

# FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY Pennsylvania Chapter NEWSLETTER

VOL. 42 No. 4

WINTER 2014

## Collectors Gather for Symposium and Field Trip

The Friends of Mineralogy - Pennsylvania Chapter held its symposium, **Pennsylvania's Mineral Heritage**, at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. On November 1, 2014, we met in the Hackman Physical Sciences Laboratories. We were welcomed by our host, Dr. Stan Mertzman, professor of geosciences. Chapter President Joe Marchesani also welcomed the group and had some opening remarks.



Dr. Stan Mertzman



Joe Marchesani and Ron Sloto

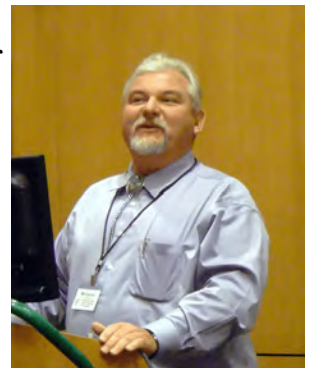
Ron Sloto spoke about the history, geology, and mineralogy of *The Fritz Island Mine, Cumru Township, Berks County, Pa.* Worked for iron ore between 1846 and 1884 in a Cornwall-type deposit, it produced 40 different mineral species. Some impressive display specimens were produced; Ron showed photographs of specimens in the collection of the Reading Public Museum. The site has been occupied by Reading's sewer plants since 1895; some remains of mine working were uncovered during sewer plant excavations through the years, but no trace of mines or dumps now remain.

Before the first break, Board member David Glick conducted the Annual Meeting of the membership, presenting brief reports, asking for volunteers to help

with Chapter activities, and providing brief backgrounds on two candidates for re-election to three-year terms on the Board. An election was conducted by printed ballot; the count showed that David Glick and Joseph Marchesani were elected.

Breaks in the program allowed attendees to visit invited specimen dealers, bid in the silent auction, pick up giveaway specimens, and meet other collectors.

Bill Stephens spoke on *The French Creek Iron Mine - A Collector's Memories of a Lost Mineralogical Treasure*. This is another Cornwall-type deposit, and another locality closed to collecting. Bill noted that he was one of many collectors who considered this a favorite collecting locality. He discussed the geology and mineralogy, showing a variety of specimen photos.



Bill Stephens

The silent auction and other activities in the break room continued over lunch hour. Attendees walked to restaurants on nearby Harrisburg Avenue for lunch. The silent auction ended before the presentations resumed in the afternoon.



Silent auctions, dealers and discussions in the break room.



Robert Kulp

Robert Kulp spoke on his Masters degree work on *Xenoliths of the Triassic Passaic Formation in the Monocacy Hill diabase intrusion, Amity Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania*. He reported that the xenoliths are assimilated into the diabase to varying degrees, and illustrated this with field photos. He showed thin section photomicrographs of a variety of mineralogies.

Stephen Shank's presentation addressed the *Mining History of the Serpentinites, Pennsylvania and Maryland*. Different source rock chemistry, different metamorphic histories in different locations, and later hydrothermal alteration have produced a wide range of chemistry and mineralogy in the resulting serpentinites. The region was the largest producer and exporter of chromite in the world up to the mid-19th century. Magnesite, talc and soapstone, and green building stone were other important products, although the building stone was later found to deteriorate rapidly from urban air pollution.

The group met at Cornwall, Pennsylvania on November 2<sup>nd</sup> for collecting at two sites. - Editor



Morning collecting at Cornwall

Photographs  
by David Glick



Later collecting from three huge benches of dump material behind the golf course

## JOHN PASSANEAU

1949 - 2014

by David Glick

We are deeply saddened to report that our friend, avid mineral collector, FM-Pa member and Nittany Mineralogical Society founding member John Passaneau died October 16, 2014, in the hospital in Pittsburgh. After battling pulmonary fibrosis, he had received a lung transplant in the summer, but never recovered enough to leave intensive care.

John was born May 13, 1949 in Lansing, Michigan. He said he was a mineral hobbyist from the age of ten years, and later described his start on his mindat.org home page: "My interest in rock collecting started one warm summer day when friends and I were setting around doing the "what do you want to do?, I don't know, what do you want to do?" dance. As someone had just given me a copy of the Little Golden Book of mineral collecting, I suggested that we start rock collecting. We all did..." and John stuck with it for the rest of his life.

