BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY

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Chairman
Roy Starkey
15 Warwick Avenue,
Fringe Green,
Bromsgrove, Worcs., B60 2AH

Secretary
Shirley Adrian
An Feóran
North Connell
Argyll PA37 1RD

Membership Secretary
Pearl Freeman
12A Allingham Court
Haverstock Hill
London NW3 2AH

Treasurer
Sidney Freeman
12A Allingham Court
Haverstock Hill
London NW3 2AH

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN
Roy Starkey

I can clearly remember going to the cinema to see the spectacular "2001 - A Space Odyssey" when it was first released. It seemed so futuristic and far-fetched that we could hardly believe any of it would happen in our lifetime. "Don't do it Dave" said Hal, the infamous killer supercomputer on board the doomed mission to Jupiter, apparently trying to resolve conflicts in its programming. It had been told that the success of the mission took precedence over the crew's safety. But it was also instructed to protect the crew and never to lie to them. Now with 2001 under 12 months away it is a sobering thought to realise how much the world has changed in the last 30 or 40 years.

Computers and telecommunications are perhaps the areas where change is most apparent, and still accelerating, but if we look at the extractive industries we can see major differences between the latter half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the next. We no longer have a mining industry as a core domestic wealth producer, our collieries have dwindled to a shadow of what I remember as a boy. The so-called "dash for gas" has seen the off-shore oil and gas industry enjoy a period of steady expansion, and the short-lived revival of Strontian as a barite producer, only to be eclipsed by the much larger and lower cost Foss Mine near Aberfeldy. Re-structuring in the steel industry and overseas competition have, indirectly, hastened the demise of our fluorspar mines and, most recently, the final efforts to sustain some deep mining of tin in Cornwall have been abandoned.

These events in the "macro-world" of minerals mirror a gradual transition which has been taking place in the sphere of field mineralogy and mineral collecting in general. There are numerous localities which many members will recall visiting in the 60's, 70's and 80's which are no longer available today. The attentions of generations of collectors may have depleted the resource to a point where it can be said that "there's nothing worth collecting anymore". The site may have been obliterated by subsequent development or reclamation in the interests of "environmental improvement", or perhaps the onslaught of ever more stringent health and safety legislation has meant that the land or quarry owner/operator is no longer prepared to allow access for collecting. Whatever the reason, it is a certain fact that opportunities for field mineralogy as we used to know it are disappearing fast.

What then should the amateur mineralogist make of these changes taking place around us? There are those who believe that "we should stand up and fight for our rights". Others sound a more cautious note - to the effect that we do need to acknowledge that finite resources are involved, and that therefore a degree of restraint is warranted. Conservation is a fashionable activity nowadays, but how should one weigh up the merits of conserving material on or in a spoil heap, versus removing it from its context and curating it in a collection, whether private or public. Compelling arguments are being rehearsed on both counts, and this is perhaps nowhere more topical than in relation to the Caldbeck Fells.

The BMS, together with a number of other societies and organisations (including the Russell Society, The British Geological Survey and English Nature), has been engaged in discussions with the Lake District National Park Authority concerning development of a "Caldbeck and Uldale Commons Minerals Policy". A meeting of the Working Group was held in June 1999, and draft notes circulated to participants for comment in October, with a final version being released in December. The BMS was able to contribute some further proposals for amendments to the policy prior to Christmas, several of which have been incorporated into the "final draft". This "final draft" policy was presented to a meeting of the Park Management Committee in Kendal on 27 January 2000.
The full text of the Policy which has now been adopted by the Park Management Committee is reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter. In the paper submitted to the Management Committee as agenda item 5, the authors, P. Davies and J. Hodgson conclude with the following paragraphs:

"This policy has not been considered lightly by those authorities responsible for preserving the geological, archaeological and landscape features which form part of the special qualities of both the Caldbeck Fells and the Lake District National Park. It is recognised that mineral collecting is regarded by many as a legitimate and innocuous pursuit. However, recent experience coupled with information and advice from English Nature and the British Geological Survey has led to the conclusion that our management of the Caldbeck Fells needs to change in order to address the issues of the depletion of the mineral resource and damage to archaeological remains and the landscape.

The policy will cause many mineral collectors and geological students to reconsider their own aims and position regarding their activities. However, the policy is an attempt to preserve and maintain the landscape and the archaeological qualities of the area whilst allowing for justified research exploration and collection by both clubs and individuals. In order to accommodate some of the demands for amateur collecting, we propose to arrange collecting weekends throughout the year (with the mineral societies) and to hold teaching collections of minerals for use by educational establishments."

