

# **BULLETIN of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

Volume 99 Number 5 May, 2026

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*The 1,050<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California*

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***With Knowledge Comes Appreciation***

**A ZOOM Meeting  
May 8, 2026, at 7:30 P.M.**

**Program: " HOW DOES WOOD BECOME SILICIFIED"** Presented by Jim Mills

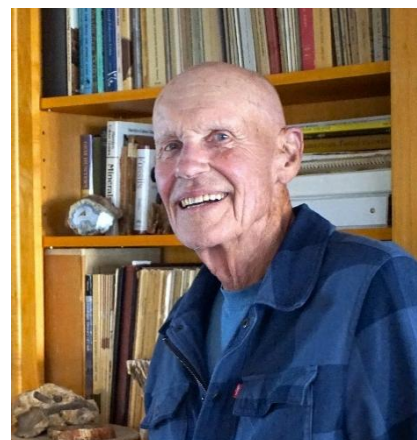
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**Remember:** If you change your email or street address, you must let the MSSC Editor and Membership Chair know, or we cannot guarantee receipt of future Bulletins

**Program: ” HOW DOES WOOD BECOME SILICIFIED”** Presented by Jim Mills

Jim is an avid collector of petrified wood. Along with his spouse, Beth Myers, he also operates a small Internet business selling petrified wood and plant fossils to collectors and museums around the world. His presentation will be on the topic “HOW DOES WOOD BECOME SILICIFIED.” If you have ever wondered how wood can turn to stone, this lecture will provide the answers. Topics covered will include where the minerals come from, how they get to the wood, how the minerals enter a wood cell, types of geologic strata most likely to yield petrified wood to rockhounds, and the origins of color in fossil wood.



Jim Mills grew up in Southern California right around the corner from the North Hollywood Gem and Mineral shop and began collecting rocks and minerals at the age of 9 years. So much time was spent hanging out at the shop that the proprietor started giving him odd jobs to do. Of course, the payment was in rocks and minerals! He graduated from UCLA Earth and Planetary Sciences Department in 1965 and joined the US Air Force as an Intelligence Officer very soon after graduation.

In a second career Jim worked for the National Park Service. It was a good match - the first national parks were related to interesting geology, fumaroles and hot springs at Yellowstone and the glacial features at Yosemite. In fact, a very early National Monument was Petrified Forest set aside by Teddy Roosevelt in 1908 – 8 years prior to legislation that established the National Park Service to administer the nation’s treasures.

He has authored several papers related to geology and fossil wood localities. A complete list can be seen at <https://www.millsgeological.com/about-us.html>

**How to Join our ZOOM Meetings**

MSSC members are automatically included in the invite list each month.

For non MSSC Members who want to attend this meeting. You must respond to our Programs chair, Carolyn Seitz [speakers@mineralsocal.org](mailto:speakers@mineralsocal.org). no later than the Thursday prior to the next scheduled meeting. Please include “*current month ZOOM Meeting*” in the subject line of your response. This response date will allow time for us to send you the information needed to participate in the ZOOM meeting.

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**From the Editor:** Linda Elsnau.

Due to circumstances beyond anyone’s control, the April meeting minutes will be in next month’s Bulletin. Our thoughts go out to Marcia and Joe Goetz at this time.

Welcome to May, 2026. Looks like a really interesting program for the May meeting and you won’t want to miss it.

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**From Our President Leslie Ogg**

This month I am deviating from my alphabetical theme. I visited the White Cliffs of Dover yesterday, so I will tell you about my newest mineral acquisition, white chalk aka calcium carbonate

The cliffs were formed by coccolithophores, tiny plankton with calcium carbonate shells. The shells settled to the bottom of the shallow sea along with other detritus. The limestone is studded with pieces of black chert, formed by inclusions of silica, possibly from sponge spicules or diatoms. Over time the layers compacted into a very fine white limestone. These sea beds have been uplifted and now form the famous Dover cliffs.

