



CAPE TOWN GEM & MINERAL CLUB

FOR THE STUDY OF ROCKS, MINERALS & CRYSTALS

mineral chatter

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

JULY 2013

DIARY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
JUNE	29		Workshops open on request
JULY	6	10h00	Open Day – Minerals, gems and jewellery to view, buy or chat about
	13	14h00	Monthly Meeting – Fixed price auction Come early to view items
	20		Workshops open on request
	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
	24		Workshops open on request
	31		Workshops open on request



What's inside this month?

- Committee Corner
- Events
- Report on the Blesberg Field Trip
- The Fixed Price Auction - details
- Hunting for Tigers in Hout Bay





COMMITTEE CORNER

Mid-Winter Greetings to all.....

- ❖ **A special fixed price auction will take place at our July Monthly Meeting on 13th July.** Please read the information below regarding this very carefully, so that you do not miss out on the excitement. **The first item will be auctioned at 2 pm and you will need time before that to register and view the items. There will be no new registrations after the auction starts at 2 pm. Refreshments will be on sale during the course of the afternoon.**
- ❖ **The latest issue of the SA Lapidary Magazine Vol. 45 No. 1 (now called South African Gems & Minerals) has arrived.** Please collect your free copy from the library.
- ❖ **Pat Pearce** sends her greetings to everyone. She has happily moved to a new flat at Silvermine Village and is enjoying the smaller space and fully serviced accommodation.
- ❖ **FOOD ON OPEN DAY.** As no one was seemingly interested in providing additional food at Open Day for personal income, the Gemboree committee has decided that it will take up the challenge and use the opportunity as a means of fund raising for the Gemboree they are organizing next year. Make sure you bring some extra cash for lunch next time you come to Open Day. **Remember it is always held, whatever the weather!**
- ❖ **Gemboree 2014.** If anyone is willing to help the Gemboree committee, please contact Malcolm Jackson, or tell an EXCO member.
- ❖ **WORKSHOP.** Remember to contact both Charlie and Rinda by e-mail to indicate your wish to use the workshop before coming.
- ❖ **We welcome** new members Ursula Dawson, Dirk Plambeck and Kingston Frank. We hope your association with us will be a long and happy one.

EXCO

Events

Saturday, 13th July - Fixed Price Sputnik Auction – For those of you who are new to the club, this is a concept created by our committee after the death of Fr. Tony Garman when we wished to disperse his mineral assets in such a way that it was reasonably fair to all members, regardless of how much money they had to spend. It is more a raffle than an auction in a way.

Due to the generous donations of a few of our members we shall have a wonderful array of about 70 items available to attract all tastes. They include lovely mineral specimens, quality gem rough, slabs and

stones for lapidary work, polished stones and cabs, fittings and fixtures for jewellery, and other ephemera.



A list of the items up for “auction” is still being finalised and will be circulated with the meeting reminder on about 9th July, HOWEVER, A DRAFT IS ATTACHED TO GIVE YOU SOME IDEA OF WHAT IS AVAILABLE. Copies of the list will also be available on the day. Each item will have a number, and each item will **already have a fixed price**. That means whoever is interested in a certain item already knows what it will cost them, **IF** they are successful in their bid.

How does it work, and how does one bid?

On arrival at the club that day, put on your name tag. Only paid up members, wearing name tags, and present on the day, may take part in this auction. Then go to the table and sign in, and collect a number that will be dedicated to you for that day, as well as a list of items and a pencil for keeping a note on what you wish to bid on.

Hold tight onto that wooden disc, because you need it to bid with. If it isn't in the “sputnik” at the right time, you will have no chance of getting the item you fancy. Please make sure you return the disc to us again at the end of the day.

Each time an item is up on offer, members will be invited to place a bid. Make sure it is something you are interested in, and then make sure that you place your own numbered disc in the sputnik before the draw is made so that you stand a chance of having it drawn. If you are not interested in the item, make sure your number is taken out. The sputnik is then spun and the lucky number drawn. The sputnik is then emptied of discs and you must reclaim your number again, before the next item is auctioned.

