

Zoom Meeting October 28 Time: 7:30 p.m.

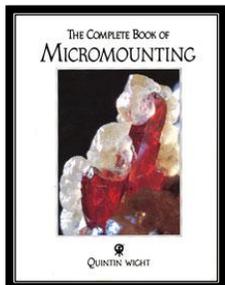
Program – Драгоценные камни и минералы в России

Gems and Minerals in Russia

by Quintin and Willow Wight, Canada

As the Canadian Delegate to the International Gemmological Conference (IGC), Willow attended the 30th IGC at the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow in July 2007. Accompanied by her husband, Quintin, she joined in the pre-conference and post-conference tours of diamond, emerald, and demantoid garnet mines across Russia from Mirny in northern Siberia to Ekaterinburg and Arkhangelsk. Willow and Quintin together will describe aspects of the journey, illustrated with photographs of the mines, their products, and some of the spectacular finds.

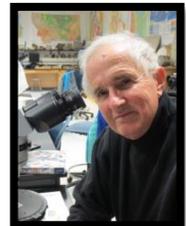
They will also cover some of the magnificent collection of the Fersman Mineralogical Museum in Moscow, and the Urals State Mining Museum in Ekaterinburg. The nature of the occasion merits some short mention of the local scenery and geology as well". Quintin & Willows' biographies are on next page. Quintin Wight is also the author of The Complete Book of Micromounting.



Mark Kucera from Yonkers, New York will moderate this meeting through Zoom. Editor Kathy will email you the meeting link just prior to October 28.

President's Message:

by Dave MacLean



Michel Pabst's zoom talk on rock hunting in the Pyrenees mountains shows we can come to virtual meetings on Zoom for our programs. Thank you, Mike. How can we share his talk and future programs with other clubs and access zoom talk s given at other club meetings? I am glad that we invited NVMC members to Michael Pabst's zoom talk. Let's continue to do so. I had the pleasure of wishing Barbara Sky a 90th happy birthday on Zoom last Saturday. A reminder that we need a nominating committee to recruit candidates for 2021 officers by our November meeting to be elected in December via Zoom.

Photo of the Month:



Cobaltkoritnigite, Les Ferreres Mine. FOV 1.6 mm. Photo by Michael Pabst

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

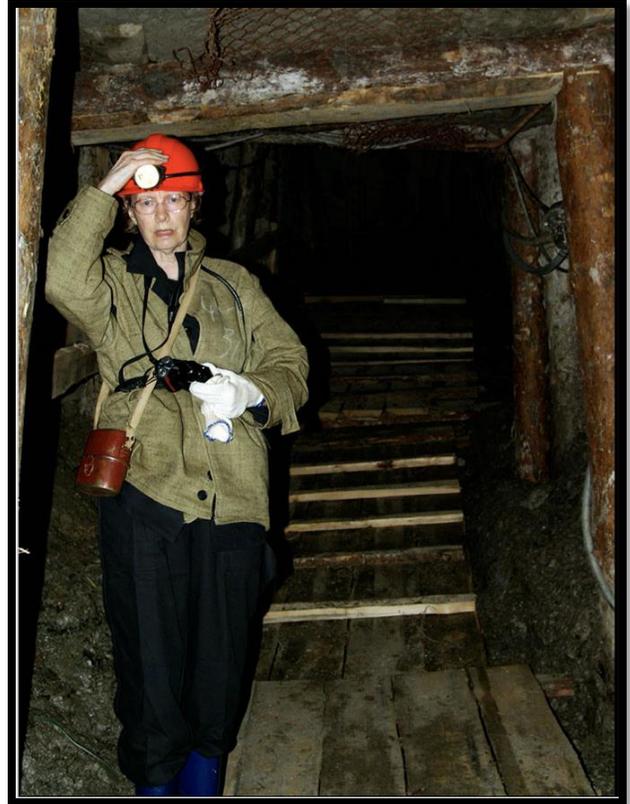
Colonel (Ret.) Quintin Wight, CD, MA

His 37-year career in the RCAF/CF took Quintin, a graduate of Queen's, Carleton, and Concordia Universities, to many localities in which he could find mineral specimens to add to a growing collection. He began writing about minerals in 1966 and has since published a book and over 185 articles and reviews on mineral-related subjects. He began to specialize in mineral photomicrography in 1973 and has given more than 180 presentations to groups across North America, and in England, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Tanzania, and New Zealand. Inducted to the Micromounters' Hall of Fame in 1990, he now coordinates that organization in Baltimore, Maryland, and heads an annual gathering of specialists in microscopic minerals in Rochester, New York. The mineral quintinite was named in his honor in 1992.

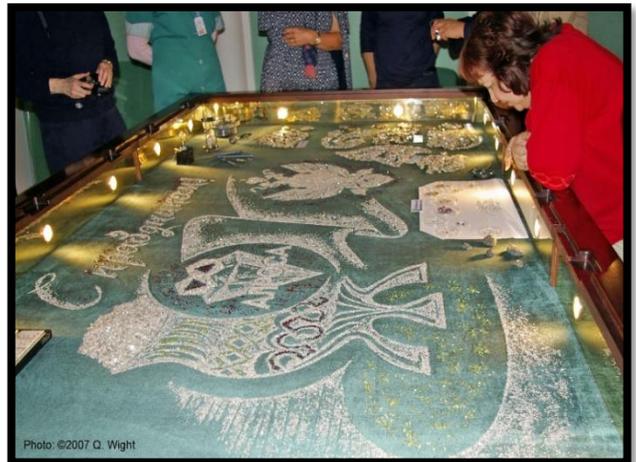
Willow Wight, BA, FGA, FCGmA

Willow Wight is perhaps best known internationally as Editor of *The Canadian Gemmologist*, the official quarterly journal of the Canadian Gemmological Association. After 25 years as Editor, she has now assumed the position of Editor Emeritus. Willow graduated from the University of Toronto as an organic chemist, then took up the study of gemstones in 1967. Her first practical work in gemstones was in association with Paul Desautels, then Curator of Minerals at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. At the Smithsonian, she examined, verified, and catalogued the gemstones in the US National Collection, gaining a wealth of experience.