Besides their beauty, they have played a role in England’s history. They are the first line of defense, overlooking the channel; ancient Dover Castle sits atop the bluffs.



During WWI, the cliffs played a role in British air defense. Parabolic “mirrors” were carved into the limestone (later replaced by smoother concrete). These structures concentrated the sound from approaching aircraft and served as an early warning system.

During WWII, a huge effort was made to install gun emplacements on and in the cliffs. Areas inside the cliffs were carved out to house soldiers and ammunition. There are also several large windows set into the cliffs overlooking the harbor. These allowed the Admiral in command of Dover to oversee and plan operations, especially the British troop evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940.

White Chalk Cliffs  
Photo: Leslie Ogg

<p>Chert and chalk samples Photo: Leslie Ogg</p>	<p>Chert embedded in chalk Photo: Leslie Ogg</p>	<p>Coccolithophores. From Monteiro and others, 2016, Why marine phytoplankton calcify: Science Advances vol. 2, no. 7, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.</p>

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## MSSC Membership ZOOM Meeting Minutes, Friday, March 13, 2025

Will be published in the June 2026 Bulletin.

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### List of Upcoming MSSC Events : Mark your Calender!

Event	Date	Comments / Scheduled Program (if known)
Meeting Dates::	ZOOM June 11, 2026	TBA
	ZOOM July 8, 2026	TBA
	ZOOM August 14, 2026	TBA
Board Meeting	Sunday, May 3, 2026	ZOOM at 1:00 PM
Field Trip		No News At This Time

Note: Dates and programs shown above are subject to change. Check your bulletins to confirm final information each month.

*The Ride Share Listing* is being temporarily discontinued until such time as MSSC starts holding in-person meetings again.

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## EARTH DAY EVENT

MSSC at NHMLAC\*



\*Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

EARTH DAY at NHMLAC was celebrated on Sunday, April 19, 2026. The *Mineralogical Society of Southern California* (MSSC) and other organizations took part in the event.

MSSC had hands-on exhibits, ultra-violet lights, “Which rock is heaviest?” specimen and fun facts about So Cal rocks and minerals (you eat this!), and free rock specimens for the kids - of all ‘em!

The MSSC exhibits were informative for all ages. This was a hands-on exhibit with a theme of “Please Touch the Rocks.” Here are a few examples: The density test (Which rock is heaviest?) was fun with difference between a much smaller iron specimen vs. a very large pumice specimen. The magnetic test was interesting as there was only one specimen on the table that reacted to a magnet. Still, people tried to get the magnet to “stick” to several specimens. There was a 1.2-billion-year-old anorthosite collected from the area where NASA astronauts trained in the San Gabriel mountains; feasting the eyes, a display of different colored quartz crystals: rose, citrine, amethyst. The fluorite, corundum/ruby, and willemite were very popular when viewed under UV light and there was a wonderful large specimen of malachite to ooh and ahhh over, as well as, fossil bones, petrified wood and many other examples. By the way, the “you eat this rock!” was ultra-pure marble/calcium carbonate that is found in breakfast cereal! There was an emphasis on using as many Southern California rocks and minerals as possible, so each specimen did double duty. There was much more to delight all the people who came to our exhibit station and, of course, there were smooth (tumbled) handouts for the kids. The smiles on their faces said it all!

All in all, it was fun to contribute in this way. Angie brought brochures and Paolo made up flyers, which we handed out. Patrick did great as our ambassador/pitchman, talking up MSSC, encouraging people to put our website and QR Code (the revised one) on their phones for more information to view at their leisure. Not sure, but maybe we were able to get a couple more members.

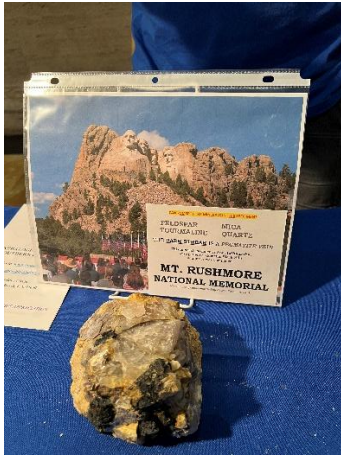
Here are some photos from the event. Enjoy!

