

# **Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

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**Volume 80 Number 12**

**December 2009**

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## **The 860th Meeting of The Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

**Australia - Gems Down Under**

**By**

**Charles I. Carmona, GG, ASA**

**Friday, December 11, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Geology Department, E-Building, Room 220**

**Pasadena City College**

**1570 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena**

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### **Featuring:**

- December program**
- Pacific Micro-mount Conference**
- Mineral deposition of Bolivia and Chile**
- Invitation to Jewel Tunnel Imports**

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## December Program

### Australia - Gems Down Under

**Date: December 11, 2009 7:30 pm**

**Geology Department, E-Building, Room 220**

**Pasadena City College**

**1570 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena**

The topic for December program will be gems from Australia, presented by Mr. Charles Carmona.

Australia is the leading opal-producing country in the world and is among the leaders in sapphires, diamonds and pearls as well. The deposits (except the pearls of course) are located in Australia's famous and often foreboding outback, where gem miners brave many hardships to wrest the beautiful stones from the earth.

Mr. Carmona's PowerPoint presentation will highlight many of the major gem materials coming from Australia with images and discussions of their mining areas, as well as the geology associated with the minerals. The presentation will also be a preview of the field trip to Australia next August sponsored by the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum Gem and Mineral Council led by Mr. Carmona.

#### **Submission deadline**

Due to editor by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, unless the 20<sup>th</sup> is on the weekend, then the 18<sup>th</sup> is the due day. Email to [shoulin.lee@yahoo.com](mailto:shoulin.lee@yahoo.com)

Charles Carmona is a Graduate Gemologist and an Accredited Senior Appraiser, and President of Guild Laboratories, Inc. in Downtown Los Angeles. He has been a rockhound for over 40 years and has been in the gemstone business since the mid-1970's. Mr. Carmona travels extensively. He has led trips to gem mining areas in Brazil, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Madagascar.

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## Minutes of the November 13, 2009 Meeting

The 859th meeting of The Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, November 13, 2009, at Pasadena City College, Pasadena, CA. President Geoffrey Caplette brought the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Vice President Bruce Carter then introduced the speaker of the evening, Rock Currier, who gave a

presentation about the mineral deposits of Bolivia and Chile.

Mr. Currier, in addition to being a well-known mineral dealer and expert, has traveled the world collecting gems and minerals, and has often shared his adventures with MSSC members. His most recent contribution to the study and collection of minerals has been the authoring of a 5-part essay, "An Insider's Guide to Mineral Collecting," which can be ordered from The Bookstore, at [www.MineralogicalRecord.com](http://www.MineralogicalRecord.com).

Mr. Currier's discussion revealed Bolivia to be a primitive country, with poor roads, few accommodations of any type, and a harsh existence for its citizenry. On the other hand, his slides pictured interesting and unusual geological features, such as expansive salt flats. Big mining interests have been eliminated in Bolivia; mines are mostly controlled by militant miners, who, unfortunately, do not have the required monies and expertise to properly conduct operations.

Mining techniques are very outdated, producing little profit, if any, for the workers. It is very difficult to move minerals in and out of Bolivia. In addition to tin locales, Mr. Currier also described the sulphur mine that he visited, and the halite and cassiterite specimens that he found.

Chile reputedly has the biggest mine in the world, a copper producer that is state-owned. Nearby, there is a mine with unusually thick chrysocolla veins. It was not possible to obtain permission from the site managers to collect any of the chrysocolla material, as was usually the case at the larger operations in Chile. A new, privately owned copper mine, with equipment and machinery that is much more sophisticated than is found in the Bolivian mines and the other large Chilean copper mine, has been opened. This mine, which employs only about 15-20% of the number of people working the state-owned copper mine, produces about the same amount of copper.

It was decided that the open house at Jewel Tunnel Imports would be held on Saturday, December 12, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Janet Gordon announced that Ron Thacker, an MSSC member, had donated his personal collection of minerals to the MSSC for auction and door prizes. Dr. Gordon graciously donated her time to organize and label the numerous specimens for MSSC auction/prize purposes. We thank Mr. Thacker for his thoughtfulness and generosity in contributing his beautiful minerals to our society.

