



The Rockblast

The Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Club Newsletter

October 2010

President's Message

Hi, everyone!

By the time you will be reading this, we will be somewhere in Nova Scotia, eating fresh seafood, and maybe doing a little rock hounding. Unfortunately, I won't be back in time to hear Charles Gould tell us about exotic fluorescent minerals in Greenland. He plans to bring some interesting specimens that most of us have never seen before, so it should be an excellent meeting. Details on our mini-speaker are still being sorted out, but should be available before press time, so please look elsewhere in the *Rockblast*.

We've had a good response from our request for help to plan meetings. March and April are taking shape and we have some leads for February and May. Stay tuned. We still need some volunteers for mini-talks. Do you have a favourite mineral that you could talk about? Maybe some fossil expertise? Or perhaps you have taken a recent trip that has some geological context? The club would love to hear your story. Several dates for 2011 are available, so don't be shy.

Don't forget our Rock Club T-shirt contest. Please submit your creative efforts — design the whole shirt, print out some clever slogans, provide special photos or your own art work. The ideas will be on display throughout the meeting, and then everyone will be asked to vote (by show of hands) for the ideas and/or design they like the best. A small group of 'experts' might need to refine the choice for the final design. Sample shirts will be available at the November meeting for sizing and orders. We expect the shirts will be available at the December meeting.

You are invited to join our October speaker, Charles Gould, for supper Oct. 1 at the Duke of Wellington, 33 Erb St W, Waterloo. Time, 5:30 - 7:00 PM. It is a good time to get to know fellow members and enjoy conversation on any topic, including rocks and minerals. The food is good and reasonably priced.

And now it's time to pack the car. --- Gary Partlow





Pictures from the September 2010 Meeting

by André Mongeon

Upper left: shells and fossil from Australia.
Lower left: Peter Russell.

Below: Donna Hollander and some of her wirewrapped jewellery.



At right: Calcite from the Dundas Quarry.

The September meeting was our annual show-and-tell. Gary Partlow told us about his trip to Australia and his search for fossils. Donna Hollander told us about her wirewrapping adventures. And Gary Winkler brought in a very ugly rock to be identified.



Upcoming Club 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

Friday, October 1 2010: Charles Gould will speak on "Collecting Fluorescent Minerals in Greenland". Peter Russell gives a mini-talk on “Colourful Micro Mineral Collecting - Smithsonite, Vanadinite & Wulfenite”.

Friday, November 5 2010: Our own **Rob Maric** will speak on "All you ever need to know about ground water: do we have enough?".

Friday, December 3 2010: The annual holiday auction of minerals, gems, fossils, and other items.

Upcoming Events

This listing is provided as a service to club members. Events subject to cancellation. As always, double-check dates and times with the sponsors before leaving home!

September 25 2010: Field trip to the Beamsville Quarry. Directions and more available at <http://www.ccfms.ca/Events/Beamsville.html> . Required equipment includes fluorescent safety vest, safety boots, safety glasses, long pants, and hard hat. Plan to arrive at the gate of the quarry of Beamsville at 8:30 AM for sign-in and vehicle tag-in. We will enter the quarry about 9:00 AM after our safety talk. Word has it there have been new blasts since the Spring in the NE corner.

September 26 2010: Field trip to the Dundas Quarry. Admission **only** if you have registered with Jim Glen, jrglen@sympatico.ca . (As of this writing the trip is full.)

October 1-3 2010: Ancaster Gem, Mineral, Bead & Jewellery Show. Try on the latest in fashionable jewellery. See crystals, fossils & magnificent rocks from all over the world! Shop at over 30 dealers. Hours: Friday: 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM; Saturday: 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM; Sunday: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Admission: \$6.00 per person, under 12 free. Location: Ancaster Fairgrounds, 630 Trinity Road, Ancaster, Ontario (corner of Hwy. 52 & Hwy. 53). For more info, phone: 519-448-1236 or 1-800-360-2813 or visit www.roberthalloriginals.com or e-mail rockshow@roberthalloriginals.com .

October 8-10 2010: 66th Annual Greater Detroit Gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show. One of the top shows in the U.S. and Michigan’s largest mineral show for 65 years. Hosted by the Michigan Mineralogical Society. South Macomb Community College Expo Center, Building P, 14500 E. 12 Mile Road (12 Mile & Hayes), Warren, MI. Friday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sunday 11a.m. - 5 p.m. Adults, \$8; Seniors \$5; Children \$4. For more information, see <http://www.michmin.org/show/> .

