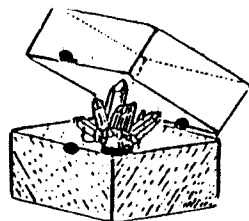


BRITISH MICROMOUNT SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER No.6 December 1982

It seems only yesterday that we were gathering in Matlock on a bright Saturday morning in October. Microscopes and specimens, boxes and people piled up on the doorstep to the Pump Room. Yes, the first British Micromount Symposium was underway !

That the weekend would be a success, I never seriously doubted, but the enthusiasm and atmosphere which carried it through had to be experienced to be believed. Never before have so many like-minded people had the opportunity to gather together in the UK, and perhaps it was the novelty value which got the Symposium off to such a magnificent start. Certainly all those who were able to attend will vouch for the friendliness and convivial nature of the proceedings.

A full report appears later in this newsletter, and I would like to use this space to summarise a few general thoughts on future activities, and matters raised by the questionnaire circulated to all delegates at the weekend.

The unanimity of replies was staggering, and it seems that the first Symposium was generally thought to be 'right' in all respects. Standards and topics of lectures, venue both in terms of location and type, timetabling and the balance between talks and practical sessions met with virtually 100% approval. Slight reservations regarding space for swap sessions, and the shortage of tables hardly detract from the overall picture. 64% of delegates do not wish to incorporate outside speakers, and 60% would prefer to keep a field excursion as a separate activity. 52% would favour inclusion of an evening dinner in the programme, and 72% would like to see some trade representation from suppliers of microscopes. The venue for next year's Symposium is less clear-cut, and under investigation at the present - 28% favouring a return to Matlock, and 50% in favour of Birmingham or Leicester. Suggestions for lecture topics include - Mineral Locations, Crystallography & Identification, Chemical Identification, Cleaning, Photomicrography, Cornwall and Computer Cataloguing.

Over 5500 miles was travelled by delegates attending the Symposium !

The hospitality extended to us by Pam Diamond, Curator of the Peak District Mining Museum was very much appreciated, and Elsie Hansford's magnificent efforts with literature and organisation did much to aid the success of the weekend. Thanks also to my wife for suffering many hours of domestic disruption during the planning and run-up to the Symposium.

The venue and dates of next years Symposium will hopefully be announced in Newsletter No.7, and numbers are likely to be limited in the light of this year's experience, to something in the region of 50 delegates.

A major feature of the Symposium was a mammoth swap session on the Saturday afternoon, when in the space of two hours, an estimated 500 micromounts changed hands ! Can you picture the scene if you weren't present ? It seems quite likely that a 'National Swap Day' might be well supported - if the physiology of the micromount collector could stand the strain !

No swap lists have been received for inclusion in this newsletter and so the idea will be dropped - you must all have exhausted supplies at Matlock (or do you have such a backlog that any further acquisitions would be an embarrassment ?).

Only one contribution for our series on Classic British Micromount Localities has been received - published in this issue, PLEASE get writing , you can ALL contribute something. Thanks.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

It was decided by 100% majority at the Symposium to raise subscriptions for 1983 to £3.00. All members present on the Sunday at the Symposium have paid, and if a red 'x' appears here you have not yet paid. Please pay by return, and help me to keep clerical work and chasing to a minimum. Thankyou. (Cheques payable to British Micromount Society).



FIELD TRIP 1983

It is planned to run a field trip over the May Day weekend in 1983, i.e. 30th April/1st & 2nd May. The venue will probably be the northern Lake Bistrict, and full details will be announced later. Please make a note in your diary now and reserve the date.

OVERSEAS NEWS

The Association des Micro-Monteurs de Mineraux Montigny le Tilleul (4M for short) have written requesting a copy of our Directory, and they wish to establish contacts between their members in Belgium, and collectors in the UK. Some of you may be receiving enquiries in due course. Their address is :- R.Rokegem, 16 Rue Trou Barbeau, 6031 Monceau sur Sambre, Belgium.

Celeste Ferdinando
Via Crocefisso 2
20090 Vimodrone
Milan
Italy

and

De Lorenzi Giorgio
Via Piave 71/A
20090 Vimodrone
Milan
Italy

have written with extensive swap lists of many rare minerals - atacamite, biscolite, cyrilovite, coquimbite, fassaite, mordenite, parahopeite, penninite, sagenite, ludwigite, and 2 A@ pages of others. These two collectors are well worth contacting !

