

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. 262

March, 2005

OFFICERS 2004-2005

President

Jim Cahoon
(978) 897-8221
jcahoon@
geochronlabs.com
cahooncj@aol.com

Vice-President

Bob Janules
(603) 424-9269
janules@worldnet.att.net

Treasurer

Anna Wilken
(603)-536-2013
microxl@mfire.com

Secretary

Patricia Barker
(603) 536-2401
barker@eagle1st.com

Directors

Gene Bearss
(207) 324-3610

Bob Wilken
(603)-536-2013
microxl@mfire.com
2004-2005

Newsletter Editor

Mike Swanson
(413) 773-3867
msmicros@crocker.com

Next Meeting

Saturday, March 19, 2005
Chelmsford, MA library
Doors open at 9AM

Map and directions are on the back page

For information regarding
MEETING CANCELLATION
due to inclement weather,
contact President
Jim Cahoon at
(978) 897-8221
or
cahooncj@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A Note From Your Editor

Enclosed is a copy of the 2005 MMNE membership list which has been compiled from membership renewal data and previous membership lists. Please check carefully for any errors or omissions; if any are present please notify me promptly at msmicros@crocker.com. Per the MMNE bylaws, this list may not be circulated outside the membership or used for any commercial purposes.

I have had trouble this year keeping the e-mail list for the *Newsletter* up to date because of frequent changes in personal e-mail addresses. Please send any changes made throughout the year promptly to the above address to make sure you do not miss an issue. If you wish to be added to or dropped from the e-mail list please contact me. If you are happy with your e-mail copy, and do not need to get a hard copy, please notify the editor (it costs us about \$1.00/copy to print and mail a hard copy). The e-mail edition contains full color photographs which are not available in the hard copy.

OTHER BUSINESS

Annual elections are coming up at the April meeting. All positions need to be filled except for the 2004-2006 Director's post currently held by Gene Bearss. Nominations will be made at the March meeting, and a ballot sent out with the April Newsletter. Nominations can be made from the floor at the April meeting.

On a sadder note - over the past few months the MMNE has lost another two members:

A letter was received from José Solé indicating that his wife, Elaine Solé, had passed away in July of 2004. Elaine was known to most of us through her frequent attendance at the MMNE May Meetings. José has indicated that he will continue as a member of the MMNE, and that he hopes to make it to the May Meeting as Elaine did for many years.

The following obituary was recently received from David Hollmann, brother of MMNE member Ken Hollmann:

Kenneth Hollmann, 61, of Center Rutland, VT, died Jan. 14, 2005 at his residence. He was born on June 16, 1943, in Rutland, the son of Rudolf H. and Erna O. (Putz) Hollmann. He graduated from Rutland High School and attended Castleton State College. Mr. Hollmann enlisted in the U.S. Navy, served during the Vietnam War, and was honorably discharged in 1968. He was employed by Rutland General Electric Co. as a chemical analyst for 30 years prior to his retirement. Mr. Hollmann was a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1. He enjoyed photography, rock and mineral collecting, and he was a member of many affiliated organizations.

Survivors include his daughter Nancy Dipietro of Rutland; two brothers, Walter Hollmann of Center Rutland and David Hollmann of Venice, FL, two grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. Memorial contributions may be made to the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Hillside Road, Rutland, VT.

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 2004-2005

President: Jim Cahoon, 31 Parker St., Maynard, MA 01754	(978) 897-8221	jcahoon@geochronlabs.com
Vice President: Bob Janules, 17 Woodard Rd., Merrimack, NH 03054	(603) 424-9269	janules@worldnet.att.net
Treasurer: Anna Wilken, 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223	(603) 536-2013	microxl@mfire.com
Secretary: Pat Barker, PO Box 810, Campton, NH 03223-0810	(603) 536-2401	barker@eagle1st.com
Directors: Gene Bearss (2003-5), 33 North Avenue, Sanford, ME 04073-2943	(207) 324-3610	
Bob Wilken (2003-4), 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223	(603) 536-2013	microxl@mfire.com

Editor:

Mike Swanson: 646 Greenfield Rd., Leyden, MA 01301-9400	(413) 773-3867	msmicros@crocker.com
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2004 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2005

26 - MMNE meeting. Chelmsford, MA public library

April 2005

1-3 – Atlantic Micromounters Conference sponsored by the Micromounters of the National Capitol Area.
Contact Steve Weinberger at cweinber@bcpl.net.

