

Bulletin of the  
Mineralogical Society  
of Southern California

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Volume 83 Number 1

February 2011

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The Meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California

**Speaker Dr. Robert Housley**

**Blue Bell Mine  
(Same Talk as at Tucson Show)**

**Friday, February 18, 2010 at 7:30 pm**

**Geology Department, E-Building, Room 220  
Pasadena City College  
1570 E Colorado Blvd., Pasadena**

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**A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It's a new year and a new challenge for MSSC. I was President about 30 years ago. At that time we faced different challenges than we are facing today. Now, we are facing the challenge of commitment to the Society. People are interested in attending meetings and the Micromount Conference, but are hesitant to participate in the leadership and governance of the Society.

One event that bound us together in the past was our annual show. What do we want to do now? Here are some of the ideas (that are not mutually exclusive) that have been floated about. Do we want to find a new venue and have a show again? Could that be done in conjunction with the Micromount Conference? Or perhaps we can sponsor a symposium similar to New Mexico and Rochester? Or do we want to work more closely with the schools to help with earth science education? I know people are hesitant to make suggestions because then it is assumed that they will become the chairman of the activity. But a chairman has (or should have) a committee to help with planning and follow through – so we need to work together to make things happen. What would you like to do? Where do you see the MSSC going in the next 5 and 10 years? The Society is now 80 years old. Don't let indifference trigger our demise.

**From Our Secretary, Bob Griffis:**

The January, 2011 meeting and annual banquet of the MSSC was held on January 22, 2011 at the Oaks Tree Room in Pasadena. Attendance was not as robust as in previous years, but the food and company was excellent.

Following dinner, Jo Anna Ritchey oversaw the installation of officers: Ann Meister as President, Bruce Carter as Vice-President, Jim Kuseley as Treasurer, Bob Griffis as Secretary.

Bruce Carter introduced the evening's speaker, MSSC member and Cal Tech Professor George Rossman. George began by discussing the long history of the MSSC and showed remarkable bits of our history. The presentation then focused on coloration of minerals by Manganese in valence states ranging from  $Mn^{2+}$  to  $Mn^{5+}$ . Typical minerals include garnets, rhodochrosite, tourmaline, and sylvite from the Salton Sea area. Another interesting tidbit was the influence of gamma radiation (derived from the decay of  $K^{40}$ ) on saturation of the pink color in elbaite tourmalines resulting from the oxidation of  $Mn^{2+}$  to  $Mn^{3+}$ . A subtext of the presentation was the continued loss of public access to once prolific collecting localities.

Several comments were made by various members of the MSSC, including Ann Meister, Bruce Carter and George Rossman about the long history of the MSSC -- now celebrating its 80th year -- and about the challenges facing the Society as people's lives become more complex and busy, resulting in reduced membership and some degree of apathy -- as demonstrated by the difficulty filling the slate of officers and committee chairs.

## HISTORICAL NOTE:

At the January 2011 banquet, George Rossman showed a list of the founding members of the MSSC which included Chuckawalla Slim. I happened on some pages from an old Bulletin from 1967 which talked about him in a “Notes and News” column.

CHUCKWALLA SLIM – one of the diminishing symbols of pioneering.

“Charter Member Chuckawalla Slim (E. K. Vose) is still doing business as The Rockologist near Indio, says Helen Gilbert. He keeps in touch with MSSC affairs through the Bulletin. He would like to be more active in our affairs but his health and long distance interfere. He is one of our most avid stamp and coupon savers. His trailer was a familiar landmark for years near Cathedral City. During the summer heat he used to relocate in the foothills of the High Sierras. Now, he has equipped his trailer with air conditioning and he stays in one place. Slim doesn’t like to stay set too well for he is a roving man.

“He would be glad to see you anytime you pass through Indio. You will now find him and The Rockologist trailer in a trailer park[...] Beside tending his mineral trading material he is now writing his life story. It will include how he (about 1914) came “out west” in a covered wagon, hauled by burros. When he was a borax pioneer, they called him “Slim” – for he weighed but 90 pounds. So, as “Slim” he has been almost exclusively known – ever since. We wish him luck and success.”

(Note: I wonder if his life story was ever published. Does anyone know?)

## Editors Corner

This will be a new section for me, as editor, to editorialize. Others are welcome to be guest commentators.

Articles for the Bulletin are due by the 20th of each month. This month has been delayed because of the Banquet, and a little of this and that going on in my life this week.

This club is extremely fortunate in the quality of its members, both past and current. We have a dynamic slate of officers that are diligent in their duties. For example, see Ann's questions regarding the future direction of the club. Please offer her your ideas. Our Secretary, Bob Griffis, (chosen, volunteered?) at the banquet, sent me this note "Since I was poorly prepared for the assignment of keeping minutes, as it was somewhat of a surprise to me, and I had no paper to take notes, this is about the best I can do" along with the Minutes. I think he did a great job and we, as a club, are lucky that he saw our need and stepped up to the plate. Jim Kuseley, our new Treasurer, has been extremely busy filing tax returns for the last 3 years and getting a handle on our membership, dues, and everything else that is the Treasurer's responsibility.

