



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 \$5.00 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 next meeting of the MMNE will be **Saturday, February 10, 1990**, at the Westford Public Library.

January 1990

Newsletter #137

The next meeting of the Micromounters of New England will be **Sunday, January 14, 1990**, at Boston University's Department of Geology. Our host will be John Stewart. Parking is available in the lot behind the geology building off of Bay State Road. (See map below.)

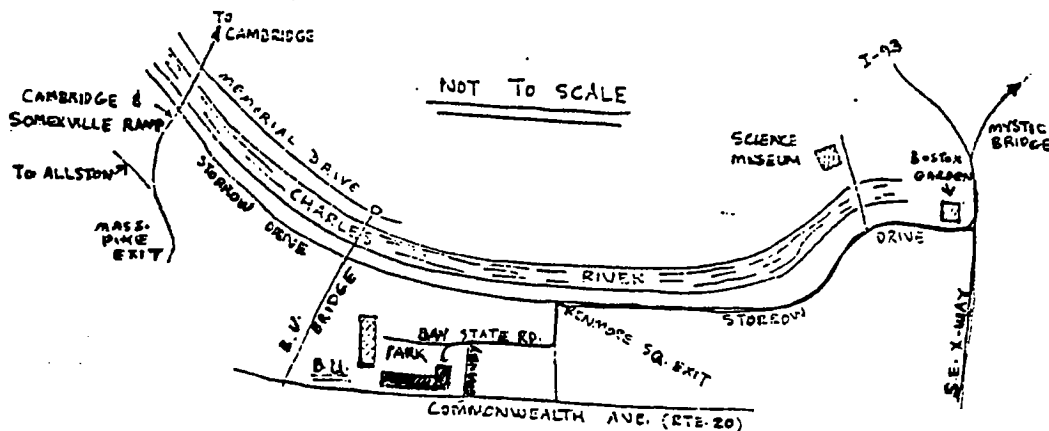
WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

John & Jean Downing
144 Cancellaro Drive
Wolcott, CT 06107

We extend our condolences to member Wallace Watson whose wife, Mildred passed away on December 15th.

MEMBERS IN PRINT

In an attempt to shed more light on the ushkovite/laueite controversy, Larry Pitman examined specimens labelled "laueite" by chemical, optical, and physical means. His results and conclusions were published in the Mineralogical Record (Sept./Oct., 1989) in an article titled "Laueite from the Hagendorf-Sud and the Palermo Mine". Congratulations Larry!



NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

On the way back from the Franklin, NJ show, I stopped for about a half hour at Thomaston Dam in Thomaston, CT. The dam was built about 30 years ago for flood control on the Naugatuck River and was described in an article in Rocks and Minerals, in the May-June 1985 issue. In the very limited time I had, I decided to collect in the quartz veins in the schist on the east side of the railroad cut, which is beyond the west end of the dam. Good micros of heulandite, sphalerite, and sphalerite pseudomorphs after wurtzite were found with little effort. The heulandites were mostly colorless on quartz crystals. The sphalerite crystals were found with quartz crystals and were very highly twinned, as sketched below. Sphalerite pseudomorphs after wurtzite were found in the same paragenesis as the sphalerite and are identical to that pictured in fig. 7 of the R & M issue. From memory my best guess is that I was collecting in the area of 600 feet to 700 feet as shown on the map in the R & M article. This seems to be a very good area to visit for a short visit or an all day trip.



twinned tetrahedrons

Sphalerite - Thomaston Dam, CT

From John Anderson

TYPE MINERALS OF NEW ENGLAND

In the Program Book for the Northeast Meeting (1989) a list of species first found in New England appears on page 12. For those interested, several changes should be made:

Frondelite should be deleted from the list. Though reported as a type species in the reference by Frondel (1970), it was first found at Sapucaia, Brazil. See Lindberg, M.L.L. (1949) *American Mineralogist* 34:541.

Tungstite should be added to the list. The type locality for this species is Lane's Quarry, Monroe, CT. See Silliman, B. (1822) *American Journal of Science*, Series 1, 4:52, 187.

