



Federation of Southern African Gem and Mineralogical Societies Federasie van Suider-Afrikaanse Siersteen en Mineralogiese Verenigings



FOSAGAMS Newsletter 3 2015

www.fosagams.co.za

Gemboree 2016

Hope the excitement is building up as the time for our 2016 Gemboree draws near! We recently undertook a recce trip to the impressive little town of Prieska in the Karoo to familiarize ourselves with the surroundings. It was originally named Prieschop, a Khoisan word meaning 'place of the last she – goat'. We are pleased to announce the main venue of the Gemboree will be the Soon le Roux Youth Camp situated on the banks of the mighty Orange River. The camping and caravanning area covers three hectares, and rooms are also available at the Youth Camp. Other accommodation will also be available including lodges and guest houses. We will also make use of the hostel facilities of the Hoërskool Prieska. Full details will be given in the communiques of the Gemboree. Prieska, known for its semi-precious stones and minerals has so much to offer. Be sure not to miss out on this exciting adventure!

Death of Lorraine Mollentze, printer of the SAGM



It is with great regret and sadness that we have to inform you that Lorraine passed away recently. She will be remembered for her warm – hearted, friendly and professional approach towards us. Our deepest sympathy goes to Lesley Meise, her daughter. Lesley will also be taking over the printing concern.

Lorraine Mollentze

Photo: Lesley Meise

Open Day Sunday October 18

The new Open Day, now officailly known as the Rock Science Open day, will be held on Sunday October 18 at All Scape 266/1 Spencer Ave, Chartwell North Estates. Rock Science (Pty Ltd) have stepped in to help continue Rob Smith's tradition of offering a venue for all of those involved in this hobby. Entrance and vendor sites will be free. Tables can be hired from Marlene Howard at Easy Hire 082 7825 837. There is a safe onsite parking and the gates will open at 09:30 and close at 16:00.



Graeme Hoffman kindly requests all to join in on this day to assure its success to continue the Open Day tradition. An auction in aid of the SAGM will also be held. Dealers are expected to submit an article for the auction. For further information contact Graeme at 082 4436 402 / rockscienceg@mweb.co.za

Photo: Graeme Hoffman

Rotating spheres

An article on rotating spheres was recently given to me. According to this article stones which are billions of years old rotate on their axis while in a vibration free environment. John Hund found a stone at the Gestoptefontein mine near Ottosdal in the North West Province. While playing with this stone on a very flat surface, he realized that the stone was very well balanced. Hunt was intrigued by the form of the spheres, grooved around the middle and the fact that they were hard of steel, while the material (pyrophyllite) in which they were found, is as soft as limestone with a count of 3 on the moh scale.

An article on 'Mysteries unsolved' appeared in the SA LapMag 1997 vol. 29 no 3 p15. Read this as well as Bruce Cairncross' reply to this under the heading 'Cosmic Cannonballs' in the SA LapMag 1998 vol. 30 no 1 p 4-6. All these articles can be found on www.fosagams.co.za / magazines

Another article was written on this phenomena which can be found on <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/704738-2-8-billion-year-old-spheres-found-in-south-africa-how-were-they-made/>

Are these stories fact or fiction? You decide!!!



The Gestoptefontein mine produces a high quality pyrophyllite which is a phyllosilicate mineral composed of aluminium silicate hydroxide: $AlSi_2O_5OH$. The clay was formed by the alteration of volcanic ash, which apparently accumulated at the bottom of a quiet body of water to form a dense, but soft light grey, or darker, fine grained stone, which splits into well-defined slabs.

Blocks of Pyrophyllite are quarried and sold as either 'wonderstone' or 'African stone' for sculpting. Other products from this stone are: acid-resistant lab ceramics refractory bricks and linings, filler in paint, electrical electrical etc.

Gestoptefontein mine

Photo: With acknowledgement to Bruce Cairncross

from his book 'Field Guide to Rocks and Minerals of Southern Africa'

Gemstones for sale



Tvl. Jade (pink)



Opal



Native Copper



Garnet

All photos supplied by Bronwyn Bertal

Bronwyn Bertal's (Pretoria) uncle left her some of his collection of semi-precious stones. The roughly 70 precious stones are tourmalines (red, green), opal in matrix and fossilized bivalves (Ethiopian and Australian), topaz, (blue – pink and yellow), aquamarine, garnet, barium, native copper, chrysoprase, Transvaal Jade (red, pink and green), sapphire (± 7 carats in size), zircon crystals, obsidian, a Norton County stony meteorite (46,2 g) etc. etc. Please contact Bronwyn at bronwynbertal@gmail.com / +27 798 990 999.

A Creative Crystal 'Fair'



Toprock will be having a creative crystal 'fair' at the Toprock Farm, Ashburton, Pietermaritzburg. This will be held from August 9 – 10. Classes and talks on crystal wrapping, crystal wand making, stained glass painting wall art, paint with crystals and a talk on healing with crystals and crystal structures will be on the agenda. Booking per email (shop@toprocks.com) or cell phone (072 462 0458) is advisable.

Photo: Supplied by Ashburton's

35th International Geological Congress

South Africa is hosting the 35th International Geological Congress in Cape Town, August 27-September 4 2016.

The International Geological Congress represents the 'Olimpics' of Geology and is held every four years. Cape Town will be hosting the 35th IGC in on behalf of the African continent. With the support of the major African geoscientific societies and related organisations, the event will be a Pan African experience. The expected 6 000-10 000 delegates will include a large number of African delegates, and field trips are planned to all parts of the African continent.

The organising committee of the 35th IGC would like to invite you to participate in this exciting event. You can find information at <http://www.35igc.org>. You can also contact the Technical Chair, Professor Laurence Robb (Laurence.robbs@earth.ox.ac.uk) for further information.

Regards and take care!

Linda Stone

President FOSAGAMS