

# MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND NEWSLETTER

*The MMNE was organized on November 8, 1966 for the purpose of promoting  
the study of minerals that require a microscope*

No. 254

April, 2004

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### **Next Meeting**

Saturday, April 17  
Westford, MA  
Public Library

For information regarding  
**MEETING CANCELLATION**  
due to inclement weather,  
contact Jim Cahoon at  
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# MMNE

## MMNE NEWS

The March 20, 2004 meeting of the MMNE was held at the Auburn, MA library with 18 members present. Norm Biggart said that he talked to the librarian at the Chelmsford, MA library, asking if we could meet at their library for all the winter meetings. She got back to Norm after talking with the library Trustees, and indicated that the Trustees would not agree to be locked in to every month since Chelmsford is on a six month schedule. She did say that some dates could be set up. Westford and Auburn were mentioned as alternatives when we cannot get Chelmsford.

Anna Wilken has taken over as treasurer from Anita Hubley, but the books have not been transferred so no treasurer's report was available.

Angie Teixeira was welcomed back after a long absence.

Submitted by Pat Barker

**REMEMBER:** April is the month for our elections and annual business meeting. Please plan to attend or submit the ballot which was sent in the last *Newsletter*.

## Slate of officers

President – Jim Cahoon  
VP – Bob Janules  
Secretary – Pat Barker  
Treasurer – Anna Wilken  
Director (2 year term) – Bob Wilken.

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The **Newsletter** is the official publication of the Micromounters of New England (MMNE). The last by-laws revision was April 19, 2003. The MMNE is a member of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS) (<<http://www.amfed.org/efmls>>) and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) (<http://www.amfed.org>). Material from the *Newsletter* may be copied in other rock and mineral publications if credit is given to the author and the *Newsletter* and permission has been obtained from the author. If there are questions regarding copying contact the editor. The club address is c/o the Secretary. Meetings are held monthly, September through May, except for December, and usually on an informal basis in July and August. Sites rotate and will be posted in the *Newsletter* as far in advance as possible. Visitors are welcome to attend all meetings. Bring a microscope and light source if you have one.

**DUES** are \$10/year for a single person and \$15/year for a family membership, levied on a calendar basis. The family membership includes two adults and all children under 18 living at the same address. One copy of the *Newsletter* will be sent on a family membership.

#### Officers for 2002-2003

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### 2004 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Micromounters of the North Shore Rock and Mineral Club meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month at the home of John and Margaret Stewart, 244 Mill Street, Burlington, MA. All members and visitors are welcome. For more information, call John or Margaret at (781) 272-0854.

#### SHOWS

##### April

**15 - 18 - Rochester Mineralogical Symposium**

##### May

**7-9 – Maine Mineral Symposium.** Senator Inn & Conference Center, Augusta, ME. Contact Woodrow Thompson, Maine Geological Survey, 22 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0022. (207) 287-7178.

[Woodrow.b.thompson@maine.gov](mailto:Woodrow.b.thompson@maine.gov)

**19 – MMNE 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Reunion Meeting,** Elks Lodge, Hudson, MA

##### June

**26-27 – 40<sup>th</sup> annual Rock Swap and Mineral Show,** Gilsum Elementary School and Town Recreation Fields, Rte 10, Gilsum, NH. 8-6 Saturday. 8-4 Sunday. Contact: (603) 357-9639. No admission charge.

##### July

**7-12 - EFMLS/AFMS Convention & Show.** Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse. State Fairgrounds. Syracuse, NY.

##### August

**13-15 – East Coast Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show.** Eastern States Exposition. 1305 Memorial Drive, West Springfield, MA. <http://www.mzexpos.com/eastcoast.htm>

### MICROMINERAL RELATED CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

##### April

**2-4 - 32nd Annual Atlantic Micromounters Conference.** Tyson's Westpark Hotel, McLean, VA. Info & Registration: Steve Weinberger, cweinber@bcpl.net.

##### May

**14-16 – CMMA Spring Symposium, Brock Univ., St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada**

**15 – MMNE Reunion Meeting.** Elk's Lodge, Hudson, MA. 9AM to 4:30PM.

**22-23 – Maine Mineralogical and Geological Society 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Gem and Mineral Show.** Finley Gym, U. New England, 716 Stevens Ave., Portland, ME. 10-5 both days. Contact: Wes Baker (207) 784-1738 or wesbton@adelphia.net.