On her return to Canada in 1975, she was sought out by the National Museum of Natural Sciences (now the Canadian Museum of Nature) in Ottawa and has remained there ever since. She is now a Research Associate in Gemmology at the Museum. Willow's research has led to many articles, with particular emphasis on new Canadian gemstones, e.g. ammolite from Alberta, hornblende from Baffin Island, and scallop pearls from Nova Scotia. The series "Rare Gemstones Check-list" in *The Canadian Gemmologist* has earned her international praise. Her latest work is in the history of gemmological exploration in Canada. Willow is the Canadian Delegate and a member of the Executive of the International Gemmological Conference (IGC), an organization created by the late Dr. Edouard Gübelin and others in 1952 to promote advanced research in gemmology.



Willow in the depths of the Malyshev emerald mine in the Ural Mountains



Alosa Diamond Company headquarters in Mirnyy. Those designs on the table are made of uncut diamonds—and there is no glass covering the table!

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

Previous Meeting Minutes: 9/23/20

by Bob Cooke, Secretary

(The last MNCA meeting was in February 2020. Since then, MNCA activities have been curtailed due to the Covid pandemic. In an effort to re-start MNCA activities, Mark Kucera and Michael Pabst organized a Zoom presentation at the club's normal meeting time. MNCA's business meeting for September consisted of a couple informal comments at the beginning of that Zoom presentation.)



Treasurer Michael Pabst stated there has been no change to MNCA finances since the last meeting. The Baltimore Mineral Society will conduct its Desautels Micromount Symposium on October 10 as a virtual symposium. Reservations are currently being accepted. Several MNCA members have already registered.

Previous Program Reviewed 9/23/20

by Bob Cooke, Secretary

Mineral Hunting in the Pyrenees: A Virtual and Imaginary Tour

by

Monsieur Michael Pabst
Mineralogiste Magnifique
Gastronome Extradinaire

Abstract: Dr. Pabst recently purchased several micromounts of minerals from a mine in the Pyrenees Mountains. In this presentation he presents photographs of the minerals and describes in exacting detail the geology and culture of the area that he might have seen if only he had actually traveled to the mine instead of taking advantage of the internet to contact a vendor and have minerals mailed to him.

Twenty-two people, including both MNCA members and non-affiliated members of the international mineral community, connected on the internet to participate in a Zoom session that Mark Kucera hosted for this occasion.

Michael Pabst reported that due to the imaginary nature of his travel to acquire these minerals, he was not hassled by TSA guards, did not succumb to respiratory diseases from recirculated airplane air, had no issues with passport or customs control, did not get food poisoning from exotic foods or experience any difficulties exchanging U.S. dollars for Euros.

The minerals are from the Les Ferrerers Mine in Rocabrana, Camprodon, Ripollès, Girona (Gerona), Catalonia, Spain. It is a mere couple hundred yards south of the border with France. Extensive information (128 pages, unfortunately in Catalan language, but translatable by Google) about the mine and its mineralogy, geology, flora, fauna, history can be found online at

<https://issuu.com/rosellminerals/docs/roca-bruna-final-1r> MinDat reports 32 minerals from this mine, 20 of which are significant enough to have photographs. For the best photos, however, see Michael's article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Michael acquired his micromounts through Elise Chaigneau at Rocks Store, 19 rue Rossini 11100 Narbonne, Occitanie, France www.rocks-store.com Continuing in the spirit of his virtual tour, Michael presented pictures of the local hotel (where he pretended to sleep) and the market area with shops for bread, cheese, vegetables, fish, spices (over which he actually drooled during the presentation). Pictures of confections from a local chocolatier were also shown. While not wanting to detract from the quality of French (and Belgian) chocolates, Michael felt obligated to give a plug for real American chocolates which taste infinitely better than imaginary French ones. Recommended U.S. sources are:

Gearharts Fine Chocolates (Charlottesville, VA)
<https://www.gearhartschocolates.com/>

Giancarlo-Fine European Pastries (Staunton, VA)
<https://europeanpastry.com/>

Arno's Pastries (Aldie, Reston Market & Chantilly Market) <http://www.arnospastry.com/>

We are all looking forward to the next virtual trip of the Pabst Mineral Consortium.

Previous Program Reviewed 9/23/20

by Michael Pabst, Treasurer

Mineral Hunting in the Pyrenees - a Virtual and Imaginary Tour: How this virtual journey began: I usually look at e-rocks.com every day, since being trapped at home by the pandemic. This site is hosted in England but supports dealers from all over Europe and the US. One day I saw for sale a cute specimen of Aragonite and Azurite from Les Ferreres Mine for sale by a dealer, new to me, called Rocks Store, www.rocks-store.com. Rocks Store is in Narbonne in France. I did not know where Narbonne was located in France, so I Googled it. I started to look at pictures from Narbonne and the surrounding countryside, and I thought that I would like to visit. I bought 6 more Les Ferreres specimens from the Rocks Store website to photograph. Then I went crazy online, looking for pictures of Narbonne and the surrounding area, and imagining that I was there in person, with the talk as the result.

