

The Conglomerate

Newsletter of the Baltimore Mineral Society

www.baltimoremineralsociety.org

Volume 11, No. 4

April 2016

The BMS Maryland Mineral Collection

by Al Pribula

Last month, in my report on the Mineral Day held in February at the Natural History Society, I mentioned that I had brought the Society's Maryland mineral collection for display. I'm sure that some of you knew of the existence of this collection, but I'm sure that many of you did not.

When Herb Corbett passed away in 1997, his micro-mount collection was donated to the Smithsonian Institution (where he volunteered for many years), his thumb-nail-size specimens were kept by his family, and everything else (a huge quantity of items, most of which have been auctioned by the Society at the Desautels Symposia since Herb's passing) was donated to the BMS. In going through this bequest, I noticed that there were a number of larger (miniature to large cabinet-size) specimens, almost all from Maryland, with matching hand-written labels on index cards. I surmised that these were the items that Herb brought with him when he gave presentations to schools, scout groups, etc. I decided that this would serve as the nucleus of a Maryland mineral collection which could be used for educational purposes by members of the Society.

The collection contains a large number of specimens from a wide variety of localities—some still in existence as collecting sites, but some which are no longer accessible. There are selenites from St. Mary's and Calvert Counties, specimens from Frostburg (siderite, quartz, barite), Hunting Hill (grossular, hydromagnesite, etc.), Cockeysville/Texas (calcite, phlogopite, etc.), Harford County (Dinning limonite pseudomorphs and rutile, asbestos from the Jenkins Mine), Baltimore County (siderite and petrified wood from Arbutus, garnets from Owings Mills and White Hall, pyrrhotite from the Greenspring Quarry, agate, magnetite, and chromite from Bare Hills, magnesite from Soldier's Delight, etc.), Howard County (schorl from the Ben Murphy Mine, pyrite etc. from the Howard-Montgomery Quarry), Union

April Program

from Jake Slagle

Our program on April 27th will be given by Phil Greenberg and is entitled "Arsenic, Its Industrial Uses and the interesting minerals that bear it". As usual, Phil will be showing arsenic related minerals from his collection and talking about each.

Our meeting will be held at the Natural History Society of Maryland beginning at 7:30 pm and will be hosted by Steve Dyer.

Bridge (calcite, etc.), Baltimore City (garnet and muscovite from the Jones Falls, calcite from the Woodberry Quarry), Martin Mountain (strontianite), Oxon Hill (vivianite), and a host of other localities and species.

However, the collection is far from comprehensive or complete. For example, the Medford Quarry is not well represented in the collection since Herb seldom (perhaps never) collected there. (On Mineral Day, I supplemented the collection with a few of my own specimens from Medford and elsewhere.) Specimens from the Maryland Materials, Havre de Grace, Blue Mount, and M & M Quarries are absent from the collection, and Marriottsville is poorly represented. Picrolite from Delight, goethite from Oregon Ridge, garnets from Loch Raven or Hunt Valley, and any specimens from old-time localities like Milford, Hollofield, Mountain View, Mineral Hill, Patapsco, or Liberty would be welcome additions to the collection. Specimens from relatively new locations (such as the Deer Park Road quartz locality that so many folks collected at last year) would be especially welcome to bring the collection up to date. In general, any non-micromount item from any Maryland locality could potentially add to the collection.

Baltimore Mineral Society

The BMS was established in order to allow its members the opportunity to promote the study of mineralogy and to act as a source of information and inspiration for the mineral collector. We are members of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies and affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of each month (except November, December, June & August) at the Natural History Society of Maryland beginning at 7:30 p.m. Visit the club website <www.baltimoremineralsociety.com> for directions.

Yearly dues are \$10 for individual members and \$15 for family memberships. Send payment along with your name, list of family members, if applicable, address, phone and e-mail to: BMS, PO Box 302; Glyndon, MD 21071-0302.

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Write for "The Conglomerate"!

Send news, announcements, comments, observations, or articles to <[mseeds at fandm.edu](mailto:mseeds@fandm.edu)>. No e-mail? Hand in your submission at a meeting.

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President's Postings

by Jim Hooper, BMS President



Is it Spring yet? I can't tell. They say the weather is changeable in March, but this seems to be going on and on. I've got a mind to go have a talk with the groundhog. Well I can't say it's been the weather entirely that's prevented field trips so far. We had a close call when a trip we had hastily scheduled was lost among the papers of the quarry office and we were cancelled at the last moment. We're still in hopes of hearing good news from the other quarries we're in negotiations with. Bob tells me things are still looking good overall.

