



Mineralogical Society of Western Australia Inc May 2009 Newsletter

Editorial

Thanks to those members who have provided articles for this issue. Thanks to Mignonne & Sue for proof reading. Members are reminded that short adverts are provided free of charge to members.

June Meeting - Wednesday June 3rd at 7:30pm at the WA Lapidary Club rooms 31 Gladstone Street Rivervale.

Speaker: Peter Downes, Edward Simpson Assistant Curator, Minerals and Meteorites, WA Museum "The Fletcher Mineral collection at the W.A. Museum: a late 19th century gem"; about the mineral collection sent to the W.A. Museum by Lazarus Fletcher (keeper of mineralogy at the British Museum (Natural History)) in 1887, in exchange for a piece of the Younegin meteorite.

August Meeting

Members are reminded that the August meeting will consist of members doing mini-presentations (about 10 minutes each) on relevant topics: 10 slides, bragging rock, or other members contribution.

Members should start thinking what their topic will be and inform both the secretary (minsocwa@hotmail.com) and myself (minsocwa.newsletter@hotmail.com) as soon as they have decided on their topic.

Future Meetings

Wednesday 5th August AGM. Members – Mineral presentations

Wednesday 7th October Murray Thompson "SA Minerals"

Wednesday 2nd December Christmas Meeting Speaker Margot Willing

MINSOC members were treated to a very interesting and entertaining talk by Dr Ivor Roberts on "Clay, clay and more glorious clay" at our April meeting
A hamburger will never look quite the same again.

There are many events of interest to members during June.

- Our meeting on the 3 June
- The joint Mineralogical Societies "Minerals Mines & Collectors" Brisbane from 6 to 8 June. Latest details available on: www.mineral.org.au
- The Western Australian Lapidary & Rockhunting Club Inc June exhibitions 13 & 14 June and 21 & 22 June – Flyer at end of newsletter

"Reporter required"

Will you be attending the "Minerals Mines & Collectors" Seminar?

Please contact Allan Hart as a report from the Seminar is required for our next news letter due to be published in July.

Door Prize April meeting

A special thanks goes to Clive Daw who donated the door prize of Nickel carbonates mineral specimen from 123 Mine Widgiemooltha WA. The specimen also contains gaspeite and gypsum.

The nickel carbonate is Widgiemoolthalite $\text{Ni}_5[(\text{CO}_3)_4(\text{OH})_2] \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$

Named after its discovery locality, 132 North Nicke Mine, near Widgiemooltha, Western Australia, Australia.

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 Daw (ph 9397 5486) (please leave a message if he is not available)

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LAPIDARY AND ROCKHUNTING CLUB INC. 31-35 Gladstone Road, Rivervale, 6103. Rivervale W.A.
PROPOSED 2009 ACTIVITIES & EVENTS
Sunday May 24 – Beverley area – various Silica/Feldspar minerals. To be confirmed closer to the date.
JUNE EXHIBITIONS at club rooms - 31-35 Gladstone Road, Rivervale, 6103. Rivervale W.A. Two weekends – Saturday 13 June & Sunday 14 th June then Saturday 21 June & Sunday 22 nd June Please collect flyers for distribution to family and friends
July –Extended field trip to – Eastern Goldfields area
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.

Notes from Gemboree 2009 – by Barbara Donati

The 2009 Australian Gemboree was held over Easter, 10-13 April at Horsham, Victoria. Several West Australians from various clubs and societies attended.

The venue was the Wimmera Machinery Field Day site that had camping space for over 300 caravans and campers. Many of the attendees stayed in Horsham, about 20 kms away. There were 40-50 tailgaters on Friday afternoon with minerals and fossils for sale. Many of these were there the four days. The main hall had the usual commercial sellers as well as the competitions for lapidary, fossils, and faceting.

There were also many talks given in the evening or during the day. There included Queensland agates, micromounts, safety in the lapidary room (CD available), minerals of Victoria, and Pearls and Pearl Farming.

