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# BAM Newsletter ~ April 2024

Meeting: Wednesday, Apr 10, 7:00 pm  
ZOOM only\*

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## April Zoom Meeting

While we work on finding a new location for in-person meetings, we've reverted to monthly all-Zoom meetings. The Zoom link will be emailed to all members and guests the day before the meeting. We're hoping our new meeting place will have hybrid meeting capabilities.

## Program: Macro & Micro Minerals from the Mines of Butte, MT

By Dan Evanich

At our April meeting, Dan will show us the hidden beauty of the minerals within the polymetallic ore deposits of Butte, Montana.

The Historic Butte Mining Era lasted from roughly 1865 through 1982. It spanned almost 120 years of continuous operation from the first established silver mines through the closure of the Berkeley Open Pit. In its heyday between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, it was one of the largest copper boomtowns in the American West, attracting surges of Asian and European immigrants, particularly the Irish; as of 2017, Butte has the largest population of Irish Americans per capita of any city in the U.S.

Over the course of its history, Butte's mining and smelting operations generated in excess of \$48 billion worth of ore, but also resulted in Superfund sites on the upper Clark Fork River and the Berkeley pit.



*Silver wires covered in black acanthite on rhodochrosite. From the Alice-Lexington Tunnel extension project in the 1990s. FOV 5mm. [DJE photo](#)*



*Dan E. digging through the manganese oxide blackened dumps near the site of the Burlington Mine (in the old Independence Mining District) located along Blue Bird Trail in West Butte, Montana in search of rhodochrosite specimens. Photo by Barb Matz 2023.*

## Milestone of 6000 Minerals Passed

By Herwig Pelkmans

With the prepublication of the 77th Newsletter of the Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification (CNMNC) in early February 2024, the milestone of 6,000 minerals officially recognized by the IMA was passed. At mindat they were quick to create the mineral pages for the 25 new minerals that were approved in December 2023 and January 2024. After the new minerals were added to the database, the mindat counter is now at 6017 mineral species [6031 in March 2024]!

Some of these new minerals caught my eye because of their name or their type locality. For example, there is **rotherkopfite**: a new silicate  $\text{KNa}_2(\text{Fe}^{2+}_{2.5}\text{Ti}_{1.5})\text{Fe}^{2+}(\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{12})_2$  for the neptunite group, from the well-known collecting site of Rother Kopf in the Eifel region (Germany). And **désorite**

$\text{Pb}_2(\text{Fe}^{3+}_6\text{Zn})\text{O}_2(\text{PO}_4)_4(\text{OH})_8$ : a new lead-iron-zinc phosphate from Germany, named after Joy Désor, the driving force behind the company Mineralanalytik, AFAIK the only private company in the world that has professional mineral identification (for mineral collectors) as its core business!



[\*Rotherkopfite\*](#), fov 0.8mm. Rother Kopf, Roth, Gerolstein, Vulkaneifel, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany.



[\*Désorite\*](#), FOV 900  $\mu\text{m}$ , Schöne Aussicht Mine, Dernbach, Wirges, Westerwaldkreis, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany

The famous Lengnabach quarry in Switzerland can also extend its list, with the two new silver-thallium-lead minerals **geuerite**  $\text{Ag}_2\text{Tl}_4\text{Pb}_4\text{As}_{22}\text{S}_{40}$  and **giușcăite**  $\text{Ag}_2\text{Tl}_4\text{Pb}_4\text{As}_{20}\text{Sb}_2\text{S}_{40}$ . And Frédéric Hatert, professor of mineralogy at the University of Liège (Belgium) and vice-chairman of the CNMNC, now has a fourth mineral that bears his name: after hatertite  $\text{Na}_2(\text{Ca},\text{Na})(\text{Fe}^{3+},\text{Cu})_2(\text{AsO}_4)_3$ , calciohatertite  $\text{NaNaCa}(\text{CaFe}^{3+})(\text{AsO}_4)_3$  and magnesiohatertite  $(\text{Na},\text{Ca})_2\text{Ca}(\text{Mg},\text{Fe}^{3+})_2(\text{AsO}_4)_3$ , there is now also **manganohatertite**  $\text{NaNaCa}(\text{MnFe}^{3+})(\text{AsO}_4)_3$ . One can only wonder how many more 'hatertites' the Tolbachic fumaroles of Russia have in the works!