If you attended the last meeting you had the opportunity to see a presentation on Maryland minerals by long-time collector Fred Parker. Apparently the Old Line State still harbors collectable minerals well worth looking around for. Fred and Carol left the area about two years ago to try their luck in New Mexico. We hope they're doing well and enjoying a home that doesn't involve much snow shoveling.

Also at the last meeting you had an opportunity to see some huge quartz crystals brought in by Jim and Mimi Stauffer and Nick Speros. Jim was very happy with finding of a 44+/- lb terminated crystal. The stuff rockhound dreams are made of. The closest thing to a locality or site was Lancaster Co., PA. It's quite a piece. Nick brought a 22+/- lb. quartz crystal, also terminated and beautiful and found in central Baltimore County. Congratulations to Jim and Mimi and Nick for showing us that the beauty rocks are still out there and can still be found without a backhoe.

Well while we wait for the weather to settle a little more and some greenlights from the quarries some shows are happening hereabouts that are worth checking out. Please check for details on the last page of the newsletter. Please keep in mind our 'Presentation' department welcomes ideas, suggestions, etc. Contact Jake if you have something you'd like to see more about or if you have a resource for a presentation. If the winds land you in Kansas please send us a card or email and if not we look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Cheers

Jim

Field Trip Ideas



Spring is when our thoughts turn to rock collecting. If you are interested in collecting trips, contact the Field Trip Coordinator Bob Eberle with ideas and suggestions for collecting sites. Do you know someone at a quarry or a property owner of a good location? Give your suggestions to Bob. 410-661-8436. Let him know that you are anxious to dig, and he will keep you on his list.

How to Write an Article for the “Glom”

by Mike Seeds

You can enjoy your rock hobby in many ways: digging, shopping, surfing the web, trimming, cleaning, mounting, labeling. But you can also write about your rocks and share what you are learning with others. It is astonishingly easy to write a good article.

What could you write about? Almost anything you do involving rocks would make a good article. Don't worry about a title; write the title last once you discover what you have to say. Nevertheless, here are some titles that might give you an idea.

Digging At the _____ Quarry
My Favorite Mineral
How I clean Rocks
Three Specimens I Couldn't Afford at Rock Show
My Favorite Web Sites for Mineral Specimens
Basic Tools I Use to Trim Rocks
The Best Bargain I Ever Got At a Rock Show

And so on. You can think of many other topics for an article, so finding something to write about isn't a problem. Remember, write first, title last.

Many articles are stories, a sequence of events. You were driving north of Saint George, Utah and saw a rock shop, and they had mostly junk but there was one big piece with lovely fans of dolomite but they wanted too much. You bargained with the lady and she finally called her son on the phone and they agreed to a reasonable price, and then you had to bring the specimen home on the plane in your carry-on bag. Is your article a story? Then it's easy to write because we all like to tell stories.

Most other articles are lists. If you are writing about your four favorite minerals, then your article is a list, but even if you are writing about why you like quartz crystals, you are listing your reasons and explaining each one. List articles are easy to write because they are, well, just lists.

An article does not have to be long. Three paragraphs is a nice short article and five paragraphs is full length. Just write down what you would like to say: Three rock shops I visited on vacation; Five ways to clean a specimen. Those would be good articles and just a few paragraphs would do.

If you take photos of a rock shop beside the road or people collecting in a quarry, they are easy for an editor to

Minutes From our Last Meeting

by Carolyn Weinberger, Secretary Pro tem

President Jim Hooper called the March 23 meeting of the Baltimore Mineral Society to order at 7:30 pm. Minutes of the February meeting were accepted as printed in The Conglomerate. Treasurer Carolyn Weinberger indicated that BMS remains solvent.

The Mineral of the Month for March was hemimorphite and specimens were displayed by Al Pribula, Jim Hooper, Phil Greenberg and Steve Weinberger.

Announcements: Jim mentioned the upcoming EFMLS Region IV picnic set for this coming June at a regional park in Calvert County. Details to follow as the event gets closer.

Jim and Mimi Stauffer displayed a very large quartz cluster -- too large to bring into the meeting room -- from the trunk of their car after the meeting concluded.

