

Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia

MINERAL MINUTES



Vol. 69, No. 10

Mineral Minutes

December 2010

Club Meeting: Wednesday, December 1, 7:00 PM

The annual Holiday Dinner and Party of the MSDC will take place as noted above. We meet at 6:45 PM in the lobby of the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. See separate invitation.

Program and Speaker: December's meeting will start an hour early, at 7 pm,

so that we can enjoy our annual holiday dinner together. Your side dishes, desserts, and beverages will guarantee that we will have a real feast, along with the brief business meeting to elect 2011 officers. Please e-mail Betty Thompson at bdthompson01@yahoo.com with what you plan to bring. See separate invitation.

Place: The National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 10th Street and Constitution Ave., Washington, D.C. We will gather at the Constitution Avenue entrance at 6:45 PM to meet our guard who will escort us to the Cathy Kirby room. If you park on the street, **REMEMBER THERE ARE PARKING FEES, PAYABLE AT THE KIOSKS, AND ENFORCEMENT UNTIL 10 PM.**

Upcoming Programs: January program -- Scott Southworth, from the USGS will be returning to present the program originally scheduled for last September -- "Recent Advances in the Understanding of the Geologic Framework of the Piedmont Province, DC, VA and MD." Note -- MSDC members and other club members and editors, please spread the word. This will be a very interesting program describing in some detail the geology of our "home" region, the Piedmont of Virginia, Maryland and DC. Those of us who were at the September meeting had a brief introduction to Scott's interesting presentation about our local geology. Don't miss this program!!! Remember, Wednesday, January 5, 7:45 PM at the usual meeting room at the Smithsonian.

February program - Steve Johnson, "An Introduction to the Minerals of Afghanistan." Steve is a geology graduate from William and Mary University, and is serving in the US Army. He has served in Afghanistan, where he established contacts with local mineral suppliers, and has added a number of nice specimens to his collection. This will be a timely discussion of minerals from a previously exotic region few of us have been privileged to visit. Nice minerals, interesting people, and spectacular scenery.

NOMINATIONS FOR 2011 MSDC OFFICERS

Ed Fisher, Nominating Committee Chairman

The nominating committee would like to thank all the members of MSDC who considered running for office in 2011. The slate of candidates for the MSDC executive board in 2011 is as follows:

President: Tom Tucker

Vice-president and program chairman: Andy Thompson

Treasurer: Rick Reiber

Secretary: Denise Whitman (with assistant secretaries Betty Thompson and Susan Fisher)

Director: Cynthia Payne (with current directors Dave Nanney and Don Greaves continuing)

IMPORTANT: Reminder Dues are Due Soon Rick Reiber

This year we are planning to produce a membership list in February, to be given to all paid members. We hope you'll remember to pay Rick Reiber because the list won't feel complete without your much appreciated presence on it. Bring your check and the enclosed form on page 7 (also online) to the December, or January meeting, or mail it to Mineral Society of DC, PO Box 9957, Alexandria, VA 22304. For new members who join/joined in the last months of the year, membership extends through the following year with no additional dues.

THE PREZ SAYS - A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Andy Thompson

Mineral collectors across the nation are gearing up for a monumental transition in their clubs' officers. It is election time and this brings home the reality that there are three types of clubs: those who annually reelect existing officers, those desperately searching for candidates, and lastly, those clubs fortunate enough to have a number of willing candidates. This year, thanks to MSDC members, I feel we are among the last-mentioned type club.

In this spirit of collaboration, I want to go out on a limb and advise MSDC's incoming President, whoever he or she may be, by providing a few suggestions for improving our club's performance. Yes, MSDC's nomination committee has provided one presidential candidate, but given write-in possibilities, I want to address my pretentious ideas to the entire club membership.

Recently I stumbled upon a forum called "The Stone" having nothing to do with minerals or collecting rocks. Rather, it is an electronic gathering place seemingly facilitated by the New York Times newspaper and in which philosophers and scientists share their random thoughts. One article triggered some thoughts I hope will be practical for all of us. It described the research of Yale psychology professor John Bargh who focuses on unconscious influences in judgments and social behavior. The forum drew on his and others' research and concluded that metaphors strongly influence our thoughts and decisions. Important as this is for MSDC members' day-to-day lives, I thought our incoming MSDC President and officers may benefit from considering this idea and its implications for the future content of this column.

One pattern I've noticed in other clubs' newsletters is that their presidents' articles almost always begin by announcing what season of the year it happens to be and then go from there. I want to suggest that most MSDC members already know what time of the year it is. So it is not a requirement that the President's column begin with a calendar update. Even though a reference to the fall or springtime can be a metaphor and so of value, MSDC's incoming President can economize our newsletter's column space by fast-forwarding to the real message.

