



# The Mineralogical Society of Queensland Inc.

## NEWSLETTER

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No. 50

November 2007

Office Bearers: 2007-08

**President:** Russell Kanowski 4635 8627

**Vice-President:** Ron Young 3807 0870

**Secretary:** Tony Forsyth 3396 9769 **Treasurer:** Phil Ericksson 3711 3050 **Membership Sec:** Bill Kettley 3802 1186

**Management Committee:** Sue Ericksson 0431 906 769, Theo Klopogge, George Brabon

### UPCOMING MINSOC MEETINGS

Minsoc meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month, excepting December, at the Mt Gravatt Lapidary Society clubhouse, formally starting at 7.30pm. (The clubhouse is located at the very end of Carson Lane, which is off Logan Road, Upper Mt Gravatt, on the left as you are heading north towards the city, directly opposite McDonald's. There is plenty of handy parking available, at no charge).

**December 8 (Saturday) 07: The Annual Christmas Barbeque**, once more at the home of Andy and Helen Toole, 62 Barter Avenue, Holland Park. The function will start around 12 noon. This will be a **bring your own everything event**, with *swap share and eat*; desserts especially welcome. Bbq facilities will be provided, but bring your own plates and eatin' irons. Our thanks in advance to Helen and Andy.

The event will include the annual auction to raise funds for Minsoc. Please bring donations of minerals (also books, equipment, plants and other worthy 'stuff') for Ron Young to auction; 'fossils' will be tolerated, but only just. Remember, what you may not love, or need no more, may bring tears of joy to someone else, and it's all in a good cause.

**30 January 08:** Phosphate minerals, speaker TBA. Phosphates will be the mineral group of the month; bring your phosphate minerals, as well as munchies, as we will all have a great apatite ..... make no bones about it!

**27 February 08:** Tony Forsyth will present a talk on mining lamps and other accoutrements for lighting up the underground; if you have any, bring 'em along and shed some more light on the subject (*When will this stop?*) Let's make the feldspar group the mineral group of the month. Volumetrically, feldspars are the most abundant minerals in the earth's crust, so bring your most precious, most interesting or most colourful feldspars for all to see – twins will be especially welcome.

**26 March 08:** Steve Dobos will present a talk on sulphide minerals (or sulfide minerals, to be pedantic). Sulphides will be the mineral group of the month; bring your sulphide minerals, as well as munchies; do any of you have any green sphalerite?

### MINSOC MGMT. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Commencing at 6.00pm, prior to the Minsoc meetings, on 30 January, 26 March, 28 May, 30 July .... 2008

### 2008 MICROMOB MEETINGS starting 10am

**13 January**, chez Eric Stevens. Eric on SA phosphates – afternoon: viewing Eric's collection, and swaps

**9 February**, Mount Gravatt Lapidary Society Clubrooms (or MGLSC). Erythrite (and members of the vivianite group, including köttigite and annabergite) – afternoon: problems and swaps

**8 March**, Chez Russell Kanowski in Toowoomba. Russell on thomsonite – afternoon: problems and swaps; *possible* field trip to be arranged for Sunday

**12 April**, MGLSC. Sulphides – afternoon: problems and swaps

**10 May**, MGLSC. Lead minerals of Australia – afternoon: problems and swaps

**June** – no meeting

### TENTATIVE 2008 SHOW CALENDAR

*For updates and more details, see Tony's website in the new year ([www.mineral.org.au](http://www.mineral.org.au)).*

**1-2 March**, North Brisbane Lapidary Club Gem & Jewellery Festival, Aviation High Schhol (formerly Hendra Secondary College), Widdop St, Hendra, 9 to 5 Saturday, 9 to 3 Sunday

**7-9 March**, Minerama, Services Club, Grey St, Glen Innes, NSW, starting 10am; field trips run 6 through 10 March

**21-24 March**, Gemboree 2008, Murray Bridge, SA, (some 80km north of Adelaide)

**19 April**, Gatton Lapidary Club Gem Show, Gatton Showground, SE Queensland

**3-4 May**, Redcliffe Gem & Mineral Club Jewellery and Craft Show, Isobel & Elizabeth Ave, Clontarf Qld



**For Sale:** Theo Kloprogge will have 10 bags of transparent micromount boxes, 100 boxes per bag, at \$17 per bag. Each box measures 28x28x22 mm; ring Theo on 0417 949 998 if you want to buy a bag or two for Xmas.

## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

**Members' Meeting, 26 September 07:** Tony Forsyth gave a very interesting and enthusiastic talk on fluorite. There were lots of specimens for all to see, and Bill Kettley prepared the customary mineral ID competition. There is no doubt that members are becoming more knowledgeable as a result of these ID quizzes. RY

**Members' Meeting, 31 October 07:** The main event for the night was Russell's presentation on carbonate minerals; this was extensive and very informative. Heavyweight ('Bill') Kettley once again prepared the mineral ID quiz. One member scored 12/12, but all members got a lot of insight. RY

**Members' Meeting, 28 November 07:** The night was largely devoted to presentations by Russell and Sue on the combined NZ MicroMineral Group 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium, and the 30<sup>th</sup> Joint Seminar of the Mineralogical Societies of Australia, held at Waihi Beach, North Island, New Zealand, in October. The theme was 'Volcanic Minerals and Mineralogy'.

The presentations were informal and informative, and very well illustrated with numerous images; they covered friends and attendees, the countryside, collecting sites, specimens and micros, and sheeps. Both Sue and Russell had fantastic images of in-situ sulphur crystals, some of which are included here. Afterwards, the NZ specimens were examined (and drooled over); the Weardens had a great little micro of osumilite (grey-green flattened hexagonal prisms with vitreous lustre, in a rhyolite matrix).

Theo brought along a tableful of his latest library acquisitions, including several of the more recent Extra Lapis volumes. It was great to see new faces, in the form of Denise and Peter Whitehead from the Sunshine Coast, and new blood, in the form of Dirk – we'd love to see them regularly. In a few words: a well attended and thoroughly enjoyable meeting. SD

**Management Committee Meeting held Wednesday 26 September 07:** There was some discussion about the ongoing matter of the review of the Constitution.

Paul Clatcher told us of his Treasure Chest adventure for the year and was hoping to get some Minsoc members involved.

It was noted that the Mt Gravatt Lapidary Society has agreed to allow Minsoc Q some space in their club rooms which will be sufficient to house our library and our microscope, ultrasonic cleaner etc.

There was some discussion about a field trip to Kingsgate. Quite possibly a trip might be arranged via connections of either Ron or Steve; worst case scenario would be joining the trip which will be on during Minerama, March 08.

Ron and Steve will try to arrange a trip underground at the University of Queensland Experimental Mine, Indooroopilly, tentatively scheduled for 11 am on 28 November 07.

There was some discussion about obtaining a grant for the purchase of a microscope camera and relevant attachments to allow photomicrography and/or viewing of microscopic images via laptop, monitor or computer projector, using Minsoc's Olympus SZ40 stereo microscope. Steve has ordered the relevant phototube from Olympus, to start the ball rolling, and is investigating the various options and costs.

**Brief meeting of Management Committee members prior to Members' Meeting, 31 October 07:** Committee members attending the Members' Meeting met briefly to discuss aspects of the new Constitution. Ron provided hard copies of the latest draft to all committee members, and requested feedback ASAP.

There was some discussion of the New Zealand Conference, but it was agreed that this will be more fully discussed during the November meeting.

