



THE
MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF
NEW SOUTH WALES INC

C/o School of Natural Science
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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2013

The April Meeting will be held on Friday the 5th of April 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.

The program will comprise a lecture to be given by Professor Ken McQueen

‘Mercury Deposits and their Historic Mining in Australia and New Zealand’

Members are invited to bring in mercury-containing minerals to display to the Meeting and help illustrate the lecture.

MEMBER’S MINI AUCTION

Friday 3rd MAY

The annual **May Member’s Mini-Auction** will be held at the May 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 for a total of over \$2,500 realised. The Society takes no commission so if the member is not satisfied with the highest bid, he or she can bid for their own specimen or place a (realistic) reserve on it.

In order to provide a sale list in advance of the Auction information on specimens should be provided to Jim Sharpe ideally up to two weeks before the Sale, if not before. By post to : - 190 Ray Road, Epping, NSW 2121, Telephone :- (02) 9871 2502 or e-mail : - sharpe4min@tadaust.org.au

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 a mineral or boxes of minerals may be sold by silent auction. Just bring in a tray of specimens to leave on a table accompanied by a bid form which will be provided. No need to advise Jim in advance as these will not be listed. Please clearly label all individual specimens and boxes.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings will be held on the first Friday of each month this year except in June when the Society General Meeting has been cancelled because of the **Seminar** being held that month and October when the Meeting will be deferred to the second Friday because the first Friday is before a long weekend.

Subject to circumstances some changes to the following schedule of program subjects and speakers may have to be made in due course.

June 8th to 10th: **National Mineralogical Societies Joint Seminar.**

‘The Wonderful World of Minerals’

To be held in the Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club, Ryedale Road, West Ryde.

Because the Seminar is being held in Sydney over the 8th to 10th of June the Society General Meeting will be cancelled for this month.

July 5th: Lecture by Michael Waterhouse on the **Wau Bulolo goldfields in Papua New Guinea.**

August 2nd: Society AGM and the Betty Mayne Memorial Lecture.

September 6th: The program is not yet finalized but may include lectures on **Skarn Minerals** or **Pine Ridge Cassiterite.**

October 11th: (The first Friday in October is before a long weekend and the Society Meeting will therefore be deferred to the second Friday).
Member’s display of their favourite fluorites. Talk on **Fluorite** by Gary Sutherland.

November 1st: The program is not finalized but may include the lecture by George Stacey on –
‘Mt Isa - The Mine in the Spinifex’

December 6th: Annual Christmas Social and ‘Swap n’ Sell.

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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MARCH MEETING

February Kids with Cancer Sale

Thanks to the Donors

At the commencement of the March General Meeting Jim Sharpe reported that the sale of mineral specimens via the **Kids with Cancer Sale** at the February Meeting had raised \$960 for the charity and Jim warmly thanked all those members who had donated the specimens and those who had purchased them.

Mineralogical Societies Seminar:

The President, Dieter Mylius, reminded members about the forthcoming combined Seminar being held in Sydney over the second weekend in June at the **Ryde Leagues Club**. The event he recommended would surely be very interesting and affordable and the Committee was by now well along with finalising much of the planning, the catering, the speakers and venue and a Seminar Registration form would be distributed shortly. Registration would be \$80 with an extra \$45 for the Saturday evening dinner and Society members were recommended to make every effort to attend the event.

In due course volunteers would be needed for a number of tasks at the Seminar, for people to help welcoming visitors at the door and guiding them to the registration desk and at times helping re-arrange the chairs and tables in the conference room. So if any members felt able to help out over the Seminar weekend they were urged to make this known to any of the Committee members.

Field Trip to Coonabarabran:

John Chapman reported that after the information given to him and to the March Meeting about a collector in Coonabarabran who had a large amount of Garrawilla area zeolite specimens to sell he had organized a field trip to visit the collector. This would be over the weekend of the 16th and 17th of March and an e-mail with details of the trip would be sent out to all those who had expressed an interest in attending. Anyone not on e-mail was advised to call John by telephone. He had made inquiries about other sites to visit during the weekend and had been turned down for a visit to the Kandos Quarry whilst Mt Knowles near Mudgee would probably be allowed.

