

BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



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**"TWENTY YEARS IN THE FIELD -
A PERSONAL VIEW OF BRITISH MINERALOGY"**

Roy Starkey

These notes relate to the presentation to The Society at the 16th British Micromount Symposium.

As we approach the end of the 20th Century and the start of the next it is interesting to reflect on what has happened in British Mineralogy during our lifetimes and what the future may hold for those that will pursue our interest in the future.

Mineralogists and collectors are often heard to voice feelings such as "if only we'd been around when such and such a mine was working", or "it was OK for Sir Arthur Russell but you can't find anything there nowadays". It is easy to fall victim to such persuasive conversations and somehow to feel that one could have done more, better or enjoyed a richer feast of localities, if only....

This presentation sets out to demonstrate the richly varied collecting opportunities which have presented themselves during the latter part of the 20th Century, and is essentially a personal recollection of people, places and mineralogical discoveries which the speaker has experienced over the past twenty years or so.

In this short time span we may recall the re-opening and subsequent closure of Carrock Mine and Wheal Concord; the re-birth of the Cornish Tin industry and its later demise; the collecting opportunities and superb specimens yielded during the 1970's and 1980's by Wheal Jane, Geevor and most recently South Crofty, which at the time of writing this abstract is once again under threat of final closure. Extensive development work at Parys Mountain resulted in the sinking of a shaft to considerable depth for bulk sampling of the ore-body, only to see finance withdrawn and the venture wound up. Much activity still continues in prospecting and development work for gold mines in Scotland and Ireland.

During this period we have seen access lost to Heights Mine and Hilton Mines, but thankfully preserved in the Nenthead area, for the time being at least. To offset these many frustrations, the developments in vertical caving equipment and the growing number of people becoming proficient at SRT (single rope technique) has seen access regained to deeper workings via shafts and open stopes, hitherto considered lost for ever. Working quarries have become the focus for fresh exposures and many of the new discoveries, but diligent digging and examination of dump material under the low power stereomicroscope has also furnished a surprising range of interesting minerals and new finds. The increasing accessibility of instrumental analysis such as XRD, XRF and SEM / microprobe to collectors, both via the workplace, and through Universities and Museums has also spawned new discoveries, a number of minerals new to the British Isles and even, occasionally, species new to Science.

The mineralogical community has seen the birth of several new organisations and publications during this period, with possibly a greater level of activity in terms of recording sites and finds by amateur workers than seen at any time previously. There have been remarkable projects undertaken in reopening old mines and re-gaining access to long inaccessible workings, such as the Susanna Mine, Trevinnick Mine, Bage Mine and others. A growing realisation that coastal vein outcrops offer exciting possibilities for late-stage supergene mineral formation has resulted in an explosion in the number of recorded occurrences of phosgenite and cumengeite, as well as a number of very rare species.

The mineralogical community has inevitably lost a number of very good friends over the past twenty years, but perhaps pre-eminent amongst these are Richard Barstow, Roger Harker, John Fuller and Maurice Grigg - names that will probably be familiar to everyone at the Symposium, people who many people present will have met or known personally.

Finally we should perhaps consider the legacy which will be left by workers in Mineralogy during the closing part of the 20th Century. We have seen several excellent private collections acquired by National Museums. We have seen publication of books which will surely stand as the "classic reference" in their field - "Minerals of Caldbeck Fells", "Minerals of Cornwall and Devon", "Mineral Museums of Europe", "A Mineralogy of Wales" and the much heralded and soon to be published "Minerals of Scotland".

It is heartening therefore, in these uncertain times, to know that worthwhile discoveries are still being made, people are "going the extra mile (or fathom)" to push forward our knowledge, and that even now, probably as we sit here today, somebody is turning over a new leaf in British Mineralogy.

The following "bullet points" formed the substance of the presentation and provide a "timeline" of events through the past twenty years or so.

