

Nelson Rock and Mineral Club Inc



June 2015

50 years Celebration report

Note: Our newsletter editor has gone on holiday, taking the new format with him, so until he gets back we are back to the old one!

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2015

Secretary: Diane Toole	Ph 03 540 2240	Email wanderweg@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer: Hub op den Buysch	Ph 03 543 2337	Email hub.opdenbuysch@xtra.co.nz
Newsletter: Tez Hardwick	Ph 544 7814	Email thardwick@slingshot.co.nz
Mike Blowers	Ph 03 548 6299	Email m.h.blowers@gmail.com
Mary Davies/Kevin Bourne	Ph 545 6075	Email davies_bourne@clear.net.nz
Paul Henare		Email paulhenare@hotmail.com

Presidency by rotation of committee members.

Club Resources and Equipment held by:

Club Library: Marion Mathews Email mathewsmob@orcon.net.nz
Club Machinery: Kevin Bourne (club rock collection, cabinets, helmets, hammers, first aid kits, gold pans, one set club machinery), Ian Ladds (microscope, 10" cutting saw, grinder unit), Hub op den Buysch (remainder of club machinery), Chris Fraser (leaf fossil rock) and Dave Dunning of Rockafella (big saw), Mike Blowers microscope and digital camera.

Club email address is via Diane Toole: wanderweg@xtra.co.nz

Anyone wanting to be emailed newsletters from other clubs please email Diane.

Upcoming Events

Please note that some dates may be subject to change, though all the speakers will remain the same, so look out for your emails prior to each club meeting/trip event taking place.

<p>Thursday June 18th Club Meeting at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Paul Benseman of Golden Bay speaking on his book, <i>Lost Gold</i>. Find of the Month: Samples from the 50th Anniversary Fieldtrip. Display Table: Pyroxenes. Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Sunday June 21st Trip to quarry site/s in the Nelson region. Meet 9.30am Warring Carpark. Bring warm clothing, boots or strong shoes, hard hat and high viz vest if you have them. (the club has a limited number of hard hats). And lunch plus a thermos. Leader Ian Ladds, ph 547 1466.</p>
<p>Thursday July 16th Club Meeting at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Barry Korcheski of Nelson Astronomical Society will speak on mining minerals from comets and meteorites. Find of the Month: Your finds from the June quarry trip. Display Table: Anything from outer space – e.g. meteorites, tektites Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Sunday July 19th, Trip to Mary and Kevin's place to learn to cut and polish, and for further sorting of the club rock collection.</p>
<p>Thursday August 20th Club Meeting at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Professor Ewan Fordyce of Dunedin speaking on Waitaki Basin Geology and Fossils. Also the Duntroon, Lost World Geology Museum. Find of the Month: Your best cut or cut and polished samples, hopefully from the workshop last month. Display Table: Your very best fossil to show Dr Fordyce Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Sunday August 22nd or 23rd (to be announced). Trip to 88 Valley to look at fossils with Prof Ewan Fordyce. Meet 9am at Warring Carpark. Bring lunch, thermos, warm clothing. Leader: Ian Ladds, ph 547 1466</p>
<p>Thursday September 17th Club Meeting at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Professor Alan Cooper of Dunedin speaking on Haast Schists and Carbonatites Find of the Month: Fossils from the 88 Valley Field Trip last month Display Table: Carbonatites from anywhere. (Look up the definition) Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Saturday September 19th, Trip to Copperstain Creek to look at skarn with Prof Alan Cooper. Meet 8.30am at Warring Carpark or 9.00am at the clocktower in Motueka. Bring lunch, thermos, warm clothing. Leader: Clyde Nicholson ph 03 5432231</p>
<p>Thursday October 15th AGM at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Dr Mike Johnston speaking on Gold Mineralisation, Zhaoyuan Province, China Find of the Month: Finds from Copperstain Creek Display Table: Gold samples from around the world. Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Labour Weekend Trip Away Oct 23 – 26. Destination to be confirmed</p>
<p>Thursday November 19th Club Meeting at the Richmond Library, 7.30pm. Craig Potton speaking on New Zealand Landforms Find of the Month: Finds from the Labour Weekend trip away Display Table: New Zealand volcanic rocks Gold coin donation, sales table, raffle, supper provided.</p>
<p>Sunday November 22nd, trip to be confirmed</p>
<p>Christmas Barbecue – venue to be confirmed</p>

Remember small labels for all your finds of the month and display table specimens, saying what it is and where it was found.