Another pending field trip was a visit to the Kulnura Quarry north of Sydney on Tuesday the 11th of June which was planned as part of the Seminar activities and would only be open to people who were registered as Seminar attendees.

Tucson Update

Peter Beckwith

In speaking about his latest visit to Tucson Peter Beckwith described it as a very interesting place, as always, but somewhat chaotic, especially for him trying to get around to as many of the dealers as possible in the time available, looking particularly for any new, interesting or exciting material or variations of older material. Towards the end of his report he advised that the Tucson show event was so big with so many dealers and smaller shows that even the determined visitor cannot see more than a proportion of the minerals on display and for sale.

In looking around however, there were a number of new finds or old sources of new specimens which were noticed and Peter Beckwith had managed to obtain a few examples of some of these. A new source of Moroccan vanadinite had been opened up providing specimens with large blocky crystals, many with a dust coating but some very bright red. Other new specimens from Morocco included barites, pyrolusite and sharply bladed specimens of haematite. These so resembled knife blades that the speaker speculated that he would have had difficulty carrying any of them as hand luggage and risking confiscation by customs as apparent weapons!.

As he spoke Peter Beckwith referred to a number of specimens which he had brought in to display and also moved around the World in terms of the new finds that he had seen at Tucson, from Morocco to Dalnegorsk which had produced some nice specimens of actinolite-included quartzes; Bulgaria; Mali with grossular garnets, quite dark in colour and with good crystal structure. China was as prolific as ever with a lot of material including nice quartzes and chalcopyrite coming out of the north-east area which used to be known as Inner Mongolia. Prices on the Chinese material however were very high.

Whilst there was quite an amount of material from Brazil there did not seem to very much new from South America as a whole. This was with the exception of Mexico with an impressive number of new finds on display. In the ten years that the speaker has been visiting Tucson he had never seen so much new material coming from Mexico. These included amounts of mottramite, wulfenites, and an interesting find of rosasite, a number of specimens speckled with hemimorphite, also amounts of apatite with some magnetite, and a new find of smithsonite, some specimens showing very good chatoyancy.

Overall Peter Beckwith admitted that whilst there was a great deal of material that he had seen, Tucson was so large, so vast, with too many places and shows to visit that he had little chance of seeing more than a proportion of the material and dealer's shows. Others who have been to Tucson would know that it is just not possible to see everything. In conclusion the speaker recommended that the visitor can only expect to try and get around to a portion of the shows and to take lots and lots of money!.

The second speaker for the evening was to have been George Stacey but the President advised that George had faced a health setback and was not able to give his lecture. Dieter Mylius wished George all the best for a full recovery and expressed the hope that he would be able to give his lecture later in the year.

In place of the previously-scheduled lecture another program had been organized comprising a series of short talks by members referring to their collecting or mineralogical experiences or to notable, unusual or significant specimens which they had brought in to display or demonstrate. Many of the talks were illustrated by members referring to specimens that they had brought in and to a number of photographs shown during the program.

‘Show and Tell’

John Behrens spoke first to relate three anecdotes about the unexpected things that may happen to the field collector. The first story illustrated a problem that many others may find familiar and will probably also have experienced in travelling about the bush in search of fossicking sites.

A number of years ago during a field trip to Broken Hill a Lapidary Club party including the speaker made a stopover at Cobar and got into conversation with a local old-timer who upon hearing that they were fossickers told them about a site with a lot of quartz and pyrite. He provided directions which in the event proved to be somewhat out-of-date. The party in two cars set off along a track which was supposed to cross a cattle grid after which they would come to a fork in the road and should take the left road. In coming to a fork without having crossed a grid the party decided to take one fork each and set off to look for the grid to get their bearings. Inevitably one of the roads further along had a second fork which the car on that road chose to follow and carried on, basically to get lost for some considerable time before eventually making its way back to the first car, stopped at the original first fork in the road.

