

JUNE 2003

June Meeting

Our June meeting will be, as customary, a dinner and auction to be held at the Scotia United Methodist Church. Please call Betty Phillips by May 30 for reservations and directions.

A silent auction will be the main program with the entire proceeds to benefit the club's treasury. Three items is the limit for each member to offer with the exception being bulk donations from late members Margo Gitlin and Charlie Brown, and former member, Charles Morse.

The only business item carried forward to this meeting will be the proposed change to the By-Laws to allow the position of president and vice president to serve two consecutive terms.

May Program - Three Speakers

Mike Hawkins, Collection Manager for the Geological Survey at the NYS Museum in Albany, spoke about a plan involving a new display case reserved for mineral specimens found in New York State by the various clubs in the state.. These specimens would be "on loan only", not donated to the state. Also another new case is being planned for the fluorescent minerals, amphiboles and Franklin, NJ minerals.

J. Richard Hartnett was our main speaker and his topic was fluorite and related minerals found in New Hampshire. The Stoddard Fluorite and William Wise Mines were worked until 1918. The

Lincoln Mine was worked for molybdenite; and the Curtis Mine was mentioned. He offered to lead a field trip to the Stoddard Mine in June. (See field trip column for details.)

Richard Stein gave our annual "Safety Lecture" demonstrating the tools and equipment recommended and required at all working quarries. He also emphasized the dangers of collecting alone and with groups spread out at various levels of the quarry. The \$2,000,000 insurance policy that the club purchases through the EFMLS applies only to damage to the quarry or the equipment in the quarry, not to injuries to the collecting members. Non-members and young children are usually not allowed to participate. Always ask the field trip leader for details.

EFMLS Nomination

The EFMLS had contacted all club presidents in upstate New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio to submit a recommendation for their consideration to fill a vacancy a vacancy on their board. Both Bruce Murray and George Gearhardt volunteered for the position of Region Three Vice President for EFMLS. Mark Kilmer passed out ballots for the voting to select our club's nominee. Counting of the votes was done by our president and verified by Helen Eckler, Secretary and Ruth Schmidt, Treasurer. George Gearhardt received the nomination and his name will be forwarded to EFMLS for consideration.

Marketing Committee

President Mark Kilmer is forming a new committee to be known as the "Marketing Committee" to plan and execute ways to further our club's existence and presence in the Capital District. The first meeting will be held in July jointly with the field trip committee. Interested members should contact Mark at 518-725-7629.

Field Trip Reports

May 3 - Diamond Acres, Fonda, NY
No report was received.

May 18 - LaFarge Quarry, Ravena, NY
It was another successful field trip to the LaFarge Quarry on 18th of May. Richard Stein led a contingent of rockhounds on a beautiful sunny day through portions of the quarry. The team included Bob Ballard, Paul Van Schaick, Bob Hartig, Gerald Boileau, Tom Bushnell and family, Anne Woods, Max Fischer, Anthony Segot and family, and Mark Kilmer. Fossils were still available in fairly large quantity. Although some calcite and quartz pieces were collected, it was not as productive as before. Rich suggests researching new work sites. All and all it was a great day for all of us. Thanks Rich!

Upcoming Field Trips

Sunday, June 8, 2003 (note change of date)

Stoddard Mine, Westmoreland, NH - see attached sheet for details

Saturday, June 21

Open house for the LaFarge Quarry. Dave Bahue of LaFarge Quarry, said the Open House is June 21, from 10 AM to 4 PM. Free hot dogs and hamburgers for the starving. CDMC will have a six-foot table to set up on. He said the Open House is on the school grounds which is across

from the LaFarge Plant on Route 9W, i.e. driving south, plant left, school right. Volunteers will be needed to man our table distributing our club pamphlets and application forms. Please contact Bruce Murray at 518-355-2146. He will be bringing his lapidary machine to demonstrate cabbing; Charlyn will be bring posters and our club banner.