Photos Credit: Angie Guzman

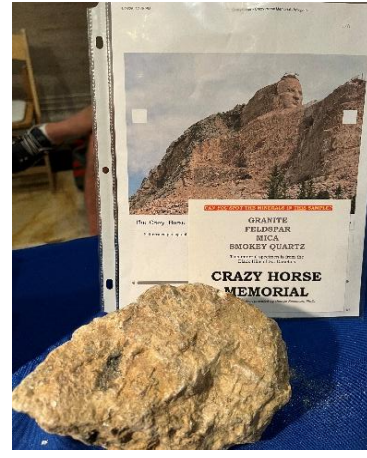
NOTE: Parental and/or adult permission was obtained to capture images displayed in this article/aag 4-19-2026.

***With Knowledge Comes Appreciation!***





**MSSC  
CELEBRATES  
EARTH DAY AT  
THE NATURAL  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM OF  
LOS ANGELES  
COUNTY**  
April 19, 2026



Many thanks to volunteers David L and Patrick S, who worked both shifts. Jeff D, Bert V, Paolo S, Kenneth N (friend of Paolo's) and Angie G worked split shifts – all in all it made for an easy day! We had a wonderful surprise visit from Dr. Tony Kampf, Curator Emeritus of Natural History Museum and MSSC member. He shared delightful specimens from The Vault! Thanks, Tony! A good time was had by all!

<p>This photo is in the Public Domain: "Earthrise" by Bill Anders, Apollo 8, Dec.24, 1968</p>	<p><b>THAT'S ALL FOLKS</b> Angie Guzman 04/19/26</p>

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**OTHER (FREE) THINGS TO DO...by Ann Meister**

**The remainder of the 2025-2026 Watson Lecture series has been postponed.** Due to unforeseen maintenance at Beckman Auditorium, the Watson Lectures are postponed until further notice. All registrations for the remainder of the season will be cancelled. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your understanding. Find past lectures on [Caltech Watson Lecture Series - YouTube](#)

The **Von Kármán Lecture** is on Thursday, **May ??** at 5:00 PM. Available live on YouTube at [NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory - YouTube](#). Date, speaker, and topic were not available at time of publication. Check website for information and past lectures [Lecture Series \(nasa.gov\)](#). Previous lectures are available on YouTube.

The **UCLA Meteorite Gallery** is open to the public weekdays from 9 am to 4 pm and on Sundays from 1 to 4 pm when it is staffed with volunteer docents. Admission is always free. The monthly lectures seem to have been discontinued but the gallery is well worth exploring. Visit the website and check on events, videos, and other neat things including resources for teachers, Go to <https://meteorites.ucla.edu>

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**Calendar of Events:**

Only S. CA shows are listed here. Other CFMS Club shows can be found at: <http://www.cfmsinc.org/>

**2026 Shows**

**May 1-3, 2026 - Vista, CA**

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, 2040 North Santa Fe, Vista, CA 92083

Vista Gem and Mineral Society

Hours: Fri & Sat: 10am-5pm; Sun, 10-4

Spring Gem & Mineral Jewelry Show. Website:

[vistarocks.org](http://vistarocks.org)

**May 1-2, 2026 – Yucaipa, CA**

Yucaipa Valley Gem &\* Mineral Society

Located on Yucaipa Blvd., in Yucaipa, CA 92399

Hours: Fri 12 Noon – 9 PM, Sun 6 PM – 10 PM

Website: <http://www.yvgms.org/>

**June 20, 2026 - Bellflower, CA**

14515 Blaine Ave, Bellflower, California 90706

Delvers Gem & Mineral Society

Hours: 9 am - 4 pm

Rock & Gem Parking Lot Sale

Website: <https://delversgemclub.wordpress.com>

**June 27-28, 2026 - Culver City**

Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA 90230

Culver City Rock and Mineral Club

Hours: Sat, 10am to 6pm; Sun, 10am to 5pm.

