



# MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND NEWSLETTER

#213

February, 1999

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

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Dues are \$7.00/year and due on January 1st, payable to the Treasurer.

News items for the *Newsletter* are welcome and should be submitted to the Editor. The *Newsletter* may be quoted if credit is given. The Club address is c/o Editor.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1999, 9:00 AM –  
Fairbank Senior Center,  
Sudbury, MA.

## **Next meeting**

The next MMNE meeting will be held on Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at the Public Library in Northboro, MA. Doors open at 9:30 AM. We have invited Larry White of Framingham to speak on the road cuts at the intersection of I-290 and I-495. This locality was good collecting about ten years ago and many of our members were active there. It was not totally a micro locality, but a number of interesting species were found. Larry has previously presented a paper on the locality at the Rochester Symposium and has new information to add to that (see *Rock and Minerals*, May/June, 1997).

## **Minutes of the February meeting**

The February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Micromounters of New England was held at the Fletcher Library in Westford, MA with about 15 members present. As the only officer present, Janet Cares called the business meeting to order at 12:45 PM. As Treasurer she reported a balance of \$5070.34 as of January 25, with dues still being collected.

As we all know, both the scheduled and the postponed dates for January had to be cancelled on short notice. Several members tried to notify regularly attending members but apparently missed several who arrived in Auburn to a closed library and an icy parking lot. Methods of notifying members in the future were discussed but no final decision was made.

Janet Cares has three used books for sale to members who are interested in testing; these were still available at the end of the meeting. She also notified members that about 150 specimens were sent to the Southern California Micromineralogists in addition those sent via Hans Swarts (*I sent about 100 specimens – ed.*)

After the meeting adjournment, Bob Janules gave an interesting program describing his recent collecting activities which included discovery of at least one mineral new to the State of New Hampshire.

Janet Cares, Secretary Pro Tem

## **Last call for dues!**

This will be the last request for payment of annual dues. Anyone not responding by the middle of March, 1999 will be dropped from the membership list. Please send payment to Treasurer Janet Cares (address on masthead).

## **May Symposium**

The annual MMNE Symposium is just around the corner and we're still accepting donations. As always, we're looking for a wide variety of sales and giveaway materials – mineral specimens, books and magazines, article reprints, mineral photos or artwork... Donations can be brought to any MMNE monthly meeting, where the proper person(s) will take charge of them.

## **Call for newsletter material**

The editor is always looking for material to include in the newsletter – collecting stories, show and book reviews, reminiscences, personal profiles. Please consider putting pen to paper – or fingers to keyboard – and writing something for our newsletter. Pieces can be submitted by regular mail or through email.

## Calendar of upcoming events

**March 6-7, New York City, NY.** New York Mineralogical Club Gem & Mineral Show. Holiday Inn Manhattan. 440 West 57<sup>th</sup> St (between 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues). Hours: Sat 10-7, Sun 10-6. Info: (914) 739-1134.

**March 13, Northboro, MA.** MMNE regular monthly meeting. Northboro, MA Public Library. Doors open at 9:30 AM.

**March 26-28, College Park, MD.** 27<sup>th</sup> Atlantic Micromounters Conference. Hosted by the Micromounters of the National Capital Area. University of Maryland, College Park, MD. Info: Steve Weinberger PO Box 302, Glyndon, MD 21071-0302.

**March 27-28, East Windsor, CT.** Connecticut Valley Mineral Club 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gem & Mineral Show. Best Western Colonial Inn. Hours: 10-5.

**April, Rochester, NY.** 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. Info: Dr. Helen Chamberlain, PO Box 85. Manlius, NY 13140.

**April 17, Sudbury, MA.** MMNE regular monthly meeting. Fairbank Senior Center, Sudbury, MA. Doors open at 9 AM.

**May 8-9, Topsfield, MA.** North Shore Rock & Mineral Club Show. Topsfield Fairgrounds. Info (781) 592-4148.

**May 15, Marlboro, MA.** MMNE Annual Symposium, Moose Lodge, Marlboro, MA.

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### **Parker Mountain minerals**

MMNE member Dana Morong requests help in the identification of a mineral from the Parker Mountain mica mine. Dana writes:

"Among the odd specimens I found at the old Parker Mountain mica mine (aka Buzzo mine) in Strafford, NH, is one I collected in 1991 or 1992, and was wondering if anyone else has a specimen of similar description:

The mineral occurs as square yellow to tan platelets about ½ mm wide within a 1-mm wide veinlet of loellingite within pale beryl. No fluorescence of either wavelength appears, but the specimen is slightly radioactive. Based on its description and probable chemistry, I suspect that this may be the species kahlerite (a member of the autunite group) or something similar. It is almost certainly a species not before listed for this locality. As the exchange of information among mineralogists is important to mineralogic studies, any information on such similar material, or on any mineral from this site would be greatly appreciated."

