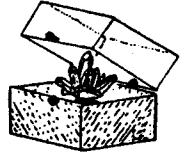


BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER No.14

JUNE 1985

YOU WILL FIND ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER A REGISTRATION SLIP FOR THE 4TH SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD AT LEICESTER UNIVERSITY ON 28/29 SEPTEMBER. PLEASE COMPLETE WITHOUT DELAY AND RETURN TO MIKE ROTHWELL SO THAT ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS CAN BE FINALISED

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Eric Otty

The British Mineral and Gem Show in London saw the start of our annual season and certainly was a great opportunity to get together with members who had been holed up over the Winter. For a couple of hours after the doors opened it was hot and crowded and there were so many foreign accents. When things settled down it was good to see new material in the form of selenites and halites from Poland, and some superb wulfenites from Morocco. There were fine crystals of fluorite from Spain in deep-purple but apparently they were non-fluorescent. The BMS stand was out of the hot mainstream and there was an opportunity for leisurely discussion, in between answering so many queries. The stand itself was attractively laid out and BMS was awarded the Roger S Harker Memorial Shield for the best society display.

And what a great start to the collecting season! The BMS week-end was so well attended and some of the Warrington members made a week of it by going in search of gold from Hope's Nose and collecting wavellite, fishtail calcite etc. elsewhere. I was happy to join in with the Northern Group's field trip to Derbyshire and there learned of plans of many to join up in Cornwall for up to a fortnight's collecting starting late May. Good hunting..... and let me know of new sites and finds.

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BMS WEEK-END FIELD TRIP 4/6 May 1985

David Ifold

Forty-nine members met early on the Saturday morning for this event. For the first day the party was split into two to avoid pressure on the various locations. During the first day West Wheal Crebor, Prince of Wales and Holmbush mines were visited. Later most of the group went to Kit Hill while Roy Starkey took eight members underground at New East Wheal Russell. Most members collected large amounts of francolite from Holmbush, and the first group to visit West Wheal Crebor did very well. The underground visit to the New East Wheal Russell provided some interesting long clear prismatic childrenite for those brave enough to dodge the bullets and cross the flooded winze. At Prince of Wales and Kit Hill, Max Wirth collected terminated needles of tourmaline which most people ignored. Dorothy Merritt collected a small but very nice scorodite from the dumps of Prince of Wales.

Sunday morning started off reasonably pleasant but the weather deteriorated as the day progressed. Three groups were formed to visit the locations in rotation. The first two groups to visit Virtuous Lady Mine collected anatase but the last group only got wet. Roy Starkey managed to persuade his group to follow some sort of ritual to find specimens with everyone kneeling, but no one knew which way Mecca was!! East Gurnislake provided a fair amount of libethenite. At Drakewalls, members collected "foreign" francolite; some managed to find more childrenite and John Pearce found a little molybdenite(?). During the afternoon everyone met up at Wheel Phoenix in what was by then steady rain and a strong wind. Richard Bell found an excellent libethenite under very difficult collecting conditions.

Monday morning started bright and sunny. Everyone met at Meldon where various colours of tourmaline were collected. The blue mineral I assumed to be apatite is not, since Max Wirth assures me that it behaves more like tourmaline under the polarising microscope. Several members collected lots of montmorillonite, and much material was taken home without being identified. Around lunchtime members made their way to Belstone mine to collect garnet. Most members collected a fair amount of this material but much of it is weathered. During the afternoon members gradually left to make long journeys home.

Everyone went home with a large stockpile of material for the trimmer and cleaning. I look forward to seeing the sorted specimens at the Leicester meeting.

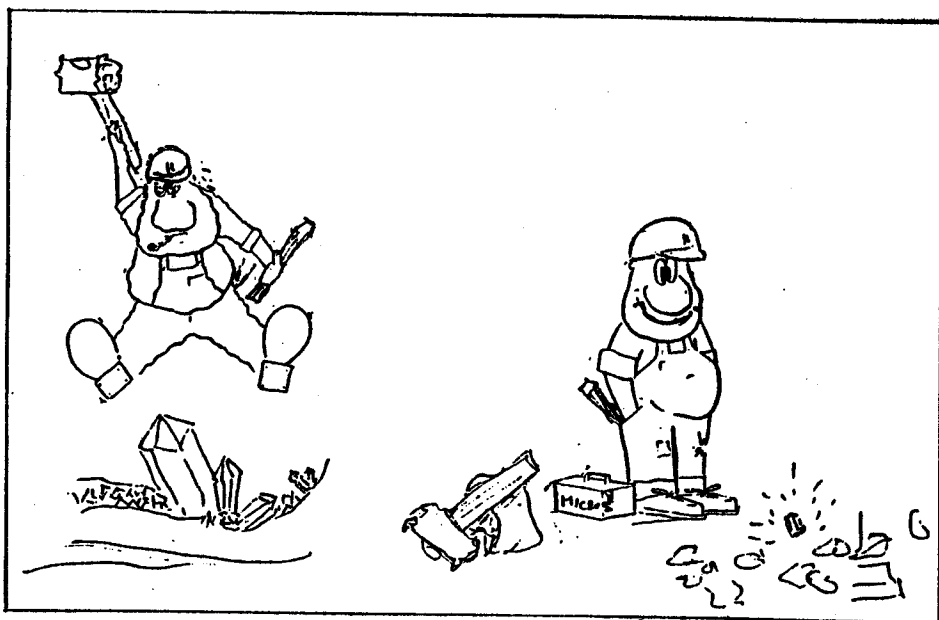
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Vote of Thanks

Mabel Lumb

"The week-end field trip was such a great success as always and I would like to see in the Newsletter, a Vote of Thanks and Appreciation to all who gave their time and planned the trip".

