

THE CMLC NEWS

The Canterbury Mineral & Lapidary Club Inc. Newsletter for February 2024



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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): February 8, March 14.
Committee Meeting (7pm): February 15, March 21.
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 February Meeting: This will be a social evening. Come along and talk about any holiday rockhounding you have done. A book review by Val and Don, and a brief talk by Malcolm and Lynda about the changes that are coming up for incorporated societies.

Kitchen Duty for the February Meeting: John & Sharlene Dugmore, Genevieve Early, Wayne Eddy, Kamen Engel, Logan Flanagan, Valeska Flanagan, Ray Forbes, Tracey Freeborn, Fraser Gare, Peter Gibbs. Lay out the tea, milk, coffee and cups. Do dishes and tidy up the kitchen after the meeting.

February Meeting Auction: Some more material from Lewis Hall.

Field Trip: To be announced at the meeting

New Members: Pleaser make these new members welcome. Craig Elms, Gary Wetere, Helen Timpson, Donna Denize and Joel Alcorn.

The November Monthly Competitions Results

Lapidary: Polished lapidary work containing the colour green

1st J. Taylor 2nd C. McGregor 3rd C.Hourston 4th Zena Wilson

Fossil Fossil coral: 1st C. McGregor

Mineral: Mineral from Australia: 1st C. McGregor 2nd Zena 3rd equal Ava , J Taylor

Alphabet Cup: YEG: 1st Equal C. McGregor , Zena
2nd Ava

Novice Section Any rock you wish to enter: 1st Equal Ava , C. Hourston

Bring and Brag: 1st Equal Tyler McBeth , Browyn Adams –Hooper
2nd Craig Mc Gregor, 3rd John Taylor

Monthly Competitions for February

Lapidary:..... Own Polished lapidary work containing the colour blue

Fossil..... Canterbury Fossil

Mineral: Mineral from the North Island

Alphabet Cup: XLS

Novice Section Any rock you wish to enter

Bring and Brag

Here are the rules for entering into the club monthly competitions.

1 All lapidary entries must be your own work only.

2 You may enter only one specimen for each category, (except for bring and brag) where you may have a collection of things to talk about. The specimen must be from your collection and not borrowed from someone else.

3 To enter the novice section you need to have been a member of the club for two years or less.

4 Entries for the Alphabet Section must come from the country, or a state starting with the letter listed for that month's competition.

5 Entries need to be labelled with your first and last name on the reverse side of a label (hidden from the judge's view. The front side needs to have the name of the specimen and the category it is entered for.

E.g. Front side

Copper : Nelson Region

Alphabet NDR

On the reverse:

Name : John Smith.

GEM SEEKERS GUIDE (The New Zealand Lapidary, December 1968)
THIS is the first time “The New Zealand Lapidary” has attempted to map our national gem fields. The unwillingness of some rockhounds to disclose their finds, the problem of land access permit and the unknown extent of deposits has made us cautious about the sites. Nevertheless these are either the personal observations of many rockhounds or fairly conclusive assumptions based on geological evidence. We hope that the photos showing massive gemstone will be of particular help to new chums. We do not claim that you will find gemstone with absolute certainty at the sites mentioned because some are traditional collecting places and surface material is often quickly stripped off. However, we guess with reasonable confidence that something that has not been mapped will be found at one or more of the sites. Remember that the stuff has to come from somewhere. In the future we intend to extend this survey into the field of mineralogy and as more information is collected so the full story will unfold. THE most important single area in the North Island offering a wide selection of polishing material and mineral specimens is the Coromandel Peninsula. Combined with these obvious attractions is a history of gold mining plus scenic beauty which acts as an irresistible magnet to rockhounds from the major population centres of Auckland and the Waikato.

Approaching the peninsula from the Hauraki Plains and seeing Table Mountain and the other hills of the Coromandel Range a certain stirring of adventure is felt at the thought of new discoveries. Calling at the old gold mining town of Thames it is well worth visiting the Museum which is devoted to rocks and minerals and having a chat to the Curator Mr. A. M. Isdale who has a first-hand knowledge of the area. The Rock Shop is a favourite calling place for Rockhounds and a friendly welcome is always assured. Not many of the original pubs are still open for business but some of the remaining ones contain relics of a bygone era with examples of old hand drills, picks, spades, lamps and photographs telling of the hard work and perseverance of those early prospectors. Since the town's centenary last year, many of the old mine workings are sign-posted giving a brief history and the total output of gold.

