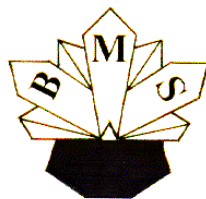


BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER NO. 59 June 2001

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OCCASIONAL PAPERS 8, 9 & 10 - UPDATE
Peter Braithwaite

Since publication of the Papers there has been a number of changes and additions as follows.

OP.8 'Collecting'

Permission to collect. One item which was not considered necessary to mention was that of permission to collect. A number of recent incidents suggest, however, that it should have been, not mentioned, but perhaps stressed. There is no such thing as 'Public Land' in the British Isles. 'Public areas', 'Rights of Way' etc. exist but these are all controlled and regulated either by special sanctions or by Common Law. The 'Right to Roam' has received a lot of publicity lately, but even this does not include the right to collect minerals. Theoretically at least collecting from an area on which there is 'Mineral Rights' ownership is stealing, and could lead to prosecution. Events in Derbyshire, Caldbeck Fells and parts of Cornwall and Wales underline this. In practice it is usually the Landowner who will take some form of action - not because of the loss of mineral specimens - but because of the damage caused, and regrettably sometimes left, by their extraction.

Sometimes it is, however, impossible to even find from whom one might obtain permission. In this case be ready to act in a conciliatory manner if challenged, pointing out that you had tried to find the ownership and had, in any case, been extremely careful. You had - of course?

Working quarries and similar, and even those apparently abandoned are different. Permission must be obtained for each visit. Quarry owners may be held not only responsible, but also, liable for any accident or undesirable incident, even when permission has been granted. Trespass opens up a veritable quagmire of legal wrangles, in which you could find yourself both suing and being sued or prosecuted.

The end product is, when all is said and done, a few pieces of rock which fit in 1" cube boxes. Keep things in perspective.

Equipment: A. Tools There are now available in this country more of the American 'Estwing' tools. Of special interest is a tool similar to the 'long lump' of all steel construction with the usual rubber grip. Also a long handled, heavier version, of their 'Rock Hammer'. Contact Earthlines on 01508 531014 for further details and prices.

In the last twelve months or so a number of 'bargain' tool shops have started to appear. Most of the tools are of good quality and very cheap. Be careful, however, of chisels, some are excellent but others are brittle. It may be worthwhile buying one, if it bears a manufacturers name or identifying mark, and then, wearing goggles, try it out before buying others. There are also some good pincer type tools, 'endcutters' 'sidecutters' etc. which will be demonstrated at the Symposium. Look also for gloves.

Tile snips are described in the paper but there is now a larger, heavier version called 'Quarry Tile Snips' for larger tougher rock.

B. Cleaning Modified syringes, hypodermic and baby feeding types have proved excellent at all stages of cleaning. Again these will be demonstrated at the Symposium.

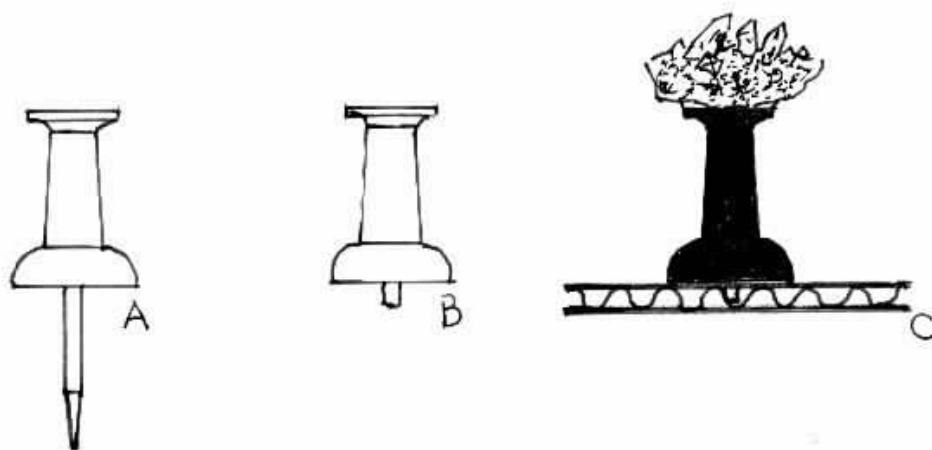
OP Number 9 (Part 2 Micromounting)

A The recommended 'UHU' glue has been replaced (or perhaps only renamed) by 'UHU POWER'. The tube nozzle is somewhat large but will soon 'gum-up' to a more useful, smaller aperture. If only tiny amounts are required squeeze onto a piece of glass or similar and apply with a mounted needle; placed on glass, a small amount dries quickly and must be used immediately.

