

**THE
MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF
NEW SOUTH WALES INC**



C/o School of Natural Science
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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2012

The April Meeting will be held on the second Friday, the 13th of April AFTER EASTER, at 7.30 p.m. in the LZG14 lecture theatre on the ground floor of Building LZ in the Science campus of the University of Western Sydney on the corner of Victoria Road and James Ruse Drive in North Parramatta.

Due to changed speaker circumstances some adjustments have had to be made to the previous schedule of lectures.

The lecture for the evening will be given by Arthur Roffey on :-

A Lifetime with Minerals.

The mini-talk in April is to be a

Members' Forum – Return to Ben Lomond.

The Ben Lomond zeolite deposits alongside the New England highway and near to the village of Ben Lomond in New England have provided a suite of minerals to collectors in earlier years. A variety of zeolites have been found including fine examples of chabazite and analcime and other minerals found have included phillipsite, natrolite, saponite, calcite and aragonite.

Many Society members may have Ben Lomond specimens in their collections and in order to help illustrate and contribute to the forum members are invited to bring in a selection of their specimens and any anecdotes about their collecting experiences at the locality to display to and share with the Meeting.

Members. Please sign the Attendance Register at the General Meetings.

Members are recommended to be sure that they sign the Attendance Register at Society General Meetings. In the event of anyone incurring an injury and wishing to make a claim on the **Personal**

Accident Insurance the Register might have to be referred to in order to establish that they were attending the Meeting.

MEMBERS MINI AUCTION

Friday 4th MAY

The annual **May Member's Mini-Auction** will be held next Meeting. There may be a few announcements made at the commencement of the Meeting but otherwise the entire evening will be devoted to the auction. Last year there were some 80 specimens auctioned over a little less than two hours.

The art of building a good collection is not just acquiring minerals but also selecting those that are duplicates or surplus and selling or giving them to other collectors.

Members are recommended to start sorting out now their surplus specimens for the auction. As well as the regular auction you can also sell a mineral or boxes of minerals by **silent auction**. Bid forms will be provided. No need to advise Jim as these will not be listed. Please clearly label all specimens and boxes.

The Society takes no commission so if you are not satisfied with the highest bid, you can bid for your own specimen

So that an auction list can be prepared, please let Jim Sharpe have your list by 21st April. Contact him by phone – (02) 9871 2502 or by e-mail:- sharpe4min@tadaust.org.au or post to: 190 Ray Road. Epping 2121.

FIELD TRIP APRIL 26th TO 29th

Tambar Springs Field Trip. . This field trip is to collect zeolites from the Garawilla Volcanics near Tambar Springs, east of Coonabarabran. The dates for the trip are **Thursday 26th April to Sunday 29th April**. Members can attend for all or any of these dates. So coming for the full period would mean travelling up on Wednesday 25th (ANZAC day) and returning on Monday 30th. Accommodation can be arranged at the Tambar Springs hotel at very reasonable rates. Please let John Chapman know if you are interested (unless you have already done so). John may be contacted by phone on 9808 3481 or by email at chapmanjr@optusnet.com.au .

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Society General Meetings will be held on the first Friday of each month for the rest of the year. Subject to circumstances some changes to the following schedule of program subjects and speakers may have to be made in due course.

May 4th : Members Mini-Auction.

June 1st : There will be a demonstration and talk by Penny Williamson and Doug Austen on diamond crystal forms and a lecture on ‘Recent Additions to the University of Wollongong Mineral Collection’.

July 6th : There will be a talk to be given by Gary Sutherland on the Museum of Lead Mining at Wanlockhead in Scotland. It is hoped that this will be followed by the lecture by Larry Barron on ‘Australian Diamonds’.

August 3rd : The Society A.G.M. which will be followed by the Betty Mayne Memorial Lecture to be given by Peter Williams on : - ‘Gazing into the Mineralogical Crystal Ball. Where is it all going?’

September 7th: Member’s Forum: - ‘Return to Kingsgate’ Members will be invited to bring in specimens, information, collecting experiences and anecdotes from this significant and productive site. There may also be a talk to be given by Sylvia French on ‘Gem Analysis’.

October 5th: Lecture and photographic display by Gary Sutherland on ‘The Museums of England’.

November 2nd: Depending on circumstances and speaker availability it is hoped that there will be a lecture on ‘Mineral Hill Update’.

December 7th: Annual Christmas Social and ‘Swap n’ Sell.

WELCOME

Welcome to new Society member Howard Greening of Winston Hills.