- 1976 • Carrock Mine under development by World Wide Energy
- 1977 • Old Tor Mine accessible and traffic allowed through Winnat's Pass
- 1978 • Exploration drilling on Parys Mountain, Anglesey
- 1979 • Welsh Mines Society formed by D. Bick
 - Author first visited Brownley Hill Mine, Cumbria
 - Heights Mine entrance (Weardale) blown in for safety reasons
 - Northern Pennine Orefield being actively prospected and worked
 - Hilton Mines underground access available via Warcop Training Camp
- 1980 • Author's first visit to Bwlch Glas Mine, Talybont, Wales
 - 22 June Welsh Mines Soc. First Field Meeting at Cwmystwyth
 - Cwmystwyth Mill still "intact" on-site
 - August 1980 - First NAMHO Field Meeting at Leadhills
 - Discovery of fine aurichalcite at Craig Rhiwarth, Llangynog, Powys
 - Wheal Concord, Cornwall re-opened - survived two years
- 1981 • March British Mineral and Gem Show London - West Midlands Mineral and Mining Society Stand - launched BMS
 - Ivor Thurgood and Dave Neal launched Mineral Kingdom
 - John Fisk & Co. re-opened Trevinnick Mine
 - June - First BMS Newsletter
 - 27 August 1981 Pam Pearce finds elyite at Meadowfoot Smelter
 - December 1981 - Mineral Kingdom changed name to Mineral Realm
- 1982 • March - Journal of the Russell Society launched
 - Fallgate Quarry millerite era
 - May - Author's first trip to Skye
 - 14/15 August - First BMS Field Meeting - Eaglebrook, Mid-Wales
 - 14 September Richard Barstow died aged 35
 - 9/10 October - First BMS Symposium at Matlock
 - 28 December 1982 - phosgenite found at Clevedon

- 1983
 - K3 1/2 surfaced in Mineral Realm (Milltown Quarry)
 - One week at Chichester Guest House £75 full board incl. field trips
 - March - Roger Harker died aged 41
 - Mulberry open work - cyanotrichite and chalcophyllite collected
 - May Day - BMS trip to Caldbeck Fells - mottramite collected at Arm O'Grain
 - R. W. Barstow Stock Sale
 - September - 17 year old Scout killed in Smallcleugh
- 1984
 - Carbonate cyanotrichite confirmed from New East Wheal Russell, Tavistock
 - Hampshire Micro providing big impetus to amateur microscopy in UK
 - May Day trip to Leadhills
 - Rex Bingham holds "Gold Panning Class" in stream at Wanlockhead
 - Niccolite find by Jane Young at Lady's Rake
- 1985
 - Jan 1st Trip to Hendre Quarry with Steve Rust
 - Thurstaston Beach attracted huge interest - complex silicate minerals in erratic boulders
 - May day trip to Tavistock, highest turnout ever
 - Turquoise vein at Gunheath - Frank Ince finds cyrilovite on Russell Society Week
 - Trerubies Cove phosgenite and sideronatrite discovery by the author
 - Loanhead Quarry becoming well known for prehnite and thomsonite
 - Brandy Ghyll, Cumbria - hedyphane discovered by the author
 - December - final issue Vol.16.4 Gems and Mineral Realm
- 1986
 - Witherite and harmotome discovered at Penyclun Mine, Mid-Wales
 - May Day - two BMS field trips
 - Pant-y-gaseg Mine "re-discovered" - nice dickite and calcite / chalcopyrite
 - Beinn a Bhuird (Cairngorms) trip with J. Faithfull
 - Visited Knoydart Mica Mine with M. Wirth
 - Judkins Quarry (Nuneaton) - vanadinite pod discovered
 - BMS Group Photo - Leicester 1986
 - October - John Fuller died of heart attack
 - 18 October - P. Tandy - Natural History Museum, Dept. of Mineralogy Open Day
 - Rockbottom No.1 produced
 - Mineral Museums of Europe published
 - Shap Blue Quarry - apophyllite find by the author
- 1987
 - Minerals of Cornwall and Devon published
 - First visit to Dysgwylfa Hill Quarry, Shropshire - prehnite and "unknown"
 - Strontian Mines - landscaping underway
 - Wulfenite everywhere - BMS N/L - Ecton, Ladywash, Cwm Orog, Mexico, Bwlchrennaid
 - Mattheddleite described - Scott.J.Geol. 23.
 - Carol Starkey born 2 September
- 1988
 - May Trip to Leadhills / Wanlockhead - veszlyite find at Waygate Shaft
 - Carrock Mine, Cumbria - main adit sealed off
 - Mineralogy and Museums Conference - London 5/6 July
 - Visited Max Wirth's harmotome locality at Touch Hills
- 1989
 - Ullmanite and schmeiderite reported in BMS newsletter
 - September 19th Brian Starkey born

