



CRYSTALS AND CABS

Newsletter of the Capital Mineral Club
Concord, New Hampshire

President - Scott Higgins, 59 Charles Lane, Eliot, ME 03903, Phone (207) 439-1107
Vice President - Martin Kippley, 6 General Sullivan Way, Rollinsford, NH 03869, Phone (603) 743-1881
Secretary - Vince Valade, 35 Plimpton Rd., Goffstown, NH 03045, Phone (603) 497-3935
Treasurer - Don Dallaire, 829 Candia Rd., Chester, NH 03036, Phone (603) 483-8467

December 2006

Volume 7 Issue 4

Capital Mineral Club News

Inside this issue:

* November Minutes	2
* Field Collecting & Creative Lapidary Awards	3
* Christmas Party Info	4
* Other Mineral Clubs and Meeting Dates	5
* CMC Calendar of Events	6
* Gem & Mineral Shows	

The December meeting of the CMC will be held on Saturday, December 9th, at 12:00 PM. PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE. The meeting location will be the Salvation Army Building on Clinton Street in Concord, NH for:

The CMC Annual Christmas Party

Plan to join us for great food and great company, both of which guarantee a wonderful time had by all. Hope to see you there!!!

See pages 3 and 4 for more Christmas Party info!

The club would like to thank the three students from Keene State College who reported on their field camp experiences during summer 2006 in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

Thanks to Gordon and Heidi Graham for bringing refreshments to the November Meeting

There will be no Directors meeting or Business meeting in December.

There will be a show committee meeting at Gordon Jackson's on January 9th 2007 at 6:30 PM.

Editors Note:

The **deadline** to get info to me for publication will be the **3rd Saturday** of every month

• My e-mail address: steffenh@comcast.net

• CMC Website: www.capitalmineralclub.org

• Website designed and maintained by:
Robin Edgewood-Reece & Steffen Hermanns

BRISTOL, NH; HENRY DAVID THOREAU AND THE "LEAD" PENCIL

In The History of Bristol Charles Musgrove writes: "On the Samuel Hilands farm, east of Newfound Lake, is a mine of plumbago, or black lead, of considerable extent." (Plumbago and "black lead" were at one time the common descriptors for graphite.) From this description, the Hilands property was in the vicinity of what is today the Cliff Lodge. Musgrove goes on to say that the *Farmer & Little Gazeteer* of 1820 characterized the mine as "a large body of plumbago recently discovered in Bristol, which is pronounced as the best in the country." Subsequent to the discovery of graphite, the land was purchased by a Charles Dunbar from Concord Massachusetts. Dunbar's company, apparently working with a partner, was called Dunbar and Stow. As best as can be determined the mine operated from the early 1820's into the late 1840's about which

(Continued on page 4)



These are the minutes of the November 11, 2007, meeting of the Capital Mineral Club. The meeting was called to order at 4:40pm. Approximately 30 members and guests attended. The secretary's report was accepted as printed in the newsletter. Don Dallaire's treasurer's report covered income and expenses for March 2006 through October 2006. Don also gave a preliminary report of the finances of the show, stating that the final income will be close to last year's and that a final report should be ready for the next meeting. Both reports were accepted as read.

Correspondence was read including a letter to the club from Ernie Schlichter thanking all for the support given him before, during, and after the show. Michael Howley of UNH sent a letter expressing his thanks for the scholarship help he received which made it possible for him to attend field camp in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming in 2006.

Old business: Gordon Jackson (2007 show chairman) discussed the 2007 show. There is a need for a dealer chairman and for a chairperson for the club table (to enforce procedures at that table). At this point, he expects to have about 28 dealers in the retail and wholesale sections. He also requested help with publicity and stated that any and all club members who wish to help with the show should please attend the next show committee meeting (tentatively set at his house on January 9, 2007).

More old business: Charles Forsberg (2006 show chairman) gave a report on the 2006 show. More than 20 club members helped out with the set-up and clean-up - thanks to all who worked. It is hard to tell whether the senior and educator discounts on the admission prices made a difference. The results of his dealer survey were presented: Dealers have an average of 13 years of participation.