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BRITAIN'S RAREST MINERAL?

Roy Starkey

During an evening of the week-end field trip spent in pleasant surroundings of the Mary Tavy Inn, the question was posed - "What is the rarest mineral specimen in Britain?". An innocent enough enquiry, but it certainly sparked off a storm of disagreement. The "secondary copper" buffs listed off various sulphates, phosgenite was quickly discounted as abundant, sub-micron inclusions in galena were ruled as disqualified etc. etc. What then is the answer?

If we stop to consider the meaning of the question it is soon apparent that "rare" covers a wide spectrum of meanings, e.g. large euhedral crystals are never common; sweetite is chemically unlikely to occur; very small crystals are hard to find; wulfenite is rare but occurs commonly with pyromorphite at Bwlch Glas Mine and so on.

Clearly we must define matters more closely, and consideration must be given to such factors as:-

Crystal perfection and size - large perfect chalcophyllite crystals are rare, similar specimens of calcite would be considered common.

Chemical composition in relation to the surrounding rocks - phosgenite can be expected in coastal lead veins, but at Penberthy Crofts Mine, it is certainly uncommon.

One of a kind specimens - often descriptions are made of such material and published, or material is only discovered by one individual.

Should we consider rarity of minerals as an expression of the physical weight of material known, the number of specimens collected or known, the perfection of size of crystals, chemical/mineralogical probability of occurrence etc. Rarity almost certainly changes with time - minerals considered rare in Greg & Lettsom's day were rediscovered by Russell and Wainwright, and we in turn go in search of their localities and material. The truth is that rarity, like beauty is very much a personal thing, and if one has never found leadhillite from Whyte's Cleugh it may be considered rare, whereas mottramite a relatively uncommon mineral is certainly not hard to find at Arm O' Grain.

Geography, chemistry, crystal size and form must all go into the equation but I believe that nomination of Britain's rarest mineral is a personal, subjective opinion - what do you think?

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THURSTASTON ERRATICS

Isabel Geldart

I was very interested in the article by Mike Rothwell in the last Newsletter on the minerals at Thurstaston Beach. I found the same minerals at the bottom of a worked out brick clay quarry at Buracough, near Ormakirk in 1975.

At that time I took them to Manchester Museum where they were identified with the aid of the XRF machine as follows:-

Albite	Thomsonite
Orthoclase (crystals adularia habit)	Edenite
Diopside	Sphene
Fayalite	Chalcopyrite
Tremolite	Analcime
Calcite	

Unfortunately this site has now been filled in.

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After examining material submitted by Mike Rothwell, I made the following observations:- "The sphene of course is out of this world and if I was correct in my earlier letter, it is interesting that it occurs in several forms. The hornblende is nice but hardly unusual. The albite is fine as it is so well crystallised and clear in most cases. It is interesting to find analcime, even though they are in minute crystals. We will have to see whether we can find the original source rock formation and whether that also contains the zeolites. As for netrolite, I could not identify any. I agree that the slender needles look very much like it, particularly the terminations, but the refractive index is too high and I cannot identify it. Quite splendid are the green prismatic crystals which are certainly pyroxene, though I do not think they are augite. They seem to be optically negative, whilst augite is positive. They show extensive twinning and this makes aegirite at least unlikely. Other slender needles are hexagonal or very nearly so, I think they may turn out to be apatite. The magnetite is beautiful but I refuse to comment further on opaque minerals. I would expect the material to contain a host of the rarer minerals which would not be apparent to amateurs like myself and it should be a museum job to identify further species."

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BRANCH NEWS

South Eastern Branch

Elsie Hansford

In spite of very bad weather prospects for the meeting date of 16 February, some 24 members and guests turned up for the meeting which started at 3 p.m. and went on until nearly 8 p.m. Good use was made of Bob Snowbell's rock splitter and some excellent slides were shown by Michael Jackson, Martin Stolworthy and Steve Rust. Then followed a discussion on photographic equipment for use with the microscope and the excellence of the Olympus system with so many accessories was acknowledged. It was thought that the OM2 was the best camera for photographing through the microscope as it offered the special focussing screen for this purpose as well as an excellent automatic exposure system which gave accurate exposures of the subject matter. Nigel Hoppe gave some good advice based on his own experience with separate meter readings and discussed films, filters etc. Thanks were expressed for the refreshments and the excellent arrangements and the next meeting was called for 11 May.

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Northern Branch

Jean Spence

The inaugural meeting was held at Bircotes Village Library on Saturday 13 April and was attended by fourteen members and friends. Visitors had travelled from as far afield as Keighley, Manchester, Derby, Nottingham and York and within a few minutes of opening time at 2 p.m. Introductions had been made, electrics sorted out, and microscopes set up. A lively chat ensued throughout the afternoon as specimens were examined and discussed and there was some swapping. A short business meeting was chaired by Peter Braithwaite when the group was named "Northern Branch" and Jean Spence who had initiated the meeting was appointed leader. Finances and various projects were discussed and further meetings were arranged for 5 May (Field trip), 6 July, 14 September and 2 November starting at 2 p.m. After a most enjoyable afternoon thanks were expressed to Jean Spence and to Muriel Tisington who had organised refreshments and the use of the library. Bircotes is ten miles south of Doncaster and is easily reached from the junction of A1(T) and A1(M); the library being on Scrooby Road and opposite the road leading to the colliery. If any other members are interested in joining, please contact your nearest branch member listed with a view to sharing transport or ring Jean Spence (0302-710244) for a directional map.

