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. 291 October, 2008

Current Meeting
Saturday, Oct 18th
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chelmsford, MA
Doors open at 9 am

Map and driving directions are on page 10

Next Meeting

Saturday, November 15th
Trinity Lutheran Church
Chelmsford, MA

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

Next Meeting:

Saturday, October 18, 2008, Trinity Lutheran Church Chelmsford, MA.

The meeting focus will be on **Mont St Hilaire**.

Please bring along a suite of some of your favorite Mont St Hilaire micro specimens to share with others at the October MMNE meeting.

Our last meeting of 2008 will be on November 15. For this meeting a focus on Palermo is planned. Joe has obtained a video on this world famous mine to be shown as part of the day's program.

October Meeting Notes and Follow Up of September Meeting by Joe Mulvey

I will be unable to attend the October meeting because I am in a wedding for a very close friend.

Actually, this friend, **Mike Iodice**, is very important to our club. Each month when I bring a projector and screen to a MMNE meeting, it is courtesy of Mike. Mike is a potential mineral collector. His soon-to-be wife Valerie and stepdaughter Ellie have collected at Stoddard Mine with me and my daughter Rosemary and they went to Ruggles Mine on a field trip through school.

I think that the addition of the projector and screen, coupled with the laptop I bring each month adds a dimension to the meetings that potentially increases what we all get out of the monthly meetings. If you have mineral related presentations, or a digital camera with pictures, or a CD / DVD containing digital mineral material, bring it on in to share!

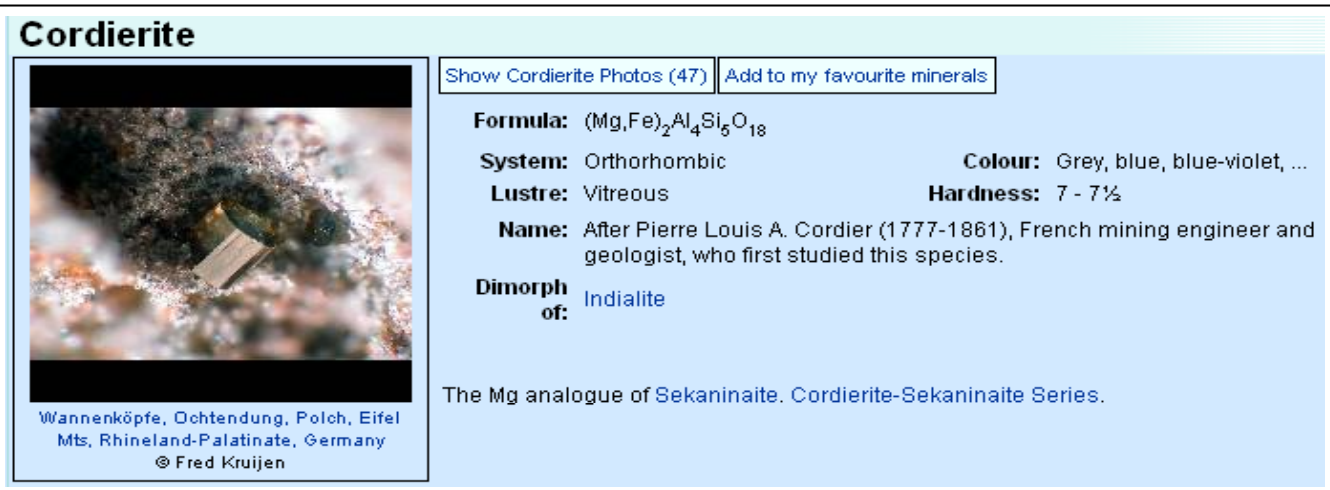
Thanks to **Hal Herard** for bringing in a great cake!

2008 Symposium Final Note

I am very happy to note that I was incorrect in my statement that we only broke even in finances; **Anna Wilken** corrected me at the September meeting by showing that we actually made $600.85!

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. 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.



Cordierite

Wannenköpfe, Ochtendung, Polch, Eifel Mts, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany

A rare mineral at the Wannenköpfe, you're very lucky if you find some specimens. Another old name is Dichroite (Greek), which means: two-colored rock, a reference to Cordierite's strong pleochroism. The color changes from violet blue to grayish/yellow as the crystal is turned. Image width: 1,5 mm.
Photo/collection: Fred Kruijen.

