

THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC

Website: www.minsocnsw.org.au

Please address all correspondence to :-The Secretary, 58 Amazon Road, Seven Hills, NSW 2147

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2022

The October Meeting will be held in the clubrooms of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club at 73 Fullagar Road, Wentworthville, on Friday the 7th of October at 7.30 pm.

The wearing of masks and maintaining social distancing is no longer mandated for any venues but members attending the meeting should be double vaccinated and should sign the Attendance Register. Anyone who feels unwell or has had recent contact with an infected person should not attend the Meeting.

There will be a lecture to be given by Noel Kennon on : -

'Colour and the Colour of Minerals'

There will also be a mini-talk to be given by Jim Sharpe on :-

'The Northparkes Sampleite Occurrence'

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS and PROGRAMS

November 4th: There will be a lecture to be given by Lee Spencer on 'The Emperor Gold Mines'.

At the November Meeting there will also be the sale of minerals donated for the **Kids with Cancer Foundation.** The projected Kids with Cancer sale has been moved to November to give members more notice to find specimens to donate. Members are invited to look through their collections and select specimens to bring in to sell. All proceeds will be sent to the Kids with Cancer Foundation.

If possible Members are asked to advise in advance what specimens they will donate so that a list can be circulated with the next Newsletter although more specimens could be brought in on the evening. Specimens to be sold should be provided with the name, location if known, the donor's recommended sale price, and can be communicated to Peter Beddow by e-mail - *plbeddow@tpg.com.au*, or telephone 8810 8446, who will compile an advance sale list.

Saturday December 3rd Christmas Social and Swap N' Sell.

It has been decided to hold the Christmas Social during day-light hours on Saturday probably between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm, (times to be confirmed). Last year the Social was held during the day and was thought to have been more favourable and convenient to members.

2023: The first Meeting next year will be on February the 3rd

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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Mark Walters

Mobile: 0421 012 647

Digitising the Society's Newsletters

The early newsletters of the Society since inception in August 1975 have been digitised. They were then known as The Mineralogical News.

There is one issue, Issue Number 50 that we do not have a copy of and are asking our long time members if they have a copy so it can be digitised. Your copy will be returned.

There is no archive of any newsletters between 1991 and 1996. During this time the Newsletter was published intermittently and a News Sheet was also published frequently instead. We are looking for any issues in this period.

If you can help, please contact Edward Zbik on 0401 538 480 or by email at edward.zbik@bigpond.com



FORTHCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Mark Walters ably helped by Denis O'Brien and Ed Zbik has continued researching collecting site availabilities, regulations and making arrangements for continuing the Society Field Trips program. A trip to Mt Tennyson is now scheduled for the weekend of the 23rd and 24th of October. The arrangements have involved a considerable amount of organising and making preliminary reconnaissance visits.

A concern about future visits to the Mt Tennyson mine is that there are plans to build a **Hydro Power Plant** on top of the mountain which would severely affect the Society's access to the historical mine site. According to information that Mark Walters has acquired the proposed top dam is about 150-250m from the Mt Tennyson mine and if it goes ahead, the result for the Society will be that we will lose access.

Local concerned interest groups in Bathurst and the immediate area have been generating protests about the proposed Hydro Power scheme although since the project is part of the State Government's long-term power supply plan it is likely to go ahead.

A brochure, - *The Yetholme Hydro Power Station Proposal – A Community View'* with information about the project and invitation to join the protest has been prepared and distributed by the *'Yetholme Research Group and the Friends of the Fish River Group'*. Copies of the complete brochure may be distributed by e-mail to any members by the Secretary, George Laking.

In the meantime Mark Walters has organised the October visit to Mt Tennyson and the following is the notice which he has sent out to members who have expressed an interest in attending the trip or who have already registered. Any other members interested in attending the Trip, and they must be SWMS-accredited, should contact Mark on telephone 0421 012 647.

As Mark advises : - "There is a real concern that the next trip to Mt Tennyson may be our last".

Hi All,

You are receiving this email as you have expressed interest in going to Mount Tennyson. So far we have 8 participants.

- New participants can be added until the weekend of the 7th October.
- A limit of 12 15 would be best.
- All participants need to be currently accredited under our SWMS process to ensure safety.
- All members need to be currently financial.

