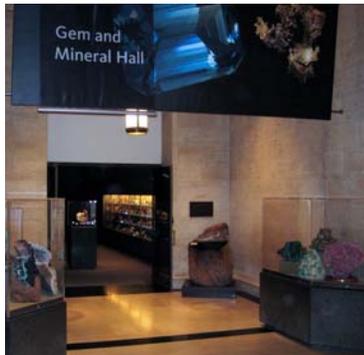
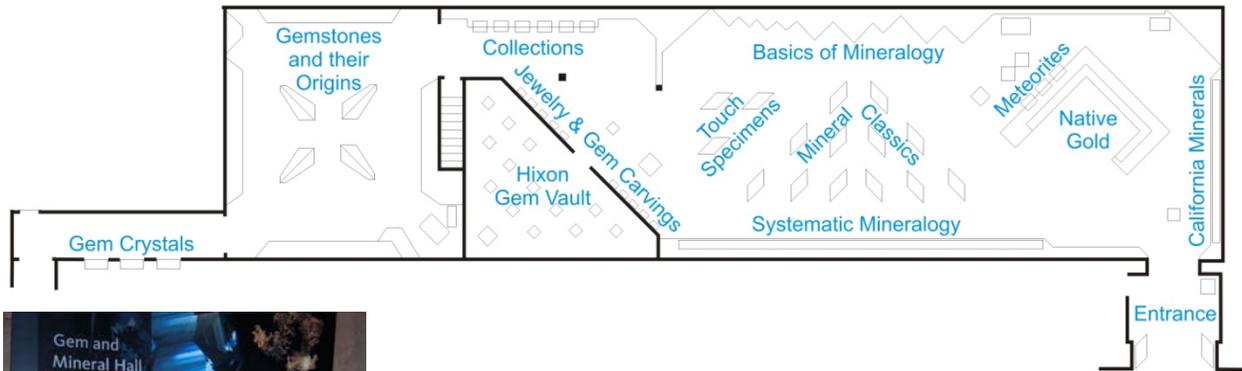


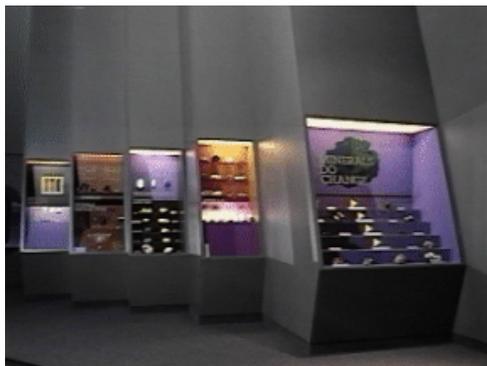
Gem and Mineral Hall



The 6,000 square-foot Gem and Mineral Hall was opened in May of 1978. Another 1,500 square-foot gallery titled Gemstones and their Origins was added in May of 1985. Together they comprise one of the finest exhibits of gems and minerals in the world. In 1989, Los Angeles magazine rated it as the finest permanent museum exhibition of any kind in the Los Angeles area.

CALIFORNIA MINERALS

The finest display of California minerals in the world welcomes visitors into the Hall. This section was made possible through the generous support of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and is dedicated to the memory of Jessie Hardman, A dedicated supporter of both the Federation and the Museum. Among the highlights of the display are superb specimens from the southern California pegmatites, including topaz, tourmaline, kunzite, morganite and quartz.

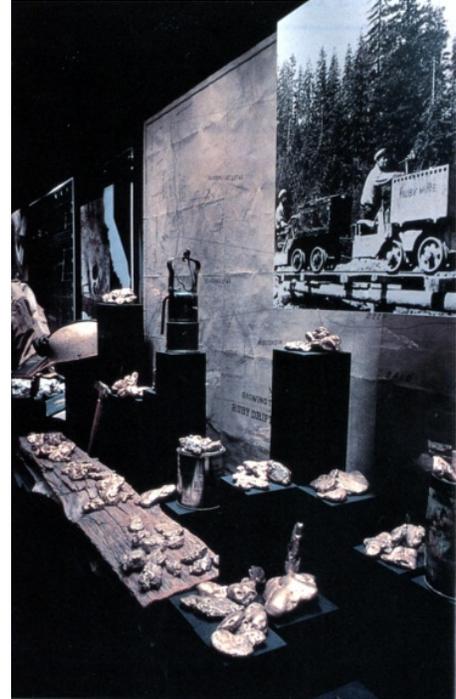


BASICS OF MINERALOGY

One entire wall is used to introduce basic concepts of mineralogy using lively graphics, motion, special lighting, beautiful specimens and straightforward information. Topics include mineral-forming environments, "What is a mineral?", physical properties, and fluorescence. Two interactive kiosks installed in 1998 provide exciting insights into the world of minerals.

