

Newsletter

Issue 03 February 2024



Malham Cove, Yorkshire Dales

From the Editor

Welcome to the third edition of the SMLS Newsletter. Hopefully we all now feel like we are emerging from winter and are very much looking forward to getting back to meeting in person on Friday 1st March.

Thank you to all this months contributors, I hope you enjoy the selection.

Samantha

smlsnews72@gmail.com



Inside this issue

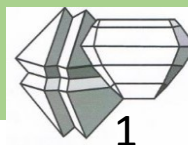
Pg2 – From the Chair

Pg3 – Events, a roundup of what's on over the next couple of months

Pg4-5 – News, a selection of articles covering, minerals, fossils, gemstones and more

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From the Chair



Dear Members,

Hopefully you are all now out of hibernation and looking forward to the first signs of spring, I mean field trips not the flowers! although the snow drops do lift your spirits. The Sheppey visit is currently 17th Feb, but I will watch the weather carefully and if necessary, I can move the date to first weekend in March. The talk this Friday is on one of our favourite collecting regions, Yorkshire, so please join in the zoom talk and have a chat with fellow members.

The March talk will be both zoom and face to face at the Church Hall, looking at life in the Eocene based on evidence from the London Clay. Mineral of the month will be Sheppey Baryte, but it would be good if you can bring along any London Clay fossils and minerals to share with members.. It will be an interesting talk as I read recently that global warming will essentially push the UK climate back to the Eocene climate, lots of rain!!

You will have read the sad news that John Burgess passed away a couple of weeks ago after a long spell with advanced dementia. Jill Burgess has thanked SMLS for the flowers and the kind words about John's time with SMLS. As you know, Gill donated half of John's mineral collection to SMLS, the other half went to the Russell Society. Proceeds from the sale have significantly improved SMLS bank balance.

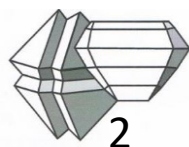
The first half of the year is a busy time for the committee in that it is 'thinking time'. SMLS is in a strong position but we do have to be mindful of the gradual changes in membership and adapt accordingly, we will be looking at this at the committee meeting in March. If you have any input on where you feel SMLS should adapt and develop please let me know.

I look forward to getting back to the face-to-face meetings, the social aspect of SMLS is for me one of the main reasons I have been a member for over 30 years, long may it continue.

Happy Collecting, Colin



*Western Face of Thwaites
Scars, Yorkshire*



Events

2nd February – SMLS Club Meeting, zoom only.
“Minerals of Yorkshire” By Steve Warren.

8th-11th February – Tucson Gem & Mineral Show

17th February – Field trip to Sheppey

17th February – Essex Gem & Mineral [Show](#)

1st March – SMLS Club Meeting, in person and Zoom. Life in the Eocene: Evidence from the London Clay By Margaret Collinson. Zoom click [here](#)

2/3rd March – [Rock and Gem](#), Kempton Park

3rd March – Oxford Mineral & Fossil Show

16th March – Field trip to Samphire Hoe

23rd/24th March – [Rock and Gem](#), Brighton

SMLS 2024 programme

Has been updated and a revised version is at the end of the newsletter.



OXFORD MINERAL & FOSSIL SHOW
Gems * Crystals * Fossils * Minerals *
Ancient artefacts * Books
EXETER HALL, OXFORD RD,
KIDLINGTON OX5 1AB
November 26
2024:
March 3
May 12
July 28
November 24
Sundays 10.00 - 4.00pm
* Free Entrance & parking * Refreshments
Further information: oxfordshow@gmail.com
facebook.com/oxfordmineralandfossilshow
UK Mineral & Fossil Events Co. proudly hosts the Oxford Shows

Next Club Meeting – Friday 2nd February

“Minerals of Yorkshire” By Steve Warren

The talk will take place at 1945 on Zoom click [here](#)



Boracite – Steetley [2006](#)

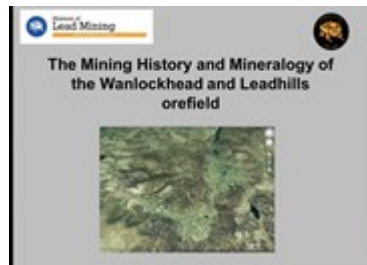


Pyromorphite – Steetley [2456](#)

Thanks to Peter at Steetley Minerals for the images

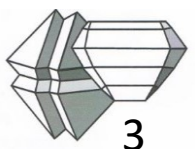
In case you missed it

The recording of the January club meeting can be found by clicking [here](#).