Dana has written a very informative article on the history of the Parker mountain mica mine - see *Matrix*, Fall 1997.

### **Closing of mineral collecting sites**

The following is excerpted from an article by Nate Martin in Boston Mineral Club newsletter (*BMC News*, March, 1999). While an amethyst locality may not be of immediate interest to a micromounter, the micromounting community stands to lose some notable localities if the described actions of the Forest Service become policy. Currently accessible localities for good micro material include North Sugarloaf Mountain, Bethlehem, NH (phenakite, bertrandite, bastnasite, cassiterite, xenotime); Iron Mountain, Glen, NH (helvite, phenakite); and South Moat Mountain (smoky quartz, bertrandite, titanite, rare-earth minerals).

"As many of you know, the US Forest Service recently closed the Deer Hill amethyst locality in the Maine portion of the White Mountains National Forest. The locality is to be closed for two years for reclamation due to "safety concerns" created by digging in the alluvial deposits near the old quarry. A number of New England clubs and collectors are working to try to get the Forest Service to reconsider the closure and develop a reasonable plan for this and other collecting localities that recognizes the needs of the hobby mineral collector. I have just written to Donna Hepp, the Supervisor of the White Mountains

National Forest to protest this closure and I am asking those of you who are similarly upset by the never-ending loss of collecting localities to do the same."

Mr. Martin then goes on to summarize some key issues based on discussions with other collectors:

- ◆ The use of National Forest lands by hobby mineral collectors is a legitimate and important recreational activity.
- ◆ No important mineral collecting locality should ever be closed without significant public discussion and comment. Such closings are a serious matter and the collecting community gets VERY UPSET when localities are closed.
- ◆ Deer Hill is the only New England locality on public land where amethyst crystals can be found. The "locality" is not restricted to the old quarry pits and dumps but also includes the surrounding alluvial deposits.
- ◆ The Forest Service needs to develop an active management plan for the entire Deer Hill collecting locality in cooperation with local mineral clubs and recreational collectors. This plan must recognize the basic necessity to "disturb the earth" to some degree in order to collect.
- ◆ Local clubs and individual collectors will work with the Forest Service to develop these management plans if they are willing to listen to us.

"Elaborate on these issues as you see fit. If you have specific suggestions based on experiences in other parts of the country, please offer them. If you are REALLY UPSET about the closing, say so. If you want to be reasonable and cooperative, that's OK too. If you want to try to help them understand why you enjoy tramping around in the woods looking for rocks, share that as well with them. The most important thing is to write the letter!!! We desperately need to let them know that there are lots of New England mineral collectors who care about losing access to collecting sites."

The address to write to is:

Donna Hepp - Supervisor  
White Mountains National Forest  
719 Main St.  
Laconia, NH 03246-2772

## Brownlow Thompson

Our Micromounter Club member Brownlow Thompson of Conway passed away at age 89 on August 18, 1998.

“Brownie” was the name all his mineral pals used, but his family called him “Tommy” because his father had been known as “Brownie.” Brownie grew up in various towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire where his father was a minister. Brownie followed in his father’s footsteps for awhile. He attended The University of New Hampshire and Boston University School of Theology. He was a Methodist minister in the towns of Monroe, Sunapee, and Enfield and is still warmly remembered by parishioners there.

During World War II Brownie served in Italy with a Red Cross Ambulance team. Over there he met his wife, Dorothea where she was a dancer with a U.S.O. troop. After the war they moved to Conway. Both Brownie and Dorothea became school teachers. Brownie was a teaching principal. They are remembered in Conway by several generations of appreciative students.

Brownie was a very talented artist, especially of New Hampshire landscapes. He was also interested in photography and became interested in mineral photomicrography. He shared an interest in American History with Dorothea and was very proud of his wife’s accomplishments as a talented dancer, history teacher, and writer. Together they formed square dancing groups and helped form the New Hampshire Folk Festival. They toured the State with the Bicentennial Dancers, performing traditional dance programs. They even made over the breezeway between their house and garage into an indoor room where the local square dancing group met! This was also the “meeting hall” for the Saco Valley Mineral Club.

Brownie was a very devoted mineral collector and there were few locations he hadn’t visited in New Hampshire and Maine. His excellent collection was very widely admired, and Harvard University was the recipient of his finest specimens.

Brownie tried to attend all the New Hampshire mineral events. Beside The Micromounters of New England, he belonged to the Capital Mineral Club, The Saco Valley Club, and a group in Laconia called The Lakes Region Mineral Club. Both Brownie and Dorothea held offices in the Saco Valley Club and were editors of the club bulletin, “Topaz Topics”. Dorothea always provided the refreshments which were greatly enjoyed by the members. Once a year they held a special Micromounters Day which was attended by 8 or more of the MM of N.E. as well as Saco Valley members. Brownie received a much deserved Outstanding Service Award from the Saco Valley Club in 1995.