14-17 – Rochester Mineralogical Symposium. Park Plaza Rochester Airport (formerly Radisson Inn), 175 Jefferson Rd., Rochester, NY. Contact Helen Chamberlain at (315) 682-6023 or contactrms@hotmail.com.

16 – MMNE meeting Chelmsford, MA . Note: this meeting date may be changed because of the conflict with the Rochester Symposium

31-May1 – Maine Mineral Symposium. The Senator Inn (Best Western), Western Avenue, Augusta, ME.

May 2005

21 – MMNE Annual Symposium, Elks Club, Hudson, MA. Scott Whittemore will be giving two talks on microphotography with an emphasis on the use of digital cameras.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1 - Membership News, Memorial notices

Page 2 - Masthead
Calendar of Upcoming Events

Page 3/4/5 - **A MICROMOUNTER EXPLORES NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONWAY GRANITE – Part 10**
MIDDLE MOAT MOUNTAIN, The Government Pit, Middle Moat Mountain, Albany, NH
By Bob Janules

Page 5 – Minutes of the February MMNE meeting

Page 6 - Map and directions to Chelmsford, MA Library

A MICROMOUNTER EXPLORES NEW HAMPSHIRE'S CONWAY GRANITE – Part 10

MIDDLE MOAT MOUNTAIN

The Government Pit, Middle Moat Mountain, Albany, NH

The Government Pit, a gravel operation with exposed ledges, was a popular collecting locality at the time I started mineral collecting. Smoky quartz, microcline and topaz were the minerals usually sought after, but an interesting suite of microminerals was also present there. It is a deep regret of mine that I never collected there at the time of its operation. Fortunately Gene Bearss of Sanford, Maine did. My best micromounts from this locality are in my collection because of Gene's generosity. Gene and I joined forces and wrote an article on the minerals of the Government Pit. (1). The reader should consult this article for a complete account of the minerals to be found there. Here, I will only recount my personal collecting experiences at this locality, collecting that took place long after the productive ledges were bulldozed over and covered up.

One day at a meeting of the Micromounters of New England, Gene told me he had been finding interesting material from the only still-exposed solid granite at the Government Pit. The bulldozing had spared one small mini-trench at a corner of the quarry. Gene also gave me a bucket of vuggy pieces he had collected from there. It is great to receive tips about mineral finds when there is still something left to find, and I made two trips to the Government Pit right after Gene's head's up. In a corner of the trench the granite was riddled with small cavities and the following microminerals were found there:

Hematite – Hematite was abundant as lustrous black platy rosettes often liberally covering the albite in the cavities. Under a bright light source deep red internal reflections were sometimes noted; in addition some hematites from here were iridescent.

Fluorite – Fluorite was readily available usually in octahedral habit. The fluorite was most often purple or colorless. Some fluorite had hematite inclusions. Generally the fluorite from here was somewhat frosted, and not as lustrous as the best fluorite from elsewhere at this locality.

Danalite – Red brown masses of danalite were liberally dispersed in this granite. The danalite at this exposure was strictly massive, often etched and showing no crystal faces.

Allanite-(Ce) – The late Gene Foord confirmed the identity of allanite-(Ce) as occurring in this material. The allanite formed as lustrous gemmy brown clusters of platy crystals. These clusters are tiny, much smaller than .5mm, but they are lovely under the higher powers of the scope.

Titanite – Often associated with the allanite-(Ce) were tiny tan to gray titanite crystals, with pyramidal faces dominant.

Vigezzite (?) – One of the most interesting finds from here were amber brown platy crystals with rounded edges usually stacked together. Gene Foord analyzed these both by SEM EDS and also by x-ray. Gene reported that the x-ray patterns of vigezzite and fersmite are quite similar, and our specimens produced a pattern that was not conclusive to determine which mineral it was. He said, however, that the chemistry leaned toward vigezzite.

Milarite – The biggest draw to this spot was that the cavities commonly contained milarite. The milarite formed as long prismatic colorless hexagonal crystals. Individual cavities often were riddled with many milarites in jack straw fashion. Sometimes the milarite was acicular, and some interesting curved crystals also were found.

