

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

OCTOBER 2004

October Meeting

It's time once again to hold our monthly meeting. The October meeting of the Capital District Mineral Club will be held on Thursday, October 7, 2004. We will meet in the Student Center on the first floor of the New York State Museum, Madison Ave., Albany, NY (unless otherwise noted at the front security desk). Please sign in and out at the security desk in the after hours guest book. The museum doors will be open from 7:00-7:15pm and the meeting will begin around 7:30pm. Please be on time since after 7:15pm, we will no longer let you in. Please also note that as of now, no one will be there to let you into the door prior to 7pm either (so bring your mittens, your scarf, and your winter coat if you intend to wait by the frosty window for 7 to arrive).

October Program

Mike Hawkins, the collection manager for the New York State Museum's Geological Survey department, will be our presenter. He will conduct a private tour of the museum's "Mineral Gallery" and will discuss the changes made recently in the exhibition cases. There are currently seventeen cases available for public viewing, including the "Recent Acquisitions" one, which holds several specimens from our own members. The "Fluorescent Minerals" case has also been updated. The website for the "Mineral Gallery" has been updated by member Steve Condon, the website is given in its own space later in this newsletter.

Review of September Program

The "Show and Tell" program included presenters: Richard Stein, Bob Kaufman, Chuck and Joyce Vedder, Bob and Elaine Royer, Amy Sternstein, Mellissa B., Bob Ballad (a meteorite- the most expensive) and Bob Hartig (Herkimer diamonds.- the most heart breaking for the rest of us - Bob collected over one-thousand of them over Father's Day weekend).

Also, the trial run of a "Silent Auction" was performed at our meeting. George Gearhardt was in charge, and announced the start and stop of the auction. Ten items which had been previously donated to the club were auctioned off. All the \$68.00 proceeds went towards our club treasury. There is discussion as to whether to make this a permanent club event.

Review of Past Long Ago Field Trips

Submitted by Jim Palmer

Mohawk River Trip. Twelve people attended the Mohawk River Trip to Amsterdam, NY at the beginning of the summer. The river rock picking was not quite as good as in years past due to the large pieces of ice that were in the midst of the collecting site. The large chunks of ice were in the process of melting, which were leaving a lot of sand and gravel behind. This made collecting around the ice a bit difficult.

We then went to Scotia Sand and Gravel to look for aragonite. The aragonite, in this case, was the cement which holds the large and small stone pebbles together in a sort of conglomerate structure. We were able to find some weather worn aragonite crystals as well.

The last stop was the sand pit on Burdect Street across from the sand and gravel pit. There we found sand concretions, both round and flat.

Diamond Acres Trip. Eleven people went on the Diamond Acres trip to Fonda, NY in April. After meeting at the icecream stand in Fonda, we went up to Diamond Acres to look for herkimer diamonds. First we did some cleanup work in the club claim and then we went diamond hunting. We sieved some dirt and had little luck. Remember this time of year, early spring, the ground is still quite wet. We then moved onto an abandoned pit and had better luck. Some diamonds were found. We tried to find pockets of diamonds, but had no luck.

Dues Are Due

The Capital District Mineral Club, Inc. has a fiscal year that begins with September 1 and ends with August 31. That means the new year starts NOW. Look at the mailing label on your newsletter and if, after your name, the numbers "8/04" appear, your membership is expiring August 31, 2004. Please renew by completing a membership form included in this newsletter or print one from our website (address on last page). Send checks, payable to the Capital District Mineral Club, to our post office box (address on last page), or you can renew at our monthly meeting. You will receive your new membership cards (ours and EFMLS) either by mail or at the meeting. If you have already renewed your membership, we thank you, and you can disregard this message.

Trustee Meeting Review

The Trustee Meeting was held at Bob Ballard's home at 3pm on Sunday September 19. A number of items were discussed including making T-shirts again, a scholarship, a kid's corner, and a new auction committee. Please note that this is just a summary for your enjoyment, and not the official write up of the Trustee Meeting.

T-Shirts. Two people are getting estimates on the cost of making T-shirts with our club logo on them. It has not been decided if this will be a T-shirt, jacket, or sweatshirt, or if just sewable logos will be made. More on this issue later.

