



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 MARCH 2019

The March Meeting will be held on Friday the 1st of March at 7.30 pm in the clubrooms of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club at 73 Fullagar Road, Wentworthville.

The program at the Meeting will comprise a talk to be given by John Chapman on :-

Gypsum Occurrences in Cyprus

The talk will be followed by a lecture to be given by Graham Ogle on :-

Vesuvius Visited.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

Not all meeting programs for the rest of this year are finalised and suggestions from members would always be appreciated. In addition a member may be able to provide a 'mini-talk' or short report on some mineralogical item of news or information. If so please inform John Chapman or Dieter Mylius that a report can be made and the member will be invited to deliver the talk to the Meeting.

April 5th : There will be a mini-talk to be given by Dieter Mylius on the **Kyloe Copper mine** near Adaminaby and a lecture given by Mellissa Murray on '**Magnificent Minerals in Museum collections: The Albert Chapman Collection.**

May 3rd : Member's annual **Auction.**

June 14th (Second Friday): The program for the June Meeting is not yet finalised.

July 5th : There will be a lecture given by David Colchester on '**Why Rely on Nature When You Can Make Your Own Minerals**'. There will also be a report to be given by Paul Meszaros on :- '**The NSW Economic Rock and Mineral Collection – Latest Developments**'.

August 2nd : A.G.M. The Mayne/Walker Memorial lecture may be given by Peter Williams and Jim Sharpe on :- '**Secondary Copper minerals of the Mt Isa District.**

September 6th : Program not finalised.

October 11th (Second Friday): There will be a lecture on **Mineral Museums in Australia and Overseas** by Dieter Mylius and Graham Ogle.

2018 Society Membership Subscriptions: A Reminder

Membership subscriptions were due from January 1st. Members are recommended to pay their subscriptions by direct debit as much as possible which should be the most convenient method of payment and which also provides a bank record of the transaction. Ordinarily receipts would not be issued for direct debit payments.

Members paying subs please note: The payer should be sure to enter his or her name into the description or memo line in their bank account direct debit window so that the Society will know from whom the payment has been made. The phrase 'Minsoc sub' would not be sufficient to identify the member. Without the payer's name being entered into the memo line the debit entry into the Society account would identify only the bank from which the payment is being made but not the individual member.

A few members have asked for the name of the Society's bank to arrange their direct debit. The Society bank is the Commonwealth although the BSB number 062016 given following is specific to the bank.

Account Name: Mineralogical Society of NSW Inc.
Commonwealth Bank: BSB: 062016
Society Account number: 28023647

THANK YOU

A big thank you to the members who donated mineral specimens for the **Kids with Cancer** sale at the February meeting. The sale was well received by the members who attended the Meeting with almost all the donated specimens sold and accruing over \$1,300 for the Kids with Cancer Foundation.

'The Kids with Cancer Foundation Australia, (<https://www.kidswithcancer.org.au/>) is a non-profit Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and registered charity with the 'Australian Charities & Not for Profit Commission, (ACNC). All donations are 100% for family assistance and the cancer wards in children's hospitals with no management fees taken.'

The MAY MEETING SOCIETY AUCTION

The annual **Society Auction** will be held at the 3rd of May Meeting and will take up the entire evening from 7.30 pm to about 9.30pm. There has to be a limit of eighty on the number of specimens which can be auctioned in one night so members intending to enter lots in the Auction are asked to limit themselves to ten specimens each. Please clearly label all your specimens and boxes.

During the Auction if someone feels that bidding on any of their specimens is not proceeding high enough they can bid for the specimen themselves to take it back. The Society takes no commission on the sales and will not enter into any transactions which must be entirely between the vendor and purchaser.

So that an auction list can be prepared and distributed in advance please provide Jim Sharpe before the 20th of April with a list of your specimens to be auctioned. Jim may be contacted by phone on (02) 9871 2502 or by e-mail:- sharpejames@tpg.com.au. Vendors will then be provided with a list of lot numbers to add to their specimen labels.

