

The Mineralogical Cabinet

Newsletter for the Friends of the New Mexico Mineral Museum, New Mexico Bureau of Geology & Mineral Resources

Volume 10, No. 1, June 2025



From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends,

It has been a very busy winter and spring at the museum with many new acquisitions, including some very important collections discussed below.

2025 New Mexico Mineral Symposium

The 45th New Mexico Mineral Symposium will be held November 7-9 on New Mexico Tech's campus. We are very excited to announce that this year's featured speaker will be Mike Rumsey, Principal Curator of Minerals and Planetary Materials for the Natural History Museum in London, England. Mike will give two presentations at the symposium. His featured talk will be History and Highlights, including New Mexico specimens, of the Natural History Museum, London, England.



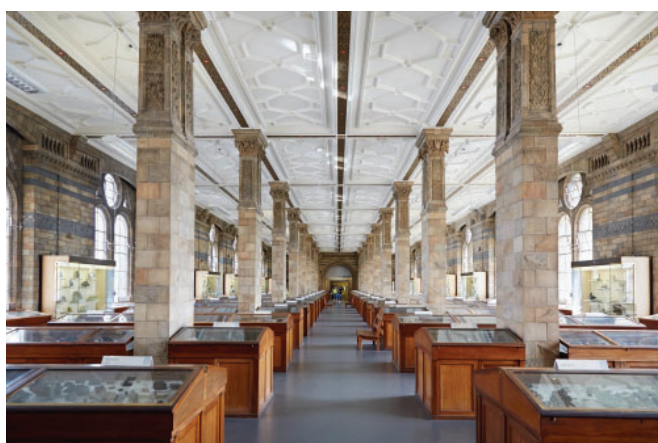
Featured Speaker Mike Rumsey

For full symposium details as they develop please check the webpage:

<https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/museum/nmms/home.cfm>

The Micromineral Group of the Albuquerque Gem and Mineral Club will again host the **Micromineral Aficionados Gathering** — Friday, November 7. The event is free and open to all. If you have any questions about the gathering email Jay Penn at jaypenn246@gmail.com.

Once again, we will have the **Friends of the Mineral Museum** reception at the museum on Friday, November 7, from 5-7 pm. Your yearly membership fee for the Friends of the Museum supports museum activities including the symposium. If you are not already a member, please consider



Mineral Gallery, Natural History Museum, London with roughly 12,000 specimens on display.

joining (<https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/museum/friends/home.html>) and participating in the reception.

Thanks to the efforts of Patrick Rowe there will be a field trip to the Lake Valley Mining District again this year. The number of participants is limited and requires registration. We ask that people who attended last year not register so others may have a chance. If interested, please send an email to la.geo.society@gmail.com

We hope to have registration open in late August this year. We will sent email notification when it is active.

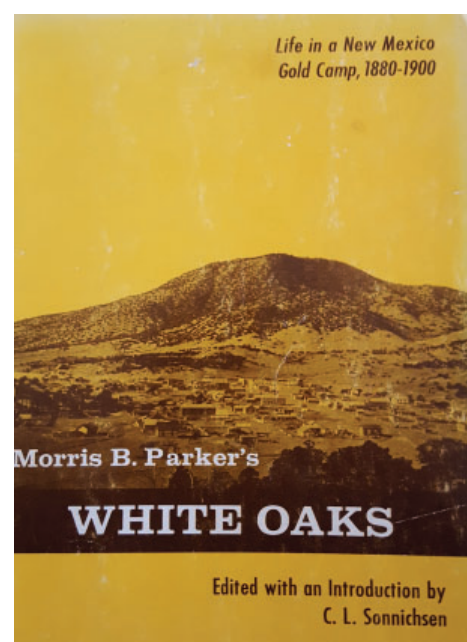
The Morris B. Parker Collection – the White Oaks NM gold rush and a career in mining



Morris B. Parker 1886 (when he was 15 years old)

