

# Bay Area Mineralogists September 2006 Newsletter

Next meeting: Sep. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006

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.

## September Meeting Agenda

Dan Evanich will be presenting a 45-minute video tour of the adits of the Majuba Hill Mine together with a review of other Summer trips. Bring your stories and samples from your Summer collecting adventures!

## Nevada BAM Field Trip - May 2006

**Willard Mine, Redbird Mine, Bloody Canyon, and Majuba Hill Mine**

By Dan Evanich

The first 2006 BAM extended field trip was held over the Memorial Day weekend and covered a host of mineral collecting localities. We kicked off the long weekend with a visit to Scott Klein's home in Reno, Nevada. Scott was a gracious host and we were treated to a showing of one of the most extensive collections of Nevada minerals to be



Viewing Scott Klein's collection

found anywhere. We feasted on a BBQ lunch, and then prepared to head off into the distant dry reaches of the basin and range provinces of Nevada that afternoon.



Cinnabar crystals from Red Bird Mine

The first evening was spent at The Willard Mine, just off of highway 80, north of Lovelock, Nevada. We made base camp here for two nights collecting phosphates at Willard the first

afternoon. The site is still worthy of collecting and yielded a couple of very nice 8-10cm wide vugs containing clear fluellite crystals to about ¼". From Willard base camp, the next day we headed east into the Humboldt Range to the Red Bird Mine in search of cinnabar crystals. The going was a little tough with several wash-outs having to be negotiated. We did reach the mine site and the view was awesome. There are still a few out buildings standing and the dumps were easily accessed. Major adits were closed off or caved in. From Redbird Mine, we drove further east in search of Hollywood Mine. After a few wrong turns, we did locate the presumed high grade ore dumps of the Hollywood found three years earlier. No GPS on this one, but fortunately, Dan Evanich imprinted all the right turns somewhere in his mind and we reached it. We collected samples of material yet to be fully identified, but certainly containing stibnite and possibly stibiconite.



A look up at the Red Bird Mine dump



The main dumps showing the big turnout at the Red Bird Mine



Rick Kennedy contemplating a faster way down from the Red Bird

On the third day, the group split up with several members heading off for a day of collecting at Bloody Canyon, further north in the Humboldt Range. A separate report on that part of the trip will follow. Members Rick Kennedy and Dan Evanich proceeded to Majuba Hill Mine to scout access to both The Copper and Tin stopes as well as to do a little remedial construction in the Tin Stope.

We entered the main adit of Majuba Hill Mine and noted several changes that have occurred since the last trip, two years ago. It was early in the season and the mountain was still damp from recent April

rains. A couple of areas in the main adit had slumped (small cave-ins) and progress down the adit is no longer as easy on the back as it used to be. First note was that the "museum" shelf midway down the adit had been very nicely cleaned up and restocked, courtesy of Roseville Rock Rollers.

We turned left into the adit leading to The Copper Stope and found it to be relatively unchanged through Crosscut #212. From there, things got progressively worse. We began to encounter a lot of loose debris after the last turn upward that leads to the three-rock entry passageway into the main Copper Stope. This last hole that provides access to the stope now measures about 20" x 20" and is very unstable. Having gone this far, I made the decision to do a quick inspection and evaluation of stope for safety and access. Upon squeezing through, I found that the "roof" that had been built to keep debris

coming down from the main stope from blocking the access is now stressed and very unstable. After standing up and doing a visual in the lower portion for ten minutes, the decision to not collect in Copper Stope was made by Mother Nature. A distinct “thud” from falling debris further up in the cavern convinced me to slide back down the small chute, probably quicker than at any of the times over the past five years. We decided that Copper Stope was off-limits for this trip and quite possibly forever. Another trip to inspect it may be made late in summer after the area has had considerable time to dry out. Old mine stopes and moisture just don’t mix. After deciding that Copper Stope would be off limits, we focused our efforts on re-building the collecting bench at the top of the arch in The Tin Stope. A full day was spent in deconstructing the rotting wood bench that had been in place for 7-8 years and a new one was completed and in place today. Access to the back wall for olivenite and clinoclase specimens is much easier now since you can actually stand up and use both arms to chisel matrix away. It’s still a little precarious in that you have to ascend about 25’ upward to the top of the arch via an 18’ ladder and rope holds. Once up though, it’s relatively comfortable.



Snow at the Majuba Camp!

The weather decided to change Friday night and we noticed a drop in temperature of about 20 degrees when we exited the mine late that afternoon. What we didn’t plan on was snow! We were aware that the “official” weather report called for a 20% chance of showers Saturday and Sunday, not a big deal. The rest of the group made it up to Majuba Hill late that afternoon and we prepared camp for the next couple of days. The next few pictures tell the rest of the story and what we had to encounter both days.

Monday proved to be a very nice day with the weather clearing and a chance to scout the dumps of the main haulage way. The afternoon was spent collecting, cleaning, and packing specimens.

## Upcoming Events of Mineralogical Interest

**Sep 13-17** **Fall Colorado Mineral & Fossil Show**, Holiday Inn - Denver Central, 4849 Bannock St., Denver; Wed. 10-6, Thu. 10-6, Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5.  
<http://www.mzexpos.com>

## BAM Contact Information

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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

Month	Newsletter	Program	Snacks	Field Trip
September	Dan Evanich BAM Nevada Trip	Dan Evanich Majuba video	John Magnasco	
October				Big Creek/Rush Creek John Magnasco
November				
December				
January				
February		OFF	OFF	
March		Tucson Show		
April				
May				
June				