

BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER NO. 25 APRIL 1989

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MUSEUM VISITS

Mick Wolfe

The idea of museum visits seems to have gone down well with the membership. Is there a mineral collection in your area (Museum, University, etc) that you think is worth a visit? If so and you are prepared to help organise it please send details to the Newsletter Editor.

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WOLLATON HALL NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, NOTTINGHAM

Mick Wolfe

The visit to Wollaton Hall took place on the 18th January 1989. Those attending were met by Mick Cooper, the organiser, in the mineral gallery of the museum where we were joined by Neil Turner, the curator of geology. This gallery contains some 500 specimens on permanent display. Neil kindly answered questions about the

display whilst we looked round, before taking the party 'behind the scenes' to see some of the 4500 specimens in the reserve collection. He had kindly put out some Cornish specimens and a microscope in the storage area where the remainder of the collection was housed. All the cabinets were unlocked and specimens handled. The main strength of the collection is old north England material, especially some fine baryte, and central European minerals. Neil proved an excellent host and we were all grateful for the opportunity to handle such excellent material. The public display is well worth a visit by any member in the Nottingham area.

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CITY OF SHEFFIELD MUSEUM

Chris Jewson

10.00 a.m. Saturday 21st January and a group of us gathered in the foyer of the Museum where we were welcomed by Tim Riley, the Principal Keeper of Natural Sciences, who outlined the programme for the morning. Due to a lack of space in the annex we split into 2 groups and arranged to meet in an hour. Those of us not on the first 'tour' spent an absorbing hour enjoying the public display of geological and mineral specimens. This display is well worth a visit in its own right. It concentrates on the local area and is shown in an imaginative arrangement of well-lit modern display cases. The specimens are of such quality that they stimulate the basest of emotions, forget thy neighbours ox and his ass, I'll settle for just one of their fluorites. After an excellent cuppa in the Museum coffee shop the groups exchanged roles. We were then taken across the road to the annex and squeezed into a room packed with the most superb cabinets. The 4000+ specimens are stored on the Hey Chemical Index system. The earliest specimen is a quartz crystal with phantoms collected in 1801. The collection is approximately 50/50 foreign/UK, with 10% local pieces. Largely owing to a shortage of space, current policy is to concentrate on expanding the collection of local specimens. Time being limited we were invited to request those specimens which we would like to see; another bad attack of avarice ensued, the specimens were superb.

We were all struck by the huge task facing Tim and his staff with the conservation of these beautiful specimens. With some difficulty Tim persuaded us to rejoin the others and visit the geological reference library ; absolutely fascinating. It was an all too brief access to a wealth of literature not readily available to the amateur collector. The museum has an interesting range of specimens and publications on sale in the foyer and most of us took the opportunity to acquire additions to our collections/libraries. The main business of the day concluded, Tim led us to the nearby "West End" pub for an enjoyable and convivial lunch. Following a most sincere vote of thanks to Tim for a truly interesting and enjoyable visit we went on our various ways with many a promise (threat !) to return.

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VISIT TO LIVERPOOL MUSEUM

Mike Rothwell

On Saturday 28th January seventeen members and three guests visited the Liverpool Museum. The visit was arranged with Philip Phillips and Geoff Tresise, curators of Palaeontology and Mineralogy/Geology respectively. Philip met those of us who travelled by car at 10.30 a.m. at the Museum's staff car park in which we were kindly allowed to park. The first part of the visit was spent in the Museum's new Natural History room on the second floor. This room, which was completed in 1987 and holds some 4000 specimens, is specially designed for 'hands on' study of natural history. The room is equipped with menu-driven video discs describing selected mineral specimens, fossils, and birds, and stereo microscopes for closer examination of the specimens. Philip told us that at present the Natural History room is only opened during school holidays and for parties, such as ours, by prior arrangement. To date it has been opened for a total of 25 weeks and has had some 70,000 visitors. The museum deserves much praise for this initiative. After lunch we moved on to visit the main museum collection of 11,000 mineral specimens. The collection is extremely well curated and the catalogue computerised. Philip and Geoff reckon that they can locate 90% of the specimens within 30 seconds and 99% within two

minutes. The remainder they are not so sure about. The main attraction, at least for our party, was the North of England collection. Beautiful specimens of fluorite and galena from Weardale, fluorite, baryte, calcite, and hematite from West Cumbria, mimetite/pyromorphite from the Caldbeck Fells, and other Northern specimens were soon surrounded by an admiring group. Amongst the many other specimens available for inspection a beautiful chalcotrichite from Wheal Phoenix (which appealed to a Cornwall buff in our party) and the gemstone collection alone were certainly worth the trip. Our thanks to Philip and Geoff for their hospitality and help, and for a most enjoyable visit to Liverpool Museum.

