



1999, 2000, & 2001 EFMLS
Trophy Winning Newsletter

CRACK 'N CAB

Datolite, the program for January 19th and Show & Tell

Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
Letter from the Editor	2
Less than 7 Months	3
Coming Events	4
EFMLS News	5
AFMS News	6
Datolite	7

Be with us for this special view of **Datolites**. On **Monday, January 19th at 7:30 PM** don't miss this terrific slide show featuring one of the most beautiful minerals found in the Upper peninsula of Michigan and few other places. The UP or upper peninsula is in copper country and is also referred to as the Keweenaw. Keweenaw Week in the UP is usually held during the first week of August. Many copper mines are open for tours and collecting during Keweenaw week. This has been described in Lapidary Journal as one of the best organized collecting events of the year in Michigan.

Also on January 19th, we are including show and tell for anyone interested in



*Photo from A.E. Seaman Museum,
Houghton, Michigan (UP) on-line collection*

sharing a special event or rockhound experience they had over this past summer. Anything pertaining to the hobby and fairly short. Say, up to five minutes or so.

Special points of interest:

- Beading Group meets at 6:30 PM.
- Youth Group meets at 6:30 PM
- Regular Meeting meets at 7:30 PM

Remembering Betty Witworth

Submitted by Loren Patterson

We are sad to report the recent passing of Betty Witworth early Sunday, the 11th. Betty was always involved in teaching the lapidary arts, particularly cabbing. Her e-mail address was even: cabber@northnet.org

Betty was someone who got things done. She opened her own home to members of the club

for cabbing classes. She established the Bob Livingston Skills Center in her own basement and also taught the classes. Many of our members learned cabbing at the skills center instead of having to travel many miles to Wildacres or even farther. Betty was recognized for her efforts having won the EFMLS Each One Teach One award in May 2002. More on page 4.

President's Message



A Farmer's Rock Saw

Just before the holidays, I ran into a friend of mine whom I've known since grade school. He remembered that my kids and I were into rocks and asked me if I had a rock saw. I said, "yeah, an old second hand trim saw, nothing real great and the blade is shot". I thought he had some rock he wanted cut. Well it seems he is finally getting rid of his father's lapidary stuff and one of the first things he has dug out and cleaned up was a rock saw. I told him that I am not a lapidary person, but I'd look at it and see if I could help him find someone who wanted it.

"No, this is a rock saw, there's a little trim saw around in the workshop someplace too, but this is a rock saw. It's a big and ugly saw," he told me repeatedly. "You could cut boulders in half with it," he said. The more we talked the more I felt he wanted me, not some stranger, to buy the saw. Finally, we arranged for my son and I to go to his family farm and look at the thing.

"My father always wanted a big saw, but would not pay the price for one," he told me when I got there. "The blade is almost new and it's about the only thing he bought besides the motors." "Motors?...how many motors does a saw need?", I thought.

I finally got to see the ugly saw. I guess if you compare it to those saws we see in the lapidary catalogs, it is ugly. But this saw will be around long after those fancy ones wear out. The thing has a monster 16-inch blade and was built by an old farmer out of surplus farm equipment. There was

none of those wimpy spot welds or any of that thin angle iron stuff here. It has a moving arm made out of a piece of half-inch steel I beam. It takes two motors to run – one for the saw and one for the oil pump. And an ugly fiberglass guard, made to try to catch some of the oil and grit.

In the end, I bought the saw. He even left the last rock that his father was cutting, there in the clamps. Seems his dad wanted this saw, so he could cut his own cab slabs to the thickness he wanted (sound familiar?) I was very glad now that my son and his truck came along. We struggled to get it into the back of the truck.

Now, here I sit with yet another reason to wish for spring. Besides wanting to go rock hunting, I now have this ugly monster saw waiting for me to set up in the barn, so I can cut rocks in half. You see it has to be up in the barn, because for once my wife won – it is too big, ugly and oily to come into the house or even go down in the basement.

Oh, will spring ever arrive? Hmmmm... maybe I could put heat in the barn.... no better not or she might make me sleep out there.

