

Volume 10, no 3 ~ Nov. 1967



the

GLACIAL

DRIFT

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The Grand Rapids Mineral Society is a Non-Profit Corporation affiliated with the Midwest Federation and the American Federation of Mineral Societies.

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 8:00 PM at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Multi-Purpose room, East Building. Summer meetings at various parks as announced.

Membership dues are \$3.00 per year for a family, \$2.00 for single adult, and \$1.00 for students under 18 yeazrs of age. Dues are payable to Treasurer-year is from September 1 through August 31 of the follwong year.

Advertising in the GLACIAL DRIFTER is at the rate of \$3.00 per issue, September through May only.

All material for publication shall be in the hands of the EDITOR no later than the Wednesday after the regular monthly BOARD OF CONTROL meeting which is the third week of the month.

Permission to reprint articles appearing in the GLACIAL DRIFTER IS HEREBY GRANTED, PROPER CREDIT IS GIVEN.
Member--National Bulletin Editors Association.

Auction Time!

NOVEMBER, 1967



NOV. 8, 8 p.m., Museum East Bldg., SILENT AUCTION
(Important details on Page 2)

NOV. 11, Museum, LES PEARL JR. ROCKHOUNDS, 9 a.m. regis.
(Important details on Page 2)

NOV. 13, 8 p.m. Board of Control, R.B. Smith, 1445 Breton S.E.

NOV. 15, 8 p.m., LAPIDARY GROUP, H. Tchozeski, 2941 Edge-
wood N.E. See how Henry has progressed with the
carving he was demonstrating; bring your own att-
empts for help and evaluation.

NOV. 29, 8 p.m., MINERAL GROUP, Fay Reed, 425 Lafayette N.E.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hats off to Larry Fegel for his excellent talk, movies and slides of his Higgins Lake Conservation Camp experiences this summer. Again it's obvious that the club's scholarship to the camp is a good investment. And Larry, again we want to thank you for all your efforts with the Junior group. Your comments concerning an instructor for the '67-'68 program were appreciated very much.

How about you, club member? Wouldn't you like the opportunity to work with an eager group of youngsters on Saturday mornings? If you are interested, please contact your president or any member of the Board of Control. This is a very worthwhile project and you will be given help whenever asked. That's a promise.

Did you notice the bags of Michigan rocks and fossils handed out to our new members? This is the result of Elaine Smith's idea and efforts. The materials are unidentified, the idea being that if the new member doesn't know what a piece is, he or she will have to ask another club member, and thus become better acquainted. Good idea, Elaine.

A number of suggestions have been made as to how we can increase our membership. Some of these are as follows: Dick VanBeek suggests a special outside speaker once or twice a year. This has been discussed by your Board of Control and will be accomplished. Dick also suggests that former members be contacted and asked to rejoin the club.

Better publicity is another suggestion. Most churches and schools have weekly or monthly publications which will accept notices about activities in the city. Won't you insert a notice in your church or school bulletin about the club? How about posters displayed in stores or schools? Anyone have the talent? The club will furnish the materials.

Next month is one of "the" big meetings of the year--our annual silent auction. Please contribute lots of rocks and bring bundles of money. Invite your friends along (with their pocketbooks) too. They'll enjoy it.

Don Crabbs

G.R.M.S. HAS BUSY SEASON OF

EVENTS, ACTIVITIES AHEAD

Our famed Silent Auction, the starting of our Junior Group, a promised Christmas Party, special programs designed to help you know what sort of equipment might be best for tumbling, lapidary work or mineral identification -- these are some of the things being planned for the next few months.

SILENT AUCTION, Nov. 8 -- We need three things from each of you: material to sell, a willingness to buy, and some cookies (coffee will be provided free, cookies will be 5¢ ea.) Material: surely every club member could and should find or buy at least one slab, specimen or desirable material of some kind for the club auction. If at all possible, get it to one of the chairmen before the meeting (Don Crabbs, 1827 Millbrook S.E.; Jim VanVuren, 3281 S. Division in Grandville; Max Ross, 1017 Charlotte N.W.; or Bob Teunis, 1150 Ball N.E.) Material for the Connoisseur's Table should have a minimum value (bid) of \$3, and may be reclaimed if not sold by the end of the evening (we mean of at least \$3--it could be more). All other material remains the property of the club and is usually used for prizes and for our rock table sales preceding each meeting. The chairmen emphasize that this is our only money-raising event, with the expenses of such things as the Glacial Drifter, our March Show, and our Higgins Lake Scholarship being dependent upon its success. Your editor would like to add, however, that it works both ways -- and she always finds the auction not only exciting and lots of fun, but a source of real bargains in unusual and varied material. So bring your friends--and please donate cookies, too!