Les Ferreres Mine, Rocabruna, Catalonia, Spain
Good review article (in Catalan), with nice photos, about 100 pages

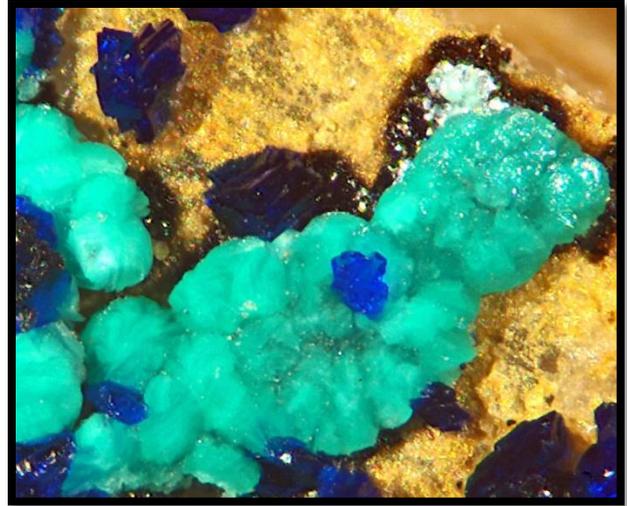
<https://issuu.com/rosellminerals/docs/roca-bruna-final-lr>

Elise Chaigneau

- Rocks Store, in Narbonne, France
- www.rocks-store.com
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- (+33) 07 82 65 79 46



Aragonite and Azurite, Les Ferreres Mine, Rocabruna, Catalonia, Spain. FOV 2 mm. Photo by Michael Pabst.



Theisite (green) and **Azurite**, Les Ferreres Mine. FOV 1.5 mm. Photo by Michael Pabst.



Cobaltkoritnigite, Les Ferreres Mine. FOV 1.6 mm. Photo by Michael Pabst

Virginia links:

Gearharts chocolates in Charlottesville are European quality.

At the Vinegar Hill Shopping Center, 243-B Ridge McIntire Rd

Monday - Saturday, 10am- 6pm
434-972-9100

gearhartschocolates.com

Giancarlo-Fine European Pastries

Europeanpastry.com

117 Austin Ave, Staunton, VA 24401

James Madison University Mineral Museum update: Dr. Lance E. Kearns

by Dr. Lance E. Kearns

The museum is set up, but not open. It has not been formally opened by the administration. The Mineral Museum is beautiful, with phenomenal specimens.



The September/October issue of the Mineralogical Record will have a major write up of the museum and the specimens. Jeff Scovil took about 60 photos that will be in the article. So, you can at least get to drool over some of the top specimens.

Mineral Talks Live Wednesdays 1pm

<http://go.mineraltalkslive.com>



Happy 100th Birthday Jack!



Jack Halpern
Private Collector, San Francisco, CA, USA

Wednesday, September 23, 2020
10A Los Angeles; 1P New York; 7P Paris

Presented by:
  

Desautels Symposium online Oct 10

64th Annual
Paul Desautels Micromount Symposium
October 10, 2020
1 pm Eastern Standard Time

We will hold the 2020 Desautels Symposium online using Zoom. Plans are being made now but we expect the program to include

Voice Auction
Select Mounts

Hall of Fame Inductions
Renato Pagano, Milan, Italy
Title to be announced

Mike Seeds, Lancaster, PA
The Universe in a Micro Box

Registration is free of course.
Register now to receive a Zoom invitation.
Mike Seeds mseeds@fandm.edu

Scrambles: Unscramble the following.

Mourn Cud _____

Emit Heat _____

Age Mitten _____

Lure It _____

Cherry Pool _____

Finally, what do all of these have in common?
Answers on page 15.

Reprinted from The Conglomerate, The Baltimore Mineral Society newsletter September 2020

Chlorastrolite, a Variety of Pumpellyite - (Mg)

by Herwig Pelckmans of Belgium
Posted Mindat.org: Aug 31, 2020



Chlorastrolite Isle Royale National Park, Lake Superior, Keweenaw Co., Michigan, USA

Introduction

Since chlorastrolite is no longer a valid mineral species, the information that can be found now about this material on Mindat is fairly limited. This article intends to change that.

Occurrence

Chlorastrolite occurs as amygdules or cavity fillings in certain of the lava flows on Isle Royale. When weathered out of the lava flows, it can be found on some of the island beaches as pea-sized pebbles, generally greenish in color. When polished, either by wave action on the beaches or artificially, the "greenstones" generally exhibit a distinctive and attractive mosaic or segmented pattern, sometimes referred to as "turtleback". The polished stones also commonly are chatoyant - the property of having a luster resembling the changing luster of the eye of a cat. Chatoyancy is probably best known in the gemstone called tiger eye and is a property of translucent material that contains fibrous structures capable of scattering light. The grouping together of bundles of such fibers produces the mosaic pattern of the "greenstones" (Huber, 1975).

