



FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY

Pennsylvania Chapter

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 14, No. 4, Winter, 1986

Page 1

RETIRING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This letter will be my last as President of the Pennsylvania Chapter, Friends of Mineralogy. I have found that being the parent of a two-year-old and a five-year-old consumes most of my free time when I am home. The Chapter needs a President who will be able to devote considerable amounts of time in the next few years. The Board will be meeting in the next month or so to decide who the next President will be.

I look back on my term as President with pride in our accomplishments as well as with frustration concerning what could not be accomplished.

.....The new mineralogy of Pennsylvania volume project is off and rolling. Jay Lininger has assembled a team to help steer the publication through what, if past history repeats itself, will be stormy seas.

.....The Chapter Bylaws have been revised and updated but must be officially approved by the Board and the membership.

.....Our Spring Meetings and Fall Symposiums hve been well attended and, in the case of the Fall Symposiums, have been financially successful, as well.

.....We were unable to assemble the Chapter's historical records at a central locality. Jay Lininger volunteered to be Chapter Historian and to archive the records.

.....The membership dues were increased to help cover the costs of Chapter operation.

.....We were unable to nominate a new Secretary for the Chapter from the membership.

The successful operation of any organization depends on those members who are willing to participate and to be involved. I was able to depend on many people during my term and would like to point out these people to the membership.

.....Martin Anne for advice on the operation of the Chapter and for advice on dealing with the frustrations of the Presidency.

.....Tom O'Neil for doing such a great job maintaining the Chapter's financial records and for thinking out the majority of the revisions to the Bylaws.

.....Arnold Mogel for taking over Tom's position as Treasurer and for his help at the Symposiums and the Spring Meetings.

.....Jay Lininger for his outstanding work on Chapter publications and for assuming responsibility for the new volume on the mineralogy of Pennsylvania.

.....Roger Mitchell for doing a great job as Chairman of the 1986 Fall Symposium.

.....Bill Lorah, Roger Mitchell, Ed Carper, Arnold Mogel, and others for their help with the Spring Meetings, field trips and all.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd)

..... Bill and Betty Yocom, as well as Sy Greenberg and Dave Saja, for their hospitality and help at the Fall Symposiums.
..... Marge and Vince Matula, who keep track of dues and membership, providing the information to the national F.M. group and to our editor.
..... Special thanks to Juliet Reed for her outstanding performance as editor of the Newsletter, and for her gentle reminders to me about things which needed to be said or done (such as this letter).

I'M sure there are some of you whom I have forgotten, but many thanks to everyone who made my job easier by being willing to participate. A volunteer organization such as ours can only be successful if the members are willing to get involved. I myself intend to stay involved, either as Board member and/or as a member of the Spring Meeting and Fall Symposium committees. Help our Chapter grow and improve by becoming an active member.

George Buchanan
80 Beltz Rd., Telford, PA 19069
(215)703-0727

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

DUES: Send \$7.00 (\$5.00 for students and seniors over 62) for 1986 and/or 1987 dues to: F.M., Pa. Chapter, c/o Marge and Vince Matula, 1031 Honeysuckle Drive, Walnutport, PA 18088.

OFFICERS: Past President, George Buchanan, 80 Beltz Rd., Telford, PA 19069; Vice-President, Jay Lininger, R.D. #3, Ridge Rd., Dillsburg, PA 17019; Treasurer, Arnold Mogel, R.D. #1, Box 151M, Mohrsville, PA 19541.

EDITOR: Juliet C. Reed, 336 Rockland Rd., Wayne, PA 19087.

ADDRESS CHANGE: Patricia Hoyer, 6528 Mountain Drive, Chambersburg, PA 17201.

CORRECTION: Gay and Dale Richards, 7582 Quarry Rd., Alburtis, PA 18011.

SHOW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Franklin County Rock & Mineral Club tenth annual Jewelry, Mineral, and Gem Show at the Middle School, 1151 McKinley Street, Chambersburg, Pa., Saturday, March 21 (10 a.m. to 7 p.m.) and Sunday, March 22 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Contact Pat Hoyer (717) 352-8548

The Berks Mineralogical Society 19th Annual Swap & Sell, June 20 and 21, Appalachian Campsites, Shartlesville, Pa. (use Exit #8 off Interstate 78). For more information concerning camp sites and the swap and sell, contact Dennis Buffenmyer, 145 South Ridge Road, Reinholds, PA 17569 (215-267-3356)

23rd annual Delaware Mineralogical Society, Inc. Gem & Mineral Show, Brandywine Terrace, 3416 Philadelphia Pike, Claymont, Delaware, Saturday, March 7 (10 a.m.-7 p.m.) and Sunday (11 a.m.-5 p.m.).

WHEATLEYITE, A NEW MINERAL FROM THE
WHEATLEY MINE, PHOENIXVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Roland C. Rouse, Donald R. Peacor, Pete J. Dunn, William B. Simmons, and Dale Newbury have recently described "Wheatleyite, $\text{Na}_2\text{Cu}(\text{C}_2\text{O}_4) \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$, a natural sodium copper salt of oxalic acid" (American Mineralogist, vol. 71, pp. 1240-1242, 1986).