B An ex neighbour, Ken Beeson, a newcomer to micromounting (no that isn't why he's 'ex'.) followed the methods in 'Paper 10' quite successfully. However, after a while he tried to find other perhaps 'easier' ways. A successful method is described below. It has definite limitations but I now use it, and variations for about 20% of my mounting. Try it.

The basis of the method is a push pin, available in most office or school supply shops. Unfortunately they are not obtainable as black only but in a selection of mixed colours. All, however, take paint well.

The drawing below outlines the process and once again this is an item which will be demonstrated at the Symposium.



A. Pin as bought Scale x 2

B. Pin snipped and filed flat to punch into, but not through, the card base OR pulled out completely using small pliers.

C. Glued to base, specimen glued to pedestal.

Limitations: 1/ Standard height limits height of specimen

2/ Flat top requires flat base to mineral

However, it is possible to file a slight bevel to the top or, with a very thin specimen, to glue a small 'shaper' on top. Top head may also be reduced in overall size or shape.



EARTH GALLERIES - THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - LONDON

Austin Lockwood

Despite the criticism that the Natural History Museum has received of its various improvement projects in recent years, with the main escalator being closed off for months on end and the rotating metal globe at a standstill more often than not, visitor numbers have continued to soar. Children and adults over 60 years of age are now admitted free and there are positive moves within Government to reintroduce free admission for all¹. In recent years there has been a realisation that the exhibits are not only interesting but are educational. The key words for the use of the collections are now Research, Education and Exhibition.

In years gone by, if you had a specimen, be it a mineral, rock or fossil that you wanted identified, you took it to an enquiry desk, filled in a form and left the specimen with an attendant. On each visit to the Museum you would enquire what progress was being made on the identification and after several months, or even years, you gave up in frustration. Or, you were told that the specimen was of great interest and they would be grateful if you would donate or leave it with them. Some of us who had contacts with the Museum could get the occasional mineral specimen identified from time to time but, friendships could run a little thin, if you did this too regularly.

Now we have the Earth lab in Gallery 66 and, once you have found your way there, you will discover what a fantastic place it is. On display there is a diverse collection of British rocks, minerals and fossils and you have easy access to the full records associated with each specimen, stored in a database, with touch screen computers. There is also a laboratory where you can sit at one of the fully-equipped work stations, and inspect, by means of a microscope, the specimens more closely. But, best of all, if you take along between 12.00 and 17.00, some of your own specimens you would like identified, there is a duty mineralogist (and palaeontologist for the fossil collectors) who will come to the Earth lab and spend time with you in examining what you have and, more often than not, in putting a name to it. If he is not sure what it is 'he knows a man who does' and, unless it is something particularly rare, you will come away with all your specimens properly identified. If you are asked to leave any specimens with them, they generally take very little time in identifying these, and the whole service is very efficient. This will cost you nothing, all they ask is that people make use of the Earth lab and sign the visitors book. A small price indeed.

The one thing that annoys many people who visit the Natural History Museum is to find that the British Geological Survey book shop does not open on a Saturday which is, of course, one of the Museum's busiest days. They have a vast range of books, maps and guides which are not stocked by the Museum book shop. So, if you want any of the products B.G.S. sell, you will have to go on a week day but remember they close for an hour at lunchtime! With such archaic opening hours the manager's name must be William Smith!

¹ *Austin has since reported that admission charges to the Natural History Museum will be removed from December of this year. Editor*

ADDITIONS TO THE BMS REFERENCE COLLECTION

A. Doug Morgan

As most of you will know I took over as Curator of the Collection from Max Worth towards the end of last year, and have now got most things up and running. There has been the usual hiccups with computers and tables, but I am fortunate in having good friends at hand when needed. When confronted with words as long as pseudomalachite and Zachariades (Sorry Nick!) strange things happened to my tables.

