

# ***BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY***

<http://britishmicromountsociety.homestead.com/>

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**NEWSLETTER No. 90 - OCTOBER 2013**

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**Bob King (1923-2013) centre, receiving the very first Russell Medal from Bob Symes in May 1992, with his wife Sally looking on (see page 35)**

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## OFFICERS - CONTACT DETAILS

CHAIRMAN	Martin Stolworthy, Homeview, 1 Richmond Place, Lyng, Norwich, Norfolk, NR9 5RF
VICE CHAIRMAN	Richard Belson, 11 Waldemar Avenue, Hellesdon, Norwich, Norfolk. NR6 6TB
SECRETARY	Phil Taylor, Dunvegan, 96 Kingsfield Road, Kintore, Inverurie, Aberdeen. AB51 0UD
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY and TREASURER	David Binns, 3 The Dene, Hastings, East Sussex. TN35 4PD
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	David Roe, 20 Lutterburn Street, Ugborough, Ivybridge, Devon. PL21 0NG
SYMPOSIUM ORGANISER	Martin Gale, 2 Coles Cottages, Rectory Road, West Tilbury, Essex. RM18 8UD
SYMPOSIUM ORGANISER	Greg Towing, 7 Denver Road, Topsham, Exeter, Devon, EX3 0BS
SYMPOSIUM ORGANISER (Displays etc.)	Rob Selley, Flat 3, Over Garage, Paynters Lane, Illogan, Cornwall. TR16 4DJ

### MEMBERSHIP CHANGE OF DETAILS and WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Einhard Kleist	Mommenpesch 6, D-47839 Krefeld, Germany	00 49 215 173 3698 <a href="mailto:e.kleist@fz-juelich.de">e.kleist@fz-juelich.de</a> Mob: 00 49 160 817 8733
Donna & Robert O'Meara	2a Avenue Roda, Stoneygate, Leicester, LE2 3EA	Mob. 07955310442 <a href="mailto:flipper965@msn.com">flipper965@msn.com</a>
Jonathan Abbs	New email address	<a href="mailto:bacchus.vin@btinternet.com">bacchus.vin@btinternet.com</a>
Alan Barnes	1, Highfield Crescent, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 7DN	New postal address
Ann Barrett	New email address	<a href="mailto:annbarrettgeo@gmail.com">annbarrettgeo@gmail.com</a>

**SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER**—if you did not renew your subscription at the recent BMS Symposium, please remember to send a cheque for £10 single or £12 family to David Binns by the end of December. Also, please check that we have your up-to-date contact details - address, telephone and email. If not, please notify David Binns. **A revised list of members was issued at the Symposium. If you were not at the Symposium, your copy is enclosed herewith.**

**32<sup>nd</sup> BRITISH MICROMOUNT SYMPOSIUM**  
**20-22 September 2013**  
Roy Starkey

Another year gone, another year older, but once again the faithful gathered in Leicester to pay homage to the world of microminerals. For the first time ever, the Symposium started formally at 2pm on the Friday afternoon. This changed the dynamic considerably, and the excited buzz which usually characterises Saturday morning was instead fully underway by about 2.30pm on Friday! This had the (possibly predictable) effect of dragging everything forward somewhat, meaning that people had done much of their “Mineral looking” and purchasing by Saturday morning, and as a consequence there was more opportunity for chatting and discussion.

This year there was a great deal of material for sale and on the grab table (largely from the collection of the late Mary Hyde of Cheltenham), and a large selection of books and magazines too.



**Frantic activity around the “Grab Table” - it is amazing what people find attractive when it is free”**



**“Microscope Room 3” with the gang hard at work**

BMS Chairman Martin Stolworthy welcomed delegates to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Symposium on Saturday morning, and wished everyone an enjoyable and successful weekend. Martin caught everyone “on the hop” (including myself and David Roe) by announcing, in a break with tradition, that the Mike Rothwell Award would this year go to none other than David Roe - much applause! (And we didn’t even get a chance for a photo - sorry David). Rick Turner presented a talk on his personal experiences of the famous Tsumeb Mine, and Martin Stolworthy gave an interesting account of a small, and little-known, working - Kilham Tin Mine, south-east of St. Neot, in Cornwall, and the source of some fine specimens of jeanbandyite.

This year, for the first time it had been decided to run a “silent auction” - where items offered for sale are laid out on a table with a bidding sheet next to each. Bidders enter the price they are prepared to pay and the auction runs until a pre-determined closing time. The “silent auction” was a great success and will most probably be run again



**Alan Dyer and Beryl Taylor deep in conversation**



**The hotel lobby sales area—bargains galore apparently!**

next year.

The principal objective of the “silent auction” was to ensure that the number of lots in the main auction was restricted to a reasonable number, and of a much higher quality than usual. The strategy worked well, and the main auction had a much better feel to it. The proceeds of the combined auctions generated £1089 for Society funds, which is great—thank you to everyone who provided items for sale, and to those who bid for



**Competition was fierce on the Silent Auction tables**



**Lots to look at on the sales tables**



**Auctioneer Trevor Bridges extracting cash from the delegates**



**The Chairman finds a quiet moment to take a break in the fresh air**

them—well done!

As is usual, Saturday evening was devoted to a sit-down meal and social evening, this time, without the previously traditional quiz. Delegates gradually drifted away to bed,



**Delegates enjoying a social evening and meal in the Stoneycroft**

leaving the hard core to sample the delights of various single malts and some super-strength Russian vodka.

Sunday morning had a very relaxed feel to it, and again, perhaps because of the earlier start on Friday, many people had essentially packed up by the time the AGM kicked off at 10.30am. We then romped through the formalities of the AGM, with the minimum fuss, and soon it was time to hear the results of the Micromount and MicroMineral



**Martin Stolworthy presents the Founder's Cup to joint winners, Christine and Harry Critchley**



**Richard Belson presents the Micromount Competition Trophy to Roy Starkey**

Competitions (see Phil Taylor's AGM minutes and report elsewhere in the Newsletter). The inimitable David Roe regaled us with his findings of "What's About on the Tables" - (see separate account), and this was followed by a presentation by David Ifold, describing his investigations at Littleham Cove, Budleigh Salterton, Devon.



**Andy Castleton presents the MicroMineral Competition Trophy to Mike Leppington**



**Congratulations to David Ifold and Yolande Eldridge who were married in July**

People started drifting away around 12.00 noon, and we perhaps need to re-think how the weekend is configured to best suit everyone's needs (and to help the organisers—especially with regard to clearing up on the Sunday afternoon).

The 33<sup>rd</sup> British Micromount Symposium will be held on 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014—venue and other details to be confirmed.

See you all next year for another great weekend (so why not get your competition entries and show and tell stuff sorted now, while there is still plenty of time?)

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY  
Stoneycroft Hotel, Leicester, on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2013**

The Chairman, Martin Stolworthy, opened the meeting at 10:30 am and welcomed all delegates to the 32<sup>nd</sup> BMS Symposium. There were 52 members present. Minutes were taken by the Secretary, Philip Taylor.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mike Dannatt, David Green, Elsie Hansford, Nigel Hoppé and Avril Woodburn, Peter Harrison, Doug Morgan, Ulrich Wagner and Sigridd Teige, Peter Wallace and Quintin and Willow Wight.

**2. Minutes of the AGM of Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

The Minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> British Micromount Symposium AGM were published in Newsletter No. 87 (October 2012) and in this year's 2013 Symposium brochure.

**3. Matters arising from the 2012 AGM Minutes**

None.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report; Martin Stolworthy on behalf of Greg Towing**

Greg was not present at this year's AGM; his report is as printed on the last page of 2013 Symposium Brochure. No questions were raised regarding the report.

#### **5. Membership Secretary's Report; David Binns**

The current number of members is 147, reduced from 151 at this time last year. There are presently 16 members whose membership status is uncertain, so some of these may have to be removed. David was pleased to report five new members this year; Yolande Eldridge, Terry Evans, Fiona Rabone, Susan Tyzack and Walter Veldsman and pointed out that Fiona is Edgar Taylor's daughter (both of whom were attending this year). Everyone was reminded to pay their subs using the envelopes provided while at the hotel.

David also announced the splendid news that David Ifold and Yolande Eldridge were married in July this year.

#### **6. Secretary's Report; Philip Taylor**

On taking over as Secretary in 2006 Phil inherited two large boxes of folders containing paperwork and correspondence pertaining to the Society since its inauguration in 1981. The majority of these files are of no further relevance and it was agreed at the previous day's Committee Meeting that most of these can be destroyed. Phil will retain anything he considers still relevant or of historical interest. No objections were raised to this from the floor. The Chairman added that since Greg's resignation from the post of Treasurer this year, he now holds similar files relating to all past treasurer's work. He too will review these documents and destroy everything considered superfluous.