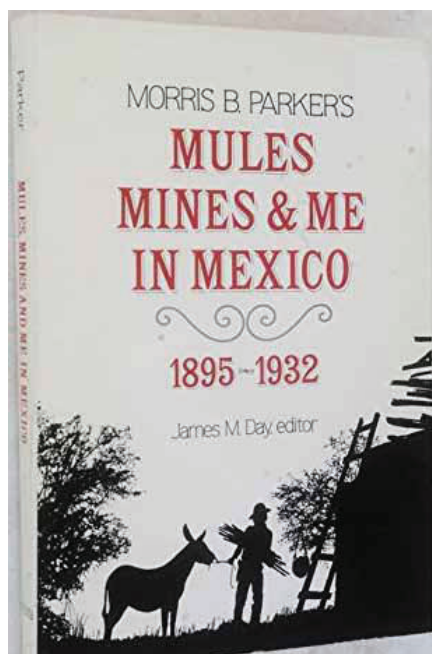
White Oaks, Lincoln County, New Mexico, was a booming gold mining town in the 1880's and 1890's. Morris Parker got in on the ground floor, arriving in 1882 at the age of eleven. That experience lead to an education in mining engineering and a career in mining and assaying in New Mexico, Arizona, and Mexico.

“Morris B. Parker (1871-1957) was born in 1871, the son of Erastus Wells and Emmeline Brown Parker. He grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and spent his summers in Penn Yan, New York. His father purchased the South Homestake mine located in White Oaks, New Mexico, in 1879 and the family moved there in the summer of 1882. He went back to New York for high school, where he studied chemistry and assaying. He then attended Colorado College in Colorado Springs, from 1889-1892, as well as the University of Missouri from 1892-1893 to study at the School of Mines and Metallurgy. Once his studies were complete, Parker returned to White Oaks to begin assaying. During that same year he married Olive Genevieve McCourt [on 29 November 1893]. Parker moved to Nacozari, Mexico for work in 1895, and in 1903 moved his family to El Paso, Texas. Until 1932, much of Parker's time was spent in Arizona, Mexico, and New Mexico. In each place, he worked for various mining companies assaying ore and predicting the prospects of mining claims.” In El Paso he and his brother, James H. Parker, started the company, Parker & Parker - mining and consulting engineers. Morris “retired in Hermosa Beach, California, and with the help of his daughter, Lina Parker Matthews, was able to write of his experiences in Mexico and White Oaks that were subsequently published after his death on 18 October 1957, [at the age of 86].”



The two books, posthumously published from his memoirs are:

White Oaks: Life in a New Mexico Gold Camp, 1880-1900 “provides a detailed look at life in White Oaks during its peak years as a gold camp. Parker’s research offers a comprehensive view of the town’s social and economic dynamics, highlighting the daily lives of its residents. Through vivid descriptions and firsthand accounts, the book captures the essence of a bustling mining town and its eventual decline.” By: Morris B. Parker (Author), C. L. Sonnichsen (Editor).



The second book is ***Mules, Mines, and Me in Mexico, 1895-1932***, “Parker’s colorful reminiscences as a mining engineer in the rough, frontier Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua at the turn of the century provide an engrossing story. For 37 years Parker witnesses the drama of day-to-day life and death in Sonoran mining camps.”

Starting during his time in White Oaks, Morris assembled a Mineral Cabinet, which resided for decades in the dining room of his house in Hermosa Beach, California. A portion of that collection was exhibited at the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, the world’s fair held in Chicago, Illinois. After Morris’s death, many of his belongings were passed down to family members. The Mineral

Cabinet eventually ended up in the possession of his great grandson Kerry Kemp. In January Kerry contacted me to ask if the New Mexico Mineral Museum would be interested in accepting the donation of the Parker collection and its associated memorabilia.

Kerry felt it was time for it to come back to its roots and that its history to be shared with others. Not knowing anything about Morris Parker, at the time, I turned to our resident mining historian extraordinaire, Bob Eveleth.



Diane Ramirez, Kerry Kemp, Bob Eveleth & John Rakovan with the Morris B. Parker Mineral Cabinet at the New Mexico Mineral Museum, NMB-GMR. Note Morris’s favorite rock pick, and other personal items on top of the cabinet.

