



Witwatersrand Gem and Mineral Club

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Department of Geology
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Wits Rock Digest Newsletter of May 2013

As even the trees turn to metal, with shades of **rust**, **copper** and **gold**, the sun becomes lazy, yet the mineral world is heating up. This autumn edition is abuzz with activity and excitement...



Find us on Facebook :

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Witwatersrand-Gem-and-Mineral-Club/346437298736246>

Meetings



Visitors and new members are welcome at all club meetings.





A very special note to all our Mineral collectors, members and friends who shied away for a multitude of reasons, possibly club politics. With a warm note and a round of hearty applause, I know that I have everyone's vote of confirmation; we are truly proud to announce that our Rocky meetings have returned to a pleasant, informal, relaxed forum of camaraderie, possibly the best equilibrium ever experienced in the Club's existence. We welcome you all to visit again, to share, sell and trade specimens, knowledge and updates of our treasured hobby.



To those who have been absent for a while, or who wish to visit for the first time, there is ample **FREE** parking available to the right of the gate, at the bottom of the hill.

The themes for this month's mineral meeting on the **Wednesday 8th May at 7pm** are:

-  Lead minerals
-  Minerals named after people



Our speaker and for this month, on **Wednesday 29th May at 7pm** is **David Minster**. He will be presenting the enthralling topic of OPALS. David is a renowned gemmologist and a living walking encyclopaedia on mineralogy. He is also doing a splendid job as the new Editor in Chief of the Lapidary Magazine as well as the FOSAGAMS Website and Facebook eManager. We are honoured to have this opportunity to share his knowledge and insights.

Events

The annual event that every rockfella worth his salt, has been waiting for; **Rob Smith's African Gem & Mineral OPEN DAY** is finally upon us. Get your running shoes ready for **Sunday 26th May**. Drums roll and gates open at 10am sharp!!! Don't forget your raffle ticket from the gate meister. It may just earn you that diamond in the rough!



Dress warmly – or rather in layers, in case mother sun blesses us with her presence. ☀️

Coffee, tea and juice are always available courtesy of Rob. 😊 Blessings be upon you Mr Smith. Boerewors rolls will be available for a small donation. Salads will be available for vegans. This year the mountains are coming to Mo.... Rob has threatened to unleash the contents of 3 warehouses upon the rock hounds. An African event of this magnitude has only been preceded by the tombs of Tutankhamen. The earth shall move

Book Announcements

Professor Bruce is pumping out the books like a proverbial publishing press:

- 📖 *First Field Guide to Rocks & Minerals of Southern Africa / Eerste Veldgids tot Gesteentes & Minerale in Suider Afrika* (used by many, both locally and internationally as a reference guide.)
- 📖 *Kalahari Manganese Field Book*

Stephen Gomersall has done some homework and has obtained a bulk discounted price for Bruce Cairncross' books. In other words, for 12 or more books, as a club... This is currently available to Wits Club Members only. Should other people be interested, please email me directly for additional information.

gomersall@powermite.co.za and cc: Sharon lifeisthepresent@gmail.com interested.

Raffle and Auction donations



Thank you to members who have donated worthy beautiful specimens to the club for auctions and raffles. These funds contribute toward our year end function. Donations need not be limited to mineral specimens!!! As long as the subject matter is vaguely related to rocks, crystals and klippies ...



Raffles usually take place at month-end meetings ie the last Wednesday of every month. Tickets are on sale at meetings and you will be alerted to this. If you **sell minerals** at the club, please donate a nice rock to the raffle. Contact **Keith Bailey** in this regard at club meetings.

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Club fees are due (past due in fact). If you haven't paid up, please bring your fees to the next meeting. 💰 Come on peeps, we don't want to chase you!!! 🚗

The WGMC **Banking Details** are as follows:

Standard Bank	Cheque account
Account number:	200551744
Branch code:	630522



Access to our club is wheelchair friendly, with ramps and lifts. So if you are a rockhound, collector or dealer, there's no excuse not to be where it's happening!!!