Following the break, the group viewed a video of a talk given by Fred Parker on Maryland Minerals that was given at the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium several years ago.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9 pm.

add to your article. Photographing a mineral specimen can be intimidating, but your photos don't have to be super perfect. Snapshots of someone holding the specimen are often more interesting than a great artistic photo. Photos are not necessary but if you have them, they can add to your article.

Trust your editor. If you send anything to an editor, he or she will love you beyond reason and will work to make your submission the best it can be. Your editor will fix spelling and commas and combine short paragraphs and divide long paragraphs. Editors will fix grammar. That's what editors do; they can't help it. But an editor will never change what you mean. You can trust your editor, and that means you can write freely and with confidence.

We all love it when people visit and admire at our minerals, and we love to stand up at a club meeting and explain how we got a certain specimen and why it is nice. There is no reason why you can't get the same pleasure by writing a few paragraphs about your favorite mineral.

Mineral of the Month – Cerussite (PbCO₃)

by Steve Weinberger. All photos from Wikimedia used under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 license

Cerussite is a member of the aragonite group of minerals. It forms in the orthorhombic crystal system and has varied habits, namely massive, granular, fibrous, and acicular. Crystals can be tabular with shorting along the “b” axis or elongated along the “a” axis.

Twinning can be common with pseudohexagonal trillings and we can also see flower-like or star-like groups or even snowflake shapes.

The name cerussite comes from “cerussa” for “ceruse”, a white lead pigment. Colors can range from colorless to white, gray, pale blue, dark gray, etc. Visually, cerussite can be transparent to translucent and even opaque. The luster is adamantine. There is good cleavage and is brittle with a conchoidal fracture. Hardness is 3-3.5 and density is 6.58, fairly high due to the lead content. Cerussite can fluoresce under UV light.

Cerussite is a secondary lead mineral often found in veins and limestones and is usually associated with galena.

Since it has a strong dispersion, and although relatively soft, it can be faceted. Because it can be chatoyant it makes fine cat’s-eye stones.

Although found in world-wide locations, here in the U.S. you can search for cerussite in Pennsylvania, Colorado, New Mexico, Idaho, and Arizona.

Bring in some of your examples of cerussite to share with members of the BMS.

References:

Sinkankas. *Mineralogy*.

Bernard & Hyrsl. *Minerals and their Localities*



Cerussite
Tsumeb, Namibia
Photo: Rob Lavinsky - i-rocks



Cerussite
Tsumeb, Namibia
Photo: Rob Lavinsky - i-rocks



Cerussite and Pyromorphite
Wheatley Mine
Phoenixville, Chester Co. PA



Cerussite
Shoshone Co., ID
from the George Vaux Collection at Bryn Mawr College.
Photo: Rock Currier

The Micromounters Museum

by Steve Weinberger

While Carolyn and I were out in Arizona during February we had a chance to visit John Ebner's Micromounters Hall of Fame Museum. To paraphrase Yakov Smirnov "what a place!"



John has been working diligently since moving to Arizona a year and a half ago to ensure that the displays in the museum truly reflect the accomplishments of those individuals who have been

inducted into the Micromounters Hall of Fame or were important micromounters with important collections.

The collection consists of mineral cabinets, microscopes, slides and micromounts along with sundry other items and equipment useful in the hobby.

One room in the museum contains all kinds of microscopes (stereo, monocular, petrographic) measuring equipment, pictures, filled cabinets of all types, and memorabilia. Another room is full of plaques and microscopes of Hall of Famers along with John's own work station.

And he's not finished yet! He still has boxes and boxes of memorabilia etc. to go through and figure out how and where he wants to display them.

It was a pleasure to go back in time to visit with pioneers who truly helped to make this aspect of mineralogy the art and science that it has become.

John is eager to guide visitors through the museum and point out the work of the innovators. Remember, way back then you did not purchase plastic boxes, you made them out of cardboard. There were no easily purchased and affordable microscopes as there are today either.

So, if you are in the Tucson area, give John a call and let him show you this truly remarkable adventure. He is in his museum most days.



In Part II of this series, I stated that electrons were the reason for the colors of minerals (indeed, for everything else as well) in the majority of cases. What are electrons and how are they involved in the production of color?

