

Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California

Volume 75 Number 5

May 2005

**The 807th Meeting of The Mineralogical Society
of Southern California**

"Amazonite and Adventures in Ethiopia"

by Rock Carrier

Friday, May 13, 2005, at 7:30 p.m.

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

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Amazonite from Ethiopia is May Topic

The ever-popular Rock Currier will be the speaker for the May 13, 2005, meeting at 7:30. As the owner of Jewel Tunnel Imports, Rock has searched the globe for minerals to import for the enjoyment of the rest of us. Come hear about his recent quest for amazonite in Ethiopia. This locality has produced sharp specimens of superb color, and if we're lucky, he'll bring us samples from his latest shipment for us to examine. Rock's great knowledge of minerals combined with his gifts as a raconteur guarantee that this will be an interesting and informative evening.

As usual members are encouraged to participate in the meeting by bringing their favorite or latest mineral acquisitions for show and tell. Also, those who arrive a bit early (between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m.) will be invited to help prepare show mailings and/or kid rock.

A Message from the Display Chair

by Ken Raabe

It's not too soon to start planning your display for the 2005 MSSC Show. Come join us in Long Beach and show off your collection of Gems and Minerals of the Southwest. The display/exhibits part of the MSSC Show has always been regarded as one of the best in the country. We need to work hard to continue this fine tradition. The Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History has already pledged a wonderful collection of Bisbee azurites and malachites for the show. As always, trophies will be awarded for best exhibit (H.Stanton Hill Trophy), best individual theme specimen (Gus Meister Trophy), and best gem crystal (Hyman Savinar Trophy). The Kristalle Trophy will be awarded for the best junior (under the age of 16) exhibit, along with a \$300 cash award. In addition, cash awards of \$50 will be presented for outstanding exhibits in the categories of Non-dealer Theme, Non-dealer Non-Theme, Dealer Theme, Dealer Non-Theme, Museum Theme, Museum Non-Theme, Junior Theme, and Junior Non-Theme.

For more information or to reserve a case, contact

Ken Raabe, Display Coordinator, at 626-396-9141.

Ken is already sending out invitations to display to prominent collectors and institutions, and the 50 or so available display cases will be filled this year, so reserve one today! A panel of 3 experienced MSSC judges is needed to award the trophies and cash awards. In addition to the awards, the panel traditionally provides an optional display judging service to assist exhibitors who would like to participate in CFMS/AFMS or Tucson Competitions. No results are posted, and results are for the exhibitor only. Please contact Ken if you would like to volunteer your services as a show display judge.

Minutes of the April Meeting

The 806th meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, April 8th, in the Geology department at Pasadena City College. President Bill Besse brought the meeting to order at 7:33 pm. This particular meeting presented a full house including members and many guests.

The evening's speaker, Dr. Gerald Grellet-Tinner, was then introduced by Vice President Jim Kusely. The talk discussed the origin of birds and included various illustrations of dinosaurs and pictures of exotic eggs from all around the world. It was an eggcellent presentation that was enjoyed by all the attendees.

After the talk there was a brief dialogue regarding MSSC business, along with events and announcements. At the conclusion of the meeting there was a show and tell session given by a couple of the members and door prizes were given out. The meeting came to a close at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ilia Lyles, Secretary

Minutes of the April Board Meeting

The April board meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, April 8th, in the Geology department at Pasadena City College shortly after the monthly meeting. President Bill Besse brought the meeting to order at 8:58 pm. Attendants at the board meeting included Bill Besse, James Kusely, Ken Raabe, Bob Griffis, Janet Gordon, Ilia Lyles and Walter Margerum.

Business was discussed regarding this year MSSC show, including advertising as well as possible times to aid in Kid Rock. There was also a recent update on the remaining display cases, 1/3rd of the cases have been sold.

The meeting came to a close at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ilia Lyles, Secretary

Display Cases for Sale - \$100.00 each

These are the same sturdy, birch wood veneer cases we use at the MSSC show and used by many competitors for Federation competition.

Made by Pony Case Co. The cases are used but in good condition. New they sell for about \$300.

Disassembled they are easy to manage and bolt together in a few minutes.

Inside dimensions: 46" long, 22" high, and 20" deep.

Contact: Bill Besse (wbesse@altrionet.com, 626.359.4488) or Walt Margerum (wmargerum@earthlink.net, 310.324.1976).