Bob just about jumped out of his skin. He explained to me that a 19th century mineral collection in its original cabinet, from New Mexico, and one associated with someone so prominent as Morris Parker, was a historical gold mine (pun intended).

I picked up the collection in mid-May, 2025 and only a few days after getting it to Socorro, Kelsey had it unpacked, organized, and setup just as it was for decades at Morris Parker’s home in California; thanks to photographs that Kerry had taken of it.

Two notable mineral specimens from the collection are pictured below. The first is a fine specimen of azurite on goethite coated malachite from the Czar Mine, Bisbee, AZ; collected ca.1900.



The second, and finest specimen in the cabinet is a cluster of sharp, intergrown, bournonite crystals; some doubly terminated. The crystals are prismatic, although twinned, and the largest is 6 cm. Unfortunately, we do not know from where it came. However, given the size, crystal morphology, and the time period that it was likely acquired by Parker, it is possibly from one of the French localities.



A notable suite of specimens in the collection are 107 nicely shaped (Carl Francis used “pillows” to describe them) rock and ore specimens with the Foote Mineral Company labels on them (see photo). Given the label shapes, the company insignia FOOTE, PHILA'D, the specimen sizes (roughly 4 x 3 x 1 inches), and their identities, it is likely these were examples of “The American Rock Collection” that Foote marketed, with the addition of specimens selected by the purchaser, and they were probably acquired sometime between 1900 and 1907 (Alex J. Speer personal communication). Alex, an authority on the early Foote company, also mentioned that “of all the Foote specimens I have owned or seen over the years (a Foote label always attracts my notice), rock specimens, especially in the quality you seem to have, are very rare”. The Foote company also sold oak cabinets along with collections. The Parker cabinet is not one of their standard models, but it is possible that it was a spe-

cial order from Foote. There is a lot more research to do on the collection and I will continue to share what we learn as it progresses.

On June 6th, Kerry and his partner, Diane Ramirez, came to Socorro to see the collection in its new home. On June 7th we went on a journey to White Oaks to visit the town where this all started. Located twelve miles NE of Carrizozo in the Jicarilla Mountains, White Oaks was a boomtown and cultural center in the late 1800's, but today it is all but a ghost town. There we met with the Wetzel brothers Charlie, Paul, and Bryan. The Wetzel's great grandfather, Dr. Alexander Lane, a contemporary of Morris Parker had also lived in White Oaks.



Kerry Kemp, Charlie, Paul and Bryan Wetzel in front of the ruins of the Parker House, White Oaks, NM 6/7/2025.

Though not related, Kerry said, it was like coming home to meet long separated family. Charlie, Paul and Bryan were gracious hosts and spent the day showing us key places in Morris Parker's life. We first visited the Parker house, or the ruins of it. Much of the structure is still standing and it was easy to imagine the house from the 19th Century as it is pictured in Morris' book *White Oaks*... From there we went up to Baxter Mt., where the Parker family started its association with mining, after Morris's father, Erastus, purchased a mine in

1879. It was an amazing feeling to know we were in the very mine where Morris spent much of his childhood and started his training as a mining engineer.



Kerry Kemp entering an adit to one of the White Oaks mines.



*A portion of the main shaft from underground in the mine, White Oaks, NM.
6/7/2025*



View to the east from upper Baxter Gulch with the town of White Oaks, NM in the valley. 6/7/2025.

gold camp, has made the history behind the Parker collection much more vivid and interesting.