#### **7. Chairman's Report, Martin Stolworthy**

This year has seen me take a more hands on role in the organization of the Symposium, together with Dick Belson to help Martin, who is making slow steps in his recovery. Martin continues to formulate all the paperwork needed for the Symposium, and liaises with Donna to make sure the hotel know our requirements. We have now got back to three Newsletters a year. Unfortunately Mike Danatt had to relinquish the editor's role due to family health problems. Roy again stepped in but is looking to get a permanent editor, as he is busy with other ventures.

We continue to lose members for various reasons. In the April issue Roy reported the death of Michael (Mike) Peel Bayley. Mike was a constant delegate at our early Symposia. Then in May, after a fairly short illness, we heard of the very sad loss of Julie Margaret Green (née Ballard). It is also with great sadness that we have learned of the passing of Mike Dannatt's wife Janet, only three weeks ago. To the families of all three members we offer our sincere commiserations. There are also several members struggling with their own and family health issues. They are all in our thoughts.

The website is still ticking along. Nothing much new goes on as no one sends anything to me. The hits to date (18<sup>th</sup> August 2013) are 7848, which is an average of nearly 1000 a year. Before anyone says about the lack of new dates in the Local Groups section, that is my fault. The dates were sent to me, but I forgot to put them on.

The success of the 2012 Symposium meant that this year we would be at the same venue. The costs are higher because we have to rent in the tables. The Auction generates a good amount to offset the costs, but the income is not enough to cover all the outgoings. This year should give a clearer picture of the overall loss and we must decide elsewhere in this Meeting what to do next!

I have heard some mutterings about the growing number of overseas members. It was agreed at a previous Symposium that overseas members could be admitted by invitation only, and that is still the case. All our foreign friends and members only help to serve the growing stature of the society.

This year Greg Towning has asked to step down as Treasurer at the AGM, because of work commitments, and I extend my thanks to Greg for the last three years. To all the other members of the committee, and the branch organizers, to the hotel staff and management, and to anyone else, if I have forgot them, thank you very much.

## **8. Other Reports**

### **8.1 Newsletter Editor's Report; Roy Starkey**

Roy began by pointing out that he can only put in it want members send, and if little is sent it will be everything Roy then has to write. Mike Dannatt had set up a 24 page template which Roy endeavours to fill and he will produce the next Newsletter which has to at the printer by 8<sup>th</sup> October. Following this, David Roe has volunteered to become Editor and so next February's issue will be entirely his work, hopefully together with contributions from lots of members.

Roy reminded everyone that if they send photos or snippets or anything else, the Editor will happily turn it into something useable if it is a bit thin on content; it can be padded out and embellished to make a worthwhile item. Roy asked if what he has been including on British mining is still of interest, which is indeed the case from the many positive replies.

### **8.2 Curator's Report; Trevor Devon**

The BMS foreign collection was successfully sold off at yesterday's auction as per instruction at the AGM last year. The UK collection has not received any new material for the last two years, however Trevor has not been actively soliciting any. It has been agreed with David Roe (the new Newsletter Editor) that Trevor will supply a regular input on either a location or a Mineral (from within the collection). This may well prompt readers to comment and could help to build up the collection a bit more.



The collection is still not getting a lot of use, apart from the Sussex people. This is not just because the collection is stored in Sussex, for when it was stored in the Midlands, John Hall used to still get material out for the Micromount meetings. Trevor would like to see more of the Micromount regional groups use the reference material for micromount evenings and one suggestion is that when John prepares material for the Southern Branch meetings he writes extensive viewing notes. Should other groups wish to reproduce these evenings, John would have no objection to them looking at the same specimens along with the viewing notes already prepared. That would be less hard work for the people in the groups and advantage would be taken of the detailed work already put in.

### **8.3 Archivist's Report; Alan Edwards**

No report submitted.

## **8.4 Branch Co-ordinators Reports**

### **8.4.1 Norfolk Branch; Dick Belson**

Meetings are held four or five times a year with between eight and twelve people attending. The micromount meetings are run in conjunction with the club nights and it is often the case that these joint meets have the higher attendance.

The group did borrow one set of specimens from the BMS reference collection during the last year and Dick will be contacting Trevor to arrange for another set once arrangements have been made for such another evening. Dick commented that there is a lack of expertise in their group and invited any expert to consider moving to Norfolk!

### **8.4.2 South East Branch; Vicki Packard**

The branch is ticking over as usual, mainly with the help of the Norfolk group, with around ten to twelve people attending. Peter Wallace usually takes about five new Minerals for everyone to study, which all adds to the interest.

### **8.4.3 North West Branch; Harry Critchley**

The group meets about every two months with usually four to five people attending. The group does try to accommodate as many people as possible by arranging mutually agreeable dates. Some meetings have been held on a Monday, which suits all of those already retired; this will also be the case in October (Monday 21<sup>st</sup>) as no weekends are available.

### **8.4.4 Sussex Branch; John Hall**

Usually ten to twelve members attend. The notes John writes, to which Trevor previously referred, have amounted to about 70 specimens per year, which is becoming a little too much now. John is therefore cutting this down somewhat, which is helped as members are increasingly bringing in their own specimens to supplement

those borrowed from the BMS collection.

#### **8.4.5 South West Branch; Chris Jewson**

This branch holds quarterly meetings with about seven or eight people. The dates for next year will be in the next newsletter and anyone who would like to visit will be most welcome. The meets lean more towards camaraderie, swapping of information and sorting out queries; they do not do themed meets. Sheila Harper added that a new Mineral (to study) is taken to each meeting, but Mr Jewson appeared not entirely convinced by this. [Hopefully next year's SW report will shed more light on this dispute!]

#### **8.4.6 Midlands Branch; Jane Randle**

Excellent meetings are held at the Starkey family's house and are usually themed. Jane added dryly that the Midlands meetings are overflowing with expertise!

#### **8.5 Symposium Organisers; Martin Gale and Rob Selley**

Nothing to report, but Martin added that more may be said later, following the AGM.

#### **8.6 Occasional Papers; John Pearce**

There has been no new Occasional Paper now for three years. However, John does get requests for about 25 papers a year mainly from new members, sometimes from people who aren't even members. Copies of all 23 excellent papers were available at the Symposium and it's business as usual.

#### **9. Founder's Cup; Martin Stolworthy**

As is my usual practice, I sent out a suggestion to all members of the BMS committee, with the names of the recipients. All unanimously agreed that my suggestion was the correct one. Each year when the process of selection starts you think to yourself that this might be the year when no one stands out as an obvious contender. This is the 27th year that the trophy has been presented and to my mind, the couple who have been awarded the trophy, were right there at the top of the list. They both fit the criteria set for selection, as wherever they travel around the world, they promote both the BMS and Mineralogy in general. They have been members of the BMS for longer than I can remember, and have organized their branch meetings for many years. My heart sank last year, on that Sunday morning in June, when Dick Belson rang me to say that Harry had had a stroke, just as we were all preparing for the trip to St Marie and the Eifel and looking forward to them coming with us. In the event and with typical tenacity and Christine's help, and to the delight of everyone, he made enough of a recovery to join us at the Symposium in Leicester last year. It gives me great pleasure to announce that this year the Founders Cup has been awarded to Harry and Christine Critchley.

#### **10. Change to the Constitution**

A change to the Constitution was required in regard to the election of officers. Details

of the change are set out in the 2013 Symposium brochure under Section 7, whereby the old and new versions of Clause 5.1 are printed. Basically, the line requiring change is that the committee used to comprise of five officers, i.e. the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary. The proposal is to join the two jobs of Treasurer and Membership Secretary together, therefore requiring the new clause in the Constitution. The Chairman asked for a vote to accept the change in Constitution and this was passed unanimously.

## **11. Election of Officers; Martin Stolworthy**

Two changes are made this year to the committee officers. Proposed by Martin Stolworthy, and seconded by Martin Gale, for David Binns to become the new treasurer; this was passed on a show of hands. Also, David Roe has agreed to take on the role of Newsletter Editor, for which he was thanked.

All other positions were elected en-bloc by a show of hands.

The committee for the 2013-2014 period is:

Roy Starkey: President

Martin Stolworthy: Chairman and Web Master

Dick Belson: Vice-Chairman

Philip Taylor: Secretary

David Binns: Membership Secretary and Treasurer

Roy Starkey and then David Roe taking over: Newsletter Editor

Auditor: To be advised by David Binns once a candidate has been identified

Alan Edwards: Archivist

Trevor Devon: Curator

Martin Gale: Symposium Organiser (joint)

Rob Selley: Symposium Organiser (joint)

Greg Towing: Symposium Organiser (joint) ?

## **12. Any Other Business**

### *12.1 Martin Stolworthy: Proposal for election of overseas member*

Proposed by Martin Stolworthy and seconded by Dick Belson, for Einhard Kliest to become a member of the BMS ; this was passed unanimously on a show of hands.

### *12.2 David Binns: Society accounts*

Concerning the Society accounts, the intention is to go online so to open up the possibility to have bank transfers and standing orders to help membership renewals. David explained that having checked with the banks, there can be, for example, three members of the Society who can have individual login details so that only they can view online accounts. This means there is not too much in-house access and online payments are not possible, so maintaining this level of security.

