

# BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



---

## NEWSLETTER NO. 60    October 2001

---

<b>Chairman</b>	Roy Starkey	15 Warwick Avenue, Fringe Green, Bromsgrove, Worcs., B60 2AH
<b>Secretary</b>	Shirley Adrian	An Feóran North Connell Argyll PA37 1RD
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Pearl Freeman	12A Allingham Court Haverstock Hill London NW3 2AH
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sidney Freeman	12A Allingham Court Haverstock Hill London NW3 2AH

---

## CONTENTS

International Section  
Membership News

## 20TH BRITISH MICROMOUNT SYMPOSIUM - 2001

Roy Starkey

Last year our annual gathering in Leicester was disrupted by the petrol shortage/ tanker dispute and prospects for the weekend looked bleak indeed. In the event, the depleted numbers made for much easier car parking outside the Department of Geology, and we enjoyed an excellent weekend as usual, in spite of the absence of a number of prominent friends. As this year's meeting approached all seemed to be going well, and then ... the 11<sup>th</sup> of September struck. Two of the organisers were immediately stranded in the USA (having been enjoying a super trip to the Franklin area), a key speaker was still in Canada and the rest of us wondered what might befall the rest of the world in the intervening week.

Saturday morning arrived however, and the familiar traffic chaos ensued in the vicinity of the Department of Geology – this year's surprise was that three minibuses of students were gathering to depart on a Field Trip! Well, we have had roadworks, lamp posts, new security barriers in the past, so it was nice to have a new reason not to get a parking spot. Thankfully the Field party moved off fairly promptly and everyone managed to get in and unload.

As usual, welcome cups of coffee greeted members arriving from all over the country, before Roy Starkey (Chairman) opened the proceedings. He reported that he had recently been in touch with David Middleton, Max Wirth, Peter Reynolds, George Ryback and Kemp Meikle - all of whom were well and sent greetings to members. Jim Peat (Canada) had emailed Roy to advise that he had been disposing of Cynthia's collection and equipment to various institutions and individuals, and Bob Reekie sent best wishes and apologies for not being able to attend. Trevor Bridges was unavoidably away overseas touring Morocco (next year's talk perhaps?). Jamie Nelson, unable to be with us this year, had received the prestigious Kohler Award from the State Microscopical Society of Illinois, USA "for outstanding contributions to microscopy" – well done Jamie! David Green had miscalculated his travel arrangements and had only just returned from Skye late on Friday night, so had decided he would not be coming. Lastly Sid and Pearl Freeman had regrettably decided they would not make the journey this year, and the meeting recorded its sincere thanks and best wishes to them (see more later in this newsletter).

Roy announced that he was going to try to make a short videotape record of the weekend to circulate to "absent friends" – members were asked to behave "naturally" if they spotted the camera. Any of you who have seen the tape will know what this means! *[For members who have never attended a Symposium you may borrow a copy of the tape from Alan Edwards (Archivist). It is primarily a visual record – sound is of variable quality and audibility, but it captures well the fantastic atmosphere of what is arguably still the best mineralogical weekend in the Country.]*

The first lecture of the day was from Richard Herrington (Natural History Museum, London) with a fascinating and topical account of "Black Smokers" – ocean floor hydrothermal vents. The talk spanned the origins and mineralogy of Black Smokers, together with stunning photography of the fauna associated with these most strange deposits – including Vestimentiferan Tube Worms (get that ?!). Richard described how he had become involved in a global quest to identify fossil Black Smokers, with examples turning up in the Phillipines, Cyprus, Soviet Republic of Georgia, and the Yaman Kasy Silurian deposit of the Ural Mountains. Researchers have identified evidence of bacterial structures back as far as the Pre-Cambrian, and it seems quite possible that life may have started with these bacteria and hydrothermal vents. There is currently speculation that Europa, one of Jupiter's moons, has the potential for hydrothermal vents on the ocean floors beneath frozen surface water. We were treated to an artist's impression of a possible mission being

contemplated by NASA within the next 20 years, to send a nuclear powered lander to melt its way through the ice cap, and then to venture down to the ocean floor in search of hydrothermal vents – watch this space! Maybe we can get Richard to come back in 2025 or so to present the findings! This was a truly great lecture, and was especially enjoyed by members who had seen David Attenborough’s programme on BBC television the previous week.

Next on the agenda was Quintin Wight, from Ottawa, possibly one of the best known micromounters in the world today. Quintin has specialist knowledge of the minerals of Mont Saint Hilaire, and this formed the subject of his talk. A super set of slides charting the history of the quarry over the past 30 years or so was accompanied by an entertaining and informative commentary. Quintin started out by saying that the first half-dozen minerals at MSH are easy, and you lie about the rest! Seriously though, the point was well made that collectors should beware of purchasing material from dealers unless they were sure about the integrity of the specimen and the dealer. Many species are visually indistinguishable, and rarer items attract high price premia. To illustrate this point Quintin explained that the mineral quintinite cannot easily be distinguished from muscovite. However, if tested with dilute acid, and the specimen fizzes – you HAD quintinite!

After lunch Peter Braithwaite and Quintin Wight presented a joint practical workshop on “Proper Micromounting” – where specimens are permanently mounted on blackened pedestals in optimum viewing orientation (you know – no Blu-Tak in sight!). This was very well attended and many good hints and tips were exchanged.

