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. 301 November, 2009

Current Meeting
Saturday, Nov.21, 2009
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chelmsford, MA
Doors open at 9 am

Next Meeting
To Be Announced
2010
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chelmsford, MA

Map and driving directions are on the last page of this newsletter

For information regarding **MEETING CANCELLATION** due to inclement weather,
Joseph Mulvey
(603) 880-4018
bassmeister_2000
@yahoo.com

Welcome to the November edition of the **Micromounters of New England** newsletter.

November Meeting

The November meeting was a great meeting! Some super micro material was donated to the giveaway tables by **Gene Bearss**. Gene also supplied us with caffeine which certainly was lacking at the September meeting! Our specimen competition in search of the perfect isometric micro was great. Four specimens were submitted for examination; you will see the photos elsewhere in the newsletter, unfortunately one of the specimens did not really qualify as a micro. We had a tie for first place between **Anna Wilken** with a great fluorite from the Walworth Quarries in New York and a beautiful garnet from **Dana Jewell** collected at Eden Mills, probably from the glory days. **Bryan Manke's** pyrite from Maine's Harvard Quarry was extremely nice as well, especially considered how that tiny crystal somehow held on to the matrix so well!

Brian Porter

It is truly with a heavy heart I am sorry to report that long time member Brian Porter passed away to cancer after a battle that lasted over a year. Brian was only 47. He had been in the club for many years but rarely made it to meetings other than the May symposium in recent years. I am sure that at the November meeting the club will unanimously vote to make a donation in Brian's name to Earlham College in Indiana as requested by his family. Brian lived in Newington, CT. He leaves his wife Sandra and a son, Curtis Porter.


Brian Porter

Outreach

There was discussion about assembling give away material for kids or to donate to schools at the meeting. While the general consensus was that this probably won't amount to any new members, I think I will still give it a shot using our club material. We also discussed cigar boxes containing small collections for people. It was interesting to hear **Suzanne Wall** mention that she too uses cigar boxes as a mineral collection delivery system. A friend of mine, **Pete Leed** was the man who first suggested to me this mode of giving small collections to kids. An engineer and salesman by trade, Pete donates his free time to working with autistic children where his cigar boxes have become quite a hit. While not necessarily a micro article, Pete has given permission to use this great collection article in our newsletter. You will find it later in this edition.

Up and coming meetings changes to dates and locations

The **Boston Mineral Club's Annual Club Auction** is Saturday, January 16, 2010. With so many members overlapping in membership, it would be great if the MMNE could move the January meeting to Saturday, January 23, 2010 instead. We will need to discuss this at the November meeting and get the word out as soon as a consensus is reached. The BMC Auction is certainly an event not to be missed!

We also need to determine a date for a meeting to be held at **Pat Barker's** house. She has graciously volunteered to host a meeting and I hope the closer distance will enable some of our Maine members to have a chance for attending a regular club meeting.

The speaker for the **May Symposium** should be settled and announced very soon.

Newsletter Submissions

Bryan Manke has assembled a great review of available trimmers on the market. Members may recall that the door prize for the May 2010 symposium will be a brand new trimmer. Please read Bryan's research so that you may share your impression as to which one the club should purchase. I also have been granted permission to reprint a great mineral trimming article by **Mike Howard** of Rockhounding Ar. Mike's website is packed with great material! Check out http://rockhoundingAR.com. Thanks to **Larry Rush** for his superb article on cleaning your newly trimmed specimens. I am not sure if his techniques work best on material from Mexico, maybe you can tell me!

The ***Newsletter*** is the official publication of the Micromounters of New England (MMNE). The last by-laws revision was May 16, 2009. 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. Meeting sites may change 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 $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 *Newsletter* will be sent on a family membership.

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Albite, some coated with Childrenite, Palermo #1

Minerals Stolen

The mineral museum at Teigarhorn in Djupivogur (Berufjord), Iceland, in the heart of the zeolite find area, has recently been robbed and a significant number of mineral specimens have been stolen. According to one report 500 pieces valued around $120,000 in US dollars were taken. More information can be obtained online at Mindat. Christa Feucht is collecting any information regarding this incident for the museum. She can be reached via e-mail at Christa@feucht.ch. (I assume Christa is female).

Club Equipment

Currently, the club digital camera is booked until the December. The club microscope, bellows assembly and SLR camera have been reserved for November – December. If you want to get on the list for this or any other equipment, please feel free to drop a line to me, Joe Mulvey.