Vice President Carter confirmed that the annual banquet would be held on January 16, 2009, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The banquet speaker will be John Koivula, who will discuss inclusions in minerals.

Gene Reynolds reminded members of the upcoming Micromount Conference, and also requested additional micromount donations from members.

Both Mr. Reynolds and Jo Anna Ritchey described proposed closures of collecting areas in our nearby deserts, and encouraged members to write to their respective representatives opposing such actions. All too often, MSSC members and other desert visitors have not made their voices heard.

The meeting was brought to a close at 9:10 p.m. by President Caplette.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Caplette, Secretary

# Mark your calendar

**December 12, 2009**

## Open house at Jewel Tunnel Imports

See next page

**January 16, 2010**

## Annual Banquet

The 2010 Annual Banquet will be held on Saturday, January 16, at The Oak Tree Room, located at 1150 East Colorado Blvd., Arcadia. The program speaker will be Mr. John Koivalo and the topic will be "Inclusions in minerals," follow by a silent auction.

### Samples of Auction Items



And

**January 29 and 30, 2010**

## Pacific Micromount Conference

## **You Are Invited!!**

**An invitation for the members and friends of the  
Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

**to attend an openhouse at**

**Jewel Tunnel Imports**

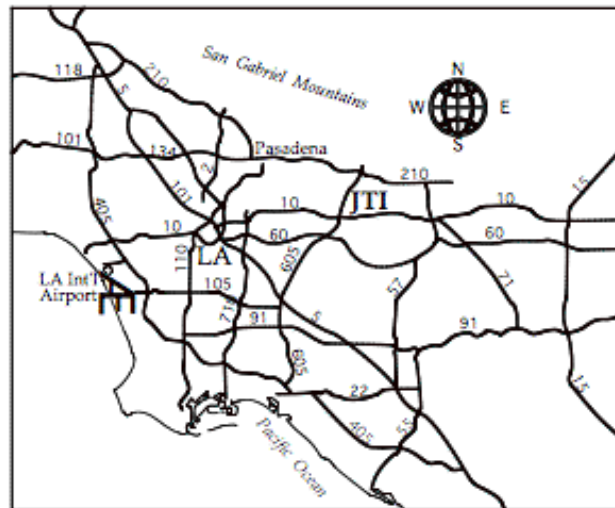
**Saturday, December 12, 2009, 10 AM to 4PM**

13100 Spring St., Baldwin Park, CA 91706, 626-814-2257

Map available at [jeweltunnel.com](http://jeweltunnel.com)

Refreshments will be served.

### **Directions to Jewel Tunnel Imports warehouse.**



Jewel Tunnel Imports is a leading wholesale distributor of mineral specimens, crystals, fossils, tumbled stones and many different kinds of lapidary items like balls, eggs, jewelry etc. made from different minerals. We have a warehouse in excess of 10,000 sq. feet full of mineral related natural history items, perhaps the largest of its kind in the United States.

Historically Jewel Tunnel Imports has had limited open house parties for mineralogically and geologically oriented groups such as the students and faculty of various university geology

departments and members of certain gem and mineral societies. These open houses, by invitation only, on a few weekends just preceding Christmas, offer a chance for individuals belonging to these groups to buy minerals and crystals at wholesale prices and to learn something about the wholesale gem and mineral business.

The owner of Jewel Tunnel (Rock Currier) is also interested in learning about new sources of mineral specimens and has been known to buy and trade such items. He is a micromounter and always interesting in trading for good micromount material not represented in his collection.