The usual hectic afternoon of talking, swapping, buying and selling seemed, as ever, to pass all too quickly.

Quintin Wight kindly offered to provide a second lecture –this time entitled “History and Practice of Micromounting”, and this proved to be a fascinating and enjoyable account of the art/science from the earliest days right up to present, featuring many of the members of the Micromounters Hall of Fame.

The Annual Mineral Auction commenced at 5.00pm with Roy Starkey acting as auctioneer. About £200 was raised for Society funds (similar to last year), and The Raffle raised a further £78 - thanks to all those who purchased tickets.

Roy Starkey presented Quintin and his wife Willow with a water colour painting of the Levant Mine, kindly donated by Peter Braithwaite as a memento of their visit to England.

Members retired to the Stoneycroft Hotel and Reynards Bar for a pre-dinner chat and drink, before enjoying a meal and social evening. The dinner was again voted a great success and it is planned to return next year.

Ken Luff reverted to the usual Mineral Quiz format, and this time teased delegates with a palaeontological question as the opener, and stratigraphical subject matter later on down the question list. This of course gave rise to the usual dissent about what answers were acceptable, and the two long tables of this year’s room layout made team definition a little difficult. Raucous cries of “no half-marks” drowned out the opposition, but in the end prizes of Thorntons Chocolates seemed to circulate round most of those present and a good time was had by all. Many thanks again to Ken for another entertaining half-hour or so. The crowds gradually drifted away as midnight approached, save for a few die hards who talked on into the early hours.

Sunday morning kicked off with a free couple of hours to follow-up on the previous day's swapping and workshop activities, before we were all herded into the lecture theatre for the AGM. The Chairman again declared his intention to see the proceedings over in a shorter period than scheduled on the agenda, and set out some "ground rules" offered by an anonymous member to a previous Chairman:-

1. Try not to run a Parish Meeting – we don't need proposers and seconders for thanking people – just do it and get some applause!
2. If people want to do things then it is never achieved by group discussion – cut out the discussion and set up a sub-committee to sort it out. Talk is cheap – it costs nothing and achieves nothing!
3. The problem with hearing is serious – if it is important, then it should be heard, or not said at all. Agenda items must be delivered from the front and pre-prepared. Speakers from the floor must stand up.
4. Learn to recognise that a brisk short discussion is ten times better than a ramble. Get the point out of the way and move on.
5. See if you can get the next AGM out of the way in 45 minutes – or less!

The Minutes appear elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Since the AGM had been despatched in record time it was decided to move on directly to the judging of the Micromount and Micromineral Competitions.

Peter Braithwaite once again gently chastised the audience that if they wanted a competition, then entries were required. A solemn undertaking was given by a number of those present (remember we have your names and photographic evidence!) that they would indeed enter a proper mounted micro in the Competition next year. The winner was judged to be a fine quartz and haematite from Florence Mine, entered by Martin Gale.

Austin Lockwood stepped up to run through the entries for the Micromineral Competition, which had been very well supported, and judged by four judges. The results were:- 1<sup>st</sup> Robin Sellars (chalcophyllite 44 points), 2<sup>nd</sup> George Fletcher (pyromorphite 43.75 points), 3<sup>rd</sup> Tom Cottrell (serpierite 43.25 points).

Well done to all the winners, and thanks to everyone who entered – let's have MORE next year please.

Once again David Roe provided his usual review of "What's about on the tables?" and his account is reproduced elsewhere in this Newsletter. Many thanks to David for drawing delegates' attention to interesting items.

After lunch on Sunday Alan and Sue Edwards gave an illustrated talk on their two Mineral Collecting trips to Chile, accompanied by many interesting facts and absolutely super photos. We would all like to go I am sure.

There was still a healthy number of people in the lab at 4.00pm - a return to what we used to see maybe ten years ago. Please do write in and tell us what you think about the Symposium format

and content. It is your Symposium - we can do almost anything. If you would like an after-lunch slide show again on Sunday next year, please let us know. (*Please see plea from the organisers below - Ed.*)

Thank you to everyone who helped to make this year's event a great success, especially the organising team from Norfolk – they do a great job, and their regular helpers and behind the scenes team too. See you all again next year we hope.

## **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, PHOTOS AND REMINISCENCES**

### **Editor**

Next year will see the 21<sup>st</sup> British Micromount Symposium – our coming of age, so to speak. We are contemplating expanding the Symposium Booklet into something more substantial, with colour illustrations, maybe adverts for things which people will be bringing to display or for sale etc.

It is proposed that we use some of our reserve funds to sponsor this project, and that maybe we can include a “History of the BMS”. This enlarged publication would be available not only to Symposium Delegates, but will depend very much upon what material we can gather. In the first instance please send offers of items for inclusion to Roy Starkey, including photos of early BMS events, memories and funny incidents, people and places etc. We will be looking to make a real bumper issue if material is available – please help. I look forward to hearing from you. Written contributions would be especially appreciated by email.

## **A PLEA FROM THE SYMPSIUM ORGANISERS**

The symposium organisers have asked me to include a note about members expressing their views concerning anything and everything to do with the event. They really do appreciate comments from participants about all aspects of the weekend. In the first instance they would appreciate hearing *direct* from members about any problems which were encountered. There is nothing worse than hearing indirectly of any criticisms which are being levelled. So, please help them to help you by letting them know what you liked as well as what you disliked. They want to make number 21 a very special event.

