



THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC

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NEWSLETTER

MAY 2016

The May Meeting will be held on Friday the 6th of May at 7.30 p.m. in the clubrooms of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club at 73 Fullagar Rd, Wentworthville.

The program at the May Meeting will comprise the annual May Member's **Mini-Auction**. There may be a few announcements made at the commencement of the Meeting but otherwise the entire evening will be devoted to the Auction. The Meeting will start at the normal time and after any announcements the auction will commence immediately and will probably last about two hours. A list of 76 specimens will accompany this Newsletter.

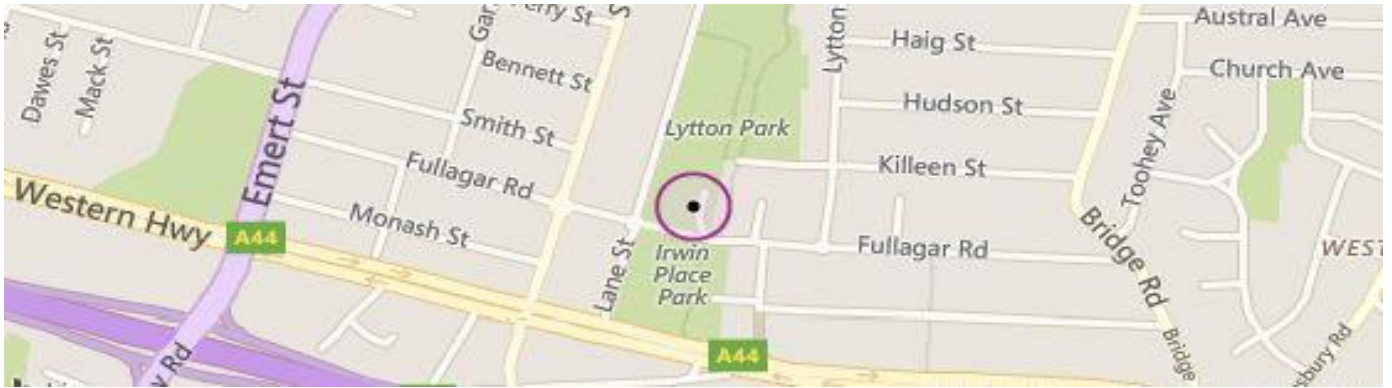
In addition a number of trays of minerals will also be sold by silent auction. Members can bring in a tray to leave on a table accompanied by a bid form which will be provided. There will be no need to notify the Society in advance about trays being brought in for sale as they will not be listed.

Members please note that transactions are by cash only and directly to the vendor. The Society will not enter into any transaction arrangements and will take no commission on the sales.

SOCIETY MEETING VENUE CHANGE

Due to the impending substantial renovations to the Western Sydney University buildings housing the Society's meeting venue for the past eighteen years the Society has had to find an alternative meeting venue and has been pleased to receive a generous response from the management committee of the **Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club**. Accordingly from May 6th 2016 onwards Society meetings will be held in **the Lapidary Club** rooms at 73 Fullagar Rd, Wentworthville.

Members should have no difficulty locating the Lapidary Club which has been in the same location for many years and is clearly marked on Sydney street guides about midway along Fullagar Road in Wentworthville. The road is parallel to and one block north of the Great Western Highway. As an extra guide the map which appears on the Lapidary Club website is reproduced below.



Location of the Parramatta and Holroyd Lapidary Club, Wentworthville.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

Meetings will continue to be held on the first Friday of the months throughout the year.

- June 3rd : Open night, interactive forum on : - **'Kingsgate Re-visited'**. Member's collections and re-collections from Kingsgate and other molybdenite mines in New England.
- July 1st : Lecture on the **Hera Gold-Lead-Zinc-Silver Mine at Nymagee** by Adam McKinnon.
- August 5th : Society AGM followed by the Betty Mayne- Edna Walker Memorial Lecture : - **'Mineral Curiosities'** by Brian England.
- September 2nd : **Mineral Quiz** by Noel and Ann Kennon. The Quiz was to have been presented at the April 1st Meeting but has been re-scheduled.
- October 7th: **'4.5 Billion Years of Mineral Evolution'** by David Colchester
- November 4th : Lecture on **'Meteorites'** by Ross Pogson
- December 2nd : Christmas Social

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip to Sunny Corner mines over the weekend of 21st / 22nd May

All Society members welcome to attend but please register in advance for the Field Trip.