That being said, the power of metaphors is the core of this President's final real message. Although I'm probably preaching to the choir, MSDC officers and members will do well to keep in mind that our constituency is a mixed bag of mineral collectors, geologists, rock hounds and whatever additional very interesting characters curiosity has tempted into our monthly meetings. Here's where the

importance of metaphors shows itself. Call a geologist a rock hound and you may need to apologize. Imply a rock hound is a collector of pretty-ite and you discount their scholarly interest in discovering fossils and asteroid debris. As a group, we are diverse not of a single stripe.

Then there is the question of how our MSDC monthly meetings can best be conducted. Based on research, I suggest that one of the most important factors for predicting the success of our gatherings is the presidential clip board which holds the meeting's agenda. The board needs to be heavy. The above mentioned Yale psychologist conducted a study in which volunteers were asked to evaluate the strengths of job applicants whose resumes were individually attached to either a heavy or light clip board. The evaluators invariably identified the applicants whose resumes were attached to the heavy clip boards as more serious and having greater gravitas than the owners of resumes attached to the light clip boards. My suggestion, of course, is for the incoming MSDC president to decide which type of meeting he or she wants to conduct, heavy, middling or light, and then attach the meeting's agenda to the appropriately weighted clip board. MSDC members are keen sighted and will pick up that cue.

The success of our club's efforts will further be assured if together we take control of our destiny. Neuroscientists writing in "The Stone" forum speak about the brain's frontal cortex which handles emotional regulation, gratification postponement, executive decision-making and long-term planning. "We study hard in high school to get admitted to a top college to get into a fine grad school to get an excellent job so we can get into the nursing home of our choice." Gophers and zebras can't do this but MSDC members can. Our newly elected officers need our help to guide the directions we want our club to take as we move down the road including our meeting topics, speakers and possibly field trips. If and when the new President asks for our active participation, for "all hands on deck," we know he or she wants more than our hands to show up and provide assistance. Our voices and other body parts also need to be fully in gear.

Other research studies over the years have echoed the above sentiments and found that the human brain often gives equal weight to what is symbolic and metaphorical, as distinct from valuing only facts and physical reality. Do you think we value metaphors because each of us is a metaphor?

With any luck at all, our club will move beyond our election of officers and our holiday dinner party. Then we will face 2011 with its call, however faint, to making personal New Year's resolutions. It might be fun for each

of us to consider what metaphors we individually would use to describe our involvement in MSDC, other clubs and, for that matter, in the other aspects of our lives. Do we tend to take a “hands off” or a “hands on” approach to our engagement? Cheerful or gloomy? Are we watching for opportunities to enhance our own goals and/or also anxious to help others achieve their goals and objectives? We have so many opportunities, almost as numerous as there are minerals, collecting sites and mysteries to enjoy. Go team!

MSDC MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 3, 2010

By Betty Thompson

Andy Thompson said he hoped everyone is aware that ALL are very welcome to come to the regular pre-meeting dinner at Pier 7 Restaurant in the Channel Inn (650 Water Street SW, on the waterfront), a very enjoyable, informal gathering that ranges from 5-6 people to twice that many. If you're coming, just email him on the morning of the meeting so he can let the restaurant know how many will be at the table.

Andy thanked past presidents Cynthia Payne and Ed Fisher for their contributions. He welcomed guests and new members, and honored the memories of long-time members Jack Cranford and Gladys Fuller, who passed on within recent weeks.

Terri Cordero, a new member, let Andy know that she is really enjoying her current training at the Smithsonian in how to be a mineral tour guide. She enthusiastically recommends the program to anyone interested. Its schedule covers six nights over six weeks.

The October minutes were approved as published. Treasurer Rick Reiber (pronounced RY ber) renewed the EFMLS insurance policy. Vice President and program chair Tom Tucker invited Scott Southworth back for January, to give his previously planned talk on the Piedmont region; we can confidently expect an information-rich and enjoyable program, given our experience of his superb impromptu geological tour of Mather Gorge, using the Nanney's slides from Great Falls. Ed Fisher, chair of the nominating committee, announced the candidates identified so far and said the full list would be in the next Mineral Minutes (see page 1).