## AROUND THE SYMPOSIUM TABLES 2001

David Roe

I took to rambling the tables in memory of Mike Rothwell and I regard it as a gentle stroll through the quiet meadows of the BMS. In these pastoral backwaters the competitive edge of collecting is muted and the cry of the mineral vendors is stilled and the new treasures can be glimpsed like the flash of a kingfisher over the bubbling brook.

Anyway before it all gets too literary I have some confessions to make. Firstly - I am slightly dyslexic and this results in a quirky enthusiasm for “scoderite” while my inability to remember whether I have collected duffite or dufrenite in Gunheath or dufrenite or duffite at Penberthy causes some irritation amongst the high priests of mineral collecting. Even worse as age creeps on I find a person’s name disappears from the filing cabinet of my mind as soon as I see their face. To take on a job where the whole point is to correctly name both mineral and person causes some stress – to myself, and I suspect, to the audience – so my thanks for your patience and forbearance – particularly as this year the chairman refused to allow you to leave the room.

This year my ramble started well with Tom Cotterell’s serpierite from Henfwlch, Mid-Wales – a splendid display of blue – plus the first of many Dolhyr quarry specimens. Those who bemoan the lack of new collecting sites should start counting now. Tim then waved a lump of rust in front of me similar to many truckloads I have cast aside – wrong again – close examination showed black crystals of the zinc manganese oxide chalcophanite from Drosgol.

Henceforth unusual versions of rust cried out for attention and I found myself peering down Graham Bell’s microscope at gorgeous transparent treacle coloured lamina from Whatley quarry where rust becomes lepidocrocite. Why is wandering the tables so pleasant? One reason is that it inspires one to revisit ones own collection – returning home I find I have confused my lepidocrocite with lepidolite - no wonder people have been surprised by my specimen of ferrian biotite from North Devon.

Simplicity, both chemical and aesthetic, was beginning to establish itself as a trend in 2001 for I had my senses assaulted by a Norfolk mineral – and very pretty too – siderite from Norfolk flints by Peter Smith. Then I was plunged into stripped out post modernism of Paul Nicholson’s stunning calcite, gypsum and fluorite from boring places like Derbyshire - a reminder that obscurity and chemical complexity can lead us to forget the simple beauty of well presented gypsum crystals. The Damian Hirst prize for post modernism has to go to Oneta Wilson, whose allophane clay from Odin’s Cave made a very powerful statement by being an off white powder that says so much about whiteness and powder by its sheer white powderiness – I have to agree with Oneta that to win the Micromounter’s prize next year we are going to have to come up with some novel mounting methods for allophane.

And in a world that is without new mineral locations .... Austin Lockwood seemed to be finding some interesting pinks and greens in Shropshire quarries that deserve further exploitation. At this point heavy-duty specimens intervened – I dare say everyone else in the Midland region has vanadanites from New Cliff Hill quarry twice the size of Frank Ince’s – but they looked pretty big to me.

And where was fair Cornwall? Roger Eslick et al have been working hard at Cathedral mine, which has yielded them some superlative bismuthinite. Interesting how BMS minerals go in phases – last year anatase was all the rage – this year it was almost an anatase free zone – except

Martin Gales' honey coloured (sorry that joke was genuinely unintentional) tablets of glistening anatase - never mind the magnification - just look at them, ethereally floating on the matrix.

Yes - chemical simplicity and aesthetics – they kept on coming in 2001 - a lovely unoxidised dendritic silver suspended in a vugh from Force Crag found by Peter Todhunter – a micromineral delight which I would be pleased to put in my safe particularly if I could convince Mike Leppington to let go of his very attractive blue sapphire – against the trend of Scottish sapphires that so often look like lumps of anthracite.

I had expected the enthusiasm of the symposium to be new exciting digital future beckoning us through the viewfinder of a digital camera - yes it was but - the real future was Doug Morgan's home made – all you need is a lathe and 50 years experience – LED cool lighting system that was a beauty of engineering and elegant cool light.

Chris Jewson proclaimed a Cornish third – doesn't quite have the ring to it – but anyway - the third chalcocite in the Dutchy and a new mineral site in Cornwall labelled “now under a bungalow in St Cleer” – so down in Cornwall we don't have lawyers chasing ambulances but micromounters chasing builders' vans.

Even that poor battered old site of Hemerdon Bal can still provide interest. Andy and Melissa Banthorpe's scorodite epimorphs stopped me in my tracks – how many “rusty” –its that word again – scorodites have I thrown away over the years when in fact they were hollowed out facades.

And while on the subject of battered old sites - surely there is nothing left at Wheal Cock. So along comes the Wallace clan and pick up a lump of rock liberally coated with blue crystals of chalcocite – a copper selenium mineral vaguely related to copper sulphate. Lovely stuff.

If it goes on like this some of us might be encouraged to take up serious collecting again and enjoy looking at minerals rather than running round like a busy fools. So those of us who couldn't even get round to bringing anything apart from a microscope should make a vow – “I will bring some little pieces of rock to the next symposium because the real joy is not the buying and selling but the pleasure of sharing”.