**Club President
Jay Tinker**

Letter from the Editor

By Loren Patterson

In getting our submissions ready for the annual EFMLS Newsletter Editor's Contest, I couldn't help noticing the limited number of articles we were able to submit. There is a limit of two articles from each author in each category. This year there were only three authors, myself included, who had written anything in the past year that I could submit for the contest. There were no junior articles, no

poems, no drawn features, or any technical writings. Even if there were no contest, this lack of participation by our membership in the content of our newsletter, translates into a publication that does not truly reflect the interests or goals of the membership. There may be few members qualified to write a technical article, and we would really love to hear from you. Certainly, almost anyone could sit down and write about their interests in the hobby or thoughts for improving this club. From the youth group, someone might write a junior article about a recent field trip or project the group is working on.

As a place to start, I am making space for a letter to the Editor column in any future newsletters. Anyone wishing to speak out to the membership to make a suggestion or voice his or her opinion will have the opportunity to do so. If anyone can write a poem or a short article connected in some way to our hobby, we will find space for you. With some luck and a bit of effort, you could be up for an award in the next contest. I know you're out there; we need to hear from you.

Executive Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Rollie Allen

The executive board met Dec. 8 at the home of **John Davis**. Further plans were made for the 2004 Gem and Mineral Show. The committee went over the job list for the show and checked names for the many tasks. Extra security has been arranged because of the extra exhibits.

Cathy Patterson and **Carrie Gannett** asked if they could have a beading class before the regular meeting at the same time as the kids meet. The plan met with an enthusiastic yes.

The meeting ended with ice cream provided by John.

Less than 7 Months*by Bob Livingston*

Photo by
L.Patterson

Less than 7 months to the first ever-American Federation show in New York State (yep, here in Syracuse).

I thought it would be neat to pass on to my fellow Syracuse club members what we are telling the Eastern Federation and American Federation clubs via their newsletters. It will help you to realize what is coming and why more so than ever, we need to pitch in and split the chores and work like eager beavers to pull off this biggie. Here is the first of probably 4 articles:

**It's Eastern up at Bat
July 7 thru 11**

by Bob Livingston,

Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse (Host Club) on the web at: gmss.us

That's right, back in April '03 the eyes of the country were on the Syracuse Orangemen as they fought hard and won the NCAA title. Lots of pride in town ever since with that #1 trophy.

The pendulum swings the maximum as the big event in our hobby shifts in '04 from California to New York. Next July, the focus once again will be on Syracuse, site of the big 2004 combined American Federation / Eastern Federation annual convention and show. It is incredible, but until now, this event has never been in the State of New York. What a shame since the Finger Lakes vacation area has so much to offer.

In these pages over the next 4 months we will give you the skinny on everything we can squeeze in re the big event we are

calling "The Splendor of Quartz" - after all, those coveted "Herkimer Diamonds" are only a little over an hour down the road.

The meetings and food events will be at the Headquarters Hotel, The Ramada Inn on Buckley Road in Syracuse, NY (Exit 36 off New York Thruway, I-90) where we are holding a large block of rooms.



*Art Grant & EFMLS Vice-President
Carl Miller, 2 smiling faces from our
Jewelry, Gem & Mineral Show 2003*

Photo by Loren Patterson

The special rate is \$89 per day and includes a cooked to order breakfast. When reserving, merely mention that you are with the American or Eastern Federation convention. Phone number is (315) 457-8670 or online at: www.ramadasyracuse.com. Hotel rooms and restaurant were renovated in 2003. For persons wishing other hotels, either wait for the packet to be mailed to Eastern clubs in mid March or, go to the website: www.amfed.org/EFMLS where complete packet info including downloadable forms await you.

For your planning purposes, the American Federation meeting is

Thursday, July 8th at 9 AM, the Eastern Federation meeting is Saturday July 10 at 9 AM, the Awards dinner is Saturday night, July 10 and the Editors' breakfast is Sunday, July 11 at 8 AM. The show opens at 10AM each day beginning Friday July 9. Closing time is 6 PM on Friday and Saturday. Sunday the 11th, the show closes at 4 pm. There will be daily lectures plus a fund raising auction for Eastern at 2 PM on Saturday, July 10. The show is air-conditioned and will include 50+ retail dealers and 11 wholesalers. It will be located in the huge Center of Progress Building at the New York State Fairgrounds in Syracuse, Exit 7 off I-690.