##### June

**25-27 – Northern California Mineralogical Assoc.** Annual meeting. Pollock Pines, CA.

[www.geocities.com/yedlinite/Meeting.htm](http://www.geocities.com/yedlinite/Meeting.htm)

**MSH field trips: May 22-23, July 3, July 24, September 4**

## A MICROMOUNTER EXPLORES NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONWAY GRANITE (Part 4)

THE TALUS BOULDERS OF NORTH SUGARLOAF MT., BETHLEHEM, NH

BY BOB JANULES

[Janules@worldnet.att.net](mailto:Janules@worldnet.att.net)

The hiking trail up North Sugarloaf Mt. passes many large talus boulders. Some of these contain cavities. In 1982 members of the Nashua Mineral Society discovered a boulder a short distance from the trail that featured a huge pipe-like pocket that extended upward into the boulder long beyond anyone's reach, even if that individual was holding a long bar. Some amethyst was recovered at the bottom of the pocket and a stick knocked down a couple of microcline crystals from above.

I was invited by Mike Undercoffler to collect at the boulder the week following its discovery. In preparation I attached a three-pronged garden rake to the end of a wooden pole. This upgrade of equipment worked fabulously and it was soon raining microclines. We quickly collected a couple of flats of fine microcline crystals but no quartz crystals. A large amount of the pocket wall material, consisting of vuggy albite, was raked out as well.

There were interesting microminerals in the cavities of the wall rock. Common were clusters of siderite that appeared to be partially altered to goethite. Also common were foliate clusters of an iron-rich muscovite. These were olive green, sometimes stained orange, and had a form that resembled a chlorite mineral. Fluorite was moderately abundant as colorless or pale blue cubes. These were rather mundane except for the fact that some displayed interesting phantom development. Inside of the fluorite cubes could be seen cubo-octahedral fluorite phantoms with the octahedral faces a purple color in sharp contrast with the colorless cube faces. Bertrandite was noted as very thin flat sheets, usually broken, that cut across the vug. Tan to yellow-brown crystals of xenotime-(Y) were sparsely scattered in this material. The xenotime-(Y) crystals were bi-pyramidal, with some showing prism development. A small amount of the pocket wall material was a mixture of quartz and albite rather than just albite. In this matrix were the most interesting finds – genthelvite and plumbopyrochlore, both new to New Hampshire. The genthelvite formed as single golden yellow tetrahedrons and also as interlocking growths forming hollow shells. These may have formed on the surface of another mineral that had dissolved. In the Sugarloaf article (1) in Rocks and Minerals magazine this mineral was incorrectly identified as helvite. A chemical analysis performed after publication showed that zinc was the dominant metal in the composition of this mineral making it genthelvite. The plumbopyrochlore formed sharp octahedrons in colors ranging from orange to yellow-orange and tan.

Other nearby boulders also produced specimens of note. Scott Whittemore found a number of bertrandites as heart-shaped twins and reticulated clusters. Another boulder featured bertrandite in blocky crystal form. Also found was genthelvite that was bright blue in color. It didn't form as sharp crystals, unfortunately, but the color was striking. The blue color is probably not due to an impurity, but rather from a variation in the valence state of the zinc atoms. When scientists make pure genthelvite in the lab it is sometimes blue, sometimes yellow.

One day I decided to go way off trail and hike the mountain in an upwards spiral in hopes of finding other productive boulders. I found very little that day, but I'm convinced that there is a lot of potential in the talus fields of this mountain. When I made this hike there was a family at the summit. Since I arrived at the top off-trail, the family members had gathered many large rocks to throw at me. They thought I was a bear.

Because the article on North Sugarloaf Mountain was in the New Hampshire edition of Rocks and Minerals I was invited by Bob Whitmore to a photo shoot with all the other authors and co-authors. Bob spearheaded this special state issue, and after the photo session we were treated to an underground tour of his mine, the Palermo #1 in North Groton. It was early spring and underground there were many impressive ice statues several feet tall resulting from dripping and freezing water. I remember one had grown an "arm" because of a cross breeze. More impressive were clusters of hexagonal ice crystals growing on one wall about an inch across with well-developed hopper growth. I remember seeing ice crystals on the wings of a hibernating bat.

