

Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California



Volume 79 Number 8

August 2008

The 846th Meeting of The Mineralogical Society
of Southern California

Picnic Time
at
Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Museum

Saturday, August 16, 2008, at 11:30 a.m.
123 W. Alvarado St. Fallbrook, California

Featuring:

- Speaker information for feature meetings
- CFMS show reviews
- Gem and Mineral show at San Diego County Fair
- Agate show at Menasha Wisconsin
- Field trip for a hot summer day

Mineral Picnic in Fallbrook Saturday, August 16

Once again the Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society has invited us to join them at their summer potluck and mineral sale. This year members from the Palomar Gem and Mineral Society and the San Diego Gem and Mineral Society have also been invited. Last year's event was a delightful day of mineral camaraderie where many minerals changed hands to the satisfaction of sellers and buyers alike. And don't worry about the heat, the Fallbrook Mineral Museum is fully air-conditioned!

When: Saturday, August 16, 2008, with the potluck lunch from 11:30 to 1:30 followed by mineral sales until 4:00 p.m.

Where: Fallbrook Mineral Museum, 123 W. Alvarado St., Fallbrook. The festivities will be held in the museum complex's Tourmaline Room.

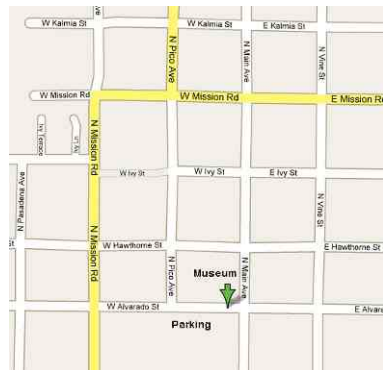
Food: Bring a dish of any kind to serve 6-8 people.

Minerals: Each seller will be allocated ½ of an 8-foot table and will be asked to donate 10% of their total sales to FGMS..

Bring your \$\$\$ to buy specimens from others and to support the museum. Last year there were lots of great buys!

Questions? Please contact FGMS Office at (760) 728-1130. Please do not bring your pets!

Driving instructions: Take I-15 south from Temecula to Mission Rd exit (exit #51) toward Fallbrook (west). Continue on E. Mission Rd as it joins Old Hwy 395 and CR-S13. It is about 5 miles to downtown Fallbrook. Turn left onto N. Main Ave. Go three blocks and turn right on W. Alvarado St.



Park in the lot on the south side of the street, opposite the museum. Driving time from Pasadena is approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes. See the maps below.



Future Meeting Programs

By Janet Gordon

Dr. Bryan Wilbur of the PCC Geology Department will be our speaker for the September 12, 2008, meeting. This will be a great opportunity to get acquainted with one of the department's younger faculty members and learn something about what Early Cambrian echinoderm fossils tell us about the geology of eastern California.

On October 10, Dr. Nancy King of USGS-Caltech will be speaking about California earthquakes and how advances in GPS technology are expanding our knowledge of these events.

Graham and Bonni MacKintosh of San Diego will join us on November 14, and Graham will speak about Santa Rosalia mineral collection. The MacKintoshes have spent considerable time in Baja California, and Graham is the author of several books on the area.

Minutes of the July 11, 2008 Meeting

The 845th meeting of The Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, July 11, 2008 at Pasadena City College, Pasadena, CA.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Geoff Caplette. Vice President Janet Gordon then introduced the speaker of the evening, Dr. George Rossman, who gave a presentation entitled: “Nano-mineralogy.”

Dr. Rossman, who is Professor of Mineralogy in the Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences at Caltech, is an avid researcher, has published numerous technical papers on a wide variety of topics, and frequently participates in scientific conferences.

To explore the world of sub-microscopic minerals, the nanometer regime, highly sophisticated and expensive equipment is utilized. Dr. Rossman described the scanning electron microscope, which allows one to go into nature to see what small minerals can be found. He also discussed the transmission electron microscope, which can almost resolve individual atoms. Other instruments reveal structure and diffraction patterns.

The use of such impressive equipment, combined with researcher tenacity, resulted in the discovery of new minerals, including barioperovskite from the benitoite mine. Also found, among others, were scandium minerals from the Allende meteorite, and molybdenum minerals.

Equally interesting was Dr. Rossman’s descriptions of the detailed information required (including occurrence, appearance, physical properties, chemical data,

crystallography, x-ray powder patterns and the like) before a new mineral can be approved by the international committee. Further, a specimen must not only be deposited in a curated museum, but also must be described in published scientific literature.

Dr. Rossman additionally discussed the standards for naming new minerals.

Jo Anna Ritchey announced that Dr. Janet Gordon was recently honored at the CFMS banquet. Janet Gordon reminded members of the annual picnic to be held in August in Fallbrook (see bulletin for details). She also stated that the speaker for September would give a presentation on fossils, particularly those of the Eastern Mojave. She further announced that speakers were needed for December and January, and welcomed suggestions.

