



- “The Isotopy of Clay Minerals – Mysteries in the Sheets”, organized by Fred Longstaffe (University of Western Ontario, Canada).
- “Abiotic Redox Processes Related to Clays and Clay Minerals”, organized by Yuanzhi Tang (Georgia Institute of Technology, USA).
- “Molecular Studies of Clay Minerals and Related Structures”, organized by Jeffrey Greathouse (Sandia National Laboratories, USA).
- “Phyllosilicates Throughout the Solar System”, organized by Michael Velbel (Michigan State University, USA).
- “The Role of Clay Minerals in Controlling the Properties and Geochemical Processes Associated with Hydrocarbon Systems”, organized by David Cole (Ohio State University, USA).
- “Structures and Reactivity of Clays and Nanoparticles in Soils and Water”, organized by Youjun Deng (Texas A&M University, USA), Mengqiang Zhu (University of Wyoming, USA) and Yuji Arai (University of Illinois, USA).
- “Illite–Smectite Group in Geological Systems, Soils, Laboratory, and Computer: The Complete Picture” organized by W. Crawford Elliott (Georgia State University, USA) and Jan Środoń (Institute of Geological Sciences, Polish Academy of Sciences).
- “New Visions in Clay Science: Bio-Nanoclays in Medicine”, organized by Jin-Ho Choy (Ewha Womans University) and Lynda Williams (Arizona State University).
- “Intensively Managed Clays in the Critical Zone”, organized by Paul Schroeder (University of Georgia).
- “Volcanic Ash as Source Material for Clay and Zeolite Mineral Formation”, organized by Rona Donahoe and Kim Genereau (both of the University of Alabama, USA).
- “Bentonite Barrier”, organized by Georg Grathoff (Ernst-Moritz-Arndt Universität Greifswald, Germany) and Stephan Kaufhold (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe, Germany).
- “Teaching and History of Clay Sciences”, organized by Stephen Altaner (University of Illinois).
- “Applications of Infrared Spectroscopy to Clay Mineral Systems”, organized by Sabine Petit (Institut de Chimie des Milieux et Matériaux de Poitiers, France) and Jana Madejová (Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, Slovak Academy of Sciences).
- “Palygorskite: From Fundamental Research to Functional Materials”, organized by Ai Qin Wang and Junping Zhang (both Institute of Chemical Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences).
- “Applications of NMR Spectroscopy to Clays and Clay Mineral Systems”, organized by Wei Li (Nanjing University) and Brian Phillips (SUNY Stony Brook)

Yuji Arai, Organizing Committee Chair

OBITUARY: JEAN-LOUIS ROBERT (1948–2017)

The Société Française de Minéralogie et de Cristallographie (SFMC) sadly lost Jean-Louis Robert, one of its long-time and active members. He passed away 17 July 2017 in Orléans (France). Jean-Louis presented his thesis (Thèse d’État) at Orsay University (France) in 1981 on the crystal-chemistry of micas and amphiboles. He was a recognized expert on the structural and spectroscopic properties of micas, clays and amphiboles. He also inherited the Orléans tradition of experimental mineralogy and developed new synthesis methods for clays and micas. Author of more than 100 articles, he was also a co-author on Milan Rieder’s classic article “Nomenclature of the Micas”. Jean-Louis animated many sessions and meetings in national and international meetings.



Jean-Louis Robert at the EMU School 2004 in Vienna.

Jean-Louis spent his career within France’s national scientific research organization, the CNRS, mostly at the Centre de Recherche sur la Synthèse et la Chimie des Minéraux, now the Institut des Sciences de la Terre d’Orléans (ISTO). He investigated the substitution processes and the extent of solid solutions in natural and synthetic micas and amphiboles through detailed structural and spectroscopic studies. Through numerous collaborations, he was well recognized by the international mineralogical community. In 2006, he joined the Institut de Minéralogie, de Physique des Matériaux et de Cosmochimie (IMPMC) in Paris, where he was a dynamic member of the Earth science team. There, he continued to develop his activity on micas and amphiboles and introduced new experimental approaches to mineral synthesis. Recently, Jean-Louis turned to research areas, the structural control of clay hydration. He was a member of several professional societies, including the SFMC and the Groupe Français des Argiles (GFA), which he chaired from 2011 to 2015. He was also President of the ECGA (European Clay Groups Association) for the period 2015–2019 and Chair of the organizing committee of EUROCLAY 2019. He was well-known for his enthusiasm for science and society and for his devotion to our community. He was a passionate *aficionado* of clays, clay science and experimental mineralogy, and he always had a door open to help students and researchers.

Clay science has lost a great and active scientist, society member, friend, and colleague. Jean-Louis Robert will be fondly remembered for many years.

**Etienne Balan, Georges Calas,
Laurence Galois, and Maguy Jaber**

AWARD PRESENTATION

William Rapin, co-winner of the 2017 Häuy-Lacroix Prize (awarded for the best PhD thesis in mineralogy), received his medal from Bertrand Devouard, SFMC President, in Paris on 5 October 2017. On this occasion Rapin presented his PhD work on the hydration of Mars surface using the data collected by the *Curiosity* rover.

