



# FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY

## Pennsylvania Chapter

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 17, No. 1, Spring, 1989

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Directors held a Board meeting on March 18, 1989: I was elected President of the Board, and many items were discussed, including the revision of the By-Laws, in preparation for voting upon by the membership.

A Symposium was set for March, 1990. The date and topic are subject to the results of the survey you'll find at the end of this Newsletter. Please take time to fill this out and return it to me by May 15. It's your organization and I need to know what you want!

A Spring Field Trip for 1989 was discussed. It is hoped that arrangements can be made as soon as possible. Let's bring the group together to break a few rocks!

We would like to try quarterly business meetings for our membership. Locations and dates will be announced in upcoming Newsletters. I would like to see us put together a fall swap. This date might be as early as September, 1989.

Jay Lininger has agreed to stay on as Vice-President and Chairman of the Publications Committee; the Matulas, Marge and Vince Matula will remain as membership administrators, continuing to maintain our membership rolls; and Juliet Reed will edit and publish the Newsletter for the tenth year. What we need is a Treasurer, since I cannot continue that role, and a Secretary.

We have eight Board members at present. Under the By-Laws, we can have twelve. I would like to see this happen! We need members willing to fill these positions. There is a ballot sheet at the end of the Newsletter (under the By-Laws the members must elect the Board members, although the Board may fill a vacancy). Please return the ballot sheet after also writing your choices for nominees of up to five Board members, as well as Secretary and Treasurer. Here you may volunteer your services as a Board member or officer.

I'm very pleased to be able to announce that the "Memorial Fund" policy has been amended by the Board to support not only student research, but other worthy projects as well. The group voted to present one thousand dollars to the Department of Geology, West Chester State University, for the development of the mineral museum, which is under construction. The Board felt that this donation would prove of benefit to students and to the public at large. Your continued donations to the Memorial Fund will enable us to support other worthy causes.

I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Bill Yocom to the Board of Directors, to fill the post of Ed Carper, whom we thank for his long service to the Chapter. Most of us know Bill and the fine work he has done in the mineral collecting field over the years and in the position of Curator at West Chester State University. His

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd)

appointment is both a credit to himself and a real asset to the Pennsylvania Chapter Board. Welcome aboard, Bill, and congratulations.

I will try to keep the membership informed as to the goings on of the group, either through the Newsletter or by special mailings. Feel free to get in touch with me on any topic.

Please fill out all of the items on the last page (Ballot, Nominations, and Survey) and return them to me by May 16, 1989.

Arnold Mogel  
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Orwigsburg, PA 17961-9969

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FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY, PA, CHAPTER, INC.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

January 31, 1988 through December 31, 1988

BALANCE, January 31, 1988	\$4037.93
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INCOME

Dues and Sale of Publications	\$ 719.30
Interest on Savings Account	81.07

EXPENSES

National Dues	\$ 198.00
Newsletter (2 issues carried to 1989)	\$ 163.46
1986 Symposium Speaker Fees	\$ 180.00
Bank Charges	\$ 1.00
Grant Fund Returned to Checking from Grant Fund	\$1000.00

BALANCE December 31, 1988	\$3295.84
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First National Bank, Leesport, Pa.: Checking	\$1710.23
Savings	\$1585.61

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BALANCE, Memorial Fund, February 1, 1988	\$1577.86
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INCOME

Checking Account 4/21/88	\$1000.00
Interest	\$ 117.08

BALANCE, Memorial Fund, December 31, 1988	\$2694.94
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### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**DUES:** Please send in your dues for 1989 ( \$7.00 or \$5.00 for members over 62) by June 1, if you have not already done so (thank you!), to F.M., Pa. Chapter, c/o Vince and Marge Matula, 1031 Honeysuckle Drive, Walnutport, PA 18088.

The Board has decided to suspend membership privileges, namely the Newsletter, until the overdue amount comes in, in order to concentrate the dues-paying early in the year, rather than having the dues dribble in over the year, or even be carried over into the next year. Your cooperation is most appreciated. Of course, new members are welcome at any time. In 1990, dues will be due Jan. 1. The cut-off date will be announced in the Fall Newsletter.

**ADDRESS CHANGE:** Lawrence Eisenberger, 25 Filbert St., Hanover, PA 17331.

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

### A GEOLOGIC HISTORY OF YORK AND LANCASTER COUNTIES

Matrix Publishing Co. (Jay Lininger, President), has announced "The Whispering Hills, A Geologic History of York and Lancaster Counties, Pennsylvania," by F.M., Pa. Chapter member, geologist Jeri L. Jones and Paul B. Chrastina.

The text of the interesting brochure relates that "The Whispering Hills" tells the story of geologic events and processes which may be seen recorded in the diverse rock formations of York and Lancaster Counties. Ancient landscapes of the area are explored in detail, as are the rocks, "which have witnessed the origins of life, the rise and fall of the dinosaurs, and the arrival of man in North America." Intended for the general public, the 88-page 8 1/2 x 11" softcover book is clearly written and colorfully illustrated.

"The Whispering Hills" may be ordered for \$19.00 per copy plus 6% sales tax, plus postage and handling (1 copy, \$1.00; 2-3 copies \$2.25; and 4-5 copies \$3.00). Send checks to Matrix Publishing Co., Box 129, Dillsburg, PA 17019. Schools, bookstores, and dealers are invited to request information on large order discounts and promotional information (please include a business telephone number with that request).

### CORRECTIONS

Arthur Dorne ("Pennsylvania Collecting in the Nineteen Thirties") noted several errors in "Part I," (Winter, 1988).