Up and Coming Mineral Events and Shows

November 10 Rhode Island Mineral Hunters monthly meeting
November 11 Southeastern NH Mineral Club monthly meeting
November 20 North Shore Mineral Club monthly meeting
November 21 **Micromounters of New England monthly meeting**
November 21-22 Worcester Mineral Club Annual Show
November 25 Nashua Mineral Society monthly meeting
December 1 Boston Mineral Club monthly meeting
December 2 Connecticut Valley Mineral Club monthly meeting

2009-2010 Micromounters of New England Meeting Agenda

Saturday, November 21, 2009……Micro swap – everyone swaps a specimen at the "special swap" table
Saturday, January 16, 2010 OR January 23, 2010.Competition: Most specimens on one piece, size less than $2cm^3$
Saturday, February 20, 2010……..To be determined at fall 2009 meetings
Saturday, March 20, 2010……..To be determined at fall 2009 meetings
Saturday, April 17, 2010……To be determined at fall 2009 meetings
Saturday, May 15, 2010…….The 2010 Micromounters of New England Annual Symposium

Cigar Box Rocks by Pete Leed

Most mineral collectors begin as children. It seems that several important mineral collectors recall that their first mineral collection was kept in a cigar box. Often the box was a gift from their father or another adult. Often this small gift fostered an interest in collecting that lasted a lifetime.

When I was about nine, I started to collect minerals. My first collection site was in upstate New York. The site was an old and closed magnetite mine on a state park a couple of hours north of where we lived. My father put the few samples I collected and some others he found together in a cigar box. I don't know where he got the box- he was not a cigar smoker but this simple act transformed these samples into special ones and encouraged my collecting.

I primarily collect commercial minerals (ores) with an emphasis on fluorescent minerals. Early in my career as an engineer I worked for a manufacturer of ore processing equipment. I traveled to many mines in the United States and Canada and took full advantage of what I like to call "all expenses paid collecting opportunities."

My father's interest in geology probably began by accident during his field training in World War II in the American Southwest Deserts. My father had a knack with maps and liked fooling around with gadgets. The Army put these skills to good use. He was assigned to conduct survival and weapons training for Army Rangers prior to Operation Torch. During the training my father worked with a soldier from California who had been studying geology at college prior to the war. As things go they became friends and shared their interests.

Fortunately for my father who was colorblind, the geology of desert areas is especially evident because of the lack of vegetation. Although my father wanted to become a geologist, he felt his lack of color vision would limit him. After the war, he decided to go into business; but he never really forgot about his interest in geology. He continued to collect - mainly rocks and fossils. Largely self-taught, my father completed the course work for a masters in geology after he retired from business.

When my father passed away in 1996 after struggling with cancer for years, I inherited his collection. As a way to cope with my grief, I wanted to do something that I thought would have pleased him. I came up with the idea of dispersing samples from the family collection. Initially, I simply gave showy samples away to friends and relatives. One of my relatives became interested in mineral collecting and has increased her collection on her own. These initial efforts did not completely satisfy me. So I began to give it some more thought.

Slowly I remembered the effect that the cigar box had on me. So about four years ago, I decided to put together small mineral collections in cigar boxes. I gave them out to the children of friends and relatives. My initial kits were very simple. Inside a cleaned up cigar box, I put six to twelve labeled samples.

All of my boxes begin with a little bit of planning. I try to find out something about the child's favorite things such as colors, pets, toys, interests, etc. from the parents. These things give me ideas about a theme I can use to link the box's design to the child. Much of what I do is based on these efforts.

For example, many cigar boxes have a piece of velvet glued to the inside lid. Early on I decided to glue a piece of velvet or woolen cloth inside those that didn't. Inside the lid, I often glued a numbered list of the samples. Later I put where the samples came from and something about them.

To answer the many questions about minerals in the boxes, I decided to include the book A Golden Guide to Rock and Minerals by Shaffer. For older children I substitute the more complete National Audubon Society's Field Guide to North American Rock and Minerals. Children between eight and thirteen years old have been the most receptive to this these kits.

Each time I made up a box, I spent more time fussing with it. Soon I decided to disassemble the box and completely sand, stain and polyurethane it. Because I do not want to encourage smoking (the nasty habit that took my father's life), I remove all the labels from the box that refer to smoking or cigars. To make the box sturdy and nice looking, I replace the original hinges and latches with brass or hand made ones.

Sometimes at yard sales, I find old or broken jewelry. I have disassembled and inserted the stones or chains from these pieces on the boxes. Once I came across the remnants of someone's jewelry hobby and thus acquired a small stock of polished stones, tools, wire, and other interesting items.