There were about 25 people at the micromount session, about 10 with microscopes and mineral specimens to view and buy. Apparently there is no size limits for a micromount, just any thing you want to see under the microscope. Some of the micromount groups are associated with Mineralogical Societies rather than Lapidary clubs. All though all the microscopes at the meeting were conventional scopes, it was mentioned that a professor at the University of Queensland used a Dino-lite digital microscope for his teaching.

There were two ‘rock’ hunts, one for fossils and one for Moralla crystals.

Photographs from the Gemboree supplied by Sue Koepke.



View across one end of dealers' hall



Rob Sielecki's display includes fine local and overseas specimens



John & Pam Taggart Showcase some of their Spheres



Doug Littlelys amazing Mooralla Quartz display



The last Tailgaiter
George Stacey insists he's the last true tailgater:
no tables here...



Large specimen of Ferrotapiolite from
Wodgina (George Stacey specimen)

Are you down sizing? New place too small for all your mineral specimens you have collected over the years? The answer is to get started into micromounting.

Ted's story of his passion for micro mounted mineral specimens has spanned 40 years and is an inspiration to all of us.

GETTING STARTED IN MICROMOUNTING – by Ted Fowler

I started collecting micro mineral specimens over 40 years ago when I lived in Victoria and shortly after I first became interested in rocks. One day my wife came home from a ladies night out, wearing a tiger-eye pendant she'd bought at the gemstone and lapidary party she'd just attended. I was intrigued that a "stone" could be turned into something so pretty, and what on earth was "lapidary"? Over following weeks I read every book on this subject from our local library together with some basic books on geology and mineralogy. I joined the Victorian Lapidary Club and in early 1967 participated in my first field trip to a property near Springhurst, NE of Melbourne. There I broke open some weathered granite boulders and discovered several small 4-6mm quartz crystals of good amethyst colour. Later that day, some further crystals of clear quartz were collected from vugs in the dump material at the abandoned Mammoth gold mine near Rushworth. The absolute perfection of all these bright, gemmy crystals captivated me. I'd found my first micromounts, although it would be some months before I realized what they are called, and some years before I preserved them by mounting the crystals in a plastic micromount box. In 1966 their home was a twist of tissue paper for each specimen and the lot was stored in an old tobacco tin. A further club field trip to Flinders for zeolite specimens enlarged my collection of small crystals and the variety of these species, when viewed through my 10X magnifier, added to my fascination of miniature minerals in pristine condition.

By 1968 I was working at Camberwell Junction, only 50 metres from Roy Greatorex's rock shop. Nearly every lunch break would find me wandering through that shop, asking questions, viewing gemstone rough and mineral specimens, or browsing through his stock of books on related subjects. One day I discovered "The Complete Guide to Micromounts – Minerals for Everyone", a 96 pages \$2-50 booklet by Milton Speckels and it all fell into place. I had a name for my growing collection of small specimens, plus the information on what to do to display and preserve them. That booklet is probably no longer in print and the subject matter was updated in 1993 in Quintin Wight's excellent 283 page book "The Complete Book of Micromounting". This is recommended reading for anyone interested in learning more about this aspect of mineral collecting, or wanting to start a micromount collection.

In 1969 my employment saw our family relocate to WA and I joined the WA Lapidary & Rockhunting Club as lapidary was still my main interest. I continued to slowly accumulate micro mineral specimens and in 1971 I ordered a small supply of plastic micromount boxes from America. Late in 1972 I bought my first microscope and I completed my first mounted and boxed micro specimens in 1973 while living at Goldsworthy in the Pilbara. By 1980 lapidary was of secondary interest and micromounts had become my main hobby, and that focus continues to this day.

When I am asked why I collect micros, the reasons can be summarized thus:-

Portable – a thousand specimens can be carried in a briefcase.