Geoff Caplette informed members of the most recent developments regarding the trailer and the display cases.

At show and tell, Bob Housley displayed smoky quartz crystals that he obtained near Hwy 50, east of Placerville.

The door prize was won by Geoff Caplette.

The meeting was brought to a close by Geoff Caplette at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Caplette, Secretary

CFMS Show in Ventura

Entry from Janet Gordon: The California Federation of Mineral Societies held its annual show in Ventura this year at the end of June. I arrived at the show at the Ventura County Fairgrounds (aka Seaside Park) not long after it opened on Friday, and found things rather quiet. Compared to the CFMS show at this location 5 years ago, there were significantly fewer exhibits and dealers, and it seemed that the emphasis was even more on beads, jewelry, glass, and lapidary than before. Mineral displays and dealers were very limited.



The California Golden Bear Nugget on display at the CFMS show in Ventura. Photo by Jay Valle and Don Ogden from the CFMS web page.

The Golden Bear Nugget and other specimens from the CFMS collection are always a pleasure to see, and it was interesting to see how many of them were donated by past or present MSSC members. Pat LaRue's collection was the other significant mineral display. The lapidary arts were well represented, and the magnificent slabs of petrified wood displayed by Walt Wright were the highlight of show for just about everyone. An impressive variety of different woods in assorted colors delighted the eye. Each was labeled according with its plant name and geologic age.

Lots of fossils were displayed including the remains of a mammoth discovered in a housing development in Moorpark in 2005 and a good educational case about stromatolites.

The speakers program was well done, although I wouldn't have known about the talks if I hadn't encountered another MSSC who told me about them. I caught Bob Jones' talk on "America's Finest Minerals," a recap of the special displays at the recent Tucson show. I missed all the others, but the line-up looked good.

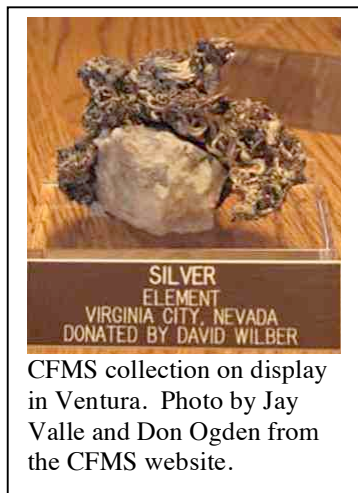
Kids' activities took up a substantial portion of one of the halls, and I hope there were more kids to enjoy them as the



CFMS collection on display in Ventura. Photo by Jay Valle and Don Ogden from the CFMS website.

weekend progressed. Other activities included lapidary demonstrators, silent auctions, and door prizes.

I'm glad that I hadn't driven up to Ventura especially to see the show, because I would have been disappointed. However, I was coincidentally in the neighborhood, so I stopped by and enjoyed talking to folks. I left wondering if local mineral shows have a future. Apparently, no club was willing to host this show, and the show committee was made up of individuals scattered around the state. It's to their credit that the show came off, but the organization seemed a bit casual. When I attended the banquet on Saturday night, I wondered if anyone new to minerals or lapidary was there. Most of the audience looked like they had been attending these banquets for decades, and probably the cast hasn't changed much in recent years. Surely they enjoyed each other's company, but their numbers are dwindling. Is the mineral hobby dying out because we're doing things that same way it's been done for decades? Because we're talking only to ourselves? Does it matter if we don't do anything about it?



CFMS collection on display in Ventura. Photo by Jay Valle and Don Ogden from the CFMS website.

Entry from Shou-Lin Lee: I was there too. I must say that as a show, it was much better than last year at Lancaster. The number and the quality of the displays were certainly better.

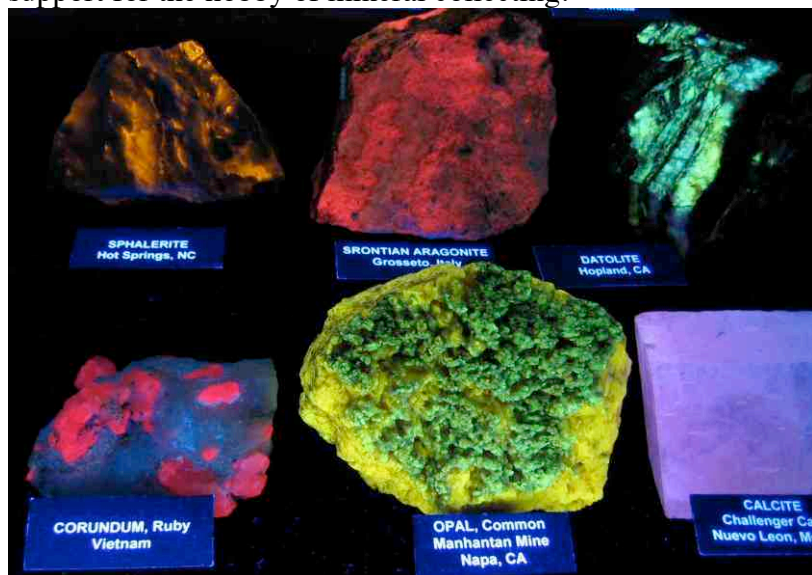
As I walked into the selling area, I was greeted by a large fossilized branch with three pine cones attached. I guessed it was about two feet long. The specimen belonged to a vendor who specialized in Condor agates from Argentina. I could not resist. I must have a picture of this. I could have clicked my camera without asking, but I decided to ask for