Preite Domenico
via Piave 18
S.M.Rossa
20024 Garbaguste
Milan
Italy

also writes with an extensive swap list and would like to strike up exchange contacts with collectors in the UK. Please contact him if you are interested.

The South African Micromount Society have an in-depth review of the mystery mineral 'Arandisite' in their newsletter No.9.1, Arandisite may be a mixture of hydrous cassiterite with quartz. They also record the occurrence of Cornwallite and Clinoclase from Stavoren, Transvaal, S.A. - a first occurrence in S.A. Congrats to Andre de Ruijter for the finding and identification. Details are also given of the Annual one-day workshop - a great success.

THE FIRST BRITISH MICROMOUNT SYMPOSIUM - by a special correspondent.

When the doors of the Pump Room, Matlock Bath opened at 10.0am on Saturday, some forty delegates went through, many carrying boxes with their microscopes and minerals for swapping which were quickly set on window ledges and tables. Many introductions had already been made in the car park and within minutes a friendly atmosphere prevailed among collectors who had come from as far afield as Bath, Burgess Hill and Carlisle. After a welcoming cup of coffee, Roy Starkey outlined the programme of talks, demonstrations and field trips. Society business was discussed and it was agreed to increase subscriptions, to put on a stand at the March 1983 London show; and to arrange a weekend field trip, probably in May 1983.

The programme opened with Eric Otty's talk on 'Gold in Britain' which showed the main sources of the 4 Tonnes recorded production since 1860, as well as earlier localities such as Ogofau and Goldscope mines. There were also slides of goldpanning and sluicing activities of the North West Lapidary Society. This was followed by 'Microminerals of the Caldbeck Fells' by Trevor Wolloxall and David Middleton. This area had been worked for lead, barytes and tungsten from 1100AD onwards but much of the early published information on the area was found to be misleading. The speakers covered in detail the area between Carrock Mine and Roughtongill, an area of mainly igneous rocks which had provided a vast range of minerals. With rare humour they explained some of the difficulties of collecting micros underground and their technique requiring three rucksacks! "All good collections should be catalogued" said Paul Monk when introducing his talk on "Cataloguing techniques for the Micromounter". After discussing the fundamentals of listing accession number, mineral name and locality he talked of a variety of ways of cross-referencing to meet the individual requirements of the collector. There was considerable interest in computer cataloguing which it is hoped will be discussed further at the next symposium.

After lunch, Mike Leppington showed a selection of slides on 'The Minerals of Zambia'. Whilst copper has been extracted for centuries from surface deposits, deeper orebodies have been opened up in recent years and Zambia is now the fifth largest copper producer in the world. The orebodies consist of disseminated particles of sulphides in sedimentary greywackes and shales, with malachite, chrysocolla, cuprite and azurite in the oxidised zones. The collectors favourites from this area include the rare phosphates such as libethenite, hopeite and parahopeite and tarbuttite. A talk on 'Simple Mineral Optics' by Doug Morgan followed next, showing how minerals could be identified by determining their refractive index using immersion methods on the microscope stage (the Becke Line technique). The different crystal systems were discussed in relation to optical properties and dichroism. The manufacture of a simple dichroscope was explained.

The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to demonstrations of various mineral trimmers, mounting techniques, and photomicrography. A remarkable variety of minerals came from under the tables as the swap session got underway, and it seemed that this might go on all night. After a break for a meal, Roy Starkey returned with slides of 'Microminerals of the Isle of Skye'. The enormous potential of Skye as a mineral locality was explored, and the obvious attractions of the island for holidays were well portrayed. The meeting closed with a short selection of photomicrographs of micromounts to supplement the afternoon demonstration. Members then retired to the 'Fishpond' across the road where liquid refreshment was taken until closing time.

The mild and sunny weather of Saturday was with us again on Sunday morning as delegates returned to the 'Pump Room' and enjoyed a cup of coffee and a chat.

Peter Braithwaite opened the programme with his presentation on 'Microminerals of Millclose Mine, Derbyshire'. This mine which was first worked in the 17th century worked up to World War II, but during the 1970's the main areas of spoilheaps were cleared for re-processing and the site is now grassed over. Some superb photomicrographs taken using tungsten lighting were shown, including marcasite 'suns', acicular gypsum, galena, cerussite, a variety of forms of barytes, and greenockite. Zinc minerals also occurred in quite beautiful forms - sphalerite in colours ranging from bright orange to black and smithsonite from white to black with orange and green.