12.3 The date for the 33<sup>rd</sup> BMS Symposium is confirmed as the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2014. However, please note, the venue has yet to be decided upon. The AGM was formally closed at 10:55 am.

## **COMPETITION RESULTS**

We had four judges in this year's panel; Dave Binns, Thierry Dreyer, Rick Turner and Einhard Kliest, all of whom were offered sincere thanks for a job which demands both concentration and time. Each judge can award up to a maximum of 50 points, meaning each entrant could score up to 200 points in total.

### **Micromount Competition: The Peter Braithwaite Micromount Trophy**

Results were announced by Dick Belson:

1<sup>st</sup> Roy Starkey: Linarite, Cwmystwyth Mine, Cardiganshire, Wales (175 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> Mike Leppington: Quartz variety Eisenkeisel, Dry Gill, Caldbeck Fells, Cumbria (164 points)

3<sup>rd</sup> Mike Leppington: Caledonite and susannite, Higher Roughton Gill, Caldbeck Fells, Cumbria (160 points)

### **MicroMineral Competition: The Maurice Grigg MicroMineral Trophy**

Results were announced by Andy Castleton:

1<sup>st</sup> Mike Leppington: Corkite, Iron Crag, Caldbeck Fells, Cumbria (151 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> David Roe: Pyromorphite on cerussite, Wheal Bungalow, Porthleven, Cornwall (148 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> Rob Selley: Cuprite & arsenopyrite, Cligga Mine, Perranporth, Cornwall (148 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> Steve Burchmore: Cinnabar, chalcopyrite & barite, Gortdrum Mine, County Tipperary, Ireland (148 points)

3<sup>rd</sup> Mike Leppington: Philipsburgite, Driggith Mine, Caldbeck Fells, Cumbria (136 points)

The photographic competition was not held this year.

## **AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW**

### **The British Micromount Society's Annual Symposium**

(or the place where people can get together and talk about "rocks")

Megan Critchley (Niece of Harry & Christine, visiting from Australia)

First, I'd like to clarify a couple of things – I'm not a geologist, Mineralogist, chemist, physicist, biologist, or anything else that ends in -ist. Yet, in spite of this I volunteered to accompany my uncle and aunt to this years' BMS symposium. For them it was a chance to catch up with old friends and geek out over small rocks. For me it was a

chance to go shopping, talk extensively to anyone who would listen to me about the Wars of the Roses, and to look confused whenever people mentioned vesicles. Although, I can now tell the difference between vesicles and amygdales - vesicles with stuff in - due entirely to the fact I found myself sitting opposite Professor Alan Dyer and Dr Oneta Wilson, both of zeolite fame, at dinner.

Now I'd always thought that my aunt and uncle had a lot of rocks. Impressed as I was with Uncle Harry's restraint at only taking 36 trays of specimens for sale and exchange, I still thought it was a lot. Then I walked into Stoneycroft. (It must be noted that I salute the organisers of the symposium for holding their event in a hotel with such an appropriate name). Suddenly I felt like I'd stepped into a Jules Verne novel – '*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*' to be specific – so great was the amount of material extracted from the ground. While making repeated trips from the hotel to the car, I was asked if I was a 'rock person', to which I could but laugh and say that my interest in Minerals extended only to those I could wear. I was also told several times that I look remarkably like my mother. This was curious in itself, because I doubt any members of the BMS have met my mother (Christine being, in fact, my father's sister-in-law).

Dinner on both nights proved an instructive affair, including being introduced to premier collectors' items from Russia and France (Vodka and cheese), courtesy of Professor Richard Turner and Thierry Dreyer. I learned rather a lot (mostly about zeolites – see above), and in-between making awful (but brilliant) Mineralogy jokes – "Why wasn't the Mineralogist hungry? Because he'd lost his apatite!" - , I debated the merits of Richard III as a king, confirmed that amiodarone is a drug used for controlling heart problems, decided that no one was really sure what you call amygdales that are only half full, and had rather an excellent time.

And I'm truly thankful that I will be able to explain the various types of zeolites for many years to come.

Note: I would like to make it known that I use *rocks* in the above report not to offend any hard-core Mineralogists that are itching to correct me, but simply because I lack the knowledge to describe everything properly. Although Uncle Harry is doing his best to correct what I'm sure he sees as a dramatic oversight in my education.

## **WHATS AROUND ON THE TABLES - 2013?**

David Roe

Every year you kindly invite me to view your combined wealth of micro Minerals – it is a privilege for which I am deeply grateful. In many ways it is like going to a village Open Garden event – where for one day of the year people throw open their gardens for all and sundry to view in return for a charitable donation. I fear I am too often like that grizzled curmudgeon who does the round of gardens and then mutters about

the green fly at No. 10, black spot on the roses at No. 22 and a surprising number of dandelions in the Vicarage lawn, instead of taking in the wonders that you offer. To be honest, many of the collections I have viewed this weekend are as colourful and wonderful as any English country garden, and this year they have been bathed in the glorious autumn colours of wulfenite. I suggested earlier in the year that we had a wulfenite extravaganza and many of you responded by digging out specimens from the back of filing drawers marked "W" (or 112 in my obscure nomenclature) to share with us this weekend. As a result I have spent the BMS weekend awash with lead molybdate.

I started with a visit to Harry Critchley and a pretty yellow wulfenite with intense purple spotted fluorite from Crich Cliff Quarry – a lovely colour contrast to start the day. This was followed by an amazingly complex wulfenite crystal from Trevor Bridges that showed three distinct phases of growth – each with a different colour and crystal face angle. BMS members may recall that I have an enthusiasm for the benefits of Vitamin C, and I am pleased that Trevor has become a convert to the cause and is applying his industrial chemistry experience into developing the process. He has brought a three inch baryte crystal whose ochre coating surely condemned it to the hard core pile but after five days of Vitamin C it is astonishingly clean and would grace any rock cabinet – do check it out.

I have to thank Frank Ince whose wulfenite selection opened my eyes – I had never realised how many wulfenite locations there are in the Midlands and what a wonderful range of colour and form they exhibit. Also worth checking out is his superb pink synchysite barrel crystals from Cwmorthin which dwarf the associated brookite – usually synchysite is consigned to a walk on role outshone by its more flashy brookite and anatase neighbours.

I then broadened my horizons and was introduced into the wonders of world-wide wulfenite – John Vanston showed me the first of several specimens from Whim Creek in Australia – they really are unusually numerous, gemmy and varied in crystal shape - while Trevor Devon conducted a veritable symphony of crystal habits in his selection from Arizona and further south – a real pleasure to wander through them.

Already exhausted by these molybdate spectacles I needed a soothing balm so I retreated to the calmer waters of zeolites, only to be jolted awake by Alan Dyer's melanophlogite (I have had several coaching sessions in order to get that one out without mangling the name). This Mineral was originally synthesised in the laboratory but he has a naturally occurring specimen from an Italian location (bought at the symposium from Thierry). It is the oddest Mineral I have seen in a long time – it occurs as clear glassy globes without a discernible crystal structure – these led to much speculation as presumably they have an infinite number of axes of symmetry – all in all it is a slightly disconcerting Mineral.

Back to grubby reality with Tom Cotterell's corroded galena cubes from Breedon on the Hill Quarry – often glued together by the secondary growths of wulfenite and cerussite. As always Tom and I spent a few minutes discussing the black art of identifying manganese Minerals which so often depend on “my black is blacker than your black”. No such problem with Roy Starkey whose “Show and Tell” box was overflowing with recently found Cairngorm beryl and quartz to 6 inches (that's the quartz – the beryls only manage an inch or so). Is he losing his enthusiasm for micromounts I wondered (he resoundingly responded by winning the micromount completion in finest blue linarite tradition). His wulfenite selection wasn't half bad either – he gets the best Scottish wulfenite award – his Struy specimens are what micromounting is all about – a wonderful combination of deep orange wulfenite on a felty grass green background of pyromorphite – mouth-watering contrast.

As always it a treat to look at Rob Selley's goodies and he is still plodding through his Lushington cliff fall bonanza. He has a jaw dropping dendritic silver – at first it is invisible – all you can see is the matrix and then it flicks into and out of view until you realise it is a few microns above the background. When you finally capture it the silver dendrites hang, suspended in space, looking like a three dimensional street grid. Rob also had a wulfenite specimen from a little known Cornish Location of Wheal Ludcott. I had just seen these for the first time in Neil Hubbard's wulfenites and was entranced by the fact that the associated green pyromorphites were peculiarly elongated to fine whisker terminations – most odd. Of course Cornish Cornucopias can always be found with Chris Jewson who had some very tasty wulfenites – particularly from Wheal Mary Ann. One of my favourites of the weekend is his “*Batman*” wulfenite from Wheal Mary Anne that has octahedral crystals growing out perpendicular to the corners of the tabular crystal. He was cruelly denied entry to the micromount competition due to some ancient Braithwaite strictures on blue tack exclusion – but I look forward to it returning in triumph in 2014 securely attached to a stick and in the regulation box.