- 1990
 - Minerals of the Caldbeck Fells published
 - Easter - underground trip down Victory Shaft at Geevor Mine, Cornwall
 - Prenteg, North Wales - access becomes an issue due to damage caused by collectors
- 1991
 - First visit to Coatesgate Quarry, Beattock - nice garnet, haematite and chabazite
- 1992
 -
- 1993
 - Edingtonite described from Dysgwylfa Hill Quarry, Shropshire N. Hubbard
 - October - edingtonite discovered at Loanhead T. K. Meikle / G. Todd
- 1994
 - 2 January 1994 - barytocalcite found at Rorrington Mine, Shropshire
 - A Mineralogy of Wales published
 - July Eric Otty died
 - Author's first visit to Sgurr nam Boc, Skye
- 1995
 - Easter - Carol gets first hand instruction in field mineralogy with Rev. Vincent Holyer
 - May - Jim Wooldridge died
 - Return trip to Beinn a Bhuird, Cairngorms in perfect weather conditions
 - Pim Hill adit accessible - mottramite collected in-situ
 - 5 December Maurice Grigg died
- 1996
 - Underground visit to Florence Mine
 - First visit to Isle of man - pharmacosiderite and scorodite discovered at Bradda Head
 - November - Maurice Grigg Auction
- 1997
 - Milwr Tunnel Trip via descent of Olwyn Goch Shaft, Halkyn - fine smithsonite collected
 - South Crofty Mine, Cornwall under final threat of closure

I hope that this review might encourage someone else to contemplate giving an "alternative" personal review of their experiences and reminiscences of the last twenty years or so - I look forward to hearing the talk !

MINERAL EXCHANGE REQUEST

An American mineral collector has written expressing an interest in the possibility of exchanging micro and macro material with members. He lists material from Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey and Arizona including prehnite, calcite, stilbite, apophyllite, pyrite, celestine, epidote, magnetite, wulfenite, copper minerals from Arizona and a range of fluorescent specimens from Franklin, NJ. He appears to be previously unknown and anyone wishing to take the matter further will obviously proceed with the usual caution. His name is Alan Fisk and his address is P.O. Box 133, Devon PA 19333, USA.

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the British Micromount Society held at
University of Leicester on Sunday 21st September 1997.**

The Chairman John Pearce opened the meeting at 10 a.m. There were 65 members present. Secretary Shirley Adrian.

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Oneta Wilson, Alan Dyer, Isabel Geldart, Bill Swindell and Josette Sachs.

2. Minutes of the 1996 AGM.

The Minutes having been published in the Newsletter were taken as read.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

The Chairman said that the Committee had considered such matters at their meeting in April. No other points were raised.

4. Treasurer's and Membership Secretary's Reports.

Sidney Freeman presented both reports.

Before the Symposium there were 202 Memberships of which 29 were Family Memberships, a total of 232 persons. This represented an increase of 14 during the year, there having been one death (David Bloch) and one non-renewal.

The Treasurer thanked Mike Leppington for auditing the accounts so efficiently. He reminded the meeting that the account he was presenting was of receipts and expenditure during the year. He reported a small decrease in the balance of funds at the end of the Society's financial year. There had been a small drop in income from the Symposium (which includes the proceeds of the Raffle and the Auction). 46 of the 50 Database disks had been sold. The increase in the BMS Awards (a sum awarded to the Leicester University Geology student presenting the best Notebook) was due to the payment covering 2 years' awards. This year there had been two "firsts" and £50 each had been awarded. It had been decided to increase the award to £100 in future. The sponsorship of the UK Journal in the sum of £440 was another factor.

Sidney said that he had not included in the account a 'one-off' donation to the Society from the West Midlands Mineral and Gem Society on its closure. This had been given on condition that it was used for the benefit of the West Midlands Branch and had been passed on to them. The year had been a successful one, with the small loss accounted for by the unusual expenditure.

The Treasurer felt that he should point out that the cost of production of the Newsletter was liable to increase considerably during the coming year. Mike Rothwell explained that a change of company policy meant that photocopying etc. had been passed to a private firm and he would no longer be able to get BMS work done at cost. The Newsletter costs would be likely to double and consideration would need to be given to the binding of the Occasional Papers and the Symposium booklet which would become more expensive. Sidney felt that this potential deficit should be

covered by the subscription. He proposed that Individual Memberships and Family Memberships should each increase by £1 for the year 1999. This was seconded by Austin Lockwood and passed unanimously.

Austin Lockwood proposed, and Max Wirth seconded, that the Accounts be accepted, and this was carried unanimously.

Mike Leppington was asked, and agreed, to act as Auditor for the current year. Appreciation was shown for his work and for that of Sidney and Pearl Freeman.

5. Chairman's Report.

John Pearce said that the Society had been coasting along during the past year, with no major new initiatives, but continuing to carry forward those of previous years. Membership of the Society had increased modestly over the years but numbers attending the Symposium were fairly static. He wondered how many new members were coming and felt that perhaps we needed to encourage participation. The Committee were asked to look at this in more detail.

John reminded the meeting that he was retiring from office. He said he had thoroughly enjoyed his time in office and was proud to have been Chairman. He considered that the Society was informal but effective. The Chairman did not need to do much - there were so many non-committee members who did a lot of work. Perhaps the thing he had enjoyed most was the feeling of 'absolute power'! He had quickly learnt new skills in committee-meeting-management and delegation. But it was important to change. Like his predecessors he felt that 5 years was a suitable time-span, but he stressed that this was not to apply to any-one else on the committee. He thanked the Officers, Committee members and all his off-Committee helpers for their support.