## **2001 MICROMINERAL COMPETITION**

### **Austin Lockwood**

This popular event, now in its seventh year, was again held during the Annual Symposium at Leicester University. Judges were appointed from four branches of the Society and our thanks are due to Vicki Packard, Andy Coster, Harry Crichley and Mick Wolfe who kindly gave up their time to examine and award points for each of the 24 specimens entered for the Competition.

As a judge, you have an opportunity to carefully examine each specimen, without distraction, and the general view of the judges was that this year's entries were again of a high standard.

As members may recall, judging is based on a maximum of 50 points awarded by each judge for features such as perfection of crystals, overall cleanliness, rarity of species and dramatic appeal. Part of my job as Competition Administrator is to check the marking and to work out the average points awarded by the four judges. This year I again remembered to take my calculator with me

so I did not have to stay up half the night working out the results!

A new member of the Society, Robin Selley, was judged to have submitted the best entry with a specimen of *chalcophylite on olivenite with brochanitite and scorodite* from Cathedral Mine, near St. Day, Cornwall, collected in 1999, which was awarded an average of 44 points.

George Fletcher took second place with his specimen of *globular pyromorphite on plumbogummite pseudomorphs on prismatic pyromorphite* (try writing that on a micromount box). The specimen was collected in 1971 from Roughton Gill Mine and was awarded 43.75 points.

Tom Cotterell came third in the Competition with his specimen of *sepielite sprays on finely crystalline hemimorphite lining a vug in quartz-chalcopyrite-sphalerite and ferroan dolomite bearing veinstone*. The specimen was collected this year from Henfwlch Mine, near the Nant-y-moch Reservoir in Mid Wales, and scored an average of 43.25 points.

There were four other specimens that scored over 40 points these being Martin Gale's *strunzite* from Gravel Hill Mine, Perranporth, Cornwall, Roger Eslick's *clinoclase/olivenite* from Wheal Unity, St. Day, June Lockwood's *calcite on mesolite on analcime* from Bracadale, Isle of Skye and Robin Selley's *torbernite on smokey quartz with minor hematite* from East Wheal Sparnon near Redruth.

Following the announcement of the results on the Sunday morning, Roy Starkey kindly presented Robin Selley with the Maurice Grigg Micromineral Trophy to display at his home in Cornwall until next year, and a small trophy for Robin to keep to mark his success in this year's competition.

It is encouraging to see the Micromineral Competition so well supported and I would like to thank all those who entered specimens for this. I will remind you all in good time about next year's Competition and, perhaps, when you are sorting through your fnds over the next nine months or so, you will put aside something special for this.



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY HELD AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ON SUNDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2001**

The Chairman Roy Starkey opened the Meeting at 10.10 a.m. There were 49 members and 2 visitors present. Secretary Shirley Adrian.

**Chairman's Opening remarks:**

“Sorting through some BMS papers whilst preparing for this weekend I came across some notes of advice offered to one of my predecessors by a very good friend of mine. I would like to share these with you:-

1. Try not to run a Parish Meeting - we don't need proposers and seconders for thanking people - just do it and get some applause!
2. If people want to do things then it is never achieved by group discussion - cut out the discussion and set up a sub-committee to sort it out. Talk is cheap - it costs nothing and achieves nothing!
3. The problem with hearing is serious - if it is important then it should be heard, or not said at all. Agenda items must be delivered from the front and pre-prepared. Speakers from the floor must stand up.
4. Learn to recognise that a brisk short discussion is ten times better than a ramble. Get the point out of the way and move on.
5. See if you can get the next AGM out of the way in 45 minutes - or less!

Those are the rules – you have been warned!”

**1. Apologies for absence,**

Apologies were received from Pearl and Sidney Freeman, David Green and Jean Spence.

**2. Minutes of the 2000 AGM.**

The minutes were agreed.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes,**

Doug Morgan had taken over from Max Wirth as Curator of the Reference Collection.

The Micromount Competition had been opened to specimens from any source obtained by any (legal) means.

Alan Dyer had contacted Craig Williams, who has facilities for mineral identification, and is willing to identify specimens for members. Material for testing should be submitted to Alan first.

**4. Treasurer's Report.**

The Auditor Mike Leppington presented the report on behalf of Sidney Freeman. He said that the Society's finances were in good order. On May 31<sup>st</sup> 2001 funds stood at £5,629, an increase of £464 on the previous year. £250 had been received once again from Colin Horstman's legacy. The increased amount shown as Affiliation Fees included 2 years' subscriptions to the Geologists' Association. A refund of VAT on the printing of the Newsletter was to be made.

The accounts were accepted unanimously.

### **5 Membership Secretary's Report.**

Pearl Freeman had written that at 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2001 there were 196 paid up memberships. This figure included 28 family memberships giving a total of 224 persons. There had been 9 new memberships during the year, including 1 family membership, 4 resignations, 1 death and 11 non-renewals.