The dates have been confirmed as the 22nd & 23rd of October.

Further details will be released after the 7th of October.

We intend to spend both days at the site. See the August Reconnaissance visit (thanks Denis).

Accommodation:

No camping onsite

Camping: Flat Rock Camping Ground on Mutton Falls Road between Tarana and O'Connell (Website:-<u>Camping at Flat Rock - NSW (findacamp.com.au)</u> <u>http://www.findacamp.com.au/camp-site.php?camp=490</u> Location: <u>https://goo.gl/maps/uJmuCpXE2abPrrCr7</u> it is 25minutes away.

Motel Accommodation:

- Sadly the O'Connell Hotel is closed for renovations.
- The closest is Yetholme Caltex Station Motel, it is run by the Caltex petrol station (phone 63375336) the manager is Vishal. <u>https://goo.gl/maps/hbJtd2EdH5CjxFxh7</u>
- Bathurst 25 minutes away, lots of accommodation.
- Lithgow 30 minutes away.

Draft Agenda

Day 1 – 22nd Oct - Do the Mammoth mine site and the other parts of the main working. I would like to use the UV lamp in the main cavern, for scheelite / powellite and whatever else can fluoresce. Also would like to visit the 'red door' adit.

WHS Issues:

- The rock bridge over the entrance to the Mammoth Mine Cavern is upto 15m high and is largely • hidden in vegetation. Action: Needs to be flagged
- The entrance to the Mammoth cavern from ground level involves a balancing traverse over a 1.5m drop, there is also a barb-wire trip hazard here. Action: May need a small rope to allow people to get down / across. Cut / tag the barb wire.
- The scree slope down into the cavern is made of loose slippery rocks. Action: Proper foot wear
- To the SW of the main works are tracks ways / ledges that have partially collapsed and often are covered by fallen trees. Action: Tag and avoid.
- Some of the adits have blackberry at the entrance. Action: I have asked the owner if we can remove • some of it and he is fine with that.
- The season and the locality is perfect for snakes: Action: Use long pants, preferably with gaiters, wear gloves, watch where you are, make good noise/ vibration to give snakes a warning. Be careful about rock piles.

Dav 2 - 23rd Oct - Extend our visit to the main workings if needed / Visit the Southern adit dumps that have Molybdenite crystals, calcite, andradite / melanite and guartz and occasional powellite / possibly scheelite in the host matrix. Denis has identified a possible additional site for UV minerals in this area.

WHS Issues:

- Hidden rock piles in the paddock grass pose risks to cars and trip hazards for people. Action: Park in designated areas.
- Some adits / costeans can only be seen from downhill, not the side or from the top. Action: Caution • whilst walking about, solid footwear.
- The season and the locality is perfect for snakes: Action: Use long pants, preferably with gaiters, wear gloves, watch where you are, make good noise/ vibration to give snakes a warning.
- Be careful about rock piles, there are many voids and not much earth, so a good snake habitat for protection / sun.

General access:

Due to the proposed dam the local politics and tensions are quite high. We are asked to enter as a convoy and ensure that we do not access the wrong property or stop along the road. There are several gates to go through.

The preference is for all-wheel drives and higher clearance vehicles (e.g. RAV4 / Subaru). The paddocks can be slippery and wheels can sink.

PPE:

Full brim hat, work gloves, long pants, long sleeves, laced up solid foot wear with good grip, gaiters, eye protection, hi vis shirt.

Mark Walters Cheers.

Reconnaissance visit to Mammoth Molybdenite Mine Mount Tennyson, Yetholme, NSW,

Saturday, 6th August 2022

Mark Walters and Denis O'Brien,

Introduction and background

In 2014 a memorable winter weekend field trip to this site was organised by Ed Zbik with many participants. Minsoc has not been back since then, and during this time much has changed on the ground with the building of a cabin, a new house and a new shed.

Minsoc is now considering another field trip to the site and so a reconnaissance visit was organised by Mark Walters to review the situation and potential for a field trip.

Denis and Mark met at 10am on a cold and windy day at the intersection of Molybdonite (sic) Road and the Great Western Highway and were first provided with an overview of the nearby proposed pumped hydro project dam that will have a detrimental effect on the Mt Tennyson property if it proceeds, and ongoing difficulties related to it were outlined.

