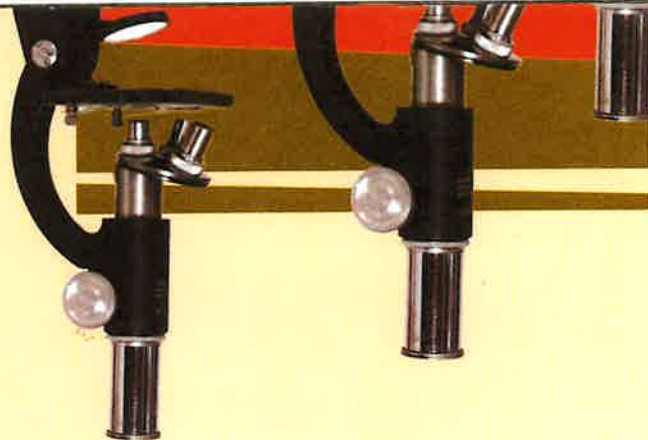


This is a story about a scientist at the Australian Museum. His name is Ross Pogson. He looks after the museum's rock, mineral and meteorite collection. He thinks he is really lucky to be able to look after such beautiful, precious things.

Here is Ross holding a group of quartz crystals. He looks pretty happy doesn't he!





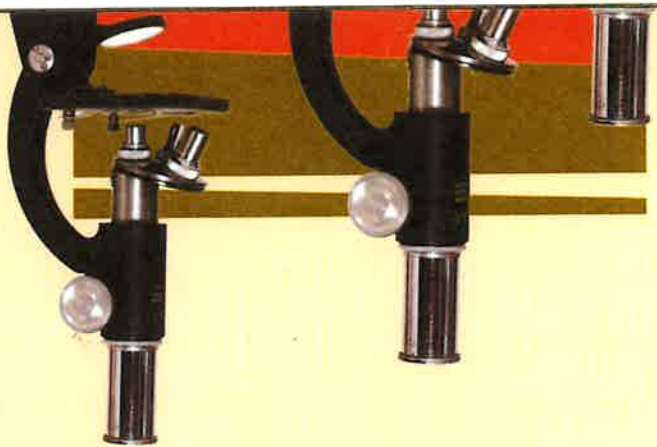
Ross has always loved rocks. Here he is on Thirroul Beach, which is near Wollongong. He was 4½, can you spot his Mickey Mouse bucket? He is collecting smooth round stones. He calls these 'Lucky stones'. He remembers that he loved how they felt and looked. Some of them had interesting patterns and markings.

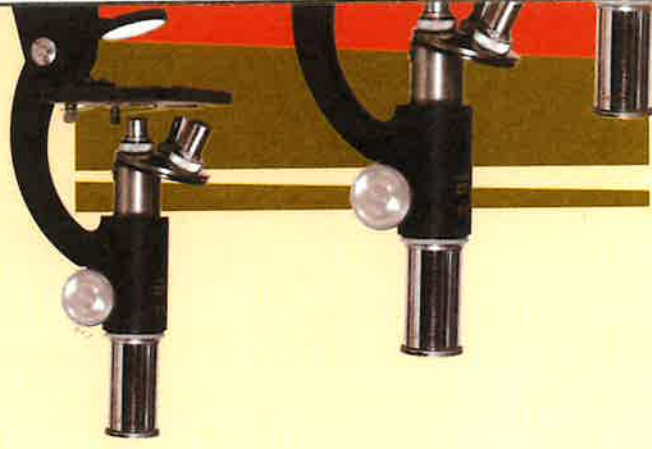
He liked to make piles of Lucky stones and sometimes he took little ones home to add to his collection. His mum wouldn't let him take the big ones home!





When Ross was eight years old he became serious about collecting rocks and minerals. His parents gave him a microscope for his birthday. This is a photo of it. He used the microscope to look really closely at the patterns and marks in his rocks.



