

THE CAPITAL ROCKHOUNDER



Publication of the Capital District Mineral Club, Inc.
Chartered by the Education Department of the State of New York
P.O. Box 12814, Albany, New York 12212-2814

April 2008

Next Meeting

Please come to the next meeting on April 3, 2008. The door to the museum (on Madison Ave., farther east from the red church) will be opened from 7:00-7:15pm (sometimes earlier, but never later...unless we know who's late). Please wait in a visible location. Please sign in at the security desk when you enter and leave. The meeting starts at 7:30pm. We look forward to meeting you.

April Program

Our April program will be in two parts:

First, Bob Ballad will do a demonstration, using Stoddard Mine fluorite he has collected, on the thermoluminescence of minerals. Thermoluminescence dating is the determination by means of measuring the accumulated radiation dose of the time elapsed since material containing crystalline minerals was either heated (lava, ceramics) or exposed to sunlight (sediments). As the material is heated during measurements, a weak light signal, the thermoluminescence, proportional to the radiation dose is produced. In thermoluminescence dating, long-term electron traps in the mineral are used to determine the age of materials.

In the second part of the program, Richard Stein will demonstrate safety measures we all will need to follow on our club field trips, and also anytime we go digging for rocks, minerals, or fossils. This will include safety preparations for a field trip, preparation of tools and safety measures to take in the field. Safety materials will be shown and sources for the materials. This is a very important lecture for all members.

Bruce Murray

March Program Review:

Mining Sulfur in the South American Andes

The March 6, 2008 mineral club meeting started with a talk by a NYS based geologist, Alfred Petrov, who discussed mining sulfur crystals in Bolivia. He had been asked by a wholesale mineral dealer in North America to obtain a large number of crystals from a sulfur mine high in the Andes Mountains. Driving to the mine at over 9,000 feet above sea level Mr. Petrov took pictures of volcanoes and very large white salt flats or salars where drivers can lose their bearings, and their lives if they do not prepare for the bright sunlight and lack of water and definable horizons.

Mr. Petrov rented the mine for three months and employed miners at a generous wage to dig the sulfur crystals which form at the mouth of volcanic vents. Some of the of the fuming vents were so active that a miner could leave a small item in the vent and in a matter of days the item would be covered with small crystals. The sulfur fumes in the air reacted with moisture from the skin to form a dilute form of sulfuric acid and eyes had to be covered with goggles. Miners who came up from the lowlands for the jobs found that their body lice died from the acid and soon dropped off. Additionally, the ultraviolet radiation at this altitude is so intense that all areas of the skin must be protected from the sun, and skin cancer is very common.

The harvested sulfur crystals were very fragile; Mr. Petrov wrapped the crystals in layers of toilet paper before placing them in boxes and putting them on the truck headed for the shipping point. At the shipping points the crystals were re-inspected and some had additional layers of popcorn put between the crystals to preserve them.

The expressive photographs of the high mountains, volcanoes, salt flat, miners, sulfur vents and living quarters were very graphic, reminding us that life and living in other areas of the world is quite different than ours. The club members thoroughly enjoyed the presentation. Mike Hawkins, of the NYS Museum, was the club member who contacted Mr. Petrov and arranged for him to give the talk.

Bruce Murray

Website Updates

So far, only 10 people have signed up for the internal section of the website. Please go to www.albanyrockclub.com and REGISTER. Type in a username, your email, and your membership address. I will systematically go to the website to check to see if people have signed up, and unlock them to allow them full access.

Rock Shows 2008

April 5-6. Hamburg, NY: Show, "Jade--Stones of Heaven"; Buffalo Geological Society; Hamburg Fairgrounds Market & Grange Bldgs., 5600 McKinley Pkwy.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, children 12 and under free; Contact Steve Birtz, 2230 Fix Rd., Grand Island, NY 14072, (716) 773-6386; e-mail: SBirtz@aol.com

April 19-20. Freeport, NY. Show; Village of Freeport; Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E. Merrick Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5, adults \$4.50, children under 12 free with adult; Contact Ralph Gose, P.O. Box 1418, Melville, NY 11747, (631) 271-6411; e-mail: ralph_gose@yahoo.com