Mary Bateman, newsletter editor, announced that, starting in January, a paper newsletter will be mailed only to those who have not said they want it electronically; otherwise

the newsletter will be “delivered” via e-mail notification. She also clarified two EFMLS policies that will affect which 2010 newsletter articles will be eligible for EFMLS editorial awards. First: Mary is now both Mineral Minutes editor and Eastern Federation BEAC chair, so the bulletin as a whole is ineligible for an award until her term as BEAC Chair ends. Second: Our bulletin had two editors this year, Susan Fisher as a generous editor *pro-tem* and now Mary as a more permanent editor. Under EFMLS policy, if a bulletin has had more than one editor during a year, articles and other materials published under only one of the editors may be submitted for awards from the Eastern Federation Bulletin Editors Committee. Mary and Susan had earlier agreed that MSDC's submissions for 2010 would come from the longer period when Susan was editor, January through June. So September-December 2010 newsletter materials will not be eligible for awards. Mary expressed regret that she had not made this clear before.

For Geology in the News, David Nanney shared a David Rasmussen article about why the Vietnam Wall is cracking. While the Wall is often incorrectly said to be made of black granite, it's really a heavier stone, gabbro, which collects heat and is oriented to the sun, leading to the cracks. Also, the 2004 Indonesia earthquake that killed about 200,000 people (including tsunami casualties) just had an official aftershock; Mary noted that much of the ash is turning to concrete. Erich Grundel pointed out that tonight's speaker is featured in *Rocks and Minerals* for October 2010.

Andy noted that for the holiday party in December, everyone should meet in the lobby at 6:45 instead of 7:30; we will start early in order to have dinner together. He invited ideas about party entertainment. Rick Reiber and Mary Bateman will create a Mineral Jeopardy; Pat Rehill suggested a mineral exchange and, later, a game that she is willing to organize. Don Greaves and Jeff Guerber won the door prizes.

Tom introduced speaker Patrick Haynes – Haynesite is named after him – and we were led by an expert on a virtual exploration of the splendid, diverse minerals of the Thomas Mountains of Utah. In his introduction, Tom told us that there is “no better collecting spot on earth.” Patrick's superb program was full of engaging stories and illustrated by photographs of both the specific collecting sites and marvelous specimens – some of which we were able to appreciate “live” after his talk, as we enjoyed the delectable refreshments provided by Mary Bateman and Susan Fisher.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

SUMMARY OF THE MSDC OCTOBER PROGRAM

“The Minerals of the Thomas Mountains of Utah” Presented by Patrick Haynes

Reported by Betty Thompson and Tom Tucker

When MSDC's Tom Tucker first met Patrick Haynes, 20 years ago, a memorable part of Pat's presentation about his collecting activities in the Colorado Plateau region was his mention of his near-zero white cell count. Pat's skill, dedication, and readiness to far exceed normal collecting requirements have led to his discovery of several new mineral species including his namesake mineral, HAYNESITE, and to his recognition in the September/October 2010 issue of *Rocks and Minerals*. He led us through the Thomas Mountains of Utah, with particular attention to the spectacular and varied minerals of Topaz Mountain. It was an armchair trip that may actually lead some of us to climb some big hills in Utah.

Pat began with describing his collecting exploits this past September, with folks from Collectors Edge, a large mineral specimen miner and dealer. They were working a claim near the original Maynard Bixby prospect, where the new mineral species BIXBYITE was first discovered, in 1897. Pat spent 9 days collecting there as they were finishing up their mining and just before they began the reclamation project that is now completed. It was immensely rewarding, with superb finds. This collecting was a very professional operation involving blasting and heavy mining equipment to break up the rhyolite bedrock before collectors entered the site, looking for reflections that would lead them to crystals, especially TOPAZ. The excavations yielded TOPAZ, HEMATITE, BIXBYITE, and occasional PSEUDO BROOKITE. Pat's photos showed the varied states in which crystals were found – intact, encrusted with clay, broken in ways that could be repaired well enough to warrant sale, or damaged enough to be of no interest to Collectors Edge. The latter category includes the minerals that Pat could bring home himself. He brought several to the meeting and, despite imperfections, they were very impressive specimens. He was also allowed to purchase some of the better specimens that he had “mined”.

Pat then moved on to a gray knob east of the Maynard claim. (One of the great assets of this presentation was Pat's precision about where he was collecting.) Crystals at

this site include red BERYL and BIXBYITE. Here Pat was one of the first collectors of the newly discovered mineral HOLFERTITE. Near Dugway Pass were some stunning specimens such as a HEMATITE and a BERYL, each with delicate, intact spears of HOLFERTITE passing through them.

On the east side of the saddle near Topaz Valley is the Autunite No. 8 claim - a concentration in a brecciated fault with common opal. It's not a big pit but it is the type locality for the mineral HOLFERTITE, in tiny vibrant green fluorescent needles.

