

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. 274

October, 2006

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Current Meeting

Saturday, October 21st
Chelmsford, MA library
Doors open at 9 am

Map and driving
directions are on page 8

Next Meeting

Saturday, November 18th
Chelmsford, MA library
Doors open at 9 am

Map and driving
directions are on page 8

For information regarding
MEETING CANCELLATION
due to inclement weather,
contact:

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MMNE Secretarial Report September 16, 2006

President Tom Mortimer brought the September MMNE business meeting to order promptly at 12 PM. Thirteen members attended.

Anna Wilken read the Treasurer's report indicating that the club "was in the black" after the May Meeting. But, there was little or no profit from the event. After a brief discussion of new expenses such as the website and postal increases, a motion was made to increase club dues from \$10 to \$12 dollars for individual memberships and from \$15 to \$16 for family memberships starting with the 2007 calendar year. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

President Mortimer questioned those present if all who were supposed to receive the mailed version of the newsletter actually had gotten it. All had received it.

Tom gave thanks to several members who volunteer regular service to the club. One such person is Norm Biggart who year after year arranges the meeting place for club meetings. Another is Meredith Porro who brings and sets up refreshments and coffee for meetings.

Tom also expressed gratitude for Joe Mulvey's ongoing work with the club website. He indicated that he looked in recently and that much material had been added, especially articles from previous newsletters. Mike Swanson said that he has copies of all club newsletters. He questioned if the web master would like them as a source for even more articles.

The final business item discussed was about the 2007 May Meeting and the need to start early to arrange for a speaker. Bob Janules volunteered to contact Jim Nizamoff to determine if he would be available this year. Anna Wilken said she would contact Jim Cahoon to see if he had already booked the Elks Lodge for 2007. The May Meeting date would be the third Saturday in May, or, May 19, 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Wilken, Secretary

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.

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2006 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2006

- 7-8 – 43rd Annual Gem and Mineral Festival, Capital Mineral Club
Sunapee Ski Area, Rte 103, Newbury, NH. Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-4.
contact Jonathon Herndon, P.O. Box 520, Ossipee NH 03814-0520
- 14-15 – 34th Annual Gem and Mineral Show and Sale sponsored by the Bristol Gem and Mineral Club
Beals Community Center, 240 Stafford Ave, Bristol, CT. Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4
Website: <http://bristolgem.org> – Email: Bristolgem@hotmail.com
- 21 – MMNE meeting, Chelmsford, MA Public Library, 9am-3pm (Map and directions on page 8)

November 2006

- 4-5 – Annual Show, Samford Mineralogical Society. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, 90 Harding Rd.
Old Greenwich, CT. Sat 9:30-5, Sun 10-4:30 Email: rzlapidary@yahoo.com.
- 14 – Boston Mineral Club - Business Meeting & Annual Specimen Competition, 8:00 p.m., Harvard
University Lecture Hall, 24 Oxford St., Cambridge MA.
- 18 – MMNE meeting, Chelmsford, MA Public Library, 9am-3pm (Map and directions on page 8)

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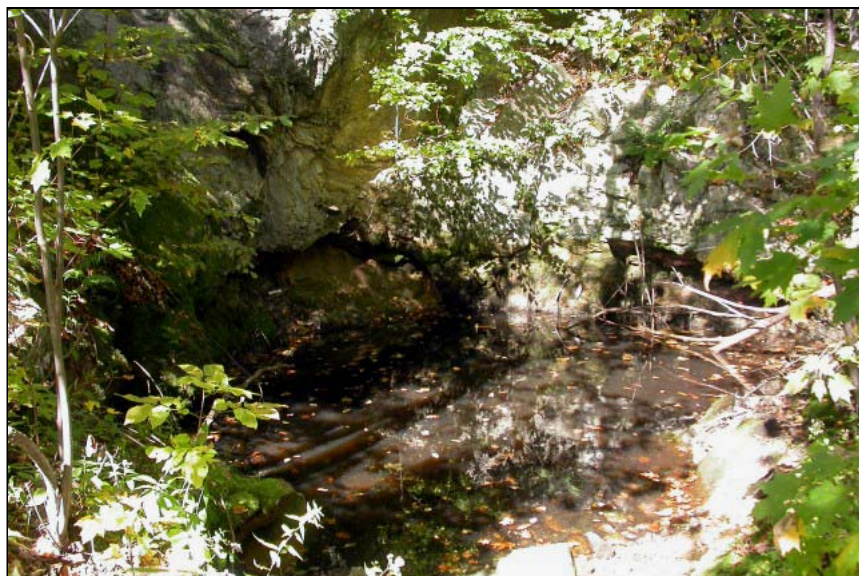
E. E. Smith Mine Trip Report

by Bob Wilken

The E. E. Smith Mine is located on Hutchins Hill in Alexandria, NH. Anna and I first collected here approximately ten years ago when we were making the long weekend trek up from Connecticut to collect. Our interest was piqued by the list of interesting minerals in Phillip Morrill's New Hampshire Mines and Mineral Localities. The mention of triphylite, among other phosphate secondaries, was enough to catch our eye. On that first trip I came home with one very small piece of phosphate rock that when broken revealed a small vug with many tiny microcrystals. This was the first time I had actually ever found phosphate crystals. At the time I had no idea what they were. Somewhere along the line I lost this little piece, and now it only resides in my memory.