Membership Renewals

Just a little reminder that your subs were due on 1st January. Please settle up if you have not already done so or contact Alan Simmonds if you have any queries.





The Turtwig

Fossils

Casts turn out to be copies of priceless [fossil](#)

Meet the Malmesbury fossil [collector](#)

Christies dinosaur collecting [guide](#)

NHM – getting fossils ready for [display](#)

400 million year old fish reveals how we got our [arms](#)

NHM fossil fish [collection](#)

Trilobites rise from the [ashes](#)

Smithsonian – five incredible [fossils](#)

Giant pliosaur found in [UK](#)

The story of the [Turtwig](#)

Fossils found in Peterborough [quarry](#)

Fungus fossil reveals [secrets](#)

Mosasaur fossil from [Iowa](#)

Great Plains Palaeontology dinosaur [shop](#)

The man who found 4000 fish [fossils](#)

Minerals & Rocks

Is there gold in [Minnesota?](#)

Clouds of quartz found on [exoplanet](#)

Minerals – sparkling ,sensitive and [toxic](#)

Solving the Dolomite [Problem](#)

Why Scotland’s geology is attracting a new kind of [tourist](#)

Smithsonian, minerals behind the [scenes](#)

NHM - Ocean Bottom [Deposits](#)

Tetrataenite the cosmic [magnet](#)

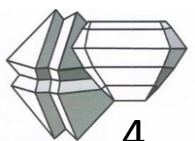
Some gems on collecting from The [Arkenstone](#)



Photo credit NHM (Rhodochrosite)



Photo credit Christel/Pixabay (Dolomites)



Gems & Lapidary

GIA global team convenes in [Carlsbad](#)

The gemstone world is in its unique cut [era](#)

Denver local jewellery [scene](#)

Antwerp shuns Russian [gems](#)

Diamond glut dulls the [sparkle](#)

Gem Legacy Adventures [await](#)

State plans to patent rare tsavorite [gem](#)

Gem industry and [ecosystems](#)

Afghan soldiers turning to gem mining to [survive](#)

All female African mine carves out sustainable [future](#)

The Blue Royale, amazing diamond set for [auction](#)

How much gold is left in the [world?](#)



Something to share?

If you have read or watched something interesting email it to The Editor at smlsnews72@gmail.com and it will be considered for future issues.

Use Ctrl + Click on the underlined text to link straight to the articles.

Videos & Podcasts

Digging up opal [pineapples](#)

Collectors Edge live from the HardRock [Summit](#)

Munich Show Walkabout [2023](#)

Giant ammonite [recovery](#)

Tucson 2024 [walkabout](#) 1

Tucson 2024 [walkabout](#) 2

Tucson [walkabout](#) 3

Tucson [walkabout](#) 4

Podcast-The Delicate Age of Edwardian [Jewellery](#)

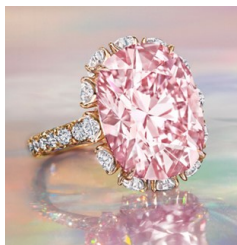
Podcast - The Art of David [Webb](#)



Objects of Vertu

Standout pieces from LVMH Watch [Week](#)

Pink Supreme fetches [\\$11m](#)



February is for Amethyst

Amethyst is traditionally the gemstone for February. The name “amethyst” derives from the Greek *amethystos*, which means “a remedy against drunkenness,” a benefit long ascribed to the purple birthstone. I think I must be using it incorrectly..... Read more about amethyst in the following selection.

All about amethyst from [GIA](#)

Amethyst minerology from [Mindat](#)

This beauty is on [Minfind](#) for a bargain \$30000

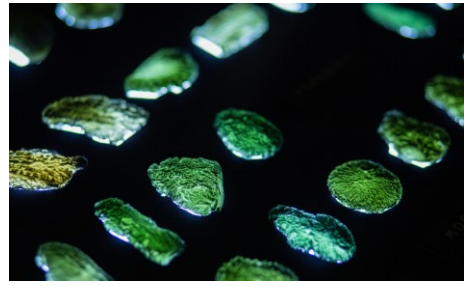


Ethics – How do we ethically decolonise a rock and mineral collection?