Month-end Meetings

Last Wednesday of each month (Time: **19h00 for 19h30**)



Allan Fraser has had to postpone his presentation, due to other commitments, till our winter. Allan, please let us know when your schedule will allow for your next presentation. Thank you Allan, Bruce and Paul. We all value your contribution and look forward to your very informative interludes into great frontiers. I have been working on some other possibilities, but have yet to confirm them.

Please let me know what topics you would be interested in. I have a list of potential speakers, but **REALLY** need help in suggesting topics. **I'm listening**

Library



Massimo Leone is at still taking care of the library and will give assistance to members wishing to borrow or return books, magazines or CDs. If you have any old books on **minerals, geology** or **lapidary** that you wish to donate to our library, please contact Massimo. The library is being updated and rearranged and a register drawn up to maintain proper control. You will be notified of further acquisitions for the library when they are made.

It was recently discussed that we need to catalogue and list the libraries CDs. We will then be able to list and offer Club CDs on loan.

Membership

WGMC Membership Cards

New membership cards are due for 2013 and will be issued upon payment of 2013 fees.

Access Cards

The validation of access cards held in 2012 expired at and need to be renewed for 2013. A number of members handed their cards to **Bruce Cairncross** at the end of 2012; these have been renewed. **If you have not already collected your card**, please give us a shout at the next meeting you attend, and we will let you have it.

The remaining cards must please be handed in at the next meeting which you attend. Should you still require a card, kindly provide Bruce with:



2 passport sized photographs,



R25.00 in cash, and



a certified copy of your ID Document or passport (No DNA sample or shoe size necessary)

New Members

If you know of anyone interested in minerals, please bring them along to meetings. New members are always most welcome.

Other Events & Outings

The Wits and Pretoria clubs have a reciprocal arrangement to participate in the outings arranged by each club. Please refer to the PGMC Newsletter which is available to members in our DROP BOX. They can also be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/57175197494

Friends & Acquaintances

The Cape Town Gem & Mineral Club exchanges newsletters with a number of societies. Should you be interested in reading up on any of them, please contact Jo who will email them on to you. If you wish to join any of the clubs, or attend their lectures and outings, their contact details are as follows, or view the Cape (or any other Club's) Newsletter in our Dropbox :

Astronomical Society - Contact Lia at xtrahand@iafrica.com
Friends of SA Museum - Maxine Davies 021 481 3913 (Wed & Fri only)
samfriends@iziko.org.za

Club Documents

By now we really hope you've popped your heads into our Dropbox. It's basically a virtual club library, rather like a website. Every month I add a new folder and pop all the newsletters and mineral related information in there for mineral minded folk to enjoy, without having to clog up one another's emails or waste unnecessary data downloading oodles of emails.

Meteor Showers

May 6th - next decent meteor shower [eta-Aquariids]

"The fast and often bright meteors make [getting up early] worthwhile." - IMO

Expect one "shooting star" per minute or two, at best.

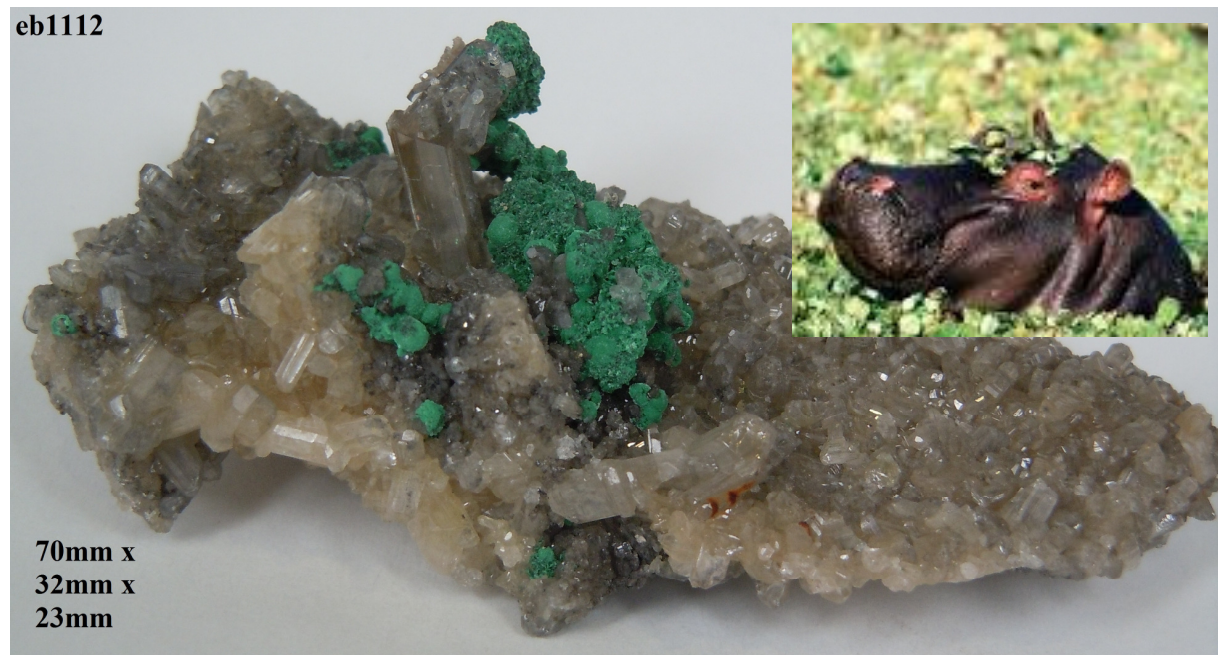
Best time to watch: before dawn of May 6th; look up towards the north-east.