Soon afterwards, I started to experiment with combining the wire with the polished stone cabochons or cabs as they are called to form the child's initials. I have found Elmer's Carpenter's glue to works well for attaching the stones to the boxes. On all of the boxes, I make sure to include the child's name or initials.

A friend whose hobby it is to carve wood gave me some ideas on how to hand carve the boxes. I have found that the Dremel rotary tool works well. Especially useful is the routing and engraving attachments. I also use the tool to drill, cut and sand portions of the boxes.

Sometimes inside the boxes are wood slats, I call lid guides. These I hand sand and finish and sometimes write inspiring words or phases with a golden paint pen. Note that you need to use a glossy glaze to protect the writing before applying the polyurethane finish.

On a few boxes, I inserted covers from my childhood "Rock and Mineral" magazines, glued photographs of minerals or picture postcards with interesting landscapes. I found that Elmer's spray on adhesive (contact cement) works well for attaching these items.

In all of my tinkering I try to avoid making the boxes look store bought or too fancy. I want the child to know the box was made especially for them. But I don't want the box so fancy that the child will not feel free to personalize their box. So instead of making my own boxes from exotic woods or simply buying them, I work with common wooden cigar boxes.

As I got more proficient making up the boxes, I started to include more things. My father had an assortment of mineral collecting tools and various instruments. In addition he had a collection of textbooks and geological maps. I have a similar collection of items. Depending on the interest level of the child, I have included some of these items. These items have included hammers, compasses, handheld GPS units, field notebooks, hardness test kits or just about anything else that made sense and few things that didn't.

A couple of years ago, I started to collect useful documents from the numerous web sites devoted to rock and mineral collecting and geology in general. As needed I corrected spelling and grammatical errors and changed the document to the font I adopted as a standard (Times New Roman). Sometimes I would edit the document so it more suited my purposes.

Whenever the recipient showed interest in collecting, geology or science in general, I made it a point to send along additional samples and other useful items from time to time. I think that the earlier one gets exposed to hands on science, the easier it will be to do science later. Although several recipients have shown considerable interest, it is too early to tell if my efforts will have a lasting effect. Mostly I try to get the parents to recognize and encourage their child's interest.

Several of my friends have contributed samples, tools, books, supplies and ideas on what to do with the boxes. Through my business contacts I have arranged to get samples from several worldwide locations. Another friend, an employee of the Audubon handbook's publisher, manages from time to time to supply me a few copies. I get the cigar boxes for free from a local liquor store that saves them and on occasion from other stores. It seems that everyone wants to help children.

I have been teaching myself how to paint and draw. So far I have tried a do some landscapes, flowers, and figures. My idea is to paint something interesting inside the box lids. I am still experimenting with ideas for enhancing the boxes. It has become sort of a hobby.

This fall I decided to put together a newsletter called The Cigar Box Rocks Liner (CBRL). I haven't decided what direction to go with the newsletter. The first issue discussed mineral formation and included photographs of minerals that illustrated the concepts. I included two bedrock maps from Michigan's State Department of Geology's web page. Probably, I will collaborate with others and put together a few articles and some interesting information. But I am not sure just yet.

The bottom line to all of this is I believe my father would be pleased to learn his lifelong interest is being passed on to the next generation. I know I am.

Worcester Mineral Club Annual Show November 21-22

The centerpiece of the club's year is our annual show held in November. Dates and times can be found on our show page and below. The show provides members and the general public an opportunity to purchase gems, jewelry, fossils, minerals, lapidary, and related publications and equipment. The show features dealers with a wide range of material from children's and beginner lever items to advanced collector's items. Prices range from less than a dollar to hundreds of dollars.

November 21-22, 2009 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 413-477-0107

Review of Mineral Trimmers by Bryan Manke

Scouring the internet for trimmers suitable for micro-material, I have found only three that are truly applicable for this application. I thought it would be a breeze to find a wide selection of trimmers, but that task was more difficult than planned. Here are three models which seem to be the most popular.

Trimmer #1

This trimmer is manufactured in China under the name Wydar. This hand-forged steel unit with 6.5cm maximum clearance (using large chisels as shown in the picture above). Included with the trimmer price:

- 2 upper, 2.0cm hardened chisels
- 1 upper hardened steel micro chisel,1.0cm - screw-thread
- 2 settings for the lower chisels, 1 for high, 1 for low
- 2 mandrels to prevent rotation of upper chisels -
- 1 for micro chisel
- 1 for regular chisel
- 1 base plate with 4 domed bolts and washers
- 1 plastic carrying case.