The rivers and creeks around Thames are well worth exploring and the Kauaeranga has yielded many fine specimens of agate and jasper.

Proceeding north on the Thames coast most beaches will yield carnelian, agate, chalcedony, petrified wood and jasper. At Waiomu call at Rei Hamon's which is well signposted, where a fine collection of carnelian-

agate is on display. He will give you expert advice on collecting areas and where permission is required before proceeding on to private areas. Most of the carnelian comes from the Te Mata river and is amongst the finest carnelian agate in the world. On the beach at Tapu chalcedony and white banded agate are the principal finds, but as much of the surface material has gone it is necessary to pay close attention to half buried material. Low tide is the best time to collect on all the beaches of the peninsula. It is worthwhile making a diversion at Tapu taking the inland road which goes through Coroglen. The road follows the stream for a considerable distance and it is worthwhile having a look at various points. Particularly in the banks and sand bars where small agates are trapped. Cail at the Rapaura Ranch about 33 miles up the road where you are welcome to picnic in beautiful surroundings and see the splendid workshops and jewellery display.

Te Mata beach, where the river of that name empties into the sea, has long been a favourite area and usually the reef is dotted with rockhounds, heads bent, looking like so many penguins. Although the possibilities of finding large specimens of carnelian-agate are now pretty remote after thousands of 'going-overs', the diligent prospector should not come away empty handed. Look for heavily weathered agate these have the beautiful deep colour and banding so much admired by overseas collectors. Fine specimens of silicified wood can be collected, but much of the wood has a carbonised black centre and can be disappointing.

The road leaves the coast at Wilsons Bay and climbs up Kirita Hill and down to Manaia Harbour. Petrified wood can be found in the mud-flats with a lot of coloured, translucent silica material which takes a good polish. Permission should be obtained to prospect in the swamp as this is a private claim and signposts will warn you of this fact. Good polishing material may be found in the bush on the Manaia Hill and may be recognised by the caliche white coating on the surface, often mistaken for carnelian because of its orange translucent colour when held to the light. A diversion to Te Kouma beach may be made, before proceeding on to Coromandel, where more colourful translucent silica material may be dug out of the mud if you don't mind the sand flies.

The short trip between Manaia and Coromandel can take some time if you stop to investigate the creeks which may be reached by side roads. These all yield varieties of good polishing material as all the streams have

originated in quartz country.

Coromandel is another old gold-mining town whose population has shrunk since those eventful days. Time should be made to visit the School of Mines Museum which has many examples of the material obtainable in the area as well as many interesting relics and photographs.

Coromandel itself can be the base for many interesting trips and one of the best known is to Tokatea. Take the road to Kennedy Bay just outside Coromandel. Here the road winds up through the native bush affording fine views of the Coromandel harbour and the islands lying in the Firth of Thames. At the summit, drive off the road on to the level section that was once the site of a pub. This is Tokatea. No buildings—just glorious views on both sides of the peninsula. Although all the buildings and crushing machinery of the gold mines has gone, there is no shortage of tunnels and shafts. Consequently danger is the keynote with the bush concealing many deep shafts. Great care is essential. Proceed over or around the hill behind the parking area and soon you will be filling your collecting bag with quartz crystals. Look in the loose earthy banks for the better specimens. About half-way round the hill facing the road is a quartz outcrop where evidence of much digging will be seen. Here are exposed veins of amethyst of good colour. Excellent geodes of amethyst crystal have been found in this area. Carrying on from Coromandel to Colville stop at Amodeo Bay. Petrified wood, chalcedony and carnelian are among the interesting rocks here. Waitete Bay still yields carnelian, beach agates and petrified wood. The agates are interesting, usually smooth light brown on the outside, sometimes with traces of the caliche white often seen on chalcedony. They are usually banded or in two different layers, one coloured, one transparent. Fossils are another feature of this beach.

Carrying on to Colville, branch off to the left just after passing the village store, and go on to Cabbage Bay where the road ends. Here can be found carnelian, banded agate, chalcedony and highly silicified wood often containing wide bands of bluish coloured silica. Veins of chalcedony can be traced on the foreshore. Other lighter coloured types of wood look deceptively soft but can be tumbled successfully on their own.

If time is not at a premium it is worth the trip up to the most northerly point at Port Jackson just for the scenery. Most beaches on this side consist mainly of large granite pebbles of different colours. Port Charles on the other side has evidence of quartz on the beaches but no worthwhile polishing material has been collected by the writer.

