

THE CMLC NEWS

The Canterbury Mineral & Lapidary Club Inc.
Newsletter for October 2023



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Facebook: Canterbury Mineral and Lapidary Club
Meeting Venue & Clubrooms: 110 Waltham Road, Waltham, Christchurch 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of the month [Feb. to Nov.]

General Meeting (7.30pm): October 12

Committee Meeting (7pm): October 19

Micro Mineral Meeting: Tuesday evenings (7 pm)

Workshops: Every Tuesday evenings, 6.30 p.m.

Geobusters: Sunday afternoons every second month.

www.geobusters.co.nz; Facebook.

The October Meeting: Leigh Love as our speaker. Subject; 'The geological background to fossil collecting in North Canterbury'.

Kitchen Duty for the October Meeting: John and Anna Baker, Jess Banfield, Graham and Lynn Barr, Jim Barwell, Carolyn Bentley, Jim Barwell, Mark Billington, Paul Breakwell, Miranda Bryant, Elly Burgess. Lay out the tea, milk, coffee and cups. Do dishes and tidy up the kitchen after the meeting.

October Meeting Auction: Some more material from the Brian Jones collection. Please note that Craig's eftpos machine will not be available for the October meeting. Direct debit is ok.

Field Trip: The field trip for October is individual trips to the National Show in Blenheim. Be sure to register for field trips being held there.

New Members: Pleaser make these new members welcome. Fraser Gare, Alastair Hay, Theo Greening, Gavin Pateman and family, Nelson Tata and family.

The September Monthly Competitions Results

Lapidary:: Polished lapidary work containing the colours white and black

1st John Taylor , 2nd Zena, 3rd Craig McGregor

Fossil: Fossil wood (NZ)

1st Equal John Dugmore and John Taylor, 2nd Morne Wium, 3rd Colleen Hourston.

Mineral:: Mineral from Kakanui- Otago

1st L. Day

Alphabet Cup:: DTJ

1st Craig McGregor , 2nd L. Day, 3rd Ava

Novice Section: Any rock you wish to enter

1st Colleen Hourston, 2nd Ava

Bring and Brag

1st Gen Early: 2nd Paul Morgan, 3rd equal C. McGregor, Robin Hall, Vince Burke.

Monthly Competitions for October (Refer to the July newsletter for guidelines for the competitions)

Lapidary: Polished lapidary work containing the colour red

Fossil Fossil Leaves (NZ)

Mineral: Mineral from Canterbury

Alphabet Cup: D W N

Novice Section Any rock you wish to enter

Bring and Brag

Club Sales Table: Material on this table is getting rather diminished and needs restocking with donated material. If you have material to donate, please bring it along to the meeting.

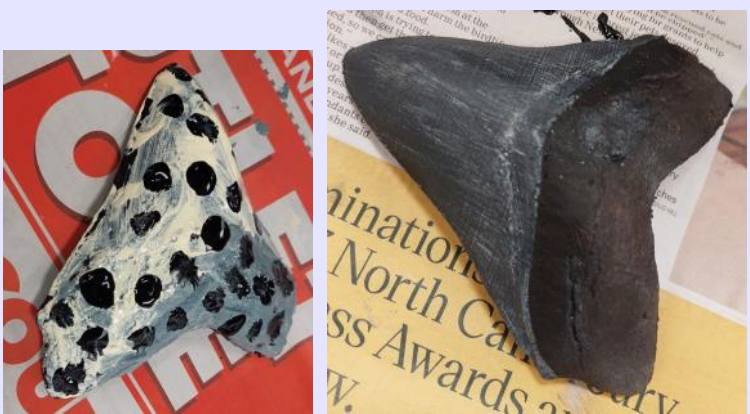
The PDF Books written by Dr Hans Schumann: The books are: Lune River, Tasmania, Curio Bay, Southland, Part 1 Conifers, Part 2 Donponoxylon, Part 3 Ferns, Other South Island Locations.