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## **The Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

**Proudly Presents**

**The 45th Pacific Micro-mount Conference**

**January 29 to 31, 2010 at the**

**San Bernardino County Museum**

**2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands, CA**

**Friday, January 29**

**3:00-6:00 PM REGISTRATION, greeting friends and microscope time.**

**6:00-7:00 Famous POTLUCK BUFFET Dinner.**

**7:00-8:00 PM “WHAT’S NEW IN MINERALS” by Sugar White.**

**Followed by**

**SHORT CONTRIBUTED TALKS AND MEMBER SLIDES.**

## **Saturday, January 30**

**8:00-9:00 AM DOORS OPEN, On Site REGISTRATION. Setting up scopes, filling "Give-away" and "Sales" Tables, and greeting friends.**

**10:00 AM WELCOME, Introductions and Special Announcements.**

**10:15 AM - Paul Adams "Micro-mineral collecting in La Paz County Arizona"**

**NOON LUNCH. Subway sandwiches served at Museum. (No cost)**

**1:30 PM VERBAL AUCTION, followed by silent auction of member donated materials.**

**3:15 PM – Joe Marty "Recent Easter vacation mineral collecting adventures in the Southwest"**

**6:00 PM BUFFET DINNER Served at Museum.**

**7:00 PM CONTRIBUTED TALKS AND MEMBER SLIDES**

## **Sunday, January 31**

**Field Trip, possibly to Otto Mountain for rare tellurates**

**--Friday night Potluck –Please bring an hors d'oeuvre, salad, hot dish, dessert, etc.**

**--Saturday lunch – Subway sandwiches (No cost to attendees.)**

**--Saturday night Buffet dinner is \$5.00. Advance reservations necessary. (See Registration slip.)**

*Registration Fee is \$10.00 before Conference,*

*\$15.00 at door.*

## **Conference Guidelines**

**Now is a good time and not too soon to make your advance registration for the 2010 Pacific Micromount Conference.**

Registration: Please provide the names of all in your party. We like to have a name-tag waiting for everyone. In addition to Conference registration you will need to make a reservation if you plan to attend the delicious Saturday evening buffet dinner.

Note: While we encourage swapping of minerals during the Conference, we cannot allow participants to sell minerals inside the museum.

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## Nearby Motels

Redlands Motor Lodge, 1151 Arizona St., Redlands (Alabama off-ramp) 909-798-2432

Good Nite Inn, 1675 Industrial Park Ave., Redlands (Alabama off-ramp) 909-793-3723

Starlight Motel, 1371 W. Redlands Blvd., Redlands (Alabama or Tennessee off-ramp) 909-792-3333

Super 8, 1160 Arizona St., Redlands (Alabama off-ramp) 909-335-1612

Also, if you have an RV, a trailer, or van and are self-contained, you may camp at the outer edge of the Museum parking lot. Quite a few do this, and you will not be alone. (Use Registration form to let us know)

The San Bernardino County Natural History Museum is located just north of the 10 Freeway, at 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands, California. (Take California Street exit and go north to Orange Tree Lane, then turn right to Museum Entrance.)



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### **Attention Interested Participants:**

**[For more information on the conference, click here](#)**

[To download registration packet as a pdf, click here](#)

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## Nomination for Officers



## The Society Needs Your Help

Last month, both MSSC secretary, Patricia Caplette and Field Trip Chair, James Imai announced their intention to resign from their posts. Requests for nomination to fill the posts were published in November issue bulletin however, the response was none. Below are brief descriptions of the responsibilities for these posts:

**Secretary** is responsible for attending the monthly general member meetings and board meetings, taking minutes of these meetings, and submitting the minutes to the bulletin editor before the deadline via email.

**Field Trip Chair** is responsible for scouting potential field trip locations, organizing field trips, on a regular basis.

**Show Chair** is the lead person to organize the annual show. This post requires a considerable amount of time. Although this position was vacant for the past several years it is still available for anyone who is interested in it.

Anyone interested in filling the posts please contact Geoffry Caplette at (626) 798-0664.

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## Cady Mountains & Potential Closures

Reprinted from CFMS Newsletter December issue, FIELD TRIPS-SOUTH section

**By Shep Koss & Adam Dean**

Hi, fellow Rocknuts! Hopefully, you remember the Dec. 12-13 CFMS field trip to the Cadys for an overnigher Adam Dean will be leading to his favorite spots in his "backyard." Details are in the November CFMS newsletter and on the web site.