The final talk was a demonstration by Michael Edwards of Hampshire Micro (57 New Market Sq., Basingstoke, Hants.) who brought along a selection of Japanese Meiji microscopes. He gave some useful advice on cleaning microscopes - use a camel hair brush to remove dust from the lenses, then a tincture of moist breath and removal with a lens tissue on a soft stick, cottonbuds or a well-washed cotton handkerchief. He advised never to touch screws on the lenses, never to remove the diaphragm, and never grease the rack and pinion - only the dovetail slides. For travel, he advised covering the eyepieces with polythene bags, wrapping the microscope in sponge, and putting the whole in another polythene bag. Microscopes travelled better on their side.

After lunch delegates went off in small parties to a number of collecting localities in the area and were well-rewarded. Two of the sites yielded 10 and 8 different minerals. All delegates returned by 3.30pm for the closing review and discussion. The weekend had been a resounding success and everyone left with even more enthusiasm for micromounting. Delegates had been asked to complete a survey regarding the Symposium and future activities, and some of the early returns were discussed. A weekend field trip would be arranged to the Caldbeck Fells in May 1983, and another symposium would be arranged for October 1983, which might be held at one of the Midland Universities. A vote of thanks to the organisers - Roy & Mary Starkey and Elsie Hansford - was proposed by Peter Braithwaite and unanimously encored.

LIVERPOOL MICROSCOPICAL SOCIETY

Ted Lynch, one of our members is also President of the L.M.S., and has written to invite any interested persons to contact him should they be interested in joining. The LMS is a long established society - founded in 1868, and has a close association with the Quekett Microscopical Club at the B.N.Nat.Hist.London. The society has recently moved to new premises at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Regular monthly meetings are held, and interests range across the entire field of microscopy, from optical to electron microscopes. Please write to E.W.Lynch if you are interested (address in Directory). Membership is £3.00 per annum.

FOR SALE

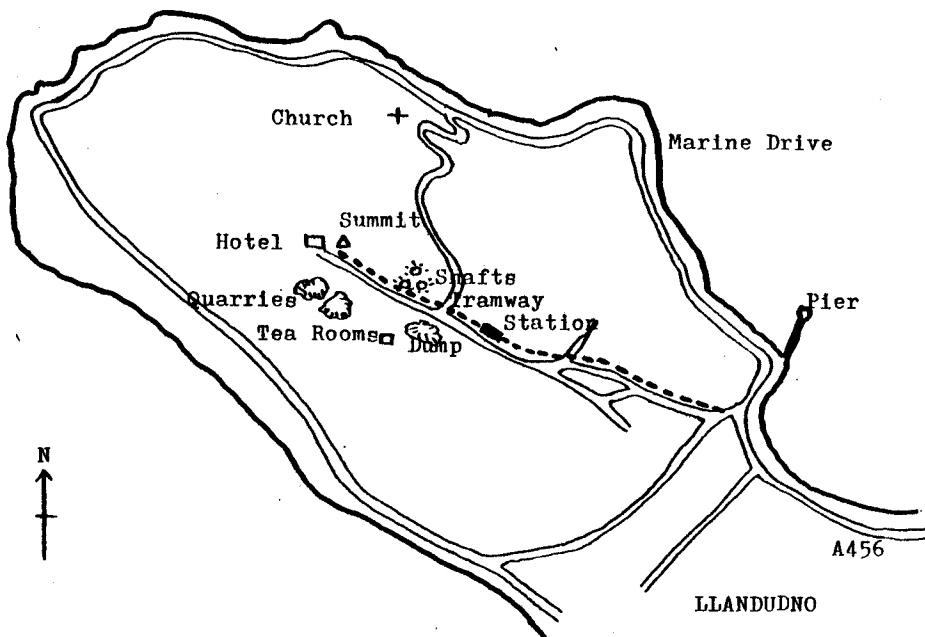
In response to demand at the Symposium I have prepared a limited number of further sets of Microminerals of the Isle of Skye - eight ready trimmed, quality micros in a card box, price £3.00 including postage. Please contact me at 15, Whitehall Drive, Dudley W.Midlands. DY1 2RD if you want a set. Roy Starkey.

BRITISH MICRO LOCALITIES - No.2 The Llandudno Copper Mines

by Keith Snell

Grid Ref. Sheet 107.771832

These mines are situated on the Great Orme, a carboniferous limestone promontory bordering on the north Western outskirts of the town. They were unusual in that they were worked almost exclusively for copper, with minor amounts of lead, whilst the mines of Denbighshire and Flintshire lying nearby to the east, in the same formation, were worked mainly for lead, although a small quantity of zinc was also produced.



