

PEOPLE BEHIND MINERAL NAMES: HUBERT PUTZ, A KEEN OBSERVER AND A STAR STUDENT

The newly described species putzite, $(\text{Cu}_{4.7}\text{Ag}_{3.3})_{\Sigma 8}\text{GeS}_6$, named after Hubert Putz, was found in old dumps near the Rosario vein, Capillitas mining district, Catamarca Province, Argentina. It can be considered the copper-dominant analogue of argyrodite, Ag_8GeS_6 . This dry account provides the essentials about the new discovery, but falls short of giving insight into what led to it.

Hubert was born on March 12, 1973, in Bad Ischl, Austria. By the age of 8, he had started collecting fossils near his home in the foothills of the Calcareous Alps. Only later did he develop a keen interest in minerals; he first began to specialize in quartz in its many manifestations. He acquired his first books on mineralogy at age 16, and at age 18, he attended his first mineral fair. By that time, he had built up a respectable collection of 300 or 400 specimens, with little representation from ore minerals, ironically enough.

In 1994, he began his studies at the University of Salzburg and obtained a MSc degree in 2000. During this period, he took classes in mineralogy, ore microscopy, and economic geology, given by Professor Werner H. Paar. By this stage, his mineralogical interests had shifted to ore minerals. He became fascinated in combining the traditional approach of reflected-light microscopy with modern analytical techniques. For his Diploma thesis, he studied gold mineralization in a long-abandoned mining district in the Province of Salzburg. He studied the microparagenesis of the complex auriferous ores, evaluated their conditions of formation using fluid inclusions, and published his results in *Mineralogy and Petrology*.

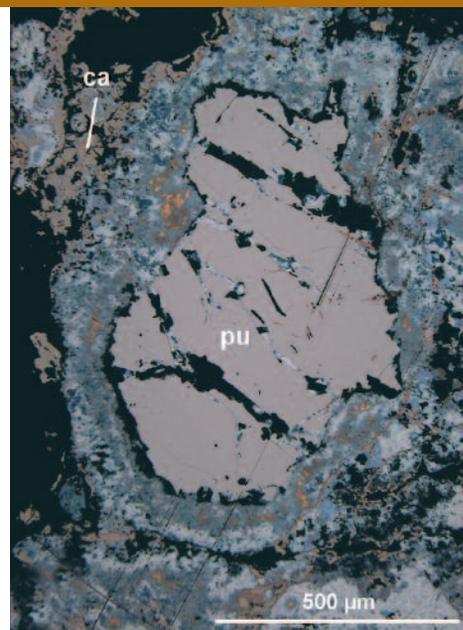
In 2000, he was asked by his thesis advisor, Professor Paar, whether he would consider a «risky» three-year project on ore districts in



Putzite is named after Hubert Putz, presently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Geography, Geology and Mineralogy of the University of Salzburg. Hubert discovered the mineral during the preparation of his PhD thesis on the Capillitas district, and was the first to document a significant Ge anomaly in the region.

Argentina, with the support of grants by the Austrian Science Foundation. He jumped at the opportunity, a decision that was a turning point in his young career. He accompanied his advisor on many expeditions to remote mining locations in Argentina and later Bolivia. He became quite fluent in *castellano*. He thus started a PhD thesis on the Farallon Negro Complex of Catamarca in Argentina, with special emphasis on ore mineralogy and conditions of formation of low- and high-sulfidation epithermal mineralization at Capillitas. He anticipates finishing his thesis in 2005 or early 2006. He has participated in several national and international conferences, at which he presented the results of his various discoveries on ore deposits.

Hubert's collection now contains close to 5000 specimens, which represent over 1000 different species. With his knowledge and keen sense of observation, he has discovered at least three germanium-bearing species that are new to science. The most abundant of these was named putzite in his honor by his advisor (Paar et al. 2004), in recognition of his



Putzite (pu) rimmed by a fine-grained matrix of chalcocite, sphalerite, chalcopyrite, and covellite. This matrix is associated with catamarcaite (ca).
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special accomplishments in the field of ore mineralogy and his discovery of a Ge metallogenic province in this historically famous mining district. A second mineral is named catamarcaite, Cu_6GeWS_8 , and the third is possibly the Ge-dominant analogue of stannoidite. Keep up the good work, Hubert!

I acknowledge the major contribution of Werner H. Paar to this profile.

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REFERENCE

Paar WH, Roberts AC, Berlepsch P, Armbruster T, Topa D, Zagler G (2004) Putzite, $(\text{Cu}_{4.7}\text{Ag}_{3.3})_{\Sigma 8}\text{GeS}_6$: a new mineral species from Capillitas, Catamarca, Argentina: description and crystal structure. *Canadian Mineralogist* 42: 1757-1769

JOINT ASSEMBLY

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 23-26 MAY 2006

Abstract Submissions: 1 March 2006

(Submitted not later than 2359 UT online)

A partnership between the American Geophysical Union (AGU), the Geochemical Society (GS), the Microbeam Analysis Society (MB), the Mineralogical Society of America (MSA), and the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG).

Other Important Deadlines:

Housing: 13 April 2006 • Pre-Registration: 20 April 2006

For more information about the meeting, or for details about sessions, speakers, and deadlines, check the AGU Web site at www.agu.org/meetings/sm06.