



THE MINERAL VEIN

Official Newsletter of

THE MINERAL SOCIETY OF MANITOBA

May 2018

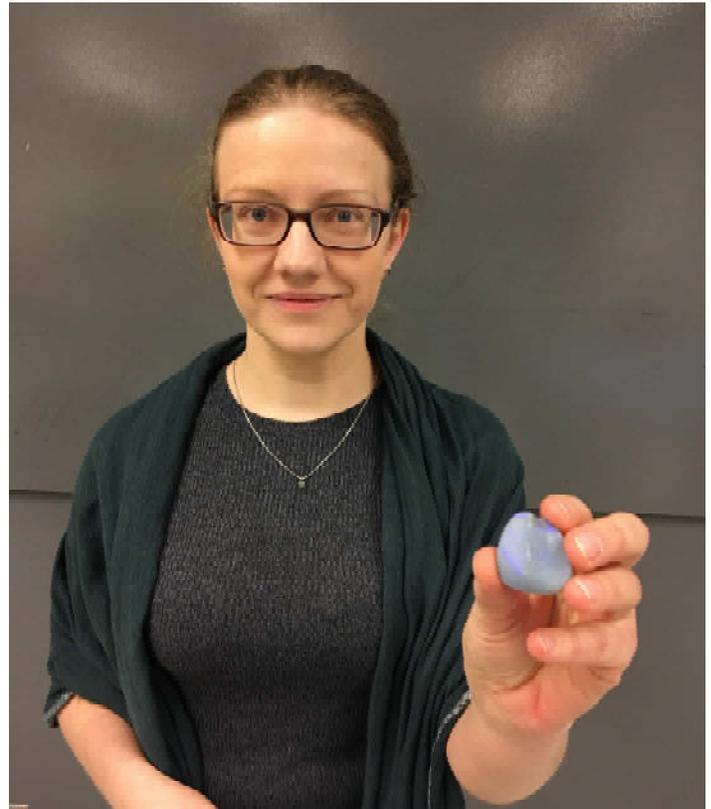
APRIL PRESENTATION SUMMARY

By Jacques Bourgeois

Our guest speaker in April was Liga Kaulina from Unicorn opals and Gems. Her talk was about, you may have guessed it, opals! Liga has worked with opals for 4 years. She started to cut opals with a simple Dremmel but now she has her own cutting machines in her workshop. She focuses her work on Australian opals.

Opal is a hydrated amorphous form of silica, its water content usually ranges between 6 and 10% by weight. Because of its amorphous character, it is classed as a mineraloid, unlike the crystalline forms of silica, which are classed as minerals. It is deposited at a relatively low temperature and may occur in the fissures of almost any kind of rock, being most commonly found with limonite, sandstone, rhyolite, marl, and basalt.

Over 90 % of opal come for Australia. It is the country's national gemstone. Some of the main opal producing areas of the country include Coober Pedy, Mintabie, Adamooka and Lightning Ridge.



Liga Kaulina presenting on opals.

Other countries producing good amount of quality opals include Ethiopia, and Mexico. Other significant deposits of precious opal around the world can be found in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Turkey, Indonesia, Brazil, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

There is also some good opal deposits in the United States. Two good localities for opal are in Nevada, more precisely in the Virgin Valley opal fields of Humboldt County in northern Nevada as well as in Opal Butte in northeastern Oregon and in Spencer, Idaho.

Canada only has one opal mine located near Vernon, British Columbia.



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THE MINERAL SOCIETY OF MANITOBA

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The Mineral Vein is published monthly from September to June.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month from September to May inclusive at the Manitoba Museum in room P47 on the Planetarium level. They begin at 7:30 PM and feature announcements, an invited speaker and a raffle. Members are encouraged to bring along any new, interesting specimens, or specimens appropriate to the speaker's topic.

Field Trips take place from May to September to interesting sites in Manitoba or neighbouring provinces and states.

Membership: A single membership is \$15 while a family membership is \$20. Memberships run from October to October.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2, 2018—7:30 p.m. : MSM regular monthly meeting begins at **7.30 p.m.** at the Manitoba Museum. Our guest speaker will be, **Kathryn Lapenskie**, Industrial and Specialty Minerals Geologist, in the Mineral Resources department, for the Manitoba Geological Survey. She will be talking about Devonian Stratigraphy and the well preserved fossils, found in the Winnipegosis area.

May 7, 2018 : Field trip to **Gillis Quarry**. Please contact **Danial McKay (204-510-2443)** to register of for more information.

May 20, 2018 : Field trip to **Souris**. Please contact **Danial McKay (204-510-2443)** to register of for more information.

June 3, 2018 - 1:30 to 6:00 p.m.: **MSM BBQ, Potluck and Swap Meet** at Stonewall Quarry Park covered multi-use facility, near the baseball diamonds. The Mineral Society will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, soft drinks and water. Members are welcome to bring salads, desserts or other item. Bring your minerals and fossils for show or trade. Please, sign up at the May meeting, or call **Jack Bauer (204-632-6934)** as we will need an accurate head count for this event!



Founded in 1971, the Mineral Society of Manitoba is dedicated to promoting the study of minerals, rocks and fossils for their scientific and recreational value. The Mineral Society of Manitoba hosts monthly meetings covering a variety of mineral related topics. In addition, the Mineral Society organizes summer field trips to collecting localities, and hosts educational exhibits about minerals and fossils.

APRIL PRESENTATION SUMMARY (CONT.)

There are several types of opals:

White Opal refers to Opal with a white milky body tone. Most of this type of Opal comes from Coober Pedy in South Australia. While this Opal is beautiful it does not show off the Opal colors as well as the Black Opal.