There were several new books available for examination, including 'Guidebook to the Pegmatites of Western Australia' and 'Minerals and Gemstones'

**At a Special General Meeting held on 28 November 2007**, preceding the members' Meeting, the draft constitution was presented and discussed. Comments were received from two members as follows:

Addition of a contents page would be beneficial; minor grammatical changes; rewording of Clause 10 *Expulsion* as follows:

*Any member who has conducted himself, by word or deed, in a manner considered to have been injurious or prejudicial to the character or interests of the Society, and whose continuing membership will be detrimental to the best interests of the Society, as decided by the Management Committee, may be expelled.*

*In such cases, the Management Committee will inform the member that his expulsion is under consideration, and shall extend to the member, either verbally or in writing, as the Management Committee may decide, an opportunity of offering an explanation to the Committee,*

*within a period of no more than 4 weeks. Thereafter, if the management committee decides to expel, no appeal will be allowed.*

Members were in agreement with the proposed modifications and it was moved by Ron Young and seconded by Sue Ericksson and carried, that we adopt the Constitution (a draft copy of which was available on the MINSOC website) together with the above amendments. This document will be forwarded to the Office of Fair Trading for approval in the near future.

When approval has been received from the Office of Fair Trading a copy of the final document will be available on the Minsoc internet web site <http://www.mineral.org.au> Those members wishing to obtain a paper copy of the document should forward a self addressed, stamped business sized envelope (postage will be \$1), to the secretary. RK

**Management Committee Meeting held on 28 November 07:** Discussion about the very successful visit to the University Mine and the Julius Kruttschnitt Mineral Research Centre. It was agreed that a letter of thanks be forwarded to Eric Muhling and Jon Worth for giving of their time to show MINSOC members through the mine and the Centre.

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the joint Mineral Societies of Australasia held at Waihi New Zealand were read and discussed. It is proposed that the 2008 Combined Societies Seminar be hosted by the Tasmania Group with the possible venue to be Queenstown. **The timing will most likely be early-mid November 2008** which will allow field excursions to be conducted during more pleasant weather, in association with the seminar. The probable theme will be *Copper Mines and Minerals*. Queensland will host the 2009 Seminar in June 2009.

Reimbursement of travel expenses to a value of \$300 for the president to attend the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar of the Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia

Discussion took place on the submission for a data projector and a digital camera with suitable attachments for our microscope. Tony and Steve are to prepare and finalise the submissions on our behalf. RK

**Field trip to the University Experimental Mine and the Julius Kruttschnitt Mineral Research Centre (University of Queensland), Indooroopilly, 28/11/07.**

Steve made all of the arrangements with Eric Muhling, Deputy Mine Manager at the Experimental Mine, and nine of us turned up just before 11am. Sue and Ted Wearden came up from Mexico, to join Sue and Phillip Ericksson, Russell, Tony, George, Theo and myself.

We participated in a quite specific site induction course which, together with instructions from Eric, pretty much guaranteed that we wouldn't get lost or killed. We were split into two groups (five and four) and Eric took Theo, Russell, Tony, George and me 'down the mine'. Jon Worth, Senior Research Assistant JKMRC, took the

other group on the surface trip, to look at the mineral processing experimental and research facilities.

We climbed down via a series of vertical ladders, through the 116ft. level to the 140ft. level. The drive was about 1.2m wide and varied in height from about 1.5 to 2m. The rock looked to be pretty solid but the drive was timbered with pretty serious wood. Eric has found a few slugs of galena over the years but we saw no evidence of ore except for a couple of tiny sparkles. Although the ladders were vertical, the whole exercise was not too arduous even for oldies like me.

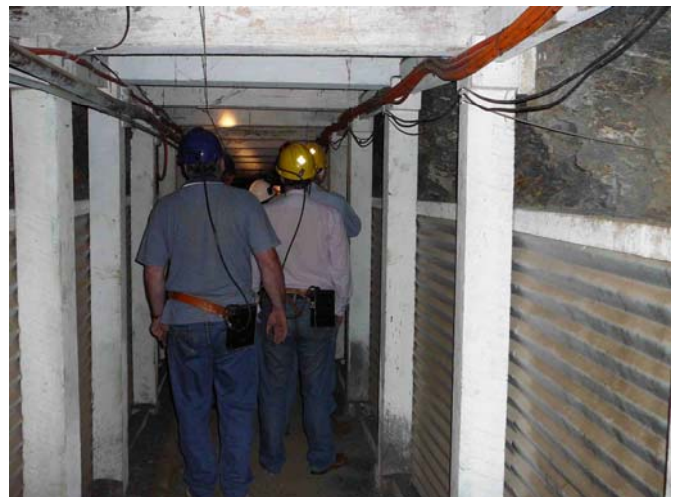
When we got back to the surface Eric took the other group down the mine and Jon took our group on the surface tour and explained about grinding the ore, the flotation process and other aspects of the minerals processing research done on site.