I think that it is important for members to bear in mind the above comments when reading through the Policy. There are undoubtedly many pressures upon our National Parks, and mineralogical heritage in general. Organisations such as the BMS, and the Russell Society, together with more formal conservation bodies such as RIGS Groups must give serious thought to where we go from here. This is the beginning of a most important debate, involving many aspects of the mineral collecting/earth science subject area as a recreational pursuit. If we are to avoid the inexorable elimination of mineral collecting as a field pursuit in the UK the collecting fraternity needs, not only to change its ways, but to be seen to have done so. It is quite possible to portray mineral collecting as an anti-social, non-environmentally friendly, commercially driven pursuit which leaves behind damaged outcrops, disturbed vegetation and sharp fragments of broken rock. This of course is not the image which we would wish to represent. One could instead cite the good work done by amateurs in providing research material for academics and museums, the growing interest in earth sciences in the National Curriculum, and such ventures as the BMS National Reference Collection. Whether we like it or not, the climate in which mineral collecting will operate in future has changed. Our conduct, aspirations and contribution to the science will have to adapt to this new order if the activity which we have all pursued with such enthusiasm for the past fifty years or so is to survive into the second half of the 21st Century.


Many of the well-known sites are now denuded of fossils, but conservation has not, in general, assisted his enquiries. "Conserved" sites (RIGS or SSSI) are sometimes hopelessly overgrown, while unconserved ones where sheep are active, sometimes have the features that were visible to nineteenth or early twentieth-century geologists well preserved, even if the fossils are now removed. He says that several geologists he interviewed stated that their work was not seriously hampered by the activities of amateurs or students, though mention of localities in field guides often led to their damage. His thought-provoking article rounds off with this paragraph. "What
messages all this may or may not have for geological curators in Britain, I leave for readers to contemplate. I am only a visiting historian from the colonies."

There is a future for mineral collecting and amateur mineralogy, we now need to work at defining what it is, and how we are going to contribute to its regulation and development.

With regard to the Caldbeck Fells, please DO apply for a permit to collect in accordance with the new Policy document. We need to test the system and help the LDNPA to gain experience in coping with the needs of the amateur mineralogical community. Please let me know how you get on.

CALDBECK AND ULDALE COMMONS - MINERALS POLICY

This policy covers the area of Caldbeck and Uldale Commons in the ownership of the Lake District National Park Authority and that part of Caldbeck Commons owned by Dalemain Estate (see attached map). (OS copyright rules preclude copying the map in this newsletter but copies should be available to individuals from the LDNPA - Editor.)

INTRODUCTION

The Caldbeck Fells are a significant component of the Lake District National Park and are important for their landscape, cultural, environmental and recreational value. Various features of archaeological, geological or ecological interest have been given statutory protection. The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) owns a substantial part of the Caldbeck Fells, comprising the majority of the Caldbeck Common. Dalemain Estate own the remaining part of Caldbeck Commons including the Carrock Mine area. The LDNPA and Dalemain Estate are concerned to conserve and protect the varied interests of the Caldbeck Fells while assisting visitors to appreciate and enjoy the area. As part of this work, the LDNPA has worked with partner organisations to produce management proposals for the area that have been published as the 'Skiddaw Management Plan' (1997). This document outlines many of the current conservation issues on the Skiddaw Massif and includes options for future management.

For some time the LDNPA has been concerned that uncontrolled collection of minerals on the Commons has been causing damage. The concerns are that:

- Large quantities of minerals are being removed without adequate justification in terms of research and furthering knowledge. There is a danger that the minerals resource will become exhausted if the current rate of collection and removal is not checked;
- Important archaeological sites, principally remains of early mining, are being damaged;
- Landscape damage is being caused by excavation.

Recent monitoring of the situation by the LDNPA has indicated that some of the damage has been caused by commercial collectors seeking good mineral samples for their businesses. This is an activity that the LDNPA is particularly keen to prevent and the police have been involved in the last year. However the scale of casual amateur collection is also causing damage and the LDNPA has decided that the time has come to formulate a policy on mineral collection on the Commons. To this end a policy on minerals collection has been developed by the LDNPA in conjunction with English Nature, the British Geological Survey, the Cumberland Geological Society, the Cumbria RIGS Group, the Russell Society, the British Micromount Society and Dalemain Estate. This policy will apply to the LDNPA's property on Caldbeck and Uldale Commons and that part of the Caldbeck Common which is owned by the Dalemain Estate.
1. **POLICY**

1.1 A permit system will operate to regulate collection of minerals on the Caldbeck and Uldale Commons in the ownership of the LDNPA and that part of Caldbeck Commons in the ownership of Dalemain Estate. The attached map shows the land covered by the policy. *(See note above - Ed.)*

1.2 Application for a permit must be made via the LDNPA, Blencathra Centre office, by the end of December of the preceding year in which people wish to collect. *[for 2000, applications should be submitted by March 31st]*.