First discovery

It was C. T. Jackson who first found the material and brought it to the attention of J. D. Whitney, who wrote the first article about it for the Boston Journal of Natural History in 1847. According to his article: "*This mineral was found by Dr. C. T. Jackson on the shores of Isle Royale, in small rounded pebbles. It occurs in finely radiated, stellated masses, with a pearly luster, and slightly chatoyant on the rounded sides.*"

The article ends with: "*This mineral was named by Dr. Jackson, in allusion to its peculiar stellated structure and greenish color. It receives a fine polish and would form beautiful ornaments for setting in jewelry could it be found in quantity sufficient for that purpose.*"



Chlorastrolite Delaware Mine, Delaware, Keweenaw Co., Michigan, USA

Name

The name is based on three Greek words: "chloros" meaning green, "astron" meaning star and "lithos" meaning stone. The name "green star stone" refers to the color of the material and its stellate appearance. In rock-collecting and lapidary circles it is informally known as the "Isle Royale greenstone." This usage of "greenstone" should not be confused with the use of the same term for a volcanic rock with a greenish hue, such as makes up Greenstone Ridge on the island (Huber, 1975).

continued next page

Chlorastrolite continued

Further history

G. W. Hawes (1875) declares in his article that chlorastrolite is not a homogeneous mineral, and on the basis of his analysis he describes it as impure prehnite. And owing to the variable sign of elongation, Lacroix (1887) considers chlorastrolite to be a supposed pleochroic variety of thomsonite. Only in 1953 does D. S. Coombs show that chlorastrolite is in fact pumpellyite.

The mineral pumpellyite was baptised many years before, in 1925, by Palache & Vassar. According to their article: "*For this mineral we propose the name of Pumpellyite for Raphael Pumpelly, the pioneer student of the detailed paragenesis of the minerals of this region.*"

The material they used for describing the then new mineral pumpellyite came from two locations on the Keweenaw Peninsula, Michigan: "*The [first] sample was an amygdaloid from the Isle Royale Mine containing amygdules of pumpellyite. The second separation was made on ore from the Kearsarge Lode in the Calumet and Hecla Mine from the crosscut from the Red Jacket Shaft on the eighty-first level. The specimens consisted of amygdaloid with replacement areas of red feldspar, epidote, pumpellyite and calcite, the last named having been last to form and enclosing the pumpellyite.*"

The first description of pumpellyite ends with: "*Pumpellyite was probably one of the substances known to Pumpelly and other early investigators of these minerals as "green earth"; probably also more generally mistaken for chlorite.*" It is quite surprising the authors don't mention anything at all about chlorastrolite, found in the same area and at that time already known for almost 80 years!

Anyway, the pumpellyite material from the peninsula was described in much greater detail than the chlorastrolite from the island, and the name "pumpellyite" became deeply entrenched in the world mineralogical literature long before it was realized that the material from both areas was mineralogically the same.

Consequently, pumpellyite has been adopted as the only valid name for the mineral species, although chlorastrolite is still useful as a term to designate the variety with the peculiar crystal habit of the Isle Royale "greenstone." Pumpellyite is common in many parts of the world, but the chlorastrolite variety is apparently rare outside of Isle Royale (Huber, 1975).

In 1973 the name was changed to pumpellyite-(Mg) in order to comply with the nomenclature proposed by Passaglia & Gottardi.



Chlorastrolite Phoenix Mine, Phoenix, Keweenaw Co., Michigan, USA

Michigan's state gemstone

Chlorastrolite was named the "Official State Gem" of Michigan by the Seventy-Sixth Legislature (Act 56, PA 1972, effective March 30, 1973). "Chlorastrolite occurs as amygdaloid structures and fracture fillings in basalt, and when the water and wave action has worn away the basalt, they are found as beach pebbles and granules in loose sediments. It is found in the Keweenaw Peninsula of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Isle Royale is a National Park, and so it is illegal to collect specimens there. It is difficult to identify an unpolished pebble of chlorastrolite. Most gem quality chlorastrolite stones are very small, and it is rare to find one that is larger than a half inch. The largest gem quality stone is in the Smithsonian Museum and measures 1.5 by 3 inches."

continued next page

Other synonyms of pumpellyite

* The green mineral lotrite was described from and named for the type locality (Lotru valley, southern Carpathians) by Munteanu-Murgoci in 1900 and 1901. Sobolev showed later (in 1947) that lotrite is the same mineral as pumpellyite. As Murgoci's description and chemical analysis were both reasonably adequate, it is unfortunate that his work should have been overlooked. The name 'pumpellyite' is now firmly entrenched in the literature and 'lotrite' must lapse into synonymy, in spite of priority (COOMBS, 1953).

* In 1873 Foote describes a massive mineral banded in different shades of green as the new species **zonochlorite**. It occurs both as shore pebbles and in situ in amygdaloidal trap at Neepigon Bay, Lake Superior. Hawes (1875) analyzed it and concluded it was impure "chlorastrolite".