We have made approximately five other attempts to collect at E. E. Smith since then. I say "attempts" because on two occasions when the flora has been in full leaf, the mine has disappeared like Brigadoon in the fog. The hike to the mine is done in two segments: one on a snowmobile trail with a medium but steady grade; the second, on the eroded and overgrown, old remnants of an extremely steep mine road. My pedometer registered approximately .6 of a mile for the first leg and just short of .16 for the second leg. The most difficult part has been to discern where this old mine road intersects the snowmobile trail. If you go up the hill too soon you can (as we have) wander for an hour or two on rough, steep terrain and never find the mine. I think we now have it down pat.

E. E Smith actually consists of two mines, the upper and the lower. Although Morrill indicates the lower to be a lithia pegmatite, the former has been the one of most interest to us and is, as mentioned, high up above the snowmobile trail. There are several prospects at varying elevations on the hillside associated with this mine. The lower mine is in relatively flat terrain steeply below the same snowmobile trail.



*Water pit at entrance to the upper mine
Photo: Bob Wilken*

Pegmatite Investigations, 1942-1945 contains the only detailed descriptive geologic information known to me concerning this mine. And, although we know the mines covered in the report were in operation during the mid forties, there is little if any information that would inform us of the last date of production. E.E. Smith was mined only for its muscovite mica. (I have often asked myself why feldspar was not recovered from this mine and others in the region. Apparently it was due to the lack of easy access to rail lines from these hinterland towns.)

Pegmatite Investigations describes the mine this way: “The main working at the upper mine is an open cut 105 feet long, 14 to 35 feet wide, and 12 to 35 feet deep. Near the entrance to the cut, a pit—now flooded—leads into a high narrow stope.” Of interest to us is the description of one zone of the pegmatite: “Plagioclase-muscovite-quartz-beryl middle intermediate zone, 1-3 feet thick.... In the north end of the cut there are crystals of triphylite up to 1.2 feet by 3 feet in cross section.... Traces of autunite are associated with columbite-tantalite, and triphylite is partly altered to vivianite and other unidentified alteration products.”



On a cool, sunny, clear day in autumn there could be no nicer place to collect than E.E.Smith. Views toward Newfound Lake with foliage in color are an absolute delight! Also of interest is the abundant variety of mining “memorabilia” evident at the site. A tumble-down shed that no doubt served as a place to eat and sleep still gives evidence of the inner spring of a mattress and the rusty remains of a kerosene stove. We have discovered old rubber compressor hose, drill heads, ore car track and a couple of hoppers of varying types. The real prize is an old Ingersoll Rand compressor now pushed down over a slope on its side with tires rotted away.

Mine shed remnants. Photo: Bob Wilken

What about the minerals? Well, there is NO bonanza of microminerals awaiting the collector atop Hutchins Hill. In spite of the promising aforementioned description, it has become apparent that it is very difficult to find the remnants or shards of the large triphylite crystals scattered across and down the mountainside dumps. And, sad to say, the crystals described as being in situ are no longer there! Except for apatite the phosphate secondaries are difficult to find and tiny, tiny when you do....at least so far. The following is a list of what Anna and I recently found on a single trip.

Apatite: gemmy, aqua to colorless, doubly terminated tabular crystals found in very vuggy albite. They display a truncated pyramidal termination which one might say appears “domed”. These are the classic apatites that have been found over the years at E. E. Smith. They can be stunning.

Arsenopyrite: Silvery-white, deteriorating sulphide masses in pegmatite

Autunite: crusty layers pressed between fractures in quartz and micaceous xls that often blow away with a blast of canned air.

Beryl: two side-by-side intergrown, flattened and distorted, “muddy” aquas roughly 2” wide by 4 ½” long in matrix. Also, another loose, flattened, “gray” aqua 1” x 2” long. Also, one rounded ¾” x 1” long golden beryl in graphic pegmatite.

Columbite-tantalite: one embedded, broken-across xl and one distorted, squeezed xl.

Garnet: rounded, highly fractured in pegmatite

Pyrite: small, embedded masses in pegmatite.