I own this particular model. I have broken one chisel, and have gone through one mandrel (this was when I first bought the unit and was *probably* using it incorrectly). This unit should be bolted to a solid structure using the base plate provided, I have not done that. I find that it works well for most matrixes, however, large pieces of quartzite need to be broken down to a smaller size with hammer and chisel in order for this unit to trim the rock. Both upper and lower chisels and be rotated 90 degrees.

There are two places to order this unit

1) Simkev Micromounts http://www.simkevmicromounts.com/suppliesTrimmer1.htm - Cost is about $100 with shipping. Replacement chisels are $10 each. But there is a minimum order of $25.00. This is a Canadian outfit whom I've ordered with in the past.

2) Attard's Minerals
http://www.attminerals.com/equipment.htm
Cost is $85 and replacement chisels/cutters are $5

Trimmer #2

This trimmer is "designed for precision trimming of micro and miniature specimens" according to Absolute Clarity who designs and sells the unit.

It has a steel construction and 5% Cobalt Tool Steel for strength and chipping prevention. The tips are rotatable to the 0, 45 and 90 degree positions.

Extra chisels are available, but according to the lady I spoke with, none have ever been ordered. This appears to be a solid unit for the micromounter.

Total cost including shipping is $100. This unit can be found at http://www.absoluteclarity.com/splitters.htm

Trimmer #3

This German unit has been branded the "Cadillac of Rock Trimmers" by Shannon & Sons. They claim it can handle the hardest Grand Reef quartzite to rhyolite to massive quartz and does a super job on softer matrixes too. This trimmer builds up a hydraulic pressure of 5000kp and can handle sizes from thumbnail up to cabinet pieces with an opening of 10.5cm x 17cm. The trimmer appears to be suitable for all collectors from cabinets to micros and could potentially replace manual trimming all together. This unit is sold with a standard 90 degree hardened steel chisels, however other angles and styles are available. It comes with a fixed acrylic glass screen on both sides for chip protection. It is sold by Shannon & Sons for $579 plus shipping (which is about $1.40/lb to the Northeast. This unit can be found at http://www.shannonsminerals.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=30091

Primer on Mineral Triming by Mike Howard of RockhoundingAR.com

GETTING RID OF extra matrix, or removing unattractive parts of the specimen will enhance your pieces, sometimes turning an ordinary piece into a real show piece. It takes study and courage, but the rewards are worth it.

A use for leaverite

Ever wonder what you are going to do with all that leaverite and trashite you hauled home in your early collecting years and haven't gotten rid of yet? Well, you could use some of it to learn something about trimming specimens. After reading this article, try trimming out a crummy pocket of broken crystals, just to get the experience!

Start in the field

Trimming usually begins in the field where you find the specimens. I usually carry an 8-pound sledge hammer and a 4-pound crack hammer with me wherever I roam. These are generally sufficient to get the specimen down to a size that I can bring it in from the field. Also, many materials will not hold up to this type of trimming (the shock from the hammer blows break the crystals loose from the matrix) so it becomes evident that only through experience will you learn what can stand up to collecting and what to leave for someone else to waste their time and energy on. A knowledge of the matrix and its peculiar nature is essential. You will ruin some specimens learning how to trim, but hopefully, you will also learn how to greatly improve some of your specimens.

An expensive lesson

An example that taught me a lesson concerns a nice thumbnail of bright yellow paper thin wulfenite blades that I paid $40 for. The matrix was too large for a perky box so I thought that if it would trim to fit, I would have a $100 thumbnail for my efforts. Well, I used a pair of ceramic tile nippers. The shock generated when the matrix popped shattered the wulfenite into a hundred pieces. All this happened because I was not experienced in trimming that type of specimen and host rock. The lesson: don't work on a good quality specimen until you have the experience gained from trimming some average quality samples.

Trimming tools to use

There are many tools that can be used to trim specimens. You are only limited by your pocketbook. Simple hammers, chisels, and tile trimmers may be supplemented by screw-type pressure trimmers, hydraulic pressure trimmers, and/or diamond saws. (Note: a peculiar trait of veteran mineral collectors is that they really dislike a saw cut surface on a specimen, so if you must use a saw for trimming, be prepared to take some flack from some collectors) Never trim a specimen just to make it set up nicely. You can always get a stand to accomplish this goal.

Go easy

Shock is the great enemy of any specimen. Anything that can be done to reduce shock will give you better odds of accomplishing your task. I once cradled a cabinet-sized specimen in my lap and held it with leather gloves as tightly as possible while a companion trimmed over half the matrix off with a 4-pound sledge hammer. The weight went from about 15 pounds to about 8, while the wholesale value went from $225 to $650! It was hard work and took about 10 minutes of concentrated effort, but was a most interesting experience. The collector, an expert in trimming this material, had saved the piece for almost a year because he knew I would be trusting enough to help him, and because he could not do this by himself.