Note. Members attending the Sunny Corner visit will need safety helmets, gloves, and non-paper bags to collect stuff. Screw-top plastic containers are best - little ones. It is a great site! The specimens to be collected are rather arcane, but beautiful, in terms of their scientific importance. Low acidity soils expected, wear leather or rubber boots. Check articles in AJM. Members attending the Trip can be based overnight in Lithgow. Assembly points for Sunny Corner will be given to members when they register. There will be an introductory and explanatory commentary given by Peter Williams.

To register, e-mail Edward Zbik at etzed@optusnet.com.au or phone (02) 9638 6586 for details.

The **Research Expedition to Tolwong** is on schedule to be held in early May with some arrangements still to be finalised. Members registered to participate will be kept informed of details.

THE CORDILLERA FIELD TRIP

The Cordillera Field Trip was held over the 16th & 17th of April weekend and was attended by ten members led by Ed Zbik. Three sites were visited over the weekend commencing at the scheelite occurrence west of Tuena. A detailed report on the Trip is to follow, subject to collecting together more of the many photographs taken and more surely identifying and describing the minerals found.

FIELD TRIP REPORT on a walk with the NPWS ranger to Sivewrite Spur, 1km east of Tolwong Mines. The main expedition into the area will be in early May.



Figure 1: Scratchy Hakea thicket

Tolwong Reconnaissance Field trip Saturday 23rd April.

Geoff Parsons and Ed Zbik travelled to Morton NP on Friday 23rd April and camped at the Quiera camp site. The Tolwong road is the western edge of the Sydney sandstone basin. The soil here is shallow, sandy soils with swampy hollows making up the plateau landscape that had basalt outpourings at Sassafras, Quiera, Tullyangela and Tolwong. The Tolwong lava flow once dammed the Shoalhaven River in the Ordovician period.

Saturday morning saw three parties of bush walkers drive in to walk the Ettrema Wilderness tracks, including a party from Sydney Bushwalkers, one of the oldest bushwalking clubs in NSW. The appearance of a NPWS vehicle proved to be the dog baiting contractor doing his rounds. At 10:00am, the second NPWS vehicle pulled in and we meet the Nowra region NPWS ranger. The three of us then drove off to Tolwong station, where we meet the owners at the padlocked gates entering the property. From here we drove west along the old track, if you can call it that, it is definitely not used, very rugged, pitted and heavily eroded, travelling was slow for three kilometres before the track ran out.

After parking the cars at about 11:00 am, the three of us geared up with day packs and headed west. Before long we encountered our first of two obstacles, a wall of dense defensive scratchy hakea thicket scrub, difficult to move through but passable. There is no road beyond this point, the road is not overgrown but has melded seamlessly into the open forest woodland, with the occasional track for 20m or less and the occasional series of berm's stating the road was there once.

The bushland is an open woodland of yellow bloodwood, Blue Mountain mallee and scribbly gum. By 1:00 pm we reached the hut near Mogo creek, set down and had lunch. From here we continued north to "the junction", designated on the map but not evident under foot. Changed direction west and by 2:00 pm reached the top of Sivewright Spur, about 1km east from the Tolwong Mines. We talked about water being the most critical factor in the trip, all the creeks on the plateau are dry, so it's most likely we will use the Shoalhaven River as our water point and will most likely camp near Sivewright Spur. We now backtracked back to the cars along the track we came. Geoff spotted a crystal shining on the track back, it was allocated the first Field Note number "GPWP66", its blue dense claystone backing will be used to identify it if it originated from the Tolwong Creek mines. The early years had the concentrate move overland to the eastern ports before the flying fox was installed.

Soon after, we came across a small fenced enclosure, not recognised previously by the NPWS, could be a lambing pen constructed by the early pioneers or walls for a bivouac site. We arrived back at the track with the cars at 4:46pm. Sunset was half an hour away.

One of the interesting observations is the number of termite mounds 1-2m tall. A very common occurrence was for these to have been excavated by goannas making them look like ovens.

The Mineralogical Society has been granted a Scientific License to conduct research on a group of mines in the Tolwong area within the Morton National Park and Bungonia State Conservation Area. The Project Objectives are to collect and photograph specimens from mine dumps at Tolwong and nearby localities and to support an already completed unpublished article written by Laurie Lawrence, David Colchester and Jim Sharp for publication in The Australian Mineralogical Journal. A mineral essay will be prepared for The Australian and New Zealand Micro Mineral News on the expedition. Specimens collected will be under the custodianship of the Society or designated institution.

