



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 DECEMBER 2020

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL and SWAP n' SELL

IT'S ON !

The December Meeting will be the Society's Annual Christmas Social, this year to be held from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm on Saturday the 5th of December outside the clubrooms of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club at 73 Fullagar Road, Wentworthville.

The Christmas Social will comprise the sale or exchange of mineral specimens and mineralogical material, books, magazines and equipment. This year due to the COVID restrictions the Lapidary Club rooms cannot be opened for use so the Social will be held in the car park area outside the club building. Only sellers and helpers are allowed in before 11 am – so please don't come too early. The obvious has to be stated about an outdoor event which will be dependent on the weather being fine.

A number of tables will be set up along the car parking area and there will be tea and coffee available but otherwise due to the pandemic restrictions still in place food and drink cannot be served. Members are recommended to bring their own refreshments or otherwise the **Wentworthville Shopping Plaza** with cafeterias is about a ten-minute walk away. Since the Society cannot provide the customary refreshments members attending the Social will not be charged entry.

A COVID safety plan has been registered and has set the conditions for the event. Since the Social will be an out-door event there is no restriction on the number of people attending although everyone must firmly observe social distancing and face masks must be worn, especially when members approach a sales table when only two buyers will be allowed at a table at any one time. Only Society members and their associates are allowed to attend the Social which is a private event, general public people will be refused entry. Everyone must sign in upon arrival, (names should be printed), and give a contact number.

In order to assess the amount of table space which will be required by members intending to sell at the Social they are asked to inform the Vice-President, John Chapman, or the Secretary, George Laking, that they will be selling so that helpers setting out the tables will have an idea how many will be required. There is no shortage of tables or car park space to set them out so booking tables in advance will not be necessary. Since the Lapidary Club car park is being utilized for the Social car parking cannot be allowed on the Club premises. Members with material to sell should arrive by 10.30am and will be allowed to drive in to unload when they must then move their cars out of the Club and park elsewhere.

Vehicles can be parked along Fullagar Road and the two nearest side-streets, Griffiths, (which is a cul-de-sac), a left turn off Fullagar, and Bransgrove. There is some limited parking in the tennis court area next to the Club where there are also public toilet facilities and the Wentworthville Shopping Plaza is a little further away with undercover parking and facilities.

Members are reminded that the Society Committee has previously determined that anyone attending the Christmas Social who was not currently financial **may buy but would not be allowed to sell minerals**. Any members who were unsure of their current financial status could pay their subscriptions for 2021 from now on and they would then be taken as financial. Membership fees are in any case due from January 1st. Members are requested to pay their subscriptions **only by direct-debiting** since this will provide both the member and the Society separately with bank account records of their payments. In direct-debiting, the payer should make certain to add their name to the payment panel to show who the payment is from. Cash payments for subscriptions will not be accepted at the Social.

To direct-debit the Society account the details are: - Commonwealth Bank
Account Name: - Mineralogical Society of NSW Inc.
BSB: 062016 Account number: 28023647

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

2021: Society Meetings will resume on February and by then it is hoped that they can be held as before in the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club building.

February 5th 2021: A schedule of Society Meeting programs is being organised commencing with the first Friday in February and continuing with first Friday meetings throughout the year except in April when the Society meeting would be held on the second Friday, after Easter.

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
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The NOVEMBER MEETING

The November meeting was held by virtual mode, hosted by the Vice-President, John Chapman, and opened by the President, Dieter Mylius. The meeting commenced with a few announcements.

Ed Zbik described arrangements for several **Field Trips** to be held over the next few weeks, some being preliminary investigations of possible new collecting sites. Over the 21st and 22nd of November Ed and Denis O'Brien were going to Lowes Mountain State Forest to look at some different areas to those already visited on previous trips. Then in December they were going back to Gumble to look for malayaite and garnets. In general Ed indicated that Field Trip planning had not ceased or been particularly slowed down by the pandemic, information gathering and site investigations had continued, effectively as normal.

On a trip the previous month a group had gone out to the Condoblin area to look at a number of sites, managing to find the Blackfella uranium mine and collected some specimens of torbernite. Later the group visited the Overflow site and called into a number of rural properties to seek permission to investigate sites on private land. Unfortunately whilst several properties which looked occupied were called on no landowners were at home. The party was able to look at and collect on sites on Crown land and found the 'Breakaday' site which was reported to have fluorite in all shades and a variety of colours.

