

**THE 774th MEETING  
OF  
THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**7:30 p.m., Friday July 12, 2002**

**Building E, Room 220  
Pasadena City College  
Pasadena, California**

**Featuring a Talk by  
Bill Besse**

**on the  
Minerals of the Grand Reef Mine**

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**JULY PROGRAM**

The July program will be a presentation by Bill Besse on the Minerals of the Grand Reef mine, Arivaipa mining district, Graham County, Arizona. Some of the rare and unusual minerals coming from the mine are grandreefite, pseudograndreefite, laurelite, and aravaipaite.

**Biennial Report of the President**

To the members of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California:

You may recall that I announced the first meeting of our Society for the evening of June 23, 1931, in the lecture room of the Pasadena Library. Mr. Van Amringe delivered the address and ably assisted in getting the group under way. The response to a call for those interested was sufficient to warrant organizing what has come to be known as the Mineralogical Society of Southern California. A Constitution was adopted September 1, 1931.

The society has grown steadily. Complete statistics are not available but I believe that it is one of the largest, if not the largest, of its kind in the country. Our total membership to date is two hundred and three. One hundred and seventy nine of these are active members with paid-up dues. The membership is drawn from forty cities and towns in California, besides several other states and foreign countries.

An honorary membership has been awarded to Dr. William Morris Davis, one of the world's greatest geologists. Interest in the study of minerals is increasing and in all likelihood our society will, as a result, increase in proportion.

There have been twenty-two regular meetings of the Society. The total attendance has been about 3800, an average of about 175 per meeting. On several occasions the lecture hall has been crowded to capacity and large numbers turned away. All meetings, with the exception of the annual meeting, are open to the public.

We have been fortunate in securing for our speakers capable men who were thoroughly familiar with their subject. Eleven of our speakers, have come from educational institutions, (California Institute of Technology, Harvard University, Pomona College, Pasadena Junior College, and Glendale High School) and seven of our speakers have come from the gem and jewelry trade, the mining industry, the automobile industry and the petroleum industry.

Thirteen field trips have been taken to neighboring mineral localities. The total attendance on these has been almost 1000, an average of about 75 on each trip. The total mileage on all of these trips was about 3000 miles and their duration from one to three days.

One of the worthy achievements of the society, of which we can be justly proud, is the publication of the Monthly Bulletin. Sixteen numbers have been printed, with a total of eleven hundred column inches of reading matter and advertising. About four hundred copies of each issue are printed and circulated. The Bulletin is distributed to those attending the meetings and is also sent into eight states and foreign countries. The following institutions regularly receive copies of the Bulletin:

Pasadena Public Library.  
U. S. Bureau of Mines, San Francisco. Cal..  
U. S. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.  
University of California, Berkeley, Calif.  
State Mining Bureau, San Francisco, Calif.  
Los Angeles Public Library.  
University of Rochester (Ward's) Rochester, N. Y.  
Pasadena Junior College, Pasadena, Calif.  
Algernon Lewin Curtis, Chatteris England.  
Pomona College Library, Claremont, Calif.

The collection and exchange of mineral specimens among the members has been encouraged and specimens have always been on display at the meeting. Much interest has been shown by a number of the group in polishing their own material, about fifteen now qualifying as amateur lapidaries.

The success of the society has been due largely to the work of the directors and the support of the members, and it is a pleasure at this time to extend my thanks to the directors, committee men and members for their continuous, whole-hearted cooperation and support.

Respectfully submitted,  
JOHN A. REN5HAW,

June, 1933.

President.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It is sometimes interesting to review the past in order to discern the future. As you can see, in 1933, the Society was dynamic and the President was very optimistic. I wonder what he would think of the Society today. My guess is he would not be as pleased.

The society is not growing. We no longer have 4 to 5 field trips per year, and if 15 people show up for a trip it is considered a good turnout. With today's limited collecting opportunities this is not unexpected, but it is still discouraging. We no longer have hundreds of people show up for the monthly meetings, although the recent increase in participation is encouraging. On the bright side our recent speakers have been exceptional.

The biggest disappointment is the level of membership participation. If you look at the last page of the Bulletin you will see that most of the Chair positions are unfilled. This needs to change! Last year the President asked former Chairs to provide job descriptions to assist him in getting members to volunteer. The response has been underwhelming. If you look at the Bulletins for the last several years you will see that the level of membership input has been minimal. I hope that this is a temporary condition, and that some of you have enough interest in the MSSC to become active members.

## BOARD MEETING

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for July 14 at Bill Besse's house. The meeting will start at 2:00PM. All members are welcome. If you plan to attend contact Bill at by e-mail at [wbesse@mminternet.com](mailto:wbesse@mminternet.com).

## FIELD TRIP REPORT

### The Blanchard Claims, May 2002

Carolyn Seitz

Once again, the MSSC was fortunate to have an opportunity to collect at the well-known Blanchard Claims. We who attended owe a great thanks to Ray DeMark, Brian Huntsman and Mike Sanders for their terrific hospitality. We also owe thanks to Allison Nilsen at the Blanchard Rock Shop who is always ready to greet us and prepare us for the days ahead.

Ray DeMark is an acknowledged expert on minerals of New Mexico and the Blanchard Claims are no exception. He treated us to a bit of history about the claims and Ora Blanchard. We were given an opportunity to collect underground again at the Sunshine #1 tunnel and at the by now very popular Glory Hole. Some of you may remember that last year, Jim Schlegel opened a pocket in an effort to move some "junk" out of his way. He was really after something down low on a wall and there was stuff on the floor that was bothering him, so as he moved the "stuff" aside, he eventually lifted out a plate of those beautifully Blanchard blue fluorites. That pocket has been the Glory Hole of the year and the pocket he opened is still being worked.