Trip/Meeting Reports

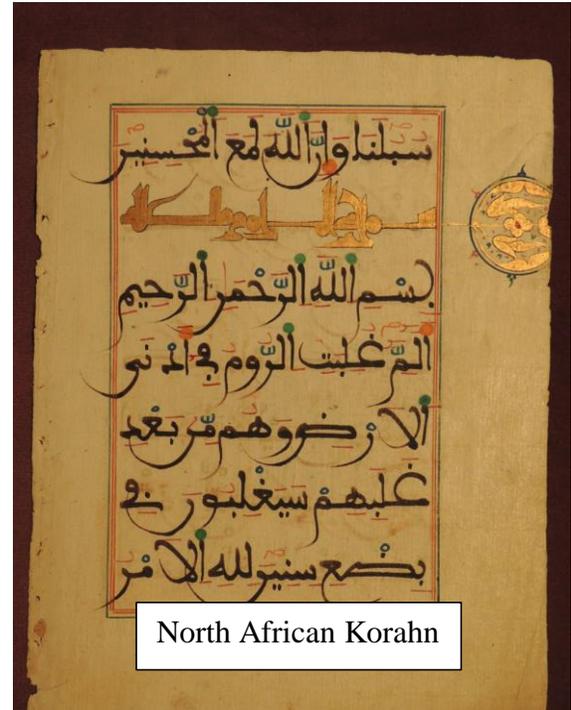
Illuminating Minerals by Stephen Eagar (write up by Mike Blowers)

The intriguing title for this talk by Stephen Eagar had members wondering what they were in for, was it about fluorescent minerals?, or minerals used in the lighting industry?, or mineral colours generally? - few realised we were about to dip into an ancient sphere of mineral use which few of us had ever considered.

We were treated to a fascinating look into the use of minerals for the making of coloured inks to be used for the illumination and decoration of ancient texts and books. Not only did we learn about this ancient use of minerals, but we were treated to a fascinating array of many of the ancient documents that Stephen has collected over the years. We were able to scrutinise at close quarters the laborious and detailed hand written and coloured work done by artisans and scribes, some of pages well over 500 years old.

We learnt how malachite was used for greens, lapis lazuli and azurite for blues, iron oxides for browns, coal and charcoal for blacks, chalk and gypsum for whites, cinnabar for reds and of course gold for the wonderful gold embellishment of texts. We learnt how there were two techniques of using gold, the first utilising gold leaf, pressed onto the pages, the second using powdered gold in an ink mix with gum, both techniques giving beautiful results which have passed the test of time. It was surprisingly difficult to tell which was which as I had always understood the gold leaf gave the most striking colour, but this was not the case. We were also given an insight into the history of the documents, the types of materials used, papyrus, parchment and more recently, paper. We learnt why the documents were produced, often for religious reasons, and about the techniques of inscription. It was a fascinating introduction to Stephen's passion, the collection of these ancient documents.

Our thanks to Stephen for this thought provoking and illuminating talk.



Nelson Rock and Mineral Club 50th Anniversary

To see the photos of the celebration evening go to: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nelson-Rock-and-Mineral-Club-50th-Anniversary/788790734522747>

On Saturday May 9th the club held its 50th anniversary celebrations. This is a fantastic achievement by the club and we soon learned over the day why the club has continued on despite its many changes along the way.

We started the day with a fieldtrip, led by Dr Mike Johnston. The evening saw us at the Aloha Lodge for a lovely potluck

dinner followed by a fabulous talk by Sheila Hardwick on the club's history (we intend to turn Sheila's notes into copies of a club booklet for longevity purposes) and Dr Mike again on the Aorere Goldfields. Many thanks to all who contributed to organizing the day and for those who came along to make the whole day a success. Write-ups on the day's events/talks are as follows:-

Fieldtrip around Nelson, led by Dr Mike Johnston

On a very nice day, weather-wise, Dr Mike led us on a fieldtrip, first to Richmond to look at an exposed faultline on a new subdivision where we were able to view the actual fault placement and the differing rocks and ages on either side. The fault had been exposed to enable a house to be built, but regulations state that it must be so many metres from a fault. We then went north to Maori Pa Road near Cable Bay to look at a fossilised faultline with phyllonite, then back along the same road to look at some ultramafic rock with augite. This area is a continuation of the mineral belt northwards.