After some more time a truck driver who had much more up-to-date knowledge of the local tracks drove up and asked the effectively stranded party if he could help. Upon being told about the directions which had involved locating a cattle grid the truck driver told them that the roads had been changed and the cattle grid removed many years ago and used to build a fence on a property!. This was the first time that John Behrens had ever heard of a cattle grid being removed at all. Almost always once the heavy grid is in place it stays for ever. In the event the party had lost so much time and it was getting late so they had to abandon looking for the site described and came home.

Another unexpected occurrence was when on another field trip to Eromanga the speaker's party stopped at Quilpie and accepted directions from another local who did advise taking care along the route he described. The directions involved travelling on a track with at intervals three cattle grids to cross. Shortly after they had got going a South Australian car came up behind the field trip convoy of some six cars, caravans and trailers and roared past showering them all with dust. Further on however the party in coming up to the third cattle grid were probably amused to observe the South Australian car stuck in ruts left by large trucks in the middle of a large depression filled with bull-dust which had concealed the ruts and which came half-way up his doors !. The fossicking party were obliging enough under the circumstances to help haul the impatient driver out of the trap.

As an aside to this story John Behrens mentioned that the stop at Quilpie was made at least in part to visit the pub there, the party presuming that this would be the last watering place on the way to Eromanga. In fact it turned out that there was a pub at Eromanga, which also doubles as the local mortuary since it is the only building with a cold room !.

A third story concerned the speaker acquiring a box of Broken Hill minerals from an older member of the Lapidary Club who was having to dispose of a large accumulation of field trip rocks collected by her late husband. The box was something of a trove of a variety of minerals including a small specimen with orange crystals which the speaker could not identify. In later asking Jim Sharpe to examine it he was told it was the fairly rare mineral raspite, the only one that John Behrens has seen and a lucky and unexpected find in a box which the widow might well have been expecting to throw away.

Asahel Bush spoke next about a very unusual-appearing specimen that he had brought in to display comprising a nodular and furrowed mass of rock. Members had been invited to suggest what it was and how it may have formed and John Chapman had been the only one to guess correctly. The specimen was a slab of lava from Mount St Helens in Washington State in the U.S. During the eruption there lava had flowed around and over a tree stump and gradually burnt down into the root system,

solidifying as it went. Effectively it was a lava cast of some of the tree root base reflecting the grain of the bark as it burnt through.

Graham Ogle spoke about some of his experiences in collecting Mount Vesuvius specimens. He had previously lectured to the Society about the site which he has visited and advised that he also on occasion would search through the Internet for unusual Vesuvius specimens which might be available. One of the more interesting parcels of specimens which he was able to acquire through E-Bay was from the United States and comprised a collection put together by an American airman who had been in Italy during the war. In March 1944 the airman had been stationed at an air base which the American Air Force had taken over at Naples situated not far from Mount Vesuvius. The volcano had erupted in March 1944 and the American base was seriously affected. The airmen had scrambled to get their planes out but lost a number of them which were badly damaged. During his time stationed in the Naples area the airman had taken the trouble to collect a number of items as mementoes of the area and taken them back to the States.

The parcel of specimens acquired from America was of rocks but also a few pieces of pottery and bronze which was interesting but since the speaker was aware of the practice of 'Vesuvian' artifacts and minerals possibly being manufactured in modern times by locals he did not place too much significance on them. However it just so happened that his daughter was taking her HSC last year and was being lectured in Ancient History by an expert in Vesuvian pottery from Macquarie University. In asking his daughter to take the pottery items to school to show the lecturer Graham Ogle was pleasantly surprised to be told that the lecturer had been very impressed with the pottery and had pronounced it all genuine.