Gadolinite – A number of cavities contained yellow brown sheaf-like crystals of gadolinite that were very earthy and friable. These were not analyzed. They were sight identified, as their appearance was identical to those found on North Sugarloaf Mountain in Bethlehem, NH. (2)

Zircon – Cream to tan rosettes of platy crystals grew on the surface of some of the gadolinites. With the gadolinite association I expected them to turn out to be a rare earth mineral. I was surprised when Jim Nizamoff analyzed them and found them to be zircon. Jim was surprised too; he re-checked them, as this is a most unusual habit for this mineral.

This productive spot at the Government Pit soon pinched out, and one was soon facing solid granite again. I was glad I took advantage of the brief window of opportunity that presented itself. When I collected at the Government Pit I also found tabular **bertrandite**, a specimen of **bavenite** and a euhedral **danalite** crystal. These did not come from the mini-trench, but from chunks of rock that I picked up elsewhere at the quarry.

(Continued on page 4)



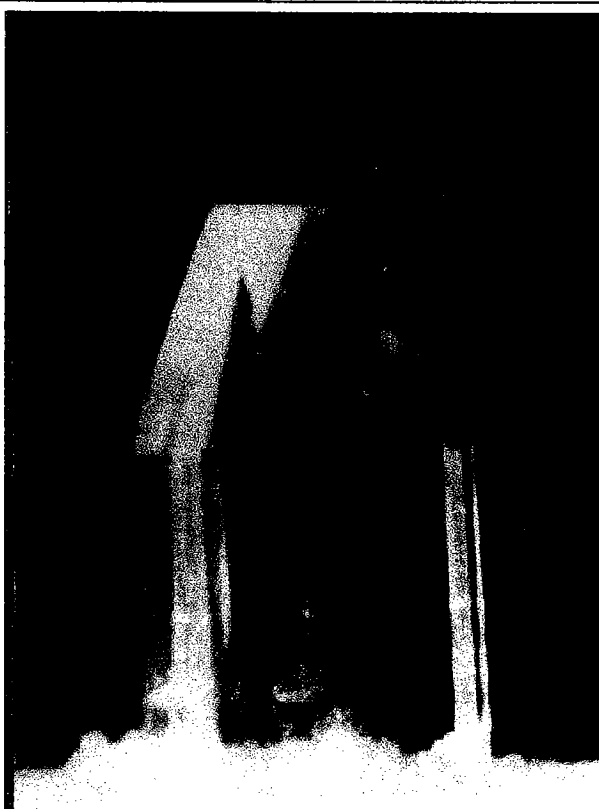
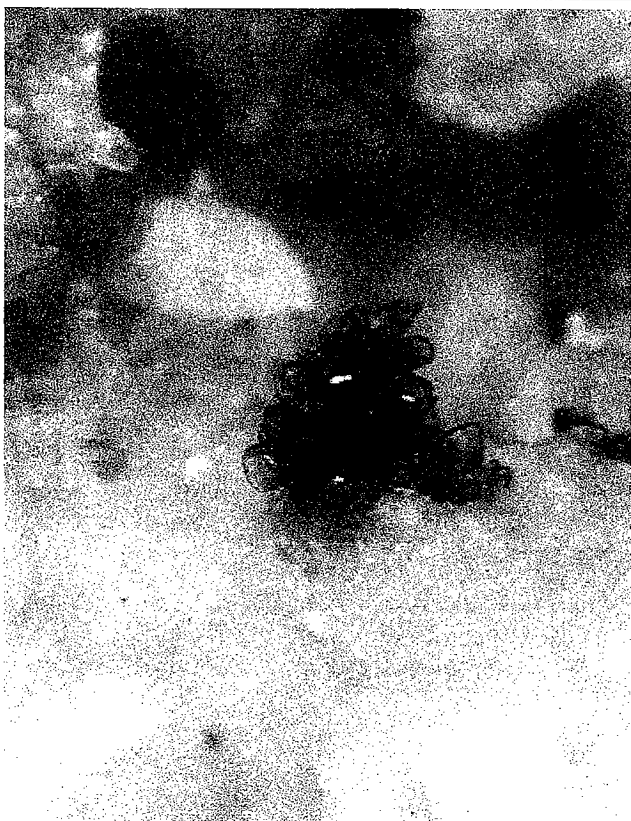
Top left: Microlite, Bob Janules photo and specimen