Members present:- John Bottomley, Keighley; Peter Braithwaite, Derby; George Fletcher, Calver; David Green, Leeds; John Morgan, Mansfield; Eric Otty, Wilmslow; Michael Smith, Pocklington; Jean Spence, Bawtry; Muriel Tissington, Bircotes; Michael Wolfe, Nottingham; Avril Woodburn, Cheadle.

Fourteen members and friends met at the Market Square, Ashbourne, Derbyshire at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday 5 May before proceeding to a disused quarry nearby. Mainly overgrown and now a rubbish dump, recently dug ground at one end revealed calcite and copper secondaries. As trenches were opened up some good crystals of malachite and calcite were exposed as well as azurite, brochantite, wulfenite and hydrocerussite. After lunch the party moved on to the Waterbank mine tips on Ecton Hill, Staffordshire for more digging. Galena and chalcopyrite were abundant along with linarite, aurichalcite and other secondaries. The weather deteriorated in this very exposed site and so the material was just collected for examination at home. The results of the day's outing which was most enjoyable will be discussed at the meeting on 6 July.

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West Midlands Branch - Inaugural Meeting

Roy Starkey

The inaugural meeting of the West Midlands branch will be held on the afternoon of Sunday 16 June 1985, commencing at 2.30 p.m. The venue will be 29 Nuthurst Drive, Churchbridge, Cannock. If you wish to attend please contact either Trevor Wolloxall or Roy Starkey. Tele: 0922-417756 or 0527-42018. The meeting will have a free format of exchanges, discussions, practical microscope work, slides etc. Please bring a microscope and some specimen material for discussion. Churchbridge is within easy access of the M6 motorway, being just off the A5 and will thus be within striking distance of Derby, Leicester, Manchester, Liverpool and the West Midlands conurbation. We look forward to seeing you on the 16th - please book in advance.

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BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY) OPEN DAY

Roy Starkey

A proposal is under consideration to hold an open day around the Department of Mineralogy for the benefit of amateur mineralogical groups and enthusiasts. The event will take place on a Saturday, probably during the Autumn of 1986. Will those members who have connections with other societies bring this matter to the attention of their society officers, and ask someone to write to Mr J Fuller at the Department of Mineralogy expressing support, and indicating what you would like to see and approximately how many visitors would be expected to attend. Further details will appear in future Newsletters.

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AUCTION REPORT

The auction of a large part of the remaining stock of the late Richard W. Barstow took place on Sunday 19 May. Viewing took place on the previous day and attracted a small group. The auction took place with only sixteen attending and the bidding was not very competitive. The maximum price for any lot was £47.50 for a mixed tray of twenty four mainly foreign specimens. A tray of quality specimens from Silvermines, Eire made £40.

About ninety of the 200 lots were unsold as a result of no bidding or a failure to reach the reserve. Some of the foreign specimens failed to reach their trade price. Vanadinite failed to reach the original cost of purchase in Morocco. Non-dealers attending the auction were put off by the size of the lots. The cheaper material was in groups of three trays packed to

the brim. At the close of the auction about £1700 (plus VAT) had changed hands; a great disappointment for Yvonne.

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CROCOITE FROM LEADHILLS

Kemp Melkie

Max Wirth's letter in the last Newsletter prompts me to write a P.S. regarding our stop at Leadhills on the return journey from Leicester last year. Additional to the mottramite we both found, I obtained a single specimen (34 x 28mm) of crocoite - also from the Hopeful Vein dump. The mineral has been identified by the Royal Scottish Museum and occurs as individual crystals on pyromorphite and cerussite. The crystals are orange-red in colour, equant and doubly terminated ranging in size up to about 0.6 x 0.3mm. Crystal faces are sharp and well defined and the form is generally similar to the illustration in Dana's Textbook of Mineralogy. The specimen carries about 50 separate crystals which collectively and individually are highly photogenic.

Referring back to the mottramite, this also proves highly interesting and photogenic, occurring as it does both on quartz and separately with bright light-green or orange-yellow pyromorphite. The mottramite is universally deposited on the quartz, but is clove-brown translucent to blackish vitreous bipyramids when with pyromorphite. One specimen also has reddish-brown resinous spherules of what appears to be plumbogummite, while another has a small group of brownish-red translucent hexagonal crystals which are almost certainly vanadinite. Maximum size of the mottramite is about 0.8mm while the vanadinite does not exceed 0.2mm and the plumbogummite spherules are about 0.03mm.

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MOUNTING TECHNIQUE

Trevor Wolloxall

Whilst in Holland, I noticed that many of the micromounters there did not mount their specimens on the balsa wood pedestals that are commonly in use in England. Instead they used thin strips of supple but hard rubber. The benefit of using these black rubber strips are that they can be trimmed to any size to suit the particular specimen and do not need to be painted matt black. And best of all, if after mounting a specimen on these rubber mounts the micro is dropped on the floor or given a sharp jolt, it does not 'plng' off as often happens with a balsa mount. This is due to the elasticity or give in the rubber mount. If anyone is interested in this technique I have samples of these rubber mounts which I can make available. There are probably similar pieces of rubber with the same properties available in Britain.