The speaker was later invited to the University to be shown their collection and whilst there it was explained to him about the Red Slip pottery style which was established at Pompeii where some of his pottery had originated. Another indicator of the provenance of the pottery was the mineral leucite which is found in the Mount Somma deposits and is also present in the pottery. Other pottery items from the speaker's acquisition were Etruscan but also of the same vintage. They were variously intended as vessels to hold perfume and one was an oil lamp. The few bronze items were also genuine, probably from about the same period and with very intricate engraving, of the figure Pan and other similar figures in garden scenes with fruit trees. Overall the parcel of specimens from the U.S. had turned out to be a very interesting and unexpectedly pleasantly significant acquisition.

John Chapman presented another fortuitous story, about having acquired an old collection, a dream for many members and one only occasionally realised. He had received an e-mail from a lady who said that her grandfather had a collection of Broken Hill minerals and in going to look at the collection he decided to buy it. The collector had been a manager of the Sulphide Corporation at Newcastle and had assembled the collection in 1923. The specimens displayed a lot of damage since unfortunately the collector's granddaughter did not know enough about minerals to have prevented her children from playing with the specimens! In spite of the damage the specimens were quite an impressive variety of species, of cerrusite, pyromorphite, stolzite, silvers and the prizes of the collection, two native coppers which although bearing some damage were cabinet-display quality.

Dieter Mylius described a fossicking expedition which turned out to be unexpectedly concerning at intervals. In 2010 he and his wife were camping with friends at Grassy Head on the north coast and knowing that there were some old antimony mines in the Taylors Arm district decided to try and find some of them. Led by a metallogenic map the speaker found a track to follow into very thick bush to eventually find a property named Kiora which he stopped at to ask for directions. A fellow named Gary appeared who although given to carrying a large machete turned out to be very obliging and offered to show the speaker where the mine was. This involved driving carefully along a track, barely-visible due to two-foot high thick grass, for about two kilometers, taking an invisible turn for another five hundred meters and being stopped by a large tree across the road after which the party had to walk.

As soon as they started walking Dieter noted with some concern that the bush had effectively closed in behind them hiding any trace of civilisation completely. In asking about the danger from snakes he was told that the grass was more dangerous than snakes and would cause blindness if anyone fell into it! The walk took about two hours when the guide announced that they had arrived, ... only for there to be nothing immediately visible, thick bush and grass everywhere. Gradually however various quite large features of a mining operation were discerned in spite of the 'jungle' everywhere. There were the remains of a railway and an opening into the side of a hill large enough to have driven a bus into.

In spite of a thorough search however no specimens were found and the party made its way back to the car and the Kiora homestead. Once there Gary the guide offered the speaker a specimen of stibnite that he had found a few years previously and that was the only souvenir that Dieter Mylius was able to bring away from that particular expedition, other than the memory of some serious jungle-bashing. He was also able to report that the Taylors Arm village did have a pub with cold beer and meat pies .

Graham Delaforce took the floor next to speak also about finding specimens unexpectedly in unusual places. Whilst he was with the RAAF in Townsville the speaker went to Cairns for the day and in walking around the town found a bazaar and a shop with a specimen with golden calcite crystals on show. In asking the vendor how much it cost was told that it was \$5 so the speaker bought it immediately. Since there was another specimen in the same cabinet which was an erythrite from Mt Cobalt he bought that as well.

Years later in 1995 the speaker was in Tasmania and in poking around Salamanca Markets in Hobart on a Sunday morning found another small shop with a specimen for \$25 which he also bought immediately. The novelty of this purchase was that in order to transport the specimen home Graham Delaforce, no doubt accessing his Air Force connections, managed to arrange to get the specimen carried on a DC3 'Goony-Bird' plane!

John Rankin apologised that he did not have any stories to tell but had brought a few unusual specimens to display and invited members to examine them and suggest ways that they may have formed. One notably unusual specimen was of a piece of massive wolfram from Wolfram Camp which also contained bismuth in rod forms. The specimen had originally been collected by a Jimmy Johnson who for a time was the metallurgist at O.T.Lempriere, then processing ore from Wolfram Camp, and was later acquired by the speaker.

