

MICROMOUNTERS OF NEW ENGLAND 1967 - 1992

In 1992, the year of this publication, we are observing the 25th anniversary of our founding. The notice below, reprinted in part (by permission) and entitled "A Micromounters Club for New England" was written by Gilbert George to announce the formative meeting and appeared in Rocks & Minerals, August, 1966.

"A group of micromounters here in the New England area would like to start a club devoted to the study of minerals. This club would meet once a month somewhere in the Boston area, which is located in the geographic center of New England. The reason for the monthly meetings rather than a once a year affair, would be to enable more members to attend at their convenience when the press of commitments allowed."

The meeting was reported in the January issue under the title "New England Micromounters" and this is reprinted below in its entirety, also by permission of the editors of Rocks & Minerals. The January meeting was held, as announced here, officers were elected, and a constitution ratified with change from the name used here to the "Micromounters of New England"

"The charter meeting of the "New England Micromounters" was held at the Eliot Church of Newton, Mass. at 1 P.M. on Saturday, Nov. 5, 1966. An interesting meeting was held with members coming from Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Micromounts of the rare minerals from the Quarries at Mount St. Hilaire proved to hold the most interest, as members had been there recently or had bought or traded for them. These quarries are being cut in nephelite-syenite rock and therefore many rare minerals are being collected, such as serandite, wohlerite, lavenite, eudialyte, elpidite, catapleite, leucophanite, helvite, genthelvite, and many more.

"A committee was appointed to draft a constitution to be voted on at the next meeting, which will be held at 1 P.M. on Saturday, January 14, 1967 at the same location. Why not come to the next meeting? Bring your microscope and light if you have one. If you do not have a microscope, come anyway to see slides and take part in the next meeting. Hope to see you there. For further information write to: Gilbert G. George, 82 Chapin Ave., Providence, R. I. 02909."

In his column, "Thumbnails", member John Reiner told of an early meeting which was to become a tradition. The following paragraph, reprinted by permission, appeared in Rocks & Minerals, September/October, 1969, p. 695.

"The summer meeting of the Micromounters of New England was at my home on Saturday, July 19th. There were nineteen present along with ten microscopes. Some brought lunch and my good wife had things ready for those who like to chew on a sandwich and chat over a microscope. This provided a great chance for identifying new finds and swapping."

1992 also marks the 10th anniversary of our first Northeast Meeting, which was held May 1, 1982 at the Springfield Museum of Science, and which inaugurated the first of our Program Books. This year's book presents a complete index to all previous issues, as well as selections from some of our best-known mineral publications, written by some of our best-known micromounters, all reprinted or quoted by permission of the editors of the publications cited. Many of our members have made contributions to the Program Book as well, which may be located in the index.

"FIFTY YEARS OF MINERAL COLLECTING" Gunnar Bjareby

A series of eight articles with the above title was written for Rocks & Minerals by the late Gunnar Bjareby, our first vice-president. The following excerpts are taken from Part V (November/December 1962, page 565), and give an account of his introduction to micromounting.

"To anyone who collects minerals the organized field trips are, of course, the most important of the club's activities. In the field one soon learns 'who is who' and I met paragons among mineral collectors...I have had the pleasure to dig side by side with all of them and it did not take me long to learn their various techniques. But, being what one could term an 'Inter Continental' I was influenced more than anyone else by the then British consul in Boston, Hugh A. Ford, now in New York City. He had one of the finest World-Wide collections. Like all advanced collectors he had a microscope and introduced me to micromounts. Shortly afterwards I was in Portland (up Maine that is) and saw a microscope in a second hand store. I bought this brassy Parisian made antique which had belonged to a 'bug-chasing' M.D. and a number of smeared glass slides came with it. While in that city I met McKay who was one of the pioneers in micromounts in Maine. He too had an antique microscope which seemed to incorporate the main functions of a telescope, goniometer and microscope. Working in metal is one of my hobbies and I made a few improvements on the old 'mike' but it was not too well suited for micromounts.

"My principal reason for collecting micromounts is that roughly one thousand or about half of the known species have crystals ranging in size from less than a tenth of a millimeter to a few millimeters. The only means to distinguish such crystals from a mere smear of color is the microscope."

