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 $3.50 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

There will be two meetings next month. Sat., Oct 18 at the Fogg's--Sat., Oct. 25 at the Rhode Island show.

SEPTEMBER 1986 NEWSLETTER #108

The next regular meeting of the Micromounters of New England will be held at the 24th Annual Swap, Talk, and Brag Day, on Saturday, September 13, 1986. Our hosts will be the Saco Valley Gem and Mineral Club. The show will again be held at the Kenneth A. Brett School, Route 113 in Tamworth, New Hampshire. (See map below.) Please remember to bring tables as well as your usual equipment. A donation of $1 is requested.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

HELP! HELP! HELP!
MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND ARISE!
YOUR HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED!

Frivolity aside, I must make an appeal to all. A while ago a notice was placed in the monthly bulletin asking for assistance in obtaining more give-aways for our meetings.

A certain number of members bring in material, and for their help we thank them most heartily, but all of us should participate in this endeavor.

Now, a second and more urgent appeal must be made at this time as we are fast approaching the time when the barrel will be empty, and I don't think there is much under the barrel, either.

Over the years, the Cares have given their time in preparation of their material in making up fine and interesting cards of minerals for our give-away table. A labor of love which I'm sure all of us appreciate.

Now their supply of material is about exhausted, and we need input from members to keep the give-away table as fruitful as in the past. Most or all of us have material that would be great for giving to the table. I for one have been just too lazy to put out that little effort in putting together a few cards of interesting material.

If you have any good extra material, it does not have to be mounted on cards, simply put the pieces in egg cartons with enough identification to let others know what it is and where it came from.

So dig out that cellar and dust off those shelves, and show your generosity to your fellow club members! It will probably surprise you as to how much good material you have (cont. p. 2)

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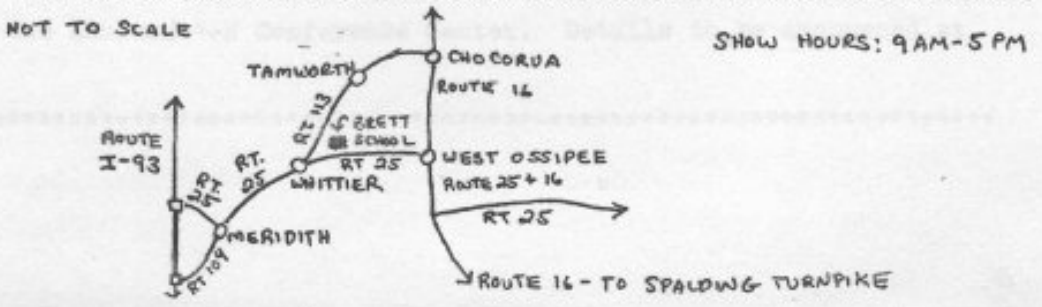

(PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONT.)

available that you had forgotten about.

So, in closing, as an appeal from your president and fearless leader, make the give-away table sparkle and shine!

AND AN ADDITIONAL NOTE.....

Now that the Micromounters of New England is a member of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, I need to ask the following:

We need the services of two members of our association to represent our club at the Eastern Federation Business meetings. One is to be delegate, and the second will be an alternate in the event that the first delegate can not attend a particular meeting.

I am calling for volunteers for these two posts. I suspect these posts will not be too involved, but we should have representation in the Federation.

If anyone who has not served as a club officer (or even if they have) and would like to do his or her stint of duty, so to speak, please contact me shortly as we need to be ready for the October 24th meeting of the Federation at the Rhode Island Show.

-- From Frank Leighton

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WELCOME NEW MEMBER:

Dana Morong
Back River Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824
(603) 742-0270

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Edna Lerer
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Stow, MA 01775
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SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, 1986-1987, MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND

SEPTEMBER 13, 1986 (Saturday)--24th Annual Swap, Talk and Brag Day, Kenneth A. Brett School, Route 113, Tamworth, New Hampshire.

OCTOBER---October 18, 1986 (Saturday) at the home of Forrest and Vera Fogg, Goffstown, New Hampshire.

October 25, 1986 (Saturday) at the Rhode Island Show & Eastern Federation Show/Convention, at the Knight Community College Campus, Warwick, Rhode Island.

NOVEMBER 15, 1986 (Saturday) at the Auburn Public Library

DECEMBER--NO MEETING.

JANUARY 10, 1986 at Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

FEBRUARY-- To be announced

MARCH-- To be announced

APRIL-- To be held at the Hudson Public Library, date to be announced

MAY-- ANNUAL MEETING at the Ashland 4-H Conference Center. Details to be announced at a later date.

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DESAUTELSITE, A NEW MINERAL FOR MARYLAND

On one of our trips to the Hunting Hill Quarry owned by Rockville Crushed Stone in Rockville, Maryland, during 1985, we discovered clusters of orange hexagonal plates of a relatively soft mineral on a black base coating on the serpentine rock common to this quarry.

No one had an idea as to what the material was, although a few hesitantly suggested Desautelsite from the color, but none of us had ever observed Desautelsite except as a "smear of dried mustard" as described by Paul Desautels, and these crystals were quite visible clusters of hexagonal plates.

Our analysis made over several months made the following comparisons:

1. The Hunting Hill location is a serpentine quarry similar to the type locality for Desautelsite, the Cedar Hill Quarry, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Desautelsite has also been found in quarries in Coalinga, California which is the type locality of Coalingite, also found in relatively large quantities at the Hunting Hill Quarry.

