

GRIT'S REPORT

Mother Nature has been busy with the changing weather of March as she normally does. It gets us enthused about the warmer weather that is coming, so we rockhounds can get out to the gravel pits, quarries, and other collecting sites. I, for one, am raring to go!

Lila Stevens is busy putting the banquet together. Be sure to volunteer if she needs help.

Show plans are also getting underway. Even though there have been a few stumbling blocks, it looks like Neal Snapp and his helpers have the blocks moved around, lined up and ready for a show. Mark your calendars now for October 25-27. The show will be held at the Marshall Street Armory.

The program for March is the usual silent auction. Now is the time to sell off those excess slabs, minerals, fossils, equipment and other hobby related materials. Of course, I for one always gain some too. That's what makes the hobby fun: selling and buying!

See you at the meeting.....Grit.

A CHANCE TO CAPITALIZE ON YOUR SKILLS

The folks who own "God's Creations" (the rock shop at Frandor) are looking for artisans to whom they can refer customers at their shop. If you wish to market your skills in faceting, cabbing, wire wrap, casting, carving, etc. please give one or several of your business cards to Mary Kay Bean. She is friendly with the owners and will pass on the information. If you wish to mail your cards, Mary Kay's address is: 1619 Wintercrest, East Lansing 48823.

"TIPS FOR TRIPS": SHARE YOUR BEST

As a club, we need to keep in touch with what our members like to do. April's program will be "Tips for Trips" -- a chance for you to tell about where you have been! Diane Baclowski gave us a start at the February meeting with her experiences studying dinosaur footprints in Texas and Colorado.

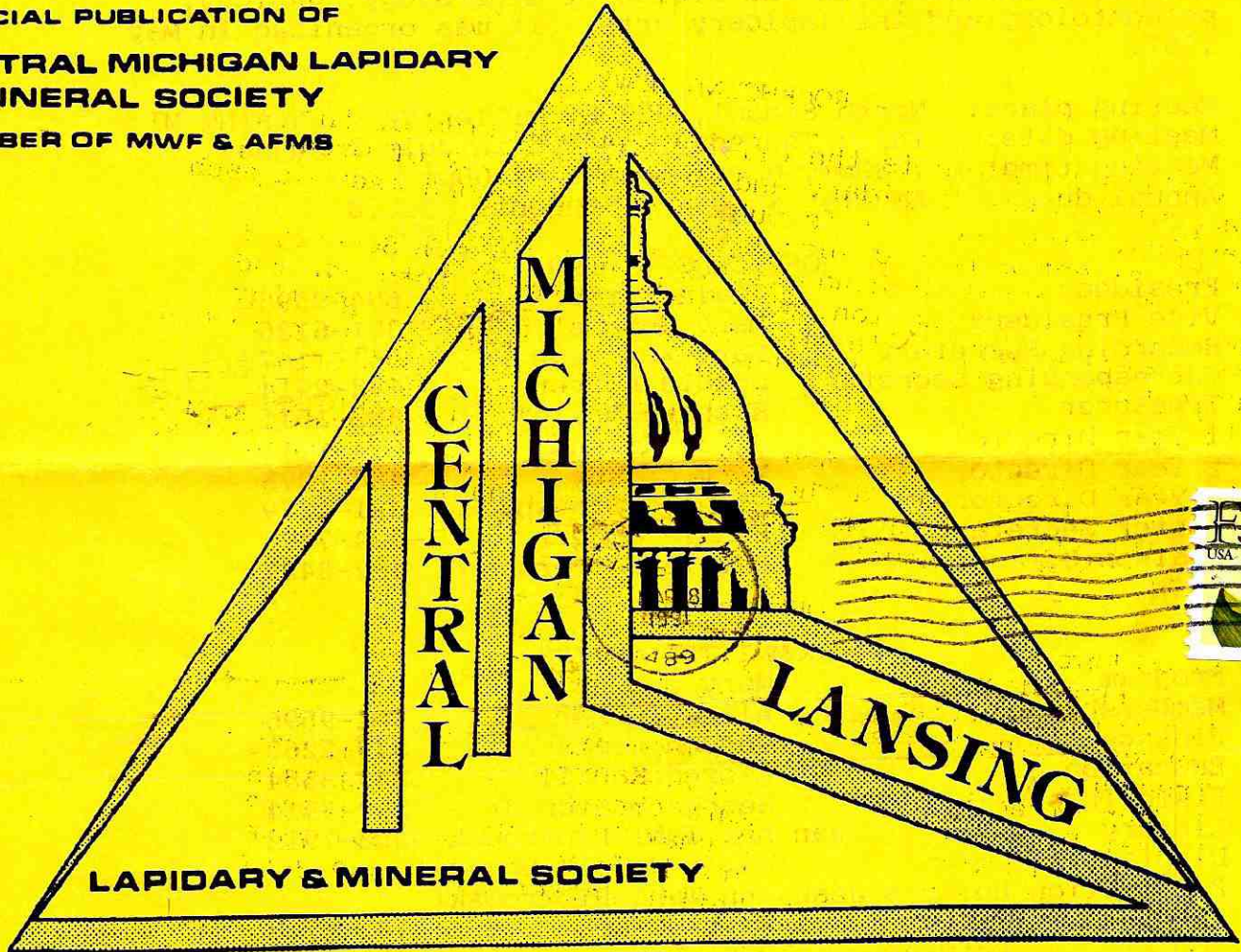
Now is the time to start thinking about those rock hounding places or geological marvels that you visited once upon a time. Please gather information such as: specimens that you found, any good museums to browse through, lodging, restaurants, and anything else special about the area. You might use slides, brochures, photos, postcards and maps to illustrate your recollections. Your presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes -- if we get plenty of participants!