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LEAD MINES CLOUGH, ANGLEZARKE MOOR

This collecting area, which was described by Keith Snell in Newsletter No. 12 has been turned into a historical trail by the local authorities and is now the subject of an illustrated folder. After parking near Alance Bridge, the visitor is directed up the valley of the Limestone Brook, where faulting is pointed out, to the conical depressions which were once shafts and the spoil dumps. "Small pieces of galena (lead ore) may still be found on the dumps along with other minerals." Further along is a slime pit, a waterwheel pit and pumping shaft which have recently been restored by Conservation Volunteers. The leaflet outlines the history of the mines and methods of working and ore dressing and the story of witherite. This had been found by the year 1700 and was being used in porcelain manufacture in Stoke-on-Trent and in Germany before being called "terr ponderosa" by Dr. Withering in 1783 and later named after him. The leaflet costs 15p and is available from Great House Barn Information Centre, Rivington Lane, Horwich, Bolton GL6 7SA (Horwich

691549). Further information on the minerals and geology of the area can also be obtained from Bolton Museum, where a collection of minerals from the Anglezarke area is on display.

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WELSH GOLD

Activities at the Clogau and Gwynfynydd mines in the Coed-y-Brenin Forest near Dolgellau continue to attract much attention from the press. Clogau Gold Mines plc who raised £2 million capital from a share issue last year are trying to establish whether gold exists in shoots other than in those of the old workings and they are concentrating on the area near the Llechfralth adit. Gold has been found mainly as free gold in the ore shoots as well as combined with sulphides throughout the lodes. Bismuth tellurides also occur. The portable crushing, milling and tabling plant has a daily capacity of ten tons of ore and the company aim to go into commercial production by the end of the year. New track is being laid in the mine where working conditions are good and there are no ventilation or drainage problems. At Gwynfynydd an area in the Chidlaw lode has been outlined by the Geological Consultants with an estimated reserve of some 4,800 tons of mineable grades and a drilling programme is now underway. Fine gold occurs in association with sulphides but free gold is very rare at this mine. The milling plant installed last year was unsatisfactory as it only recovered half the feed material and has been replaced by new plant with the addition of froth flotation cells and thio-urea leaching. These should improve the recovery of fine gold from the sulphide ore. About £1 million is being spent at this mine this year, most of the money being provided by financier Mark Weinberg. His partners are Rupert Lycett-Green and Cornish mining engineer Nick Worrall.

A chance to dig for "Royal" gold is to be offered to visitors to the Mid-Wales Festival of the Countryside after the opening by Dr David Bellamy at the Elan Valley visitor's centre near Rhayader on 9 June. The festival will run until September and the mine which will be opened to the public is at Ganllwyd, near Dolgellau.

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SCOTTISH GOLD

According to "Mining Magazine" (April 1985) Ennex International have discovered economic gold mineralisation in "mountains between Oban and Pitlochry". Reconnaissance exploration has revealed a 1.9m wide vein grading about 13 grammes/tonne gold and nearly 40 g/t silver extending over a length of at least 110 metres.

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CELTIC GRANITE

Foster Yeoman Ltd who worked the largest limestone quarry in the U.K. near Shepton Mallet are planning to develop a large granite quarry at Glensanda by the shores of Loch Linnhe in the Morven Peninsula. It is expected to be operational by end 1986 and will produce 7½ million tonnes a year. The granite will be shipped in a specially built bulk carrier to ports in Southern England. Some £60 million is to be spent on the project which will be one of the world's largest single quarries.

Meanwhile man-made granite is being made for the stone cladding and floor market at the Marmor works in Cwmtillery, Gwent, South Wales. Called "Celtic Granite" it is based on pigmented polyester resin-bound high grade quartz aggregate derived from quarries in the Western Islands of Scotland. The production line is highly automated and the product is significantly cheaper than granite or marble and compares favourably in physical properties.

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NEW BOOKS

Mineralogical Record Book Department, P O Box 1656, Carson City, Nevada 89702 are offering the following new publications:-

"Minerals of Broken Hill". Price \$50 postpaid

A magnificent volume commemorating the centenary of the discovery of Australia's famous Broken Hill Deposit. Lavishly illustrated with 170 colour photos of specimens.

"Catalogue of South Australian Minerals". Price \$20.50 postpaid

Contains descriptions of over 400 species with 169 colour photos and eight colour maps. Particularly useful to micromounters.

"Bisbee: Queen of the Copper Camps". by Lynn R Bailey. Price \$22 postpaid

Complete storey of Bisbee's mining history. 159 pages, 175 historical photos, maps and diagrams.

"Brazil, Paradise of Gemstones" by Jules Sauer. Price \$24.50 postpaid

Superb colour photography of many fine Brazilian crystal specimens as well as gems. The author is a mine owner and mineral collector.

"Glossary of Mineral Species 1983" by Michael Fleischer. Price \$9.50 postpaid

A comprehensive catalogue of all 2919 known mineral species. Includes formulae, crystal system, relationships etc. Indispensable.

The Northern Mine Research Society expect to publish a comprehensive monograph on "The Old Mines of the Llangynog District" in May 1985. Written by R A Williams, it contains the history of mining ventures for lead, phosphate and slate from the earliest documented activity in 1656 to the end of the nineteenth century. Members of the Northern Mine Research Society will receive a copy as part of their normal subscription, but others can order (without sending money) a copy by writing to R A Williams, 5 Longshaw Common, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7JD. The softback book will have about 90 pages, 27 plates and 32 figure diagrams; Price about £4.00.