Safety – mounted and boxed specimens are safe from damage, dust or weather.

Variety – micro mineral collecting is like stamp or coin collecting – one cannot collect one of everything, but it's easy to specialize, if you wish to.

Quality – field collectors are more likely to obtain undamaged crystals in micro specimens, than find similar qualities in larger material. Modern mining methods are forever reducing the chances of recovering any larger specimens in undamaged condition.

Cost – micro material is inexpensive to acquire, often exchanged or given away. The major expense to fully enjoy this hobby is the cost of a microscope. For over 5 years I relied on a Hastings triplet type hand lens of good quality. My first stereoscopic 15x fixed power microscope cost \$200 and while I've upgraded twice since 1972, I still have my original instrument. It is small, light and handy to use for specimen viewing on extended field trips. A microscope with good optics will give you the best viewing pleasure. It is one of the few material possessions in the modern world which does not depreciate in value. Invest, buy the best instrument you can afford, and enjoy the micro mineral world!

Blue Diamond

On Tuesday 12 May a flawless 7.03 carat rectangular vivid blue diamond was sold for 10.5 million Swiss francs (\$A12.53 million) in Geneva to an anonymous buyer by telephone after 15 minutes of frantic bidding. It is claimed that this is the highest price for a fancy vivid blue diamond (although the Wittelsbach 35.6 carat grey-blue diamond (sometimes described as fancy intense blue) sold at Christies auction house on 5th December 2008 for £16.39 million (\$US24,3 million)) and the highest price per carat for any gemstone sold at auction. The buyer will have the right to name the stone. The diamond belonged to Petra Diamonds before the sale and was found at the Cullian mine in South Africa in 2008. It was cut from a 26.58 carat rough stone. There are probably only a handful of blue diamonds larger than this. Some of the more well known ones are shown in a table in the link <http://www.internetstones.com/moussaieff-jewelers-unnamed-blue-diamond-famous-jewelry.html>. – The most well known blue diamond is probably the Hope diamond (45.52 carats), although the Copenhagen Blue diamond (45.85 carats) is 0.33 carats larger.

Readers are strongly advised to look at the following 2 links for more information:-

<http://www.sothebys.com/video/privateview/GE0902/index.html>

<http://petradiamonds.com/d/diamonds.php#coloured>

For further reading more references can be found by doing a search on 7 carat blue diamond

References: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/a/-/odd/5564626/rare-blue-diamond-sells-record-95-million/www.outofaces/703-carat-blue-diamond>

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/05/13/2569131.htm

http://www.petradiamonds.com/im/media/2009/sotheby_mag_may09.pdf

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/executive-style/culture/rare-diamond-fetches-over-11m/2009/05/13/1241894020785.html>

<http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/searchresults.aspx?intSaleID=21555#action=paging&intSaleID=21555&sid=dd518a2a-3ca4-48d6-9aa0-3502175a1646&num=45&pg=3>

Committee Members

Stewart Cole - President	Tony Davies
Sue Koepke - Secretary/Treasurer	Allan Hart - Newsletter Editor
Nimal Perera – Vice President	Mignonne Clark
Clive Daw - Field trip co-ordinator	Susan Stocklmayer

Society e-mail addresses

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W.A. LAPIDARY & ROCKHUNTING CLUB INC.
www.walapidaryclub.com

ANNUAL EXHIBITION 2009

Gemstones, Jewellery, Fossils & Minerals

TWO WEEKENDS
13/14 June and 20/21 June
AT CLUBROOMS
CNR GLADSTONE RD & NEWAY ST
RIVERVALE

- Minerals – Gemstones – Fossils
- Silverwork – Faceted Stones
- Demonstrations
- Photographic Exhibition of Club Activities
- Sale of Specimens
- Gemstone Lucky Dips

OPEN 10AM - 5PM
Admission: Adults \$2 - Children 50c.

Light Refreshments available.