



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 JUNE 2023

The June Meeting will be held in the clubrooms of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club at 73 Fullagar Road, Wentworthville, at 7.30 pm on Friday the 2nd of June

There will be a lectures by Luis Martins and Graham Ogle :-

‘Pegmatites: What are they and why do we like them?’

Luis Martins

The Levant Mine and the Royal Cornwall Museum

Graham Ogle

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS and PROGRAMS

July 7th: The program is not finalised but will include a sale for the **Kids with Cancer Foundation**.

August 4th: Society A.G.M. and Memorial Lecture.

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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FIELD TRIPS

Weekend Fieldtrip to Lowes Mount State Forest.

Visiting Lowes Mount State Forest over the weekend of the Sat 17th – Sun 18th June, to examine some of the skarn sites. The Society has visited some of these sites in the past and we are looking for a couple of new sites within the skarn area.

Accommodation is to be arranged by the attendees, Oberon is nearby. Attendees must provide their own transport. All members are welcome if they are currently SWMS accredited and financial. Safety gear and PPE is a must.

Trip leaders: Mark Walters & Denis O'Brien. Any interested persons please contact Mark via email on *markwalterstafe@gmail.com*

Regards,
Mark

FOR SALE

A few years ago the Committee purchased a Public Address sound system for use at Society meetings. It has become apparent that the equipment is surplus to requirements, the acoustics in the Lapidary Club meeting room being adequate for speakers to be heard without amplification.

Accordingly the Committee has decided that the equipment should be sold and is inviting offers from members to purchase it. The equipment is a powerful DIGITECH 100W 8-Channel PA system with two large speaker amplifiers, two wireless, (cordless), microphones, a remote-control programming key-pad and two instruction manuals. The equipment is fairly heavy at about twenty kilos, is completely unused with all components accompanying and contained in the original box.

The original cost of the PA system was over \$600 but the Committee has decided to offer to sell the equipment for \$200. It is currently being stored by the secretary, George Laking, and any members interested in purchasing it may contact him by phone, mobile 0468 387 899, to arrange a viewing. The equipment can be transported to a Society General Meeting but preferably after inquiries from serious potential buyers, it is, as noted, quite heavy.

The MAY MEETING

The program at the May Meeting comprised the Annual Member's Mineral auction which was again conducted cheerfully and competently by Glenn Brown. There were some 67 lots and an amount of silent auction specimens and trays. By the end of the evening total sales had exceeded \$3,100 with about eight lots selling for over \$100 each. These included specimens of wavellite, olshanskyite, galena, malachite, native copper and pyromorphite.

Thanks are due to the auctioneer and to Marian Ong who very commendably has made a practice for many months now of bringing in a substantial amount of delicious snack foods for the members.

”The New Minerals Gallery at the Australian Museum”

Ross Pogson

At the Society March General Meeting the main lecture of the evening was given by Ross Pogson, Collection Manager and Scientific Officer for Mineralogy & Petrology and Group Manager, Geosciences & Archaeology, at the Australian Museum. With the aid of a number of images Ross described the New Minerals Gallery in considerable detail.

Ross commenced his lecture by delivering the Museum’s official promotional statement *‘The New Mineral Gallery is part of the Australian Museum’s transformative, renovation and expansion program, made possible as part of Project Discover, Phase 2, supported by the New South Wales Government and opened on the 9th of December 2022 by the then Minister for the Arts, the honorable Ben Franklin MLC.*

The New Gallery has taken three years of planning and designing, almost four weeks to install and is now finally there. The project has provided a wonderful scientific and educational resource and is one of the premier displays in Australia. It is on Level 1 in the Museum and covers a floor area of approximately 360 square meters. In the course of his lecture the speaker advised that he would take the audience on a virtual tour of the Gallery, describing many of the cases and displays as he went along.

There are many different themes in the new Gallery displays compared to the 1986 gallery and the aim has been to appeal to a much wider audience such as students of mineralogy and gemology, to professionals, amateurs, and students of all educational levels. In fact to anyone who has an interest in the Earth Sciences or simply enjoys the beauty of minerals, the variety, colours, symmetry and shapes. The exhibition has a comprehensive 1,800 specimens on display and these have been very carefully selected from the Museum collection of 60,700 minerals and 19,300 rocks or a total of about 80,000 specimens.

Museum visitors who remember the 1986 gallery specimens were advised that all their favourites will still be on display in the new Gallery. The new displays also incorporate specimens acquired since the 1986 gallery was assembled and which are now on show for the first time whereas also on display are specimens which had been exhibited in gallery assemblies before 1986.