Brownie is survived by a daughter, a large family of nephews and nieces and many, many friends who loved him.

## John Demar

Long time Micromounter of New England member John Demar passed away on January 18, 1999. John was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania in 1909 and worked in Mamhattan as a stationary engineer, in charge of the heating and cooling, for the 48th Street Theater and at 20th Century Fox. He and his wife Mary lived in various areas in the New York, including Somers in Westchester County. They had two daughters. They moved to Moultonborough, N.H., and John lived there until the last few months when he lived in Meredith with one of his daughters.

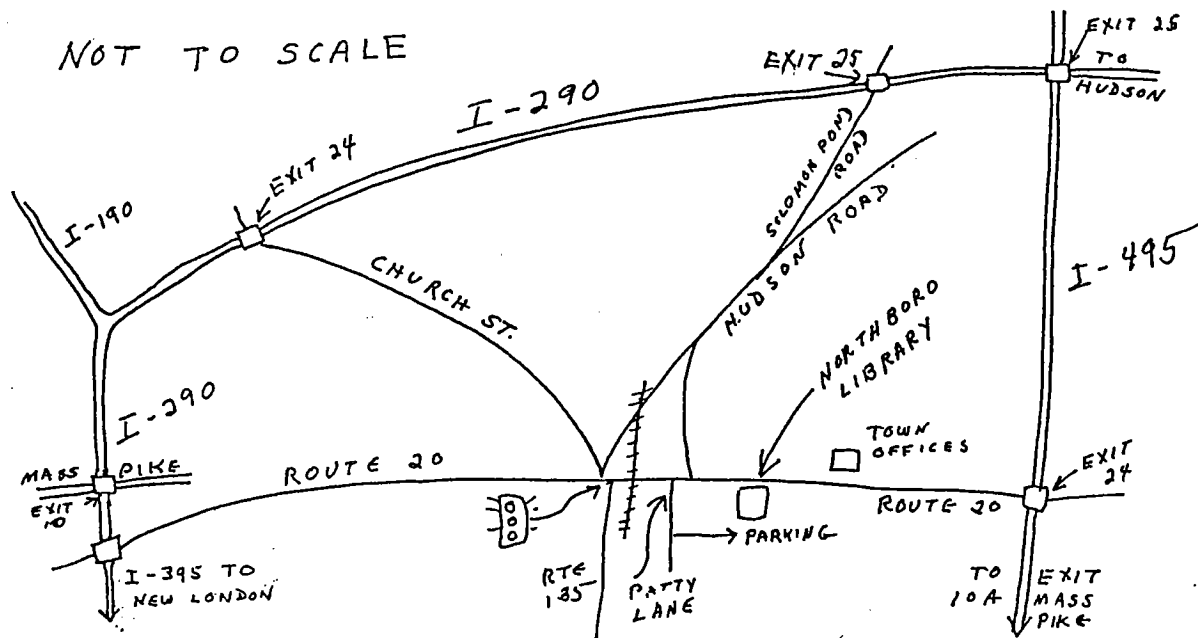
When he and his wife Mary moved to New Hampshire, he became a member of the Micromounters of New England, the Capital Mineral Club, and the Saco Valley Mineral Club. John was interested in lapidary skills, and he also collected mineral specimens and micromounts. Mary enjoyed her husband's hobby and attended many of the mineral club gatherings. She passed away in 1986.

To the members of the MM of N. E. John will be remembered as John Reiner's close and loyal friend. Much that John Reiner was able to do, after his wife Martha died in 1988, was due to John's diligence. John Demar drove him to meetings, aided him to walk into buildings, carried his mineral case displays, microscope, minerals, etc. When the micromounters went to John Reiner's home in July, it was his friend who got the tables and chairs ready, either outdoors or, on rainy days, in the garage. He bought the breakfast donuts, and helped the club members find kitchen utensils for the potluck lunch.

An unassuming man, John was of great help working at the Sunapee Show and at the Saco Valley Swap, Talk, and Brag Day. He was always there when he was needed!

Thank you John; we really miss you.

Pat Barker thanks: Betty Sevens, Vera Fogg, Janet Cares, Catherine Chase of Laconia and John's daughter for help with these memories.



## Northboro, MA

The map shown has been modified to show all approaches, so that compass directions and distances are distorted. The following directions will help:

FROM MASS PIKE WEST: Take exit 10 to I-290 through Worcester, then exit 24 (Church St.) to Northboro\*.

FROM I-495 SOUTH: Take exit 24 (Route 20) west to Northboro\*

FROM I-495 NORTH: Take exit 25 (I-290) to exit 25 (Soloman Pond Rd.) to Northboro\*

\* At Northboro follow map to Patty Lane off Route 20 between the library and railroad tracks. Follow Patty Lane to left into the library parking lot. Enter the meeting room through the rear door at parking lot level.