

THE 749th MEETING
of
THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

7:30 p.m., Friday, June 9, 2000
Geology Building E Lecture Hall
Pasadena City College
Pasadena, California

Featuring A Talk

by

Dr. George Rossman

“What’s New With Tourmaline”

JUNE PROGRAM

“WHAT’S NEW WITH TOURMALINE”

There has been renewed interest in the tourmaline group of minerals both in academic institutions and with collectors. This has led to a large number of tourmaline analyses, discovery of new members of the group and efforts to systematize the classification of species in this group of minerals. Much has also been learned about the origin of color in these diverse minerals and the relationship of color to chemical composition and structure.

Dr. George Rossman will review what has been learned, take a look at some of the new members of the tourmaline family, some which occur right here in Southern California, and attempt to bring order to the nomenclature of these minerals. He will also take a look at some colorful and some not-so colorful members of this family and try to bring understanding to the origin of their spectacular colors.

George Rossman is Professor of Mineralogy at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. A chemist by training, he has long been interested in the origin of color in minerals and has turned this interest into his professional career. He has authored or co-authored nearly 150 papers on the color and spectroscopy of minerals covering nearly every major group of minerals ranging from amphiboles through feldspars, garnets, pyroxenes to zeolites. He and his students and associates are currently studying the origin of color in rose and other varieties of quartz, rainbow obsidian, tourmalines, garnets, talc and apatites.

As a member of both our society and the Mineralogical Society of America, he has served as Associate Editor

of American Mineralogist and now serves on the editorial review board of *Gems and Gemology*. He has contributed to several volumes in the *Reviews of Mineralogy* series of the Mineralogical Society of America including including an extensive review article on the color of minerals and co-authored a series of articles reviewing the color of gems in *Gems and Gemology*.

We fully anticipate that he will also tell us about the new species of tourmaline, rossmanite, recently named after him and will have pictures to show as well.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Bob Housley

Since our annual trip to Peterson Mountain was canceled this year I was able to participate in the Southern California Friends of Mineralogy outing to Shoshone. For those of you who do not know Shoshone, it is located on Highway 127 about 65 miles north of Baker on the way to Death Valley. It consists of a service station and general store combination, a restaurant and now a museum. The museum is in an old service station to which an extra room has recently been added. It plans to focus on the natural history of the Death Valley and Lake Tecopa areas and is fast assembling a credible collection of material. The centerpiece is a nearly complete fossil elephant skeleton that was found nearby some time ago. There are also casts of prehistoric animal tracks found in a mud flow layer exposed in Tecopa dry lake, borate minerals from Death Valley, other Southern California minerals, and historical mining artifacts. This museum is worth stopping to see if you are on the way to Death Valley and is even air conditioned. It is also a work in progress and could use additional donations of California mineral specimens.

After our noon meeting on Saturday and some work at the museum we had lunch at the restaurant and then went out to a small ravine in the old lake sediments where we could see and photograph the animal tracks. I particularly remember the very clear camel, horse, and wolf tracks. After that, while part of the group went back to work at the museum a number of us went off to explore some abandoned lead mines near Tecopa Pass on the way toward Kingston Peak of amethyst fame. We spent the rest of the afternoon looking over the Noonday and Columbia mines, but only found microminerals. We did also find some mining artifacts including an assay crucible which we donated to the museum.

That evening the whole group camped in a sheltered ravine in Tecopa dry lake and enjoyed a fine dinner prepared by renowned camp cook Bob Reynolds. We then sat around and talked until near midnight because it was way too hot to sleep before then. It finally got comfortable just before dawn. As soon as the sun came up the temperature jumped back up. That is when Garth Bricker, with whom I had ridden, and I took off for the War Eagle, another lead mine in the group near Tecopa Pass.

Bob and Mary Aruta had told us that the War Eagle had very extensive passable workings with a cool breeze blowing through them and that indeed proved to be the case. Of course when we looked around on the dump right after arriving we saw absolutely nothing of interest. With the cool breeze beckoning that did not stop us from going in though. After going in straight for about 200 yards the main adit started to meander and repeatedly branched. Garth and I separated and he went on to the end of the main branch, which took him about an hour. In the meantime I explored some of the side branches and found an incline that went down to five lower levels. When we rejoined after two hours we had neither one found anything of much interest, but I had seen a little aurichalcite.

We collected some of that and then decided to go down the incline. On the next level down we soon found some more aurichalcite. At this point we decided to go outside and see what we had, especially since it was also lunch time. When we got a good look at our samples we barely took time to grab quick sandwiches before heading back in. By the time we finally headed out at 5:30 pm we had partially explored three levels and had found four good collecting sites. I had all the material I could carry and Garth had to make two trips. We were both tired and incredibly dirty, but felt really good. When we drove back through Baker at 6:30 pm that evening the thermometer at the Bun Boy still read 110 F, but we had been fairly comfortable in the mine.

As I write this I have still only unwrapped a small amount of what I brought home, but know we found some of the best aurichalcite I have seen from California along with several other as yet unidentified minerals. I guess the moral is you cannot always judge a mine by its dump, or maybe it is just try to keep cool.

