



GRAND RIVER HERITAGE MINES

SOCIETY NEWS LETTER

MAY-JUNE-JULY 1994

REPORT FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

We have been busy preparing displays for upcoming shows and manning the booth at the first show where we were represented, the GEO-RAMA, annual show of the Brantford Lapidary and Mineral Society on the weekend of April 9 and 10. Jean, Kathy, Ilse and Sanko supervised our display. This was very successful in that we gained two new members and handed out many copies of our new pamphlet to interested people. We have also had some phone inquiries since the show.

We met Peter Russell, Curator of the Earth Sciences Dept., University of Waterloo, who had a display at Geo-Rama, and we were invited to set up a display at the MAMMOTH GEMSHOW sponsored by the Central Canadian Federation of Mineralogical Societies and Waterloo '94, the Annual Meeting of the Geological Association of Canada and Mineralogical Association of Canada, May 14th and 15th, Saturday 10 - 6, Sunday 10 - 5. WE SURE WOULD APPRECIATE SOME HELP IN MANNING THE BOOTH! Please let us know. It sounds like fun for the whole family with a rock hunt and "gold" panning for children, a mastodon display, a bush camp, rock swap, carving, flint knapping, etc.

The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto will be celebrating the 5th annual Ontario Mining Week celebration by offering several wonderful programs on Family Sunday. We are sending some of our pamphlets as handouts for interested people. Mining Week is May 15th to 21st. For more information about the programs, phone me (Jean) at 519/442-7000.

Preparations are underway to have a display and walking tour at SPRINGTIME IN PARIS on May 29th and 30th. Plan to attend! There are lots of activities planned - house tour, musket loaders, dog show, buskers, bands, etc. If you come, would you set aside an hour or two to supervise our display? Your steering committee puts in many hours of planning for field trips, meetings, etc. for your enjoyment. Your support would be appreciated.

Other shows where we will be represented and can use your help: Central Ontario Annual Historical Show, Paris Fairgrounds, June 11 and 12 - display booth; the Golden Horseshoe Steam Show in Caledonia, Civic Holiday weekend, July 30, 31, and August 1.

FIELD TRIPS

The regular monthly field trip in May will be a repeat of the Mystery Trip we had last fall, by special request! Not many people showed up because it was raining, but those who did come had a great time! COME AND EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN! We will meet at Tim Horton's at the junction of Highways 5 & 2 east of Paris, at 10 a.m. on Sat. May 21st. Rain date is Monday, May 23rd.

The June regular field trip is scheduled for Sunday, June 26th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Field Research group will be holding exploratory field trips every week-end except when shows are on. Phone Ilse Kraemer at 519/756-6634 for confirmation of and details about these field trips or any of the (less rugged) monthly ones planned for all members.

We are pleased to welcome Christopher Andreae, a consultant in Industrial Archaeology, as a new member. He met with the steering committee and has offered to give us some assistance and guidance in gathering and presenting our information professionally.

The Archival Research group is working on preparing an historical display and mapping out a walking tour for Springtime in Paris. We now have five members in our group. Can anyone help us locate a miner's helmet for our display.? If you can help, call me at 519/442-7000.

LOCATING OLD MINES REQUIRES DETECTIVE SKILLS

You may wonder how we locate these old abandoned mines some of which have been closed for over 100 years. Sometimes it is very difficult, for the areas have been grown over with vegetation, old roads have all but disappeared, talos heaps are buried, mine tunnels have been blasted shut, the river has changed its course, and people who knew something about the mines are long dead or so old they can't remember anything anymore. But we must be persistent!

We check all possible records including:

- Tweedsmuir histories
- Local histories
- Old newspapers
- Old maps and atlases
- Wills
- Deeds and leases
- Company records
- Government reports
- Archival materials - fire maps, photos, personal papers, etc.

Bern Feenstra, Resident Geologist at the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, London, is being most helpful by providing summaries about each recorded mine. However, some mines were never officially recorded.

By sifting out all available facts in print, and gathering any information available from local people, we are ready to begin our field trips. With cameras, mining picks, maps, measuring tapes and compasses (sometimes we need machetes!), we tread into the deep wilderness, eyes alert for clues such as talos heaps, outcrops, strange sinkholes, hillocky areas, dripstone or tufa deposits, strange plants that grow in alkaline soil, signs of old timbers, or unnatural formations that may have been mill races or landing places. It takes keen eyes to detect these clues, and how excited we are when we locate another possible site!

This newsletter has been prepared by Jean Farquharson. Editorial contributions are welcome.