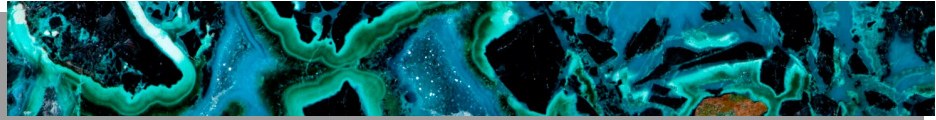




# SKAGIT GEMS

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A wonderful article about our members Bev and Carroll and their involvement in rockhounding from 1989!

See the full article on pages 5 and 6

## Amateur Geologists Find Skagit County To Be Gem of a Place for Lapidary

by Mark F. Kramer, Encore April/May 1989 edition

Carroll Dillon doesn't like it when people call him a "rock hound." He tags himself an amateur geologist, a term he says better defines the dedication and knowledge required to participate in his hobby of rock collecting and gemology. Dillon and his wife Bev are 18-year members of the Skagit Rock and Gem Club. The club got its start about 27 years ago when a few area rock collectors gathered to talk about local geology and share their enthusiasm for the art of lapidary.

Lapidary is the name for a hobby that includes something more than just picking stones from the earth. Lapidarists have the vision to see beyond the layers of dirt and outer crust of a rock. Through practice and experience they can identify the kind of stones that, when cleaved, may yield colorful strata and crystalline structures. Lapidary can mean as "little" as cutting a stone in half and buffing its face to bring out the luster and colors buried inside. Or it can cover the craft of polishing a fragment of rock until it glows, and then putting the fragment into a sterling silver setting. But lapidarists aren't the only rock enthusiasts involved in the Skagit club.

Continued on pg 4



March 2016

Volume 56, Issue 2

### Events this month

**March 3rd** Geology Presentation @ Burl Library

**March 5th** General Meeting 10am

**March 19** Field Trip Cherry Creek for Jasper

**March 26-27** Gem Show -Mt. Baker Club Bellingham, WA

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## President's Message

Hi Rockhounds,

We had a great turnout for our meeting. I was sorry I wasn't able to join everyone at Joe's house but I hope to see you at the next meeting. The gem of the month for March is 'Green' stones and it reminded of a quote from past member, Vi Jones. When she was first getting into rockhounding she had to remember "Not all green stones are jade" ---Eric Self

## Next Meeting

March 5th 10am

Gem of the Month: 'Green'

Program:

Video on the Oso landslide.

## The Gem of the Month is Green!

So I want to talk about the most famous green stone, Emerald, and its family. Emerald is a member of the Beryl crystal family with a Beryllium, Aluminum, and Silicate base chemistry. It is a Hexagonal with a mostly flat to rounded termination. They have a vitreous luster and a hardness of 7.5 – 8 making them very good in jewelry.

Our green beauty **Emerald** is colored by traces of chromium and iron and is found on most land masses of the world though only a few places produce gem quality stones in quantity.

The second one in the family, ranked by popularity is **Aquamarine**, it is a blue to blue green it gets its color from traces of iron it also is found all over the world.

Third we have **Heliodor** the greenish-yellow to yellow version it is a stone that does not include and is also known as golden beryl.

Fourth is **Morganite** a pink to peach colored beryl that was first marketed by JP Morgan and was sold under its current name, it is a rarer stone that gets its color from manganese.

Fifth is **Goshanite** it is colorless therefore it is not a form that has been colored by other elements.

Last we have **Red Beryl** that has only been found in gem quality in one place on the planet, the Wah-wah Mountains in Utah. It's found in very small quantity and size; most are under a carat. There is also the Beryl by color. Often found in large quantities, a few are even gem quality such as the green non-emerald Beryl as well as blue non-aquamarine.

