



MERRY CHRISTMAS!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS to ALL!

Bay Area Mineralogists

December 2006 Newsletter

Next meeting: Dec. 13th, 2006

8:00 PM, Room P-24

Foothill College, Los Altos, California

<http://www.baymin.org>



BAM is an eclectic group of mineral enthusiasts who gather to promote and share their interests in advanced mineralogy and mineral collecting. Membership is open to individuals with various levels of experience in mineralogy. The roster includes amateur mineralogists and professionals from organizations including the United States Geological Survey, the California Division of Mines and Geology, local universities and colleges, research laboratories and institutes, museums and mining companies, well-known mineral dealers, notable private mineral collectors and accomplished field collectors.

December Meeting Agenda

Nothing special planned for this December meeting, but it might be a good time to clear out some of those extras in your collection for our **Winter Silent Auction**. BAM dues are really cheap, so here's your chance to make up some of the gap between what it costs BAM to run and what you pay for dues. The silent auctions are the biggest contributor to our kitty. Please bring a nice sample or two, a book perhaps, some old mineral magazines or other items of mineralogical interest.

Dues are due!

My October 16th Trip to the Benitoite Gem Mine

by Rick Kennedy riken@flash.net

It was about a month after Dave Schreiner had given me the news that he was opening up the mine to parties of five or more. I had spread the word throughout the eBay community as much as I could and a couple of my customers asked me to take them up. Add BAM member Bill Spence and a surprise last minute email from former Gem Mine co-owner Bill Forrest and we had our five. Everyone except Bill Forrest (who was coming from Fresno) met up at my house around 5:30AM. Pretty dang early for those of us that did not sleep much the night before. After the obligatory food stop in Hollister, we were on our way! We decided to go in through New Idria and took the high road where the split was. The road was rough, but quite passable despite the opinion of some of the other drivers. I remember the days when one could get near the Gem Mine from New Idria in 30-45 minutes. Those days are long gone and I'd say it took us 60-90 minutes to cover that distance.

We arrived at the mine at 9:30 AM, Dave had kindly left the gate open for us. We made our introductions and it turned out that we had Bill, Bill, Bill, not Bill, not Bill and not Bill. We were given the full run of the mine for our \$100.00 investment and could fill a five-gallon bucket for the day. Extra was negotiable. The only big rule was no hammering, but to be honest I rarely had the urge. I showed my two friends that I had brought (Bill and not Bill) what I would look for and then made a beeline to the loo. A full outhouse should be set up soon! When I got back, I chatted with Dave (Not Bill) and Bill Forrest for a while. It was a real pleasure to have Bill Forrest there, he was a real gentleman and was not only helpful to my friends, but told many stories about some of the big finds that were made in their thirty plus years of working on the mine.



Rick's 5+ carat Benitoite

There is a lot of rock with potential still there. In the several hours I collected, I covered very little of the surface area and still managed to fill my bucket with rough that I'm very pleased with. I found around ten pieces that I could see Benitoite in and many showing Neptunite. For a midday respite, I had brought my small BBQ and cooked sausages for the group. Everyone got along very well and every person found some Benitoite. Around 5:00, we were pretty pooped and our buckets were full, so we said our good byes and started the bumpy drive home.

A recent view of the Benitoite Gem Mine

I am certainly going back, hoping for a good rain before I do. At least for a couple of seasons the collecting should be good. After that, he is going to need to turn over the ground to keep producing. The cost to black light is still prohibitive, but there is a reason for that. Accidents and injuries are much more likely at night, as is the chance of a large gem being recovered. For his part, Dave was a gracious host. He is putting together a washing system so people can go through gravel for gem rough and he had no problem with us using the water gun I had brought for Dave.



New minerals at the Munich Show



Green **Fluorite**, Riemvasmaak, near Oranje River, Northern Cape, South Africa 8x6x5.7 cm www.irocks.com photo
 ~5cm Pink **Fluorite** from Pakistani alpine cleft deposit www.trinityminerals.com photo
 2.3 cm **Rhodochrosite** with 0.5 cm **Shigaite** crystal, N'Chwaning II Mine, Kalahari. www.trinityminerals.com photo
Childrenite, Poco Dantas, Corrego do Piaui, Taquaral, MG, Brazil, 1cm xls. 8x5x4cm www.dakotamatrix.com photo

PbMoO₄ Passion!

Or, in lay terms, "Wulfenite, my favorite mineral species!"

by Dan Evanich dan@calminco.com

Here's a short bio about me and the mineral species I seek most actively. The rock you see below came to me about two years ago through an old collection and really ignited my interest in the entire wulfenite species. It's a museum size specimen of near perfect orange wulfenite cubes on host dolomite/calcite matrix from Ahumada Mine in Los Lamentos mining district, Mexico. It measures a full 8" x 7" x 5" and has over a hundred cubic wulfenite crystals measuring up to 5/8". I specialize in Los Lamentos wulfenite specimens exhibiting various crystal forms as well as a few of the associated minerals also from that locality. Anglesite and arsenian rich vanadinite (endlicheite) are a couple to mention as there are not many other well documented species still around. Willemite, calcite, cerussite, and descloizite are a few of the more recognized "others" from Ahumada Mine, Los Lamentos District. Today I continue to seek out unusual wulfenite crystal forms and the "others" whenever possible from this mine.



My interest in minerals stems from my boyhood days growing up in Colorado and New Mexico. There I was exposed to rock collecting by my dad at the early age of about 7 or 8. I remember us driving up to Silverton, Colorado on fishing trips and rummaging about the many mine dumps looking for nice "shiny crystals" and other neat rocks. I kept a lot of lead and pyrite because they were in great abundance. Petrified wood was also important to me because it, too, was all around where we would hike in the Southwest. I never did find that vein of elusive turquoise when we lived in New Mexico. Our home was in a small town called Farmington in the Four Corners area on the Navajo reservation. I just couldn't figure out why turquoise was so hard to find because there was so much Navajo jewelry made with it back in the early 60's.