6. Other Reports.

Newsletter Editor.

Mike Dannatt thanked those who had sent in material, and said that he had gained the impression that members wanted the Newsletter to be kept 'light' and would welcome reports of Field Trips.

John thanked Mike and congratulated him on the smooth transfer of Editorship.

Curator.

Max Wirth reported that there were 1917 specimens in the Reference Collection and encouraged members to take the total to 2000 so that a new Catalogue could be produced. He urged former donors to check the accuracy of the information about their specimens in the Catalogue. He had been given a list of corrections that were needed. He said that he enjoyed looking after the collection but that if anyone else wished to take it over he would be happy to hand it over.

Some discussion followed on the purpose of the Collection and the use made of it by the membership. The Chairman said that this should be reviewed during the year through the Newsletter. Neil Hubbard asked Max to write to the Newsletter so that members would be reminded how to go about borrowing specimens.

Archivist.

Alan Edwards reported that the Rashleigh was out on loan but that the Goldschmidt volumes were at the Symposium and available for borrowing.

Branch Reports.

South-East Branch.

Austin Lockwood reported that 50 members were linked to the S-E branch and about 30 usually attend the meetings at the Ringway Community Centre in Grove Park, including members of the Norfolk Branch. He has established contact with the French Micromount Society, and an exchange of visits had been hoped for, but was not possible due to a clash of dates. Elsie Hansford and Peter Wallace will be mounting a BMS stand at the FLAGS Exhibition at the GA Reunion on Saturday 8th November and would welcome help from any member able to attend the event.

Austin thanked Peter Reynolds for co-ordinating the Micromineral Competition, and the judges for giving up their time. The S-E Branch held its own Micromineral Competition in August, at which over 40 specimens were entered. He also thanked Peter Wallace for looking after the branch finances and for reporting on the interesting specimens brought to the meetings. The £2 annual subscription has remained the same since Elsie Hansford established the branch in 1983. He also thanked June Lockwood for organising the refreshments and members for their support.

Northern Branch.

Jean Spence reported that members continued to hold their very informal meetings in Bircotes Library, when slides might be shown, plans and views exchanged and ideas discussed. Contributions were collected on an ad hoc basis. Mike Rothwell said that the meetings were always well worth the trip - if only for the excellent tea provided by Jean.

Warrington Branch.

Harry Critchley reported (in the absence of Isabel Geldart) that BMS members of the Warrington Lapidary and Mineral Society would get together, with their microscopes, about twice a month at club meetings.

Norfolk Branch.

Kevin Johns reported that 10 or 11 members met on the 3rd Thursday of every month, and that he would send the dates for next year's meetings to the Newsletter Editor. Visitors would be very welcome, but he advised telephoning first as occasionally changes were made to the timetable.

West Midlands Branch.

Dick Smith reported that there were 15 or 16 members in the group and about 8 at each meeting in Solihull. They had recruited a new member to the BMS. They had organised a Field Trip to Central Wales and encountered very bad weather, but fortunately most of the trips were underground. The group had mounted a stand at the Dudley Rock and Fossil Show, and there had been a lot of interest particularly from youngsters. The next branch meeting would be in November. Dick thanked members for their support.

Projects.

Database.

Harry Day reported that he had received quite a lot of feed-back since each group had been given its own hard copy. Sometimes sites were duplicated because of variations in spelling. The Natural History Museum had been approached, but although the request for information had not been turned down a reply had not been received. There was a potential problem with confidentiality. Harry said that various “agents” were scanning the journals. 49 of the original 50 disks had now been sold, and updated versions were available. Updates would cost £2.50 at the Symposium and £3.50 by post. The project was now financially self-supporting. He somewhat ruefully thanked everyone for the bouquet which had been sent to Joyce last year in appreciation of the hours he had spent at the computer.

John Pearce thanked Harry for all the work he had put into the project.

Occasional Papers.

The Editor David Green reported that 2 papers were nearing completion - one on Wet Chemistry, the other the second of Peter Braithwaite’s papers on Micromounting. There were a further 2 papers with a chemical flavour in the pipeline.

BMS member Tony Brittain, now trading as Endsleigh Books, had offered to sell the Occasional Papers, and might even be able to produce them if we have problems.

Workshops.

Peter Wallace reported that a workshop on mineral identification using XRD and Microprobe analysis had been held last October and proved most successful thanks to David Alderton of Royal Holloway College who had been an excellent lecturer. Peter hoped it would be possible to organise another such workshop for the “South”, but help is needed to arrange something “North of Watford”. Peter would be prepared to undertake the organisation and publicity if someone can find a suitable venue, provide the necessary contacts, and act as leader.