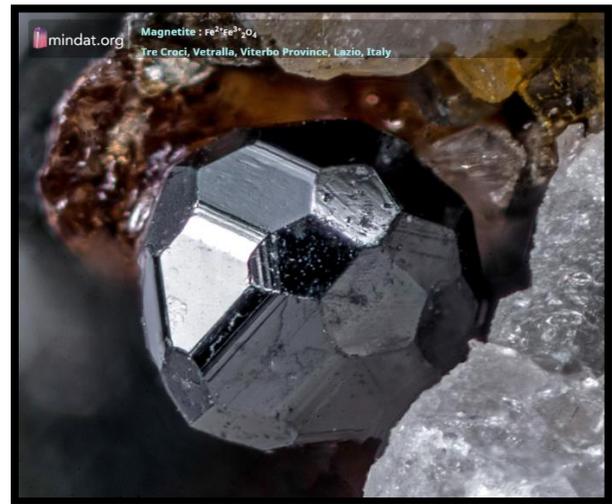
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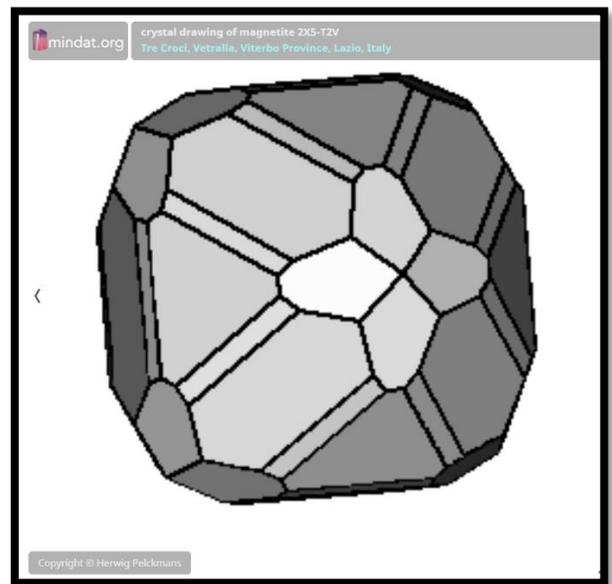
MNCA Editor's Note: Herwig was our Atlantic Micromounters' Conference speaker in April 2018.

Magnetite on Mindat with drawing

by Herwig Pelckmans



Magnetite Tre Croci, Vetralla, Viterbo Province, Lazio, Italy



MNCA Editor's note: Herwig was the featured speaker at our Atlantic Micromounters' Conference in 2018. We remember him for his Fluorite program which included detailed crystal drawings. He also introduced us to the finest Leonidas brand of Belgian chocolates imaginable.



Sicilian Sulfur, Covid Retreat on eBay

by David Fryauff, Vice president

Recently I was wasting some time on my cell phone, looking for interesting mineral specimens for sale on eBay. I had never yet made a mineral purchase on eBay, but friends of mine had acquired some very nice, and satisfying specimens by bidding for them on eBay. Most of the stuff I saw was not very interesting, or unique.



But then I came upon several frames of very handsome, bright yellow clusters of hand- & cabinet-sized specimens of Sicilian sulfur on matrix. Sicilian no less!!!! The color was spectacular & the individual sulfur crystals were sharp, partially transparent, di-pyramidal, and each crystal looked to be in the 1 to 2 cm range. On a whim, I placed a bid of \$3 on a nice 8" specimen that had apparently just come onto the market and yet had no bids. Over the next 10 days I watched as the bids went higher. eBay made sure to keep me notified each time a new bid was made, and I could see the cost going higher and higher. On the last day, with just 5 minutes remaining, I decided to bid \$35 for the 8.0 x 13.0 cm specimen. This was just \$3 more than the current bid and I felt sure I would be outbid. But in the next few minutes I was surprised to learn that my bid won the specimen. I paid by PayPal and was told that I would receive it in 2 weeks' time from the seller.

In all the excitement and fear that characterized daily life under the COVID-19 pandemic at its July 2020 height I had almost forgotten about the Sicilian sulfur I had bought. But then one day a strangely wrapped package was delivered. It was just big enough to fit into my mailbox. It was very well enclosed between Styrofoam halves and the sender had spent a good bit of time and effort winding strips of cushioning tissue paper around it. Finally unwrapped it seemed to weigh about 3 or 4 pounds and appeared to have no damage whatsoever. Wow! Stunning, sharp, beautiful color, and no breaks, bruises, or gashes that had been acquired during the collecting effort. Close examination with my 10-40x microscope disclosed mostly large, mostly transparent, beautifully sharp, and well-terminated crystals over the top & sides. Solid looking; not skeletal. The sulfur crystals ranged from millimeter size to over 2 cm. There was almost nothing on the bottom except some breakage, which was as expected. Strangely, there was no sign of any aragonite or calcite, as I had expected to find on a specimen of sulfur from the Sicilian mines.

In this case, only fluorite & quartz made up the matrix underlying the sulfur. There were numerous pale green fluorite cubes & countless tiny quartz crystals, but most of these seemed to be covered with sulfur "gunk". I do not believe it was any type of varnish protectant because the edges and faces of the sulfur crystals were so sharp and clean. The Mindat pages for Sulfur locations in Sicily (>700 photos of sulfur) show only aragonite, calcite, celestine, barite, quartz.



Sicilian Sulfur continued

There appears not a single photo in Mindat showing sulfur associated with fluorite. Furthermore, there appear to be just a few fluorite listings at any of the main sulfur locations in Sicily.

I was able to locate a remarkably interesting Mindat conversation from back in 2015 about beautiful man-made fake sulfur crystals created by a Dr. Martinat. Also, a Mineral Record article from 2002 by R. Pagano who reports that only a handful of these beautiful fakes ever came onto the market back in the 70s. These are probably all gone by now, unless someone else has taken over the production of crystalline sulfur fakes & is again selling them, but this time on eBay. These had been only identifiable as fakes by costly S isotope analysis that showed Martinat used S not from the Sicilian mines, but from a different sulfur dome location. What started out as a really great specimen from a classic location, began to seem like something less to me. It was still beautiful, but I'm afraid that my \$35 "Sicilian sulfur" is a fake. Also, the crystals look too perfect & too clear. Not a hint of any bitumen inclusions as many Sicilian sulfur specimens have.

