



Mineralogical Society of Western Australia Inc July 2009 Newsletter

Editorial

Thanks to those members who have provided articles or information for this issue. Members are reminded that short adverts are provided free of charge to members.

August Meeting - Wednesday 5th August 2009

Starting at 7:30 pm at the WA Lapidary Club rooms 31 Gladstone Street Rivervale.

Commencing with our Annual General Meeting

Meeting documents will be mailed and e-mailed to registered addresses of Society members

Important: Please advise if you will not be attending the AGM, if you have not already done so.

Following the AGM will be updates on general club business

Mineral Presentations

Short presentations by Society members on a topic of their choice:-

Murray Thompson

Topic **“collecting quartz crystals from White Rock Quarry, SA in the 70s.”**

Allan Hart

Topic **“Hafnium (Hf) and its minerals”;**

Find out what the element Hafnium looks like, what is it used for and what minerals contain it.

Susan Stocklmayer

Topic **“Euclase”**

Sue Koepke

Topic **“The seminar field trips that were held before and after the Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia 32nd Annual Seminar.”**

Conclusion

Refreshments provided

A Geiger Counter will be available if anyone wants to test their specimens for radioactivity.

2009 Future Meetings

Starting at 7:30 pm at the WA Lapidary Club rooms 31 Gladstone Street Rivervale.

Wednesday 7th October 2009

Speaker Murray Thompson Topic **“South Australian Minerals”**

Wednesday 2nd December 2009 Christmas Meeting

Speaker Margot Willing Topic to be advised

2010 Meeting Dates

Wednesday 3rd February 2010 – Speaker to be advised

Wednesday 7th April 2010 – Speaker to be advised

Vale Ernie Nickel	18 July 2009
<p>Society member and internationally renowned mineralogist Dr. Ernest "Ernie" Nickel Condolences to all family members.</p>	

MINSOC members were treated to a very interesting and entertaining talk by Peter Downes on "The Fletcher Mineral collection at the W.A. Museum: a late 19th century gem" at our June meeting

Membership Renewals now due

Annual subscription \$20

These may be paid at the August meeting, or alternatively posted to the treasurer (Sue Koepke).

To avoid having to pay the joining fee (\$5) again these must be paid by 31st August 2009.

Anyone wishing to nominate for a position on the committee must have paid their subscription by the beginning of the meeting.

FIELD TRIPS 2009

By arrangement members of the mineralogical society are able to go on field trips organized by the Western Australia Lapidary and Rockhunting Club inc.

Please register with MINSOC Field Trip organizers prior to attending any of the following events, if you are only a current MINSOC member to confirm event details.

MINSOC Field Trip organizers Nimal Perera & Clive

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LAPIDARY AND ROCKHUNTING CLUB INC. 31-35 Gladstone Road, Rivervale, 6103. Rivervale W.A.
PROPOSED 2009 ACTIVITIES & EVENTS
Aug 23 (Sunday)– Staurolite - Chittering
Sept 26, 27, 28 Long Weekend - Morawa Area
Oct 25 (Sunday) – Toodyay area
Nov 15 (Sunday) Gravity Centre & Star Gazers Optical Observatory
Further 2009 activities and events will be published during the year

A lot of organization goes into making a successful field trip – please bring mineral specimens to club meetings for a show and tell.

OS&H – Yes, occupational, safety and health applies on field trips

Please make sure you have the normal safety gear – field boots and hard hat Plus carry extra drinking water. Take sun screen and fly repellent. Drive safely

Particularly important for group field trips:-

Please register your details with excursion organizer – name, car rego, mobile telephone

Please follow instructions by excursion organizer and if you need to leave a field trip early, advise organizer.

There are many opportunities to show case your mineral collection. Enquiries can be made with the various lapidary clubs throughout WA.

Report on the 32nd Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia Annual Seminar, 5-9 June 2009, and what else was happening around Brisbane

by Sue Koepke

The red-eye flight from Perth to Brisbane was uneventful (apart from my raging tooth ache), and I soon found myself at Somewhere to Stay in West End, with a double room in one of the rambling Queenslander style buildings, where I had stayed previously for the Seminar in 2002. In a quiet residential street with great city views, yet only minutes away from supermarkets, cafes, restaurants, banks, the bottle shop and almost anything else you may need, I was within walking distance of the South Bank, the CBD, the Botanic Gardens and most importantly, the seminar venue at the Queensland Museum.

Following check-in and freshening up, the courtesy shuttle bus took me to South Bank. I trudged through persistent rain¹ across Victoria Bridge, and found my way to 61 Mary Street in the Brisbane CBD. In the foyer, the Minerals Heritage Museum (MHM) displays some first class mineral specimens in four well lit cabinets. Although quite a few impressive specimens had been temporarily removed from the cabinets to be displayed at the seminar, I still spent an hour photographing and studying the many pieces remaining on display. You can read more about the MHM at <http://www.mineral.org.au/>.