Arthur Roffey related a number of stories of lucky acquisitions from his long experience of buying specimens or parcels of specimens and travelling around the World, notably to the United States, on collecting trips. One rewarding purchase many years ago was as the result of Arthur seeing an advertisement in the American Lapidary Journal for a parcel of zeolites, 60 specimens for twenty American dollars, including freight. At that time \$20 American was about AU\$25 and the speaker sent off an order. After six months Arthur Roffey had begun to despair of seeing it but the parcel eventually arrived. It was very securely packaged in a stout wooden box covered in stitched linen. In later showing the specimens to Albert Chapman the speaker was told that they were better than the ones that Albert had! So what had been the speaker's first overseas purchase had turned out to be quite a coup.

Another collecting experience occurred during one of Arthur Roffey's annual visits with his wife to the Tucson Show when he was told about a widowed lady in Pasadena who was gradually selling off her late husband's collection. In visiting the lady the Roffeys were pleasantly surprised to be offered various mainly lapidary materials initially at prices so low that they were embarrassed to pay this and offered more. Unfortunately the lady would not sell too much of the collection at any one time and Arthur eventually made about five visits, one each year he went to the Tucson Show, buying an amount of material each time. On the last visit he was shown a World War Two ammunition box filled with fluorites from the Blanchard Mine in New Mexico and for which he paid only US\$50. Also a lucky acquisition.

Jeremy Taylor-Edwards described some of his experiences in field collecting, notably scrambling and clambering about and into old mine pits, shafts and tunnels. One trip had been to the Torrington area and to a place supposedly actually named 'Woop Woop' !. In parking his car in the general area he intended to search which was very thickly wooded the speaker decided that in commencing to walk around if he walked in a circle he should not get lost. In finding a shaft and unloading his equipment including several pieces of a long ladder the speaker clambered down to find the going becoming awkward with timber and large boulders leaning about but some quartz exposed invitingly in a wall out of reach. At one point however the speaker in having to crawl through a narrow gap moved on to his back and found that his large torch in illuminating the roof of the tunnel above revealed what he described as about three thousand Huntsman spiders! This apparently discouraged him from continuing his examination of the particular shaft and he quickly climbed out.

An unexpected acquisition that the speaker made was as a result of getting into conversation with a mine electrician who worked at the Appin Colliery and who upon hearing that the speaker collected minerals announced that he had an amount of white crystals that he had collected from a seam about 500 meters underground. The speaker visited the miner and was shown an amount of calcite crystals which would have been quite presentable if the miner's children had not been playing with them. However the miner indicated that he would be able to acquire more from the colliery in due course and after only a week was able to telephone the speaker to announce that he had a quantity available and Jeremy Taylor-Edwards arranged to buy all of them. A few were on display to the Meeting. The crystals were mostly fairly clear scalenohedral prisms some with interesting almost Christmas-tree-like quartz druses inside.

Gary Sutherland admitted that he has only had the opportunity to purchase two collections in his collecting experience. The first purchased was one that had originally been started by a collector in the 1920s named Stan Ashley and later acquired and added to by very long-time collector and occasional Society member (in the 1980s), Gertrude Thornley. In visiting the seller in Auburn the speaker found that there was a very large quantity of material including lapidary slabs and stones, fossils, shells and amounts of Broken Hill material, Peak Downs and the Chillagoe area, all tightly packed into a very large shed.

There was so much material that the speaker clearly could not take on all of it and he left all the lapidary slabs and stone. As it was he took away about eighty flats, or Avocado boxes, of minerals. There were a number of prize or notable specimens among the collection including a magnificent angel-fish fossil from Blackwater in Queensland. Another notable specimen in the collection was a large piece of matrix with beautiful balls of azurite and malachite.

The other collection purchased was that of a small but notable one acquired from Society member Chris Parkinson when Chris had his Rock Shop in Lane Cove and was selling up there. Chris had a relative who had known George Smith quite well and the mineralogist had put together a small collection of minerals for the relative, then living in Victoria. The specimens were accompanied by George Smith hand-written labels, some of which the speaker still had. As he spoke Gary Sutherland was continually showing many photographs of the more impressive specimens from the collections. He finished his talk by showing a picture of a fine Herodsfoot bournonite which he had seen on an American dealer's Website and bought for \$100.