*(continued on the next page)*



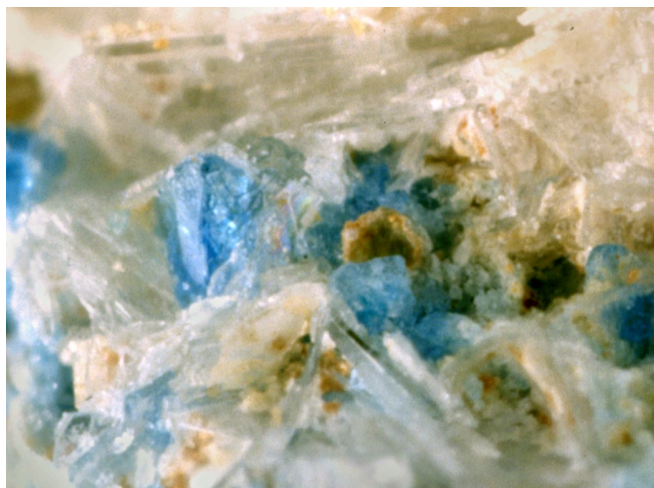
*(Conway Granite – continued from the previous page)*

Bob wanted us to dress as old time miners. When I go collecting it is with the reasonable expectation of getting very dirty. I therefore have a couple sets of “bang around” clothing that I use. I will admit that I do hold onto this clothing longer than most people would consider reasonable. It was not hard for me to dress for the part. When I arrived at the Palermo I had just stepped out of the car when Bob approached me wide eyed and animated. “Where did you get those?” he asked me. He was pointing to my boots. In addition to minerals Bob also collects mining artifacts and memorabilia. He thought my worn down boots were of turn of the century vintage. I can’t speak for Bob, but I know I was a little embarrassed when I answered, “K-Mart.”

(1) Whittemore, S., and Janules, B. 1990. Pegmatite and miarolitic cavity minerals of North Sugarloaf Mountain, Bethlehem, New Hampshire. *Rocks and Minerals* 65:338-347



Top left: Bertrandite, V-twin (Scott Whittemore photo)  
Top right: Bertrandite, blocky (Janules photo)  
Bottom left: Bertrandite, (Scott Whittemore photo)  
Bottom right: Genthelvite, (Scott Whittemore photo)



Genthelvite  
Photograph by Scott Whittemore



Plumbopyrochlore  
Photograph by Scott Whittemore

#### LOUIS PERLOFF, 1907–2004

Doyen of North American micromounters, Lou Perloff died on 16 January, 2004, at his home in Tryon, North Carolina.

A lawyer by profession, and a mineralogist and micromounter by preference, Lou was born in New York City on 03 December, 1907, and spent much of his working life in that city. He later moved to North Carolina to take up a position with the National Labor Relations Board in Winston-Salem, a position he held for 20 years before retiring.

Lou had been interested in minerals since his boyhood, when he and his lifelong friend, Neal Yedlin, first frequented the Brooklyn Children's Museum. He did not take up micromounting until 1947, when he bought his first microscope and Neal bought a micromount collection. In the following years, his collection expanded to include 25,000 mounts. He kept his general collection in sixteen wooden cabinets, his 1,400 diamond mounts in three smaller cabinets and his silicates and uranium minerals in three large metal cabinets.

Two things made Lou famous among micromounters: his fabulous self-taught knowledge of minerals, and his great skill in photomicrography. He gave beautifully illustrated talks at each of the Baltimore Mineral Society's Symposia for close to forty years, and he was much in demand elsewhere for his lectures and his expertise. He worked on the *Encyclopedia of Minerals* (Roberts *et al.*, 1974) and on the *Photo-Atlas of Minerals* (1998). His standing among professional mineralogists was so great that Dr. Kampf of the Los Angeles County Museum named the mineral perloffite  $[\text{Ba}(\text{Mn}^{2+}, \text{Fe}^{2+})_2 \text{Fe}^{3+}_2 (\text{PO}_4)_3 (\text{OH})_3]$  in his honour in 1977. In 1981, he and his friend Neal Yedlin were inducted into the newly formed Micromounters Hall of Fame, together with four other stalwarts of the hobby, George G. Rakestraw, George W. Fiss, Paul Desautels and Paul Seel. The death of Lou Perloff marks the end of the great team of Yedlin and Perloff, and a break in our connection to a time after World War II when improved stereo microscopes became available, new plastic boxes were coming into use, new cameras were on the market, and there was real excitement among collectors. He was a small man who cast a large shadow, but now the light has faded—and what remains is history.

Quintin Wight

(Originally published in the CMMA MicroNews, March/April 2004)



Westford, MA Public Library  
Saturday, April 17, 2004  
Doors open at 10:00AM

#### Directions to the JV Fletcher Library

From I-495, coming from North or South, take exit 32 and head North towards Westford on Boston Road. Go approximately one (1) mile to a fork in the road and take Lincoln Street to the right along the island. At the intersection of Lincoln and Main Street, the library is directly across Main Street. Proceed to the parking lot in the rear of the library. Enter through the rear door and go down several steps to the meeting room on the left.

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