April 26-27. Franklin, NJ: 36th annual show, swap and sell; N.J. Earth Science Association, Sterling Mining Museum, Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society; Franklin School; Sat. 9-5:30, Sun. 10-5; Contact Sterling Mine, (973) 209-7212

Field Trip to Franklin, New Jersey

This year the Eastern Field Trip Association (EFTA) Trip: STERLING HILL SUPER DIG will occur on April 26, 2008. Registration and Trip Information is currently available at www.uvworld.org. On the same weekend, there will also be the 36th Annual NJESA Gem and Mineral Show & Outdoor Swap & Sell! The Delaware Valley Earth Science Society (DVESS) and the North East Field Trip Alliance (NEFTA), in cooperation with the Sterling Hill Mining Museum, invite you to share an international collecting experience. This field trip has attracted dedicated collectors from across the globe. Be one of them this year! It WILL be an historic and memorable event.

Tools and UV lights will be available for purchase at the Franklin Museum and the Sterling Hill Mining Museum. The Sterling Hill dig and find area will have excavation / turnover of fresh NEW soil areas for your digging pleasure -- tens of TONS of new material has been pulled down from the mountain just for us (that's what this year's fees help to pay for). Attendance is by advance reservation. Sign up early! We MUST have at least 100 people. and . in case you are wondering, it IS "rain or shine" -- so come prepared!!! Collectors enter any site at their own risk and must sign a hold-harmless liability waiver when registering. New, LOWER AGE RESTRICTIONS for the collecting areas. Standard Federation safety rules apply - safety goggles and durable footwear are mandatory (no sneakers or sandals). Work gloves are strongly recommended. PLEASE!!!! Note the age requirement at each site. Other questions? send email an Email to Jeff Winkler: TripMaster@UVworld.org ; Phone: 973-835-2582

Tentative Field Trip List 2008

- April 5 - Jim Palmer - Mohawk Trip (search for river rocks on the shore of the Mohawk River before the flood gates go up. People have found many different colored pebbles, fossils, labradorite, etc.).
- April 20 - Rich Stein - LaFarge, Ravana, NY (joint trip with Boston club. Look for quartz and calcite crystals as well as some fossils)
- April 26 - on your own - Franklin, NJ Fluorescents (trip explained above and to left)
- May 3 - Gerry Pratt - 18-mile creek Penn-Dixie, Hamburg, NY (fossils! plan was to drive out to hamburg, stay overnight somewhere, then drive back next day to Ithaca)
- May 4 - Gerry Pratt - Meyers Point Fossil Trip, Ithaca, NY (fossils here too...)
- May 17 - Jim Palmer - Fonda (herkimer diamonds)
- May 24 - Jim Palmer/Bob Ballard - Schoharie Pyrite (searching for pyrite in the walls of the schoharie creek)
- May 31 - Bob Ballard - Gallupville Fossil Trip (tentaculites, brachiopods, searching the river bottom, etc.)
- June 14 - Robert Stitham - Callaruso Fossils (the other side of the SLC Quarry...fossils)
- July 19 - Bob Ballard - Panther Pond (labradorite)
- July 26-27 - Gerry Pratt - Governour, NY (lots of different rocks here...weekend trip)
- August 16-17 - Bob Ballard - Gold Panning, VT/NH (weekend camping trip...pan for gold in river)
- August 30 - Bob Ballard - Minerva, NY (look for rocks along the tracks)

September 6 - Bob Ballad - Chester, MA
September 27 - Gerry Boileau - Hooper Mine (garnets)
October 18 - Jim Palmer - Fonda (more herkimer diamonds)

Capital District Mineral Club Meeting -
March 6, 2008

Meeting was held in New York State Museum at Albany. Called to order for Program at 7:30 PM. Speaker: Alfredo Petrov. Showing slides and talking about remote sulfur mines in Bolivia. Very good program and interesting slides. Then raffle of minerals was held before regular meeting. Club profit from this was \$96. Meeting called to order by Anne Woods our President. Attendance: 57 members and friends. Secretary's Report: of February 7, 2008 meeting was read by Helen Eckler and motion made to accept and a second. Treasurer's Report: Balance at February meeting was \$6692.89. Disbursements \$35.00. New balance \$6656.89. Treasurer's report accepted on motion and second. Library - Barbara Gearhardt gave report on books and what we have for people to read. She thanked club volunteers for their help. Richard Hartnett gave a brief report also. George Gearhardt reported on the rock and minerals show held in February. Thanked all volunteers who helped with this. Next month's treasurer's report will give what our profit was. Anne Woods introduced our officers. Anne Woods President, Vice President Gerry Pratt, Treasurer Bob Stitham and Helen Eckler Secretary. Bruce Murray asked anyone who wanted to go on Dessert run to Denny's on Wolf Road were welcomed to join group.