After a year of effort on the part of the claim owners in collecting from that pocket, what we saw and experienced in that Glory Hole was amazing. The fluorites range in color from the typical Blanchard blue to a paler color on sugary white quartz. Here and there, blades of barite are also visible. Having an invitation to see it was really wonderful, but having an opportunity to collect there was incredibly generous of the claim owners. Brian Huntsman and Ray DeMark were there collecting with us. Chris Sibel also spent some time helping Brian chip away at a slab estimated to have been several hundred pounds. After Brian's two days of effort, the largest piece was not only aesthetically beautiful, and would stand on its own at a few hundred pounds, it was finally movable.

Our group had 12 participants this year: Bill and Elizabeth Moller, Chris Sibel, Larry and Vicki Bruce, Jim Kusely, Paul Malone (a new member of MSSC), Bill and Pat Kent, Walt Margerum, Steve Knox and Carolyn Seitz. On Saturday morning, after hearing some of the history of the claims and having a safety meeting, Ray took us on a tour of the entire complex, showing us all of the Sunshine adits - #1 through #6, some of which have been sealed. We then collected for a while on some dumps and most of us were lucky enough to find some smithsonite. Saturday afternoon was a trip into the Sunshine #1 tunnel and everyone remarked that it was worth the trip.

Sunday we were given a rare opportunity to have a guided tour of the Mex-Tex and we had some time to collect on the dumps there. That was also a very generous and welcome surprise. If you are familiar at all with the Mex-Tex, many of the more rare minerals are known to exist at this claim. The claim owner is Tom Massis. We were very lucky to be able to spend some of Mother's Day at the Mex-Tex collecting linarite, spangolite, brochantite, clear, smoky and amethystine quartz, fluorite, galena, barite, murdochite, libethenite and other unusual minerals.

Our BBQ, planned for Saturday night was postponed because of high winds so some of us adjourned to The Owl for green chili cheeseburgers. Ray's wife, Judy DeMark joined us for that fine dining experience, as did Allison Nilsen.

It was a terrific weekend and for those of you who missed it – tsk tsk. You missed a wonderful group of people and a rare opportunity to collect in places that most people only read about. It is an easy field collecting opportunity even though fluorite collecting is always hard rock mining. Except for a bit of wind now and then,

it was a really beautiful weekend. I think Larry and Vicki Bruce and Jim Kusely would consider the wind conditions at something greater than a “bit” of wind. They came to consider their 2 room tent a lung for all of its wave action.

The hospitality of the claim owners is tremendous as is their generosity. It was another very fine weekend spent with good friends collecting beautiful specimens.

## Talc

### The Mineral that Won the War

Walt Margerum

If your only contact with talc is the powder that comes from cans the above statement may seem absurd, but it is not far from the truth. *Ben M. Page* in **California Division of Mines Special Report 8 “Talc Deposits of Steatite Grade, Inyo County California”** states *Steatite is exceptionally pure talc suitable for the manufacture of high-frequency radio insulators and for other exacting uses. It was a critical mineral during World War II. At the beginning of the war there was a single major domestic source, the Talc City mine, Inyo County California.* During WWII the government decreed that all the steatite was to be used in high-frequency radios. There are two definitions of steatite, the mineralogical definition of massive talc, and the commercial one. The commercial definition of steatite is that it is talc having less than 1.5% lime (CaO), 1.5% Ferric oxide (Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>), and 4% alumina (Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>) as impurities. It was used in two forms. Blocks of “Lava” talc were machined into the desired shape and then fired to make ceramic insulators. The second and more common method was to grind the talc, and mix it with a binder. This mixture was then molded into the desired shape and fired.

During and after WWII the Southern Inyo Mountains were extensively prospected and 18 talc mines were put into operation. All have since closed, and most have been abandoned. The most extensive deposits were at the Talc City Hills located north of Darwin. The talc is a dull gray, and makes for uninteresting specimens at best. But if you do not have any in your collection you do not have the mineral that won the war. If you still wonder why I call it that, the most important high-frequency radio it was used in was called RADAR!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JULY

**12-14 Placerville** CFMS 63rd Show & Convention - Treasures of the Sierra Nevada

**El Dorado County Mineral and Gem Society**  
El Dorado County Fairgrounds

100 Placerville Drive  
 For more info: (530) 622-3038  
 E-mail [gemshow@hotmail.com](mailto:gemshow@hotmail.com)  
 Website <http://www.CFMSGemshow2002.org>

## AUGUST

### 3 - 4 Arroyo Grande Central Coast Treasure Hunters Assoc.


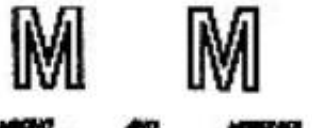
15th. Annual Treasure Hunt  
 Brush Poppers Arena  
 John (805) 489-1079 or  
 Frank (805) 438-3125

### 9-11 Nipomo Orcutt Mineral Society

St. Joseph's Church  
 298 S Thompson Avenue  
 Hours: 10 - 5 daily  
 Dick Shields (805) 937-0357 / [Shields6@ix.netcom.com](mailto:Shields6@ix.netcom.com)

### 17-18 San Francisco San Francisco Gem & Mineral Society

Fort Mason Center's Herbst Pavilion  
 Marina Blvd. & Buchanan Street  
 Hours: Sat 10-6 Sun 10-5  
 Ellen Nott

	
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