



The Mineralogical Society of Queensland Inc.

NEWSLETTER

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We trust that you've all had a Very Merry
Chrysoberyl and that you'll have a Happy and
Far More Prosperous Newberyite!
We hope to see you all in 2009!



UPCOMING MINSOCQ MEETINGS, 2009

MinSocQ meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month, excepting December, at the Mt Gravatt Lapidary Society (MGLS) clubrooms, formally starting at 7.30pm. Anyone interested in minerals and mineral collecting is most welcome, at any meeting.

(The clubrooms are 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 parking available adjacent to the clubroom, at no charge.)

January 28: *Tasmanian minerals* will be the topic, with various speakers - if you have 'em, please bring 'em.

February 25: *Tourmaline* will be the topic, with various speakers; not surprisingly, the tourmaline group minerals will comprise the minerals of the month - so bring yours in to be ogled.

March 25: *Native elements* will be both the topic and the minerals of the month, with assorted speakers; so bring in your diamonds, gold crystals and nuggets, sulfur, native silver, copper, copper, bismuth & platinumoids; graphite will be permitted

April 29: *Evaporite minerals* will be both the topic and the minerals of the month, with assorted speakers; so bring in your halite, gypsum, sylvite, borax, nitratine,

nitrate, anhydrite and any other evaporite minerals and rocks.

MINSOCQ MGMT. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Commencing at 6.00pm, prior to the 2009 MinsSocQ meetings: 28 January, 25 March, 27 May, 29 July.

2009 MICROMOB MEETINGS starting 10am

A reversal of order to these meetings has evolved. The morning's activities will comprise 'problems', swaps, brags and 'scope work, punctuated by cups of tea. The afternoon activity will comprise the chosen topic - with presentations - and more 'scope work.

January 10: at the MGLS clubrooms; the topic will be *Tasmanian Micros - from Tasmania no less!*

February 14: chez Sue and Ted Wearden, Old Bonalbo, in deepest NSW (**please note change of venue!**) the topic will be *Topaz - from anywhere*, led by Theo. MicroMobbbers are invited to camp over and make a weekend of it (contact Sue or Ted for arrangements); there will also be instructions and demonstrations for bead making, and other scurrilous delights.

March 14: at the MGLS clubrooms; the topic will be the tourmaline group

April 17: at the MGLS clubrooms; the topic will be the feldspar group, led by Steve (if he is not away)

23rd Annual Seminar of the Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia, in Brisbane, hosted by MinSocQ; Queen's Birthday Weekend, 6 - 8 June 2009

The venue will be the Theatre at the Queensland Museum, South Bank, Brisbane, and the theme will be *Minerals, Mines and Collectors*.

For more detail, go to Tony's website - *The Australian Mineral Collector* at www.mineral.org.au, and click on the *Joint Seminar* link

2009 SHOW CALENDAR

For updates and more details, see www.mineral.org.au

February 28 & March 1: North Brisbane Gem and Jewel Festival, Aviation High School, Widdop St, Hendra

March 13-15: Minerama, Glen Innes & District Services Club. Arguably the best show in NSW, with over 70 traders offering the best range of minerals and gems available. There will be tailgaters galore, with some offering top class specimens. As usual, there will be organized field trips.

March 21: Bill and Yvonne welcome everybody interested in minerals to the BK Minerals, 'Back from Tucson Extravaganza', 9am to 5pm; 104 Koorungal Rd, Munruben, Qld 4125; Ph: 3802 1186.

April 10-12: Easter Rock Swap, Warwick & Districts Lapidary Club; Warwick Showgrounds

April 10-13: 45th National Gemboree, Horsham Victoria

May 2-3: Redcliffe Gem & Mineral Show, corner Isobel St & Elizabeth Avenue, Clontarf

May 16-17: Lismore Gemfest, Lismore Showground

May 30: Mt Gravatt Gem Show, MGLS clubrooms

Vale Vilma

Some may have been aware that Vilma Tarhanoff was very ill and sadly she lost her fight for life on the 26th October 2008. Although Vilma and Vic have only been in our group for a few years they have both been good friends to us all. Vilma was a very generous lady with a quick smile. She always had something from their farm to give away, whether they be strawberries, eggs or flowers. Some may also remember her interest in creating 'Faberge eggs'. Vic still enjoys chatting about the hobby even though he is now unable to attend our meetings. We will miss you Vilma! To Vic and Family, we extend our sympathies.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

The Annual Seminar of the Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia, in Zeehan, Tasmania, and Zeehan Gem and Mineral Fair, 6-9 November 08.