A bit of science review: All matter is composed of tiny particles called atoms. These are made up of three types of smaller particles named protons, neutrons, and electrons. Protons have a positive electrical charge, neutrons are electrically neutral, they have almost identical masses, and both of these are found in the central “core” of the atom, called its nucleus. The number of protons in an atom’s nucleus is called its atomic number, and this determines its chemical identity. (So, for example, all carbon atoms have six protons in their nucleus, all iron atoms have 26 protons in their nucleus, etc.) Surrounding the nucleus are the electrons. They are much smaller than the other two (about 1/2000 the mass of a proton or neutron) and have a negative electrical charge (equal in magnitude to the charge on the proton, so a neutral atom has an equal number of protons and electrons). These are constantly moving around the nucleus, but their locations or pathways can’t be pin-pointed. The best that can be done is to say that they are most likely (i.e., have the highest probability) to be found in a certain region of space around the nucleus. These regions of high probability are called orbitals. (No, not “orbits,” meaning a definite pathway—electrons in atoms are much less predictable than that. The idea that electrons travel in fixed orbits around the nucleus (as is often pictured) is a gross over-simplification which is only marginally true at best.) These orbitals have a variety of shapes and sizes, but, most importantly for our discussion, an electron in one orbital will have a specific energy (the fancy way to say this is to say that its energy is quantized), but normally a different amount of energy than one in another orbital in the same atom.

Normally, the electrons have the minimum amount of energy that they can and still be stable within the atom. (Indeed, all systems try to reach the lowest-energy (i.e., the most stable) state that they can under the prevailing conditions.) This lowest-energy state is called the atom’s ground state. When an electron in one orbital absorbs energy and moves to a different orbital where it has higher energy than in the ground state, it is said to be in an excited state. The difference in energy (i.e., the amount of energy absorbed when the electron moves from the ground state to the excited state) is a very specific amount (again, we say that this energy is quantized) for a given pair of starting and ending orbitals. For a given atom, the energy required for the transition between two specific orbitals is pretty

constant, but can vary somewhat depending on the chemical environment of the atom in question—what other atoms or ions surround it, how strongly they are bonded, and the geometric arrangement of atoms or ions around the central atom in question. The fact that electrons in different atoms or in different surroundings can absorb different amounts of energy is the basis for materials (whether flowers, feathers, paints, fabrics, dyes, minerals, gemstones, or anything else) having different colors. Also, if the electrons are excited by something other than light (such as heat or electricity), they can jump to an excited state and then emit light as they drop back down to their ground state. This is the origin of the colors of “neon” lights and some other light sources.

So: What are the different mechanisms which can produce color? What physical or chemical processes cause a sample to be able to selectively absorb (or emit) light of a specific energy? The subtitle of Nassau’s *The Physics and Chemistry of Color* is *The Fifteen Causes of Color*. Some of these fifteen causes are related to one another, but, for the most part, they are distinctly different mechanisms. Many of them involve the basic cause I discussed previously (absorption of energy by electrons moving from one orbital to another), but a number of them do not. (No, I didn’t lie to you. I stated above that electrons were the cause of color “in the majority of cases.”) These fifteen causes of color are listed below (the order has been changed somewhat from that given in Nassau), and the list will be followed in future articles by a discussion of each of them as we go along.

1. Incandescence
2. Gas Excitations
3. Vibrations/Rotations of Molecules
4. Dispersive Refraction and Polarization
5. Scattering
6. Interference
7. Diffraction
8. Transition Metal Compounds
9. Transition Metal Impurities
10. Extended Pi Systems
11. Charge Transfer
12. Metallic Conductors
13. Pure Semiconductors
14. Doped (Activated) Semiconductors
15. Color Centers

Quite the list! What are all these things? Who thought it would be this complicated? Is your head spinning yet?

continued on bottom of Cerussite

Pudge has been trying for years to get the club into Brickman's Quarry, and he finally succeeded. Last Sunday morning, while the quarry was closed, the club gathered at the entrance and the owner, Mr. Brickman himself, gave them a safety talk and then let them through the gate. Then he went home to Sunday dinner.

The guys were having fun in a new quarry when someone shouted, "Hi everyone." It was Stinky. He is not a member of the club, but he had somehow found out about the quarry trip and walked down from the gate. Eddie explained that the trip was for club members only, but Stinky said he knew the owner and collected in the quarry all the time. He just cheerfully refused to leave. In the end, everyone settled down to collect.