When John was young, he worked for mineral dealers at shows, earning some money to buy specimens, learning how to recognize the best specimens, and receiving good deals from dealers who enjoyed encouraging an enthusiastic young collector. He also participated in competitive displays of mineral specimens at shows, winning many prizes through the years, and he used those skills in his impressive home display cases as well. He always enjoyed finding a mineral specimen bargain at shows or on ebay, and was expert at trimming a specimen to retain only its best aspects, improving its appearance and value. Among his areas of specialization in mineral collecting were zeolites, quartz, twin crystals, fluorescent minerals, and micromounts. He was an excellent mineral photographer, recently making use of computerized digital focus-stacking techniques to produce photographs which were amazingly sharp from foreground to background, and then using optimization programs to print them in the best possible manner. He produced a series of posters as fundraisers for Nittany Mineralogical Society. He shared some of these "mineral portraits" on his web page at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/j/x/jxp16/>.



John with his newly constructed splitter, Mount Pleasant Mills, PA, 2005. D. Glick photo.



Another major interest was electronics and amateur radio. John liked to joke that his job description as an engineer in the Physics Department could be "I make toys for physicists." In reality, he worked on a variety of advanced projects, including anti-matter containment vessels, which he traveled to Europe to use. His skills allowed him to both design and assemble electronic circuit devices on the job, for his hobbies, and as a service to the community.

John held a range of offices in mineral clubs in Michigan. After moving to Pennsylvania, he set about connecting with the mineral collecting community; the club in State College at the time was more focused on lapidary. The 1993 symposium of the Friends of Mineralogy - Pennsylvania Chapter, held at Penn State, brought local collectors together, and in 1994 John was one of the collecting enthusiasts who founded the Nittany Mineralogical Society. He was an enthusiastic officer and volunteer at the club's events, brought specimens to share and discuss in social hours, hosted the club's garage sale, visited schools and other groups to present programs about minerals to children, and much more. He always wanted to encourage people of all ages by including them in club activities and helping them personally. In recent years he was a member of Penn State's Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum Advisory Board, and created the control circuits for their present display of ultraviolet-fluorescent minerals.

John advocated planning for the continued use and enjoyment of one's collection by others. Details of the disposition of John's collection are being worked on at this time, and we will report them when they are known.

An obituary appeared in the Centre Daily Times (State College, PA) on Dec. 6. Memorial services will be conducted at The State College Evangelical Free Church, 1243 Blue Course Dr., State College PA 16801 on Saturday January 24, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. Donations in his memory may be made to the Nittany Amateur Radio Club or to Nittany Mineralogical Society. *- Editor*

## Rossville Site Closed to Collectors

from Jeri Jones

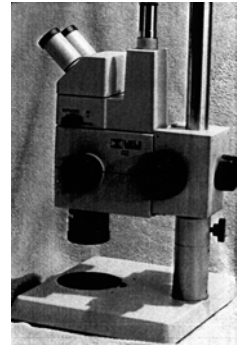
courtesy of Rock Buster News, Newsletter of the  
Central Pennsylvania Rock and Mineral Club, Inc.  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
Volume 54 No.10 December 2014

"I was notified by the property owner of the Rossville malachite/azurite location in northern York County that the site is now closed to collectors. The owners would appreciate that collecting cease. If anyone is seen at the site, the owners will notify proper authorities. Please pass the word, as this site has been collected since 1974. It is well advertised in books and articles. RJ Harris has added that the site has become dangerous."

**FOR SALE:** Long-time Pennsylvania collector John 'Pen' Ambler in Hollidaysburg has books, specimens and more for sale. Pen reports: "I have some 10 - 15 cartons of books on mineral and mineral related subjects. My cataloged collection consist of upwards of 6,000 specimens some of which were the Ed Carper collection. The specimens are cabinet, small cabinet, hand-sized, miniature, thumbnail and micro minerals. Many of the minerals are PA and eastern U.S.; however, it is a varied collection. There are lapidary materials (slabs and some bulk); limited fossils; tumbled stones including PA amethyst; UV materials and equipment; supplies (boxes, etc.)." Please contact Pen by email: [bridger@atlanticbb.net](mailto:bridger@atlanticbb.net)

**FOR SALE: Collection, Microscope & Accessories, Crystal Models** - Avid collector wants these to be purchased by someone who would appreciate them. Contact Frank & Gail Beall, 724-789-7290. Western PA. **See much more complete listing** at [www.nittanymineral.org/beall.pdf](http://www.nittanymineral.org/beall.pdf)

**Meiji RZ-B Trinocular Microscope system:** two 10x eyepieces plus zoom yield 7.5x to 75x viewing. Wide field. High stand, long focus. Equipped for photography with trinoc tube & photo "eyepieces" (included). Iris diaphragm to control depth of field. Separate Fiber-Lite brand FL-181 variable-intensity illuminator, halogen bulb and two flexible fiber-optic arms about 22" long with focusing lenses and filter holders. Cooling fan; anti-vibration table (over 100 lbs). Case, manuals, calibration slide, spare bulbs, etc. included. Exceptionally high quality scope, used for 1 project in 2004-5. Paid \$6,000 in 2004. **\*\*Only reasonable offers, please.\*\*** Still a bargain for the right person.