Visible to the east across the deep gully of Stony Creek were some mine workings in dense bushland which is probably the "Kirk and Wades" Molybdenum mine site (Approx S33.50606° E149.81688°) this is near Locksley Mine / Quarry (S33.50624° E149.81920°) as identified on Garmin base maps. The Mammoth Molybdenum Mine is one of a cluster of molybdenum skarn sites in the area that includes Kirk and Wades, Gemalla and Diamond Hill.

Minsoc has previously visited the Diamond Hill site on several occasions and collected garnets, Epidote, Vesuvianite, Scheelite and Molybdenite.

Pending arrangements, a weekend field trip might be organised for the middle of October when the days are longer and the weather warmer.

Geology

The basic geology is a contact metamorphic skarn deposit that was mined for molybdenum in the early 20th century and at various times since then. Mineralization is disseminated in a contact metamorphosed, calcareous cobble conglomerate unit that ranges from 1.5 to 12m thick. The unit is characterised by garnet-quartz-calcite-Diopside skarn assemblages with accessory chlorite, amphibole, pyrite, magnetite, chalcopyrite and pyrrhotite. This is underlain in places by a wollastonite-garnet-Diopside-quartz skarn. A poorly mineralised calc-silicate with weak development of garnet ore mineralisation outcrops as the hanging wall. The major ore minerals are Molybdenite and Scheelite with accessory Powellite. The rocks have been folded into a broad anticline, the apex of which marks Mt Tennyson.

Site description

The Mount Tennyson Mammoth Mine area in general is an open grassy plateau that drops steeply away on the south, east and west. The sloping ground is covered with Eucalypt forest. There are excellent views across the surrounding plains. New buildings include a cabin near the open cut, a new house and a new shed near the old chimney.

The main mine remnants are the open cut and underground cavern plus several nearby tunnels and mullock heaps. Numerous adits / costeans are also present around the area. Concrete building remnants are visible near the tunnels in the bush.

Main minerals of interest found to date

Molybdenite	Metallic and lustrous			
Garnets	Small amber coloured to dark opaque crystals to 10mm			
Powellite	Fluoresces pale yellow			
Scheelite	Fluoresces bright blue			
Unidentified mineral	Fluoresces white (Wollastonite?)			

*A report in DIGS identified a green fluorescing mineral as Powellite over Scheelite

Accessing the open cut area.

Mammoth Mine Cavern (S33.49996° E149.80926°) is easily accessed via a short foot track through the bush and a little rock scrambling. A head lamp is a necessity to safely explore the underground area as it is very dark and the floor is very uneven and littered with loose rocks. Mark's short wave UV lamp showed plenty of creamy yellow fluorescence on the rock wall (Powellite?) and an unknown substance fluorescing bright green in some drill holes. The mine dump site behind the open cut is piled high with discarded material. Nice dark garnets, yellow fluorescing Powellite, and Molybdenite have all been found here on a previous visit.

Accessing the costean south of the open cut.

This is just one of many adits /costeans excavated over the years for testing for molybdenum. This area has three adits / costeans with cobble sided rock blocks left in piles, there is little soil in these mullock heaps. They are as follows:

- Adit with Molybdenum (S33.50285° E149.80994°)
- Adit with Calcite & garnet (S33.50342° E149.80972°)
- Adit with Calcite (S33.50344° E149.81052°)
- Some weathered surface rocks outcrop above the grass near the costean. It is a reddish crumbly rock and under SW UV light a white fluorescent mineral was seen. These rocks also contain dark garnets up to 10mm across.



Figure 1: Southern open cut / adit source of Molybdenite and several fluorescent species. (Mark Walters of Denis O'Brien) (Note the happy fossicker at the end of the rainbow, centre of photo).

Minerals listed for the site on Minview

- Chalcocite major ore

Pyrite major ore

Arsenopyrite major ore Mn Oxide major ore

Chalcopyrite major ore Ferrimolybdite major ore Molybdenite major ore Pyrolusite major ore

Covellite major ore Garnet major ore **Powellite** major ore Pyrrhotite major ore • Scheelite major ore

Sphalerite major ore Diopside major gangue

Quartz major gangue Host major gangue

• Wollastonite major gangue

Calcite major gangue

Mineral Colours under Natural Light and Short-Wave UV Light

The crystals from the costean that fluoresce white under short wave UV light are also white under natural light and visually indistinguishable from the associated quartz in the field.

