



The Rockblast

The Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Newsletter

June 2006

President's Message

Editorial problems have held up our communications, but thanks to **Jeff Shallit** (our new editor), this problem is solved. As of Spring 2005 an average of 26 members have turned out for the meetings -- thanks for the support! A record crop turned out to the Bon Choix restaurant in support of **Malcolm Back's** talk, and **Matt Manson's** talk on diamonds drew a record turnout of 34 members. There have been requests to have **Ken Dardano** and more dealers return for future talks. Every effort is being made to attract the best of speakers.

Our 2005 May show was more popular than before, and our 2006 show just fell short of the money taken in last year. Thanks to all who gave of their time to help with the show. Special thanks to **Peter Russell** for being our "microscope man" all day and to **Jeff Shallit** who personally hand-wrapped all the giveaways. Special thanks also to **Gary Partlow** who advertises our show to the media year after year.

Thanks to **Peter Russell** who hosted last June's potluck at the U of W and then gave us a walk and talk through his special garden. This year **Bob Sharpe** is hosting the potluck at WLU -- we will have a look at some WLU rocks and help identify some of them -- thanks, Bob! (See page 4 for directions.)

Our annual meeting was short and sweet. **Scott Rose** was added as a new executive member, as it is crucial to have the kid's club represented in order to help with the smooth running of that club. **Jeff Shallit** will be our permanent December "auctioneer" until he resigns.



We are getting two trophies made: one will be for "the best collected specimen for the year", the other for "the best acquired specimen of the year". All of your best collected and best acquired minerals will be judged at the December meeting and the winners will have their names entered on the appropriate trophy. Special thanks to **Gary Partlow** who has become our new "go get the trophies man".

Our "mini talks" on the mineral of the month have had a very favourable response and I only can hope that the members can keep this going.

Remember this club is for you -- any requests for speakers or ideas for future meetings are always welcomed. The speakers for next year are already booked and all that remains is to arrange them into time slots that will work for them.

Have an enjoyable summer and pick up some rocks for the September meeting! -- *Gary Winkler*

2006 Club Field Trips

The 2006 field trip season is upon us again! Our club already had its first field trip, to the **Guelph Limestone Quarry**, on **April 29 2006**. This quarry has recently changed ownership, and thanks to the hard work of Gary Winkler, we were able to visit. It was a beautiful sunny day, and there were lots of sphalerite crystals and fossils to be found. Reiner found the prize of the day, a beautiful specimen of nearly perfect, highly lustrous golden-brown sphalerite crystals sitting atop dolostone matrix. Reiner reports the specimen was just sitting there, waiting for him to pick it up! How it failed to get damaged during the blasting is a mystery. Jeff collected lots of sphalerite rough which he hopes can be faceted into gemstones. We're hoping to arrange another trip there soon.



On **May 14**, the CCFMS had a trip to the **Dundas Quarry**. This one was a little disappointing, with not many freshly-blasted areas to search through. Reiner found a nice vug with celestine crystals, which he immediately donated to Gary Winkler.

We're hoping to set up another trip to the **Flamborough Quarry**, too. Unfortunately this quarry can only be visited on Friday mornings. Stay tuned to the e-mail list for more news.

There is a possibility for an **August 10-13** trip to **Herkimer, New York** to collect Herkimer diamonds and to **Springfield, Massachusetts** for the [East Coast Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show](#). If you're interested in participating, contact Jeff Shallit.

Tentatively we have **August 24-27** set aside for a trip to **Cobalt, Ontario**. This is getting to be an annual event, led by Reiner Mielke. This is your chance to strike it rich in silver!

Gary Partlow is trying to set up a multi-day trip to **Bancroft**, tentatively **September 21-24**. If interested in participating, contact Jeff Shallit or Gary.

On **September 23 2006** the CCFMS will have their semi-annual trip to the Beamsville Quarry.

On **September 24 2006** the CCFMS will have their semi-annual trip to the Dundas Quarry.

