



CAPE TOWN GEM & MINERAL CLUB

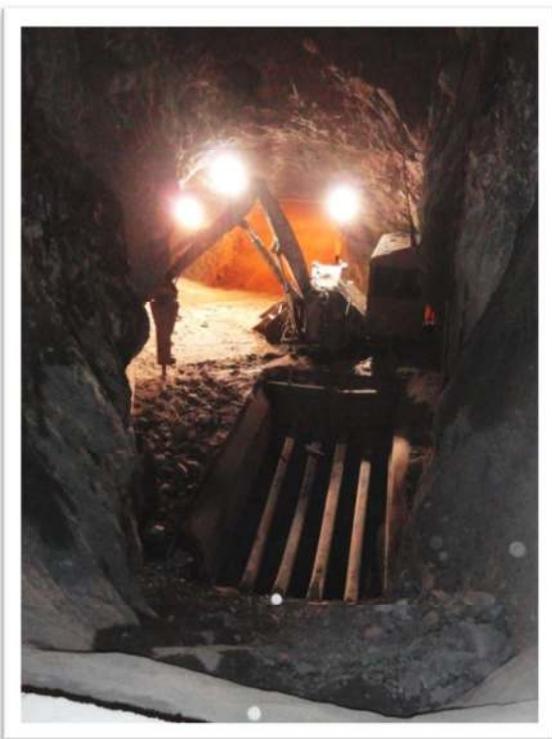
FOR THE STUDY OF ROCKS, MINERALS & CRYSTALS

mineral chatter

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2013

DIARY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
	27		Workshops open on request
AUGUST	3	10h00	Open Day – Minerals, gems and jewellery to view, buy or chat about
	10	14h00	Monthly Meeting – Rosh Pinah mine
	17		Workshops open on request Jo Technik - 11 am
	24		Workshops open on request
	31		Workshops open on request
SEPTEMBER	7	10h00	Open Day – Minerals, gems and jewellery to view, buy or chat about
	14	14h00	Monthly Meeting-Mineral Collecting in Sweden – a historic review. Peter Fels
	21		Workshops open on request
	28		Workshops open on request



Crusher – Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine JW

What's inside this month?

- Committee Corner
- Events
- My Collecting, My Collection
- Best Internet Article of the Month





COMMITTEE CORNER

Warm Winter Greetings to all.....

☞ We would like to let you know that **on 8th July our friend TVJ had a decisive operation** to start repairs to his broken leg in order to get him mobile again. He was out of hospital within five days. His recovery continues to go very much according to plan, and we hope that we shall soon see him back at the club. Well done, Trevor!

☞ In today's technological world when the majority of people have access to the internet, it is so easy to look up information the instant you need it. Many members are already fully aware of the properties of particular minerals, of birth stones, or other topics easily researched on the internet. Often only original articles are of real interest to the newsletter reader, so for a change, we are going to introduce a column on **"the most fascinating mineralogically-related item found on the internet this month"**. To avoid copyright issues we are not going to cut and paste the relevant articles, but will give you the link and brief information on the topic should you be interested in following it up. (We apologise for not making this research accessible for our very few remaining members without computers.) So, if you too wish to share something unusual or outstanding that you have found on the internet, please send details and a short summary (in your own words) to Jo at Joanna.wicht@kingsley.co.za

☞ **Another new heading we are going to feature is "My Collecting, My Collection"**. Duncan Miller has kindly sent us the first article for this. Now, who will be the next to write for us? We would love to know what you collect and why and how you got hooked on the hobby. Please put together a few notes, or better still write a lovely long article for our newsletter, and include some photos of your favourite pieces.