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT:	Dieter Mylius	Tel: (02) 9477 1060
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	John Smedley	Tel: (02) 9688 1284
	Gary Sutherland	Tel: (02) 9871 1379
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MARCH MEETING

At the commencement of the March meeting the President, Dieter Mylius, announced that **Arthur Roffey** who had been one of the founding members of the Mineralogical Society in 1975 and has been continuously closely associated with it since then including serving as President for a period and latterly as a Committee member had been advised to cut down his work-load and has had to resign from the Committee. The President commended Arthur for his long commitment to the Society and to mineralogy and expressed the hope that he would continue to attend Society Meetings for a long time to come.

Dieter Mylius further advised the Meeting that some changes had to have been made to the next few month's programs due to intended speakers becoming otherwise engaged and the lectures on diamonds scheduled for the April meeting would be held later in the year. For the April meeting program Arthur Roffey's lecture had been moved forward and it was also intended to hold a 'Return to Ben Lomond' member's forum. Dieter Mylius recommended that anyone who had collected at Ben Lomond or who had specimens from that site in their collections to bring these in to the next meeting and if possible to report on any collecting experiences involving the location.

The next meeting of the **Micromineral Group** would be held on Saturday the 31st of March at Brian England's house in Maitland. The theme of the meeting would be on the minerals of Leadville.

Jo Collas was invited to address the meeting and bring member's attention to a new book '**Minerals of the Iron Monarch**' a copy of which he had brought to show and commend it to the members, "*A remarkable book written by a remarkable man*". The book had been reviewed by John Bosworth in the Australian Journal of Mineralogy, Volume 16 No 1, 2011 which provided a comprehensive description. It has been written by Glyn Francis and published by the Onesteel company of Whyalla, S.A. for whom the author had worked for many years and who are the current leaseholders of the Iron Monarch. The book has a soft cover and '165 pages with over 40 colour mineral photographs, and 60 colour and black and white historic mining photographs'.

'**Minerals of the Iron Monarch**' is available for \$25 plus packing and postage from the S.A. Museum shop, North Terrace, Adelaide, S.A. 5000, or from the Whyalla Visitor Centre, Lincoln Highway, Whyalla, S.A. 5600, - visitor.center@whyalla.sa.gov.au.

John Chapman announced that planning was under way for a **field trip** to be made to the **Tambar Springs** area to collect zeolites. The date had not been finally established but would probably be held over the third or fourth weekend in April. The trip was being organized and would be run by Society member Ken Mitchell who was scheduling three days, Saturday to Monday, for the trip although attendees would be at liberty not to stay for the whole time and could leave whenever they wished. The plan at the moment was to arrange accommodation for attendees in the Tambar Springs hotel which would charge \$20 per night for bed and breakfast. Once the date and details had been definitely established John Chapman would contact by e-mail those members who had expressed an interest in going on the trip to bring them up to date.

John Behrens advised that he had noticed that the ALDI supermarket stores were currently selling a number of **ultrasonic cleaners** which members might be interested to look at if not purchase.

Jim Sharpe finally reported that the sale of mineral specimens at the February meeting had raised **\$1,220** for the **Kids with Cancer charity** and Jim warmly thanked all those members who had donated the specimens.

Tucson Update 2012

Peter Beckwith

The Tucson Gem & Mineral Show has been running now for fifty-five years and was described by the speaker as a Mecca for collectors, this year being no exception. It is an event where everyone goes to talk about minerals, new finds, old finds, gossip and generally discuss everything about collecting. The Report was illustrated by the speaker with reference to a number of newly-acquired specimens from the Tucson Show that he had brought in to display.

In regard to the minerals on sale at the Show however there did not seem to be much new material although there were a few interesting items coming from China. One of these was some silver on siderite specimens with fine crystals which looked very attractive under a microscope. A new find has been of some very gemmy green specimens of tremolite from Haliburton County in Ontario where quite a lot of this mineral has been appearing from recently. Another new find has been of large, flat epidote crystals from Pakistan which have been brought out by a number of people and prices vary quite dramatically.

Inner Mongolia is effectively being developed as a mineral specimen market-place since the area is quite inaccessible to outsiders and getting specimens out is very difficult. The speaker drew attention to several pyrite specimens which he had brought in to display. Pyrites have been coming out of Yunnan Province in China for about two years so their affordability has just about come down to a point where they are economic for a dealer to purchase.

A few specimens of calcites from Peru, from the Roqueiro Cancha mine were obtained and were found to be highly fluorescent in bright pink-orange. They were quite striking with tiny pyrite crystals growing on them. Gold-coloured gypsum specimens from Peru had been seen before but there was a new supply of them with reasonable size, crystal form, colours and prices.

In the course of his report Peter Beckwith provided some insight about the wheeling and dealing which goes on in the upper levels of the mineral purchasing world. A notable feature of mineral purchasing is that the bigger dealers or dealing companies go into new areas, presumably with a large cheque-book, and completely buy up supplies of the particular mineral or minerals, effectively if not actually cornering the market for that particular mineral or site. This allows them to control the market for that supply and keep prices exceptionally high. Gradually after perhaps two years of maintaining high prices and selling off the best pieces a dealer will start disposing of his remaining stock at lower prices that the smaller dealers and collectors can afford. An example of a new find which has been tied up by a big dealer is that of a supply of mottramites from Mexico and the expectation is that these will not come on to the general market for a year or two and only after the best have been sold at super-high prices.