REMINDER: You can always keep abreast of new field trips by going to

<http://www.calaverite.com/kwgmc>

Upcoming Club Meetings

On **Wednesday, June 7 2006** our annual potluck will take place, but this year, with a twist! The **Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU)** has a mineral collection, but recently it has not received all the attention it deserves. The Department has literally hundreds of specimens, but many have lost their labels. This is your chance to help out by identifying specimens. Bring your hardness kits, mineral identification books, etc., and join the fun! Bob Sharpe, who is hosting the event, promises a free mineral to everyone who participates.

The fun starts at 6:30 PM and may go as late as 10:00 PM. The Department is located in the **Arts E Wing**. We will gather in Room 2E7 which is on the second floor and East wing of the Arts Building.

The parking lots closest to the Department are labelled on the map below. The most accessible lot is likely behind St. Michael Campus on the north side of University Avenue. The red parking lots are metered and require coins. Parking permits are not required after **4:30 p.m.** in all **white permit** parking areas and after **6:30 p.m.** in most **gold permit** parking areas.



On **September 6 2006** we'll meet at our usual venue, the "Button Factory" (aka Waterloo Community Arts Centre) at 25 Regina St. South, Waterloo, at 7:30 PM. This is our annual "Show and Tell". Bring minerals you've collected or obtained during the summer and give a short talk! Also, **Bo Rennecken-dorf** will give a mini talk on "the cosmic source of rocks".

Past Meetings

May 3, 2006: **Alan Morgan** from the University of Waterloo spoke about "Geoscape Grand River". Bob Sharpe gave a mini-talk on the Mineral of the Month: tungsten minerals.

April 12, 2006: Special meeting and slide presentation at the CEIT building at the University of Waterloo: "Treasures of Tucson". **Peter Russell, Gary Partlow, Frank Ruelicke,** and **Jeff Shallit** spoke about their recent trip to the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. Gary and Peter brought free samples of glauconite pseudomorphs that they collected in Camp Verde, Arizona.

April 5 2006: **Bill Plavac** was going to speak about "Mineral Collecting in Newfoundland" but had to cancel, so **Jeff Shallit** gave a talk about meteorites instead. The mineral of the month was sodalite and its variety, hackmanite.

March 1, 2006: **Ken Steele**, District Geologist for Central and Southwestern Ontario, spoke about "Southern Ontario Minerals in Your Life". Mineral of the month: copper, presented by **Ed Stiles**. Gary Winkler passed out some free barite specimens, courtesy of **Bill Plavac**.

February 1, 2006: **Matthew Manson** spoke on "Diamonds in Canada: a view along the Pipeline", and **Rich Paterson** gave a mini-talk on quartz.

January 4, 2006: **Ulymar Rocha** talked about imperial topaz, and showed two movies. **Rob Fox** and his family gave a short talk on the "Mineral of the Month" -- diamond.

December 7, 2005: Pizza for Christmas, Xmas gift exchange, and live auction! 32 items were auctioned off for the benefit of the club. There were donations from **Bill McIntyre, Reiner Mielke, Gary Winkler,** Stonebridge Imports, The Weather, The Gneiss Guy, and Calaverite Fine Minerals.

November 2, 2005: A big turnout came to hear mineral dealer and Gneiss Guy **Ken Dardano** tell us some of his rock tales. Thanks, Ken!

Rockin' in Belgium

Your newsletter editor recently had the opportunity to attend the [MINERANT](#) gem and mineral show in Antwerp, Belgium. This annual show is held at the Exposition Hall in the south part of the city. Although Antwerp is famous for diamonds, they were hardly in evidence at this show, which attracts dealers from all over Europe.

I arrived in Antwerp rather jet-lagged from the trip through London and Brussels, and negotiated the tram system to arrive at the Exposition Hall at about noon. Walking around the tables of about 100 dealers, I could hear French, Flemish, German, and English being spoken -- sometimes two or three languages in a single conversation!

