CML&MS
4519 Seneca
Okemos MI 48864
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Neil & Connie Snepp
1325 Orlando Dr
Haslett MI 48840

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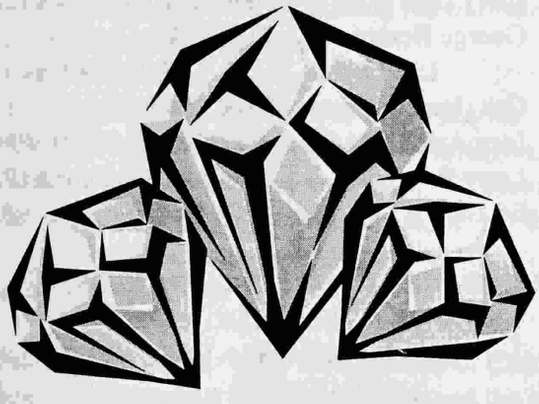
ROCKHOUND NEWS

February 2000



Official publication of the
Central Michigan Lapidary & Mineral Society
Member of MWF & AFMS

ROCKHOUND NEWS

This bulletin is the official publication of the Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society of Greater Lansing, Michigan. It is published the second week of each month except July and August.

The Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society is a non-profit organization, meeting to promote interest and increased knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, geology, paleontology and the lapidary arts. It was organized in May, 1957.

Meeting place: North School, 333 E. Miller Rd, Lansing MI
Meeting date: Third Thursday, except in July and August
Meeting time: 7:30 pm; doors are open at 7:00 pm
Annual dues: Adults $5.00, Students $1.00

OFFICERS 2000

President	Mary Kay Bean	351-1107
Vice President	Ed Drown	347-5097 EdDrown@aol.com
Recording Secretary	Mary Gowans	351-6136
Corresponding Secretary	Connie Snepp	339-2863
Roster Secretary	Wayne Zittel	485-2002
Treasurer	Alan Hukill	641-6125
1 Year Director	Alice Turner	694-9596
2 Year Director	Gail Hopkins	886-6047
3 Year Director	Beth Stinnett	521-3375
Laison Officer	Bettie Patterson	347-8821
Past President	Larry Bourland	bourlal@scnc.cps.k12.mi.us

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MEMBER OF:
Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies
http://www.comean.com/rock/mwf
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies
http://www.AmFed.Org

If your last name begins with A-I, please bring refreshments to the meeting!

FROM THE ROSTER ROOSTER -- Wayne Zittel
The following folks may pick up their membership badges at any club meeting:
Leonard Espinoza, Dave Regalbuto, and Connie Sysak.

Any and all corrections or updates of **directory** information should be given to the Roster Rooster at the February meeting. This is your chance! **CHECK YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, E-MAIL, ETC. and report any problems NOW!**

Two new e-mail addresses to add to your directory:
Florence Hill hillflo@tir.com
Gordon & Marie Lewis g.m.lewis@mindspring.com

GRAND RAPIDS FIELD TRIP, FEBRUARY 19-- George Heaton
The February field trip will be to the Michigan Natural Storage Co. Gypsum Mine in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We will meet on Saturday, February 19th at the Michigan Natural Storage Co. office at 10:00 am.

The storage company charges $2.50 per person. Bring flashlights, lanterns, and spare batteries since the mine tunnels are dark. You will need hammers, sharp chisels, and buckets or boxes to carry tools and rocks. If you collect selenite crystals, you will also need tissue paper to wrap them. The mine is around 54 degrees, so you will probably find it most comfortable to dress in a few layers which you can adjust to your level of activity. Boots and a hard hat are also recommended. Do not forget to bring a lunch and something to drink. We stay down in the tunnels until about 3:00pm.

Material to be collected includes massive gypsum in the form of "pencil ore" and alabaster, and gypsum crystals called selenite. I would like everyone to collect and carry out a couple of good pieces of "pencil ore" for the children's table. If everyone does this it will add up to a good quantity of material and I won't have the back-breaking job of hauling out one huge and heavy bucketful by myself. I would appreciate this very much.

