

ROSSENDALE PEOPLE

YOUR HOBBY

Enthusiast's collection rocks – and is also out of this world!

Name: Martin Goff.

Name of Club: British and Irish Meteorite Society (BIMS) www.bimsociety.org. My own website is msg-meteorites.co.uk.

Where do you live? Rossendale

What do you do? I collect rocks from space. Meteorites are fragments of rock and iron that originate from outer space and have survived entry through our protective atmosphere to land on Earth's surface. Meteorites can fall at any time and can land anywhere. They mostly originate from asteroids although some come from the Moon and Mars. Some possibly even originate from other planets and comets. Meteorites are a window into the past and their study today has helped to unlock some of the secrets of the formation of our solar system, the universe and even the origins of life on Earth. Meteorites are collected today not only as important objects scientifically but also as beautiful and fascinating specimens in their own right. To be able to hold in your hand a mysterious rock that is older than the Earth itself evokes a huge feeling of wonder and gives you great perspective

on the huge scale of the universe. To put it very simply, meteorites are amazing!

How long have you been doing it? I have been collecting meteorites since 2007, my first specimen being a small Campo del Cielo crystal – which of course I still have.

How did you get started? I used to collect fossils after having a childhood fascination with dinosaurs.

What does it involve? I collect all different types of meteorites but being half-English, half-French, my main collecting focus is on UK/Irish and French meteorites. I purchase and trade specimens from and with fellow collectors and dealers to further my collection. I enjoy the history and cultural impact – pun intended – on people and places that these rocks from space leave behind as well as the science that they provide. BIMS members attend various shows around the country and abroad to put on meteorite displays for the public.

What has been your greatest achievement so far? Over the last few years I have grown to very much enjoy educating

people about meteorites. The displays that myself and other BIMS members put on have given me a great sense of achievement especially seeing the look of awe on visitors faces when seeing and touching some of our specimens which are on display.

Most memorable moment while doing this? Many of my friends had been to the Ensisheim meteorite show in Alsace, France before and so I decided in June that it was high time that I attended too. Ensisheim is famous as it was the location of a historic meteorite fall in 1492 and the bulk of the meteorite is still held in the town where it is on display in the town hall. I am so glad that I went – the meteorites were superb but the company for me was even better and I will cherish the memories of this trip for a long time.

Any ambitions for the future? I have not yet had the opportunity to find a meteorite in situ myself and this is one goal that I hope to achieve soon. The feeling of awe of being the first person to lay hands on a piece of freshly fallen space rock would be amazing!

Anything else you



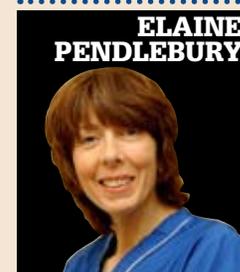
● Martin Goff is a member of British and Irish Meteorite Society

would like to share? BIMS is a group of more than 150 UK and Irish meteorite researchers and amateur meteorite collectors. BIMS was formed in 2004 by meteorite collectors Mark Ford, Dave Harris and a group of like-minded fellow collectors. We provide a meteorite collecting and study focus for the UK

and Ireland, and is the only meteorite group in the UK and one of only three in the entire world. The aim of the society is to bring together all those involved with meteorites in the UK under one roof, with a view to educating the general public, furthering the interests of meteorite study, and preserving any new or old

UK meteorite material for science and for posterity. It is also an ideal place to share our interests and meet other people with a similar passion for space rocks. In addition where possible we also give talks, have meet-ups, put on exhibitions and help with identification of suspected meteorites found by the public.

VETS Q&A



● **DEAR Elaine,** I have a two-year-old guinea pig called Boris who has bright pink eyes. I am really worried. Shouldn't only white animals have pink eyes? It can be normal for a guinea pig's eyes to be quite pink, but if the skin around your guinea pig's eyes has turned pink recently, this can indicate problems like infection or eye damage. Hay seeds and pieces of straw can quite commonly find their way into a guinea pig's eye. Often with eye damage the guinea pig's eyelids become swollen, and the eye muscles spasm so the eye is always closed. The eye may also be very watery. Alternatively, it could be that your guinea pig has some conjunctivitis, or inflammation of the eyelid lining. A vet needs to examine your guinea pig's eye, determine the cause and carry out any appropriate treatment.

● **DEAR Elaine,** I have two German Shepherds and the female always nibbles the male's neck. He seems to like it, offering his neck to her, but occasionally she catches his skin and it hurts him. Why is she doing this and how can I stop it? Non-aggressive nibbling like this can be a sign that dogs are playing. Sometimes play can get a bit rough, but usually dogs realise this and then calm it down a bit. If the female dog does break his skin, contact your vet for advice as soon as possible. Also, if the play does develop into aggressive interaction, then your dogs may need to see a behaviourist – your vet can advise you on this.

» For more details on PDSA Pet Aid Services call 0800 7312502. To donate or fundraise visit www.pdsa.org.uk.

My top coffee of the month



FATHER-OF-TWO Brian Hockenfull gave up a career in accounting and IT to share his passion for great, affordable coffee. He runs Buckley's Yard, a coffee bar in Buckley 2 bakery in Uppermill, and sells his brews, £1 a cup, plus whole and ground beans and loose-leaf teas, at Ashton-under-Lyne market. He shares with

us his top coffee of the month: Finca Muxbal.

THIS month we look to Mexico for our coffee of the month – a quite outstanding coffee that I roast in Uppermill and also to supply my brother's Mexican restaurant near Bristol.

His staff and customers rave about this coffee – some start dancing on their hats after tasting it!

Coffee was introduced to Mexico from Jamaica in the 19th century and since then the country has become the fifth largest producer in the world with an output of around five million bags per year. Around 75 per cent of

production takes place on small farms of less than two hectares and, as such, much of the country's coffee is produced by cooperatives.

In addition there are estate grown coffees, particularly in Chiapas, Mexico's largest coffee-producing state, and it is from here where I source the fantastic Muxbal beans.

In the local Mame dialect, Muxbal means 'place surrounded by clouds' and was the name chosen for the farm where it is grown, on the slopes of the active Tacana volcano, on Guatemala's northern border. The farm is managed by

mother and son, Maeggi Rodriguez and Jorge Gallardo, and was purchased in 1959 by Maeggi's father, Don Enrique, who was a pioneer of his time.

He introduced three key principles that remain as important today as they were then – social responsibility, environmental sustainability and the production of very high quality coffee.

Evidence of these three principles can be seen around the farm and tasted in the cup.

The quality is wonderfully complex and fruity, with a long-lasting aftertaste, probably due to

the altitude – 1,600 metres above sea level, the rich and fertile volcanic soils and the meticulous care and attention that Maeggi and Jorge take in all aspects of harvesting and processing.

The farm is fully Rainforest Alliance certified. It has been achieving a 100pc in recent audits and was the first in Mexico to do so.

It is easy to understand why.

Much of the farm has been given over to a breathtakingly beautiful nature reserve – a gorge where icy mountain waters flow through a jungle that teems with life. The housing for staff is

clean and comfortable and the canteen, which serves three meals a day, is spotless.

There is also a well-equipped school, which is open throughout the harvest for the children of the coffee pickers.

Great emphasis is placed on all of the social needs of the people who work the land at Muxbal.

To me, it's really important that the farm workers are not being exploited, and that's why I source my supplies of beans very carefully.

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