
Bay Area Mineralogists

March 2008

Next meeting: March 12, 2008

NEW TIME 7:00 pm!!

Foothill College

<http://www.baymin.org>



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7:00 Start Time for March 12 Meeting

At the January meeting, the group consensus was to try an earlier start in order to wrap up at a reasonable time. The post-Tucson meeting is always well-attended and often runs long in the first place... hence, our shiny new starting time of 7:00pm. Plan for a little extra traffic on the way in.

We meet in the Geology Lab at Foothill College. See <http://www.baymin.org/Meet/FoothillMap.gif> for a campus map. Bring \$2 for parking.

BAM March Program: Tucson!

. As per tradition, the February meeting hiatus is followed by the March retrospective / blowout on the Tucson show. The earlier start leaves all the more time to discuss what sounds like it was a fantastic show. Dan Evanich and John Magnasco are preparing a slide show with highlights from the desert

This year's theme was “American Mineral Treasures” and word has it the displays were nothing short of jaw-dropping. BAM was well-represented in Arizona this year, with at least twelve members out to buy, sell, or just leave nose-prints on cases filled with priceless specimens.



*California gold display case at the Main Show
John Sulzbach photo*

The annual BAM dinner was held at La Fuente restaurant on February 15. Along with a number of guests and drop-ins, the unofficial BAM list included Bob & Gretchen Luepke-Bynum, Joe & Bobbi Cernac, John & Ann Sulzbach, Bill Spence, Steve Pullman, Stan Bogosian, Paul Andrade, Chuck Trantham, John Magnasco, Dan Evanich, and Rick Kennedy.



*The "usual suspects" at La Fuente
John Sulzbach photo*

March is always a fun BAM meeting – be sure to bring your Tucson rocks (and stories behind them!) next Wednesday!

Planning for the BAM New Mexico Field Trip in June

Dan Evanich has been working through the details of our next major BAM collecting trip, a visit to New Mexico in June. With the help of alumnus Dan Carlson, it looks like we'll be able to get lodging through the University of New Mexico, but we'll need to nail down a time and approximate level of interest. Dan will have more details at the March meeting; if you're interested but won't be there next Wednesday, drop him a note at djevan@aol.com.

"Cash & Treasures" at the Gem Mine

Many of you undoubtedly have heard about the episode of the Travel Channel's "Cash & Treasures" show that was filmed at the benitoite locality last December. Herb Yeates, who has a personal web site on fluorescent minerals,

attending and assembled a page with photos from that visit.

Those looking for some nice shots should check out <http://luminousminerals.com/benitoite.shtml>

In Search of Iceland Spar

This request originally came via Barb Matz and has been languishing in my file, waiting for the next newsletter... following is verbatim from the e-mail:

"Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Norwegian artist currently working on an art project about the crystal Iceland spar. I write to you believing that your institution might have a piece of Iceland spar, and I am hoping that you kindly would want to contribute to my project with a photo of the piece.

WHY:

My interest for Iceland spar was initially set off from a fact once told to me by a geologist: Petrographic microscopes used in mineralogy originally had Iceland spar as a basic component, and led to great advances in the field of geology. At the turn of the 20th century the supply source of the crystal, the Helgustadir quarry, was nearly emptied and a situation of "spar famine" took place. I think that the paradox of the story forms an interesting case: The development of a particular science led to scarcity of the material the development was based on. Iceland spar was of great importance for the development of other fields of science as well, and the "spar famine" concerned quite a few scientists at the time.

HOW:

I am searching for Iceland spar crystals taken out of the Helgustadir quarry on Iceland in order to make a collection of photographs of as many pieces of the crystal as I can trace. The photographic "archive" will metaphorically be a synthesis of the quarry: What was once fragmented and spread all over the world will be put together again photographically.

If you/your institution have a piece of Iceland spar, I would kindly like to ask you to take a documentation picture of the piece and send it to me.

I am searching for any sorts of pictures: Photos of exhibition pieces in their display case, pure rhombs, pieces as elements in instruments, the instruments themselves and whatever other forms the Iceland spar crystals might have taken.

The photograph may be digital or analogue, according to what suits you best. Use the equipment you have available: Professional quality is not required. What is most important to me is to get hold of as many pictures as possible.

It can be posted to me by e-mail:
to.johannessen@gmail.com
Or by mail:

Toril Johannessen
Nikolaismauet 2a
5003 BERGEN
NORWAY

I will also kindly ask you to forward my request to any other institution or person that can possibly contribute to my project: The pieces of Iceland spar are spread globally, though most of it is supposedly in Europe. To my knowledge, most Museums of Natural History would have an exhibition piece. I believe faculties of various branches of natural sciences have pieces both in rhombs and as refined elements in instruments. Manufacturers of lenses (Nicol prisms), petrographic microscopes, polarimeters and other various instruments are likely to have samples. Other collectors and institutions might also have pieces either in their collection or in use.

Sincerely,
Toril Johannessen
<http://www.toriljohannessen.no>

Upcoming Shows

March 8-9
Salinas Valley Rock & Gem Club
Spreckels Veteran's Memorial Hall
5th and Llano Streets, Spreckels
10am-5pm both days

March 8-9
Mother Lode Mineral Society
Stanislaus County Fairgrounds
900 N. Broadway, Turlock
8th, 10am-6pm; 9th, 10am-5pm

March 15-16
Vallejo Gem & Mineral Society
Solano County Fairgrounds
900 Fairgrounds Dr, Vallejo
10am-5pm both days

March 22-23
Calaveras Gem & Mineral Society
Calaveras "Frogtown" Fairgrounds
Hwy 49, Angels Camp
22nd, 10am-5pm; 23rd, 10am-4pm

March 22-23
Roseville Rock Rollers
Roseville (Placer County) Fairgrounds
800 All America City Blvd, Roseville
22nd, 10am-5pm; 23rd, 10am-4pm

April 4-6
Santa Clara Vly Gem & Mineral Society
Santa Clara County Fairgrounds
334 Tully Road, San Jose
4th, 9am-5pm; 5th-6th, 10am-5pm

April 12-13
Mariposa Mineral & Gem Show
Mariposa County Fairgrounds
10am-5pm both days

Letters to the BAM Editor

Please send your comments, content, compliments, and/or complaints to Don Windeler, don.windeler@rms.com, 650-591-1644.