We lunched at The Glen and the Boulder Bank where there was some discussion about the rocks, the source and the wave action along the promontory. Finally we did what we all love doing - a fossick for Jurassic fossils at Marybank. Because this area is being prepared for a subdivision we were able to find an abundance of plant fossils.

We had a wonderful day, well attended by many people. Our youngest member was a joy to watch as he learned and looked. Let's continue to inspire children to join us. Thanks to Mike for this informative day as always. There is so much to see right on our back doorstep.



At the Richmond fault location



Maori Pa Road

Dr Mike Johnston's Talk at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Nelson Rock and Mineral Club

The Aorere Goldfield is situated within the Takaka Terrane, which is comprised of basement rocks composed of Cambrian volcanics and Cambrian to Devonian sedimentary rocks. These rocks, including siltstones and mudstones, contain gold formed in tectonic upheaval of the late Early Paleozoic. The sedimentary rocks in the Aorere valley are altered to schist and are exposed on a now gently sloping surface comprising the Northwest Nelson peneplain. The peneplain formed as low lying land in the Cretaceous and on which firstly Upper Cretaceous-Lower Tertiary coal measures accumulated. As the sea washed over it limestone and siltstone were deposited. Most of these rocks were eroded off when the peneplain was uplifted and tilted towards the Aorere River but remnants remain, such as at the Aorere Caves near Druggans dam. Alluvial gold derived from the basement rocks accumulated within the Tertiary

(Eocene) Brunner coal measures, consisting of river gravels and swamp material as they were being deposited on the peneplain,.



In the 1850s some Aorere settlers looking for stray stock found colours of gold in some potholes in the schistose rocks when they stopped for a drink. There was some debate over whether or not it really was gold, but when it was proved to be so William Lightband confirmed that it was present in payable amounts. Donald McGregor prospected further afield and found more gold-bearing creeks.

As well as in the creeks and rivers gold was found in the river terraces. The Slate River Sluicing Company had a gold sluicing claim in one terrace but found that much of it had been worked by the early miners who had tunnelled into it. In doing so they removed stones and stacking them up on one side so that the tunnel could be safely widened. Because of this the Slate River Company's claim turned out to be largely unprofitable – the early miners had already been in and taken the gold out.

The coal measures are preserved in a number of places including Appo's Flat, where they have been down faulted and is low lying land. In nearby Golden gully a patch of coal measures contained abundant, but very fine gold, and has all but been sluiced away leaving great piles of rounded quartz pebbles and small boulders. The Quartz Ranges, another important mining area in the Aorere Valley that contained similar quartzose gravels in the Tertiary coal measures.

In the bedrock are a number of abandoned mines including the Phoenix and Mt Ophir in Cole's Gully and at Bedstead Gully (so named because the early miners found a prospector's McGregor's bed frame made of manuka branches) and, most importantly the Johnston's United Mine, previously known as Perseverance Mine as it mined a quartz reef of this name. Spectacular gold was found in the iron cap or gossan that developed on the cap of the Perseverance Reef during a long period of weathering when the peneplain was formed prior to the deposition of the coal measures on it.

This is known as the secondary enrichment.

The Johnston's Mine was a battery with 20 stampers – this was a big operation and the noise of the stampers crushing the quartz would have been deafening as well as accompanied by tremendous vibration. A 24 hour a day operation lanterns were mounted on springs. We saw a plan of the mine and from the lowest level iron rich waters issue forth.

The Perseverance Reef and other mineralisation in the Aorere area are along the thrust contact between the Cambrian schist, which is pale in colour with beautiful recumbent folding, which rests on the younger, and much darker, and carbonaceous, Ordovician schist. There are no fossils, such as graptolites in this area, due to the metamorphism.

George Grindley, who was geologically mapping north west Nelson in the 1950s and 1960s, knew that the Cambrian schist was older and worked out that there had been faulting and folding that caused the thrusting of older rocks over the younger ones.