A few minutes later, the guys were startled by the sound of an engine. They looked around to discover Stinky trying to start a front loader. "They left the keys, so they must not mind if we use it," Stinky explained. Gus yanked Stinky out of the seat, and Pudge and Eddie gave Stinky an ultimatum: behave or leave. Stinky shrugged an apology and everyone went back to collecting.

That's when the quarry owner's pretty daughter spoke up. "Here's a puzzle for you," she said. Gus groaned. "When you turn the key on that front loader, electricity flows from the battery through the starter and back to the battery. So how long does it take an electron to make the trip?"

Stinky was admiring the specimens in Pudge's bucket. "That's easy," he said. "You just divide the length of the wires, about 10 feet, by the speed of light, and . . ." But Eddie and the quarry owner's pretty daughter were both shaking their heads.

Stinky was wrong. How long does it take?

Solution on page 8

Well, hopefully I'll be able to explain these mechanisms to stop the spinning (or at least slow it down a bit). In future articles, I'll discuss each of these in turn. Some of the discussions will be fairly short (either because that cause is pretty rare, or because some of them can cause color in some materials, but not in minerals), but the more common and important causes of color in minerals will be discussed in more detail and used to explain the color of some familiar minerals and gemstones.

Fuzzy minerals are as tempting as fuzzy puppies; we want to pet them. But the fuzz on fuzzy minerals is made up of long needle shaped crystals. Mineralogists refer to such structure as acicular, a word that comes from the late Latin word *acus* meaning needle. The Latin *acicula* means "little needle". The crystals that make mineral fuzz are indeed little, and you need magnification to appreciate them.

Specimens from Mount Solo in Washington State sometimes contain lovely fuzzy balls of natrolite on water-clear analcime, but only when you zoom in on those soft little balls of fuzz can you see that they are made up of sharp needles of natrolite in radial arrays. What looks so soft is composed of rigid crystals. In some specimens, you can find individual needles broken off and tossed at odd angles showing just how brittle the crystals are.

Commonly we see natrolite as elongated crystals with square cross sections and distinctive low pyramidal terminations, but because natrolite tends to form radial groups, it often forms sprays. The sample in Figure 2 contains a "spray" of natrolite crystals in a tiny vug, but because the crystals are short compared to their diameter, we do not think of them as acicular, and we have to stretch our definition to even consider the cluster of crystals a spray. It all depends of the ratio of length to diameter.

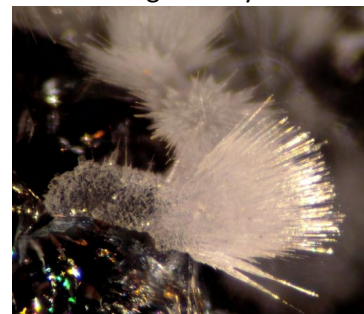


Figure 1. Natrolite on Analcime. Mount Solo, Longview, Washington. Field of view 2.1 mm.

These photos are made up of multiple frames recorded at slightly different focus settings and combined (stacked) to improve depth of field. However, Figures 1 and 2 have been made with controlled depth of field so that the crystals in the foreground are in focus, but crystals in the background remain out of focus. This improves a sense of depth



Figure 2. Natrolite crystals. Hillside Mine, Yavapai County, Arizona. Field of view 3.2 mm.

continued on page 8

and, more importantly, it avoids confusion between separate crystals. Note the larger, blocky crystal of natrolite deeper in the vug and out of focus in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Natrolite crystals
Hillside Mine, Yavapai County, AZ. Field of view 3.2 mm.

Kaersutite is $(\text{Na})(\text{Ca}_2)(\text{Mg,AlTi})(\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{22})\text{O}_2$, and it forms crystals that are much much longer than their diameter. The ratio of length to diameter can be so large the crystals can look like strands of spider web. They can even curve. Note the very thin crystal crossing the center of Figure 3. It is attached at only one end at up-



Figure 3. Kaersutite
Nickenich, Eifel, German.
Field of view 3.8 mm.

per left. Kaersutite can form blocky crystals, elongated crystals in reticular arrays, or jack straw jumbles, but it does not tend to form radiating sprays, and so we do not think of it as a fuzzy mineral.

In contrast, the Boltwoodite sprays in Figure 4 consist of crystals that are not so long compared to their diameter. They are less needle-like and more straw-like. That means that this specimen does not seem to be fuzzy. Nevertheless, Boltwoodite can form very thin crystals in acicular sprays, and those have a fuzzy appearance.



