



The Rockblast

The Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Newsletter

March 2008

President's Message



Have we had enough winter yet? Our February meeting was cancelled at the last minute due to another winter storm that just seemed to keep getting worse throughout the day. I had intended to brave the weather and head down Highway #7 from Guelph to Kitchener, but finally wisdom prevailed (along with a bit of urging from my wife). **Reiner** and I decided that it was not worth the risk, and so we contacted our guest speaker, **Frank Ruehlicke**, and cancelled the meeting at 6 pm. Unfortunately, by that point, we did not have any way of officially notifying everyone. Hopefully, you decided to stay at home in front of the fireplace, or at least some place warm and safe. We will re-schedule **Frank** and his talk on "*War and Pieces of Pyrite*" later in the year. As winter drags on, the good news is, you have more time to continue sorting and cataloguing the specimens you obtained last year. Or, if you are like me, there is still lots of time to get

started.

In April, we will have a large display case at the Kitchener Public Library on Queen Street to advertise our club and give an indication of what we do. Are there suggestions of a theme? You are invited to loan the club an item that shows your interest in the hobby: lapidary work, a carving, a specimen you have collected, or perhaps a small display of related minerals to show different crystal shapes, or colours of a mineral. Nothing too exotic or valuable. The club will reimburse members if there is any loss or damage up to a maximum of \$100.

Although it feels like winter will never end, preparation for the Club Show on Saturday, May 3rd, has already begun. We need a volunteer to help with the advertising. Would someone be willing to notify local radio and TV stations of this event? Also, there are many electronic bulletin boards available. I can provide details on the show, and a list of past places we have advertised. With a little creativity, I am sure there are lots of ways to get the word out. Can someone help out with this?

Our speaker in March is Erin O'Hara, a 4th year Geology major at the University of Waterloo. Her topic is "Petrography: Minerals and Microscopes". Come and see the fascinating array of colours and information in "thin sections".

--*Gary Partlow*

Upcoming Meetings

All meetings start at 7:00 PM for trading specimens at the Waterloo Community Arts Centre, 25 Regina St. South, Waterloo. Typical schedule:

7:00 - 7:30 PM: trading and socializing

7:30 - 7:45 PM: a "mini-talk" about some aspect of the hobby

7:45 - 8:00 PM: announcements

8:00 - 8:15 PM: monthly raffle

8:15 - 9:00 PM: featured talk

March 5 2008: Erin O'Hara, a 4th year student in geology at the University of Waterloo, will speak about "Petrography: Minerals and Microscopes".

April 2 2008: Tony Steede from the Walker Mineralogical Club in Toronto will speak about "The Magic Mountain -- Mont Saint-Hilaire, Québec". Bring your specimens from this location!

May 7 2008: **John and Tim Elliott** will speak about "The Dundas Quarry - its geology, history, and minerals". Bring your best Dundas specimens to show to everyone!

June 4 2008: Howard Plotkin from the University of Western Ontario will speak about "The Dresden Meteorite". Bring your meteorite specimens!

Upcoming Events

On **March 29-30 2008**, the Brantford Lapidary & Mineral Society the 36th Annual Lapidary and Mineral Society show (the Paris show) at the Paris fairgrounds, 139 Silver Street, Paris, Ontario. Adults \$3, Children \$1. For more information, contact Jenny Maracle-Jones at turtlefeathers@brant.net.

On **April 10-13 2008**, the 35th Annual Rochester Mineralogical Symposium takes place in Rochester, New York. For more information, visit <http://www.rasny.org/MinSymp.htm>.

On **April 18-20 2008**, the Club de Minéralogie de Montréal presents their 23rd Annual Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show at the Centre Pierre_Charbonneau, 3000 Viau Street, Montréal. (Viau Métro) Friday, 3 PM - 10 PM; Saturday 10 AM - 7 PM; Sunday, 10 AM - 5 PM. Adults \$8, Children 6-12, \$4, Parking \$10. For more info, visit <http://www.salonminerauxmtl.com>. or call (450) 964-8472 or (514) 353-0101.

On **April 25-27 2008**, the 16th Annual Toronto Gem and Mineral Spring Show and Sale takes place at the Oriole Community Centre, 2975 Don Mills Road, West, North York, Ontario. Friday 4 PM - 9 M, Saturday 10 AM - 7 PM, Sunday 10 AM - 5 PM. Adults \$8, Seniors \$7, Kids 12-18, \$6, under 12 free with adult. For more information, contact Ohannes Bedrossian at (514) 989-9800 or e-mail torontogemshow@canada.com.

On Saturday **May 3 2008** our club hosts the Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Show at the Waterloo Community Arts Centre (aka the "button factory"), 25 Regina St. S., Waterloo, 10 AM - 4 PM. Rocks, minerals, gemstones, jewelry, fossils, meteorites. Free admission. Free rocks for kids.