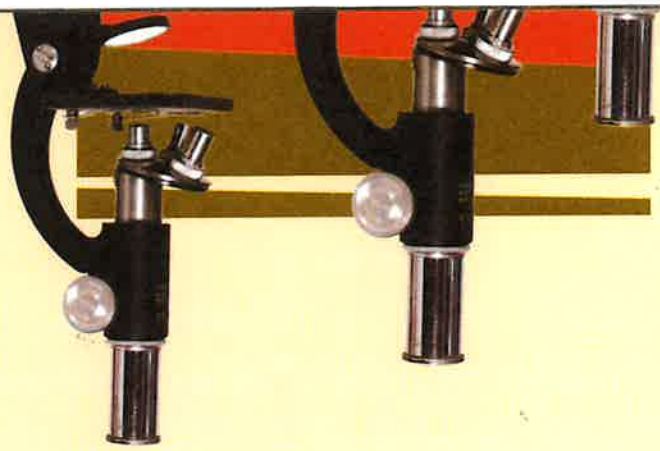
A black and silver microscope is positioned at the top of the page, partially cut off by the top edge. It has two eyepieces and a large objective lens.

Unusual stones in the playground at school fascinated Ross. Lots of them looked pale green and glassy. He wondered what they were. He discovered later that it was a mineral called Prehnite from Prospect Quarry.

Here are some pieces of Prehnite that Ross found at school. Have you found any in your playground?

### Prehnite





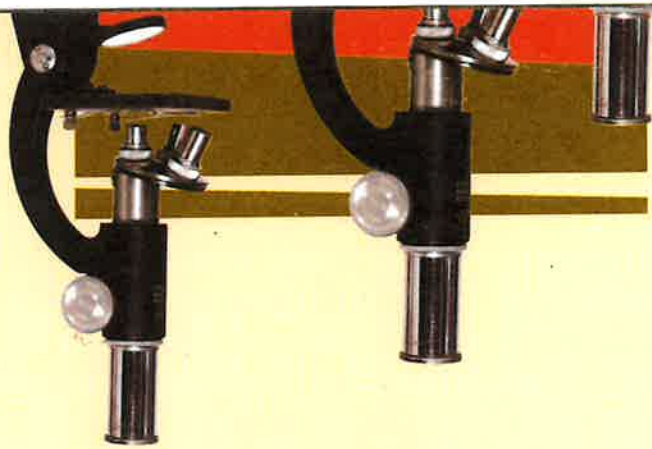
Ross's family liked going for picnics to the beach and the bush. He collected different coloured sandstone from the bush. Here's a picture of his family in the bush at Heathcote.

When they went to Garie Beach in the Royal National Park, Ross found pieces of petrified wood and agate. Petrified wood has been under the earth for so long it has turned into stone and become a fossil. Here is some of the petrified wood and agate that





## East's Beach

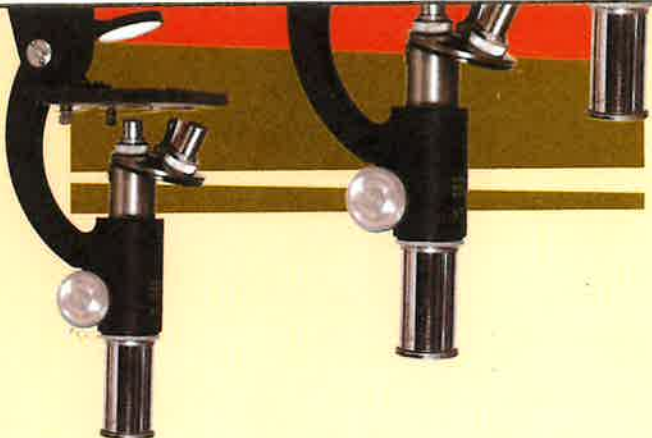


Ross collected as a child. When Ross was a young teenager he started pestering his Father to drive him to places where he could collect rocks for his growing collection. He was lucky to have parents who encouraged his love of rocks and minerals and helped him so much.

They used to go to Kangaroo Valley to find petrified wood and jasper, and to East's Beach at Kiama to find amethyst crystals.