Doug Morgan said that a workshop on Wet Chemistry had been suggested earlier but that new Health and Safety regulations made the purchase of chemicals privately very difficult. Various sources were suggested but it was pointed out that the regulations regarding packaging and disposal of such materials were now extremely stringent.

John Pearce said that this was a very complex area that could perhaps be better explored through the Newsletter.

Symposium Organisers’ Report.

Kevin Johns wished to record his thanks to the University for their help with the laboratory. He hoped members attending the Symposium for the first time had enjoyed the experience. He gave special thanks to Ken Luff for another after-dinner quiz, to Mike Edwards for giving up his time to attend to our microscopes, and to Roy Starkey, Pam Pearce and Dorothy Merritt for their invaluable help with the auction.

The Raffle had raised £80 and the auction £250.

He gave provisional dates for the next symposium as September 19th/20th 1998.

Sidney Freeman queried whether the hire of the overhead television screens had been worth the extra cost. Richard Belson said that on this occasion there had been no extra cost as the overhead system had been included in the hire of the lab. Peter Braithwaite felt that showing videos on the screens was not appropriate. Kevin said that constructive criticisms and ideas were most welcome. The after-dinner speaker on Saturday was much appreciated.

John Pearce thanked the Symposium Organisers for a most enjoyable weekend

7. Founder's Cup

John said it was a delight to be able to present this each year and that there were always several possible candidates. This year's recipient fulfilled both criteria. In the field of Mineralogy in general he was involved as Editor of the UK Journal of Mines and Minerals, as Curator of a University Mineral Collection, and as a skilful professional collector. It was enough to make one 'Green' with envy. For the society he had contributed lectures at Symposia, specimens to the Collection and help to amateurs. He was also the Editor of the BMS Occasional Papers.

John then presented the cup to David Green.

Roy Starkey took a photograph of the presentation, and John said that his last act and wish as Chairman was that this should appear in the next issue of the UKJMM.

8. Election of Officers.

The present Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Secretary had indicated their willingness to stand again and in the absence of any other nominations John had asked that they be re-elected *en bloc*. This was proposed by Peter Reynolds, and seconded by Vicki Packard.

The Committee nominee for Chairman, proposed by John Pearce and seconded by Shirley Adrian, was Mike Rothwell. John said he was handing over to him with complete confidence.

These proposals were put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Mike Rothwell said that John Pearce would be a hard act to follow. He would have preferred to wait before taking on the position, but had had much pleasure from his membership of the Society over the past 16 years. He requested a copy of the phrase book from John! He was considering ideas for possible future projects - perhaps on mineral identification - to carry the Society into the next millennium.

9. Any Other Business.

Harry Critchley drew members' attention to the Warrington Show taking place on November 2nd.

Dorothy Merritt said that the Sussex Mineral and Lapidary Society had produced sets of notelets, with photographs by John Hall of members' mineral finds, to mark its 25th anniversary. These were available to purchase at £1 for 4 cards in 2 different sets.

Peter Wallace said that the S-E branch of the Russell Society was organising a one day event at the Natural History Museum on October 25th. The theme was 'Collectors and Collections, an historical perspective' and a few places were still available at a cost of £6.

Doug Morgan said that he was going to see overseas member Cynthia Peat who had been too unwell to travel to the Symposium in the past few years, and he would be pleased to take specimens to her from members.

Peter Braithwaite said he was somewhat concerned to learn of the possibility of a 'French Connection' in view of past unfortunate experiences with foreign collectors. John asked members to feed their reactions to Committee members.

Malcolm Southwood on behalf of the meeting thanked John Pearce for an excellent 5 years' Chairmanship.

The Meeting closed with applause at 11.33 a.m.

1997 MICROMINERAL COMPETITION **Austin Lockwood**

This is the third year in which the Micromineral Competition has been held and it is clearly a popular event. There were minor rule changes this year and we may well omit the identification of the mineral(s) from the items to be judged next year. This will, perhaps, enable less experienced members to take part in the judging.

There were 18 entries (there would have been 19 if someone had not left her specimen at home!), and the standard was well up on last year. This year the judges were Beryl Taylor, Richard Bell, Andy Castleton and myself, so four of the five branches were represented. Peter Reynolds again kindly undertook the duties of Competition Administrator and, after collating the judges marking, announced the results at the Symposium on the Sunday morning.