Some dealers familiar from Tucson, such as Jaroslav Hyršl and [Gunnar Färber Mineralien](#), were in evidence, but there were also some that never make it to that big US show. There were lots of micro-minerals from the world-famous location of Eifel in Germany, and minerals specific to Belgium, such as [Vantasselite](#), [Davreuxite](#), and [Ardennite](#). There were also radioactive minerals from the former Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo).



There was a roped-off concession area where you could relax with a beer or a glass of wine. Now *that's* an innovation we need to have in North American shows!

One thing a North American mineral collector immediately notices is the different display boxes that Europeans use. The familiar “perky box” with black bottom, foam insert, and hinged clear top was nowhere in evidence. Instead Europeans seem to prefer unhinged two-part plastic boxes, with a white bottom and clear top -- see the picture at left.

These were available in all sorts of sizes, from micromount, to small cabinet size. In the picture you see a specimen of the rare mineral [Tsumoite](#) in one of these cases.

Prices were not ridiculously high, although since they are in Euros you need to add about 50% to the cost to get Canadian dollars. I brought a few Canadian minerals for trade, and was able to trade some native silver from Cobalt, and some graphite spheres in calcite from the Bancroft area. In return I got a specimen of the rare tellurium mineral [Rodalquilarite](#) and the mineral [Microlite](#).

I hear the best Belgium show is held annually in November in Liège -- a trip I'll have to save for another day!

Find a Meteorite & Get Rich

The **Tagish Lake** meteorite was recently sold for \$750,000! Jim Brook, the outdoorsman who retrieved samples of this carbonaceous chondrite, which fell in northern British Columbia on January 18, 2000, had the presence of mind to carefully preserve the meteorite in his freezer as it was discovered. His care was rewarded when a consortium including the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of Alberta bought the meteorite for research. For more details, see the [April 22 Globe and Mail](#).

Another Meteorite Story

According to a story aired on the [BBC in May](#), scientists drilling in the 145-million-year-old Morokweng crater in South Africa have found a remnant of the meteorite that formed the crater. The beachball-sized meteorite was found 770 meters below the ground in the Kalahari desert.

Previously it was thought that no large remnants of such a large impact could survive.

Perhaps this means there are still meteorites to be found buried below the crater at Holleford, Ontario!

In Memoriam: Frederick Pough

Frederick Pough, author of the *Field Guide to Rocks and Minerals*, died on April 7, 2006, while attending the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. He was 99.

Pough's guide, first published in 1953, sold over a million copies and introduced many to the pleasures of minerals and mineral collecting. The mineral **Poughite** ($\text{Fe}_2^{3+}[\text{SO}_4(\text{TeO}_3)_2] \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$) is named after him.

Yet More Meteorite News

According to an April 11 story in the *Associated Press*, a 355-pound **Campo de Cielo** meteorite specimen recently sold at Bonhams Auction House in New York for US \$93,000.

Meteorite aficionados know that this is one of the more common meteorites and routinely is sold for as little as 10¢ a gram -- so the buyer overpaid by about \$77,000. Caveat emptor!

New Rockblast Editor

Peter Russell has been editing the *Rockblast* for some time now, but he's decided to move on, so **Jeff Shallit** volunteered to try to fill his shoes. We thank Peter for his many years of service as *Rockblast* editor.



Peter and the new newsletter editor in the Earth Sciences Museum at UW.

Summer And Fall Show Schedule

On **June 3-4 2006** the Niagara Peninsula Geological Society will hold **Geoventure 2006** at the Children's Discovery Centre, 360 Niagara Street, St. Catharines. 10 AM - 5 PM both days.

Directions: Take the QEW towards Niagara. In St. Catharines take the Niagara St. exit, head north on Niagara St. for 1.2 km, just past the park on the right. Extra parking on left at Laura Secord High School. For more info, call (905) 357-5132, or visit the Niagara Peninsula Geological Society website: <http://www.ccfms.ca/Clubs/NPGS/> .

On **July 28-29-30 2006**, the **Toronto Jewellery Gem & Mineral Show & Sale** will take place at Leaside Gardens, 1073 Millwood Road, East York, Toronto. Admission \$8 adults; \$6 12-18, under 12 free with adult. Friday 4 PM - 9 PM; Saturday 10 AM - 7 PM; Sunday 10 AM - 5 PM. For more information, visit www.torontogemshow.com.

