



MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND

The MMNE was organized on November 5 1966 for the purpose of promoting the study of minerals that require a microscope

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Dues are \$6.00 per year and are due on January 1st, payable to the Treasurer.

Contributions of news items for the Bulletin are welcome and should be sent to the Editor

This bulletin may be quoted if credit is given. Club address is c/o Editor.

NEXT MONTH:

Our next meeting will be on **Saturday, November 20th**, at the **Auburn Public Library**.

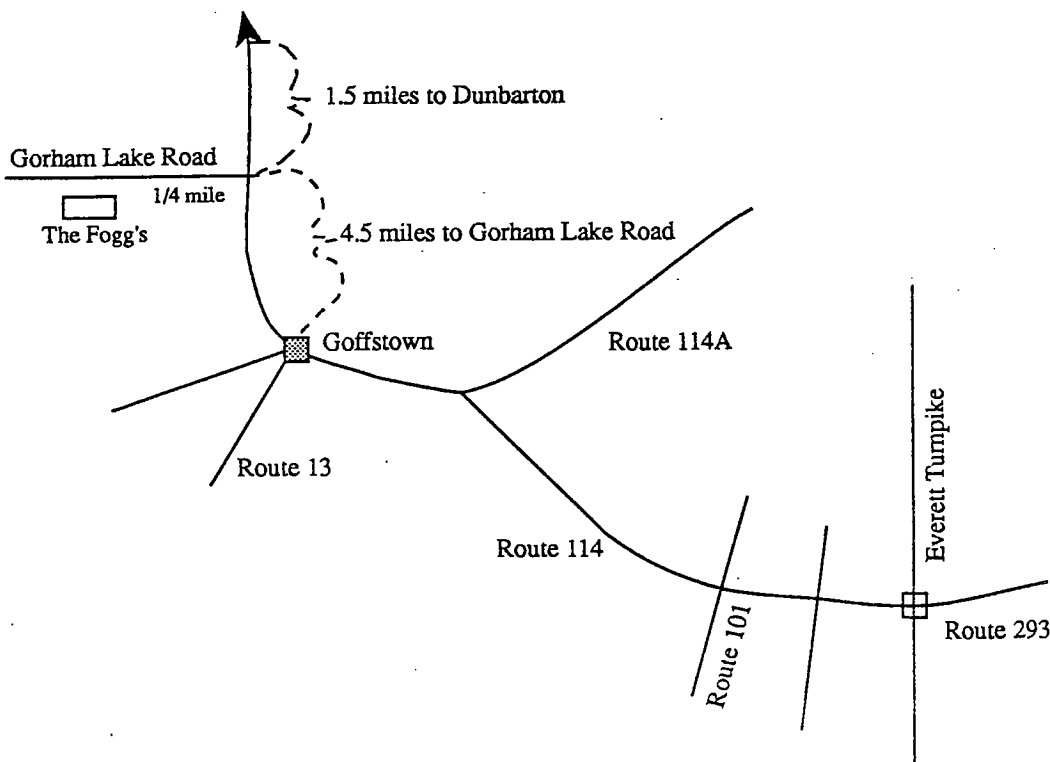
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Newsletter #171

Our next regular meeting of the Micromounters of New England is **Sunday, October 17, 1993**, at the home of Forrest and Vera Fogg. Member Frank Leighton will present a program on how to do stereo photography. Frank will bring his equipment along, and members will get a chance to see some of his work.

Next month's meeting at the Auburn Public Library will coincide with the Worcester Mineral Club's annual show, held at the Ramada Inn, 624 Southbridge Street, Auburn, Mass. Mark your calendars.

Also coming up is the Rhode Island Mineral Hunters' annual show on October 30 & 31, 1993 at the Knight Campus, Community College of Rhode Island, East Avenue, Warwick. Show theme this year is Conklin Quarry (Lincoln, RI). Speakers will include our members Bob Whitmore - "The Fletcher Mine, Groton, NH," and Bob Janules - "On Davis Mine, Groton, NH." Micromounters are, of course, invited to set-up at the show (admission will be waived).



Museum Volunteers Needed

Harvard University Museums of Cultural and Natural History (a.k.a. the MCZ, Mineralogical and Geological Museums, the Botanical Museum and the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology) are seeking volunteers for its Education Department. We need museum tour guides and tour guide assistants for our visiting school groups program and teacher assistants for our family programs. We also need assistance in creating visuals such as posters and flyers, cataloguing educational materials, updating mailing lists, planning special events, and assisting with general office work. If you have an interest or background in geology, natural history, native cultures, or education, please call the Museum Education Department at (617) 495-2341.

Mineral Locality Names - Be It Ever So Jumbled

by Garry Glenn

For those of you who have attempted to commit your mineral specimen catalogue to a computer database, I do not need to point out the inadequacy of many of the locality names. As soon as you try to cross-reference them, it is obvious that many of the names actually refer to the same place or that it is simply impossible to locate the place within a political context. Here are some suggestions of things that you can do.

1. - Adopt some standardized reference for locality names. Mine is based on the Mineralogical Record 14 year index with additions of my own as needed. This provides me with a standardized format and spelling (god - the possible spellings of some foreign localities are endless).
2. - Adopt a standardized format such as: Mine name, nearest city or town, political division such as county, state, province, etc., and country.
3. - Encourage foreign correspondents to always print or type labels and to spell out all words in full (no abbreviations), and then have the courtesy to do the same for them.
4. - Make a list of all localities in your collection from one country and mail it to a correspondent in that country with the request to correct it as much as possible. I have recently done this with both my Italian and French minerals with good results.
5. - Exchange small maps and mineralogical information with correspondents (not just specimens) whenever possible. Much of this information is totally unobtainable otherwise.
6. - Learn a foreign language.