Our previous Bulletin Editor was excellent and did a great job. She took pictures and wrote many articles. I hope she will find time to continue to take those pictures and share them with us.

Currently the MSSC Bulletin is in a state of flux. Initially I was told that it would be strictly e-mailed. I and others have worked on our e-mail list in the attempt to have a good address for all members. My instructions have now changed and I will be mailing the MSSC Bulletin to those 25-30 members that do not have a current e-mail address.

All members are welcome to write articles for the bulletin. These articles can be about a show, a trip, a mineral, or something members would enjoy reading.

Currently there are discussions about re-printing articles from old bulletins that would be just as interesting today. Perhaps have bios of some of our past or perhaps current members.

#### **"The Blue Bell Mine"**

**Dr. Robert Housley** – Housleyite is named in honor of Dr. Robert M. Housley, Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA 91125, USA. Robert Housley's scientific career in experimental solid state physics and materials characterization has spanned nearly five decades. While much of his professional work has focused on planetary/meteoritic materials, he has always had a strong interest in terrestrial mineralogy. In recent years, his personal mineral collecting efforts have brought to light many unusual occurrences of rare minerals in southern California and surrounding areas. His chemical analytical work has served to identify and characterize several new minerals.

Robert Housley has a Ph. D in physics, but has had a strong lifetime interest in mineralogy and is an avid field collector. He is currently a Visiting Associate in Geological and Planetary Sciences at Caltech where his analytical work has served to identify many rare minerals and to characterize several new ones.

The Blue Bell claims encompassed a group of small working, on what was known as Joe Dandy Hill during the prospecting boom of the 1890s. Limited mining activity occurred there during the early 1950s, and since that time these workings have been known as a source of fine mineral specimens. By 1985 forty five species, mostly as micro-minerals, had been identified from there. During the past fifteen years new species have been identified, beginning with the tellurate quetzalcoatlite in 1996. These new species include the tellurates kuksite and dugganite, the rare mineral plumbotsumite, and the new species plumbophyllite and phosphohedryphane-F. The area and the minerals will be described and the history of these finds described.

**Tucson Gem and Mineral Show**  
*Minerals of California*

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show has set the standard for gem and mineral shows around the world, and is now the largest gem and mineral show in the United States.

At the show are Exhibits dedicated to presenting extraordinary mineral, gem , fossil, lapidary and jewelry exhibits. These exhibits provide a rare window into private and museum collections from around the world.

There are an estimated 250 retail dealers sharing the Exhibition Hall and the Arena areas of the Tucson Convention Center.

Lectures and Seminars are held Thursday through Sunday of the Show week. A partial listing include:

Dr Robert Housley	"The Blue Bell Mine" on Friday.
Wayne Leight	"California Gold Rush",
William Frank "Bill: Larson	"Fabulous Treasurers from San Diego Gem Mines"
Vandall T King	"The California Minerals You Want to Own".
Anthony Kampf	"California - Treasure Trove of New Minerals"

For a complete listing of lecturers go to  
[http://www.tgms.org/2011\\_Lecture\\_Schedule.pdf](http://www.tgms.org/2011_Lecture_Schedule.pdf)

## 2011 Calendar of Events

### January 28-30 - REDLANDS, CA

Mineralogical Society of Southern California  
Micromounters Symposium  
San Bernardino County Museum  
2024 Orange Tree, Redlands, CA  
Hours: Fri. 5 - 10; Sat. 9 - 10  
Sun. Field trip time to be set  
Dr. Robert Housley (714) 697-4435  
Email: [rhousley@its.caltech.edu](mailto:rhousley@its.caltech.edu)  
Website: [mineralsocal.org](http://mineralsocal.org) (click on micromounters)

### February 18-27 - INDIO, CA

San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society  
Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival  
Gem amp;& Mineral Building Bldg #1  
46-350 Arabia Street, Indio, CA  
Hours: 10 - 10 daily

### February 25-26 - NORTHRIDGE, CA

Del-Air Rockhounds  
Northridge United Methodist Church  
9650 Reseda Blvd., Northridge, CA  
Hours: Fri. 3 - 9; Sat. 10 - 5

### March 5-6 - ARCADIA, CA

Monrovia Rockhounds, Inc.  
Los Angeles Co. Arboretum & Botanic Gardens  
301 Baldwin Ave.  
Hours: 9 - 4:30 daily  
Jo Anna Ritchey (626) 359-1624  
Email: [joannaritchey@gmail.com](mailto:joannaritchey@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.moroks.com](http://www.moroks.com)