Reference:

Bosi F., Hatert F., Pasero M. and Mills S.J. (2024) IMA Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification (CNMNC) – Newsletter 77. Mineralogical Magazine, 88, <https://doi.org/10.1180/mgm.2024.5>

**Editor's Note:** The last I heard from John Sulzbach, he was going through some more of his old journals and I think he will eventually have another good collecting tale to share with us. In the meantime, I recently came across several stories I wrote for the Albuquerque

Gem and Mineral Club's newsletter in the mid-1990s, when I lived in Albq and was a member of AGMC. I was primarily a lapidary at that time, just beginning to appreciate minerals and about 10 years away from acquiring a microscope. The first story, of a frustrating Colorado field trip, follows.

## Amazonite Field Trip

It was a dark and stormy Saturday afternoon of Memorial Day weekend, in the mid-1990s. Materializing out of the rain, the vehicles of AGMC members converged at Glacier Peak Art, Gems and Minerals, in Colorado Springs, CO. Business owner and miner Joe Dorris hosted us with a slide show about his mining claims in the Lake George area and the fine amazonite and smoky quartz found there, and he displayed some of his best specimens for us to salivate over [this was long before the Prospectors TV show and the Smoky Hawk claim]. As the slide show concluded, rays of the setting sun broke through the clouds and illuminated downtown Colorado Springs. We were all highly encouraged by this apparent good omen, but it was just a teaser. There was no indication that 14,110-foot Pike's Peak was towering over Colorado Springs and the foothills were shrouded in dark, wet clouds.

The following morning, we again traveled through the cold, damp gloom to Joe's shop, where a pot of fresh hot coffee awaited us. We killed some time buying minerals, then decided to try to reach the mine. Joe's claims lay at an elevation above 9,500 feet at the end of a 5-mile partly-4WD dirt road. At about 7,500 feet, the accumulation of snow on the paved highway (!! ) forced us to turn back. At this point Joe disclosed that earlier in the week he had opened a good pocket at the mine and had left it intact for us to collect in! Needless to say, we all left with visions of amazonite and smoky quartz dancing in our heads.



*Microcline (var. amazonite) and Quartz (var. smoky), Smoky Hawk Claim, Teller County CO. 5.5x5.2x5.3 cm. (Source: mindat)*

The scheduled field trip was over, with zero field collecting! I opted to stay in the area and spent the rest of Sunday morning visiting the Garden of the Gods in intermittent rain showers. The eroded sandstone walls and spires were accentuated by the sheets of water flowing over their surfaces!



*Garden of the Gods and Pike's Peak. (GoG [FB page](#))*

Later that afternoon the rain and snow stopped and the highway was clear and dry, so I drove up the hill again, this time to Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument [also in the Lake George area, about 10 miles from the amazonite claims]. The ground was covered by several inches of wet snow, but there was a good crowd, including me, looking at exhibits in the visitor center. One entire wall is covered with several hundred different plant, leaf, and insect fossils that have been found over the

years. (Being a National Monument, collecting by visitors is forbidden.)



*Wasp (genus Paleovespa), Florissant Fossil Beds, Teller County CO. (Source: [NPS FLFO.](#))*

Monday morning dawned clear, bright and chilly. Finally, all of Pike's Peak was visible, so I signed up for the Cog Railway ride to the summit and pulled on all the warm clothing I could find in the car (it was Memorial Day, after all!). Unfortunately, at about 11,500 feet the train was forced by high winds and blowing snow to turn back. There was nothing to do at that point but drive back home to dry, hot, sunny Albuquerque!

## Upcoming Shows / Meetings

### April 13, Gilbert AZ

Flagg Mineral Foundation

[Minerals of Arizona Symposium](#)

Celebrating the Field Collector

Regional Library, 775 N Greenfield Rd

Hours: 8:30 am to 9:00 pm

### April 13-14, Mariposa, CA

MGMC [Annual Show](#)

Mariposa County Fairgrounds

Hwy 49 two miles south of Mariposa

Hours: Sat 10-5; Sun 10-4

### April 27-28, Santa Cruz

SCMGS [Spring Showcase](#), 307 Church St.

Hours: Sat & Sun 10-5

### May 10-12, Tucson AZ

Tucson Fine Mineral Gallery Spring Showcase

465 W St Mary's Road

Hours: 10 am to 6 pm each day

### May 24-26, El Dorado CA

NCMA Annual Micromineral Symposium

El Dorado Community Hall,

6139 Pleasant Valley Road

68th Annual  
Mineral, Gem, Fossil & Jewelry Show

Wizards, Crystals & Treasures

Sat & Sun • April 27 & 28 • 10 am - 5 pm  
Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium  
(Corner Of Church & Center Streets Santa Cruz, CA)