Another important site which might be possible to visit was **Kingsgate** near **Glen Innes** which has not been open to collectors for many years. Just latterly the property was being advertised for sale having been broken up into seventeen eight-hectare lots to be sold separately. Once the sale/s went through it would probably be very difficult to obtain permission to visit any of them in that up to seventeen new owners would have to be located, contacted and negotiated with.

Otherwise Ed Zbik noted that the COVID restrictions were gradually being reduced and the prospect was that more trips could be organised for small groups of up to ten people and Ed invited members to suggest sites which they would like to visit when information about the site and permission to obtain access would be investigated and trips scheduled.

At the end of the evening Graham Ogle announced that the next **Micro-Mineral Group meeting** would be held next Saturday at Peter Beckwith's house in Howes Valley which was about an hour from Windsor along the Putty Road towards Singleton. Attendees would need to be members of the Group and should have received e-mails notifying them with details about the meeting. Given the distance involved, car-pooling could be organised.

In answer to a question about a forthcoming Report on the **October Mineralogical Symposium** Graham Ogle pointed out that Pdf files on five of the lectures given at the Seminar had already been added to the Society Website. The editors of the **Australian Journal of Mineralogy** were also intending to add a report on the Seminar to the next issue of the Journal due to be distributed by the end of the year.

John Chapman introduced Guy Fleming who was to be the speaker for the evening. The two had been colleagues when the speaker was the manager of the GeoScience Information Section of the Geological Survey of NSW. Guy Fleming has a considerable range of talents, having been a cartographer and an expert in geo-spatial computer work, but was also a talented musician having played, (vocals and keyboard), with the *Machine-Gun Fellatio* group. He was also an accomplished photographer of landscapes and astronomical subjects and has built his own astronomical observatory in his back yard.

“An Overview of Geotrail Development in NSW”

Guy Fleming

The development and promotion of Geotrails in New South Wales is a fairly new venture for the Geological Survey but it is hoped that the program, and number of trails established will be considerably

expanded for the future. The concept of Geotrails is built around the interest in geotourism which is very popular around the World. Many people are prepared to travel long distances to look at amazing landscapes and associated geology. In New South Wales there had been quite an amount of progress over the last few years and the speaker was quite excited and privileged to be involved in the project.

The lecture was well-illustrated by a series of images accompanied by explanatory captions projected on to the virtual program shared screen and described enthusiastically by the speaker who continually stressed the expected considerable interest and value to the community of the development of Geotrails. He expected and hoped that many more would gradually become available. .

Initially Guy Fleming acknowledged the significance of the traditional owners of the land through which Geotrails were being established. Many of the sites through which trails had been laid had considerable relation to aboriginal heritage or stories and the GeoSurvey was often working closely with aboriginal groups. Generally the Survey had utilised pre-existing routes to avoid the expense of excavating new ones although this was done elsewhere with Trails being established for tourism purposes. In developing a Trail the Survey had to take in a number of considerations. The ideal was to emphasize the geological heritage features, to incorporate the biodiversity, the Aboriginal heritage as well as the impact of local mining work, and to cater to visitors and local land-holders.

To quote from the speaker's image presentation : -

'Guiding features of the GSNSW geotrail strategy and approach include:

Physical impact to sites is kept to a minimum, with an emphasis on digital information delivery (self-guided tour apps and web content).

Aligned with and complementary to tourism and economic development strategies, especially in regional NSW.

Includes consideration of geoheritage, environmental, historical and Aboriginal heritage values or preservation.

Geotrail design should be flexible, upgradeable and mix walking or road-based trails as required to maximise broad accessibility, and value for stakeholders and the public.

Visitor safety, public access, site amenities, custodian requirements and infrastructure should be considered in geotrail design.

Flexible multimedia & technology integration Geotrail content capture and creation includes:

Geological fieldwork or other applied field expertise.

Audio voiceover (aids convenience and safety).

Videos and podcasts provide engaging story content and human interest, as well as raising awareness.

Drone imagery and 360 camera (VR) imagery aids in immersive and educational experiences.

Animations and illustrations.

Educational and curriculum-aligned resources.

Collaborative partnerships in content creation (artists, storytellers, academic partners).'

The Survey has opened two Geotrails so far, the Port Macquarie and the Newcastle Coastal Trails. The Warrumbungles National Park trail was due to be opened soon. Trails being developed for the near future include Mutawintji and the Central Darling river trail and plans further ahead were expected to be extensive. Guy Fleming proceeded to describe the three existing trails in some detail and also projected a short video with narration which had been produced for the Newcastle walk.

