

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

November 2006

Next Meeting

Please come to the next meeting on November 2. The door to the museum (on Madison Ave., farthest from the red church) will be opened from 7:00-7:15pm (sometimes earlier, but hardly ever later). Please wait in front of the door for us to come let you in (make sure you can be seen from the inside of the lobby). Please sign in at the security desk when you enter. The meeting starts at 7:30pm. We look forward to meeting you. Feel free to bring a friend. Remember that the walk from the parking lot to the museum entrance can be quite the wind tunnel, so bring appropriate clothing to stay warm.

October Program Review

Our program speaker was Richard Hartnett. He spoke about the different kinds and properties of Quartz. (and showed us many of his specimens of quartz).

November Speaker

The November Speakers will be Bruce Murray (CDMC program chair) interviewing long time CDMC member Max Fischer about the rock specimens that he has collected from around the world during his travels. Parts of Max's collection will be on display for members to look at after this exclusive interview.

Dues are Due

If you look at the label on your newsletter, and the date has passed, you need to renew your membership. Membership dues are \$14 per individual, \$20 per family, and \$5 per student. Dues can be paid to the membership committee at the November meeting (or to Helen, Bob, or Anne in the front..depending on who is missing). Please note that one must have a current up-to-date membership card to attend fieldtrips. If you are not paid up-to-date soon, your newsletter may stop arriving at your home. Membership form is available on the website which can be found on the back of this newsletter.

December Banquet

The December Banquet on December 7, 2006 will be held once again at the Rexford Fire Station in Rexford, NY. This is one of two meetings per year where you must pay in advance before you may attend. You may bring a date, a friend, children, or a spouse, but they must pay for separate dinners. Please arrive at 6pm for the social hour. Dinner will be served at 7pm. It will be buffet style all you can eat. The menu items are as follows: Beef Stroganoff, Chicken and Biscuits, Vegetable Lasagna, Roasted Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Salad, Assorted Cookies and Bars, Caramel Shortbread, and Coffee and Tea. The price of the dinner will be \$12.50 per

person. Please contact George Gearhardt at 355-0670 (ggear@atecone.net) if you are planning on attending this dinner and wish to make a reservation. George will not be at the November meeting, but someone will get your money to George if you wish to give it to us at the meeting. Please note that your reservation will not be set in stone until we receive your check/money order. Please put your full name and names of people coming with you (plus your email or phone number) on a separate sheet of paper with the check in the envelope that you give to us. Please make all checks payable to: Capital District Mineral Club. Please mail them to the CDMC P.O. Box which can be found on the back of this newsletter. There will also be the traditional "silent" auction at this dinner. Each member will collect 80% of the proceeds (the other 20% will go to the club). Members are asked to bring 3 specimens (fossils, minerals, books, lapidary, jewelry, hammers, chisels, etc.). The only catch is that the material put in the auction must have something to do with our club and the collecting of rocks/minerals, or the upkeep of them. Please also remember to bring a grab bag gift. Each gift must be \$5-10 in value, and of interest to a rockhound.

Gerry Boileau and Anne Woods

November Field Trips

Please note that you must make reservations with trip leaders ahead of time if you plan on attending a trip. Also please arrive at the location when specified.

1. **November 4. Westmoreland, NH. Stoddard Mine.** Trip leader Richard Hartnett. Call to sign up at 518-439-7243. The meeting place is on the outer edge of the Walmart parking lot towards Route 7 in Brunswick, NY (just up the hill from Troy on Route 7) at 8:00am. Things you can find include light green/dark purple fluorite, barite, small malachite bursts, quartz crystal clusters, barite, and pyrite (perhaps even galena). We will stop in Wilmington, VT, at Dot's Diner, for coffee and breakfast; a great rest spot. The distance involved from our meeting/departure point in Brunswick was roughly 85 miles each way. Bring chisels, large hammers, etc. Working on old mine site in woods. 10-20 minute walk in.

Field Trip Reports

1. **Barrus Ledge & Betts Manganese Mine Combined Trip.**

On Saturday October 7, a group of nine Club members assembled at the Glenmont School to embark on a field trip into two western Massachusetts sites. In attendance were Bonnie Unser, Bob Kaufman, Max Fischer, Jeff Klein, Alex Klein, Dick Ackerman, George Yager, Art Collins, and Richard Hartnett.

