

NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR APPLIED MINERALOGY

The Ninth International Congress for Applied Mineralogy (ICAM 2008) held during 8-10 September 2008, Brisbane, Australia was a very successful and special event. With 86 delegates from Australia and 97 delegates from overseas representing 19 countries (South Africa, Germany, Brazil, USA, China, Canada, Sweden, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Chile, India, Finland, Turkey, Republic of Serbia and Argentina). Over 100 papers presented in 23 sessions and 6 pre-congress short courses.

The President of ICAM, Professor Henrique Kahn, welcomed everyone to the congress and noted that the Ninth ICAM was another milestone in the evolution of the field of applied mineralogy.

The first plenary lecture was "The Future of Quantitative Mineralogy" by Professor Ben Adair of The University of Queensland, Australia who set one of the key themes of the congress: "Automating Quantitative Mineralogy". The second plenary lecture was "Applications of the Australian Synchrotron to Mineralogy and Materials Characterisation" by Professor Rod Hill of Monash University, Australia.

It was recognised that the development of new tools for quantitative mineralogy characterisation and their applications in the minerals industry would lead to significant economical and social benefits.

The keynote speeches and technical presentations reported the recent advances in a diverse range of topics in applied mineralogy, including Environmental and Medical Mineralogy, Geometallurgy and Process Mineralogy, Industrial Minerals, Analytical Techniques and Automated Instrumentation, Quantitative Mineralogy and Image Processing, Mineral Exploration and Ore Mineralogy, Mineralogy of Precious Metals, and Conventional Ceramics and Construction Materials. There were many papers in the Geometallurgy and Process Mineralogy sessions, reflecting the keen interest in this "new" field of applied mineralogy among the delegates. Two papers were presented from National Geophysical Research Laboratory, Hyderabad, on QEMSCAN - PGE studies in Sittampundi Anorthosite Complex and Laser Ablation- EPMA, SEM studies to quantify PGMs in Western Dharwar Craton, Karnataka.

The 6 pre-conference short courses

were focused on the practice of applied mineralogy, covering ore microscopy for SEM microscopists, mineralogy analytical methods and applications, MLA and QEMSCAN, and quantitative mineralogy forum on standards and certification for mineralogy analysis. These courses were well attended considering there is currently an acute shortage of qualified mineralogists in the booming mining industry. The skill shortage and education of the next generation of applied mineralogists were also of great concern among delegates.

One of the highlights of the congress was "Don Hausen Special Session", which commemorated the life of one of the most prominent applied mineralogists Dr Don Hausen. Fellow pioneer, Dr W Petruk informed the audience that as a father of applied mineralogy, Dr Hausen's dedication to promoting the field through technical societies and through his professional work was outstanding, and his activities as a humanitarian are noteworthy. A plaque in memory of Dr Hausen was presented to his wife Mrs Mary Hausen. The congress was a technical and social success.

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