In addition to the regular auction minerals can also be sold by silent auction. Members may bring in one or two trays or boxes of specimens to leave on a table accompanied by a bid form which will be provided. There will be no need to advise Jim in advance regarding the silent auction as the boxes will not be listed.

WELCOME

Welcome to new members Neil and Robyn Baker of Hornsby Heights

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT:	Dieter Mylius	Tel: (02) 9477 1060
	E-mail: <i>dieterm@internode.on.net</i>	
VICE-PRESIDENT:	John Chapman	Tel: (02) 9808 3481
	E-mail: <i>chapmanjr@optusnet.com.au</i>	
SECRETARY:	George Laking	Tel: (02) 9636 7145
	E-mail: <i>bglaking@tech2u.com.au</i>	
TREASURER:	Graham Ogle	Tel: (02) 9868 4446
	E-mail: <i>grahamo@diabetesnsw.com.au</i>	
COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Peter Beddow	Tel: (02) 8810 8446
	David Colchester	Tel: (02) 9449 3862
	Geoff Parsons	Tel: (02) 9548 3289
	Simon Tanner	
	Edward Zbik	Tel: (02) 9638 6586
	E-mail: <i>ecjz@optusnet.com.au</i>	

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

At the commencement of the February Meeting Dieter Mylius offered **thanks to Peter Beckwith** for giving the Society an exclusive opportunity to examine and make purchases at the sale of the Graham Lee collection held at the Toongabbie Public School in January. Society members were able to visit the sale on Friday 11th of January before the general public on the following day.

Thanks were also made to Jim Sharpe for having organised the current **Kids with Cancer sale** which had attracted a lot of interest and purchases by members as soon as the specimens were set out with most of the material already sold before the Meeting formally commenced.

Dieter Mylius further advised that the **Albert Chapman Collection** at the Australian Museum had been placed in storage pending a move to be put on display in Bathurst. The move has been made partly because the Museum was undertaking renovation of some of the display areas including the part of the Museum that had been displaying the Collection.

[The Society has received a letter from the Director and CEO of the Australian Museum notifying the Society that the Albert Chapman Collection was being moved for ... *'about two years'* to *'another venue. The Australian Museum has received funding to undertake a major redevelopment of the exhibition spaces in the Museum '* (which) *'will affect the area currently housing the Albert Chapman Collection. The Collection will go off display'* (at the A.M.), *at the end of January 2019.'* (and is expected to be opened for display at Bathurst) *'starting from mid-2019'*

'The Museum is committed to keeping a major part of the Collection on public display '(and is) ' arranging for a temporary visiting display of the Collection at the Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum in Bathurst. '(which) ' currently houses another Australian Museum collection, the Sommerville Collection. Australian Museum building works 'will take about two years to complete', When the collection returns to the Australian Museum ... it will be re-established in another area within the Museum'.]

Ed Zbik announced that he had several **SWMS Certificates** to award to members Jerry Reed, Brian England, Geoff Parsons and Peter Beddow. The certificates were valid for three years and would allow the Society in organising field trips to approach mining or mineral site managements and assure them that the Society had regulations and qualifications in place referring to entering mining sites which members had guaranteed to follow. This would provide the Society with greater access to sites, particularly ones currently being operated.

Ed Zbik advised that he would like to see the Society making about ten field trips a year but he needed help in organizing these. He would like to see about three to five people helping with the field trip program, researching sites to visit, investigating the access capabilities and requirements, perhaps providing a preliminary reconnaissance of a site and leading trips on occasion. Organising a field trip was a big job and if more people could take on some of the work involved the trip program or number of trips which could be made, would expand. Ed had a number of sites which he would like to investigate, or investigate further, with the view to taking a party to visit and it would be very useful if one or more other members could help with the preliminary work if not lead a trip. Sites which Ed had listed for investigation included a number in State Forests and a third were on private property so some negotiation with officials or property owners would be necessary. Suggestions from members for sites to investigate or visit would be also welcome and notably the Society would be hosting the **2020 Mineralogical Societies Seminar** and it would be ideal if field trips could be incorporated into the Seminar program.

