



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. 292

November, 2008

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Current Meeting

Saturday, Nov. 15th
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chelmsford, MA
Doors open at 9 am

Map and driving
directions are on last
page

No December Meeting

For information regarding
MEETING CANCELLATION
due to inclement weather,
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Next Meeting:

Saturday, November 15, 2008, Trinity Lutheran Church Chelmsford, MA.

The meeting focus will be on **Microminerals of the Palermo Mine**, N. Groton, NH. President Joe Mulvey has obtained a video on this world famous mine to be shown as part of the day's program.

There will be no Micromounters of New England meeting in December. Our first meeting of the new year will be on January 17, 2009.

MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND MINUTES OF OCT. 18, 2008

Pat Barker Secretary pro tem

On October 18, toward the end of the glorious foliage season, nine members of the MMNE met at the Lutheran Church in Chelmsford, MA.

Ed Haksley from Mountain Home, Arkansas, an active member of the MMNE for many years, paid the club a welcome visit. Ed had some interesting collecting experiences to relate. He brought some very attractive give-away micro material from Arkansas and southwestern states that he has visited. Especially attractive were specimens from the Granite Mountain Quarry, Little Rock, Arkansas. The minerals from there are very similar to those from Mont Saint-Hilaire.

John McCrory of the Capital Mineral Club had donated a flat of small minerals that he had collected this past year or two.

At noon Vice-President, Gordon Jackson held a business meeting. The first topic was the possibility of a new location for our annual Reunion Meeting. A location nearer to a main interstate was one of the problems with the Elks Hall. Difficulty darkening the room for slide programs was another issue. Hal Herard had done some extensive searching in the Auburn, MA area and had two promising locations. Mike Swanson said that a meeting in Auburn might encourage attendance of some micromounters from the western part of the state, as well as Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York. However, since we would have to lock in these dates immediately, it was decided to continue for another year at the Elks. Anna Wilken will remind the Elks Hall that we require the hall on May 16, 2009, (the Saturday after Mother's Day).

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Page 2	Micromounters of New England Newsletter	Nov, 2008														
<p>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 <i>Newsletter</i> may be copied in other rock and mineral publications if credit is given to the author and the <i>Newsletter</i> 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. Meeting sites may change and will be posted in the <i>Newsletter</i> as far in advance as possible. Visitors are welcome to attend all meetings. Bring a microscope and light source if you have one.</p> <p>DUES are \$12/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 <i>Newsletter</i> will be sent on a family membership.</p>																
<p><u>Officers for 2007-2008</u></p> <table><tr><td>President: Joseph Mulvey 24 Skyline Drive Nashua, NH 03062-3516</td><td>(603) 880-4018</td><td>bassmeister_2000@yahoo.com</td></tr><tr><td>Vice President: Gordon Jackson, PO Box 600, Canterbury, NH 03224-0600</td><td>(603) 783-4493</td><td>gsj8544@aol.com</td></tr><tr><td>Treasurer: Anna Wilken, 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223</td><td>(603)536-2013</td><td>microxl@mfire.net</td></tr><tr><td>Secretary: Robert Wilken, 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223</td><td>(603)536-2013</td><td>microxl@mfire.net</td></tr></table> <p>Director:</p> <table><tr><td>(2006-2008) Gene Bearss, 33 North Ave., Sanford, ME 04073-2943</td><td>(207) 324-3610</td></tr></table>			President: Joseph Mulvey 24 Skyline Drive Nashua, NH 03062-3516	(603) 880-4018	bassmeister_2000@yahoo.com	Vice President: Gordon Jackson, PO Box 600, Canterbury, NH 03224-0600	(603) 783-4493	gsj8544@aol.com	Treasurer: Anna Wilken, 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223	(603)536-2013	microxl@mfire.net	Secretary: Robert Wilken, 79 Meadow Lane, Campton, NH 03223	(603)536-2013	microxl@mfire.net	(2006-2008) Gene Bearss, 33 North Ave., Sanford, ME 04073-2943	(207) 324-3610
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<p><u>MMNE Website:</u> http://www.micromountersofnewengland.org</p>																

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October 18 meeting minutes, continued from page 1

Another lengthy discussion was about a proposed contest mentioned in the Oct. bulletin for a “best micro.” Mike opined that we must have a topic, and we should have a best specimen each month to generate interest. Best specimen of a particular mineral, best specimen from a particular location and best specimen field collected this year were topics suggested.