The table below (Cannon, 1944) relates to the proportions of Tungsten and Molybdenum and the colour of crystal fluorescence under SW UV.

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The table below (Cannon, 1944) relates to the proportions of Tungsten and Molybdenum and the colour of crystal fluorescence under SW UV.

% wt. of Mo.	% wt. of Wo4	% wt. of Cal.	% wt. of Cal.	Colour
		Molybdenum	Tungsten	
0	80.6	0	100	Blue
.05	80.5	0.1	99.9	Pale blue
.19	80.2	0.4	99.6	Paler blue
.33	80.0	0.7	99.3	Whitish blue
.48	79.8	1.0	99.0	Bluish white
.72	79.4	1.5	98.5	White
.96	79.0	2.0	98.0	Yellowish white
1.4	78.2	3.0	97.0	Whitish yellow
2.4	76.6	5.0	95.0	Pale yellow
3.4	74.9	7.0	93.0	Less pale
				yellow
4.8	72.4	10.0	90.0	Yellow

<u>It is just speculation</u> but if the white fluorescent mineral collected from the costean is not Wollastonite but is of the Scheelite - Powellite series, then according to this table the fluorescent costean mineral could be midway between Scheelite and Powellite. (XRD required for confirmation).

The SEPTEMBER MEETING

The guest lecturer at the September Meeting was Trevor Dart who delivered his lecture by virtual connection from Broken Hill where he is resident. He was actually born, grew up and lived for most of his life in Broken Hill. He is a Geologist and Science Teacher having obtained a B(Ed) – Secondary Science Teaching – Geology & Chemistry from UniSA, (University of South Australia, Adelaide), and is currently Head Teacher in Science at Broken Hill High School.

Trevor Dart is also a noted mineral collector, a founding member of the Broken Hill Mineral Society and *"has spent the last 22 Years exploring the Broken Hill and Olary Districts"*. He is the author of a number of articles and a book on the mineralogy of the area : - 'A Collectors Guide to the Minerals of the Broken Hill and Olary Districts' Dart, T. 2020.

The book describes the occurrences of over 80 minerals found in the Broken Hill and Olary districts. It includes a comprehensive list of all minerals found and locality maps of the region. The book is available online via the print-on-demand company *Lulu.com* for US\$ 29.99 plus postage or direct via email to the author's Facebook Page at AU\$ 40 plus postage. *https://www.facebook.com/curnamonamineral*.

The lecture for the evening was illustrated by a number of images projected by the speaker through the virtual system and from which the following summary has been taken.

'Recent Mineral Finds in the Broken Hill District

The Unusual and Unknown Occurrences and Localities

Trevor Dart

INTRODUCTION:

'The rocky outcrops of the Broken Hill and Olary Districts make up the southern portion of a larger geological province called the "Curnamona Craton". This area is called the Willyama Complex and the rocks are mostly high grade metamorphics and igneous intrusives. Associated with these rocks are many mineral deposits – base metal sulphides, banded iron formations, pegmatites and hydrothermal veins. The world-famous Broken Hill deposit is the largest of the base metal deposits and has been continuously mined for nearly 140 years, producing an outstanding variety of spectacular mineral specimens. There are many other small mineral deposits across the Willyama complex, some of which have produced new and unusual finds.

METAMORPHIC MINERALS OF THE BROKEN HILL AND OLARY DISTRICTS:

Almandine is the most common garnet species found in the Broken Hill district. It occurs mainly in schistose rocks and also in pegmatites. The best formed garnets occur in a shear-zone that runs from near Cockburn on the South Australian border to the Pinnacles.

Staurolite is also a common mineral in the metamorphic rocks that make up the Broken Hill and Olary districts. It occurs as chocolate brown to black single crystals and twins, usually in mica schists. Most of the twins are at 60°, however 90° twinning can be found. The best crystals of staurolite are found in the Thackaringa-Pinnacles shear zone.