To get there take I-96 to the 28th street-West exit at Grand Rapids. (This will be the 2nd 28th St. exit.) Go west on 28th St. to Clyde Park Ave, turn right (North) on Clyde Park. Take Clyde Park to Grandville Ave. and turn left (West). Grandville Ave. becomes Chicago Drive just west of Clyde Park. Take Chicago Dr. to Judd Ave. and turn right (North.) Take Judd to Michigan Natural Storage which is on the right just before the railroad tracks. Allow about 1 1/2 hours driving time from Lansing.

NEIL'S NOTE: A heartfelt thank you to all the members of CMLMS for the honor accorded me at the January meeting. The certificate of appreciation and the cake were greatly enjoyed. Thank you all.

GEORGE HEATON'S POTLUCK REPORT

We had our January potluck at the Alaiedon Township Hall on Sunday, January 23rd. We had about two dozen people at this popular event which was sufficient to provide a good quantity and variety of food. As usual, George Heaton did not overeat but ate just the right amount. Truely amazing will power. Beside eating food we also played that bingo-like game Rocko with plenty of rock related prizes to be won. There were enough prizes available that almost everyone won at least one prize. Even George Heaton won a prize on the very last game.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT -- Connie Snepp

*Get well cards were sent ot Don Collins and to Frank Swagart who is undergoing chemotherapy.
*Bessie Rogers is recuperating. Her voice is still a whisper, but she can be understood and enjoys visiting with club members. Since get-well cards are now old hat for her, we're sending a Valentine.
*Life member Lucy Dewey died Jan. 19. A book in her memory will be placed in the library.

Mercury -- Duane Jorgenson

"Quick, Silver!" the Lone Ranger cried as he saw his mercury bullet slip between his fingers. The mineral for February, the fastest month of the year, is quicksilver or mercury, and is, as you probably know, named after the God and planet of the same name. Mercury is a noble metal, fluid at normal temperatures, which occurs both native or uncombined, and combined with other elements, and occurs as a sulfide, selenide, telluride, chloride, oxide and so on. Of past considerable interest, as well as a method to recover gold is the combination of mercury and gold, known as amalgam. Mercury has been known since prehistoric times. A small vessel containing quicksilver that was made in the 15th or 16th century B.C. was recovered from a grave at Kurna in Mesopotamia. Aristotle described mercury in his writings of about 320 B.C. and referred to its use by priests. The Chinese are known to have used both liquid mercury and the sulfide, cinnabar, by 200 B.C. Pliny the Elder, in 77 A.D. describes the use of mercury to amalgamate(see above) and refine gold, and in gilding and silvering (Who said the ancient Greeks had no mirrors?). Cinnabar, the bright red sulfide was used as a pigment and as a medicine. In Roman times the source of mercury was Almaden, Spain, and an exclusive license from the Roman government was required to extract ore which, after extraction, was sent to Rome for refining.

Alchemists in the Middle Ages considered mercury as a basic constituent of all fusible metals, and their experimentation with it resulted in many valuable compounds of medicinal value, some of which were used until recent times. By the 16th Century mercury was well known, and the accounts of the time about mercury's properties, geology, and refining of its ores are little different from accounts 300 years newer.

The Spanish explorations for gold and silver in the New World, and the exploitation of the deposits discovered, created the first large scale demand for mercury for use in the amalgamation process. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the invention of scientific instruments, including the mercury thermometer, increased demand for mercury, and in 1799 the discovery that mercury

fulminate could be used as an explosive resulted in a use that only recently has been superceded by other compounds. Since the 1890's the use of mercury in electrolytic cells in the Solvay process to produce chlorine and caustic soda greatly increased demand for mercury and ultimately lead to great environmental problems where these mercury cells were used. Mercury is wide spread in nature, and also occurs in traces in some coals, resulting in traces of mercury being even more widely spread as the coal has been burned to generate heat and power. Uses of mercury are still abundant, in switches, specialized electrical instrumentation and appliances, medicines, and as dental amalgam.