We started out just after 9:00 am and stopped briefly in Pittsfield, Mass. After a bit of route confusion in Dalton, the group got back together and we stopped for coffee in Cummington, Massachusetts. The weather was ideal: sunny and low 60's.

We arrived at Barrus Ledge at about 11:00 am, and were once again met by John Foulkes, cousin of the owner, Tim Barrus. John graciously led us to the collecting sites and decided to join us in collecting.

Minerals collected were Goshenite (clear beryl), Indicolite (blue tourmaline), Elbaite (green tourmaline), Schorl (black tourmaline), and spodumene. The pegmatite did not yield its treasures easily. The crystals extracted were small. A few good specimens, however, were found. I recommend a return trip in the late Spring, and I am sure that will be acceptable to the owner.

Around 2:30pm we left for the Betts Manganese Mine in Plainfield, 4 miles east of Barrus Ledge. There we found small amounts of Rhodonite, Pyrolusite, Garnet, and Psilomelane. Another collecting site nearby at Betts Manganese Mine needs to be investigated and permissions obtained.

Richard Hartnett

2. Ilion Gorge, Ilion, New York, October 14, 2006.

Bob Ballard led Anne Woods and Ryan Sapienza on a trip to Ilion Gorge, NY to collect travertine. Last spring's floods brought down another big block of shale/limestone.

Splitting off pieces of this block yielded some chocolate brown botryoidal travertine pockets. Climbing the bank from where the block fell also yielded some good travertine (and a little angry hairy bat). The best travertine was left behind as trying to open the pockets would have brought down twenty feet of rocks, dirt and trees from above the pockets. We will go back next spring after mother nature brings it down. Good flow stone was also found in the stream.

Note: Travertine found in the pockets is a growing mineral. This means the travertine is very reactive and will combine with any mud left on the piece, especially if it dries out. This mud coat dulls the specimen and is very difficult to remove. The travertine should be kept damp until you get it home and carefully wash off any mud.

Bottom line: Ilion gorge still has some nice travertine to collect.
Bob Ballard

3. Eastern Fieldtrip Alliance (EFTA) Trip to Walworth, NY.

Walworth's Dolomite Stone Quarry held its annual Fluorite Fantasy Weekend on 7-8 October. This was an EFTA trip. At 7:30am, Bob Ballard, Anne Woods, and Bob Stitham arrived at the quarry office for the safety briefing.

While the weather this year was better, cool and sunny, the collecting was not as good. If one looks at the high wall, one will see about eight feet of thinly-bedded limestone, barren of fluorite, and then twenty-five feet of large block limestone with fluorites. The blast the quarry did dropped the wall in place rather than overturning the rock. The result was that the best rock was under eight feet of barren rock.

Some fluorite crystals were found but nothing like last year. In fact it was the year of the lookers. Anne found the second place fluorite in a pocket only her hand would fit in. Then, on the theory where there is one there might be more, Bob and Bob got out the saw, chisels and wedges and opened up the pocket. This yielded a small fluorite and a dinner plate [8"] size selenite. The best fluorite of the day was found by a Canadian woman just looking at pockets. She found a better fluorite on Sunday doing the same.

Sunday we were allowed on the left side of the quarry and this yielded some better finds. The thin bedded rock on this side did have small fluorites, but we were limited in collecting time. One person did see a beautiful 3" fluorite.

While not the best year to collect, it was still a fun trip and I will go back next year.

Bob Ballard

Getting Too Cold to Collect

Sort your rocks, minerals, and fossils and label all what you think they are but be certain or where you collected them. Someone can always identify them, but only you know where they came from and the location is worth at least 60% of the value of the item.

Location, location, and location is important in real estate, but it is also important in the value and importance of mineral specimens. Keep the best, trade others and sell or donate the rest. Your local mineral club is one outlet. Check the newsletters on the internet if you are not a member of a club, give them a call and be surprised by their response.

In September, Carol Buskirk of Harrisville Pa, was in our area settling the estate of her father in East Chatham and she contacted the club to offer some of her dad's collection. It included: books and pamphlets, copper ore, rhyolite, agates, petrified wood, obsidian, jasper, opalized wood and pyrite. That went into one flat, in the second one were: geodes, rose quartz, sand selenites, gem identification cards, and three "old" postcards from the Herkimer Diamond mine in Middlebury. The third carton held "findings" and small pieces for tumbling. These are just some of the things that will be available for future auctions looking for a new home of old minerals and hobby equipment. All looking for a new home in which to display themselves, which is better than you keeping them in the cellar, garage, or shed waiting for your children and heirs to look over when you are not longer to do it yourself.