Scholarship. The Capital District Mineral Club will give a scholarship of \$250.00 to be given to the head of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Troy, NY) Geology Department for the purpose of giving it to a student each year for the purpose of that student conducting a geology research project.

Silent Auctions at Meetings. The board has decided that it will continue with the "silent auctions" at our club meetings for now, pending approval by higher authorities.

New Auction Committee. It was decided at the board meeting that due to the confusion of a new person running the Club Auctions each year, that it might be easier to form a committee for that. Members of this committee include so far: Anne Woods, George Gearhardt, Bob Ballard, and Gerald Boileau. If you want to join us, please contact Bob Ballard at the next meeting.

Kid's Corner. An idea for a "Kid's Corner" was brought forth at the board meeting. It would be a one page (front to back) informative sheet included in the monthly newsletter aimed toward kids.

By-Law Change. The club must update the by-laws to define a club trip for the insurance. While we are at it, we are also going to attempt to make the language "politically correct". Also, since we are making changes anyways, if anyone has any suggestions, now would be the time to tell us about it. Contact Bob Ballard if you want to help him. <rballad@nycap.rr.com>.

New Weblink in Cool Sites

Please check this out! The new link is under "The New York Academy of Mineralogy" in the 'N' section under COOL SITES in our club website. The webmaster of the site, Stephen Condon (also one of our members), brought it to my attention. Note that some of the photography was taken by members of our club. Also, you can go directly to it via the following link <www.nysam.org>

Upcoming Field Trips for October

We are having a shortage of field trips this year. Anyone wishing to lead one for October, please announce it at the October Meeting. Also, anyone wishing to join the field trip committee...let us know at the next meeting. At any time during the year, if you think of somewhere that you want to go on a fieldtrip, that you know we can get access to, by all means, bring it to someone's attention in the club.

EFTA October 2004 Field Trips

Submitted by Bob Hartig

<rockbob@nycap.rr.com> for more info

You must contact Bob to attend one of these trips.

- Oct. 2.** Danbury Mineralogical Society. Case quarry, Portland, CT. Beryl, columbite/tantalite, schorl, autumite, et al.
- Oct. 15.** Danbury Mineralogical Society. Herkimer diamond weekend. Details to be announced.
- Oct. 16.** Saco Mineral Club. Harvard Mine, Greenwood, ME, Pearl Lake, Lisbon, NH, Minerals to be found?
- Oct. 23.** Rock and Mineral Club of Lower Bucks County, PA, Doylestown, PA, Calcite, Dolomite, Pyrite, Barite, Fluorite, Micros (Limit on Number of Collectors)
- Oct. 31.** Connecticut Valley Mineral Club. Hardwick, MA, epidote, babingtonite, etc.

Upcoming Shows

- Oct. 2-3, Newark, NY.** 11th Annual Wayne County Jewelry, Gem, Mineral, Fossil Show & Sale; American Hobby Shop; St. Michael's School, 320 Main St. (Rte. 88); Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$3; contact Dave Kords, (315) 986-1171; <dave@americanhobbyshop.com>.
- Oct. 9-10, Newbury, NH.** Show; Capital Mineral Club; Sunapee Ski Area, Rte. 103; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$3, seniors \$2, children 12 and under free with adult; contact Gordon Graham, (603) 763-3129; <ghgraham@snet.com>.
- Oct. 16-17, Poughkeepsie, NY.** 35th annual show, "Rocks from Space" Mid-Hudson Valley Gem & Mineral Show; Mid-Hudson Civic Center, 14 Civic Center Plaza; adults \$5, seniors and students \$4, children \$1; contact Carolyn Reynard, (845) 471-1224; <sunstone3@prodigy.net>; <http://geocities.com/ny-rockhounds>.
- Oct. 23-24, Bristol, CT.** 32nd annual show; Bristol Gem & Mineral Club; 240 Stafford Ave.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; contact Dave Korzendorfer, (860) 651-9980; <dkorzend@comcast.net>.
- Oct. 23-24, Henrietta, NY.** 34th show; Rochester Lapidary Society, RAS Mineral Section; Minett Hall, Dome Center; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, children under 10 free; contact Larry Shulmann, (585) 271-6967; <namluhcs@aol.com>.
- Oct. 30-31, Freeport, NY.** Annual fall show; Village of Freeport; Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E. Merrick Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; contact John Anderson, P.O. Box 551, N. Bellmore, NY 11520, (516) 781-8410.
- Oct. 30-31, Warwick, RI.** 33rd annual show, "Curious Calcites" Rhode Island Mineral Hunters; Community College of Rhode Island-Knight Campus, Rte. 113, East Ave.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$5, children under 12 free with adult; contact Nancy (Koskie) Millard, (401) 683-4764; <nancy_koskie@msn.com>; <www.rimh.org/show/index.htm>.