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MMNE Activities update – Joe Mulvey

2009 Symposium

The 2009 Mini-Symposium date is Saturday, May 16, 2009. Laszlo Horvath has accepted our invitation to speak. His talk will be titled "Rare earth minerals of Mont Saint-Hilaire."

Hal Herard is looking into the possibility of moving the May Symposium to Auburn, MA.

Auburn, MA, to me, doesn't seem a significant enough geographical change of venue that would enable people to attend who otherwise would not. Auburn, Maine might make a difference! While I am not opposed to a change in venue because it may encourage a few who otherwise may chose not to attend, I think that it is imperative that the club agree and choose either Auburn, MA or Hudson, MA for the May Symposium at the October meeting. We need to book this so that we may start publicizing the event in all the right places.

Club Brochure

In the interest of promoting our club to others, a tri-fold brochure providing information about the MMNE has been drafted. It was emailed to the board for initial approval By the time you read this it will be available on our homepage. Please take a look and offer your two-cents' worth.

Donation from Tucson Club

Longtime club member **Herb Fielding** brought back about a dozen egg crates of giveaways from the Tucson Micromounters' Club. I have sent a note of thanks, repeated here for your information:

Greetings, Tucson Gem and Mineral Society!
Our mutual club members, Mr. & Mrs. Herb Fielding, brought to yesterday's Micromounters of New England meeting a large box full of great micro giveaway's courtesy of your respected organization.
I know I speak for all of our members when I say thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and kindness.
If you were so interested, I would be happy to send you a DVD of the information in our members' area which, among other things, contains 75% of our newsletters since 1967, the Speaker notes and photos for the last 4 MMNE May Symposiums, and dozens & dozens of member articles. Just give me an address and I will send it on.
Thank you again and best regards from myself as well as all of the members of the Micromounters

To date, I have not heard back from them.

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MMNE Activities update – continued

First Annual, Members Only, Micromounting Competition

The club reception to the proposal for the 1st annual micromounting competition was warm enough that it deserves to be pursued.

Thus, here are the rules as I can recall from our conversations. If you have an opinion, please speak up!

1. Maximum of three submissions per member
2. Submissions will be anonymous and only assigned a number.
3. Submissions must be mounted by a current club member
4. Must be permanently mounted in a typical, current MM accepted box
5. In future years we will request that this be mounted in the previous year, but since this is the first, we can go back to the beginning of your mounting career.
6. All members present will vote on preprinted ballot sheets, tallied at the end by able members of the board.
7. Judging will be based on these criteria:
   - ✓ Quality of the physical mount – no glue, focal point centered, appropriate specimen trimming
   - ✓ Quality of specimen label – all pertinent info, accepted spelling, locality info
   - ✓ Quality of the specimen itself – probably the easiest category to get the best score
8. A 5 point rating system will be used with one being the least and 5 the best score for each category.
9. All scoring sheets will only be tallied once all members have viewed all submissions.
10. Winner gets nothing but the admiration, respect and envy of his or her peers and their picture on the homepage.

Web Stats

From January through September 2008 we have had a total of 4,429 visitors which averages to 53 visitors per day. Those 14,000 visitors called up almost 17,000 pages. Sure the majority look at the home page and move on, but many people visit the links, calendar and downloads pages.

Most people find us for one of two reasons. First as they search for more info on micromounts. Second, as they search for locality information, they find the wealth of articles on our Articles page; chief among these are copies we have of the 3 Volume Mineral Localities of the US. Any locality listed in these volumes ends up in search engine results, thus exposing our site to many new people.

Most users of our website run Windows XP and use Internet Explorer version 6.

Cool Link #1

In doing our webstats I always pay attention to those sites that refer to us from faraway. This month I noticed a link to us from a very nice website located somewhere in the United Kingdom. Their links page is great! Check it out for yourself at http://www.micromineral.org/liens-uk.html

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MMNE Activities update – **continued**

Cool Link #2

"The Middletown Pegmatite District, centered at Middle Haddam, lies within the Eastern Highland Region of Connecticut on both side of the Connecticut River. In Hartford and Middlesex Counties roughly from Glastonbury south to East Haddam and from East Hampton west to the Middletown area contains dozens of quarries, mines and prospects which have produced beryl, feldspar, mica and other minerals in commercial quantities. "

This is the introduction to a 1960's Boston Mineral Club document detailing a very interesting region of Connecticut. To read the whole thing visit the BMC website at
http://www.bostonmineralclub.org
or see the document directly at
http://www.bostonmineralclub.org/docs/middletown-ct-pegmatite-quarries.pdf

Club Holdings

Below, please find an inventory of club holdings in my possession. If other members have club equipment please list it in a format similar to this so that it may be added to our official inventory records.

