



Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland

Environmental Mineralogy BATH WINTER MEETING GIVES IT THE SPOTLIGHT

The Mineralogical Society's Winter Meeting was held at the Bath Spa University, Bath from 6 to 7 January 2005. The theme of the meeting was "Environmental Mineralogy, Geochemistry, and Human Health". The meeting was split into seven sessions: Biomineralisation, Toxicity of Micro- and Nano-Particles, Contaminated Environments, Environmental Geochemistry, Arsenic in Groundwater, Radwaste Management, and Platinum Metals in the Urban Environment. It was convened by Éva Valsami-Jones, Ed Stephens, Karen Hudson-Edwards, Kevin Taylor, Kym Jarvis, Kathryn Linge, Dave Polya, Roy Wogelius, Dave Sherman, Simon Redfern, and John Bowles. Sponsorship was provided by the Mineralogical Society, CCLRC Daresbury Laboratory, the Society for Environmental Geochemistry and Health, the Applied Mineralogy Group, the Geochemistry Group, and the Environmental Mineralogy Group.

The meeting attracted some 140 participants from around the world, including the USA, South Africa, and several European countries. The 80 contributed presentations were given in two parallel oral sessions and a series of poster presentations. The theme of the meeting allowed for a range of multidisciplinary topics to be presented, showing that mineralogy and geochemistry in the 21st century can be fundamental to many other disciplines, such as medicine, biology, material science, and archaeology. The highlight of the event was the

Hallimond Lecture, which was delivered this year by Professor Catherine Skinner (Yale University, USA). In her talk entitled "Biominerals—broadening opportunities", Professor Skinner gave a fascinating overview of the intimate relationship between living forms and the biominerals that support them.



Catherine Skinner and David Price

After the first day's presentations, the delegates celebrated in style with pre-dinner drinks in the atmospheric Roman Bath followed by a banquet in the beautiful Victorian Pump Room. Following the live piano entertainment, the President of the Society, Professor David Price, awarded the following Society medals:

Schlumberger Medal for 2004 to Prof. David A.C. Manning (University of Newcastle) for his outstanding contribution to the application of mineralogy in a wide range of environmental issues.

Max Hey Medals for 2004 jointly to Dr. Mark Hodson (Reading University) **and Dr. Lidunka Voadlo** (University College, London). These medals are awarded for excellence in research carried out by young researchers. Mark Hodson has done exceptional work on the understanding of geochemistry and biogeochemistry of mineral reactions in soils. Lidunka Voadlo has carried out pioneering research in the field of computational mineral physics combining experimental studies of materials at high temperatures and pressures with computer simulations and using the results to understand the chemistry and behaviour of the Earth's core.

Eva Valsami-Jones

OPEN UNIVERSITY HOSTS VMSG ANNUAL MEETING 2005

The Volcanic and Magmatic Studies Group held its annual meeting, together with the Geochemistry Group, at the Open University in Milton Keynes on 5–7 January 2005. The meeting was very successful, with over 100 participants and a wide variety of talks and posters. Thematic sessions included 'Boles: alteration, erosion and sedimentation in the volcanic environment'; 'Rates and timing of magmatism and volcanism'; 'Magmatism in Volcanic Arcs'; and 'Volcanic Edifice instability'. Keynote speakers were Dave Jolley (Sheffield University), Steve Blake (Open University), Julian Pearce (Cardiff University), and Ben van Wyk de Vries (Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand). The prizes for best student talks were awarded to Graham Andrews (University of Leicester) and

Eoghan Holohan (Trinity College, Dublin); prizes for the best student posters went to Eleanor Donoghue (Trinity College, Dublin) and Marie-Noelle Guibaud (Open University).

Katharine Goodenough

BERNARD LEAKE HONOURED BY THE SOCIETY

On 11 November Professor Bernard Leake was guest of honour at the Society's President's Luncheon held at the Strathmore Hotel, South Kensington, London.



Bernard Leake during his acceptance speech at the luncheon.

At that event the President, Professor David Price, presented Bernard Leake with a certificate of Honorary Life Fellowship in the Society, given for exceptional service to the Society and the highest honour the Society bestows. In his citation, David Price thanked Bernard Leake for his long and continuing support to the Society as an associate editor of *Mineralogical Magazine*, as an abstractor, and as a managing trustee and astute financial advisor over the last 40 years. These services to the Society were set alongside his lifelong contribution as a petrologist and leading expert on the amphibole group of minerals. He successfully steered an IMA committee towards a now established classification of these minerals.



The President's table at the Pump Room banquet. From left to right: Brian Skinner, Mark Hodson (Max Hey Medallist), David Manning (Schlumberger Medallist), Lidunka Voadlo (Max Hey Medallist), David Price (President of the Society), and Catherine Skinner (Hallimond Lecturer)

MINABS ONLINE — A NEW ELECTRONIC DATABASE FOR THE MINERAL SCIENCES

Launched in January 2004

MINABS Online, launched in January 2004, has already established a cadre of enthusiastic users with over 10,000 searches carried out in the first nine months of operation.