Figure 4. Boltwoodite
Goanikontes Claim, Erongo Region, Namibia.
Field of view 21 mm

Fuzziness depends on two important characteristics. A fuzzy mineral typically has to form radiating sprays, but it must also form very thin crystals. That is, the ratio of length to diameter must be very large. Then we see a fuzzy mineral and have the urge to pet it to see if it is really as puppy-soft as it appears.

43rd Annual Atlantic Micromounters' Conference

April 22-23, 2016

Spring Hill Suites by Marriott Alexandria, VA

Presented by The Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

Friday 22, 6-9pm Saturday 23, 8:30am – 9pm

Featured speaker: Tony Nikischer, Excalibur Minerals of Charlottesville, VA

Speaker Biography: Tony's interest in minerals was stimulated by an early visit to Franklin, NJ in the 1960s. Today, he is founder and president of Excalibur Mineral Corp., arguably the largest provider of systematic minerals in the United States. The company has specialized in rare minerals for researchers, museums and private collectors worldwide since 1974. He operates an in-house analytical laboratory and is also the publisher of the monthly periodical, *Mineral News*.

Download Registration form and Hotel Information at the Club website
www.dcmicrominerals.org

Racing Along: Solution

Slick said he thought you needed to know how long the wires were in the starter winding, and Gus said it depended on the voltage of the circuit. But the quarry owner's pretty daughter just smiled, "It takes about 4 hours for an electron to make it all the way around. I heard it on the radio." The guys argued, but Eddie interrupted, "No, a few hours is right. The electrons move, but they bump into atoms and other electrons, so the individual electrons don't move at the speed of light. They just drift along." Stinky didn't say anything because he was quietly pulling rocks out of the hole that Eddie had been digging.

Safety Matters – Terribly Toxic Treasures

by Ellery Borow, EFMLS Safety Chair from EFMLS News, May 2016

Tightly tucked toward the top of our trinket trunks are treasures too toxic to touch, tempting us though as they tease our thoughts .

Yes, tis true! Tossed throughout our treasure trunks are things that are toxic to the touch and taste, even in this totally tantalizing, yet tranquil, task of teaching there are terrors taxing my task.

Well, enough of these terrible, Thesaurus taxing “t’s”. The message this month is a mention that there are dangers lurking among our mineral treasures and what to do about that. Think for a moment, if you will, about the chemical compositions of some of the minerals we collect - autunite, arsenopyrite, cinnabar, betafite, thorite, cuprosklodowskite, malachite, even beach shells for the jewelry we make have within them chemistries that, under certain conditions of working, handling, or storage, can present concerns about their part in maintaining our health. Think of the conditions in which we find our mineral treasures -- conditions that hide biting, stinging insects, or rash-causing plants, or offer precarious physical conditions which may impact ones health.

Our hobby is associated with great joys but also has within it certain dangers with which we should exercise substantial care and caution. There are minerals that should not be touched with bare hands and fingers. There are minerals that should not be worked dry. There are minerals that produce slivers that, oh so easily, penetrate the skin. There are minerals of a radioactive nature as well. Each of those situations requires certain protective measures.

We encounter many specimens of fauna and flora along the way as we walk to our favorite collecting localities. Many of those same fauna and flora are ones which bite, sting or scratch us. Some things just lay in wait to dig into our delicate hides, or

scratch and tear us. We don't usually encounter hiding tigers or crouching dragons on our trips but those pesky little eight and six legged things sure can mess with our enjoyments.

What is a body to do to protect oneself? Glad you asked! We have a hobby based on sharing, giving, and teaching! Most of the hobby's enthusiasts out there, ones I've met over the years, follow those practices in all ways. There are folks in our clubs who have all manner of experiences with our hobby's related dangers and hazards. What I would like to offer here is a thought for your consideration. I would like to offer a suggestion that we encourage our members with the most experience to share, give, and teach not just about their knowledge with rocks, minerals, and fossils, but, also share, give, and teach what they have learned about being safe -- safe mineral handling, safe storage, safe caring and feeding of our treasures, safe traipsing on quarry roads, safe avoidance of biting insects and so on.