A lucky exception to this situation was made by the speaker managing to acquire the siderite and tremolite specimens at reasonable prices by finding a smaller dealer who had actually been digging out the tremolite and had two flats of specimens 'tucked away'. The smaller dealer seemed to be more interested in where the speaker was from and what he was about and was possibly concerned to avoid selling to someone from one of the big companies.

Another exception seems to have been the supply of Japan Law citrines from Luapula Province, Zambia. Normally as the speaker had indicated, all the new specimen material usually goes to the U.S. first

and smaller dealers, and other countries, have to wait the two years for new material to filter out. For a change however Peter Beckwith and others who have visited Zambia and the producing sites have been able to obtain amounts of the citrine at first hand.

A few smaller mostly micro-specimens were pointed out amongst his display by the speaker. Niobium-rich rutile is not very new but is not too plentiful and a few were acquired. There were also some raspites and stolzites from Brazil and a few collections and older stock on sale. In conclusion the speaker advised that he has had an interesting U.S. visit this year but whilst the Australian dollar was comfortably valued against the U.S. dollar unfortunately prices had been adjusted against this.

John Chapman was asked to introduce the guest speaker for the evening. Rob Barnes has spent his entire career in the Geological Survey of New South Wales where he and John Chapman worked for many years. Rob has contributed a massive amount of information on mineral deposit studies in NSW. He originally obtained his degree from Macquarie University and after joining the Geological Survey did a lot of early work in the 1980s in Broken Hill establishing procedures for metallogenic mapping, work which has provided immensely detailed maps of that area, the finest that can be found anywhere in the World. Rob then moved up to New England and did a lot of work in that area. He also got involved with the **Regional Forestry Agreement** with the Federal and State governments and worked on identifying potential mineral resources and preserving those areas to allow future exploration and mining. Rob Barnes has accordingly played a significant part in the mining industry in New South Wales. He retired from the Geological Survey a year ago and formed a geological consultancy Goldvine Exploration Services.

‘Metallogenic Mapping. Locating the Mineral Deposits of N.S.W.’

Rob Barnes

The speaker described his lecture saying that he wished to run through the story of the metallogenic mapping program particularly to make clear to people some of the extraordinary information systems that are now available to them when they are looking for mineral deposits. New South Wales is probably the World leader in terms of making available vast sets of metallogenic data and a great number of people are simply not aware of the extent and depth of this information. Accordingly the speaker intended to run through the history behind some of these data sets and to show the Meeting by means of connecting to the Internet in real time during his lecture demonstrating what information is available and how readily it can be accessed from the Department of Primary Industries Website : - <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/mineral-maps-data>.

The speaker took a few moments to define what he would mean by a mineral deposit compared to a site where minerals might be found but in too small an amount to be economically significant. There are many places where there might be minerals but which are not regarded as being mineral deposits. A deposit would be a site where there were concentrations of minerals which were economic to extract. The metallogenic data sets record those occurrences where minerals have been won from the ground or places where there are economic concentrations which have yet to be won. The sets also record sites which were worked on but eventually abandoned as non-economic.

Rob Barnes’s lecture was extensively illustrated by a series of images of land forms, maps, aerial and satellite maps and images of swathes of large and smaller areas of country and mining and

mineralogical sites to which the speaker constantly referred and described. A brief introduction was provided to the major mineral provinces of NSW which also applies to most of eastern Australia. The eastern edge of the Australian plate has acquired a series of accretions of crustal material over time so that in general terms the rocks tend to be older in the west and younger to the east. The speaker then described and named the major orogen or fold belt features of eastern Australia, the Curnamona Province which includes all of the Broken Hill block and extends into South Australia incorporating the mineralised sites at Roxby Downs and the Lachlan and New England fold belts. These comprise the major exposed fold belts in New South Wales and also contain the highest number of recorded mineral deposits. A fold belt currently being investigated is the Thomson orogen in the north of NSW and extending into Queensland. It is largely covered by sediments up to several hundred meters thick and may be substantially mineralised in places but since its rocks are deeply buried the mineralisation is concealed.

The government has always had a role in systematically recording information so even before the Geological Survey was formed in 1875 the government Department of Agriculture was recording mineral occurrences as they were found and as the colony developed. The Department of Mines and its various other names and the Geological Survey since have been recording mineral deposits and maintaining all the lease and administrative records relating to any deposits. Parish maps also recorded mining leases and have been another useful source of information. Much early information was related to agricultural resources as well as minerals and recorded together. Early records also did not separate industrial non-metallic minerals, coal etc, from metals, copper, gold silver etc. Over the years however, very large amounts of data have been gathered, recorded and latterly scanned and are available in digital form.