Along with a visit to the White Oaks Schoolhouse Museum we ended the day at the *No Scum Allowed Saloon*, a colorful watering hole that occupies a period building and has been a bar since about 1980. Reading Morris Parker's books, and visiting White Oaks with decedents from its heyday as a frontier

Another Historical Collection – from 1938

The mineral collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (ANSP) was one of the historically oldest, most important in the United States. It grew over its roughly 200-year history through major acquisitions, like the American Philosophical Society and Vaux collections, as well as through collection expeditions like those organized by Sam Gordon (see Arthur Montgomery's nine-part series about Gordon, An American Mineralogist, in the *Mineralogical Record* 1973-1975). In 2006 the majority of the ANSP collection was sold to Colorado mineral dealer Bryan Lees, California dealer Wayne Leicht and British dealer Ian Bruce (Wilson, *Axis V*. 2#5). This group did what they could to keep important suites together and place them with appropriate institutions. One of the last suites to be placed was from the Academy's 1938 expedition to Chile, led by Sam Gordon. In 2024 that collection was donated by Collector's Edge Minerals to the New Mexico Mineral Museum,

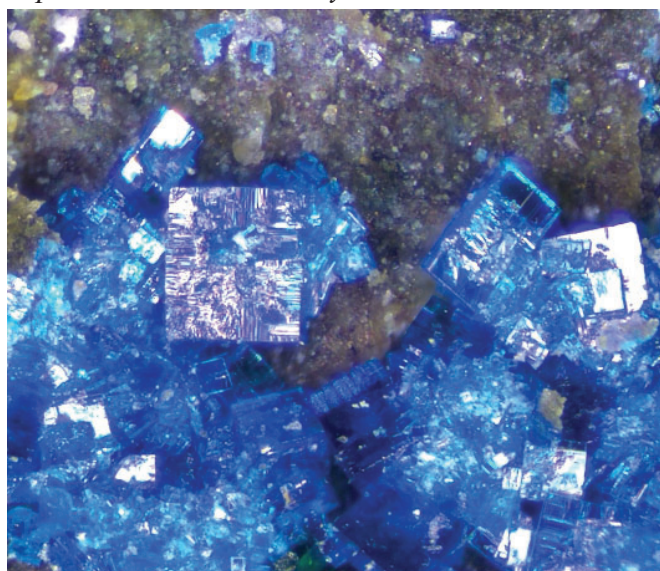


Paul & Bryan Wetzel, John & Monica Rakovan, Kerry & Diane Ramirez, and Charlie Wetzel in the No Scum Allowed Saloon, White Oaks, NM 6/7/2025.

New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, in Socorro, New Mexico. Museum benefactor and volunteer Pat Haynes has been hard at work identifying all of the different minerals in the collection and researching the expedition's history. He has written an article with his results for *Rocks & Minerals* magazine. It is likely to appear in the March/April 2026 issue. Many thanks, Pat!



Pat Haynes in the museum layout room working through flats of specimens from the ANSP 1938 expedition to Chile, led by Sam Gordon.



Pseudoboleite from the La Compañía Mine. 1.5 mm FOV. from the ANSP 1938 expedition to Chile,

led by Sam Gordon. Patrick Haynes photo.

Bob Eveleth to be presented the Rodman Paul Award by the Mining History Association

The NM Bureau of Geology's emeritus mining engineer, historian, and museum curator Bob Eveleth, will be presented the Rodman Paul Award by the Mining History Association, <https://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/>, on Thursday, June 19th at 10:30 am in the Mineral Museum. The Rodman Paul Award is granted for outstanding contributions to mining history. Congratulations to Bob!!!

“A 1969 graduate of the New Mexico Institute of



Bob Eveleth, 2021

Mining and Technology (formerly New Mexico School of Mines), he still uses his extensive mining experience and solid geologic knowledge of ores in New Mexico to defeat shady entrepreneurs out to make money from less-informed citizens. For over twenty years he has researched and documented New Mexico history relating to mining, the city of Socorro, and the School of Mines. He

has been with the Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources for over 35 years and remains their Senior Mining Engineer, specializing in Mining Technology, Mining Law, and Mining History.” Bob’s extensive writings have become a regular part of the *Mineralogical Cabinet* and you can find an article by Bob in this issue; *Lett’s swap rocks for suds*.

Director’s Choice

Four New Minerals From New Mexico

Four minerals new to science were recently discovered in the state of New Mexico. Three of these are named in honor of prominent New Mexico citizens, they are raydemarkite, virgilluethite and the newest, approved in December 2024 by the International Mineralogical Association, stunorthropite. The forth, tianhuixinite, is named after the late Chinese mineralogist, Professor Huixin Tian. All of these minerals were all discovered in the Summit mine group, Cookes Peak mining district, Luna County, New Mexico.

