



Pretoria Gem & Mineral Club

established 1957

Affiliated to the Federation of Southern African Gem and Mineralogical Societies

Registered as non-profit organization – SARS 9830/639/14/3

Pretoria Rockhound Digest



September 2020

Pretoria Gem and Mineral Club
P.O. Box 36 888
Menlo Park
Pretoria 0102

Clubhouse: no. 29, 26th Street, Menlo Park
Saturdays 11:00–15:00, Thursdays 18:00– 21:00
Website: www.pgmc.co.za
Bank: ABSA Bank, Acc. No. 405 584 9839

Chairman: Willem Vorster, 076 612 4888
wcv.vorster@gmail.com
Vice-Chairman: Bernard Strydom, 074 850 5683
bernardstrydom@gmail.com

Treasurer : John Morgan
Admin.: John Morgan, 073 473 9968
john.ja.morgan@hotmail.com



Highlights



- *** Club re-opening all workshops open
- *** Silversmithing Evening
- *** Swop & Sell Day, all workshops open

- 3 Sept. (Wednesday)
- 4 Sept. (Thursday)
- 6 Sept. (Saturday)



Carnelian Gem Tree on Carnelian Agate from Madagascar



Happy Spring Day

(Photos and Gemtrees, Heidi Naudé)



Amethyst Gem Tree on Amethyst Geode from Kwa-Zulu Natal

1. Welcome back

It is with great pleasure that we announce the re-opening of our clubhouse and workshop facilities. After tremendous efforts by our chairman Willem Vorster, approval was received to start-up activities. The Committee quickly got to work the past Saturday and prepared the clubhouse to comply with the government's Covid-19 rules and regulations.

Since we can only accommodate a certain amount of people at any given time in the workshop, we decided to open the clubhouse also on Wednesdays. This will be in addition to Thursday evenings and Saturdays.

The opening times will be as follows:

Wednesday, 10:00 – 15:00 (duty done by Bernard, John and/or Willem)

Thursday, 18:00 – 21:00 (duty done by Bernard)

Saturday, 10:00 – 15:00 (duty as per duty roster)

Please note that the clubhouse will be opened strictly at the time mentioned to allow duty members time to prepare as required. Members arriving early will be asked to wait outside.

Entry rules:

The admin.duty member will also act as the Covid-official for that day. Please note that he/she will have the authority to allow entry to the clubhouse and also manage/restrict the amount of people inside workshop. Members are asked for their full co-operation/adherence to the new rules.

- **No face mask – no entry** (this applies on the club premises and in workshops); **face masks must be worn the whole time you spend at the club.** Please note – a face screen may be worn for additional protection but does not replace a face mask.
- The Covid-official will then ask you to **complete the registration form, take your temperature** and record it on the form and ask you to **sanitize your hands**, before entering the clubhouse – no exceptions. Should your temperature exceed 37.5 degrees we cannot allow you access into the clubhouse/workshops.
- To avoid cross contaminations **no aprons will be provided by the club** – please bring your own. Waterproof aprons are sold at many hardware stores (Chamberlains, Builders Warehouse, etc.)
- **The kitchen is closed to all**, i.e. no tea or coffee making, no using of the club's crockery/glasses/cutlery, no use of the microwave, no washing-up of your private dishes. Members may still buy cooldrinks at the duty desk or bring their own refreshments; however **no eating or drinking will be allowed inside the clubhouse** You are welcome to enjoy your food/drinks in the garden outside.
- To comply with the social distancing rules (1.5m) we have closed-off certain workstations. This means that you may not use them. Only one person may be working at each open workstation, i.e. no sharing or waiting for the use of grinding wheels, trim saws or slabbing saws. **Only one trim saw will be available for cutting – we therefore restrict the use of it to trimming only** (no cutting of small stones), to give everyone a fair chance. Only one person may work on the big flat lap. Weather permitting, we can put 4 mobile lapidary machines and 1 faceting machine outside to provide enough work space while still adhering to the 1.5m distance rule.
- **No towels are allowed** in the toilets – paper towels have been provided.
- The library will be open to members, however only two persons are allowed at that table.
- **No socializing and/or trading of minerals etc. inside the clubhouse; this applies also to rainy days!** Traders must bring their own tables and chairs and set-up in the garden area outside.
- To ensure adequate ventilation the clubhouse windows and main entrance door will remain open.
- Plastic buckets will be made available at the tabs outside for washing/rinsing of rocks.

