

# Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California



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Volume 79 Number 7

July 2008

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The 845th Meeting of The Mineralogical Society  
of Southern California

**Nano-Mineralogy**  
by  
**Dr. George Rossman**

**Friday, July 11, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.**  
Geology Department, E-Building, Room 220  
Pasadena City College  
1570 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena

## Featuring:

- Mineral collecting in New York
- Remembering Gus Meister
- Potluck with Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society

## July Meeting

### Nano-mineralogy by Dr. Rossman

By Janet Gordon

Dr. George Rossman of Caltech will speak on “*Nano-mineralogy*” at the Friday, July 11 meeting at 7:30 p.m. Let's face it. There are not many new minerals discovered that are available in large crystals. However, there is a wealth of new minerals being discovered that exist in sizes measured in micrometers to nanometers. And there are a variety of uncommon minerals previously known as large crystals that are now recognized to be important and abundant at the micrometer to sub-micrometer scale. George's presentation will discuss some of the methods he and his colleagues use to examine the sub-microscopic world of minerals and will focus on some recently discovered new minerals including barioperovskite from the benitoite mine.

George Rossman is Professor of Mineralogy in the Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences, California Institute of Technology, an MSSC member, and popular and dynamic speaker. He has a wide range of research interests including hydrous components in normally anhydrous minerals, color phenomena in minerals, and the relationship between spectroscopic properties of minerals and their structure and composition. The mineral rossmanite hints at his study of tourmaline. He has published on these topics extensively and participated in numerous international scientific meetings. Among his many honors, George was awarded the Dana Medal by the Mineralogical Society of America in 2001.

## Minutes of the June 13, 2008 Meeting

The 844<sup>th</sup> meeting of The Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held on Friday, June 13, 2008 at Pasadena City College, Pasadena, CA.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Geoff Caplette. Vice President Janet Gordon then introduced the speaker of the evening, Justin Zzyzx, who gave a presentation entitled: "St. Lawrence County, New York: A Field Collector's Wonderland."

Mr. Zzyzx, the owner of The-Vug.com, has, together with his wife Brandy, collected minerals in numerous sites across America and produced videos documenting such areas.

His talk centered around eight locations in St. Lawrence County, which he and Brandy visited over a three-day period.

Despite the brevity of the hunt, and without strenuous effort, they were able to readily gather specimens of dravite and uvite tourmaline, tremolite, calcite, diopside and feldspar crystals, among other minerals. They were also fortunate enough to meet a rather eccentric guide, who provided valuable site information. The presentation was accompanied by numerous slides, shown by Brandy.

Janet Gordon announced that George Rossman would be the speaker at the July 11<sup>th</sup> regular MSSC meeting.

Bob Housley reminded members about the June 27,28 and 29, 2008 California Federation of Mineralogical Societies Show at the Ventura County Fairgrounds.

At show and tell, Mr. Housley displayed a specimen of lapis from Cascade Canyon.

The door prize was won by Geoff Caplette.

The meeting was brought to a close at 8:30 p.m. by President Caplette.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Caplette, Secretary

## **Minutes of the June, 2008 Board Meeting**

The June 2008 Board Meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California was held at Pasadena City College on June 13, 2008, immediately following the regular meeting. President Geoff Caplette brought the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m. In attendance were the following MSSC members: Janet Gordon, Jo Anna Ritchey, Bob Housley, James Imai, Leslie Ogg, and Geoff and Pat Caplette.

Janet Gordon, one of the club's stalwarts, who has been immersed in MSSC activities for many years, can no longer participate in the MSSC to the same extent. Input and suggestions are especially needed regarding speaker candidates for 2009. Since the speaker identification process is often a time-consuming task, efforts must be undertaken as soon as possible to confirm the attendance of knowledgeable and interesting individuals. Further, it was moved, seconded and approved that the MSSC speaker fee be raised to \$150.00.

It was also moved, seconded and approved that the annual banquet will be held sometime in January, 2009, at the Oak Tree Room in Arcadia, CA. Sugar White will be contacted to determine her availability as the speaker for the event. The Micro-Mount Conference will be held January 30-31, 2009.

The Board agreed to again combine the annual MSSC picnic with that of the Fallbrook Club's. The picnic will take place in August, in Fallbrook. Further details will be provided in next month's bulletin.

Jo Anna Ritchey requested written information regarding deserving honorees in conjunction with the CFMS scholarship program. Such persons do not need to be CFMS members, although we have many deserving individuals, including Rock Currier, Bob Housley and Ed Imlay. Please provide her with letters describing your nominee's qualifications and related activities.

Geoff Caplette will obtain information regarding the location of the MSSC trailer, the identity of a capable trailer mover, and the costs involved, so that the trailer can be transported to the Caplettes' business yard. After the trailer is relocated, reserved cases can be removed.

President Caplette brought the meeting to a close at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Caplette, Secretary

**You are invited to join  
Fallbrook Gem and Mineral Society  
Potluck and Mineral Sale**

**When:** Saturday, August 16, 2008, potluck will begin from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. follow by Mineral Sale until 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Fallbrook Mineral Museum, 123 W. Alvarado St., Fallbrook.