These books are available on a flash drive, 32gig. The drive also has many of the research files as well that contributed to the books. If you want a copy, please exchange a 32 gig flash drive (approx. \$20) with me.

I had all of the books printed by Print Online (over night delivery), ring bound with plastic cover and cardboard back, double side colour for \$453.

The Geobusters in July had an attendance of 16 children and 10 adults, our most yet! A huge thank you to everyone who attended. The topic was the Megalodon shark and we explored questions about what caused their extinction, what they fed on, their enormous size and where their teeth have been found in New Zealand.

After this short presentation, we had some life-size, 3D-printed Megalodon shark teeth to paint using acrylic paints. Some opted for accuracy while others went for some pleasing patterns.



Each attendee was given a set of New Zealand fossil cards which can be used to play a game where you try to beat your opponent's chosen statistic. The aim of these cards is to get the players more familiar with New Zealand's unique fossil animals.



We require more fossils, crystals, agate and any cool rocks for the kids' auction table - this is a huge hit every time and helps them grow their collections.

Email geobustersclub@gmail.com to book your child in. The topic will be opal with the activity centred around some opalite. If anyone has any tiny opal chips, that would be very useful as well.

Agate Creek Sojourn Malcolm Luxton

Any serious agate collector should do their darnedest not to pass up the opportunity to go to Agate Creek in Queensland. Some 480 km or 6.5 driving hours inland from Cairns, Agate Creek has become the Number One agate fossicking area in the world. The variety is almost unparal-



leled, the range of colours swoonworthy, ease of access a breeze, the experience unmissable.

In May this year Yvonne and I, accompanied by the kitchen sink, set off on our second sojourn to this chalcedony capital of Etheridge Shire. Unlike our first pilgrimage when we were hosted by our good friends from Mackay, this time, sickness prevented a repeat and so we made our own way via Mackay where we borrowed

the necessary camping gear and bought such victuals that would sustain five avid Kiwi rockhounds for a week. I say five because in Cairns we planned to rendezvous with three other mentally deranged agate collectors in the form of Mark our son, Braden our grandson and Anton our son in law before setting off in convoy for the creek.

We had a few hours to kill in Cairns on the Saturday morning awaiting the boy's plane so we toddled along to the Cairns Mineral and Lapidary Club. (CMLC ironically.) Their clubrooms are open Saturdays and their Pres kindly gave us a guided tour of their remarkably appointed clubrooms and workshop areas. It seems that some 30 or 40 years ago there was a close relationship between our club and theirs, attested to by a cabinet hosting a display of various NZ geological specimens. Incidentally the Pres appeared keen to re-establish that previous connection - a possibility worth thinking about perhaps.

Running late from the boy's flight delay meant we didn't get to our Mt Surprise stop-over until after dark, an event alas, causing some short lived apprehension as we couldn't for some time locate our dastardly dongas and for one brief moment I was reminded of Mary and Joseph! Eventually however the kind hearted torch wielding 'Camp Mother' came to our rescue and showed us to our digs where she had constructed and left a giant hamburger each.

At 7am the following morning after paying our bill we set off for the Creek stopping at Georgetown to top up with diesel, get a couple of bricks of water and a few last minute necessities (chips, ice-cream, coke etc) then on through Forsyth, the last civilised town before the final 70km dirt road push to the pole. (Incidentally, Georgetown hosts an excellent Mineral museum. If you are passing through, try and make time to visit)

Agate Creek Camping Ground is outside of and just along the road from the designated fossicking area. To put it bluntly but not derogatorily, you camp in a farm paddock, co-existing with docile Brahman and Drought-master cattle along with all the usual idiosyncrasies of a cow paddock. No booking is required but an honesty box arrangement at the gate specifies the \$10 per person per night fee. So a bit of cash was handy. The un-powered sites are not marked out so you can pretty much camp anywhere within the several hectare gumtree-clad 'reserve'. If you have a Woolworths bladder you might find it comforting to sacrifice some privacy and camp nearer the amenities block. If any volunteer campers have powered up the hot water donkey you may be fortunate enough to luxuriate in a hot potable water shower on your return from the trenches. The shower also doubled as a chance to freshen up some socks 'n jocks or whatever else needed laundering attention.