Saturday and Sunday, June 28-29, Gilsum, NH

While not a club field trip, it is a swap and show that many of our members make every effort to attend each year. Count on about 2-1/2 hours driving time. Call the Gearhardts for directions if your are interested.

Saturday and Sunday, July 12-13, Syracuse, NY

This is one of the biggest shows in New York State each year. It is held at the New York State Fairgrounds and usually has fifty or more dealers.

Saturday, July 19, Hooper Mine, Garnet Hill, North Creek, NY

This trip will be led by Bob Ballard to look for garnets. You can call Bob at 518-377-8656 for information and to sign up.

Saturday, July 26, Green Farm, Roxbury, CT

This trip will also collect garnets but a totally different type of garnet. For information and to sign up, call Gerald Boileau at 518-482-0511.

Member Hospitalized

Member Judy Bouchard has been hospitalized with a blood clotting problem and diabetes. She would appreciate a card. Send a card to Judy Bouchard c/o Sinai Hospital, Guggenheim Bldg., Room 201, 11th Floor, 1468 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10029.

Wildacres Retreat

Barbara and George Gearhardt just returned from the spring workshop session held at the mountain top retreat just off the Blue Ridge Parkway just past Little Switzerland, NC.

Bob and Stephanie Kaufman joined us there. They are the first members from the club to attend since we started going in 1995.

Barbara and I attended the faceting workshop with Reivan Zeleznik as Instructor. There were six students in the class. Mid-week Reivan started having back pains, so Steve Weinberger began to assist him. Even with two instructors and working four days, we finished faceting our amethyst just before the "Show and tell" session where all work is on display. They will eventually be placed rings. Maybe do that next time in the silversmithing workshop.

Bob worked on cabochons while Stephanie completed a fish in soapstone carving.

Rain and fog were the weather conditions for the whole time on the mountaintop. Rain and cloudy conditions followed us down and back. But a good time was had by all. Their auction brought \$2300 toward the Eastern Federation's expenses at Wildacres.

There is still time to plan to attend the September 2-8 workshop. The cost is only \$275 each for the five-day period. Contact the Gearhardts for information and application forms. Check out the website for pictures and descriptions of Wildacres at <AmFed.org/efmls> and click on a link for Wildacres.

Granite State Symbol Falls Victim to Nature

By Don Kauffman, member from Reading, PA

Mother Nature can be a fickle woman. She proved this to the state of New Hampshire and the nation at a time of her choosing early in May. A proud state icon of nearly one hundred years, a symbol of self-reliance and determination, a granite outcrop depicting the face of a man is now just another pile of rock. New Hampshire's Old Man of the Mountain is gone.

Not being a native of New Hampshire, one can only imagine the shock and dismay the state's residents must be feeling. Surely the empty space on the mountainside overlooking the interstate near Franconia Notch also leaves a very empty place in their hearts. When first seeing the contrasting photos and captions in the Reading, PA newspaper, my reaction was "Is this a joke?" Alas, no joke, the natural death of the craggy profile was true.

Officials are not clear as to when gravity and the elements ended the figure's existence. Inclement weather and low clouds prevented any human from witnessing the end of the old fellow. No home video camera or TV news crews were on hand to record the plunge. State park crews working in the area on May 3rd were first to realize the state symbol was no more. Gone.

As a boy of eight or ten my viewing on the mountainside was part of a family trip to that mountainous region. Although you may have never personally seen the stern face, look at a quarter dollar, souvenir or travel brochure of the Granite State and you will see the great face. A face that inspired Nathaniel Hawthorne and Daniel Webster to write.

A spokesman for the state said the rocky outcrop had been held "only by stabilizing cables and epoxy" for years. Efforts were apparently inadequate to keep elemental freeze and thaw from making a victim of New England's stoic face.

The governor and state officials are said to be already planning to reestablish the Great Stone

Face to his position on the rocky promontory. My initial reaction is to say, "What God and Nature have chosen to sunder should be left to lay in memory. The rock was a natural symbol, not a manmade one." Most certainly there will be a lively debate and discussion by citizens in regards to the officials' response.