The rain had eased a little and so had my tooth ache, so off to the Botanic Gardens, followed by a visit to the QUT Art Museum for a still life photography exhibition featuring Froese, where I learnt about rhopography (from the Greek word Rhopos meaning trivial objects) – intriguing stuff, some quite bizarre.

A couple of hours later, I found myself at the Queensland Museum, unable to locate the mineral display. The friendly and helpful staff eventually directed me to a single cabinet where I discovered - much to my dismay - specimens of little merit, and dubious labels. The set of drawers opposite it held mineral specimens without any locality information, while nearby, I observed young children playing with, and rearranging, the unprotected fossil specimens in several other drawers. It was then that I fully appreciated how fortunate we are to have dedicated professionals such as Alex Bevan and Peter Downes at the Western Australian Museum. Time to call it a day and go for dinner.

The next morning, Friday, the Seminar started with a field trip to the Julius Kruttschnitt Mineral Research Centre (JKMRC) in Indooroopilly, a short train ride from the Brisbane CBD. The JKMRC is home of the University of Queensland Experimental Mine. Believing the University mine site to be only 1km west of the train station (so I was told) and with no taxi in sight, I set off on foot, asking for directions along the way. It was a glorious sunny morning; the scenic walk took me alongside the river and past picturesque gardens. I arrived some 40 minutes later, with rosy cheeks and feeling rather invigorated.

Before the University of Queensland developed it as a training centre to showcase mining engineering principles to students, the Experimental Mine operated as a working silver-lead mine. Access to the underground workings (drives, adits, shafts) was unfortunately closed after recent flooding pending a safety inspection, however, our group of 12 was entertained by Eric Muhling's anecdotes, and enjoyed an overview of the history and research activities at JKMRC followed by an extended tour of the mineral processing laboratories led by Jon Worth. We were guided through a series of sheds housing a varied array of rock crushing machinery, some vintage, some state-of-the art such as for drop weight testing. Further on, there was even a glass bottom tank so that scientists could observe processes in action.

After our visit finished, Barbara and Bob Kuchel kindly gave me a lift back to the Brisbane CBD. There, in the Queen Street Mall, a street performer entertained the crowd by balancing atop a straight ladder while juggling an apple, a machete and a pin. His talent impressed me so much that I happily handed over some folding stuff.

George Stacey's arrival had been delayed, so after a late lunch I made my way down to the river and over to the Botanic Gardens, where the City of Brisbane was holding Greenfest, a huge open air event to celebrate its 150 year anniversary. There were marquees with food vendors from around the world, 'green' business promoters, trinket sellers and marketers everywhere, and even a huge circus tent where more 'green' businesses displayed their merchandise. Visitors had the opportunity to 'roll around' on Segways (I'd buy one if it wasn't for the ridiculous price tag), while rock bands, blues singers, drummers, and other music performers worked the crowds simultaneously on three separate stages set up in various sections of the Botanic Gardens.

Eventually, George joined me and before long we made the acquaintance of some inquisitive possums. Equally inquisitive George stuck his hand out to stroke² one, but it turned and tore a piece of flesh out of his finger. Nursing his wounded digit, George found first aid, supper and a drop of red (purely medicinal) at a nice South Bank restaurant.

On Saturday morning, Sue and Phil Ericksson handled the registration process with great efficiency and handed out bags containing – among other things – tourist information, notebook and pen, and a superb 30 page seminar guide produced by Tony Forsyth in full colour, thanks to generous donations by Caleb Yue and Bob Bryan. I think the Queenslanders raised the bar a notch.

¹ So much for the rumour that Queensland weather is perfect.

² Remind George Stacey to avoid strokes at all cost.

We had the opportunity to socialise and appreciate Tony's display of miner's safety lamps as well as fabulous specimens in the mineral display cases, one of them heavily weighted with 'berylliant' specimens, before being ushered into the theatre at Steve Dobos' behest.

The Queensland Society's President, Russell Kanowski, welcomed everyone before the Society's patron Bob Bryan officially opened the meeting. Over the next two days, the speakers took their audience around the world from Chillagoe to New Jersey to Colorado, and via the Binntal back to NSW and Victoria. From gemstones on the Queensland Mace in State Parliament to moving specimens, from mysterious moonmilk to sequestering uranium: there was a wide span of topics, all expertly presented. Tony Forsyth shed some light on Candles, kerosene and carbide lamps, while Dermot Henry highlighted the importance of collectors to museum collections. Much to the writer's surprise, Steve did 'not mention the war' in his talk on Be minerals, though came awfully close with Zanazziite (enunciation!). To read the abstracts, go to

<http://www.mineral.org.au/seminar/images/abstractsfinal.pdf> .

