



CAPE TOWN GEM & MINERAL CLUB

FOR THE STUDY OF ROCKS, MINERALS & CRYSTALS



mineral chatter

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2014



DIARY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
	29		Workshop course
DECEMBER	6	10h00	Open Day – Minerals, gems and jewellery to view, buy or chat about
	13	14h00	Swap, sell or give away your surplus minerals. Spit braai.
			CLUB CLOSED UNTIL LATE JANUARY



What's inside this month?

- *Committee Corner*
- *Events – past, present, and to come*
- *Members' lapidary work:
Duncan Miller's citrine*

Vanadinite – a similar specimen is the 13th Dec. raffle prize





COMMITTEE CORNER

This is our final newsletter of 2014, and the time to thank everyone who has played even the tiniest role in making our club the success that it has been this past year. There are too many names to mention them individually, but thank you to you all. We have had 34 new members join us during the course of the year and hope all these newees will become hooked on our hobby. We welcome Dot & Hilton Butlion, Danie Gouws, Suzanne Ekwall, Belinda & Ashley Davidson, and Charlotte Jin & family who joined us in November. On the admin side it has also gone well, as the rates rebate was granted immediately and our NPO requirements fulfilled without question. Our Gemboree team also ran a very successful event. We hope that the final building and workshop maintenance that has just about been completed will set us up in good stead for 2015.

The certificates for completing the workshop course have been printed – please contact Tracy, if you have not already received yours.

After the 13th December Monthly Meeting the Club is closed until the first Open Day of 2015 on 7th February. There is no Mineral Chatter in January, but the one for February will be sent out in good time to let you know what is happening next year.

MONTHLY MEETING ON 13TH DECEMBER.

(SEE ALSO "EVENTS" BELOW)

A spit braai for members has been arranged for our final monthly meeting of the year on 13th December. This will take place after the "Swap, Sell or Give Away" session which will take place from 2-3 pm.



⚙️⚙️ The last date to pay and get tickets is on 6th December at the club. There will be no late payments taken in, nor tickets issued, on the day of the spitbraai. You must have a ticket to attend this meeting. ⚙️⚙️ Tickets will be partially sponsored by the club and will cost R50 per person. If you are bringing your partner who is not a club member, please pay the full price of R100 for their ticket. The last chance to obtain tickets in person will be at the December Open Day, but we would prefer to be paid before then by EFT into the club's account at Min Soc of SA - ABSA 405 975 5822. Please put your surname, number of tickets, and braai as reference, e.g. smith2braai. All tickets are individually numbered and stubs will go into the "Sputnik" for a lucky draw at the end of the spit braai. We hope to have a good crowd so please remember to bring your camping chairs just in case we run out. No drinks will be available on the 13th (the kitchen is totally closed on this occasion - except for tap water!). Please bring your own glasses, beer, wine, or cold drinks of choice. All food, plates and cutlery are provided.

Linda Stone (the President of FOSAGAMS) will be joining us on this occasion for her first visit to the club.

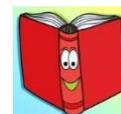


Our financial year ends on 31st December. If you have any outstanding debts (particularly those members who use the workshops) or claims for items you have been asked to purchase, please get them to Jo or Carol before 13th December. Remember you must attach original invoices/chits to claim forms (to be found in the office) in order to be refunded.



We would prefer that no subscriptions for 2015 are paid until next year. We shall be sending out invoices to everyone in mid-January. We ask you then please to pay promptly. Officially all memberships lapse on 31st December, except for those of new members who have joined since 1st September this year. There will be no newsletter in January, but the one for February will be sent out early to remind you of our re-opening date and other details. The cut-off date for subscription renewals is March 2014. No further information will be sent to those people whose membership remains unpaid after then.

Duncan and Carol ask that members please return all borrowed books and magazines to the library on December Open Day or at the December 13th meeting.



PLEASE – for next year WE NEED YOUR PHOTOS OLD AND NEW, ORIGINAL SHORT OR LONG ARTICLES FOR OUR NEWSLETTER, NEWS OF RECENTLY MADE LAPIDARY ITEMS, OR ANY OTHER CLUB RELATED ITEMS YOU FEEL MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO READ ABOUT. You can send them through to Jo at any time.



FOUND IN GENTS' TOILET – several new silver chains on a plastic hang tag.

The club is closed from 14th December until late January. We regret no access to the clubhouse or workshops is available during the holidays.

Jo4EXCO

***“A club is its members, not its committee which must be an aide to those members.*”**



EVENTS



PAST: 8th November – ZEOLITES. Trevor Vaughan Jones with the assistance of Malcolm Jackson presented this well-attended (24 members) talk and information session on zeolites. Trevor has written a brief article on zeolites for those who were unable to attend. You can read this further below.