Most readers of the *Mineralogical Cabinet* will know of the gentlemen from New Mexico, one of them started this newsletter. Ramon S. DeMark is a retired US Naval aviation officer with a bachelor of science degree in geology (Illinois, 1960) and a lifelong interest in mineral collecting, specifically promoting and collecting New Mexico minerals for the past fifty-three years.

Dr. Virgil Lueth, Emeritus - Sr. Mineralogist/Economic Geologist from the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources was director of the New Mexico Mineral Museum from 1994-2022, and continues to be an integral part of the Museum’s team.

Few of us personally knew Dr. Stuart A. Northrop (1904-1994), a professor of Geology at the University of New Mexico from 1928 – 1969. He is the author of the most comprehensive work on our state’s mineralogy, *Minerals of New Mexico*. First published as a book in 1944, it has undergone

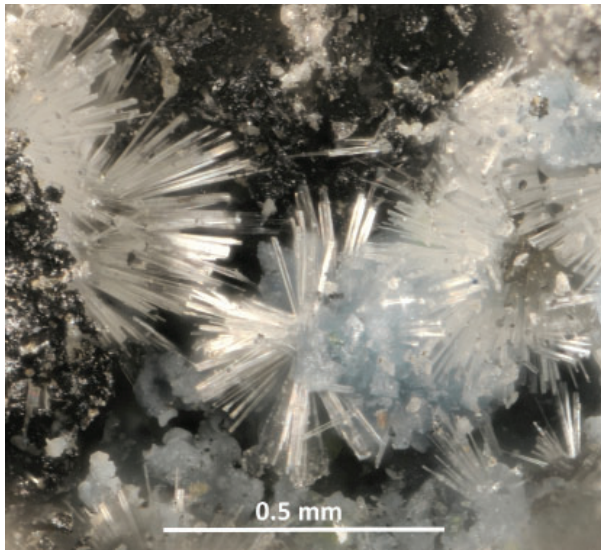


Shaft in the Summit mine group, with Cookes Peak in the background.

several major revisions and is currently in its third edition.

Cheers, *John Rakovan*

“Minerals! Inspire a love of science”



Raydemarkite



Virgilluethite



Ray DeMark



Virgil Lueth



Stunorthropite



Stu Northrop

Curator Corner

Hello all you mineral lovers,

It has been awhile since our last letter! The museum and bookstore staff hope you all had a nice time over the holidays, at the spring gem shows, and are now out mineral hunting without getting scorched. The Mineral Symposium was a success, judging by the measure of compliments we received from attendees. Once again, funding for the 2025 Symposium was secured, thanks to you! Please give yourselves a pat on the back. Museum life has been good. We received a total of 19 mineral donations during 2024, with a value of over \$600K (this doesn't include monetary donations)! The museum collections continue to improve each day because of our generous donors. I'll share some photos of the goodies received late 2024, as well as minerals gifted and purchased in early 2025. But before I get into that, I'll share some gem & mineral show photos. Enjoy!

GEM & MINERAL SHOWS

The theme of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show was “Shades of Green” and what better to showcase than “New Mexico Green” minerals. We stuck to the chile license plate and green chile theme, with a variety of green minerals from around the state. We decided to add some curious minerals, like the green botryoidal fluorite from the Mirabal Mine in the Zunis and diopside from the Victorio District in Luna County (big thanks to Rex Nelson!).