When the nine of us were together again Eric took us to the open pit and through an adit into a short drive where traces of sphalerite could be seen. Both Eric and Jon are obviously very proud of the Mine and JKMRC, and were not shy in telling us that the work done there is world class.

We all left at about 3pm after having had a very pleasant and very interesting four hours. Several of us took photos; some of Russell's are below. RY

**A bit of History:** Outcrops of weathered silver- and lead-bearing quartz veins (derived from a deeper granitic rock mass that is not exposed) were discovered in 1918 at Finney's Hill (now Isles Road and environs) Indooroopilly. Small scale mining commenced shortly thereafter, but by 1919 had expanded to the larger scale works of a formal syndicate. Two more syndicates were formed to mine the silver and lead, but by mid 1921, only the Finney's Hill United Silver Mine was operating. Ore was beginning to run out, though several smaller ore zones were subsequently found. The mine formally closed in 1929, and the land reverted to Brisbane City Council. In the 10 years between 1919 and 1929 the mine produced more than 227,000 t oz of silver (7.071 tonnes) and 1,800 tonnes of lead.

In 1951, much of the mine land was acquired by the then School of Mining Engineering, University of Queensland.



The workings became the University Experimental Mine, and are maintained as a registered mine, regularly used for student practical work in ventilation, earth sciences, surveying, production engineering and safety. The Experimental Mine site covers 3.5ha (8.6 acres), and the JKMRM is situated on this site. SD



**MicroMob meeting 15 September:** After driving around many corners, the September meeting of the micro group was held at the home of Sue and Ted Wearden at Old Bonalbo. Seven of our members met with another eight of the Casino group over a much needed cuppa. Theo then led the discussion on twinning in crystals and some of the different habits of the more common crystal families. Thanks to Theo for bringing his laptop and sharing his knowledge and also thanks to Steve for preparing the article for the last newsletter; we had plenty to discuss.

Several members also brought along some information that Theo made sense of for us. The lack of specimens to view showed our lack of understanding of what we have in our collections, although Tom had a rather nice phillipsite sixling.

After lunch we had show and tell and a lot of swapping. Tom was showing some of his new finds from Glencoe and Toowoomba, and Josie and Norm Robinson

brought along samples from Mount Bonnie, the Evelyn mine, Ballina and Biggenden (some very fine thumbnail calcites). They also put out diamond crystals for us to select from; their generosity is always appreciated.

Philip and I were the only ones to stay overnight as Sunday was a monthly meeting for the Casino members. It was a night of riotous laughter and a day of eating. Those ladies know catering!



*Tom's phillipsite sixling, approximately 0.9mm across the arms – Bedford St dump, Toowoomba; Sue Ericksson photo*

**MicroMob meeting 10 November:** Our final meeting for 2007 commenced with a cuppa and discussions on the recent New Zealand Micromineral symposium and the Joint Australian mineral seminar with input by Russell, the Erickssons and the Weardens. Theo spoke about small mineral boxes that he has found on the internet. By buying 4000 at a time the cost becomes quite favourable (see the ad on page 2).

The theme of Beryl was then introduced and after an excellent presentation by Theo we compared our individual research and quite a few beryl specimens were shown (of the larger size mainly with very few micros). Discussion on the 2008 calendar was brief and this will be published in the next newsletter for all to see. Show and tell of purchases and acquisitions from the last month consisted mainly of the New Zealand trip and were mainly micros. Theo has purchased a collection from Adelaide and showed us the Broken Hill, Tasmanian and Tom's Quarry SA samples.