People bought shares in Perseverance Mine, which became unprofitable. The work concentrated on the rich patches in the reef and ignored the rock in between as the company did not have enough capital to properly develop the mine. When the shareholders were asked to pay more, they refused. The mine workings go down at a gentle angle following the thrust fault that in places has small kinks where quartz got thicker – these often contained rich gold.

There is no record of gold production from the Phoenix Mine and it soon closed when it became unprofitable. There was no swindle though – the miners genuinely believed the mother lode was there. There is nothing to see underground as all the mineralisation is in a blow of quartz at its entrance.

Thanks to Dr Mike for a great talk that followed Sheila's on the history of the Nelson Rock and Mineral Club – a wonderful conclusion to the evening. Watch out for Dr Mike's upcoming book on the Aorere Goldfields.

Sheila Hardwick's Notes on the History of the Nelson Rock and Mineral Club

We all offer a huge thanks to Sheila for the sterling work she put into digging into 50 years of the Club's history. This effort will be put into book form for members and the Club to keep as a reminder of the event. The following is an excerpt from some of the many slides and information that Sheila gave us. Details of office holders over the years will be in the full document.

Introduction

- The very history of Nelson is intimately associated with the search for mineral wealth which occurs in any newly settled area.
- Among the early settlers of New Zealand were several prominent geologists who made expeditions the length and breadth of the country through some extremely difficult terrain, and under very harsh conditions, searching to understand what the earth might yield in the way of mineral wealth and agricultural opportunities.
- The Nelson region was reported as being extremely diverse and complex and over the years it has gained the reputation of being a paradise for the rockhound.
- It is not surprising therefore that newcomers to the region are fascinated by the different rocks they see in the area and around fifty years ago, a group of interested locals decided to set up the Nelson rock and Mineral Club to further their understanding of the geology of the region.

Founder Members

As research for this presentation I decided that it would be worth tracking down and reading through all the minutes of the club, a somewhat daunting task.

- Apart from the difficulty of deciphering the copperplate of early secretaries, it took me awhile to understand that the men were referred to as Messires and the women as Mesdames! No first names were used so it seems that the club was run along much more formal lines in the early days.
- Ian Ladds mentions being a Member in 1963/4 before the constitution was finished and the first Patron was also elected before the Club was registered.
- *(Little bit of history): In 1897 the enormous interest in mining in New Zealand led to the formation of a New Zealand Department of Mining Engineers which began with 80 members but only survived initially for four years. On it's demise, 28 of its member joined the Australian Institute of Metalliferous Mining and Metallurgy (AusIMM). Both our first two patrons were elected as New Zealand representative Councillors to this body in their time, as was Jock Braithwaite later on.*

Patrons

Tas McKee was Patron between 1964 and 1973. He was born in Nelson, educated at Motueka and Nelson Boys College and at Victoria University where he studied for B.Sc. in chemistry and geology in 1931. With his father and brother Guy, he established Fruitgrowers Chemical Company at Port Mapua. He secured a patent for the colloidal reduction process in New Zealand and North America, thus eliminating the need to import products from England. This was a significant first step towards his goal of import substitution and his desire to contribute to New Zealand's self-sufficiency in mineral and agricultural products.

In 1938 the three McKees established Lime and Marble Limited to supply high-grade lime to the Auckland glass works and burnt lime for local industry. This led to the production of industrial fillers for many New Zealand manufacturing companies; including rubber, plastics, glass and the chemical industry. Later they ventured into oil exploration.

In 1965 McKee was elected New Zealand's representative to the council of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. In 1966 he was appointed an OBE for his pioneering work in mineral exploration and development. He was also renowned for his involvement in environmental issues.

After McKee's death the family business merged with Transport (Nelson) Holdings and in 1976 became part of the TNL Group; in 1980 Fruitgrowers Chemical Company was sold to BP (New Zealand) and in 1988, because of major pollution problems, the Port Mapua operations closed down.

Dr. Gordon J Williams Patron between 1973 and 1984

Gordon J Williams was Dean of the Otago School of Mines between 1944-65 and during this time he also served as Councillor on the Australian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy representing New Zealand.

After presenting a lecture on "New Mineral discoveries in the Nelson Province" both he and Tas McKee were very excited about the recent Uranium discovery by Cassin and Jacobsen in the Buller Gorge in 1955.