The goal

The purpose of trimming is to remove excess material to improve the overall quality and to remove damaged areas detracting from the overall esthetics of the piece, thus improving the value of the specimen. If you cannot accomplish these goals, then do not trim it.

Matrix vs. crystals

Matrix has its own properties, independent of the minerals you desire to collect. It may be soft and punky, brittle and highly fractured, compact and hard as the hinges of hades, uniform and predictable, or any combination of these characteristics. Keep in mind the strength of the crystals you are trying to recover. Are they brittle or do they cleave easily? Are they firmly attached or about ready to fall off? These properties (of both matrix and crystals) you can quickly learn from a poor quality specimen by tapping on it with a regular rock hammer.

Some recommendations

I can not tell you which specific method to use because I cannot possibly know the characteristics of every specimen. But I can make a few recommendations. Then it's up to you to try, and through your efforts, gain the necessary experience.

Two kinds of matrix

I deal mostly with 2 types of matrix: hard and uniform that is somewhat brittle, and softer and highly fractured. The former is relatively easy to work with and the latter much more difficult.

Hard matrix

When I work with hard and uniform matrix, I often am trying to extract a pocket of crystals from a very large host rock. I start in the field with an 8-pound sledge to remove bulk from the piece. I work away from the pocket, but not opposite it since the shock would carry straight through the matrix and to the crystals. Once it is down to a reasonable size, depending on the scarcity of the types of crystals, I either work it on down with a 4-pound hammer or wrap it up to take to my prep area at home where I can take more time and work under a more controlled environment. There I may use a pressure trimmer or chipping hammer to remove the remaining excess host rock. If the boulder is too large to work effectively with an 8-pound hammer, then I get serious around the edge of the pocket with a hammer and chisel. I often recover as a couple of miniature specimens the best portion of a crystal pocket that otherwise is impossible to collect. These specimens I handle very carefully and wrap with toilet paper (one of the cheapest and handiest wrapping papers ever invented!). Many times I have nothing else to do with these pieces other than to clean them.

Soft and fractured matrix

Soft and/or fractured matrix is a completely different situation. You must carefully examine the entire piece. If one crack goes through the pocket, then you are apt to split the specimen. If not, then light tapping on the back side, with your strokes going parallel to the long direction of the pocket (definitely not at right angles to the pocket) give you the best chance to chip away excess material.

Pressure trimmer a boon

On some specimens of either type of matrix, a pressure trimmer is essential. The effectiveness of this type of trimmer comes from the highly directional planar pressure (pinch) it generates in the matrix.

Several brands of small screw-type trimmers are available. The size of specimen you can trim is limited by both the distance between the vertical rods, the length of the rods, and the strength of the matrix you want to break. If too tough, you could strip the central screw's threading. So, you have to use common sense or you will ruin the machine.

A C-clamp type trimmer, either screw feed or hydraulic, is available on the internet at: http://www.rocktrimmer.com The smaller one is around $70 plus postage and the larger hydraulic one is around $550 plus shipping. Additional similar C-clamp and I-beam type trimmers are available at: http://attminerals.com/equipment.htm

Know when to quit

The final trick of trimming comes from knowing that you have done everything you possibly can to improve the specimen and that it is time to quit. I have witnessed some extremely poor examples of trimming and some spectacularly successful ones. One example concerns a wavellite specimen purchased from a local dealer at Mount Ida by a University professor. He agreed to let a friend, known for his trimming expertise, remove some matrix right at the guy's shop. One whack and the specimen was only 1/3rd as large and probably worth 5 times what the prof paid for it.

In another example, a friend loaned me a spectacular variscite specimen for a display. I noticed that a small knob on the backside of the specimen appeared to be loosely attached. One tap on that knob to remove it and the specimen split in half! Fortunately for me, most of the mineralized portion was on one half, having not split down the middle of the cavity. The lesson? No matter how much experience you have, never try trimming someone else's specimen without their permission!

Contact JMichaelHoward@rockhoundingAR.com revised October 2001

October MMNE Secretarial Report, October 17, 2009

President Joe Mulvey presided over the October '09 MMNE meeting at the Chelmsford Trinity Lutheran.