The other locality at Mineral Hill (page 3) is "...just west of the path from Crump's, where it neared a second small stream..." There were "...many small pieces of amazonstone and some sunstone."

The Smedley Asbestos Mine (page 5) is "...about 1/4 mile north of the end of Post House Lane."

At Blue Hill (page 5), Arthur found quartz: "...The largest group about 2 inches across..."

Editor's Note: How about an article on collecting in your area?



## PENNSYLVANIA COLLECTING IN THE NINETEEN THIRTIES: PART TWO

Arthur Dorne  
1668 S. Forge Mtn. Drive, Valley Forge, PA 19481

### Serpentine Localities (cont'd)

In the 1930's, the Brinton Quarry, near West Chester, Chester County, was already a swim club. The northern pit was intermittently worked, probably for road metal. It had an approximately three-inch vein of crystalline talc running vertically through its back wall, but nothing else of interest. The third pit (toward the road from the other two) was very small, abandoned and featureless until about 1939. Then, on one occasion when I stopped in, only because I happened to be going by, I found that there had been fresh blasting in the latter. Lying in the debris were several handsome thick cleavages of clinochlore. They were firm, bright green, hexagonal and about 3 1/2" across. Shortly after, on a return visit, everything was cleared up. No more blasting, no more clinochlore.

I only visited the Unionville Corundum Mine, Chester County, once, with the Northeast Club. We stopped at only one digging. The ground around it was strewn with sparkling amethystine drusy quartz. Each of us got a piece or two and then we left. I would have been pleased to go back and explore the area but never got to it.

My first visit to Wood's Chrome Mine, Lancaster County, was probably in 1931. At that time the dump was huge, about 400 feet long and almost 100 feet high. Everything exposed or near the surface was weathered beyond recognition. Cracking rocks was so tedious that little was found. A few years later a large crusher was installed and a good-sized crew started crushing and hauling away everything they could get at with a large power shovel. It took about two years for the entire dump to be removed and during this period I went there a number of times. There still was a little to find: highly weathered brucite, an occasional tiny pocket of aragonite crystals and once in a while a boulder of picrolite was about the best.

However, not far away there was a spectacular display of mine material. In the Wood family homestead was a cabinet jammed with sparkling crystals. I particularly remember dinner plate size clusters of brilliant brucite crystals. A few years ago I tried to find the collection and learned that some years earlier it had been given to the Little Britain School. When asked about it, someone there told me they had never even heard of it. Another mystery!

There was a small dump at the Line Pit, also in Lancaster County., no more than 100 feet long and 6 feet high. With diligence, small pieces of good quality williamsite and chromite could be obtained, but nothing else interesting. However, on my last visit there (1934), I found that the entire dump had just been spread out over the adjacent dirt road as fill. A stretch more than a mile long was evenly covered with mine waste, much of it fresh because the larger pieces had been broken up to even the surface. Williamsite in pieces up to about six inches was much in evidence I picked out a specimen of first quality williamsite and chrome and went on my way.

In those days the Williams Quarry, at Easton, Northampton



# PENNSYLVANIA COLLECTING IN THE 1930's (cont'd)

County, was active, with much material. I only went there twice, but found really nice pure white asbestos and loads of eastonite, varieties of serpentine minerals, and many minerals I wasn't knowledgeable enough to identify.

At the Phoenixville Mines, the dumps were then pretty much as miners had left them except that they were overgrown. there were still open shafts and at least one headframe, but the pickings were not very different from what they have been in recent years. Although there were many more places to dig, what was found was essentially the same as lately: lots of fair quartz crystals, small masses of the sulfides, and small crystallizations of pyromorphite, cerrussite, and anglesite. With a sharp eye and diligence, I have not doubt that much more could have been found.

The only one of the replacement iron deposits that attracted me, and I think other collectors of that time, was Cornwall, which, of course, was active then. I first went there in 1934 on the same Philadelphia Mineralogical Society trip that had taken me to Howellville. We had great success. By official club count, twenty-nine different minerals were found, many of them in fine specimens. I went there about four more times on my own and always found it fascinating. I located a number of good typical things and some excellent andradite. These were sharp, bright trapezahedra, up to about 1 inch across, embedded in a bright micaceous hematite matrix.

## Is There a Message in All This?

I believe that in those days there were only two active localities which offered better collecting and were more interesting overall than anything we have today: Easton and Cornwall. Also, of course, there were a number of good localities that no longer exist, as for example, Bridgeport and Blue Hill. These, however, have been at least fully offset by new ones such as Faylor-Middlebrook and Cedar Hill. Then, as now, the majority of localities had been long abandoned and were essentially barren. I by no means listed all of this type that I explored, and could have added Friedensville, Gap, Poorhouse, and many more.) Now, as then, there are many localities, both old and new, which are not explored, some of which undoubtedly would reward a search. As an example from the 1930's, I cite the Smedley Mine as one that was neglected. I am pretty sure I was the only collector there at that time. Overall, I think that what is out there now is neither better nor worse than it was fifty years ago.

I also believe that more good material is collected in Pennsylvania now than was then. I have the impression that this reflects a trend of our times. Generally speaking, I think knowledgeable people value the distinctive qualities of the local scene more than they used to, and that this is true in all aspects of our culture. Whatever the reason, Sam Gordon (who seemed to be interested in everything mineralogical) and only a few others in the 1930's made any serious effort to be informed about what was happening locally. As a measure of this, the recently found material that I have seen displayed at shows during the last few years is in a number of instances much better than anything I saw collected in Pennsylvania fifty years ago.