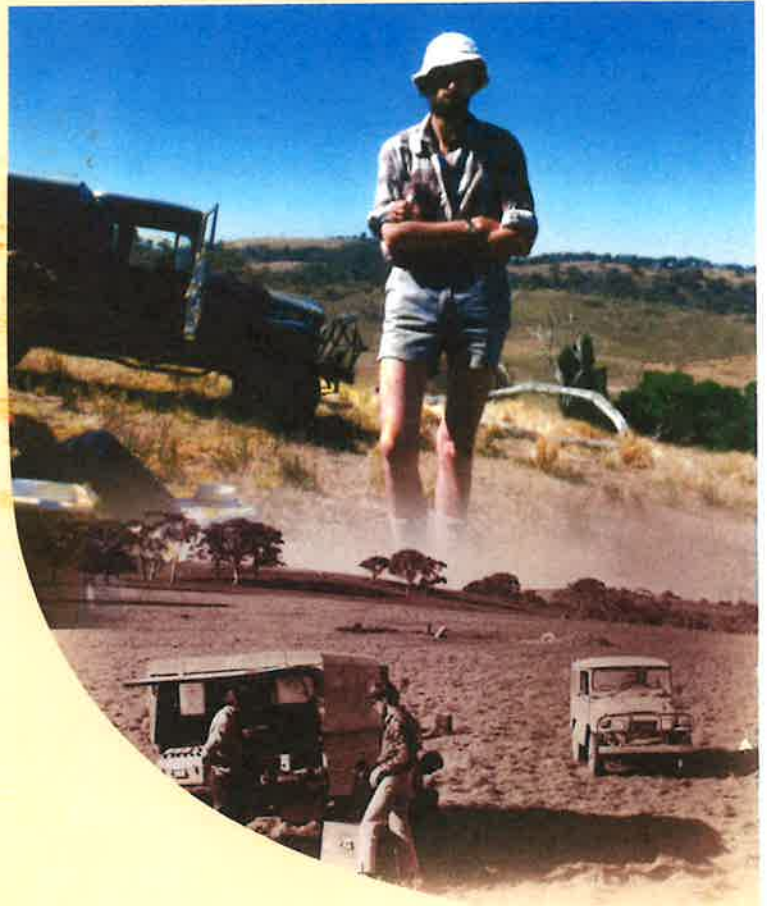
## Kangaroo Valley



Here are some of them.

When Ross left school he studied geology at university. While he was a student he worked for a mining company that was looking for metallic minerals underground.

Here is a photo of some of the geologists and a machine they used to pump electricity underground. They would then use another machine to measure electrical signals in the ground nearby to help them work out if there was anything metallic there.





When Ross finished studying he was asked to join the Australian Museum to reorganise the rock collection. What a perfect job for him!

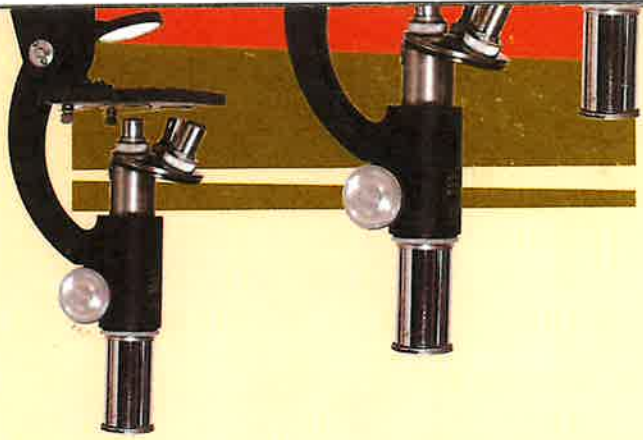
He says he has been organising the collection ever since. He has to keep the rocks and minerals safe and clean and make sure that they are all labelled properly.

He helps to choose what should be added to the collection and also chooses which minerals and rocks go on display for us to see when we visit the Australian Museum.

He wants to be able to help everyone learn more about minerals and rocks.







Ross also goes on a lot of 'field trips' to different places to study the rocks and minerals there and learn how they were formed. For the past thirty five years, Ross has been part of a group exploring the Jenolan Caves. They wanted to find out what minerals were there and where they came from. They discovered that one of the minerals comes from bat poo from the Large Bentwing Bats that sleep in the caves. The poo, called guano, has changed over a long time to become the mineral gypsum. Fancy that!