October 11 2010: Field trip to the Mont St. Hilaire Quarry (formerly the Poudrette Quarry), sponsored by the Club de Mineralogie de Montreal. Registration at the quarry between 8 AM and 9 AM. Quarry closes at 4 PM. Admission: \$10/person. Safety equipment (steel-toed boots, safety vest, safety goggles, hard hat) is compulsory. For registration, contact field trip leader Tony Gordian, gordianmtl@yahoo.ca.

October 30-31 2010: The University of Waterloo Gem and Mineral Show. 10 AM-5PM Saturday and Sunday, CEIT Building, University of Waterloo. Saturday includes the annual Science Open House for K-12 children and their families. Featured Speaker, Sunday 2:00 PM: Dr. Steve Evans will talk on the Haiti Earthquake. See www.openhouse.uwaterloo.ca for more details.

November 4-6 2010: The CMMA Fall Mini-Conference, at the Burlington Arts & Cultural Centre, 1333 Lakeshore Road, Burlington, ON. Contact: Bill Lechner at 416-438-8908 or bill.lechner@rogers.com. Website: <http://canadianmicrominerals.ca>.

November 20-21 2010: The London Gem and Mineral Show, Sat. 9AM-6PM, Sun 10AM-5PM. Western Fairgrounds (Western Fair Entertainment Centre - Special Events Building), 316 Rectory Street, London, Ontario. Directions: Highway #401 to Highbury exit North, west on Florence, North on Rectory - Main entrance immediately on right hand side. Features: Over 35 dealers, demonstrators and educational talks. Admission: Adults \$5, Children \$2. Contact: Ken Dardano 519-846-5836 or ken.dardano@sympatico.ca. Website: <http://www.gemandmineral.ca>.

November 27-28 2010: The 23rd Annual Midhurst Arts & Crafts Home Tour. Saturday 10 AM to 5 PM; Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM. Featuring 31 artists & artisans in 12 locations in Midhurst, Ontario (just north of Barrie), including Doug Wambold's Lismark Minerals and Jewellery, 5 Orser Drive, Midhurst, (705) 722-3330. Free admission.

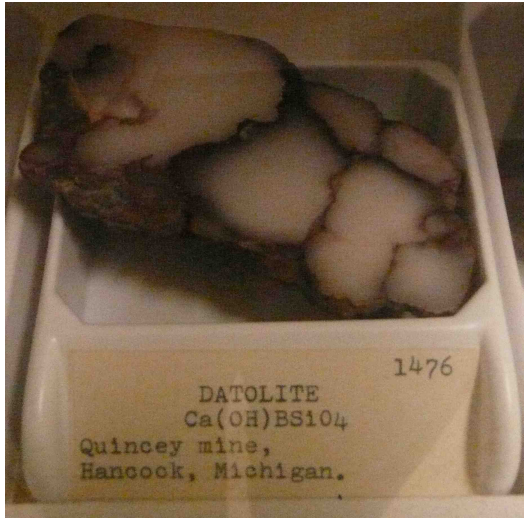
March 5-6 2011: The 18th Annual Peterborough Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show, presented by the Kawartha Rock & Fossil Club, Evinrude Centre, 911 Monaghan Road, Peterborough, Ontario. 10 AM - 5 PM Saturday and Sunday. Minerals, fossils, gemstones, beads, equipment, books, displays, live & silent auctions. Admission \$3; children under 12 free. For more information call 705-639-2406 or visit <http://www.rockandfossil.com>.

April 2-3 2011: The 39th Annual Paris Gem & Mineral Show, presented by the Brantford Lapidary & Mineral Society, Paris Fairgrounds, 139 Silver Street, Paris, Ontario. Saturday & Sunday, 10 AM to 5 PM. Admission: adults \$5, kids 12 and under free. Featuring gem, mineral, fossil, and stone dealers; lapidary equipment; supplies; jewellery; demonstrations; exhibits; silent auction. Free parking. Wheelchair accessible. For more information, contact John Moons 519 752-9756 or Bob Parry at robert@roberthalloriginals.com.

