

Dave Barthelmy

From: news@aamineralspecimens.com
Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2009 06:07 AM
To: dbarthelmy@webmineral.com
Subject: 15th March 2009 Newsletter



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ABN 83 320 547 821

15th March 2009

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Dear Dave Barthelmy

We've been back from Tucson for nearly three weeks and we are still sorting through our acquisitions and we're also awaiting the arrival of those specimens still in transit.

This week we have a small selection of our new stock. We are still featuring the unique zircons from Malawi. These zircons are proving particularly popular with collectors of fluorescent minerals.

We also have a selection of polished free form specimens of lapis lazuli from Afghanistan.

Anyone interested in sulfur crystals should check out the truly spectacular cluster of bright yellow native sulfur listed. .

We also have some very nice green pyromorphite clusters and while thinking of those colorful secondary minerals, try putting "secondary" in the search box on our home page for a much larger selection of this beautiful and popular mineral family.

We will be at the Canberra Rock Swap on 28th and 29th of March and look forward to meeting up with our numerous friends and hopefully making more friends with a common interest.

All the best,

Susan and Bruce

NB: If you are having trouble displaying the images in this newsletter, you may need to click the 'display content' link at the top of your page. Also, adding our email address to your address book will in many cases solve the problem. You can also view this newsletter by going to our newsletter page, clicking on the + sign, and selecting the newsletter you wish to view.

Lapis Lazuli: amulet stone of the Ancients

Lapis lazuli is a rock whose main constituents are the minerals lazurite(blue)(Na,Ca)₈(AlSiO₄)₆(S,SO₄,Cl), sodalite(blue), pyrite(metallic yellow) and calcite(white).

Lapis lazuli is usually associated with marble as a result of contact metamorphism. Classically lapis is an intense blue with an even scattering of small crystals of golden pyrite. It is readily carved and can be polished to a high and even luster.

The usage of lapis as a jewelry or decorative medium predates dynastic Egypt and the deposits on the Kokcha River in Afghanistan, the source of the Egyptian lapis, have been worked for more than 6000 years. Lapis from Afghanistan has been found in Neolithic sites as far from Afghanistan as Mauritania in West Africa. One can only ponder the material, religious and metaphysical significance placed on lapis to justify transport over such distances in such ancient times.

Lapis has had great cultural and religious significance to the Ancient Egyptians, Romans, Sumerians, Greeks, Hebrews and Medieval Europe with it being used in jewelry, ornaments and in the walls and columns of palaces and temples.

Interestingly lapis was ground to make ultramarine pigment for painting in Europe up to the early 19th century.

Thus we have a rock that is considered a jewel of great beauty that has a history going back thousands of years. To the mineralogist it has a fascinating genesis involving complex chemistry and physics.

New Stock



Rutile crystals

Rutile crystals & Hematite, Novo Horizonte, Brazil.



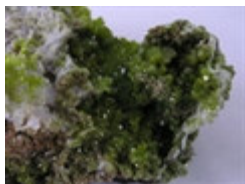
Zircon

Zircon, Rift Mineral Province, Malawi.



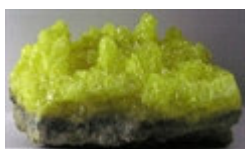
Pyromorphite

Pyromorphite crystals, Daoping Mine, Guangxi Province, China.



Pyromorphite

Pyromorphite crystals, Daoping Mine, Guangxi Province, China.



Native Sulfur

Native Sulfur, El Desierto Mine, Potosi Department, Bolivia.

Lazurite

Lazurite, Kokscha Valley, Badakhshan Province, Afghanistan.



Lapis Lazuli

Carved Lapis Lazuli, Afghanistan.



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Carved Lapis Lazuli, Afghanistan.



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Carved Lapis Lazuli, Afghanistan.



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Carved Lapis Lazuli, Afghanistan.



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Carved Lapis Lazuli, Afghanistan.



Tetrahedrite and Quartz

Tetrahedrite and quartz, Casapalca, Peru.



Pyromorphite crystals

Pyromorphite, Daoping Mine, Guanxi Province, China.



Rhodonite

Polished Rhodonite, Broken Hill, NSW, Australia.



Rutile and Hematite

Rutile & Hematite, Nova Horizonte, Bahia, Brazil.



Labradorite

Labradorite, Madagascar.



Chalcedony 'Grapes'

Carved Chalcedony 'grapes', China.

Itinerary

March 2009

Saturday 28 and Sunday 29

Canberra Lapidary Club
Rock Swap
EPIC (Exhibition Park In Canberra)
Flemington Road, Mitchell ACT

April 2009

10-13 April

Australian National Gemboree
Wimmera Machinery Field Day Site
Longerenong Rd, Dooen via Horsham (Victoria)

May 2009

Saturday 16 and Sunday 17

Lismore Lapidary Club Gemshow
Lismore Showground (NSW)

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