

# **German Mineralogical Society**

# www.dmg-home.org

#### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**



Dear fellow mineralogists,

At the start of 2023, I took over at the helm of the DMG from Past President Friedhelm von Blanckenburg. He had to steer through an increasingly difficult period, with Europe and the world burdened by war, a pandemic, and the increasingly perceivable consequences of the global climate disaster. He kept the course, nonetheless, and initiated important modernization steps for

the DMG. Like other branches of science, our discipline of mineralogy has changed its research and teaching foci and methods with the constant flow of the world around it, and it will have to keep adapting in the future. Yet, some core aspects of the science have prevailed since the DMG was founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and, on the road ahead, we need to carefully balance necessary transformation with preservation of our strengths.

When I enrolled in the geoscience undergraduate program of Heidelberg University in the mid-1990s, I was encouraged by university staff to sign up for mineralogy. The first reaction of my young self was "what on Earth is 'mineralogy'?" I went on to collect diploma and doctorate degrees from Heidelberg. Both certificates name "mineralogy" as the subject of expertise, but still today I feel that I cannot offer an apt description of the term. I could, of course, either recite the one-line dictionary definition of mineralogy ("the scientific study of the chemistry, crystal structure, and physical properties of minerals") or I could describe its very broad field of inquiry. Yet, the prosaic dictionary denotation surely falls short of capturing the true essence of mineralogy, fails to discriminate it from its neighboring disciplines, and is, to some degree, tautological—while thoroughly describing the various fields mineralogy embraces would take all day. Some topics of mineralogical research have clearly changed over time, and the answer to our question would have been different depending on the decade and century in which it was posed. A layperson might think of gemology when confronted with the task of defining mineralogy. But it encompasses a much wider field and a number of subdisciplines, such as crystallography, petrology, geochemistry, cosmochemistry, archaeometry, technical and applied mineralogy, and economic geology. Some of these fields are represented by the mineralogical societies, but in addition have their own, separate learned societies, journals, and even departments, or are represented by and integrated into the societies and departments of physics, chemistry, or the geosciences.

Deliberations like these might be considered moot or all too academic, but they become real-world questions when we try to attract young people to a university mineralogy program, or convince potential employers in industry to consider a mineralogist for a job. If any of these prospective students or employers reacted in the way I did in 1996, we would be in a bad place. The question also becomes relevant in cases where we, as a mineralogical society, issue a public statement on a topic of current interest. In such a case, the active members of the society have to decide whether or not the respective topic falls into the broad field of mineralogy. After my Heidelberg decade came to an end, I completed a five-year postdoctoral period at the University of Bristol's School of Earth Sciences. There were no mineralogy labels on the building, website, or the students' certificates, but we taught introduction to mineralogy and our research included geochemistry and petrology interwoven with a large list of other Earth science subdisciplines. In 2011, I moved to beautiful Cape Cod on the US East Coast to join the Department of Geology and Geophysics of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) as a staff scientist—yet a different label and my own foray into the marine realm. This move did little to precipitate an existential crisis, since my mineralogy skills from Heidelberg were still a foundation to build on for myself and for WHOI.

The move to my current location in Frankfurt led me to the Department of Geosciences in a building called "Geocenter" that also hosts physical geographers, meteorologists, and other atmospheric scientists. My own title in the Geocenter is "Professor of Deep Earth Processes" and I am co-director of the "Frankfurt Isotope and Element Research Center" (FIERCE) among other things. In Frankfurt, we run a degree program that offers a master's degree in mineralogy that builds on a bachelor's degree in geoscience. Students who complete this program receive hands-on education in the chemical and structural composition of solids and encounter many of the spectrometers, spectroscopes, and diffractometers that the Geocenter is stuffed with. After graduation, many students move on to apply their skills not just in companies specializing in ceramics, glasses, or building materials, but really anywhere where the ability to analyze, characterize, and predict the composition and behavior of complex materials is sought after.

What I conclude from my journey through these variably labeled departments is that mineralogy is a strong discipline that has its place in science and academia, even if we see a waxing and waning of the use of the term itself. Integration of mineralogy into larger departments (geoscience, geology, Earth science, or what-have-you) leads to better connectedness to other disciplines and to the inclusion of its content into the curricula.