PAST: Field trip to Vredendal on 15/16th November. Graham Harrison reports:

“After braving a wet and rainy start from Cape Town and the road works between Citrusdal and Clanwilliam, the normal diehards and eight new visitors arrived at the gate to the quarry bright and early on Saturday morning. While most of the travellers stopped at Klawer just to grab a coffee and maybe a toastie to eat on the road, one of the “older” club members simply fell in love with the food and service at the Wimpy and after arriving early in the region was the last one to join everyone at the main gate just in time to attend the safety briefing. (We suspect he was trying to eat enough to last the weekend!!)

After the safety briefing, the regulars were set free to go in search of their treasures with Malcolm taking the new guys on a brief tour of the quarry and pointing out potential areas to them all. It wasn't long before everyone had their heads down and surprisingly, even though no further blasting had taken place, some good finds started to materialise. The pleasing news was that a few of the first timers had in fact hit reasonably productive pockets and it seemed as if most people were finding specimens all over the quarry.

In the late afternoon as we all trooped down to the campsite, a few things had transpired. We noticed that the last thorn tree had been flattened and Antonio had built a remarkably impressive squatter shack to sleep in, and that Malcolm had taken to living in his car (while the Landie is in hospital). Needless to say the remaining tents went up quickly and the fire was lit, with everyone sitting around enjoying the evening while burning the remains of the thorn tree..... (a proper bonfire was had by all).

Sunday saw most of us packing up early – the road ahead was calling and it seemed as if everyone had at least got something to take home, making the weekend successful.

Very good finds of feldspar, quartz and rutile, as well as calcite and a possible new mineral were made. Hopefully some of these will find their way to the club sometime in the future for everyone to see.

Thanks go to the OTRA team for arranging the trip, Malcolm for being such a good teacher, and to the rest of the group for making it a lovely weekend. We look forward to returning there sometime next year.” GH

ON NEXT OPEN DAY, 6TH DECEMBER, WE SHALL PUT OUT A SHOWCASE. IT WOULD BE GREAT IF THOSE PEOPLE WHO FOUND “TREASURES” AT VREDENDAL COULD BRING THEM TO SHOW TO OTHERS.

TO COME: 13th December.....”Make some cash for Christmas” and then join us for a spit braai. Are you moving house, scaling down your collection, or nowadays just specialising in, say, KMF and Tsumeb minerals? Now is your opportunity



to swap, sell, or give away your surplus minerals, with no table fees, VAT, or other dues, and all cash coming into your own pocket just in time for Christmas. Alternatively do you

wish to buy mineral bargains with your Christmas bonus? Whatever suits you..... this is advance notice to sort out your specimens, or start saving your hard earned rands, and prepare for the mineral “bring & buy” at our closing event of the year. **However, we ask that each member bring no more than two beer flats of items to trade with, as this will mean that you are relatively mobile and can get around to look at what others have.** As Malcolm said at the November meeting - remember the olden days of ice cream sellers in the cinemas. You could make yourself a special selling tray with a tape going round the back of your neck to aid with carrying your wares!



This will be followed by the spit braai. We hope most people who wish to attend, have bought their tickets by now. Tickets must be paid for by 6th December, (preferably by EFT), as we must give the outside caterers final numbers in good time. No tickets will be issued or payments taken on the 13th. Full details are under “Committee Corner” above. Please remember to bring your own drinks and glasses, as well as a couple of camping chairs.



Zultanite



Robert Lurie has pointed out something to us regarding the article on Jay Liebenberg's talk. The beautiful Turkish gemstone is ZULTANITE and not zultenite, probably because of its connection with royalty, i.e. fit for a sultan.

He sent us the photo alongside and says that the pink sapphires on either side of the zultanite, whilst they may seem a bit garish, are from the opposite side of the colour spectrum and are necessary to "punch out" the orange/green/yellow in the zultanite. Try holding your fingertips over your monitor to mask out these pink sapphires, then see how anaemic the ring as a whole looks.

A good source of internet reference for zultanite is

http://www.gemstone.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=120:sapphire&catid=1:gem-by-gem&Itemid=14

Zeolites

TVJ kindly wrote this article for those members who were unable to attend his talk



Zeolites are a large family of silicate minerals, commonly containing calcium, sodium, and potassium, and considerable amounts of water. When strongly heated they fuse into a bubbling mass as water is driven off, and from this they get their name from the Greek "zein" meaning "to boil". They are mainly formed in volcanic lavas, rich in water and gases, and low in silica content. They can be thought of as the equivalent of feldspars, formed in surface lava flows. These lavas are sometimes called trap rock, from the Scandinavian "trapp" which is similar to Afrikaans and means "step", because lava flowed in successive step-like outpourings. When molten lava cools down and solidifies, escaping water and gas become trapped in bubble-like cavities called vesicles. When later percolating mineral-rich solutions seep through the porous rock, they fill the vesicles with minerals and the cavities are then called amygdalae. In silica rich lavas quartz geodes and agates form, while in silica poor lavas, calcite and

zeolites are formed. Zeolites are mainly white in colour, often small in size, and their identification might require professional expertise. Specimens larger in size and attractively stained in shades of pink and red are eagerly sought after.