Joe began with several brief announcements: 1. He apologized to all who may not have gotten their newsletter on time. He said the mailing list address list was not quite up to date. 2. Next, he said that he had completed a simple update of the on-line, printable club brochure so that it could be copied and distributed for the Worcester Mineral Club show on the weekend of November 21. Since we had yet to get a May Symposium speaker it would be included as "to be announced". 3. He also announced that Russ Behnke had written a free on-line book on Cliff Trebilcock's Maine Amethyst find. 4. He also thanked Bob Wilken for offering to reproduce and send out the snail mail version of the newsletter.

The President's announced that attempts to contact Ronnie Van Dommelen continued to meet with failure. As a result Joe asked if members had any ideas for another May meeting speaker. None forthcoming, Anna Wilken asked if any club member would give a talk. Gene Bearss volunteered Tom Mortimer! Tom gave a qualified "yes" indicating he would rather be the "backup" should no one else be found. Later, when Joe asked if anyone would try to call Van Dommelen, Tom volunteered saying he "had a vested interest" in doing so.

The President suggested that the club purchase a C-clamp rock trimmer/splitter as a "high quality" door prize for the May Meeting. He said it would cost around one hundred dollars. Members had no objections and several indicated potential vendors. Tom Mortimer volunteered to research models and prices for the next meeting.

Joe then proposed that the club buy a yearly subscription to a mineral-article writing service purveyed by Andrew Sicree. The cost would be $69 dollars per year. Additional back years are available for $39.99. Joe said that the articles he has seen are well written and interesting. With little discussion or objection a motion was made to subscribe and a voice vote passed.

Treasurer Mortimer announced that he had paid Trinity Lutheran for three months of room rent. He went on to question how long records should be kept. Most concurred that seven years was a standard length of time.

President Mulvey presented two issues that related to by-laws. The first pertained to a pro-rating of membership dues for new members. There was a general consensus that should an individual join the club in September that he/she would receive all rights and privileges for that year as well as the year following. The second issue pertained to the duties of club directors. Joe suggested that they should be responsible for co-chairing the officer nominating committee. Tom Mortimer supported Joe in this and said it was a "logical responsibility" for that position. A motion was made and was passed by voice vote.

Gene Bearss suggested that the club concentrate on mining for new members via other existing mineral clubs.

Joe questioned the members (as in Oct) about the possibility of scheduling a meeting closer to members in Maine. He said that two of the Maine members had donated many specimens to the last May Meeting. Pat Barker volunteered her home in Campton, NH as a meeting place. The discussion was brief and inconclusive.

These meeting minutes are not quite complete because the audio recording terminated at forty-five minutes

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Wilken, Secretary

History of the Mineral Trimmer from Mineralogical Record

The first mechanical rock trimmer for trimming mineral specimens was invented by Frederick A. Canfield (1849-1926) of Dover, New Jersey around 1875. Canfield, one of America's leading mineral collectors of the early 20th century, was born April 7, 1849, at the Canfield homestead (called Ferromonte) in Randolph, near Dover, New Jersey. His father was a mine superintendent, and had inherited the mineral collection of his uncle, Mahlon Dickerson (1770-1853), so young Frederick had an early exposure to minerals. He attended private schools in Mendham and Chester, New Jersey and later the Newton Collegiate Institute. After graduating from Rutgers College in 1870 he went on to earn a degree in Mining Engineering from the Columbia School of Mines in 1873.

Shortly after graduation he invented his trimmer, possibly inspired by the laborious trimming of rocks and mineral specimens that had been part of his studies at the school. The trimmer was introduced at Columbia in November 1875 and was an instant success. Prof. Thomas Egleston (1832-1900), founder of the school of mines, wrote an article for the mining journal Iron Age in June 1876, extolling its virtues. "Since the introduction of this machine in November last," he wrote, "the hammers and chisels of the School of Mines have been consigned to a drawer, as there is rarely occasion to use them, and we no longer fear to trim a specimen of any size, no matter how hard the rock or how delicate the crystals."

Canfield's trimmer came to the attention of Philadelphia mineral collector Albert E. Foote (1846-1895), probably via the Iron Age article. Foote, who soon thereafter became one of America's most famous early mineral dealers, was born on February 4, 1846, in Hamilton, Madison County, New York. He graduated from Courtland Academy in Homer, New York, where he first became interested in mineralogy through the influence of Dr. Caleb Green, and began collecting minerals in 1862. He was a student of Prof. Walcott Gibbs at Cambridge and Prof. Hoffmann in Berlin. Foote obtained his medical degree in 1867 from Michigan State University in Ann Arbor. In 1870, after teaching for three years at Ann Arbor, he took a position as Assistant Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy at Iowa State Agricultural College, and was promoted to Full Professor in 1871.