LES PEARL JUNIOR ROCKHOUNDS -- We really miss Larry Fegel's dedication and responsibility in taking over the Junior group completely last year, and it has been hard to find busy adults who can match that kind of time. However, in answer to Larry's moving plea for continuity in handling this group, Nellie Mead and Ruth Steele have volunteered to take the group for the first month. The class is open to any youngster between the ages of 9 and 15 years (enrollment will probably be limited to 35 members). Dues for the 20-week course will be \$2.00. The Conservation Dept's "Rocks and Minerals of Michigan" will be used as the basic teaching text, and Nellie will try to break it down into appropriate sections to cover the 20 weeks, with associated field trips, etc. The course will start on Saturday, Nov. 11, with Registration from 9-10 a.m., and class from 10-12. As was done last year, 5 or 6 of the group will be selected each week, on a rotating basis, to bring a bag lunch and stay for two hours of lapidary instruction in the afternoon, so that all may gain some experience in cutting and polishing stones. WE STILL NEED LEADERS AND HELP WITH THIS GROUP, help with field trips, etc. We are proceeding on faith, and we know you won't let us down. How about some of you men volunteering NOW?

CHRISTMAS PARTY'S A-COMIN! -- Wonderful potluck supper, plus gifts, plus a marvelous program you'll never forget! Save the date--Dec. 13!

WE'VE HAD REQUESTS for more information on how to get started with rock work, what equipment to get, etc. We're planning several special programs built around this in the near future, including possible pre-meeting lapidary demonstrations on the Museum equipment used by the Juniors, and a "Basement Field Trip" to show what some of our members have, use and do. More information next month.

GETTING TO KNOW --- WHO? --- WHY, YOU-ALL! ---

Richard VanBeek is a new Board of Control member who has taken on the duties of secretary for that group. If you haven't had a chance to meet him, get acquainted at the next meeting--he's a most enthusiastic and interested club member.....You'll be hearing more about our club in the future. We're working toward better publicity--newspaper stories, of course, but also special signs, interest sheets, special classes and courses, and a club brochure to be given out at schools, other clubs, shows, etc.....Larry Fegel will soon be joining the Coast Guard. Our very best wishes go with him--and do send us a bit of news about yourself from time to time, Larry..

...Esther Hall was last month's lucky winner of the Petoskey stone jewelry donated by Jerry Morris. Other winners included Bob Teunis, who got W. Iteen's fire agate; Nellie Mead, winning Dr. Rose's horn coral specimen; Jay Baar, with the Merrick's black jaspilite; and Dora Hurd, who got the pretty plant given by garden expert Nellie Mead.....Among the welcome visitors at the October meeting were Mr. and Mrs. George Arnold and sons, Mrs. Willem Clous, Keverne Kennedy, and A. J. Otlewski, who is a member of the Rock Exchange Club in Dearborn Heights. Mr. Otlewski makes it a practise, whenever he has a business trip, to consult the Midwest Federation Directory and see if there isn't a rock club meeting in that vicinity. Says he meets lots of interesting people and has a far more entertaining evening than sitting in a hotel room. On learning of our coming Silent Auction, he promptly brought in a number of specimens of the material sometimes known as Fordite, which he gave to the club. This highly colorful material is composed of many different layers of automobile enamels as they collect on the drying racks at the automobile plants. The stuff polishes beautifully and easily--as Mr. Otlewski quickly demonstrates by having you rub it with a small polishing cloth glued to a flat stick. If you noticed his own sculptured bola, you'll realize how intriguing it can be to work. Watch for it at the auction--you don't need special equipment to handle this!

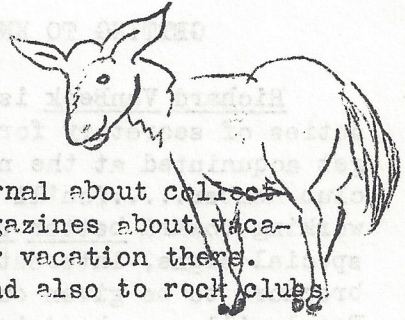
.....The Grand Valley Rock & Mineral Soc. has an interest project--an exchange of Michigan rock and fossil specimens for "lots of petrified wood, picture jasper, obsidian (gold and silver sheen and rainbow), thundereggs and other material" from the Portland Earth Science Organization of Portland, Ore. Sounds like fun. Could we find a similar contact?.....The Conglomerate News also calls our attention to the Oct. National Geographic Magazine, with its special picture map depicting the bottom of the Indian Ocean--the result of several years of intensive exploration, the geographical features shown are of outstanding interest.....Worth remembering--the Ariz. Fish & Game Dept. has issued a warning that wild animals can die if they eat discarded negatives from Polaroid cameras. You are urged to dispose of negatives in some other manner than throwing them wherever you are.

CARVING NOTES: Bored with cutting cabs? Try some carvings. Start with a flat relief carving for practise, then to the third dimension. Soft stones of good quality are best to start on, such as calcite onyx, alabaster and howlite. Fracture-free material is a must. Do not use small motorized hand tools in carving; they are not adapted to the long hard use. The ventilation system tends to pull the rock dust into the motor causing rapid wear; the shafts soon wear out also. The answer seems to be a medium weight, high speed flexible shaft with protected bearings and a good lubrication system. Too tight a nut on the operation end isn't helpful for good work. A vacuum arrangement to catch rock dust is a must for peace of mind and health.

