

THE 753d MEETING
OF
THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

7:30 p.m., Friday, October 13, 2000
Geology Building E Lecture Hall
Pasadena City College
Pasadena, California

Featuring a Talk
by

Dr. Janet Gordon

“Fun With Minerals and Microscopes”

OCTOBER PROGRAM

Dr. Janet Gordon will present "Fun With Minerals and Microscopes." With the help of modern technology we can all look down the microscope together for an evening of fun. The first part of the program will be an introduction to the petrographic microscope as a tool for mineral identification. Even if you don't catch the technical implications of using this scope, you can enjoy the beautiful phenomena it produces. The audience will provide the second part of the program by sharing their favorite microscopic mineral specimen under the binocular microscope. Please bring a contribution to share for this part!

Janet earned her Ph.D. in geology from U.S.C. and is currently full Professor of Geology at PCC where she has been teaching for 15 years. She teaches mineralogy, petrology, physical geology, and field classes including GPS techniques. Janet has been an MSSC member since 1973 and a major contributor to the Society's activities.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Bob Housley

Appreciation I regret to have to tell you that one of our most active members, Ron Pellar, has changed jobs and will soon be leaving the area. Hopefully he will be able to stay through our show in November, but if so must leave soon after. Ron is a past president of MSSC and is currently treasurer, acting secretary, Federation Director, and exhibits chairman, as well as chairman of the nominating committee. As you can easily see we will miss Ron greatly, but of course wish him all the best in his new home and job. Normally I would have

saved the praise for our banquet in January, but unfortunately he expects to be gone by then.

Nominations and Elections Normally the nominating committee presents a slate of nominees at our November general meeting and then asks for additional nominations from the floor. Then we hold the election at the December meeting. This year it will be especially important for members to help the nominating committee, preferably by volunteering to fill a position, but if you cannot do that by thinking of a "friend" you can nominate from the floor. Seriously if you would be willing to fill a position please let us know.

Interim Treasurer Even before our coming elections it is critically important to find someone to take on the job of treasurer, even if only on an interim basis, before Ron leaves the area so that the books and signature authorizations can be transferred in an efficient and orderly way. If any of you would be willing and able to do this please let us know as soon as possible. Our Bylaws allow the Board to make appointments to fill vacancies.

Field Trips We do not have any field trips planned during October since there is already a lot going on. The annual Searles Lake trip will be on the second weekend. On the third weekend Southern California Friends of Mineralogy is hosting a Mineral Collectors Workshop in Barstow with field trips to the Mohawk and Copper World Mines. On the fourth weekend the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center is hosting a Crestmore Workshop and field trip.

We are tentatively planning a field trip to the Clear Creek area in San Benito County for the first weekend in November, but that is critically dependent on the weather. If it rains the trip will be canceled because the roads become impassable. We then might substitute a trip to the Borate and Ludlow areas. Since we will not have another Bulletin before then anyone interested in these trips should contact me. I will mail out detailed information and maps as the time approaches.

Carl Biggs kindly led our traditional trip to Topaz Mountain this Labor Day weekend. He and John Kennedy left early and spent a day exploring the iron mine west of Cedar City and a day; exploring the green garnet area west of Beaver on their way up and still got to the camping spot in time to spend Friday looking for topaz. Somewhere along the way they were joined by Bill and Elizabeth Moller so the four of them were at camp when I arrived on Friday evening.

The wind was still blowing pretty good and clouds were sailing overhead with lightning flashes visible in the distance, so we did not have a camp fire that night. Carl showed me some nice large octahedral magnetite crystals he had collected at the iron mine and some nice green garnets from near Beaver and said he thought they would have done considerably better if they had not had to dodge cold rain showers at those locations on the way up.

By Saturday morning the clouds were gone and the weather was perfect for the rest of the weekend. Tish Hunter, Walter Margerum, and Mike Evans arrived on Saturday bringing our total group to eight. As planned we spent Saturday exploring the amphitheater area. There seemed to be a lot more people there than I remembered from past trips, with accordingly less easily visible topaz laying around near the camps. However, by walking a ways up on the side hills and digging a little I think most of us did pretty well. Carl had his own goal of tracking down a garnet locality in the amphitheater and did find one nice well formed half inch garnet. Unfortunately he said it appeared to be all alone.