"Mineral Statistics, Devon and Somerset" has been published by the University of Exeter in association with the Northern Mine Research Society; Price £3.95. Orders to Dr Roger Burt, Department of Economic History, University of Exeter.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Eric Otty

"The British Lead Mining Industry" by Roger Burt. Published by Dyllansow Truran, Trewolsta, Trewirge, Redruth, Cornwall, Cornwall. 1984. Hardback pp.343. Price £10.95

"The development of non-ferrous metal mining and manufacturing industries in the U.K. has long been one of the most neglected areas of modern economic history" states the author, and this book aims to provide a definitive work on the subject. Dr Burt is Head of the Department of Economic History at the University of Exeter, as well as a prolific author in this field, and is well-known for his publications for the Northern Mines Research Society.

The book traces the history of lead mining, the organisation and financing of the industry, organisation of labour, costs and prices, and methods of manufacture and markets for lead.

The book is not illustrated apart from a few line drawings and graphs but contains masses of statistics which are mainly contained in 25 tables. It is not a book that is easy to read. It is essentially an interpretation of statistics on a scale which is unfamiliar, but it does put the contribution of the major orefields into perspective. Students of mining history will find a wealth of information in this book which is not easily obtainable elsewhere; sources are quoted and there is an extensive bibliography. Publication of the book has been aided by a grant, and it represents good value.

"Catalogue of South Australian Minerals - 1983" by R J Noble, J Just, and J S Johnson. Published by the South Australia Department of Mines and Energy. Softback pp.244.

As the owner of a few South Australian micros, I was pleased to obtain this book from Simon Harrison at the London Gemshow for £16.50. It is based on a Catalogue produced in 1956 by the Government Geologist and has been updated using the names and chemical compositions adopted in Michael Fleischer's "Glossary of Mineral Species".

The presentation is straightforward with all the minerals being listed alphabetically. Localities are divided into fourteen regions of Southern Australia and eight maps show the locations of all the mines mentioned in the text. Details of occurrences and variations are outlined and the text is illustrated with many crystal drawings and 169 colour photographs, mainly of micro specimens. Over 400 species are described and in many cases several photographs of varieties are shown. Printed on thick art paper by the Government Printer, South Australia, it is a high quality publication which will have universal appeal to micromounters. Expensive it may be, but cheaper than buying from "Mineralogical Record"!!

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LASER PROSPECTING

Laser pulses fired from low-flying aircraft or helicopters are being used to identify deposits of metallic ores, making use of their properties of photoluminescence. The laser sends an intense beam of u/v light at the ground and the effect is recorded through a telescope in the aircraft onto magnetic tape. Tungsten, tin, gold, molybdenum, zinc and uranium can be easily identified and the firm developing the system has produced a detailed mineral index. A hand-held device has also been developed which will be useful for small-area exploration. The laser cannot penetrate soil or vegetation but mountainous regions which would be difficult to explore on foot are particularly suitable for the system.

(The Sunday Times)

Satellite mapping, remote sensing, data collection, paradigms and parameters are the buzz words in Geology today, according to Dr Derek Agar of the University College of Swansea, writing in a recent "New Scientist". He asks that things should be kept in proportion and while the "black boxes" of modern technology are valuable tools, there is no substitute for looking at the real evidence in the field. The final paragraph in his article sums up the argument.....

"Forty years on from D-day it is well to remember that the first of the Allies ashore in Normandy, months before 6 June 1944, were geologists studying the sediments of the beaches. I remember it well because I was at the time involved in the tank-landing trials on similar beaches we found in Britain. Aerial reconnaissance could not tell us what we needed to know, even if we had been clever enough to call it remote sensing in those days. Someone had to go there and do the field work. There is no substitute for getting on the ground and looking at the real evidence".

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ANTARTICA

The Antarctic Continent covers nearly 14 million sq.km, about the size of the combined areas of the United States and Australia. About 90% of it's surface is covered by a thick ice-sheet; this ice-cap making Antarctica the highest of all continents. Despite it's huge reservoir of frozen water, it is the world's largest desert with very low precipitation. The mean average temperature in August is -31°C .

Minerals have been found in great quantity but not in great concentrations. Iron ore and coal have been found in quantity but because of their inaccessibility neither is economically usable. Copper, chromium, gold and other metals occur in small quantities. Exploration on land has been limited to the scattered 2% of the continent that is ice-free. The most favourable province for exploration includes the Antarctic Peninsular, an extension of the mineral-rich geologic zone from South America. Of all the mineral resources oil and gas appear to have the greatest economic promise, because these resources are probably located offshore rather than under the ice-sheet. But there are great obstacles to exploitation. Fresh water is extremely scarce and to melt ice needs much energy. The harsh climate reduces labour and equipment efficiency and land transport is very expensive. Shipping requires ice-breaker support for most of the year while offshore oil operations would face drifting icepacks and huge icebergs. Substances with high unit value such as diamonds, gold, platinum, might be worth facing these costs and hazards to obtain. The Antarctic Treaty is silent on the question of mineral exploitation and who owns which territories has still to be decided.

