

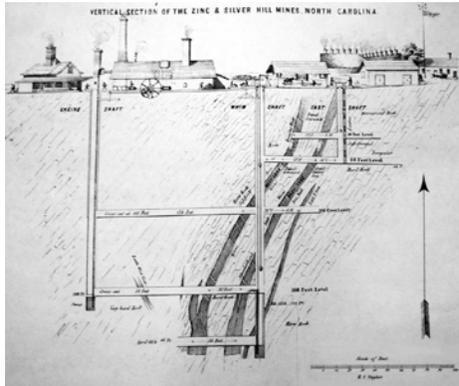
The Mineral Minutes



March 4, 2020 Program: “The Silver Hill Mine” by Mike Haas

by Yury Kalish, MSDC Programs VP

L. Michael “Mike” Kaas, is our presented in March. Mike will discuss the history of the Silver Hill Mine in North Carolina, its complex ore, historical importance, and influence on the development of mining and metallurgy in this country.



Cerussite, galena, and native silver were the principal ore minerals in the upper portion of the mine (and mined for silver and lead), while zinc-bearing sphalerite was more prevalent deeper in the mine.



Mike (known affectionately as “Miner Mike”) is a former Deputy Director of the Bureau of Mines, and is known for mining history related research and articles in Mining History Journal and other publications.

Please join us in taking Mike to dinner on March 4th at 6:00 pm at the Elephant and Castle at 1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. If you cannot make it to dinner, please go directly to the lobby of the Natural History museum (Constitution Avenue entrance) at 7:30 pm. We will head upstairs to the Cathy Kerby Room at 7:45 pm for Mike’s presentation.

Sharing Time

by Dave Hennessey, MSDC President

In view of the presentation, the theme for this month is minerals containing silver, lead, or zinc. Except for Dave and Leslie & Dan and Sean. I know you guys were in Tucson. Please bring in something wonderful that you acquired there so we can be jealous.

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Prez Says...

by Dave Hennessey, MSDC President

I’m ready for winter to end, not that we’ve had much of a winter this year. No snow to speak of. Just a lot of gray and wet days. Many plants in my yard have started putting out their spring growth already. Sure hope we don’t have any late deep freezes or snows that punish them for their decision to start growing now.

For me, the first sure signs of spring are when our local mineral shows get underway. The first show in the area is the Delaware Mineralogical
(cont. on p. 2)

MSDC's February 2020 Business Meeting Report

by **Andy Thompson, MSDC Secretary**

MSDC President Dave Hennessey welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially first time visitors Luke and Kara. Dave asked if members saw a need for any changes in the report of the January Business minutes as published in the February edition of Mineral Minutes. With no changes offered, Dave called for a motion to approve the minutes, which, was unanimously accepted.

John provided the Treasurer's report and emphasized it was time for members to pay their annual dues which can be done by providing a check at a monthly meeting or by mailing him \$20 for an individual or \$25 for a family membership.

Members then discussed the upcoming mineral shows which, among others, included the 56th Annual Montgomery County GLMS Mineral and Fossil show being held on 21-22 March. For more information, visit: <https://www.glmsmc.com/flyers/show-flyer-2020.pdf>. Also, the Eastern Fed is holding its 48th annual spring workshops May 18-24. Many members spoke positively about their personal experience participating in these workshops over the years in North Carolina. For more information, visit: <https://efmls.org/wildacres>.

Dave then asked if any attendees had reports for "Geology in the News." Two events were cited, the first being the recently reported discovery of one of the world's largest diamonds found in Botswana. Those interested were referred to a recent New Yorker magazine issue. The second event was the report by Dan who recently returned from a plant study program in Peru. He took the occasion to drive into northern Peruvian mountains where in road cuts, he found selenite strips and fossils and captured photos of a very large U-shaped, syncline fold in the side of a mountain, which pictures he shared with attendees.

With no further business or reports needing discussion, Dave turned the meeting over to V.P. for Programs, Yury Kalish, who introduced the evening's presenter, Bill Stephens.

February Program Presented by Bill Stephens: "Hogg Mine"

by **Andy Thompson, MSDC Secretary**

"You will never be skunked," said mineral hunter and environmental engineer Bill Stephens, speaking of visitors to the Hogg Mine. The site is located in Troup County, about 50 miles southwest of Atlanta, GA. In the 1950's, it was one of the premier sites for mining high purity beryllium and its sole customer was the U.S. government which identified the mineral as strategic, that is, used in products vital to national security.