At the Solar Wind Claim, 3-4 miles west of Dugway Pass, looking south you can see several vertical seams, probably gas vents, which can be good collecting locals for more TOPAZ and associated minerals.

Along the “main” dirt road several miles to the south you'll find a sign saying “Topaz Mountain Rock Hounding Area.” This is the well known Topaz Valley public collecting area – where new private mining claims have been prohibited, so the area is open to all to collect with hand tools. On summer holiday weekends it's crowded with RVs, motorcycles, and all-terrain vehicles (but no snakes). Most people go to the west wall to collect, but in the southwest corner you can find lots of TOPAZ and red BERYL, as well as weathered rhyolite, which is very white. Pat cautioned that in this area you have to really work at breaking rock to find anything interesting. Most of the easily examined rock has already been “collected”.

One of Pat's favorite collecting areas is the Topaz Mountain's northeast saddle. There are lithophysae everywhere, yielding TOPAZ and a little red BERYL, easily worked with a sledge. A single cavity in a boulder may hold 6-8 topaz crystals. There's also PSEUDO BROOKITE and FLUORITE.

Pat cautioned that the weather in these mountains can change very quickly, sometimes in life-threatening ways. You need survival gear in the car, and it's good to have alternate collecting targets in case your first goal proves inaccessible. High summer is way too hot for collecting, and other seasons hold risks as well, as temperatures can change fast and sudden blizzards can leave people stranded.

At last Pat told us the story of his zero white-blood-cell count. Seeking uranium bearing minerals, he now uses a respirator that filters out not only dust but also radon. But in his youth he collected with little protection, and the first physical impact of excessive radiation exposure is a reduction in white blood cells. But this change isn't obvious if you're otherwise healthy. Pat's serious blood condition was found only because Pat's wife became very

sick with an unrelated illness, and he was examined while they were searching for the cause of her illness.

The Thomas Mountains are located in west central Utah, approximately 50 miles northwest of the little town of Delta. As a side note – during World War II this remote local was selected as the site of one of the Relocation Camps for our Japanese citizens. Its remoteness has changed little over the years.

This splendid presentation had several folks longing to make a field trip to western Utah!

IN MEMORIUM

MSDC lost two old-time friends recently – Jack Cranford and Gladys Fuller—

Remembering Jack Cranford By Cynthia C. Payne and Other MSDC Members

For many years Jack and I have been the oldest members of MSDC but we could not agree who really was. Jack claimed he first remembers meeting my sister Lydia and me at the EFMLS Show in Old Port Comfort. But I was not at the show at Old Point Comfort, although I wish I had been. All I heard about at the first meeting I attended was what a great show it had been. That was September 1957. So I think Jack was a member earlier in 1957.

Jack loved to collect. Besides club field trips, he and his good friend Ned Blandford would go somewhere every chance they got. Frequently in the social time before a meeting he would pull a specimen from his pocket and quietly say “I got this Saturday” and you would wish you had been with him. I think possibly his favorite quarry was Barger in Lexington, Virginia. He just couldn’t seem to get enough of chiseling pyrite crystals out of that hard black rock. At a show one year he had a case of nothing but a few matrix specimens and, in the center of the case, a picture frame lined with black velvet with about 20 or 25 perfect graduated size crystals arranged as a necklace. He reveled in collecting in those spots where hard work is required to get results. He broke the resilient rock of Mount Saint Hilaire with great gusto and found some of those elusive rare species for which the quarry is noted. Above all else, Jack collected with a smile. He was happiest with a rock hammer in his hand.

Jack's interests weren't limited to just collecting rocks and minerals. He was fascinated by the history of Native Americans in this area. One year the club had a picnic on Sycamore Island. Since the Native Americans and early settlers had lived in this area, Jack brought along a metal

detector and spent the afternoon going over every bit of the island that was not overgrown. Jack also had a great voice and loved to sing. For several years in late 1990s Jack arranged to have a barbershop quartet perform at our Christmas parties.

Jack was a very quiet and soft spoken individual and he loved his family and his friends. While his health allowed, Jack came to the MSDC functions and brought family members. He was vice-president in 1982, 83 and 84 arranging programs and Publicity Chairman in 1995 and 96. No one remained a stranger when Jack was around. He was a driving force in MSDC and he is missed. [See photo on page 6.]

Remembering Gladys H. Fuller Information Submitted by Bob Carter

Gladys was known for ability to teach others in most areas of earth science. She served as a docent at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History for more than a quarter of a century, in the Mineral Sciences Department covering minerals, fossils, rocks and gemstones. She served as a volunteer in the Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems and Minerals talking about the various minerals in the museum including the Hope Diamond.