Jumping over to the eastern side of the peninsula to Whitianga it is worth-travelling north to Kuaotunu and going up to Black Jack Hill. On the top of Black Jack is evidence of extinct hot springs and tiny clear quartz crystals may be found. A particular kind of siliceous sinter is in evidence here along with various coloured cherts. Good display specimens of pseudo-morphs (quartz after calcite) are more worth- while than the polishing materials.

South of Whitiangi stop at Coroglen and search the streams for banded cherts, jasper and agates. Also call at Hot Water Beach to collect good petrified wood and more siliceous sinter. The road south leads on to the popular holiday resort of Tairua and rhyolite can be collected at the southern end of Pawanui Beach.

The spherulitic rhyolite makes good polishing material. Inland now to Hikuai and the river here yields many varieties of good polishing material. Jasper, banded chert, onyx, plasma to name a few. A few days spent here will satisfy the most ardent rockhound.

A whole new area of exploration has now been opened up to the amateur prospector with the new road from Hikuai to Kopu. We have so far been unlucky with the weather when prospecting various spots along this road, but' some really first-class jasper has been collected and we have seen some wafer thin slabs of iris agate from here.

This has been a potted tour of the area most easily accessible to the road and obviously there are many more places worth exploring when a full day may be given to the project.

Between North Cape and Kerr Point there is New Zealand's largest deposit of Serpentine which would be worth visiting. This is quarried for fertiliser but it is reported as being the only polishing grade deposit in the North Island. Rocks and pebbles seen by yachtsmen near Mt. Camel, Hauhoru, fit the description of jasper; also at several points on Karikari Peninsula and East of Mangonui Harbour. At Coopers Beach petrified coconuts have been found.

Andesitic rocks around Whangaroa Harbour have influenced the occurrence of quartz crystals near Te Huia and silicified wood in the hills above Tauranga Bay. Wider searching should find much more of the silica family particularly on the North side of the harbour. Marble exposed in the fore

-shore of Marble Bay (also called Little Tauranga) is intercalated into greywacke and therefore of white to grey colour, but it has an interesting texture. Obsidian and Pyrite has been reported from Kaeo and Puketī.

The greywacke from Whangarei to Whangaroa contains common chert and manganese. Apart from manganese oxide the writer found no chert along the coast between Wainui and Matauri Bay, but there are some interesting Maori forts along this isolated coastline.

On Kawau Island jaspilites occur at numerous places most of which are inaccessible to other than people with boats. Jaspilite is midway between jasper and argillite and true jaspers have been found en route to the copper mine. A visit to Kawau Island is one the whole family can make.

The boat leaves the Sandspit about mid-morning and returns later in the afternoon. Take lunches, the store at Mansion House Bay does not cater for tourists. The track inland begins at the store but you should approach the mine from the beach as it is not safe to come down through the ti-tree above the shafts. You'll have no trouble finding the spot, the pump house chimney still stands as it has for over 80 years. In and around the entrances there are small encrustations of malachite and azurite, perhaps other copper minerals also. Surprises await close scrutiny.

Cinabar-in-chalcedony can be collected from a roadside quarry on a plateau above Puhīpuhi. Do not enter the mine area on the other side of the road, this is signposted against trespassing. Remember also the area is a state forest and permission to collect should be obtained from the local warden.

In the lower Whangarei Harbour, North bank, the local equivalent of "wonderstone" can be found on the shore. This brown flinty stone takes a good polish but it is not as picturesque as the Coromandel variety. Several other quartz family rocks, particularly jasper have been found around Whangarei Heads.

Other more colourful flints, and a green moss agate have been collected in the country west of Whangarei. Flints and variegated jasper around the ancient seamounds, the Tangihua and Maungaru ranges, and moss agate from green and chocolate shales about eight north of Māreretu. Rock-hounds are not welcome on some of the farms in this district. If you wish to collect, it would be a good idea to contact one of the Auckland clubs for

directions.

Dargaville has prospects, the writer has seen pale blue banded agate apparently gathered on the Holocene hillsides west of the town. An unconfirmed report of silicified wood on Baylys Beach undermines geologic confidence. South of Dargaville there is a most interesting area worth looking at if you are passing through. Tokatoka is a unique terrain where shales, mentioned above, are punctured by the cores of old volcanoes, the cones of which have long disappeared. Lime garnets, olivine nodules, zeolites and perhaps flints occur here, but that is another story. The only specimen that can be collected easily is quartz porphyry in a quarry on the side of the volcanic neck, Maungaraho. Maungaraho and Tokatoka are the two main peaks in this district. The quartz porphyry is a buff colour with short crystals up to .4" in diam.