### **6 Chairman's Report.**

Roy Starkey said: "Last year I began by saying that it seemed hard to believe that another year had gone by since taking over as Chairman. We were of course looking forward to what some people believe was the REAL beginning of the new Millennium, but I won't dwell on that point. As ever, the darker evenings were soon upon us, and many minds were no doubt turning to catching up on a bit of sorting, cataloguing etc., and of course planning the Fieldwork for the New Year. On the domestic front life was complicated by both myself and my wife being told our jobs were redundant, and so the first part of 2001 was occupied by much effort on the job front. Then came Foot & Mouth and it seemed that things could only get better. In April, possibly the greatest living British geologist, Sir Kingsley Dunham passed away, marking truly the end of an era. As the summer wore on it became increasingly apparent that the countryside was NOT getting back to normal, and to all intents and purposes mineral collecting ground to a halt. The issue of the Caldbeck Fells access policy thankfully faded from the headlines, but has sadly been overtaken by the catastrophic impact of Foot & Mouth Disease on the Cumbrian farming and tourist economies. It is still not clear when things will be back to normal.

The 2000 Symposium was disrupted by the fuel dispute and we were all looking forward to a smooth run-up to the 2001 event. Unfortunately the events of Tuesday 11th September in the USA have all but saturated our consciousness with images of death and destruction, and there cannot be anyone in the Society who has not been touched by the impact of last week's tragedy. Certainly the world seems a much less certain place than it did only a few days ago, and previous concerns about Foot and Mouth, a general slowdown in trade and mineralogical conservation / collecting access issues have been replaced by much more searching questions. In times like these it is good to have a hobby or interest such as mineralogy and micromounting as a diversion, and we should all be grateful that we currently enjoy the freedom that we do to pursue this most rewarding of pursuits.

This is the 20th British Micromount Symposium and as I cast my mind back I can recall with amazing clarity the people, places, events, and little incidents which make

up the heritage of the BMS. Way back in 1982 on 8 & 9 October when we met in the Pump Room at Matlock Bath friendships were forged which still stand today. There are people in the room who have been coming to these events for 20 years, some of whom I see only at the Symposium, yet I feel that I know them intimately. Sadly of course there are also good friends whom we have lost along the way and I ask you to pause for a moment to remember them. What

the next 12 months will hold is difficult to foresee, but of one thing I am sure - we'll all be planning to meet again, in Leicester, in September 2002

The campaign to save Wanlockhead Lead Mining Museum led by Bob Reekie has enjoyed a recent boost as a result of a significant donation from a benefactor, and work continues to try and generate support from other bodies too. Thanks to all members who helped by writing to Rhona Brankin, MSP, Deputy Minister for Culture and Sport. Bob reports that he is now working on a grant application for EU funding to support a £3m regeneration programme for the Leadhills-Wanlockhead area, possibly including restoration of a rail link. There are also plans afoot for a new Minerals and Gold Hall at the Royal Museum of Scotland - more news on this in due course.

The long awaited book "Minerals of Scotland" is still experiencing delays, but I telephoned Lesley Taylor who is in charge of RMS Publications and she has confirmed that they still hope to have it out before the end of this year.

Austin Lockwood was honoured by the Geologists' Association as recipient of the Foulerton Award, presented for "work of merit" connected with the Association - well done Austin.

Don Blake reports that he is very close to having a working Access Database for optical identification of minerals - interested parties are invited to contact Don for further information.

During the year we were notified of the death of Fred Cornwall of Sidmouth. Fred, who was a stonemason, had worked with rocks throughout his life and was never happier than when he had a hammer in one hand and a chisel in the other. Our condolences go to his son Clive and the family.

Thanks to the various Local Groups who continue to operate at various different levels - do please let the Newsletter Editor know what you are up to.

Thank you too to all the members of the Committee and other Society Officers who do so much to keep the wheels turning - they do a great job.

Finally - thanks to all of the Symposium Organising Team, to the Staff and support personnel at Leicester, and to all of you for coming and making the weekend such a great success.

## **6. Other Reports.**

### **Newsletter Editor**

**Mike Dannatt** said that the Newsletter varied from 12 to 20 pages. He was short of material, but wanted to maintain it as "our" newsletter, and not include recycled material from other publications. He asked members to keep items coming in. The closing date for the next letter was October 1<sup>st</sup> –or soon after.

### **Curator.**

**Doug Morgan** said that he took over as Curator on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2000. Roy had helped to convey the 3 cabinets and 10 shelves of material to his house, and Roy and Max had helped with the difficult installation of Max's programme on his computer.

He had received 21 new specimens, of which 16 had been reported on in the Newsletter, bringing the total to 2271. 24 more had been handed in at the Symposium.

There had been several requests for specimens, usually as suites of minerals for groups of members to study. He felt that this was an excellent way of using the Collection.

Doug paid tribute to Max, saying it was obvious that hours of work had been devoted to curating the collection.

He asked that care should be taken to make the registration forms for donated material clearly legible, and complete with the Map reference.

Finally he said he felt that a younger person was needed to take over from him, in 12 to 24 months' time.

### **Archivist.**

**Alan Edwards** reported that two volumes of Goldschmidt were on loan but the remaining volumes were available. The Rashleigh had been with David Green for some time and any member wishing to borrow it should apply directly to David.

Quintin Wight had kindly donated a copy of the Directory of Micromounters to the Society.

### **Branch Reports**

**Austin Lockwood** said he was pleased to report on the continuing success of the South-East Branch, and to have the opportunity to thank Peter Wallace for looking after the branch finances and reporting on "What's on the Tables" for inclusion in the Newsletter. The official opening of the large new building at the Ringway Community Centre, Grove Park, by the Mayor of Lewisham, had taken place the previous day. Austin had arranged for a display panel showing the work of the BMS to be exhibited, since for obvious reasons it had not been possible to be there in person. He thanked the members who arrive early for the meetings to help set up the tables, and June Lockwood for organising the refreshments.