Strunzite ? Moraesite?: white matted, fibrous tufts associated with the Autunite mentioned above.

Tourmaline: brown masses of needle-like schorl

Triphylite: A ¼" thick segment of a triphylite xl in quartz matrix
(the following secondaries were found in narrow seams in the triphylite)

Ludlamite (?) pale green massive material

Vivianite: Very small, more black than blue in color, found in a seam of the above triphylite xl once broken down.

Whitmoreite: Reddish-brown, smooth, dimpled spheres of sub-micro size.

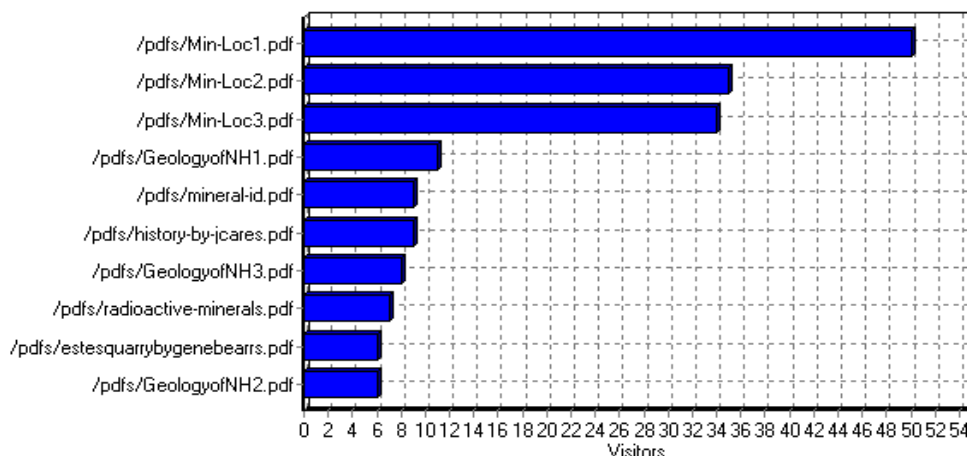
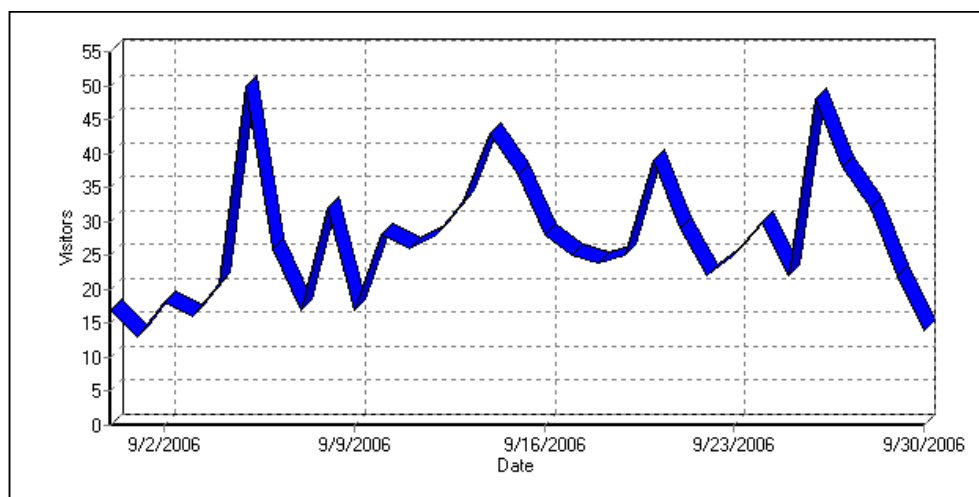
Unknown (?): extremely small, lustrous, dark brown xls

If anyone is interested in making a trip here I will happily fill you in on updated landmarks. Access to the mine and snowmobile trail is generally permitted, but the drive in to the starting point is over private, developed land. There is a caretaker who keeps an eye on comings and goings.

Selected statistics for the MMNE web site, September 2006

by Joe Mulvey

Daily visits,
September 2006



Most downloaded
files

For September 2006, the micromountersofnewengland.org web site received 845 visits from 283 different computers. The typical visitor downloaded 500 kilobytes of information and files.

On average, 1.12 pages were viewed during a typical visit.