Ed Zbik further advised members that whilst there were no field trips being planned for the summer months he hoped to arrange a return trip to the Manuka mine, possibly by next June. That trip which would probably take at least a week would involve three days staying at the mine and include visits to other mines or sites in the area and staying a night each at Nyngan and Condoblin.

Dieter Mylius complimented Ed Zbik for the amount of work which he had put in over the past several years, organizing many field trips and attending to all the associated research, negotiating and paperwork.

Graham Ogle reported that the next meeting of the **Micro-Mineral Group** would be held at 1.00pm on Saturday, 9th February, at his house in North Epping. The group would be studying minerals from the Burra, Dome Rock and other mines along the Barrier Highway to Broken Hill. There would be some microscopes available for use at the meeting but members were advised to bring their own.

John Chapman introduced the speaker for the evening. Glen Cathers is currently a senior geologist with the Geological Survey of N.S.W. and in fact took John Chapman's job when the latter retired. Glen had studied for his geology degree at Macquarie University and before taking up his position with the Survey had worked in a number of places including watching the progress of the Sepon Gold Mine in Laos.

The Sepon Copper Mine in Laos

Glen Cathers

Initially Glen Cathers filled in a little more of his background. He had been in the Army Reserve for a number of years before deciding to take up Business Studies. Upon completing that course he decided to study something quite different and went to Macquarie University to study Science. His honours degree there had involved studying volcanic rocks at the Prominent Hill mine in South Australia and upon completion he applied for a job with the MMG Company. The application was successful and he was promptly told that the company would be sending him to south-east Asia. He was eventually to spend about two years in Laos. Generous travel arrangements were provided by the company for the workers who were able to travel to and fro regularly spending a month in Laos and then two weeks back in Australia.

In returning to Australia permanently Glenn Cathers worked in a number of places, in the Cootamundra area for a while and also at Broken Hill and at an MMG project in western Tasmania then 'ending up at' Kalgoorlie before taking a position with the Geological Survey. The speaker regarded his time spent in Laos as a highpoint in his career, both mineralogically speaking and finding the country very interesting. He then proceeded to describe his time in Laos with the aid of a large number of projected images, - of the countryside and mining area, the areas affected by the Vietnam War bombing campaign but particularly a large number of diagrams and images describing the geology and mineralogy of the deposits in considerable detail.

Laos is a small country with a population of about six and a half million people. It is one of the five remaining countries identifying themselves as communist. The Sepon gold mine is situated in the Savannakhet Province in the south-east, almost on the Lao-Vietnamese border and is in an area referred to by the Americans in Vietnam over the Vietnam War period from 1964 to 1973 as the so-called 'Ho Chi Minh trail'. Accordingly the area was subjected to extremely heavy bombing by the U.S. Air Force with 2.5 million tonnes of bombs and 'sub-munitions' (cluster bombs or bomblets) being dropped over 580,000 bombing missions equivalent to a planeload of bombs every eight minutes, 24 hours a day, for nine years. This is more tonnage of bombs than were dropped on Europe throughout World War II and has provided Laos with the unfortunate distinction of being the most bombed country in the world per capita.



Bomb craters in Phonsavan in the northern mineralised area of Laos



The same crater pictured by the speaker

The speaker indicated on a map the extent and bombed density of areas in Laos with Sepon being located in one of the two most heavily bombed areas. The other area in the north also bears mineral deposits and coincidentally these two most heavily bombed areas are also the only ones in the country with economic mineral deposits. Unfortunately a large proportion of the American munitions failed to detonate with up to 30% or about 80 million unexploded cluster bombs remaining in or on the ground and today over 40 years after the war, less than 1% of these munitions have been destroyed or removed. Ten of the eighteen Lao provinces have been described as still severely contaminated with more than 20,000 people killed or injured by Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) incidents since 1974 or an average of about one person being killed per day.

During the Vietnam War the US Government spent nearly US\$17 million per day bombing Laos but since 1974 had been spending only US\$2.7 million annually on UXO clearing and this expenditure was reduced from 2011. A few images were shown of some of the UXOs, notably the cluster bombs, cases which would open before impact with the ground and scatter 1,800 one-pound bomblets.



