



Mineralogical Society of America



web

www.minsocam.org

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Mark Ghiorso in New Zealand

Why be a Member of the MSA?

I write this, my fourth President's Letter, in mid-April 2021. Things are looking up, at least in the US, regarding the pandemic. The federal government once again respects science and makes policy decisions accordingly; vaccinations are becoming available and, at least where I live, there is little hesitation in taking advantage of that availability. Of course, things are not yet back to "normal." Meetings are still being morphed into virtual extravaganzas and there are advantages to that format. There are also disadvantages. Attendees listen to talks more, as the option of milling around and talking about hiking, where to eat and what to drink, has all but vanished. However, the positive social and research consequences of milling about—new collaborations, a discovery of common interests, and all the other serendipitous aspects of social interaction—are gone. Of necessity, research presentations are recorded, often prerecorded, and are available to watch at one's leisure. No more rushing from room to room hoping to catch a talk only to discover that the Chair has lost control of the schedule and thrown everything into disarray. These alternatively structured meetings are perhaps more civil and, arguably, more civilized. Is that a good thing? Will the research meeting of the future be forever changed and emerge as a hybrid of what necessity forced upon us? I suspect that it will, and I think that is a good thing, because it forces us all to reevaluate how we do business and whether the traditional practices are still the most effective way to best communicate our science.

The Mineralogical Society of America (MSA) is about to have its second council meeting for 2021, and many of us in leadership are thinking about how to better address the needs of members. The society journal (*American Mineralogist*), *Elements*, short courses, the *Reviews in Mineralogy and Geochemistry* volumes, our lecture program, and grants to support student research are the primary benefits of MSA membership. Although the MSA does not sponsor its own annual meeting, we participate in the annual meetings of other societies and contribute significantly to these by mounting short courses and sponsoring sessions. With the exception of the direct research grant awards, all of these benefits are generic; nonmembers benefit to almost the same extent as members. As a consequence, membership of the MSA tends to be more motivated by loyalty; sustained membership perhaps in part by inertia. Surely, the silver pin at the end of 25 years and the gold one at the end of 50 years is not reason enough to keep paying those yearly dues? And, demonstrably, many early career researchers feel that way, because they constitute the demographic shallow end of the MSA membership pool. Are there ways that the MSA can address the tangible personal benefits of membership? Can we attract more early career researchers and engage its members directly? Personally, I have memberships in three scientific societies. They all treat me in about the same way: that is, they largely ignore me and I pay my dues. I maintain these memberships in one case to receive discounted meeting fees, and in the two other cases for nostalgia: I joined as a graduate student and kept it up until now. In one case, I am getting very close to that gold pin. I think that my motivation for membership should not be the reason that others join the society or maintain their memberships. What do you think? Isn't it time to ask the question of what can society membership do for you? Let me know what you think. I would like some feedback on this issue.

As always, stay safe and stay healthy,

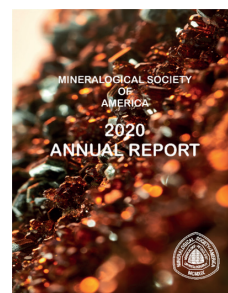
Mark Ghiorso, 2021 MSA President

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

- MSA 2021 membership renewal notices have been sent out to all 2019 and 2020 members. If you have not yet renewed, please do so by accessing the renewal information on the MSA home page at www.minsocam.org.
- Members and Fellows who are in the senior, honorary, and life categories are sent renewal notices. They need not pay dues, but they are sent notices as the best way of prompting an update of membership information, particularly mail and e-mail addresses. The notices also afford an opportunity to purchase MSA publications and to make contributions to support MSA's programs.

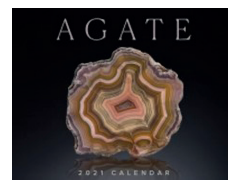
2020 MSA ANNUAL REPORT

The 2020 MSA Annual Report is available in the "About" section of MSA's website: www.minsocam.org. The report provides highlights of MSA's programs, publications, communications, events, and governance during the past pandemic year. You will find features on the 2020 awardees (Dr. Andrew Putnis, Roebling Medal; Dr. Daniela Rubatto, Dana Medal; and Dr. Jin Liu, MSA Award); student research grant winners (Hannah Tompkins, Behnaz Hosseini, and Md Abu Raihan Chowdhury); publication statistics; Minerals Day events; communication outlets; education and outreach programs; benefactors; and much more.



THE 2021 CALENDAR

The 2021 sixteen-month calendar titled *Agate*. The calendar is published by Lithographie, LLC, in cooperation with the Mineralogical Society of America, Martin Zinn Exposition, Tucson Gem and Mineral Society, Fine Mineral Shows, Denver Area Gem & Mineral Show, and Rocky Mountain Gems & Minerals. The calendar is available on the MSA website at www.minsocam.org.



AWARD NOMINATIONS

Nominations are sought for the 2022–2023 awards.

The **Roebling Medal** (2022) is MSA's highest award and is given for eminence as represented by outstanding published original research in mineralogy.

The **Dana Medal** (2022) recognizes continued outstanding scientific contributions through original research in the mineralogical sciences by an individual in the midst of his or her career.