Meanwhile, Colleen Thomson shared not only her lovely Moroccan erythrites with me, but – and perhaps this is what the symposium is all about, – she shared her memories of collecting it in the dark depths underground – for our micromounts are also repositories of memories. I will continue this theme in my homilies since Steve Burchmore has done what I always beg you to do - dig out those lonely un-viewed specimens of yester-year. He had gone back to the glory days of Gortdrum – do have a look at them and remember the wonders of cinnabar and associated copper secondaries – we were lucky to have lived through those past days.

While you were enjoying breakfast this morning I was already crouched over my microscope trying to make up for my dereliction of duty highlighted the previous night. In a warm fug induced by plum brandy followed by a whisky chaser I was asked why I had not looked at the contents of Richard Bell's cigar box. This is a magic box that can only be viewed once a year at the time of the BMS Symposium. Open it and

inside you find the Minerals of your dreams sparkling in pristine glory – alas the next day all you have is fading memories. He had conjured up wulfenites from across Britain and even after ten hours of wulfenite binging they made my knees go weak. So I make the Cigar Box award of the year to Richard.

And then, Sheila Harper brought me back to the realisation that they are still out there waiting for us – those little gems nestling in their vughs awaiting the call of the hammer and chisel. Check out her blue tinted apatite found this year in Hingston Down Quarry – a proper little treasure. Some of you may remember that Sheila caused ructions last year by her attempts to micromount grains of garnet panned from the Kennack Sands. She has been trumped by Jane Randle who has also opened up the possibility that micromounters are in fact evolutionary descendants of the Caddis Fly. For she has some Caddis Fly larva cases where the grains have been lovingly chosen and then painstakingly glued together to make a home and perhaps an aesthetic artistic statement – for several of them are adorned with microscopic garnet crystals. So now do we know where we came from?

## **BMS COMPETITION RULES (REVISED SEPTEMBER 2013)**

Martin F. Gale

### **MicroMineral Competition**

1. Entries will be judged primarily on specimen quality and are restricted to two per member. Specimens are to be British i.e. including Northern Ireland (but NOT Republic of Ireland) and are to be owned by the entrant having been self-collected or obtained other than by means of purchase (given/swapped).
2. The size of the specimen is restricted only by the practicality of handling and viewing under a conventional binocular microscope. A rough rule of thumb is overall specimen size can be up to ½ a house brick in size but the crystals need to be viewed with a 10x powered loupe or more. Remember large is not necessarily better.
3. Specimens should be submitted in a card tray or plastic box when possible, placed the right side up for viewing and provided with suitable packing if necessary, to prevent movement or damage.
4. An entry form must be completed in full, in block capitals, for each specimen entered.
5. All entries are to be submitted at the owners' risk and are to be given to the competition administrator by 11am on Saturday at the annual symposium to allow time for preparation for judging. The competition is open to all members attending, including overseas members.



6. Entries are to be legibly labelled with the name of the Mineral/s and location only (i.e. No member's name). Entry numbers will be allocated by the competition administrator and specimens will be known only by these numbers until after the final judging.

7. The panel of judges will be appointed by the administrators and is the same for all the competitions. (Judging takes up most of Saturday so please be aware of this before you volunteer).

8. Judging will be based on a maximum of 50 points awarded by each judge in respect of each of the following categories.

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| A: Perfection of crystals (Crystal terminations and faces etc.) | Max. 15 points |
| B: Overall cleanliness (Not just the crystals)                  | Max. 15 points |
| C: Dramatic appeal (Wow factor)                                 | Max. 20 points |

9. The result of the competition (3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> places) will be announced after the AGM on Sunday morning and the Maurice Grigg MicroMineral Trophy will be presented to the winner.

10. If possible no entries should be collected before 2.30pm on Sunday, allowing members a reasonable time for viewing.

11. The former rarity criterion has been withdrawn. Therefore, if, for example a quartz and bassetite are entered, and the quartz has perfect crystals and is clean, and with a greater wow factor, then the quartz will win hands down.

12. In the event of a tie for first place, the administrator will give overall first place to the specimen with the highest points tally in the wow category. If there is still a tie, the administrator will ask an independent person to judge between them. The independent person may be a guest, a speaker, or a member that has neither judged nor entered.

### **Micromount Competition**

1. Entries will be judged primarily on specimen quality and are restricted to two per member. Specimens are to be British i.e. including Northern Ireland (but NOT Republic of Ireland) and are to be owned by the entrant having been self-collected or obtained other than by means of purchase (given/swapped).

2. The specimen must be permanently mounted. The term "*permanently mounted*" means *glued* i.e. not fixed using Mineral tack. The specimen can be glued into a box, either on a pedestal or directly into the box. The specimen must be mounted into a regular micro box, these include Perky type or the more common Eurobox. Entrants are advised to use matt black paint to cover the glue, pedestal and inside of the base of the box, as this is what the judges will be looking for, and will result in a higher score.

Mounted slides may also be entered.

3. An entry form must be completed in full, in block capitals, for each specimen entered.

4. All entries are to be submitted at the owners risk and are to be given to the competition administrator by 11am on Saturday at the annual symposium to allow time for preparation for judging. The competition is open to all members attending , including overseas members.

5. Entries are to be legibly labelled with the name of the Mineral/s and location only (i.e. No member's name). Entry numbers will be allocated by the competition administrator and specimens will be known only by these numbers until after the final judging.

6. The panel of judges will be appointed by the administrators and is the same for all the competitions. (Judging takes up most of Saturday so please be aware of this before you volunteer).

7. Judging will be based on a maximum of 50 points awarded by each judge in respect of each of the following categories.

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| A: Overall cleanliness(Crystal terminations and faces etc.)   | Max. 10 points |
| B: Perfection of crystals(Not just the crystals)  | Max. 10 points |
| C: Dramatic appeal (Wow factor)   | Max. 15 points |
| D: Mounting (Glued either onto a pedestal or into the box, with the specimen positioned squarely, and the glue, pedestal and box base covered in matt black paint | Max. 15 points |

8. The result of the competition (3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> places) will be announced after the AGM on Sunday morning and the Peter Braithwaite Micromount Trophy will be presented to the winner.

9. If possible, no entries should be collected before 2.30pm on Sunday, allowing members a reasonable time for viewing.

10. The former rarity criterion has been withdrawn. Therefore, if, for example a quartz and bassetite are entered, and the quartz has perfect crystals and is clean, and with a greater wow factor, then the quartz will win hands down.

11. In the event of a tie for first place, the administrator will give overall first place to the specimen with the highest points tally in the mounting category. If there is still a tie, the administrator will ask an independent person to judge between them. The independent person may be a guest, a speaker, or a member that has neither judged nor entered.

## **New Competition Class - World Competition**

A new competition class will be introduced at the 2014 Symposium. It will be run on the same lines as the Micromount and MicroMineral competitions, but instead of being restricted to British / Northern Ireland specimens, it will be open to specimens from all over the world. For the first year we will run only one world competition and the rules will be the same as for the MicroMineral Competition, except for rule 1, which shall read:-

1. Entries will be judged primarily on specimen quality and are restricted to two per member. Specimens are to be non-British (i.e. World including Republic of Ireland), and are to be owned by the entrant, having been self-collected or obtained other than by means of purchase (given/swapped).

The competition will be known as the World competition (how original) and a trophy has yet to be named. If there is anything members are not clear about, please contact Martin Gale.

### **SYMPOSIUM FEEDBACK**

Martin Stolworthy

Will any member with a complaint about, or **praise for**, the Stonecroft Hotel with regard to this year's symposium, please contact Martin Gale by email or Snail Mail ASAP.

### **MISSING AT THE SYMPOSIUM - CAN YOU HELP?**

Alan Barnes

I left a small plastic box (approx. 3" x 4") on Harry Critchley's sales table in the entrance lobby of the hotel. The box contained four specimens from Merehead Quarry, a rickturnerite, cesàrolite, plumbonacrite and mendipite. When I returned to collect the specimens on Sunday morning the box had disappeared. If you picked this up by mistake can you please contact me to arrange its return? Thanks for your help.  
Alan Barnes [alan.j.barnes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alan.j.barnes@hotmail.co.uk)

### **BMS CONSTITUTION**

(as amended by the AGM on 22nd September 2013)

#### **1. NAME**

The Society shall be called the British Micromount Society, hereinafter referred to as "the Society".

#### **2. AIMS**

2.1. The aims of the Society shall be to promote contact between micromounters in the U.K., to encourage the development of micromounting as a branch of Mineralogy through the publication of a newsletter and occasional field meetings and

Symposia, and to establish branches of the Society in different parts of the country to provide activities at a local level.

2.2. In a wider context the Society aims to promote Mineralogy in the U.K. by sharing the knowledge and experience of its members.

2.3. The Society shall promote contact, and exchange of newsletters etc., with other societies in the U.K. and overseas.

2.4. Members shall keep the aims of the Society in mind at all times, and any work done in its name shall be executed in a responsible manner. The name of the Society shall not be used without the express permission of the Committee.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The Society shall consist of Ordinary Members and Family Members and membership will normally be restricted to U.K. residents. However, exceptionally, non-residents may be permitted to become members by a majority decision of the Committee and at a special fee agreed by the Committee.

