PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY



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PNWFM



President's Message Toby Seim

Greetings all,

With summer coming to an end, I'd like to bring up a few highlights from this season.

Washington Pass Clean-Up

We recently conducted our *Washington Pass Clean-Up* event and I thought it went quite well. The

thought behind scheduling the clean-up in September opposed to earlier was to dodge the potential heat, smoke and help clean after the big holiday. Although the attendance was smaller than I expected, the members who did attend consisted of some of our heavy hitters. The morning of the Clean-Up, we broke into groups and each group went with a campground host (Forest Service Representative) where we were coached up on what to do. We screened fire pits and picked up garbage throughout one of the most popular campgrounds on the Pass. Turns out, collecting garbage is similar to collecting minerals in the field. With our eye for oddities, we found some quite interesting things such as a working flashlight, an antique phone line tree-mount and the bullet-screw (see photo). I have already received an email from the campground hosts thanking us for the much needed help that we provided. They are hopeful for our return in 2020.

After the clean-up, a group of our experts moseyed into the field for some collecting. This was a great opportunity for me to learn the key fundamentals to collecting the area.

Now that I fully understand the Washington Pass Clean-Up process, I am expecting future years to continually improve. Keep in mind, by PNWFM doing our due diligence towards preserving the environment; precious localities will continue to be collectible. Thank you to the group who participated.



Out in the talus collecting.



Bullet-Screw - The oddest thing we found.

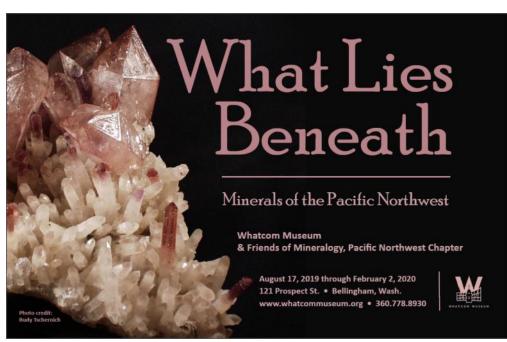


One of our Washinton Pass Clean-Up groups (Lanny, Tom, Camp Host, Randy)

Whatcom Museum

The exhibition put on by our Friends of Mineralogy – Pacific Northwest Chapter at the Whatcom Museum demonstrates the power of our capabilities. We are presenting some of the most notable discoveries found and educating the general public with critical information about minerals, localities and stories behind

the specimens. If you haven't had the opportunity to schedule a trip to view it, I would recommend trying to go on Sunday November 3rd. That Sunday, Randy Becker will be providing a 2:00PM talk about mineral crystals and their occurrence in the Cascade Mountains. His talk will introduce a series of localities, from the south cascades to the north cascades that once produced collectable mineral specimens for each locality. Very Exciting!



Annual Symposium

Our October Symposium titled "Specimen Mines of the West" will be a good one and is right around the corner. Please try to complete your planning as soon as possible to prevent any hiccups that may occur in the final moments. I learned the hard way last year and as a result was the lone satellite dealer located in the Red Lion upstairs hallway. I am really excited for the all-star cast of speakers and to get to know our members better. See you there!



2019 Symposium Speaker Bios

Erin Delventhal grew up collecting minerals with her family. Long road trips were punctuated with detours to localities where they spent hours getting dirty and tired while digging for mineral treasures. Photography and design work later took precedence as a hobby and profession, but a visit to the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show rekindled her love for minerals. She rejoined the mineral community with enthusiasm and has since been an active member in several mineral organizations as well as mineral museums, symposia, and other educational programs. Erin currently works as a freelance photographer, photo editor, graphic designer, and Mindat manager, as well as collecting and distributing New Mexico minerals for Enchanted Minerals LLC.

Virgil Lueth is currently Senior Mineralogist and Economic Geologist as well as Director of the Mineral Museum at the New Mexico Bureau of Mines & Mineral Resources. He received his B.S. in geology at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and his Masters and Ph.D. from the University of Texas – El Paso. He has served on many boards, including the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals, New Mexico Geological Society, and Friends of Mineralogy. He is also adjunct curator at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science and adjunct professor of geology at New Mexico Tech. Dr. Lueth has published over 80 articles in scientific journals, textbooks, and popular magazines and was also managing editor of 11 books for the New Mexico Geological Society.