- Offerings for sale at the show were: minerals @ 26%, fossils @ 16%, jewelry @ 16%, lapidary @ 9%, art forms @ 19%, and gemstones @ 7%.
- Sources of these offerings were: self collected @ 35%, wholesale @ 27%, hand made @ 19%, other @ 19%.
- Was the revised brochure/flyer helpful? Yes = 14, No = 2, Not Sure = 2.
- Would you consider advertising in the flyer? Yes = 5, would consider = 6, No = 7
- Are you looking forward to Concord as a show location? Yes = 7, No = 5, Don't Know = 6.

New business: Gordon Jackson urged people to wear their name tags and requested that people needing name tags see him for new ones. A discussion of dues for next year resulted in a motion being made, seconded, and passed to leave the structure of the dues the same as last year: \$10 for adult single, \$15 for family, \$2 for subscriber with email newsletter, and \$5 for subscriber with mail newsletter.

Door prizes were won by Sam Killum, Bob Whitmore, Dillon Bush, and Pete Nickles.

The three students from Keene State who had received scholarships from the club presented an informative and entertaining report of their field camp experiences during summer 2006 in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Refreshments were supplied by the Graham family. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Dallaire for the secretary, Vince Valade

**Capital Mineral Club
Concord, New Hampshire**

12th ANNUAL FIELD COLLECTING & CREATIVE LAPIDARY AWARDS

Eight Award Categories

BEST FIELD COLLECTING

1. BEST NEW HAMPSHIRE
2. BEST NEW ENGLAND
3. BEST OUTSIDE NEW ENGLAND
4. **BEST OF SHOW**

BEST CREATIVE LAPIDARY

5. BEST FACETED
6. BEST CARVED OR POLISHED
7. BEST CABOCHON OR JEWELRY
8. **BEST OF SHOW**

RULES

1. Must have been a **Club member** for the past year to enter.
2. All entries must be **self-collected or self-produced** during the past year.
3. Only **three entries** per person per category. However, we encourage you to bring additional pieces to the meeting.
4. Only **Club members present** at the award meeting are eligible to enter and vote.

COMMENT

Voting slips will be provided and the entries marked by number and category. Your “best of show” vote will most likely be a repeat of one of your choices. Winners from each category will receive a **Club sweat shirt** and have their **names mentioned** in the January Newsletter. The **Best of Show winners will receive engraved plaques** and a **Club sweat shirt with the year embossed**. The plaques are theirs to keep and display until next year’s contest when new winners will be chosen and will keep the plaques until the next contest. This allows a history of winners to develop as the years go by. It is your chance to see the best of this past year and hear the stories behind the finds or creations.

The Awards were started December 1995 Past Winners

BEST OF SHOW FIELD COLLECTING

1995 Vince Valade	Beryl, Golden Beryl Loc.
1996 Steffen Hermanns	Grossular, Eden Mills
1997 Bill & Mary Finney	Beryl, Palermo No. 2
1998 John McCrory	Magnetite, Eden Mills
1999 Ernie Schlichter	Barite, Grand Jct., Colorado
2000 Robert Whitmore	Epidote, Eden Mills
2001 James Tovey	Amethyst Scepter, Hopkinton, RI
2002 Dana Jewell	Fluorapatite, Palermo No. 1
2003 John McCrory	Garnet/ Diopside, Orford, Quebec
2004 James Tovey	Beryl, Tripp Mine, Alstead
2005 Bill Brown	Pyritized Cephalopoda, Alden, NY

BEST OF SHOW CREATIVE LAPIDARY

Bill Brown	23.70 Ct Faceted Bolivian Amethyst
Bill Brown	69.45 Ct Faceted S. American Amethyst
Bill Brown	5.72 Ct Faceted Nigerian Aquamarine
Bill Brown	3.5 Ct Faceted Palermo Gold Beryl (HT)
Bill Brown	22.60 Ct Faceted MtSt Helens Obsidianite
Bill Brown	24.60 Ct Faceted MtSt Helens Obsidianite
Bill Brown	10.30 Ct Faceted Brazilian Citrine
Bill Brown	22.10 Ct. Faceted pink Sapphire
Bill Brown	26.80 Ct Faceted pink Star Sapphire
Brian Bissonette	25.70 Ct Fac. Pink Syn. Garnet
Bill Brown	24.45 Ct Faceted Spider in Obsidianite

DECEMBER 9, 2006 YEAR END GET TOGETHER

SALVATION ARMY BUILDING

12:00 - 12:30 **BEGIN**, organize
 12:30 - 1:30 **SOCIALIZE**, setup, prepare dinner and relax, have fun!!!!
 1:00 - 1:30 **VOTE** on the collecting and Lapidary awards
 1:30 - 2:45 **EAT** all the good, and I mean good, food that everyone brings
 3:00ish **YANKEE SWAP** - good fun
 4:30ish **SOCIALIZE, PICK UP, LEAVE**

DRIVE SAFELY AND HAVE A GOOD HOLIDAY!