**Specimens collected by the Mineralogical Society of NSW are under a NPWS Science License for research.
Fossicking is prohibited in National Parks and will result in heavy fines, imprisonment or both.**

Some photos:



Figure 2: Termite mound



Figure 3: Open woodland



Figure 4: Hut built by 4WD enthusiasts



Ed Zbik
April 2016

The National Parks and Wildlife Service. Policy Review

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/policies/fossicking-policy.htm>

The NPWS is currently reviewing its fossicking policy (see link above) and the Mineralogical Society is looking at preparing a response to the NPWS review of fossicking in national parks and the NPWS managed estate and will be making a submission, acceptance of which closes on 6th May.

The brief is : - *Only the categories of fossicking defined in this Policy as **detecting, panning and sluicing** will be considered.* The approach is to give our perspective as mineral collectors within the three categories and what would be acceptable limits we would want the NPWS to place on access. Also like a two layered licensing, an annual fossicking fee and a site specific fee.

Are there any areas within the NPWS estate that may have potential to add to the proposed NPWS fossicking areas? Your positive comments on any aspect of the draft NPWS fossicking-policy would be appreciated. If you would like to make a comment, send it to Ed Zbik to be part of the Society's submission or make a comment directly. The final date for acceptance of submissions is the 6th of May.

Edward Zbik's email is etzed@optusnet.com.au or SMS text to 0401 538 480

WITH REGRET

With regret it was learned that Society member Jolyon Collas passed away on the 8th of April after a short illness. He had served in the navy for a time many years ago and had contracted an asbestos-related malignancy, diagnosed only last December. The funeral was held at the Pinegrove Memorial Park on the Western Highway and attended by near to one hundred people including Society members.

The SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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PLANS LEADING TO THE FORMATION OF THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF N.S.W.

40 YEARS SINCE INAUGURATION. THE HISTORY.

In late 1974 and early 1975 there had been informal discussions among interested people about the establishment of a mineralogical society to service and bring together mineral enthusiasts from the several lapidary clubs in Sydney and from the ever expanding number of mineral collectors and dealers. In particular Mr. Robert Bliss of Greenacre, N.S.W. and member of the Bankstown Lapidary Club was very active in lobbying support for a mineralogical society. Mr. Bliss held several discussions with leading collector Mr. Albert Chapman of Glebe and with fellow collector Rev. Albert (Bert) Gardner. The outcome was a firm commitment to proceed.

On the 2nd of May 1975 a meeting was held at Albert Chapman's home. Among those in attendance were Albert and his wife Doreen, Rev Bert Gardner, Robert Bliss, Chris Parkinson, Simon Pecover, Richard De Pledge, Arthur Roffey and Gary Sutherland. Agreement was unanimous on the formation of a society but there were differences of opinion on the title and the level of its operation. Some wanted the title – 'Australian Mineralogical Society', others sought to limit it to - 'The Mineralogical Society of New South Wales'. The latter title was finally adopted and a steering committee was set up with Richard De Pledge as President pro tem.

Albert Chapman was keen to base the society on scientific grounds and he had the support of some other members of the steering committee. Albert sought the view of Professor Laurie Lawrence, collector and professional, who cautioned against aiming too high in that direction. Others argued similarly - that, since such a society would rely heavily upon lapidarists and established collectors for its initial support and membership it should aim at a standard more acceptable to knowledgeable laymen with an academic input.

Following the informal meeting of 2nd May 1975, a formal meeting was held at Robert Bliss's home in Greenacre on 12th May 1975 under the chairmanship of the temporary President Richard De Pledge. The following committee of the now formally founded Mineralogical Society of New South Wales was elected.

President:	Mr. Chris Parkinson
Vice President:	Mr. Simon Pecover
Hon Secretary:	Mr. Richard De Pledge
Hon Treasurer:	Mrs. Molly Parkinson
Publicity Officer:	Mr. Robert Bliss
Committee Members:	Mr. Albert Chapman
	Rev. Albert Gardner
	Mr. Maxwell Hudson
	Mr. Stephen Wright
	Mr. Neville Irvine

Minutes records for the few months after May 1975 indicate that several 'General Meetings' interspersed with more occasional committee meetings were held in various member's houses in turn such as the Chapman's, Mrs. Val Tolhurst, Simon Pecover, Mrs. Rachael Chrimes, Chris Parkinson, etc. The minutes of these meetings indicate the preparations and deliberations for operating the Society including compiling and presenting for acceptance a constitution and code of ethics. There were also arrangements discussed to hold meetings in a venue that could accommodate a larger number of people with the Gemmological Association being approached to allow these to be held in Gemmology House, Wentworth Street, central Sydney.