July 15-17 2011: The 29th Annual Sudbury Gem & Mineral Show, Carmichael Arena, Bancroft Drive, Sudbury. Friday, 5 PM to 9 PM; Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM; Sunday 10 AM to 5 PM. Featuring jewellery, beads, fossils, minerals, rock craft, dealers, door prizes, demonstrations, displays, ID booth, metal detecting, kids' activities, outdoor vendors (Saturday, 11 AM - 4 PM). For more info, call (705) 522-5140 or visit <http://www.ccfms.ca/Clubs/Sudbury/show.htm>.

A Visit to London, Ontario

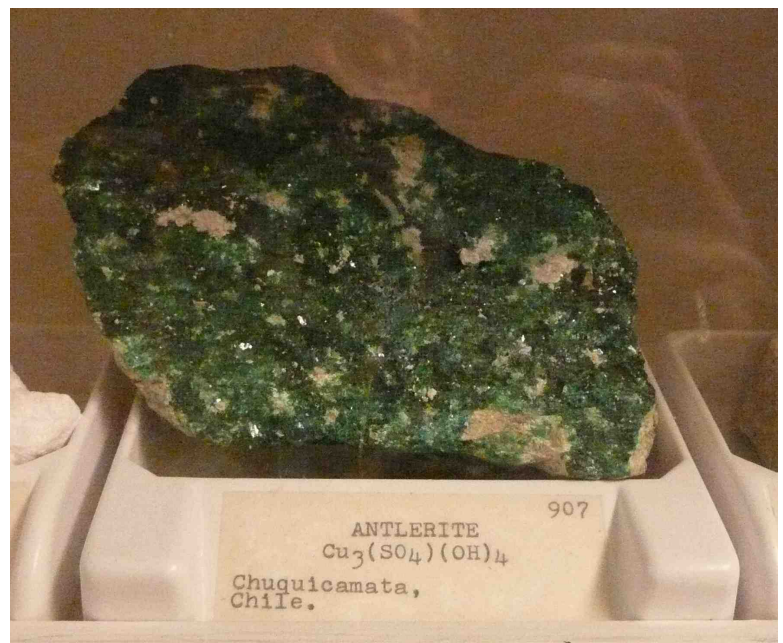
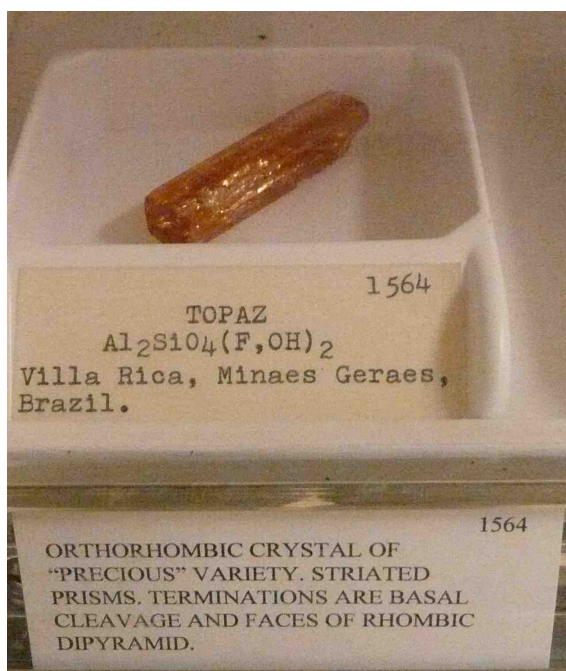
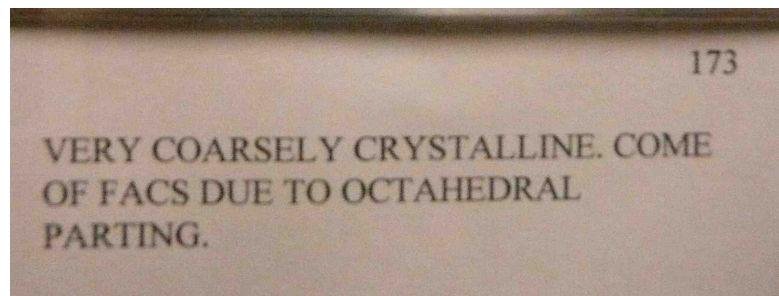
This summer your editor visited three different mineral exhibits: in Saskatoon, London (Ontario), and Oberwolfach, Germany. In the last issue of the *Rockblast*, I discussed the exhibit at the University of Saskatchewan. In this issue, I'll tell you about the mineral exhibit at the University of Western Ontario.