Xanthoxenite. Add (of Frondel), change type locality to Palermo Mine, Groton, NH. This species has a controversial history, however, Moore, P.B. and J. Ito (1978) *Mineral. Mag.* 42:309, propose that the xanthoxenite described by Frondel (1949) *American Mineralogist*, 34:692, be adopted as the type species. See abstract of Moore and Ito (1979) *American Mineralogist*, 64:466. --JWC 12/89

BEYOND AND SUGARLOAF

a continuing commentary on New England collecting by Gene Bearss

By early May of 1989 I was ready to go collecting. Unfortunately, most of my favorite collecting localities were not ready for me. No snow in the Winter makes for a deep, deep frost. Deep frost plus a lot of late April/early May rains made most dirt roads impassible. Out of desperation, I headed for one of my favorite localities of the early and mid-seventies, Mt. Apatite, Auburn, Maine. Unfortunately, my two favorite localities at Mt. Apatite, the Keith and Pulsifer quarries, are no longer readily available to collectors. However, the Maine Feldspar and Greenlaw quarries are open for collecting. These localities are both described in the recent publication by the Maine Geological Survey "A Collector's Guide to Maine Mineral Localities". After parking my car (see above-mentioned publication for directions and where to leave your car), I enjoyed a nice walk up to the quarries. As I walked I noted very little snow and ice in the woods which was an encouraging sign.

How things had changed since my last visit to these localities some ten years previous. A lot of holes dug in the dumps attested to the continued interest these localities still generate among some collectors. I next proceeded to try digging at several of my favorite spots in the dumps. But, what I feared might be true - was. After digging down one to two feet in the dumps I hit solid frozen ground. I have always stayed away from early Spring dump digging for just this reason. There is nothing as frustrating as being continually stymied by ground frozen as hard as a rock. I scouted around for about another hour, but frustration had cooled my zeal and my heart just wasn't in it anymore. So, I headed back home. While I had no luck on this particular day, I have had good luck previously here, and so feel the localities deserve a little further discussion.

If you should want to try these quarries, early Fall or late Spring is your best times of the year. Also, I have had my best luck collecting micros at the Greenlaw Quarry. Referring to the previously mentioned publication, page 27, under walking directions "...for about 0.75 miles to the quarries.", you have just walked the vertical of a capital letter "T". At this point if you make a 90 degree turn to your right and walk straight ahead until you only have about 20 feet of dump material left (there should be an old apple tree in the immediate area), you will be in an area I have previously had quite a bit of luck in. Your problem now is finding an area of the dump that has not been previously dug through a hundred times before. This means you have to dig deep and try and pick out an area that looks relatively untouched. In the late seventies I found some beautiful micro, tabular, blue apatite crystals and some nice microlite crystals in this area. Plus, there is always the chance of picking up a piece or two of elbaite tourmaline.

If instead of making a 90 degree turn to the right after walking the 0.75 miles, you instead make a 90 degree turn to the left, you are near my favorite area for dump digging at the Greenlaw. After making the turn to the left, walk about 40 feet and look to your right. In between the two water-filled areas is a small dump which faces on the smaller water-filled pit. Once again, this area in the past has provided me with some nice micro material. Here I have found hydroxyl-herderite crystals, colorless apatite crystals, free-standing columbite crystals and some nice green muscovite crystals. All of these are associated with the green muscovite and flesh-colored perthite.

While I had pretty much struck out at Mt. Apatite this year, I would still recommend it to anyone who is not afraid to put some time and effort into dump digging. No you don't have to put a "Dana Jewell", i.e. Herculean, effort into it, but if all you are going to do is surface scratch -- don't bother with this locality. The rest of May I pretty much devoted to collecting at Sugarloaf, Bethlehem, New Hampshire.

I am not going to say much about Sugarloaf because of a forth-coming article in Rocks and Minerals magazine devoted to this area. Two of our members, along with another gentleman, are co-authoring this article. The two members, Bob Janules and Scott Whittemore, have added quite a few minerals to the list of those that occur in New Hampshire by concentrating on this locality over the last several years. Both Bob and Scott have had phenomenal success at this locality. I have collected at this locality about eight times over the past several years, and most of my best micro specimens from Sugarloaf are still those given me by Bob and Scott. May was drawing to an end, and mud or no mud, I was heading for the Emmons Quarry, Greenwood, Maine.



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Thomas J. Campbell, Exploration Geologist, Homestake Mining Company,
and **George R. Rapp, Jr.**, Professor of Geology and Archaeology and Dean, College of Science and Engineering, University of Minnesota, Duluth;
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