Top Search Phrases Bringing People to Our Website

Phrase Searches

1 micromounters of new england	4
2 micromounts	2
3 micromounters	2
4 new england calendar pictures	1
5 new england micromount club	1
6 mineral collecting in new hampshire	1
7 ne micromounters	1
8 orford nickel mine, st-denis-de-brompton, sherbrooke co., québec, canada	1
9 rock and gem show in rhinebeck, ny	1
10 village melsore park	1
11 what are some geologic facts on maine	1
12 rev. kings mine alabama chulafinnee	1
13 picture of ferruginous gossan	1
14 priday ranch, gems sunstone	1
15 quartzites, ashland	1
16 micro mount minerals	1
17 benjamin chromy mineral collection	1
18 canadian chrysoprase occurrences	1
19 chelmsford ma november	1
20 ben chromy mineral collector micromount	1

Top Keyword bringing People to our website

Keyword Searches

1 micromounters	7
2 new	7
3 england	6
4 of	5
5 mineral	5
6 show	3
7 mine	3
8 and	3
9 rock	2
10 pictures	2

Operating Systems of Our Visitors

	Operating System	Hits	Visitors	% of Total Visitors
1	Windows XP	2,173	122	45.86%
2	Others	119	83	31.20%
3	Windows 2000	189	45	16.92%
4	Windows 98	42	5	1.88%
5	Windows Server 2003	56	4	1.50%
6	Mac OS	21	4	1.50%
7	Windows Vista	2	2	0.75%
8	Linux	1	1	0.38%
	Total	2,603	266	100.00%

The Member's Area contains an incredible amount of information. We are working on scanning the entire history of the club newsletters into Adobe acrobat files. Many articles by members have also been scanned in. I am always happy to post your photos be it micros or localities. If you have printed copies I promise to scan and return your originals.

You can email submissions to me at bassmeister_2000@yahoo.com

In Memoriam:

Vera Fitt Fogg



Vera Fitt Fogg, wife of Forrest Fogg, owner of Palermo Mines in North Groton for many years, passed away September 29th. Vera was always interested in minerals and collected with her husband. She proudly wore the handsome jewelry that Forrest made for her.

Vera enjoyed taking snapshots at the various Micromount gatherings: meetings, picnics, and field trips. Some of her pictures are in our club scrapbooks.

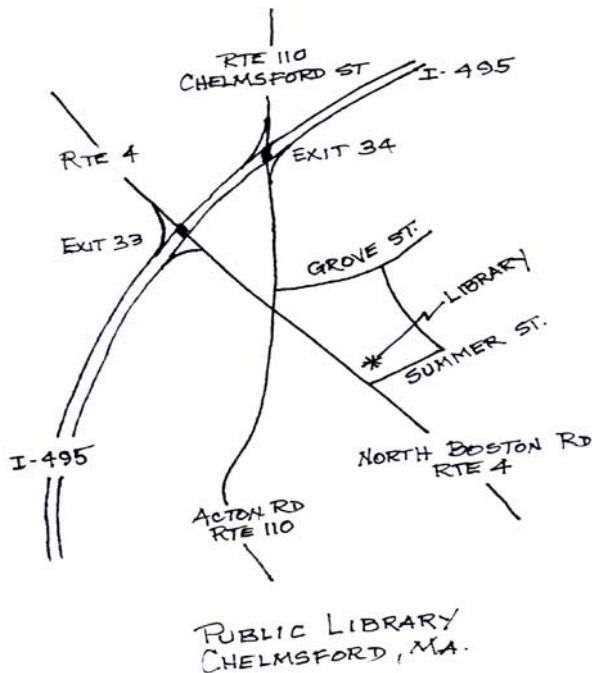
For many years she hosted a Foliage Potluck Meeting at their lovely home in Dunbarton. Even after Forrest passed away in 2000, she looked forward to entertaining the MMNE. She would hurry out the morning of the meeting to a bakery in Concord to get still warm donuts and muffins. She also provided a special potato casserole for lunch. She and Forrest arranged a pyramid of Hubbard squash at the door for members to take home and sprays of bittersweet for our Halloween and Thanksgiving decorating.

After the huge potluck “lunch” everyone took a break to go outside to admire the fabulous autumn views. This beautiful property is now in a conservation trust.

Shortly after Vera was diagnosed with cancer, her neighbors and friends in Dunbarton joined together to celebrate a Vera Fogg Appreciation Day. Someone recalled that Vera had once expressed a wish to ride in a motorcycle sidecar. On her special day, a motorcycle complete with sidecar arrived at her door to take a surprised and delighted Vera on a celebratory ride. Banners and signs and her neighbors standing on the curb welcomed and cheered her on as she was driven (several times!) around the village. A picnic and prepared speeches awaited her at a town park, letting her know how much she was appreciated and loved. Several weeks later at Dunbarton Old Home Day she was driven in a town police car in the annual parade amid much fanfare.

Vera Fitt Fogg loved to joke that all her life she was known as “Miss-Fitt.” We will remember her as a dear and precious mineral friend.

Pat Barker



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 Southbound

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.

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