

Bellevue Rock Club Meeting Minutes 7 March 2023

Aldersgate Methodist Church, Bellevue, WA

The meeting was called to order by President Bobbi Premo at 7:00 pm. There were 16 people attending. Guests tonight, as well as becoming new members, are Barbara Koch, and Doug McNeill. A mother and young son, Ethan were also guests.

Secretary's Report – The February 2023 meeting minutes were approved as read.

Treasurer Report – Treasurer reported on the club's finances. Sales from the E KingCo Rock show were reported.

Old Business – A big Thank You to Emery Bayley for providing some nice rocks for BRC to sell at the show, and another huge Thank You to Dave Scott's wife, Betty, who made the cloth bags for our grab bag sales. There were up to approximately 2,500 people who turned out over the two-day show.

New Business – Jackie Hughes had a question re: E KingCo club – i.e. are they going to continue to run this show every year? Some of their expenses include a storage unit between \$350/\$375 each month, as well as approximately \$250 per month to park their equipment trailer. It's possible a small charge for an entrance fee will be needed going forward. E KingCo charges \$28/foot for table rental. Our set-up/take-down and general show help gets us 'free' table space to the tune of about \$400. Well done everyone who participated in this year's event!

Door Prize – John Bono, Elizabeth Harris.

Show and Tell – **Louise Joost** had a large piece of raw turquoise from New Mexico. **Elizabeth Harris** showed a very large chunk of calcite (they got it from their plumber who found it at another house he was working on). This calcite is possibly from Arkansas. **Cameron Hawkins** brought some magnetite and jade to share. He talked about the Wagonmaster field trip in February to the Skagit River. **Gary Cantrell** had a piece of siderite from Brazil. Siderite is an iron carbonate. Guest, **Ethan**, brought some rainbow, blue and angel quartz to share.

Treats – Thanks Sharon Storbo for our break time treats!

Gotta Have It auction table – Two sizes of grit in 3 lb. bags for \$10/bag were offered.

Tonight's viewing, the Wonderful World of Agates was produced by the University of Wisconsin in July 2008 with Brad Cross as a speaker. Mexican Agates were mentioned in 1902 but it wasn't until 1945 when Mexico's Federal Hwy 45 was constructed, and connected the US southern border with Mexico that they began to show up on the market. There are currently over 100 varieties with features that include color, nodule size, exterior rind, banding, inclusions, pseudomorphs and weathering. As new regions opened up, each variety was given its own name from the ranch, the nearest railroad station or nearby village they came from. Laguna, Coyamito, Agua Nueva, Apache, and Moctezuma are a few of the localities that produced some of the world's most remarkable agates.

The Mexican agate story begins some 38 million years ago in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountains where there were violent volcanic eruptions producing the Rancho El Agate andesite flows.

The following nine agates are common to this area.

Sueco: These have a wide range of colors with red, purple, olive and yellow predominant. The rinds are rusty yellow and pitted. More than 80% are hollow.

Gallego: Rancho Gallego near the mountain known as El Gallego was where the first banded agates were commercially collected in 1946. These exhibit pink, light red and gray banding with rinds of chocolate brown or pale pink.

Casas Grandes: Banding is predominantly lavender, gray, white, slate, and pink. The Parceles agate has often been mistaken and marketed as Gasas Grandes agate.

Aqua Nueva: This variety includes both nodular and vein types. Many contain bands in lavender, purple, gold, pink and yellow.

Apache: Found in Mexico as well as worldwide. Its colors tend to be bright red, vivid orange and dark yellow suspended in a contrasting blue and lavender quartz resembling splashes, folds and swirling veils. A famous single agate, "the Apache Hooded Owl" weighing approximately 1.5 lbs is from Rancho La Vinata.

Coyamito: These commonly contain intense shades of red, orange, yellow and purple. The more rare varieties contain purple, yellow, rose and white, red, and/or mustard. Many of the Coyamitos are hollow.

Laguna: One of the most highly prized of the Mexican agates (likely due to name recognition). They have striking fortifications in a range of colors including red, pink, orange, purple, lavender, beige, white and gray.

Las Choyas Geode (also known as coconut agates): Although geodes/thunder eggs are found all over Mexico, the most abundant deposits occur at Las Choyas in Chihuahua. These geodes are found 100 ft. below ground and are within a 2-square mile area but constitute a multi-million dollar business. They are hollow to fully filled quartz or agate.

Crazy Lace: (or Mexican Lace) is found in Cretaceous limestone in remote areas of northern Chihuahua. This agate makes great cabochons. There are zig-zags, scallops, curved, twisted bands; colors include shades of red, orange and gold in a white to gray agate. A great many of the other Mexican agates are from an igneous environment.

Moctezuma: Is a nodular banded agate in pastel shades of pink, yellow, salmon, tan and white. Banding is fine to heavier with a white 'banana peel' exterior. Moctezumas are surface dug, not mined. The Loma Pinta agate is a close cousin to Moctezumas.

Michael Carlson was a guest speaker and showed entries from his book, *The Beauty of Banded Agates*.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Storbo, recording secretary