Top right: Milarite: Scott Whittemore photo and specimen

Bottom left: Vigezzite (?), Bob Janules photo, Gene Bearss specimen

Bottom right: Bertrandite, Scott Whittemore photo, Gene Bearss specimen

A fifth picture from this article (Bavenite) will be printed in the May issue of the Newsletter



MMNE Secretarial Report for February 19, 2005
Chelmsford Public Library

President Jim Cahoon brought the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 noon. There were twenty members present and five guests according to the sign-in sheet. A motion was made and seconded to accept the January minutes as published in the newsletter. Anna Wilken followed with the Treasurer's report. This too was moved and accepted. A question was directed to Anna regarding how many previous members rejoined for the new calendar year. Anna responded that there were only four or five individuals who had not rejoined MMNE.

Jim Cahoon made it clear that to carry the "guest" microscope discussed during the January meeting back and forth to each meeting would be a great inconvenience. He asked if anyone else would be willing to do so. Once it was clear that there were no volunteers, discussion ensued which resulted in the determination that guests would be better served if they were to use a member's microscope.

President Cahoon announced that Scott Whittemore would be the speaker for the May 21st Symposium (Hudson, MA Elks Lodge). His presentation will encompass film and digital photography of minerals. He will discuss and demonstrate techniques and issues dissimilar and common to each.

Gene Bearss announced that he would show "Rhodochrosite, Red Treasure of the Rockies" at the end of the March 26th Chelmsford Library meeting. The DVD not only retraces the history of the now permanently closed Sweet Home Mine but also shows the tools and techniques of extracting and cleaning the specimens.

Anna Wilken asked President Cahoon if there was a menu determined for the May Symposium. Although there was "some dissatisfaction" expressed about the quality of the food offering last year, others felt it was quite good. Jim told Anna to remind him regarding the menu options by e-mail.

Mike Swanson asked if the April MMNE meeting date could be changed so as not to conflict with the Rochester Symposium. Norm Biggart said he would inquire with the Chelmsford Library to find out if it is possible to change to either April 9th or April 23rd.

If not possible the meeting date will remain April 16th.

Discussion developed regarding the disappointing turnout for the October 2004 meeting at the home of Vera Fogg. Although there was a sense there were a variety of reasons why members did not go, there was a willingness to try to keep the tradition alive. Gordon Jackson volunteered to speak to Vera Fogg to see if she would host and try again for 2005.

Door prizes were phosphate micros compliments of Steven and Janet Cares. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bob Wilken, Secretary.

(Conway Granite concluded from page 3)

THE FRESCHETTE QUARRY

As one drives on High Street to get to the Government Pit one passes another gravel operation just before it. This is the Freschette Quarry. Jim Parella has a knack of making interesting finds, and one day he showed me some microspecimens of fine blue **titanites** that he found at the Freschette. Scott Whittemore and I joined Jim at the quarry soon thereafter. He led us to one spot at the quarry. It appeared to be the only area that was at all vuggy. Soon we all had our pails full of promising material. In addition to the titanite crystals a few specimens of prismatic **milarite** turned up when we investigated what we took home.

(1) Bearss, G., and Janules, B. 1992. Mirolitic cavity minerals of the Government Pit, Albany, New Hampshire. *Rocks and Minerals* 67: 158-168

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

Next : Moat Mountain's Oliver Trench

DIRECTIONS TO CHELMSFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

From I-495 Northbound

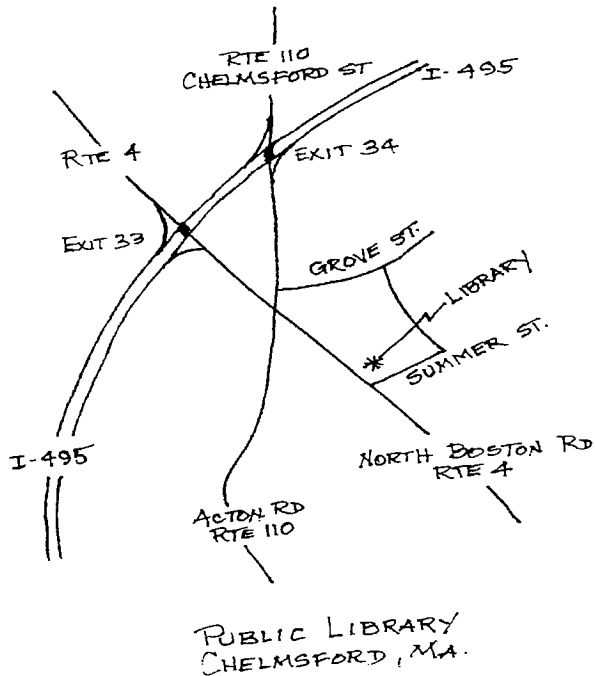
Take Exit 33 and turn right (South) at bottom of ramp onto Rte 4. Follow Rte 4 approximately ½ mile through several sets of lights to traffic island in center of town.