Alex Homenuke has been a serious mineral collector since the age of 12 and came by his interest in silver mines naturally, living his first 8 years at the original Silver Standard Mine at Hazelton, British Columbia. He spent his high school summers diamond drilling all around BC, which helped finance his Diploma of Mining Technology from BC Institute of Technology in 1969 and his Geological Engineering Degree from Colorado School of Mines in 1974. He worked over 40 years in mineral exploration and mining from Alaska to Arizona, followed by eight years as a regulator with Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada, retiring (mostly) from that position in 2014.

Les Presmyk and his wife of 43 years, Paula, are both Arizona natives and graduates of the University of Arizona. Les recently retired after some 44 years in the mining industry, all the while serving on numerous boards and commissions as well as town councilman for Gilbert, Arizona. He has been a mineral collector for some 57 years and has been involved in a number of specimen mining projects, including the San Francisco mine in Mexico, the Brushy Creek mine in Missouri, and the Red Cloud mine in Arizona. He is currently serving as vice-chairman of the Flagg Mineral Foundation and is president of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society. Les has received many awards for his service, the most recent of which was the 2017 Carnegie Mineralogical Award.

Register for the PNWFM 2019 symposium: "Specimen Mines of the West"

https://squareup.com/store/pnwfm

The "paper" registration will be available later and sent to members by email when it is ready.

Symposium Topics:

Erin Delventhal

The Blanchard Mine. New Mexico

Alex Homenuke

The Highland Bell Mine, British Columbia

The Keno Hill – Galena Hill Area, Yukon

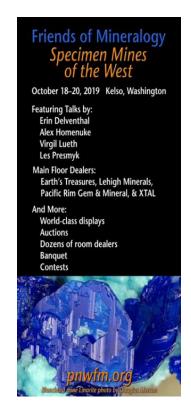
Virgil Lueth

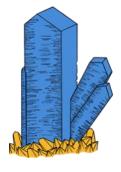
The Chino Mine, New Mexico

The Magdalena Mining District, New Mexico

Les Presmyk

The Red Cloud Mine, Arizona The Pioneer District, Arizona





Interested in a wonderful resource for teaching children about minerals?
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http://www.diamonddanpubl ications.net/

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Noble Serpentine at the Wild Turkey Mine!

Story and photos by Stuart "Tate" Wilson

WILD TURKEY MINE

Story and photos by Stuart "Tate" Wilson



Wild Turkey Mine owners Jim and Jennifer Sahli proudly serve up freshly collected noble serpentine!

Jim and Jennifer Sahli, owners of the Wild Turkey Mine, are a true American success story. Everything from the rich local mining history to their own current involvement in producing a fantastic new semiprecious lapidary gem material make this a great addition to the history books. I made the trip over to the Colville River Valley of Eastern Washington to interview the Sahlis. I got to see first hand the local geology which produces the most lovely glowing green serpentine while spending the day mining alongside them. I also learned what it takes for this gem to make it from mine to market.

My first time meeting this couple was over 8 years ago at a small gem and mineral show in western Washington. We were neighboring vendors and this was one of their first shows. My business name was "Washington Treasures" and theirs was "Washington Rocks!" Naturally we hit it off. We both shared the passion of digging Washington state material. Over the years we got to witness each other grow and discover amazing material. I got to see these won-

derful folks turn a passionate hobby into a profitable and enjoyable business.

While the Sahlis owe most of their success to a ton of hard work and a fair bit of luck, it is also important to realize and acknowledge the work of over a century's worth of labor done by

those whose memories and artifacts are all that remain. This area is rich in mining history. If it were not for all this work laid out by those of the past we would not have the knowledge or access of these localities now.

Our story really begins over one hundred years ago, pre World War 1. In Europe pre war tensions were causing strain on international commerce. Prior to the war we sourced magnesite from Austria-Hungary and some from Greece. However this ended as the War began. Our United States Government sent out a call all over the nation to geologist to check their records and resources to find where all domestic magnesite deposits were located. We needed the magnesite to create the lining

tion.

of the open hearth furnace. This style of furnace was absolutely necessary for creating the steel that was not only necessary for



A long horizontal sill is exposed revealing the beautiful green noble serpentine.