☞ **WORKSHOP.** **"The Jo Technik" demonstration** will take place on Saturday, 17th August at 11 am. Jo will bring her machinery and a selection of her work to the workshop to demonstrate how she sets about her stone carving. **Please contact Charlie Scharfetter for further details and to let him know that you will be attending.** Due to the amount of equipment and stuff to be brought to the club, this will be a once off event. If you are interested in seeing how Jo works with stone, make sure to keep a couple of hours free that morning. charliescharfetter@gmail.com

On any other Saturday, remember to contact both Charlie and Rinda by e-mail to indicate your wish to use the workshop before coming to the club. rindadt@gmail.com

☞ **LIBRARY.** The library has various mineralogical DVDs for loan, including the spectacular **What's HOT in Munich** and **What's HOT in Tucson** annual series. These are not on display, so ask Duncan or Carol to dig them out of the desk drawer if you would like to borrow them.

☞ We welcome new member Helen Crowther, and welcome back Peter Rosewarne who has re-joined the club. We hope your association with us will be a long and happy one.

EXCO

Events

Saturday, 13th July - Fixed Price Auction – Despite the cold and damp weather, the indoor fire was burning brightly, bacon and egg baps, samosas and filter coffee were lined up on the counter to feed the hungry, and out in the foyer the various 80 items with pre-fixed prices were lined up for inspection and ready for the auction. Our faithful members arrived in good time, and waited excitedly to see if they would be lucky in obtaining the bargains they desired. Mabel Ciolli chose token number 13, and successfully acquired 16 items, along with husband Remo who secured a further 10 – his usual good luck overcoming all other contestants.

Thank you to our few loyal supporters who ensured that all the items were sold, and the predicted price of R4020 was raised for club funds. We had fun that afternoon. Sadly, only twenty members attended, but for those who made the effort, the odds were very good, and many acquired precisely the items they had hoped for. JW



Monthly Meeting, Saturday, 10th August. Rosh Pinah Zinc Mine has been visited over the last few years by a few of our members. This talk will tell you something about the history of the mine, its working processes, and how its deposits came to be laid down. A compilation of members' photographs taken both inside and outside of the mine will be shown. Anyone who has Rosh Pinah mineral specimens is pleased asked to bring them for display on the day.

Saturday, 17th August, 11 am. "The Jo Technik" Jo started carving stones in the latter half of 2006 after going on a field trip to the Green Mine near Blesberg and bringing home a few chunks of green serpentine. The club had also just completed the information leaflet for new members joining the club where it had asked Lorna Quinton to write the section on "carving stone" and basically her words were "you just get on with it", and so Jo did. A serpent seemed the simplest shape and so she started with that..... To learn more about how Jo works make sure you attend the demonstration on 17th August at 11 am. Contact Charlie Scharfetter to book your place. charliescharfetter@gmail.com

My Collecting, My Collection

Duncan Miller



My mineral collecting did not start out well. I dropped a prized calcite specimen and it broke. Thirty five years later I still regret it. My clumsiness put me off collecting minerals for twenty years. Evidently I was not up to looking after these treasures that grow in the dark. Instead, as an unconscious penance, I concentrated on faceting, which really is a matter of painstakingly transforming broken crystal fragments into reflective gems, giving them renewed sparkle and life.

But the hunt for faceting rough inevitably involves looking at many mineral specimens, and some of them demand to be taken home, even against firm resistance. On one visit to Tucson in the early 1990s, with the express intention of buying nothing but faceting rough, I returned three times during one day to goggle at a group of lazurite crystal specimens in matrix. Eventually the Afghani dealer, disbelieving my repeated insistence that I was not in the market for mineral specimens, lost his patience. He brought out several more and made me an offer to purchase the lot that I could not refuse. No one will believe I was really not trying to get a bargain but just captivated by something I had only ever seen illustrated in coffee table mineral books!

How and why do we collect? No doubt peoples' strategies and motivations vary. My resistance was broken by the lazurite at Tucson. Now my guide is that if I return to a particular specimen on offer several times and cannot get it out of my mind, then if it is affordable it should go home with me. I have tried to impose more discipline on myself – concentrating on the garnet family and an ostensible regional focus on Namaqualand – but it doesn't really work. I can always persuade myself that something is mineralogically interesting even if it doesn't complement what I have. If I had the space and the money my collection would be huge. As it is, it is quite modest because I cannot afford much of a silver pick.

