

Memorial of Heinz Meixner November 4, 1908–December 19, 1981

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Heinz Meixner was born in Graz (Styria, Austria), the son of Dr. Adolf and Bertha Meixner. His father was a zoologist and leader of the zoological department of the government-museum Joanneum in Graz. His mother had studied mineralogy and petrography with Cornelius Doelter in Graz. His grandparents on his father's side came from officer families. His grandparents on his mother's side came from the middle-class. The universe of minerals drew the schoolboy Heinz Meixner into a magic circle. From his teachers for natural history at the higher modern school, the later university professors F. Angel and F. Machatschki, he was introduced to mineralogical science. From 1930 on he studied chemistry and natural history (including mineralogy, geology, zoology, and botany). With the thesis "Das Mineral Lazulith und sein Lagerstätten-typus" he graduated and became doctor of philosophy in the autumn of 1936. His teacher and supervisor was F. Angel. He had studied geology with F. Heritsch and chemistry with A. Skrabal. From 1936 to 1938 he was an assistant at the university at Graz. In summer 1938 Dr. Meixner was an assistant professor and worked with the famous sedimentary petrographer C. W. Correns at the University of Rostock. In 1938 he became a curator at the natural history museum in Vienna, where he also qualified as a university lecturer at the Mineralogical Institute at the University of Vienna. He was appointed professor in 1940. During the Second World War he worked as an army geologist in Norway and was a war prisoner until 1947 when he could return to his native country (to his home) again. He dedicated himself to his studies of mineralogy. In 1948 he found a position as assistant mine-surveyor and mineralogist at the Bergdirektion Hüttenberg der Österreichischen Alpine Montangesellschaft.

His polarizing microscope, a small chemical laboratory, a rich library, and his own vast collection of minerals were his resources at his new home in Knappenberg. There, in the very same year, a special group for mineralogy and geology of the Natural Club for Carinthia was founded, and Dr. Meixner was one of the founders of this institution. He became secretary and publisher of the club newspaper "Der Karinthin"; about 85 numbers were published before his death. The famous mineralogists Paul Niggli, Paul Ramdohr, Hans Schneiderhöhn, and H. G. F. Winkler were welcome guests in his home in Knappenberg. He married in 1954. His wife always accompanied him during his excursions and his visits to congresses, and she helped him with his scientific work. During this time he gave the minerals cobalt cabrerite (1951) and kahlerite (1954) their new names. In 1956 he got his second title as professor



at the present Montan University of Leoben. In 1962 he was awarded the title of "special professor." In 1968 he became professor in ordinary at the University of Salzburg. The newly founded institute for mineralogy and petrography was soon internationally appreciated. Professor Meixner had always been a particular friend of the collectors of minerals in his Austrian home and not only there. The specimens he got he always analyzed with enthusiasm and reported about them regularly in the Kärntner club newspaper "Carinthin." Often he succeeded in identifying a mineral by means of a magnifying glass, because of his extraordinarily rich knowledge of minerals and their qualities. Dr. Meixner published 420 scientific essays. On December 19, 1981, he died of heart failure at Salzburg.

Dr. Meixner had been Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America since 1953; in 1973 he became an honorary member of the Natural Club for Carinthia; in 1978 he became an honorary member of the Austrian Mineralogical Society; and in 1980 and 1981 he was awarded the same title in the Vereinigung der Freunde der Mineralogie und Geologie (Heidelberg) and in the German Min-

eralogical Society. In 1975 S. Koritnig of the University of Göttingen (Federal Republic of Germany) named a magnesium-aluminium-hydroxide from the serpentinite of Ybbs-Persenbeug in the lower parts of Austria after him and called it meixnerite.

I think that we have lost an excellent expert as far as minerals are concerned, who had always been able to fill people and especially young people with enthusiasm for our science, mineralogy. Dr. Meixner was the best expert on mineralogy in Austria.

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¹ The complete bibliography of Heinz Meixner has been published by Hans Wieseneder (Carinthia II, 172/92, 7–30, Klagenfurt/Austria, 1982).