*Continue on Rte 4 to the right at the island and proceed past the Mobil station on your left (Note that you are on a one way street). The library is on the same island as the Mobil station. Continue on Rte 4 staying to the left for several hundred yards. The back side of the library is to your left. Take Rte 4 North, a left hand turn, and the library is the first building on the left. Park in the lot and enter through the front doors. The meeting room is to the right, just inside the entrance.

From I-495 South bound

Take exit 34 and turn right (South) at the bottom of the ramp onto Rte 110. Follow Rte 110 (Chelmsford Street) to junction of Rtes 110, 129, and 4. Go straight into Chelmsford Center, staying to the right of the Mobil station and follow directions from I-495 Northbound (*)

OR take Exit 33 and follow the directions from I-495 Northbound



Michael Swanson
Editor, MMNE Newsletter
646 Greenfield Road
Leyden, MA 01301-9400

Last Name	First Name	Address #1	City	State	Postal Code	Home Phone	e-Mail address
Anderson	John & Susan	17 Ginley Road	Walpole	MA	02081	(508) 668-2008	jranders@erols.com
Bannon	Lynn	68 Mountainview Street	Westfield	MA	01085	(413) 568-8740	lynnbannon@earthlink.net
Barker	Robert	PO Box 810	Campton	NH	03223-0810	(603) 536-2401	barker@eagle1st.com
Barker	Patricia	PO Box 810	Campton	NH	03223-0810	(603) 536-2401	barker@eagle1st.com
Bearss	Gene	33 North Avenue	Sanford	ME	04073-2943	(207) 324-3610	
Biggart	Norman B.	4 Baron Park Lane, Apt. #1	Burlington	MA	01801-5431	(781) 272-1537	normviking@juno.com
Boggs	Robert	10434 22 Avenue SW	Seattle	WA	98146-1333	(206) 242-7485	
Butler	Mathieu	940 Main St., Apt. 47	Woburn	MA	01801	(781) 932-3445	mbutler@emprix.com
Cahoon	James	31 Parker Street	Maynard	MA	01754	(978) 897-8221	jcahoon@geochronlabs.com
Cares	Janet & Steve	18 Singletary Lane	Sudbury	MA	01776-2402	(978) 443-9180	
Champlain	Richard	15 Burr Rd.	Old Lyme	CT	06371-1103	(860) 434-5092	
Charman	Al and Jeanette	571 Forest Road	West Suffield	CT	06093-2020	(860) 668-5200	
DeChristopher	David	127 Glendale Rd.	Agawam	MA	01001-3347	(413) 335-7582	daved@samnet.net
Ebner, Jr.	John	PO Box 1169	Wall	NJ	07719-1169	(732) 681-3451	jcebnerjr@cs.com
Fielding	Herbert	48 Butters Row	Wilmington	MA	01887-3341	(978) 657-7463	
Fogg	Vera	1040 Gorham Pond Road	Dunbarton	NH	03045-4508	(603) 774-6450	
Grandy	James	24 Rathburn Road	Westminster	VT	05158-0132	(802) 722-4772	
Gristani	Carlos	12 Jambard Road	Hollis	NH	03049	(603) 465-6292	carlosg@charter.net
Hakesley	Edward	1214 Glenbriar Court	Mountain Home	AR	72653	(870) 424-0956	edscamp@cox-internet.com
Henderson, Jr.	William A.	47 Robin Ridge Drive	Madison	CT	06443-2044	(203) 245-0489	willhenderson@cshore.com
Herard	Harold	2 Betty Street	Auburn	MA	01501	(508) 755-5947	hherard1@rcn.com
Hitchings	Marge	10 Church Street	Saugus	MA	01906-2474	(781) 233-4968	
Hubley	John & Anita	90 Valley View Drive	South Windsor	CT	06074-2829	(203) 644-9600	hubley264@cox.com
Hubley	Christopher	95 Naubuc Avenue	East Hartford	CT	06118	(860) 985-2043	
Jackson	Gordon & Pamela	PO Box 600	Canterbury	NH	03224-0600	(603) 783-4493	gsj8544@aol.com
Janules	Robert	17 Woodward Rd.	Merrimack	NH	03054	(603) 424-9269	janules@worldnet.att.net
Kieron	Michael W.	38 Merritt Road	Riverside	RI	02915-3805	(401) 434-0281	mikekieron@cox.net
Lane	Carolyn	673 Gore Road	Alfred	ME	04002-0245	(207) 324-5934	
Leighton	Phyllis	10 Templeton Road	Phillipston	MA	01331-9794	(978) 249-4261	
MacIndewar	Josephine	72 Ryder Avenue	Melrose	MA	02176-5418	(781) 665-9107	
Martin	Nathan	8 Elena Road	Lexington	MA	02421	(781) 674-0017	rocknate@gmail.com
Medard	Etienne	50 Meacham Road	Sommerville	MA	02144	(617) 372-7706	emedard@mit.edu
Morrison	Frances & George	182 Pine Street	Pawtucket	RI	02680-3918	(401) 726-2931	
Mortimer	Tom	3 Roberts Road	Amherst	NH	03031	(603) 673-4039	tjmort@aol.com
Mulvey	Joseph & Rosemary	24 Skyline Drive	Nashua	NH	03062	(603) 880-4018	bassneister_2000@yahoo.co
Parella	James	35 1/2 Wellsworth St.	Worcester	MA	01610	(508) 363-2388	jeparella@cs.com
Pershken	Richard	150 Surry Drive	Bristol	CT	06010-7261	(860) 583-3909	per1919@aol.com