They form three groups of crystals, the Fibrous Group of needle-like radiating crystals, the Platy Group of flat lamellar crystals, sometimes forming bundles, and the Equant Group of stubby equi-dimensional crystals. Examples are natrolite and mesolite (fibrous), heulandite and stilbite (platy) and analcime and chabazite (equant). Compact massive varieties are also known, with thompsonite from Minnesota and Michigan in the USA showing attractive agate-like concentric circles in greens, yellows and browns, when cut into cabochons. Zeolites have two interesting properties. The first is that they can easily swap similar sized cations, or major metals, like calcium or sodium. When water is “hard” having calcium in solution making it difficult to lather with soap, a sodium zeolite can be added to “soften” the water. The calcium in solution is absorbed by the zeolite, which releases its sodium into the water and the former sodium zeolite becomes a calcium zeolite. The process is reversible. The second property is if zeolites are gently heated, the water inside the crystals can be driven off, keeping the crystal structure of the zeolite intact. This leaves empty spaces in the crystal structure that can absorb other substances to fill the gaps. In this way zeolites can be used to absorb poisonous gases, like ammonia, and mercury vapour.



Grootberg zeolites with stilbite and natrolite

Goboboseb basalt with pink heulandite, quarts and prehnite

Zeolites are popular collectors' species, which are not only attractive in their own right, but are often accompanied by equally attractive associated minerals. These include calcite, prehnite, apophyllite, datolite and pectolite. Special mention can be made of cavansite, with vivid blue sprays of acicular crystals perched on stilbite from India. When collecting zeolites, a word of caution should be given to the species called laumontite. When exposed to air, it rapidly loses water and crumbles into a white powdery mass. Possibly the species can be preserved in airtight jars? A few years back the IMA (International Mineral Association) renamed a number of zeolites by adding the chemical symbols for their dominant, or secondary, metals after their names. So what was once called simply heulandite became either heulandite-Ca, or heulandite-Na, or heulandite-K, but knowing what metal should be

added is well beyond the amateur's means. So it is likely that good old fashioned names like plain heulandite will be used for a long time into the future yet. TV

Member's Lapidary Work



This is a 21,7 ct citrine cut by Duncan Miller. The design is a modified trillion, cut to see if a batch of dark rough supposedly from the Congo would produce a nice stone. It transpires that this intensely orange-coloured citrine probably is irradiated Brazilian material. Nevertheless, it is very bright and eye-catching.



CONTACTS

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.

WORKSHOP: rindadt@gmail.com and tracyhannath2@gmail.com Please write jointly to both addresses.

YOUR 2014 COMMITTEE

Chairman	Malcolm Jackson	021 551 8009	jacksonhome@telkomsa.net
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Workshop liaison	Tracy Hannath	021 559 2564	tracyhannath2@gmail.com
Secretary/Newsletter Editor	Jo Wicht	021 976 3808	joanna.wicht@kingsley.co.za

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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>

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

GEMCUTTING (FACETING) undertaken by GRADWELLS GEMS In the Cape Town CBD. Expert faceting and quick turnaround times. Please

contact Neil Gradwell on cell 083 2616543 or email neilgrad@iafrica.com

FOR SALE - small Jurgens caravan. It has 2 double beds, 2 tables plus tents. R15,000. Heila and Johan van der Merwe kamakazin@gmail.com
Or 078 5748740 after hours

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

2014/5 MEMBERSHIP FEES

TOWN MEMBERS: Single: R300 e mail (R35 extra if newsletter is posted because you do not have e mail)

Family: (Principal/partner/with dependent children under 21) R390 e mail (R35 extra if newsletter is posted)

COUNTRY MEMBERS: (Living more than 50km as the crow flies from central Cape Town) **Single:** R225 e mail (R35 extra if newsletter is posted because you don't have e mail)

Family: (Principal/partner/with dependent children under 21) R275 e mail (R35 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) R150 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 and you do have e-mail you must please pay an additional R75.

Club bank a/c for payments is ABSA - Table View - account no. 405-975-5822 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.

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:

WE ALSO RECEIVE EMAIL COPIES OF NEWSLETTERS FROM THE OTHER FOSAGAMS CLUBS. SHOULD YOU WISH TO HAVE THEM FORWARDED TO YOU, ASK JO TO PUT YOUR NAME ON HER SPECIAL MAILING LIST.

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 Sheila 021 782 1620

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/>

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)

The Mineralogical Society of Southern Africa, PO Box 28079, Goede Hoop Street, Bothasig, Cape Town, 7406, registered Non-Profit Organisation No. 61-850, trading as The Cape Town Gem & Mineral Club. Affiliated to the Federation of South African Gem & Mineral Societies.

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Happy Holidays