

## Vancouver Island Zone Gemboree

The 2017 Gemboree for the Vancouver Island Zone was held on the North Island at Cluxewe Resort from July 20 until the 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were 101 registered Rockhounds representing clubs from all 6 Island groups, 2 lower mainland clubs and a Kootenay club plus members from 3 American clubs (all from Arizona) and a couple from Europe to round things off. The participants ranged in age from 8 to 80.

The organizing committee, comprised of Janice Boyes, Shane Mawhinney, Kathy Young, Linda Henderson, Faye Thompson and myself, were all motivated in our jobs by the exemplary Gemboree held by the Cowichan club last year. Their organization and enthusiasm just filled us with a desire to continue on and build on that successful event.

We began our planning last September and decided upon a date and location first. Each of the committee members chose an activity to be in charge of and preparations began. I booked space at Cluxewe Resort and they were to accommodate our event providing us with a covered pavilion and tables as well as BBQs to assist us in providing for all of our expected guests. The schedule and itinerary were set up to provide rockhounds with a full, but hopefully not overloaded, 4 days' worth of activity.

The first day was simply registration and a tailgate sale. Jan Boyes handled the registration and the tailgate was open to any and all.

Day 2 Started early with marshalling for the 3 field trips organized by our wagon master Shane Mawhinney. We had demonstrations organized by Beba Adams at 4 p.m. and a potluck supper at 6 under the 'big top'.



Beba demonstrating wire wrap techniques. Faye's in the background showing beading methods.



Rockhound gathering at the Potluck dinner held on Friday evening under the 'Big Top

The 3<sup>rd</sup> day also began early with the fieldtrips leaving the Resort at 8:30. People were glad to have seen what was collected from the previous day's trips and it was easier to decide where to head out on this day. There was a BBQ dinner organized by Kathy Young and assisted by a whole bunch of volunteers and held under the 'big top'. Fire rings kept everyone warm and there was a lot of friendly socializing afterwards.

Sunday started with the pancake breakfast that was organized by Linda Henderson. The coffee was hot and the cakes were flying off the griddles. Everyone got their fill! Organizing for the auction spearheaded by Faye Thompson, started right after the breakfast and the event was ready for previewing by noon. Bidding started at 1 p.m. and the final item was sold off by 2:15.

Our accountant gave us broad strokes as far as expenses and income and we feel it was a success netting the Zone around \$700 after expenses were covered and the profits split.

Field trip destinations were determined as being those in the area that would provide the most interest and accommodate a large number of rockhounds. The Merry Widow mine with its large array of minerals was an obvious choice. It didn't disappoint. Carrie Maire came away with the most spectacular

find of magnetite and calcite with 0.75 cm garnets adorning the perimeter. But her find was not the only treasure taken away from the site.



Garnet on calcite



Carrie and her find



Sean Maire indicating 'blue' garnet

The second location was the Colonial Creek area around Port Alice. It had 3 stops in total. The creek itself yielded many interesting specimens of chert, conglomerates, and porphyries. The marble dump site a few kilometers away had many people gathering a sample and several came away with 'gold' (pyrite) crystals attached to the marble. Quite unique and very exciting! The final spot was just at the edge of the town site where we collected picture stone, marble, and other interesting specimens.



Collecting from the Colonial Creek bar



A Merry Widow group



A variety of interesting river rock



'Picture stone'

The 3<sup>rd</sup> location for the field trips was in the Bonanza Lake area around Telegraph Cove. It gave up the largest specimen of the week end, a piece of white marble for carving that came in at around 90 Kg. Large and small pieces of the Gordonite were collected from the Kokish River area just a few kilometers away.



This massive piece of Gordonite now adorns an attendees yard.



A marble cave in the Bonanza Lake area

No matter the location, all participants came away with some great rocks! And many will have wonderful tales to tell. Young and old rockhounds were enthused by the treasures that they collected.

As an organizer I was very pleased with how the event unfolded and appreciative of all the work that went into making it a 'success'. The committee worked long and hard can be proud of what they accomplished. We tried our best to make this a memorable event for all and I have to think that it we achieved that goal.

Gordon Burkholder