MinSocQ was represented by Russell, Tony, Sue and Ted Wearden, Rebecca and Larry Queen, Bev Mortensen, and Doug Rumsey who had travelled all the way from Longreach. Tony presented on collecting at Wolfram Camp, and by all accounts, he gave a good talk, even though he had some last minute to-ing and fro-ing due to a family emergency. The Seminar went well, with an attendance of 70+.

The Zeehan Museum Mineral Display has been upgraded (just as well, as it was previously in an 'awkward' setting in the bowels of the Museum). The weather was variable; drizzly and overcast on Monday (Mt Bischoff Mine), but fined up for Tuesday (Adelaide Mine for crocoite and the stichtite quarry) and Wednesday (Queenstown/Mt Lyell Mine); Thursday to Sunday saw typical West Coast weather, showery, and rain, but fortunately, the Gem and Mineral Fair was also held indoors.



The ASJMA venue – Gaiety Theatre Zeehan. Below: Mt Bischoff Mine, Waratah Tasmania; Mt Bischoff was one of the early high-yield tin mines, now reopened by Metals-X, with ore trucked to the Renison Bell Mine to feed the concentrator.



Entrance to the Adelaide Mine, with field trippers scrounging for crocoite; Russell Kanowski photos

Russell presented images from the Zeehan seminar and field trips (with additional commentary from Tony) at the MinSocQ meeting of November 26, for the benefit of those that could not get to Tasmania. There followed an inspection of goodies acquired at the Zeehan Gem and Mineral fair, plus Tasmanian specimens in general.

Management Committee Meeting, 26 November 08

The committee first dealt with matters arising from the previous AGM, most of the paperwork being done by Tony.



Next, the committee finalized the considerable paperwork required for a submission to the Community Benefit Fund, for monies to purchase a laptop, multi-format computer projector, and a photomicrographic system for the MicroMob. We should hear of the success (or otherwise) of our submission, by the end of February 09. In the interim, please cross your fingers, or various other parts of you anatomy.

Next the committee addressed the forthcoming Joint Annual Seminar, Queens Birthday weekend in June, which we are hosting this year (see page 1 of this Newsletter). There is a lot to do in the interim.

End-of-year BBQ on 13 December chez Andy and Helen Toole, at Holland Park

17 members and spouses attended this annual event; the weather was fairly cooperative, and no member actually melted. The gathering started with Sue and Phil regaling the assembled masses with anecdotes from their recent trip to Denmark and the UK. Sue and Ted Wearden had made the trip from NSW to attend the BBQ. It was a very pleasant surprise to see Amy Willis, who had been a very keen and enthusiastic junior MinSocQ member for some 4 years; she's now at ANU in Canberra, 'doing' maths and stats. Amy's now on the mailing list for the Newsletters, and we hope she comes to MinSocQ meetings when in Brisbane.

In the absence of George, Tony assumed the role of *barbequemeister* and did a great job; there was plenty of food, nibbles, and Helen's enjoyable tasty bits of no redeeming nutritional value (but they surely taste the best!), followed by sweets and Christmas cake.

After the food and drinks, and in the time honoured tradition, Ron Young worked hard to enthuse the mob to a bidding frenzy for the annual auction (aided, after a fashion, by Jackie). There was much good natured ribbing of the Youngs during the auction, which they took in their stride. The auction raised a tad over \$300 for MinSocQ's coffers – top job Ron!

A thoroughly enjoyable end-of-year event, as always, and yet again, we thank Helen and Andy for a perfect venue!



Auctioneer to Bill Kettley: 'Bid or be quiet!'