If you would like to participate, please contact Mary Gowans. Be sure to let her know at that time if you will be needing the slide projector. Also, if you are feeling shy, you may give your information to Mary and she will be glad to present it for you.

ROCKHOUND NEWS

MAR 1991

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
CENTRAL MICHIGAN LAPIDARY
& MINERAL SOCIETY
MEMBER OF MWF & AFMS



Return To:
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TIME VALUE

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 & August
Meeting time: 7:30pm, doors open at 7:00pm
Annual dues: Adults \$3.00 Students \$1.00

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HOW ABOUT A SPECIAL "MICHIGAN" EDITION OF THE NEWS?

Over the last couple years as winter editor of the Rockhound News, I have accumulated quite a collection of exchange articles on Michigan collecting and minerals. My idea has been to "someday" type up a Michigan edition, but it seems that space gets limited by regular club business and information. So, at the last board meeting I proposed a special issue of the Rockhound News, to include nothing but articles on Michigan rockhounding. This could be distributed in May, close to the time of Michigan Week -- or mailed in the summer to keep folks in touch with the club.

Please let me know your 'druthers regarding the timing of such an issue, and share any ideas you may have for articles. It would be especially nice to print some original works by our members!!!! Maybe as you get ready for April's "Tips for Trips" program you could jot down a few lines for the news as well? Please don't let fears of grammar or spelling stop you-- taking care of those things are the editors job! Thanks for your help, Jean Ann

GRAND RAPIDS FIELD TRIP, MARCH 2 -- George Heaton

Attendance at our field trip to the Michigan Natural Storage Co. in Grand Rapids was about average with 11 people showing up to try their luck at collecting selenite and other forms of gypsum. A few mediocre selenite crystals were collected by George Heaton and Gordon and Marie Lewis. Richard and Lila Stevens collected some "window pane" selenite for the children's table. George Heaton also collected some "pencil ore" for the children's table. Mary Kay Bean found a large window pane selenite, but she stepped on it.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY REPORT -- Don Lohrer

The Society sends belated get well wishes to Anne Baker who underwent surgery a while back. By now Anne is well on the way to recovery. Our apologies Anne, but news travels slowly sometimes. Archie Ammerman was nipped by a flu bug late in February so we all wish him a speedy recovery also.

March heralds the season we all look forward to. No, not spring!!! It's SILENT AUCTION TIME! Remember that stuff you couldn't live without a few years ago? If you can still find it, now is the time to pass it on and get something else you really need. Gordon Lewis says to bring all your goodies and a pocket full of change!!

Take care now and I'll see you at the sale (and meeting.)

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE -- Florence Hill

The mineral for this month's consideration is chromite, a ferrous chromic oxide. David Piotrowski will provide us with information on chromite.