Submitted by Wes Frank



## Things to do

### Geology Presentation

**What:** Dave Tucker will make a presentation on

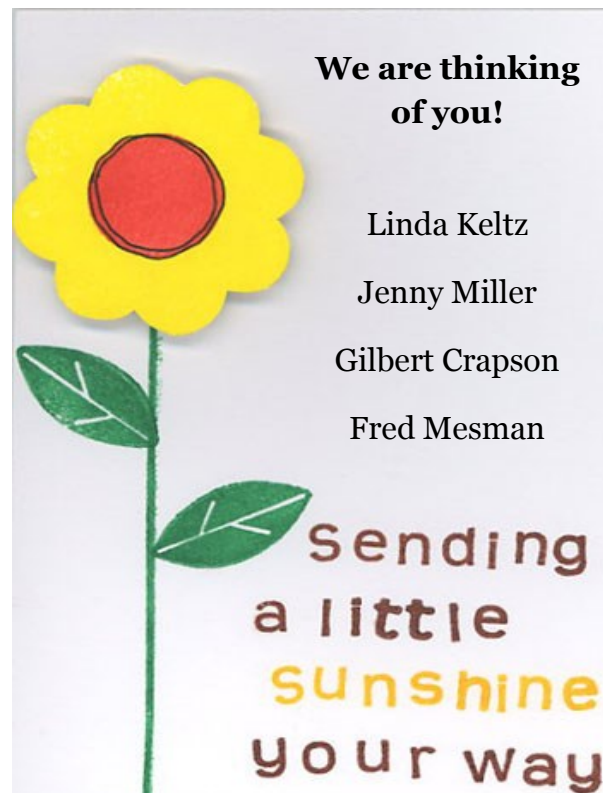
ERUPTION HISTORY AND  
FUTURE HAZARDS OF MOUNT BAKER

**When:** Thursday, March 3, 7:00 PM

**Where:** Burlington Public Library, 820 E. Washington  
Burlington, Wa

### Seminars at WWU Geology Dept.

Approximately 4-8 times per quarter, the Geology department schedules seminar talks that are free of charge and open to the public. These are generally one of four types of talks: invited speakers who will discuss their current or recent research; members of the Geology department discussing their current research; new Masters students defending their proposed research plans; or outgoing Masters students presenting their completed projects. The public is invited to all of these. For schedule go to <http://geology.wwu.edu/dept/visitors/talks.php>



## Gem Shows and Field Trips this Month

### Mt. Baker Rock & Gem Club

54th Annual Rock and Gem Show  
March 26th 10am - 6pm, 27th 10am - 5pm  
Bloedel-Donovan Park  
2214 Electric Ave. Bellingham WA

### Field Trip

March 19th w/ Marysville club  
Cherry Creek  
Meet 9:00 @ Duvall Safeway  
Looking for Jasper  
Dig & Hard rock tools needed

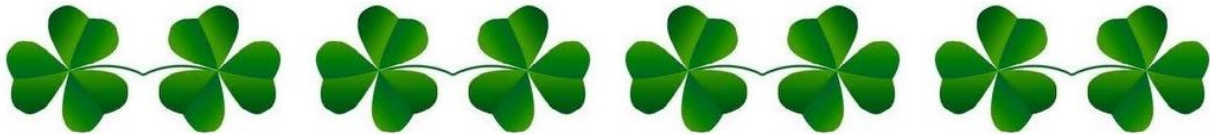
\*\*\*For more info and a full list of Gem Shows and Field Trips go to: [skagitrockandgem.com](http://skagitrockandgem.com)

Refreshments	Schedule	
February	Debbie Frank	Eric Self
March	Francie Hansen	Jenny Miller
April	Peggy Peterson	Janet Garner
May	Nona Avery	Marie-Claire Dole
June	Greg Hochmuht	Linda Keltz
July	Potluck & Swap	
August	Susan May	Frank Isca
Sept	Violet Munion	Margo Perry
Oct	Marion Melville	Lee Tennefoss
Nov	Joanie Self	David Britten
Dec	Xmas Potluck	
Bringing snacks not manadatory, only if you're able		



## Board Meeting Minutes Feb 6, 2016

- Called to order at 9:35
- Members Present: Eric Self, Greg Hochmuht, Susan May, Debbie Frank, Dave Britten
- Members absent: Virgil and Linda Keltz
- No Board Meeting minutes to approve
- Treasurer's report was read and approved
- Gem of the month for March: Any green stone
- Program: Greg is working to get a video on the Oso landslide
- Debbie reported she is working with Noni to update the scholarship application forms. She has also been updating the club's meeting times and dates on various websites.
- Eric reported that Stu Earnst, a long-time member of the Marysville club, has recently passed away.
- Dave reported that there is ivy growing behind the shop and we need to have a work party soon to get it cleaned up. He will set a date. He also said that the old box truck needs to be cleaned out and sold so we can get it off of the Bever's property. A date will be set to do that as well.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:00