1.3 The issuing of permits will be undertaken by a small group comprising English Nature, The LDNPA, The British Geological Survey, a representative from the collecting groups and Cumbria RIGS. This will be carried out in January of the year the permits are to apply. *[for 2000, in April]*.

The wider group, *(comprising: the LDNPA; English Nature; The British Geological Survey; RIGS; Cumberland Geological Society; Norfolk Minerals and Lapidary Society; Russell Society; British Micromount Society; Federation of Lapidary and Geological Societies and Manchester Museum)*, will review this system of application and permits in the year 2001, and in subsequent years as required.

1.4 No charge will be made for this permit procedure.

1.5 The permits will be restricted to those undertaking accredited research and educational programmes. All applications must therefore include a clear statement on the research aims and objectives. Information must also be supplied concerning: -

i) Collecting methods

ii) Location(s) of collecting

iii) Date(s) of collecting

iv) Arrangements for analysis, storage and publication of material.

1.6 The permits will be issued to an individual and must be carried by the individual on the fells as the National Park Rangers, Voluntary Wardens or police will wish to view the authorisation. Failure to do so could incur a fine up to £500 under the byelaws. An individual eg, a secretary of a club may apply on behalf of several other individuals, but these must all be named in the application and must carry individual permits as above.

1.7 The permit procedure will be widely publicised and summarised at access points.

2. **Accredited Research and Educational Programmes**

2.1 The individual must provide a detailed and reasoned description of the research programme for which a permit is being sought. This must clearly state research goals, aims and objectives and must also detail description on ALL of the following: -

i) Methodology

ii) Timetable

iii) Locations for collecting.

iv) Amount of material to be removed *(in particular the panel will be examining the reason for which finite and irreplaceable material must be removed from the Caldbeck fells.*

v) Publication of results.

2.2 Applicants must also supply the name(s) and addresses of a referee for the application and a named individual who has the ability to verify the identification of the collected minerals.
3. **Methods of collecting**

3.1 The following conditions will apply to all collecting:

- No power tools or explosives to be used.
- Only small hand tools (geological hammers, trowels) to be used i.e., no pick axes, sledge hammers or spades.
- No breaking into turf.
- No vehicles.
- No access to underground workings - this needs a separate application, justification and authorisation from the National Park Authority.
- No damage to or sample collecting from in-situ vein outcrops or exposures material.
- Collecting by raking over the surface of mine spoil tips should disturb as little material as possible in order to prevent damage to archaeological remains. [A maximum depth of 4-6" is specified as a guideline].
- Disturbed material should be returned to its original location.

4. **Collecting Locations**

4.1 Some areas of archaeological, geological or ecological sensitivity will be restricted and will be indicated in the application form material.

4.2 Permit holders are asked to keep out of the fenced areas, which are safeguarding mine and air shafts.

4.3 The locations need to be identified initially by the applicant in order to secure a permit.

5. **Dates of Collecting**

5.1 Specific dates for collecting should, where possible, be provided in the application. However, in some circumstances the LDNPA may agree to the permit holder giving 14 days notice of a visit. In all cases the total number of visits will remain as specified in the application.

6. **Further Conditions of Permit**

6.1 The permit system will require a record of the actual visit, where any material is stored and the published papers (journals) if relevant. It is expected that an interim report should be filed within three months of the visit followed by a final report at a later date. Groups which do not provide feedback on their site visits will be looked on unfavourably for future permit applications.

7. **Storage, Display and Ownership**

7.1 Any rare or significant mineral specimens that are identified will be donated to an appropriate museum. Any other minerals may be retained by the collector subject to consent of the National Park Authority or Dalemain Estate. It is not expected however that material should be collected for financial gain.

8. **Amateur Collecting and Educational Visits**

8.1 The LDNPA recognises the interest and potential contribution of amateur collectors to furthering knowledge of minerals in the Caldbeck Fells. Therefore, in addition to the permit system for collecting as part of accredited research projects, a series of weekend collection sessions will be organised each year. These will be arranged by the National Park Authority in conjunction with the Minerals societies and will be open to a limited number of individuals by application.