There is a November 2015 Mindat conversation that talks about how the Martinat process of creating the sulfur crystals causes distortion or loss, even of the aragonite. But I don't think the matrix of my specimen had any aragonite or calcite to begin with, and I suspect that the matrix did not come from the famous Sicilian sulfur mines. Dr. Martinat's classic fakes were always carefully made with matrix from the Sicilian sulfur mines, and relatively few of these came onto the market, back in the late 1970s.

All this led me to doubt that my specimen was one of those "classic Martinat fakes". I am thinking that someone new is in the business of creating and marketing fake Sicilian sulfur crystals. I think you could take a quick look at eBay and see that there are a lot of these up for sale. One of the pricier eBay offerings was a rather unbelievable and large plate of bright yellow sulfur crystals interspersed among bright green fluorite crystals. A bit too garish for my taste, but nature has, created even more bizarre and unbelievable combinations.

A few weeks back, I looked at Mindat discussions, and jumped into the category "Fakes and Frauds" to see if there were any updates on too-good-to-be-true Sicilian sulfur crystals. There was a highly active, and relatively new Mindat discussion entitled "New Chinese sulfur crystals from Yunnan" dated 30DEC2019 to 11JAN2020.

I won't try to summarize the fascinating and erudite discussion of about fifteen participants, including Mindat Managers (Keith Compton, Alfredo Petrov, Frank K. Mazdab) and Experts (Johan Kjellman, et al.), but I consider this group to be very well-informed and knowledgeable on the subject. I do recommend that string of comments and observations to anyone interested in the subject or tempted to purchase "Sicilian" sulfur crystals from eBay sellers.

In closing, let me say that I am quite certain that my sulfur crystals are man-made/laboratory grown and possibly created under conditions of danger and risk to the person who made them. I am disappointed that they are not natural but they are certainly beautiful. I was unrealistic and gullible, but I am satisfied that I got my money's worth.

There is also a good lesson to be learned here. I should stick with microminerals (and go no larger than a thumbnail). Fellow micro collector Johannes Swarts wisely reminds me/us that "ANOTHER GREAT REASON TO COLLECT MICRO SPECIMENS IS THAT THEY ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO FAKE AND IT WOULD NEVER BE WORTH SOMEONE'S TIME, EVEN IF THEY COULD BE FAKED".

Happy 90th Birthday Barbara Sky!

Sept 19, 2020

You are a Gem!

*Barbara at MNCA/AMC
2015, Photo courtesy of
Kathy Hrechka*



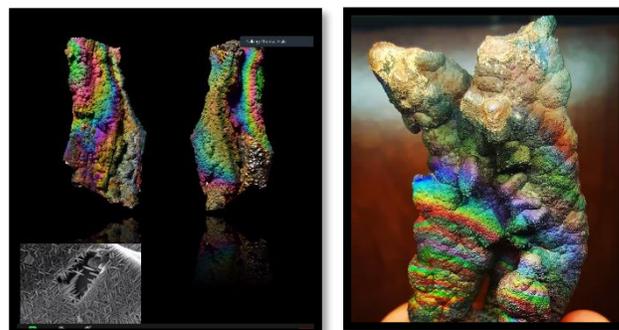
**Virginia Mineral Project Zoom Sept 17
Thomas Hale's Presentation Recap**

by Kathy Hrechka, Editor



Iridescent Hematite: The Color

The IMA does not classify “turgite” as a mineral species, rather a mixture of microcrystalline hematite and goethite. Several studies from Caltech, Virginia Tech, and now the Smithsonian are trying to understand the mechanism which is behind the color/iridescence. Small nanorod structures on the surface are causing interference patterns with visible light. Perhaps it is diffraction grading or “photonic” hematite. The Alleghany County, Virginia site is within the Clinton formation. (Favorites of Thomas)



**Barger's Quarry Pyrite
Lexington Rockbridge Co. VA**

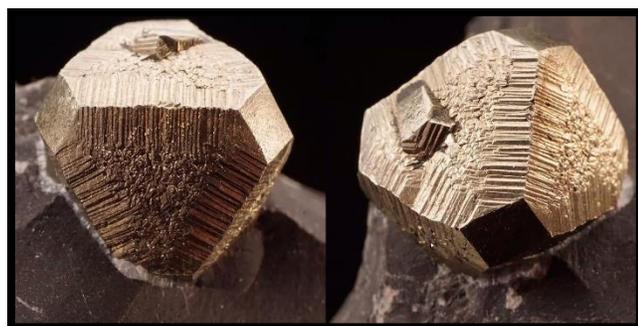
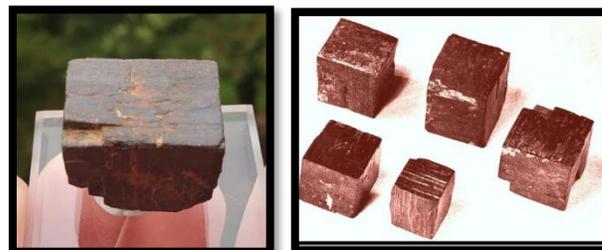
The original quarry was opened on the east side of U.S. Highway 60 by Howard A. Donald around 1922. Charles Barger & Son Inc. since 1932. Earliest record of “complex forms of pyrite” were recorded as early as 1886 by John G. Meem. Carbonate rocks from the quarry date back to 400 million years; Liberty Hall formation Ordovician. Mineral clubs collected at the quarry in search of pyrite.