The Mineralogical News Society Newsletter No 1 dated August 1975 carries a NOTICE OF MEETING advising that the "inaugural" general meeting of the Society in Gemmology House, scheduled for the 5th of September was being postponed since many members would be away in Melbourne. The first general meeting in Gemmology House was therefore to be held on Friday the 3rd of October 1975. The November 1975 Newsletter No 3. meeting summary referred to approximately 45 people attending the 3rd October meeting to hear a lecture given by Albert Chapman on classic minerals and locations, past and present. There was also a film shown on 'Crystals'.

From the earliest meetings once these were established, the Society has held meetings for eleven months of each year since inauguration and to date. The program at meetings has almost always included a lecture given by a Society member or guest speaker often with a slide showing, minerals and/or equipment on display and sometimes a film. Membership fees were first set at \$10 and remained so for many years with only slight adjustments made from time to time.

The files indicate that by July 1975 Albert Chapman was offering to approach several academic persons to act as patrons to the Society with later Newsletters indicating that Lin Sutherland, Curator of Minerals at the Australian Museum, and then Oliver Chalmers, former Curator, had accepted these appointments by February and June 1976 respectively.

A meeting in August 1975 saw additional positions established. The position of Exhibitions Officer was taken up by Arthur Roffey with Albert Chapman taking over in 1976, 1977 and 1978 when Arthur Roffey was Vice-President. June Pecover became Editor (of the Newsletter), Doreen Chapman became Librarian and Messrs Warren Sommerville, Kevin Davy and Noel Franks were country representatives.

Chris Parkinson remained as President in 1976, 1977 and 1978 with Arthur Roffey as Vice-President in 1976 and 1977 and Gary Sutherland becoming Vice-President in 1978. Stephen Wright took over the role of Secretary in 1976 and Erica Hepburn in 1977 and 1978. Jim Clarke became the Treasurer in 1976 and again in 1977 and 1978. A new position was created in 1976 – that of Education Officer with Frank Carter taking this role; he was succeeded by Rev. Albert Gardner in 1977 and 1978. A position of Social Secretary was established in mid-1976 with Joan Sutherland. The position of Editor was held by Betty Clark in 1976, 1977 and 1978. In 1976 a further position was established – Field Trips Officer with John Woolfe as the incumbent. The Society was very active in the earliest decade with a number of other people assuming tasks and positions for various periods.

An item of news in the March 1976 Newsletter informed members that a mineralogical society was to be established in Victoria in Melbourne. An interim Committee had been chosen by Victorians and the new society was to be formally constituted on 16th March 1976.

General meetings were held at Gemmology House from 1975 to December 1976 and then at the Australian Museum to 1988. Meetings were then held at the Mining Museum, renamed the Earth Exchange, in George Street North for several years to February 1995. From March 1995 after arrangements and negotiations by Peter A. Williams with the University of Western Sydney, (now WSU), meetings were held in the Coach House near to Westmead hospital to March 1998 and from then to the present day in rooms in the ‘LY’ and ‘LZ’ buildings of the North Parramatta campus of the University.

In 1980 the Society hosted the first of the interstate mineralogical seminars held in the lecture room at the Y.W.C.A. building off William Street, Sydney. Members of the NSW Society with those from Victoria, Queensland and South Australia attending the first Seminar totaled over 150.

The APRIL MEETING

The 40th Year Commemoration Meeting:

The April meeting program comprised talks from a number of members who with the exception of Peter Williams had been very early or founding members of the Society in 1975 or shortly thereafter. Because the talks with a half-hour break at 8.00 pm for a meal lasted through until about 9.30 p.m. the scheduled quiz to have been given by Noel and Ann Kennon has been re-scheduled.

Peter Williams:

The first speaker was Peter Williams who addressed the Meeting to describe the events from the early 1990s which were a turning point in the fortunes of the Society. The early 1990s had been a lean time with membership fallen to a low point. At the time monthly meetings were being held at the Earth Exchange, virtually just under the Harbour Bridge, which unfortunately was not an ideal meeting location due to the considerable difficulty of access and parking.

In the 1980s Peter Williams had been overseas for some years working in the Chemistry Department of the University College of Cardiff but in returning to Sydney in 1991 renewed his interest in mineralogy and joined the Society. This was during the lean time and after some discussion with Jim Sharpe and Laurie Lawrence they firmly pushed for and arranged a move of the monthly meeting venue to University of Western Sydney premises – in the ‘Coach House’ near to Westmead Hospital. The move was no doubt greatly facilitated by Peter Williams’ position as a professor of the University and obviously knowing the right people with whom to make the arrangements.