For kids there will be sluice mining, operating model ore trains, straw draw chances and hopefully soapstone carving. We have geared up for over 100 educational displays and look to clubs and individuals around the country to share your wonderful creations, mineral specimens and fossils for everyone to enjoy.

Next month we will tell you why you should not miss this exciting show and convention in an area of the country new to many of you. We will also let you in on more of what you can expect to find here at the show and the beautiful surrounding countryside. Meantime, dig around and decide what it is that you will bring to show off for your club and /or yourself to share for the benefit of all. Look forward to seeing you in Syracuse "Orange country" in July."

Sunshine News

By Cathy Patterson

Harry and Irene Perkins were in a serious accident on their way to Florida December 22. The truck and trailer they were driving through South Carolina were caught in a semi tractor-trailer's back draft and went out of control. Both the truck and mobile home were totaled leaving Harry with a broken shoulder as the truck landed on its side. Irene was unhurt, though shaken up, and they both say they are lucky to have survived. They are thankful to their southern Good Samaritans who helped collect all of their possessions and get them medical help. By January 1, they were home and recuperating from the ordeal. They still hope to travel to Florida this winter to see their many friends. We wish Harry and Irene a speedy recovery at home.

Betty Witworth, our friend and Skill Center instructor died Sunday January 11th at the Lee Memorial Hospital in Fulton.

Betty brought to us many years of lapidary experience from the Tuscarora Lapidary Society of Pennsylvania where she and her husband Otis were members. The Witworths were regular exhibitors and demonstrators at our GemWorld shows for many years. Their attention to detail and excellence set them apart from others.

Betty was very exacting in her instruction of making competition quality cabs. Those who were her students at the skill center in her home created many quality cabs and learned much about precise cutting and polishing techniques.

Betty & Otis were published in Lapidary Journal writing about a foolproof way to cut a perfect cab. We are appreciative of her efforts to start up a skill center in her home to begin giving lessons in the lapidary arts. She even bought most of the equipment with her own funds. Betty had hopes of other instructors coming to give lessons in wire craft, and beading. We will truly miss Betty in our hobby community.

For any sunshine news, please contact either **Gloria Royer** or **Loren Patterson** (see back page for phone and e-mail addresses.)

Wildacres Spring/summer Classes

By Cathy Patterson

Thinking you might like to get away in June for some fun in the Blue Ridge Mountains? Think Wildacres!

This year the spring session of the Wildacres Workshop has been moved to later in June to accommodate those working folks who might need to take their vacation after the kids get out of school. Check out the December EFMLS News, page 6 for a complete listing of classes as well as the application form on page --- ---in the same issue. Applications are being accepted starting January 1, 2004. Sessions fill up early; so don't delay in sending your registration in as soon as possible. **Should all spaces be filled, you will be placed on a waiting list in the order that your application is received.**

You can ask any of the following former attendees why Wildacres is a great place to visit:

Bob and Joan Livingston, Lou Budell, Cathy & Loren Patterson, Carrie Gannett, John Davis, Ruth Burgess

Your Help is Needed

Submitted by Cathy Patterson

www.amfed.org/news/n2003

AFMS wants us to write letters to get gemstones on stamps. Details are on this page as well as address to write.

Coming Events

From William Lema

February

21-22:11th Annual James Campbell Memorial Gem & Fossil Show & Sale, co-sponsored by the New York State Academy of Mineralogy and the **Capital District Mineral Club**. Concourse level, south end of the Empire State Plaza, Madison Avenue, Albany, NY

March:

6 - 7: New York City Gem & Mineral Show Hosted by the **New York Mineralogical Club** Holiday Inn Midtown Manhattan 440 W.57th St., New York City.

6 - 7: 41st Annual Earth Science Gem and Mineral Show sponsored by the Delaware Mineralogical Society New Location: Delaware Technical and Community College @I-95 Exit 4B, Churchmans Road (Rt. 58) Newark (Stanton), DE 19713.

April:

3 -4: 36th Annual Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show, sponsored by the **Buffalo Geological Society, Inc.** Erie County Fairgrounds, Hamburg, NY.