BRING DINNER, DESSERT, AND SALAD PLATES; CUP/MUG & SAUCER, UTENSILS, NAPKINS, SALT & PEPPER, POT-LUCK SPECIALTY & SERVING UTENSILS, HOLIDAY CENTER PIECE IF DESIRED. PLASTIC BAG FOR TAKING HOME DIRTY OR WET DISHES ETC.

THE YANKEE SWAP Bring a gift of at least \$5.00-\$10.00 value to do with the hobby, gift wrapped. Each participant is given a numbered ticket. You then chose your gift when your number is called. Before you open your gift you can swap with any member called before you. You can not go back to swap your gift once you have passed a person. The first person called, can at the end of the swap, swap with any other. The club adds a mystery gift to a lucky participant. Come and enjoy lots of fun and nice gifts.

DISPLAYS If you can, bring a display of your summers acquisitions. The object is not to show the best, but to stimulate some conversation and make for good socializing. This is separate from the annual "Best Field Collecting Award" & "Best Creative Lapidary Award". Suggested topics might be;

"THINGS I HAVE COLLECTED THIS YEAR"

"THINGS I HAVE CLEANED, TRIMMED FROM THE LAST TEN"

"ACQUIRED THIS YEAR" "MINERAL OF MT PARADISE"

"MY CHILDHOOD COLLECTION FROM 80 YEARS AGO"

SIGN UP!!!

COME!!!

If you have not signed up for a food item or want to know more about the December meeting you can call Gordon Jackson at (603) 783-4493. Please RSVP if you can. Lets have a good turn out!!

(Continued from page 1)

time the deposit became exhausted. Musgrove states that by 1845 a company by the name of Zeabury, Olup & Watkins operated the mine. At this time the graphite was "ground and put up in small packages for shipment" on Water Street in Bristol.

In the very early 1800's the "lead" pencil was a relatively new and somewhat unsophisticated writing tool. German and French pencil makers were busy experimenting with processes designed to improve it. Though somewhat behind, American pencil makers were also attempting the same, "often under the veil of secrecy". As early as 1812, David Munroe of Concord, Massachusetts was mixing graphite with an adhesive material, spreading it onto slabs of cedar with grooves, which were then sawed into individual pencils. Early

(Continued on page 5)

Merry Christmas

(Continued from page 4)

on, Munroe hired a cabinetmaker, Ebenezer Wood, to help him operate and mechanize his production.

Soon after Charles Dunbar, owner of the Bristol graphite property, discovered graphite in 1821, he invited his nephew, Henry David Thoreau to join him in a pencil making enterprise. The man we think of as author of the transcendental American classic *Walden* was also a capable engineer and inventor. Thoreau ascertained a process by which inferior graphite could be mixed with a clay binder so as to result in a product that would not smear. Whether he secretly gleaned this information from German pencil making sources is not known. Thoreau also determined that by varying the amount of clay the pencil lead could be made harder or softer.

In the 1830's Thoreau and his father built a milling system to refine graphite. In an article entitled "The Machine in the Wetland: Re-imagining Thoreau's Plumbago-Grinder" the author concluded that Thoreau's grinder "may have been widely replicated". About this time Ebenezer Wood left Munroe's operation and started his own grinding facility and pencil making company. He apparently benefited from the Thoreau's unpatented grinding methods. Wood, a talented inventor in his own right, "is credited with using the first circular saw in the pencil business, inventing a grooving machine, a molding and trimming machine, a wedge glue press, (and) creating the hexagonal and octagonal pencil." (Like Thoreau, Wood never bothered to patent his inventions.) It is unclear why Thoreau did not grind his own pencil graphite, especially in view of the fact that he is credited with the development of the grinding equipment. Nevertheless, both Munroe and Thoreau ended up buying milled graphite from Wood. Because Thoreau's "business was larger and more lucrative" than Munroe's he managed to prevail upon Wood to cut back on Munroe's graphite supply.