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THE DEEPEST HOLE

Since 1970, geologists and engineers have been drilling the world's deepest well in the Kola Peninsular of USSR and have now reached 12,000 metres or $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Considering that everytime a drill bit wears out, the entire string has to be recovered to change it, the technical achievement involved is quite bewildering. The bottom half of the hole cuts through rocks more than 2700 million years old which are rich in iron and titanium with the percentage reaching 40/50% at 8711 metres. Large amounts of hot, highly mineralised water have been found in the hole and gases such as helium, hydrogen, nitrogen, methane and carbon dioxide have been found at all depths. Hydrothermal deposits of copper, nickel, zinc and cobalt sulphides were found between 4500 and 9000 metres down. The actual samples of rock from such depths will supplement information collected by seismic reflection methods.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

The Amsterdam Mineral Show

Trevor Wolloxall

This one-day show took place on Sunday 28 April in the "Cornerstones" building in central Amsterdam. The floor area was larger than that at the London Show with two floors of dealers and trade exhibits. There were about 90 dealers in attendance of which 50% were selling minerals, 40% lapidary materials and 10% fossils. The majority of the dealers were selling low to medium grade material such as Brazilian amethyst and agate slices etc. but there were five or six dealers selling good quality minerals. The prices of specimens were much the same as in England, but there was much more to interest the micromounter. There were five dealers specialising in micromounts with prices ranging from 25p to £7 per specimen. Surprisingly there were hardly any British micros for sale and those on offer were generally of little interest. The most interesting micros were being offered by Albert Schrader/M.Hettinga (see below) who are now advertising in "Mineralogical Record" and had taken an immense amount of time and care in the preparation, mounting and labelling of

specimens. These ranged in prices from 50p to £3 and included some very rare micros from Taumeb, Chile and unusual Russian localities. Minerals of interest from other micro dealers included some very rare and desirable material from Langenback Quarry in Switzerland and some specimens of the new mineral, Sturmanite, from South Africa were available. The only criticism I had was that none of the micro dealers had microscopes available for the use of potential customers who might expect to view before buying a rare and expensive specimen.

There were several stands catering solely for the needs of micromounters. There was a wide range of dentists' tools, tweezers etc and a continental equivalent of "blue tac" which is not as hard as ours selling in thin 6 metre lengths for £1.50. Also on sale were excellent Chinese microscopes with a 10 to 45 zoom magnification priced at around £200, and a complete fibre optic lighting unit with a triple fibre optic cable priced at around £180. To my knowledge, these products are not available in England. The Dutch Mineralogical Society (G.E.A.) had a large exhibition of their own publications which contained good articles and photos of various locations, the latest edition being solely on England. It includes articles on fossils and an excellent account of the mines and minerals of the Caldbeck Fells with superb colour photos of some of our old favourites - linerite, pyromorphite, rosasite and caledonite. The article was written by Wlm Van Den Berg with whom I stayed during my time in Holland.

My overall impression of the show was that it would be worth a visit for any British collectors of European and worldwide micros.

Dealers Lists

Coincidentally, Pearl Freeman has sent in a list of micros offered by Albert and Marianne Schrader-Hettinga, Loostraat 20", 1053 NX Amsterdam, Holland. A large number are priced at the equivalent of 75p including material from Czechoslovakia and USSR. Wroewolffite from Eaglebrook mine is priced at £1.25/£2.50 and there is a good selection of Laurion micros at around 75p each. Exotics include silver wires from Czechoslovakia from £1.50, powellite from Antofagasta from £1.50 to £6.00 and uvarovite from USSR at £3.00. A good selection of mainly massive material in thumbnail/miniature sizes from Czechoslovakia and USSR in transparent boxes is available from 50p. These lists certainly offer great variety for the species collector at reasonable prices.

Included in lists from David Shannon Minerals are 2lb bags from 17 different Arizona and Mexican mines that have good micro potential. Each bag contains a list of species likely to be found as well as descriptive data. Priced at \$5 each, are bags from Red Cloud Mine and the Rowley Mine, both of which have been described in "Mineralogical Record" and are classic localities for wulfenite, vanadinite, mimetite etc. Also from Los Lamentos, Mexico are bags of material which include wulfenite, endlichite, descloizite etc. In some cases several different bags are offered from the same mine, e.g. there are four different bags from St Hilaire, Canada and some 49 species have been listed from this material. Larger sizes are also offered and because much of the Arizona material is self-collected, and he operates the business from home, prices are very reasonable. For further information, please write to David Shannon Minerals, 1727M W. Drake Circle, Mesa, Arizona 85202, U.S.A. Enjoy a fantasy field trip to Arizona with no fear of rattlesnakes!!!

Italian Trades

The following letter has been received from Dott. Ugo Ostan, Geologo, 26100 CREMONA - VIA ARENILI, 10 Italy:-

"I am an Italian advanced collector of micromounts and I am interested in minerals from your country. I write to you to ask if some of your members of your Club are interested to trade with me. I can offer several rare Italian species and can send, on request, my trading list of micromounts from Italy and from Europe. Please write for further information; a reply is guaranteed."

Norwegian Minerals for Exchange

Svein A Berge, Ringkollen 16C, 3200 Sandeffjord, Norway has a long list of rare Norwegian micromount material for exchange from the Gjerdingen and Langesundsfjord areas. At Gjerdingen the crystals occur in cavities in a syenite called nordmarkite and the locality is known particularly for its rare fluorides. The list includes nenadkevichite, ramsayite, pyrochlore, elpidite, gearkautite, ralstonite, jenhaugite, monazite, zircon and gargarinite. From the Langesundsfjord area are boehmite, diaspore, gibbsite, gonardite, aegirine, andradite, helvite and the recently-described mineral chiavennite. Other Norwegian minerals include babingtonite, parisite, arfvedsonite and ktenasite.