Respectfully submitted...Helen Mary Eckler

Want to Get Out?... Head North!

Are you tired of staying in the cabin with the winter drearies? Are you craving a chance to get out in the sun and air to touch earth and crack rocks? Dispair no longer, May is coming, it isn't too early to plan to head north for some stimulating presentations and collecting before insect season. But you have to decide **NOW**.

May's northern focus is on the Maine Mineral Symposium which has been held the second full weekend for the past 19 years. Linda and myself attended for the first time in 2003. Then, subsequently 2005 and 2006.

Maine's Symposium is almost a rite of spring for

New Englanders. The central point of gathering for over 300 rock, mineral and gem enthusiasts is a program emphasizing gem and mineral discoveries, mining history and collecting sites. While focus is on Maine, there are presentations about New England and world renowned localities.

This year's program proposes a very exciting series of presentations connecting feldspar mining in Maine with discoveries of rare and gemmy minerals. New York's Vandall King will outline the career of Maine's pegmatite king, Stanley Perham. A followup will be a presentation by Stanley's son, Frank, who will speak about his vast year's of experience in pegmatite mining and what it meant for collectors.

Our favorite part of the Symposium is reuniting with old mineral associates after a long winter. Saturday evening's mineral auction with the always humerous Vandall King as auctioneer is a treat.

We really enjoy making Sunday's trek to mystery mineral collecting sites by way of the beautiful Maine countryside. As part of the Symposium group you gain access to localities not normally accessible to individuals or even most clubs. In 2003 we collected at quarries in the Topsham area. In 2005 we collected at famous Mt. Mica and in 2006 we were able to tour and collect at Maine's famous Bumpus Mine.

You may view the complete program at: Key word, Maine Geological Survey or go to: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mgs/explore/minerals/symposium.htm>

Deadline for pre-registration for the symposium is April 21. The Symposium is worth every dollar of the small fee.(You also end up with a collectible Symposium name tag.) Details are available on the website. Call, (610) 375-6841 or e-mail (Lindonmin2@wmconnect.com) me for details on where to stay and best route to get to Augusta, Maine.

(NOTE: Just got an e-mail from Woody Thompson of the Maine Geological Survey, he sez..."This has been the worst winter that I can remember. We've had record snowfalls in Maine and NH, with over 100 inches in many places....There's 3 feet in my yard right now, and snow banks higher than the garage windows!")

We hope it all melts by May.

Don Kauffman

Capital District Mineral Club
P.O. Box 12814
Albany, NY 12212-2814

**HOWES CAVE
QUARRY 2007...
PHOTO BY ROBERT
STITHAM**



Officers:

President	Anne Woods	518-322-7932
Vice Pres	Gerry Pratt	518-392-0453
Secretary	Helen Eckler	518-943-3459
Treasurer	Robert Stitham	518-755-2255

Newletter Staff:

Anne Woods	schmanie@albanyrockclub.com
Don Kauffman	
Richard Hartnett	
Robert Stitham	
Curtis Breuer	

Website:

<http://www.albanyrockclub.com>

All submissions to the newsletter must be in my hand before the 18th of any given month, or they will be used in the next subsequent newsletter.

The purpose of our club is:

- To promote and encourage the study of mineralogy and other applied sciences.
- To cooperate with educational and scientific institutions in order to bring about a better and more general understanding of earth sciences.
- To provide a program with suitable speakers for scheduled meetings.
- To sponsor, direct, and assist in the planning of excursions to mineral localities and other places of geological interest.
- To cooperate with organizations whose purposes are similar to those stated in the foregoing items.

The Capital Rockhounder and the Capital District Mineral Club are not responsible for the accuracy or authenticity of any information in the articles printed in this newsletter. Nor are the opinions here expressed necessarily those of the officers of the Capital District Mineral Club nor of the Newsletter Staff as a whole.