You may see "eta-Aquariids" over a few days **after** May 6th (early mornings); before May 6th the Moon will interfere with viewing.

Click here to view WGMC info: <https://www.dropbox.com/l/Ndv3wgfDrfoFHpmXe8GtP9>

Under the heading of **WGMC**, monthly folders have been created up to **MAY**. There's a long list of documents, emails and other trinkets to wade through. These also include details of Rob Smith's OPEN DAY, Meteor Showers, Culinan Blue Diamonds that have disturbed the share price – positively. Lost Ajoite, Ajoite rock hounding and digs. Thanks to Steve Gomersall, even a Star Factory...

Mineral of the Month – Lead Minerals (Cerrusite)



HippoChite

Malachite on Cerrusite from Tsumeb Mine, Namibia

Picture and Specimen: Romuald Claudius Koppert

Don't mess with a hippo, not matter what hat she's wearing today!

Lost or Stolen Specimens

An Ajoites (valued at R7000) has departed the Shop. It gave everyone great pleasure to see it in our glass cabinet. This and a few others were not under lock and key. This particular specimen measured 63 - 77 - 90 mm and weighed 455 gms. If someone should try to sell it to you, please contact Sharon Bernhardt of Toprock Crystals & Gemstones, Ashburton sjbernhardt@gmail.com – refer to the DROPBOX documents.

Request for Members' contributions

Members who have anything related to our hobby to share, please let the newsletter editor, currently Sharon Flax Waddington - email: lfeisthepresent@gmail.com, have a paragraph or two for insertion in the newsletter. We would welcome input from members.

If there is anyone in the club able to give a talk at a month-end meeting, or knows of someone who could provide a talk, members' input would be much appreciated. To encourage external speakers (non-members), a once off fee of R500.00 is available.

Massimo has some presentations and DVDs he has shown previously. If you have missed these, **please let me know**, so that we can reschedule a showing on month ends that we do not have speakers for.

Committee Members

The Club has several vacant committee positions and would welcome new volunteers. Committee members for the year beginning 1st March 2013 are as follows:

Chairman	Vacant	
Vice Chairman	Vacant – possible volunteers	
Mineral Section	Vacant – possible volunteers	
Treasurer	Jono Hotz jonohotz@gmail.com	0824449628
Librarian	Massimo Leone mass@thefacetingstudio.co.za	082 372 0328
Scribe / Newsletter Editor	Sharon Flax Waddington Lifeisthepresent@gmail.com	082 9 234 794
If you're unable to reach my cell, please use Rom Koppert's Cell		083 227 5634

Other Club Contacts

Raffle Master	Keith Bailey
Access cards	Bruce Cairncross

If you have received this newsletter in error or wish to be added to or removed from the mailing list, please email me with UNSUBSCRIBE WGMC in the subject line.

Sharon Flax Waddington

May 2013

E&OE