By occupation Gladys was a nuclear scientist who worked at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and The National Academy of Sciences. She was nominated by the Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Montgomery County, for the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies Each One Teach One Award.

MINERAL MINUTES

By Mary Bateman, Editor

A reminder if you signed up for the electronic version of *Mineral Minutes*, in January you will receive only the electronic version of *Mineral Minutes*. This will be your last mailed copy of the *Mineral Minutes*. If you haven't signed up for the electronic copy and wish to do so, please e-mail me at mbateman1@verizon.net, along with your e-mail address, name and telephone number. If you have already signed up, you need do nothing. Again, **if you do not want the electronic copy, you also need do nothing** — you will automatically receive the *Mineral Minutes* in the mail.

The **deadline for the January issue of the *Mineral Minutes*** will be **December 10**. If you have an article or pictures that you wish to share, please e-mail them to Mary

Bateman at mbateman1@verizon.net or mail them to 2700 9th Street South, #203, Arlington, VA 22204-2328. Articles can be included in the body of your e-mail or attached as a Word document or .pdf document. Pictures can be included in the body of your article.

**FOR SALE: GOLDSCHMIDT'S ATLAS
DER KRYSTALLFORMEN (ATLAS OF
CRYSTAL FORMS)**

Tom Tucker for Jennie Smith

Long time member Jennie Smith has for sale a complete nine volume set of the Goldschmidt, *Atlas der Krystallformen (Atlas of Crystal Forms)*, 1913, this being the Rochester Academy of Sciences reprint, limited to 300 copies; 1986.

She has included the German-English, English-German locality index to go with the set, (which was prepared for a Rochester gathering) and "Goldschmidt's World Mineral Locality Index" (includes all the localities from which studied crystals were sourced for the Atlas).

Jennie is also including the "International Handbook - A Multi-lingual Dictionary for Mineral Collectors."

I've found two copies of this Atlas reprint for sale on the Web for \$ 900 and \$1500. There are versions available on CD, for \$40 (presently out of stock - for months) and also for free directly on the Web, however, in each case the images are very inferior to the real thing.

This is a classic crystallography reference, and no serious collector should be without it. If interested you can make Jennie an offer at lonestarjennie@sbcglobal.net



Photo by Cynthia Payne

(L-R) Clarence Payne, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Cranford

HAPPY THANKSGIVING & HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL
THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (MSDC)**

Family ~ \$25.00 per year. One address.

Individual ~ \$20.00 per year.

New * Renewal Dues are for Year _____ *

For new members who join in the last months of the year, membership will extend through the following year with no additional dues.

Please make check payable to MSDC.

ANNUAL DUES – PLEASE PAY BY JANUARY 10.

Pay at December or January meeting or mail to: Mineralogical Society of DC
P.O. Box 9957
Alexandria, VA 22304

Name(s) (First and Last)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) – Home/Work/Mobile

Email(s)

OK TO INCLUDE YOU ON CLUB MEMBERSHIP LIST? Distributed to Club members only.

Yes – Include name, address, phone, email.

If you want any information omitted from the membership list, please note:

Omit my: Email Home phone Work phone Mobile phone Address
 Name

SPECIAL CLUB-RELATED INTERESTS?

MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

President: Andy Thompson thompson01@starpower.net Director: Dave Nanney
Vice President: Tom Tucker threedogtom@earthlink.net Director: Cynthia Payne
Secretary: Betty Thompson (301) 270-6790 Director: Don Greaves
Treasurer: Rick Reiber, c/o DC P.O. Box 9957, Alexandria, VA 22304 rickhike14@yahoo.com
Web page: www.mineralsocietyofDC.org

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:45 p.m., in the Kirby room, the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. (No meetings are held during July and August.)

The purpose of this Society is to promote interest in mineralogy, geology, and related earth sciences and to encourage mineral collecting. An annual scholarship is awarded to a deserving student in the related field.

Dues – Due by 10 January. \$20 for a single membership, \$25 for families.

The *Mineral Minutes* is the bulletin of The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia, Inc.

The Mineralogical Society of the District of Columbia is one of the founding Societies of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies.

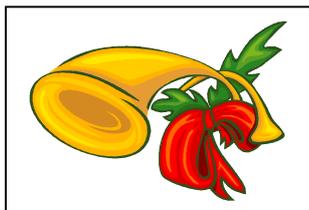
VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS!

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Newsletter of the Mineralogical
Society of the District of Columbia

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2700 Ninth Street South, #203
Arlington, Virginia 22204-2328
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Time Sensitive Dated Material
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS
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