The move with greatly improved access and parking and the new venue even being only a short way from the Westmead rail station considerably improved Society meeting attendance and fairly quickly boosted up membership numbers. After a few years the meeting venue was moved to its present location at the North Parramatta campus of the University, unfortunately due to be lost because of building renovations. Peter Williams advised that the benefits of the association between the Society with the University had been two-way with a number of Society members having helped promote and conduct certain lines of research and also helped some of the University students in their studies.

The General Meeting venue has been provided by the University of Western Sydney (now W.S.U.) for over twenty years since the move from the Earth Exchange in 1995 and this has greatly enhanced the functioning of the Society. At the end of Peter Williams' talk Robert Falzon moved a vote of thanks to the speaker for all his efforts on behalf of the Society which was endorsed by the Meeting.

Gary Sutherland:

Gary Sutherland had been involved in some of the discussions leading to the formation of the Society but as he admitted, "did not quite make the first list of members". He had been interested in mineral collecting for some time and on the occasion of a visit to the Rock Shop in Lane Cove run by Chris Parkinson and his mother Molly, Chris recommended that the speaker attend a meeting that Saturday at someone's house, to listen to discussions about minerals. At the meeting and as Gary put it, "The whole gang was there", - Albert and Doreen Chapman, Chris and Molly Parkinson, Max Hudson, Neville Irvine, Robert Bliss, Steven Wright, and the Rev Bert Gardner. No doubt the discussions at that meeting considerably enhanced the speaker's interest in mineralogy.

Gary had spoken to Chris Parkinson just the previous day and Chris had asked the speaker to convey his best wishes to all current and past members and congratulate the Society in achieving forty years. Chris is now living in Warwick and was unable to travel to Sydney for the commemorative meeting but hoped to see some members at the Mineralogical Seminar in Brisbane next October.

Simon Peckover:

Simon Peckover had been particularly active in the discussions leading to the formation of the Society and with his wife had served on the Committee for some time after inauguration. He described visiting Albert Chapman at his house with Richard De Pledge when the formation of a society was first discussed. A number of meetings later with more people drawn into discussions led to the official formation of the Society on 12th May 1975. In the early days the 'gang of nine', as Richard De Pledge has referred to them, had multiple roles in the organization before gradually other people were drawn into the Society committee and sub-committees. The work-load in the earliest days was heady with all the organising involved in getting the society up and running and trying to ensure that programs would be interesting and exciting.

Simon Peckover had contacted Richard De Pledge about the commemorative meeting but he was unable to attend. In discussion however Richard De Pledge reminded the speaker about the 1979 Journal of the Mineralogical Society which he had edited and which carried a historical summary of the early years of the Society. Copies of the Journal were available at the meeting. Also noted was the image of a specimen of heulandite on the cover of the magazine which had been collected by the speaker and Richard De Pledge together on the occasion of a field trip to the Glendowda property within the Garrawilla Volcanics area.

Simon Peckover continued relating a number of other anecdotes and remembrances from that period, including referring to Albert Chapman and Bert Gardner fossicking in the old Dundas quarry, now filled in, as well as making many trips to the Prospect quarry. On a particularly personal note the speaker noted that when he got married the Rev Bert Gardner had officiated at his wedding.

Referring to the monthly meetings which for the first year were held in Gemmology House Simon Peckover noted that they really exploded with more and more people turning up to attend, indicating the degree of interest in mineralogy at that time. After that first year the meetings were moved to the Australian Museum.

Richard Depledge:

Richard De Pledge now lives on the South Coast and although unable to attend the meeting had written a letter to be read to the Meeting about his having helped found and about his early involvement with the Society. The letter was read out by Simon Peckover who added in additional comments and information as he proceeded.

Mineralogical Society of NSW 40th Anniversary

Message from Richard Depledge, one of the founders....

Congratulations to Min Soc NSW for reaching 40 years! I regret that I am unable to attend tonight's meeting. It would have been great to catch up with some of the founding and early members and share some reminiscences. It is good to see some familiar names from those early years are still involved with the Society. I am happy to share with you some of my memories of the founding of the Society and the first few years.

Who would have thought all those years ago when a small group of collectors got together to form an organisation to cater for the serious mineral collector, that 40 years down the track it would still be going strong, and that there would be similar Societies in all the States of Australia. I suppose we all subconsciously hoped that it would endure but I am sure none of us was thinking that far ahead.