American CBU-75 'Sadeye' cluster bomb casing with 1,800 bomblets



One-pound 'bomblets' each containing 600 razor-sharp steel shards

The resourceful Laotian people have not been slow to make use of some of the discarded American ordnance and a number of images were shown of bomb and shell casings converted into plant holders, a child's bath and pillars to prop up their houses.



The existence of a large amount of UXO in the Sepon gold prospecting and development area was obviously of considerable concern to the MMG company and Glenn Cathers described the precautions necessary to take during the prospecting work. Ground had to be marked out in grid lines with each section being checked with metal detectors and then drilling very carefully conducted, noting that some of the larger American bombs were capable of having penetrated down to about twelve meters into the ground. Drill holes therefore had to be tested at two, five and eight-meter intervals. According to records seen by the speaker over the period 2009 to 2013 MMG destroyed over 17,000 UXOs.

Glenn Cathers noted that in presenting a picture of the UXO situation in Laos it was quite confronting but unfortunately a reality of life and working in the country. After the first part of his lecture he moved on to describe the history, geology and mineralogy of the gold deposit area in considerable and well-illustrated detail.

The Sepon mineralized area is located approximately 40 kilometers north of the town of Sepon, in Savannakhet province of south-central Laos. Gold and copper deposits were discovered in the district by CRA and RioTinto during prospecting over the 1990s and during further exploration by the Oxiana Company over the early 2000s. The deposits were estimated to contain over three million ounces of gold and 1.5 million

tonnes of copper. Six separate gold and two copper deposits occur over the area of the Sepon Project of almost two thousand square kilometers. Mergers of the companies Oxiana and Zinifex formed OZ minerals in 2008 with MMG later acquiring a majority interest.



The Sepon mine area

Some of the minerals found in the Sepon deposit



Cuprite



Possibly cyanotrichite



Cheerful mineralogical work at Sepon



Azurite and malachite

With the aid of a large number of diagrams Glenn Cathers described the layout of the Sepon Mineral District situated in the Sepon Basin, within the Truongson Fold Belt. Major changes likely during the Ordovician caused Basin structures to become conduits for mineralisation. The mineralisation includes pyrite, gold in the arsenic-rich pyrite, chalcopyrite, and minor sphalerite, galena, bornite and stibnite. Towards the end of his lecture the speaker commenced to show images of a number of the more notable specimens of the minerals, which had been found in the Sepon workings. Inevitably the existence of, or interest in, the resource and value of specimens was not unknown to all the mining area workers and unfortunately whilst in the earlier years workers were allowed to collect specimens the mine management gradually clamped down and imposed restrictions on taking 'samples' out.

At the end of his lecture Glenn Cathers showed a few images of 'jungle creatures', of snakes and scorpions, and of a few of the countryside and Buddhist temples away from the mining area.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

BACK FROM TUCSON SHOW

Being held in the TURRAMURRA MASONIC & FUNCTION CENTRE on the corner of the Pacific Highway and Turramurra Avenue, Turramurra. Very near to the Turramurra rail station.

From 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on Saturday 2nd March & from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm on Sunday 3rd March.

Presented by : -

Glenn Huntley of Quality Gem Rough Supplies. Mobile No: 0427 945 087

And Peter and Debbie Beckwith of Kristallen, Mobile No: 0412 333 150

Rachelle Juter Jewellers will also be at the Show with bespoke jewellery

Inquiries - e-mail Peter at raregems@optusnet.com.au

Leaflets describing the Show including a map of the location will be available at the Society March Meeting.

Gem Festival in the Glen Innes Highlands

The Minerama Fossicking, Gem & Jewellery Show,

Being held over Thursday to Sunday the 7th to 10th of March at the

Glen Innes & District Services Club, 120 Grey Street, Glen Innes.

Tailgaters will be accommodated on the King George Oval behind the Services Club.