Further south on the Hukutere Peninsula rocks of the Manukau Breccia hide silicified wood, flints and possibly agate near Tinopai.

Black, white and mixed coloured flints have been collected around the toll plaza and other parts of the Waitemata Harbour, Auckland. These require a lot of keen searching but one piece of plume agate found in an afternoon's hunt is really worth looking for.

The Manukau Harbour has yielded a few flints but also contains in at least one place opalised wood which is completely silicified and has the appearance of a highly polished natural wood. The site has been 'staked' but the owner Mr. Edward Gibbons sells the wood from his home at Weymouth.

A little cul-de-sac called Waiti has been a favourite haunt for collectors of a fine red radiolarian jasper east of Auckland. This spot is three miles along the coast from Kawakawa Bay.

Olivine nodules were once obtainable from a quarry (now flooded) at Takapuna. These are also found in the tuff cones near Patumahoe.

Spherulitic rhyolite polishes well and has an interesting texture. It can be

found between Cooks Beach and Hot Water Beach, Pakitu mountain at Tai-rua, Ohui, Whangamata and Whiritoa. Quartz crystals have been



found south of Hot Water. The outcrop above the spring here is pumice breccia, not wood.

The Beeson's Island Volcanics that have been host to most of the Coromandel mineral intrusions can be found as far south as Matamata on the west side of the Kamai range. A spattering of remnants on the east side are found south and inland at Tauranga. Rivers on both sides of the Range are considered worth hunting in. This mother rock is relatively uninteresting but a search around the fringe of these members should reveal hydro-thermal by-products such as chalcedony.

The Taupo-White Island graben is a gem field in the making and in two or three million years it will probably be cool enough for us to get excited about. Nevertheless there is something to find there now, common opal, obsidian, though high quality material is yet to be found. Obsidian in worthwhile lumps could be obtainable west of Taupo.

East Cape is an extremely contorted complex of crushed and folded sedimentary rocks some of which contain chert. Search specifically for this around Raukokere. Calcite bands occur upstream from Tikitiki and inland from Ruatoria (Mangaoporo river). Many resorted beds of conglomerate contain basaltic and acidic boulders which could provide gabbros and granite worth collecting.

In Hawkes Bay flint beds are found in Mata rocks in areas between: — Horoeaka and Te Uri, Wimbledon and Porangahau; also east of Waipukurau. Some interesting rocks—perhaps calcite and chalcedony are present there.

In the East Coast ranges of the Wairarapa are intrusions of igneous rocks that promise interesting finds for rockhounds of the area. A few years ago the editor found an agate weighing 10 lbs in a stream near Ngahape. This specimen is of milky, cryptocrystalline quartz with a yellow band top and bottom. Intrusive rocks of the district are coarsely crystalline plutonics and spilitic lavas. Small amounts of cinnabar occur as vesicles and void fillings in spilitics, in Mesozoic greywacke, west of Eketahuna township. Bob Gray of Martinborough reported precious opal from Palliser Bay in Volume I, No. 1 of this journal. There are extensive flint beds, chert and jasper in many areas some of which are inclined to be inaccessible. However this — slightly mountainous terrain will probably become the most important collecting area in the Wellington province once rockhounds get into it.

Blood red jasper is an occasional discovery in the greywacke of New Zealand, and should be sought after in the eastern portions of both islands. Radiolarian jasper (of siliceous skeletons) is reported from Porirua by B.

D. Webby and described as a cryptocrystalline quartz containing a small amount of finely disseminated hematite. McKay reported (1899) the finding of a relatively rich rhodocroisite deposit east of Paraparaumu "but his findings have not been entirely supported."

IN Maori mythology Maui fished up the North Island. Geologists tell us that the South Island is much older than the North, so it follows that for lapidaries the advantage the South has over the North is the abundance of material. Pebbles and cutting rocks are more common, easier to find, already smoothed and waiting for the 240 grit polish in your tumblers. This is largely due to the type of coastline and rivers.

Supposing you arrive at Picton by ferry and proceed towards Blenheim, There, the Wairau River, also the Awatere, and beaches will yield metamorphic rocks. But the surprise here is agate; it is scarce while flints are common. There is good pebble picking on the beaches South to Ward, good fishing and swimming where the waters are sheltered.