The Wanderers Return

Sue and Phil Ericksson were away for some two months, in Denmark and the UK. They were nearly barred entry to the UK, due to what is now fairly common – rampant bureaucratic pettifoggery. They did make it in the end, one suspects, by some adroit words from Suzie.....and speaking of words, here are some snippets from herself:

During our recent overseas trip we visited the Copenhagen Geological Museum. It is an extensive and well displayed collection, well worth a few hours to anyone travelling to Denmark. The lighting was unobtrusive and well placed to display the minerals to their advantage, quite unlike some of the museums we have visited.



You can never get enough beryl – Display in the Geological Museum, Copenhagen; Brazilian specimen at left is 10cm in length – Sue Ericksson photo

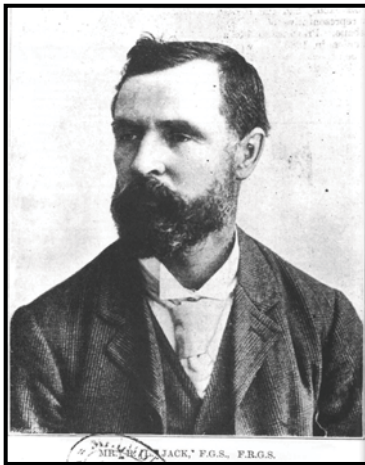
A lot of time passed quickly in the London Geological Museum too. The displays are in two separate sections, the first of which is based on education, exhibiting some enormous specimens. There are displays on a variety of themes, including shape or morphology,

hardness, colour, mineral groups and uses. There is a separate display of the Russell Collection.

The second display area is in the older building which is an architectural marvel in itself. Here there are rows upon rows of minerals to view, sorted into groups starting with the silicates. Around the walls are cabinets of larger specimens loosely grouped. It was good to see some nice Australian minerals, including a crocoite donated by Ann and Noel Kennon from Dapto in NSW.

Here is another article compiled by Eric Stevens, in his series on early Australian geological scientists:

Robert Logan Jack (1845 – 1921)



Great Pioneer Geologist Robert Logan Jack was one of the foremost Australian colonial geologists, even compared to icons such as Sir Douglas Mawson and T. W. Edgeworth David. His massive and detailed contributions to Queensland geology and public office were incredible.

His efforts have never fully been recognized. The physical, geographical and logistical difficulties under which he had to work combined with the diversity of his input over more than two decades are strong factors for his recognition as a great colonial geologist. No doubt many will disagree with this, but the facts speak for themselves. He was geologist, surveyor, cartographer, geographer, explorer, administrator and visionary all in one, with significant contributions in all these fields. His achievements are too many to describe here except in the briefest manner.

Jack was born in Scotland in 1845 and educated at the Irvine Academy and Edinburgh University. He joined the Geological Survey of Scotland in 1867 where his major contribution to Scottish geology was his coalfield mapping.

He was appointed Geological Surveyor for northern Queensland in March 1876, was married in 1877 and in the same year arrived in Townsville. In 1879 Jack was appointed the government geologist for all Queensland - an event which assured the ultimate reality of the development of the Geological Survey, under a Chief Geologist in the Department of Mines. This occurred with the subsequent move to Elizabeth Street in Brisbane in 1892.

Jack's talents soon became apparent and his harmonious and efficient relations with prospectors, miners, officials, settlers, selectors and the public no

doubt contributed to his success as an administrator. He reported on fourteen goldfields, including three on Mount Morgan and at least eleven mineral fields, including Stanthorpe and Herberton tin fields and the Chillagoe mining district.

It is to him that we owe our early knowledge of the Bowen River coalfield, and of those near Cooktown. Jack did much topographic mapping himself, and continually asked that surveyors be sent ahead of geological parties. He made excellent collections of fossils, prevailing upon his friend Robert Etheridge Jnr, then at the British Museum, to carry out their identifications and descriptions, culminating in their classic publication in 1893 of *The Geology and Palaeontology of Queensland and New Guinea*. The Royal Society of NSW recognized the great value of this book by the award of the Clarke medal to each of the authors in 1895.