Quoted from the Minerama Website: www.minerama.com.au

'The Minerama Fossicking, Gem & Jewellery Show in Glen Innes is NSW's largest annual gem and jewellery show, attracting visitors and dealers from all over Australia. Held every year on the 2nd weekend in March, Minerama is perfect for all gem and jewellery lovers, rockhounds and outdoor adventurers.

Search for buried treasure in the Glen Innes Highlands with a 3-day program (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) of guided fossicking field trips to suit both beginner and experienced gem hunters. It's great fun for the whole family with a wealth of gems waiting to be unearthed and jewels waiting to be worn.

Entry to the Gem & Jewellery Show at the Glen Innes Showgrounds is FREE. There are over 100+ stalls trading in gemstones, fine jewellery, facet rough, lapidary tools & supplies, crystals, beads, fossils,

mineral specimens, arts, crafts and more. Whether you are after a two-dollar special, a gemstone of world-class quality or a unique piece of jewellery you'll find it at Minerama.

Minerama also features gem cutting and beading displays, advice from gemmologists, dealers, lapidaries & jewellers, and plenty of entertainment throughout the weekend.'

The New England Lapidary & Fossicking Club Inc.

Present their 28th Annual Gem and Craft Show in the Armidale Showground over Saturday and Sunday the 16th and 17th of March. From 9am to 5pm on Saturday, 9am to 3pm on Sunday.

'See a spectacular array of Gems, Rocks, Crystals, Jewellery, Crafts, Beads, Lapidary books, supplies, equipment and much more'

Canberra Rock Swap- Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st of March -

'The **2019 Canberra Rock Swap** will be held as usual outdoors at Wagtail Way, in the Exhibition Park in Canberra. (EPIC). Vendors are required to register by Friday March the 15th at the latest.

Camping facilities for visitors are available. Powered camping sites on the grass are limited, but extra powered sites are available on the asphalt on the other side of the internal road. As usual, unpowered sites and non-camper sellers will be located on the internal road side of Wagtail Way. Those who camped last year will be allocated a site at or near where they were in 2018. For camping Tuesday night 26/3 to Sunday night 31/3 inclusive, the Club will be collecting camping fees on behalf of EPIC (so you do not need to pay at two different places). The site is booked from Tue 26 Mar to Mon morning 1 April (depart by 10am)

We will be selling breakfasts 7.30am to 9.30pm on Sat & Sun mornings at the food stall, and fixed cost social BBQs will be held on Friday & Saturday nights for dealers & club members.

Inquiries to Norm Menadue, Show Convenor Ph : 02 6258 6631, M : 0407 718 347
Email : nmenadue@optusnet.com.au
www.canberralapidary.org.au

GEMBOREE 2019

The 55th GEMBOREE will be held in Rockhampton Qld, at the Rockhampton Showgrounds, over Easter, Friday to Monday, the 19th to 22nd of April.

The Gemborees are organised each year by AFLACA, (The Australian Federation of Lapidary and Allied Crafts Association Inc). The 2019 GEMBOREE is being hosted by the Queensland Gem Clubs Association Incorporated (QGCA). GEMBOREES are hosted in a different state and city each year by the state body, the 2020 event will be held in Albury.

Further information is available on the websites 'GEMBOREE Advance Rockhampton.

29th LISMORE GEMFEST 2019

The 29th Lismore Gemfest will be held in the Lismore Showgrounds, Alexandra Parade, North Lismore, over the weekend of the 18th and 19th of May next. Saturday from 9am to 5pm and Sunday from 9am to 3pm.

Quoted from the Lismore Gem Club website : -

'Lismore GEMFEST is the biggest annual event in the country devoted to lapidary and allied arts and is organised by the Lismore Gem & Lapidary Club Inc. Exhibitors come from all parts of the country and range from amateurs to the most experienced professionals. Everything from rough stone for cutting, through to finished jewellery in all price ranges, along with mineral specimens, fossils, gold nuggets and meteorites are to be found on display. There are gem sieving activities for children, demonstrations of jewellery making and other craft activities.