The winner of the competition was Mike Leppington with a very nice specimen of corkite from Iron Crag, Caldbeck Fells which scored 186 points from a maximum of 200. Equal second was Bridget Belson's specimen of atacamite from Geevor Mine and Richard Bell's bertrandite from Hingston Down Quarry, both scoring 185 points. In third place, Peter Wallace scored 184 points for his specimen of philipsburgite and cornwallite from Penberthy Croft. The Chairman presented the Maurice Grigg Trophy and the annual trophy to Mike Leppington following the announcement of the results.

It was disappointing to learn that only four entries had been received for the Micromount Competition. I know that a number of members are concerned about sending their specimens through the post, where they can get lost or damaged. Perhaps Peter Braithwaite would like to consider following a similar system to that adopted for the Micromineral Competition, and have the specimens examined by a panel of four judges at the Symposium. Perhaps the change could be tried for one year to see if this does increase the number of entries, and if any problems result. I like the idea of Peter commenting on the entries, particularly those with the higher marks and, of course, this arrangement could still continue.

NOTES AND RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE BMS COLLECTION

Max Wirth

The BMS reference collection now stands at 1958 specimens which are available to any member on request. Normally the maximum number of specimens sent by post would be 25. Any request should be in writing, stating the mineral and the specimen number given in the listings. The specimens may be kept for up to one month and should be returned in the same box, being careful to pack the plastic boxes tightly to avoid rattling in the post. The postage may be paid in 2nd class stamps when specimens are returned.

Any specimens for the collection should be sent UNMOUNTED, but wrapped in tissue. An index slip should be enclosed (ask M.Wirth for blanks to photocopy). Specimens should be new to the collection or from a new site and will only then be accepted.

Members may also request an up-to-date disc copy of the catalogue (ASCII text) for #2 including postage (again 2nd class stamps).

John Pearson found excellent monazite (1901) at the Croft Gothal mine. It is in the form of rosettes looking rather like synchysite. He also found mottramite (1902) at Iron Crag, Caldbeck Fells.

Mike Rothwell entered some of the unusual jeanbandyite (1906) from Hingston Down quarry (Note the correct spelling of Hingston Down!). At the same location he found natanite (1910). Cerussite (1911) is hardly rare, but this specimen from Talybont is particularly showy. Mike also found phosgenite (1914) at Treubies Cove.

David Green gave us fine specimens from Skye, levynite (1915), natrolite (1916) and apophyllite (1917). Only the choicest from David!

Max Wirth looked through old specimens and thought he had found edingtonite from Port Glasgow, but it turned out to be heulandite (1922). Roy Starkey identified ullmanite (1923) from Brandlehow mine near Keswick. Kevin Johns gave us a tiny specimen of botallackite (1930) from the 14th level of Geevor mine.

I felt rather embarrassed when Richard Bell told me to take anything I wanted at Leicester and I took 17 specimens for the collection. Bronzite (1935) from Kennack Sands, pyromorphite with galena pseudomorph (1936) from Wheal Hope, pyrolusite (1937) from Flory Island which I could not even find on my map, francolite (1938) from Killifreth, a new site, pargasite (1942) from Roscommon Cliff and others. Trevor Bridges also left us a bundle of specimens from the North of England. Niccolite (1955/6) from Lady's Rake mine is a mineral not many of us would recognise and the same is true of gersdorfite (1957) from Hilton mine.

I have yet to mount most of these, but they should be available in a week or two.

1901	MONAZITE CE	Croft Gothal mine	Cornwall	Pearson J.
1902	MOTTRAMITE	Iron Crag	Roughton Cumbria	Gill Pearson J.
1903	EPIDOTE	Shap blue quarry	Cumbria	Wirth M.
1904	ACTINOLITE ?	Shap blue quarry	Cumbria	Wirth M.
1905	BISMUTHINITE	Cambokeels	Weardale Durham	Green D.