Ross Pogson referred to being taken to the Museum as a child and seeing specimens probably from the 1940s displays which did not appear in the 1986 gallery but which he remembered seeing many years before then. He had been pleased to put them back into the current exhibition. Ross had been given a generous purchasing budget and had bought some further specimens especially for display in the New Gallery, notably of specimens of polished banded iron formation and oxidized copper ore from W.A. aquamarine crystals from Namibia, epidote crystals from Peru and fluorite from China and England.

Proceeding with his virtual tour the speaker described the first display case which the visitor would encounter at the entrance to the Gallery, of a case containing the magnificent slab of polished folded ironstone formation, one and a half by two and a half meters across.



Just inside the foyer of the Gallery is a display case of opal and then the visitor is presented with a very large show case with no particular theme but which shows the extensive and magnificent spectrum, variety and diversity of the mineral kingdom. It contains many of the Museum's best specimens, some being very old having been originally purchased in 1878 by one of the Museum trustees of the time who was overseas visiting the Great Paris Exhibition of that year.



A few of the specimens in the 'MINERALS' case were described in some detail, the speaker referring to his next images, taken closer. The specimen of molybdenite from the Allies Mine near Deepwater is acknowledged to be the best specimen of its type of that mineral in the World and has been on continuous display since it was first acquired. Also pointed out were the magnificent amethyst geode and a large topaz crystal from Brazil, a new specimen of epidote from Peru and fine wulfenites at the far right of the case.



On the left of the second shelf is a specimen of molybdenite from the Allies Mine near Deepwater.



The Amethyst geode and the topaz crystal in front of it are from Brazil

There are actually two general themes for the whole Gallery. One is called 'Making Minerals' and the cases are intended to demonstrate eight environments of mineral formation. These are volcanism, (agates and thunder eggs), zeolites and associated minerals, hydrothermal processes, evaporites, pegmatites, gossans and cave formations.

Cases also displayed Native Elements, methods for Classifying and Identifying minerals, Fluorescent Minerals, Silica Minerals, Sulphides and Sulpho-Salts and Synthetic Minerals as well as Zeolites, Hydrothermal minerals, Evaporites, Gossan minerals and Cave Formations. The Cave Formation cases included a mock-up of a cave showing stalactites.



'MINERALS' case, right end.



The Opal display in the Foyer

The cases have a title of the theme and description of the display on a plaque or on the rear of the case whereas the individual specimens and exhibits were all numbered with the identifications and descriptions provided on a panel in the front. The exhibits include a mixture of Albert Chapman specimens and a number from other previous Museum collections.

The second theme for the gallery is of cases showing minerals from around Australia demonstrating the various structural geological provinces such as the Lachlan Fold Belt, (NSW, Queensland and Tasmania), the Copper Belt of South Australia, the Flinders Ranges, Broken Hill, the Granite Belt of eastern Australia, the Pilbara and Yilgarn blocks of W.A. the Harts Range, N.T and the Far North. There is actually a separate Broken Hill display in the Museum Long Gallery which contains some of the Museum's best Broken Hill specimens. In the event the speaker was prevailed upon to leave those specimens in the Long Gallery.

Another group of cases showed minerals and exhibits referring to a general display on mining and quarrying. One fine example from a copper mine was a large slab of copper ore from W.A. Other cases showed gold samples, including a model of the Holtermann nugget and a photograph of its finder, Bernhardt Otto Holtermann.



Specimen of oxidized copper ore from the DeGrussa mine in W.A.



The First European Gold Mines in Australia



The Holtermann Nugget

The Holtermann nugget was found in 1872 at the Star of Hope Gold Mine, Hill End, New South Wales. Although dubbed the Holtermann Nugget, the gold was not, in fact, a nugget. Weighing in at 285kg, it was a mixture of gold, quartz and slate from which after crushing and processing 93.2kg of gold was extracted. As manager of the Star of Hope, German migrant and prospector Bernhardt Otto Holtermann was credited with the discovery although it was actually found by miners in a drive at 150 feet depth. The discovery of the Holtermann Nugget made headlines around the world, and Holtermann himself became one of the richest men in Australia at the time. With his newfound fortune, Holtermann built a palatial mansion in St Leonards, Sydney, (now in North Sydney). His house still exists and is now a school with an image of him in a stained glass window.

At the rear of the Gallery there is a section on Collectors and Collections. After almost two hundred years of existence the Australian Museum has gradually built up its collections by field collecting, donations, purchases, exchanges and bequests. In recognition the New Gallery has a few cases presenting a selection of specimens originally part of private collections.