On **July 25-27 2008**, the 3rd Annual Toronto Gem and Mineral Summer Show and Sale takes place at the Leaside Gardens Arena, 1073 Millwood Road, East York. Adults \$8, Seniors \$7, Kids 12-18, \$6, under 12 free with adult. For more information, contact Ohannes Bedrossian at (514) 989-9800 or e-mail torontogemshow@canada.com.

On **July 31-August 3 2008**, the [45th Annual Bancroft Gemboree](#) will take place in Bancroft. For more information, call (877) 410-1513.

On **September 13-14 2008** the Scarborough Gem and Mineral Club presents their 40th Annual Show, 2467 Eglinton Ave. E., Scarborough, Ontario. Saturday 10-6, Sunday 11-5. Adults \$3, Children \$1. For more information, contact scarbgemclub@lycos.com.

On **October 10-12 2008** the Michigan Mineralogical Society hosts the 64th Annual Detroit Gem, Mineral, Fossil, and Jewelry Show, South Macomb Community College Expo Center, Building P, 12 Mile Road and Hayes Road, Warren, Michigan. Friday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m, Saturday 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Adults \$7, Seniors \$4, Children \$3. For more information visit <http://www.michmin.org/show/>. This is the largest show within a 4-hour drive of Kitchener-Waterloo, well worth a visit.

On **October 25-26 2008** the University of Waterloo Earth Sciences Department hosts the Annual Gem and Mineral Show, University of Waterloo Earth Sciences Museum, Waterloo, Ontario. For more information contact Peter Russell at (519) 888-4567, extension 32469.



Scheelite and Wolframite

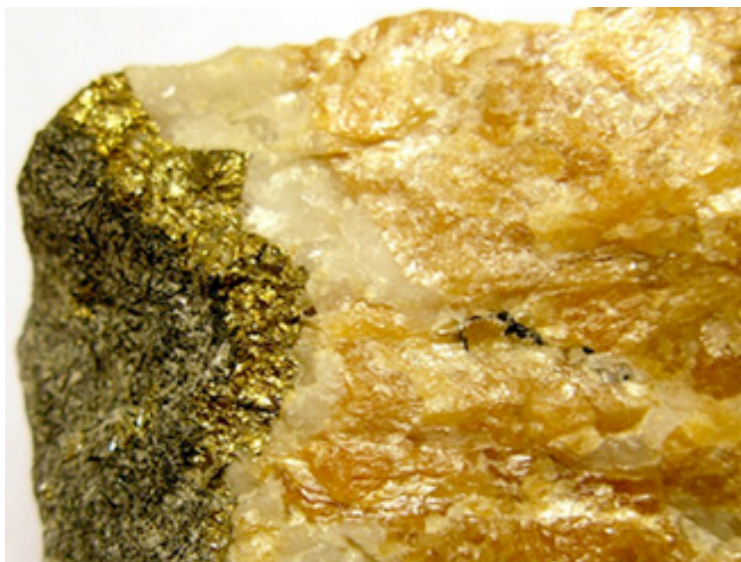
By André Mongeon

Tungsten is an important metal used in a wide variety of applications, from industrial to scientific. This very heavy metal is used for incandescent light bulb filaments, for making steel alloys and for the manufacture of the abrasive tungsten carbide. The name “tungsten” comes from the Swedish words for “heavy stone”, alluding to the high density. During World War II, tungsten was considered to be of strategic military impor-

tance as a vital war material. Today it remains a metal of economic importance.

Above left: Scheelite, Ferberite, Hunan Province, China.

At right: Scheelite, Lamaque Mine, Val d’Or, Québec.



Scheelite (CaWO_4) is one of the most important sources of tungsten. Crystals are often nicely shaped tetragonal bi-pyramids, but scheelite is also found in massive form. Some crystals resemble fluorite at first glance. Colours range from white to yellow to brown and occasionally light violet or light green. Often brightly fluorescent under short wave UV, prospecting has been performed at night using a portable SW lamp. Crystals are sometimes gemmy enough to facet. These are usually cut for collectors only because scheelite is too soft for most jewellery applications.

