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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Publishing Mineral Descriptions and Crystal Structures

The mineral research community has become concerned about the problem of timely publication of descriptions of new minerals and new crystal structures. There is a great backlog of manuscripts at some journals that are traditional outlets for such work. This has not been a problem at the *American Mineralogist*, which has taken many steps to make the publication process more efficient. However, there have been concerns among authors that the *American Mineralogist* has stepped back from its tradition of publishing these fundamental contributions to mineralogy. I have taken this concern very seriously in discussions with council members of the Mineralogical Society of America (MSA).

The *American Mineralogist* editor has strived to raise the citation index of the journal. Some suspect that descriptive papers don't engage an adequately broad readership to meet the changed criteria to achieve this goal. Some manuscripts may do a good job of describing a new mineral or its structure but lack details about the species' geological context or its implications for the mineral forming environment. Likewise, the significance of a new structure type or topology may not be explained in terms of its implications, such as how it is novel or revolutionary, the implications for its thermodynamic properties, its possible phase transitions, or some other important characteristic. Resistance by some authors to include this added information has led to rejection of their manuscript. I have received assurances that *American Mineralogist* will continue to perform its role of publishing fundamental mineralogical manuscripts. Nonetheless, the journal faces financial limits on the amount of material it can publish, which results in either increased rejection rates or requests to shorten papers and so help keep the MSA solvent. After all, publishing is MSA's main game, so keeping our publications viable is critical to the mineralogical sciences. So, I urge authors to address these challenges when submitting to *American Mineralogist*.

On the horizon is a new outlet for mineralogical data that should improve the situation: the creation of an MSA data journal, which has been talked about for some time and is the pet project of Past President Becky Lange. The publishing emphasis will be presentation of data, rather than implications. This will not necessarily address all problems of publishing mineral descriptions, new occurrences, or structures, but it will lead to a greater spectrum of mineralogical data becoming available in a more timely and less costly manner. One interesting problem it will likely address is the difficulty of, hence seldom seen, publishing a second, third or n^{th} occurrence of a rare mineral. Publishing such information at present typically needs to await a review, such as in a *RiMG* volume or other magnum opus, or may not happen at all. A data journal will facilitate researchers in their publishing, with subsequent inclusion into efforts such as the interpretation of mineral diversity and the Earth System, as promoted by our recent Roebbling Medalist, Bob Hazen. We hope to make progress within the year.

George Harlow
2017 MSA President



IF YOUR INTERESTS ARE DIFFERENT THAN THOSE AROUND YOU, THERE IS
PLACE FOR YOU IN MSA. JOIN MSA ONLINE AT WWW.MINSOCAM.ORG

NOTES FROM CHANTILLY

- MSA will have electronic balloting for its 2017 election of 2018 MSA officers and councilors. The slate of candidates, all from the USA except where indicated - President: Michael Brown (University of Maryland); Vice President (one to be selected): Lukas P. Baumgartner (University of Lausanne, Switzerland) and Mickey E. Gunter (University of Idaho). Secretary: Bryan C. Chakoumakos (Oak Ridge National Laboratory). Councilors (two to be selected): Martin Kunz (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory), Vincent J. Van Hinsberg (McGill University, Canada), Jay J. Ague (Yale University), and Donna L. Whitney (University of Minnesota). Thomas S. Duffy (Princeton University) continues in office as Treasurer. Continuing councilors will be Rajdeep Dasgupta (Rice University); Peter I. Nabelek (University of Missouri-Columbia); Sarah K. Carmichael (Appalachian State University); and Sarah C. Penniston-Dorland (University of Maryland).
- All 2015 and 2016 MSA members have been contacted by mail, electronically, or both about renewing their membership for 2017. If you have not renewed your MSA membership, please do so. If you have not received a notice by the time you read this, please contact the MSA Business Office. You can also renew online at anytime.

J. Alex Speer
MSA Executive Director
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THE MSA COUNCIL



Depending on how they are counted, there have been 159 meetings of the MSA Council, with the first in 1920. As far as I know, there are no pictures of a council meeting until this one in the Fall of 2016. Seated at the table is your hard-working 2016–2017 Council, counterclockwise starting at the right are:

Rebecca Lange, President; Bryan Chakoumakos, Secretary; Wendy Panero, Councilor; Edward Grew, Councilor; Sarah C. Penniston-Dorland, Councilor; Sarah K. Carmichael, Councilor; Matt Kohn, Councilor; Thomas S. Duffy, incoming Treasurer; Michael Brown, incoming Vice-President; Rachel Russell, Managing Editor; Steve Shirey, Past-President; Howard Day, outgoing Treasurer; Peter Nabelek, Councilor; George Harlow, Vice-President & incoming President; J. Alex Speer, Executive Director. Not present: Rajdeep Dasgupta and Abby Kavner, Councilors

MSA CENTENNIAL HISTORY

In February 1917, one hundred years ago this month, Edward H. Kraus, a faculty member at the University of Michigan, circulated the typeset flyer (below) to 51 mineralogists in the USA and Canada. He invited them to join as charter members the organization to be called the Mineralogical Society of America. At the same time, Prof. Kraus circulated a draft constitution among those he felt were most interested. By the end of the summer, 35 replies were received, 29 being favorable. Much of the discussion in those original reply letters concerned including the terms "petrographical" and "crystallographical," both as subject matter and in the name of the society; a possible society publication; meetings; whether there were a sufficient number of mineralogists to form a viable and specialized society – might it better to be a branch of a larger society because there were so many other societies; and the \$10 cost of membership (= \$203.90 in 2016 dollars).