3.2. Ordinary Members – normally aged 18 years or over. Minors may be accepted at the Committee's discretion.

3.3. Family Members – being a member of a family in which there is one Ordinary Member.

In the case of Family Members only one copy of any publication(s) shall be supplied to any one address.

3.4. Applications for membership of the Society shall be made on the official Society application form. The Committee can refuse any application without giving a reason.

3.5. Ordinary Members and Family Members shall pay an annual subscription to be decided at the A.G.M.

3.6. Subscriptions shall be due on the first day of January each year, but members elected after the first day of October shall not be required to pay a subscription for the current calendar year.

3.7. Any members in arrears of subscription for more than three months shall be deemed to have resigned, but may seek re-election when all dues have been met.

3.8. Any member not behaving in a responsible manner shall be liable for expulsion from the Society. Membership shall cease if, at a meeting of the Committee (of which the member in default shall have twenty one days' clear notice, and at which the member shall have been given the opportunity of being heard), the Committee shall

pass a resolution that it is undesirable, in the interests of the Society, that such a membership be continued.

#### 4. FIELD MEETINGS

A leader shall be appointed for each of the Society's field meetings, both above and below ground. Any member failing to comply with a leader's reasonable request shall be reported to the next Committee meeting.

#### 5. COMMITTEE

5.1. The business of the Society shall be conducted by a Committee consisting of four officers:

Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer/Membership Secretary.

Plus other members representing their key organisational roles within the Society:

Newsletter Editor.

Symposium Organiser(s).

Archivist.

Curator of the Reference Collection.

Branch Coordinators.

The Committee shall have the right to modify the above categories of organisers and coordinators as changes within the Society's activities take place and shall report such changes to the AG.M. They shall also have the power to co-opt other persons as necessary. Four members, including two Officers, of the Committee shall form a quorum

5.2. The Officers of the Committee shall be nominated by any two members of the Society. Such nominations in writing shall reach the Secretary at least 28 days before the time arranged for the Annual General Meeting.

5.3. Branch Coordinators shall be elected by the members of their branch. Other members of the Committee shall remain members whilst they retain their posts. When the need arises for any new appointees, they shall be nominated by the Committee and confirmed by the A.G.M.

5.4. The Annual General Meeting (of which 25 Ordinary and Family members, not being officers, shall form a quorum) shall be held to receive the Annual Report and audited accounts. Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to all members of the Society at least 14 days before the time of the meeting.

#### 6. CONSTITUTION

Alterations to this Constitution can only be made at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose, and proposed alterations must be submitted to the Secretary in writing not less than 28 days prior to the meeting.

## 7. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the Committee, or on the signed request of ten members sent to the Secretary. Such Extraordinary General Meetings shall be held within 28 days of receipt of the request, and 14 days' notice of the meeting shall be given by post to all members.

## 8. TERMINATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society shall not be dissolved or terminated except at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose. Any property remaining, after the satisfaction of all proper debts and liabilities, shall be donated to societies or organisations whose aims and objectives are in the fields of Mineralogy, or to some registered charity as agreed by the meeting.

## **MARGATE (KENT) IS TWINNED WITH IDAR OBERSTEIN (GERMANY)**

Trevor Devon

The invitation by the editor to identify twinning with towns of Mineralogical significance perhaps allows me to indulge in a bit of nostalgia from my hockey playing days. In 1981 the seaside town of Margate in Kent was formally twinned with the German town of Idar-Oberstein and a number of sporting events were arranged to celebrate this event. At that time there were two hockey clubs in the Thanet area, Cliftonville and Thanetians, and I was then playing at the Thanetians club. When it was announced that Idar Oberstein was bringing over a mens hockey team, the two clubs combined resources and players to entertain our German guests and play some friendly hockey games. The Idar Oberstein players stayed in our homes and so began several new friendships.

The following year we were invited to take a team to Idar Oberstein to participate in their annual hockey tournament. Now it has to be admitted that few of us had any idea about the significance of Idar-Oberstein as the Mineral and gem capital of Germany. My own interest in rocks and Minerals only blossomed some 20 years later. When we arrived at their prestigious hockey stadium and clubhouse up in the mountains above the town, it was very clear that this was a rich town (in Ramsgate we had to make do with the local recreation ground). When I say town, I should really explain that there are two towns, Idar and Oberstein, 5 kilometres apart that were administratively united during the 1930's. If you visit there, it is clear from the people that there are two towns (each with its own Mineral Museum!).

Apart from the hockey, I have two main memories of that first visit: a visit to a Mine and a traditional Idar-Oberstein culinary delight of marinated, barbequed slabs of pork called "spießbraten". The latter became something of a team joke because our hosts so wanted to impress us that they served it up for almost every meal – maybe they were trying to slow us down on the hockey field! The visit to the Mine was rather challenging as we could not find an English-speaking guide and my German language

understanding was practically nil. I do remember the guide saying something about a rock from the Mine that sounded like he was clearing his throat – “aaahaaat” – of course I now know that the word “achat” is German for agate, a stone Mined there along with jasper up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Incidentally, it was Miners from Idar Oberstein that emigrated to Brazil who discovered the source of rich new agate, jasper and amethyst in Rio Grande do Sol.

We returned to Idar Oberstein for two more of their tournaments and on the last trip I purchased a pair of earrings for my wife. Made of aquamarine and slate by the leading young jeweller of Idar-Oberstein, who was also the captain of their hockey team, he had won a national prize for their design that year. It was with some disappointment on presenting them to Fiona that I realised she did not have pierced ears! It was probably nearly five years before she did have her ears pierced, by which time I couldn't remember where I had secreted the expensive earrings! I eventually found them a couple of years later! So ended my formal association with Idar-Oberstein, although I did stop off there for a visit each of the last couple of years on my travels from the St. Marie Show to collecting in the Eifel; And for lunch, guess what, I had some speissbraten for old times sake!

## **HEMERDON PROJECT—THINGS ARE REALLY HAPPENING!**

David Roe

Hemerdon Mine has appointed its new senior management team. Wolf Minerals, the company responsible for constructing and opening the Mine near Sparkwell, revealed the 10-strong team last week. Full of local management professionals and international mining experts, the company says the team is now embarking on the Mine's construction and production phase.

This will see some 230 direct jobs created and hundreds of millions of pounds pumped into the local economy. UK Operations Manager for Wolf Minerals Jeff Harrison – himself an ex-Imerys Operations Manager and with many years international mining experience - said: 'It is a very exciting and busy time for Wolf Minerals. We are very pleased to have brought together such a highly experienced team of professionals to take the Hemerdon project forward. The team combines a great mix of local knowledge from Devon and Cornwall, together with international experience of working for some of the biggest companies in the industry. 't is particularly satisfying to be creating job opportunities here in Devon for people who have trained in the South West, lived and worked in the industry locally or perhaps gone overseas but who are now drawn back to this globally significant project.'

The project will be managed by Commercial and Financial Manager Mike Lean, Environmental Manager Barnaby Hudson, new Mineral Planning and Estates Manager John Briggs, Project Management Team David Henderson, Charlotte Wilkins and Ian Reynolds, Human Resources Manager Martin Hill, and Administrator Amy Hatswell.

Wolf Minerals can now begin the work, having recently secured a £130 million funding and investment package. The company hopes to have the Mine in full production in early 2015. In September and October, three more new recruits – all graduates of Camborne School of Mines – will be joining the Wolf Minerals senior management team: Mines Manager Andy Bond, Health and Safety Manager David Howourth and Process Plant Manager Charlie Northfield.

From: [http://www.ivybridge-today.co.uk/News.cfm?id=29722&headline=Wolf\\_names\\_team\\_for\\_Mine\\_project](http://www.ivybridge-today.co.uk/News.cfm?id=29722&headline=Wolf_names_team_for_Mine_project)

### **SOUTH CROFTY UPDATE**

Roy Starkey

The latest “non-news” story from South Crofty appeared on the This is Cornwall webpages of the West Briton on 17th September (<http://www.westbriton.co.uk/Gold-worth-millions-South-Crofty-set-swell-Royal/story-19806191-detail/story.html> )

“Reports that gold reserves worth millions, discovered at South Crofty, in Pool, are set to make the Queen and Prince Charles a fortune have been dismissed by the mining company. Western United Mines Ltd (WUML), which owns the Mine, was granted permission to search for tin, copper, zinc and other metals in 2006.

The Crown Estate and the Duchy have agreed to split the proceeds of gold reserves unearthed at the Mine, ending a centuries old row over who has the rights to the profits. The Crown Estate, which had claimed proceeds from mining in the area, agreed to hand half of any profits to the Duchy. Any profits for the Crown Estate revenues go straight to the Treasury, while the Duchy, which funds Charles’ activities, is exempt from corporation tax. However, WUML dismissed the chances of gold ever being Mined in Pool saying it was not commercially viable.