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Hampshire Micro

The Microscope Shop, Oxford Rd,
Sutton Scotney, Hants SO21 3JG.
Telephone: (0962) 760228



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TOP TEN BRITISH MINERALS?

Eric Otty

Of all the British minerals seen in museums and through your microscopes, which species would you put in the top ten to compare with the best in the world? Which species do overseas collectors most want from our islands? These are questions suitable for "Mastermind" competitions, but I have views and would like yours. At the top of my list are the fluorites from Weardale and I can never forget that enormous specimen of dark purple in the Natural History Museum in South Kensington. The Weardale varieties have the advantage of being very fluorescent, but of a very pleasing pale-blue colour are the fluorites from old haematite mines in West Cumbria. These mines also produce the haematite-stained calcites which are world-class specimens. Collectors abroad are also very keen on haematite kidney ore which is unusual, and even more attractive when polished. Specular haematite from West Cumbria makes attractive specimens but the manager of Beckermat mine maintained that the best haematite in this form came from Elba. From the Strontian area in Scotland the two zeolites - harmotome and brewsterite - come in large crystals which are also eagerly sought abroad. Brookite is rare and while my small specimens from Prenteg are not as good as Italian specimens, there is a beautiful specimen crystal 2cms long in the National Museum of Wales. Cornwall must come into the reckoning with such a variety of rare minerals, and I would select bourmonite if only because it is rare as "cogwheels" and commands such high prices. Five years ago I handled a thumbnail specimen for which £74 was asked; and a year later I saw it in a collector's home a few thousand miles away!! Turquoise is found in many countries in the world but according to a leading mineralogist only from a handful of sources is it crystalline. So far that reason the crystalline turquoise from Cornwall should be in the list. For the remaining two I have to go north again, and select barytes which were found in exceptional specimens in West Cumbria and campylite, the variety of mimetite from Caldbeck Fells. I cheated on these two which are pictured in the final chapter in Paul Desautels' classic "The Mineral Kingdom". As the man in charge of minerals at the Smithsonian, he should know!!

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CLUB NEWS (OVERSEAS)

The Newsletter of the South African Micromount Society has had several articles on the uranium minerals of Shinkolobwe, Zaire. Largely due to the work of two Belgian mineralogists five new species have been described recently and this location has provided 21 oxides, 4 carbonates and 7 silicates. All the species are very rare and some have only been recorded from one or two specimens.

The Canadian Micro Mineral Association held their Annual Workshop Conference on 4/5 May at Brock University where a hundred enthusiasts thronged the rooms and enjoyed themselves. There were informative talks on "Skarn Minerals", "Dakota Phosphates" and "Ancient Minerals", minerals were auctioned and sold and the give-away tables were loaded. At one count, 62 microscopes were set up and everyone helped to make the occasion a great success. The May issue of their Newsletter carries a helpful article by Dieter Schmidt on the Clara Mines, Oberwolfach, Baden, Germany. Over 200 minerals have been identified from these mines which have a history going back to the 13th Century. Barite and fluorite are still being mined and collecting is permitted at the flotation plant for a small fee..... Several useful hints from Muriel Wood about labelling micros for exchange with people in other countries. Please USE CAPITAL LETTERS when printing as rapid scribbling often results in mis-spelling and where there are several minerals in the specimen, the colours of the minerals can be added to ease identification. (Editor's Note: don't forget to add England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland when sending material from this country.)

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EXCHANGES WITH USSR

My request for information on mineral collecting in the USSR was courteously answered in a broadcast on 23 March. Yes, there were many collectors in the country, they exchanged specimens and many donated their finds to museums. Many large and beautiful precious and semi-precious stones were found in the Urals. As they didn't say whether they exchanged with collectors overseas I wrote specifically on this point and Miss Elena Romanova has replied pleasantly advising that I should apply to the British-Soviet Friendship Society, 36 St John's Square, London EC1V 4JH. "Hope they will provide you with an address for private correspondence." I am not pursuing this further but would like to hear from anyone who makes progress in this direction.

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

In 1985, the U.K. tin mines are expected to yield about 4,800 tons tin-in concentrates; more than Zaire or Nigeria who are producer members of the International Tin Agreement. Members of the ITA are subjected to quotas and price agreements which so far has not affected Cornish producers. All the tin ores are sent to the Melton works of Capper Pass & Son (a RTZ subsidiary) at North Ferriby, Humberside, which is the largest smelting unit in Western Europe.

After acquiring full control of the company which operates South Crofty and Wheal Pendarves tin mines, RTZ now has an interest in 80% of total tin production in the U.K. Wheal Jane with a large output of tin, zinc, copper and silver has defined ore reserves of around 3 million tonnes with a further 3 million tonnes classified as resource material. Wheal Maid and Wheal Pendarves are maintaining smaller production but carrying out exploratory/development programmes. But South Crofty has, perhaps the greatest potential with defined reserves in excess of 4 million tonnes. The limitation is the shaft capacity and

this is being extended by modernising Cook's shaft and developing a surface decline from the nearby Tuckingmill Valley. This will link with the shaft on existing mine levels and give access to the orebodies right to the bottom of the mine.