Debbie Shankler, one of our newer members, took the Kreps' educational cases to the Family Science Day at Okemos High School recently. She then took the cases on to her own classroom at Colt School in the Waverly district. Thank you Debbie, for making use of one of our resources.

OLD TIMERS' CORNER -- Florence Hill

This feature is dedicated to Homer Godfrey, who called last June to ask why our newsletter didn't say anything about the old-timers in the club. Sadly, Homer's death in the summer prevented his seeing his suggestion carried out.

If you are an "old-timer", or know one, will you please write and tell us what's new? This month we hear about Ethel Gasche thanks to Joyce Kahres:

Ethel is feeling pretty good now, though she did have cataract surgery a while back. Her son, who is retired from the National Guard, was called up to service in the Middle East. However, his physical revealed that his knee was still healing from surgery and he was excused. This was a relief for Ethel. She does plan to attend the club banquet in May, and looks forward to seeing everyone there!

HOW CAN YOU FORGET THE SILENT AUCTION?

Yet another reminder that the March program will be a silent auction!

Please keep the following pointers in mind:
 --If you are selling, come early to fill out your auction slips. Each item must have this bidding sheet.
 --100% of the money goes to the seller. (If you want your money to go to the club, just put CML&MS instead of your name on the slip.)

--If you want to buy, please bring lots of ones and loose change! It's nearly impossible to split up the profits if the cashiers only have \$10's and \$20's with which to work.

A successful club auction depends on you! Dig through those boxes and drawers-- I bet you'll find a few things to sell (and maybe even a quarter or two to spend)!

ANTI-POLLUTION AND SAFETY -- Michigan Gem News 2/91 via The Rock Pile

Instead of dumping used acid (oxalic, muriatic, etc.) down the drain where it will cause pollution or damage plumbing, or letting it set there where it may endanger someone, try the following: Put the acid in a plastic (NOT METAL) bucket or earthenware crock with a piece of limestone. The limestone will neutralize the acid so that it can safely be dumped almost anywhere.

HEALTH WARNING: ROCK DUST TOXICITY by Olin Banks, SFMS
Safety Chairman via The Rockpile 2/91 and others

When grinding and polishing, don't breathe the dust of rocks. Some materials are toxic. Tiger eye is not some kind of harmless agate — it's quartz with asbestos fiber inclusions.

The asbestos makes it shimmer and shine, but the airborne fibers are carcinogenic. Malachite is also poisonous as a microscopic dust particle. If you breathe it, mild to very serious respiratory problems can develop.

The most horrible story I ever heard was from the Bedford, Indiana fossil show in June 1988. I was fascinated with the beautiful slabs of Waldron Shale from Cincinnati, Ohio. They were covered with groups of trilobites or clusters of crinoid flower top and stem. In many pieces, whole groups of crinoids were shown intertwined and arranged exactly as they fossilized hundreds of millions of years ago. The dealers who sold these specimens would sit and tell stories about fossil collecting and preparing them for sale. I sat with them and listened with much interest.

The one dealer told about an artist who got hooked on the beauty and the aesthetics of the crinoid fossil. He worked the "Dremel" tool like a sculptor, scraping, chiseling and grinding away at the Waldron Shale with a passion. He was not content just to expose the flowers and stems but also the branchlets and columns and even the "hold fast" bulb. He strived for more and more detail, allowing the stem to be completely exposed all around, only connecting it to the slab by the flower top at one end and the bulb at the other end. Stems and branchlets touching one another stood out in excellent bas-relief.

Then the final step, micro-sand-blasting for the fine detail work. Like a surgeon he worked the micro-blaster to expose and reveal more and more detail. There was only one problem — the container box that the specimen was isolated in to prevent dust from entering the environment and contaminating the air, and the shield on the sandblaster prevented close examination as he worked. His compulsive personality combined with artistic license to break the rules for the sake of being creative was a deadly combination.

He was obsessed with perfection. Working with out a shield made it easier and more exciting. The hundred million year old sea lilies revealed themselves before his eyes. By the skill of his hands he restored the delicate grace they once possessed.

He finished some fine slabs. They were purchased by museums and private collectors who were lucky enough to grab them up before he died at the young age of 25 of asphyxiation and septic shock!!

The moral? Wear a mask when you are cutting and grinding. You can never be too careful.