Back in the early 1970s about when Rob Barnes started work at the Survey the concept of metallogenic mapping came to the fore with the expectation of gathering as much information together as possible. So what is a metallogenic map? This is a map which will show the location of mineral deposits in a geological context providing a description of what is there and the characteristics of the deposit and also provides the information that allows the worker to go back to the original source data. Maps would be produced in various scales depending on the amount of information to be presented, maps of the Broken Hill area where a lot of work in great detail has been done have been produced in 1:50,000 scale whilst maps to a scale of 1:250,000 or sometimes 1:500,000 have been more usual.

Images of maps of a number of mineralogically-significant areas familiar to miners, mineralogists and collectors were shown. In addition to Broken Hill and the Pinnacles area the speaker showed and described aspects of maps of the Bathurst area, Cadia, Cobar, Tingha, Hillgrove, Kingsgate and others. To demonstrate how easy it is for anyone to access metallogenic maps through the Department Website the speaker used his own mobile telephone to provide wireless connection to a blue-tooth hook-up to his laptop computer then projecting the images to the screen. Rob Barnes finally downloaded the information he had accessed from the Website to the Google-Earth facility and was able to use this to move about the mineral deposit areas 'zooming in or out' at will to examine at distance or closer the various areas. Individual mines, the open cuts, mine-shafts, processing plant and even vehicles could be discerned.

At the conclusion of his lecture Rob Barnes answered a number of questions. One query was whether it was intended to integrate NSW metallogenic mapping information with other states. The speaker indicated that whilst federal government committees have for a long time have been attempting to standardise data-bases across Australia there were a number of problems. One feature is that whilst New South Wales has a very complex and comprehensive data-set other states have less or sometimes more complex systems. Information may be presented in different forms with different notations. So there is a lot of work still to be done in this field.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The 22nd annual Lismore GEMFEST

Being held over Saturday and Sunday the 19th & 20th of May 2012 in the Lismore Showgrounds.

‘The Show is now in its 22nd year and is dedicated to lapidary and allied crafts. A large number of dealers and tailgaters provide minerals, fossils, cutting material, cut stones, jewellery findings, tools, machinery and finished jewellery. More than half of the trading is under cover, providing a safeguard against poor weather. There are also club displays and children's activities such as gem sieving. A variety of food is available from several caterers. On site camping registrations are obtainable at very economical rates, giving you the chance to enjoy a visit to the Northern Rivers as well as attending the Show. Anyone wishing to trade is advised that pre-booking is essential, since all available space has been committed in recent years and current occupants will be given the chance to book first.’

Information: Postal enquiries to P.O.Box 743, Lismore, NSW 2480, from bcopper@bluemaxx.com.au or visit the Website www.gemclublismore.org.au.

The Canberra Lapidary Club Gemcraft & Mineral Show

Over Saturday and Sunday the 2nd and 3rd of June. From 10.00am to 5.00pm
In the Exhibition Park (EPIC), Flemington Road, Mitchell, Canberra.

Minerals, fossils, opals, rough & cut gemstones, Lapidary equipment and supplies, Beads, jewellery and findings, Displays of members' collections, Demonstrations of cabochon making & faceting, FREE fossicking and gold detecting sessions, Food and drink available. Information available from : - www.canberralapidary.org.au

The WINDSOR JEWELLERY, BEADING, GEM & MINERAL SHOW

Saturday & Sunday, June 16th & 17th 2012
At the Windsor Function Centre on the corner of Dight & Macquarie Streets, Windsor.
Next door to Windsor Public School.

Saturday open from 9.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. & Sunday from 9.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
Admission \$5, children \$1. Light refreshments.
SALES of jewellery, gemstones, beads, opals, mineral specimens from all over the world,
tools and equipment for lapidary and beading work, metaphysical and healing crystals.
Inquiries to Peter Beckwith on 0412 333 150.

GEMKHANA 2012

In the Showground at Mudgee over the long weekend Saturday, September 29th 10.00am-5.00pm;
Sunday, September 30th 10.00am-5.00pm; & Monday, October 1st, 9.00am to midday.

'We are returning to Mudgee Showground this year. The competition brings entries from all across NSW and quite a few from interstate. Dealers and tailgaters will attend. We will have children's activities. Refreshments will be available. There is wheelchair access and plenty of parking. On-site camping is available.

Contacts are Una (Co-ordinator) 02 4759 2440, Marilyn 02 9635 8218, email to gemplapidarycouncilnsw.org.au or Website <http://www.gemplapidarycouncilnsw.org.au/gemkhana.html>