Jim takes a fresh scoop of noble serpentine out of the ground, showing just how this material is being found.

carrying us through both World Wars but also the industrial revolu-



Noble serpentine is a unique variety of magnesium iron silicate that contains a high content of calcium.

It was way back then that one particular mine ran into a large serpentine sill of semi precious material, which is now known as noble serpentine. The deposit was more or less left unused since the early 60's. Since that time this material has largely gone unnoticed except by the local rock club who was using it as a lapidary stone.

It was one of these local rock clubs where Jim and Jennifer became acquainted with this beautiful greenstone. These two are based in western Washington however they have their summer lake home near Chewelah. It was here during their off time from work where they hooked up with some local rock club members who shared with them some local collecting sites, one of which was the serpentine spot. At this point in the story Jim and Jennifer are just a couple of fun loving rockhounds looking for a good time.

The Sahlis instantly fell in love with the beautiful noble serpentine and recognized its potential to

That call that was sent out by our U.S. government was answered quickly. R.S. Talbot was one of the men who answered that call. He had been mining dolomite to be used in his paper mill. This occurrence was consistently showing test results with a high magnesite content. Mr. Talbot switched efforts from his paper mill to mining, and thus marking the beginning of the "magnesite rush" in Stevens County. Their were other folks with similar stories. People responded to the call and quickly patented mines sprung up and were developed. This boom created in industry were there once was none. Roads were built going up into the mountains and many mines were created. Today all these roads and mines are still there. Their mineral wealth and history is well documented. The path has literally been paved for the Sahlis to start where others have left off long ago.



The Wild Turkey Mine in Eastern Washington carries a variety of beautiful gem serpentine.

be marketed as the new and exciting semi precious gem material that it is. At first, they collected small amounts here and there for tumbling material and yard rock. The softness of the stone made it wonderful for tumbling and it came out looking shiny and beautiful. The tumbles that they produced were given out as gifts to family and friends. The response was great! Everyone loved this glowing lime green colored stone. This led to the Sahlis ultimately vending the occasional local gem and mineral show and the well known International Quartzite Gem and Mineral show which preludes the huge Tucson show in Arizona. It was at Quartzite they realized how big this noble serpentine could be for them. The demand was so high that every year they ran out of material early.

Unfortunately it was at this same time that land access was shut off and any small production came to an end. They had foreseen this and smartly they tried contacting the landowners to lease or buy the land. However all attempts were futile as the owners lived across the country and did not respond to any request. Jim and Jennifer's dream of opening a mine and seeing its full potential reached was starting to dissipate quickly.



Noble serpentine tumbled stones hold the light so well they appear to glow.

Then out of nowhere not even six months after land access ended they received a call from the out of state landowners whom had heard they were being summoned. The Sahlis gave a huge sigh of relief when they learned that the property owners were more than happy to sell the property to them and at an unbeatable price! Their dreams of owning the mine were back on track and in a better way than ever. Their minds were once again able to run wild with ideas of how they could really turn this noble serpentine into something that could support themselves fully while providing them gem and mineral world with a fantastic new stone.

Since Jim and Jennifer own the property and the mine now they have decided to name it the "Wild Turkey Mine", because of the wild turkey flocks that frequent the area. The serpentine that occurs here is quite interesting. It has so

many varieties of colors and qualities. Serpentine is a general term for a whole group of rocks that tend to be greenish in color and are magnesium iron silicates and are metamorphic in nature. Serpentine is polymorphic in that there are a number of varieties that look different while they all have the same chemical makeup. All these varieties can make serpentine hard to identify. This particular variety is called noble serpentine and almost resembles a common opal with a most rich lime green color. This particular variety of serpentine is different then varieties as it contains a high amount of calcium instead of iron.

Now we are up to current day status with our story and I just got done on a three day trip over in Eastern Washington to spend some time with the Sahlis and visit the mine. The first day of my trip was just driving over the Cascade Mountains crossing over into Eastern Washington from the west. The drive is amazing as you go from the lush evergreen forest that dominate western Washington into the flowering plains of Eastern Washington. Finally as I made my way into the northeastern corner of the state I again enter a mountainous area full of tall trees and creeks running everywhere. This is where I met Jim and Jennifer at their lake house. We hung out for a while and created a game plan for the following day.