At this stage I would like to add my tribute to the tremendous amount of work which Max has done over the years in maintaining the Collection in such good order, with notes and nicely mounted specimens which are a credit to him, and of inestimable value to the Society. I shall need to ask for help to maintain such a high standard, but Roy is not far away and Max is always in touch.

On the subject of mounting, I found Max's method of embedding the specimen in a blob of Polyfiller on a 1" square matte black card very easy to do, and very satisfying. So much so that apart from the first 74 specimens of my collection which are mounted traditionally the rest of my relatively small collection is now mounted in the same way as the reference collection. After several years, I found that some mounts on Blutac were very dry and hard, and others sticky, but I enjoyed remounting the lot.

Roy Starkey has helped in describing the following new additions:

No	Mineral(s)	Locality	Description	Donor
2251	Magnetite/ Garnet	Lang Craigs, Dunbarton NS 433 748	This has gemmy transparent dodecahedral orange pyralspite garnet crystals on a magnetite-bearing matrix.	Kemp Meikle
2252	Actinolite/ Biotite	S.W.Shore, Lunda Wick, Burragarth, Unst HP566 044	Deep green transparent prismatic crystals intergrown with black biotite	R.E.Starkey
2253	Kyanite in Quartz	N.E.Slope of Ward of Scousburg, S.Mainland Shetland HU397 193	Pale blue elongate crystals in quartz	R.E.Starkey
2254	Stauralite	Greff, nr Libbers Hill, Unst HP58/14 area	Clove brown prismatic crystal sections in high grade schist	R.E.Starkey
2255	Kammererite	Nikka Vord, Unst HP 625 103	Waxy purple crystal flakes	R.E.Starkey
2256	Magnetite	Fethaland Penin. N.Mainland Shetland HU 37/94area	Sharp black metallic octahedra in chlorite	R.E.Starkey
2257	Chromite	Hagdale Quarry, Baltasound Unst HP 640 103	Black metallic grains and crystals in pale green serpentine	R.E.Starkey
2258	Kyanite	Housi Field, Saxa Vord, Unst HP 633 138	Elongate colourless crystals in schist	R.E.Starkey

2259	Siderite	Bampfylde Mine, Heasley Mill, Devon SS 740 330	Medium brown lenticular crystals with haematite.	G.J.Deverell
2260	Wulfenite	Shap granite Quarry. Shap, Cumbria NY 558 084	Sharp euhedral transparent yellow bipyramid on granite	M.Leppington
2261	Natrolite	Skye, South of Cuillins, Scotland	Lustrous colourless transparent prismatic crystals.	G.Henwood
2262	Para- symplesite	Harriet's Shaft Dump, Dolcoath mine, Camborne, Cornwall SW 654 401	Mid green spherical aggregates with radial fibrous structure, with arsenopyrite.	R.Lampshire
2263	Kasolite	Loe Warren, Botallack, Cornwall, SW 3609 3297	Waxy microscopic yellow scales on matrix	P.Hay
2264	Dewindite	Loe Warren, Botallack, Cornwall, SW 3609 3297	Waxy bright orange flakes on matrix	P.Hay
2265	Erythrite	Beach, The Floors, Budleigh Salterton, Devon	Small pale yellowish white grains	P.Bampton ex.D.Merritt
2266	Atacamite	Lelant Foreshore, Hayle Estuary, Cornwall	Dark green crystalline aggregates	P.Hay

THE NEWSLETTER

It is five years since I took over from Malcolm Southwood as your newsletter editor and, during that time, I have tried to maintain the position that the newsletter should be by, for and about members and about the BMS itself. I have tried not to nag members for articles - until this issue, although Peter Braithwaite maintains that he "dug his own hole and jumped into it". Being editor has been a rewarding learning exercise for me and, if members so wish, I am happy to continue for a little while longer. All I would say is that I cannot do it alone - I need *your* help by way of articles which may be of interest to other members. *Please* keep me from becoming a nagger!

THE GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION - FOULERTON AWARD Austin Lockwood

The Foulerton Award, instituted in 1920, is presented to a member or group of members for "work of merit" connected with the Association.

The award for 2001 was presented to Austin Lockwood at the Annual General Meeting of the Association held on Friday 4 May.

The award was made for his work on behalf of the Association during Millenium Year.