On **Saturday July 29 2006** the **Mineral Capital Gem & Mineral Show** will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, Station St., in Bancroft, Ontario, from 10 AM to 4 PM. This show is an "all-minerals" show that takes place one week before the Gemboree.

On **August 3-6 2006** the **Bancroft Gemboree** will take place in Bancroft.

On **August 12-13, 2006** the **East Coast Gem Mineral and Fossil Show** will take place in W. Springfield, Massachusetts, at the Better Living Center, 1305 Memorial Avenue. Largest US show outside Tucson. 200 Dealers. Friday and Saturday, 10 AM - 7 PM; Sunday 10 AM - 5 PM. Admission \$6. For more information see www.mzexpos.com.

On **September 16-17 2006** the **Gem & Mineral Club of Scarborough** presents "Wonders of the Earth", Saturday 10 AM - 6PM, Sunday 11 AM - 5 PM. Demonstration, kids' auction, door prizes, snack bar, kids' quarry, live auction, silent auction, free parking. Admission \$3 adults, \$1 child. Mid-Scarborough Community Centre, 2467 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto. For further information, call (416) 282-5319 or (416) 438-8908.

On **October 13-14-15 2006** the Michigan Mineralogical Society will host the **Greater Detroit Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show**, South Macomb Community College Expo Center, Building P, 12 Mile & Hayes, Warren, Michigan. Friday, 9 AM - 7 PM, Saturday 10 AM - 7 PM, Sunday 11 AM - 5 PM. Admission fee.

On **November 4-5 2006**, the **University of Waterloo** presents the **Annual Gem and Mineral Show**, from 10 AM to 5 PM, at the Earth Sciences Museum in the CEIT building on the UW campus. This year's theme is "Carved in Stone". For more information, call (519) 888-4567, ext. 2469, or visit www.openhouse.uwaterloo.ca.

On **November 11-12 2006**, the **Gem and Mineral Club of Burlington** hosts their annual **Gem and Mineral Show** at the Mainway Recreation Centre, 4015 Mainway, Burlington, Ontario (NE corner of Walkers and Mainway). 10 AM - 6 PM Saturday; 10 AM - 5 PM Sunday.

KW Junior Rockhounds

Our Kids' Club is now in the able hands of Scott Rose, who has many activities planned. Kids 6-16 are welcome to attend with their parents. Here's the schedule:

Saturday, June 3, 12 PM to 2 PM: Fossil identification at the Waterloo Community Arts Centre

August 5-6: Field Trip to the Bancroft Gemboree and collecting trip to Bear Lake Diggings

Saturday, September 2, 1 PM to 2 PM: Geology of Bear Lake Diggings and identification of Bancroft finds

For more information, contact Scott at (519) 885-0674, or send e-mail to kwrockhounds@gmail.com.

Humor: Rock Books Reviewed

By Fu Ling Yu

Forever Amber: Set in the Middle Ages, this book tells the story of a young woman who would do almost anything to acquire fossilized tree sap. Rated R.

Diamonds are Forever: Secret Agent 007 is sent to Northern Canada to investigate a new find of kimberlite. On the way he learns about clarity, cut, and colour.

King Solomon's Mines: A young man is forced against his will to extract fine rhodochrosite specimens.

The Celestine Prophecy: Author James Redfield meets a blind old man who tells him of a location in Madagascar where the finest celestine crystals are found. But when he gets there, all he finds is calcite.

You Can't Go Home Again: In this cautionary tale, a man's wife forces him to move out once his rock collection takes up every available space in their house.

Gone with the Wind: A tragic story of a rockhound who finds hundreds of tiny sperryllite crystals, but loses them all when a fierce storm blows them off his porch.

David Copperfield: In this Dickens classic, a young man makes good after finding a vast deposit of azurite and malachite. Heartwarming.

Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Club

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Club Website:

<http://www.calaverite.com/kwgmcc>

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