MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND

The MMNE was organized on November 5, 1966 for the purpose of promoting the study of minerals that require a microscope.

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Dues are $4.00 per year and are due on January 1st, payable to the Treasurer.

Contributions of news items for the Bulletin are welcome and should be sent to the Editor.

This bulletin may be quoted if credit is given. --- Club Address is c/o Editor.

→ NEXT MONTH

The February meeting of the MMNE will be Saturday, Feb. 6, 1988 at the Northborough Public Library.

JANUARY 1988 NEWSLETTER #120

The next regular meeting or the Micromounters of New England will be Sunday, January 10, 1988, at Boston University. John Stewart will be our host. As of printing time, I am uncertain whether we will be meeting in one of the new lab rooms, or our usual meeting room, but John assures me that everything will be arranged.

DUES ARE NOW DUE!!!! Please remember to bring your dues to the January meeting or send them along to our Treasurer, Janet Cares.

Orders for the Rocks and Minerals Index have been placed for those members who wished to participate in the club order. I have not received word as to when the index is expected to arrive, but I will keep members posted. --Editor

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Walter A. & Carolyn J. Lane
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Brian L. McLinden
13½ Townsend Street, Apt. 3
Worcester, MA 01609

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Larry M. Cross
64 Hamilton Drive
Manchester, CT 06040

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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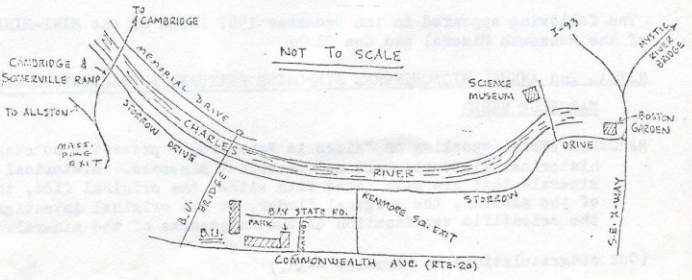

Editor's Note: the following information came in the package of micro swap minerals from South Africa(inwhich several members of our club participated). Owing to the unusual nature of the locality I am reprinting the article in order that all club members may have this locality description.

VANADINITE AND DESCLOIZITE FROM THE NAMIB LEAD MINE, NEAR SWAKOPMUND, SOUTHWEST AFRICA

by Rick Turner, P.O. Box 9539, Johannesburg 2000, Rep. of S. Africa

Although Southwest Africa is an extremely rich producer of a wide variety of minerals, the area is notably deficient in commercial zinc deposits and this mine is the only primary zinc producer in the country. The Namib Lead Mine is located roughly 30 km inland of Swakopmund, on the western coast of Southwest; the mine lies about 5 km north of the road to Usakos and about 10 km west of Rossing Mountain and 15 km west of Rossing Uranium Mine. The mine is the oldest constantly worked deposit in Southwest, having been in production since sometime in the 1890's. Originally a lead producer, the grades have gradually altered over the years so that lead is now a by-product and zinc accounts for roughly 80 percent of the mine's revenues. The zinc is sold locally for fertilizer usage. The mine has been run for some years by the Deblin Mining Corp., and has erroneously been called the Deblin Mine on occasion. Very old labels, reports and articles sometimes refer to the deposit as "Namib Siding".

The orebody consists of a lenticular, vein-like structure containing iron oxides that were intruded into a fissure. The surface outcrop extends for roughly 6 km, and the whole dips about 80 degrees east. Only the southern end of the structure has been worked as the main vein pinches out sharply to the north. The intrusion is generally considered to be late stage mineralization associated with the emplacement of the Erongo granite boss that now forms Rossing Mountain. At depth, the ore consists of a hard, grey martite matrix with irregular lenses of sphalerite, galena, and occasionally other sulphide minerals. The local climate is somewhat unusual, being an arid sand and rock desert that is saturated with water by coastal fogs. These are caused by the proximity of hot desert and the cold offshore current in the South Atlantic. Daytime temperatures reach about 40° Celsius, and the desert nights are bitingly cold, usually with a temperature of less than 4 degrees. This usual combination of climatic conditions has lead to extensive alteration of the surface outcrop of the deposit, forming a cellular limonitic gossan. This gossan contains vanadinite, descloizite and rarely wulfenite. The specimens that I am sending were collected by my wife and I in November 1986. They contain both vanadinite and descloizite in abundance; diligent search may locate the odd wulfenite crystal. The search is worthwhile as the wulfenite crystals from here are distinctive, having a bright red color similar to specimens from the noted Red Cloud Mine. However, the crystals are extremely complex, having a rounded, multifaceted appearance. The vanadinite crystals are invariably typical hexagonal prisms having an orangey color when fresh that eventually darkens to brown. Descloizite forms small, well formed black metallic crystals.

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The following appeared in the December 1987 issue of the MINI-MINER, the newsletter of the Monmouth Mineral and Gem Club:

NJESA. 2nd ANNUAL MICROMINERAL SYMPOSIUM FEATURED AUTHORITATIVE COLLECTORS/SPEAKER, MARCELLE WEBER

MARCELLE WEBER, speaking on "Micro is Beautiful", presented outstanding slides of historical micro-minerals and beautiful minerals. Historical minerals are those minerals that are associated with either the original find, the original locality, of the mineral, the original finder, or the original investigator that published the scientific verification of the uniqueness of the mineral.

(Our congratulations to Marcelle --Ed.)