Octahedral crystals are the dominant form from Barger's locality. Striations occur on most of the octahedral faces. These striations run at right angles to the edges of the octahedron and apparently represent the oscillatory development of trapezohedron faces.

**Limonite Cubes,
Albemarle County**

Limonite cubes have occurred in various counties in Virginia. Some are denoted as limonite after pyrite or goethite after pyrite. Exposed red clays around the area host an abundance of these cubic crystals, known by the locals as Jack Rocks or Devils Dice.



Editor's Note: I viewed Thomas Hale's presentation on Zoom and was extremely impressed. I took screen shots, to share his finding with you. Thomas Hale is recreating a history of Virginia Minerals with our assistance. He has been working with museum specialists to document his research. Now he presents programs based on what we also share with him as hobbyists. The Virginia Mineral Project (VMP) is a statewide project to “collect, preserve, and educate” the public about our Virginia mineral heritage and its geology. <https://smwv.org/virginia-mineral-project> Science Museum of Western Virginia sponsor <https://www.friendsofmineralogyvirginia.org/virginia-mineral-project>

Club Member Profile: How I Became Interested in Rocks: Bob Cooke

by Bob Cooke, Secretary

MNCA Editor's note: The article is adapted from The Northern Virginia Mineral Club Newsletter (Sept 2020)



In the 1970s, I was assigned to an Army unit in Pirmasens, Germany (then West Germany). One of my fellow officers, Mike Pace, had a degree in geology and enjoyed showing off his collection of thumbnail sized mineral crystals. He also tried telling us about a radical new theory in geology: plate tectonics. But none of us believed him about anything so strange. A couple of Army assignments later, Carolyn and I were living in Salinas, CA, where I got to play games with the 7th Infantry Division. One weekend, we went to a mineral show. We found the minerals to be quite intriguing and remembered the excitement Mike had had for his collection. Carolyn and I debated for over an hour that day about whether we really wanted to start a new hobby and whether we could do it on terms of equal participation. Because we were subject to frequent moves with Army reassignments, we thought we should limit ourselves to small pieces (thumbnails).

We finally broke down and bought four specimens that afternoon: an amethyst from Las Vigas, Mexico; a rhodochrosite from Santa Eulalia, Mexico; a diopside with wulfenite from Tsumeb, Namibia; and an azurite from Bisbee, AZ. We spent almost \$100 and were convinced we had ruined our bank account forever. Our mineral purchasing continued over four more military assignments and then for 20 years with the U.S. Department of Energy. We have finally retired but are still collecting minerals. And I am still plucking cotton fibers from crystals—remnants of the cotton balls that we placed in perky boxes to protect the crystals during transcontinental and transoceanic moves.

Over time, my interests have expanded to include mineral photography, crystallography, paragenesis, pseudomorphs, and micromounts, as well as geology in general. Carolyn has expanded her collection to include faceted gems and polished spheres/eggs of many rocks and minerals. We still don't have that "granite" countertop, though.



GeoWord of the Day and its definition:

marmolite (mar'-mo-lite) A thinly laminated, usually pale-green serpentine mineral; a variety of chrysotile.

radioluminescence (ra"-di-o-lu"-mi-nes'-cence) Luminescence that is stimulated by the impact of radioactive particles.

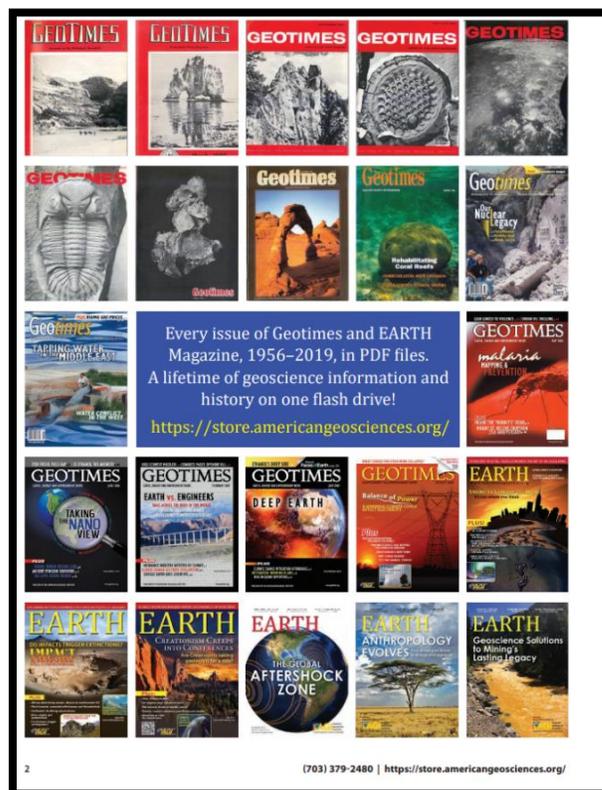
rustenburgite (rus'-ten-burg-ite") A metallic creamy cubic mineral of the *zvyagintsevite* group: (Pt,Pd)₃Sn

All terms and definitions come from the [Glossary of Geology, 5th Edition Revised](#).

GeoWord of the Day is brought to you by:

EnviroTech! envirotechonline.com

[<wordoftheday@agiweb.org>](mailto:wordoftheday@agiweb.org)



Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.



American Federation of
Mineralogical Societies

(AFMS)
www.amfed.org



Eastern Federation of
Mineralogical and
Lapidary Societies

(EFMLS)
<https://efmls.org>

Please read the AFMS bulletin attached in original monthly email to MNCA members.

