

SMP NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2001

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2021 N. Kinney Road
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Denver MEETING

Date: Friday, Sept. 14, 2001

Place: Denver Merchandise
Mart(program room)

Board Meeting: 1:30 2:00 PM

Membership Meeting: 2:00 3:00 PM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Have you ever been asked the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Of course, you have. (If it was only last week, then you had better start wondering about your perceived level of maturity.) In various ways through the years, we have asked this same question of SMMP (and MMAC before it).

According to my records, it's been 12 years since we formally incorporated under our new name with the intent of becoming a more professionally oriented organization. Our roots go back to the early 1970s when curators from around the world gathered at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum during the Tucson Show to share ideas, to commiserate about common problems and to simply get to know each other better.

I came across the picture below in my files. I know it is from 1976 or before because I'm not in it. My guess is that this was not taken at the first gathering. Does anyone know what year the first group of curators got together?

Jean F. DeMouthe
California Acad. of Science
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, CA 94118

George E. Harlow
American Museum of Natural
History
Central Park West at 79th St.
New York, NY 10024

Marc L. Wilson
Carnegie Museum of Natural
History
4400 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Paula N. Wilson
Utah Museum of Natural
History
1390 E. Presidents Circle
Salt Lake City, UT, U.S.A.

Michael A. Wise
Dept. of Mineral Sciences,
MRC-19
National Museum of Natural
History
Washington, DC 20560



Sorry to digress. The point I'm trying to get at is that, after nearly 30 years of existence, we are still asking what we want to be.

Toward the end of this newsletter, you will read that we are currently examining the benefits of becoming affiliated with [AGI and NSCA](#). Such affiliations could help us to increase our effectiveness and our credibility, at least within the United States.

At our last Tucson meeting, we talked about making SMMP an international organization. Certainly, the first group that met nearly 30 years ago in Tucson was international in scope and our [current membership](#) includes many museum professionals from outside of North America; but to become truly international, we must look for ways to more effectively reach mineral curators everywhere. In a sense we have a mandate. At the M&M4 conference in Melbourne last December, the IMA Commission on Museums resolved to fully support an effort by SMMP to unite mineral museum professionals all over the world.

It now is up to us to decide what we want SMMP to be when it grows up, and then to make it happen.

Tony Kampf
President

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MEETING MINUTES
TUCSON: February 9, 2001
Directors Meeting, 12:00 pm

President Mauthner called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. All members of the Board were present.

Minutes: The minutes for the Denver meeting were presented and made open to discussion.

Directors Terms: The president announced that M. Mauthner, G. Mast, and T. Kampf terms were expiring.

Financial Report: Anna Domitrovic, Treasurer, submitted a written financial report to the Board. An expense of \$500 was reported for the cost of the SMMP sponsored reception at M&M4. Anna reported that income continued to be greater than expenses. George Harlow made a motion to accept the financial report as presented and was seconded by Mike Wise. The motion was passed.

Computer Committee: Tony Kampf, chairman of the computer committee, presented his report. Tony suggested the society purchase a domain name, smmp.net. A motion by George Harlow to purchase a domain name was seconded by Jean DeMouthe. The motion carried.

Collections Committee: Virgil Lueth, chair of the collections committee, reported no additions to the current list of orphaned collections or curators.

Stolen Specimens: The current chair, Bill Metropolis, was not present to give a report. President Mauthner asked for a volunteer to take over the committee. Tony Kampf volunteered to continue as chair by posting reports on the website. Tony noted that all postings will be at the discretion of the committee chair.

Education: Ginny Mast announced that there has been significant interest in the Societys display of under \$50 specimens at the show. She also reported more institutional participation in the display. Ginny will step down from the committee after this meeting. A new education committee chair will be named at the general meeting.

Publications: Jean DeMouthe reported that she received no response to a call for articles. Jean announced that she will now begin to accumulate information for a publication via our public presentations.

New Business:

Expansion of SMMP: Tony Kampf highlighted the discussion of SMMP expansion that was presented in the society newsletter. He will present this information at the general meeting to form a committee to explore the concept of uniting curators under a singular organization.

AGI Association: The committee discussed joining the American Geological Institute as an associate society.

Department of Interior Collections Survey: Mark Wilson discussed a recent survey he received concerning an accounting of material collected from public lands. The topic will be presented at the general meeting.

Collection Standards: The need to establish uniform collection standards for geological materials was discussed and will be presented at the general meeting.

Proposal for Collections Project Funding: George Harlow presented information on the need for collection support for mineral museums. A proposal to work toward establishing such funding will be presented at the general meeting.

Association for Systematic Collections: Susan Eriksson will present information on changes to the scope of the organizations purview at the general meeting.

President Mauthner adjourned the meeting at 12:55.

General Meeting, 1:00 pm

President Mauthner called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. in the Copper Ballroom of the Tucson Convention Center.

Roll Call and Guest Introduction

Presidents Message: Mark Mauthner outlined the agenda for the meeting. He announced the names of the directors leaving the board and noted the elections would be held at the end of the meeting.

Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting: The minutes from the last meeting were approved as presented in the SMMP Newsletter.

Treasurers Report: Anna Domitrovic, Treasurer, submitted a written financial report to the meeting. The accounts have earned approximately \$120 to \$125 per year in interest. An expense of \$500 to host a reception at the M&M4 conference was reported. Total assets of the Society are \$8,095.07. Anna reminded the membership of the need to renew membership.