A spokesman for the mining company said that while traces of gold and silver had been found at South Crofty it was not enough to make it commercially viable to extract. They said tin, zinc and copper were the main Minerals to be Mined at the site with WUML retaining the Mineral rights.”

### **SCOTGOLD – CONONISH UPDATE**

Roy Starkey

Scotgold Resources has announced (on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2013) the placement of 10 million fully paid up Scotgold shares to Zio Holdings Ltd, a company incorporated in Mauritius, raising AUD\$200,000 of new capital to fund on-going operations. Additionally, Scotgold has agreed to give Zio a non-exclusive right to conduct due diligence enquiries into Scotgold and the Cononish Project with a view to Zio making further investments in Scotgold, subject to any relevant shareholder or regulatory approvals. More later, no doubt .....



## **MINCO NORTH PENNINES UPDATE**

Roy Starkey

Following on from the report in the last newsletter, Minco recently issued an upbeat report to shareholders at its Annual Meeting held in Dublin on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

“Eight (8) exploration drill holes, with a total of 3,200 metres of drilling, have been completed in the Pennines programme over the past nine months, centered around the town of Nenthead adjacent to the county boundaries of Cumbria, Northumberland and Durham. Hole CA008 intersected significant zinc-lead Mineralisation grading 8.44% combined zinc and lead over 12.05 metres, which included an intersection grading 10.48% combined zinc and lead over 7.20 metres. Hole CA006 hole intersected a 5.15 metres wide section of disseminated zinc-lead Mineralization averaging 6.69% combined zinc and lead. Hole CA003 (previously reported) intersected disseminated Mineralization grading 4.32% zinc (“Zn”) and 13 grams of silver per tonne (“gpt Ag”) over 2.35 metres, which includes an interval grading 12.2% Zn and 34 gpt Ag over 0.3 metres, and another interval grading 11.3% Zn and 45 gpt Ag over 0.34 metres.

Commenting on the results, John Kearney Minco’s Chairman and Chief Executive, told shareholders, “We are very encouraged by the results of Minco’s first eight holes in this large area which has a rich mining history. We believe these results confirm our initial opinion of the potential of the Northern Pennine Orefield for the discovery of new Mineralization, both extending laterally around and at depth below historic workings. A new third phase of drilling is planned for the next year, with the planned addition of a second drill machine to further explore this exciting project for Minco.”

A total of 3,200 metres of drilling was completed in eight (8) exploration drill holes by Irish Drilling Limited under contract with Minco Mining Limited, a wholly-owned UK subsidiary of Minco plc. The current drilling by Minco is the first ever undertaken in this large area, either from surface or underground. Drilling in this initial phase of work was very widely spaced on a reconnaissance grid measuring 15 by 15 kilometres in size.

You can read the detailed report (which contains a lot of tabulated analytical results) on the Minco website here:- <http://www.minco.ie/news.htm>

## **KENNECOTT LANDSLIDE UPDATE**

Roy Starkey

Further to the piece in Newsletter 88, four months on from the disastrous landslide at the Bingham Canyon Open Pit Mine crews are starting to make progress in their efforts to get the Mine back to full operation.

The following report is from ksl.com Utah. A P&H electric mining shovel is helping clear part of the mountain out of the open-pit Mine. The machine known as "99" is six stories tall and weighs 1,800 tons.

“So far we have been able to move 6 million tons from the head of the slide, and we are going to continue to work to clear the benches and the side of the slide to make sure that it is safe for our people to work in and around those areas,” Kennecott Utah Copper spokesman Kyle Bennett said.

In one scoop, the dipper is able to shovel 120 tons. “So we can provide an additional 200,000 tons of material movement per day using one of these giant shovels,” Bennett said, and when there’s another 159 million tons of dirt and rock to move, such a shovel really helps. “So, we have a 24/7 operation, and we run this shovel approximately 20 hours a day,” said Jessica Sutherlin, senior analyst for Kennecott.

The shovel is so big it was delivered in pieces and assembled on-site. “It takes 60 semitrucks [articulated lorries to you and me Ed.] and 10 rail cars, to bring all the parts into our operation, and then it takes a crew full time, 50 to 55 days to construct a piece of equipment this size,” Bennett said. Kennecott lost three shovels in the slide, so 99 will start mining once the Mine is back to full operation. Despite all the remediation work going, ore is still being Mined. Rio Tinto hopes to have all of the work done by the end of 2015.

This is a seriously impressive piece of engineering hardware and you can see a short video of it in action here <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=26661994>

## **YORKSHIRE POTASH**

Roy Starkey

The Yorkshire Post reported on 16<sup>th</sup> September, that SIRIUS Minerals, the company behind a proposed £1bn potash Mine in the North York Moors, “has decided to alter its approach to the project. The bid to create the potash Mine in the Yorkshire national park has been hit by a series of delays owing to growing concerns over the York Potash project’s impact on the environment.

Sirius said that it has been in a range of “productive discussions” with advisers, experts, the North York Moors National Park Authority and other statutory bodies about how best to proceed with the approvals process.

Sirius said it will align the environmental study work for all four key elements of the project (Mine, pipeline, materials handling plant and port). The firm said: “This is possible because the company has completed more work on other aspects of the project, now allowing a more comprehensive assessment of cumulative impacts of all

of the elements of the project. It differs from the previous approach which focussed initially on a joint environmental statement for the Mine and the pipeline.”

Chris Fraser, Managing Director and CEO of Sirius, said: “Further, extensive work on the port and materials handling facilities has helped to de-risk the project, but it has also generated more information that needs to be assessed in conjunction with the other applications. As a result this new approach will reassure the decision making bodies that sufficient information is available on each element needed to deliver the whole project.

“With the benefits of the York Potash Project proceeding being so substantial, I know that our many supporters will welcome this revised approach that delivers greater certainty and leaves little room for debate over the high level of environmental standards that we are adopting. The Mine development has the longest lead time so it previously made sense to progress that application as a priority over the other required infrastructure applications. This revised approach will closely align the projects to ensure there are no unknowns for the decision makers.”

So, we may yet see a major new underground mining project in the UK, and one with the potential to unlock some really interesting Mineral specimens in due course.

## **LAPWORTH MUSEUM**

Roy Starkey

Work continues apace at the Lapworth Museum redevelopment project. Architects and Exhibition Designers have been appointed and several focus groups have been convened to inform the project team. An on-line survey has been launched to engage potential users and visitors and you are invited to participate in this. You can access the survey here <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/lapworth-museum/news/2013/27Aug-LapworthMuseumSurvey.aspx>

I am a member of the Project Core Team and also sit on the Project Board, and hope to play a significant role in the development of the planned Mineral gallery. All being well, the HLF Round 2 application will be submitted in the Spring of next year, and if approved, building and detailed design work should commence towards the end of 2014.

You can also register for a free Newsletter which will keep you up to date with future developments and the progress of the project here <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/lapworth-museum/about/register-updates.aspx>

## IN PRAISE OF VITAMIN C

Trevor Bridges

Further to David Roe's interesting note concerning the use of Vitamin C to remove iron staining, I thought I would give it a try. The photos below show a fine specimen of tabular crystals of baryte from the Hilton Mines, Cumbria. The specimen as originally collected was heavily encrusted in iron oxides / hydroxides, and a potential candidate for "disposal". However, after 4-5 days soaking in a solution of Vitamin C, the result was truly astounding, and the specimen is now firmly back on the "keep" list!



**Specimen before treatment**



**Specimen after soaking in a solution of  
Vitamin C**

### THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR IN WAITING.

David Roe

I take up the role of BMS Newsletter Editor with more than a little trepidation about how I am going to fit it in to the rest of my fairly busy life. That conundrum is summed up by the fact that writing this is compressed between a wonderful day on the top of the Cornish cliffs collecting very unimpressive blue coatings from Wheal Charlotte and driving up the dear old M5 to do a day's work in Manchester tomorrow.

I am also aware that my dyslexia produces some odd difficulties. For example a few minutes ago after confidently spelling wulfenite correctly twenty times this morning I was suddenly gripped with irrational consternation that it might be spelt wulfinite – and had to look it up on MinDat to calm my fears. Clusters of letters endlessly change and re-arrange in front of my eyes – so for those of you who see the printed word from a different perspective to Mine please be patient and don't depend on me to check the spellings of Minerals and locations in your most welcome future articles!

I am sure that with your help it will be successful – I am hoping to set up a network of contributors and to get a rhythm going. I am probably influenced by a couple of things. Firstly I am enthusiastic subscriber to magazines such as New Scientist and Sky at Night and have noticed how the layout of regular features makes for pleasant

reading. I have also noted how my wife in her capacity of editor of the Ugborough Parish Newsletter has noticeably raised the standard of this revered monthly missive by pleasant and supportive cajoling of her contributors. I am similarly hoping to charm a number of you to make regular contributions to your BMS Newsletter.