Symmetry Fun

Sharp-eyed mineral collectors use crystal symmetry to help identify minerals. Try brushing up your observational skills with the rosettes below. Imagine that there is a rotational axis (such as your pencil) pointing through the center of each rosette and sticking up perpendicular to the page. Rotate the pattern about the axis a bit. How many degrees (e.g. 30° , 45° , 120°) do you have to rotate it to make the pattern appear to be in the same place that you started? If you held a mirror across the pattern perpendicular to the page, are there any positions in which the reflection in the mirror is the same as the pattern on the backside of the mirror. After you've tried this, check the answers at the end of this bulletin.



African Quartz Quest and Other Adventures

By Justin Butt

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from an e-mail Justin Butt recently sent to friends and customers. He has given permission to reproduce some of it here.

A couple months ago I was asked to become the buyer for another mineral dealer and I leapt at the chance to start traveling the world buying minerals direct from the source! My main goal was to buy up as much great stuff as I could for my main client's sales and my side goal was to snag some really neat things for my customers on MinWreck.com! What a great plan!

Thinking about my first logical place to go I decided that Africa seemed like the best start! Just about EVERYONE speaks English and the crime rate in the mineral areas is REALLY low! Namibia HAS to be the SAFEST country in all of Africa. Even looking in the newspapers I got the idea that so few instances of dramatic violent crime occur that they have to keep talking about the few crimes that have happened, all the way back to 1991!! It was rather interesting and refreshing!

Everyone kept telling me to watch my back, don't drink the water and make sure to get my shots. Better take along lots of food, cause you never know what they eat over there!

I drank the water, I didn't need the shots, there was no need to watch my back and I never ate a ONE of those Cliff bars I had brought with me...all thirty of them...

The best thing about the trip plans...I had a VERY good guide! Mr. Gerdus Bronn, from www.mineralgallery.co.za was to be my guide and traveling buddy for the trip. Mr Bronn and I have been doing business together for many years and I've always wanted to spend some time traveling with him. Our plan was to visit the Orange River deposits and buy as much stuff as possible (I was warned that it might not be much...) then work our way up to Windhoek to get our paperwork and then go off to the coast, buying from the locations on the way...Karabib, Erongo, Tafelkop (Brandberg Quartz's real location), and buying from dealers in the main cities. Visit the tourist spots along the way and in general, have fun, buy rocks. Sometimes you can even have fun buying rocks. I know we did!

If there is one drawback to the chance to buy rocks in a distant land it has to be the multiple hours of flying. I love to fly. Six hours from the east coast to Los Angeles is not too shabby when you compare it to the 3-day drive across the states. If given the option between driving and flying I will almost always take flying. But after getting to Johannesburg and having to get on ONE more plane to Upington, I started to wonder WHY, with all the advances in science, WHY haven't they come up with some teleporting devices? By the 10th hour on a plane I want to grab the person in front of me and shake them violently until they put their freakin seat UPRIGHT!

Thankfully I made it intact after 6 take offs and landings to Upington, South Africa. It's a nice little town that is set alongside the Orange River, which makes it's

way across South Africa and flowing into the Atlantic Ocean and forming the border between South Africa and Namibia. I learned right away...passanger seat is on the OTHER side of the car. That took a little getting used to =)

We took a road up some small dirt track to a town alongside the Orange River to see what kind of fun stuff might be there. It was here that I saw my first African village shantytown. The homes there are...modest. Sometimes you would find a home made of cement blocks, or some kind of adobe, but most of the houses are made of tin sheets, plastic board, discarded signs and car doors. They are great at putting items to use in a very interesting way.

We found a group of quartz diggers while in this village and they showed us what they had to offer: lots of broken red quartz crystals. I guess that would be good for tumbling...right? I picked out a handful of crystals that were still intact and got a great laugh when the miner asked me for \$300.00 for the 15 crystals...that's \$300...US...UNITED STATES DOLLAR BILLS! The entire time there was a short guy that was already 3 sheets to the wind...at 1:00 in the afternoon. He kept coming up to me and introducing himself and saying "Hey Mister...Lishen to me! I speak ENGLISH!..." He would then start talking to me in Afrikaans, the official language of South Africa and Namibia. I couldn't help but keep laughing...you try to keep a straight face when some drunk dude is hanging all over you rapping at you with a foreign tounge..."Stop laging om me" which would be a half English, half Afrikaans version of "stop laughing at me!" Sorry sir...I just couldn't help it. That village was a laugh riot and a great introduction Africa!