PROPOSED NEW VENUE FOR THE SYMPOSIUM MEAL FOR 2002

Roy Starkey



Roy Starkey sends the photo above showing a Taverna in Platanias on the Isle of Crete which he visited recently on holiday. Perhaps the Symposium organisers would like to consider this as a possible venue for the meal at next year's event as an alternative to Reynard's Bar?

2001 MICROMINERAL COMPETITION

Austin Lockwood

Members are reminded that this popular event, now in its seventh year, will again be held during the Annual Symposium at Leicester University.

Details of the Competition, including the Rules and Entry Form, were sent out to all members with the Symposium Notice.

If you are unable to attend the Symposium you can always ask a colleague, who is going, to take any specimens you wish to enter with him/her.

Last year we had 19 specimens entered for the competition so there is clearly a lot of interest. Search out those really nice specimens now and be ready to fill in the entry form when it is received.

THE MICROMOUNT COMPETITION 2001

Peter Braithwaite

At the last Symposium a number of people approached me to point out that the competition rules made it difficult to impossible for them to enter. Some members were unable, for one reason or another, to actually collect for themselves. Although still micromounting they relied on specimens purchased, swapped or as gifts. The other major complaint was the insistence on British only.

These complaints were not from only one or two individuals, but from quite a few people. I found this most disturbing. Although I initiated the competition some years ago it is not MINE it is the Micromount Society MEMBERS AS A WHOLE who are responsible and must agree the format. If the present arrangement is not satisfactory then it must be changed. How is another matter. After discussion with a number of people about the competition it was obvious that an immediate solution was not possible. In order, therefore, to attempt some clarification the next competition will be used as a sounding board. Following the award members views will be invited in the hope that an acceptable formula may be found. The competition will be opened up and will be conducted as follows.

- 1/ There will be three Judges. This will enable members to decide whether or not they wish it to so continue, or remain as it is at present with one Judge. Or it may, in future be only one Judge, but a different one each year.
- 2/ Specimens will have no restriction as to their country of origin or how they were obtained.
- 3/ Judging will be on some form of points system as agreed between the Judges but these will not be revealed as it is considered to discourage the 'lower scorers' from entering in the future.
- 4/ The Best Micromount will be that chosen unanimously, or by a 2 to 1 majority. Should there be more than one entry at 2 to 1 but with a different pair of Judges we will let you know!
- 5/ As the competition is wide open so far as specimens are concerned particular attention will be paid to the mounting, labeling etc.
- 6/ With possibly exotic specimens from exotic sources being entered the 'wow' factor becomes difficult. Don't worry about it, the Judges will fight it out, sorry - sort it out.
- 7/ Specimens may be sent to me at home or taken to the Symposium on Saturday morning.
- 8/ All specimens must be accompanied by a separate note giving, as a minimum, details of the specimen and your name.
- 9/ The entrant may submit up to THREE entries. Boxes to be no larger than 1" (25mm) cube.
- 10/ The result will be announced on SUNDAY we will tell you when exactly sometime over the weekend.

NOTE. THIS COMPETITION WILL HOPEFULLY PROVIDE THE FORMULA FOR THE FUTURE. IT IS YOUR COMPETITION. PLEASE ENTER IF YOU WANT IT TO CONTINUE. WITHOUT SUPPORT IT MAY BE LOST.

Note: *For the avoidance of confusion in both the Micromount and Micromineral competitions, I have confirmed with Peter and Austin that the term British is taken to include the whole of the British Isles including the Republic of Ireland. Ed.*

CHAIRMAN'S GLEANINGS

Roy Starkey

Mineralogical Society Snippets

The latest issue of the Mineralogical Society Bulletin (No.130 April 2001) features a photograph on the cover page which may be of interest to members. The picture is of an unusual skeletal form of pyrite collected by John Mason in May 1998 from Drift 1 East Vein, Prince Edward Gold Mine, Gwynedd. Pyrite with this growth form has now been recognised from a number of mines in the Dolgellau Gold Belt. The field of view is only 0.6mm so an SEM would be helpful !

The MinSoc website has recently undergone an upgrade and now features a "mineral of the month", and the concept of a "crystal cave" for younger mineralogists is being developed. The address is www.minersoc.org

The Society records with regret the death of Sir Kingsley Dunham on 5 April 2001. A full obituary will appear in a forthcoming issue of the Mineralogical Magazine.