**Mineral Specimens:** High-quality specimens, many already sold. Those remaining include:

- Tetrahedrite, Zacactecas, Mexico, 5x4"
- Pyrite & marcasite, Idarado Mine, Ouray, Colo. Ex-Carnegie Museum display. 10.5x6"
- Mesolite, Nasik, India 2.75"
- Barite on quartz, Old Mines, MO.
- Tetrahedrite, Peru, paid \$350.
- Smoky quartz, amazonite, albite. Albany NH. 4.5x3"
- Andradite garnet, Calaveras County CA. 5.5x3.5"
- Elbaite (tourmaline) on albite Var, cleavelandite, Minas Gerais Brazil. Ex-Carnegie Museum. 9x3.5"
- Quartz pseudo after barite, Ouray CO, Ex-Carnegie. 7x6"
- Calcite & strontianite, Winfield PA, 6.5x5", Ex-Carnegie.
- Rhodochrosite, quartz & tetrahedrite, Rob's Pocket, Sweet Home Mine, Alma CO. 3x2". 2014 appraisal \$2,300.
- Ruby, garnets, amethyst, selenite, apophyllite & stilbite, galena & calcite, others.
- Extensive life-long **collection of pyrite specimens**, many still available. A number of rare or unusual forms and from a variety of locations, a variety of sizes from thumbnail to several pounds. Stored sealed with desiccant.
- General collection** of approx. 500 mineral specimens in plastic "keeper" boxes; some fossils and cave formations. Thumbnail to almost hand-size.

**Variety of crystal models.**

**Scroll-sawed art replicating mineral specimens.**



**From the Editor**

David Glick

THANK YOU to everyone who has been providing material for the Newsletter! Everyone else - join the fun! **Please provide materials for the next issue by March 1, 2015.** Feel free to contact me at xidg@verizon.net, or 814-237-1094 days and evenings (especially Thurs-Sat., otherwise leave a message).

Materials related to Pennsylvania mineralogy, collecting or collectors are invited for this newsletter: articles, long or short; announcements from FM-PA committees; photographs of specimens, field localities, collections, etc.; reports on publications about PA minerals or by PA authors, or actual book reviews; or other items within the mineralogy and mineral collecting areas of interest. Photographs should be of good resolution (1000 pixels across) without much JPEG compression, so that they will look good in print. Please provide captions including photographers' names.

We are producing four issues each year; **your material is needed** to make them worthwhile!. If you know people who have interesting material, please encourage them to submit it.

**DONATIONS WELCOMED**

The FM-PA Chapter is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; donations are gratefully accepted and may be deducted from your federal income tax. Donations of any size help to offset the general operating costs of the Society, helping to keep dues low.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**January 24, 2015:** Mineral & Fossil Swap & Sell, by Phila. Mineralogical Soc. Cathedral Village, 600 East Cathedral Rd., Philadelphia PA 19128. Sat. 9-1  
[www.philamineralsociety.org](http://www.philamineralsociety.org)

**January 31, 2015:** Rutgers Geology Museum Open House, Rutgers University Geology Museum and Scott Hall, New Brunswick, NJ. 9-4. See page 6, and <https://geologymuseum.rutgers.edu/museum-events/open-house> (Parking and additional information on web site)

**March 7-8, 2015:** Annual Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show, by Delaware Mineralogical Soc. Delaware Technical & Comm. College, 400 Stanton-Christiana Rd., Newark, DE <http://www.delminsociety.net/marchshow.htm>

**March 27-29, 2015: EFMLS Convention and Show,** Hickory, North Carolina. Field trips.

**March 28-29, 2015:** Philadelphia Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair, by Phila. Mineral. Soc. & Delaware Valley Paleo. Soc. Lulu Temple, 5140 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA

**March 28-29, 2015:** Rock & Mineral Show by Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club. Athens Township Vol. Fire Hall, 211 Herrick Ave., Athens PA. <http://www.chehannarocks.com/show.html>

**April 18-19, 2015:** North Museum Rock, Mineral & Fossil Show, by North Museum of Natural History & Science. Farm & Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Rd. Lancaster PA

**May 2-3, 2015:** Treasures of the Earth 2015, Annual Show & Sale by The Mineralogical Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Oblates of St. Joseph, 1880 Hwy 315, Pittston PA 18640. Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4.

**FM on the WWW**

Please explore the FM-PA web site at [www.rasloto.com/FM/](http://www.rasloto.com/FM/)

**National News**

National FM newsletters, links to other chapters, and much more can be found on their web site: [www.friendsofmineralogy.org](http://www.friendsofmineralogy.org)

**Friends of Mineralogy Pennsylvania Chapter Directory of Officers****OFFICERS and BOARD OF DIRECTORS members**

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Treasurer	Ron Sloto	rasloto@aol.com	
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Friends of Mineralogy Pennsylvania Chapter Web Site: <http://www.rasloto.com/FM>