**March 5-6 - VENTURA, CA**

Ventura Gem & Mineral Society  
Seaside Park, Ventura Co. Fairgrounds  
10 W. harbor Blvd.  
Hours: Sat. 10-5; Sun. 10-4  
Andy Anderson (805) 987-0043 /  
[lilliananderson@juno.com](mailto:lilliananderson@juno.com)  
Email: [vgms\\_editor@roadrunner.com](mailto:vgms_editor@roadrunner.com)  
Website: [www.vgms.org](http://www.vgms.org)

**March 11-13 - VICTORVILLE, CA**

Victorville Valley Gem & Mineral Society  
Tailgate at Verde Antique Quarry (Stoddard Well)  
Bell Mountain/Stoddard Well exit from I-15  
Hours: 8-5 daily  
Brett Ward (760) 954-4323  
Email: [Bretts88@verizon.net](mailto:Bretts88@verizon.net)  
Website: [www.vvgmc.org](http://www.vvgmc.org)

**May 13-15 - ANDERSON, CA**

**CFMS SHOW & CONVENTION**

Northern California Treasures

Hosted by:

Superior California Gem & Mineral Society  
Shasta Gem & Mineral Society  
Paradise Gem & Mineral Club

Shasta District Fairgrounds - Anderson, CA

Briggs Street (8 miles south of Redding)

Exit 677 off Interstate 5 to Highway 273; 2.5 miles to  
Fairgrounds

Hours: Fri. & Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4

Website: [www.superiorcal.com](http://www.superiorcal.com) **Forms are on this site**

 **Northern California Treasures** 

May 13, 14, and 15, 2011

**California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.  
Show and Convention**

Shasta District Fairgrounds  
Briggs St. - Anderson, CA  
8 Miles South of Redding, CA

 

Hours:  
Friday: 9am-5pm  
Saturday: 9am-5pm  
Sunday: 10am-4pm

Raffle  
Speakers  
World Class Displays  
Silent Auction  
Free Demonstrations



Minerals  
Fossils  
Beads  
Gems  
Jewelry  
Jewelry Supplies

Lots of stuff!  
Loads of Fun!

Come for Lunch and  
stay through closing!

Adults: \$4.00  
Seniors: 65+ \$3.00  
Children: 13-18 - \$2.00  
Children: 12 and Under - Free



Sponsored by California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.  
Hosted by:  
Superior California Gem and Mineral Association a combined association of:  
Shasta Gem and Mineral Society, Inc. - Redding, CA. - [www.shastagemandmineral.com](http://www.shastagemandmineral.com)  
Paradise Gem and Mineral Club - Paradise, CA.  
visit us at: [www.superiorcal.com](http://www.superiorcal.com)

## About the Mineralogical Society of Southern California

Organized in 1931, the Mineralogical Society of Southern California, Inc. is the oldest mineralogical society in the western United States. The MSSC is a member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and is dedicated to the dissemination of general knowledge of the mineralogical and related earth sciences through the study and collecting of mineral specimens. The MSSC is a scientific non-profit organization that actively supports the geology department at Pasadena City College, Pasadena, California. Support is also given to the Los Angeles and San Bernardino County Museums of Natural History. The Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California is the official publication of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California, Inc.

The MSSC meetings are usually held the second Friday of each month, January, February and August excepted, at 7:30 p.m. in Building E, Room 220, Pasadena City College, 1570 E Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California. The annual Installation Banquet is held in January, and the annual Picnic and Swap Meeting is held in August. Due to PCC holidays meetings may vary. Check the Society web page for details. The Society also sponsors the annual Pacific Micro mount Symposium held at the San Bernardino County Natural History Museum during the last weekend of January.

Annual Membership dues for the MSSC are \$20.00 for an individual membership, \$30.00 for a family membership.

The Society's contact information::

### **Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

**P.O.. Box 41027**

**Pasadena, CA 91114-8027**

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**Web: <http://wwwmineralsocal.org>**

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### **DISCLAIMER:**

The Mineralogical Society of Southern California, Inc. is not responsible, cannot be held responsible or liable for any person's injuries, damages or loss of property at or traveling to or from any general meeting, board meeting, open house, field trip, annual show or any other MSSC event.

## **Society Contacts for 2010**

### **OFFICERS**

President	Ann Meister
Vice President:	Bruce Carter
Secretary:	<b>Vacant</b>
Treasurer:	Jim Kusley
CFMS Director:	Jo Anna Ritchey
Past President	Geoffrey Caplette

### **DIRECTORS**

2009-2010

Leslie Ogg  
Geoffrey Caplette  
James Imai:  
Fred Elsnau:

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

<i>Facilities</i>	Vacant
<i>Field Trip</i>	<b>Vacant</b>
<i>Membership</i>	Jim Kusley
<i>Program and Education</i>	Bruce Carter
<i>Show</i>	Vacant
<i>Webmaster</i>	Leslie Ogg
<i>Bulletin Editor</i>	Jo Anna Ritchey

*joannaritchey@gmail.com*

### **Submission Deadline**

Due to editor by the 20th of the month unless the 20th is on the weekend, then the 18th is the due day. Email to [joannaritchey@gmail.com](mailto:joannaritchey@gmail.com)