Although mercury is widespread in nature a handful of deposits have produced most of the world's supply. By far, the world's largest deposit and production has come from Almaden, Spain, about 150 miles southeast of Madrid. Until about 1470, this deposit was virtually the world's only producer. Mercury production began there about 400 B.C., and the mine was operated under Iberian, Roman, and Moorish control, until 1151 when Alfonso VII transferred it to the Knights Templar, and subsequently others. In the 16th century when the New World gold and silver deposits created great demand for Mercury, the Spanish government reposessed the properties and in 1525 awarded a 120 year lease to the Fugger brothers from Germany. The Fuggers installed new highly productive furnaces, and when the lease expired, an agency of the Spanish government took over operation of the property. In 1651 new furnaces were constructed that remained in operation until 1923, when the plant was rebuilt (maybe management knew about planned obselescence then too). The second largest and most famous mercury deposit in the world is at Idria, about 25 miles northeast of Trieste, in what was recently Yugoslavia.

In the New World the major deposits are at Huancavelica, Peru (also the source of some spectacular pyrite), and New Almaden, California. However, in the U.S. mercury occurs in all the Western states generally associated with hot springs, or vulcanism of some sort. One location in the U.S. that most people aren't aware of is in Pike County, Arkansas, not far from the diamond mine near Murfreesboro, Arkansas (production is stated at about 11,400 flasks from about 35 mines and prospects.) On a personal note, way back in the old days I collected metacinnabarite, a mercury sulfide from the Mt. Diablo Mine not far from Berkeley, California. The specimens weren't spectacular but the metacinnabarite was readily recognizeable. I suspect that the area is probably covered over by a housing development now.

YUKON EMERALDS via Strata Data 2/00, Scarborough Ontario Canada
(thanks to George Heaton for sharing this article)
Last September, geologist/prospector Bill Wengzynowski discovered emeralds while exploring for base metal VMS deposits in Yukon's Finlayson Lake District. The discovery was quickly covered with snow making this summer the first opportunity to return to evaluate the size and quality of the discovery. Numerous emerald-bearing localities were discovered and although stones have been evaluated ot be gem quality, the size of the emeralds and the size of deposit remeins uncertain as exploration has literally just scratched the surface. There are four known occurrences of emeralds in Canada.
Geolog, Newsmagazine of the Geological Assoc. of Canada, 12/99

JET -- compiled and submitted by Bettie Patterson
Jet is a fossil wood, a sort of glorified coal, black in color, easily cut and takes a high polish. Being a hydrocarbon, it can ignite by spontaneous combustion after havein been dampened. In ancient times it was combined with beeswax as an ointment for reducing tumors. When mingled with wine, it was given for the relief of toothaches. Burning jet was thought to drive away snakes, reptiles and demons, as well as deceitful illusions and prophecies of evil omen. In the British Isles, it was believed ot protect people from devils, poison, witchcraft and thunderstorms.

A heart of jet incribed iwth a Latin cross and a cross of jet were two amulets that were held in high esteem among the Christians a century ago.

Cardanus says that the Saints of old used bracelets and rosaries made of jet. A century ago or so, it was used as mourning jewelery. In Prussia, the amber-diggers called jet "black amber" and sold it for a high price.

Most jet has been found in the deposits at Whitby in Yorkshire, England.

YOU MIGHT BE A ROCKHOUND IF...
http://members.aol.com/eukaryote/SciHumor/geologist.html
The rockpile in your garage is taller than you are. You assosciate the name "Franklin" with New Jersey instead of "Ben." There's amethyst in your aquarium. You've had to remove flats of rocks out of the tub so you can take a bath. Your children are named Rocky, Jewel and Beryl.

CLUB CALENDAR

Feb. 17	Regular Meeting, North School, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 19	Grand Rapids Field Trip, 10:00 a.m.
March 2	Board Meeting, Meridian Twp. Service Center, 7:30 p.m.