As Monograph #4 of the publications of the Congress, a most important work edited and largely compiled by Gordon Williams, the "Economic Geology of New Zealand" was produced and subsequently became "the Bible" for those engaged in mineral exploration.

In 1965 he left to establish a Department of Mineral Resources in Teheran.

Dr Mike Johnston Patron between 1984 and present

As we all know, Dr. Mike has an awesome geological pedigree in his own right; but I decided to look more at what he has done for the Club in his long patronage. He has been a source of inspiration and instruction to us for many years.

Mike is a highly respected Geologist who has worked tirelessly in the Nelson region. He has not only made himself available as a speaker (and huge draw card) at our Annual General Meetings, each November, but has also been extremely generous in donating many of the books and maps, which he has been involved in publishing, to the Club.

He was also involved in the Club's initiative to provide a workshop of site visits and education, entitled "Whose Fault is it Anyway?" in 1999, which was patronised by the region's senior science teachers, who, under N.C.E.A. are required to teach a Geological component. The notes he provided have become the basis for the secondary geology teaching in the Nelson region. We are truly honoured to have him.

Extract from the newspaper regarding the Dun Mountain Tragedy at a Club Field Trip

1 dead, 9 hurt in Dun tragedy. (and one died later) Sunday 18th May 1980

A critically injured woman was flown to Wellington Hospital this morning by helicopter following yesterday's fatal accident on the Dun Mountain. One man was killed and nine people injured when a four-wheel drive vehicle is plunged more than 100 m down a cliff on the mountain about 10k from Nelson. The dead man was Ronald Phillip Shorter, 46, of 37 Maitland Avenue Stoke

The accident happened shortly after 2 p.m. during a Nelson Rock and mineral club field trip involving two four-wheel drive vehicles. As they were traversing a ridge on the Dun Mountain at the head of the Brook Valley, one of the vehicles slipped off the track and down the cliff face. The party had driven up the Dun Mountain at 9.15 a.m. Although conditions at the time were fine, the weather deteriorated rapidly during the day. It was raining heavily with dense mist. The weather was so bad that they decided against stopping for lunch and at about 2.15 they were heading for Third House. Mrs. Grabham described how she saw the vehicle roll off the

road at a steep bend and crash down the precipitous 140-metre mountain side. It could have struck a boulder on one side of the road. The heavy rain might have affected the surface. They went straight down. One minute they were there – the next they were gone.”

While two passengers fought the rain and gathering darkness to reach the crashed vehicle, Mrs. Grabham and the rest of the party drove on to Third House to call for assistance by radio. “We couldn’t help anyone. In those conditions, you have to know what you’re doing. All we could do was stand in the rain waiting for them to be brought up. It was an awful experience. It was terrible to think of those people lying at the bottom waiting to be helped”.

All but one of the 10 occupants were thrown out of the vehicle, (one woman was trapped inside for the entire 140 m fall) and lay in atrocious weather for about an hour and a half before help arrived. A mayday call was sent using Citizens Band radio equipment in the second vehicle. This was picked up by a local CB operator and the Nelson Police were informed. An extensive operation was launched by about 3 pm., involving Fire Service rescue units, a St John’s four-wheel drive ambulance and an Army Bedford vehicle from the Nelson four Wheel Drive Club.

Heavy rain and the steep unstable terrain made the rescue operation extremely difficult.

All the injured people, and the dead man, had been brought out by about 7 p.m.

Injured: Mrs. Winifred Broekes of Wellington Mrs. Cherry Shorter, Mr. Arthur and Mrs. Marie Olliver, of Stoke, Mr. Eric Collinson and his son Neil, 12 of Nelson and Mrs. June Shone, Mrs. Zoeliza Goodwin and Mrs. Clarice Rackley, all of Richmond.

Mr. Collinson’s older son Mark, 14 was in the second vehicle with Mr Vern Grabham, Mrs. F.V. Grabham, Mr. J. Smith (the Club’s president,) and Mr. Brian Thomsett.

The rescue was not without its problems. Fortunately all the injured had been rescued but the four-wheel drive ambulance went off the road as it was coming back from the scene. The two fire brigade vehicles were trapped behind it and could travel no further until the ambulance was moved. The extremely bad weather conditions made this impossible until the following day.