Yes, I am one of that "gang of nine" – Albert Chapman, Chris Parkinson, Simon Pecover, Albert Gardner, Max Hudson, Stephen Wright, Bob Bliss, Neville Irvine and myself. I can't recall where the inaugural meeting was held but I think it might have been at Chris Parkinson's home. The date was 12th May, 1975. All the founding members formed the first committee from which Chris Parkinson was elected President, Simon Pecover Vice -President and Richard Depledge, Secretary.

From its inception, Min Soc had a close association with the Gemmological Association of Australia and the GAA offered to make a room available in Gemmology House for our meetings. However, at the time Gemmology House was undergoing renovations and wouldn't be available for some months. Consequently, the group continued to hold meetings at members' home which also gave time to finalise all the formalities of establishing such an organisation. These were a busy few months, particularly for me as Secretary, formulating the Objectives, drafting the Constitution, designing a logo, having stationery and publicity brochures printed, etc.

The first "public" meeting of The Society was held on 3rd October 1975 in Gemmology House. This meeting had been widely advertised for the previous couple of months. The response was quite pleasing with about 50 people attending. The guest speaker for this inaugural meeting was Albert Chapman who delivered a lecture entitled "Classic Mineral Localities – Past and Present".

The Society continued to hold its meetings on the first Friday of the month at Gemmology House but attendance at these meetings frequently exceeded the seating capacity of the room and it eventually became necessary to find another venue. The Australian Museum offered the Society the use

of the Activities Room in its new Education Block at the Museum. The Society held its first meeting of 1977 (February) at the Museum and it continued to meet there for many years.

The Society has always had a close relationship with the Australian Museum. Lin Sutherland, who was the current Curator of Rocks and Minerals, and Oliver Chalmers, the former Curator, both showed considerable support for the Society from its inception and both were made Patrons of the Society in 1976. The Society participated in a number of exhibitions in those early days. The first exhibition was held in September 1975, only four months after the Society was formed, and even before the first "public" meeting. The Bankstown and District Lapidary Club, which had an active mineral group, had heard of the formation of the Society and invited the Society to contribute a showcase to its Annual Exhibition. This participation was largely instrumental in gaining many of the Society's early members.

Probably the greatest honour and kudos was being invited by the Australian Museum to contribute a showcase to its exhibition being held as part of the 25th International Geological Congress in August 1976. Our exhibit entitled "Australian Mineral Collectors" showed the crème of members' collection and drew high praise from delegates from around the world, as well as from the general public visiting the museum. Many new members resulted.

The Newsletter served an important function from the beginning, especially with a large number of members being in regional areas or interstate. The first issue was printed in August 1975. The first 6 issues of the newsletter was produced by myself until Betty Clark took over as Editor in April 1976, a job she did commendably for many years. Thanks to the generosity of my employer at the time, the first few issues of the newsletter were printed on a small offset printing machine, so they looked quite impressive for those days when Roneo was the usual method!

Many field trips were held in those first few years. The first field trip was to Prospect Quarry in July 1976. I see that the Society has a field trip to Tuena area including the Cordillera Mine scheduled for a couple of weeks' time. The Society first visited the Cordillera Mine in November 1977 and some good raspite and stolzite specimens were recovered.

Of course, one cannot fail to mention the establishment of the annual Joint Seminar, the first being held in Melbourne in collaboration with the Mineralogical Society of Victoria in June 1978 (there's another 40th Anniversary celebration coming up!). The Victorian Society was formed in March 1976. The Joint Seminars have obviously expanded to include other State Societies as they were established. The subject of that first Joint Seminar was "Zeolites of Victoria and NSW"

Lest you get the impression that I have an incredible memory for these details and dates, I did refer back to a comprehensive article about the first four years of the Society that I wrote for the first (and only) issue of the Society's Journal in 1979. Undoubtedly the Society would have copies of this Journal in its archives or library. This article has much more information about Society fieldtrips and lectures during that period, as well as acknowledging a number of the people involved in those early years. I recommend it to anyone interested in the history of the Society.

