



Date : October 11, 2002

Participants in Newfoundland Gold Rush On Way To London.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Chamber of Mineral Resources is sending a small party of listed Canadian companies with operations in that part of the world on a tour of Europe and they will be passing through London next Tuesday, giving presentations at the Armourers Hall in the City. Initially the idea was that they would parade at the Canadian High Commission in Grosvenor Square, but the bureaucratic demands were stifling. Memories returned of a meeting held there a couple of years back on behalf of companies operating in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Grey suited civil servants pontificating about environmental issues and relations with Eskimo tribes outnumbered the actual company representatives and bored everyone rigid.

Minesite had a similar problem at Australia House when the bureaucrats wanted to drown out some Aussie junior mining companies with dreary lectures on tribal rights and other such subjects.. Small wonder more use is not made of these emporiums and congratulations to the Chamber of Mineral Resources for turning down the two-edged invitation. Their Canadian candidates are going visiting at a good time for gold and there is a bit of a gold rush in progress in Newfoundland at the moment, focused on the Botwood Basin, which should attract some attention.

Unusually the Botwood Basin is virgin territory which has not had any history of commercial gold production. According to stockbrokers BMO Nesbitt Burns Newfoundland has a unique geological history with rocks that illustrate the complete tectonic cycle from the rifting of an ancient continental mass through to eventual closure through subduction which generated plutonism, related volcanism, and related mineralising events. If that sounds a bit technical, take it that the earth's surface crunched up all around Newfoundland releasing a lot of liquefied metals and minerals. And it was a founder of one of these junior companies, Altius Minerals, who came up with the theory that the Botwood Basin, at the centre of this disturbance, was a dead ringer for the Carlin Trend in Nevada with its epithermal gold deposits.

Last year Roland Butler, for it was he, went down to Nevada and convinced Barrick Gold, with its major production on the Carlin Trend, to take a hike up to Newfoundland. In the meantime his company shrewdly took a lot more ground over three regional trends and Barrick signed up as a joint venture partner on the Mustang trend on December 2001. By this time the price of gold was starting to look more interesting and another company with Barrick connections, Candente Resources, was also picking up ground through option agreements with Newfoundland companies and prospectors. Candente's relationship with Barrick is based on an adviser, Larry Kornze, who was previously Barrick's general manager for exploration. He is credited with a number of discoveries at and around Barrick's Goldstrike operations so is an expert on the Carlin Trend.

The full list of companies on the European trip is: Altius Minerals, Candente Resources, Copper Hill Corporation, Globenet Resources, Rubicon Minerals Corporation and Vulcan Minerals. Altius is run by a team of Newfoundland geologists and entrepreneurs who have arranged "earn-in" funding agreements for 28 of its properties with BHP-Billiton, Teck-Cominco, Agnico-Eagle Mines, Inmet Mining, Barrick Gold and Cameco Corporation, among others. Candente, on the other hand, also has a portfolio of gold properties in central/northern Peru in addition to Newfoundland. These include the high grade Luna project and El Tigre whose diatreme geology is similar to Rosia Montana in Romania and Cripple Creek, Colorado, operated by AngloGold.

Copper Hill Corporation is based in Newfoundland and Labrador. Its two main projects in central Newfoundland are the Tim's Cove gold project situated in the north east of the Carlin-style "Mustang Trend" of the Botwood Basin; and the Powderhorn volcanic massive sulphide discovery situated in the Buchans Belt just above the Buchans group of deposits.. GlobeNet Resources Inc. is an emerging junior gold exploration company with two active exploration projects in Newfoundland. One of the projects, the Cape Ray Gold Project, is an advanced stage project where a considerable gold resource has already been identified.

Rubicon Minerals controls six district-scale gold projects on the island of Newfoundland. A new discovery has been made on the Golden Promise Project where visible gold has been intersected in 15 of 17 holes, just three months after acquiring the property. Rubicon is a major player in this emerging gold district and has a similar position in the world-class Red Lake gold belt of Ontario. Vulcan Minerals is a diversified Newfoundland based company covering oil as well as mining. Its three main projects, are Little River gold, Tasisuak Lake nickel and Flat Bay oil. The Little River property covers 30,000 acres with numerous gold showings along a 20 km belt in the emerging gold area of Central Newfoundland. The TL nickel property contains significant nickel/ copper drill intersections approximately 50 km northwest of the Voisey's Bay development in Labrador. The Flat Bay oil project covers 80,000 acres in the virgin onshore Bay St. George basin in Western Newfoundland where Vulcan has discovered oil at shallow depths.

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