



# Mineralogical Society of Western Australia Inc March 2010 Newsletter

## Editorial

Thanks to those members who have provided articles or information for this issue. Photographs in this newsletter have been reduced in size and are not suitable for enlargement. Members are reminded that short adverts are provided free of charge to members.

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## April Meeting - Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010

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

### Speaker: Francine Payette

#### Topic: "Famous gem localities in Tanzania"

Francine has visited TanzaniteOne, Longido ruby mine, Manyara emerald and alexandrite mine and Williamson diamond mine in Tanzania. She will give a short summary of the geology of these deposits, as well as quality of material mined, mining conditions etc. She may also talk about corundum from Winza. **Visitors are welcome.**

### 2010 Future Meeting Dates

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 – Speaker Alex Bevan on "Mineralogical Aspects of Impact Cratering"

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2010 – Speaker Sue Koepke on "Japan-law Twinning in Quartz"

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010 – Speaker to be advised

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 Christmas Meeting. Speaker Margot Willing. Topic to be announced

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### **Trip leader's report - Northampton trip - October/November 2009, by Ben Nicolson**

The trip was interesting as we visited a new area which is serviced by nearby towns which is somewhat of a novelty in terms of mineral collecting in WA. We had exchanged our swags for a B&B, our camp fire for the local pub and 'blacksnaking it' for a hot shower and bathroom! The accommodation was a little tight, but the Old Miner's cottages served as a suitable and appropriate venue whilst visiting the oldest mineral field in Western Australia.

As for the specimens; quality was an issue, as some of the mines date back to the 1870s and the last mine closed around 1970. With years of exposure to the elements and rains, most sulphides have become tarnished on the surface. Galena, which was the main source of lead ore production of the field doesn't lend itself easily to good preservation during mining. The narrow vein mining techniques of the day and the hard rock required strong charges of dynamite and, with the perfect basal cleavage of galena, most samples were either blown off or cleaved off matrix with the shock of mining. Despite this, however, nice loose crystals representative of the type and crystal habit could be found with some searching.

The appearance of the specimens is not perfect though, with the years of weathering dulling the surfaces and forming a layer of clay-Pb-oxide that is very difficult to remove. Experiments are still underway as to how best remove this coating. For those interested in trying, a solution of CLR, a cleaning compound for scale and staining on patios and pottery, is available at large grocery stores and Bunnings. As with all chemical use, the instructions should be followed and protective equipment worn. At a minimum, gloves and safety eyewear should be used.

Cleaning minerals can be delicate and requires experimentation to determine both the strength of the chemical agent and time the specimens should be immersed. I would recommend trying with the ugly bits before placing the most promising specimen into the solutions and finding it dissolves before your very eyes. Patience is a key as well. Sometimes it might be preferable to immerse specimens in a weaker solution for periods of up to several weeks rather than using a stronger solution to achieve the same results in a day, but risking some associated damage to the crystal you are trying to preserve.

Happy cleaning and bring any of the resulting sparkling galenas along to show the members afterwards!

**Allan Hart:**

**Photos of some of the minerals from the social evening at Vernon & Susan Stocklmayer's house**

The following photos show just a few of the minerals that members examined.



Bahianite ( $\text{Al}_5\text{Sb}_3\text{O}_{14}(\text{OH})_2$ ) from Brazil



Hydroxylherderite ( $\text{CaBePO}_4\text{OH}$ ) from Brazil



Manganapatite ( $(\text{Ca},\text{Mn})_5(\text{PO}_4)_3\text{F}$ ) from Finland  
Manganapatite is no longer recognised as a separate species and now considered to be Mn rich fluorapatite.

The purple jadeite was brought along to show that not all jadeite is green.



Purple Jadeite ( $\text{Na}(\text{Al},\text{Fe})\text{Si}_2\text{O}_6$ ) from Turkey



Lengenbachite ( $\text{Pb}_6(\text{Ag},\text{Cu})_2\text{As}_4\text{S}_{13}$ ) from Switzerland



Purple Fluorapatite from Pulsifer Quarry Maine, USA

Lengenbachite is one of the few minerals that contain both lead and silver.

Purple is an unusual colour for fluorapatite – this colour is thought of more as either fluorite or amethyst.



Small inexpensive diamonds ranging in price from \$5 to \$20  
These were purchased earlier this year from a shop in Fremantle.

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### **Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia 33rd Annual Seminar**

The next Joint Mineralogical Societies of Australasia 33rd Annual Seminar will be held in Adelaide 2010 over the June long weekend, Saturday 12 June, Sunday 13 June and Monday 14 June 2010.

The theme is “Australian Collectors and Collecting”. A mineral market will be held on Monday morning with the chance to buy, sell and swap.

Field trips are planned for Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June and Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June. A longer field trip is also being considered.

Registration forms have already been sent out. If you intend to go and have not received a registration form then please contact either Sue or Allan. Registration forms are due by 30<sup>th</sup> April otherwise a \$10 surcharge per person applies.

### **FIELD TRIPS 2010**

#### **The position of MINSOC Field Trip organizer is currently vacant**

By arrangement, members of the Mineralogical Society are able to go on field trips organized by the Western Australia Lapidary and Rockhunting Club Inc.

Would current (financial) MINSOCWA members please register with MINSOC Field Trip organizers prior to attending any of the following events in order to confirm event details.

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIA LAPIDARY AND ROCKHUNTING CLUB INC. 31-35 Gladstone Road, Rivervale W.A. 6013	
<b>PROPOSED 2010 ACTIVITIES &amp; EVENTS</b>	
April (Easter)	Ravensthorpe Hopetoun area
May 23 (Sunday)	
June	Exhibitions
July Sat 3 to Sun 18	East Pilbara Area
Aug 15 (Sunday)	Byford Area
Sept 25-27	Wildflower trip Eneabba Area
Oct 24	Northam Area
Nov 14	
Further 2010 activities and events will be published during the year	

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. Also 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, vehicle registration number and mobile telephone.

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

#### Welcome

At the February meeting Bill Fitzgerald, Francine Payette, James Sherborne, Samantha Wright and Craig Bosel were welcomed to the society.

#### Vacancy

We have a vacancy for field trip co-ordinator. Anyone interested should contact the secretary  
(Sue Koepke)

Committee Members	
Stewart Cole - President ph 0414 904 169	Ben Grguric
Sue Koepke - Secretary/Treasurer ph 0417 990 688	Allan Hart - Newsletter Editor
Mignonne Clark – Vice President ph 0418 955 974	Frank Radke
	Susan Stocklmayer
Society e-mail addresses	
All correspondence (excluding the newsletter): minsocwa@hotmail.com	
Mineralogical Society WA Newsletter : minsocwa.newsletter@hotmail.com	