Rain will freeze, winds will blow, and mountains will crumble. It is normal demise of icons and symbols created by a force greater than all of us. And thusly so, it should be ended.

Two-Day Rock and Mineral Fest: Gilsum, NH

By Don Kauffman, member from Reading,
PA

With many of our clubs starting field trip activities as early as April and May, by the time the end of June arrives, we all digging deep into summer collecting schedules. Perhaps it is time to stop, take a breath and do some relaxing off the usual beaten mineral roads. The small town of Gilsum, New Hampshire is just the place to take a side step into a less harried environment.

For over fifty years the little town of Gilsum was successful mining mecca. At one time the region boasted over sixty working mines and prospects. Cheap imports eventually cut into the once bustling American mining economy and the pegmatite laden mines fell silent.

In 1964 local residents decided to revive a sense of community and pride in their past by establishing an annual rock swap. In fairly short time, the rock and mineral swap, with exploring and collecting trips to local mines put Gilsum back on the map. The project funded recreation activities for the town's children during the subsequent summer months.

Now in the 39th year the quiet little New Hampshire town still raises recreational funds for

the children on the very same school grounds. During the fourth weekend in June, the town library sponsors its annual book sale; old mine maps are still available. The members of the Ashuelot grange serve up a pancake breakfast with genuine maple syrup. The American Legion has hot dogs and burgers on an open grill in a shady grove of trees; Sunday a chicken barbecue is the main event. A glass of cool lemonade is sold by the ladies of the Gilsum Historical Society on the hottest of days. All of these fund raising activities plus over seventy dealers and swappers make the show a special event under open June skies.

The highpoint, for many participants and visitors, is a Saturday evening "all-you-can-eat" family style ham and bean supper. Once held in the social hall of the Gilsum Congregational Church, the feast is now held in the school's addition: a new cafetorium. The supper is a special and meaningful fellowship because some of the money raised through the years of the mineral show was invested to provide for expansion of the school.

The years haven't all been kind to the show. Old-timers will tell you they once had over 5000 visitors attend the two-day event. Now attendance numbers may be well less than one third that figure. The local mines and properties have seen more privatization and escorted tours are a thing of the past; however, the old Beaugard Mine is still available for collecting beryl by arrangement during the dates of the show. Also, just up the road between Gilsum and East Alstead, there are still a few sites to explore on an afternoon drive.

Besides the small and friendly community fair environment pervading the show, there are some local natural areas and geological attractions; such as ice age rocks forming "bear dens" and glacial potholes. Any local resident can provide directions to these attractions.

The changes through the years haven't diminished the spirit for the show. An enthusiastic group of

camp followers show goes and community participants keep it alive. For all who have attended for many years, a grand feeling of accomplishment is seen in the new addition to the school.

Finally, as a step forward, this year's Saturday night supper will be topped off by a guest speaker. Jim Tovey, who has made a name as a local mine operator and collector will be keynote speaker. Primarily involved in bringing green fluorite of the Wise Mine to world attention, his current project and partnership explores the holdings of the Beaugard Mine in nearby East Alstead.

Located off Route 10 and just north of Keene, in the beautiful lower Ashuelot Valley, the village of Gilsum is the very place to stop and enjoy. The charm of the area will ultimately encourage an annual return. It is a small stop off expressways and highways on one of the calmer byways of mining and collecting history.

Don't miss a stopover at Gilsum. We have been returning since 1997.

Editor's Notes

Most editors complain that no one reads their newsletter. In the May issue of The Rockhoulder, I listed a lecture on Earthquakes to be given at the State Museum in Albany at 7 PM. The only item I omitted was the date (April 30). I got one email and two phone calls. So, at least three people read the May issue.