Peter Beckwith asked to add a brief points about the pitfalls of looking at collections with the view to purchase. In going with Arthur Roffey to look at a collection in St Marys it was found that every room and the verandah of a normal-sized house was absolutely packed with rows of boxes of rocks, including much of the back yard, side passage and the shed. Possibly the best specimens including some very nice Broken Hill pieces were on display in the lounge room. The collector asked how much the speaker was prepared to pay and Peter Beckwith suggested \$500. The owner exclaimed that the collection

was worth much more than that to which the speaker replied that if he were to be allowed to take only the specimens he wanted, the ones in the lounge room, he would pay \$10,000 but if the owner wanted him to take everything, the price would be \$500! The lesson was that just because one was looking at a large collection it did not mean that it was all good.

Over the final few minutes of the program a number of members offered various points, comments and questions in regard to their collecting experiences, queries and comments about various specimens and exchanging a few items of information before the President declared the Meeting concluded.

FIELD TRIP to Airly Mountain and Mount Knowles.

Saturday & Sunday, 16th & 17th of March

REPORT on the FIELD TRIP by JOHN CHAPMAN

'The first stop on this field trip was Airly Mountain where the wonderful Col Ribeaux took us to the top of the mountain in his four wheel drive to see narrow gorges, wonderful views and his old diamond workings. We were amazed that Jerry Taylor-Edwards was able to get his four wheel drive van up there intact. Then it was heads down and bums up sifting through remnants of the diamond concentrate. This produced a number of small sapphires, zircons, tourmalines and a couple of tiny diamonds.

On Saturday night we had a pleasant waterside picnic dinner at Mudgee.

On Sunday we visited the Mount Knowles Quarry east of Mudgee. Unfortunately very little 'ranceite' was found but people were happy with finds of calcite, dolomite and quartz. Allen Kemp, the quarry manager, was most obliging and helped direct us to the more productive areas.

Thanks to everyone for making it such a pleasant outing.'

John Chapman
March 2013

The **March Field Trip** had originally primarily been intended to visit a Garrawilla zeolite specimen collector in Coonabarabran but after virtually no commitments were given by members prepared to travel as far as that town over a normal weekend the itinerary was changed. Accordingly the Trip was re-arranged, and commendably at short notice by John Chapman, to visit Airly Mountain and the Mt Knowles quarry near Mudgee. About nine members attended the trip first visiting Airly Mountain which is a few kilometers turn-off from Capertee on the Lithgow to Mudgee Road, then staying overnight in Mudgee and visiting the Mt Knowles quarry on Sunday.

Airly Mountain is significant partly for its spectacular scenery and the novelty of extremely rugged trails having been built, first to get up on top of the mountain, which turns out to be very far from flat, and a number of others crisscrossing the top. In the time that the Society party was on the mountain several other 4WD vehicles with groups of people were travelling about. Apparently the mountain is of interest to seriously bush-bashing weekend 4WD visitors and clubs.

The mountain is also significant for diamonds having been discovered there and the presence of the local identity, Col Ribeaux, having established a property at the foot of the mountain many years ago, putting in most of the trails up and over the top and proceeding to mine the deposits. When gold prospectors were working the area around Mount Airly, and no doubt just about everywhere else in Australia, a few very small diamonds were found and the prospectors followed these up on to the top and found a few more. Eventually several small deposits of diamondiferous gravel were found and opened up and according to Col Ribeaux, some several tens of thousands of dollars worth of diamonds, none much larger than match-head size, were recovered. Mt Airly is accordingly one of a very few sites in New South Wales where diamonds in any quantity have been discovered, the main sites having been Copeton and Bingara although a Department of Primary Resources report refers to a total of 120 sites in NSW, *‘several with significant recorded production’*.