Recovery parties on the Dun Mountain track yesterday were greeted by the crumpled remains of a four-wheel drive Land Rover – a stark memorial to Sunday’s tragedy in which a man died and nine other people were injured. Evening Mail photographer Ann McDonald accompanied police and civilian recovery parties to the crash site – 24 hours after the vehicle plunged off the track down the precipitous bush covered mountainside. The accident occurred a kilometre north-east of the Third House. “When we arrived, personal belongings were still scattered around and inside the wreckage together with blankets left by the rescue team.” Recovery teams faced difficulties in reaching the crash site yesterday. They had to walk 8 kilometres along the narrow twisting track, piloting a bulldozer and fire rescue truck. The bulldozer was eventually used to drag out an ambulance abandoned the night before after it slid partially off the track. The fire brigade vehicle also lost a wheel. A replacement was later carried into the area.....

We received much support from all the other Clubs in New Zealand who were shocked that such a tragedy could occur on a club trip.

MY EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST 20 YEARS WITH THE CLUB

By Sheila Hardwick

I arrived in New Zealand from the U.K. 20 years ago and was lucky enough to be introduced to the Nelson Rock and Mineral club, which at that time was meeting at the Methodist Church on Wensley Road in Richmond. The meetings were always run by Philip Wells and they opened my eyes to the fascinating world of collecting mineral specimens in the wild, so to speak.

We would go on amazing trips to quarries such as Collins Valley for Serpentine and other minerals which I had never heard of. There were older members such as Jim Smith, Bill Murcott and Hub op den Buysch who were welcoming and eager to share their knowledge. Hub, especially would organise fantastical quizzes,

showcasing some of his incredible collection; and there were raffles which meant that we could become the proud possessors of mineral samples formerly unheard of.

There were winter field trips which took us to visit the wonderful collections of local people, such as Ed Sixtus and the Polglaises, which inspired me to try and find my own specimens.

And then there was the Saturday morning "field trip" to Philip's garage, where he kept the club's, and his own, lapidary tools. It was the first time I had ever seen a rock cut in half and polished and I was blown away by the realisation that doing these things was possible for me. I was hooked, and joined the committee very early on in my membership, as I wanted to help such a wonderful club to survive and flourish.

It seemed that Philip had been doing a lot of the running of the Club on his own and was anxious for support, so a new president was chosen in Rex Hunt, who organised the most memorable 3-day field trips to Golden Bay and to Waiuta, near Reefton. We saw so many different facets to geology; minerals, leaf fossils, working mines, mining museums, quarries full of marine fossils, cliffs and beaches. I felt so lucky to be able to do all this exploring in my new country and I cannot express enough gratitude to those who made it all possible.

Alan and Marion Mathews, also recently arrived from England were involved with the club on many levels. They both gave talks to the club members and Alan was president of the Club in 2002/3, whilst Marion became responsible for running the library over many years and also edited the newsletter.

Don and Margaret Kivell had also moved to Nelson and Margaret had a wonderful rock shop on Bridge Street called Crystal Creations. Don was responsible for running a stall in the Nelson Saturday market, and quickly became a focal point for local rock hounds and visitors alike.

Dave Buchan, a very long time member, and his wife Irene were also frequent members of field trips and Dave's knowledge of the area and willingness to share his expertise was always a valuable addition to any trip. Dave was treasurer between 1981-7 and also acted as Vice President between 1993-6.

Clyde had also retired into the area in 1999 from Galatea, a small farming valley on the edge of the Urewera National Park. Clyde was a keen and knowledgeable collector who also led many trips. He acted as treasurer between 2002 and 2008 and also ran the sales table at monthly meetings until very recently.

Katie Greer was the very able and experienced secretary and she also contributed enormously to the club's ability to produce a monthly paper newsletter, both in an editorial and an administrative capacity.

In 1998 the Blenheim Club put on the National Show and there was another wonderland to explore. The show itself was stunning; and part of the entertainment was to meet some of the Blenheim Club members and visit their clubrooms. Those of you who have seen them will understand the fascination and the promise that those clubrooms held.