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OBITUARY

It is with regret that we announce the death of one of our members. Mrs. Mabel Lumb passed away on Wednesday 28th December 1988. She was a very keen member and joined in all the activities. Several members of the Warrington Group attended the funeral.

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"MINERALS OF THE CALDBECK FELLS"

Mick Cooper

After several years of hardwork the final draft of this new illustrated guide to the mines and minerals of the Caldbeck Fells, Cumbria is now complete (see enclosed leaflet). BUT the publishers, the British Museum (Natural History) Publications Department, are not proposing to issue a hardback copy unless there is a demand. So, if you want it in hardback, write NOW to :

Chris Owen

Natural History Museum Publications

Cromwell Road

LONDON SW7 5DD

Publication is expected to be in late 1989.

NEW MEMBERSHIP LISTING

With this newsletter you will find an updated membership list. Please check your details carefully and if they need correction please let the Chairman know by post.

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SPRING MINI SYMPOSIUM

Those of you who have returned the application form to Peter Braithwaite from the last newsletter will have already realised that the proposed Spring Mini Symposium has had to be cancelled due to lack of support. Less than 25 members were interested and the resulting cost per member would have been very high. This must be disappointing for those interested in attending but the poor level of support was surprising in view of the three to one majority in favour of the idea at the 1987 AGM. Could it be that the proposed timing was wrong (Easter)? Is two days too long ? Would an alternative venue be more appropriate ? Is the suggested format not to your liking ? Only by knowing your ideas can Peter change the details. He intends to raise the idea again at the 1989 AGM so have your suggestions ready.

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FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Marcel Adriaansen, who describes himself as a "very enthusiastic mineral collector" would like to exchange information and specimens with British collectors. Contact him at Donaustraat 42, 906 SN ASSEN, Holland.

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NEW FINDS

Steve Rust has advised the newsletter of the following occurrences, all x-ray confirmed at the BM(NH).

- Ullmanite** NiSbS un-named trial at NGR SN 720 693 near
Ysbyty Ystyth, Dyfed, Wales
as grey metallic masses to 5mm and as extremely rare
cubic crystals to 1mm.
- Dickite** $\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_2\text{O}_5(\text{OH})_4$ **Dyfnwryn Mine, Powys, Wales**
- Schulenbergite** $(\text{Cu}, \text{Zn})_7(\text{SO}_4, \text{CO}_3)_2(\text{OH})_{10} \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$ same location
- Nanuwite** $(\text{Zn}, \text{Cu})_4(\text{SO}_4)(\text{OH})_6 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ same location
which all occur in small amounts as crusts of platy
crystals. The dickite analysed was a translucent blue-
green colour (presumably stained by copper) and could
be confused with supergene copper minerals.
- Nanuwite** **Dylife mine, Dylife, Powys, Wales**
as pale blue-green curved platy crystals in thin drusy
crusts with sepielite and Mn-Fe oxides on quartz-
chalcopyrite veinstone.
- Schneiderite - linarite** $(\text{Pb}, \text{Cu})_2(\text{Se}, \text{S})\text{O}_4(\text{OH})_2$? **Llechwe-ddhelyg**
mine, Salem, Dyfed, Wales
as intense blue to light blue balls to 1mm scattered
over quartz with langite, malachite, and brochantite.
A quantitative analysis suggests the mineral is almost
exactly of mid-series composition with a minute
predominance of selenate over sulphate.
- Caledonite** $\text{Pb}_5\text{Cu}_2(\text{CO}_3)(\text{SO}_4)_3(\text{OH})_6$ same location
as druses of prismatic blue-green crystals to 0.5mm
associated with
- Susannite** $\text{Pb}_4(\text{SO}_4)(\text{CO}_3)_2(\text{OH})_2$
in yellowish plates. This is only the second reported
occurrence of susannite in Wales.

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BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY) MINERALOGY SECTION OPEN DAY
SATURDAY 21ST OCTOBER 1989.

A restricted number of tickets to this event have been made
available to the B.M.S. If you have not already reserved a ticket
through another society and would like to attend please write to
Roy Starkey - enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. The format

of the open day will be similar to the 1986 open day with guided tours of the Mineralogical Department that will include :

Mineral Gallery & history of the collection

A selection from the Russell & Ashcroft collections

Cataloguing & computer inventory

Gemmology

Rock & mineral preparation laboratory

X-ray laboratory

Electron microprobe laboratory

In addition there will be two lectures each of one hour. The minerals of the Caldbeck Fells' is the title of one and the other is concerned with current topics of mineral research in the Department of Mineralogy.

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SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Neil Hubbard, the membership secretary, will still be happy to receive cheques (£3.50 single or £5.00 for a couple) from those members who have not paid their subs for 1989.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

13/14th May 1989 - International Gem & Mineral Show, Watershed Media Centre, Canons Road, Bristol.

24th June 1989 - Medway Mineral & Fossil Fair, Upstairs Community Hall, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, Gillingham, Kent.