Bill had made multiple trips to the mine, but this most recent visit was special, not only because it lasted for three days, but more importantly because the owner, Chris, rented a backhoe which turned over the soil thereby making it immensely easier for the collectors to discover beryl and related specimens, including aquamarine, a variety of beryl, and rose quartz. Because of the high cost for renting the back hoe, the mineral hunters interested in participating had to sign up in advance and pay an appropriately higher per-day entrance fee for their "machine dig" day.

During his presentation, Bill circulated mineral specimens he had collected from his earlier trips to the Hogg Mine, the first two, to the right and below, show light blue beryl specimens embedded in quartz.

(Prez Says cont.)

Society show on Saturday/Sunday, March 7th and 8th in Wilmington, Delaware. It is a nice show with lots of mineral displays in addition to the many dealer offerings. I would also note that the University of Delaware Mineral Museum in Newark, Delaware is open that Saturday but not Sunday, from 11 am to 5 pm. This museum has a terrific collection featuring the collection of Irénée du Pont which was gifted to the museum in 1964. It is well worth the trip and Wilmington and Newark are only about 15 miles apart. Both the show and a visit to the museum could easily be fit in on that Saturday.

The next local show is sponsored by the Montgomery County Gem Mineral and Lapidary Society and is held at the Montgomery County fairgrounds. That show is being held on March 21st and 22nd and also features many displays and dealer offerings. One of the displays each year is put in by the Smithsonian Institution and usually features their recent acquisitions from Tucson. Our board member, Ken Reynolds, has indicated he will bring show flyers to our upcoming meeting. The flyers provide clear directions to the fairgrounds and a reduced cost of admission.

There will be dealers at both of these show that have been to Tucson and will give us our first look and opportunity to acquire what was new at Tucson this year. Hope you all can make it to one or both of these shows.





The third photo, below, is a rose quartz specimen. He said that if the mineral when first discovered is coated with a silky white substance, there is a possibility that it could be a star rose quartz.

Bill then mapped out the locations for finding the mine's various minerals, including that the large beryl specimens, in the 30- to 40-pound range, were sometimes found close to the quartz core of the mine field. The photo below shows an example of one such large beryl specimen found in 2011 which a



happy miner holds on her lap. To the right, the same slide shows photos of two tiny cut stones, an aquamarine and a garnet, both of which were faceted at the mine site.

Practical tips for visiting the Hogg Mine

- Bill noted that the mine is not easy to find and so contacting the owner ahead of time is essential. For security purposes, he prefers to meet visitors at a local McDonald's and then escort guests to the mine site.
- Visiting the mine on a "machine dig" day is definitely productive and worth the cost to the 15 to 30 attendees. But visitors on regular days are also typically rewarded for their efforts and they also find beryl, aquamarine and rose quartz specimens, occasionally including star rose and tourmaline specimens.
- Bring your own drinking water. The Hogg mine provides clean water for washing off the minerals, but visitors need to bring their own drinking water and an umbrella for shade. These suggestions are particularly important because the temperatures on summer days can exceed well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, especially down in the trenches.
- For identification purposes, beryl is a "pencil crystal" having six sides and tests at a 7.5 to 8.0 on the Mohs scale for hardness. Extensive exposure to water will erode the mineral.
- The beryl specimens are often covered with a chalky white material that washes off.
- In his experience, digging in the trenches is generally safe from cave-ins. The soil is somewhat rocky, the trenches narrow (about 18 inches) and only about 4 feet high.
- In his experience, the piles of tailings were also worthwhile places to look for smaller mineral specimens.
- He advised visitors to be on the lookout for the mine's famous aquamarine specimens which can be cornflower blue, deep blue or cobalt blue. Black schorl and tourmaline also have been found.

Bill then addressed the question of why beryl mines such as the Hogg Mine has such a concentration of beryl specimens. He attributed this fact to the chemical nature of beryl, as a cation (a positive ion drawn to the cathode terminal or to an atom with a negative charge). The beryl "wants to be by itself," Bill said. "It does not like substitutions" and so becomes more concentrated. Also, the beryl is at a late stage in its formation and "needs to be crystallized" resulting in the area becoming more beryl rich. He said this is typical of much of the Piedmont Eastern Blue Ridge area where there is an abundance of crystals.