I'd like to broaden the sharing approach of our hobby to all things safety. Indeed, if your club does not have a safety coordinator, I would recommend your investigation of the benefits to your club with having a dedicated safety person. And, if you already have such a dedicated person in your club, I applaud your forethought! If you have a safety coordinator making safety a fun, interesting, and a learning experience, you are well ahead of the safety curve!

Please be safe, and think safety. Also, please mind those legless critters as well, after all, we all have a place on this Earth and we need to be mindful about sharing it with them.



South Penn Rock Swap & Sale
Saturday, May 14, 2016 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

South Mountain Fairgrounds West of Arendtsville, PA on Route 234
For GPS, use address: 615 Narrows Road, Biglerville, PA 17307

General admissions: \$1.00/person Table for Swappers: \$5.00/table

Sponsored by the Central Pennsylvania and Franklin County Rock & Mineral Clubs

Rochester Recap

by Carolyn Weinberger

The 43rd annual Rochester Mineralogical Symposium took place the weekend of April 14-17 at the Radisson Hotel just outside Rochester, NY. BMS'ers Mike Seeds, Al Pribula, Linda Watts and the Weinbergers attended again this year.

The Symposium consists of a series of illustrated talks, given by well known mineralogists, museum curators, or knowledgeable private collectors, and outstanding photographers like Jeff Scovil, an assortment of top quality mineral dealers, short talks on various research projects, and fabulous displays. There is even a "Micromounters Playroom" where Al, Mike, Steve and I were able to set up our microscopes, exchange minerals with fellow enthusiasts, and graze the give-away table.

Some of the talks that we were treated to included one on Collecting Minerals on Southern Baffin Island, Canada. This is an area that is remote, and difficult to live in due to changeable weather, the presence of polar bears, and rugged terrain. Other talks focused on Uranium minerals and their importance to society and were given by Dr. Peter Burns from Notre Dame University and Dr. Robert Lauf who spent much of his career at Oak Ridge, TN. John Koivula from the GIA talked about inclusions in diamonds and other gemstones. His photographs of these tiny inclusions is amazing.

Other highlights included an overview of the Minerals of the Belvidere Mountain Asbestos Quarries in Vermont and a talk on the William (Bill) Pinch collection of minerals at the Canadian Museum of Nature. Bill sold this collection to the CMN in 2007 for \$11 million...and it is truly an wonderful assemblage of rare and not so rare, but esthetic specimens.

And then there was the shopping. Twenty two dealers from as far away as Colorado and Canada had rooms on the fourth floor of the hotel where they displayed many of their outstanding specimens "Tucson style" (on the beds, on tables, on the desk, etc. Dealers are open only when there are no talks scheduled in the banquet room, and



One of the dealer rooms

each "shopping break" saw our merry bunch of BMS'ers riding the elevator for visits.

Being micromounters, our five visited rooms where these tiny treasures were for sale. All of us passed on the \$495 specimen of Samuelsonite (although we all ogled it nestled in its tiny vug). It's one of those rarities that only those with oil man bank accounts would consider. But there were many other specimens to consider and all of us came away with a few to add to our catalogue. In addition, dealers had thumbnails and larger specimens to view and select from. Al, Steve and I added to our collections there too.

Displays, put in by some of the speakers, museum curators and other attendees are always excellent and worth drooling over.

Evenings on the dealer floor get a bit crazy. Some years there's "bowling for beer bottles" and there is always at least one night when David Joyce brings out his guitar and entertains with his wonderful mineral songs. Camaraderie is the key...and Rochester certainly has that.

On Saturday evening the infamous banquet and auction occurs. All items are donated and put into either a silent auction or an often funny voice auction. Monies generated from the auctions is used to help offset the cost of bringing world class speakers to future symposia. One of the annual highlights is the auctioning off of a very rich and decadent cake. The winning bidder gets to take slices for everyone at their table, then must return the remains for re-auctioning. Parts of that cake were returned 3 times during the evening and raised over \$1,000 for the Symposium. Lots of laughs always accompany that portion of the auction.



John Bradshaw shows a little skin. "Are you going to let them win the cake for only \$5 more?"

Rochester is only 350 miles from Baltimore and is certainly well worth the mostly scenic drive north. The talks are fabulous as is the shopping and friendship. I encourage you to join us next year - April 20-23, 2017.