2. Desautelsite is hexagonal. The specimen from Hunting Hill is hexagonal.

3. Desautelsite is orange in color, transparent, and has a Mohs hardness of 2. The unknown met all of these criteria.

4. Desautelsite dissolves with effervescence in HCL. The unknown does likewise.

5. Optically, the specimen tested as omega at 1.57. Desautelsite is 1.569. Epsilon was not tested on the sample because of poor orientation and lack of time, but if it was Desautelsite the reading would be 1.547.

6. Chemically, the solution appeared a deep brown color in HCL 1:1. Had it been greenish yellow, it could have been Pyroaurite. (The optical and chemical tests were made at James Madison University...)

Most of the orange color material forms in clusters on a black base material. However, single plates sometimes occur and frequently the single plates have other plates growing from the center as if to start a cluster.

It is noted that the material tested has larger hexagonal plates than are generally displayed on Desautelsite, and that rather than giving the appearance of "a smear of mustard" as described in the Mineralogical Record, the plates form individual clusters, standing clearly on the black background.

In February 1986, X-ray tests made at the Smithsonian confirmed that the beautiful orange clusters were indeed Desautelsite.

by Paul E. Smith, from THE MINERAL MITE 3/86, via TOPAZ TOPICS, 4/86

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New member Dana Morong has submitted an update on the Parker Mountain Mine:

As I live not far from Parker Mountain Mine in Strafford, New Hampshire, I have often visited the site to collect mainly small specimens. This has no valuable material nor much of quantity, but has quite a variety, and hope for micromounters. Mr. Philip Foster used to be quite an authority on this site, and others since have added to the knowledge. George Switzer's 1938 article (American Mineralogist, p. 811) is enlightening on its minerals, as is Gunnar Bjareby's 1964 July article in Rocks and Minerals magazine (p. 353..). The latter discusses strunzite at some length, and lists 29 species found here (if you count 'cymatolite'), of which I've seen examples of most of these, except for some phosphates (Philip Foster's micromounts are at UNH in Durham). Though I have complete confidence in his listing, there are 21 definite additional species not mentioned in his article, and a few more have been reported. The definite ones are as follows:

Arsenolite, white on scorodite (Foster)

Arsenopyrite, as tiny crystals (Foster)

Cookeite, in cleavelandite vugs (also lately found)

Cyrtolite, the metamict zircon,* small brown tetragonal crystals with slightly convex pyramidal faces, found in discolored spar

Fairfieldite, as grains; possibly as tan waxy fans in triphylite

Fluorapatite, as 1) yellow prisms associated with whitlockite (at least some type

(PARKER MOUNTAIN MINE, CONT.)

of apatite)+
2) white, pale blue prisms in cleavelandite vugs, minor face modifications (1986)+

Goethite, lately found as tiny striated pseudomorphs after pyrite.

Graftonite, as thin pink lamellae in triphylite (Switzer)

"Gummite" group of uraninite alterations, hardly ever found here (will not now elaborate on separate species) (Foster)

Hyalite, as part of the eucryptite "rind," only seen in shortwave ultraviolet light as a greenish yellow. (this is yellowish; autinite is definitely green)

Jahnsite, as reported (by Bjareby?)

Limonite, alterations from goethite and from almandine, etc.

Magnetite, once found (Foster)

Melanterite, once found (Foster)

Monazite, waxy, red-brown (identified by physical tests).

Petalite, resembles rotten spar (now in museum) (Foster?)

"Pyrolusite", manganese oxides, also some dendrites

Rhodochrosite, tiny pink bits (tested out for Mn and CO_3)

Scorodite, green alteration dust on loellingite (tested for AsO_4)

Tourmaline, often black; however deep brown euhedral inclusions in mica have been found. These repeatedly tested out for both magnesium and for iron, hence (being in a series) this could be called dravite-schorl.

Whitlockite,+ as clear, whitish-grey, slightly modified rhombs, in altered triphylite, associated with yellow apatites, rockbridgeite, strunzite (further away), and a couple of unknowns (whitlockite does not have rhombic cleavage, whereas calcite and siderite do). This is a new locality for this species, a fairly easy one to identify, as few phosphates are rhombs (goyazite is more pseudocubic) and it looks just like whitlockite, too.

Siderite is also suspected in the matrix by its rhombic cleavage.

Epidote has been found in vugs in diabase boulders in a nearby stone wall, but this is not the pegmatite, nor is diabase even native here (probably came from the Belknap Mountains to the NNW, where such rocks do occur).

Fifty species is a respectable number, and there are reports of others. The list here is only to supplement Bjareby's 1964 list previously mentioned. A few species (only about 3 or 4) in the Morrill guide were not included as those few were found to be erroneous, a result of a cataloging mistake.

As I have, for some time, had the hobby of collecting information on this unpretentious but interesting locality, I am sure there is more information that others know about this pegmatite. In a spirit of research, I would be most interested in such information, and in viewing specimens from here, be they common, or micro-phosphates (some of which I haven't had the opportunity of viewing), or new species reported. There is much to be learned about all this. ---DMM

+ Found by Author

* I consider cyrtolite to be a distinct species, not just a variety; it may be chemically the same as zircon, but as its structure has been disordered by radiation, it must be considered as having a different structure. In my opinion, it is really a kind of alteration pseudomorph after zircon.