It seemed to me that our own club would be so much more attractive if it could also have such premises, not only to store all its gear, library etc, but as a working space for members to meet and develop their skills, and also, more importantly to house the club's collection and showcase our local specimens, to interest and educate both locals and visitors about the region's geological potential.

Well, we searched for premises and Founder's Park seemed like the ideal place to be. Hub, our long term treasurer, from 1988 to 2002, warned us that in his previous experience, having club rooms was not always a positive thing. However, there was sufficient enthusiasm, and with Don Kivell acting as our new president in 2004, and wonderful support from such members as Clyde Nicholson, and Ivan Hodges, who donated so much time and expertise putting 3-phase power into the clubrooms, we went ahead; and we truly hoped that our clubrooms would grow to be a shining gem in the heart of Nelson.

We worked hard on making it happen with huge input from many members. We painted the premises and had all kinds of shelves put in to house our books and gear. There was much to do in terms of sorting and displaying and housing our collection, but by far the greatest emphasis was on the lapidary equipment, and there were many schemes to make income from the equipment.

As a result of having club rooms we became eligible to apply to the Lottery Commission for funding and Alan Mathews organised the application and acquired funds to buy an enormous saw to be designed and built by Don and to be used to cut larger rocks than ever before.

Ian Longley, a local jade carver was involved in our plan and he used the rooms as his working premises and contributed a portion of the rent. As time went by, his involvement increased and he became Club room manager, maintaining the club's machinery and promoting the club to members of the public.

Don lived close by and as President (2003-2007), he was always very concerned with making enough money to pay the commercial rent. He organised sausage sizzles at The Warehouse which were reasonable earners but took lots of time and effort, and people having to give up their weekends to fundraise, rather than enjoying their hobby. We also were lucky to have Bruce Rollo as a member, and he would donate a BBQ for many years which we could raffle before Christmas. Many of us spent long hours in the Richmond Mall or at Countdown in Nelson selling raffle tickets and promoting the activities of the Club.

In 2006, one of our initiatives was to raise money by having our own Show in conjunction with the Marlborough and West Coast Clubs, which was called the "Top of the South Show". There was much to do but members got together and produced a very memorable occasion. We hired Stoke Hall and had a huge logistical task of moving tables from Founders,

We had some very good times but there was always pressure to pay the rent and eventually the same people were fundraising endlessly, sadly, leaving them with little time to enjoy the facilities they were paying for. More worryingly, for some reason, the club rooms were not well patronised by the members and membership did not grow.

During this time, the club had close relations with the Blenheim Club with several members of both clubs having joint membership. There were productive trips fossil hunting along the Awatere with the wonderful Joan Bottom from Derbyshire, to the Wakamarina goldfields, and overnight trips up to Mount Upcott and Middlehurst for zeolites and crystals with Ron Bothwell – it really was a very interesting time for members. Between 2007- 2010 Chris Fraser was our President and he decided to hold another show in 2009, at Founder's Park. Again, it was a wonderfully successful show , but not only did we have to pay \$1,600 to hire the park for the weekend, but we also had to give Nelson City Council \$1 for each person who attended. Because our clubrooms were too small to host the monthly meetings, we also had to hire the Jaycee room each month for a further cost of \$30.

Although we had such high hopes of our clubrooms, we could not, as a club, afford the cost of running them and in the end we were struggling to raise the funds. At this time no one really wanted to be president as there was the unpleasant task, which had to be faced, of leaving our clubrooms to save the club from financial difficulty. This was, initially, an unpopular move, but once the members realised the extent of the problem they sought solutions. .

We were lucky enough to have some very keen new members; including Diane Toole, Mary and Kevin Bourne-Davies, and Mike and Hazel Blowers, who were glad to support the move. We also had some very welcome support from both Mike Johnston and Jock Braithwaite, both very highly respected people, who tried to plead our case with the council. Unfortunately they were unsuccessful, so instead became supportive of our efforts to relocate.

Kevin Bourne and Mary Davies generously offered room to house the equipment and collection at their home and have provided facilities for people to use their premises to cut and polish rocks once they have gained sufficient expertise with the tools. We are still cataloguing the collection at very enjoyable social working bees with a BBQ.

One of the biggest problems we had was the removal of the large saw, which had never properly worked and had certainly not generated the income we were hoping for. We did, however, manage to find a home for it in

Motueka; where it is still available for use by both members and the public.