Item Number	Manfacturer	Model Number	Description	Serial Number	Donated By:
1	Bausch & Lomb	Stereo Zoom 7	Trinocular microscope with stand and adapter for camera	n/a	Pat Barker
2	Swift	n/a	External lighting assembly, needs bulb MA 760	B400511041244	Pat Barker
3	Bausch & Lomb	31-26-84	Trans illumination base	n/a	Pat Barker
4	Un-named	n/a	Trans illumination base - cast iron	n/a	Pat Barker
5	member-built	n/a	Mounting stand for connecting slide camera bellows to the B&L trinocular microscope	n/a	Pat Barker
6	Minolta	SRT101	Slide camera with bellows and adapter	1300585	Pat Barker

Field Trip to a Dummer, NH Road Cut and Iron Mountain

Bob Wilken, text
Tom Mortimer, photos

Several MMNE club members had been talking of taking a trip to Iron Mountain in Bartlett, NH for nearly three years. But, it just never happened. I recollect how Merry Porro was so enthusiastic and eager to go. I don't know the number of e-mails that I received from her on the subject! She was **ready**! Unfortunately, it never happened. For this reason she was in my thoughts on the long climb up the mountain.

If I had had my way I would have dragged my feet and found reasons not to do the trip again this year. The reason for this probably was the daunting nature of the climb to the mines. Tom got assertive though and proposed that we do it as early in September as possible. For a variety of reasons it still didn't happen until Sept 21-22. Tom researched info in the U.S. Bureau of Mines "New England Beryllium Investigations" and plotted GPS waypoints based upon UTM coordinates in an article by Alan Plante. He determined where the trailhead was, all the directions to get to it and the location of each of the adits on the mountain. After all, he **is** an engineer! I did the easy part researching lodging for one overnight and booking the reservation. Otherwise I was a casual navigating consultant in the car

In my mind the reason for overnight lodging was to get up to Bartlett the day before to scout out the area and to be ready for an early ascent to the mines. Tom was confident he had everything set, so he had other ideas. He had visited a Route 110 road cut in Dummer, NH back in the late '80's and indicated that there were "interesting things" to be found there. Regular collectors have known the location for years as a source for very nice octahedral pyrite.

So, Tom and I arrived at the Villager Motel in Bartlett around 1PM. We quickly dumped our overnight essentials and headed north up Route 16 toward Berlin and Dummer. After so many years Tom wasn't exactly sure where in Dummer the road cut was. From Route 16 we traced westward over 110A and found no road cuts. The only other possibility was a short section of 110 in the southwest portion of the town. Sure enough, we came upon several exposures on each side of this road. Tom quickly remarked that the road was considerably wider than he remembered it and he lamented the missed opportunity of the road-widening project.

Gear in hand, we set out to explore the exposures. They mostly consisted of a very hard, highly metamorphosed silvery phyllite. There were quartz seams – some solid and others, pockety alpine seams occasionally filled with calcite. In certain places the rock showed hints of green color due to the presence of what I would call very minor epidote. Here and there we could see iron staining due to pyrite. Tom quickly found the remains of the octahedral pyrite digs. But I was interested in micros, not thumbnail pyrite, so we headed off up the northeast side of the road to look for the things we couldn't see. We each settled in at a prospective quartz seam and chiseled out bits and pieces as best we could. Then we moved on down from one place to another sampling the whole way. After about two hours we each had an abundant amount of rock to take home.

Now it seems I had the "Dum" mer luck of finding something at the Rt 110 road cut. Tom has indicated that all of his material went in his chuck-bucket. My finds consisted of a scant number of yellow titanites, red rutiles, two or three hematite xls, , a fair amount of adularia and lots of chlorite balls. Etching the calcite out of quartz seams revealed some of these finds.