George Gearhardt

Rock and Gem Shows

November 4-5. Exton, PA. 37th annual show, "Gemarama 2006"; Tuscarora Lapidary Society; CFS, School at Church Farm, Business Rte. 30 and Rte. 202; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Contact Nancy Marks, (570) 342-1355; e-mail: LolaLfields@yahoo.com; Web site: www.lapidary.org.

November 4-5. Old Greenwich, CT. Annual show; Stamford Mineralogical Society; Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, 90 Harding Rd., I-95 Exit 5, follow signs; Sat. 9:30-5, Sun. 10-4:30; adults \$5, children under 12 \$2; Contact Reivan Zeleznik, 39 Pepper Ridge Pl., Stamford, CT 06905, (203) 322-3297; e-mail: rzlapidary@yahoo.com.

November 4. Tucson, AZ. 5th annual silent auction; Old Pueblo Lapidary Club; 3118 N. Dale; Sat. 9-2; free admission; contact Danny Harmsen, (520) 323-9154.

November 10-11. Pittsburgh, PA. Fair & Balanced Promotions; Semiannual show; Washington County Fairgrounds, I-79N exit 40, I-79S exit 41; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; jewelry, gems, minerals, jewelry repair, stone setting; contact F.M. Zambrotto, (304) 825-6845..

November 11-12. NYC Gem & Mineral Show "A show and sale of Minerals, Gems, Fossils, Jewelry, Crystals, Fluorescents, and Meteorites!" Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 11am-5pm; Holiday Inn- Midtown Manhattan; 440 West 57th Street (between 9th and 10th Avenues), NYC; Hotel, Parking, and Restaurant on Premise! Hosted by the New York Mineralogical Club; Lectures; Door prizes; Kid's Events; Souvenir Show Card; World Class Fluorescent Mineral Exhibit! Admission \$6.00 Children under 12 accompanied by adult admitted free

November 11-12. Farmingdale, NY. Show; TarchKo Productions; SUNY Farmingdale, Roosevelt Hall, 2350 Broadhollow Rd. (Rte. 110), south

of Long Island Expwy. and N. State Pkwy.); Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4.50 (\$4 with discount flier), children under 12 free with parent; museum-quality minerals and fossils; raffle prizes, grand door prize, meteorite lecture and exhibit; contact Eva Kokoris, 42 Lenox Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801-132, (516) 707-9926; e-mail: info@tarchkoproductions.com; Web site: www.tarchkoproductions.com.

November 24-26. Hamburg, NY. Show, "Gemstreet USA"; Fairgrounds at Hamburg, 5600 McKinley Pkwy.; Fri. 11-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; books, door prizes; contact Jane Strieter Smith, Strieter Productions Inc., P.O. Box 770680, Lakewood, OH 44107; e-mail: spi@stratos.net; Web site: www.gemstreetusa.com.

EFTA Trips

To book a place on a trip a club member must make the request through Bob Hartig (518-842-5948).

Nov. 18. Delaware Mineralogical Society. Arundel Quarry, Havre de Grace, MD for pyrite cubes and epidote crystals. Limit 10 people, working quarry rules. Need safety glasses, rock hammer, chisels, hard hat, and steel-toed boots. Contact glauconite5@yahoo.com for details.

Day-Glow Safety Vests

When collecting in working quarries, members of neighboring clubs are being asked to wear bright-colored safety vests such as we see on highway workers. Quarries are beginning to require them for their workers also. It is a good idea. It allows field trip leaders to keep track of members when they spread out, whether in quarries, fields or woods. Or land owners, should they wish to check up. Should someone get hurt, they are much easier to find. This subject will be brought up for discussion at the November meeting. If the members are in agreement, vests can be ordered while still on sale. Prices are realistic.

Rich Stein

Field Trip to Marion, Kentucky

Principal objective - Fluorite. Marion, KY, is within the tri-state area noted for its magnificent fluorite specimens. I had been there in 1998 with a group of Canadian mineral collectors - saw many beautiful specimens, but found only a few pieces worth keeping. When the Boston Mineral Club announced a trip to that location, I was immediately interested. It was to be only three days on location, but that was sufficient incentive.