Read about the project at Bristol University to understand what research can be done and how to bring that knowledge into the way we curate collections in the future. Link [here](#)



Photo credit Elemental Fine Natural Art



National Museum in Prague

Contains the oldest documented moldavite specimen. There are also many more wonderful collections to see. Take a tour [here](#).

Mineral Identification Competition (2)

How good are your mineral identification skills? Take part for a chance to win a specimen, points will be accumulated over the year. Identity = 2 points, Country = 1 point, specific locality = 1 point. Email answers to smlsnews72@gmail.com

Specimen 01 answers were – iridescent pyrite with calcite, Abbeytown Quarry, Ballysadare, County Sligo Eire.

Specimen 02



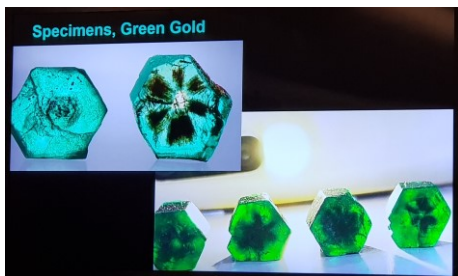
London Gem & Mineral Show 2023

A brand new two day show organised by Alix and Mary and Carpe Crystals. They have aspirations to be the UK's very own Tucson Show. What a great start they have made on that journey, the show was a fantastic success and there is already a waitlist (which I am on) for next year.

Held at Sandown Park Racecourse with lots of parking and just off the M25, it's a good location. I should perhaps add that this show is nothing to do with the "Rock, Gem and Bead" Shows that we are familiar with.

First impressions were that it was very professionally run, with a good mix of dealers (31 in total) and the marketing had been knockout. The show is run under the banner of wellbeing, which is growing ever more popular, but there was still plenty there for mineral collectors, which I will focus on in this article.

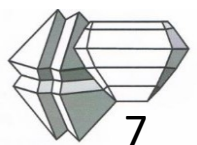
A series of eight talks ran throughout both days ranging from mining emeralds to ethics and advanced crystal healing. Click here for the link to the [podcasts](#). (Apophyllite and Ethics in the crystal trade may be of interest). I attended the talk by Talha on emerald mining. It was not a technical talk but still informative and he engaged the audience well (by giving away samples!). He had a very rare cat eye emerald and photos of some exquisite trapiche emeralds.



Carpe Crystals excelled in large specimens as Ross demonstrates but they also had some very fine rutile.



Ade and Louise from North West Crystals were new to the circuit with their first show. They had an excellent mix of fine minerals and crystals. They bring a new mineral to the UK this year with the discovery of Lions Gate Quartz from India. That is the trade name but it is an unusual combination of pyrite, hematite and Golden Healer (limonite quartz). As fast as it went on the shelf it flew off! They sold kilos of it.....





Joe and Erika from [Agate Bands](#) had their usual selection of fine minerals from Bulgaria and other localities and were delighted with how busy they had been. This fine baryte from Morocco was among them.



I met the lovely couple running the Kimbilio stall supporting the [Congo Children Trust](#). They were the charity partner for the event and I wonder if we should consider a similar charity partner for our own show. She and her friends make the fabulous range of bags and aprons from wonderfully bright traditional materials and sell them to raise funds. The charity aims to improve the lives of vulnerable street children, many of them who survive by mining in less than ideal conditions. I bought beautiful washbags and tote bags for Christmas presents.

Mohammad from Crystals Mania had his usual high quality crystals and minerals, what caught my eye was the bi-colour beryl, I haven't seen this before - aquamarine and morganite in a banded crystal.



Isaac and his Opal Whisperers team flew over from Australia with an awesome array of opals that they have mined and fashioned themselves. They were a big draw and busy all weekend. If you watch Outback Opal Hunters on Discovery you will know Isaac and his sister Sofia, if you don't why not!? Fantastic informative TV, highly recommended. They specialise in Yowah and Koroit opal. Website [here](#). See their biggest haul [here](#), its jaw dropping.



