

Photos: Jeff Post, curator emeritus at the National Museum of Natural History

Barry Adams | Wisconsin State Journal

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The Mount Horeb native has retired after a nearly 40-year career at the museum, the last 29 as its curator of minerals and gems.



Jeff Post shows off the archives at the National Museum of Natural History, which hold thousands of specimens of minerals and gems from around the world. Only a fraction are displayed in the museum.

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An African bush elephant anchors the rotunda of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

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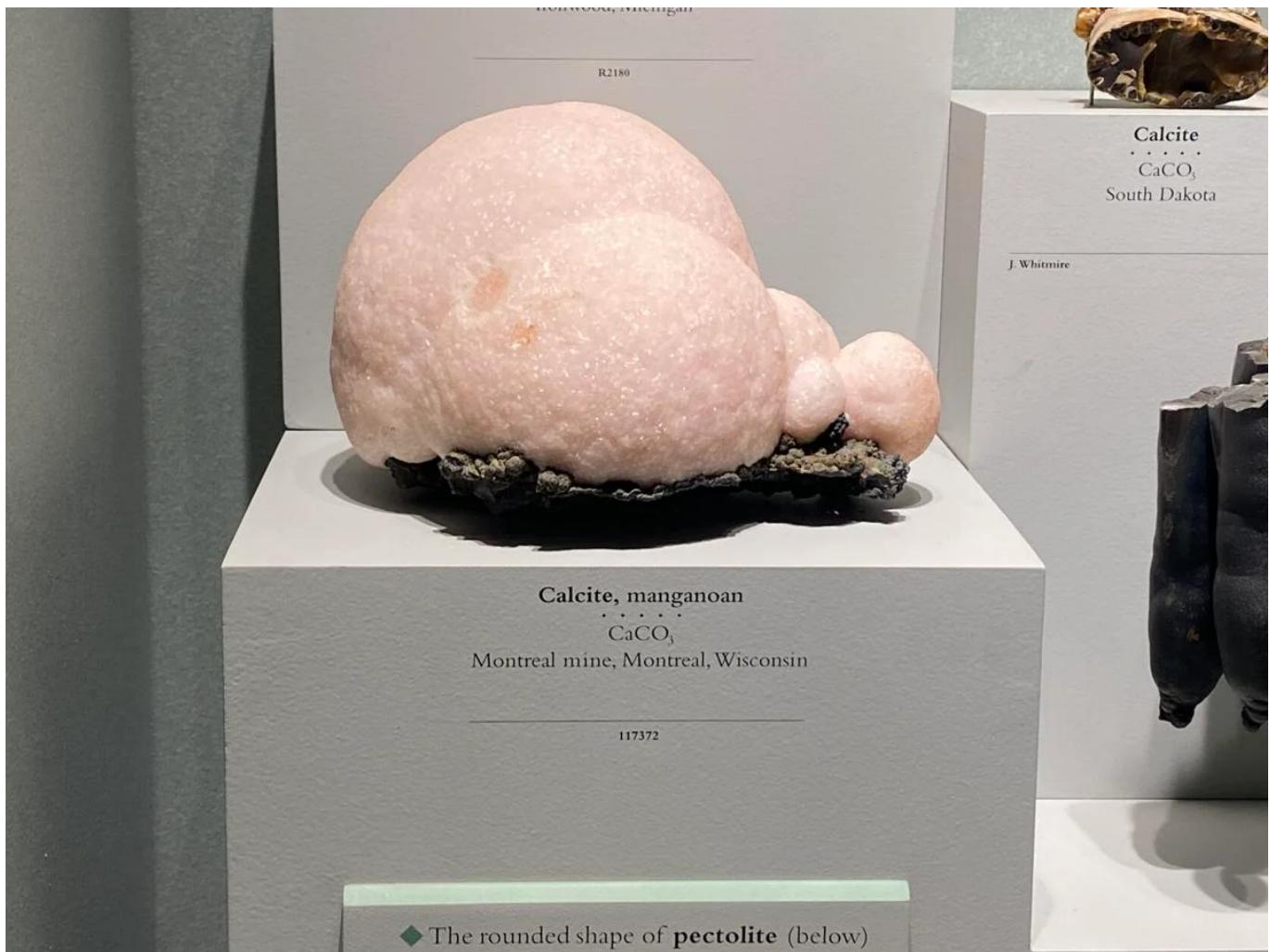
Jeff Post points out minerals from the Midwest, including two specimens from Wisconsin.

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The mineral and gem collection at the National Museum of Natural History also holds more pedestrian pieces, including a pink glob of calcite, upper left, and a chunk of black and gold marcasite, lower center. Both were harvested from Montreal in far northern Wisconsin.

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This chunk of calcite was mined from Montreal in far northern Wisconsin and is now part of a display at the National Museum of Natural History.

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Jeff Post, curator emeritus of the mineral and gem collection at the National Museum of Natural History, shows off a chunk of quartz crystals harvested from Rib Mountain near Wausau. The quartz are part of the museum's vast archive.

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Jeff Post shows off a piece of quartz crystal from McCaslin Mountain in Oconto County in northeastern Wisconsin.

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Jeff Post, who has been with the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, looks over a display of three of the instrumental researchers who helped create the museum's mineral and gem collection. They are, from lower left, Frederick A. Canfield, Washington Roebling and Isaac Lea.

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The centerpiece of the grand rotunda of the National Museum of Natural History holds an African bush elephant but one of the museum's most popular pieces is the Hope Diamond, located on the second floor.

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The Hope Diamond, one of the most famous gems in the world, has been under the watchful eye of Jeff Post for the past 29 years. The Mount Horeb native retired in May as curator of the mineral and gem collection at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History.

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About 3.9 million people each year come to the National Museum of Natural History and for many their first stop is the Hope Diamond, which has been on display since 1958.

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Many of the 3.9 million visitors to the National Museum of Natural History make the Hope Diamond one of their first stops. It has been a part of the museum's collection since 1958.

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Visitors check out some of the more than 350,000 minerals and 10,000 gems at the National Museum of Natural History.

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