How to Clean Minerals by Larry Rush

Hello, everyone…….

As you know, I like to clean my own minerals after collecting or buying them. On this, the Christmas Season, I thought I would share some of my cleaning secrets with my fellow rock hounds. Follow the instructions exactly as written below, and you will be sure to get the same excitement and enjoyment from your beautiful crystals that I do……..

Cheers, and……..Merry Christmas!

Required cleaning devices and agents;

Plastic gloves, plastic pail	Oxalic Acid powder
Ultrasonic Cleaner	Muriatic Acid
Household Detergent	Cleaning Water Gun
Phosphoric Acid	Hand-held Dremel
Steel wool soap pads	Super Iron-Out powder
Hot and cold running water source	1 bottle Jose Cuervo Tequila

Start with a carefully filled level cup of the Cuervo to make sure of the quality. Drink this before doing anything else. This will insure that you have the necessary discipline of thought and action before starting the critical next steps.

Next, make a solution of very hot water and detergent in a plastic pail, and mix thoroughly. Do not put on the gloves, as these dilute the sensitivity in your touch that you will need in handling the Cuervo that will be helpful in the succeeding steps.

Take two sips more of the Cuervo to be sure your mind is clear and your touch is steady.

Dip the specimen in and out of the hot water. Isn't thish fun, see the bubbles!

Turn on the Dremel and test the wire attachment on your mineral table to see if it works well….whoops! Where did those scratches come from? Oh, well… take a sip of Cuervo, this is going to be a nong light!

Dip your Dremel into the Phosphoric Acid (no, not the whole drill, you dummy) you need anodder drink!

Throw the Dremel away, and load up the water gum with soapy water. Take another drink, to make sure that the Cuervo is still good. Umm, that is good, just one more before we get down to bishiness.

Add a teaspoon of sugar, and mix with the cimmamon….oh, sorry, wrong receipt!

The damn directions on the Iron-Out are blurry, need to have my eyes checked by the Optomometer in the AM, but first, a little break and a fres cup of Cuervo. Darn, did I put my stir rod in the acid??

Next, sift 2 cups of soap pads in something or ever, who givesasheet anyways. Is this drink loosting its tonsisticy?

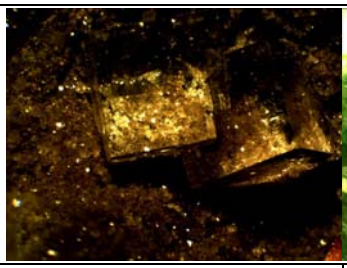
Maybe if I has another good slug of this joy-juice, I can stink fretter. Did I turn off the Dremmer or is that still running in the pail of muritic acid?? Now where is that piece of rockite or whatever I was doing……can't fine a thing escep this bottle of Cuervo. I hope my leg heels before my wif sees that burn!

At these stage, you shud juss throw the stupid rok out the winder, drink up the las of the Cuervo, and wisch you had put up that tree a lot sooner.

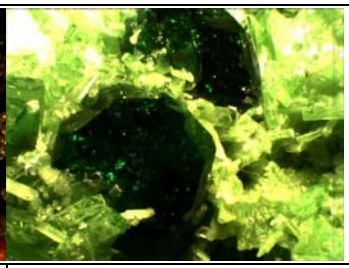
Cherry Fristmas!