Kaikoura is long famed for fishing around the peninsula but if you don't fish, look for Maori artifacts. From Oaro. around Haumuri Bluff at low tide you'll find petrified wood, fossils, calcite, selenite and pyrites. DON'T try to walk through the rail tunnels, climb over the hills. The glaciation deposits around Claverly and the Conway River are worth searching through. At Gore Bay golden brecciated chert has been collected, and various other coloured pebbles can be found too. At Motunau the occasional agate, some chert and, of course, this is where the penguin fossil was found.

Christchurch is the base camp for Birdlings Flat where over a thousand pebble pups gather to collect on a Sunday. More stones are turned over with every wave. Don't forget the waves, this beach is DANGEROUS. The Rakaia, Ashburton, Rangitata and Orari rivers and the beaches at their mouths yield jaspers, agates and other. chalcedonies. The beach just south of Timaru has many different quartz pebbles, then nearly all the beaches down the coast from here have stones. —Successful collecting will depend on the winds though. As with many West Coast beaches

these are often sanded over, they depend on the set of the wind and tide as to whether they will be sandy or stony.

Around the South Eastern coastline where mainly rugged, fossiliferous, sedimentaries occur there are fossil woods at Haldane, Fortrose, Awarua.

On Riverton beaches, also Te Waewae Bay at Orepuki, there are more metamorphic rocks and some pre-Cambrian conglomerates which cut and polish well. There is hydrogrosularite also, heavy and with a sheen on already. The lakes district contains mainly schists, granites and gneiss (pronounced 'nice'). The water worn, pink, piedmontite schist polishes well if put in with a batch of quartz pebbles. To the writer peidmontite is more beautiful than all the man-made gold-stones, it has a real mica shimmer.

Most people drive straight through the Haast Pass. Pause a while, you will be surprised at the variety of country rock as you proceed across the Alpine Fault. Of the different grades of schist, the black and white (possibly biotite schist) when sawn through has the most beautiful wavy bands, these take a good polish.

When you arrive on the West Coast at the mouth of Haast River drive south to Okuru, it is essential to book ahead for the lovely motor camp here. There are good pebbles at Mussel Point. Further information about collecting may be obtained from this and other motor camps and hotels en route up the West Coast. If the weather is fine you'll get dust, if wet you cannot get down into the river beds to pan for gold or pebble pick. But, wet or fine, don't miss the glaciers or National Park Headquarters at the Fox township.

