

Virtual Museum of the History of Mineralogy

Newsletter 2009/1 (July 2009)

<http://www.mineralogy.be>

In our previous newsletter (December 2008) we announced that our goal for the next months was to increase the book collection of the Virtual Museum. We are happy to report that we presently have detailed descriptions and pictures of 144 books (this is almost double the number of books described at the end of last year). A significant amount of historically important and representative books in the fields of mineralogy and crystallography are now present in the book collection.

Apart from some classic mineralogy textbooks, we again added some hand colored mineralogy books like the lavishly illustrated work by [Knorr](#) (1754), the rare "Briefwechsel über die Naturprodukte..." by Christian [Wünsch](#) (1781), a late 18th century children's book on minerals by [Baumeister](#) (1794), as well as the colored mineralogy books by [Schmidt](#) (1850), [Sowerby](#) (1850) and [Weber](#) (1871).

For the coming months we plan to add more works that illustrate the history of the mineralogical sciences.

It is also rewarding to observe that the number of visitors of our site is still growing since the opening, two years ago. An average of 600 different visitors per month was observed for the five last months of 2007; this average value reached just over a 1000 in 2008 and almost 1300 per month for the first six months of 2009.

The discussion group "Oryctics" was initiated at the end of September 2008 and the choice of its name was documented in our previous newsletter; the antique flavor of the word was received with enthusiasm by several members. Interesting discussions were held and most of the questions about instruments, books, bookplates, antique labels, etc. found satisfying answers. Many mineralogists, crystallographers, collectors and experienced amateurs, are willing to share their knowledge with all members. It appears that "oryctics" offers a unique opportunity to obtain answers to all kind of questions about collectibles and historical facts related to the history of mineralogy. We highly recommend its use.

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