At left: Faceted Scheelite, China

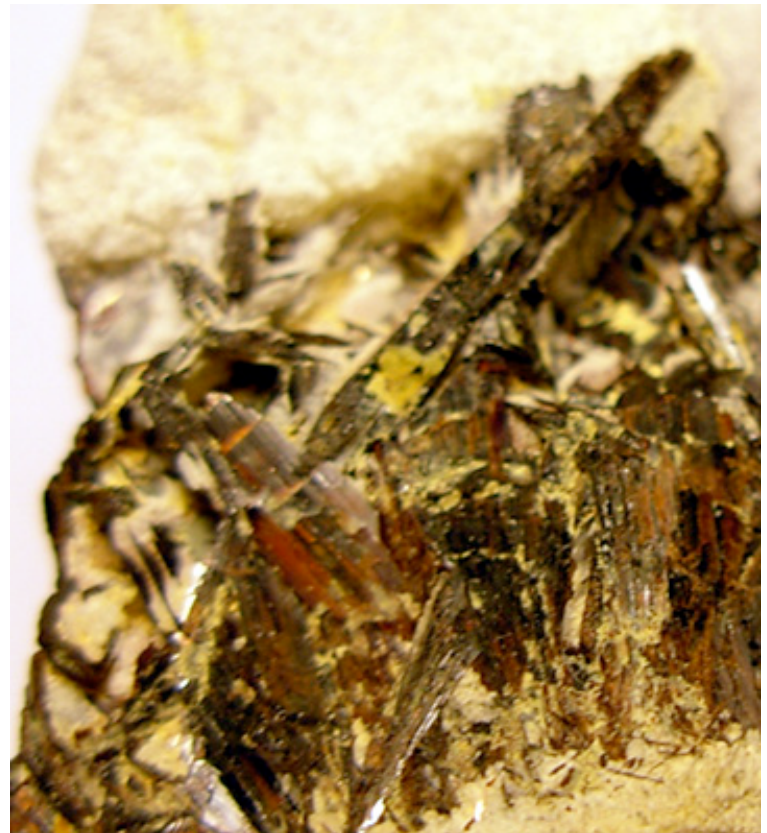
Wolframite is actually an intermediate in a series between two minerals. Huebnerite (MnWO_4) is at the manganese end, and Ferberite (FeWO_4) is at the iron end of the series. Often the two are found blended and then the mineral is sometimes termed Wolframite ($\{\text{MnFe}\}\text{WO}_4$), although this is no longer a valid mineral species name. Huebnerite crystals tend to be brown to reddish-brown and



Ferberite is usually black. Both share the same crystal habits, often prismatic, tabular or bladed. Wolframite is also mined for its tungsten content.

At left: Wolframite, Burnt Hill Tungsten Mine, Maple Grove Stn, New Brunswick

At right: Huebnerite, Adams Mine, San Juan, Colorado



Famous locations for scheelite include the Natas mine, near Windhoek, Namibia; the Xuebaoding Mountains near Pingwu, Sichuan, China; Santa Cruz, Sonora, Mexico; and the Shigar Valley, Northern Areas, Pakistan. Famous locations for ferberite include Quartz Creek Mine, Gunnison County, Colorado and San Cristobal district, Junin Dept., Peru.

Huge Darwin Exhibit Opens at the ROM

Darwin: The Evolution Revolution, the largest exhibition ever mounted on Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution by natural selection, opens at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum on March 8. According to [this press release](#), the exhibit will feature personal artifacts and live animals, and will run through August 4, 2008.

The exhibit consists of nine sections. In *The Introduction*, visitors will learn about Darwin the man. *The World Before Darwin* discusses biology before Darwin. *An Ordinary Man* features a video about Darwin's life and work, shot at Down House in England. *Early Life* illustrates Darwin's early years and influences. *Voyage of the Beagle* depicts Darwin's famous 5-year voyage to South America and the Galapagos. *London* discusses Darwin's life after the *Beagle* voyage. *Down House* covers the years 1842-1882 where Darwin developed his famous theory. *Evolution and Natural Selection* covers the fact and theory of evolution. *Legacy*, the final section, explores the impact and relevance of Darwin's work today.

Peterborough Show

On March 1-2, your newsletter editor attended the 15th annual Peterborough Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show in downtown Peterborough.

The Peterborough show is a great show for mineral collectors because it is the first show of the year after Tucson, and many dealers have new stock. Also, many of the dealers are actually collector-dealers, and sell their own finds. If a mineral specimen doesn't pass through many different hands, it is likely to be cheaper.

A [full page article](#) in the Peterborough *Examiner* covered the show, including a long interview with the show chairmain, Mark Stanley. According to the article, the Peterborough show got its start in 1994 when Mark held a mineral swap on his farm southeast of town. From that small beginning, where 100 people attended, the show has grown to its present site at the Evinrude Centre. In 2007, 4600 people attended.

The *Examiner* article also covered Mark's interest in fulgurites. Fulgurites are a natural glass formed when lightning strikes the ground. Mark has 30 different fulgurites in his collection.

Liz Fodi from the Walker Club had an excellent stock of self-collected minerals from Dundas and other Ontario locations. I bought a large Fergusonite crystal from her for only \$1 - what a bargain!

Kerry Day of KayGeeDee Minerals had a large stock of interesting minerals from Africa, Vietnam, Greenland, and other locations. I particularly noticed the unusual green Sodalite and the rare mineral Sorensenite, and **Reiner** pointed out the fine fluorescent spinels from Vietnam.

The exhibits featured classic Canadian minerals, including a beautiful blue Suolunite and a fine large yellow Fluorite. Everyone agreed that the Peterborough show is a friendly venue well worth attending.

Unusual Earthquake Hits Britain

On February 27, Britain experienced its first large earthquake since 1984. Estimates of the strength of the quake varied from 4.7 to 5.3 on the Richter scale.

According to [this article at cnn.com](#), the tremor struck at 1 in the morning. A man in South Yorkshire was injured when his chimney collapsed and fell into his bedroom.

Britain gets several hundred earthquakes a year, but most are too small to notice.

Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Club

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