27th Annual
**Chesapeake
 Gem & Mineral Show**

Saturday, May 21, 2016
 10 AM – 4 PM

Ruhl Armory - Towson, MD

FREE ADMISSION

Top Mineral Dealers, Original Jewelry
 Silent Auctions, Door Prizes

Directions: Take I-695 (Baltimore Beltway)
 to exit 26 - York Road South
 Ruhl Armory is on the east side of York Road
 (across from a car dealer and funeral home)
 just inside I-695.

*Still free admission after all these years.
 Please have exact change when you enter.*

The Southern Maryland Rock & Mineral Club is proud to sponsor the 2016
 Eastern Federation of Mineralogy and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS)
**Region IV Potluck Picnic
 and Rock Swap/Sale**



Gilbert Run Recreational Park
 Charlotte Hall, MD

Saturday, June 18, 2016
 9 am - 5 pm

Admission to the Park is \$5 per carload
 (No charge for swapping or selling)

*"This is an old-fashioned rock swap where people who collect rocks,
 minerals and fossils will be selling and trading specimens"*

Break

This is a free event for all EFMLS rock club members and their families and
 friends. In addition to mineral, fossil and jewelry for sale, rock swap
 specimens should be placed in a potluck dish to share, and one hundred
 specimens donated for a contest that will be held after the event.
 The potluck will help defray the cost of the event. There is no charge parking for
 anyone swapping/selling. Please bring your own tables and chairs. There are
 water dispensers and benches on-site. There are also first aid and medical
 tents on-site. "Liquor Bar" are welcome and you are free to accept to take. The
 Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club will provide plates, cups,
 paperware, toilet, and toilet paper.

Schedule of Events

9:00 - 11:00 Swap and Sell
 12:00 - 1:30 Potluck Lunch and
 Auction
 1:30 - 3:00 Swap and Sell

Contact Person: Dave Lines (240) 427-7062

Dave.Lines@comcast.net

Directions:

From the D.C. Beltway:

Take Rt. 2 South (Exit 2A) towards Waldorf

Go 3.1 miles and turn left onto Montgomery-Thomson Rd. (Rt. 5)

Go 2.2 miles and turn left onto Woodrow Rd. (Rt. 3)

Go 4.9 miles and turn right on Oliver St. (Rt. 6)

Go 1.9 miles and turn left onto Gilbert Run Recreational Park

RD

Take Rt. 201 to La Plam, turn left onto Christie St. (Rt. 6 East) and go 5.8 miles to Gilbert

Run Recreational Park

Turn left onto Gilbert Run Park and follow the signs to the Hilltop Potluck Picnic and

Swap

From La Plam, Md

From Rt. 201, take Rt. 6 East (Christie St) 5.8 miles

Turn left onto Gilbert Run Park and follow the signs to the Hilltop Potluck Picnic and

BMS Webpage

Brad Grant, the BMS Web Master, reminds everyone to check the BMS website (www.baltimoremineralsociety.org/) for information about upcoming meetings and activities and to submit photos and articles for inclusion on the web site. Brad's email address is info@baltimoremineral-society.org.

Publish Your Mineral Photos and Stories

Want to see your minerals in The Conglomerate? Whether you dig them yourself or buy them from a dealer, whether they are micromounts or boulders, whether they are rare or common, readers would enjoy seeing your mineral photographs and hearing about your adventures. Have you visited a mineral museum lately, gone collecting, driven through promising geology? Got some selfies in a rock shop or a mineral show? Submit your photos and stories so everyone can enjoy them. Send photos to mseeds@fandm.edu.

The Conglomerate

Mike Seeds, Editor
516 Bald Eagle Ct;
Lancaster, PA 17601



Upcoming Events

April:

27: BMS meeting at Natural History Society of Maryland. Phil Greenberg on "Arsenic Minerals and Their Industrial Uses". 7:30 pm. Steve Dyer will host.

May:

3: Gem Cutters Guild meeting at Meadow Mill - 7:30 pm.

13: Chesapeake Gem & Mineral Society meeting at Westchester Community Center - 7:30 pm. Wayne Werner will speak on "Into the Labyrinth" Exploring Forging, Stone Setting and Finishing Surfaces".

14: So. Penn Rock Swap (see page 8 for details)

21: Chesapeake Gem & Mineral Show at Ruhl Armory.

25: BMS Meeting at NHSM will be our annual Tucson show review - 7:30 pm.

June:

BMS summer picnic. Date and location to be announced.

Parting Shot