**Mick Wolfe** said that the Northern Branch found their new premises in Bawtry more convenient than Bircotes Library. Attendance varied from 8 to 18, depending on whether the members of the Norfolk group were visiting.

**Kevin Johns** said the Norfolk Branch had a good turnout at their monthly meetings –but no visitors!

**Harry Critchley** reported that the Warrington group had also had a change of venue, in company with the Warrington Lapidary Society. They met on the 3rd Thursday of the month. There were usually 6 or so members at the meetings.

**Dick Smith** said there were 10 active members in the West Midlands Branch. They had had 2 meetings this year, one of which had focused on minerals of the Isle of Skye borrowed from the Reference Collection. There had been two Field Trips, one with the Russell Society and the other to Broadway Quarry—no minerals, but interesting, and good weather.

**Chris Jewson** said the South-West Branch met quarterly, and attendance was good when the Norfolk members came along!

## **Symposium Organisers**

**Kevin Johns** thanked the Geology Department. He said that the Society had built up a very good relationship with the Department over the years. He also thanked the excellent speakers, and the members who had helped organise the refreshments, the Raffle and the Auction.

The Raffle had made a profit of £78, and the Auction had raised £200.

To mark our 21<sup>st</sup> year next year it was hoped to expand the Symposium booklet, and to use it as a means of communicating items of interest to those present, such as hobby related items for sale or exchange.

He told delegates that they should be aware of security as students were arriving on campus and might visit the department.

Provisional dates for 2002 were given as September 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. He thanked everyone for coming.

### **Occasional Papers.**

**John Pearce** reported that all 13 Occasional Papers were available from him at the Symposium.

The Zeolite paper by Oneta was expected to be available next year, together, hopefully, with a paper on Secondary Mineralisation by David Alderton of Royal Holloway College.

He informed members that Tony Brittain was no longer able to print and sell the Occasional Papers, but Kevin Johns may be able to take this over.

### **7. Founder's Cup,**

Roy Starkey told the meeting that this year's winner of the Founder's Cup broke with tradition. In arriving at a decision, those involved in the nomination process had chosen to celebrate the outstanding contribution of two people who have been actively involved in the world of amateur mineralogy for more than 20 years. From their initial involvement through local organisations in the south of England, to many national and international contacts and activities, these two individuals had contributed to the development of British amateur mineralogy and geology.

Very keen tennis players, and a successful professional couple, the nominees for this year's award have been tireless supporters of the BMS in various roles since early in its development.

Involvement in national organisations such as FLAGS, and with the Amateur Geological Society's Bazaar in Golders Green has brought them into contact with many hundreds if not thousands of enthusiasts. Overseas exchanges and trading have played a prominent part in the development of a fine personal mineral collection.

The hospitality of these two individuals is legendary amongst visitors to their London home, which is still used as a meeting place for the FLAGS Committee.

“It is difficult to find words to express my personal sense of appreciation and debt of gratitude which I owe to them, both as members and officers of this society. The annual "double act" at each year's Symposium, which sometimes seemed like an extract from the Two Ronnies, was the

highlight of the AGM, and we could be sure that once the first had delivered his report and said 'goodnight from me', he would be back up on his feet to deliver the 'other report' and say 'goodnight from him'.

This years winners, who unfortunately cannot be with us today, are of course, Sid and Pearl Freeman, and whilst we can't quite go to them live by satellite - we are going to try a quick call by mobile telephone - a loud round of applause please at the signal!"

Roy disguised the call as a query about the accounts, and it seemed as if Sid thought he was joking when the real purpose of the call was given. However the noisy applause from the meeting gave confirmation.

## **8. Election of Officers.**

The Officers agreed to serve for another year. No other nominations had been received. They were unanimously re-elected.

Peter Braithwaite gave a vote of thanks to all Committee members.

Mike Leppington reminded the meeting that an Auditor should be appointed. He was willing to act in this capacity again. Alan Taylor proposed that Mike be re-appointed. Bob Snowball seconded the proposal and it was carried unanimously.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Ken Luff suggested that the award to a student in the Geology Department should be increased from £100 to £150. This was agreed.

Roy Starkey said he would like to see a "History" of the Society published to mark the 21<sup>st</sup> Symposium next year with reminiscences and photos of Field Trips or other events. Members agreed that this would be a worthwhile project and Roy undertook to carry it through.

John Dickinson asked if the subscription should be reduced, but the suggestion did not receive support.

Kevin Johns said that the Symposium Organisers were considering getting outside professional help for a talk and/or workshop on micro-photography next year. This might prove to be more costly than our usual lectures. It was agreed that there was considerable interest in the subject, and if combined with a topographical lecture would make for a very interesting Symposium.

Mike Leppington said he was concerned about the rising age profile of the Society.

Andy Bamthorpe said that efforts to interest and involve youngsters would be repaid later. Roy said that the BMS would have a stall at the Bakewell Rock Exchange where there were usually a good number of young people.

The subject of a website was raised again. Tony Brittain had given space to the BMS on his 'Earthlines' site but this was now discontinued. Roy made the point that the site would need to be updated regularly otherwise it became useless. A lot of work would be involved. After discussion it was decided that no action should be taken.