FLUORSPAR: The Official Mineral of Illinois from Gems 2/91

Over 200 million years ago, a mass of molten magma pushed up from the earth's interior and bulged most of the area of Hardin County, Illinois, and Crittenden and Livingston Counties, Kentucky, into a huge dome. During the ages that followed, huge dikes of black igneous rock from the abysses below split the region in many places from southeast to northwest.

When the period of volcanic activity ceased, the molten magma began to cool and contract, and the many mineral components of the mass began to separate out. As the mass shrank and subsided, the region collapsed into a series of long, narrow fault blocks.

Mineral-laden gases and liquids rose through these fault fractures...gases heavy with fluorine, lead, zinc, barium and with small amounts of cadmium, germanium and silver. During a period of certain temperature and pressure conditions, a chemical reaction took place between the gases and the rock walls of the fissures, and the minerals were deposited in veins and as replacements of limestone beds. Thus were formed the ore bodies of fluor spar or fluorite (calcium fluoride), sphalerite (zinc sulphide), galena (lead sulphide), barite and calcite. Cadmium and germanium were deposited as minor elements in the sphalerite, from which they are recovered during smelting. Silver is sometimes recovered from galena at the smelter.

At the close of the Pennsylvanian geologic period, 200 million years ago, the area stood high out of the sea and was subjected to erosion. The long years of weathering removed some 3500 feet of the domed area, leaving the relatively low and scenic hills of today, and exposing for discovery veins and bedded deposits of fluor spar reserve. Now mining and milling of fluor spar forms the principal industry of this area of the Illinois-Kentucky Ozarks.

Lustrous...glasslike...varying from translucent to transparent, from clear and colorless to dozens of hues of scintillating color... that's fluor spar in its native crystal state.

Crystals of fluor spar, found lining vugs and openings of the veins and bedded horizons, constitute some of the most beautiful minerals in nature. Glassy cubes of many-hued purple, blue, amethyst, green, yellow, pink and white fluorite are highly prized items in most mineral collections. Hardin County, Illinois is the source of most of them.

The pretty stuff, however, makes up only a small fraction of the mined material, which boasts a strategic value as a mineral second only to uranium. The principal use for fluor spar is in the manufacture of hydrofluoric acid, which is the basic chemical used in making aerosols, fluorinated hydrocarbon refrigerants, elemental fluorine and a host of fluorine-containing chemicals.

Flotation concentrates of fluorspar are pelletized in the district for use as a flux in basic oxygen methods of steel making. This use is displacing the former use of gravel-type metallurgical grade, used in open hearth methods. Other uses are in zinc smelting, making of container glassware, opal glass, welding rod coatings, enamel frits, in making magnesium metal, as a ceramic glaze extender, and in making white brick and special Portland cement.

Fluorspar is made into artificial cryolite used as the electrolyte in making aluminum. Fluorspar can also be used as a natural method of fluoridating municipal water supplies.

Underground mines are adapted to mining either the vertical vein types of ore bodies or the horizontal bedded deposits. In mining the veins, shafts are sunk alongside the ore bodies, with tunnels pushed out along the veins at intervals, into which the broken ore is drawn and hauled to the shaft. Room and pillar methods are used in bedded deposits, with a high degree of mechanization used in rock drills, loading and dieselized haulage equipment. The crude ore is upgraded in mills using gravity (heavy media separation) and flotation principles, so that various grades and sizes are available.

Grades of fluorspar range from about 80% calcium fluoride, called metallurgical grade, through the ceramic grades, up to 97% purity called acid grade.

80% of the U.S. production of fluorspar comes from the Illinois-Kentucky fluorspar region, with Hardin County, Illinois, accounting for 50%.

Although fluorite is the mineral that gave its name to fluorescence, this interesting effect is weakly shown. Superb crystal groups come from noted English localities, including Castleton in Derbyshire and Cleator Moor in Cumberland. From Derbyshire, also, came the prized blue john, a banded blue variety, which was carved into vases. Large sea-green cubes are found at Muscalonge Lake, New York. Pretty brown crystals come from Clay Center, Ohio. Clear colorless crystals come from Madoc, Ontario. Scarcely any lovely hue—plum, rose, any you prefer—is missing from the colors that fluorite may possess. This mineral received its name from the Latin word meaning "to flow" because it melts at a low temperature.