NATIVE GOLD

Subtle design effects give visitors the feeling of being underground as they explore the more than 400 gold specimens, weighing a total of more than 300 pounds. Included are nuggets, crystals, leaves and wires of remarkable size and aesthetics. This exhibit is one of the finest and largest gold exhibits in the world. Among its highlights are a unique gold "ram's horn" wire from the Groundhog mine in Gilman, Colorado once owned by the first mayor of Leadville, Colorado, the 156 troy ounce "Mohave Nugget", the largest currently known California gold nugget, as well as additional nuggets donated by Margie and Robert E. Peterson, beautiful leaf gold in quartz from the Oriental mine in Sierra County, and a collection of 159 nuggets (1000 troy oz.) from the Ruby mine in Sierra County. Artifacts and memorabilia of the California Gold Rush further enhance this display.



METEORITES

This exhibition provides an introduction to the fascinating story of meteorites. Five specimens of all of the major types of meteorites are exhibited. Featured in the exhibition are the three meteorites found in Los Angeles County including the Los Angeles Meteorite, the first Martian Meteorite known to have hit in the U.S.

SYSTEMATIC MINERALOGY

Over 400 fine specimens from worldwide localities are on display, arranged systematically according to mineral classes and groups. These specimens, chosen for their distinctiveness and aesthetics, vividly demonstrate the diversity of the mineral kingdom.





MINERAL CLASSICS

Fourteen parallelogram-shaped display cases, two outside the entry to the Hall and twelve within, provide an astonishingly beautiful display of some of the finest minerals in the collection. Old and new classics are presented from around the world.



TOUCH SPECIMENS

Color, beauty and texture invite visitors to learn through touching specimens that are scattered throughout the Hall. You'll "get the feel" of minerals, meteorites and even polished gemstones, the latter as polished pieces of nephrite and jadeite jade. Also included are an internally lit specimen of fluorite and a large piece of the Canyon Diablo Meteorite from Meteor Crater in Arizona.



JEWELRY AND GEM CARVINGS

In 1989, thanks to the support of The Gem and Mineral Council, new cases were installed to display the Museum's small but fine collection of gem carvings, as well as selected pieces of fine jewelry. Many of the carvings are of nephrite and jadeite jade from China dating from the 18th through 20th centuries. Additional fine jade carvings can be seen in the Gemstones and their Origins gallery.

HIXON GEM VAULT

This display contains the finest collection of gemstones on public display in the North America west of Washington, D.C. The suite of fine sapphire and ruby gems contains virtually every color. A bright blue topaz gem from Brazil weighs 4644 carats. A superb 18.3 carat star ruby is the highlight of the phenomenal stones. In addition, a selection of gemstones from California is displayed along with exquisite natural uncut examples. Emeralds, aquamarines, topazes and tourmalines, to name a few, round out the display of about 300 gemstones.





COLLECTIONS

This display stresses the importance of donations to the growth of the Museum's mineral and gem collections. Besides tracking some of the most important events in the collection's history, the display highlights four major private collections that have recently been received (and in some cases are still being received) by the Museum and also reveals the stories behind the collections and the people who built them.

GEMSTONES AND THEIR ORIGINS

This gallery, opened in 1985 as an extension of the original Hall of Gems and Minerals, was funded by the Deutsch and Weingart foundations. The gallery is devoted to the "natural history of gemstones" and it is arguably the most educationally stimulating part of the entire Hall of Gems and Minerals. Each of the four walls in the main portion of this gallery portray a different environment of gem deposit formation. Specially designed graphics, rough and cut gemstone specimens, dramatically lighted photographs of localities and maps provide an integrated and dynamic presentation. A favorite attraction is the large green tourmaline on quartz from the Cruzeiro mine in Minas Gerais, Brazil that is displayed above a reconstructed pegmatite gem pocket. In one corner of the room stands a magnificent four-panel fully-carved nephrite and wood screen standing seven feet tall.



GEM CRYSTALS

Although the exhibits throughout the rest of the Hall of Gems and Minerals contain many fine gem crystals, the Gem Crystal exhibit highlights some of the Museum's best using dramatic fiber-optic lighting.