With diligence, and discipline, I suppose one could build a world class collection on a modest budget. The secret seems to be to start young and to specialise. It is a definite advantage if you started young fifty years ago. Now I kick myself for missed opportunities. Over the 1974 Christmas holidays I worked for Sid Pieters in Windhoek, faceting Cape Cross jermitejites for him. During the couple of months he put me up in his home I saw some staggering Tsumeb specimens, some of which I photographed. I could not possibly have bought those, but I could have bought others, and didn't. Ah, what folly!

Money might buy more beautiful specimens, but the self-collected ones are special. They are talismans that help recollect adventures, the crazy things we do to dig up or pick up glistening crystals. My self-collected minerals may not be very glamorous but they have more personal significance than those bought, even those bought under memorably odd circumstances. The other specimens with special significance are those given to me. They have personal histories of generosity attached to them; like the Vredendal adularia complex twin given to me by Lesley Bust who thought I would appreciate it more than she would; the multi-coloured tourmaline that Maury Morgenstein dug himself at the Himalaya Mine in California; and the blue Jan Coetzee fluorite given to me by my father from his collection as compensation for the loss of the ruined calcite. After all, collecting minerals is a human enterprise, and it is the human connections that we make while doing it that are as valuable, if not more so, than the minerals themselves.



One that got away – a 30 cm Tsumeb cerrusite
– at Sid Pieters 1974



Another one that got away – giant Tsumeb diopside,
reportedly sold for US\$10000 – at Sid Pieters 1974



Best Internet Article of the Month:
What is the most fascinating mineralogically-related item you have
found on the internet this month?



SALT MINE IN KRAKOW, POLAND, sent in by Henri and Annette Schram

The historic salt mine at Wieliczka in Poland is largely unknown beyond Eastern Europe, despite having been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. On the surface this mine, operational for centuries but no longer, looks surprisingly neat and well kept. Below, it reveals its extraordinary secret. The former miners left an astonishing legacy of carved galleries, sculptures and even an underground cathedral carved out of the solid rock. Modern artists have added to these works, which now can be viewed at this unique museum.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wieliczka_Salt_Mine

CONTACTS

**LAPIDARY WORKSHOP: Contact Charlie Scharfetter on charliescharfetter@gmail.com
(or 083 700 6777 only if you do not have email)**

FACETING WORKSHOP: Contact Rinda du Toit on 072 101 1088 or rindadt@gmail.com

TRADERS: Contact Marion on 084 6060 233 or mcoleman05@gmail.com

LIBRARY: Available on Open and Meeting days. Ask Carol or Duncan to unlock for you.

YOUR 2013 COMMITTEE

Chairman	Malcolm Jackson	021 551 8009	jacksonhome@telkomsa.net
Vice Chairman	Ken Coleman	021 558 6308	kcoleman@telkomsa.net
Treasurer	Remo Ciolli	021 975 6059	remo@ciolibros.co.za
Assistant to Treasurer	Carol Coleman	021 558 6308	kcoleman@telkomsa.net
Secretary/Newsletter Editor	Jo Wicht	021 976 3808	joanna.wicht@kingsley.co.za

FAVOURITE REFERENCE WEBSITES

MINERAL SPECIMENS:

<http://www.e-rocks.com> www.mindat.org www.galleries.com <http://www.mineral-forum.com> www.minerals.net
www.webmineral.com www.mineralogicalrecord.com <http://www.johnbetts-fineminerals.com/> www.irocks.com
<http://www.the-vug.com/vug/vugfakes.html> (FAKES) www.mnh.si.edu/vtp/1-desktop/ - tour of Smithsonian

GEOLOGY:

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/> <http://geology.about.com/library/bl/images/blmineralindex.htm> geology.com