In the past we had all believed that there were no valid mining claims remaining in the amphitheater area, but we learned that this was incorrect. Somebody holds a claim right near where we camped and had recently

done a lot of blasting. Needless to say their rock piles had been pretty thoroughly searched, but I still opened some nice small crystal cavities one evening by breaking one of the bigger rocks.

It was also interesting to note that a mining family was camped near us in a fair sized trailer and said they had been there several months. They were commercially mining a locality far up on the east side, using only hand tools, and had some pretty nice stuff for sale. I know Tish bought one nice topaz cluster from them.

Carl had information with him on other nearby localities for garnet and fluorite and was planning on giving us the option of exploring them Sunday and Monday, but Mike Evans came with news of other possibilities. Through his work he keeps in contact with Mark Jenkins, who is one of the co-owners with John Holfert of the Maynard and Solar Wind Claims. He knew that Mark and John would be in the area working the Solar Wind Claim. It is the source of the great new bixbyite crystals they have recently put on the market. Mike said that for \$20 per day apiece we could go to the Maynard Claim on Sunday and to the Solar Wind on Monday.

During dinner and around the camp fire that evening we talked it over and decided to go with that plan. I think we all were anxious to see the Solar Wind Claim. The sky was clear and there was no moon so the milky way showed up more clearly than I remember seeing in a long time.

On Sunday morning Mark Jenkins came by and led us to the Maynard Claim. We soon learned that he goes about 70 mph on those two lane dirt roads, but we figured he must know the territory so we all kept him in sight and got there ok. As it turned out he dropped four of us at the Maynard Claim and went on with Mike and Carl and to Mollers to the Solar Wind where he and John were working. It has been some time since the Maynard Claim has been worked so it is not near as easy to find good material there as it once was, but it is certainly still worthwhile. Everybody got a few really nice topaz crystals, but had to work hard for them. We also found some of the topaz and hematite pseudomorphs after garnet, but very little bixbyite there this time.

The group that had gone to the Solar Wind Claim this day had found a few really good pieces, but not too many. They had had to stay out of the way of the operating heavy equipment, and hence had been mostly restricted to looking on the dump and around the margins. Bill Moller had bought one superb piece though, which he happily showed us.

On Monday since he now knew the way Mike Evans led us to the Solar Wind Claim. It is on the extreme north end of the Thomas Range, about an hours drive from our camp. Monday is the day a German rock collecting group annually comes to one of John's claims and they are a big enough group that he stops mining operations for them. We were basically able to tag along and have free run of the claim that day because of them.

Because of a minor equipment problem I was the last one up the hill to the mine site. When I got there I looked around and there seemed to be people everywhere, but I saw one open spot. Upon very brief reflection I decided that rather than trying to look around first I would just claim that spot and start digging. After an hour or so I was getting small topazcrystals and a little bixbyite and feeling pretty good about my decision when Mike Evans stopped by to talk for a minute. He was standing about 3 feet east of me and reached down and pulled a killer bixbyite up out of the dirt. After that he walked around and talked to some other people for awhile, then came back by and stopped about 3 feet west of me to talk some more and after a few seconds reached down and pulled another killer bixbyite up out of the dirt.

Of course I feel a little bad about missing those pieces, but what really amazes me is that about twenty experienced rock collectors must have walked over them without seeing them in the preceding couple of hours. Anyway as the day progressed I tried a couple of other spots and did reasonably well in all of them so I

cannot complain.

About 4 pm I left for home with quite a good haul. As usual for this Labor Day trip we had found nice crystals and seen quite a few antelope and the stars had been beautiful. Upon reflection I think my only regret is that the pace had been a little hectic and it might have been nice to spend more time around the campfire just relaxing. Maybe next time.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

By Carl Biggs

John Kennedy and I started out Tuesday...collected at the Iron Mines west of Cedar City with fair results...this are shows promise though...next day to the green garnet location west of Milford...good results. On Thursday on to Topaz Mountain where we rendezvoused with Bill and Elizabeth