Well crystallised material suitable for micromounting occurs in the vuggy dolomite abounding round the shafts, tramway embankment and the dump near the tearooms.

The more common varieties include:

Chalcopyrite - found as spheroidal and platelike crystals, also massive.

Malachite - occurs as small bright green acicular and stubby prismatic crystals. A globular amorphous variety is also found. All types either encrusting the chalcopyrite or found as isolated patches on the dolomite.

Azurite - bright blue crystals, or crusts in association with other copper minerals, or in isolation on the dolomite.

Calcite - found as single crystals with a slightly translucent surface, or compound crystals in the form of overlapping plates rather like fishscales. Sometimes both forms are found with a green tinge due to malachite inclusions.

cont'd/...

Dolomite - usually as cream coloured saddle shaped crystals.

Many other minerals are found to a lesser degree.

These mines are well worth a visit, not only for the excellence of the material, but also for the magnificent views of the surrounding countryside. An added bonus is the occurrence of fossils in the quarries near the summit of the Orme.

BOOK REVIEW The Colour Dictionary of Gemstones & Minerals. M.O'Donoghue. Orbis Publishing, London. ISBN 0-85613-414-7. Price £4.95. 159pages.

This book is welcome addition to the less expensive range of mineral texts for collectors. Over one thousand species are listed with descriptions giving physical properties, genetic relations, and typical localities. Notes on possible cleaning methods are given where appropriate. The major attraction of the book however is the large number of high quality colour photographs of the minerals described.(334 in the main text). The classification follows the order of the Chemical Index of Minerals published by the B.M.Nat.Hist., London, and is supplemented by a full alphabetical index. Various useful identification tables are included at the back of the book, as is an interesting bibliography, and a selection of useful addresses. All in all the book represents outstanding value for money and should be a useful quick reference source. It is already on my bookshelf ! Roy Starkey.

MICROMOUNT EXCHANGES - THE NEED FOR A CODE OF PRACTICE ?

G.J.Deverell of Southampton writes "Has a convention of exchange been established which reasonably covers the points mentioned above (quality, size, mounted/unmounted, aesthetic qualities, and the difficulties of setting 'fair' exchange rates). If this is the case could you publish it in the newsletter ?" He also encloses the article by Bill Henderson (Min.Record Jan-Feb 1980) on swapping microminerals, which many of you may have seen, and makes the point that apparent 'professionalism' on the part of B.H. is the very attitude likely to deter less experienced collectors from entering into exchanges. This is a topic worthy of full debate, and possibly we may table this for the programme of next year's symposium. In the mean time, any views on the subject of postal exchanges will be gratefully received for inclusion in the newsletter.

So far as I am aware there is no generally accepted procedure, or criteria layed down for micromount exchanges, other than common sense and an honest approach to trading. Personally, I adopt the following as a good routine:- upon receipt of any enquiry, always answer promptly, even if you are not interested in the material offered, if you are interested, respond with a list of your own exchange material, and brief personal details e.g. age, occupation, family background, and mineralogical interests or specialities. I have prepared a 'have list' of my collection which is updated annually and lists all species, so that exchanges may preferably provide the maximum number of new species. This avoids the problem of acquiring say calcites from all over the world. It is also a good idea to ask correspondents what their interests are so that you may likewise offer prime material to fit their special interests. NEVER post off material which is not of sufficient quality that you would not mount yourself. Only by sending the best can you expect to receive the same in return. I always exchange loose unmounted material, clean and ready trimmed for mounting. Do not send pieces that will require difficult

trimming with consequent risk of the recipient smashing the area of interest. Always send well crystallised material, and keep a carbon copy of your letter so that you will know what has already been exchanged. By this method it is easy to avoid duplication in future packets should your friendship grow into a long standing arrangement. I have found that different collectors use different methods of packaging, and providing that the wrapping selected is adequate to protect the specimens this is largely a matter of personal choice and experience. One point to avoid is DO NOT USE cotton wool, the fibres get entwined in the mineral crystals and may prove impossible to remove in the case of say aurichalcite or chalcotrichite for instance. The best way of sending micro parcels is undoubtedly Air Mail small packet rate. This means that for any given weight you pay only half the cost of Air Mail letter rate. You must not enclose a letter with the packet, and so I put numbered labels in the packet with each specimen, and send a covering letter in advance advising of the contents, and giving full locality details. In this way you can also use pre-printed air letter forms, which are cheaper on postage, and also provide you with free paper and envelope so to speak. It is reasonable to expect that you can post 20 or so micros, small packet rate to the USA for about £1.00. In the case of heavier or larger parcels, still use small packet rate (but surface) and send a covering note separately, advising of the likely delay in receiving the specimens. It is necessary to affix a customs slip C1, to the packet, and if this is completed as 'Mineral Specimens for private study purposes only - no commercial value', and the Value box is filled as 'nil', the packet will go smoothly through customs either end. I have exchanged many packets with collectors in Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, and find that this is a rewarding and interesting experience as well as being the easiest way to add many new or rare species to the collection - many of them of course not found in the UK. Please let us know your views on swapping. Roy Starkey.