I'll conclude with a personal note, which will probably only be of interest to those members who remember me. My association with the Society ceased in about 1988 when I left Sydney but I have kept up with news of what the Society has been doing over the years through a few members who I have caught up with from time to time. I retired some years ago from professional work in Earth Sciences and headed off on a different path both career-wise and personally. However, I have maintained an interest

in minerals, still have a collection that I add to sporadically (mostly self-collected specimens), continue to subscribe to a number of mineralogical journals, so keep up with what is happening in the mineralogical world. I currently live on the Far South Coast of NSW and rarely get to Sydney these days, so it is unlikely that I will make it to any Min Soc meetings in the foreseeable future, despite the very interesting and enticing program of talks you arrange. One place I do seem to meet up with some members from the old days (and current ones too) is at the Canberra Rock Swap, which is coming up again in a couple of weeks so I may see some of you there.

Happy 40th Birthday, Min Soc and congratulations to everyone involved in keeping it going. It is heartening to see something that one had a big part in starting, develop a life of its own and continue to flourish and evolve. May it continue to do so for many more years. I hope I am around to see it celebrate its 50th!

Richard Depledge
April 2016

After the letter had been read out and with catered food platters arriving the Meeting broke up for a half hour. An order had been placed by the Committee with a professional caterer to provide a number of platters of 'finger food' with a variety of refreshments, some being heated. Sufficient food had been ordered to provide a substantial meal for the all members attending the Commemorative Meeting. A range of drinks were also available.

Joan Henley:

After the meal the next speaker was Joan Henley who initially described with considerable humour some aspects of one of the early Mineralogical Seminars held at the time in Melbourne and referring to many of the people attending. She had also brought a number of images of early Society activities including of the Seminar and other functions including of the early field trips pointing out the (much younger) versions of some of the Society's current members.

Arthur Roffey OAM:

Arthur Roffey had been directly and considerably involved in the formation and functioning of the Society before and from inauguration and for a number of subsequent years. He particularly noted as previous speakers had done, how attendance at meetings really took off once these had been scheduled and were being held regularly indicating the degree of interest. He then moved away from the earliest years to compliment the work of Betty Mayne for the Society in the late 1980s whose involvement first on the committee then as President substantially boosted Society functioning and activities for a time.

(Sadly Betty Mayne's untimely death in 1991 led the Society into the temporary lean period already referred to by Peter Williams).

John Smedley:

The last speaker for the evening was John Smedley who spoke at some length and very knowledgeably about the Society's earliest years. He had brought a number of images relevant to the early years to be projected and which he was able to refer to as he spoke and also delivered a number of anecdotes along the way. One image showed was of the first Society Newsletter of August 1975 with the speaker noting the names of the first committee and other members including his own who were new at the time. A few months later as he noted, the Society was fortunate to invite the then current and previous curators of minerals at the Australian Museum, Lin Sutherland and Oliver Chalmers, to accept the positions of patrons.

Also in the few months after formation several ‘country’ representatives ‘joined the Society and John Smedley became acquainted with Noel Franks, Warren Sommerville and Warren’s magnificent mineral collection ‘the Gallery of Minerals’ then at his ‘Toll Bar’ apple orchard at Orange, now at Bathurst. In effect as the speaker described, his membership of the Society and becoming acquainted or good friends with notable mineral collectors such as Albert Chapman and Bert Gardner and other enthusiastic beginners such as himself opened up a whole new World for him.

In continuing his talk John Smedley referred to a number of other people involved with or working for the Society, complimenting them as he went along. Bert Gardner was a very friendly and helpful person with a fine thumbnail collection and Tony Rosser a jovial, very funny, almost larrikin fellow who the speaker felt was ‘larger than life’. One person that the speaker felt he was privileged to meet due to his membership of the Society was Demetrious Pohl, the noted American mineralogist who had been traveling the World in the 1970s and was working and studying in Australia for a period.

The large and commendable amount of work put in by Richard De Pledge to edit and produce the 1979 Journal was referred to. This had been a very difficult job in those days, well before there were any computers or modern printing technology. A number of the articles in the 1979 Journal were referred to, by Oliver Chalmers, Ross Pogson, Demetrious Pohl, Albert Gardner, Brian England, Albert Chapman and Richard De Pledge.

One anecdote related by John Smedley from many years ago concerned an occasion when the Australian Museum had been renovating one of the basement storerooms and a number of specimens had been temporarily set out on trestle tables in the car park. Unfortunately it was not apparent to Society members arriving for a regular Friday night monthly meeting that the specimens were not actually intended for disposal and some members helped themselves to some of them. Since he had arrived late for the meeting the speaker had not so much choice but managed to obtain a small bag of about a dozen yellow-green embolites, and what he described as a ‘sooty ore specimen’ all but one of which he still had in his possession. In noting in a subsequent Newsletter a report that the Museum had realised that specimens had been taken and was asking them to be returned the speaker advised that he had been too embarrassed to do so at the time. However at this meeting, (and many years later), he offered to give them back to Ross Pogson, (the current Australian Museum Collections Manager).

