

Gem and Mineral Show coming up July 27



By Michael Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Bancroft Gem and Mineral Club is holding its annual Gem and Mineral Show on July 27 at the Bancroft Fish and Game Club at 27602 Hwy 62 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It will feature exhibits and displays, lapidary demos, mineral specimens, rock and mineral identification service, three silent auctions, three door prizes, and a grand live auction with Mark Stanley from Norwood. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$5 for admission to both the mineral show and the mineral museum, and children and students get in free. All proceeds go toward the Bancroft Mineral Museum, which is housed in the old train station beside Riverside Park. Wendy Melanson, the acting show coordinator with the BGMC and Jacquie Buss, club secretary with the BGMC, comment on this upcoming event, now in its 27th year.

Melanson told Bancroft This Week that they begin planning the Gem and Mineral Show, now celebrating its 27th year, in January, by choosing their mineral theme, which this year is ?Native Elements.?

?We then have our posters and flyers printed so they are ready for anyone who asks, for the card rack outside the mineral museum and for the first show of the year in Peterborough, the first weekend of March. We try to choose a different theme every year, and our exhibitors are asked to make their displays as educational as possible,? she says.

The show's paid attendance last year was 223 adults, but since they do not charge children under 16 years of age, they do not have an accurate count of total attendees, according to Melanson. She says they try very hard each year to better previous years' attendance, by distributing flyers and posters wherever possible in hopes of reaching both locals and visitors.

?Our vendors are a mixture of types of dealers, with most of them carrying mainly mineral specimens, some self-collected, some from only one locality, some from around the world. We have one dealer who cuts stones from material he collects himself, one other sells fluorescent minerals, and spheres which he cuts himself, from fluorescent specimens. A few dealers have jewellery to sell, often made by them, there are two dealers who sell books, and one who sells collecting tools and lapidary machines and equipment,? she says.

Melanson reveals that they have rented the BFGC for about four years and previously rented the Legion before they decided not to take rentals anymore. ?We had rented at the legion for over 20 years, and it was the best space for an event this size. When we were forced to move, we went from 25 Vendors, down to 18. However, the Fish & Game people are happy to have us, and have been very good to us,? she says.

Melanson says they try to vary their door prizes, so usually have one mineral specimen, one cut and polished item and one or two

pieces of jewellery.

?They will be on display at the entrance table, where all visitors can put their ticket stubs into our ticket tin, for several draws, later in the day. Our silent auctions, and our voice auction, at the end of the day, are mainly of mineral specimens, but sometimes there are mineral books, pieces of cutting material, cut stones, and jewellery, all donated by members, to help raise money for the club and the museum,? she says.

Melanson says that Mark Stanley has been their auctioneer for many, many years.

?Besides being an auctioneer, by trade, he has been a good friend of the club, for a long time, and willingly does the voice auction for us. He is now a club member, and is very supportive of our Mineral Museum, and has had part of his Canadian mineral collection on display, in one of our guest display cases, for a couple of years.

Buss says they are excited about the upcoming show and says they've created a Facebook event that showcases a writeup of all 18 vendors attending the show on July 27. It can be found at

<https://facebook.com/events/s/27th-annual-gem-mineral-show/1462851854707754/>.

Melanson told Bancroft This Week that regarding community reaction to the annual gem and mineral show, she's not really in the mainstream of Bancroft, even though she's curator of the mineral museum.

?So, I don't meet many people who tell me what they think. Since COVID-19 we have had a huge increase in the number of families with children of all ages who bring them to the museum, and also to the mineral show,? she says. ?It's really nice to see them interacting and enjoying things together.?