

# 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 2005

### October Program

The next meeting will be on October 6th. The program will be a DVD presentation on the Home Sweet Mine in Alma, CO which produced beautiful rhodocrosite specimens. This mine is now closed.

### September Program Review

The "Show and Tell" program allowed members to pass the specimens around the room while they told (explained) how they can to add these items to their collection over the summer months. The judging of the "ugly rock contest" followed and it took the three judges on minutes to declare the winner. Bob Stitham was the happy winner, Rules prescribe the specimen must not have any crystals, no attractive features or uses, no fluorescence and be the ultimate "leaverite". All specimens returned to their owners.

A "Silent Auction" took place throughout both parts of the presentations and they produced \$95.00 for the club treasury. The items offered were: Apache tear on perlite matrix-Superior, Az (Jim Palmer); Celestite- Meckley quarry, Mandata, Pa. ( Rich Stein; Diopside (thumbnail) from Quebec (Bob Ballard); Dolomite- Norwood, NY (Chuck Vedder); Fluorite - Hunan, China (George Gearhardt); Fluorite -Durango, Mexico (Gerald Boileau); Fossil fish on matrix- Wyoming (Joyce Vedder); Labadorite - Madagascar (Bob Ballard); Multi mineral combo -micro from Mt. St. Hilaire, Quebec (Bob Stitham); Petrified wood-polished, Arizona (Sam Cozine);and a Trilobite from Alnif, Morocco (Paul Van Schaick).

### September Field Trip Review

September 24, 2005. Hooper Garnet Mine. At 10:00am on Saturday, ten individuals, led by Gerry Boileau, met at McDonald's in Warrensburg off exit 23 of the Northway. This was a field trip for the Capital District Mineral Club which was to replace one which was originally cancelled due to rain.

Thank goodness that the weather on Saturday was beautiful. Accompanying the trip leader, Gerald Boileau, were Florence Derry, a new member, and her daughter, Kristen, as well as her two granddaughters. Also Dick Ackerman, William and Patricia Perry, and John Balmore (?) and his wife from the Syracuse Mineral Club joined the group for a total of ten people. We had the quarry to ourselves. Everyone found garnets galore and had a very good time. We left the quarry at about 2:00pm after a very successful day of collecting. We all found a lot of garnets.

### October Field Trip Review

October 1, 2005. St. Clair, PA. Rich Stein led the club members into the site at 9:30am for a full day of collecting fern, leaf, and tree trunk fossils (some white, some orange). It was a good 10-15 minute walk to the car with our rocks loaded into buckets. After about 5 minutes down the trail, we decided that our fern fossils were "priceless". The day was sunny and warm. After hearing the weather report for the lows during the nights, none of the participants were brave enough to camp.

### Library Books are Due

Barbara Gearhardt has alerted me that several books are still out of the club library which need to be returned. Please look around your house and see if you are one of these people.

### 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 October meeting, or by sending in the form at the end of this newsletter to our P. O. Box. Please note that one must have a current up-to-date membership card to attend fieldtrips.

### Eastern Field Trip Alliance (EFTA)

## Field Trip Itinerary

Contact Bob Hartig if you wish to attend at:  
518-842-5948

Oct. 2, 2005. Saco Valley Gem & Mineral Club. Moat Mountain, Albany, NH- Smoky quartz, microcline, danalite, fluorite, topaz. Meet at National Forest Mineral Parking area for Moat Mtn. at 8AM directions (including name & phone number of trip leader) will be posted on the SVG&M club website.

Oct. 8, 2005. Lapidary & Mineral Society of Central CT. Clark Hill Quarries, East Hampton, CT for pegmatite minerals in dumps or outcrops (beryl, almandine, ferrocolumbite, muscovite, mica/feldspar pseudomorphs after schorl, etc.) 9AM-4PM. See <http://WWW.LMSCC.ORG> for details, no need to coordinate, club will have necessary permit, just show up!

Oct. 22, 2005. Mineralogical and Lapidary Society of Raritan Valley, NJ. North of Lancaster, PA. Calcite, Quartz, Dolomite, Sphalerite. 9 AM - Contact field trip coordinator, Dave Rieur @ (908) 938-5525, no e-mail, for meeting place.

Oct. 29, 2005. Mineralogical and Lapidary Society of Raritan Valley, NJ. Stanhope, NJ. Calcite, pyrite, hedenbergite, apatite, graphite, zircon, stilbite, amphibole, pyroxene. 9 AM - Contact field trip coordinator, Dave Rieur @ (908) 938-5525, no e-mail, for meeting place.

### October 2005 Show Announcements

Oct. 1, 2005. Macungie, PA. Semi-annual show, "PESA Autumn Mineralfest" Pennsylvania Earth Sciences Association; Macungie Memorial Park Bldg., Rte. 100; Sat. 8:30-3; adults \$2, children under 12 free; contact Ed Richards, 431 Maryann Dr., Alburtis, PA 18011; e-mail: mineralfest@aol.com.

Oct. 8-9, 2005. Newbury, NH. 42nd annual festival; Capital Mineral Club; Sunapee Ski Area, Rte. 103; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-4; Contact Jonathan Herndon, P.O. Box 520, Center Ossipee, NH 03814-0520.

Oct. 8-9, 2005. Worthington, PA. Show; Kit-Han-Ne Rock & Gem Club; Worthington-West Franklin Fire Hall, Rte. 422; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Contact Albert Zabinski, 235 Quay St., E. Vandergrift, PA 15629, (724) 567-7067.

Oct. 15-16, 2005. Rhinebeck, NY. 36th annual show and sale, "Gems & Precious Stones" Mid-Hudson Valley Gem & Mineral Society; Dutchess County Fairgrounds, Bldgs. B & C, Rte. 9; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; Contact Carolyn Reynard, (845) 471-1224; e-mail: sunstone3@hvc.rr.com; Web site: [www.geocities.com/nyrockhounds](http://www.geocities.com/nyrockhounds).