Committee Reports:

Computer Committee: Tony Kampf, chairman of the computer committee, reported the status quo concerning the society web page. The site contains a member list and membership status in addition to job postings and stolen specimen notices. The low-tech list-server consists of a group email address: smmp@nhm.org.

Collections Committee: Virgil Lueth, chair of the collections committee, reported no additions to the current list of orphaned collections or curators.

Stolen Specimen Committee: The responsibilities of the stolen specimen chairman will now be relegated to the webmaster (Tony Kampf).

Education: Ginny Mast thanked those curators who brought samples for the SMMP case and noted the strong interest displayed by the public in the Societys display. She noted this years display was marked the largest participation by members ever and thanked all contributors. She announced she will step down from the chair of the committee after the meeting. Paula Wilson volunteered to chair the committee. Ginny polled the participants on a theme for next display at the Denver Show whose theme is Pikes Peak Pegmatites. Possible topics included: Minerals that are fossils; Minerals that turn out to be something else; or Reunion specimens.

Publications: Jean DeMouthe reported no response to the call for papers, but plenty of ideas. She suggested that the society compile an article from todays symposium for publication.

New Business:

The American Geological Institute (AGI) has invited the SMMP to become an affiliated society. A study committee to explore this concept was named: Susan Eriksson (chair), Tony Kampf, and Paula Wilson will serve as the committee.

A discussion to expand the role and scope of the Society was the product of the M&M4 Meeting in Melbourne Australia and initially presented in an article in the newsletter by Tony Kampf. At the Melbourne meeting, The IMA Commission on Museums resolved to support the SMMP in uniting mineral museum professionals worldwide. The concept of making the society an international society that unites all institutional mineral curators was discussed. Issues included: SMMP sponsorship at meetings, upcoming international meetings, the fact that SMMP already has international members and expansion of current and past focus of the Society. Some concerns about the participation of small museums were raised. Tony Kampf will chair a committee to explore some of the questions concerning expansion.

Some museums recently received a Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Survey Letter concerning materials collected from BLM lands. Some of these surveys involve repository agreements and questions concerning ownership. A committee, chaired by Mark Wilson, was named to explore these issues. Anna Domitrovic noted a recent survey of Arizona museums exempted minerals from the survey.

Issues concerning collection support for mineral museum were discussed. Currently, there are no avenues for financial support of mineral collections by the National Science Foundation. This is contrast to other types of collections. In order to qualify for support, an interest must be demonstrated by the research community. In addition, a survey may be required to justify collection support. The Mineralogical Society of America, American Geological Institute, and American Geophysical Union may be enlisted to help. George Harlow was named chair of a committee to lay the groundwork for establishing collection support of the mineralogical community. Initial steps will involve compilation of museum policies in order to establish uniform standards for mineral museums

Collection standards will be required to accomplish the need to establish collection support. A discussion to propose national standards for collection care was discussed.

The Association of Systematic Collections has recently expanded the organizations focus to include all types of collections, including geologic materials. Susan Eriksson, a member of both organizations, has more information.

A proposal to move the time and place of the annual meeting at Tucson was discussed. A decision to poll all members prior to any change in meeting time was adopted.

Election of Board Members: The annual election to replace the board members whose terms have expired was held. Leaving the board were: T. Kampf, G. Mast, and M. Mauthner. The following were nominated to fill the vacated positions: T. Kampf, P. Wilson, and J. DeMouthe. A motion to accept the nominees by George Harlow and elect them by acclamation was seconded by Terry Huizing. The motion passed.

Announcements:

Ginny Mast reported on the construction of a new facility at the Colorado School of Mines

Susanne Cowan mentioned the opening of a position as museum director at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science.

A motion to adjourn the meeting passed and the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Post-meeting election of officers

The Directors reconvened after the general meeting to elect officers for the Board. Tony Kampf was elected president. The other officers will remain in their current

positions: Susanne Cowan, vice-president; Anna Domitrovic, treasurer; Virgil Lueth, secretary.

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AFFILIATIONS WITH OTHER GROUPS

The committee looking into affiliation with the American Geological Institute is preparing a list of benefits to this association to be presented at the Denver meeting. To affiliate, SMMP would pay \$2 per member per year. To find out more about the activities of AGI, visit <http://www.agiweb.org/>.

Committee chair Susan Eriksson has also been exploring the possibility of SMMP affiliation with the Natural Science Collections Alliance (formerly the Association of Systematics Collections). This organization has recently been looking for ways to increase its activities in minerals, fossils, etc. For more information, visit <http://www.ascoll.org/index.html>

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KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR DUES

SMMP dues are \$10.00 U.S., payable to Anna Domitrovic, treasurer, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2021 N. Kinney Road, Tucson, AZ, 85743. Any directory changes or additions should also be sent to Anna Domitrovic. Please also submit changes to Tony Kampf for the SMMP Web site.

Note that you can check your dues payment status on the [SMMP on-line roster](#). The year shown in the last column indicates the last year for which you have paid. If you are delinquent, please remit your dues payment as soon as possible.

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OTHER NEWS

New Exhibit at SFO (submitted by Jean DeMouthe)

The California Academy of Sciences has placed over 500 gems & minerals on exhibit in the new international terminal at the San Francisco airport. The new display cases are 4 feet square, and each is self-contained with adjustable lighting and environmental controls. The Academy's exhibit occupies 20 of these cases, each of

which has a different theme (i.e. meteorites, chalcedony, animal carvings, etc.).

These airport shows are a great way to reach members of the public who would not normally see natural history collections. The folks there are very pleased with it, and they have had to increase the number of times each day that the cases are cleaned, since everybody seems to want to press fingers or other body parts against the glass.