## General Meeting Minutes Feb 6, 2016

- Called to order at 10:10
- Guests this month: Maria Gonzalez, Marnie Haworth, Amy Reeves. Everyone received a guest prize.
- Welcome back to Brian Hawes a previous member that has rejoined!
- Minutes of the last meeting were approved
- Treasurer's report was read and approved.
- Lots of Displayers: Amy, Leo, Debbie, Dave, Marion, Joanie, Eric, Kevin. Thank you for sharing!
- Birthdays for Dec, Jan, Feb: Debbie, Susan, Violet and Peggy
- The program for this month is the field trip to Joe's after the meeting.
- Thank you to Peggy, Eric and Debbie for the refreshments.
- New Business: Frank Isca volunteered to help with posting to the club Facebook page. Thanks Frank!
- Joe is working to make mineral specimen cases to raffle at our show in November. We will need at least 100 specimens for these boxes and would like everyone to go thru their collections and see what they can donate. Wes has offered to build the cases.
- Meeting adjourned at 11:30     Submitted by Susan May, Secretary

Continued from front page

Rock carvers, stone hunters, fanciers of geology and paleontology, and people who get a kick out of fossils, all find satisfaction in membership in the club. "A good many people have picked up a rock at one time or another," Carroll Dillon says. "I think what distinguishes us, is that we've found other ways to appreciate that rock. "To sit in on a meeting of the Skagit Rock and Gem Club is to learn rocks and stones, and the Earth itself, are not lifeless pieces of property. Club members come to the study of geology as if they were rock biologists. They know nothing is permanent on this planet of ours. Continents drift about as if they were row boats being tossed in a stormy sea, colliding with ocean beds and each other, to push up mountain ranges and create volcanoes. Volcanoes, Earth's rock factories, spew out molten masses of material that in millions of years might turn into something lustrous under the polishing wheel of a gem club member. Apart from the geologic process, club members also seem to see life in their rock specimens. Lapidarists watch light reflect and refract from deep within their stones. Carvers make fossil wood into killer whale likenesses that splash in a petrified sea. And fossil hunters find time machines in their stones to take them to an epoch of steamy jungles and bugs bigger than our birds.

If rock and gem club members see stone as a living item, they find even more life among themselves. The club cheers up members who become ill with get well card reminders from their friends. Anniversaries are never neglected and members with birthdays must "make the walk" and put up with a chorus of birthday singing. It's a diverse group that belongs to the club. Members come from Everett and Vancouver, B.C. and in from Oak Harbor. Families participate and seniors pass along a life's learning. From laborers to physicians, Ph.D.s to business owners, homemakers to truck drivers, all political persuasions and philosophical outlooks share their earth sciences enthusiasm at the Skagit Rock and Gem Club.

The Dillons became involved in the club not really because they got "rock fever," but because their son wanted to be a member. "When a child joins, the parents must participate also," Carroll says. As went their son, so did the Dillons. But a child's interests are often short-lived. As with many parents who got involved with the club only because of their kids, the Dillons stayed on as members in their own right when their son found other activities to occupy his time. Carroll says interest in rock collection and prospecting goes far beyond the club's membership list. "As many people are enjoying the hobby outside the organized group as within it," he comments. "Many people will bring specimens, but don't want to belong to an organized group."

The Skagit Rock and Gem Club is one of 110 or so clubs that belong to the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies. There are six regional groups. All belong to the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. The Skagit club's region includes Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, Montana, and northern Utah. More than 6,500 members belong to the Northwest federation; more than 55,000 dues paying members are signed up nationwide.

"Rock and gem collecting is a tremendous retirement hobby because of the many aspects," Carroll says. The club just isn't a group of people that takes to the hills in search of stones. It has a constitution, by-laws and elected officers. Both Bev and Carroll are past presidents of the Skagit club. Bev is currently vice president. Carroll served twice as club president, which may have helped launch him into office at the regional level. In 1984 when the Northwest federation president passed away one month after taking office, the federation's vice president was promoted to the position. Carroll knew the newly appointed president. The region's highest officer asked Carroll to become his vice president. Carroll was elected vice president in his own right the next year. That meant a two-year commitment as the VP becomes the next year's president.

...Continued on next pg

In the summer of 1986, the year of Carroll's presidency, he and Bev attended the national conference in Oklahoma City. A representative for the Smithsonian Institution was there also, to lobby for funds to purchase the world's largest known faceted gemstone, the 10-pound American Golden Topaz mined in Brazil, cut in Walla Walla, and owned by a Seattle couple. "The gem cutter had to build special equipment to cut it," Carroll says.

Being an all volunteer association, the national organization didn't have the funding to make such a purchase, which meant the stone could have been lost to the public. Carroll says he felt somehow the group could find the funds. Getting the stone into the Smithsonian would not only preserve the record gem, but might give the national organization some needed publicity, he thought. The owners of the topaz were going to sell it at cost, \$40,000. The stone's actual value was much higher. As president of the Northwest federation, Carroll met with other federation officers to figure out a way to get the stone. "I put \$10 on the table as the first contribution," Carroll says. The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies put on a national fund raising drive. The topaz, as big as a softball, now has a permanent resting place in the U.S.'s primary museum, the Smithsonian Institution.