Kyanite, Sillimanite and Andalusite are common across the districts. Many locations where these minerals occur are associated with the retrograde shear zones that crisscross the region. Sillimanite is more prevalent in the eastern section, while kyanite and andalusite are predominant in the western section of the Willyama complex.

The Lady Margaret Garnet Mine on Mount George Station is 17 km south of the Barrier Highway, near the South Australian border and is noted for almandine garnets and small staurolite crystals.

Staurolite Ridge Mine on Balaclava Station: The appropriately named Staurolite Ridge, near the Pinnacles, has large brown and black crystals in garnet and biotite rock.

Staurolite is found in schists on Nine Mile Station as small black crystals in association with almandine garnets at a location called "Gordon's Goat Run". Coarse sillimanite occurs at several locations at this site. Pods of coarse white sillimanite occur to the east of the Nine Mile Road.

A small quartz outcrop on Tikalina Station, near Bonython Hill, yielded square faced crystals of andalusite up to 20 cm long.

Coarse sillimanite occurs at several locations, existing as pods and masses that form distinctive bands between gneissic strata. Pods of coarse white sillimanite occur to the east of the Nine Mile Road Large crystals of grey sillimanite occur in gneisses to the north east of the Southern Cross Mine.



Almandine garnets and staurolite crystals on matrix from the Staurolite Ridge Mine on Balaclava Station.

PEGMATITE AND QUARTZ HOSTED MINERALS:

The Thackaringa, Euriowie and the Boolcomatta areas are known for the numerous pegmatites that outcrop. Many of these pegmatites contain beryl crystals, some of very large size. Well-formed orthoclase crystals are common in contact with the quartz cores of these pegmatites. Quartz veins are common across the Broken Hill and Olary regions. Some contain associated minerals, mostly iron minerals, but small pods of titanium bearing minerals. Schorl tourmaline is found in quartz veins in the northern part of the Broken Hill and Euriowie blocks. Syngenetic quartz lodes associated with the Broken Hill type deposits often contain gahnite and/or garnet. The addition of lead and/or zinc in these quartz lodes has resulted in the gahnite and green plumbian feldspar. The rocks are labelled - Garnet quartzite horizons - Quartz-gahnite horizons.'

Pearces MI31 Quarry on Mount George Station is a mica-feldspar-beryl mine situated in the Thackaringa Hills. Last worked in the 1940's, much of the dump material is as it was left. Tapered beryl crystals have been found in the dumps and throughout the surrounding rocks. Small pegmatite veins in the surrounding rocks have yielded orthoclase.



Pearces MI31 Quarry, Mount George Station

Tikalina Station and alusite

Broken Hill North Orthoclase. Within the regeneration area on the northern end of the city of Broken Hill are pegmatite outcrops, many of which have been mined for feldspar and mica. A narrow quartz-rich pegmatite on the hill above the old Broken Hill tip has yielded well-formed crystals of orthoclase

Rutile occurs throughout the districts, often as small, isolated pockets. Large rutile crystals have been found shedding from a quartz vein in the Thackaringa Hills south of the Repeater Tower. The crystals there are generally brown to black in colour and range in size from a few millimetres to several centimetres. The larger crystals are often terminated at one end and show contact with other crystals at their base.

Adjacent to the Menindee Road, on Huonville Station, rutile occurs in quartz as wafer thin seams displaying twinned reticulated crystal growth.

Large and well-formed gahnite crystals occur at many of the small mines in the Nine Mile area. The zinc spinel mineral forms octahedral crystals which are usually green to black in colour. The quartz-gahnite lodes are known to cover over 250 kilometres of strike length across the Broken Hill block, making them the most extensive gahnite bearing rocks in the world. Many of the old zinc mines (originally prospected for silver-lead) are associated with quartz gahnite horizons. The Nine Mile area has several mines where good crystals of gahnite have been collected.

Nine Mile Mine;BH Town Common Nine Mile South Mine;Nine Mile Station Parnell Mine;Limestone Station Hidden Treasure Mine:Limestone Station Southern Cross Mine;Nine Mile Station Barrier Colorado Mine Area:Nine Mile Station

Tourmaline bearing rocks are common on Purnamoota Station. A 300 metre long outcrop is riddled with small doubly terminated tourmaline crystals A section of this outcrop has been cut by a quartz vein and larger tourmaline crystals have formed. Quartz veins containing tourmaline have been located near the amethyst field on McDougall's Well station. A single pod around 2 x 2 metres has shed coarse blocks of striated tourmaline in association with quartz and muscovite.