Gene Bearss asked for a round of applause for Pat Barker for her recent donation of micro equipment. Pat asked about other club properties, in particular the where-abouts of the new stereopticon the club purchased to be able to show the box of mineral slides that Frank Leighton had taken over the years. These mineral slides were donated by Phyllis Leighton.

Gene told the parched caffeine-deprived gathering that he would provide coffee at the next meeting.

The October meeting was adjourned at 12:30.

Respectfully submitted by
Pat Barker Secretary pro tem

MMNE Secretarial Report for September 20, 2008

(Note, the September 2008 meeting minutes were unavailable in time for the October newsletter.)

President Joe Mulvey expressed the need to discuss a variety of questions and topics related to the club's May Meeting. Anna Wilken informed the members present that the club had made a profit of approximately six hundred dollars during the past spring's event, a bit of good news that was not widely known.

With this "new-found" profit in mind, Joe felt it might be a good time to move the event to more preferred venue. Several locations were discussed such as the Harvard Museum, the Moose Lodge in Marlboro and a location in Auburn. Gene Bearss said the museum was not possible and, regarding the Auburn location, several members felt it was not central enough for most active club members.

On the topic of a May meeting speaker, two names emerged Les Horvath for a presentation on Mont St. Hilaire and Ronnie van Dommelen for one on Nova Scotia collecting localities. When it became clear that members were amenable to a MSH presentation, Joe said he would find out if Les Horvath would be available for the May date in 2009. Gene Bearss suggested that Ronnie van Dommelen could be an excellent choice for the following year.

When the president mentioned the topic of May Meeting advertising Anna Wilken expressed the feeling that, whenever attempted in the past, it just did not bear any results. Other members tended to agree. But, Joe felt there was always potential for "a new crop" of micromounters and that an effort should be made. Gene Bearss voiced the opinion that a direct invitation should be made to members in other micromount groups (such as in New Jersey club). He thought this would be more effective than general advertising. Nevertheless, others discussed the general notices through journals such as "Mineral News" and "Rocks and Minerals". Joe suggested the EFMLS newsletter and website as yet another way to get the word out.

Joe asked the members if there was any objection to soliciting donations for the May Meeting as he had done last year. No one was opposed to it.

The President stated the need for a type of advertising done by other clubs so as to increase membership. He said he was interested in designing a club brochure that included data such as activities and goals of MMNE as well as contacts and meeting dates. Tom Mortimer said the Nashua club had had one for years and that it could be done in a low-cost manner and in a "tri-fold" format. Joe said the intent would be to make it available at mineral shows, other club meetings and even such places as mineral shops.

Joe's agenda now changed to a discussion of club by-laws. He said that several officers had responded to his request to review the by-laws. He said they made helpful, concrete and specific suggestions for updating them. Joe said he would publish the most recent by-laws with the officer-suggested corrections so members could review them in advance of the November club meeting. Members agreed that the task should be limited to members in attendance at that meeting so as not to complicate the process.

Members briefly discussed the need to inventory club-owned equipment. Joe Mulvey said that he would consider listing all equipment in the "Members" section of the club website. He also said the list could be published annually in the newsletter. Tom Mortimer suggested affixing labels to each piece of equipment. Gene Bearss said he thought engraving them would be more tamperproof. Tom also said a digital image of all equipment would be a good idea.

Continued next page

MMNE Secretarial Report for September 20, 2008 *continued from previous page*

Joe floated the idea of having a yearly micromineral competition. He said each member could enter two or three specimens and that the mounting as well as the mineral would be included in the judging criteria. Due to a variety of factors such as age, ability-to-collect and a relatively small membership, entries could be either self-collected (with no limitation on **when** collected) or purchased, Joe and others were in favor of the idea as a way to encourage members to see what others are collecting. A short discussion erupted regarding the idea of having field trips. Members pretty much agreed it helped to build club membership. Gene cited the Saco Mineral Club as a case in point. Yet, some felt that difficulty in finding good micro sites was a major problem. Also, the fact that the small club membership

and its dispersal over such a large area tended to result in such a small turnout that the idea was impracticable. Peter Cristofono said he would be willing to lead a trip to Loudville. But, when Anna Wilken asked how many would go, only one hand was raised.