permission. The owner of the booth told me that I could not publish the picture if I took it. I decided not to take that picture.

At another booth I found a vendor selling quartz crystals with liquid inclusions from China, just the kind I had hoped to find. My fascination with quartz crystal that have liquid inclusions was peaked when in May, at the West Coast Gem and Mineral Show at Costa Mesa, I got a quartz double cabochon with five liquid inclusions. Four of them are two-phase, liquid and gas, and liquid and solid. The fifth one has three-phase: gas, liquid, and solid. The solid appears to be lighter than the liquid it is in, because as I rotate the stone, the solid floats to the top instead of sinking to the bottom. All of the crystals this vendor had were at least two-phase: liquid and gas or liquid and solid. One particular crystal that had liquid and solid inclusions had two kinds of solid in the same cavity, because as I rotated the crystal, one solid floated to the top, while several smaller solids sunk to the bottom. One vendor had some cabochons from Napa County he claimed to be either rare or from a dried up mine. He had a cabochon with cinnabar inclusions that he said was the only myrickete from Napa County. If the cabochon was priced less I might have bought it, not because it is rare, but because I like the red color of cinnabar. Later, I saw several myrickete cabochons from McLaughlin Mine, Napa County, in one of the display cases that also had cinnabar from California, Russia and China. Apparently, the stone wasn't that rare after all. The first rule of Acquisition: don't purchase the first one you see in the market, comparison shopping, comparison shopping, comparison shopping!

There were two fluorescent mineral displays. Some of the specimens were impressive (see picture on page 10). There were some humorous displays, such as Coprolites by the Royal Flush Society and the Dalmatian Jasper with 101 little dalmations. Several displays had specimens of single minerals such as colemanite, chrysocolla, opal, obsidian, rhodochrosite,

agate from Horse Canyon and cinnabar. Many clubs/societies entered display cases: Contra Cost Mineral and Gem Society, Roseville Rock-Rollers from Inyo County, Rock Chipper of Woodland Hills, and Oxnard Gem and Mineral Society just to name a few. Maybe MSSC can make it one of our next year goal to enter a display case in the CFMS show to show our support for the hobby of mineral collecting.



Gem and Mineral Show at San Diego County Fair

By Shou-Lin Lee

I don't know about county fairs in other parts of the country, but southland county fairs are not known to host gem and mineral shows. The last time Los Angeles County Fair included any gems and minerals was in 2000. Orange County has had some displays, although mostly for jewelry. Years ago, Riverside County Fair used to have a gem and mineral show too. When I learned that the San Diego County Fair had a gem and mineral show, I had to check it out. The entry form listed many categories of competition, but the question was, how many people actually entered?

Compared to other kinds of display such as fine art, photography and pictorial rock, the gem and mineral show was relative small. However, the quality of entries made the two-hour drive worthwhile. The Gemological Institute of America had an educational case with several fine specimens of kunzites, and tourmalines donated by William Larson. A more than one foot long fossilized lung fish caught my attention. There were also several entries of large single rhodochrosite crystals from Sweet Home mine Colorado. The number of entries between jewelry and mineral entries were about half and half. Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society had a booth there selling rocks. San Diego Gem and Mineral Society (SDGMS) had several demonstration booths.

Apparently, SDGMS was very involved in putting this show together, because I learned of the existence of this show from the SDGMS newsletter. For the sake of promoting the appreciation, understanding and collecting of minerals, I wonder can our society partner with the Los Angeles County Fair for a similar show?

Agate Show at Menasha, Wisconsin: Part I

By Shou-Lin Lee

In the MSSC bulletin of June 2008, I mentioned the upcoming agate show entitled “The Wonderful World of Agates” by the University of Wisconsin at Fox Valley in July. I decided to attend the show because I had many questions about agates but didn’t know where to find the answers. But after paying the registration fee for the show and purchasing the round trip air tickets for two, the rationale kicked in. I questioned my decision for going to the show. Wisconsin is very far and the air fare is rising. Did I make the right decision? After all, what else could I find there that I could not find here in Los Angeles, the second largest city of the US? Just because I couldn’t find any more agate nodules from China and the organizer of the show, Mr. Gary Richards,

happened to tell me that yes, there would be vendors selling agate nodules from China, and yes, Smithsonian would have a display case at the show, and yes there would be someone giving a lecture on agates in Germany, and yes, an iris agate expert would give a lecture too, and yes, there would be vendor selling Laguna agates. I was easily sold. Too easy.