The Port Macquarie Trail was opened in May 2018 and comprises a four klm walk from Oxley Beach to Shelly Beach. It has been a collaborative project between the Survey, the University of Newcastle, the Port Macquarie–Hastings Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The walk featured a free self-guided tour app, a brochure, web content and informational signage at the start and finish. Local volunteer people had been trained as guides and local schools had used the trail for teaching.

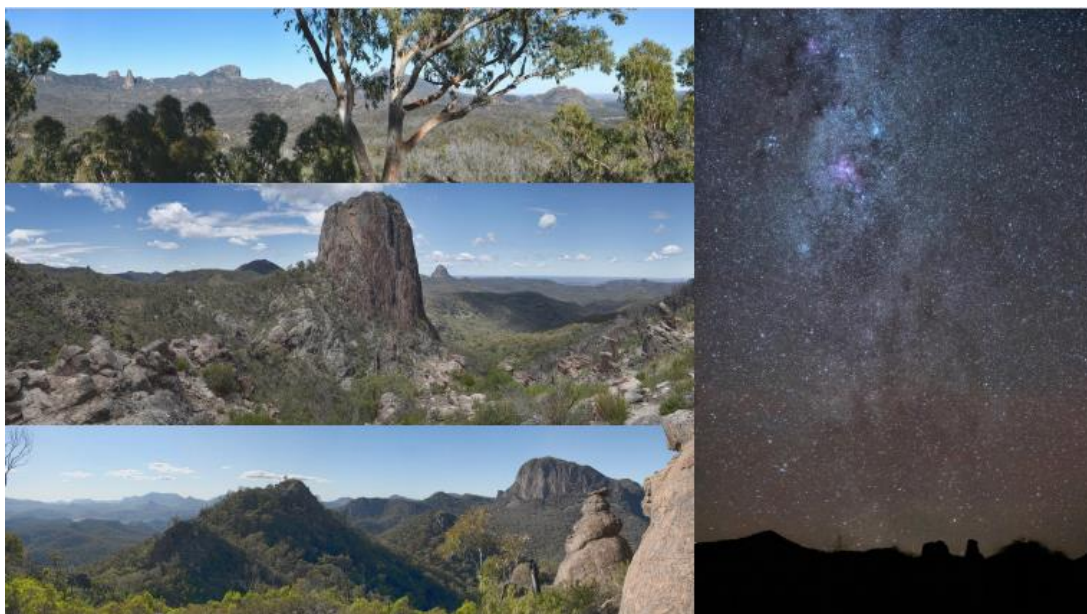
Images of the types of rocks to be observed along the Geotrail and a diagram of the geological structure along the Port Macquarie coast were shown.

The Newcastle Geotrail was opened in August 2020 and runs some seven klm from Nobby's Head Lighthouse to Merewether Beach. It presented a story of landscapes evolving over 250 million years and showed indications of ancient volcanic eruptions, rivers and mountains, forests and peat swamps. Images were referred to of the rocks to be found along the trail, of blueschists, eclogites and serpentinites.

Newcastle Coastal Geotrail route



In referring to the Warrumbungles Guy Fleming stressed how enjoyable it had been working in the area which was quite spectacular and took some time describing the volcanic events which had shaped it. These had originated from the feature of the Australian continental plate moving northwards over a mantle 'hotspot' which had created a chain of ancient volcanoes along eastern Australia. In the case of the Warrumbungles, the eruptions had occurred from 18 to 15 million years ago. Diagrams were shown of the original extent of the volcano.



The Warrumbungles

Several Geotrails would be established within the National Park and would mostly follow existing walking tracks but with the addition of more information for visitors.

Finally the speaker described the immediately future Geotrail projects being planned for Mutawintji and the Central Darling river trail.

The **Mutawintji National Park Geotrail** would be introduced as ‘Discovering Ancient Stories in the Rocks’ and feature self-guided tours along established walking tracks. By reference to and consultation with the local Aboriginal people and custodians of the Mutawintji site the Geotrail information provided to visitors would integrate stories about geology and the Aboriginal heritage. It was expected that the Trail would appeal to Outback and RV tourists, tour groups, ‘grey nomads’, international ‘geotourists’, NPWS guides, and educators.

The **Central Darling Geotrail** would be mostly a road-based tour covering over 800 km. It would take in the Mungo, Kinchega, Wilcannia and Paroo–Darling National Parks and also White Cliffs and the Darling River Run. As with the other GeoTrails, the Survey organisers would be working in close collaboration with the NPWS, traditional owners and shire councils.

At the end of Guy Fleming’s lecture there were a number of questions, comments and a general discussion on the Geotrail project which was obviously regarded very favourably by all the members.