The **Mineralogical Society of America Award** (2022) is giving for outstanding published contribution(s) prior to the nominee's 35th birthday or within seven years of their PhD.

The **Distinguished Public Service Medal** (2023) is presented to an individual who has provided outstanding contributions to public policy and awareness about mineralogical topics through science.

Society **Fellowship** is the recognition of a members' significant scientific contributions. Nomination is undertaken by one member, with two members acting as cosponsors. A form is required. Please contact the committee chair or the MSA home page.

Submission requirements and procedures are on MSA's home page: <http://www.minsocam.org/>.

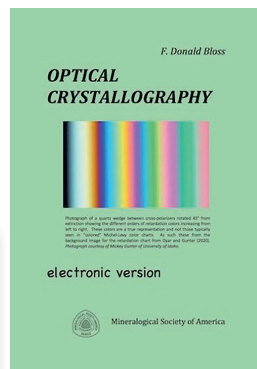
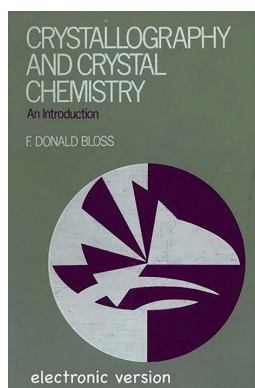


International Mineralogical Association

www.ima-mineralogy.org

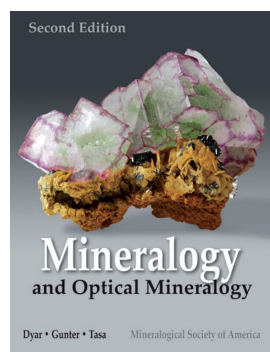
F. DONALD BLOSS PUBLICATIONS NOW IN DIGITAL FORMAT

Crystallography and Crystal Chemistry: An Introduction and *Optical Crystallography* are both now available as watermarked downloadable pdfs. Both classics in their field and still in use after many years, these publications can be ordered through MinPubs.org.



DID YOU KNOW?

- The *American Mineralogist* has been published from 1916 to the present day. All issues from 1916 through 1999 are available on MSA's website through the link "Online Access" to *American Mineralogist*.
- The images, animations, and videos that are part of the *Mineralogy & Optical Mineralogy* textbook (Dyar, Gunter, and Tasa, 2020) are on the MSA website under the "Publications/Textbook" pulldown menu. The full-color graphics are organized chapter-by-chapter and are easily identifiable through thumbnail illustrations on the website.



The 2020 International Mineralogical Association (IMA) Council Meeting and IMA Business Meeting were initially scheduled to take place during Fall 2020, during the 3rd European Mineralogical Conference (emc²⁰²⁰) in Kraków (Poland). However, the conference was postponed until August 2021 (<https://emc2020.ptmin.eu>) because of the global pandemic, and it was decided that the needs of our association and its membership would be best served by conducting the council and business meetings online – in the best traditions of our time! Between January 11th and 14th, members of the IMA Council met with one another and with national representatives from across 17 time zones to discuss the future of our association, the achievements of its committees and commissions, changes to the council membership, upcoming IMA meetings, and other timely topics. While we all would have preferred to interact in person (perhaps over a glass of Kraków nalewka), and some of us may not have been fully awake at 6 a.m. or it was well past our bedtime at 1 a.m., the meetings were a great success.



Snapshot of the January 2021 online IMA Council Meeting. **TOP ROW:** Patrick Cordier (Past President), Anhuai Lu (President), Hans-Peter Schertl (1st Vice-President), Anton Chakhmouradian (Communication Officer); **SECOND ROW:** Razvan Caracas (2nd Vice-President), Travis Olds (Treasurer), Catherine McCammon (Councillor), Sergey Smirnov (Councillor); **THIRD ROW:** Marco Pasero (Councillor), Sylvie Demouchy (Secretary), Hiroaki Ohfuji (Councillor), Ross Angel (Councillor); **BOTTOM ROW:** Peter Burns (retiring Past President), Mark Welch and Jane Gilotti (retiring Councillors).

The IMA Council welcomed new Secretary Sylvie Demouchy and councillors Ross Angel and Hiroaki Ohfuji, and thanked its retiring members Peter C. Burns (former past president), Mark Welch, and Jane Gilotti. Anhuai Lu became IMA's nineteenth president, Patrick Cordier its past president, and Hans-Peter Schertl its first vice-president. Changes to the IMA Medal Committee were also approved (stay tuned at www.ima-mineralogy.org). Incoming President Lu addressed the new council by reflecting on his first IMA conference experience in 1990 in Beijing (China), thanking the retiring and continuing councillors for their contributions, sharing his vision for new committees and working groups under the IMA umbrella, and expressing hope that China will make a successful bid to host the 2026 IMA General Meeting.

In the meantime, preparations are well underway for IMA 2022 in Lyon (France) under the leadership of Second Vice-President Razvan Caracas (www.ima2022.fr). Do not miss your chance to submit a proposal to the IMA 2022 Scientific Committee for an interesting session or a fieldtrip!