Located in the Geology building, the exhibit is a little difficult to find. It consists of hundreds of specimens arranged in glass cabinets mounted against the walls. Specimens are arranged according to their chemical composition, and there is a small emphasis on Canadian locations. Almost all specimens are in labeled 3" x 3" plastic boxes.

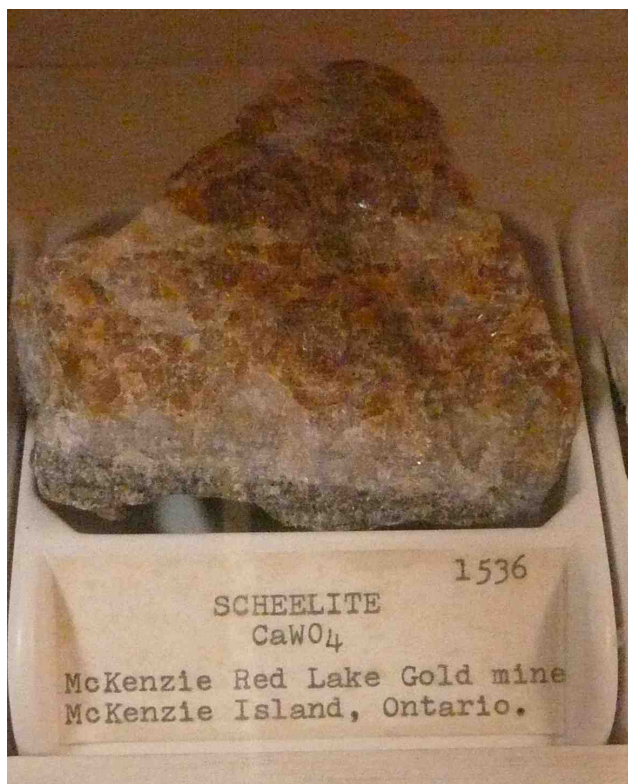
The exhibit is rather poorly lighted; it could benefit from some individual track lighting.

My main complaint is that some of the specimens have accompanying paper labels that are loaded with misspellings. Sometimes the misspellings are so severe one simply cannot understand what is meant. Take a look at the label to the right and try to figure out what it means!



Although nearly all of the specimens list the name, chemical composition, and location, a few specimens are simply not labeled at all. I found a piece of hematite-magnetite ore from northern Ontario sitting by itself with no label in the corner of one cabinet.

This is an exhibit that's not worth a special trip, but if you happen to be in London, Ontario, you could easily spend a pleasant hour admiring the specimens. With a bit of work, it could be a much nicer exhibit.



Attractiveness: C-

Scientific value: B+

Accuracy: B.

Specimen quality: B.



Next month: the Mineral Museum in Oberwolfach, Germany.

Kids' Club News

The next meeting for the KW Gem and Mineral Kids' Club will be held on October 2nd, 2010 at 2 PM at the Waterloo Community Arts Centre. We hope to see you there!

