

ALBERTA ROCKHOUND NEWS

Publication of the Alberta Federation of Rock Clubs



Volume 47 No. 4

November, 2017

Vice President's Report

by Leola Grams

Let me start by wishing everyone a happy New Year marked by good health and humor. I hope all had an enjoyable holiday season.

November's meeting was a smaller gathering as many of our members were unable to attend. Never the less we were able to cover our usual range of topics and hope to build on those in the coming times.

We also hope that with the formation of a new Grande Prairie Club we are seeing a resurgent trend of our shared interest. I expect we are all now looking forward to spring and the upcoming activities that it will offer; collecting trips, May Daze and hopefully a few Fossil, Rock and Gem shows.

Thank you all for your commitment, patience and perseverance for the coming year.

Dreaming of summer and
ROCKHOUNDING?

This looks like a likely place to
find what I don't have yet!!



ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS

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OBJECTIVES OF THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS

1. To promote and encourage the study, cutting, polishing and engraving of gemstones and rocks and other geological materials and lapidary work as a hobby other than for the purpose of trade, industry or business.
2. To encourage the exploration of Alberta for lapidary materials, and to promote and create a greater interest in Alberta finished and unfinished rocks and minerals.
3. To encourage and promote the close association with, and exchange of information between rock hobbyists and lapidary groups to stimulate interest in and disseminate knowledge about mineralogy and earth sciences.
4. The Alberta Federation sponsors a website which its members may use to promote the activities and events of their club.
5. The operations of the Alberta Federation are to be mainly carried out in the Province of Alberta, under the Canadian Rockhound Code of Ethics.

THE ALBERTA FEDERATION OF ROCK CLUBS is a member of THE GEM AND MINERAL FEDERATION OF CANADA. Each club pays their members dues to the AFRC Treasurer by February 1st and each paid up member is entitled to 3rd Party Liability Insurance which covers events such as field trips, rock and gem shows, and other organized events.

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This is your magazine. We need articles & suggestions. Send submissions anytime. If possible, send your article about two weeks before publication date to get them into the current month's publication. Otherwise the article will be included in the next publication.

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THESE?



If you would like to know more about them go to the two links:

<https://www.gia.edu/doc/Iridescent-Fossilized-Ammonite-from-Southern-Alberta-Canada.pdf>

<https://albertashistoricplaces.wordpress.com/>

On this site scroll down to “Rainbow Fossils and Bison Calling”.
You will find both sites very interesting.



Larimar



Fire Agate

Medicine Hat Rock & Lapidary Club; a year in review by Karen-Anne Cherwonogrodzky

This past year has turned out to be another busy and fun year at the Medicine Hat Rock and Lapidary club. We were fortunate to have Adam Jetter, Slim Metz and Glenda Leitch share their skills with some interesting classes. We also purchased a ring bender for the club so I am looking forward to seeing how to put it to good use. I am happy some newer members stepped forward to help out on the Executive. As per the photos, food is always a draw at the meetings and we like to decorate for the season or event. I too enjoy the Show and Tell at our meetings and the occasional guest speaker. For our last Show & Tell I was excited to share a photo of a mammoth and bison tooth in my possession. My parents had them for years in their rock garden and until recently so did I, thinking it was an interesting rock. As it started to fall apart I knew it was not a rock so I sent a photo to the Tyrell Museum who identified it for me. I will be donating it to the museum. In addition to Show and Tell at our meetings it is always fun to win one of the many door prizes. One focus this year was to try increase our membership. We did this by once again setting up a display including a Genie at the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede and we also held a tailgate one afternoon for the public before we held our club picnic. For the first time we also set up a display at Silver Cove's show in Medicine Hat. My husband John manned a Genie and gave demonstrations and promoted our club. I look forward once again to our annual bus trip to the Calgary show, May Daze 2018 and to seeing what will transpire this year. I am also looking forward to plan May Daze 2019 that will be hosted by our club. Stay



tuned.



Diamond found in Lesotho that weighs more than a baseball

article courtesy of the internet.

The diamond, found in Lesotho, Africa, is the fifth-largest gem-quality diamond ever found. High in the mountains of a small southern African kingdom, miners have unearthed one of the largest diamonds ever found, a glittering giant weighing 910 carats, or 6.4 ounces, and probably worth tens of millions of dollars.

The stone, found in the Letseng mine in Lesotho, is the fifth-largest gem-quality diamond ever found, and the largest in Lesotho's history. It weighs more than a regulation baseball (about 5 ounces).

Gem Diamonds, the London-based company that owns a majority stake in the mine described the diamond as being of extremely high quality.

It said the stone is a D colour, Type IIa diamond, meaning it is colourless and very radiant, without any yellow tint or impurities like nitrogen that absorb light and decrease lustre.

How much the rough stone will fetch at auction remains to be seen, and it will depend in part on any imperfections that limit the size of the cut and polished stones it can be fashioned into. The previous largest find in Lesotho, the 603-carat Lesotho Promise diamond, sold for \$12.4 million in 2006, and diamond prices have increased significantly since then.

Stones of that size can make some of the world's most extravagant finished jewels seem like mere baubles. Elizabeth Taylor's famous collection of hefty jewels included a 33-carat diamond ring that sold at auction for \$8.8 million in 2011, and a 69-carat diamond, both bought for her by Richard Burton in the late 1960s. The largest gem-quality diamond ever discovered, the Cullinan Diamond, weighed more than 3,100 carats, nearly three times as much as the next biggest. Several of the world's largest finished diamonds were cut from it and incorporated into Britain's Crown Jewels.

The Letseng mine, at an elevation of almost 10,000 feet, is known for producing very large, high-quality diamonds. The government of Lesotho, a constitutional monarchy surrounded by South Africa, owns a minority stake in the mine.

Diamonds and garments make up almost the entire export economy of Lesotho, which has high rates of poverty and HIV infection and ranks 160th out of 188 countries on the UN Human Development Index.

Gem Diamonds will be hoping that its stone has better luck at auctions unlike the last big stone found in southern Africa. In Nov. 2015, Canadian mining company Lucara discovered a 1,110-carat diamond in Karowe mine in Botswana. The tennis ball-sized diamond, later named *Lesedi La Rona*, meaning 'our light' in Tswana, was the largest diamond discovered in more than a century. However, at a June 2016 auction, a sale failed to materialize as the highest bid for the stone was \$61 million—\$9 million less than the owner hoped to sell it for. It was eventually sold in Sept. 2017 for \$53 million.

Sadly the history of Africa indicated that a lot of the political conflict was supported by the mining industry. One wonders how much of the money of the sale of this diamond will trickle down to the impoverished