26-28th August 1989 - Harrogate International Gem & Mineral Fair, Crown Hotel, Crown Place, Harrogate, Yorkshire.

23-24th September 1989 - 8th B.M.S. Symposium, Department of Geology, Leicester University.

6-8th October 1989 - 3rd Greek Mineral, Gem & Fossil Show, Hotel Zafolia, 87-89 Alexandras Avenue, Athens, Greece.

21st October 1989 - British Museum (Natural History) Open Day, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

4th November 1989 - Warrington Craft & Mineral Fair, Alford Hall, Manchester Road, Warrington.

2nd December, 1989 - Annual Bazaar Amateur Geological Society. St. Albans Church Hall, West Heath Drive, Golders Green, London, N.W.11.

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NEW ADDITIONS TO THE B.M.S. REFERENCE COLLECTION

751	BRUSHITE	Wh.Cock, St Just	Cornwall	Geldart, I
752	LAVENDULAN	Sandyhills Bay	Dumfries, Scot	Geldart, I
753	CHENEVIXITE	Wh.Unity, Gwennap	Cornwall	Geldart, I
754	BROOKITE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Leppington, M
755	MOLYBDENITE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Leppington, M
756	EPIDOTE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Leppington, M
757	CHLORITE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Wirth, M
758	SCHEELITE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Leppington, M
759	SPHENE	Shap Pink Quarry	Cumbria	Wirth, M
760	GARNET	Wh.Ramsley, S.Zeal	Okehampton, Dev	Zachariades, N
761	BROCHANTITE	Dale Head Newlands	Valley Cumb	Wirth, M
762	BROCHANTITE	Dale Head Newlands	Valley Cumb	Wirth, M
763	VESELYITE	Straitsteps Vein	Wanlockhead Scot	Hubbard, N
764	SCHEELITE	Bedford Utd Mine	Tavistock Devon	Hubbard, N
765	SPANGOLITE	Hallets Shaft	Wh Caradon Corn	Hubbard, N
766	CRANDALLITE	Wh.Jane(15 level)	Kea, Cornwall	Hubbard, N
767	MONAZITE	Lanterdan Quarry	Tintagel Cornw	Hubbard, N
768	RUTILE	Lanterdan Quarry	Tintagel Cornw	Hubbard, N
769	ALBITE	Loanhead Quarry	Beith Scotland	Harrison, B
770	AZURITE	Great Orme	Llandudno Wales	Vanston, J
771	SIDERITE	Wyndham M, Ogmre	South Wales	Harrison, B
772	BIRNESSITE	Penberthy Croft	St Hilary Cornw	Betterton, J
773	BIRNESSITE	Penberthy Croft	St Hilary Cornw	Betterton, J
774	CARMINITE	Brandy Gill(nr)	Caldbeck, Cumbria	Rothwell, M
775	CARMINITE	Brandy Gill(nr)	Caldbeck, Cumbria	Rothwell, M
776	JOSEITE	Carrock Mine	Caldbeck Cumbria	Spence, J
777	CALCITE	Stank Mine, Dalton-in-Furness	Cum	Bell, R
778	HEMIMORPHITE	Straitstep Vein	Wanlockhead Scot	Bell, R
779	VARISCITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
780	CACOXENITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
781	WAVELLITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
782	LIBETHENITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
783	TORBERNITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
784	CHALCOSIDERITE	Gunheath Pit	St Austell, Cornw	Bell, R
785	ARSENOPYRITE	Kitt Hill Mine	S Climsland Corn	Bell, R
786	CYANOTRICHITE	Wh. Bassett	Redruth Cornwall	Bell, R

787	FLUORITE	Carrock Mine	Caldbeck Cumbria	Bell, R
788	CHLORITE	Wh. Unity, St Day	Cornwall	Bell, R
789	OLIVENITE	Wh. Gorland St Day	Cornwall	Bell, R
790	WOLFRAMITE	Cligga Mine,	Perranzabuloe, Cornw	Bell, R
791	CASSITERITE	Cligga Mine,	Perranzabulow, Cornw	Bell, R
792	HEULANDITE	Wh. Hazzard	St Just Cornw	Bell, R
793	SPHALERITE	Wh. Concord	St Agnes Cornw	Bell, R
794	MOLYBDENITE	Prince of Wales M	Calstock Cornw	Bell, R
795	ANATASE	Remfrey Pit	St Enoder Cornw	Bell, R
796	ANATASE	Remfrey Pit	St Enoder Cornw	Bell, R
797	SIDERITE	Wh. Drea St Just	Cornwall	Bell, R
798	GREENOCKITE	Straitstep Vein	Wanlockhead Scot	Meikle, K
799	HEMIMORPHITE	Straitstep Vein	Wanlockhead Scot	Meikle, K
800	HEMINORPHITE	Straitstep Vein	Wanlockhead Scot	Meikle, K