Purnamoota Station tourmaline

Farmcote Station, Ironclad Mine epidote

A small mine on Farmcote Station, approximately 15km along the Menindee Road was operated by BHP in the 1890's. The shaft was put down on a quartz-epidote-calcite rock which has been naturally etched to expose epidote clusters. The clusters with attached quartz crystals were found throughout the dump material.

POTOSI NORTH MINE ZEOLITES.

A recent discovery of zeolite group minerals at the Potosi North Mine has yielded specimens of stilbite, apophyllite, scolecite and golden calcites. The zone is around 50 metres in length, with veins and cavities filled with crystals.

The stilbite was found in a fractured zone on the 18 level of the Potosi North Mine. Narrow cracks had plates of pale tan stilbite crystals up to 1.5 cm long, with the typical bowtie shape, growing from both sides of the crack. Both white and golden coloured calcite rhombohedrons are associated with the stilbite.

Apophyllites were found in a large vugh, approximately 1.5 metres across in the floor of the 18 level drive. Larger square topped crystals lined the bottom of the vugh, while finer crystals extended up the sides and at the top of the vugh. Golden coloured calcite formed a layer under the apophyllite and over the country rock.

A single vein of scolescite was encountered on the 18 level of the Potosi North Mine. The vein filled a crack in the rock with golden coloured calcite lining the outside and a white radial fibrous mineral filling the centre. The white fibrous mineral fluoresces vivid white and is suspected to be scolescite.

Associated with the apophyllite and stilbite were golden yellow calcite crystals. This calcite mostly lined cavities in the rock, while others sat proud as single, glassy rhombohedrons. The calcite colour ranged from white to tan to golden yellow and fluoresces pale yellow.



Potosi North Mine apophyllite

At the end of his lecture the speaker dealt with a number of questions from members and was thanked for his participation in the Society's September meeting.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Central Coast Crystal Gem & Lapidary Show

Saturday 15th October, 9am-5pm, Sunday 16th October, 9am-4pm at the Mingara Event Centre, Wyong Rd, Tumbi Umbi

'Exhibitors and sellers of crystals, gemstones, minerals, fossils, jewellery, beads and more. Adults \$5 entry fee Children under 18 FREE'

For more information: Telephone secretary @ 02 4362 2246'

Northern Districts Lapidary Club Gem Show

To be held in the Beecroft Community Centre, Corner Beecroft Road & Copeland Road, Beecroft, over the weekend of the 29th & 30th October, both days 9 am to 5 pm.

'Sales of minerals, slabs, jewellery (incl. sterling silver), books and lapidary equipment plus displays of the club members' creations. Entry \$5.00, children under 16 free.'

The Canberra Lapidary Club Spring Gemcraft & Mineral Show

To be held over the 29th & 30th October from 10am to 5pm Saturday, 10am to 4pm Sunday In the Exhibition Park (EPIC) Mallee Pavilion. Sales by Lapidary dealers of Gems, Minerals, Jewellery Minerals, fossils, jewellery, rough & cut gemstones, crystals, opals, beads. Displays of members' collections.

Demonstrations of cabbing & faceting. Refreshments.

The Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc

2022 60th Anniversary Exhibition: Jewellery, Gems and Mineral Festival Will be held over the weekend of Saturday the 5th & Sunday the 6th of November 2022.
Saturday 9am – 4.00pm, Sunday 9am – 2.30pm. In the Ribbonwood Centre, Heininger Hall, 109 Princes Highway, Dapto. Parking access from Heininger Street, off Fowlers Road.
Featuring – Fossicking Information, Jewellery Valuations, Gemstone Faceting, Club Information, Mineral Group Displays, Silver craft, Kids Games, Traders Selling – Lapidary Supplies, Jewellery, Minerals, Findings, Fossils, Beads, Opals, Crystals.
Refreshments Available. \$5 Admission – Children Under 12 Years Free. Lucky Door Prizes *www.illawarralapidaryclub.com.au*