Airly Mountain from the Lithgow - Mudgee road



heads down and bums up

Remains of the diamond mining work on Airly are still visible with several entrances to shafts with associated timberwork and corrugated iron, largely fallen in, and even the remains of a small ‘flying fox’ system to be seen and a patch of processed gravel that the Society party sat down upon and commenced raking through. Over the years of his work on the mountain Col Ribeaux had gradually built accommodation facilities comprising a ‘Nissen’ hut, BBQ hearth, and other smaller buildings on a rare area of flat ground and including an impressively large, for the top of a mountain, water reservoir.



Col and Jerry searching the processed gravel....



...and a few finds of sapphire, tourmaline and zircon.



Col Ribeaux with some of his collection



Mount Knowles quarry

After visiting Mount Airly the Society party made its way to Mudgee and stayed in chalets in one of the town camping grounds. The following morning the party made its way to the Mt Knowles quarry which is a few kilometers to the north-east of Mudgee to spend all morning to about 1.00 pm searching for specimens. The quarry is a dolomite and limestone deposit but also processes material from the Buckaroo quarry and specimens of calcite, quartz and dolomite were found.

The quarry has also been the source of a rare mineral, previously thought to be ranceite, a calcium manganese oxide, but which according to David Colchester who is currently working on its analysis, may turn out to be a chemically very similar and related but thus far un-named new mineral. On this trip, David, who was probably the most obvious person who knew what to look for, was the only one to find any specimens of the rare mineral, comprising one small piece of rock with a smattering of pin-head-sized shiny dark-grey crystals.



On one of the dumps at Mt Knowles, working hard.



In the quarry, looking around.

After leaving Mt Knowles the party made its way back to Sydney, considerably delayed by traffic congested due to the inevitable road works over the Blue Mountains route.

LAPIDARY EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS FOR SALE

At the March General Meeting Society member Bob Meyer-Gleaves informed the members that he had learned of a large quantity of lapidary equipment and materials for sale as a consequence of the disposing of a deceased estate in Schofields. The equipment comprises a substantial amount of lapidary machinery, grinding wheels, bits, tools, grits and a number of books as well as a large amount of rough and cut slabs of many shapes and sizes.

The person to speak to about the sale is a Mr Michael Foord on his mobile telephone, number 0401 311 248. Mr Foord has been contacted and advises that whilst some of the material has already been sold most of it is still available. Potential buyers are asked to make arrangements with him by phone to view the material since he is a fairly busy man with a metal-working business which he is operating and would not be able to deal with visitors if they turned up without appointment. He also advises that at times he might not be able to answer his mobile phone immediately and asks that callers should not leave voice-messages. If he cannot immediately answer his telephone callers should try again later to reach him.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CANBERRA ROCK SWAP 2013

13th and 14th of April

The Canberra Rock Swap, organized by the Canberra Lapidary Club and by now well-established as an annual event is being held in the EPIC park alongside Northbourne Avenue in Canberra over Saturday and Sunday the 13th and 14th of April from 8.30 am to 5.00pm each day. Some of the attendees would start arriving and setting up on Friday the 12th when the camping area will be already open. Entrance is FREE for the public whereas campers and vendors are asked to register.

The Rock Swap is entirely a tail-gating sale and a substantial social interaction event and normally is attended by several dozen vehicular groups and campers and many day visitors. Organised social events include the 'Banger Barby' on Friday and the 'Pizza Night' on Saturday.

'Registration Forms must be completed and returned as soon as possible. Unless otherwise agreed, payments should be received by 13 March 2013. If you are unable to attend, any payments will be fully refunded (except for booked tables). We can cater for people who want to arrive early or stay on after the Rock Swap'.

Registration forms and more information are available from the Canberra Lapidary Club on website www.canberralapidary.org.au or from the Rock Swap convenor, Norm Menadue on e-mail :- nmenadue@optusnet.com.au , telephone (02) 6258 6631, or mobile 0407 718 347.

Registration forms for the Rock Swap will be available at the (N.S.W. Society) General Meetings or from the Secretary, George Laking. Forms can also be e-mailed or hard copies posted if requested.