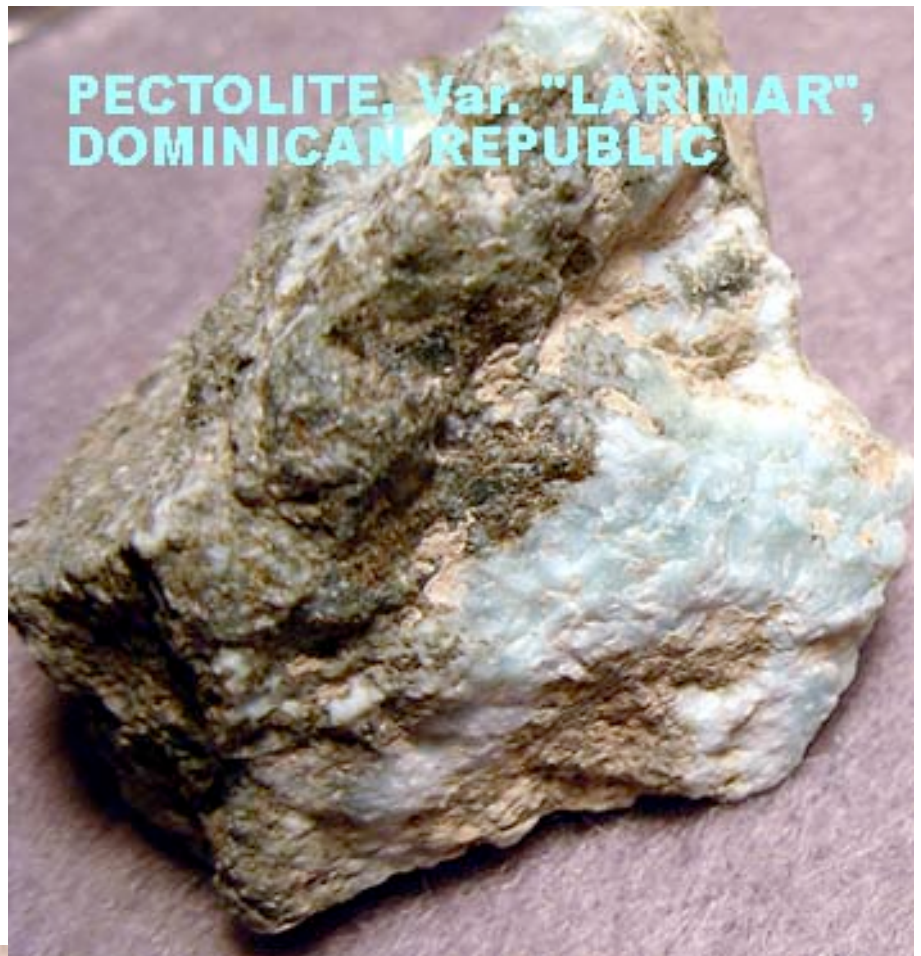
The topic will be *Groundwater: Kids Style!*

When rain falls to the ground, the water does not stop moving. Some of it flows along the surface to streams or lakes, some of it is used by plants, some evaporates and returns to the atmosphere, and some sinks into the ground. Imagine pouring a glass of water onto a pile of sand. Where does the water go? Let's hop on the water cycle ride and learn about the wonders of groundwater.

Larimar

by André Mongeon

Larimar is the name given to the blue variety of pectolite that originates from the Dominican Republic. Pectolite $\{NaCa_2Si_3O_8(OH)\}$ is formed in volcanic environments or metamorphic environments involving volcanic (basalt or andesine) intrusions. It is usually found in association with zeolites. In the case of the larimar, limestone was intruded by volcanic sills and dykes. Cobalt is thought to be the impurity responsible for the distinct sea-blue colour of larimar. Although some larimar is found in the Bahamas, it is the material from the Dominican Republic that is best



known.

The colour of larimar varies from the ideal blue to greenish and can even appear iron-stained in spots, all of which is mixed among white material. Along with colour, a spider-web or turtle shell pattern is an ideal quality. Smaller cabs are usually set in silver for jewellery with the larger pieces being reserved for carving.

With a hardness of 4.5 to 5, it is suitable for almost any kind of jewellery except rings, perhaps. It can sometimes resemble turquoise and can be used in much the same way in jewellery. Prices in the Dominican Republic vary greatly, so tourists should shop around for the best deal. As always, one should also be aware of fake stones, so buy only from a reputable vendor. Prices here tend to be considerably higher due to its relative scarcity.

Gigantic Gold Nugget Found in Australia

According to the website of an [Australian journalist](#), a very large gold nugget has been recently found in Australia.

“Last weekend the Western Australian gold prospectors assembled for their annual meeting... At the end of the meeting a nugget buyer from Perth, a guy named Andy Comas, made quite an interesting announcement: he recently acquired and sold a nugget weighing 23.26 kilogram[s], making it the world’s third largest gold nugget in existence (just after the Hand of Faith at 27.21 kg and the Normandy Nugget at 25.5 kg). When Andy showed a picture of the monster the bar went dead quiet. People just couldn’t take their eyes [off] it...

“The nugget had been found a couple of weeks ago with a metal detector somewhere in the goldfields around here. Through various tests it had been established that the thing has a 92% purity. With today’s gold price of around 40 US Dollars a gram, the gold value of this baby would be around 860.000 dollars. But of course, nuggets of that rarity go for two, three times the gold value.

“Anyway, Andy said that the prospector who found it, and who wishes to remain anonymous, gave him a week to sell it. Andy sold it for an undisclosed sum within a couple of days to a buyer in the US.”

Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Club

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