Moller. The weather had been windy and wet up till Friday pm when it turned nice...Had a nice group. Tish Hunter came down from Wyoming , Mike Evans up from San Diego along with Bob Housley and Walt from the LA area. Collecting was only fair at Topaz Mountain, but we got a nice surprise as Mike Evans arranged for us to collect at the Maynard claim as well as the new bixbyite location (the Solar Wind)....Some great bixbyite is coming out of there....I saw one that John Holfert has for sale at about an inch on an edge.... On Monday Mike Evans, Bill and Elizabeth Moller and I made a run to Garnet Basin to collect garnets....it should be called Garnet Alps....after scaling two waterfalls and over many boulders we finally called it off....Mike thinks the collecting area may be reached via another route.....Maybe we'll give it try next trip.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 7-8: Lancaster, CA

Valley Gems

9050 1/2 West Avenue J

Hours: 9-5 both days

Dean Westman 661-256-3590 or 947-6460

OCTOBER 14-15: Trona, CA

Searles Lake Gem & Mineral Society

13337 Main St

Saturday 8-5, Sunday 8-4

Bonnie Fairchild 760-372-5356

www1.lwvisp.com/tronagemclub

MINERAL COLLECTORS WORKSHOP

October 21, 2000

At the Desert Discovery Center

Exit Barstow Road, turn left (north)

Two blocks north of interstate 15

831 Barstow Road, Barstow

760 256-2324

Welcome to the Desert Discovery Center

New exhibits include:
SCFM Werner Lieber Mineral Photos
Tracking Big Game in the Mojave Desert
Minerals from the Mojave Desert

Schedule

9:00 Under the Scope: Informal Mineral Identification with outlets and tables for microscopes and a specimen give away table.

10:00 Welcome: Tim Read, BLM - DDC Coalition
Bob Hilburn DDC/Leslie Walker MRVM

Public Lectures:

10:15 James Minette
Borax Minerals from Boron and Death Valley

11:15 Bob Reynolds
A Walk through Borate

11:45 John Clinkenbeard
Status of the Inventory of California Minerals

12:00 - 1:00 Lunch

SCFM Meeting - Objectives in 2001

1:00 Bob Housley and Sugar White
What's New in Minerals,

1:30 Steve Castor
Status of the Inventory of Nevada Minerals

2:00 Steve Mulqueen
Stratigraphy and Mineralogy of Searles Lake

2:45 David Jesse
Barite and Silver Mineralization
of the Central Mojave Desert

3:30 Silent Auction: Bring specimens for others to enjoy!

4:30 Educational Social at MRV Museum

Symposium Donation: \$5.00

Field Trip Donation: \$10.00

Field Trip: Copper World / Mohawk Mines

Field Trip Led By: Bob Housley, John Jenkins, the Whites

Field Trip Maps: \$1.00 - Lead Mountain, Ord Mountain, etc.
Minerals of the Mojave: \$12.00

OCTOBER 21: Canoga Park, CA
Woodland Hills Rock Chippers, Inc.
Canoga Park Community Center
7248 Owensmouth Ave
Hours: Saturday 10-5
Mary Walker 805-578-9886
or RockWalker2000@cs.com

OCTOBER 21-22: El Cajon, CA
El Cajon Gem & Mineral Society
El Cajon Valley Masonic Temple
695 Ballantyne St
Hours: 10-5 both days

OCTOBER 21-22: Whittier, CA
Whittier Gem & Mineral Society
Whittier Masonic Temple
7604 Greenleaf Ave
Hours: Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5
Jay Valle 626-934-9764
Email: jvalle@aqmd.gov

November 4-5: Anaheim, CA
American Opal Society
Quality In Hotel
616 Convention Way
Hours: Sat 10-7, Sun 10-5
Stan McCall 714-827-5680 www.opalsociety.org

NOVEMBER 4-5: Fontana, CA
Kaiser Rock & Gem Club
California Steel Industry
9400 Cherry Ave
Hours: 9-5 both days
Jean White 909-822-7507

NOVEMBER 18-19: PASADENA, CA

MSSC SHOW

NOVEMBER 25-26: Barstow, CA
Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society
Barstow Community Center
841 S. Barstow Road
Hours: 10-5 both days
Bob Depue 760-255-1030

DECEMBER 2-3: San Bernardino, CA
Orange Belt Mineralogical Society, Inc.

San Bernardino Women's Club
503 W. 31st St. Hours 10-6 Sun 10-5
Jim McDaniels 909-792-0668



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Visit our booth at most major mineral shows!

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