We woke up early the next morning, loaded into their vehicle and headed a short distance to their mine. Once we were past the gate it was a rather steep bumpy ride up the Huckleberry mountains to their mine site. Along the way up we saw a larger mine area that is also on their property. This is what's left of the workings from that great magnesite boom that created a thriving industry in this town so long ago. We continued on just a little further to the noble serpentine mine.

The view from the Wild Turkey Mine in Eastern Washington is breathtaking.



As we went around the corner my jaw dropped. In front of me was a small open pit mine that was glowing green. The entire area was nothing but noble serpentine! If there ever was a rockhounds heaven, this is it. The majority of the mountain is part of the Stensgar Dolomite Formation. However there are intrusive sills that extend horizontally throughout it. At this particular locality this serpentine material has been exposed revealing its huge potential. As it lays horizontally with a dip that strikes downward and a visible thickness of 30-40 feet thick, this deposit promises a lifetime supply of noble serpentine that the national and international market is only now beginning to see.

The Wild Turkey Mine is still in its infancy, so mining methods are basic. We come in and collect anything and everything that looks good. Literally the whole mine is made of this noble serpentine so it's easy pickings. However I soon realized there is a lot more to it then i thought! The way this serpentinite rock occurs, it forms in horizontal layers. Each layer is a dramatically different variety of serpentine. This is the exciting part out the mine. So far they have been producing numerous varieties. There is certainly plenty of the typical dark green variety of serpentine that is much harder and an excellent material for carving. Right below this layer begins the classic noble serpentine variety that we have come to recognize on market. It has a gorgeous lime green semi translucent color with streaks of white going through it. There is plenty of this variety. Perhaps one of the rarest varieties of noble serpentine is the gem quality type. This particular variety is generally fracture free and has a highly

translucent glowing lime green color.

All this variety is great. It means that there is always something new coming out and there is something to attract everyone. Now that Jim and Jennifer have their mine up and running they are now focusing on dialing in their production and creating a varied and consistent line of finished products. Tumbled stones in all sizes are their most popular product right now. They also make spheres, eggs, book ends, towers and they also offer rough material so that lapidarist can try their hand at working this stone.

You can have the chance to meet Jim and Jennifer Sahli and see their noble serpentine during the annual International Desert Gardens Gem and Mineral Show in the sunny town of Quartzite, Arizona. Once a year the Sahlis make the pilgrimage from rainy Washington State to sunny and warm Arizona during January. During their three week time there they are set up to vend their noble serpentine. People from all the world are here and have the chance to buy and create networks and lasting relationships. This is a great time to meet up with them and sample this lovely stone and place orders for future product!

Another great way to learn more about the noble serpentine is to visit Jim and Jeniffer's website: www.washingtonrocks.net. On their website you contact them directly for placing order. Also they have listed their show schedule so you can find them throughout the year. In addition, there are many extra pictures of these two out in the field collecting material.



Noble serpentine polishes up nicely and is a wonderful lapidary stone to work with.

It will be exciting to see the future of the Wild

Turkey Mine as new material will be uncovered and new lapidary ideas come to creation. I had a great time visiting these two wonderful people and receiving a first hand tour of a century old mine that they now run. While magnesite was the main concern a century ago in this area, the old timers most certainly came across this deposit as a result. I can't help but wonder what they thought of this stone and its most lovely green color.



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MINERAL MEETING CALENDAR

2019:

45th annual PNWFM Symposium, October 18-20 Red Lion Inn Kelso, WA

Micro Mineral Study Group,
November 2, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm
Camas-Washougal Fire Station #42
4321 NW Parker Street
Camas, Washington

2020:

SCMA Micro-Mineral Symposium Jan 31-Feb 1 Fallbrook Mineral Museum 123 W Alvarado St B, Fallbrook, CA

Micro Mineral Study Group,
May 2, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm
Camas-Washougal Fire Station #42
4321 NW Parker Street
Camas, Washington

Seattle Mineral Market (PNWFM Meeting)
May

NCMA Micro-Mineral Symposium May-June

Washington Pass Cleanup
August-September

46th annual PNWFM Symposium October

Micro Mineral Study Group, November 7, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm Camas-Washougal Fire Station #42 4321 NW Parker Street Camas, Washington