Treasure Trove for Photomicrographers and Photographers

For those members active or interested in photographing mineral specimens I can heartily recommend the service provided by SRB Film Service. They provide a range of useful accessories and will custom-manufacture adaptors to suit any combination of camera and microscope/optical instrument. You can contact them at www.srbfilm.co.uk, by email sales@srbfilm.co.uk or by post at 286 Leagrave Rd, Luton, Beds. LU3 1RB Tel: 01582 572471. Catalogues and lists are available upon request.

1:25000 O.S. Maps get a facelift

The new Explorer map Series has been selected by the Design Council as one of 2000 Millennium Products. The whole of Great Britain is to be covered by Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 scale Outdoor Leisure or Explorer maps, providing improved mapping and better value for money for walkers, cyclists, and anyone enjoying outdoor activities (including of course mineral collectors !). Wales and England are complete and the remaining Pathfinder maps will be phased out by May 2003. A total of 1200 "old style" Pathfinder maps will be replaced by 370 Explorer Maps and up to 45 Outdoor Leisure maps. These really are superb maps, and the new format brings 1:25 000 scale mapping within affordable reach of most users (about £5.75 - £5.99 each) - if you're not a regular 2¹/₂" user you'll be amazed at the extra detail compared to 1:50 000 series maps.

Dennis Curry (1912-2001) (from the Daily Telegraph April 17, 2001)

Dennis Curry, who has died aged 88, combined the chairmanship of his family's chain of electrical goods shops with what he called a "passionate hobby" in geology, which culminated in a professorship at London University. Curry's specialist fields were British and Lower Tertiary sediments and the geology of the English Channel. He used core samples to help map an area of 15,000 square miles of sea bed, revealing previously unsuspected structures and outcrops. Curry family holidays were spent in close proximity to chalk pits and quarries across Europe. "Back in 20 minutes," he would announce, returning hours later with sacks of rock samples. No roadworks could be passed without stopping to investigate the chalk cuttings.

Curry was also a generous philanthropist. In 1958 he gave a large block of Curry's shares to the Geologists' Association - to mark its centenary - which was used to create a charitable trust in his name. He was president of the association from 1963-1965, and a winner of its Prestwich Medal. His rock and fossil collections were given to the Natural History Museum, which accorded him the rare honour of a key to the museum. He married, in 1937, Joyce D'Arcy. They had a son and two daughters.

Fashions and Fads

It is curious how things mineralogical come into fashion and fade away again. Like many walks of life things seem to go in phases. I can recall a period when phosgenite was the "in" mineral back in the early 1980's, pyromorphite and wulfenite too have been in the "collecting top ten". Down in the South-West chloritic matrix is "it" just at the moment with discoveries being made seemingly all over the place - with anatase, monazite and "sparable" cassiterite featuring strongly amongst the most prized finds. The last BMS newsletter contained a report by Steve Rust on minerals in the miarolitic cavities of the Loch Ainort and Glas Beinn Mhor granites of Skye, and last summer Neil Hubbard and myself visited Islay to collect examples of an unusual syenite which also yields a bewildering array of tiny euhedral crystals in miarolitic cavities (more of this at a later date). The granites of Arran also yield interesting microcrystals in miarolitic cavities, and I can see that BMS might for a while become the "British Miarolitic Society". Certainly we are fortunate in the UK to have a wide variety of igneous outcrops which may yield interesting material, and whilst pressure is increasing on the finite resources of spoil tips and old mine workings, there is plenty of scope to turn up new finds from exposures and quarries amongst the many intrusive rocks of these islands. We look forward to hearing members' reports in future editions of the Newsletter.

BRANCH NEWS

Midlands Branch - Dick Smith

We have held two meetings so far this year at St Ninian's Church Hall, Solihull, on 11 March and 13 May. The May meeting concentrated on the minerals of Skye; after an introduction to the geology of Skye and the main collecting sites by Roy Starkey members examined specimens from the National Reference Collection selected by Doug Morgan.

Our program includes

- a field trip to Dolyhir Quarry , on 17 June (*see report below*)
- a meeting on Sunday 18 November, where the topic will be chemical analysis.

We are a small branch, with just 11 active members, but our meetings are well attended.