8.2 The LDNPA also recognises the educational importance of the geology and minerals of the Commons and that educational establishments will continue to wish to make visits. In order to assist with this and to obviate the need for removal of material for teaching purposes, the LDNPA will make available teaching collections containing a sample of minerals from the Caldbeck and Uldale Commons.
SLAGGING OFF THE COLLECTORS?
Shirley Adrian

I recently received a letter from Horst Windisch, the Chairman and Newsletter editor of the South African Micromount Society. He is also the Chairman and Newsletter Editor of the International Association of Collectors of Slag Minerals and pointed out to me that my record of the Branch Organisers’ reports was somewhat misleading.

While our Norfolk and Warrington members may possibly represent two thirds and one third respectively of the UK membership of the International Association of Collectors of Slag Minerals, this is certainly not true of the Association’s full membership. As a matter of interest, the Association has 38 members in 9 countries, and the breakdown is as follows:

- Austria: 1
- France: 3
- Germany: 4
- Greece: 1
- South Africa: 6
- Switzerland: 1
- Netherlands: 2
- UK: 15
- USA: 5

Apologies have been sent to Horst.

BMS MEMBERSHIP LISTING - JANUARY 2000
Mick Wolfe

An updated BMS membership listing is enclosed with this newsletter. As promised at the AGM I have included e-mail addresses as well. I have also included the latest telephone number changes which can now be used. Despite the best efforts of Pearl, Sid and myself there will be errors and omissions. If there is an error in your entry will you please write to Pearl rather than to me with the changes so that they can be included in the mailing list and published in the next newsletter.
PHOSPHATES FROM DRAKEWALL’S MINE, GUNNISLAKE, CORNWALL
Brian Craik-Smith

Quite often I have found that reexamination of specimens collected early in my mineralogical pursuits have resulted in interesting discoveries which before I did not even notice. By error I have sometimes "disposed of" early collected material only to wish later that I could examine them again in the light of new species being reported from those locations. A lesson now well learned. One particular set of specimens I did keep however, was from a visit to Drakewall's Mine when Richard Barstow conducted the Oxford Mineral Club around this site and the Gunnislake Clitters on the 11th May 1980. This was when I hardly knew one end of a geological hammer from the other and the differences between quartz and calcite were still grey! But I did have an eye for the unusual and made an interesting find that day.

In vughs in a quartz-mica, greisen-type rock, small (up to 2mm) globules of dark green chalcosiderite CuFe6(PO4)4(OH)8.4H2O were found on rock quartz crystals and some vughs with iron staining (hematite/limonite). This was confirmed by XRD in 1981 but I did not take much further interest in these specimens until mid-1999.

On re-examination of this assemblage I found another specie that was pale pink to white globular (1mm) with a fibrous radiating structure associated with some of the chalcosiderite. I guessed it to be another phosphate and suspected it to be strengite Fe(2+)(PO4).2H2O. I have recently had this confirmed by XRD. There are other associated species that I am still checking into on these specimens as there are also some pale green micro crystals (possibly ludlumite), another brown thin long bladed specie and also other possibly copper and iron phosphates that are likely to be found with the above. I have also noticed that some of the chalcosiderite globules have definite crystal faces on some specimens and, sometimes, colourless micro crystals on the surface of the globules. This assemblage appears to be of pegmatite origin and not a super-gene occurrence. Wolframite blades also occur in the ground mass and there is a good possibility of other iron, manganese and possible lithium phosphates that are still to be identified in this material.

Strengite has been reported from Cornwall from Phoenix Mine and Gravel Hill mine by Kingsbury in 1962. The Gravel Hill occurrence has, I believe, been reconfirmed recently.

I would like to thank Peter Davidson of the NMS for his help with the XRD confirming strengite. Further investigation is being undertaken on the other associated minerals described above.

(Brian is a new member of the BMS presently living in Germany although he is almost certainly known to a number of existing members. On the new list of members his UK address is listed.)
INTERESTING ADDITIONS TO THE BMS REFERENCE COLLECTION 2151-2200
Max M. Wirth

First, two corrections, synchysite (2083) and zircon (2084) have both now been confirmed by David Green. Specimen (2084) was not xenotime.

Tim Neall has provided an interesting if non-descript specimen of parasymplesite from Wet Swine Gill (2155), greenish bundles of needles one might have ignored. These have been confirmed by XRD.