Left Guilderland the afternoon of Oct. 4, drove 4.5 hours to my hometown in eastern PA, by way of I-88 and I-81. Next morning, back onto I-81 to Hagerstown, MD, then West on I-70 and I-79 to Huntington, West Virginia. Drove 485 miles in 9 hours - weather during these two legs was cool, misty to drenching rain. Completed the trip next day in six hours, total miles 1,103.

Saturday collecting was in two mines - the Columbia and the Eureka. Started at the Columbia. Poor collecting, even though a bulldozer had been there. The only obvious vein was four feet above a pond created by recent rains, with no place to stand. Because collecting was so poor, we moved a couple hundred yards to the Eureka mine. This had been recently excavated and bulldozed to provide typical dump collecting. Although I found many pieces of rock with crystals on the surface, all were dirt (or mud) covered, so there was no way to gauge the quality. When eventually scrubbed and/or hosed off, most of these pieces had only a thin layer of small crystals on one surface, with serious damage to the crystals. I gave most to my sisters for garden rock.

After dinner that evening, we went to the Ben Clement museum in Marion. His son, Ed, was our host for the evening. What a mag-

nificent collection of fluorite. I hope my pictures turn out.

Our Sunday morning trip to Cave-in-Rock was unique. Left early (8:15) because we had to take a ferry across the Ohio River. The drive to the ferry should have taken about 25 minutes. However, we came upon a half dozen Amish buggies on their way to church, in rolling countryside where it was nearly impossible to pass. In due time did pass, then had to wait for the ferry to return for us. The ferry is considered part of the highway - there is no fee. It can hold 13 autos. Crossed over, then went to the Heavy Media Mill Site, just a few miles north of Cave-in-Rock. There was once a mill here which processed fluorite ore from that site and from surrounding mines. The area is surrounded by dumps. Hence, as soon as folks arrived there, they scattered like leaves in the wind. I had been told to look for boulders - not waste time looking thru debris that was reduced to two inch pieces. ((I did rake thru some crushed rock - lots of small bits of fluorite, but nothing with crystals)) Found a pit with some boulders below and protruding thru the crushed material. Cleaned around one boulder, found a one-to-two-inch thick seam of fluorite on one face. Recovered as much as possible (demolished the boulder). Wandered around, looking for more boulders. Found a couple with promise, but before transferring all my tools, opted to take a second look at a boulder right next to the original one. When finally able to roll it over, discovered a vein on this one also - this time up to three inches thick. Spent more than two hours working on this boulder - recovered some nice chunks of fluorite. Colors change from purple to yellow, and occasionally some blue. The yellow turns out to be fluorescent. Just one major problem - there is no crystal surface, just the vein material. Meantime most of the group had departed for the mineral museum in Rosiclare, I really wanted to get there, but it was too late by the time I finished with the boulders. So, back to the ferry, and to a cookout for the entire group ((23 rockhounds)). At dusk, many of the group took UV lamps and went back to Champion mine to collect things that definitely fluoresced.

Third day was back to Eureka mine. This was not my first choice. So, I took my time, trying to decide what to do. Ed Clement was there again, and was wondering if the mother vein was truly below the ditch that had been created by a backhoe. The only thing obvious was a lot of mud. I ultimately decided to see if I could find the vein, and began removing mud. Got down some two-to-three feet, started hitting rock. Extended my pit toward the stream about ten feet away. Started getting scratching sounds with the shovel. Working more carefully, brought out several mud-covered lumps of rock. Put these in the stream, kept on digging. Found many small pieces. Two ladies from the Boston club volunteered to wash pieces for me. They were great. Ended up with two plates with good purple fluorite, one elongated piece, one baseball sized bicolor piece, and a flat full of small pieces. The three large pieces will require hours of scrubbing with a toothbrush to remove the mud that is in every crevice. Have already had a request to sell one of the plates.

Actually, it is unlikely that I will ever personally collect any better fluorite.

Weatherwise, the 2nd and 3rd days were beautiful - temperatures in 70 to 75 degree range.

The good weather held until back in PA, then turned much cooler. Summer is gone !!!

Richard Stein

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

Officers:

President	Paul Van Schaick	518-399-5810
Vice Pres	Anne Woods	518-322-7932
Secretary	Helen Eckler	518-943-3459
Treasurer	Robert Stitham	gumby59@surferz.net

Newletter Staff:

Anne Woods schmanie@albanyrockclub.com
Don Kauffman
George Gearhardt
Robert Stitham

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.