Admission and parking are free,

Website: [culvercityrocks.org](http://culvercityrocks.org)

<b>MSSC Advertisement Policy:</b>			
Mineral-related ads are allowable in the MSSC bulletin. Below is the price per month			
	Business Card	\$5.00	
	One-third page	\$10.00	
	One-half page	\$20.00	
	Full Page	\$35.00	
In addition, any advertiser who purchases 12 months of space in advance will receive a discount of 12 months for the price of 10 months. The copy for the ads should be mailed to the editor at <a href="mailto:bulletin@mineralsocal.org">bulletin@mineralsocal.org</a> and the payment should be sent to the <b>MSSC Treasurer 2231 Golden Circle, Newport Beach, CA 92660</b>			

**2026 MSSC Officers:**

<b>OFFICERS</b>		
President	Leslie Ogg	<a href="mailto:president@mineralsocal.org">president@mineralsocal.org</a>
Vice President	Renee Kraus	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@mineralsocal.org">vicepresident@mineralsocal.org</a>
Co-Secretaries	Marcia Goetz	<a href="mailto:secretary@mineralsocal.org">secretary@mineralsocal.org</a>
Treasurer	Pat Stevens	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mineralsocal.org">treasurer@mineralsocal.org</a>
CFMS Director	Angie Guzman	
Past President	Angie Guzman	
<b>DIRECTORS</b>		
2025--2026	Carolyn Seitz	
2025--2026	David Lesperance	
2025--2026	vacant	
2026-2027	Pat Caplette	
2026-2027	Bert Vogler	
<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRS</b>		
Bulletin Editor	Linda Elsnau	<a href="mailto:bulletin@mineralsocal.org">bulletin@mineralsocal.org</a>
Field Trip	Marek Chorazewicz	
Historian	Ann Meister	
Membership	Linda Elsnau	<a href="mailto:membership@mineralsocal.org">membership@mineralsocal.org</a>
Micro Mineral Conf. Chair	Al Wilkins	
Program and Education	vacant	
Speaker Bureau	Carolyn Seitz	<a href="mailto:Speakers@mineralsocal.org">Speakers@mineralsocal.org</a>
Webmaster	Leslie Ogg	<a href="mailto:webmaster@mineralsocal.org">webmaster@mineralsocal.org</a>

**About the Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

Organized in 1931, the Mineralogical Society of Southern California, Inc. is the oldest mineralogical society in the western United States. The MSSC is a member of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and is dedicated to the dissemination of general knowledge of the mineralogical and related earth sciences through the study of mineral specimens. We are a scientific non-profit organization that actively supports those endeavors through public outreach, field study and related programs. The Bulletin of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California is the official publication of the Mineralogical Society of Southern California, Inc.

The MSSC meetings are held on the second Friday of each month, at 7:30 p.m., MSSC meetings are conducted via ZOOM conferencing until further notice. The annual Installation Banquet occurs in January, and the annual Picnic and Swap Meeting are in August. Check the Society website for details.

The Society also sponsors the annual Pacific Micro mount Symposium held at the Fallbrook Mineral Museum during the last weekend of January.

Annual Membership dues for the MSSC are \$30.00 for an individual membership, \$40.00 for a family membership. Bulletins are sent by email; there is an additional annual fee if you prefer paper bulletins mailed to your address. The Society's contact information:

**Mineralogical Society of Southern California**

**13781 Alderwood Lane, 22-J, Seal Beach, CA 90740**

**E-mail:** [treasurer@mineralsocal.org](mailto:treasurer@mineralsocal.org)

**Website:** [www.mineralsocal.org](http://www.mineralsocal.org) **The Mineralogical Society of California, Inc.**

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MSSC Bulletin  
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Glendale, CA 91214

To:



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Bulletin Is  
Here!**