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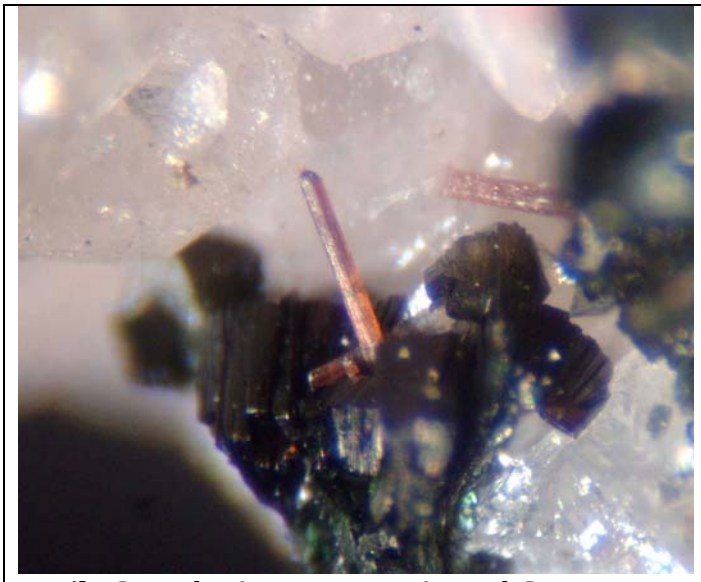
Dummer, NH and Iron Mtn. Field trip - continued

Early the next morning we headed out for a good breakfast and then to Jericho Road in Bartlett. With his GPS Tom determined that we had overshot the mileage. The old woods road was not visible and it became apparent that a long driveway to a new home had likely erased its juncture with Jericho Road. We noticed a young lady with a couple of children awaiting a school bus at a dirt drive right about where the old mine road should have been. She directed us to pick up the trail a short distance up her drive and gave us permission to park. She wondered why we wanted to go to the mine this way and said that hikers usually took a trail from a now defunct alpaca farm off Green Hill Road. Since Tom had all the gps waypoints and Alan Plante's trail description, we felt it would be best to follow the planned-for way up to the mines. Perhaps some exploration in the future will bear out whether the Green Hill Rd way is better, easier, shorter or not.

The day was cool and cloudy to start. Among the things Tom had around his neck were a weatherproof trail map, loupe, compass, Gene Bearss altimeter and GPS. The old access road began quite level (at about 900' elevation) but after a while cut up to the right across and into the hillside at a moderate climb. After a point the road no longer showed signs of even rudimentary upkeep. We were soon on an old, overgrown woods road that evidenced occasional washouts. Our first destination after about a three quarter mile hike was what is referred to as "the foundation" location. This was nothing more than an old boulder foundation for a building going back to the mining days.



Rutile Crystal, 0.5 mm Rt 110 Road Cut Dummer, NH. Field collected by Bob Wilken

Tom's Iron Mtn. "survival kit", (I carry too much!)
Top row: pair of FRS radios, cell phone, Gene Bearss altimiter, headlamp flashlight.
Bottom row: GPS, Aiptek camera, compass, loop & whistle, topo map with GPS destinations marked.

After marking the location on his GPS we headed toward a wash to the right of the old foundation. (When I say "wash" I mean a boulder-filled, seasonal stream that at points was nothing more than steep, granite bedrock covered with moss and algae. Here we picked up some old yellow and red flagging and a rudimentary footpath. From here the climb became moderately steep. Our next destination was the lower adit pit. The foot- path soon crossed to the right side of the wash. We could see how treacherous the crossing could have been had the rock been wet.

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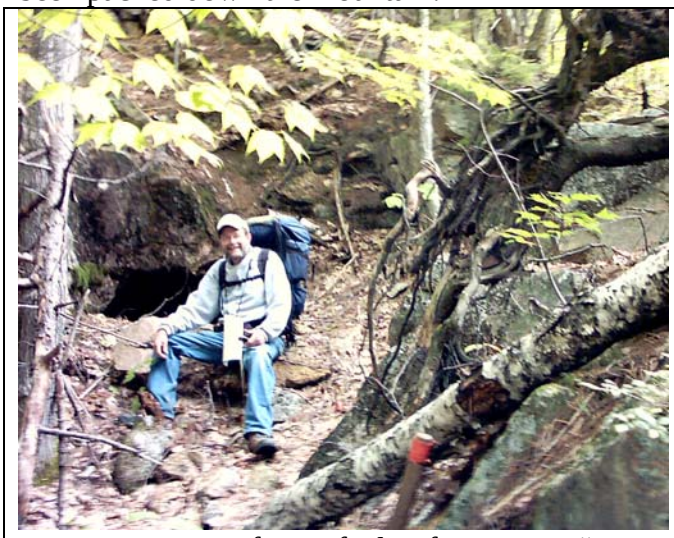
Dummer, NH and Iron Mtn. Field trip – continued

