and buyers come from all over the world, Africa, Asia, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Australia as well as North and



Quartzsite, Arizona is located in the southwestern tip of Arizona, just 20 minutes from the California border on Interstate 10. To get to Quartzsite by air, you must fly in to Las Vegas, Phoenix or Palm Springs and drive approximately three hours

to get to the town. Accommodations in Quartzsite are pretty much non existent so you will need to stay in Blythe, California or Parker, Arizona, both between 30 to 40 miles away. The other option is to travel in by motorhome, trailer or other camping vehicle to join the hundreds of thousands of other enthusiasts camping in one of the many campgrounds in town or boondocking in the desert.



There are a number of different shows held in town and they run from January 1 through to the end of March with the most popular shows taking place in January. A lot of the high end jewelry shows have moved to Tucson, however

some good dealers still set up in Quartzsite. Each show has a different focus. Some feature giftware, some jewelry, others are more diverse but all feature rocks and minerals in every shape and color. This is not a shopping mecca for the faint of heart. It is dirty, dusty, windy and rough and you walk for miles to find the treasures but if you love rocks and minerals you will delight in the madness that is Quartzsite.



If you are looking for the polished and the perfected, then Tucson is probably the better place for you. Some of the top gem dealers and jewelers in the world will set up at one of the Tucson shows. The format is similar to Quartzsite in that shows are set up in themes but here they are in hotels and convention centers, with well organized booths and payment terms. The dealers here are not as likely to barter that lovely piece of rose quartz that you brought from Nova Scotia for that fantastic bit of Crazy Lace agate from Mexico but you may pick up a lovely piece

of emerald or ruby faceting rough for a good price or a beautiful star sapphire ring for less than what you would pay for costume jewelry here at home.

If you plan to visit either place or both, do some research on the internet to find the shows that sell the items that most appeal to you and visit those first. Then, if you have extra time-explore the rest and enjoy.

A ROCKHOUND'S MID WINTER DREAM

(CONTINUED)

By Arlene Driscoll



This is the home of the Quartzsite Rock and Gem Club. They have a membership of between 800 and 900 active members each year. For a membership fee of \$15 per year you have access to the club and all of its facilities. Shop time costs \$2 per half day and classes in jewelry making , faceting, flint knapping, and opal cutting are from \$5 to \$15 .



The shop has approximately 15 capping machines plus saw shop where you can have all of your rock finds cut up. After a mandatory half day orientation to the shop, you are free to use it at any time for personal use only, no commercial use is allowed. Senior members are always on hand to offer help and advice.



The opal shop and the wax carving shop. These machines are strictly for opal work. The wax carvings are for the casting shop which is in the next room. After carving a wax mold to your desired design, you then can cast your piece in silver or if you want more artistic piece you can do a straw casting. This is done by melting your silver and pouring it over a tightly bound straw bundle and the result is a free form silver piece which you then tumble polish.



The silver shop has about 15 work spaces complete with all tools, vices, torches, etc. Classes are offered most days in some form of silversmithing.



This is the annex building at the club and this building houses the faceting shop and additional space for holding meetings or classes.



The faceting shop has 8 faceting machines belonging to the club and 3 spaces for people to set up their own machines. A faceting instructor is always in the shop to give assistance.

Events

Websites of Interest

Here are some interesting web sites for info:

- <http://www.robsrockshop.com>
- <http://nsminerals.atSPACE.com>
- <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/fossils/>
- <http://www.mindat.org>
- <http://vuprocks.com>
- <http://gis3.natr.gov.ns.ca/MODB/>
- <http://gis.wvdep.org/convert/>
- <http://www.bayoffundytourism.com/tides/times/>
- <http://www.rockngem.com/>
- <http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/MEB/pdf/ic66.htm>
- <http://www.rockhounds.com/rockshop/nssites.html>
- <http://www.42explore.com/rocks2.htm>
- <http://www.allaboutgemstones.com/>
- <http://www.rockhoundkids.com>
- <http://mineralcollecting.org/>
- <http://www.galleries.com/>
- <http://www.minerals.net/>

Deadline for the December newsletter is December 15
Send submissions to driscoll@allstream.net

I received the following letter from Bill and he asked me to put it in the Bark.

Dear members:

This notice is to inform you that I will not accept the nomination for President of the Nova Scotia Mineral and Gem Society. My reasons are personal and I will not discuss them with anyone.

I will continue as a member and I will accept the Vice-President position should you wish. This of course goes with 100% support of whom ever becomes President.

We have many new members who I am sure can fill the Presidents' position with new ideas and leadership.

2009 EXECUTIVE

President:
William Blinn

Vice President:
Fred Walsh

Secretary/Bark Editor:
Arlene Driscoll

Treasurer:
Terry Collett

Librarian:
Herb Malle

William Blinn
President NSMGS