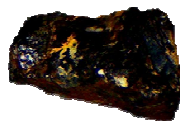
I am planning to commission articles (and if you have an idea please email me now – before you forget - on david@d-roe.freeseve.co.uk) such as “a Letter from America”, (and why not an “Epistle from Cornwall” and even a “Post card from Norfolk”), “20 from the BMS collection”, “My top 5”, “Mines Reborn Notes”, “Technical Update”, “News from the Markets”, “My Rock Room”, “Executive Profile” and most important “Members Profile”. The last one in the list perhaps summarises my feelings on what the (ghastly expression but it does sum it up) “brand image” of the BMS is – a community of friends brought together by their enthusiasm for Minerals, particularly when assisted by magnification. We range from amateur enthusiast to academic wisdom – but we all pitch in together – and the newsletter is part of this bond.

## THOUGHTS FROM INSIDE A BLACK BOX

David Roe

I have a real blind spot for identifying cassiterite especially when it is massive or water worn pebbles. This came to a head a few weeks ago when I did a walk from Cape Cornwall towards Sennen during which I picked a number of suitably heavy black/brown lumps of “tin stone”. Close inspection under the scope strongly hinted at the sole presence of tourmaline but I found it very difficult to accept that verdict. So I turned to chemistry to give me a definitive answer and used the following simple test for cassiterite. Take a fragment of the suspect material, put in an eggcup and cover with a little dilute hydrochloric acid. Now drop in some zinc – I use zinc dust but more chunky lumps can be used to equal effect. The zinc dissolves in the acid and generates nascent hydrogen which is very reactive and reduces the tin oxide to give a coating of metallic tin on the cassiterite. This reaction can be followed under the scope – although acid and microscopes are mutually exclusive - and has proved a fairly reliable test for cassiterite. To my chagrin not one of my “tin stones” was genuine.

The good news is that I can now find my socks. I often mock those of you who have tomato box infested garages – but I rarely admit my own guilty secret of storing “get round to sorting them shortly” Minerals throughout my home – in the porch, under the stairs, under the bed and – worst of all - in my sock draw. Since 1999 this has been a



**Tin-coated cassiterite (left); original sample (right)**

sock free zone – but very rich in wulfenite, pyromorphite and cerussite epimorphs from the fabled "Mike Rothwell" wulfenite location at Dylife. I had started cracking it down to more manageable size but was sorely tried by the well-known tendency of Mid Wales matrix to be incredibly tough and prone to violent random cracking. Too often a potentially world standard group of crystals would depart from their rocky home and be deposited on the carpet. It all became too stressful and I decided I needed a vacation from Dylife wulfenite and it took up "temporary" residence in the sock drawer – while the socks became homeless refugees. For the next 14 years I would open my sock drawer in a state of early morning bleary eyed somnolence only to be disconcerted by the non-availability of socks. It was only the call of the BMS Symposium Wulfenite Extravaganza that forced me to confront my fears and at last they have been cracked, sorted boxed and labelled. The carpet has been vacuumed to remove the light orange coating, the socks have returned to their natural home and tranquility descends.

My enthusiasm for apatite has been rekindled by seeing Sheila Harper's lovely blue apatite recently collected at Hingston Down Quarry. And this coincides nicely with the news that has got the Panspermists into a state of high excitement – soluble apatite from Mars. Panspermists, who include the late Fred Hoyle, espouse the theory that life was seeded from outer space, possibly from comets and meteorites. The basic amino acid building blocks of life can be synthesised fairly readily in alien conditions but these need phosphate ions to provide the backbone of the DNA double helix. Fluoroapatite is a potential source of phosphate being a calcium fluorophosphate but it has a very low solubility which would make it difficult to get a decent chemical reaction going in the primeval soup. Chloroapatite - type locality Telemark in Norway - has a better solubility but is fairly rare. Now a meteor specialist has put two and two together and may have made four when he realised that meteorites which originate from Mars (please don't ask me how they know that) uniquely contain merrillite – a calcium magnesium phosphate. He cooked up synthetic merrillite in warm water and found the phosphate levels were 50 times higher than with fluoroapatite. So if the merrillite came originally from Mars and if water was also present at some time over the last two billion years then Mars might have given rise to life based on DNA.

## **CORNWALL ROUND-UP (PART I)**

(Part 2 will appear in N/L 91)

Rob Selley

### **HALLENBEAGLE MINE**

Hallenbeagle Mine is situated on the outskirts of Scorrier and was at work in the early- to mid-1800's. It was primarily a copper producer although a small amount of tin was produced. A shaft between the main road and the railway line was reopened in 1943 to look for wolfram. Nothing was found underground though. The shaft is still open and you can get into some small stopes. At the back of one of these stopes there is a laddered man-way shaft which goes on down a lot deeper but unfortunately the air

is so thin you struggle to breathe. The set was worked on both sides of the main railway line. During recent Mine search trenching on the site a few of the small dumps were cut through. Most of the dumps consist of barren killas with the occasional spot of chalcopyrite, pyrite and sphalerite showing. On the dump around the shaft reopened in 1943 there are a few more rocks with quartz / chlorite showing. In a visit in October 2007 I found two smallish lumps that were carrying anatase and some very small sparable tin crystals. Most of the anatase crystals were unfortunately partially overgrown with chlorite although I did get a few clean ones. After two days of looking, that was all I found. There are also traces of wolfram in some of the quartz here.

In early 2013 the ground was being cleared in preparation for the construction of a trading estate. Several back-filled shafts were found and a lot of dump material moved. Unfortunately Minerals were hard to come by. The sum total being two small pieces with cassiterite on.

### **NORTH WHEAL TOWAN**

Struggling to think of somewhere to go one day after Christmas 2007 I thought I'd try East Wheal Charlotte near Porth Towan as I've had anatase there before. On the way down through Chapel Coombe I looked up at the dumps for North Wheal Towan on the side of the hill and thought, "I've never really given them a decent go", so I changed direction and struggled up through the gorse and brambles. The dumps are quite large and partially grown over. North Wheal Towan was also known as Charlotte United or New Charlotte. A fairly small set, it produced mainly copper with a small amount of tin. North Towan is situated on the right hand side of the main track from the Victory Inn, Porth Towan out towards Wheal Charlotte on the cliffs. The dumps are mainly of killas, together with some quartz / chlorite and tourmaline. A lot of the tourmaline is quite vughy and I have had some very pretty pale blue anatase plates, a few with the corners chopped off, from this material. There are also patches of cassiterite in some of the tourmaline. In with some of the quartz / chlorite I have had some dark blue pyramidal crystals of anatase. On one of the dumps there are some big blocks of quartz / tourmaline which can be quite cassiterite-rich, mainly massive but occasionally with some rough crystals up to 8mm. It goes to show, yet again, that dumps I always thought to have been barren are worth a good dig.

### **SOMETHING FROM PEDN AN DREA MINE**

During the early part of 2008 myself and a couple of friends, Nick and Nigel, decided to have a look on the remains of Pedn an Drea Mine in Redruth. Until quite recently it had been the site of Bradfords building supplies until it was decided to build houses there and Bradfords was demolished. The rubble was put through a crusher and spread around the site. A Mine search was carried out, and during the digging a lot of dump material was exposed. Everything was then put on hold. When they finished the search there was a hole about 5 feet deep by about 15 feet square, left open at the top end of the site. This area was the only bit with dump left showing. When we had a look at this in the first instance it was very dirty and we couldn't see much at all so we

left it until we had had some rain. On returning it had washed off quite well and within about 10 minutes I had picked up a **hand**-sized piece of quartz / chlorite with cassiterite crystals all over one face, from the top side of the hole. I had a bit of a dig on that side and found eight hand sized lumps of quite rich tin lode. We returned the following weekend and had another go in the same spot. Nigel found some cassiterite crystals to about 4mm and some micro purple fluorite crystals. Nick had a lump of quartz with some chalcedony in a cavity and I got seven lumps of rich tin lode. I also found a small piece of chlorite with single micro anatase and apatite crystals. The next time we went back they had started digging for an archaeological survey. The spot where we had been getting the cassiterite from was gone and there was now a large excavation at the bottom end of the site. They had uncovered walls from a boiler house still standing 8 feet high, and the cap of the engine shaft. Unfortunately I didn't have my camera with me. We returned the following weekend with cameras and found that all the walls had been knocked down and the shaft recapped.

### **BINNER DOWNS MINE**

Back in June 2008 Nick and I decided to have a go at the dumps of Binner Downs Mine. Long known for being pretty barren we didn't have high hopes. After a few small holes we decided on a place to dig on one of the dumps that wasn't disturbed when they did the capping. We spent all day there and moved a lot of stuff to get only a lump of vughy chlorite each. I found sparable tin, anatase, siderite, chalcopyrite and apatite crystals, all micro. I also found some cuprite crystals in a small lump of slag, and Nick got some sparable tin crystals to 4mm.