Disappearing Collecting Sites: Any Solutions?

Article submitted by Don Kauffman

There are great threats to perpetuating our hobby to benefit future

generations of rock, mineral, and fossil collectors. Gradual loss of available sites can almost be counted on an annual basis.

Urban sprawl and development has taken a toll through past years. Claims against rising liability insurance have created a portion of closings

Closing of a location due to limitations on a quarry expansion is understandable. We can accept economics of diminishing operations.

Other sites close for reasons of insurance. Most reputable mineral and fossil clubs have insurance for their memberships. Rare claims against a quarry owner have probably lead to closings.

Once again, we must recognize the greatest danger to survival of available mineral or fossil-collecting locations is greed. Some humans just desire to gain wealth by stealing from others. They believe the end will justify the means.

In a recent issue of Albany's **The Capital Rockhouser** human greed again reared its ugly face; a banner line indicated a planned field trip into a Gouverneur Talc location had been canceled due to person or persons unknown making unauthorized entry into the quarry.

Thieves removed a quantity of material. Then, they had the gall to sell their stolen spoils on eBay. Syracuse Field Trip Committee offered a profound apology to its membership just two weeks prior to the show.

Although an out-of-state club member, I share the outrage and concern of every club and EFMLS associate. Someone has denied us an opportunity to collect at that (or any other Gouverneur Talc) site. Mineral or fossil collecting on any private or company property is a privilege but in countless undisclosed cases a few believe it is just beneath them to go with a group.

Scoundrels and looters trespass under guise of darkness to steal from quarry owners. Those selfish and faceless thieves have not only invaded private property and taken material but they have also stolen any grant of privilege by that owner for us to collect as a group. We should not take such actions by a few lawless persons lightly.

There is a quote, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil, is for good men to do nothing" (Edmund Burke). His quote is most certainly applicable to the situation here. A minor evil should deserve no less toleration than a greater one.

Actions by a greedy and lawless few should enrage every one of us from individuals right up through statewide clubs to the upper levels of our national organization. Our privileges to collect are being endangered by greedy outlaws.

Management's sign is essentially out on the quarry gate, "NOBODY gets in here anymore!" With all respect, gentlemen, build a fence around your quarry. Post a sign. Keep good and conscientious collectors out. Thieves will simply climb your fence and steal from you again. You can believe it!

What can be done to thwart such activities? Quick, knee-jerk reaction to theft by closing sites to responsible collectors is no answer. Isn't a response from our clubs or organization as a whole part of a needed solution? We must believe WE are the solution and seek solutions in a responsible manner.

How did the company site manager become aware of a clandestine theft problem? Was there more than one property invasion?

Someone saw and identified specimens from that quarry on eBay. Who was that person? (The quarry manager knew.) How was it determined that the items were recently stolen from the quarry? How do they know the specimens weren't collected years ago?

If there is a clear-cut case of trespass and theft, were the authorities notified? Or did quarry management quarry just need weak excuse to close the location to all? Why place the blame on all of us?

We must not seek to blame quarry owners. We can understand their side as a victim of invasion and theft. But, why can't we all seek a solution to this type of problem? If we stand by and do nothing, we are then part of the problem.

After a long-term partnership with mineral or fossil collecting clubs and organizations, why would a concerned owner just allow that trust to be dashed on theft of those rocks?

Wouldn't investigation of known incidents, pursuit, apprehension and convictions of those responsible be of primary concern? Or is effort by landowners to request law enforcement to do an investigation too much trouble?

We should be determined that convictions are made. An example must be set. Word of law must go out! Names on the court docket must be put in the press.

To punish many all for acts of a few just limits competition for the lawless. To enable a few rogue collectors to illegally access specimens just helps drive up the prices for the sellers.