The meeting closed at 11.00 a.m.

## BMS OCCASIONAL PAPERS

John Pearce

There have been a number of interesting patterns emerging in the ways in which members have been purchasing the BMS Occasional Papers.

- Members on reaching retirement purchase back numbers thinking they will have more time to study and learn new techniques.
- Friends of members, often from overseas, are interested in purchasing a complete set of the papers.
- At least two Mineral Societies have purchased quantities of a particular paper for use by study groups. These have usually been the chemically orientated papers 3 and 13, Quite often members within Societies have widely different backgrounds in chemistry and using these papers, for example as pre-course reading, has proved valuable.

If you wish to purchase any of the papers please contact me at 7 Condor Way, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9QB, with a cheque made out to BMS and include p&p (75p for up to 3 copies; over 4 copies £2.00).

1.	An Introduction to Micromounts	Roy Starkey	£1.00
2.	Determining the Optical Properties of Minerals	Max Wirth	£1.50
3.	Minerals are Chemicals	John Pearce	£1.50
4.	Paper Chromatography	Max Wirth	£1.00
5.	Using the Mineralogical Literature	Roy Starkey	£3.00
6.	Stereomicroscopes	Mike Edwards	£2.00
7.	Photography of Minerals through the Microscope	Elsie Hansford	£1.00
8.	A Guide to Micromounting: Part 1, Collecting	Peter Braithwaite	£1.50
9.	A Guide to Micromounting: Part 2, Micromounting	Peter Braithwaite	£1.50
10.	A Guide to Micromounting: Part 3, Cataloguing & Labelling	Peter Braithwaite	£1.50
11.	Chemical Testing of Mineral Grains	David Green	£2.00
12.	A Select and Personal Bibliography from the Mineralogical Magazine	Roy Starkey	£2.00
13.	Minerals are Chemicals Part 2: The Periodic Table	John Pearce & Austin Woodbridge	£3.00

## BRANCH NEWS

### Devon and Cornwall Branch

The branch extends a warm welcome to any members who are in the area on any of the following Saturdays in 2002 - March 9<sup>th</sup>, June 8<sup>th</sup>, September 14<sup>th</sup> and December 7<sup>th</sup>. Meetings are held in the Liskeard Public Rooms, 3 West Steet, Liskeard and commence at 1:30pm. Details and directions available from Chris Jewson.

## **South East Branch**

Fifteen members attended the August meeting - the first in the new Ringway Community Centre building. Austin Lockwood reports that facilities and space are much improved.

Peter Wallace's report on 'What's on the tables' at the meeting read as follows:-

'From Leaton Quarry near Wellington in Shropshire, Peter FitzGerald and Austin Lockwood showed very nice pinkish calcite/dolomite in a basaltic matrix. Austin had from Llyncllys Quarry near Oswestry in Shropshire, a nice specimen of cornwallite or possibly bayldonite.

Ann Padfield had collected an excellent specimen of 'reticulated' marcasite from Chipping Sodbury Quarry and Peter Reynolds, still field tripping in his cellar, showed a nice specimen of elaterite on fluorite from Fallgate Quarry in Derbyshire.

Jean Terry, having recently returned from a field trip to Namibia with the Sussex Mineral and Lapidary Society, had collected excellent specimens of taperssuatsiaite, a sodium iron silicate, from Aris Quarry near Windhoek. The taperssuatsiaite infilled cavities in a phonalite matrix and was associated with numerous other mineral species, in particular with aegirine, to which some of the taperssuatsiaite was altering.'

Proviisional meeting dates for 2002 (all Sundays) are 17 February, 12 May, 11 August and 17 November.

## **INTERNATIONAL SECTION**

### **North America**

This report concerns a trip organised by Harry and Chris Critchley to Poland Mining Camps, Maine, USA, and to Mont Ste Hilaire and Asbestos, Québec, Canada. Other participants included Arthur and Beryl Harrison, Bill Mason, beryl Taylor and Philip Taylor. This is how the local press described the trip:

### **Digging for fun**

#### **Amateur rock hounds from England find gems at Auburn quarry**

*(Reproduced by kind permission of the Sun Journal, Lewiston, Maine.)*

The sun beat onto the piles of crumbled stone and blasted rock like an anvil.

Black flies sought bare skin. A nearby pool of quarry water turned a murky brown.

It was the beach from hell

But Beryl Taylor srmiled.

The 75-year-old English rock collector plunked herself into a lawn chair, soaked up the rays, gulped her Poland Spring water and rummaged through her sack of just-mined pebbles.

"It's like the best beach in the world," she said, "one where every grain of sand is a gem"



Taylor's beach is the Emmons Quarry in Auburn, just one stop in a week-long visit to Maine's mines. She and seven other members of the Warrington Mineral and Lapidary Society made the 3,000 mile trip here from the suburbs of Manchester, England.

Their host is a surprisingly specialized local company, the Poland Mining Camps. Owners Dudy and Mary Groves cater specifically to rock hounds.

At night, guests eat Mary's meals and stay in the rustic cabins. By day, they travel from mine to mine, around Auburn's Mount Apatite and through several other area spots where pockets still exist of tourmaline, quartz and garnet. The people who sign up bring along their own hammers, chisels, sledges and shovels. Just a couple of days into its week long visit, the society had collected seven bags of minerals to be mailed home.