DEALER NEWS

Patrick E. Haynes of the Virgin Mining Co., P.O. Box 8, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, USA. 87901, writes to say that he wishes to establish contacts for mail order exchanges with UK collectors. He offers almandine, topaz, fluorite, phillipsite, azurite stilbite, bixbyite, pseudobrookite, mimetite, vanadinite and others as micros, and a selection of larger material including a lot of Franklin New Jersey fluorescents. Please write to him DIRECT if you are interested.

Hatfield Goudey has sent his latest supplementary listing - includes alunite, bismoclite, ioargyrite, euchroite, gismondite, many native golds, goudeyite, jarosite, paralaurionite, phenacite, stolzite, svanbergite, tyuyamunite, and others. Contact him direct at ; 1145 West 31st Ave, San Mateo, California 94403 USA. Please mention BMS when writing.

Bob & Joanne Ray of the Mineral Treasury, 19751 Gresham, Northridge, California 91324, USA, have approached us regarding their extensive stock of thumbnails and micros - particularly strong on zeolites, but offering a good selection of worldwide species. Please send the equivalent of 3x20c stamps for a copy of the latest list. Commemorative stamps would be appreciated !

MEMBERSHIP FEES - are due on 1/1/83, but it would help if you could pay now, by return, Please do it NOW, before you forget, and save me a lot of work having to check and re-check who still has not paid. Thankyou - Roy Starkey. (£3.00 single or husband & wife)

SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY LIST TO THE 2nd EDITION OF THE DIRECTORY. 14/11/82

Stephen Dyson
7 Millfield
New Ash Green
Kent DA3 8JF
Tel. Ash Green 874589

British only; Surface only; No spec. area; No spec. group; 3 years; Just started m/m; Photography of m/m; Postal exchanges; Sidcup Min & Lap Soc.

Mrs Isabel Geldart
635 Lord St
Southport
Merseyside PR9 OAN
Tel. 0704-35328

Worldwide; Surface only; No spec. area; Zeolites; 12 years; Just started m/m; Prior binocular; Photography of m/m; Warrington Min. & Lap. Soc.; BMCA; WMS; Wigan Geol. Soc.

Barrie Macdonald
32 Peverel Road
Leicester
Leics LE3 1EW
Tel. 0533-823436

British only; U/G & surface; No spec. area; No spec. group; 5 years; Just started m/m; Photography of m/m; BMCA; PDMHS; NMRs; WMS.

Mrs Norah McDonald
14 Oaklands Road
Lowton
Warrington
Cheshire WA3 2LE
Tel. Leigh 602675

Worldwide; Surface only; Specialises in volcanic areas - zeolites; 7 years; Just started m/m; Photography of m/m; Warrington Min. & Lap. Soc.

Max Wirth
Parley Hill
Culross
Fife KY12 8JD
Tel. 0383-880439

Worldwide; Surface only; No spec. area; Zeolites and Furnace slags; 50 years; 1 year m/m; Russian polarising, Olympus stereo VMT x1, x4.; Expertise in paper chromatography; Photography of m/m; Postal exchanges;

FINAL REMINDERS

Field Trip dates - remember for your diary 30/4, 1&2/5 1983.

Please send in a contribution for the next newsletter - on a locality you know. A page of notes, giving minerals found, and the grid reference, with a sketch map if possible is all that is required. Any other news items or short articles are of course very welcome.

Let us have your views on micromount exchanges - we may be able to formulate a widely accepted code of practice.

PLEASE PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PROMPTLY £3.00 each. (or joint for couples)

Have a very happy Christmas, and I wish you all a successful and prosperous New Year with even better finds than 1982. If anyone gets given two microscopes by mistake for Christmas, let me know, I can find a good home for spare microscopes!

British Micromount Society, 15 Whitehall Drive, Dudley, West Midlands,
England. DY1 2RD.

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