Last Name	First Name	Address #1	City	State	Postal Code	Home Phone	e-Mail address
Porter	Brian	355 Walsh Ave.	Newington	CT	06111	(860) 666-4505	port0202@cox.net
Prescott	Malcolm L.	4 Eddy Court	Ware	MA	01082	(413) 967-3466	mprescott@samnet.net
Rambo	George & Doug	17 North Avon Drive	Claymont	DE	19703-1501	(302) 798-4163	georger@w.serve.com
Rambo	Doug	17 North Avon Drive	Claymont	DE	19703-1501	(302) 798-4163	drambo@w.serve.com
Reutlinger	Steve	PO Box 39	Greenfield	NH	03047-0039	(603) 547-3648	sjrprime@aol.com
Saums	Marjorie	24 Joseph Street	Manchester	CT	06040	(860) 643-9058	
Sevrens	Betty	PO Box 397	Plymouth	NH	03264-0397	(603) 536-2050	
Smith	Arthur	9118 Concho Street	Houston	TX	77036-6742	(713) 774-1869	artsmithite@msn.com
Sole	Jose	188-02 89th Avenue	Hollis	NY	11423-1906	(718) 776-3823	
Stenberg	Richard	185 Redlands Street	Springfield	MA	01104	(413) 733-9309	
Stewart	Margaret & John	244 Mill Street	Burlington	MA	01803-1838	(781) 272-0854	micromount@juno.com
Straiton	Ted	159 Chapman Place	Leominster	MA	01453	(978) 840-1553	Ehstraiton@aol.com
Swanson	Michael	646 Greenfield Road	Leyden	MA	01301-9400	(413) 773-3867	msmicros@crocker.com
Swarts	Johannes	PO Box 846	Bradford	VT	05033-0846	(802) 222-4875	johannes_swarts@gdt1.com
Taparowsky	Bettee	404 Westford Drive	Southport	CT	06490-1479	(203) 254-2508	
Teixeira	Angie	25 Chappell Street, Box 14B	Seekonk	MA	02771-4107	(508) 336-5561	angietex@aol.com
Whitmore	Robert	934 S. Stark Hwy.	Weare	NH	03281	(603) 529-2621	
Whittemore	Scott	8 Goldfinch Lane	Nashua	NH	03062-2243	(603) 888-1174	cyrtolite@aol.com
Wilken	Anna & Bob	79 Meadow Lane	Campton	NH	03223		microxl@mfire.net