Midlands Branch members in the field again at Dolyhir Quarry - Doug Morgan

The Midlands Branch of the BMS held a joint meeting with the Russell Society to Dolyhir Quarry near Kington on Sunday 17th June. We were blessed with good weather and it was pleasantly warm for collecting. Doug Morgan, Neil Hubbard, Alan Peckover, Ron Gibbons, Dick Smith, John Cooper, Steve Plant, Emmanuel Bravais, Peter Todhunter and Roy Starkey assembled at 10.00am for what turned out to be a very full day's collecting.

We first visited the area where realgar had been noted on a previous trip but there was little to see owing to the large amount of material which has been quarried away in recent months. The "boulder graveyard" however proved more fruitful and several large blocks were soon broken up to reveal typical dark red coatings on joints.

The party then split some climbing up to the upper bench and others returning to the older part of the workings on the lower level. Harmotome, azurite, calcite, baryte and quartz were collected from the lower area, with some very fine material indeed being collected showing beautifully clean rosettes of micro azurite dusted with colourless twinned harmotome crystals. The upper bench produced a substantial vein of altered chalcocite, large decomposed to coatings of malachite, but also yielding superb dark blue balls and crystal aggregates of azurite. A single specimen of tyrolite was also provisionally identified. A stubborn block of limestone blocked further progress and some members vowed to return the following weekend on another trip under the auspices of the Russell Society Wales and West Branch.

It was truly a pleasure to get out and do some serious collecting after all the constraints and inactivity caused by the Foot & Mouth Crisis, and we record our thanks to Alan Peckover for organising access, and to the Management of Nash Rocks for giving permission for our visit.

South East Branch - Austin Lockwood

Some 17 members attended the February meeting. Peter Wallace's report on 'What's on the Tables' at this meeting reads as follows:-'Only a few specimens of note were presented but they were all of some rarity.

Peter Hay showed the rare uranium minerals uranospinite, which is a member of the autunite group, which he had collected from Marbrue Cove on the Solway Firth and from Needles Eye, also on the Solway, nováčekite, another member of the autunite group.

From the other end of the country, Peter Hay had collected kasolite, another uranium mineral, this time from Loe Warren near Bottalack, Cornwall. Also from Cornwall, and from his favourite site of Penberthy Croft, Peter Wallace had found parnauite.

The meeting on the 13th May was attended by 22 members and the early arrivals were shown around the new building which has a meeting room for 40, another room with benches and power points and improved kitchen facilities.

Peter Wallace's report on 'What's on the tables' at this meeting reads as follows:-'From Gortdrum Mine, Tipperary, Ireland, Eddie Foy showed superb cinnabar crystals on dolomite, in a limestone matrix. Excellent bright metallic tennantite and chalcopyrite crystals were associated with the cinnabar. Steve Burchmore, from the same locality, also had fine cinnabar and unusual acicular chalcopyrite, looking very much like millerite, and a nice lavendulan specimen on which there were some water clear crystals, yet to be identified. Steve also had a specimen from Chipping Sodbury Quarry showing marcasite in a 'reticulated' habit, with what appeared to be octahedral pyrite crystals around the edges. From across the 'pond', Eddie Foy showed some of his self-collected 'Herkimmer diamonds', several of which had inclusions of hydrocarbons, giving them a smokey appearance.

Richard Belson had collected excellent erythrite from Sandbeds Mine in the Caldbeck Fells. The acicular pink erythrite crystals richly covering areas on the matrix. From somewhere in Cornwall, Austin Lockwood had a specimen of quartz and siderite on which there were several black bladed crystals, possibly wolframite, (could be from either Kit Hill or Cligga Head).

From a field trip to his cellar, Peter Reynolds showed a very nice mimetite variety campylite from Dry Gill, collected in the 1970's: He also had water clear tabular barite crystals from Preston Moor in North Yorkshire, again collected some years ago.

John Betterton, from a site he is calling the Edgcombe Park Clinker Dump, Crowthorne, showed what looked like a fine concrete matrix containing cavities infilled with silky acicular ettringite crystals, gypsum and other, as yet, unidentified species. (Peter Wallace reported that he had collected similar material from Tresavean Mine in Cornwall some years ago.)²

Pam FitzGerald showed two halves of a belemnite from Cassington Pit, Oxfordshire, with advanced symptoms of pyrite decay, covered with pretty 'efflorescence' growths, almost certainly some form of iron sulphates. A specimen that should definitely be in the isolation ward!