Some of the routes he travelled by Cobb & Co. but usually it was on horseback. Each member of his party took one horse to ride and one as a pack, carrying supplies and while he was stationed in Townsville his monthly returns included a statement on the condition of his horses.

His report on gold prospects led to his second and main journey of exploration in Cape York Peninsula which he made in the wet season between November 1879 and April 1880. Only two parties had previously attempted to traverse Cape York Peninsula from north to south: the Jardine brothers in 1864-5 and Kennedy in 1848.

The chief danger was from the aborigines, who quite understandably resented the intrusion into their domain. Jack recognized this problem and his attitude had always been one of respect for their human rights. To his regret the party once had to fire on the natives to prevent an attack, and he himself was later speared through the neck near the shoulder during a surprise native attack on his camp. However he completed his proposed journey by riding on to Somerset, the Jardine's home at the tip of the Peninsula, which he reached nearly 4 weeks later.

Wherever Jack's exploratory work took him he filled in details in the maps, especially when based in Cloncurry in 1881 to study part of the district to be traversed by a proposed Transcontinental Railway.

His trip to Cloncurry from Townsville in 1881, undertaken in connection with the railway study, led to what arguably was his greatest service to Queensland, namely the development of the Great Artesian Basin as a source of water for the sheep that were to provide the bulk of this state's wealth at the start of this century. Jack realized that the Mesozoic strata between Cloncurry and the western flanks of the granite divide which separates the Burdekin and the Flinders Rivers, were in the form of a great syncline with its axis crossing the Flinders near Marathon. *"If this is correct..."*, he said in his report to the commander of the railway party, then *"we may expect to find the greater part of the drainage of the Divide between the*

Flinders and the Burdekin, and the McKinlay Ranges, lodged in the more porous beds of the series [the Mesozoic rocks] under conditions favourable for artesian water." His reports created great interest and led to the first successful bore being sunk at Barcaldine in 1886; artesian water had 'arrived'. Jack recognized the impervious nature of the marine Cretaceous cap, and that the chief porous strata were located near the base of the sequence, as he had earlier recognized the importance of the intake areas along the divide to the east.

Whilst Jack's services to geography, mining and the wool industry were great, to the geologist his chief services have been the immense works of compilation he undertook and carried through. The titles in themselves are an indication of his labours, including:

A Handbook of Queensland Geology and a Map [1886] This was written for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London, 1886.

A Review of the Geology of Queensland [1888] Presidential address to the AAAS (geology section)

During his remaining time in Queensland, he was concerned increasingly with administration. However in 1897 he prepared a "Catalogue of Exhibits" for the mineral court at the Queensland International Exhibition and also a new geological map of Queensland which was published in London in 1899 - important as it represents a permanent record of the state of knowledge of Queensland geology when he left us.

His chief vehicle to the common people was his Geological Museum, which he carefully nurtured till it grew into an imposing building in Brisbane. He was always a vigorous collector, and from all his trips he brought back specimens illustrating the geology, mineralogy, petrology and palaeontology of the route and they were in most cases very fine specimens.

Jack was closely associated with the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science and his work in this field was recognized by the Royal Society of NSW. In 1891 he became a member of the Royal Society of Queensland, being elected vice-president for 1893 and president for 1894, serving on the council in 1895-6. He advised the Government on the foundation of the Charters Towers School of Mines in 1888. In 1897 he became a Commissioner for Queensland for the greater Britain Exhibition in London in 1899. The University of Glasgow acknowledged him with an honorary LLD in 1899.

He resigned in 1899 after an offer from an English company operating in the east to explore the metalliferous deposits of Szechuan in China. He practiced as a consulting geologist in London from 1901-04 and then returned to Australia, working as a consulting engineer in Western Australia; by 1910 was a consulting geologist in Sydney. He was elected a member of the Institute of Mining and Metallurgy in 1901 and in 1903-4 was a member of Council of the Geological Society of London, which he had joined in

1870. He died in November, 1921, survived by his wife and son, Robert Lockhart Jack who carried on the tradition of underground water geology in South Australia (and later became chief geologist for BHP). One may well say that Jack indeed was a giant of the past.