The 23rd Annual LISMORE GEMFEST

Presented by the Lismore Gem & Lapidary Club Inc

Being held over Saturday and Sunday the 18th & 19th of May 2013 in the Lismore Showground.
Opens 9 am – 5 pm Saturday, 9 am – 3 pm Sunday.

'Handcrafted jewellery, Gemstones, Minerals, Healing Crystals, Fossils, Meteorites, Undercover displays and stalls, Great bargains for Rockhounds, Children's activities, Lapidary craft demonstrations'

'This event was hailed in the Gold Gem and Treasure Magazine October 2012 issue as the best and largest gem and crystal show in Australia by patrons who attend other interstate shows and Gemborees. We already have the dealer hall fully booked with 26 dealers and expect in excess of 130 tailgaters from various parts of Eastern Australia including ACT, NSW, QLD and VIC. We had a large number of visitors including collectors from NZ and the USA'.

'Anyone intending to visit NSW prior to the Seminar in June should take note that the LISMORE GEMFEST is held only a couple of weeks before the June long weekend and more than rivals the Gemboree. Accordingly interstate/overseas visitors might like to incorporate Lismore in their itinerary and perhaps also the New England/Hunter areas prior to the Seminar.'

Information: Postal enquiries to P.O.Box 743, Lismore, NSW 2480,
General enquiries to Bruce Copper on 02 6688 8280 or e-mail : - bcopper@bluemaxx.com,
Tailgate enquiries to Jan Thompson on telephone 02 6621 4703.
or visit the Website www.gemclublismore.org.au.

THE 36th NATIONAL MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES JOINT SEMINAR 2013

The 2013 Seminar is being hosted by the Mineralogical Society of N.S.W. Inc in Sydney over the Queen's Birthday long weekend, Saturday 8th to Monday 10th of June 2013 on the theme : -

'The Wonderful World of Minerals'

The Seminar will be held in the Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club, Ryedale Road, West Ryde, Sydney. The Leagues Club is in the corner of Wattle Street with Ryedale Road about one hundred meters from the West Ryde suburban railway station and two hundred meters from the junction of Ryedale with Victoria Road.

Most Seminar activities will be held in the Club which has substantial convention and catering facilities. Activities will include the Seminar dinner on Saturday evening 8th of June and mineral and micro-mount displays and sales on Monday the 10th of June.

Activities to be held away from the Club will include a field trip to Kulnura Quarry for zeolite collecting on Tuesday the 11th, Australian Museum mineral collection visits arranged for Monday the 10th and private collection visits, to be arranged but probably also on Monday.

Seminar Registration forms with preliminary program information including information for Interstate visitors and attendees from outside Sydney about suitable accommodation in the West Ryde area have been distributed by e-mail. Hard copies will be available at the General Meeting or from the Secretary, George Laking, and are also available through the Society Website.

WINDSOR JEWELLERY, BEADING, GEM & MINERAL SHOW

Saturday & Sunday, June 15th & 16th 2013
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.

Other shows by the above exhibitors through 2013 are : -

24th & 25th of August at the Panthers Club, Penrith, (more information to follow).

23rd & 24th of November, Windsor Function Centre, Windsor.

GEMKHANA 2013

In the Showground at Mudgee over the long weekend Saturday October 5th - 10.00am-5.00pm;
Sunday October 6th - 9.00am-5.00pm; & Monday, October 7th - 9.00am to midday.

'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 Arthur 02 4572 5812, Marilyn 02 9635 8218,
www.gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au for info and link to secretary.'

Parramatta-Holroyd Lapidary Club Annual Exhibition

Friday 8th, Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th of November. From 9am to 4pm each day
At the Club Rooms at ??? Fullargar Road, Wentworthville, Sydney.

'Competition, sales, demonstrations, children's activities, sand sieve,
fossicking heap, refreshments. Wheelchair access and plenty of parking
Contact the Club on 02 9636 7843.'