The private collectors included Albert Chapman, Warren Sommerville and Sir Douglas Mawson. The Mawson Collection comprised some 2,000 specimens collected during his 1911-1914 expedition to Antarctica. Albert and Warren were both founding members of the Mineralogical Society and built up World-renowned collections. The Sommerville Collection was placed on display in Bathurst in 2004, renamed the Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum and has superlative specimens of minerals and fossils on display.



Selections of the collections of Warren Sommerville,
Sir Douglas Mawson



and Albert Chapman

A table in the centre of the Gallery floor displayed a mixed selection of colourful and impressive specimens, from a number of sources but including many from the Albert Chapman collection.

Next referred to were cases displaying examples of the Museum's meteorite collection which is the largest in Australia with over 750 specimens. There is a good representation of the full range of types of meteorites, stony, stony-iron, nickel-iron and chondritic. Some of the specimens were of pieces of larger meteorites, the Mundrabilla meteorite probably having originally weighed about 22 tonnes but which broke up on impact. The Museum has a 617 kg piece of the Mundrabilla.



The Mundrabilla meteorite, (piece).



Early Earth, Comets, Impactites and Meteorites from the Moon and Mars.



The final few display cases demonstrated were of the Museum's gemstone and gem mineral collection.



The New Australian Museum Mineral Gallery



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Gem & Crystal Expo

Hosted by AGAME and the Bankstown and Districts Lapidary Club in the Greenacre Community Centre, at 87 Waterloo Rd. Greenacre. Over the weekend of Saturday the 3rd and Sunday the 4th of June:

Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewellery Exhibition

Annual Show by the Campbelltown and Districts Lapidary Club in the Greg Percival Community Centre, Ingleburn, over Saturday and Sunday the 8th & 9th of July.

Christmas in July “Open Day” – by the Illawarra Lapidary Club Inc

Sunday 16 July, – 9am to 2pm – FREE ENTRY. At 51 Meadow Street, Tarrawanna. ‘Club members selling Mineral Specimens, Fossils, Lapidary Materials, Jewellery & more . Morning Tea and Sausage Sizzle Lunch available. You can find us at our website <https://illawarralapidaryclub.com.au> or like and follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IllawarraLC>’

Central Coast Lapidary Club Annual Rock Auction.

Being held at the Central Coast Lapidary Club rooms - 10 Ourimbah Creek Road, Ourimbah, Central Coast, on Saturday the 22nd of July. For information contact Secretary: secretary@cclcinc.org

2023 NSW GEMKHANA

The NSW Jewellery, Gems, Crystals & Minerals Show, GEMKHANA 2023, will be held in the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Show Grounds, 40 Racecourse Rd, at Clarendon, - near the Richmond RAAF base, over the 23rd and 24th of September. Featuring:- Hand crafted Jewellery, Faceted Stones, Polished Stones (Cabochons), Stone Carving, Minerals, Fossils and Crystals.

Gem & Craft Show 2023 – Inverell & District Lapidary Club Inc

Being held over the 13th, 14th, 15th October. Field Trips 15th To 20th – Open House – 13th To 20th in the Inverell Lapidary Centre, Mcliveen Street Inverell.

For further information:- Inverell Gem and Craft Show Program 2023.

‘Crystal, Gem & Jewellery Show’

To be hosted by the Central Coast Lapidary Club at the Mingara Events Centre, Wyong Road, Tumby Umbi, over the 14th & 15th of October.

The 45th Annual Seminar of the Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia

To be held over the 5th to the 10th of November at the Grindelwald Conference Centre, Tamar Valley Resort, Grindelwald, Northern Tasmania, (near Launceston).

Field trips and Gem and Mineral Show visits after the seminar. For further information :- <http://www.mineral.org.au/seminar/seminar23.html>

45th Annual Seminar of the Mineralogical Societies of Australasia: “Granite-related minerals”

Tasmania, 5 – 10th November 2023

Grindelwald Conference Centre, Tamar Valley Resort,
Grindlewald, Northern Tasmania

Tentative Program (including related events):

- Sun 5th - Tues 7th Nov 2023 – Field Trips (NE Tas)
- Wed 8th Nov 2023 – Conference and Evening Dinner
- Thurs 9th Nov – Conference with Micro Session
- Friday 10th Nov – Transport day to Zeehan, West Coast, Tas.
- Sat 11th Nov – Sun 12th Nov - Zeehan Gem & Mineral Fair
- Mon 13th Nov – Field trip, Zeehan area
- Tues 14th – Thurs 16th– Free Days
- Fri 17th – Transport day to Launceston
- Sat 18th – Sun 19th - Launceston Gem & Mineral Show



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