Red quartz from the Orange River area. The red color is due to a phantom coated with hematite. Photo from www.minwreck.com.

We set up camp on a farm Bed and Breakfast on the outskirts of the town of Pella and went to some villages in the distance to see about finding any Orange River quartz. I got to see first hand the land that produced these remarkable crystals and really get an idea of how the deposits looked. We stopped at a bunch of houses, but unfortunately it turned out that everyone was out fishing or drinking. We found one house with a large assortment of specimens available, and after working out some details with the price I selected 130 kilos of material to buy. Nice red clusters, along with some oddball stuff. I'm always a sucker for the odd-looking quartz specimens and Orange River produces GREAT oddball- looking stuff.

2005 Calendar of Events

- May 7-8 Anaheim, Searchers Gem & Mineral Society, Brookhurst Community Center, 2271 W. Crescent Ave., Hours: Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4:30.
- May 7-8, Reno, Nevada, Reno Gem & Mineral Society, Reno Livestock Events Center Exhibit Hall, 1350 N. Wells Ave., Hours: Sat. 10-5. Sun. 10-4, Jennifer Rhodes (775) 356-8820.
- May 7-8 Bishop, Lone Pine Gem & Mineral Society, Tri County Fairgrounds, Sierra St. & Fair Dr., Hours: Sat. 9-5, Sun 10-4, Jeff Lines 760-872-6597.
- May 13-15, West Coast Gem & Mineral Show, Holiday Inn-Costa Mesa, 3131 S. Bristol St., Costa Mesa, Fri. & Sat. 10-6, Sun 10-5. www.mzexpos.com.
- May 14-15 Newbury, Conejo Gem & Mineral Club *California Gems and Minerals* Borchard Park Community Center, 190 Reino Rd., Hours: Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-5. Bob Stultz 805-498-4220.
- May 14-15 Yucaipa, Yucaipa Valley Gem & Mineral Society, Yucaipa Community Center, 349 Oak Glen Rd., Hours: Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4, Lee Peterson (909) 794-0731.
- May 22, Fallbrook, Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society, '49'er Frolic, Sunday.
- June 4-5 Glendora, Glendora Gems, Goddard Middle School, 859 E. Sierra Madre, Hours : Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4, Bonnie Birdwell (626) 963-4638.
- June 4-5, La Habra, North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society, Jubilee of Gems Show, La Habra Community Center, 101 W. La Habra Blvd., Hours: 10-5 both days, Don Warthen (626) 330-8974.
- June 10-12, Roseville, CFMS & Roseville Gem & Mineral Blast, Roseville (Placer County) Fairgrounds, 800 All American City Blvd., (916) 630-1000, show web site: www.rockrollers.com/show.html.
- June 19-20, Cayucos, San Luis Obispo Gem & Mineral Club, Cayucos Veteran's Hall (at the end of the pier in Cayucos), Hours: Sun. 9-6, Mon. 9-5, Bub Hurless (805) 772-7160.
- Oct. 15-16, Long Beach, The Southern California Gem and Mineral Show, Long Beach Convention Center, presented by the Mineralogical Society of Southern California. Hours: Sat. & Sun 10-5, www.MineralSoCal.org.



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Trip Details: www.scienceattractions.com

Click on trips and vacations.

Trip Highlights:

- Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.
- Bryce and Zion National Parks.
- Fossil collecting at a new commercial quarry in the Green River Formation.

o We will be spending the entire day collecting fish fossils in a limestone quarry in Wyoming.

- Kennecott Utah Copper Mine.
- Eastern Mojave National Preserve.
- Over 2,000 miles of travel through 7 states.

Contact Information: Dan Krawitz

(714) 292-6845

E-mail: management@scienceattractions.com

Website: www.scienceattractions.com

Symmetry Fun Answers



This rosette contains 3 mirrors, and the pattern returns to an equivalent position with every 120° of rotation around the vertical axis. This is referred to as 3-fold rotation.



This pattern has 4-fold symmetry, repeating with every 90° of rotation. There are four positions for mirrors.



There are no locations for symmetry mirrors in this rosette. The pattern appears the same with every 60° of rotation about the 6-fold axis.



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