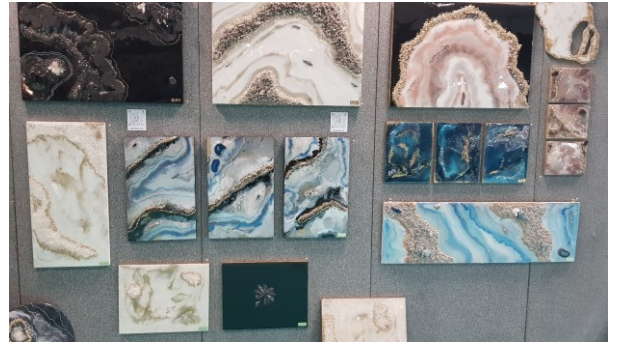
We all know how tiring it can be looking at minerals so I was lucky to find the answer in the way of some very fine Ceremonial Grade Jasper Cacao. Delicious just whisked with hot water and nutritious too, several bags came home with me for Christmas presents. I can highly recommend it if you love “proper” chocolate or know someone who does. “Its not just medicine, It’s a lifestyle” check it out [here](#).

Yowah nut (above) and a very fine selection (below) from the Opal Whisperers



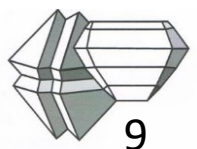
I thought the chrysocolla on quartz from Peru was unusual and the fluorite on candle quartz from China quite beautiful.

There was some fabulous mineral art on display by [Becca](#).



I spent all day here and didn’t have time to listen to all the talks I wanted to or see everything. Thoroughly enjoyed it, cant wait for next years show which I am sure will be bigger and better, look out for it!

Samantha Durrant



John Donald 1928-2023

John Donald one of the most innovative and influential jewellers, goldsmiths and silversmiths has recently died aged 94.

He lived, with his wife Cynthia in Brighton, East Sussex. He was an international celebrity, renowned for asserting the importance of structure and design over the then emphasis on size of stones.

He held royal patronage and his work was collected by major institutions.



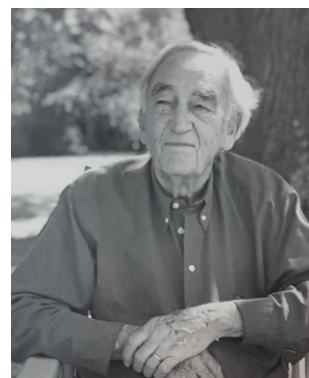
John with Princess Margaret in 1970

John excelled at art and sport, after attending Farnham art college he obtained a place at the Royal College of Art. His early work included designing luggage and NHS spectacles but it wasn't long before he opened his first jewellery workshop in Bayswater. It was there that he was introduced to Princess Margaret and the Queen Mother. The Princess was a life long patron and owned many pieces.



Examples of John's silverware

John loved to use natural stones in his work and his designs were often organic. His use of uncut stones and materials such as quartz were at that time viewed with "interest" but were truly ground breaking.



He was unique in setting up retail stores with workshops attached to them.

John taught in several institutions and helped over 100 apprentices. In 1968 he was one of the first goldsmiths to return to London's Cheapside, home to medieval goldsmiths. When he retired in 2004 he was one of the last to leave it.

He will be missed deeply by all those that knew him. His legacy is enduring and one that the nation can be incredibly proud of. **Samantha**



Closure of Milldam Mine and Cavendish Mill by Nick Hawes

Many SMLS members will have been collecting in the Peak District, and in latter years the ore piles held for processing at Cavendish Mill have proved a rich source of good specimens of calcite, fluorite, baryte, galena, cerussite and smithsonite. Sadly, it looks like this has come to an end.

An article in Down to earth Extra February 2024 informs us that the processing plant at Cavendish Mill is in the process of being dismantled and that mining operations at Milldam Mine, which provided the feedstock for the mine, have ceased for the time being, but maybe permanently.

As well as fluctuating world prices for fluorspar, both plant and mine needed significant investment in them to keep going and there was simply not an economic case to be made for this.

This marks a sad day for SMLS and other clubs, as the staff at Cavendish were some of the most friendly and accommodating for mineral collectors. I went there several times with SMLS or the Russell Society and such was the relationship with quarry staff that on one occasion the digger driver came and helped to break up the big chunks of ore with the pneumatic drill attachment on the digger. Talk about a quality service!

The mineral specimens were plentiful and those that went always came away with some nice specimens. Of particular note, the banded vein sections made lovely mineralogical specimens.