OUR 750th MEETING – JULY, 2000

Next month marks a milestone for MSSC, and to celebrate the occasion, a committee of Bill Besse, Dan McHugh and Bob Housley is making plans, which may include a picnic. Suggestions are invited, call one of the committee members. This will be an event not to be missed.

MINUTES OF THE 747th MEETING OF THE MSSC

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Vice President Bill Besse. Bill introduced himself as the speaker, and began the program, which was a guided tour of the MSSC web site. With Bill's laptop connected to a projection TV unit, it simulated a live connection to the web site, and offered an opportunity for those who don't have the ability to log on, to see it. The "tour" was followed by questions and answers, and then concluded. The second half of the program was "Tales of Tucson," delayed from an earlier date. It seemed that Bill was the only member present that had been to the Tucson Show, so he discussed some of the new and interesting things he had seen as well as displaying some of the purchases he had made.

The business portion of the meeting followed. The minutes printed in the April Bulletin were accepted unanimously, and there was no additional new business so we moved on to old business and announcements. Jim Schlegel gave a brief report on the recent trips to Borate and Lead Mountain since Bob Housley was absent, and then reminded people that they may still sign up for the Petersen Mountain field trip. Jim also gave a brief show report and made the usual requests for volunteers.

There were no guests, and Alexandria Smith who chose a celestite from Madagascar won the door prize. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by Jim Schlegel for Ron Pellar, Acting Secretary.

MINUTES OF THE 748th MEETING OF THE MSSC

The 748th meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California was called to order by the president, Bob Housley at 7:30 p.m., May 12, 2000. Rock Currier was introduced and gave a talk on his trip to Madagascar.

One guest, Ursula Wilson, was introduced. Several announcements were made:

The Society was notified that Kay Robertson donated four flats of minerals and several specimens to MSSC for Kid Give Away rocks and door prizes.

Rock Currier will donate some specimens to the MSSC.

The recipient of the Van Amringe Scholarship donated by MSSC is Donovan Steutel.

Jackie & Bill Stutz are having an open house on May 20 as part of the Eclectic Eagle Rock Home Tour.

Jim Schlegel asked for volunteers for the 2000 Show - contact Dave Smith.

The Door Prize was won by Ron Pellar. W. Besse moved for adjournment, seconded by J. Schlegel and passed unanimously at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronald J. Pellar, Acting Secretary

REQUEST FOR GUEST DOOR PRIZE SPECIMENS

Our inventory of specimens for guest door prizes is almost gone and needs replenishment. When you are collecting, or just sorting through duplicate material, please set aside a couple of nice pieces as a way of thanking our guests for visiting our meeting. Specimens should be given to Bob Housley.

SHOW COMMITTEE

The Show Committee membership also needs replenishment, and we are rapidly approaching the time when a number of tasks must be accomplished. Over the Memorial Day weekend, Jim Schlegel and Bill Besse worked on advertising, but they need, and are entitled to help from all the members. Jim's number is 626-449-9197, or jeschlegel@earthlink.net. Ask how you can help!!

CALENDAR

JUNE 3-4: Glendora, CA

Glendora Gems
Goddard Middle School
859 E. Sierra Madre
Hours: Sat 10 – 6; Sun 10 – 4
Mark Thompson 626-335-3814

JUNE 3-4: West Hills, CA

Rockatomics Gem & Mineral
Boeing Recreation Center
8500 Fallbrook Avenue
Hours: 10 – 5
Harley Rogers 805-495-6184

JUNE 9: MSSC monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m., Geology Building, Pasadena City College

JULY: 750th meeting of MSSC, date and time to be announced.

JULY 8-9: Culver City, CA

Culver City Rock & Mineral Club
Culver City Veterans Memorial Complex
4117 Overland Avenue
Hours: Sat 10 – 6, Sun 10 – 5
Brad Smith 310-472-6490

CFMS GOLD & GEM SHOW

August 4, 5, 6
Riverside Convention Center
3443 Orange Street, Riverside, CA

Interesting programs in the air-conditioned center have been chosen to accommodate your various interests in the field of geology.

Saturday, 10:30 a.m. Don Brown of the Valley Prospectors will speak and give a demonstration using a metal detector.

Saturday, 12 Noon. Bob Jones, author and collector, has chosen to speak on The History of Gold Mining in America.

Saturday, 1:30 p.m. Bob Reynolds, well known for his wide variety of programs, has not advised me as to the one he has selected.

Saturday, 3:00 p.m. Tim Thomas, one of our dealers, will be speaking on the nomenclature of opal, the cutting of opal, and the purchasing of this beautiful gem.

Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Kathleen Springer, paleontologist with the San Bernardino County Museum, has chosen as her program "Valley of the Mastodons, Fossils from the Diamond Lake Project."

Sunday, 12 Noon. Sugar White from Redlands will talk on "The Copper Deposits of San Bernardino County."

Sunday, 1:30 p.m. Francis Lau, who spoke at our 1996 show, will repeat the interesting and educational program on understanding the gemologist's grading system in the quality of diamonds.

Debbie Bunn, who at one time was our CFMS Junior Advisor, is planning junior programs.

Beverly Berg, Program Chairman

Excerpted from the CFMS Newsletter, June 2000



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Tuesday-Saturday: 10-5; Sunday: 12-5 or by appointment-FREE PARKING!!