(Mining Magazine - March 1985)

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COURSES

One of our members, Sheila Harper, and her partner Steve Hebdige run a series of "Mineral Collecting" holidays during the Summer from their Chichester Guest House, 14 Bay View Terrace, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 2LR. Sheila has been collecting for over ten years and many of our members have already enjoyed these courses which were started by Sam Weller in the early 70's. The programme is mainly field trips to collecting sites in transport provided and evening talks and visits. A collection of around a hundred mineral specimens is on display together with a comprehensive library of books and maps as well as microscopes, u/v lamps and metal detectors. The price of £86.00 per week for the courses covers full board (packed lunches on outings) and transport and well appointed accommodation. Courses still to run this year are 14/21 September, 28 September/5 October and 19/26 October. There are reductions for children and school parties and groups. Please write to Sheila for further information.

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BAKEWELL ROCK EXCHANGE - 12/13 October 1985

Roy Starkey

Details of this event are enclosed. I attended "the Exchange" last year and had a thoroughly good time. This is a golden opportunity to off-load surplus material and deserves your support. You don't have to book a table, just turn up with a boxful to do deals on the day. Either way we look forward to seeing you in Bakewell.

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DIARY DATES

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| Harrogate Gem and Mineral Fair | 23/25/26 August 1985
Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire |
| <u>4TH BRITISH MICROMOUNT SYMPOSIUM</u> | 28/29 September 1985
Leicester University |
| The Rock Exchange | 12/13 October 1985
Medway Centre, Bath Street, Bakewell,
Derbyshire |
| Annual Reunion - Amateur Geological Society | 2 November 1985
University College, Gower Street, London
(F.L.A.G.S. are given a section of the display area and some 8 Mineral/Lapidary/Geological clubs are represented including BMS) |
| Warrington Mineral and Lapidary Club Annual Fair | 30 November 1985
Parr Hall, Warrington, Lancs |

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CHANGE OF ADDRESSES

Jim Wooldridge, 16 Coachmans Croft, Fir Tree Road, Fernhill Heath, Worcester.

Michael Edwards, Hampshire Micro, The Microscope Shop, Oxford Street, Sutton Scotney,
Hants SO21 3JG. (Tele: 0962-760228).

Collin Sparrow, 53 Trevean Road, Penzance, Cornwall.

CHANGE/AMENDMENTS TO TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Geoff Deverell's telephone has been altered to:- Southampton 473400.

Ken Luff's telephone number should be:- 01-300-2405

Stephen & Debra Dyson's telephone number should be:- 0474-874589

Please alter your lists accordingly.

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NEW MEMBERS

Robert William Lester
1 R.N.S.S. Cottages
Dungeness
Romney Marsh
Kent TN29 9NA

Douglas & Sophie Bliss
91 Edward Road
Penge
London SE20 7JS
(Tele: 01-778-0833)

Anita Davis
Casa Mia
5 Nettles Hill
Helston
Cornwall TR13 8HD
(Tele: Helston 62832)

Barbara Loney
289 Motttingham Road
Eltham
London SE9 4SY
(Tele: 01-857-8337)

Glyn Henwood
18 Gannet Close
Basingstoke
Hants RG22 5QN

Peter Fitzgerald
3 Rother House
Rye Hill Estate
Peckham
London SE15 3JB
(Tele: 01-639-0611)

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A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting of the British Micromount Society will be held (during the Symposium Weekend) on Sunday 29th September at Leicester University for the election of Officers etc. and other business.

To remind you - the Minutes of the last A.G.M. were printed in Newsletter No. 12, November 1984.

E Hansford
Secretary

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Well, the file is now empty and I look forward to hearing all the news from you as you go on your explorations throughout the Summer. Whether we have another Newsletter before the Leicester Symposium depends on your contributions, so drop me a line and let me know what you are up to.

Before closing, I would like to explain how this Newsletter is produced, particularly as so many correspondents make complimentary remarks about the presentation. My part in it is set down in an inexpertly-typed copy which is then sent to Elsie Hansford in London. Elsie puts it on a word-processor and juggles things around to fit the pages, then it is shrunk and photocopied. It is then folded and stapled and finally, posted to members. This is a great deal of work for Elsie and we are very grateful to her. And I never cease to be amazed as to how the original pile of paper - letters, bulletins, catalogues and newsclippings - can be compacted so neatly.....keep smiling.

BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Eric Otty,
6 Woodlands Road
Pownall Park
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5QB

Answers to Crossword in Newsletter No. 13

Across

1. Diamonds, 5. Brilliant, 10. Avo, 11. Harp, 12. Gypsum, 14. Stones, 15. Wol,
17. Darwin, 18. Yag, 19. Dig, 21. Rut, 22. All, 23. Elements, 27. Ernie, 29. Ale,
30. Tin, 33. Indict, 35. Volcano, 36. No, 37. Rod, 38. Tarn, 39. AU, 40. Memo,
42. Lily, 43. Chalk, 46. Coma, 48. Yellowstone Park.

Down

1. Dinosaur, 2. Aragonite, 3. Orogeny, 4. Dop, 5. Beryl, 6. Ibis, 7. Lo, 8. Adam,
9. Topaz, 12. Gold, 13. Marble, 16. Ogre, 20. Pseudomorph, 22. Alluvial, 24. Lapidary,
25. Martin, 26. Trigonal, 28. China Clay, 31. Alp, 32. Galena, 34. No, 41. Four,
43. Cow, 44. Ant, 45. Kin, 47. SB.