As before, Queensland Museum proved to be an excellent venue, with friendly staff, all the required audio visual facilities, and being centrally located. Steve Dobos in the 'control centre' ensured that everything went without a hitch.

The seminar dinner on Saturday night was held in a private function room at the Ship Inn, a historic hotel dating from the 1880s located at the South Bank. The food (alternate drop) was surprisingly good, and the service efficient. The themed seminar place mats proved popular souvenirs.

Sunday morning started with the Joint Societies AGM and the AJM AGM. The writer represented MinSocWA. Newsletters and re- publication of articles were discussed. Each State is invited to place their 'old' newsletters on The Australian Mineral Collector website. The 2010 Annual Seminar will be hosted by MinSocSA and held in Adelaide 12-14 June.

There was no official program after the Sunday seminar session, so George and I went to the South Bank for a live comedy show, followed by al fresco dinner at an Indian restaurant near our accommodation. Al fresco was probably not such a good idea as I had been sneezing throughout the day and developed a sore throat and killer tooth ache the previous night.

On Monday morning, a mineral bazaar was held with much brisk trading taking place. Larry and Bec Queen had plenty of gold and some pyrite specimens from PNG available; I could not resist a specimen featuring apatite on lustrous pyrite.

Next I stopped at Paul Carr's table, going: I'll have that one, and that one, and that one, before squeezing into a scrum at the next table where dealers and collectors picked up well-priced specimens by the dozens, lots from Wolfram Camp, if memory serves me correctly. I blinked, and missed the superb Foitite specimens that Vic Cloete had been selling at another table. There was also an assortment of micros, but I didn't get a look at them as time was up because I was going on the field trip to Toowoomba. Penny kindly wrapped³ three of my specimens, practising / demonstrating what she preaches, while I gathered my belongings, and off we went.

Ross Pogson and I were offered a lift by Tony and arrived in Toowoomba, some 140km west of Brisbane, ahead of schedule. We stopped at the Tourist Centre for a comfort break, then agreed to detour to an Antiques shop. The lads went off exploring the far end of the shop, while I never got past the first display. Within minutes, I had shelled out \$200 for an antique nut cracker, and a malachite bead necklace. Somehow, an antique massager caught our eye as we were about to leave the store, and I soon found myself at the receiving end of this contraption.

I could have easily spent the rest of the day in this place, but off we went to the field trip rendezvous. We soon arrived at the site of the Toowoomba Bypass pilot tunnel's excavated rock pile, and after trip leader Russell Kanowski's safety talk and overview, dispersed to collect zeolites and carbonates.

There was ferroan and colourless calcite, chabazite, analcime, thomsonite, and olivine to be found, all on or within basalt. Society members have apparently been collecting at this site for a couple of years, and during this time the excavated material has been weathering rather quickly. I managed to collect a few larger rocks that I trimmed the following night. Scrambling across the rock pile, I must have spent half my time blowing my nose instead of looking for specimens.

Monday night, I had the pleasure of having a very nice al fresco dinner in Ross Pogson's company at a South Bank restaurant – a perfect finish to a perfect day.

On Tuesday morning, we went on a collecting trip to Laidley Creek, about 80km west of Brisbane. It was mostly sunny, with the occasional gusts of cold wind, when we stopped in a picnic area beside the flowing creek, alongside which there were basalt boulders and cobbles containing vughs filled with chabazite, calcite, thomsonite, erionite, and levyne. Being unfamiliar with this geological environment and some of the species, I very much appreciated the guidance offered by Ross. He soon helped me sort the keepers from the dornicks, and even expertly trimmed a specimen for me.

³ Penny did a perfect job, specimens arrived intact.

Over at the picnic shelter, Society members had set up a microscope and a rock splitter for our use. The microscope proved very popular and was in constant use. I did not want to spread my germs to this instrument, though I managed to have excess matrix trimmed off an oversize specimen. By now, the discomfort of tooth ache and flu symptoms began to seriously bother me as I had run out of painkillers, and I was very grateful when Sue Ericksson kindly came to my rescue with some pills. This must have been the first time ever that I used more tissue for my nose than wrapping rocks.

Around 3pm, we said our goodbyes and Theo Klopogge chauffeured us safely back to Brisbane. Back at Somewhere to Stay, most of the evening was spent trimming, wrapping and packing specimens, and reflecting upon the wonderful time we shared. The Seminar was very successful, and I wish to thank everyone involved for making it such an enjoyable event.

(all photos below are from Sue Koepke)



View of bridge across Brisbane River, Indooroopilly, Qld on way to JKMRC



View towards picturesque Laidley Creek. The basalt boulders in the creek bed contained A sparkling array of micro zeolites.