Three new books on mineral collecting in Maine will be added to the club library in September. The author is C. J. Stevens and the titles are: The Next Bend In the River (gold panning); Maine Mining Adventures; and, The Buried Treasures of Maine (metal detectors). If you can't wait until September, call Barbara Gearhardt and arrange to borrow one now. Call 518-355-0670 or email ggear@atecone.net.

Upcoming Shows

June 14-15: Fulton County Mineral Club Gem-Mineral-Fossil Show & Sale, Fulton-Montgomery Community College, Johnstown, NY. Hours: Sat. 10-5; sun. 10-4.

July 12-13: 2003 Syracuse Jewelry & Mineral Show, New York State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY. Hours: Sat. 10-6; Sun. 10-4.

July 26-27: 24th Annual Champlain Valley Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show, Tuttle Middle School, Dorset Street near Kennedy Drive, South Burlington, Vermont. Hours: 10-5 both days.

July 26-27: The Long Island Mineral & Geological Society, Inc., 22nd Annual Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show, Mattituck High School, Main Road, Mattituck, NY. Hours: 10-5 both days.

August 8, 9, 10: 2003 East Coast Gem, Mineral, Fossil Show, Better Living Center, Eastern State Exposition, West Springfield, MA. Hours: Fri. & Sat. 10-7; Sun. 10-5.

NEFTA Field Trip Itinerary

If any of the following trips interest you, please contact our club representative, Bob Hartig, ASAP (usually two weeks notice required). He can be reached by email at <rockbob@nycapp.rr.com> or by phone 518-842-5948.

June 7: Capital Mineral Club* - Lisbon, NH - Garnet, Staurolite.

* Please note this club's home base is in New Hampshire, not our Capital District Mineral Club. Our field trips have not been incorporated on May 10th when this list was prepared.

June 7: Delaware Mineral Society - Gibraltar, PA - Zeolites and Carbonates

June 7: Mineralogical & Lapidary Society of the

Raritan Valley, Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania.

Description: Limestone mineral dig. Meet at gate to quarry entrance for entry at 8 AM. Geology: this active quarry is mining the Buffalo Springs Fm. Cambrian in age. Rocks are gray limestones with white calcite veins, dolostones and shales and sandstones. Minerals as crystals include: golden calcites, pink dolomites, cubic and octohedral fluorites, pyrites and chalcopyrites.

June 14: Nittany Mineralogical Society, Central PA. Minerals found "Phenomenal" Calcite.

June 14-15: Boston Mineral Club. Northern VT. fee paid by club, grossular garnet, epidote, clinzoisite, diopside, magnetite, calcite, vesuvianite, chlorite, titanite, many other species.

June 21: The Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, Schuylkill County, PA, Devonian fossils.

June 21: Delaware Mineralogical Society, south-east Pennsylvania. Minerals to collect include: Carbonates and some Zeolites.

June 21: Rhode Island Mineral Hunters, Portsmouth, RI. Fern Fossils.

June 21: St. Lawrence Co. Rock and Mineral Club, Little Falls, New York. Herkimer Diamonds.

June 21: Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Lancaster County, PA. Calcite, Fluorite, Dolomite, Pyrite, Sphalerite.

June 22: Delaware Valley Earth Science Society, Lancaster County, PA. Active limestone quarry, don't know what we'll find. This location has produced collectible specimens in the past.

June 22: Delaware Valley Earth Science Society Lancaster County, PA. Pyrite.

June 22: Rochester Academy of Science. Crystal Grove, New York. Herkimer Diamonds.

To All the Rocks In My Life

A philosopher stood before his class and had some items in front of him.

When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks; rocks about 2" in diameter. he then asked the students if the jar was full. they agreed it was.

So the professor picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They laughed and agreed it was.

The professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. "Now" said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this is your life."

The rocks are important things; your family, your partner, your health, your children - anything that is so important to you that if it were lost, you would be nearly destroyed.

The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, your car.

The sand is everyone else. The small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your energy and time on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take the time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out dancing.

There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, attend a meeting and fix the disposal.

Take care of the rocks first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

Author Unknown