Other miscellaneous announcements and musing occurred in the course of the meeting. Joe said the price of the club website had increased one dollar per month. Tom Mortimer asked people to consider writing articles for the newsletter. Joe announced that he had not purchased the club's digital camera. Joe wondered if Bob Whitmore might be available as a speaker for one of the upcoming meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Wilken, Secretary

Notes from our club president, Joe Mulvey**2009 May Symposium**

Save the date: May 16, 2009 at the Elk's Hall in Hudson, MA. Guest speaker will be Laszlo Horvath. The title of the talk will be: "Rare earth minerals of Mont Saint-Hilaire." I have emailed Laszlo requesting a photograph and biography for our symposium brochure as well as pre-event publicity.

MMNE Brochure

It has been suggested by Tom Mortimer that it would be infinitely cheaper to create the brochure for distribution at other club's mineral shows as a black and white document instead of color.

It has also been suggested that I mislabeled the arch at Palermo as being at Palermo #2 when in fact it is Palermo #1. My humble thanks to Gordon Jackson and my apologies to all.

I will be adding the May Symposium information to the brochure and hope to be able to distribute this for the first time at the Worcester Mineral Show November 22-23.

Cataloging Your Collection

By Joe Mulvey

It has been said by somebody that unless you catalog your collection, all you really have is a box of rocks! While all of us probably place a high value on our mineral collections, this value is always underestimated by the geologically challenged.

There are many reasons to catalog your mineral collection:

1. To keep track of what you have
2. To record when and where you obtained specific specimens
3. To help recall where you have stored those priceless mounts
4. To note whether each specimen was a gift, collected, obtained at the give away table or purchased
5. As we get older we forget more and more, having your collection documented means anybody can understand your collection even if you can't remember whether that eosphorite you collected 25 years ago came from Palermo #1 or #2!
6. If anything ever happens to you, a documented collection will have value to your descendants. An undocumented collection wouldn't make sense to many.

I am very happy to say that over the past two years I have cataloged about half of my collection. I chose to use Microsoft Excel to document my collection. While some would have chosen to use Microsoft Access, I felt that I would be preoccupied with the program instead of being able to focus on the collection. I do feel I know Excel extremely well, and I also know that once the data is in Excel, it can easily be exported in the future into any other database, even a web based interface. As a matter of fact, I have exported my collection into web pages from Excel successfully by just using the Save As web page command.

Each column is specific to one type of info about the specimen. Each row is dedicated to one specimen. The fields I chose to track for each specimen are as follows:

Catalog Number I chose to start with 1001, thinking that 4 digits would allow me 9,999 minerals before having to go to a 5 digit system. Using a laser printer, I printed size 5 Arial font numbers on a large sheet of labels. I got about 1000 numbers on one page and used scissors to cut out each one and either affix it to the box or to the backside of the specimen. Especially with the micros I used tweezers to affix the label. I then coated the label with clear nail polish. Typically, I would pull out one drawer at a time and label all of the contents, which would take one or two evenings. After labeling, I brought the drawer over to my PC and entered the specimens into the database. Some people choose to use the Dana numbering system followed by a hyphen and then an incremental number starting at 1 for each example of a species. For my collection, I felt that this was overkill.

Specimen Name Self explanatory, I refer to Pough's Rocks & Minerals as well as Mindat to verify correct spelling.

Specimen Size Use standard size declarations: MM for micromount, TN for thumbnail, SC for small cabinet, etc.

Continued next page

Cataloging Your Collection *Continued from previous page*

Mine Collection locality, again like the specimen name, I try to verify correct spelling to maintain consistency as much as possible.

City Self explanatory

County Self explanatory

State Self explanatory

Country Self explanatory

How Obtained I enter info such as self-collected, gift of, MMNE giveaway, Purchased at 2007 MMNE Symposium, etc.

Year Obtained Self explanatory

Cost, if purchased Self explanatory

Estimated Value I try to give a value to everything to understand my investment as well as to make the worth of the collection known because eventually, my daughter will inherit my collection.

Specimen Storage Location I have a wooden cabinet 30" x 20' x 20' with 10 drawers. I call it Cab1 and each drawer is labeled from 1 – 10. So a specimen in drawer 3 would be located in Cab1 Drawer 3.

