Dear Dave Barthelmy

We’re back from a fairly subdued Tucson Gem and Mineral Show in Arizona, USA. We had a great time and met several new customers and business associates. We were especially pleased to meet people with a passion for fluorescent minerals.

One of the most memorable aspects of the show was the number of people who expressed their sympathy and condolences for the devastation by bushfires of so much of the state of Victoria. We are fortunate that we and our families live a long way from the scene of those fires, but we do appreciate people’s genuine concern and goodwill.

So now we are back home, we will do our best to continue to present you with a wide range of mineral specimens to add to your collections. Because we’ve been away, a few of the items in this newsletter have been on our site for a few weeks, but have not appeared in a newsletter until now.

We have a few Moldavite specimens in this newsletter and so have included a special feature on these tektites, which we hope you enjoy.

Please note, that while we intended being at St Ives in the last week of March, the Kuring-gai Garden Festival and the Canberra Lapidary Club Rock Swap have now conspired to be on at the same time. We will therefore be in Canberra at the rock swap on March 28th and 29th, and not at the Garden Festival at St Ives Showground. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Happy collecting!

Susan and Bruce

NB: If you are having trouble displaying the images in this newsletter, you may need to click the 'display content' link at the top of your page. Also, adding our email address to your address book will in many cases solve the problem. You can also view this newsletter by going to our newsletter page, clicking on the + sign, and selecting the newsletter you wish to view.
Moldavites - meteorites from earth!

Like so many people I have had a long term interest in meteorites, those fascinating arrivals from space that litter our planet. Shortly after graduation I was fortunate to work in the Great Victoria Desert in South Australia where I found several fine australites featuring beautifully formed obladed shields and thus forming a long term interest in this sort material.

As a mineral specimen trader I have handled many of the light green moldavites originating from Bohemia and Moravia and have been an interested follower of the evolving theory as to their formation.

Unlike my australites, moldavite is thought to have originated from the impact of a meteorite 15 million years ago in the vicinity of Nordlinger Ries, Germany.

A widely accepted current theory has it that the meteorite was about 500m to 1000m in diameter and entered the atmosphere at 22km per second with the temperature of the meteorite reaching 5,000 to 10,000deg C with a pressure front of 500 Gigapascals. This immensely energetic mass caused the local rock to melt prior to impact. The meteorite impact evaporated both the meteorite and the local rock producing a crater 22km in diameter. The resultant shock wave projected local material into space.

Recent research has found that moldavites share many of the chemical characteristics of the material ejected from the Reiss Crater.

One of the more interesting findings is that gas pressure in bubbles in some moldavites is equivalent to the atmosphere at 20 to 25 kilometers. Gas analysis of the bubbles also indicates a mix similar to that of the atmosphere at these levels. These facts support the theory that moldavites are composed of melted terrestrial rock originating from the distant site of a meteorite impact.

This means that moldavites have the distinction of being meteorites that originated from earth prior to a sojourn in space.

For those interested in pursuing the topic of rocks formed from the ejecta of meteor impacts I suggest you query google regarding the Acraman impact site in South Australia. This is a story on a far grander scale.

Bruce

New Stock

Zircon
Zircon, Rift Mineral Province, Malawi.

Labradorite
Labradorite, Madagascar.

Moldavite
Moldavite, Moldau Valley, Czech Republic.
**Moldavite**
Moldavite, Moldau Valley, Czech Republic.

**Hematite and Rutile**
Rutile and specular hematite, Novo Horizonte, Bahia, Brazil.

**Specular Hematite**
Specular Hematite, Novo Horizonte, Bahia, Brazil.

**Moldavite**
Moldavite, Moldau Valley, Czech Republic.

**Spinel crystal**
Spinel, Balangoda, Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.

**Apatite**
Blue Apatite, Kalthota, Balangoda, Sri Lanka.
Emerald Crystals
Beryl var. emerald, Chivor Mine, Boyacá Department, Colombia.

Zircon Crystal
Zircon crystal, Rift Mineral Province, Malawi.

Pyrrhotite
Pyrrhotite, Dalnegorsk, Russia.

Fluorite
Fluorite, Xianghuapu Mine, Hunan Province, China.

Native Copper
Native Copper, Ray Mine, Arizona, USA.

Zircon
Ziron, Afghanistan.

Emerald Crystals
Beryl var. emerald, Chivor Mine, Boyacá Department, Colombia.

Emerald Crystals
Beryl var. emerald, Chivor Mine, Boyacá Department, Colombia.

Emerald Crystals
Emerald crystals, Chivor Mine, Guavió-Guatéque Mining District, Boyacá Department Columbia.
**Muscovite var. Fuchsite**

Fuchsite, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

**Zircon**

Zircon, Rift Mineral Province, Malawi.

**Microcline Feldspar (Amazonite)**

Microcline (Amazonite), Crystal Peak, Park County, Colorado, USA.

**Rhodonite**

Rhodonite, St Martin Mine, Ancash, Peru.

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**Itinerary**

**March 2009**

**Saturday 28 and Sunday 29**

Canberra Lapidary Club

Rock Swap

EPIC (Exhibition Park In Canberra)

Flemington Road, Mitchell ACT

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**April 2009**

10-13 April

Australian National Gemboree

Wimmera Machinery Field Day Site

Longerenong Rd, Dooen via Horsham (Victoria)

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**May 2009**

**Saturday 16 and Sunday 17**

Lismore Lapidary Club Gemshow

Lismore Showground (NSW)