1906	JEANBANDYITE	Hingston-Down quarry	Calstock Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1907	CASSITERITE	West Caradon mine	St. Cleer Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1908	COPPER	Hallets Shaft	St. Cleer Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1909	CHALCOPHYLLITE	Gunnislake mine	Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1910	NATANITE	Hingston-Down quarry	Calstock Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1911	CERUSSITE	Rhyd Fach mine	Talybont Wales	Rothwell M.
1912	ANATASE	Hallets Shaft	St. Cleer Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1913	WULFENITE	Bwlch Glas mine	Talybont Wales	Rothwell M.
1914	PHOSGENITE	Trerubies Cove	St. Teath Cornwall	Rothwell M.
1915	LEVYNITE	Glen Caladane	Minginish Skye	Green D.
1916	NATROLITE	Oisgill Bay	Duirinish Skye	Green D.
1917	AOPHYLLITE	Brod a'Mhurain	Duirinish Skye	Green D.
1918	BORNITE	Swinlees quarry	Kilbirnie Scotland	Meikle K.
1919	STELLERITE	Craigangawn quarry	Milngavie Scotland	Meikle K.
1920	LAUMONTITE	Craigangawn quarry	Milngavie Scotland	Meikle K.
1921	LAUMONTITE	Reilly quarry	Bishopton Scotland	Meikle K.
1922	HEULANDITE	Port Glasgow	Scotland	Wirth M.
1923	ULLMANITE	Brandlehow mine	Keswick Cumbria	Starkey R.
1924	SMITHSONITE	Rhosemor mine	Halkyn Wales	Starkey R.
1925	CHALCOCITE/ BORNITE	Judkins quarry	Nuneaton Warks.	Starkey R.
1926	QUARTZ	Calton Hill quarry	Buxton Derbyshire	Johns K.
1927	QUARTZ HAEMATITE	Calton Hill quarry	Buxton Derbyshire	Johns K.
1928	CERUSSITE	Moon Farm quarry	Bonsall Moor Derbys.	Johns K.
1929	SPHALERITE	Silverbrook mine	Ilsington Devon	Johns K.
1930	BOTALLACKITE	Geevor mine	St. Just Cornwall	Johns K.
1931	MAGNETITE	Kilchrist	Skye Scotland	Bell R.
1932	LEVYNITE	Oisgill Bay	Skye Scotland	Bell R.
1933	ALBITE	Sligachan quarry	Skye Scotland	Bell R.
1934	CERUSSITE	Wilson's shaft	Leadhills Scotland	Bell R.
1935	BRONZITE	Kennack Sands	St. Kevern Cornwall	Bell R.
1936	PYROMORPHITE	Wheal Hope	Perranzabuloe	Bell R.
1937	PYROLUSITE	Flory Island	Newquay Cornwall	Bell R.
1938	APATITE	Killifreth mine	Chacewater Cornwall	Bell R.
1939	SIDERITE	Killifreth mine	Chacewater Cornwall	Bell R.
1940	FLUORITE	Hingston-Down quarry	Calstock Cornwall	Bell R.
1941	CHALCOPYRITE	Hingston-Down quarry	Calstock Cornwall	Bell R.
1942	PARGASITE	Roscommon Cliff	St. Just Cornwall	Bell R.
1943	ALBITE	Manod quarry	Wales	Bell R.
1944	SULPHUR	Damrigg level	Arkengarthdale	Bell R.
1945	BARITE	Wetgroves mine	Aysgarth N. Yorkshire	Bell R.
1946	HEMIMORPHITE	Eagle Crag	Glendinning Cumbria	Bell R.
1947	CERUSSITE	Force Crag mine	Keswick Cumbria	Bell R.
1948	GOETHITE	Iron Crag	Caldbeck Cumbria	Bell R.
1949	PYROMORPHITE	Grass Hill Farm	Teesdale Durham	Bridges T.
1950	SMITHSONITE	Beldi Hill mines	Swaledale N. Yorks.	Bridges T.
1951	FLUORITE	Cambokeels mine	Weardale Cumbria	Bridges T.

1952	SPHALERITE	Cambokeels mine	Weardale Durham	Bridges T.
1953	SPHALERITE	Smallcleugh mine	Nenthead Durham	Bridges T.
1954	SPHALERITE	Smallcleugh mine	Nenthead Durham	Bridges T.
1955	NICCOLITE	Lady's Rake mine	Teesdale Durham	Bridges T.
1956	NICCOLITE	Lady's Rake mine	Teesdale Durham	Bridges T.
1957	GERSDORFITE	Hilton mine	Scordale Cumbria	Bridges T.
1958	NICCOLITE	Hilton mine	Scordale Cumbria	Bridges T.

MIDLANDS BRANCH NEWS

Dick Smith

The next meeting will be at our usual venue, St Ninian's Church Hall, Solihull, on *Sunday 16th November commencing at 2:30pm.*

On June 21st and 22nd, Roy Starkey and Neil Hubbard led our Central Wales field trip - a report from Roy Starkey appears below.

The branch contributed to the Dudley Rock and Fossil Show on the 13th and 14th September. Although not as well attended as in previous years, it was encouraging to see many young enthusiasts taking pleasure in examining our micros.

If you are not on our mailing list and would like information on meetings or directions for St Ninian's Church Hall, give Dick Smith a ring on 0121 308 1217.

MIDLANDS BRANCH FIELD TRIP TO MID-WALES - 21/22 JUNE 1997

Roy Starkey

This event was attended by a total of eight BMS members, with Roy Starkey and Neil Hubbard acting as Meet Leaders. We met up with the Russell Society at Nantyeira on Saturday morning in what can only be described as atrocious weather conditions - torrential rain and streams and rivers in full spate. After about an hour of dismal collecting on the somewhat exposed hillside the BMS contingent decided to head west in search of better weather underground on the coastal plain.