After fielding MSDC attendees' additional questions about the Hogg Mine's location and about the mineral specimens that some attendees found at nearby collecting sites, Bill thanked everyone for their presence. Dave Hennessey thanked Bill for his excellent presentation and the attendees expressed their appreciation with applause.



February 2020 Sharing Time: Show and Tell

by Andy Thompson, MSDC Secretary

As is customary, Dave invited anyone who brought minerals or fossils to the meeting to show their treasures and share a few words about the specimens. He started by displaying a pyrite with calcite which was collected from Concepcion del Oro, Zacatecas, Mexico.

Ken Rock showed an emerald mineral specimen atop black sedimentary rock which was collected in Cartagena, Columbia. He noted that the white minerals were bleached out.



Ken Reynolds found a black nephrite (jade) specimen in the area of Big Sur, California and an azurite pseudomorphing into malachite, collected in Senora, Mexico, both shown below.



Lastly, Dan brought in a mystery mineral, seeming being a chalcocopyrite reported to him to have originated in NJ. But to the best of his knowledge, that mineral has never been documented as having been found in the Garden State. He sought the opinions of other attendees (no photo available).

MSDC Club Information

Meetings are the First Wednesday of the Month (Jan-Jun and Sep-Dec). We meet in the Constitution Avenue lobby of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History at 7:30 pm.

Website <http://mineralogicalsocietyofdc.org/>

Facebook www.facebook.com/Mineralogical-SocietyOfTheDistrictOfColumbia

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THE MINERAL MINUTES



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NEWSLETTER OF THE MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mineralogical Society of DC
Time Sensitive Dated Material
First-Class Mail

Useful Mineral Links

Announcements from Local Clubs

	American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS)	www.amfed.org
	Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)	www.amfed.org/efmls
	MINDAT	www.mindat.org
	Mineralogical Society of America (MSA)	www.minoscam.org
	Friends of Mineralogy	www.friendsofmineralogy.org/
	WebMineral	webmineral.com
	The Geological Society of America (GSA)	www.geosociety.org/
	Jeff Scovil Mineral Photography (not advertising - just great photos)	scovilphotography.com/
	United States Geological Survey (USGS)	www.usgs.gov
	The Geological Society of Washington (GSW)	http://www.gswweb.org/

THE GEM, LAPIDARY, AND MINERAL SOCIETY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

56th Annual Gem, Mineral, Fossil & Jewelry Show

March 21-22, 2020 Saturday 10-6, Sunday 11-5

Montgomery County Fairgrounds; Building #6
16 Chestnut St. Gaithersburg MD 20877

- Hourly Door Prizes
- Gold Panning
- Fluorescent Minerals
- Raffle Prizes
- Free Parking
- 20+ Vendors of minerals, beads, fossils, gems & jewelry
- 40+ Exhibits by club members - including junior exhibits
- Learn to make a gemstone in the shop
- Mini Mine, Free minerals & activities for children
- Demonstrations of Faceting, Beading, Jewelry Making, Physics

www.glmsmc.com

MICROMINERALOGISTS OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

47th Atlantic Micromounters' Conference

April 3-5, 2020

Holiday Inn Express, 6055 Richmond Hwy,
Alexandria, VA 22303

For information on registration, program and speakers, visit:

dcmicrominerals.weebly.com/conferences



AFMS Code of Ethics



- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind – fences, signs, and buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material – matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock. [Editor's Note/Observation: I would also include wildlife as well as livestock.]
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and the se in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.

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.

ANNUAL DUES – PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY.

Pay at next meeting or mail to:

Mineralogical Society of DC
c/o John Weidner
7099 Game Lord Drive
Springfield, VA 22153-1312

Name(s) (First and Last) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone(s): Home/Work/Mobile _____

Email(s): _____

OK TO INCLUDE YOU ON CLUB MEMBERSHIP LIST?

() 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? _____

Meeting Dates, Time, and Location: The first Wednesday of each month. (No meeting in July and August.) 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 7:30 PM to meet our guard who will escort us to the Cathy Kerby Room.