² See John's report below - Editor

A CHEAP FIELD TRIP!

John Betterton

A rather unusual locality has been discovered since it lies within our property in Crowthorne, (i.e. no transport costs or problems with access) Berkshire. It all began when we purchased a section of land along side of our existing property boundary. After the land was cleared and the arrival of new large shrubs, a series of large holes were dug during April 2001. To begin with a vast clinker dump was uncovered (about 25 x 30 square feet in area and some 1ft thick, and about 0 to 2 ft down). At first nothing strange here until some weathered concrete lumps approximately of hand size were found on top of the clinker layer. I did not take much notice at first because its just concrete. Later a sample was broken and revealed numerous cavities. No!, no! , not possible this is just Crowthorne with only the ephemeral glauconite to offer the desperate mineral collector and that alters to goethite. The sample was promptly placed under the microscope. The cavities were in places lined with colourless prismatic crystals - nice. Others had white to colourless hexagonal acicular crystal groups lining and or engulfing whole cavities - that's more interesting!. Additional specimens were extracted from the original hole and further exploratory holes were dug. All this new activity resulted in the delay of the major garden project.

After some additional examination the following species have been noted:

1. Ettringite as acicular/prismatic, hexagonal, transparent, colourless to white crystals lining infilling cavities to > 1.6 mm. They form particularly attractive specimens.
2. Gypsum as platy to prismatic colourless crystals of various habits to about 1 mm.
3. Unknown (1) Minute square shaped crystals on larger elongated gypsum crystals in one cavity so far!. Formed rapidly as the specimen dried out within a 24h period.
4. Unknown (2) Translucent to near opaque, elongated occasionally flattened and curved crystals lining some smaller cavities. May be just altered gypsum?.

Other material is still waiting to be sorted and processed. As for the site name I suggest the Edgcombe Park Clinker dump at 21 Linkway, Edgcombe Park, Crowthorne, Berkshire. National Grid Reference SU 643828. The formation of ettringite in weathered concrete is well-known and is consistent with the presence of numerous fires at the locality. This can be dated back to the original housing development in the park area during the early 1960's. A vast literature exists relating to the formation of ettingite in concrete and to other phases. Other localities for ettingite in the British Isles include Milltown Quarry, Ashover, Derbyshire and Tresavean Mine, Lanner, Cornwall. Others no doubt exist. Specimens of this association will be placed within the national BMS collection once all the available material has been sorted and studied.

MICROMOUNT HEAVEN

Peter Hay

When I first started collecting and contemplating a trip to Cornwall, I had a good look at *The Minerals of Cornwall and Devon* by Embrey and Symes. I thought I would be able to find specimens like those which are pictured in that wonderful book, and so I booked myself onto one of the collecting weeks which are run from Newquay by Sheila Harper and Steve Hebdige. Having collected wavellite at High Down Quarry, South Molton, on my way west, I was a little dismayed to be taken to Sheila's Rock Shed and set up on a microscope. As the week progressed (quite happily, I must add,) I got used to the fact of mineral collecting life in England, that fine hand-sized specimens, certainly of anything but the most common minerals, are rarely found these days. I got used to the microscope, and the delights that it can give and reveal.

One of the places Sheila took us to was Penberthy Croft. In a brief hailstorm I found my first olivenite. Penberthy Croft, as I now know, does not offer finds which are big to the collector, but it is a superb source of micro-minerals, thanks to the arsenic vein. Issue No.20 of the *UK Journal of Mines and Minerals* is largely devoted to a description of the minerals of Penberthy Croft by John Betterton who has studied them for years. As well as an exceedingly detailed written description, there are 54 very fine colour photographs and some B/W SEM pictures as well.