In order to facilitate these changes we had to share the duties of President around the committee members, a system that seems to have worked successfully for the past 4-5 years. Hub op den Buysch rejoined the committee as treasurer once again and we managed to sort out our finances. The search was underway for new premises but we were cautious of jumping into anything and also, after hearing the suggestion from Alan Mathews, that the Richmond library had a fully equipped meeting room costing \$10 per session, we decided to try meeting there.

We have not looked back. Without the need to fundraise or manage rooms, the committee is free to organise excellent speakers and interesting field trips, and we now have the time and resources to do more interesting projects.

Ian Ladds has put in an enormous amount of time and energy to working on the fossil record in the 88 Valley and has inspired many children with his fieldtrips. As a club we are now looking at doing a project on this area, which will, hopefully result in a scientific publication.

But cheaper technology has also enabled some of our members to take micro-mounting to new levels. Hub and Tim Saunderson have been working with the club's new microscope and camera. The illustrated talks they have given have inspired awe in the members, not only looking at minerals but at microfossils too. Tez, our newsletter editor, has now taken up this aspect of our hobby and has begun collecting specifically from the Champion copper mine.

These are exciting times for our club. We have a wonderful group of members with a variety of interests and expertise, and much enthusiasm to learn and further our understanding.

But sadly members come and go, and I would like to pay tribute to two members who have recently passed away; Garth Gavin and Brian Faulkner, (who used to have the farm at Thompson Hill). Both their collections have returned to the Club. Also, Tim Saunderson, who was doing such wonderful work for the club, has had to relocate to Auckland.

However, I am convinced that the some of our newer members, such as Paul Henare and Greta, Dave Briggs and Liz Martins and of course, all our remaining members, still have the enthusiasm and interest to keep the Club running productively for many years to come....

The club is a place where like-minded people can share and extend their interest. Thanks must also go to the people, who set up the chairs, bring the sales table, organise the raffles, bring along and organise the library, bring the suppers and wash up afterwards, book the rooms, introduce the meetings and organise the technology required for films slideshows etc. Then there are the speakers, the competition organisers the trip leaders and those who organise fundraising, as well as the treasurers, secretaries, newsletter editors and other committee members. All in all there are so many different roles to be filled in order to achieve the trips and monthly meetings that we all enjoy.

So I would just like to extend a huge vote of thanks to all the people who, throughout the past 50+ years have made the effort to contribute to a club which is still flourishing. The commitment and enthusiasm of our members are our biggest and best resource. I am so proud to be a member of the Nelson Rock and mineral Club and I hope that we can nurture enough interest and expertise to ensure that it will have a long and successful future.

Editor: Many more of you may have special memories you would like to document in future newsletters on what the Club means to you. Please send your write-ups to Tez at thardwick@slingshot.co.nz

Club Badges

These attractive enamelled badges show our club logo. They cost \$6.50 each and are available on the sales table at club meetings.

Hammers

Rock hammers are also available for purchase on club nights - \$85

Library

The club library is managed by Marion Mathews. To borrow material, please contact her by phoning 544 4478 or emailing mathewsmob@orcon.net.nz

Club Tumbler for Hire

The club have a small tumbler for hire which will do a handful of stones. The cost is \$20 per month. This includes all the grinding powders and complete instructions.

Please phone Kevin on 545 6075



Nelson Rock and Mineral Club Inc

Membership Application Form

Family Subscription (1 year) \$35 Single Subscription (1 year) \$25

Date of application: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone No. (home): _____ Cell: _____

Email address: _____

(Note: People who get their newsletters via email also get news updates and reminders, not to mention a colour version of the newsletter – an advantage with photos)

What type of Geology are you interested in? (this helps us run field trips that you would like to attend). General / Local / Minerals / Fossils / Gold / Cutting and Polishing / Carving / Other (please specify): _____

Please make the cheque payable to: “Nelson Rock and Mineral Club Inc.” then send this application form and your cheque to the Treasurer. Alternatively, send your payment by internet banking to Westpac 03 0751 0274539 00

Treasurer's address: Hub Op den Buysch

c/- Sunrise

Sunrise Valley Road

R D Upper Moutere.

Ph. 543 2337 or email hub.opdenbuysch@xtra.co.nz