Excitement erupted as the final discussions were under way with the sighting of a four foot green tree snake wriggling through the MIDDLE of the room. No one saw it enter but we quickly concluded that his name was NOT Elvis; he would not leave the building no matter how much he was swept towards the door. After a short inspection of the office he disappeared behind a desk, so we vacated the building leaving a note on the board to inform the Lapidary people of his visit. Some bright spark subsequently added the comment 'Yes, but did he pay his workshop fees?'

**The Ercikssons' recollections of the combined October 07 meetings - Part 2: 30<sup>th</sup> Joint Seminar of the Mineralogical Societies of Australia, Waihi Beach, North Island, New Zealand:** Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> saw the Australian Seminar begin with lectures in the Chapel - a good place to be on such a windy day.

There were 21 Australians, 2 Americans, 2 British and 10 New Zealanders in attendance. Jocelyn Thornton chaired the first segment with the first speaker being Bill Birch. He spoke on Cainozoic Volcanism in Western Victoria, highlighting some of the major volcanic centres, showing how humans have interacted with the landscape and he also spoke on possible future eruptions. The second speaker was Dermot Henry who spoke on the Minerals in Cainozoic volcanic rocks from Victoria - what they are and their occurrence. The third talk was presented by Rod Martin on the zeolites found in the Waitakere stream in the Auckland district. Neville Berkahn has done quite a study on the area and has found quite a few different minerals including half a dozen that are yet to be identified. The collecting area is greatly restricted as most of the area is now national parklands.

Dermot Henry chaired the first session for the afternoon. Steve Sorrell was the first, speaking on Tasmanian Volcanics and their minerals. Mat Singleton and Carol Davies then presented a talk on the Aranga Quarry and the minerals to be found there. Judy Rowe followed with an informative talk on Mayor Island, its history and the minerals that can be found there including a few yet to be identified. Rod Martin rounded off this session with a presentation on the Rotokawa thermal area which is located about 20 km north east of Taupo. There are more than 30 minerals species to be found in this area although very few appear in private collections. After a tea break Steve Sorrell took the chair to introduce Lin Sutherland who spoke on the baryte bearing basalts of the Bourke - Byrock area of NSW. Ian Graham followed with a talk on lanthanite from Whitianga Quarry. There has only ever been one patch found there and since the quarry has changed hands the chances are greatly reduced of having another trip into this quarry.

The Seminar dinner was held that evening at the local RS club. The food was wonderful, the company a load of fun and we were entertained into the night by several twinkled toed friends. The 30th anniversary cake which was made and decorated by Rod Martins daughter was cut by Judy Rowe and Pat Byrne.

Rod Martin was the Chairman for the final session on Friday morning. The first speaker was to be Sarah Milicich but in her absence Rod presented the paper on geothermal well cuttings done in the local area for electricity generation. The final speaker was Jocelyn Thornton who spoke on the minerals of the Mount Somers Volcanic Group, Canterbury.

The joint Societies meeting was held immediately after the group broke for a cuppa, which was followed a frenzied sale of mainly local minerals and gold-bearing quartz, then some serious packing up began. The group

photo was taken after lunch followed by the last cleanup. Most people took off for the afternoon for sightseeing; for others it was an afternoon of unwinding.

The evening was a very relaxing night as groups had one final night of friendship while others went to the beach to see the full moon rise over the ocean - a beautiful way to finish a successful, informative and tiring eight days (for those that attended the prior Micromounters' meeting).

The post seminar field trip to Lake Rotokawa involved a very early start as we had to be on the road by 8am to be at Trevor Hoskings home in Taupo by 11am. Trevor was able to get permission from the government bodies and the local Maoris to take us into the thermal area so 30 people in 14 cars made their way into the Lake Rotokawa area. The first stop was to show us a naturally hollowed area known as the Death Pit because of the gases that accumulate in the hollow; without any breeze, the foolhardy animals and birds that wander in are quickly snuffed out. Trevor then led us to an area where there were some beautiful big sulfur crystals hanging in all their splendour. This was strictly a photographic stop. Then after a lunch stop, a walk around some active pools and a history lesson, we were taken into an area to do our own sulfur collecting. It will be interesting to know just how much survived the trip home. Sulfur needs time to solidify properly before it can be safely transported and very few of us had that the luxury of time. Sue and Ted Wearden found by far the most spectacular piece of the day and many photos were taken to help preserve the piece for them (see *Russell's photo below*). Final farewells were said as we all went our own way. Philip and I went back to Auckland with Pat