### **BRANCH NEWS**

#### **Devon and Cornwall B M S Group meetings for 2014**

Chris Jewson

The group will meet in the Long Room at Liskeard Council Offices, 3 - 5, West St., Liskeard, E.Cornwall on the following dates in 2014, March 15<sup>th</sup>, June 14<sup>th</sup>, September 6<sup>th</sup>, December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Meetings start at 1pm and finish by 5pm. There is car parking 100m along West St from the venue, unfortunately it is not free. Entry is £1 to cover cost of room and refreshments. Visitors are most welcome to come along for a chat and a cuppa or bring material for identification. A 'scope will be available. For further info contact Chris Jewson on 01872 560687 or email [chris@jewson1694.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:chris@jewson1694.fsnet.co.uk)

#### **Sussex Branch**

John Hall

The next meeting (with the theme being "Lead Minerals") will be on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October from 7pm to 10pm at the Redwood Centre, Perrymount Road in Haywards Heath. This is the same building that is used for talks at the Sussex Mineral Show each year and is on the north side of Clair Hall (the Show venue). For further



information please contact John Hall on 01444 415066 or at [jahall116@gmail.com](mailto:jahall116@gmail.com)

**NW BMS Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013 - Show and Tell**  
Harry Critchley

Six members attended the MONDAY afternoon meeting which was being trialled as an alternative day to our usual Saturday meetings. Beryl Taylor was not well and gave her apologies, as did David Hardman who was attending to Margaret following a minor op, and Keith Snell who was on a visit to London.

The most unusual specimens were the eggs which David Green had brought, a neighbour keeps chickens! After talk of scrambling these as part of the 'snacks' for later the serious business of looking at specimens started. John Vanston had brought two trays of material from North Wales to look at. Oneta had ... zeolites .. to show and check, though this time they were labelled ... as identified by D.G., rather than the usual .. as identified by H.C.! David looked through the Frongoch material in Harry's collection – giving changes as necessary to some of the labels – including “it is not as labelled, but not sure what it is – other than *interesting!*” David, like Harry, has been “reviewing” his collected material and sorting this into “manageable quantities” – a process Oneta refers to as “de-mounding”. He had “found” redgillite on a Silver Gill piece, and scotlandite on one from Leadhills. Both David and Harry concluded that reviewing pieces collected “long ago” can be very enlightening and several “new finds”, due to increased understanding and knowledge, can be made, finds that may not have been made at the time of collection. The usual refreshments were served and the meeting finished about 4:30pm. David distributed several large bags of “boxes” which were surplus to his requirements – many thanks David.

**Midlands Branch**  
Jane Randle

The next Midlands Branch meeting will be held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December at Roy & Mary Starkey's home in Bromsgrove. The theme will be “Minerals of Derbyshire”. Please contact Jane Randle on 01865 880606 or email [jane6.randle@btinternet.com](mailto:jane6.randle@btinternet.com) if you are interested in coming along.

**GEORGE WILLIAM HALL (1924-2013)**  
(abridged from a longer tribute in the Russell Society Newsletter)  
Roy Starkey

Although not a BMS member, George Hall is surely a name that will be familiar to many readers. His passing, earlier this year, marks the end of an era, and certainly warrants a note in our newsletter. I first met George at a Welsh Mines Society event back in the early 1980s. He was already a well-known figure in the world of

British metalliferous mining and mining history, and author of two standard works on the subject *The Metal Mines of Southern Wales* (1971), and *The Gold Mines of Merioneth* (1975). A second edition of *The Metal Mines of Southern Wales* was published in 1993.

George was educated at St Wilfrid's prep school at Seaford in Sussex, and was later evacuated to Lampeter in Cardiganshire, which no doubt played an important role in encouraging his love of Wales. He developed a lifelong interest in Mines and mining, and when called-up in the latter stages of the Second World War, George volunteered for the Mines as his National Service and was placed in the New Dunn Mine near Coleford in the Forest of Dean.



Throughout his life he had three great loves: cycling, Mines and Wales. Cycling was a natural consequence of his father's business (a cycle shop in Gloucester), and his interest in Mines, principally UK metal Mines, never faded. He was a close friend of the late David Bick and together they spent many years exploring remote corners of Wales in pursuit of their mining history interests.

With his father he formed The Elenith Mining Company in 1946, which was intended to reopen the Esgair Mwyn Mine in Cardiganshire. BMS member Neil Hubbard spent some time working with George in the 1980s trying to get the old mill and processing equipment into an operational state, but this was later abandoned. He acted as a consultant in a project to reopen the Gwynfynnedd Gold Mine in North Wales in 1981. Although the Mine did produce gold, it was unfortunately not in sufficient quantity to be commercially viable. A little-known aspect of the Mine's activity however was the presentation of a one kilogram ingot of gold (now on display at the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea) from the Mine to Her Majesty the Queen on her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1986, thus ensuring the supply of Welsh gold for the traditional royal wedding rings for future generations.

George amassed a comprehensive library and archive of books and documents relating to metalliferous mining, most notable amongst which perhaps is his run of the *Mining Journal*, to which he compiled a manual index to every volume, by noting the page number on which every named British Mine was mentioned, and copying this information into a series of school exercise books, by hand! He was thus able to

provide a service to researchers wanting to know what references were made to any given Mine, something which I was able to make use of in my own project to document the history of the famous Herodsfoot Mine in Cornwall, and saving hundreds of hours of search time.

George passed away on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2013 in Ludlow Community Hospital, following a short illness. In addition to being the President of the Welsh Mines Society, George was a founder member and former Director of the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust.

### **ROBERT (BOB) J. KING (1923-2013)**

Roy Starkey

As this newsletter was about to go to press we learned with sadness of the death of Bob King, peacefully in his sleep, at home, on 25<sup>th</sup> September. Bob was the founder of The Russell Society and a former member of staff at the Geology Department of the University of Leicester. He was well-known in the world of earth science curation and a highly regarded field Mineralogist. Bob was born in 1923 in Leicester. He attended the City Boys School, Leicester, and later earned an MSc in Geology from Imperial College London in 1972. The Mineralogy of Leicestershire was Bob's real passion and he pursued this interest as the subject of a PhD at the University of Leicester in 1973. His fine personal Mineral collection was purchased by the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, in 1983.

In 1972, Bob founded the Russell Society, named in honour of his mentor Sir Arthur Russell, a body which continues to thrive today, 40 years later. Bob's professional interests embraced all aspects of Mineralogy and geology, but especially curation of geological materials. He was a founder member of the Geological Curators Group and winner of its A. G. Brighton Medal in 1995. He was honoured by the naming of *Offacolus kingi*, a chelicerate arthropod which he discovered in the concretions of the Silurian-aged Wenlock Formation in Herefordshire (Orr *et al.*, 2000), and in 2002 the Mineral bobkingite was named for him (Hawthorne *et al.*, 2002).

A full obituary will appear in the next issue of the Journal of the Russell Society. Our condolences go to his wife Sally and family.

### **References**

Orr, P. J., Siveter, D. J., Briggs, D. E. G., and Sutton, M. D. (2000) A new arthropod from the Silurian Konservat-Lagerstätte of Herefordshire, UK. *Proceedings of the Royal Society London B*. 267: 1497-1504.

Hawthorne, F. C., Cooper, M. A., Grice, J. D., Roberts, A. C., and Hubbard, N. (2002) Description and crystal structure of bobkingite,  $\text{Cu}^{2+}_5\text{Cl}_2(\text{OH})_8(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2$ , a new Mineral from New Cliffe Hill Quarry, Stanton-under-Bardon, Leicestershire, UK. *Mineralogical Magazine* 66: 301-11.

**AND FINALLY** ..... I am very grateful to David Roe for volunteering to take on the role of Newsletter Editor - please give him your wholehearted support and send in LOTS of "stuff" - he's waiting to hear from you. I would also like to record my grateful thanks to John Pearce and Frank Ince for their support in proof-reading the newsletters which I have edited - you do a great job guys! Roy Starkey

Chris Jewson kindly drew my attention to some images recently promoted on the internet featuring shots of the Danxia scenic area in Gansu province, north-west China. The region is noted for a red-dish sandstone that has been eroded to create unusual and striking rock formations. The rainbow mountains became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2010. Whilst there appears to be a certain amount of doubt about the authenticity of



the images and colouring thereof, the mountains do appear to exist, and would make an interesting excursion for any members planning on being in China anytime soon.

See (for example) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2013/aug/01/rainbow-mountains-china-in-pictures>

and

<http://www.isciencetimes.com/articles/5982/20130902/rainbow-mountains-china-colorful-danxia-landform-video.htm>

Thank you to everyone who has contributed material.

Please send all contributions for the next Newsletter - preferably in electronic format by e-mail, to [david@d-roe.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@d-roe.freemove.co.uk) (WORD, RTF, WORKS, OpenOffice.org, MS Publisher or plain text) with photos attached as separate jpeg files.

The next BMS Newsletter should be issued in February 2014. All contributions gratefully received - so please get writing! Deadline for contributions for that issue is **3<sup>rd</sup> January 2014**.

*The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of its correspondents, and are not necessarily agreed with, or shared by the Editor, the British Micromount Society or its Members. The accuracy of submissions is the responsibility of the authors and will not necessarily be checked by the Editor for validity.*