SPRING SHOWS

March 11 & 12	Roamin Club auction. Sat. 11-6 Sun 12-6. Schoolcraft College, Waterman Campus Center Bldg., 18600 Haggerty Rd, Livonia
March 17-19	Jackson Show. Fri. 11-7, Sat. 10-7, Sun. 10-5. Michigan Center Masonic Lodge, 355 Napoleon Rd., Michigan Center
March 25	Dearborn Club Swap. 10-5. Democratic Club of Taylor, 23400 Wick Rd., Taylor (just east of Telegraph Rd.)
April 1-2	"Blossom Land Show" Bridgman MI. 10-5 both days. Exit 16 off I-94, 3 1/2 miles North on Red Arrow Highway. Free admission.
April 5-8	Indian Mounds, Grand Rapids Show. Eastbrook Mall, 3655 28th St. SE; 10am-9pm
April 7-9	Mt. Clemens Show. Fri. & Sat. 10-7, Sun. 11-6. Mt. Clemens Recreation Center, 300 N. Grosebeck, Mt. Clemens
May 5-7	Kalamazoo Show. Fri. 4-8, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5. Fairgrounds Country Center Bldg., take
Sprinkle	Rd. to Lake St.
May 13-14	Cincinnati Show. New Location: Sabin Cincinnati Convention Center, 525 Elm St.
June 2-4	"Dearborn" Show. Allen Park Civic Arena, 15800 White, Allen Park
June 23-25	Bloomington (Bedford) Indiana Swap. Lawrence County Fairgrounds.
June 17-18	MGAGS Seminar, Roscommon Middle School. See Grit & Alice Turner for more info.
Aug. 18-20	Midwest Faceters Guild Seminar. For info call or write Harold Rice (810)463-5972, 122 Lois Lane, Mt. Clemens MI 48043

WHY MICROFOSSILS?
by Connie Snepp

A couple of years ago a fellow fossilholic , Linda Spaulding, formerly of the Ft. Wayne club, enthusiastically introduced husband Neil and me to the world of microfossils. These are fossils that will fit into a micromount box or smaller. Some are juveniles and others are small species. Soon we were able to purchase a suitable microscope for under $300 with powers of 10x and 30x. This has opened a whole new world of collecting and study for us.

We have a substantial collection of macrofossils that are crowding us out of our home, and so we are finding several advantages to working with micros. Often we return to old collecting sites and find that the macros are scarce to non-existent. Not to worry; there are probably some micros about. Sometimes we can spot them easily and manage to put them into a small bag or pill bottle. Other times, we may scrape up weathered debris in large food bags to ferret out fossils later. In any case, while once we would have been skunked and wasted the day, we now have microfossils!

When we return home, the food bag material goes into labeled pint or quart jars. Then, in the winter, when we are starved for field trips, we can take one by sifting through our material to discover wonderful fossils. As with crystals, the micros are often more pristine.

Now the storage operation begins. Some fossils may lend themselves to micro mount boxes. Les Wilson and Bob Beauvais have helped us get started with these. The disadvantage is that once mounted, you see only one side of the fossil. This can be a blessing, but only for flawed specimens. The boxes are also a good protection for fragile pieces.

In order to see both sides, we mount most of our micros in cardboard coin holders either stapled on two sides or held together with two sided tape. The holders provide good space for labeling with small print and fit into plastic coin holder pages in a three ring notebook. Divider pages separate by phylum or age. One notebook will probably hold our life long collection!

Then, when it comes time to enter the nursing home, just minimizing our underwear may provide enough space for our notebook and small collection of micro boxes. If we are really lucky, we could also take our microscope in place of a table lamp.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN LAPIDARY & MINERAL SOCIETY
TREASURER'S REPORT
JANUARY 1, 2000 - JANUARY 31, 2000

BALANCE ON HAND(1-01-00)	
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT(7-16-00)	$11664.95
COMERICA BANK SAVINGS	13322.94
COMERICA BANK CHECKING	1017.50
TOTAL	$26005.39
RECEIPTS:	
DUES	95.00
DONATIONS	35.00
RE-ENTRY CK#2426 (MERIDIAN)	50.00
TRANSFER FROM SAVINGS TO CHECKING	500.00
INTEREST (SAVINGS)	33.68
TOTAL	713.68
DISBURSEMENTS:	
MWF INSURANCE	173.90
MWF DUES	330.00
MISCELLANEOUS	70.75
2000 SHOW	500.00
PUBLICATIONS	134.23
RENT	75.00
TRANSFER TO CHECKING FROM SAVINGS	500.00
TOTAL	1783.88
BALANCE ON HAND(1-31-00)	
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT(7-16-00)	$11664.95
COMERICA BANK SAVINGS	12856.62
COMERICA BANK CHECKING	413.62
TOTAL	$24935.19

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

ALAN HUKILL, TREASURER

Michigan Natural Storage Co.
Grand Rapids, Michigan