Bibliography

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[In 1892 the Geological Survey and its Museum were transferred from Townsville to offices in Elizabeth Street, Brisbane. Note that the exhibits comprised minerals, rocks, publications and maps, as well as fossils. Most of the unpacked fossil collection went under water in Brisbane's Great Flood of 1893. Later that year, Jack obtained more suitable accommodation in a building on the corner of George and Queen Streets. That in turn was demolished in 1923 to make way for the final stage of the Treasury Building. What happened to the Museum specimens?

Presumably, the fossils that remained after the demolition of the museum building became part of the palaeontology collection of the Queensland Museum, but the finest minerals appear to have progressively 'disappeared'. Those that do remain, and are in the Queensland Museum collection, are probably of a quality that do not merit exhibition. Considering the major role of minerals and the mineral industry in Queensland's history and economy, the disappearance of specimens of our mineral and mining heritage is a shameful tragedy.

There are fine Queensland mineral specimens on exhibit at other Australian museums, but the best public display available in Queensland is our own Minerals Heritage Museum; all the more reason to support the MHM, and to acquire fine Queensland specimens for its collection! Ed.]

Newberyite? Yes, approved by the IMA no less! It is orthorhombic, prismatic, with near-square cross section perpendicular to prism length; vitreous lustre, hardness 3 to 3.5, colourless to light greys to browns. It is a hydrated acid phosphate of magnesium (MgHPO₄.3H₂O), discovered in 1879, in bat guano in the Skipton Caves, Corangamite Shire, Victoria. Named after J (James) Cosmo Newbery of Melbourne. He was the Government Analyst in the mid to late 1800s in Victoria; and was affiliated with the National Museum of Victoria, which first opened in the Government Assay Office, Latrobe Street, Melbourne.

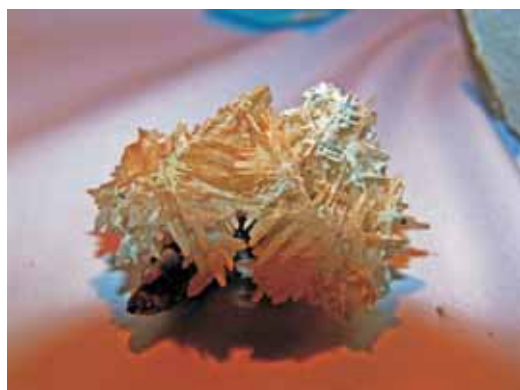
Zeehan - Tasmania - November 2008



Mineralogical Society of Queensland members at the West Coast mineral show, following on from the Zeehan Seminar - Doug Rumsey, a long way from Longreach!, El Presidenté Russell Kanowski, and Ted and Sue Wearden rugged up against the cold weather.



Another seminar, another Skylab! Following on from viewing the large Skylab fuel tank at Mark Creasey's residence during the Perth joint seminar it was an amazing coincidence to see another Skylab tank, this time recovered after it was washed up on the West Coast of Tasmania!



Gorgeous small "snowflake" cerussite from Black Star opencut, Mount Isa Queensland, was a standout specimen on sale at the west coast show. (Now owned by one of our minsoc members!)



Brightly coloured crocoite was featured prominently, close to its home in Dundas Tasmania. This specimen from the Adelaide Mine could have been yours for \$3000!



Azurite "Suns" from the Northern Territory, lovingly mined and prepared by Dehne McLaughlan were a feature of the show.



Crocoite needles photographed in 750 metres of water off Tasmania's coast. Maybe too far for a fossicking trip! From a display in the West Coast Pioneer Museum in Zeehan.

And . . . in June 2009 >>>>>>

Minerals Mines & Collectors

2009
Brisbane Australia

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Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia 32nd Annual Seminar
Saturday 6th - Monday 8th June 2009

The Mineralogical Society of Queensland is pleased to announce details of their 2009 seminar. The theme is "**Minerals, Mines & Collectors**", - giving guest presenters leeway to speak on almost any subject they are passionate about. The venue is to be the Queensland Museum, located at Southbank - an easy 10 minute walk from the Brisbane CBD.

Further details will appear on mineral.org.au and provided to all societies as soon as they become available. See you all in Brissie in June!