From MICRONEWS, September 1993, Muriel & Eric Wood, Editors.

SOME THOUGHTS ON LOCALITY INFORMATION

Shelley Monaghan

As collections cataloguer at Harvard University's Mineralogical and Geological Museums, I can understand and empathize with Mr. Glenn's comments listed above. In addition, I would like to include a few comments and suggestions.

The Museums' collections are certainly much larger and probably contain much older material than is usually found in the average, private collection. Obviously, therefore, some of the locality location problems that I have to address would not apply to the individual collector. For example, many collections came to Harvard mid-nineteenth century from central Europe, where political boundaries were very different from those today, notwithstanding the recent breakups and reunifications of several European countries. Many of these collections were assembled by Germanic speaking collectors; thus the original labels are written in the German word for a particular locality, such as Siebenbergen, which is the region of Transylvania, in Romania, or such as Fassathal, Tyrol, which is actually Val di Fassa in Trentino Alto-Adige, Italy. Because we wish to retain the historic locality reference, the locality is always cross-referenced to the modern. Thus a catalog listing (computer or otherwise) would have the historic reference in parentheses¹ with the modern locality following it. Thus:

(Bilin, Bohemia) Bílina, Stredocesky, Czech Republic

¹Brackets [] are reserved for attributed localities.

While many of you will never have to search for some of the truly obscure localities, the recent breakup of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the U.S.S. R., and the reunification of Germany might affect your locality listings. In the U.S. A. there are many old locality references, such as Red Cloud Mine in Schulz, now Tiger, Pinal County, Arizona. It is not uncommon to find many Franklin and Sterling Hill specimens listed as "Franklin Furnace" While I often use the Mineralogical Record's index for suggestions regarding specific mineral localities, there are other resources that can also help the exasperated locality tracker.

A good reference in the (London) Times Atlas. It has a huge index (over 200,000 place-names), and it has a section on common foreign terms that one might encounter. (Example, Ozero = lake in Russian, Vidda = plateau in Norwegian). For the most part, our Museum standardizes its locality spelling based on this atlas. Now I know that you probably think I'm a bit crazy for suggesting this huge, expensive book. However, with the ninth edition just coming into print, the eighth edition is available from many places at a deep discount. (I was able to mail order the atlas for \$60, a considerable savings off of a book that lists for \$189!) It may not have the proper boundaries for the former Soviet Union or Germany, but this book can be easily supplemented by very inexpensive maps (\$3-\$4) showing the correct boundaries. The advantage of the Times Atlas is the number of references (giving latitude and longitude) for cities and other political subdivisions (counties, provinces, regions, prefectures, departments, etc.) in which the mineral deposits are situated.

Another good way to find references is to acquire used copies of gazetteers. We have a number of them in the office, dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to more recent volumes. These books are invaluable because they often list the more modern names for places as Cumberland = Cumbria, England, or Zinnwald, now Cinvald (Zapadocesky, Czech Republic) or translations of names from one language to another such as Giftberg, which is the German name for Dedova Hora. In addition, nearby major cities are listed as well as the major industries of the reference, including mining. This information has allowed me to pinpoint small localities not listed anywhere else by calculating distances to nearest cities, for example, Rosia-Montana, a small village in the Apuseni Mountains, in Romania, from which several of our gold specimens come. More recently-published gazetteers include the Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World from Columbia University Press, or Webster's Geographical Dictionary from Merriam. If, unlike me, you do not haunt used book sales, you should check out your library system. They probably have gazetteers in their reference section (and the large atlases as well).

Try and build a map collection. This may seem expensive, but Garry Glenn's idea of trading is very good. Many of the maps of our area are often free from State Chambers of Commerce and Interstate roadside information stops. Get some of these, making sure that counties are clearly indicated, and trade them to correspondents from other countries for their maps. If they can indicate mineral sites on their maps, great, but if not, they can send general maps that are helpful too. One suggestion, though, please request maps with indexes and subdivisions. Many European maps I have encountered are strictly road maps, listing major highways, without counties or departments, and often without an index. These maps are almost useless for locality hunters. If you lack friends in other countries, or spending some money is not a problem, try specialty book stores that feature maps and travel books. The Globe Corner Bookstore in Boston and Cambridge is one of these travel book shops.

It is probably good for you to learn a foreign language, but for people with limited time, I recommend another book, The International Mineral Handbook: A Multilingual Reference Directory for Mineral Collectors by Sande H. Zirlin (Garnet Books Unlimited, NY, 1981). This inexpensive paperback (I paid \$7.95) covers the major mineral species in twelve languages (English, German, Chinese, Italian, Portugese, Swedish, Spanish, Russian, Norwegian, Dutch, Japanese, and French). It also includes geological and mineralogical terms in the twelve language breakdown and a primary and secondary bibliography.

And finally, if you have your collection listed on a computer, print out an alphabetized listing of your localities and keep it in a ring binder near your cataloguing set-up. You will save yourself lots of time by having your references handy so you don't have to try and remember every listing or turn the computer on to refresh your memory. As your collection grows and the list expands and gets more finely tuned, you should generate newer print-outs. If you don't have a computer listing, try a card index of localities. There's little point in repeating all the effort you've done in previously pinpointing a locality every time you catalog a specimen with a less than complete locality listing.

These are just a few suggestions that came to mind as I read Mr. Glenn's article. Don't get discouraged working on your own mineral version of "Where in the World...". It has sometimes taken me up to ten references (books, maps, gazetteers, atlases, Dana's seventh edition, state and country mineral guides, etc.) to find an obscure place, and some have still eluded my search. Good luck!