Please note that these rules are not negotiable and your full co-operation is required to make this a success and keep each other as safe as possible. Do not come to the club if you had contact with someone testing positive for Covid-19 or if you are feeling sick. Lets keep each other as safe as possible to enjoy our hobby and re-connect with each other.

Programme for September 2020


(as at 30.08.2020)

2 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John
3 Sept.	Silversmithing Workshop open	18:00 – 21:00	Bernard, 074 850 5683
5 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshops open Swop & Sell Trading Day	10:00 – 15:00 10.00 onwards	Duty Team all
9 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John
10 Sept.	Silversmithing Workshop open	18:00 – 21:00	Bernard, 074 850 5683
12 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshops open Committee Meeting	10:00 – 15:00 15.00 onwards	Duty Team Committee Members
16 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John
17 Sept.	Silversmithing Workshop open	18:00 – 21:00	Bernard, 074 850 5683
19 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John
23 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John
24 Sept.	Silversmithing Workshop (confirm w. Bernard)	18:00 – 21:00	Bernard, 074 850 5683
26 Sept.	Lapidary and Silversmithing Workshop open	10:00 – 15:00	Bernard/John



Duty Roster Saturdays



September 2020	5	12	19	26	 Various colours of Sapphires
Open – 11:00 am	Heidi	Alan	Lex	Willem	
Duty Team	Peter Beresford Heidi Naudé	Alan Crawford Dina Crawford	Lex Krabbendam Joanne Fidos	Ben Bekker Magdel Bekker	
Close – 15:00 pm	Heidi	Committee	Lex	Willem	

October 2020	3	10	17	24	24
Open – 11:00 am	Dieter	Willem	Heidi	Alan	Lex
Duty Team	Dieter Heinichen Linda Stone	Jan Oliver Joey Oliver	Peter Beresford Heidi Naudé	Alan Crawford Dina Crawford	Lex Krabbendam Joanne Fidos
Close – 15:00 pm	Dieter	Committee	Heidi	Alan	Lex

Sapphire – Birthstone for September (amongst others)



The gemstones in the corundum group consist of pure aluminium oxide which crystallized into wonderful gemstones a long time ago as a result of pressure and heat at a great depth. The presence of small amounts of elements, such as iron or chrome, are responsible for the colouring, turning a crystal that was basically white into a blue, yellow, pink or greenish sapphire (red ones, coloured by chrome, are 'rubies').


The star sapphires are another rarity, half-dome-cut sapphires with a starlike light effect which glides across the surface of the stone when it is moved.

Source: www.gemstones.org and www.wikipedia.com


2. Membership 2020

The Committee is very concerned about the declined membership figures. Yes, the club was closed for 5 months, however many of those non-renewals still worked at the club or participated on outings the first 3 months. To ensure the clubs continuous functioning and financial viability the committee urges all to renew their membership on time. Membership runs from January to December each year and fees are due by end January. Stricter control will be implemented at both clubhouse and outing attendance.


Membership fees are stated below and can be paid via EFT bank transfer to: Pretoria Gem and Mineral Club, ABSA Bank, account no. 405 584 9839; or cash at the clubhouse.

	R 500	Principal Member
	R 450	Pensioner (over 60's)
	R 100	per additional Family Member
	R 30	Joining Fee (new members only)

Please note that only fully paid-up members are entitled to use our clubhouse facilities, attend courses, participate at the Gemboree or any other club outings and receive the club's monthly newsletter.



A very warm welcome goes to our new members:
Adrian and Elna Kemp, Henry Viviers (re-joined).



3. Ongoing Reminders



We still urgently need people to serve on the **Duty Teams** and ask all our members to avail themselves for admin. or machine duty; training will be provided. Please advise Willem/Bernard/John if you are willing and able to help, thank you.



Safety glasses are **compulsory** for everyone working on the grinders, polishers and trim saws. Safety glasses are for sale at the duty desk or bring your own.



Please remove your rocks from the slabbing station. Only one rock/member may be left at the club for cutting. It must be clearly marked and a note on how to cut and how many slabs you want must accompany the rock. Members are also asked to **please collect their cut rocks and pay for their slabs.** Thank you all.

4. Personals



Congratulations go to our honorary members **Will** and **Anny van den Berg** who recently celebrated their **60th Wedding anniversary.** What a wonderful milestone to achieve! Wishing you both many happy returns for the years to come.