Specimen Notes I left a field to make notes such as associated minerals, what to look for that makes it special, things to remember.

External Mineral Information I put a URL link to the PDF file for the mineral on the RRUF website or a link to the Mindat specific mineral home page.

External Magazine Articles Articles I have scanned that were significant to my collection and interests relating either to a specimen of locality.

For your collection you may choose additional fields or deem some of my choices as either extravagant or foolish. It's your collection and your call. Set it up as you wish!

Some database notes about using Excel as your collection management system.

1. Sorting: select all, use the sort option and sort by whichever column strikes your fancy. For instance, say I am labeling yet another micro from Palermo and I start wondering just how many Palermo specimens I have cataloged so far. Using the sort option to use the Location field as the primary key, and the mineral name as the secondary, I will see the sheet sorted by location, then by mineral name, thus revealing that I have an extraordinary amount of Palermo specimens. I can sort by any field based on what strikes my fancy at the time. When I am done, I re-sort based on the catalog ID number.

Cataloging Your Collection *Continued from previous page*

2. ID Cards: Using Microsoft word and the mail merge function, I created a template for my specimens that takes name, ID number, locality info and formats it into a card that has a nice header that says "From the Collection of Joseph Mulvey" with the details of the mineral below.
3. Printing: I can print the collection info and bring it with me to events whether they are meetings, mineral shows, dealers' houses, etc. I no longer have to rely on memory to see if I have any mimetite from the Tiger Mine.
4. I can also save this to a laptop to bring with me to a meeting and even synchronize it to my Palm Pilot.
5. Sorting options have taught me a lot about what my collecting interests really are! If you had asked me prior to cataloging what my collection of minerals entailed I would have said New Hampshire minerals focusing on the White Mountains. In retrospect you will find that I enjoy the colorful minerals of the southwestern United States, Palermo and Mt Saint Hilaire.
6. I use the auto complete option in tools so that I always spell things consistently; this enhances the sorting.
7. If I give a specimen away or it disintegrates I use the strikeout option under format to show that the mineral once existed in my collection but was donated to another or that a pet ate it. I choose not to remove the entry from the database.
8. You can backup and archive your collection information. You will always have copies. While index cards are visually appealing and very impressive, they are manually challenging. Once enough specimens have been cataloged, a paper-based system will become unwieldy and you won't have the sorting options that allow you to summarize and report your information for a greater understanding of what you have.
9. I also have the option of emailing my collection database to others who may be interested in what I have.
10. The final piece that I expect to accomplish will be a specimen photo of each item with a link in a new column. This will be an external photo as opposed to embedding the picture into the spreadsheet.

Worcester Mineral Show

November 22-23, 2008 Worcester, MA Worcester Mineral Club. Saturday and Sunday 10am to 5pm at National Guard Armory, 701 Lincoln Street, Worcester, MA Take I-290, exit 22, Main Street Shrewsbury towards Worcester, through light, up hill, armory and parking lot on left. Contact: WMC, P.O. Box 2278, Worcester, MA 01613. Phone 413-477-0107 for further information or visit the website at <http://www.worcestermineralclub.org/index.htm>

American Mineralogist Crystal Structure Database

This site is an interface to a crystal structure database that includes every structure published in the American Mineralogist, The Canadian Mineralogist, European Journal of Mineralogy and Physics and Chemistry of Minerals, as well as selected datasets from other journals. The database is maintained under the care of the Mineralogical Society of America and the Mineralogical Association of Canada, and financed by the National Science Foundation.

<http://rruff.geo.arizona.edu/AMS/amcsd.php>

Collecting the Sugarloaf Boulder Field Area

Text, Bob Wilken

Photos, Tom Mortimer and Anna Wilken

Autumn is great for collecting so once again Tom Mortimer and I set off for a trip to the North Mount Sugarloaf area in the town of Bethlehem (Twin Mountain district), NH. On our trip to Iron Mountain we had the opportunity to talk more about places we would like to visit. And this was one of them. Tom had collected at Sugarloaf once back in the '80s and thought he would like a revisit. This time we had Mike Undercofler as a guide. Tom felt he would remember more accurately where the boulder field was. We opted not to make the lengthier climb to North Sugarloaf summit to collect at the "smoky quartz site". Some other day for this!