**Food:** Bring a dish of any kind to serve 6-8 people.

**Minerals Sale:** Each seller will be allocated ½ of an 8 foot table and will be asked to donate 10% of their total sales to FGMS.

**Questions?** Please contact FGMS Office at (760) 728-1130.

This year FGMS has extended their invitation not only to us, but also Palomar Gem & Mineral Society in Escondido and San Diego Mineral and Gem. However, please noted that the invitation is only for humans, not pets.

**Mark your calendar.  
More information will be posted on  
August issue bulletin.**

## Passing of a Long Time Member

Ann Meister would like members of the mineral community to know the following:

My dad passed away on Friday, May 30. At least I was with him and he was at home where he wanted to be. He will be missed.



### **GUS MEISTER 1910-2008**

By Dona Leicht

The ebbs and tides...there was an era in mineral collecting when the “club” was the thing. It was where we all gathered together to learn, to laugh, to collect, to sponsor shows and in general be the “goodwill” ambassadors of the mineral hobby. Gus Meister spent a goodly part of his life as one of these “ambassadors”.

Gus’s story is actually the “American dream” come true. With only \$20 in his pocket this young man left his homeland of Germany to come to America. For someone who had finished his apprenticeship as a machinist, washing dishes to make his way in the “big city” of New York was hardly an auspicious beginning to his new life. Several jobs followed including some time with the Waltham Watch Company in Massachusetts. In 1932 a friend suggested a trip across the country and when they landed in California there was no question in Gus’s mind that this is where he would stay, although he love of “road trips” never waned.

And stay he did.....to do successful work as a machinist, marry a lovely lady named Edith and raise two daughters. Gus settled in Los Angeles and moved with Edith and the girls to his beloved house in Altadena in 1956 and remained there his entire life. He owned Meister Engineering Corporation located in Pasadena, California. He specialized in prototype and short-run machining for many industries, including aerospace and specialty cameras. He is a life member of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

His girls, Karin and Ann, would collect rocks to show to their dad on family camping vacations. An announcement in the local paper about meetings of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California prompted Gus to attend and his interest in minerals became a life long hobby from that point in 1954. He studied geology and mineralogy at Pasadena City College and joined “study groups” held at various collector’s houses in the area - names like Chapman, Hill,

VanAmridge, Calvert, Rodekor, Streeter - all the “movers and shakers” of their day. In addition, he became active in the Southern California Micro-Mineralogists and its Pacific Micromount Conference held each year just before the Tucson show.

His interest in stamp collecting was replaced by minerals but his fondness for the harmonica I remember well. Many times it was the sound of that harmonica around a campfire that bolstered us after a day of hard collecting.

Gus loved the thumbnail size specimens and assembled quite a collection. It is Gus we can thank for new rules in competitive displays that allow for some “flair”. Previously, thumbnails had to be displays in unflattering wooden boxes with dividers. When Gus was disqualified during a competition for his deviation from the “rules” he took it upon himself to change the rules! As President of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and also the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies he nudged them into a bit more forward thinking regarding displays. Thanks Gus!!

Ever the machinist, he thought that the current crop of breakers to trim specimens were too imprecise, rough and clumsy, especially for smaller specimens. Thus the “Meister Trimmer” was born in the early 1960’s. Wayne and I still have ours as I’m sure many others do as well. Gus also engineered a faceting machine, originally called the Alta Faceter - renamed the Facet-Meister in its later years. I know of people who still use this machine.

I think that Gus served in every capacity with the Mineralogical Society of Southern California in addition to the Federation work. During the later years of the club and in honor of the many years that he shepherded the show, the “Gus Meister Trophy” was created for the best “theme” mineral at the show. The first recipient was Al Ordway, another member of MSSC lost to us recently. When I look over the roster for MSSC it is a jolt to realize that the “old guard” is now gone - Minette, Moller, Ordway and now Gus in only the last few years. I wonder if we can ever replace the camaraderie of those early mineral societies.

Feisty, but always fair, Gus will be missed by his friends. Can you hear the faint sounds of that harmonica?

## **2008 Calendar of Events**

**July 12-13 2008, Culver City, Culver City Rock & Mineral Club**  
Culver City Veteran Memorial Auditorium 4117  
Overland Avenue Hours: Sat. 10 - 6; Sun. 10 - 5  
Website: [CulverCityRocks.org](http://CulverCityRocks.org) Phone: (310) 391-8429

**August 1, 2 & 3 2008, Nipomo, Orcutt Mineral Society St.**  
Joseph Church 298 S. Thompson Ave. Hours: 10 - 5  
daily Wes Lingerfelt (805) 710-1983 E-mail  
Rocks4u@proigy.net Webpage:  
<http://www.omsinc.org>

**August 2 - 3 2008, San Francisco, San Francisco Gem & Mineral Society**  
San Francisco County Fair Bldg Ninth



Ave. & Lincoln Way Hours: Sat. 10-6 Sun 10-5 Ellen  
Nott (415) 564-4230

*West Coast Fall*  
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