Apart from the rock and gem club, Bev and Carroll have built a business and raised a family. Originally from Eastern Washington the couple met while both attending Washington State University in Pullman. "We couldn't find a place to live after we got married," Carroll says, "so we moved to Seattle and I finished up at the University of Washington. I lost five quarters in the process." At WSU Bev came within a year of getting her degree in home economics. Carroll finally finished his program and graduated from the UW with a bachelor's degree in business administration. The couple moved back to Eastern Washington and lived in Ellensburg for awhile where Carroll found a job in the auto supply business. After a time they began looking to buy their own business. "We looked at two or three different locations before choosing Sedro-Woolley," Bev remembers. "We landed in Sedro-Woolley in 1960 and opened Valley Auto Supply in April," Carroll says. With a business degree Carroll could have chosen any number of enterprises to get involved in, but he chose the auto industry. "Maybe I just fell into it," he says. "I enjoy it. There's something new to be learned every day."

A NAPA dealer, Carroll says the number of new models car companies come out with makes it harder to stock all the parts his customers might need. "We use a computer network to locate parts in our warehouses," he explains. "It's a vast difference in investment today than when we started."

When he speaks about investment Carroll wants it to be known the rock and gem clubs believe in investing in the scientific future of their past time. "Every year each region selects a scholarship honoree," Carroll says. "That person may or may not be in education, but the honoree then selects two graduate students who receive a \$2,000 scholarship grant for each of two years. The Skagit Rock and Gem Club supports the fund through a live auction at gem shows." Carroll says generally the grad students are majors in earth sciences.

This summer the annual convention of mineralogical societies is being hosted by the Northwest federation. That means the Skagit club will offer items for auction when mineralogists from across the country gather in Portland this June. Bev and Carroll Dillon will be gathering in Portland also. Carroll will have a lot of time to search for slabs to do lapidary. But Bev will be busy finding judges for the dozens of displays set out to be scrutinized by rock and mineral enthusiasts from across the country.



American Golden Topaz

## Officers and Committees

<b>President</b>	Eric Self
<b>Vice President</b>	Greg Hochmudt
<b>Treasurer</b>	David Britten
<b>Secretary</b>	Susan May
<b>Fed Director</b>	Virgil Keltz
<b>Bulletin Ed</b>	Debbie Frank
<b>Past President</b>	Linda Keltz

**Annual Show Chair**-Eric Self

**Banquet**- The Women

**Display Table**-Open

**Education Coordinator**-Open

**Facilities/Field Trips**- Dave Britten

**Greeter**-Linda Keltz

**Library**-David Britten

**Scholarship**-Nona Avery, Joe Kantor

**Mineral Council & PLAC**-Open

**NFMS Competition**-Open

**Nominating Committee**-Executive Board

**Program**-Open

**Publicity**-Open

**Stamps**-Virgil Keltz

**Sunshine**-Susan Conta

**Swap**-Vandenburs

**Ways & Means**-Executive Board

Every Committee that  
says 'OPEN' is an  
opportunity to help!

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS

### WELCOME

Meetings are on the FIRST Saturday of the month (except for Jan, July and Dec) at 10:00 am at the Mount Vernon Community (Senior) Center 1401 Cleveland St. Mount Vernon WA 98273

- The purpose of this non-profit earth society shall be to stimulate interest in the study of geology, lapidary, and the collection of geological specimens
- We are a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Washington State Mineral Council. We are affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.
- Dues are \$15.00 per year for adults and \$7.50 for those under age 16
- Visit our website: [skagitrockandgem.com](http://skagitrockandgem.com)
- Email: [skagitrockandgem@gmail.com](mailto:skagitrockandgem@gmail.com)
- Mailing address: PO BOX 244 Mt. Vernon 98273







Skagit Rock and Gem Club  
Debbie Frank, Editor  
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Burlington WA 98233

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## Free Entrance Days in the National Parks

The National Park Service turns 100 years old in 2016 and we want everyone to join the party!

On 16 days in '16, all National Park Service sites that charge an entrance fee will offer free admission to everyone.

**January 18:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**April 16 through 24:** National Park Week

**August 25 through 28:** National Park Service Birthday

**September 24:** National Public Lands Day

**November 11:** Veterans Day

There are 409 National Parks available to everyone, every day. The fee-free days provide a great opportunity to visit a new place or an old favorite, especially one of the 127 national parks that normally charge an entrance fee. The others are free all of the time. Plan your visit and enjoy our country's history and nature.