LIBRARY NEWS -- Jean Ann Wahl-Piotrowski

While sorting through our collection at the last meeting, I discovered that one of our brand new books has never been checked out!!!

Monteregian Treasures: The Minerals of Mont Saint-Hilaire, Quebec by J.A. Mandarino and V. Anderson was purchased as a memorial for several club members including: Mary Werle, Glee Wescott, Al Fox, Glendull Klopfenstein, June Fernald, Lois Clever, and George Fulton.

As you can gather from the title, this offers an in-depth look at the minerals of Mont Saint-Hilaire, a locality known for the large number of different minerals found in a very small area. The text of this book is rather sparse, featuring brief articles on the geology and geochemistry of the area. Readers who want to know more are referred to the generous bibliography.

The bulk of the book offers characteristic data for each of the minerals found in the local, and photographs of micromount samples. The largest specimen photographed is a 14mm area of radiating bladed lemoynite; the smallest a 1/5mm octahedron of pyrochlore.

This is a beautiful book, lets get it circulating!

Did you know that Granger will accept magazines at their recycling center? You can drop them off in the properly labeled dumpster 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The magazines should be loose; not in bags, boxes or tied with cord. The center is located at 3635 Wood Road, North of Lake Lansing Rd, just a little west of US127.

When you recycle paper, you don't just "save a tree." You are also reducing the quantity of petroleum and chemicals used to make the paper, as it takes less to recycle than to make new. I will be glad to gather small quantities of magazines at our club meetings. Look for the specially marked box at the library table. Thanks.

SEEDS OF CAROB TREE GIVE BIRTH TO CARAT --Exchangite 2/90

Centuries ago, the gem dealers of the Middle East used the seeds of the carob tree to balance their scales. These seeds were called "keration" (Greek for little horn) because the pods were horn shaped.

the seeds were suprisingly uniform in weight; on ancient scales they balanced exactly. And even our best modern scales cannot detect more than one three-thousandth of an ounce difference between seeds.

So the carat was the weight of a carob seed until the 19th century, when the metric carat (200 mg) was adopted.

The measure of gold alloy comes from the same carob seed. But nowadays "karat" is used for gold while "carat" is used as the unit of weight for gems.

CLUB CALENDAR

March 21	Regular meeting, North School, 7:30pm Program: <u>SILENT AUCTION</u>
April 4	Board Meeting at the Turner's, 7:30pm
April 18	Regular meeting, North School, 7:30pm Program: "Tips for Trips"
May 16	Club banquet
October 25-27	SHOW, Marshall St. Armory

UPCOMING SHOWS

- March 22-24 Flint Rock & Gem Club Show; Williams Community School, 3501 Minnesota Ave.
Flint 10am-8pm Sunday 10am-5pm
- March 23 Metro Rock Swap -- Dearborn Club.
Sheridan Community Center on Pardee Rd.
(between Goddard & Northline Rds) Taylor
You may swap, sell or buy.
\$12 per 8 foot table
- April 3-6 Indian Mounds Show, Eastbrook Mall on
28th Street in Grand Rapids
- April 12-14 Mt. Clemens Show -- Mt. Clemen's
Community Center, 300 Groesbeck
- April 19-21 Michigan Gem & Mineral Society. Jackson
Optimist Sports Arena, 1300 W. North
Fri 1-9pm Sat 10am-9pm Sun 10am-5pm
- May 4-5 Kalamazoo Show-- Kalamazoo County
Fairgrounds, Kalamazoo
- May 17-19 Dearborn Show -- Dearborn Civic Center,
Michigan & Greenfield, Dearborn
- June 21-23 26th Show and Swap, Lawrence County Rock
Club ("The Bedford Swap" now held in
Bloomington, Indiana) Free admission
Fri 10am-9pm Sat 8am-9pm Sun 8am - 4pm
- June 22-23 MGAGS Rockhound Seminar, Northwestern
Michigan University, Traverse City
- Aug. 30- Sept. 1 Midwest Federation Show & Convention
South Bend, Indiana
- Sept. 6-8 Muskegon Co. Rock & Mineral Assoc. Show
Wilma Hall, 2950 McCracken St, Muskegon