With no trips planned for January due to potential changeable weather and post-holiday recovery, this will be an opinion article. For those of you who aren't aware, these trips must be planned 2-3 months in advance for timely publication. That being said, assaults on our prolific and public sites haven't abated. The latest that I am aware of that is under consideration is turning a stretch of old

Route 66 between Barstow and Needles into a National Landmark. A worthy designation, in my humble opinion, due to its historical significance, but the huge downside for us is adding 10 miles on either side of this stretch as a designated National Landmark, as well. Is this aspect necessary? The Cady Mountains area may also move from Wilderness designation to National Park designation. For us, that just means from bad to worse. We must continue to voice our opinions to our congressional representatives.

And, as yet, our state hasn't followed the examples of numerous other states in setting aside sites as official rockhounding areas. Many states have such areas set aside. Why do we allow this state to move in the opposite direction?

On another note, anyone have sites of interest you'd like to visit? Please let Adam and me know. Any clubs wish to host a trip? Again, let us know. Were you on a specific trip this past year you'd like to return to? You guessed it, let us know.

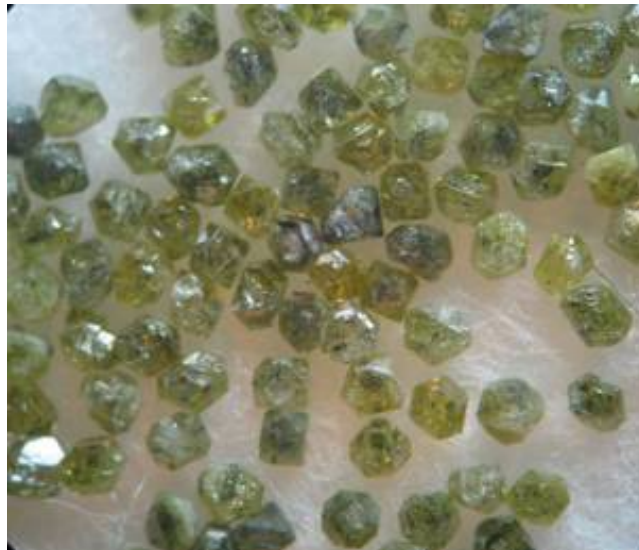
Happy Hunting and Collect Responsibly.

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## A Picture of Micro Diamonds

By Shou-Lin Lee

**You are looking at a picture of Chinese synthetic diamonds taken through a microscope with 20x magnification. Each crystal measures about 0.5 to 0.7 mm.**



***It is dues time again!!***

***Membership dues are due***

***Please make your check payable to MSSC And mail it to MSSC treasurer***

***14728 Nanry St., Whittier, CA 90604-1850***

**2010 Arizona MINERAL &  
FOSSIL SHOW-TUCSON**

**JAN. 30 - FEB. 13** Show Hours: 10 - 6 daily

**4 Easy to find Locations**

- ★ Quality Inn - Benson Hwy. - I-10, Exit 262, Northeast corner of Benson Hwy at Park
- ★ InnSuites Hotel - Downtown - 475 N. Granada Ave., at St. Marys
- ★ Ramada Ltd. - Downtown - 663 N. Freeway, at St. Marys
- ★ Mineral & Fossil Marketplace - 1333 N. Oracle, at Drachman

Over 450 dealers with the best minerals & fossils in TUCSON!  
Retail ★ Wholesale ★ Open to the Public ★ Free Admission & Parking

**Register for the AMFS Treasure Hunt at [www.mzexpos.com](http://www.mzexpos.com)**

Martin Zim Expositions L.L.C., PO Box 665, Bernalillo, NM 87004, fax: (505) 225-3478, email: [mzexpo@aol.com](mailto:mzexpo@aol.com), [www.mzexpos.com](http://www.mzexpos.com)

## 2009 Calendar of Events

**December 5-6 2009, Barstow, CA Mojave Gem & Mineral Society Community Center 841 Barstow Road**  
Hours: 10-5 daily Gene Haines (760) 256-0595 Website: [www.mdgms.org](http://www.mdgms.org)