Harry Woolgar looks for things in strange places! He has collected vivianite in mudstone (2157) from a landfill site.

David Green sent in 16 specimens, including rauenthalite (2163) from Kerry in Ireland. These are opaque, white blades of Ca-arsenate. He also sent brilliant, emerald green clinoatacamite (2166) and botallackite (2167) from the Castleton mine at Lochgilphead. There is a nice, vicious blue-green spangolite (2169) from Skye. We do not have much from Borrowdale in Cumbria, but David found and identified beaverite from there, a common mineral but not often recognised. There must be many more relatively unknown sites from which to collect minerals now that the Caldbeck Fells are out of bounds. Eagle Crag in Patterdale, green mimetite with wulfenite (2173) and azurite (2174), Blencathra near Keswick, linarite (2176), all from David.

Don Blake wrote about the tiny site near Nether Kellet in the last issue of the Newsletter and presented typical specimens of which the azurite (2177) is the best.

Max Wirth rooted around the blue Shap quarry (with permission!) and picked up a little orthoclase, variety adularia (2180). In the granite quarry (a.k.a. pink) he thought he had found beryl (2181), but it turned out to be the much rarer milarite (a beryllium osmiumite), identified as such by David Green.

Peter Hay entered the unusual uranium minerals kasolite (2182) as tiny yellow pimples and dewindtite (2183), both from Loe Warren, Botallack. He also contributed a small but splendid spray of free vivianite blades (2184) from a London clay bench which has since collapsed into a landfill site near Havant.

Back in the late 80's at Whitwell quarry, David Green collected an excellent specimen of lanarkite (2190). It is a useful reference item to see what lanarkite looks like! He also collected superb, brilliant orange descloizite (2194) and fine vanadinite (2195).

John Betterton entered some high quality specimens (N.B. clean and well documented), clinoclore (2197), cornwallite (2198) and hidalgoite (2199) as well as others which will appear in the next listing, all from Penberthy Croft. These will form the subject of an article in the next issue of the UK J. M&M.
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<th>South Crofty m.</th>
<th>Illogan Cornwall</th>
<th>Jewson C.</th>
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BRANCH NEWS

Cornwall and Devon
The next meeting will be held on 11th March at the Public Rooms, 3 West Street, Liskeard at 1:30pm.

"Foreign" visitors welcome - please bring cash to purchase the amazing bargains.

It is with regret that we report the death of Mr. J C Nicholls who had been a member since 1994. We offer condolences to his son, who reported his passing to us, and to other members of his family.

Members will also be sad to learn that Eddie Foy has recently informed us of the loss of his wife. We extend to Eddie sincere condolences.

Editorial

This first issue of the new millennium has proved to be a lightweight but, at the same time, a weighty issue.

It is lightweight because, for the first time, I have been short of articles but still not so short as to have to start badgering everyone. However, it prompts me to make this written appeal for Issue 56! **If you do have something to contribute, please note my new address, telephone number and e-mail details on the back page!**

The weightiness comes from the serious nature of the Chairman's letter and the accompanying new policy statement from the Lake District National Park Authority. Patience has paid off in that BMS members may be assured that this is the official Policy statement of the LDNPA. The Authority consists of members appointed by the County and District Councils and by the Secretary of State. The nature of the planning process is such new Policy decisions can only be made by this Authority and not by the Authority's staff or by other bodies, individuals or committees with whom they may choose consult. If a copy comes to hand before this newsletter is despatched, you will find an application form enclosed. Otherwise, if you plan a visit, please write at once to the LDNPA at Blencathra Centre, Blencathra Centre, Threlkeld, KESWICK, Cumbria, CA12 4SG.

Mike Dannatt
New members and changes of address details:

All new members and changes of address details of which the editor is aware are included in the new list of members. However, in order to ensure safe delivery of your contributions to issue 56, please take special note of the editor's new address, telephone and e-mail details given below.

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**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Mike Dannatt
Ashcroft, Smalldale, Bradwell, Hope Valley, S33 9JQ
Tel: 01433 621801
E-mail: the.dannatts@care4free.net

Please note that all of the above contact details have changed.

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The deadline for articles for Newsletter 56 will be 1st June 2000. Please let me have contributions as soon as possible. Articles or reports on PC disc are particularly welcome. Articles sent by E-mail can either be “attached” or part of the body of the E-mail message. Clearly printed documents are acceptable and can be scanned and read into the PC.