We must send a message that there is a price for their action. They must be shown the price of their activity is not that of a high bid on a valued mineral specimen; the price is prison, fines, and ruination of their reputations.

Are we all outraged enough to seek a solution from within our own ranks and organization? I'd like to think we are. If not, we should be.

We have an organization and membership that can provide solutions to some of our site closings. Why not try? Any attempt at a solution is better than allowing locations to be closed.

We must show quarry and property owners that there are many honest and responsible collectors. We must set a better example than an outlaw few.

Safety First

by William Klose, EFMLS Safety Chair

(source: EFMLS News September 2004)

HAMMER SAFETY

Hammers used by rock hounds come in every size, type, and construction, and include rock hammers, bricklayer's or mason's hammers, blacksmith's or sledge hammers, machinist's peen hammers, jeweler's hammers, setting hammers, soft face hammers, lead or copper faced hammers, trimmer's and welder's hammers, as well as a variety of mallets, such as rawhide, rubber, and tinner's. I have even seen napping hammers (a 3 pound high carbon steel hammer with tapering faces used for forming stones during road construction) and railroad track mauls (used for driving railroad spikes) in the field. As it is hard to anticipate what a rock hound's "favorite weapon" will be, I thought I would present a list of general hammer safe practices followed by the proper use of some of the more common hammer types.

1. Always select the proper type, size, and weight of hammer for the task.
2. Always wear eye protection, safety shoes, and protective clothing.
3. Always strike a hammer blow squarely, avoiding glancing blows, and over and under strikes. A hammer's striking face should be parallel with the surface being struck.
4. When striking a chisel, punch, or wedge, the striking face of the hammer should be 3/8" larger than the struck face of the tool. Both the striking face of the hammer and the struck face of the tool should be free of oil.
5. Do not strike another hammer with a hammer.
6. Do not strike a harder surface with a hard surfaced hammer.
7. Never use a hammer or struck tool with dents, cracks, mushrooming, or excessive wear. Do not redress a hammer head—replace it.
8. Replace worn or damaged handles. A qualified individual should replace hammer handles. Most hardware stores will replace hammer handles for a nominal fee. They can also provide a rubber sleeve for sledge hammers, which will prevent handle damage

adjacent to the head.

9. Be aware of others in the vicinity of the hammers arc of swing and ensure that they are also wearing safety eye protection, safety shoes, and protective clothing.

Bricklayer's or mason's hammers are designed for setting or splitting bricks, masonry tile, and concrete blocks. Never use them to strike metal or drive tools, such as chisels. The blade of a bricklayer's hammer should be kept sharp by redressing at a 40 degree angle with a bench grinder. Keep the metal cool while grinding by quenching often in water which will protect the metal's tempering.

Hand drilling hammers are used with chisels, star drills, punches, and hardened nails. Never use common nail (claw) hammers for striking metal, such as chisels, as they are designed for driving unhardened nails and their shape, depth of face, and balance make them unsuitable for other uses.

Machinist's peen hammers (ball, cross, or straight) are designed for striking chisels, drills, and punches and riveting, straightening, and shaping metal.

Blacksmith's or sledge hammers are designed for striking wood, metal, and concrete or stone, depending on size, weight, and shape.

When using a hammer, grip the handle near the end where it is designed for gripping. This will give you the best control and impact with the least effort. Watch your hands, shins, and feet. Wear gloves, a long sleeve shirt, apron, safety glasses and face shield, and high lacing safety shoes for protection from flying debris and sharp shards.

When storing hammers for a period of time, lightly lubricate metal parts, but wipe away any oil or grease from rubber mallets or rubber handle grips to prevent damage to the hammer. Before using a hammer, wipe away all oil from the striking surface(s).



Greetings from a fieldtrip in Patterson, NY. Don't worry! The owner of this mine vehicle is the one taking the picture.

CAPITAL DISTRICT MINERAL CLUB
P.O. Box 12814
Albany, New York 12212-2814

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Street _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Membership Type: Family _____ Individual _____ Single _____

Dues are \$20.00 Family membership; \$14.00 Individual membership; \$5.00 Student membership



HELLO,
I WON A LOTTERY TO SET OFF AN EXPLOSION!!!!
It was great fun.
I will tell you more later.
bye
Teka Stitham



Capital District Mineral Club
P.O. Box 12814
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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.