Sunday morning was spent sorting through a few more boxes of Hendersons Quarry specimens plus the rocks that Pat had bought ... and yes it did contain the elusive osumilite. As the day fined up we went to Stanmore Bay just north of Auckland to be there for low tide. A most scenic spot to fossick, and find we did: siderite, barite and phillipsite mainly. So then it was home to start breaking, sorting and packing AGAIN.



By now our cases had hit capacity so we spent Monday and most of Tuesday wandering around the Auckland area. The plane left at 5pm, bound for Brisbane. There were no hassles with Aussie immigration or customs, and we were through in almost record time. (We were bringing in mineral crystals, which are clean, and NOT rocks which are not clean). We were home by 7.15pm, happy but absolutely exhausted!



*You can collect (above), but below, you can only take pictures and memories; Russell's photos*



**The Weardens on their post-Symposium and Post-Seminar experiences:** Matthew Singleton and Carol Davies invited us to stay with them together with English couple Harry and Christine Critchley. Fossicking sightseeing and generally enjoying each other's company were the order of the day.

And that is what we did! The hospitality was second to none as those who have experienced it would agree. The view up the valley from Matthew's front verandah is something to behold. Bottle feeding the lawn mower's offspring was another bonus for me.

When someone says we are going to Kauri Mountain then to the beach to fossick at low tide for sulphides, suitable footwear in my mind is thongs. Not so! The track to the beach is a scramble, zigzagging down a grassy cliff, some of which is done on all fours, especially climbing back up. Ted, Christine and Matthew went paddling. Tide was well out so they did not have to swim. Temperature of both water and air were made to order. And sulphides were found: pyrite, arsenopyrite, sphalerite also siderite and a couple of lovely sceptre quartzes. Matthew certainly knew how to turn on the weather after the wind at Waihi Beach.

We went to Hihi, a small village on a bay way up north in Northland to the 'Singleton Batch' (a three bedroom house, or as we would say a 'weekender'). Again the view from the front verandah was something to behold - uninterrupted to the bay - and the sunsets absolutely beautiful. Fishing requires setting a square line overnight, retrieving next morning and disentangling fish. Ate fresh fish cooked to perfection. When a 2+ metre shark was in the net, Ted was most upset that it did not get put into the 3 metre tinny he was in.

Another day a trip to Aranga Quarry north of Dargaville was organised by Matthew.

He and Carol had done a presentation on the quarry at the Seminar, so we had a bit of an idea what it looked like and also what we were likely to find. Chabazite, thomsonite, cowlesite, levyne and calcite were all good possibilities. Rare minerals included analcite, phillipsite and cavansite. There were mountains of crushed material and initially it did not look promising. I was wearing a pair of borrowed sandals because I had tried to remove my big toe nail, and shoes did not fit over a toe about 4 times the size it should be. Traversing the rough ground was not real easy.

Before getting into the quarry proper, there were a few sort of interesting rocks and for whatever reason, Ted attacked a couple. They were not very large, about the size of a small football. Rock number two had a blue speck! Could it possibly be? Could it be cavansite? Matthew came up to tell Ted to stop playing around where he was and to go down to the quarry proper where he could collect some good specimens. Ted showed Matthew what he found. Matthew could not believe what he was seeing. But could it still be ... yes, it **was** cavansite!