A range of food outlets are available, along with free parking in the Lismore Showground. Visitors from outside of the local area can enjoy special deals for camping on site. There is something for all ages and tastes at this event. Come once and we are sure you will become a regular.'

Further information from : - bruce.copper@bigpond.com, Telephone 02 6688 8280, Or from the Website : - www.gemclublismore.org.au

The Yagoona Gem and Mineral Fair.

Over Saturday the 1st and Sunday the 2nd June 2019 in the Arena Sports Club, 140 Rookwood Road, Yagoona. Hosted by The Bankstown and Districts Lapidary Club and Kristallen.

'Traders from around Australia will be displaying their wares as well as displays and demonstrations by the Bankstown & Districts Lapidary Club. Items for sale by the many traders there will include Jewellery, gemstones, beads, opals, carvings, gem rough, lapidary cutting rough, fossils, meteorites, metaphysical and healing crystals, mineral specimens from all over the world. A great day out for the whole family.

Adults \$7, kids with parent/s are free! There is also a great lucky door prize for one lucky person who comes! Opening hours are 9:30 till 5:00 on Saturday and 9:30 till 4:00 on Sunday.'

For more information please contact Peter at raregems@optusnet.com.au or 0412 333 150.

Windsor Gem and Mineral Fair

Over Saturday and Sunday the 15th & 16th of June at the Windsor Function Centre on the corner of George Street and Dight Street Windsor.
Hosted by the Hawkesbury Valley Lapidary Club and Kristallen.

'The show will have a number of traders from around Australia displaying their wares as well as displays and demonstrations by the Hawkesbury Valley Lapidary Club.

Items for sale by the many traders there will include Jewellery, gemstones, beads, opals, carvings, gem rough, lapidary cutting rough, fossils, meteorites, metaphysical and healing crystals, mineral specimens from all over the world. A great day out for the whole family. Adults \$7, kids with parent/s are free! Opening hours are 9:30 till 5:00 on Saturday and 9:30 till 4:00 on Sunday. There is also a great lucky door prize for one lucky person who comes!'

For more information please contact Peter at raregems@optusnet.com.au or 0412 333 150

THE JOINT MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES OF AUSTRALASIA 42nd ANNUAL SEMINAR

The 42nd Joint Seminar of the Mineralogical Societies of Australasia will be held in the State Library of WA in Perth over Saturday and Sunday the 31st of August and 1st of September 2019 on the theme : -

Traps in mineralogy – pseudomorphs, look-alikes, fakes and synthetics

The full Seminar program includes a Micromount session to be held at the WA Lapidary Club, Rivervale, a Swap and Sell on Monday 2 September also at the WA Lapidary Club, Rivervale (\$5.00 per table for sellers), and a field trip to the Murchison Region on Tuesday the 3rd of September.

Registration fees are \$135.00 for MinSoc or like-Society Members, \$170.00 for non-members and \$75.00 for students.

The Conference dinner, (\$65), and Mineral Auction will be held on Saturday evening at the Mercure Hotel, Perth CBD.

Inquiries for information, registration and bookings may be made to : -

Lee Hassan

Honorary Secretary/Treasurer

The Mineralogical Society of Western Australia Inc.

lee_notebook@msn.com

http://www.minsocwa.org.au

The Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club Gem Show

Saturday and Sunday August 17th and 18th 2019

Glenbrook Community Hall, Great Western Highway, Glenbrook, NSW
(Next to Glenbrook Theatre) just west of Information Centre.

<http://www.freewebs.com/blaxlandgemmineralclub/BGMCshow.htm>

8 am to 4 pm Daily. Entry: Adults: \$3 Children \$1.

GEMKHANA 2019

The Annual Gem & Mineral Show and Competition of lapidaries from all over NSW will be presented by the Gem and Lapidary Council of NSW Inc, at the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Showground, 40 Racecourse Road at Clarendon outside Richmond over the weekend of the 28th and 29th of September. From 9am to 5pm each day.

Visitors please note: These dates are the weekend before the October long weekend of the 5th to 7th October.

For further details email gemkhana@gemlapidarycouncilnsw.org.au