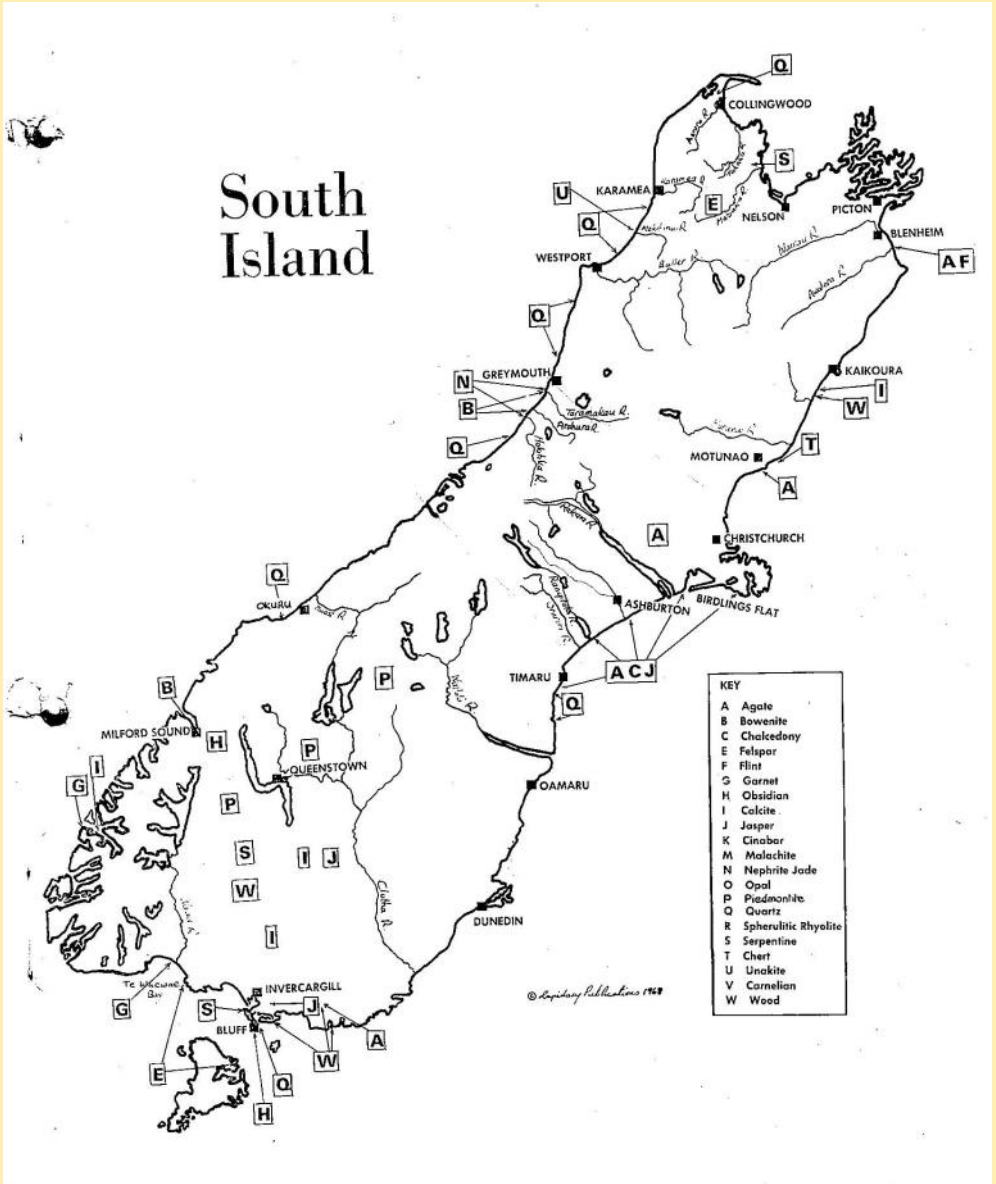
Good pebbles are found at the mouth of the Hokitika River. Keep one eye on the sea — big waves can wash you off your feet. Visit Mikastone Rockshop and don't miss a tour of the "greenstone" factory.

North of Hokitika the Arahura and Taramakau Rivers have yielded nephrite and bowenite, but the writer has found most of hers North along the beaches between Greymouth and Charleston. Beautiful orange-stain quartz pebbles can be found on beaches. all the way to Westport and beyond.

What the Americans call Unakite is Karamea's green and pink granite. Hunt for water-worn pieces along the beaches near the Mokihinui river

mouth.

Back track to Westport and through the Buller Gorge, you'll see the new earthquake scars on the hills. Either on to Murchison or back to Reefton is worthwhile for good rock in the rivers, not carnelian, but equally attractive when cut.



The Golden Bay district is great mineral country, noble serpentine in the Riwaka River, beautiful pink orthoclase-feldspar in the Motueka River.

Over the marble mountains to Takaka (Pu. Pu Spring) and Collingwood (dolomite). There is a private museum and limestone caves at Rockville and while you're up that way take a look at the old store and post office at Bainham and collect some Karamea granite from the Aorere River nearby. Study the Golden Bay geological sheet 13, or enquire at shops as to where all the rockhounds live. There are plenty about—most beaches and rivers have bodies bent double looking at nothing. Don't forget road cuttings have a lot of interesting rocks too. It will save you a lot of time if you do all your homework before you leave, make your contacts, take notes as you read and when you take some specimens it is a good idea to put a "where from" note in the bag with them.

THE 2024 NATIONAL ROCK & MINERAL SHOW

Discover the exciting and colourful world of Gems, Crystals, Minerals, Rocks and Fossils



- Bring your Rocks and Fossils for expert identification
- Dramatic displays
- Fun and interest for all the family
- Sales tables, Jewellery, Rock art, Exotic Specimens

Expressions Whirinaki Arts and Entertainment Centre

836 Fergusson Drive

Upper Hutt City

Friday 4 Oct. - Sunday 6 Oct. 2024

9am - 5pm Friday and Saturday 9am

- 4pm Sunday



Proudly hosted by the Mineral Club of Hutt Valley & Wellington Inc

HETTIE'S ROCK & CRYSTAL SHOP

Birdwood Ave, Beckenham, Christchurch.

Also: Akaroa and Queenstown

Also: Akaroa and Queenstown





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

COMING EVENTS:

National Show 2024: Mineral Club of Hutt Valley Wellington

Australia

Gemboree 2024: South Australia: Willunga.