Oct. 22-23, 2005. Bristol, CT. 33rd annual show; Bristol Gem & Mineral Club; Beals Community Center, 240 Stafford Ave., near Stephens AutoMall; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$4, seniors \$3, kids under 12 free with adult; Contact Dave, (860) 651-9980; e-mail: Bristolgem@hotmail.com.

Oct. 22-23, 2005. Henrietta (Rochester), NY. Show; Rochester Lapidary Society, RAS Mineral Section; Minett Hall, Monroe County Fairgrounds, Calkins Rd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Contact Larry Schulman, (585) 271-6967.

Oct. 29-30, 2005. Freeport, NY. 9th annual show; Village of Freeport; Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E. Merrick Rd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Contact John Andersen, P.O. Box 551, N. Bellmore, NY 11710-0551, (516) 781-8410.

Oct. 29-30, 2005. Warwick, RI. Show, "My Favorites" 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 with adult and scouts in uniform free; Contact Nancy Koskie Millard, Rhode Island Mineral Hunters, P.O. Box 802, Portsmouth, RI 02871, (401) 683-4764; e-mail: nancy\_koskie@msn.com; Web site: [www.rimh.org](http://www.rimh.org).

### The Roxbury Stone

by Don Kauffman

Not long ago stopping by a famous battlefield provided a long anticipated look at a storied stone monument. Sight of that silent monument and knowing history behind it can send chills up your spine and create a great emotional effect.

To fully understand this, you must first read "The Puddingstone." An editorial in Civil War Times Illustrated, August 1998 narrated a story about an 18-ton boulder of non-descript conglomerate stone. The editor told of its history, what it meant to young men connected to it and how it ultimately found its way to America's most famous national historical site.

Presented by citizens of Roxbury, Massachusetts, the stone was given in 1886 as a memorial for its veterans who died one hell hot July day in 1863. Forty-four townsmen gave their lives on a vast field of farms in distant Pennsylvania. The site of battle was a small crossroads town, Gettysburg.

From the day I read the article, it was my desire to locate that monument on the Gettysburg Battlefield. November of 2003 my chance came as we traveled home from a rock swap near South Mountain in Adams County.

We found the monument just as described. An unusual stand-out among fancier monuments along Hancock Avenue and just south of a copse of trees denoted as "high watermark of the Confederacy."

Puddingstone is common except for smooth or irregular lumps within the matrix. It is not gemmy or vuggy or polished or crystallized. It is not a handsome rock. Not even close to attractive. Perhaps it could win "Ugly Rock" in a mineral club contest.

A type of conglomerate, it is native to the Bay State, Massachusetts. Eons ago a soft stone covering areas between what is now Boston's Blue Hills and coastline were composed of argillite and ash from active volcanoes in the Atlantic Ocean archipelago. Clay and ash sediment collected in existing bays and marshes across primordial terrain. Gravel entered the layers of sediment and, in time, hardened to a mass of cemented pebbles and chunks.

Millions of years passed, the material was solidified, heated, compressed and faulted as well as upended and distorted. Eventually geological events covered formation with more fallout. Another million years or so and erosion exposed the ugly stone mass again. Such outcrops of material are native to this area and eventually locals called the odd concretion "puddingstone."

By our time in 1860's AD, the Roxbury stone had served as a childhood play object for untold generation. Childish hands had once traced irregular patterns around protrusions on that stone. Perhaps maturing young men had even passed idle time laughing and whispering promises of eternal love to their young ladies nearby.

The monolith that once stood mute to sounds of childhood joy or murmurs of eternal love now represents a weathered headstone to Roxbury soldiers. The stone stands to honor veterans of the 20th Massachusetts Infantry; Roxbury men who like thousands of other Federal soldiers stood rock resolute against 14,000 of their southern countrymen. Their blood drenched the very ground where the stone now stands as they held a thin line and helped repulse valiant Virginians led by George E. Pickett.

Few names are listed on the granite base. Murmuring breezes appear to whorl around visitors gazing across now silent fields. Walking the site and reading inscriptions on nearby marble or granite monuments, one is moved to feel power of spirit around the Roxbury stone.

This stone monument is just one of many in a place of honor on that field where many thousand dreams died on both sides. The puddingstone from Roxbury represents comrades, memory of childhood, young manhood, honor, country and courage. The Roxbury stone represents belief in a cause so great that duty demanded men on both sides pay the supreme cost.

The Roxbury stone is a geological and historical curiosity. It is also a silent reminder of frail humanity that is often helpless against itself. The Roxbury stone is also a reminder that as the dust of the earth we tread on, so to dust for any human cause we must return. Only stones will be left as a memoriam.

*References*

1. James P. Kushlan, "Behind the Lines: A Note from the Editor, The Puddingstone." Civil War Times Illustrated, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, page 4, August 1998
2. America's Volcanic Past – Massachusetts. <http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/LivingWith/VolcanicPast?Places/volcanic\_past\_machusetts.html>
3. The Unique Monument to the 20th at Gettysburg <http://www.people.virginia.edu/~mmd5f/monum.html>

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**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**

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

**Officers:**

President	Paul Van Schaick	518-399-5810
Vice Pres	Robert Stitham	
Secretary	Helen Eckler	518-943-3459
Treasurer	Ruth Schmidt	518-943-4876

**Newletter Staff:**

Anne M. Woods <schmanie@albanyrockclub.com>  
Barbara Gearhardt  
George Gearhardt  
Don Kauffman

**Website:**

<www.albanyrockclub.com>

**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.