2020 Purpose of the AFMS: To promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and related subjects, and to sponsor and provide ways to coordinate the work and efforts of all interested persons and groups; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and thereby to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

The A.F.M.S. Newsletter is normally published monthly except January, July, and August by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Each Regional Federation Club is entitled to receive three (3) copies of the AFMS Newsletter. These are usually sent to the President, Federation Director and Editor. Subscription Information, Distribution Questions and address changes should be sent to the AFMS Central Office.

Rock&Gem



The Rock & Gem magazine is recognized as the official magazine of the AFMS.

Communication and Involvement
Are the Keys to Our Success!

Please read the EFMLS bulletin attached in original monthly email to MNCA members.

Local Geology Club Meetings: Zoom October 2020

7: Mineralogical Society of DC–MSDC meeting
Smithsonian NMNH, 7:30 pm **Zoom**
www.mineralogicalsocietyofdc.org

10–11, Ogdensburg NJ – Annual Autumn Outdoor Rock Swap & Sale, organized by: The North Jersey Mineralogical Society. Sterling Hill Mining Museum, 30 Plant Street Masks are required. 9 am – 5 pm. Free Admission/ Free Parking. Dealers, Rock Swap, <https://nojms.webs.com/north-jersey-swap-n-sell>

12: The Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Montgomery County, Maryland - GLMS-MC
7:30 pm - **Zoom**
www.glmsmc.com

16: The Gem, Lapidary and Mineral Society of Washington, DC - GLMS-DC meeting
7:00-10pm – Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Chevy Chase, MD
www.glmsdc.org **Canceled**

26: Northern VA Mineral Club – NVMC meeting
7:30 **Zoom**
www.novamineralclub.org

28: Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc. - MNCA meeting
7:30 **Zoom**
www.dcmicrominerals.org

Rock and Gem Word Search
by Rich Simcsak

This is a first attempt to have the newsletter something people do more than read and delete from their email. If this is seen as a "good thing" for the newsletter to make it a bit more interactive, I will attempt to continue with other Themed Word Searches. **Recommendations are always welcomed!!**

C A F P L A T I N U M W Q U Q
 K G E E T I C L A C R R H U J
 O D E A L S D D L O G S A E L
 B R Y I O D N S B B X R T S S
 S P T U P O S X W A T I B I A
 I F E T M T U P L Z R E L O P
 D G T A E Q E L A A L V R U P
 I K I N R D M T B R E Y C Q H
 A D R R B L E Y I R Z M Y R I
 N A Y E H N R P W N R Y R U R
 G D R O I O A G Y M O E B T E
 B Y D O W R L F S R B Z W U O
 L K P R F C D E L M I U A K R
 K A R U T I L E A J U T L M L
 L A E T T Z A P O T J B E O A

The following words should be findable in this Word Search. Good Luck!!

AMAZONITE	GOLD	RUTILE
AMBER	LEAD	SAPPHIRE
BARITE	OBSIDIAN	SILVER
BERYL	PEARL	SMRMC
DIAMOND	PLATINUM	TOPAZ
EMERALD	PYRITE	TURQUOISE
FELDSPAR	QUARTZ	ZIRCON
GARNET	RUBY	

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area, Inc.

Desautels Symposium online Oct 10

64th Annual

Paul Desautels Micromount Symposium

October 10, 2020 1 pm EST

We will hold the 2020 Desautels Symposium online using Zoom. Plans are being made now but we expect the program to include

Voice Auction

Select Mounts

Hall of Fame Inductions

Renato Pagano, Milan, Italy

Title to be announced

Mike Seeds, Lancaster, PA

The Universe in a Micro Box

Registration is free of course.

Register now to receive a Zoom invitation.

Mike Seeds mseeds@fandm.edu



Scrambles: Answers

Mourn Cud _____ Corundum _____

Emit Heat _____ Hematite _____

Age Mitten _____ Magnetite _____

Lure It _____ Rutile _____

Cherry Pool _____ Pyrochlore _____

Finally, what do all of these have in common?
They are all oxides.

Micromineralogists of the National Capital Area

Meeting: The 4th Wed. of each month 7:30 -10 p.m.
Long Branch Nature Center (No meetings July & Aug)
625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington VA 22204
Phone (703) 228-6535 (**Long Branch is still closed**)

MNCA Purpose: To promote, educate and encourage interest in geology, mineralogy, and related sciences.

President: Dave MacLean

Vice President: David Fryauff

Secretary: Bob Cooke

Treasurer: Michael Pabst

Editor/Historian: Kathy Hrechka

Website: Julia Hrechka

AMC Conference: Kathy Hrechka

The society is a member of:

* Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies (EFMLS) www.efmls.org

* American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) www.amfed.org affiliation

Dues: MNCA Membership Dues for 2020

\$15 (single) or \$20 (family)

Payable to MNCA - Michael Pabst, Treasurer

270 Rachel Drive

Penn Laird, VA 22846



Editor's Note:

By
Kathy Hrechka



Send your articles and photos to your editor.
Club Article Deadline is 1st of each month.
The Mineral Mite will be emailed on 5th.
No newsletter July/August

EFMLS Editor's Award

First Place 2016 - Small Bulletins

Inducted into Editor's Hall of Fame – 2018

AFMS Trophy 2019

Newsletter inputs:

- *Dave MacLean
- *Bob Cooke
- *Michael Pabst
- *Kathy Hrechka
- *Mike Seeds
- *Herwig Pelckmans
- *David Fryauff
- *Dr. Lance Kearns