After moving to California in 1965, my rock collecting activity faded as the High School years came on, but I still had that mineral curiosity whenever I hiked or drove into the Sierras. I took a couple of geology classes in the mid 90's and my interest was re-kindled in the scientific side of rocks. My college degree is not in the Sciences, but rather in Business because that is where I found myself focusing work wise. After the exposure to the formal Geology classes, things got really interesting. I discovered that I lived in probably the most diverse geologic area you could in this country, California. A multitude of different assemblages were an easy drive away and you could still access a good number of them to collect minerals.



I visited several mineral shows and met many people in the mid 90's that were collectors. The most interesting thing I kept hearing about was benitoite from California. I knew it came from San Benito County, but was not sure of the exact locality. My interest was growing in all minerals, so I had to find out where this place called "Clear Creek" was. It sounded familiar, and, after visiting it, I remembered that I used to ride dirt bikes there in the early 70's. How ironic that I was right there on hallowed mineral collecting ground and never really knew it back then!

In 1997, I was fortunate enough to be introduced to Rick Kennedy by a jeweler friend in Campbell. Soon after, I met John Magnasco through a business associate, joined BAM that year, and the rest is history.

Today, mineral collecting is a passionate activity that I deeply love and I consider myself so very fortunate that my wife, Sharyn, completely understands this! She joins me on many of the collecting trips, but, after her experience underground for two days at Majuba Hill Mine, she is more than happy to leave the "rough" ventures to me.

Check out...

Scott Kleine's Summer 2006 Topaz Collecting report at:

<http://www.greatbasinminerals.com/Collecting%20Reports/Sept%202006%20Topaz%20Mtn/Colorado%20Topaz%20Trip,%20Sept,%202006.htm>

Upcoming Events of Mineralogical Interest

Jan 27- Feb 11

TUCSON!

Jan 27- Feb 10

Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show Martin Zinn Expositions; five locations: The InnSuites Hotel, 475 N. Granada; The Mineral & Fossil Marketplace, 1333 N. Oracle Rd.; Clarion Hotel - Randolph Park, 102 N. Alvernon Way; Quality Inn, 1025 E. Benson Hwy.; Ramada Limited, 665 N. Freeway; 10-6 daily, 10-5 last day; free admission; more than 400 international dealers, free shuttle among locations, Artist Gallery at InnSuites Hotel; contact Martin Zinn Expositions, P.O. Box 665, Bernalillo, NM 87004-0665, fax (505) 867-0073; e-mail: MZ0955@aol.com; Web site: <http://www.mzexpos.com/arizona.htm>

Jan 31- Feb 5

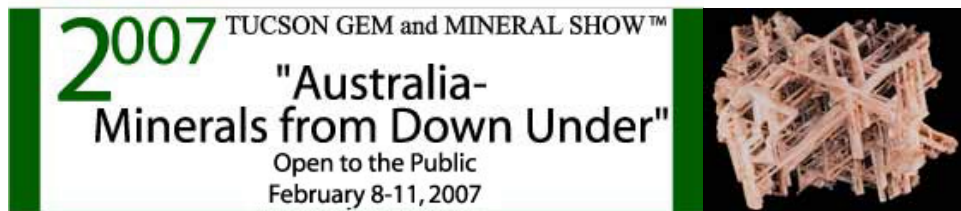
2007 AGTA GemFair™ Tucson Tucson Convention Center, 260 South Church, Tucson, Arizona 85701 (Main Entrance Off Granada)
<http://www.agta.org/consumer/tradeshows/gemfairtucson.htm>

Show Dates and Hours

GemHall & Galleria	January 31 - February 4	10:00a.m. - 6:00p.m.
GemHall & Galleria	February 5	10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.
GemHall II & Designer Pavilion	January 31 - February 4	10:00a.m. - 6:00p.m.

Feb 8 - Feb 11

Tucson Gem & Mineral Show Tucson Convention Center, 260 S. Church, Phone 520-791-4101. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday <http://www.tgms.org/>

**Feb 2 - Feb 6**

Tucson Westward Look Mineral Show

Westward Look Resort

A Half-Mile East of Oracle Rd.
 245 E. Ina Rd., Tucson, AZ 85704; (520) 297-1151
 Web site www.westwardminerals.com

Dates: February 2-6, 2007

Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m

<http://www.tucsonshowguide.com/tsg/shows/westwardlook.cfm>

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Meetings

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month during the academic year (Sept → June) with the exception of each February, which is left free for those making their way to Tucson. The location is Foothill College, Room P-24, Geology Building, Los Altos Hills, California. 8-10pm. Take Interstate 280 North from San Jose toward San Francisco to the El Monte exit and head west.

Sign-up Sheet

We **still** need volunteers to fill the spots → **In case you couldn't tell; the cells that are empty are the ones that you can volunteer to fill!!!**

Month	Newsletter	Program	Snacks	Field Trip
September	Dan Evanich BAM Nevada Trip	Dan Evanich Majuba video	John Magnasco	Dan Evanich BAM Nevada Trip
October	Various	BLM on Clear Creek Mgmt Area	Rick Kennedy	Clear Creek and/or Big Creek Trip 10/21-22
November	None	None	None	None
December	Various	Winter Silent Auction	Dan – drinks Lenny - snacks	
January				
February		OFF	OFF	
March		Tucson Show		
April				
May				
June				