I think it was on my last visit to Steve and Sheila that I bought (for 50p each) two bags of Penberthy 'Pick and Mix', walnut sized lumps from the dumps. The winter is almost over as I write, and having finished looking through what I collected in 2000 from our various field trips, I thought I would turn to one of Sheila's bags. What a revelation! So far I have spent several hours working through about 8 lumps, and the haul is amazing, which explains the title of this piece. I've found several examples of minerals I had previously only seen in pictures and I can't wait to get back to the microscope to see what else I can find. Devilline and liskeardite as well as duftite come immediately to mind. It's been an education as well as a revelation. I can now recognize a rhombic bipyramid (duftite) and I am going to have to reconsider all the Penberthy specimens already in my collection, because I am sure many of them are misidentified, libethenite being only one example. If ever there was an illustration of just what joy one can get from our hobby if one is prepared to take the trouble to learn, this has been it.

If things go on as they are, there will probably be some useful 'swaps' available, so wish me luck. And thank you, Steve and Sheila, and John Betterton.

PS The very next lump produced agardite-(La)!

John also provides the following information:

Penberthy Croft Mine update:

Go to URL <http://www.mineralman.f9.co.uk>

Then click on mineral localities, then click Penberthy Croft. Click for gallery 6 for my photos. You'll probably like them.

The other site has only text at:

<http://users.plymouthonline.net/minerals/home.htm>

INTERNATIONAL SECTION

A note from Dr Manfred Seitz, Germany

Thanks to Pearl Freeman for this contribution - Ed.

In September I attended for the first time a Micromount meeting in Cremona Italy. This event is organised by the mineral collecting club of Cremona. The objective is to assemble Micromounters from several countries just to swap specimens. This event was organised for the 25th time and it was (again) a real success. This was the first time I had attended it and I will certainly go back to Cremona next year.

We were 120 collectors from Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Slovakia, Germany, France, Netherlands, Belgium, the United States and the Czech Republic. Everybody brought his swap material with him and his own microscope. Everybody could take any drawer of specimens from anybody else and check whether there was something interesting in it. If something of interest was found, the drawer and the specimens of interest were brought back to the owner and the owner looked for something interesting for him in your material.

This procedure worked without any problems. There was a lot of generosity when the swap ratios had to be defined. There was no money in the "game" and there was a very positive attitude between the collectors - a real climate of friendship.

Tom Levinson has brought the following to my attention:

I have received a note from a Belgian micro-mounter who is looking for contacts for swaps, his address is:

Francis HUBERT
70, Rue de Marbaix
B6110 Montigny-le-Tilleul
Belgique

E-mail: francish@be.packardbell.org

Editor's note: To round this section off, I would also mention the following:

In October last year I left a box of specimens with Quintin Wight in Ottawa. Quintin took some of these to the Canadian Symposium in St Catherines, Ontario. He very kindly took the trouble to type out my address on labels and, as a result, I have just heard from an American collector who took a couple and has sent me a few items in return. He also expressed an interest in hearing from anyone else who may be interested in trading specimens from his USA/Canadian collection for non-North American material. I will bring his hand-written list to Leicester. Contact details are:

Donald J Smoley, 519 Sequoia Drive, Pittsburgh PA, USA 15236

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New members

Robert Bowers	Whitethorns, Rolleston Road, Skeffington, Leicester, LE7 9YD	0116 259 6398
David Whale and Nydia Garcia	20 Grangehill Way, Bellingham, London, SE6 3JU	0208 695 6690

It is with sadness that we report that Clive Cornwall has advised us of the death of his father, Fred, of Sidmouth. Clive writes:

"I know of his love of minerals and the enjoyment he derived from prospecting, preparing and viewing his collection. Dad was never happier than when he had a hammer in one hand, a chisel in the other and a boulder in front of him hiding unknown treasures.

"Dad worked with rocks throughout his life as a stonemason and a gifted sculptor. His carvings (and his mineral paintings) will always bring back so many good memories.

"I will do my best to follow in his footsteps by adding to the specimens he collected and putting his microscope to good use."

Changes of address, telephone or e-mail details:

Member	New or corrected details.
Richard Bell	E-mail: richardbell_rockhound@bigfoot.com (Please note underscore character and not a hyphen.)
Paul Monk	E-mail: Paul.monk@virgin.net
Robin Selley	Flat 3, Over Garare Showroom, Paynters Lane, Illogan, Redruth, Cornwall, TR16 4DJ
Martin Stolworthy	martin.stolworthy@btinternet.com

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The deadline for articles for Newsletter 60 will be 1st October 2001. 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. Hand-written items should be as clear as possible please paying particular attention to site and mineral names.