Boulder Opal is Opal that has formed along with another rock called ironstone. Most of this type of Opal comes from the Opal fields in Queensland where there is a huge belt that spreads thousands of kilometers where this type of Opal is produced.

Matrix Opal is found in a matrix of ironstone and other stones together with precious Opal. It can also be a matrix of sandstone, clay and ironstone.

Opal Fossils are opals found in opalized marine life, including shells and remains of dinosaurs.

Crystal Opal is opal that is clear. It has flashes of color on a clear body. Crystal opals can be transparent to semi-transparent and in rarer cases (less than 5%) can be dark which is what is commonly called **Black Opal**.

Opals contain between 4 to 6% water content therefore, some opal are better stored in water to facilitate water going through them and amplify the colour. Some people say it's a myth and some people say that if you don't keep them in water, the opal will eventually crack. Opals kept in mineral water magnifies the colours.

Opals have various hardness between 6 and 7, making them fairly easy to cut. Green is the most common colour found in opal, followed by blue, yellow, pink, orange, and red being the most rare. Fire opal is Mexican opal with yellow and orange hues.



Selection of various opals shown during the presentation.

SILVER COVE MINERAL SHOW REVIEW

By Carrie Carino



The Silver Cove Mineral Show was a huge success for the Mineral Society. The crowds at this event were large and it was a busy weekend, out at the Exhibition grounds. There was a large selection of Minerals for sale and vendors were excellent. They had lots to offer and the knowledge that was shared was amazing. We had a good opportunity to meet a wide variety of vendors, rock hounds and some people just getting into Mineralogy.

The Fluorescent Mineral display was an instant hit, with people of all ages. Our display was eye catching, and informative. We had many people intrigued and curious about fluorescent minerals and the information the volunteers provided was top notch. We handed out about 50 to 60 membership forms and already have a few new members joining us for the May meeting. Welcome to our new members.

Excellent job done by all volunteers from the set-up of the florescent display to the knowledge the volunteers shared. Our intention was to be diverse, bilingual and respectful, by creating a welcoming atmosphere for everyone.

A big thank you to our volunteers for making this event so wonderful and know you are very much appreciated for your dedication and time spent, spreading Mineralogical information, to Manitoba and beyond.

The next volunteer opportunity will be at Oak Hammack Marsh in September 2018. I hope to see some members out there promoting the Mineral Society and sharing your passion for minerals and fossils.

Contact, an executive member for more volunteer information and opportunities.

FIELD TRIPS INFORMATION

By Danial McKay

Field trip season is upon us and here is some useful information to assist you in planning your trip.

The Winnipegosis field trip, will not happen this year due to budget constraints at the Mines Branch. We hope to set up this trip for next year in 2019. Also, the Floodway field trip has been postponed till next year, due to unforeseen circumstances and time constraints. We hope to put together another field trip to make up for this short fall.

More information to come in the next newsletter.

Gillis Quarry: Monday, May 7th, 2018

Meet at the Walmart parking lot in Southdale by the old pizza hut at 8:30 a.m.

- Departure: 9 a.m. - Arrive on site: 10 a.m.

Gillis is about a 45 min drive from the perimeter of the city and is an active quarry. Gillis has some great fossils that can be found in their rubble pile. The quarry is closed on weekends so the field trip will take place on Monday.

The quarry charges \$15 for a car and \$25 for a truck.

Helpful tools:

- Rockhound Hammer or mason's hammer
- 5 lb hammer commonly known as a crack hammer or at the very least a heavier weight hammer
- Solid rock chisel with a guard if possible
- Pry bar
- Neoprene gloves
- Bug Spray (trust me on this one don't forget this)
- Sunscreen
- Lots of Water
- Lunch for the day
- Music helps but headphones are not recommended as they stop you from hearing warnings and equipment
- Bucket or container to carry your finds
- Paper Towels or toilet paper to wrap your fossils
- Band-Aids (just in case)
- Good pair of shoes preferably with ankle support for walking on rocky surfaces.
- Small shovel or road shovel to move larger rubble but usually not needed.
- A good nights rest, its hard work finding fossils and using a hammer and chisel

Souris Agate Pit: Sunday, May 20th, 2018

Meet at the Walmart parking lot in Southdale by the old pizza hut at 8:30 a.m.

- Departure 9 am - Arrive on site 11:30 am

Souris rock shop and permits purchase at noon.

The Souris agate pit has a lot of different minerals from fossils, petrified woods, corals, and of course agates galore. It's a bit of a drive but well worth the trip if you are an agate lover. Dig permits can be purchased at the local rock shop in Souris.

Permit costs \$20 per vehicle.

Helpful tools:

- Shovel
- Water sprayer really helps or rain is amazing to help find stuff
- Neoprene gloves
- Bug Spray (trust me on this one don't forget this)
- Sunscreen
- Ball cap or hat to keep the sun away its wide open area.
- Lots of Water
- Lunch for the day
- Music helps but headphones are not recommended as they stop you from hearing warnings and equipment
- Bucket or container to carry your finds
- Paper Towels or toilet paper to wrap your finds in.
- Band-Aids (just in case)
- Good pair of shoes preferably with ankle support for walking on rocky surfaces.
- A good night's rest

Other upcoming field trips include

Mariash Quarry, dates and details to be confirmed

Steep Rock Quarry, July 20 to 22

Camping available at Steep Rock Beach Park. We can book a group use site, for up to 25 people and 5 vehicles, for \$115.00 per night.

Please re-register for this trip, as we will need an accurate head count to book the group use site! We will have room for 25+ members.

For more information or to register for these trips , please contact **Jack Bauer** (204-632-6934) or **Danial McKay** (204-510-2443).