Campfires are permitted and ours was a great source of comfort on two very cold nights, served as a camaraderie inducing opportunity with other lower decile geriatrics and of course was very convenient for cooking porridge, roo stews, custard and the like. We learned it is sensible to secure your food and your rubbish or the ever present ants and crows will make short work of the former and a scattered mess of the latter.



Our accommodation choice was tents and after we all finally got set up, the boys headed off for a late afternoon hunt which proved to be surprisingly successful with Anton finding a large 1kg nicely banded golden agate. As mentioned, our first night turned out very cold with temps dropping to 3 degrees. This caused not a small amount of grief for the boys who had only been supplied with a sheet and one blanket by the camping organisation. Fortunately the fire was easily resurrected and frostbite was staved off, but there was a lot of tired about.

The historic nightly habit of lighting a community fire and burning a standing hollow tree trunk has ceased and although most other campers were friendly enough, the loss of that one galvanising event left something to be lamented I thought.

The fossicking area itself is approx 12 kilometres by 5 kilometres and encompasses a number of well known sites each producing peculiar agates that can usually be identified from that particular area. Agate Creek itself of course hosts agates from everywhere within the re-



serve and is a great place to find a huge variety. Digging with hand tools is permitted anywhere except on the road and on tracks. If you are serious about digging you will need a miners pick, a shovel and a geologists pick as minimum

equipment. You will also need a Queensland Fossicking Licence, available online, (easiest) or obtainable from Georgetown, Forsyth and Cobbold gorge.



Online maps are available and tracks and driving distances to the various named vicinities are highlighted therein. There is even a geological map showing the various rock types and what can be found there. Jasper, geodes, petrified wood, crystals, chert, and thunder eggs are some of the additional material available.

Early mornings around daybreak - 6.30am the kookaburras will be the first to greet (wake) you followed by a cacophony from crows, butcherbirds, larks, magpies, parakeets and a few other birds I couldn't name. If you are very fortunate, during the night you may be

treated to the eerie howling of wild dingos baying at the moon. Kangaroos were very scarce and snakes even more so with not even a sighting - most disappointing.

HETTIE'S ROCK & CRYSTAL SHOP

Birdwood Ave, Beckenham, Christchurch.

Also: Akaroa and Queenstown

Also: Akaroa and Queenstown





Preparation

If you think you might venture over there some day here are some resources that will prove helpful.

Paul Howard's book 'Fossicking for Queensland Agate'. Copy in the club library.

Google 'Agate Creek'. Talk to folks who have been there.

Youtube videos.

Costs for one week.

A very brief breakdown of our costs are as follows;

Airfares. ChCh to Cairns. Approx \$1000 each. (Qantas allows 32kg suitcase weight. Air NZ 23kg)

Off-road, fridge and freezer

equipped 4 wheel drive vehicle rental plus camping equipment hire.

\$3,000

Food per person for one week. \$200

Fuel. \$350. Insurance and/or vehicle bond needs investigating as there are options here. If you don't investigate you may be up for a \$2000 plus bond payable before release of your vehicle.

So don't hesitate. Start an Agate Creek fund today.





Sender CMLC, 1 Arlington Street, Burnside, Christchurch 8053.

COMING EVENTS:

National Show 2023 Marlborough Rock & Mineral Club: Marlborough Boys High School. 6 to 8 October.

Micro Minerals Symposium. 13 to 16 October at Teapot Valley near Brightwater.

Taranaki Gem and Mineral Club Show: Labour Weekend.

National Show 2024: Mineral Club of Hutt Valley Wellington

Australia

Gemboree 2024: South Australia: Willunga.

