



MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND NEWSLETTER

January, 2000

no. 219

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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Next Meeting

Feb. 12th, Auburn, MA Public
Library. Doors open at 10
AM.

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.

A message from our President – Jim Warner

January, February, March and April 2000 will be quite busy, as we will be involved in many decisions concerning the Micromounters of New England. It would be nice to see many of the May meeting attendees at the upcoming meetings, as you can help determine where we stand as a club and where we would like to be in the future.

Among other things, we will be voting on the following:

- Purchase of a microphone/loudspeaker system
- Purchase of a microscope
- Setting up and scheduling workshops

We are also looking to publish notices of upcoming MMNE meetings in as many other club bulletins as possible in order to attract new members. If you have an affiliation with another club and can get the information published in their bulletins, please let me know. I'd like to start a list of where notices are published so we can broaden our efforts.

Also, we are considering putting notices for our May 'Annual Steve and Janet Cares Reunion' in periodicals such as *Rocks and Minerals* and *Mineralogical Record*.

Inclement weather info: If there seems to be a possibility of a meeting cancellation due to bad weather, call **Jim Warner** at (508) 752-8328. If there is no message regarding the meeting, assume the meeting is on. I'm looking for at least one other member as a backup for this service.

Calling all members!

We often take it for granted that things get done and that the club runs smoothly. There are many jobs involved in the operation of the club that each take little effort, but when done by one or a few individuals, they quickly become overwhelming.

Many of you know that **Janet Cares** has carried the brunt of the workload that keeps our club organized and operating. Janet is now asking for our help.

We are ASKING for volunteers. And so I, as President, beseech each and every member to look at each position and consider setting just a small portion of their time aside to keep this club running efficiently. We all have busy schedules and limited time to spare, but this is your club, too!

You will not be asked to take on anything too difficult or to take it on blindly. We will assist and guide you, but these tasks must get done to keep the club functioning. There aren't many jobs that need attending, but the following are crucial:

- Corresponding secretary – to send notes/cards of thanks and appreciation to meeting speakers; to send condolences to families of deceased members; to send get-well cards to members in illness.

- Membership secretary – to collect and tally dues; to maintain and update current membership list.
- Curator – to keep track of and maintain club property – sound system, microscope, books and periodicals; to carry out an annual inventory.
- Scheduling secretary – schedule monthly meetings as to time and place. Club members voted in 1998 to keep meetings restricted to central Massachusetts, an area readily accessible to the most members. Lists of past and present facilities (mostly libraries) are available. Facilities should be free, with the usual donation granted by the club for their use.

2000 – A New Era for MMNE

This is your club! It can be what you want it to be, but without your comments, suggestions, opinions and help, this club will only be a place to pay your dues and socialize at the May meeting.

I have been asked by many of the newer and several of the older, members to guide the club in a new direction, a new era, the new millenium, if you will.

Many of our members join the club with little knowledge of the unique challenges facing a micromounter versus a macro collector, and therefore I have been asked to coordinate a more learning-friendly atmosphere within the club. This is the new direction I would like to see MMNE head towards.

I am not looking to drastically alter the format of the monthly meetings, but I feel we should tap into the collective knowledge held by senior club members. Newcomers would learn from this knowledge and it may also refresh the memories of older members. I am asking all of us to give a little of their time and knowledge to help everyone in the club, but especially the new members. This is where the 'new direction' and 'learning-friendly atmosphere' comes into play.

I have asked over the years, both in the bulletin and at meetings, to set up workshops. I have recently solicited the help of MMNE members **Ed Hakesley** and **Jim Grandy** to help set up, coordinate, and facilitate these workshops. However, without the help of all members, this may be a lost cause.

I have a simple request to all members - if you can help in any of the suggested topics, please contact **Ed Hakesley** (603 888-3891), **Jim Grandy** (802 722-4772), or myself (508 752-8328). Suggestions for other micromount-related topics would also be appreciated. These workshops are intended for the benefit of all members and should therefore also have input from every member. Pick up the phone or drop us a quick note – it's that easy!

What follows is a list of suggested workshop topics. Please look the list over and let us know where you can help!