July

9 -11: Combined EFMLS/AFMS Convention & Show sponsored by the **Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse**. NY State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY. (AFMS meetings July 7 & 8).

From EFMLS News 01/04

EFMLS News

SAFETY FIRST

from Bill Klose, EFMLS Safety Chair

SILVER, GOLD AND METALSMITHING, SOLDERING/BRAZING, CASTING AND ELECTROPLATING SAFETY

Silver brazing alloy, commonly called "silver solder" is used to join metals and alloys such as silver, brass, bronze carbon steel, stainless steel and dissimilar metal combinations. Fumes generated during brazing from the metals and brazing fluxes can be a serious health hazard. Use fluoride free fluxes such as borax fluxes and avoid zinc chloride and rosin fluxes if at all possible. Cadmium in silver brazing alloys vaporizes when over-heated and produces cadmium oxide, a highly toxic substance, the fumes of which if inhaled into the respiratory tract can cause pulmonary distress, shortness of breath, and in cases of severe exposure, death. Some of the silver brazing filler metals containing cadmium are: BAg1, BAg1a, BAg-2, and BAg-2a. Since the boiling point of Cadmium is 1412 degrees F., brazing can be carried on "safely" using BAg-1 and BAg1a classes of filler metal at temperatures below 1400 degrees F. BAg-2 and BAg-3 have recommended brazing temperatures of 1295 -1550 degrees F. and 1270 -1500 degrees F. respectfully.

Since temperatures in the upper portion of these ranges can be reached, provide adequate local exhaust ventilation or individual air-supplied respirators. Solder fume and pollutant absorbers are also available with internal fans and filters for use at the work site

and do not require the vacuum hoses of exhaust ventilation systems. General ventilation systems only spread the fumes and pollutants. Lead, Antimony, and Cadmium solders are not recommended, as these metals are highly toxic and an inhalation hazard. Flux, filler, and base material fumes are irritating to the lungs and the eyes. Zinc chloride is corrosive and Silver particles can cause a blue-black stain on the skin.

Know the materials that you are brazing and the solders/fillers and fluxes you are using and the manufactures recommended procedures and safety precautions. Use lead free solders for stained glass and slab working and remember "lead free" does not mean that there is no lead present.

Safety MattersFrom Betsy Martin
via EFMLS Newsletter

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in non-profit club newsletters
via EFMLS Newsletter 2/00

from Scribe CD 2003

Lost Wax Casting requires the use of Silica, which is highly toxic and cuttlebone dust, which is irritating if inhaled, so wear a respirator, gloves, and goggles. Always mix silica in a glove box. Use non-silica plaster if possible. Be sure that the cuttlebone is kept clean and wet the sand. Keep the area clean of dust and use a wet mop and rag to clean up. Sodium Silicate is moderately toxic and should not be allowed to come in contact with the skin. When using the centrifuge, make sure to wear a protective face shield and fireproof

apron. Remember molten metal can splash and burn.

Electroplating, annealing, cleaning, polishing and finishing may require the use of or contact with cyanide plating solution. Cyanide salts are extremely toxic if ingested, inhaled, or if they come in contact with the skin. Gold salts can cause allergic reactions. Hydrogen cyanide forms when acid is added to cyanide which is extremely toxic and can lead to shock, so only use cyanide solution in a laboratory hooded enclosure. Sodium and Potassium cyanide are also extremely toxic. An antidote kit should be available at all times when these chemicals are in use and amyl nitrate administered if poisoning occurs. Seek immediate medical attention after administering the antidote. Remember that cyanide is a hazardous chemical and should be disposed of as a hazardous chemical and not poured down the sink. Do not touch the electrical wires used with electroplating.

Safe practices for the brazing, casting, electroplating lab.

1. Provide an adequate well-lighted workspace for the type of work being performed and the number of individuals involved.

2. Provide fire extinguishers, first aid and antidote kits. Have a sink with running water available and if a lot of people are involved, install an eye wash station at the sink. Aloe plants or creams may be used to soothe minor burns.