There is nothing to indicate that the Bristol, NH graphite was the **only** graphite used throughout these early years. Indeed there were sources in Massachusetts itself. Eventually, pencil makers resorted to sources of supply as far away as Canada. The Bristol graphite was trumpeted as being of high quality, but American graphite in general did not match that which was mined in England. It was Thoreau's process that was able to turn the graphite into a product that was suitable and of high quality.

Sources:

History of Bristol, Vol I Annals by Richard Musgrove, 1904

"The Machine in the Wetland: Re-imagining Thoreau's Plumbago Grinder" by

Randall Conrad, <http://thoreau.eserver.org/pencils.html>

"Thoreau's Pencils" by John H Lienhard, <http://www.uh.edu/epi339.htm>

"Early American Pencils" <http://www.town.acton.ma.us/LSCOM/EAPencils.htm>

Submitted by Bob Wilken

Mineral Clubs - Meeting Dates

Saco Valley Gem and Mineral Club 3rd Thursday of each month at the Albany, NH Town Hall – 7:00 PM

Keene: 1st Saturday of each month at Keene State College, Bldg. 18, Keene, NH – 7:00 PM

Nashua: Last Wednesday of each month at the Nashua public Library, Court St., Nashua, NH in the downstairs Theater Room – 7:00 PM

North Shore (MA): 3rd Friday of each month, St. Paul Episcopal Church, Washington St., Peabody, MA – 7:30 PM

Boston Mineral Club: 1st Tuesday of each month, Harvard University Geological Lecture Hall, 24 Oxford St., Cambridge, MA – 7:30 PM

Southeastern NH Mineral Club: 2nd Wednesday of each month, St John's Methodist Church, 28 Cataract Ave., Dover, NH – 7:00 PM



Steffen Hermanns

Editor

7133 Oak Hill Road
Loudon, NH 03307

Keep on Rockin' in the Free World

Email: steffenh@comcast.net

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.CAPITALMINERALCLUB.ORG

CAPITAL MINERAL CLUB MEETINGS

DECEMBER 9, 2006 @ 12 NOON CHRISTMAS PARTY

Potluck Supper
Yankee Swap
Annual Collector's Award

JANUARY 13, 2007 @ 1:00PM

Ted Johnson, TBA
Scott Higgins - Refreshments

FEBRUARY 10, 2007 @ 1:00PM

TBA
Howard Ewing - Refreshments

MARCH 10, 2007 @ 10:00AM

WORKSHOP and POTLUCK @ Gordon and Pam
Jackson's House

APRIL 14, 2007 @ 7:30PM

Terry Crowell & Annette Comeau - Refreshments

MAY 12, 2007 @ 7:30PM

Bill Brown - Refreshments

Gem & Mineral Shows

January 26 - February 6: Tucson Mineral Show, Tucson, AZ

Mar. 10-11, Clifton, NJ - North Jersey Mineralogical Society. Clifton Gem and Mineral Show. Pope John Paul II Elementary School, 775 Valley Rd. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Bob Horn, 908-813-0808, mineraldog@comcast.net.

Mar. 16-18, Hartford, CT - International Gem & Jewelry Show. Connecticut Expo Center. 301-294-1640, fax 301-294-0034, info@intergem.com, www.intergem.com.

September 29-30: 44th Annual Gem and Mineral Festival presented by the Capital Mineral Club, Sat. 9 - 5, Sun., 10 - 4, Everett Arena, Concord, NH, Adults - \$4.00, 12 and under free. This is a new Venue Location

This is a letter of appreciation for the help we received at the Sunapee show. It was fun and a very good show. Special thanks to Bill Burrows and Kathy and Don Dallaire who helped Vera set up the booth -- ready for business -- while I was setting up my exhibit. Also special thanks to Kathy and Don Dallaire, Scott Higgins and the Weisberg family (from North Shore Club) who helped Vera take down the booth and load the van while I sat on a chair supervising. A lesson from 38 years as a manager in Corporate America, "When you have good help let them do their job and stay out of the way". Also thanks to the Capital Mineral Club members who helped man the booth while I took much needed rest periods. It's wonderful to have so many supportive friends from the Clubs

Ernie & Vera