This electronic abstracting journal is the successor to the printed journal *Mineralogical Abstracts* which it now replaces. Like *Mineralogical Abstracts* it is a specialized abstracting publication that targets journals and other publications in the fields of mineralogy, crystallography, environmental mineralogy, geochemistry, petrology, and related branches of Earth science. The coverage of abstracts is aimed at a wide range of Earth scientists in theoretical and applied fields, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students. These include specialists in cosmology, physical geography, clay science, minerals resources, environmental studies, nuclear waste disposal, and volcanology, as well as mineralogy, petrology and geochemistry.

Initial feedback from users indicates that they find *MINABS Online* easy to use and a worthy successor to *Mineralogical Abstracts*.

Searching Capability

Searches can be carried out by words in titles or abstracts, year, abstract number, journal, or combinations of these, with categories and subcategories. A useful feature is that abstracts can be selected for downloading as editable text delivered direct to the user by e-mail. Quick prints of individual abstracts can also be obtained by the print screen command (Ctrl P). There is also a popular browse facility that allows users to see the latest additions to the database or review older records according to date and/or subject category.



Dr J.G. MacDonald, MBE, Principal Editor

Abstract and Database Content

The database includes abstracts published in *Mineralogical Abstracts* from 1982 to the present, and about 500 abstracts are currently being added to the database every month from over 180 journals published in Canada, China, Europe, India, Russia, South America, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, and the USA (altogether in excess of 115,000 abstracts). The archive of data includes an even wider geographical coverage and includes abstracts from journals that have ceased publication or only occasionally publish papers within the target areas of *MINABS Online*. Recent titles added are from India (*Journal of Applied Geochemistry*, Indian Society of Applied Geochemists, Hyderabad) and the Ukraine (*Mineralogical Journal*, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Kiev). The editors are seeking to expand the coverage of the literature outside Western Europe and North America.

Many of the abstracts are from papers written in the language of the country of origin but with English translations of citations and abstracts. Most of the abstracts, although usually based on author abstracts, are edited or rewritten to achieve conciseness and to reflect an accurate assessment of the content of papers with the target readership in mind. Where papers contain significant amounts of geochemical data this is identified.

Abstracts are written by a wide range of professionals in the fields of study covered. Abstracts from journals that contain papers written in languages other than English are often written by abstractors in the countries of origin but are thoroughly checked by the editors before publication.

CrossRef

A very useful feature of the service is that links are provided via *CrossRef* to the full papers in journals that have electronic editions. This feature will be of increasing value

to users as libraries sign up to bundles of electronic geoscience journals such as the GeoScienceWorld package being launched this year. The full texts of many papers will therefore be available and downloadable by the user.

The Organisation behind MINABS Online

MINABS Online is a truly international enterprise, and the database is published by the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, a registered charity in the United Kingdom. This abstracting service is approved by the International Mineralogical Association and is run on a not-for-profit basis to provide support for research and scholarship. Subscriptions from developed nations help to support the Society's plan to make the database available at token cost to scientists in less-developed countries. A small core of paid staff is supported by a large band of volunteer abstractors dedicated to the maintenance of the highest possible standards.

A Uniquely Valuable Database

When preparing our abstracts we consult the conclusions and body of the original paper and as a result often add details that were not included in the author abstracts. This is done with our target users in mind, so it makes our product different from other abstracting journals and metadata sources. It provides added value to researchers, especially those who do not have easy access to the original publication. Our coverage includes titles not covered by other abstracting services, and it is editorial policy to expand coverage in Asia and other areas outside Western Europe and North America. The e-journal aims to provide a service that complements and adds further quality to the other facilities available to researchers and students throughout the world. Visit *MINABS Online* at www.minabs.com and sign up for a free two-week trial.

NEW FROM THE SOCIETY: TRAINING WORKSHOPS

The Mineralogical Society, in response to demand for hands-on training on state-of-the-art techniques in the mineral sciences, has launched a series of workshops, which will take place at various research institutes around the UK. The first of these took place at the Natural History Museum, London from 23 to 25 February 2005 on the subject of electron probe microanalysis. It is hoped that these courses will be of value to postgraduates as part of their 'skills training' for their degree course and to others as part of their continuing professional development (CPD). Full-

time Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) PhD students may be able to apply for a bursary from their departments to attend these courses. More details on the courses can be found at: <http://www.minersoc.org/pages/education/edu.html>. Future courses are planned for June (see advertisement p. 96) and November 2005. The June course will be a repeat of the February course at the NHM, and in November the Society is planning a course at Bristol University on the characterisation of interfaces of (mineral) materials.

MEMBERS' NEWS FOR ELEMENTS

Adrian Lloyd-Lawrence

As News Editor for the Society reporting to *Elements*, I welcome news from members about their achievements, awards, and honours. Space is limited but when possible we will try to include your items; photos/digital images are also welcome. Please send your items to Adrian@minersoc.org

Call for Nominations for Council 2006

Nominations are being sought for two vacancies for Ordinary Members of Council for 2006 on the retirements of Prof. Chris.

Hawkesworth and Dr. Stephen Daly. Nominations are also sought for the next President of the Society to succeed Prof. David Price in January 2006. Nomination forms can be found on the website.

Nominations must be endorsed by four Ordinary Members of the Society, and nominees must be Ordinary Members or Fellows of the Society. Nominations should be sent to the Society Office at 41 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HR, to arrive by Wednesday 22 June 2005 for consideration by Council at their meeting on 30 June 2005.