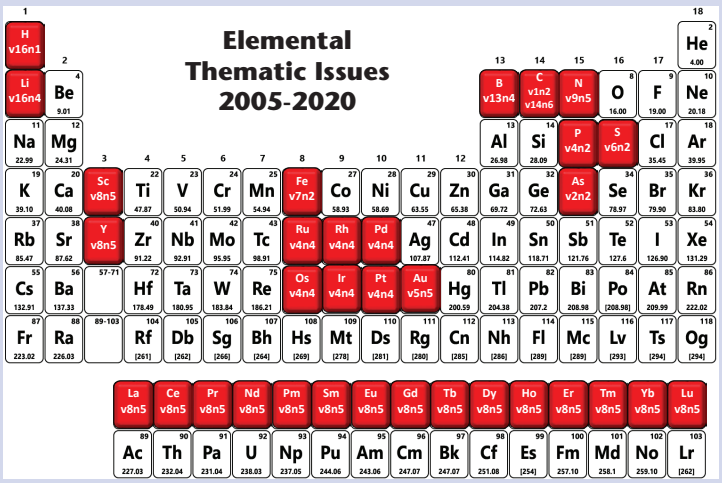
ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Elements magazine has published many topical issues for which the focus has been on an individual element (see graphic). Some elements were featured as a group, such as the platinum group elements (v4n4) or the rare earth elements (v8n5). Others were featured as allotropes, as happened for carbon as diamond (v1n2) or carbon as graphite (v10n6). Yet others were featured in the context of an overview of the many roles that an element plays in natural systems. The current issue, "Lithium: Less is More" (v16n4), falls under this latter category.



The inspiration for "Lithium: Less is More" began three years ago back in April 2017 when Rob Bowell contacted the *Elements* editorial team about his idea for a thematic issue on economic lithium deposits. Because *Elements*' readership is scientifically diverse and because lithium plays so many important roles in society, the editorial team encouraged Rob to broaden the scope of the proposed issue and to invite guest editors to participate. It wasn't long before Philip Pogge von Strandmann (an isotope geochemist) was invited to join the project. At the August 2017 Goldschmidt Conference in Paris (France), Ed Grew (a mineralogist/petrologist) also approached the *Elements* editorial team about the topic of lithium. We encouraged Ed to talk to Rob and Philip. Just days later, Rob, Philip and Ed met for the first time. None had worked with each other before, yet, over the next year, they worked together to develop a robust proposal, which was accepted in August 2018. We hope you enjoy the product of their efforts.

"Lithium: Less is More" is more than another thematic issue on another element. It is an illustration of what *Elements* aims to achieve: bringing together scientists from different corners of the scientific world to share with one another their expertise in mineralogy, petrology, geochemistry, and (in this case) also medicine. What is it that makes our science and *Elements* successful? It's the scientists who are willing to branch out from their comfortable and familiar research circles and to work with those who are from different disciplines, from different academic/professional institutions, speak different languages, have different cultures, and are of different genders. *Elements* provides the ideal platform for disparate individuals to meet and to work together and to learn from one another.

Irish poet William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) once said, "There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't yet met." Clearly, the same could be said of *Elements*' editors, authors, and readers. They aren't strangers: they are colleagues, mentors, and friends we haven't yet met.

Jon Blundy, **John Eiler**, **Richard Harrison**, and **Jodi Rosso**

Mark Welch

Dr Mark Welch of the Natural History Museum, London (UK) has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Italian Society of Mineralogy and Petrology (SIMP) (see http://www.socminpet.it/SIMP/). Dr Welch was recognized for having made "an internationally relevant scientific and organizing contribution to the advancement of the Mineralogical and Petrological Sciences and being an invaluable support to strengthen the scientific relationships between the nominee's country and Italy."

Steve Hillier

Prof. Steve Hillier of the Hutton Institute, Aberdeen (UK), has been designated as an International Centre for Diffraction Data (ICDD) Fellow. The designation of Fellow is awarded by the ICDD Board of Directors to individuals who have given their time and talents beyond that normally associated with ICDD membership. Steve is the ICDD's Regional Co-Chair for the UK and Ireland. He is the de facto expert within the ICDD on clays and is the Chair of the Clay Minerals Task Group of the Minerals Subcommittee.

Clare Warren

Clare Warren is the inaugural (2020) winner of the Barrow Award of the Metamorphic Studies Group of the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland (MinSoc). See the announcement in the MinSoc's society pages in this issue.

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