After the first two lectures I was glad that I made the trip. Menasha might be a small town in Wisconsin, but the show was no small affair. It took the organizer two years to put this show together, but what a show it was. It not only showcased the beauty of agates, and many varieties of agates, but also gathered many of the who's who in the agate world.

The show started with a full day of lectures, followed by a three-day sale of agates from many parts of the world, book signing, agate digs for children, and more lectures. At the same time, there were also two rooms of agate displays. The lecture hall, which was the theater of the university, had a capacity of 400, and it was packed full. The participants at the ribbon cutting ceremony included the mayor of Menasha, and June Culp Zeitner just to name a few (see photo below).



More about the show will be on next month issue.

Field Trip for a Hot Summers Day

by James Imai

Announcement: - Barite at Palos Verdes (see also the Other Attractions, below). Almost everyone has already collected crystals from this location, but it remains a cooling outing to the breezy seashore. (Walter Margerum kindly suggested the field trip as one of the few enjoyable during the summer). The barite crystals are euhedral, with the usual tabular habit and are transparent to translucent, typically tan in color, although rarely a light green. Size ranges from about 1/4 inch to very infrequently as much as 1 ½ inches. Dolomite crystals are often associated with the barite.

Most specimens are collected by examining boulders that have fallen from the cliffs at the site. It is not advisable to climb these cliffs because of their extreme steepness and the danger of loose rock.

Participants should meet on Saturday August 9 at 10AM in the parking lot on the south side of Palos Verdes Drive, just east of Hawthorne Blvd, and abutting the area, which was formerly Marineland and is now a very rapidly escalating housing development. Collection is possible on a level walk of about 100 yards west from the parking lot, but the usual site is on the shoreline, at the bottom of a zigzag, well maintained quarter mile trail down the cliffs. Bring a hat, sunscreen, and lunch.

Other Attractions: Just ½ mile west of the meeting place is an Interpretive and Whale Watch Center, with a small but informative natural history exhibit. It features a world-class shark fossil, with even some skin preserved! Admission is free. Also nearby is the quarry on Forrestal Drive, just east of the Portuguese Bend active landslide area. There are good dolomite crystals, selenite, some pyrite, and tiny, doubly terminated quartz crystals. About four miles to the west of the

barite site is Flat Rock and Bluff Cove, which has blue glaucophane (amphibole) and some petrified wood. Almost all of the limey shale in the entire Palos Verdes area contains fossils: tiny fish, and even whales and sharks. Try your luck! Sightseers will enjoy the Wayfarers Chapel of Frank Lloyd Wright Jr., and the pier at Redondo Beach, with its many eateries, likewise the wonderful Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (free), Cabrillo Maritime Museum, and the Ports of Call restaurant area. All of these additional activities are within a short drive from the barite collecting site.

West Coast Fall
GEM & MINERAL SHOW
HOLIDAY INN - Costa Mesa
Bristol Plaza ★ 3131 S. Bristol St. ★ COSTA MESA, CA
NOV. 14 - 15 - 16, 2008 Show Hours: Fri. & Sat., 10 - 6, Sun. 10 - 5
70 Top Quality Dealers ★ Fabulous Holiday Shopping!!
Minerals ★ Fossils ★ Gemstones ★ Jewelry ★ Beads ★ Meteorites
Open to the Public ★ FREE Admission ★ Wholesale ★ Retail
So easy to find . . . Less than a mile from John Wayne Airport!
Take the Bristol Street exit (south) from I-405. South of the South Coast Plaza Shopping Center.
Martin Zinn Expositions, L.L.C., P.O. Box 665, Bernalillo, NM 87004
Fax: (505) 867-0073, email: mz0955@aol.com, www.mzexp.com

2008 Calendar of Events

August 1, 2 & 3 2008, Nipomo, Orcutt Mineral Society St.
Joseph Church 298 S. Thompson Ave. Hours: 10 - 5
daily <http://www.omsinc.org>

**August 2 - 3 2008, San Francisco, San Francisco Gem &
Mineral Society San Francisco County Fair Bldg Ninth
Ave. & Lincoln Way Hours: Sat. 10-6 Sun 10-5**

August 29 - Sept. 1 2008, Fort Bragg, CA Mendocino Coast
Gem & Mineral Society Town Hall, Main & Loral
Hours: Sat. & Sun 10-6; Mon. 10-4