One brief and curious anecdote that John Smedley relayed to the Meeting was that in the course of investigating references to the Society through the Internet he found on E-Bay a somewhat rusty Society badge being offered for sale for \$35 !

(Orders for Society badges have been made to a supplier from time to time and the Society currently has a small stock, available to members for \$5 each, not \$35).

In conclusion John Smedley stressed noted that it is people who make a society by virtue of their support and strong interest in a subject and recommended that this continue for another forty years.

After the main speaker’s talks had been concluded a number of members offered comments and more anecdotes about some of the early years before the President declared the 40th-year Commemorative Meeting closed, advising that the Quiz originally scheduled for this evening would be held at a subsequent meeting later in the year.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Open Day at Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club

On Saturday 7th May 2016 from: 8:30am – 3:30pm at the
Progress Association Hall, The Valley Rd, Valley Heights.

Activities: Rocks and slabs for sale, gem cutting and polishing demonstrations, sausage sizzle.

The 26th Annual LISMORE GEMFEST

Presented by the Lismore Gem & Lapidary Club Inc over the weekend of the 14th & 15th May 2016
in the Lismore Showgrounds. From 9am to 5pm on Saturday and 9am to 3pm on Sunday.

'The biggest annual lapidary show in the country'.

100+ tailgaters and stall-holders with substantial camping area, full dealer's pavilion.

Information on the Website www.gemclublismore.org.au.

Inquiries about tailgating and camping on-site at the Showground should be addressed to : -

Jan Thompson at P.O.Box 743, Lismore, NSW 2480.

Dealer and general inquiries can be sent to Bruce Copper at the P.O.Box 743 or by e-mail to
bruce.copper@bigpond.com

CANBERRA LAPIDARY CLUB

Presents the Winter Gemcraft & Mineral Show

Over Saturday and Sunday the 28th & 29th of May from 10.00am to 5.00pm
in the Mallee Pavilion at EPIC.

Entry \$5 adults, \$10 family, \$2 children/concession.

Gem, Mineral, Jewellery & Lapidary dealers. Sales of Minerals, fossils, jewellery, rough & cut
gemstones, lapidary equipment & supplies, opals, beads & supplies.

Sieve for sapphires; Displays of members' collections, free sessions on fossicking & gold
detecting, cabbing, faceting & jewellery making demonstrations.

Blaxland Gem & Mineral Club Gem Show

Over Saturday and Sunday the 20th and 21st of August in the Glenbrook Community Hall
Great Western Highway, Glenbrook, NSW.

(Next to Glenbrook Theatre) Just west of Information Centre.

Displays of lapidary work and gem, mineral and crystal sales. Refreshments available.

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

Information from : -

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

The 39th Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia Seminar.

From the 30th September to 4th of October 2016 with the formal proceedings being held over Saturday, Sunday and Monday the 1st to 3rd of October 2016.

Hosted by The Mineralogical Society of Queensland.

Subject: "**Mineralogy - Science and Passion**"

Venue: In the theatrette of the Queensland Museum on the corner of Grey and Melbourne Streets, South Brisbane, (Southbank).

Quote from the Queensland Mineralogical Society Inc Website:

'The Mineralogical Society of Queensland is pleased to announce details of their 2016 seminar and invite you to attend in Brisbane, Queensland, on the Queen's Birthday weekend, Sept-Oct 2016.

The theme is **Mineralogy - Science and Passion** - giving guest speakers leeway to speak on almost any subject that they are passionate about. We are presently finalising our program of guest speakers and this will be publicised on the website www.mineral.org.au and through state and affiliated societies and clubs. We are sure that the variety of topics and our presenters will have something for everyone. As well as the seminar we are conducting field trips and a microscopy session in the days before and after the formal proceedings for those who can attend.

Seminar Registration: Adult \$85 per person, student \$40 per person.
Seminar Dinner is \$50 per person.

In addition to the formal proceedings on Friday the 30th September there will be an informal Micromount session and on the Monday morning after the Seminar there will be a mineral bazaar. The venue for both the Micromount session and mineral bazaar will be the Mt Gravatt Lapidary Society Club rooms approx. 12klm south-east of the Brisbane CBD. There will also be optional field trips, half a day on Monday the 3rd and the full day of Tuesday 4th October.