FACETING & GEMS:

www.artcutgems.com <http://www.gia.edu/research-resources/gia-gem-database/index.html> www.gemstone.org
<http://fasttex.cvl.utexas.edu/vargas/> www.nordskip.com www.facetdiagrams.org
http://www.gemologyproject.com/wiki/index.php?title=Faceting_Designs.
www.gemdat.org

LINKED SOCIETIES

We exchange newsletters with the following societies. Should you be interested in reading any of them please contact Jo who will e-mail them onto you. If you wish to join any of the clubs, or attend their lectures and outings, please contact the person listed below:

USA and UK FACETING GUILDS – Contact Duncan (embo@telkomsa.net) to join the faceting group if you want to receive these newsletters. This is open to Cape Town Gem & Mineral Club members only.

THE CAPE NATURAL HISTORY CLUB - Visit www.capenaturalhistoryclub.co.za Contact Eleanor 021 762 1779

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY - Contact Lia at xtrahand@iafrica.com

FRIENDS OF SA MUSEUM - Contact Maxine Davies 021 481 3913 (Wednesdays & Fridays only) samfriends@iziko.org.za

W.CAPE BRANCH OF THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SA - website: <https://sites.google.com/site/gssawcb/>

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Duncan Miller is the official southern African regional representative for **ULTRA TEC FACETING MACHINES** (www.ultratec-facet.com) and agent for **GEARLOOSE LAPIDARY PRODUCTS** (www.battlap.com). So if you are considering buying an Ultra Tec or Gearloose's innovative polishing materials, contact Duncan for a quote including shipping, tax, clearance fees, etc. 084 757 9830 or info@xenolithos.com You can read the latest Ultra Tec newsletter at <http://www.ultratec-facet.com/Sometimes/somenew.htm>

MAGIC MINERALS in Philadelphia. Here you will find rocks, crystals, minerals, gemstones, jewellery, décor, gifts and collectables. Open: Tuesday to Sunday, 9h00 - 17h00. Phone: Shop: 021 972 1139, Maurice: 082 6966 161, Aletta: 072 2437 496. magicminerals@telkomsa.net



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For vast range of semi-precious beads and cut stones at excellent prices contact Vadim Petzer of the **101 Jewellery Emporium** at 082 7714954.

A new crystal shop opened in Bellville in January this year. Come and visit **Avalon**, situated at 6 Sarel Cilliers Street, Bellville. We stock a large variety of crystals and various other interesting items. We are open Mondays to Saturdays, 10am-5pm. Contact Rocky: 072 697 4076

Advertising is free to members. Contact Jo to place an ad.

2013 MEMBERSHIP FEES

TOWN MEMBERS: **Single:** R290 e mail (R30 extra if newsletter is posted)

Family: (Principal/partner/with dependent children under 21) R370 e mail (R30 extra if newsletter is posted)

COUNTRY MEMBERS: (Living more than 50km as the crow flies from central Cape Town) **Single:** R215 e mail (R30 extra if newsletter is posted)

Family: (Principal/partner/with dependent children under 21) R260 e mail (R30 extra if newsletter is posted)

STUDENT/AFFILIATE: (Age under 25, registered full-time at *bona fide* college or university, or dependent child of existing member) R145 e mail only

ONCE OFF JOINING FEE FOR NEW MEMBERS: (R20 per application, single or family)

If you ask for the newsletter to be posted to you (even if you have e-mail) you must please pay the extra R30.

Club bank a/c for payments is ABSA - Table View - account no. 40-5975-5822 Payments must be made to THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA not CT Gem & Min. Please make a direct payment where possible, and identify your transaction with your name as the beneficiary reference.

The opinions expressed in the articles above do not necessarily reflect those of the Executive Committee. We welcome all contributions related to our hobby and everyone is welcome to send articles for inclusion in the Mineral Chatter.

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Chairman: Malcolm Jackson (e-mail: jacksonhome@telkomsa.net) Secretary: Jo Wicht (e-mail: joanna.wicht@kingsley.co.za)

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Ore conveyor belt – Rosh Pinah Mine JW