Dudy, a veteran miner, has worked out exclusive deals with the mine owners, who demand that guests keep the size of their tools small and that professional collectors stay out. Dudy blasts the rock, and the guests chisel.

That's fine with Christine Critchley, who came with her husband, Harry, from the British town of Black Rod.

Together, the couple has traveled to France, Spain and Greece to peck at the stone pockets. Everywhere they go, they collect rocks - pebbles mostly.

"There's a world in there," said Harry, pointing at a shiny speck in a rock.

It's not just a British thing, either.

Craig Zimmer came from Apple Creek, Ohio, with his son. A worker at a Rubbermaid factory, Zimmer has traveled to all 50 states in his hunt for rocks.

"I know of no other place that's like this," he said. Sure, he might instead go to Disneyworld, sun himself on the oceanside or from the deck of a cruise ship. Instead, he sweated in the heat and knelt to wash his new-found rocks.

"I could go to an amusement park," Zimmer said. "But I get better souvenirs and I know they're real".

Taylor, too, thought about her pebbles.

She won't make jewelry from her finds. She'll wash her rocks in the dishwasher at home. Then she'll go through her books and try to identify each little piece.

She'll throw away many of the big ones. They're too apt to have broken crystals and fouled edges, she said. Then she picked up a pebble with the faintest spot of red. It was a tiny bit of garnet. It was one of her favorite finds yet.

"I like perfect little things," she said.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Australia**

Pearl passed on a letter from John Toma, an amateur mineralogist and collector from South Australia. John has built a collection of 5,000 micro and several hundred macro specimens, for the most part self collected. He now has many surplus specimens as a result of countless field trips and is looking to contact a small number of collectors who would like to build a collection of Australian minerals, primarily micros. He would like to supply these contacts with regular parcels of specimens monthly, bi-months or quarterly.

The parcels would contain a mixture of common and rare species. The aim of each parcel would be to build not only a collection of minerals but knowledge of Australian localities and their mineralogy with literature included.

John suggests a price of, say £15 to £25 (sterling cheque) per parcel plus shipping costs and, prior to sending each parcel, he would e-mail/mail the customer with details for acceptance. He would also be happy to assist with want lists and has good contacts with museums and collectors. T/n, miniature and cabinet specimens can be provided if preferred.

John hopes to help cover his collecting costs and not to build a business and is looking to a strictly limited number of customers.

I tried one of John's parcels at the lower end of the price range and can vouch for the quality, the information provided, the care with which the items were packed and the speed with which they were despatched.

## **GRANITE**

### **Steve Rust**

Following on from Roy's new fad article, I can add a further extension to the new fads.

The granite on Mull is similar to that on Skye, but not so diverse, although we have only just started.

Nice magnetite crystals to 1mm  
Epidote greenish yellow crystal sprays to 1.5mm  
Titanite crystals to 0.5mm  
Hedenbergite hairs filling cavities to 1cm  
Fluorite colourless crystals to 0.25mm  
Zircon crystals very slim prismatic to 0.5mm  
Chabazite colourless xls to 1mm  
Heulandite crystals to 0.5mm  
Stilbite divergent sprays to 1mm  
Garnet colourless crystals to .3mm

Plus some things not yet identified

### **DOROTHY MERRITT**

Members will be sad to learn that Dorothy Merritt, a long time BMS member, died on Thursday October 4th after a long battle against cancer.

Dorothy inspired enthusiasm in others and was a key member of the Sussex Mineral and Lapidary Society and the only woman, so far, to serve as chairman. Over the last few years she coordinated Micromount Study groups within SMLS, often borrowing quantities of micros from the BMS Reference collection, based around a theme, such as the elements, copper minerals, uranium minerals, minerals from the Penberthy Croft mine. She would draw up guidelines, so that we all knew what we were looking for and a dozen of us would meet up twice a year to learn, enjoy and share our interest in micros.

Dorothy and her husband Cyril attended the annual BMS Symposia on a very regular basis over many years, but were not able to join us recently because of her failing health.

Our thoughts and sympathy go to her husband Cyril and family

John Pearce

In September Mrs Heike Bowers informed us of the sad death of her husband Robert.

Robert Bowers joined the BMS only this year and his death came quite suddenly. Pearl Freeman has written to offer our condolences to Mrs Bowers.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Changes of address, telephone or e-mail details:

Member	New or corrected details.
Don Blake	23 Burntbarrow, Storth, Nr Milnthorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7JW Telephone number unchanged.
Martin Gale	New e-mail address: martinfgale@btinternet.com
Neil Hubbard	Please add e-mail address: neil@hubbardn.fsnet.co.uk
Franz Werner	New e-mail address: f.werner@ukonline.co.uk

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Mike Dannatt

Ashcroft, Smalldale, Bradwell, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S33 9JQ

Tel: 01433 621801

E-mail: the.dannatts@care4free.net

The deadline for articles for Newsletter 61 will be 1<sup>st</sup> February 2002. Please let me have contributions as soon as possible. Articles or reports on PC disc are particularly welcome. Articles sent by E-mail can either be “attached” or part of the body of the E-mail message. Clearly *printed* documents are acceptable and can be scanned and read into the PC. Hand-written items should be as clear as possible please paying particular attention to site and mineral names.