In the same way, I think, the unification of the geoscientific learned societies in Germany will lead to a long-term establishment of mineralogy within a family of related disciplines with better interconnectedness and a stronger voice in general society. The geosciences in Germany have an umbrella society, the DVGeo founded in 2015, that to date brings the largest learned societies together under one roof. This roof is still under construction, but if it really becomes a house one day, we will hopefully all be happy to call it our home, and mineralogy will be one of its most admirable halls. As the Chairman of the DMG and Vice President of the DVGeo, I aim to drive the DVGeo project forward over the next two years in concert with my fellow architects representing the other geoscience branches in Germany. The DMG plays a vital role in shaping the DVGeo and will continue to do so in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

#### **Horst Marschall**

# SOCIETY NEWS

#### ABRAHAM-GOTTLOB-WERNER MEDAL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF MINERALOGICAL SCIENCE – ANDREAS NÄGELE



The German Mineralogical Society (DMG) awarded the final version of the Abraham-Gottlob-Werner Medal in gold last year for great merit in the promotion of mineralogical science. Dr. Andreas Nägele (Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung) was honored for his great services to the German Mineralogical Society. In 2009, Andreas Nägele took over the office of treasurer from his father Erhard Nägele and thus

in turn also from his grandfather Julius Nägele. This office included the collection of membership fees, the administration of the foundation funds, and the supervision of the use of all funds including accounting toward the treasury. In addition, he was responsible for keeping and updating the membership files. Thus, Andreas Nägele faithfully and effectively provided the essentials for the functioning of a society such as the DMG. However, his commitment to the Society goes far beyond these business procedures. He has always kept himself informed and made purposeful suggestions in procedural matters for the interests of the DMG through personal discussions and, above all, through his regular participation in board meetings. His special achievements include his commitment to editing mineralogical and geoscientific journals. Since the founding of the European Journal of Mineralogy (EJM) in 1988 and until 2019, Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung was the publisher of this union of the journals of four individual mineralogical societies (in Germany, France, Italy, and Spain), in succession to Fortschritte der Mineralogie (founded by Schweizerbart in 1911). During this time, Andreas Nägele managed the EJM as a publisher in the best possible way and brought it to great success, especially from the financial side. As publisher, he was the link between the Managing Committee, the production of the journal, and the scientific community, especially of course the DMG. Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung and thus Dr. Nägele are still the publishers of Neues Jahrbuch für Mineralogie (Journal of Mineralogy and Geochemistry), the oldest mineralogical journal in the German-speaking world, founded in 1806. With the award of the Abraham-Gottlob-Werner Medal in gold to Dr. Andreas Nägele, the tribute of the DMG for services to mineralogical science (in its previous form) has a worthy final awardee.

Gerhard Brey · Frankfurt

## **ANNUAL DMG MEETING 2023**



#### DMG SECTION MEETING PETROLOGY/ PETROPHYSICS & GEOCHEMISTRY



Bavarian Research Institute of Experimental Geochemistry and Geophysics (BGI), University of Bayreuth.

Save the dates of June 2 and 3, 2023, in Bayreuth for the next joint meeting of the DMG Petrology/Petrophysics and Geochemistry sections, where the research activities of both sections together will be presented. Traditionally, the event is intended to offer young scientists (master's and doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers) a forum to present their own work as a talk or poster.

#### Location

The meeting will take place on the campus of the University of Bayreuth. The exact building location for lectures will be announced at a later date.

## Schedule

The event will start on June 2 at 13h and is expected to end on June 3 at 16h with the presentation and poster prizes. On June 2 at 10h, there will be an optional tour of the BGI Experimental Petrology Laboratory and geochemistry facilities, to which we cordially invite you. The poster session will take place on June 2 at 17h in the BGI building. Later, the traditional BBQ will take place at the BGI building, where ideas can be exchanged and contacts be made and maintained in a convivial atmosphere.

#### Costs

A contribution toward expenses of 35 euros is asked for the various catering costs. As always, travelling DMG student members can apply for a travel allowance of 50 euros.

## **Registration and Abstract**

The expected deadline for registration and abstract submission is May 8, 2023. The abstract template and registration website for the meeting and lab tours will be announced soon via the email list and at www. dmg-home.org/.

#### **Overnight accommodation**

There is a youth hostel on campus with shared rooms for DJH members. There are several hotels near the campus or in downtown Bayreuth, which is connected to the university campus by bus and is within walking distance.

We hope that many will find their way to Bavaria and look forward to hosting this meeting in Bayreuth.

Many greetings,

Audrey Bouvier, Esther Schwarzenbach, Matthias Willbold, and Roman Botcharnikov

FEBRUARY 2023