Photos of Fluorite, baryte and galena vein section from Cavendish Mill (Milldam Mine), sledgehammer head for scale, and friendly digger driver breaking up large boulders at the Cavendish Mill stockpile so we could see what was inside them.



Where There's a Will There's a Way

Back in the 1970s/1980s when I started collecting minerals, collectors were beginning to think of donating their mineral collections to a museum when they died. However few museums had a mineral curator, most had limited space to store a donated collection and only a limited number of specimens would be of interest to any museum.

Since then the position has become worse, museums can only accept mineral specimens which can be identified as being the property of the donor. Self collected material can be particularly problematic in terms of precise locations and ownership of the land the specimens were found.

Horror stories of executives of wills saying "It's just rocks" and minerals being dumped on a tip and turned into hardcore resulted in some collectors arranging to have their collections sold or auctioned when they died so, at least, the specimens were conserved.

However I, and I suspect many other collectors, would like to donate cash to a mineral museum of their choice so that the museum can, with an increased budget, purchase appropriate minerals at appropriate times. Museums will always have very worthy projects, e.g building a laboratory, installing a state-of-the-art analytical tool etc.... but I should like my focus to be on providing funds so the mineral curators can purchase specimens for the museum's collection.

I have spoken with Mike Rumsey (Principal Curator, Minerals, NHM Science Department) and he and I discussed it with the NHM's legal/legacy team. The NHM has published some information "Your Legacy for the Natural World" Link [here](#)

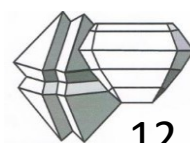
Not only does it provide some useful information, but it indicates that your donation can be a "Restricted Gift". It also provides some wording so, if like me, you already have a will, you just need to consider how much you want to donate and define the way you want your money to be used.

I am intending to send this article to the BMS and the Russell Society, as I think there may be other members who share my thoughts. I have chosen the NHM, but I am sure other Mineral Museums in the UK would be interested.

Sample forms will be made available on the SMLS website.

John Pearce

jppearce@talktalk.net



Min Rec's going free

Mark Oddy is looking for new homes for a selection of Mineralogical Record Publications. If you are interested please contact him at em.oddy@btinternet.com



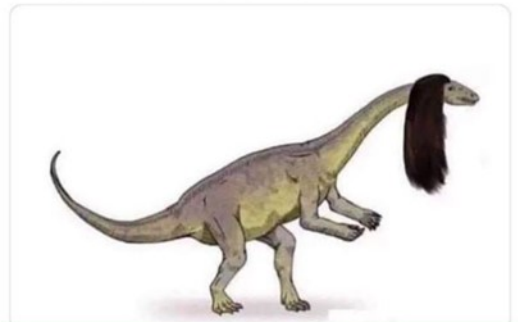
Quote of the month

The gem cannot be polished without friction nor man without trials.

Confucius

Chuckle Corner

Since hair can't be preserved in fossils we can't rule out the possibility that dinosaurs looked like this



SMLS Online

The club [website](#)

The club Facebook [Pages](#)

SUSSEX MINERAL & LAPIDARY SOCIETY
2024 Programme (revised)

Friday 5 th January	General Meeting: The Mining History and Mineralogy of the Wanlockhead & Leadhills Orefield By Jon Evans: Sponsor Colin Brough	Zoom only
Friday 2 nd February	General Meeting: Minerals of Yorkshire By Steve Warren: Sponsor Nick Hawes	Zoom only
Saturday 17 th February	Field Trip to Sheppey Coordinator Colin Brough	Low tide 11:30
Saturday 17 th Feb.	<i>Essex Gem & Mineral show. 10.00 am-4.00 pm North Romford Community Centre, Colliers Row, Romford</i>	
Sat – Sun 2 nd /3 rd March	<i>Rock 'N' Gem Show 10.00am-5.00pm Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Rd. East</i>	
Friday 1 st March	General Meeting: Life in the Eocene: Evidence from the London Clay By Margaret Collinson: Sponsor David Alderton	
Saturday 16 th March	Field Trip to Samphire Hoe Coordinator Colin Brough	Low tide 10:30
Sunday 3 rd March	<i>Oxford Mineral and Fossil Show 10.30am – 4.00pm Exeter Hall, Oxford Rd, Kidlington, North Oxford</i>	
Sat – Sun 23 rd /24 th March	<i>Rock 'N' Gem Show 10.00am – 5.00pm Brighton Racecourse, Freshfield Rd, Brighton</i>	
12 th -14 th April	<i>2024 Annual Russell Society Meeting (ASM) Cheltenham Chase Hotel at Brockworth, Nr Cheltenham hosted by Wales & West Branch.</i>	
Friday 5 th April	General Meeting: Members evening: Show and tell.	
Saturday 20 th April	<i>Yorkshire Mineral and Fossil Fair The Market House, Hawes North Yorkshire. 10:00 0 17:00</i>	
Friday 26 th April	General Meeting: Minerals of Northern Ireland By Norman Moles: Sponsor Nick Hawes	
1 st May to 11 th May	Field Trip to Wanlockhead and Skye Coordinator Colin Brough	
Sunday 12 th May	<i>Oxford Mineral and Fossil Show 10.30am – 4.00pm Exeter Hall, Oxford Rd, Kidlington, North Oxford</i>	
Friday 7 th June	General Meeting: Novel Lapidary Commissions By John White: Sponsor Colin Brough	
7 th -14 th June	Field Trip East Scotland Co-ordinator: Colin Brough/John Taylor	
Thurs - Sun 26 th - 30 th June	<i>Sainte-Marie-Aux-Mine Mineral and Gem International Show</i>	

Friday 5 th July	AGM and General Meeting. Minerals of South East Wales By Steve Plant: Sponsor Nick Hawes	
<i>20th/21st July Sat-Sun</i>	<i>North Pennines Mineral Expo. Village Hall, St Johns Chapel, Weardale, County Durham.</i>	
<i>Sunday 28th July</i>	<i>Oxford Mineral and Fossil Show 10.30am – 4.00pm Exeter Hall, Oxford Rd, Kidlington, North Oxford</i>	
<i>Sat – Sun 27th/28th July</i>	<i>Rock 'N' Gem Show 10.00am-5.00pm Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Rd. East</i>	
Saturday 10 th August	SMLS Summer Gathering Coordinator: Nick Hawes	
Friday 6 th September	General Meeting : Minerals of Scordale By Peter Briscoe: Sponsor NH	
Mon-Thurs 9 th -12 th Sept	Field Trip to Northern Ireland Coordinator Nick Hawes/Norman Moles	
<i>Fri -Sun 13th/15th Sept.</i>	<i>2024 BMS Symposium. Salwaroe Village Hall, Droitwich.</i>	
Friday 4 th October	General Meeting: Lavrion Minerals By Phil Taylor: Sponsor Colin Brough	
<i>Sat/Sun 12th/14th October</i>	<i>Bakewell Rock Exchange 10.00am – 5.00pm Lady Manners School, Bakewell, Derbyshire</i>	
Friday 1 st November	General Meeting: The Ludlam Collection By Mike Rumsey: Sponsor Nick Hawes	
<i>Sat – Sun 9th/10th Nov.</i>	<i>Rock 'N' Gem Show 10.00am – 5.00pm Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Rd. East</i>	
<i>Saturday November</i>	<i>Festival of Geology University College London</i>	TBC
<i>Sat – Sun 16th/17th Nov.</i>	<i>Rock 'N' Gem Show 10.00am – 5.00pm Brighton Racecourse, Freshfield Rd, Brighton</i>	
Saturday 16 th November	SUSSEX MINERAL & FOSSIL SHOW 10.00am - 4.30pm, Haywards Heath	
<i>Saturday 23rd Nov</i>	<i>Mineral Gem and Fossil Show Amateur Geological Society, Finchley, London Trinity Church, Nether Street, Finchley, N12 7NN</i>	
<i>Sunday 24th November</i>	<i>Oxford Mineral and Fossil Show 10.30am – 4.00pm Exeter Hall, Oxford Rd, Kidlington, North Oxford</i>	
Friday 6 th December	General Meeting: Highlights from the Spann collection By Gail & Jim Spann: Sponsor Nick Hawes	Zoom

All meetings held Methodist Church Hall, ~~Perrymount~~ Rd, Haywards Heath. 7.30pm to 10.00pm.

Jan/Feb/Dec meetings are zoom only

Items in italics are for members' information only.