A big **Thank You** goes **to all our members** who visited and supported our honorary member **Dieter Schidlowski** during this difficult time. Dieter is one of the founding members of this club and a regular trader on Saturdays. The restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic affected him badly. However things are looking up again and we hope to see you soon at the club, Dieter.



Another big **Thank you,** goes to **Tjaart** for the idea, creation and administrating the PGMC whats-app group. We also **thank Linda** for her help. The group enabled us to stay connected and share photos of minerals, as well as lapidary, silversmithing and faceting projects during the lockdown. Help with mineral identification or cleaning advice was frequently provided and all 43 participants enjoyed the interesting and often educational exchanges. **Ben** and **Magdel** also shared their amazing sightseeing experiences during their extended visit to Australia.

5. Outing Report – Groot Marico, 21 – 23 February 2020 by Linda Stone (outing coordinator)

A number of the participants met at the PetroPort on the N4 from where we left for our great adventure.

Groot Marico is generally associated with Herman Charles Bosman. A biographical film was made based on his life and a portion of this was filmed on the late Hannes Palm's farm. It was therefore quite appropriate and special to pay a visit to this small town. We dropped by the public relations shop-office which is manned by Egbert and Santa van Bart. The rockhounds were surprised to see what is stocked in their shop (the most delightful mampoer liqueur!). From there we left for Zeerust where we viewed Mauritius Claase's interesting show room consisting of furniture and memorabilia made out of coloured slate.

At 'Kaaloog' we were welcomed by the hospitable pair Diana and David Reyneke. Everything was prepared with such care and taste! Diana had tables set out for us at the campsite's verandah. We also celebrated Diana's birthday and enjoyed a piece of her delicious home baked cake.

First on the agenda for the following morning was to visit the Witkom Fluorspar Mine. Jan Scheepers and Hendrik Hanekom welcomed us and Jan took us to the dumps to collect minerals. We visited various pit holes and collected as much as possible. Tjaart van der Merwe (Pietermaritzburg Gem and Mineral Club) collected a nice piece of chalcopyrite. Interesting specimens of pyrite crystals in their matrixes and tremolite crystals were also gathered. We were also allowed to collect white and purple pieces of fluorspar. We are grateful for Jan who went out of his way to make sure that we could accumulate to our heart's desire. We joined him for lunch with a great variety of pizza's. This was much appreciated by all especially after digging so hard at the dumps!



Collecting the fluorspar



Petro & Eugene Oosthuizen and Nicky Klacar on the dumps



Jan Scheepers and his home made 'car'

All photos: Linda Stone

From there we went to collect goethite [limonite pseudo pyrite (devil's dice)] and the autumn coloured slate. On arrival it started raining but this didn't deter the rockhounds! They all went in full force led by Dawid Nortje to the site and started collecting the devil's dice. Very nice specimens were gathered.



Young ones enjoy challenges!



Goethite



William Black, Este Shearar (Natal), Petro Oosthuizen, Amanda de Bruin & Eugene Oosthuizen digging for goethite



At the slate quarry

Photo: Goethite: Amanda Schoonderwoerd

Other photos: Linda Stone

Next was the autumn slate site. Dawid Nortje gave a demonstration on how the slate was cut. Once again we collected as much as possible.

That evening we had a bring and braai and those who ordered a meal from Diana enjoyed her nicely prepared 'Gordon Blue' dishes. Freya Petersen surprised us with a sundowner and a very delicious cake, called the dream cake. We thanked Diana and David for their hospitality and the well organised manner in which they run the campsite and presented them with a sphere as a token of appreciation.

Due to the heavy rains, Diana and David advised us to travel to the old diamond mine via Zeerust and Lichtenburg.

We left on Sunday morning to collect carnelians, agates, jasper and sjert. Lots of interesting stones were gathered by the rockhounds who climbed up a steep man made hill to collect the stones. All proved to be a worthwhile trip!



Carnelian collected by Simone Licht
Note the size of it.

Photo: Simone Licht



Petro Oosthuizen's
agate

Photo: Petro Oosthuizen



Amanda Schoonderwoerd's
collection nicely being cared for!

Photo: Amanda Schoonderwoerd

Thanks to Nicki Klacar and Bernard Strydom for their part in ensuring everything ran smoothly.

Thanks to Linda Stone for organizing another successful outing for all participants.