3. Provide proper local ventilation and masks or respirators for the work area and type of work to be performed. Clean ventilation vacuum hoses and replace filters in solder fume and pollutant absorbers periodically and dispose

(Continued on page 6)

from EFMLS News 1/04

AFMS News – 01/04

Having Fun - Junior Activities Field Tripping



By Jim Brace-Thompson

In this, the last of my series of proposed "merit badge" ideas, I tackle the ultimate hands-on activity: a field trip! Little can replace the thrill of discovering a precious gemstone or fossil first-hand, and kids seem to be genetically programmed for this thrill. But before you start down the road, you need to lay out some very specific ground rules both for yourself and the kids.

First and foremost, be aware of the laws of your state regarding fossils (some areas, and some types of fossils, are regulated and, if anything, such regulations will increase in coming years). Whether searching for fossils, rocks, or minerals, always secure any necessary permits and obtain permission to collect on private property. With a large group, you'll very likely be required to sign a waiver promising not to damage property and absolving property owners of any responsibility for accidents. In fact, you're likely to get a better reception if you approach a property owner with such a waiver already in hand and with evidence of insurance coverage through your regional Federation. In selecting your field trip site, avoid areas with obvious hazards (high-traffic road cuts, steep bluffs, thick clumps of poison oak, etc.).

Remind kids to dress in appropriate outdoor clothing, sturdy shoes, and a hat, and before you go, explain the ground rules. Then, remind kids of those rules

once you arrive. Kids have boundless enthusiasm and energy, especially if they've been cooped up in a bus or car. If parking near a roadway, be sure your car is fully off the pavement when you arrive, then watch for kids rushing up steep slopes of loose talus. Don't let rocks get tossed into a roadway- or toward other kids! Don't undermine overhangs, and don't leave unfilled holes. Do make sure an adult in the group knows first-aid and has a fully stocked first-aid kit close at hand, with a cell phone and directions to the nearest hospital in the event of an emergency. Finally, select sites relatively rich in minerals or fossils. By nature, kids are impatient and will want to start finding "stuff" right away. The goal, after all, is to foster enthusiasm, not to tax their patience. If you don't know of any suitable exposures in your immediate area, ask around at a local college. Many college geology departments and state geological surveys have road logs for field trips.

With rules and recommendations like these in mind, here are some potential activities for your juniors:

Activity 1:

Field trip etiquette. Learn and demonstrate knowledge of the AFMS Code of Ethics. Make a permission release form. Demonstrate field trip etiquette on your next trip. If the trip was on private land, did you first gain permission? Did you provide the owner with a release form? Did you fill holes you made? If at a road cut, did you keep rocks off the roadway?

Activity 2:

Record keeping. Start and maintain a "field journal" of what you did and what you found in a composition or a spiral-bound

notebook, three-ring binder, or other record book. Take notes while in the field and later write up a formal report including observations about the locality and specimens. Pinpoint where you found your rocks, minerals, or fossils so that others could locate the spot. Was there a specific layer containing the fossil or mineral deposit? If so, how could others locate and identify that layer?

Activity 3:

Indoor field trips. Organize a field trip to a college geology department or to a museum, calling in advance to arrange a tour not just of the exhibitions on public display, but the treasures behind the scenes.

With this and the seven ideas I've described previously, may your kids learn while-as always-having fun!

EFMLS News

(continued from pg.5)

of the cleaning materials and filters properly.

4. Safety glasses, goggles, or face shields should be available and used where appropriate. Wear appropriate clothing, gloves, and aprons to protect the skin.

5. Do not handle your work piece, firebrick, fire screen, or heating pad with your bare hands. Use tongs or a heat resistant non-asbestos glove.

6. Be familiar with the safe operation of all the power and hand tools in the shop, such as hammers, drills, pliers, jeweler's saws, tongs, etc., before using. Do not touch any electrical wires and know how to shut down and electrically isolate all power equipment.

What Is Datolite?

By Cathy Patterson

Back in 2002 Loren and I went on a vacation that took us on a driving tour all around Lake Michigan and up to Lake Superior. That's where we first heard about the mineral datolite. We participated in The Copper Country Keweenaw Week in and around Houghton, Michigan in the Upper Peninsula. On some of our digs in actual mines we looked for the elusive thumb-sized nodules in the dumps outside the mines and inside as we excavated the walls with our picks. Upon inspecting our finds we had what looked like some small examples but until sliced there's no telling if they are datolite or not. The outer black surface resembles the appearance of cauliflower.