Field Trip Friday June 5 2009
Delegates awaiting JKMRC tour.



Field Trip participants were eager to learn about Crushing technology at the JKMRC, led by Jon Worth (top left)



Russel Kanowski holds a safety Briefing and induction at the Toowoomba pilot tunnel Collecting site.



At Tony Forsyth's insistence the lady at Toowoomba antiques shop demonstrates the benefits of antique massager on Sue Koepke's nose



Lin Sutherland and Tony Forsyth found a museum size specimen on the field trip to Toowoomba



Historic steam winch at the University of Queensland Experimental Mine. Bob Kuchel And Tony Forsyth on right



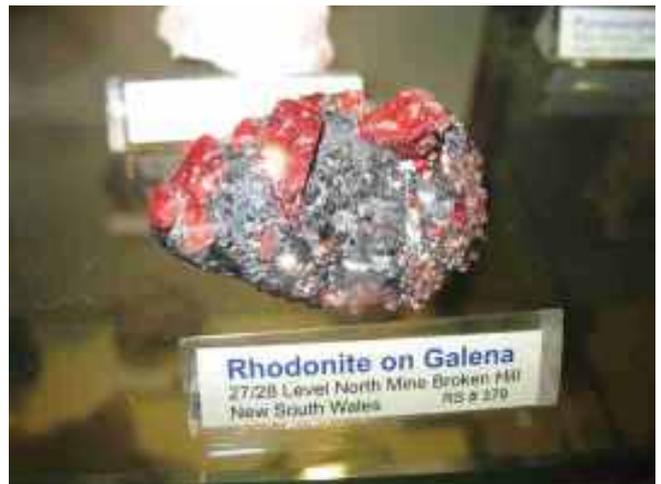
Shaft at the University of Queensland Experimental Mine



Eric Muhling (front right) passes around some specimens collected at the University of Queensland's Experimental Mine



Mineral Heritage Museum display cases in the Foyer of 61 Mary Street, Brisbane.



Rhodinite from North Mine, Broken Hill, NSW, On display at the Minerals Heritage Museum.



Stunning minerals from around the world were displayed at the seminar



Seminar mineral display case with many beryllium species.



Collection of miners lamps adds depth to Tony Forsyth's presentation



Laidley Creek field trip briefing by Phil Ericksson on Tuesday morning

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

30/07/2009

To All Members of the Mineral Society
From Susan and Vernon Stockmayer

This is to let you all know that there is a planned Geological Survey Bulletin on the Gemstones and Ornamental Rocks of WA. This is being prepared as a collaborative project between the Geological Survey, who will be the publishers, together with Vernon and Susan Stockmayer, who are the chief authors.

All known occurrences of gems, gem materials and ornamental rocks that were/are protected under mineral tenements will be included. However there are many other occurrences, often small scale, that have also provided interesting material. If you have any interesting gemmological/ornamental samples from referenced sites that you consider would make a useful entry to this book please contact Susan with details. We are also appealing for access to any carvings, cabochons or finished items made from any WA rocks/minerals that you regard as particularly attractive and worthy of being photographed for the book. Due acknowledgement will be given for any material that is photographed and published. This is a chance to search your collections and share your special samples.

Susan can be contacted on 9291 9043 or email nyanga@icenet.com.au

UNUSUAL MINERALS

Londonite $(\text{Cs,K,Rb})\text{Al}_4\text{Be}_4(\text{B,Be})_{12}\text{O}_{28}$ from near Mt. Bity, Antandrokomby, Madagascar. This is one of the few minerals which contains the element rubidium. I have been assured that this specimen has been analysed and found to contain rubidium. Webmineral lists 6 minerals containing rubidium:- Rubicline, Pollucite, Londonite, Pezzottaite, Eveslogite, and Telyushenkoite with Londonite containing 1.05% rubidium, Whereas mindat.org lists 5 minerals containing rubidium:- Londonite, Masutomilite, Ramanite-(Rb), Rubicline, and Voloshinite. Londonite is in the isometric crystal system and has a hardness of 8.



This specimen is approximately 6mm in size. Photographed by A. Hart from his collection.

Committee Members	
Stewart Cole - President	Tony Davies
Sue Koepke - Secretary/Treasurer ph 0417 990 688	Allan Hart - Newsletter Editor
Nimal Perera – Vice President	Mignonne Clark
Clive Daw - Field trip co-ordinator	Susan Stocklmayer
Society e-mail addresses	
All correspondence (excluding the newsletter): minsocwa@hotmail.com	
Mineral society WA Newsletter : minsocwa.newsletter@hotmail.com	

All the above positions are up for re-election at the AGM on Wednesday 5th August. Anyone wishing to nominate for the new committee are requested to send nominations to Sue Koepke by 5pm on Monday 3rd August.