

From Sven Helland [svenhelland@gmail.com](mailto:svenhelland@gmail.com) who spoke for quartz at the splendid and inspiring Council of All Beings at the Crossing near Bermagui, New South Wales Feb 3 2013

Hello all,

thanks again for a fantastic weekend.

A few people asked about the quartz story I told - and although not exactly the one you'll remember - as much was made up and added in the moment - here is the one I wrote...

My name is quartz, and I am a mineral. I come to you today to tell you my story – one that is truly older than the hills – as the hills are made of and littered with the stark white flecks of my family. You will all know me, perhaps by another name as the forms we take are many and varied. To some we are precious, when animal younglings see the light of Sol reflected from the cleavage of a crystal they pick it up and keep it as treasured keep sake.

But around here, we are mostly just common – but let me assure you we are not.

We like to stick together and where one is found there are more, gathering in washouts on the side of the road, scattered around the trunk of a tree in the woodland, on beaches, or capping each pinnacle of an eroded cathedral in the gully as the soil shelters beneath us from the power of the rain. We are a community overlooked like so many but if you stop – and take a moment to look we are all around you. We always have and we always will.

My birth I'm told was a difficult one for my mother yet her death brought life to so many but hers is another story and this is mine. My first memory is darkness, darkness heat and pressure. I look back with fondness on this time and the care free days – aeons of flowing through cracks between other rocks, gathering in pools and plutons with the rest of my kind. Sometimes a group would meet up with another element or mineral such as iron, manganese, or titanium. Their colour would change but we knew that deep down we were still and the same.

A few millennia ago a friend of mine and I set out travelling, we started for the surface it was to be a long journey. My friend got involved with an element called gold, I'd joke with them and say 'Au – watch out for this one, you bring him home safe'. How were we to know what was to come.

On the way I joined in with a community group called "Granite – soil for the future" soil was some new fad that was growing momentum. There was me, the Clase twins – Plagio and Ortho – as well as Mica and old man Ferrous-Iron an old throwback from the time of the first oxygenators. It was a good cause and they said it was going to change the world. Together we headed for the launching ground a massive batholith in the womb of a great mountain. You could say that in a way we were all about to be born again. The birth was violent and those in the front line were projected high and far, but we missed our opportunity as my group was in the middle and it would not be for another age when the mountain wore down around us that we would reach the surface.

The times rolled on and water, wind and time wore down the mountain. At reaching the surface I

heard that my friend had been persecuted for the company he kept - the animals on the surface used him to get to his girl gold and much of her kind and I mourned their loss.

The granite community soon began to dissolve, they called it a transition; the Clase twins started to turn into clay and had a whole cohort of other trace elements and bits and pieces who clung to their every word. Mica and Ferrous-Iron met up with some water who remembered Ferrous-Iron from the good old days and they headed out and are sitting in the ground water somewhere. They will be back – they always are.

And me? Well I'm still here and will be long after the rest of you, I think. I've heard of a fringe community for an old silica like me; Beach they call it – a place where the animals come and worship us, sculpt and play and bring their young.

Ahh... they are such a young species! And only now beginning to realise their impact I could have told them... and even the hills aren't safe. But like any young creature there are some who are more aware than others and its these who give me hope.

In time I'll return home, deep within the Earth and I'll start all over again. Who knows where I'll go, or what I become involved in – or even if I'll be the same? Whatever it is it will be good to be home. Each choice we make will determine ultimately who or what we become.

I'll leave you now, I've still a long way to go but I'll leave you with a question to think about – because when you're as old as I am you have a long time to think.

Where will you like go, and who will you impact after you next choice? and then again with the one after that.

- Story of Quartz written on behalf of the Milk Quartz found in the woodland around The Crossing, 2 February 2013. by Sven Helland

Copy left. Stories belong to those who tell it, feel free to make this your own.

Just a few notes:

Granite is an igneous rock found worldwide. There are many sub types (such as granodiorite) and the compositions change from area to area. The main minerals that make up the granite around Guliga without too much further research most likely are the same as the Bega batholith; a body of rock so huge it is arguably still molten in its centre (and if drilled into could potentially be used to generate geo thermal electricity and heat sufficient to power most of the south eastern corner of Australia).

When looking at a fresh piece of granite the minerals are – Quartz (the clear bits) Orthoclase (the pink bits), Plagioclase (the white bits) Biotite mica (black shiny bits) and Ferrous Iron (the rust streaks and red bits). Granite is an important rock in the formation of clay rich soil as the mother rock decomposes into separate pieces with many of the parts turning into clay, or helping to hold onto nutrients.

The soil in our region is old, and before us white fellas came along was already nutrient deficient. The removal of the forests and destruction of the riparian zones has only lead to what little minerals and nutrients were left to be washed out to sea and the rivers to be filled with sand (aka quartz).

Granite is an ancient rock and is no longer formed anywhere on Earth. Scientists have been yet to explain why this is; all that is known is that millennia ago the volcanoes of the earth made granite, and now they make basalt.

Guliga is the heart of a volcano that once stood over 2km tall and after the discovery mined for gold. The deposits here were never as rich as those of the alluvial field down by the coast but that didn't stop prospectors heading up into the slopes following the streams, quartz veins and then pulverising the quartz into dust to extract the precious metal.

Guliga is a sacred mountain to the Yuin people of the area, and was reserved for women's business – but that too, is another story.