- A) trimming, cleaning, mounting
 - tools – microscopes, trimmers, ultrasonic cleaners, forceps, tweezers, etc.
 - supplies – boxes, labels, corks, ink, paint, etc.
 - cleaning agents – soaps, acids, bases
 - mounting of specimens – glues, bases, techniques
- B) labeling and cataloging
- C) crystallography
 - the six crystal classes
 - concepts – axes, faces, forms, Miller indices
 - methods for identifying crystal classes by measurement of interfacial angles
 - techniques and tricks for proper orientation to the C axis
 - recognizing pseudoforms

- D) identification methods
 - magnetic properties
 - UV light reading on very small samples
 - Reactions with different concentrations of acid – overall vigor, alterations, etc.
 - Heating of samples in open & closed tubes – evolution of water vapor, alteration, etc.
 - Testing for hardness and streak on very small samples
- E) mineral optics
 - discussion of spectroscopic lens and its usage
 - polariscope – use of polarizing sheets
 - dichroscopes to determine pleochroism
 - Refractive index oils
- F) field problems in extracting delicate micro material in/on matrix
- G) Compilation of collecting sites for micro material (other than the obvious, such as Mont Saint-Hilaire).
- H) Reference books, periodicals, monographs on general micro topics

I have one last item that needs consideration from every one of our members. At the November meeting, **Herb Fielding** noted that he had gone to the funeral of **Palmer Severns**. Herb learned more about Palmer during the eulogies than he'd ever known during the years that Palmer was alive.

Several years ago, I tried to start a bulletin feature called "Who Am I?". The intent was to get members to write a biographical piece about themselves so that we could get to know each other. I was the only contributor. At the November meeting, it was unanimously agreed upon that the concept of monthly member bios be reconsidered. It is now my goal to see that this happens, and I challenge every member to get their pen out and write a couple of paragraphs stating who you are, what you do, and what your interests are, minerals aside.

We have eight bulletins a year, while we have nearly 90 members. At that rate, we could publish a different biography in the bulletin for over 10 years!

Pat Barker has graciously volunteered to help edit the submitted works. So get thinking, get writing, and please send them off to Pat Barker (see masthead, first page). She will pass them onto **Hans Swarts** for inclusion in the bulletin.

Secretary's Report – November 13, 1999

Twenty-two members and guests attended the meeting that President **Jim Warner** called to order at 11:10 AM. He introduced guest **Keith Butler** from a local cable TV station who was going to interview members and videotape the meeting in progress.

Jim said that he had looked into purchasing a microphone and loudspeakers for our meetings. It has a 200-foot radius and will cost \$150.00 at Radio Shack. We will vote on this possible expenditure at the January meeting.

Janet Cares has made a list of club tasks, which will be published in the January bulletin. She mentioned the possibility of purchasing an extra microscope for the use of guests, but she pointed out that we would need a curator for a sound system or extra microscope.

Ed Hakesley has made up a list of possible subjects for speakers at upcoming meetings. Several of the ideas brought forth comments from members who said they could tackle one of those program ideas. In fact, Jim already has four speakers lined up for the year 2000! This list will be published in January.

Jim Warner said that in case of inclement weather he would have a special notice on his answering machine saying whether or not the meeting would be cancelled. He asked if anyone else in the club has that capability so that there would be two numbers to call.

Next year's calendar will be published in the January bulletin. Janet informed us.

Jim Warner has located a person that refurbishes older microscopes: **Jim Ross** (860) 583-0502.

Janet received a letter from Editor **Marie Huizing** thanking us for the money donated to the *Rocks & Minerals* Color Fund as a memorial to **Jean Downing**.

Janet reminded us that dues are due now at \$7 per member. A minor Y2K problem found us with 19—expiration dates on our membership cards; new cards have been printed.

Jim Warner and **Herb Fielding** both asked if we could have brief autobiographies of our members to be written up in the bulletin. Jim and Herb feel that this would be a way to get to know our fellow members. **Pat Barker** offered to edit biographies for members too shy to do their own. Pat also asked about reinstating nametags such as **Steve Cares** made for us some time ago.

Gene Bearss inquired about the feasibility of having the bulletins published to reach members a week before the meetings (point taken, *Gene... the February bulletin is in the works - ed.*).

