

The 2016 Noble Witt Award

As I considered how to introduce tonight's Noble Witt award, I came to what must be a universal truth about the award: None of the awardees actually need any introduction to FM! They are all those who attend most of the symposia, volunteer for FM projects and have an impact in the world of mineralogy.

So, with that in mind, tonight I present the Noble Witt award to Dr. Rob Woodside.

Rob has been passionately studying minerals since childhood when he took a hammer to the limestone in his neighbors' rock gardens, looking for calcite crystals. The scolding he received did not dampen his enthusiasm. At age 10, his mother took him to what he describes as "a day in paradise" at the Mineral Gallery of the Royal Ontario Museum. Many kids that age have dreams of careers as astronauts, firefighters or famous actors, but Rob decided he wanted to be the curator of a mineral museum!

He collected miniature size specimens of elements, sulfides and sulfosalts in their best state of crystallization until 2006, when he sold that collection to the Royal Ontario Museum.

More recently, Rob co-authored two articles for *The Mineralogical Record*, including the 2014 FM Article of the Year, "*Famous mineral localities: The Sar-e-Sang lapis mines, Kuran Wa Munjan district, Badakhshan Province, Afghanistan.*"

As a member of the mindat management team, Rob combines a scientific approach with his love of minerals.

Rob has a PhD from McMaster University where he studied General Relativity and Solid State Physics and made a career as a college physics professor—perhaps not as glamorous as a museum curator, but I wish more of my professors had Rob's enthusiasm and sense of humor.

I have one example of FM service to share. When I asked Rob in May of 2015 to put together a mineral ID quiz for that year's symposium, he tentatively agreed to try to come up with something. I forgot about it until the week before symposium and when I asked him, he sent what he had. It was a tour-de-force, the mineral quiz to end all mineral quizzes! Every specimen had two or three questions involving habit, crystal form, chemistry, locality... like a 3-page final exam! And the result was that we had more participation in the quiz than we had seen in years.

I asked Rob if he could do one this year, but he had to decline. Sadly, Rob is unable to attend this year because he is undergoing cancer treatments, but I intend to ask him again for 2017.

I am therefore pleased to present the Noble Witt award to Dr. Rob Woodside.

**NOBLE V. WITT
1912 – 1990**

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD



Presented in Appreciation of Outstanding Service
to the
Pacific Northwest Chapter
of the
Friends of Mineralogy

**ROB W. M. WOODSIDE, PHD
2016**