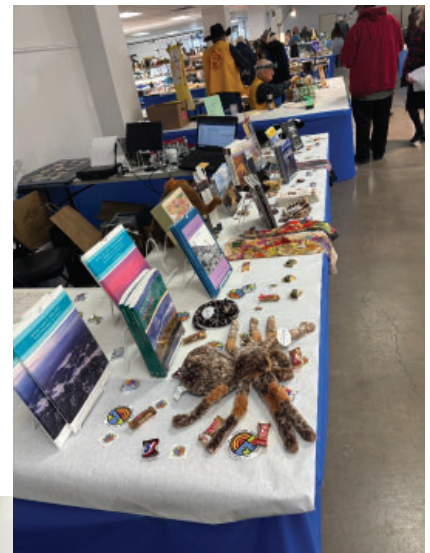
Three new NM minerals (and the rock stars they were named after) on display at the Albuquerque show, March 2025. Photo by Brenda Whitt.



TGMS “Shades of Green” display, February 2025

The Albuquerque Club Treasures of the Earth Show took place March 14-16th, and the Bureau of Geology represented with both a vendor booth and display. The display covered three new minerals, named after New Mexico mineral celebrities—raydemarkite, virgilluethite, and stunorthropite—which were discovered in the Cookes Peak Range, Luna County, New Mexico. A version of this exhibit is now on display in the Mineral Museum, if you'd like to learn more about it.

Bureau of Geology Publications table (guarded by a giant furry spider) at the Albuquerque show, March 2025. Photo by Brenda Whitt.



NEW ACQUISITIONS

Since the last newsletter in October, I've added 60 minerals to the museum collection. However, we've also added over 18,500 micromineral specimens from the Dick Thomssen Collection! Dick started the curating in 1952 and spent 73 years growing his collection. The micros are arranged alphabetically in oak and pine custom built wood cabinets in the museum reference collection. The cherry on top (for me) is that the ENTIRE COLLECTION came with a catalog. THANK YOU DICK!



Just a small sample of the over 18,500 micromineral collection, gifted by Dick Thomssen.

I will stop blabbing now so you can get through some photos of newly catalogued pieces. Many of them are now on display in our “New Acquisitions” case.



Bottom left: Single crystal of gemmy epidote from the Tormiq Valley, Roundu Dist., Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. Gift of Joan Massagué.



Proustite, Vater Abraham Mine, Erzgebirgskreis, Saxony, Germany. Gift of Joan Massagué.



Rhodonite, San Martín Mine, Bolognesi Province, Ancash, Peru. Gift of Joan Massagué.



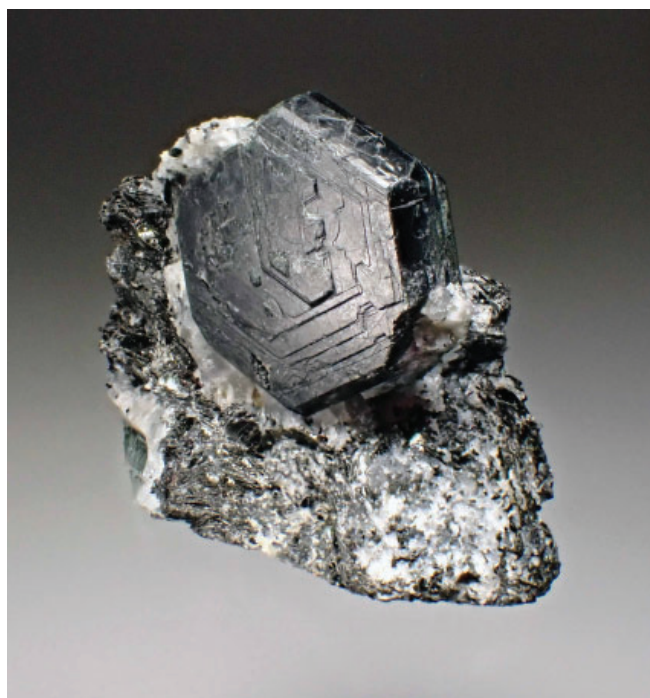
Bismuth, Shaft 371, Opal Vein, Schlema-Hartenstein District, Saxony, Germany. Gift of Joan Massagué.



Smithsonite, quartz, & tarbutite, Skorpion Mine, Rosh Pinah, Karas Region, Namibia. 5.5x3.8x4cm.



Azurite, A850 Bench, NW Extension, Morenci Open Pit, Greenlee County, Arizona. Gift of Tony Potucek.