The person who owns the first number drawn from the sputnik on each occasion is contracted to take the item offered and at the fixed price. You may not refuse to take the offered item, if it is your number that has been drawn, as you are responsible for placing it in, or taking it out the sputnik.

A record of the items won will be kept, and at the end of the day receipts will be issued to you for those items. Please keep a note yourself of the lot numbers you have successfully acquired and bring that to the payment table to help the clerks find all your purchase details. As each lot is sold, you will also be given the duplicate docket on the item as proof that you have acquired it.

You then take your dockets to the finance officer and pay a lump sum (CASH ONLY please), and are given a receipt. Only then may you collect, from the collections officer, those items you have acquired - in exchange for the receipt you have been given.

Refreshments will be on sale during the course of the afternoon.

Again, we are most grateful to Rob Smith of African Gems & Minerals, Pat Pearce, Rolf Brandt, and other members who have donated these items to be auctioned for club funds. Not everything donated will come up for sale on this occasion, so we look forward to offering the remaining items in due course in the way of raffles or other prizes or auctions.

Field Trip to Blesberg Report Back June 2013

After a long, wet, and very tough drive from Cape Town to the Springbok campsite, the various attendees assembled around the evening fire to dry out and enjoy a hot meal. All agreed the trip up to Springbok was difficult with the weather and road works but everyone was looking forward to a visit to the old favorite Blesberg the following day.

On arrival at the mine on Saturday the group quickly scattered to start their quest for new and exciting minerals. We were joined by Dr Ludi von Bezing from Kimberly and with his guidance everyone was able to see and look for some of the more obscure minerals that are known to have been found there in the past.

On the Saturday recorded finds included apatite, hyalite, garnet (some lovely red garnets in a green matrix), the elusive and rare phenakite, as well as quartz and an array of phosphate minerals.

By the evening the wind had picked up. This however did not deter the group from enjoying a wonderful potjie together, before some of the group headed back up the mine in search of fluorescent minerals. Judging by what was brought back to the campsite and the look on the faces of those that had gone up there, some very good scheelite can still be found at the mine!

The wind that blew in the night and the balance of the time spent at the mine was something few will want to remember. The nights were spent hoping your tent did not blow away and trying to sleep in the noise. This awful wind stayed with us for the entire weekend and by Monday had completely upset everyone on the trip!

Sunday morning, however, saw a few of the optimists go back up the mine as soon as they could. Others opted to look through the heaps at the bottom of the mine or to try and find some shelter from the wind at the campsite. By midday everyone had had enough of the mine and a few of the guys headed down to the epidote site to see if they could still find a few pieces. With some working hard to clear a new area in search of the epidote, others scouted a few of the diggings in the area. One of these diggings produced some interesting apatite and a few phenakite crystals and in fact probably produced more specimens than were found at the epidote site. Clearly the epidote site has been completely worked over and there is little chance of finding any more there again.

The evening braai was characterized by some of the club enjoying a "meat salad" (many different cuts of meat and no salad) and others having a glass or two of wine, provided one held the glass and the bottle for fear of it blowing away in the wind. Everyone retired early to try and get some sleep.

On Monday morning a unanimous decision was taken to pack up and go as early as possible - the wind had finally chased us away! With some leaving for Cape Town and others travelling around a bit, we all left promising to return one day when the weather was prepared to play fair.

I would like to say a special thank you to Dr Ludi von Bezing who joined us at the mine over the weekend. His knowledge and willingness to assist everyone in their quest was truly remarkable. With his kind assistance many of us left with new material we were unable to find or identify in the past.

To the OTRA committee a big thank you for your efforts - it has to be mentioned that while the effort was made to get everyone to the mine, some of these committee members then sacrificed their time in order to investigate other possible opportunities for the 2014 Gemboree!

Hopefully one day soon we will be able to return to good old 'Blessies' and with a little effort will once again be rewarded with some lovely finds from that amazing pegmatite.