Our first stop was the small workings of Pandy Mine, hidden on the banks of a pleasant wooded stream. The normally easy scramble up the side of the waterfall turned into an epic expedition almost requiring life-lining to ensure that no-one perished in the torrent of water which was sweeping across the footpath. However, eventually everyone was safely accommodated underground in the short adit and nice micros of pyromorphite and wulfenite were collected, together with a little vein quartz showing various sulphides. We then retraced our steps to the lower, but more extensive level nearest the bridge and managed to collect some fairly convincing samples of quartz showing ullmanite and galena.

The final locality for Saturday was the Lodge Park Copper Trial, recently featured in the UK Journal of Mines and Minerals, and noted for the suite of supergene minerals found there. Representative material was collected by everyone, showing brochantite, cuprite / native copper etc. and we set off for our accommodation at Aberystwyth University's Rosser Hall. Out of Term-

Time, the University provides good value B&B accommodation in "furnished flats", each provided with eight single en-suite bedrooms, and a communal kitchen / dining area. After a quick wash and brush-up we headed out to Clarach Bay for dinner at The Barn Restaurant, which passed the evening whilst we chatted over the day's discoveries and reminisced in general.

Sunday saw a considerable improvement in the weather and brighter skies as we made our way up the attractive valley behind Talybont, leading to Bwlch Glas Mine. The collecting area underground in the upper adit has changed very little in twenty years and still yields lovely specimens of pyromorphite and wulfenite micros. This probably the highlight of the trip for most members, and we enjoyed our picnic lunch in dry and mild conditions on the lower spoil heaps.

En-route home some of the party detoured to Cwmystwyth Mine where Roy lead the group to the small "Copper Level" and specimens of linarite and other supergene minerals were collected. All in all the trip was voted a success, and we hope that our colleagues from the Russell Society managed to dry out on the Saturday.

SOUTH-EAST BRANCH NEWS

Austin Lockwood

Some 22 members attended the Branch meeting in August and, as reported at the AGM, no less than 40 entries were received for the micromineral competition. With such an entry the judging was extremely difficult but the final decision went to Bridget Belson for a specimen of atacamite from Geevor Mine which was collected in 1991; it was awarded a score of 88 out of a possible 100 marks. The trophy will be presented at the next meeting.

Further details of branch activities are recorded in the minutes of the AGM.

The next meeting will be held at 3:00pm on Sunday, 16th November. Please bring to this meeting, in addition to your microscopes and specimens for study and discussion, any minerals or mineral related items for sale, swapping or freebies.

NORTHERN BRANCH

The next meeting will be held at Bircotes Library on Saturday, 1st November from 1:30pm.

Please note the following changes of address:

Ivan Peak	236 Boothferry Road, Hessle, East Yorkshire, HU13 9AU	01482 643559
Shirley Adrian	Correction to postcode: PA37 1RD	

Changes and corrections to published telephone numbers:

Peter Smith	01603 471536	Mick Wolfe	0115 919 7567
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EDITORIAL
Mike Dannatt

At this year's AGM the possibility of running a workshop on wet chemistry was raised but the new COSHH regulations to control the handling of substances which may be a health hazard may impose severe restrictions on the use of such methods at home. Our outgoing Chairman suggested that this was a subject which might be explored through the newsletter over the coming months. While there must be no intention to circumvent the COSHH regulations, it is appropriate to ask whether any members have recent experience which may point the way to being able to carry out simple tests at home. It was pointed out that although minute quantities are usually involved, some of the substances are potentially very harmful. Quite apart from the restrictions imposed by the COSHH rules, the very fact that extremely small quantities are required means that it is usually uneconomical to purchase in the volumes which the suppliers want to handle. It seems that the usual suppliers can no longer accept orders from private individuals in any case. Central buying in bulk by a branch, say, has its own problems in that the handling procedures, including disposal, must be clearly documented *throughout the handling process*.

With those thoughts I throw out the invitation to members to contribute to this discussion through the newsletter. If you just have a few thoughts which you would like to air, please feel free to telephone me - contact details are shown below.

Finally, thanks for all the contributions, please keep up the good work for issues 49 and 50!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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Please note that the deadline for articles for Newsletter 49 will be 1st February 1998. Please let me have contributions as soon as possible. Articles or reports on PC disc are particularly welcome but should be in one of these formats, please:- plain text (ASCII or TXT files), rich text format (RTF), Word for Windows 2, Word 6 or Word Perfect 5.1 for MS-DOS. Articles sent by E-mail can be "attached", if they are in one of the above formats, or be part of the body of the E-mail message. Many thanks.