Jim Grandy, who arrived late, offered to present a program on the subject of Spelling and Pronunciation of Mineral and Mine Names. This would be an attempt to clarify some confusing locations with many different names over the years, and to discuss obsolete mineral names.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Pat Barker, Secretary

Dues are Due!

Now that the new year has started, then annual MMNE membership dues are due. Please remit \$7 per individual (sorry, no family rates) by check or money order to the Treasurer, **Janet Cares**. Dues not paid by March 31st, 2000 will mean loss of membership.

MMNE Membership Application or Renewal

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Special Interests or remarks _____

Palmer Earl Sevreus --- 1914 -1999

Our Club lost a very prominent member, Palmer E. Sevreus who passed away at 85 on October 16. He had been quite active until only days before his death, visiting his beloved Mont. St. Hilaire in the summer and attending the Saco Valley Rock, Swap, and Brag Day auction in September.

Palmer often mentioned that he had always collected minerals and nature specimens, even as a child when he went on walks with his grandfather, a keen naturalist. At that time he became interested in growing plants, another hobby that was to last all his life.

As a very young man Palmer learned to fly airplanes, much to his parents' consternation. When World War II came along he enlisted as a flight instructor in the Navy, a position desperately needed. Palmer had no idea how many Naval students he taught (and a few he had to wash-out) over those years, but he had dozens of hilarious stories to tell about his training days and other Naval adventures. Many evenings in Montreal, he had fellow mineral collectors weeping with laughter about his many escapades.

Betty, his wife led a nomad existence following him from military post to post, but after the War they returned home to Woburn, Ma. Both Betty and Palmer were enthusiastic skiers and often went up on the Ski Train to Plymouth, N.H. Years later they would make their home in that area. They were also keen dancers and enjoyed visiting the ballrooms around Boston. At their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1994 they cut a graceful figure on the dance floor. Betty and Palmer have two children: William Gray and Jane Elizabeth, two grandchildren, six step-grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Palmer continued on in the Naval Reserve, retiring in 1970, as a Lt. Commander. Everything Palmer tackled he did with great verve and enthusiasm. He opened a greenhouse in Woburn where he and Betty grew seasonal holiday potted plants. At Raytheon Corp. he worked as an engineer from 1960 until he retired from there in 1972.

Perhaps even more than his interest in minerals was his love for growing plants. Both in Woburn and later in Holderness he labored over big gardens of flowers and vegetables. Also, he joined our club member Jim Clark in growing orchids. Touchingly, a perfectly gorgeous orchid, that he had nurtured, adorned his burial site.

But Palmer just loved the hunt for minerals! With Pete Dunn, now at the Smithsonian, and John Stewart they visited collecting sites all over New England. Later with Betty, John and Margaret Stewart, Norm Biggart, Jim Clark, Ev Holmes, Pat Barker, Les and Marge Hitchings, Bob and Shelley Monaghan, Ken Canning, Frank and Phyllis Leighton, and others, they expanded their horizons to Quebec and St. Lawrence Co. in New York.. Looking back it seems as if we never stopped laughing and telling stories on those hilarious trips. Those tall mineral tales got reshaped, and improved upon, over and over.

Palmer was President of the Micromounters of New England in 1986. He joined the North Shore Rock and Mineral Club in March 1966.. For many years he belonged to the Boston Mineral Club (he is in the 1976-77 Directory), and was a 30 year member of the Lynn Mineral Club. In later years, belonged to the Saco Valley Mineral Club in Conway

In 1985 while crossing a street in Woburn, Palmer was struck by a car and thrown many feet. Even the doctors didn't expect him to survive; he was only fleetingly conscious for a week. But Palmer did pull through and with tremendous will-power began the long road back.

But despite many more trips to Canada mineral collecting, he had to cut back on long hikes and very reluctantly gave up his large gardens. I believe he was never free from pain in his injured leg and hips; certainly a lot of the sparkle was not there. The loss of two of his close collecting buddies Jim Clark and Frank Leighton further undermined his spirit.

Palmer will be missed by his mineral friends all over New England. We'll never forget the good times!

Pat Barker