
Bay Area Mineralogists September 2015

Meeting: September 9, 2015; 7:00 pm
USGS, Building 3, Room 3-237
345 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park

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The Bay Area Mineralogists meet monthly during the school year, on the 2nd Wednesday. We meet at the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, on the second floor of Building 3, where the campus map (<http://online.wr.usgs.gov/kiosk/mparea3.html>) says "Conference Room." The front doors will be locked so you'll have to come up the stairs on the Middlefield Road side of the building. Parking is free.

September Program:
Minerals of the Smithsonian, 2015
By Dan Evanich



Silver with calcite, Kongsberg Norway

At the September meeting, member Dan Evanich will show photos of some of the fabulous specimens in the Smithsonian Minerals and Gems Gallery, which he visited earlier this year.

The current, and permanent, Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems, and Minerals opened to the public in September 1997, with over 2,000 specimens on display; however, minerals and gemstones have been part of the Smithsonian Institution's collection and exhibits since its inception.



Blue cap tourmaline

Over 150 years ago, James Smithson bequeathed his mineral collection along with the money needed to establish the Smithsonian Institution. Unfortunately, the Smithsonian collection was destroyed in a fire in 1865, but the gem and mineral collection has grown ever since. It currently numbers approximately 350,000 mineral specimens and 10,000 gems. Specimens from the national collection can be seen online in the [Gem](#) and [Mineral Galleries](#).

Show & Tell: your favorite summer acquisitions.

BAM at SFGMS Show

Fourteen BAM members and several of our Crystal Gazer friends showed off some of their collection at the SFGMS show August 22-23 and, as usual, the displays were stellar! The mineral ID table – which was moved to a central location in front of the stage beneath an enormous banner! – did a brisk business all weekend, and both of our gemologists fielded numerous questions. Sincere thanks to you all from the SFGMS show committee!

BAM Picnic

On August 29, Dan and Sharyn's back yard was filled with members and their families at the annual BAM picnic, where a good time was had by all. The silent auction tables featured many wonderful specimens and the give-away area was overflowing! We enjoyed abundant shade, cool beverages, and a tasty lunch of pot-luck contributions, BBQ, and of course, Chuck's (er, Heidi's) excellent peach pies. Thank you very much for your hospitality, Dan and Sharyn!



There was a lot of good stuff on the silent auction tables, and our SFGMS banner got more air time.



Stan and Dan (behind the camera) were the BBQ Meisters.



Happy picnickers chowing down!



There was a lot on offer at the give-away area, too.

Got Speaker Ideas?

Do you know of, or have you heard, a talk that BAM members would enjoy? Do you have a presentation of your own you'd be willing to share? Please forward your suggestions to the President, [don.windeler at rms.com](mailto:don.windeler@rms.com), with contact information.

BAM Summer Field Trip

Ten members attended the BAM summer field trip to Butte MT and vicinity. Everybody came home with a smile on their face and some new mineral specimens and other souvenirs. Dan Evanich, our intrepid leader, will present a program about the trip later this year.

CA Academy Fluorescent Request

The Academy of Science docents are developing fluorescent cart activities and looking for donations of fluorescent rocks and minerals. The specimens should be in the 2" to 4" size range and should include identification. Dan Evanich is coordinating a BAM donation, so contact him if you wish to contribute a specimen or two.

New Discovery of Derbyshire Blue John

Derbyshire Blue John (also known as Derbyshire Spar, or simply Blue John) is a form of fluorite with bands of a purple-blue or yellowish color, which is prized as semi-precious stone. The name is most commonly thought to derive from the French *bleu-jaune*, meaning 'blue-yellow,' or it could be related to the Cornish *bleujenn* or *blodon*, for a flower, bloom, or blossom (Cornish fluorspar is also called Blue John).



Cliff Blue Vein Bowl

The stone was fashionable during the Regency period in the early 1800s and graced the tables of Buckingham Palace and Chatsworth House.

The rare stone is found beneath Treak Cliff Hill near the town of Castleton in England's Derby District. Fourteen distinct veins of the material were found at this location beginning in the mid-1700s; the last discovery was made 150 years ago, and a "lost" vein was rediscovered in 2013. In August 2015 a new occurrence, the Ridley Vein, was discovered. This 15th vein, with a pattern distinctly different from the other 14, is named after miner Gary Ridley, who discovered it by accident while testing a stone chain saw.



The Ridley Vein features "swirling patterns of purple and blue."

The stone craftsmen at Treak Hill Cavern have already started forming the Ridley Vein material into ornamental items, some of which are for sale at the Cavern gift shop, of course.

Other occurrences of Blue John in the world include a possible source in Persia during ancient Roman times; and Chinese Blue John, a similar blue-banded fluorite that is currently produced by the Deqing Mine in Zhejiang Province, China.

Sources: Wikipedia, BBC News, mining.com

Rare mineral found in 1.2 Billion Year Old Scotland meteorite impact

A team of Australian geoscientists has discovered the earliest known occurrence of reidite, one of Earth's rarest minerals, in shocked zircon at Stac Fada, a meteorite impact area on Scotland's northwest coast. At 1.2 billion years, the finding is more than double the age of the previous oldest known occurrence, which is estimated to be 450 million years old.

“The discovery of this Precambrian occurrence indicates the potential for using the presence of reidite to indicate and record very ancient impact events,” said the lead scientist, Professor Steven Ruddy (Western Australia School of Mines).



Stac Fada meteorite impact deposit, Bay of Stoer, Scotland

Reidite is formed in manner similar to diamonds. Zircon morphs into reidite when shock waves from meteorite impacts trigger extremely high pressures and temperatures at the surface that are equal to those deep inside the Earth where diamonds form. The pressure makes minerals tightly repack their molecules into denser crystal structures. Reidite has the same composition as regular zircon, but is about 10% denser.

Source: www.mining.com

And Finally...

Member contributions to this newsletter are appreciated! Send content, incriminating photos, suggestions, or feedback to me at [matz.barb at gmail.com](mailto:matz.barb@gmail.com).

Upcoming Shows

Sep 12-20 – Denver CO: Eons Expos, LLLP, Denver Coliseum; 4600 Humboldt Street; Daily 9-6

Sep 13-20 – Denver CO: Wholesale and retail show; Martin Zinn Expositions, L.L.C., Ramada Plaza Denver Central; 4849 Bannock Street; Daily 10-6, Sun 10-5

Sep 18-20 – Denver CO: 48th Annual Denver Gem and Mineral Show, “Minerals of the American Southwest;” Denver Mart Expo Hall (formerly Merchandise Mart) 451 E. 58th Ave. (I-25 at Exit 215); Fri 9-6, Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5 [Tip: Park in back, enter from the Bead Show]

Sep 19-20 – Redwood City, CA: Sequoia GMS, Red Morton Community Activities Building; 1400 Roosevelt Ave; Sat 10-5, Sun 10-5

Sep 26-27 – Santa Rosa, CA: Santa Rosa M&GS, Wells Fargo Center; 50 Mark West Springs Road; Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5.

Sep 26-27 – Monterey, CA: Annual show; Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society, Monterey Fairgrounds; 2004 Fairgrounds Road; Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5

Oct 9-11 – Plaskett, CA: 24th Annual Big Sur Jade Festival; Pacific Valley School, on Hwy 1 60 miles S of Monterey, 40 mi N of Cambria; Fri 12-6, Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5

Oct 10-11 – Trona, CA: 74th Annual Trona Gem-O-Rama; SLG&MS Lapidary and Show Building, 13337 Main St. (corner of Main & Trona Rd.); Sat 7:30-5, Sun 7:30-4