Larry Rush
Guilford, CT
ConnRoxMinerals.com

Photos from the October Isomorphic Competition

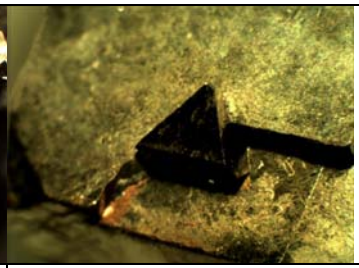


Fluorite, Walworth Quarry
Anna Wilken



Grossular, Eden Mills
Dana Jewell

Pyrite, Harvard Quarry
Bryan Manke



Pyrite, Chester, VT
Dana Jewell

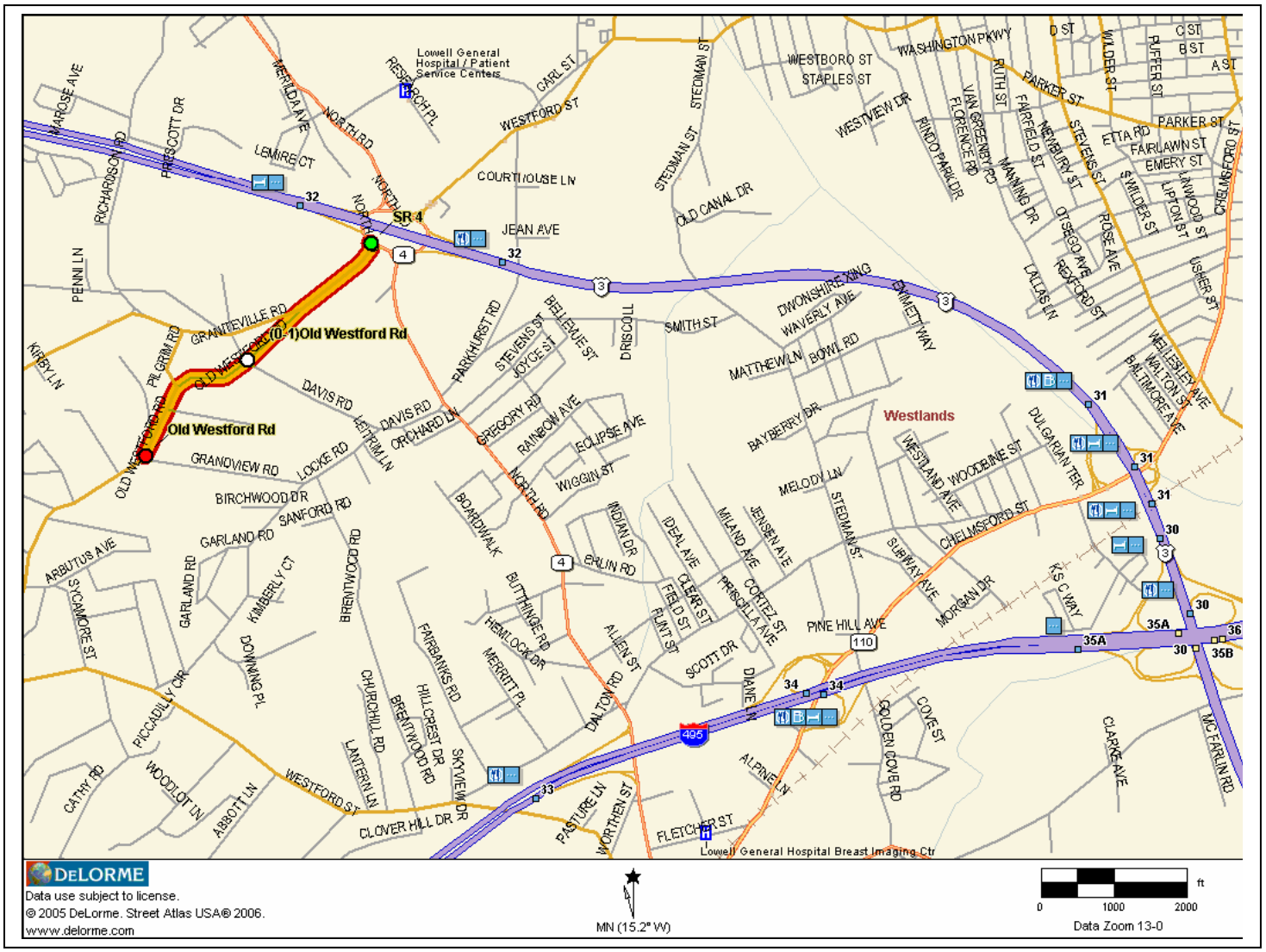
DIRECTIONS TO TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, CHELMSFORD MA

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.



MEMBERSHIP FORM, NEW AND RENEWAL

Membership in the MMNE runs from January 1st to December 31st. Dues are payable on or before January 1st for the upcoming year. Failure to renew on time will result in cancellation of membership including the subscription to the Newsletter. Please fill out this form and return it with your payment.

Name: _____

Street/PO Box Address: _____

City/State/Zip : _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

___ Hard copy via USPS or ____ via email to above address

Membership type: Individual $ 12.00 Family $ 16.00
Family membership includes two adults residing at the same address and all children at that address under the age of 18. Only one copy of the Newsletter per family membership.
Newsletter: The Newsletter is available as hard copy sent through the mail, or via email, which may have color photographs included. Please indicate choice of format. The Newsletter is published in January, February, March, April, May, Summer Issue (June), September, October and November (no December issue), and is send out approximately two weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting.
Please remit payment to Treasurer Tom Mortimer, 3 Roberts Rd., Amherst, NH 03031

Joe Mulvey, Newsletter Editor
Micromounters of New England
24 Skyline Drive
Nashua, NH 03062

TO: