

THE 300th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FERSMAN MINERALOGICAL MUSEUM AND NEW MINERAL EXHIBITS PRESENTED FOR ITS JUBILEE

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1. Jubilee medal to the 300th anniversary of the Fersman mineralogical museum, RAS.

Photo: Michael B. Leybov,
if other is not specified.

All specimens:
Fersman mineralogical museum,
RAS (FMM).

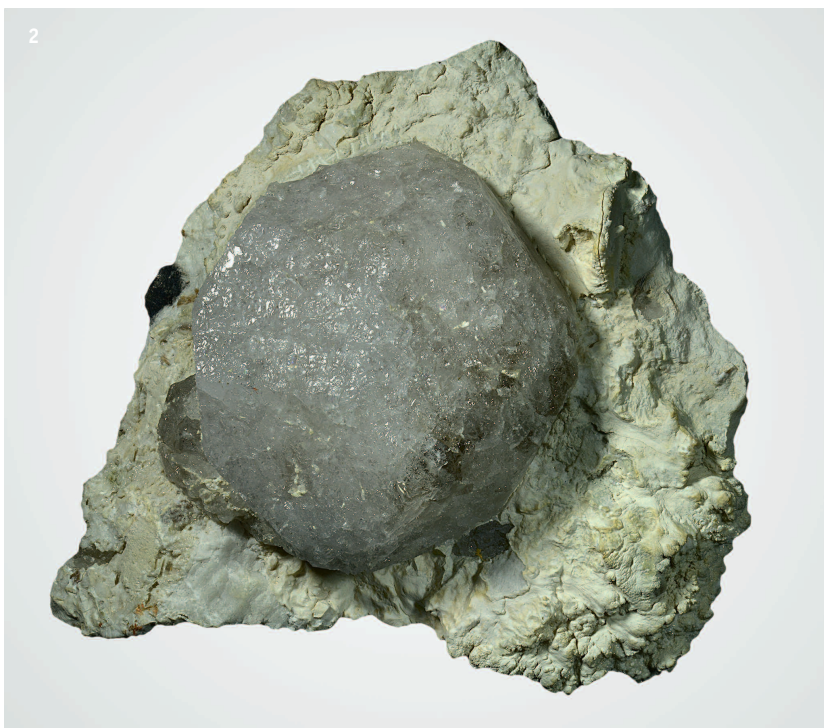
In 2016, the Fersman Mineralogical Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences celebrated its 300th anniversary. The order of the Emperor Peter I to acquire a mineral collection from Gottwald, Doctor of Medicine from Danzig, is considered to mark the beginning of systematic mineral collecting in the Russian museums. Robert Karlovich Areskin organized a Mineral Cabinet at Kunst-kamera on the basis of this collection, containing 1195 exhibits and earlier collected specimens. This collection, replenished afterwards by numerous expeditions, gifts and acquisitions, became the main mineral collection of Russia. Since 1955, the Museum was awarded the name of Alexander E. Fersman, who contributed along with the Academician V.I. Vernadsky, V.I. Kryzhanovskiy and many other people a great deal to development of both fundamental and applied mineralogical studies in the 20th century in Russia, in general, and Museum, in particular.

A replenishment of the Museum collection (today it has 143,000 exhibits) was achieved in different ways. However, significant role belonged and belongs to the specimens presented by famous mineralogists-researchers, mineral collectors and mineral amateurs. The government organization and mining enterprises contributed a lot to the expansion of this collection. They preserved and then passed their best specimens to the Museum collection during development of the richest Russian deposits.

During last 300 years, the Museum assembled and preserved one of the world's largest mineralogical collections, whose exhibits represent history of mineralogy, history of mining industry and many more particular histories, complexly interfering with the fates of famous and not so famous people. In some sense, the Museum is a temple of mineralogy, which inherited functions of temples and sanctuaries. In Antique times, as well as in the Middle Ages, it was a custom to share with the temples part of the trophies after successful military raids or trade expeditions to decorate them and replenish their interiors. In the medieval temples, one can often see diverse columns, each of which was brought from some remote country. It is so in our Museum. If to inspect the presented specimens, one can learn about successful expeditions and fortunes of some individuals, who shared it with the others. In our case, they were gifts to the Museum. For its 300th anniversary, the Museum received dozens of most valuable exhibits, each of which undoubtedly deserves a separate note or even a scientific article. Here, one can mention only several landmark mineralogical specimens, presented to the Museum in 2016. One of the gifts is a giant, but well-shaped crystal of pollucite from Pakistani pegmatites (Fig. 2), acquired by the "Russian Minerals" company (Mikhail Yu. Anosov, Victor I. Levitskiy and Alexander B. Nikiforov) specially for the Museum.

As valuable is the gift of a beautiful druse of euclase crystals (Fig. 3) from the leading Bulgarian mineralogist Mikhail N. Maleev, who studied at the Lomonosov

2. Colourless tetrahon-trioctahedron of **pollucite** (18 cm in size) with dissolution traces on the facets in kaolinized feldspar pegmatite, including separate crystals of **schorl**. Shengus mine, Skardu district, northern Pakistan. Specimen FMM #95534. A gift by Mikhail Yu. Anosov, Victor I. Levitskiy and Alexander B. Nikiforov, "Russian Minerals" Company.



3. A druse of **euclase** crystals, up to 2 cm, on the walls of the fluorite metasomatite. Sargardon deposit, Chatkal Ridge, Uzbekistan. 14 x 13 cm. Specimen FMM #95561, a gift by Mikhail N. Maleev.



Moscow State University and also was a pupil of Victor I. Stepanov from our Museum.

The two unusual specimens of amazonite (Figs. 4 and 5) deserve a special attention. One of them is the excellently formed 30-cm Baveno twin from Zambia Another one