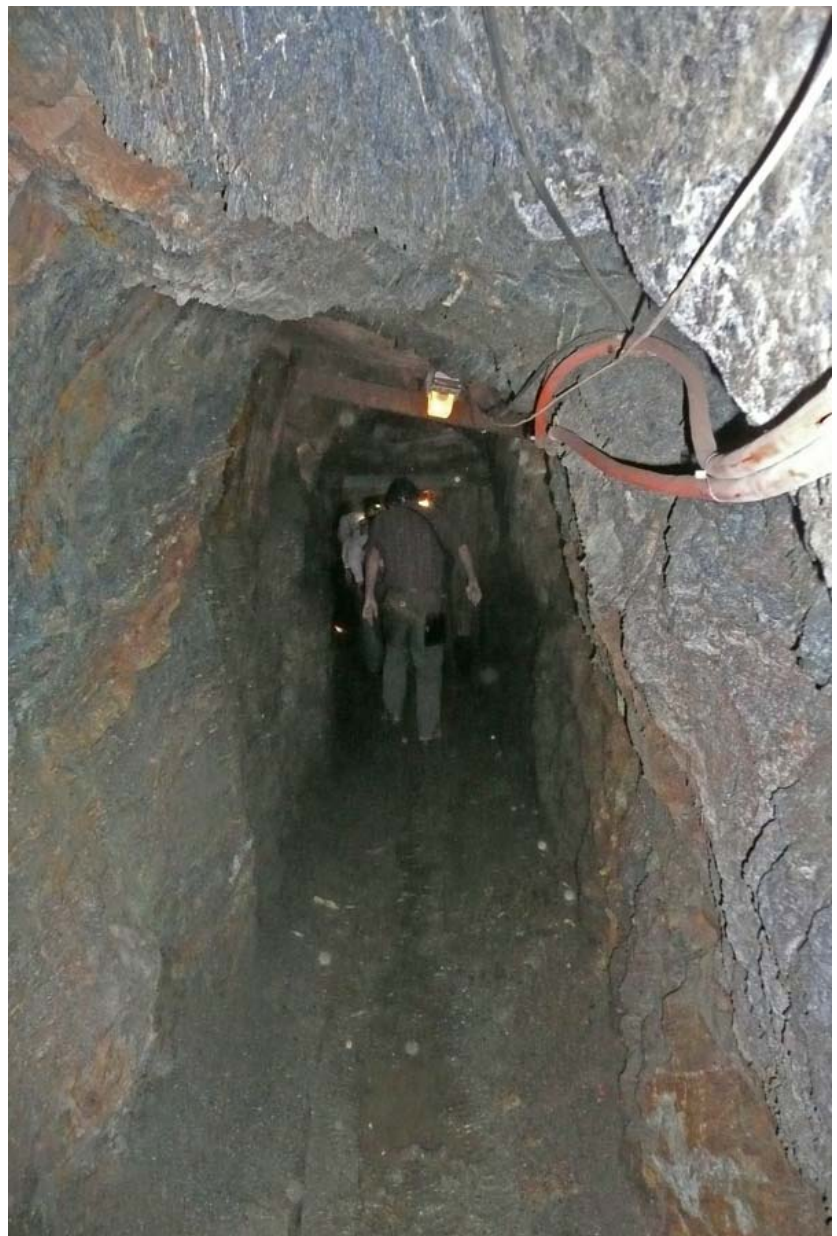
It was absolutely great to meet up with Matthew and Carol again, and meeting and getting to know Harry and Christine was a bonus. Unfortunately all good times must come to an end. The Critchleys are home in England and we have returned to the real world back here at Old Bonalbo. We extend a huge thank you to Matthew and Carol for putting up with us. Ted and Sue Wearden



More shots taken underground by Tony at the University of Queensland Experimental Mine, Indooroopilly

Top: Russell and Theo listening attentively to our guide, Eric Muhling, and George looking into the darkness

Top right: First group disappearing along a drive, trailed by Ron; note the low-grade metamorphic phyllite country rock which hosts the vein-type deposit; the veins, with silver and lead ore, have essentially been all mined out





And who said Sue can't take good pictures? From top left, clockwise: Thermal pool, bubbling, and depositing sulphur (why do I think of mother-in-law?); the assembled masses collecting sulphur; collecting with a view – what a great place to contemplate the beauties of NZ scenery; close-up of delicate sulphur crystals, deposited in a gas or exhalative hole; the sulphur crystal locale in perspective.