Admittedly no micro collector, Mike was somewhat nostalgic about Sugarloaf. As recorded in the July/August 1990 New Hampshire issue of "Rocks and Minerals", Nashua Mineral Club members discovered a huge boulder that contained a long pipe-like cavity filled with nice big microcline crystals. The story goes that in 1982 Bob Janules devised a claw-like tool that "raked out" the long pipe while Mike stationed himself below to catch everything that came out. Material from along the cavity walls yielded large microcline crystals, (photo below), as well as many micromineral species, such as helvite, danalite, bertrandite and plumbopyrochlore.

Tom and Mike carpooled up from downstate so Anna and I piled into the back seat of Tom's trusty Subaru and we headed up I-93 to US 3 North to NH 302 East. When we left the Plymouth area it was nice and sunny but as we got into the White Mountains it became very gray, cold and damp. We pulled off at the Zealand Picnic area and followed the dirt road to a parking area near the Sugarloaf Trail marker. The trail sets out along the southwest side of the Zealand River. After a while the trail departs the river and continues through a flat, often wet mucky area before it starts at first to ascend very modestly and then later more steeply.

After about twenty minutes of hiking we came to some huge boulders on the right side of the trail. At this point Mike figured he should go off trail and explore a bit. After a short time he emerged from the bush not so sure this was the area. So, we opted to keep climbing. After we climbed another ten minutes or so without finding other trailside boulders, Mike decided maybe the area we had stopped at must have been the right place after all. So back down we went.

We all struck off into the bush near the "A-shaped" space formed by two huge, leaning boulders. And, within a couple of minutes this time Mike yelled he had found the boulder. You had to get down on your hands and knees under the boulder overhang to look up into the "pipe". Tom, always prepared for anything, took out his digital camera and attached it to the end of a length of flexible gooseneck attached to a stick. Using the camera timer he soon had images of the upper reaches of the cavity. Of course, the idea behind this was to determine if the cavity continued in any way. Several digital snapshots soon revealed to Tom that the pipe walls had been plucked clean of all crystals. The pipe did not continue in any direction, this "glory hole" was empty!

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Collecting the Sugarloaf Boulder Field Area*Continued from previous page*

3.5 inch **Microcline** crystal from boulder pipe collected 1983. (T. Mortimer specimen & photo)



View inside pipe of large boulder on flank of N. Sugarloaf Mtn. October 2008

Now, without going into details about collecting methods in a national park, suffice it to say we “looked around” for minerals...one of us for big ones, the others for small ones! One would hardly know that any collecting had transpired at the location some twenty years ago. Exploring other boulders in the area revealed miarolitic cavities that showed signs of past hammer blows. It seemed the most promising ones were either cleaned out long ago or in very inconvenient locations. Holding a chisel two feet over your head with one hand while trying to swing a crack hammer with the other just is not a very effective way to break rock. It's just a good way of whacking your hand.

Well, what were the results of our trip? Most of all we had a lot of fun. Ah, I know it's not what you want to hear after investing so much time in reading all this narrative. But, unfortunately, our mineral finds were few. Among us we found a few loose microcline crystals, thumbnail-and-up to a couple of inches in diameter. As for microminerals, we found lots of siderite xls and some etched colorless fluorite crystals. This was not our lucky day for beryllium minerals.



Bob Wilken exploring rubble below boulder pipe. Large miarolitic cavity pipe, red arrow, above Bob's head. (Anna Wilken photo)



Tom Mortimer, (left), cultivating soil for next season's fern crop. Mike Undercofler supervising. (Anna Wilken photo)

DIRECTIONS TO TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, CHELMSFORD MA

170 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford, MA.

From Rt. 3, take Exit 32, (The "Drum Hill Rotary"). From Rotary, Take Old Westford Rd. towards Westford for about .85 miles to Grandview Rd. Entrance for Trinity Lutheran Church on left. Proceed up rather long driveway to parking area. If things go according to plan, we should be able to use the entrance on the far left side of the church. Our meeting room is just inside this entrance.

Those coming from the south may want to try an alternate route, exiting from Rt. 495 at Exit 33, then taking Rt. 4 north to a left onto Davis Rd.... see map below.