The wheatleyite occurs as aggregates of bright blue acicular crystals with a light blue streak, associated with galena and sphalerite at the Wheatley Mine, near Phoenixville, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The triclinic mineral has a Moh's hardness of 1 to 2, and there is a perfect cleavage clearly linked to the crystal structure, which proved to be identical to that of a synthetic compound of the same formula. Such salts of oxalic acid are very rare in the geologic environment, although they occur naturally in the biosphere.

William Pinch of Rochester, New York, recognized the uncommon character of the mineral and provided the type specimen for study. The one and only specimen of wheatleyite is now preserved in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. This unique specimen was discovered on the dumps of the now-abandoned Wheatley Mine. The hand specimen consists mostly of massive galena and sphalerite in contact with quartz. This primary assemblage is, on an exposed surface, coated with secondary cerussite, wheatleyite, sphalerite, and an ill-defined, powdery lead oxalate. The wheatleyite forms single crystals, and because it is clearly older than the secondary sphalerite that overlies it, appears to be a naturally formed phase rather than an artifact. However, other oxylates may have been formed at a later time, since the dumps have long been used for the disposal of refuse and animal waste.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF MINERAL NEWS

Dear Lanny Ream,

thank you very much for the pre-publication publicity for the upcoming Mineralogy of Pennsylvania (Mineral News, Jan., 1987).

Arnold Fainberg and I appreciate your interest in our project of chasing down the minerals new to the state for 1976-1985 (see the Fall, 1986, issue of the Newsletter). However, we would like to emphasize that we are but two of a good-sized group of Pennsylvania collectors and mineralogists who are working on the book, which has many aspects.

The Board of Directors of the Pa. Chapter of the Friends of Mineralogy has decided to model this volume after Samuel Gordon's 1922 Mineralogy of Pennsylvania, which includes descriptive mineralogy and locality lists, as well as descriptions of the geology of the localities, which are listed by counties and townships.

Jay Lininger, Vice-President of the Chapter, is the Chairman of this enterprise. I hope to be able to publish a progress report from Jay in the near future.

Sincerely,

Juliet C. Reed
Editor, FM/PA

A LETTER FROM DR. EDGAR T. WHERRY

Editor's Note: Below is the text of letter from Dr. Allen V. Heyl, in which he shares with us the background of a letter he received from the late Dr. Wherry.

"Enclosed is a copy of a letter from Dr. Edgr T. Wherry in reply to one I wrote to him at the time of his 50th Mineralogical Society of America anniversary in 1969. As you probably know, he taught at Lehigh University early in the 1900's. At that time he taught geology and mineralogy, but he was also an avid field botanist, as was my father, who won the botany prize at Muhlenberg College. My father, when he could get away from business and family, wandered, with his good friend, Harold Pretz from Allentown, and Edgar Wherry all over Lehigh, Northampton, Berks, and Carbon Counties, as well as northern Bucks County. At that time they often travelled by local trains. Wherry and Pretz were particularly active and extended their travels into northern New Jersey and even into southern New York. Sometimes they combined botany trips with mineral collecting trips, and over the years Harold Pretz ended up with quite a lot of nice mineral samples.

"After Wherry moved back to Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania, Harold Pretz got tired of his minerals, and on a trip with my father (when I was still a boy), he offered the minerals to me because he knew I was interested in all kinds of natural history, including birds, butterflies, trees, and plants, as well as a first glimmer in rocks. I gladly accepted the specimens, and found them to be very fine and unusual ones. Some were from localities not listed, as I later found out, in the Pennsylvania or New Jersey mineralogies. This suite of minerals, plus a similar suite from Mr. Detweiler, the old chemist of the 19th century Friedensville Zinc Co., was the start of my collection. Dr. Wherry's samples, via Harold Pretz in particular, started my interest in minerals, mineralogy, mineral collecting, and eventually in geology.

"When I wrote to Dr. Wherry on the 50th anniversary of his membership in the Mineralogical Society of America, I told him about his influence on me, and that indirectly he had gotten me interested in mineralogy and then into geology as a profession, and I thanked him for it. As you can see from his very nice reply, he was pleased, surprised, and interested. I had met him meanwhile, but I had never told him of this influence on my life. You can see that he remembers and had correspondence with Harold Pretz through Dr. Schaeffer, the professor of botany at Muhlenberg College from the 1950's through the 1970's. I still correspond with Dr. Schaeffer, and it was he who told me about the destruction, by a demented chemistry professor, of all the mineral collections at Muhlenberg, including the collection of Edgar F. Smith and Professor Fossig, most of Detweiler's samples, and about 500 pounds of fine material I myself had given the College in 1950.

"I hope you will enjoy Dr. Wherry's letter to me.

Allen V. Heyl
P.O. Box 1052
Evergreen, CO 80439