Cathy Patterson working on the mine dumps Keweenaw Week August 2002

Photo by Loren Patterson

The porcelainous massive form of datolite we were searching for is unique to North America and only in the copper mines of the Lake Superior region. The clear form of datolite also can be found in several places such as the Holyoke Range between Springfield and Westfield in Hampden County Massachusetts, The Roncari Quarry at East Granby Hartford County, Connecticut, parts of New Jersey, San Bernardino Counties,

Calif, Fife, Scotland, Norway and Italy.¹

We saw some eye-popping sliced specimens of datolite at the A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum in Houghton, Michigan that were porcelain like and stained yellow, salmon pink, green and purple caused by mostly copper impurities. Datolite is present in copper bearing fissures and in solid masses filling voids in the veins. The nodules are in mud pockets adjacent to the veins of copper. These calcium borosilicate minerals whose chemical composition is very close to that of danburite occurs in cavities in basic igneous rocks associated with prehnite and calcite. Their color is white, colorless, pale yellow, pale green or reddish-brown depending on the impurities. It is 5-5.5 on the Mohs scale of hardness.²

For a quick history of datolite collection in Michigan, I will summarize from an article written for *Rocks & Minerals Magazine* the May-June 2003 issue by Tom Rosemeyer.³

As early as 1844 a report of finding datolite in fissure veins on Isle Royale was recorded by Dr. C.T. Jackson. In his report he describes finding fine crystals there as well as at other Keweenaw Point localities. Some nodules were extracted from the Minnesota Mine that were as large as cannonballs and when broken apart resembled fine-grained marble.

From about 1850 to 1900 the miners had collected specimens for

their own collections or for selling to other collectors to supplement their income. At that time, datolite wasn't particularly thought of as a valuable mineral as their beauty was not revealed until they were cut and polished and equipment to do so was not readily available at that time.

Jump to the 1940's when a few of the big name collectors began to search the yet untouched mine dumps and hundreds of fine specimens were found. The golden years of collecting on those dumps was between the 1950's to the end of the 1960's when there were plenty of datolite nodules to be found and the digging was easy. Since the 1970's those dumps have been crushed on site for road construction and few if any of those classic datolites can be found although as recent as 1995 nodules as large as 3 inches in diameter have been found on those dumps. Nowadays, during Keweenaw Week in August the mine dumps are bulldozed for eager collectors, Loren and me included, to try their luck.



Photo by Loren Patterson
Cathy Patterson in mine Keweenaw Week August 2002

Other sources of information about datolite on the web:

www.findarticles.com for datolite
www.lapidarydigest.com datolite
www.brainydictionary.com
 datolite
www.cst.cmich.edu/users
www.smartminerals.com/russia
www.museum.mtu.edu/gallery/datolite

¹ The Encyclopedia of Minerals and Gemstones edited by Michael Donoghue ©1976 page 252

² The Encyclopedia of Minerals and Gemstones edited by Michael Donoghue ©1976 page 252

³ The Occurrence of Porcelaneous datolite in Michigan's Lake Superior Copper District Part 1 *Rocks & Minerals May*- Tom Rosemeyer

P.O. Box 801

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January 2004

Time Dated Material



Crack 'N Cab



Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse, Inc.

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Eight persons organized the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse in 1951. Since that time it has grown in membership to include adults, families, and young folk. The Society was incorporated in 1969 under the name.

The objectives of the Society are to stimulate interest in mineralogy, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. Individual interests include collecting, identification, and display of minerals and fossils, and many aspects of jewelry design and fabrication.

The monthly meetings stimulate the social and educational factors. Frequent field trips provide collectors with opportunities to find specimens as well as to enjoy the benefits of outdoor exercise and potential friendships. The Society meets on the third Monday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Parish House of the First Presbyterian Church, 620 West Genesee Street, Syracuse, New York.

Visitors are always welcome.

Annual membership dues:

Single Adult - \$6

Junior - \$3

Family - \$9

Honorary Life Membership - \$3

For more information write to the Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, P.O. Box 801, Syracuse, New York 13201