Fortunately, for us, we had had a pretty good dry spell. We weren't always sure that we were on the trail but after a minute or two we would pick up a marker again. Soon occasional cairns mixed in with the flagging. When we came upon the "Lower adit pit" (Pit 2), Tom took another GPS reading and we took a brief photo opportunity. We didn't linger because there were no tailings or dumps remaining here. All ore had originally been packed down the mountain.



Tom Mortimer in front of adit of Iron Mtn. "Lower Adit Pit"

Bob Wilken collecting at the Upper Adit Pit.

The sweatshirts came off in the afternoon as the sun warmed the dumps of the Upper Adit Pit.

A view from the Upper Adit Pit.

It was at this point, that the sun and clear sky warmed our ascent. Now the climb became quite steep and cyclopean granite slabs sheeted parts of the mountainside. At intervals "giant-steps" were required to clamber up and over the gray, sometimes mossy and scrubby slabs. Cairns became more common as trail markers. We would have to stop periodically to scan ahead to pick up the next cairn. If we couldn't, we just had to pick what looked like the most trodden path. When we reached the "Upper adit pit" (Pit 3), we essentially found two piles of rock: one pile of reddish-black, stained granite; the other, solid, heavy black hematite ore. After another GPS reading and photo-op in front of the adit, we finally settled in for collecting. Tom made the first and only clearly identifiable micro find of the day. He broke a piece of ore with quartz "nodule" to find several beautiful danalites had popped out. A bit "green", I went in search of similar material and soon came up with some danalite too.

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Dummer, NH and Iron Mtn. Field trip – continued

After a couple of hours, we felt we should press on to the highest pit referred to as the "Shaft Pit" (Pit 5). Leaving all but our collecting gear, we headed up a relatively short but equally difficult climb as our last. Once again, we came to a very orderly "dump": one ore pile and another of oxidized granite waste. The adit pit was water-filled here. We sampled again looking hopefully for seams or vugs. To me they seemed a lot scarcer here. But, this was where others had found some rather rare bazzite. We then descended back to Pit 3, spent another half hour or so and determined that we better head down the mountain.

The ascent had brought us from about a 900-foot elevation to a little short of 2100 feet over very rough terrain. The hike was approximately a mile and a half. The climb took approximately 2 hours and the descent took almost as long. It was equally difficult descending, now-and-then having to slide over the granite "shelves" on our rumps. And, it was no easier to sight trail markers either. For all our effort we each were able to carry down only seven or eight pounds of material.

My finds consisted of some beautiful red danalites, one sharp vitreous helvite partially submerged in quartz, two other average helvite specimens, a specimen with disk-shaped siderite xls, embedded hemimorphite fans, a single fluorite cube (!), a pyrite cube (!) and two xls perched side-by-side on quartz that look like yellow-orange titanite: one wedge shaped the other lamellar. Another wedged-shaped titanite (?) is visible as an inclusion in a quartz xl through two of the facets. Sphalerite and galena are common gangue minerals that are evident shot throughout the granite. It appears that countless "rusty" pockets in the granite are a result of the deterioration of sphalerite. This is where helvite is occasionally found.

In addition to his beautiful red danalite, Tom's finds included zoned danalites (danalite as a rind but helvite at the core), several helvites and (the find of the day) a small cluster of blue bazzites in a hematite ore specimen.

Danalite, Iron Mtn. Upper Adit Pit. 2 mm xl
Tom Mortimer specimen & photo

Helvite Iron Mtn. Upper Adit Pit. 1 mm xl
Tom Mortimer specimen & photo

Further reading: An excellent article on the "Iron Mountain Mines" by Bob Janules was published in the Nov. 2004 issue of *Micromounters of New England Newsletter*. Check the newsletter back issues section of our MMNE web site.

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.