Some of the minerals collected include the following (apologies if anything is left off the list).....

Smoky quartz, phenakite, apatite, fluorapatite, scheelite, lithiophyllite, albite, garnet, translucent beryl, libethenite, malachite and possibly azurite, sulphur, epidote with quartz, chalcopryite, chrysocolla, hyalite - and mica in our hair, eyes, food and coffee thanks to the wind!!

Graham, Richard & Craig Harrison

Graham Harrison Photo: "A little rock from a giant place", phenakite, roughly 25 mm tall and 5 mm wide.



HUNTING FOR TIGERS IN HOUT BAY

Who would have thought there were tigers lurking in Hout Bay?

In amongst the warehouses of Mariners Wharf, surrounded by chunks of picture stone, granite, rose quartz, sodalite and ironstone, and with an all pervading smell of oily fish, you will find Robin and his tigers. This is a stone carver *extraordinaire* who brings an amazing sense of movement and reality to his work. His current project of life-size tigers creeping through the undergrowth is his biggest challenge to date.



I was first introduced to Robin Kutinyu in February this year, when one tiger was just “born”, and the other still a solid block of 1 x 1 x 2 m of pale orange granite from Namibia. Each block weighed 7 tons. Now four months later both tigers are fully formed, weigh just over 2½ tons each, and the polishing is about to start. The workshop is supervised by an imperious 80 cm high sodalite eagle and black marble heads of the Big Five, while the entrance is guarded by a white marble lion, and a rearing leopard in Violsdrift picture stone.

Robin has 30 years of experience, having started carving at the age of seven, following in the footsteps of his father who was an acclaimed artist who painted in oils and carved rhinos out of stone in Mazoe, Zimbabwe. He remembers travelling all over Zimbabwe searching for different types of serpentine stone to use for their work, and sold his own collection of birds and turtles when only 10 years old. He has always preferred realistic as opposed to stylized sculptures, and spent his teenage years absorbed in the study of wild animals, birds and the human form he likes to portray.

He left his home country as a young man and first found work in Franschhoek with a local artist, before moving to Somerset West where he became apprenticed to the then company “Rock of Ages”, working primarily on granites for gravestones, but also later helping their stone carver with fireplace surrounds, or watching Thomas make his giant spheres. It was here that he gained experience working with really hard stones, which he much prefers. Other mediums he has worked in include wood, wax, metal and even ice. He once carved a full-size pink flamingo out of rose quartz complete with elegantly bent neck. For visual reference he takes or researches photographs of his subjects, referring to them constantly to ensure the correct proportions and realistic attitudes.



Stone carving is very hard, dusty and wet work, especially with projects of this size. Robin starts his large projects with a big angle grinder carrying an 8" diamond-edged blade to rough out the work and remove the bulk of what is not needed, all the while marking lines on the stone with a wax crayon to demarcate the next area needing work, or else needing to be left alone. (Once stone has been removed from a carving there is no getting it back again.) To undercut the body around the legs, he uses different sizes of diamond edged cores, followed by a smaller angle grinder and diamond cutting discs to remove the waste. Large diamond coated burrs on a die grinder help with the finer detail work. From a safety aspect, a full outfit of professional dust mask, ear muffs and goggles is worn, and especially designed water feeds protect the electrical wires and connections of his machinery .



Robin has had his artwork exhibited in Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Kenya, the USA and South Africa. We wish him every success with his current project, and very much look forward to seeing the next one.
Jo Wicht

"Within every block of wood and stone, there dwells a spirit waiting to be released. Direct carving is a way of freeing the spirit - my own,and that of the stone or wood."

(Hap Hagood)

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:

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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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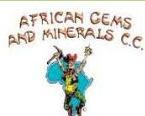


Duncan Miller is the official southern African regional representative for **ULTRA TEC FACETING MACHINES** (www.ultratec-facet.com) and agent for **GEARLOOSE LAPIDARY PRODUCTS** (www.battlap.com). So if you are considering buying an Ultra Tec or Gearloose's innovative polishing materials, contact Duncan 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>

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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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