Ann Arbor, Mich., February 5, 1917.

For several years past, some of those attending the annual meetings of the Geological Society of America have discussed the advisability of organizing a separate society composed of persons whose interests lie more especially in the field of Mineralogy. The feeling has been growing that the founding of a Mineralogical Society would do much to stimulate greater interest in the subject and also give wider recognition to the work being done in this field in America. Accordingly, the undersigned, who were in attendance upon the meetings of the Geological Society of America, at Albany, in December, 1916, discussed this question very thoroughly, and it was agreed that the time has come when an organization which might be called "The Mineralogical Society of America" should be formed at as early a date as possible.

While many of the advantages resulting from such an organization are apparent to all interested, the undersigned felt that perhaps the greatest benefit to be derived would be the founding by the society of a journal to be devoted exclusively to the publishing of mineralogical papers. As is well known, there is great need for a dignified medium of publication for the increasing volume of mineralogical investigations which are being carried on in America. Naturally such a publication must be started on a modest basis, and appear perhaps at first as a quarterly. Members of the society would of course receive the Journal free of charge.

With respect to organization and means of publication, mineralogists in America are far behind their colleagues in Europe, but we feel confident that you will respond promptly and favorably to our appeal to unite with us as a charter member in perfecting the organization of this society, the standards of which are to be on a par with those of the Geological Society of America. In order to insure the publication of a journal, which would naturally have a somewhat limited circulation, it was thought advisable that the annual dues be placed at \$10.00.

This letter is being addressed to a selected list of mineralogists in the United States and Canada, and if a sufficient number of favorable replies is received, it is planned to complete the organization sometime during the current year.

Professor Edward H. Kraus, Ann Arbor, Michigan, has been designated to conduct the correspondence looking toward the organization of the society. He will be glad to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Very sincerely yours,

EDWARD H. KRAUS,	THOMAS L. WALKER,
ALEXANDER H. PHILLIPS,	EDGAR T. WHERRY,
FRANK R. VAN HORN,	HERBERT P. WHITLOCK.

AWARD NOMINATIONS

Nominations Sought for 2018/2019 Awards

Nominations must be received by 1 June 2017

The **Roebbling Medal** (2018) is MSA's highest award and is given for eminence as represented by outstanding published original research in mineralogy.

The **Dana Medal** (2018) is intended to recognize continued outstanding scientific contributions through original research in the mineralogical sciences by an individual in the midst of their career.

Mineralogical Society of America Award (2018) is given for outstanding published contribution(s) prior to 35th birthday or within 7 years of the PhD.

The **Distinguished Public Service Medal** (2019) is presented to an individual who has provided outstanding contributions to public policy and awareness about mineralogical topics through science.

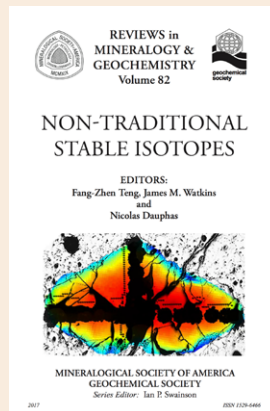
Society **Fellowship** is the recognition of a member's significant scientific contributions. Nomination is undertaken by one member with two members acting as cosponsors. Form required, contact committee chair or MSA home page.

Mineralogical Society of America

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

New title: REVIEWS in MINERALOGY and GEOCHEMISTRY

Volume 82: **Non-Traditional Stable Isotopes, Fang-Zhen Teng, James Watkins, and Nicolas Dauphas**, editors. i-xvi+885 pages. ISBN 978-0-939950-98-0



Since the publication of *Geochemistry of Non-Traditional Stable Isotopes* in 2004 (volume 55 of the RiMG series), analytical techniques have significantly improved and new research directions have emerged in non-traditional stable isotope geochemistry. This volume reviews the status of non-traditional isotope geochemistry from analytical, theoretical, and experimental approaches to the analysis of natural samples. In particular, applications to cosmochemistry, high-temperature geochemistry, low-temperature geochemistry, and geobiology are discussed. The aim of

this volume is to provide the most comprehensive review on non-traditional isotope geochemistry for students and researchers who are interested in both the theory and applications of non-traditional stable isotope geochemistry.

Description and ordering online at www.minsocam.org or contact Mineralogical Society of America, 3635 Concorde Pkwy Ste 500, Chantilly, VA 20151-1110 USA phone: +1 (703)652-9950 fax: +1 (703) 652-9951 e-mail: business@minsocam.org. Cost is \$45 (\$33.75 members MSA, GS, CMS).