Sapphirine, Vangaindrano, Atmo Atsinanana, Madagascar. 5.4x4.5x4.2cm. Gift of Nancy Attaway.



Wulfenite, Touissit, Jerada Province, Oriental Region, Morocco. 7x5x4.5cm. Gift of Nancy Attaway.



Spessartine, muscovite, & quartz, Picuris District, Taos County, New Mexico. Gift of Ramon DeMark.



Gold, Mount Kare Valley, Enga Province, Papua New Guinea. 2.5x2x1.2cm. Gift of Bruce Moffitt.



Crocoite, Adelaide Mine, West Coast Municipality, Tasmania, Australia. 9x7.5x7cm.

OUTREACH NEWS

Bureau Periodicals

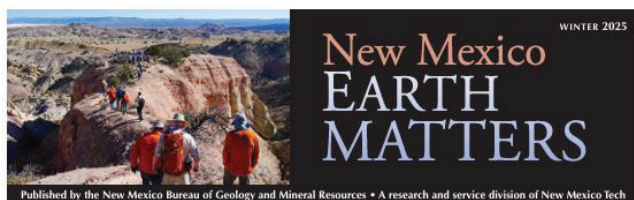
Three free geology publications are available for download on the NMGBMR website, with the latest “Lite Geology” highlighting critical minerals and mining in the San Juan Basin. The winter edition of “Earth Matters” focuses on the Bureau’s commitment to geology outreach and education. For the geologist in your family, the more technical “New Mexico Geology” covers the petrogenesis of the Railroad Mountain diabase dike of Chaves County, New Mexico.

Lite Geology

New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources
Critical Minerals and Mining in the San Juan Basin

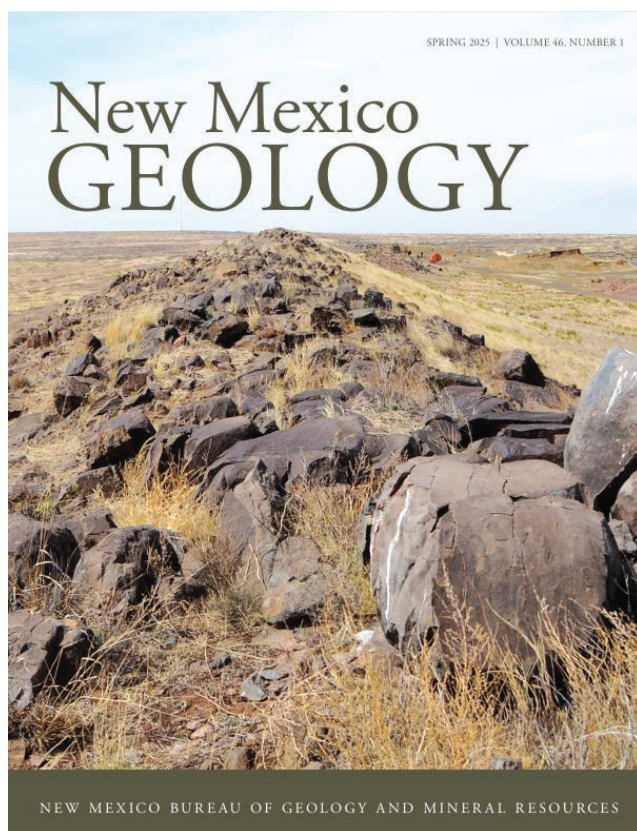


Current issue of Lite Geology, available here:
<https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/publications/periodicals/litegeology/home.cfml>



Geology for Everyone: Outreach and Education at the
New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources

Current issue of Earth Matters, available here:
<https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/publications/periodicals/earthmatters/home.cfml>



Current issue of New Mexico Geology, available here:
<https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/publications/periodicals/nmg/home.cfml>

For updates and photos on what’s happening at the museum, I try to post bi-weekly on our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/NMBGmineralmuseum

The New Mexico Bureau of Geology ALSO has a Facebook page! Please check it out at this address:
www.facebook.com/NMBGMR