--Hazel & Pete Feilen, "The Rockpile", Dearborn

MICHIGAN ROCKHOUNDS, WESTWARD HO !!

by Arthur A. Ferguson



After reading several articles in the Lapidary Journal about collecting in the High Country, and several more in trailer magazines about vacationing in Wyoming and Colorado, we decided to spend our vacation there. We wrote to several departments in the various states and also to rock clubs along the way to get as much info as possible.

When we left G.R. on Aug. 11, we had several months of planning and preparation behind us. But, "The best-laid plans...gang aft agley", and when we reached Iowa City we found that we had forgotten the Lapidary Journals and some other magazines that were supposed to be in the car.

The third day we stopped in a sand pit along the Platte R. near Cozad, to look for petrified wood and agate; many of these sand pits are open to the public. We stopped in Ogallala to see the replica of an old west Main St., then on to Chadron State Park in N.W. Nebraska for the night, stopping along the way to photograph some of the interesting buttes.

We camped two nights in Chadron State Park. This is a beautiful spot in the midst of pines and rock ridges with a small stream flowing through the park. The fee in Nebraska State Parks is only 50¢ a night and electric hookups are available at some sites. Monday we drove up to Mt. Rushmore, S. Dak. to see the stone faces, as well as the interesting geology there. We went through Custer State Pk. where there are many bison, antelope, prairie dogs and "wild" burros. We and many others fed the burros cookies. The park site at Mt. Rushmore has twisted and bent rock layers. The mountain near the carvings is similarly twisted. It is impossible not to marvel at the tremendous forces that formed these mountains and valleys.

On the way back to camp at Chadron, we visited Wind Cave Natl. Park. The name comes from the fairly constant wind that blows through the cave, caused by variations in atmospheric pressure. The cave, though very ordinary in many ways and not too large, is famous for its boxwork. This is formed when fissures in the rock are filled by mineral deposits from water seepage, and then later the base rock material is dissolved, leaving only the ridges. This boxwork is quite fragile and beautiful, some of it being translucent. As we were leaving the parking lot, we spotted a Kent Co. license and were surprised to find that the people were from Wyoming.

Tuesday we left Chadron headed toward Wyoming. We had read that agate is found near Crawford, Neb. and we had seen a map in one of our forgotten books. We stopped for gas in Crawford and learned to our surprise that the station is run by Eli Wasserburger, the man who had published the map. He gave us a copy of it, and directions. About 18 miles N.W. of Crawford, we stopped to decide where to begin hunting. As we got out of the car, we saw pieces of agate in the road. Imagine driving on agate! This is public land so no permission is needed to enter. It is fenced and grazing rights leased so the gates must be closed afterwards. We picked up vein agate, prairie agates and jasper here. Then on to Glendo State Park, Wyo.

Glendo was the collecting highlight of our trip. We obtained a permit

(Westward, Ho! --con't.)

from Eloxite Corp. in Wheatland to collect on their property. We also bought a few specimens from their museum-showroom. At the north end of Glendo Reservoir we mined stalactite agate. We met a man from St. Louis, Mo., who had started a dig up the hill. He offered to let us in on his claim if we would help him work it. We agreed and clawed our way up the hill around Mesquite, loose rocks and sagebrush for quite a ways, making several stops to catch our breath. This was our introduction to hard rock mining. We dug the sand out of a small cave and then using heavy hammers and chisels, we carved out some beautiful agate. Our friend also swapped us some Youngite, a similar material from nearby, for some Nebraska agate. We spent two nights at Glendo camped under the Ponderosa pines. Every one of the 19 days of our trip, we had blue skies with enough white clouds to make the best pictures. While there we had the first on only two nights of showers. It did not even get the paper bags of rocks wet.

After a night at a commercial camp in Rawlins, we drove to Wamsutter, where we left the trailer at a gas station. Then we went out in the red desert to look for turritella agate. About 14 miles out in the desert we had a flat. While we were changing it, a car came along, asked if they could help, and remarked that only a rockhound would be crazy enough to be out there. It was a Baptist minister, his wife and another couple from Texas also looking for turritella. We all loaded up with it. Incidentally, the annual rainfall here is only six inches. Back in Wamsutter, we bought a new tire, tanked up and drove to Green River for the night.

Saturday we bought Wyo. fishing licenses and went down to Flaming Gorge to try our luck. Many nice trout were being brought in, but we left our luck in Mich. We camped that night at Buckboard Crossing near the Gorge. The road here is gravel for a few miles through Sheep Canyon. This is a well known geological study area. The rock formations must be seen to be appreciated. After a stop at the Dinosaur Museum in Vernal, Utah, we camped nearby in a commercial campground.

Monday we started back east from Utah and drove down to Ouray, Colo. The road carried us through several large oilfields. Wyoming is noted for ranching and cattle raising, while Colorado is a mining and oil producing state. At Ouray we picked up ore specimens from mine dumps. At this camp, as at several others, we met people from Mich. or formerly from Mich. For me this is one of the many joys of camping, that is meeting and talking to the many friendly people along the way.

Tuesday, Aug. 22, up at 4 a.m. to drive down to Durango for the narrow gauge steam ride on the Rio Grande R.R. to Silverton. This is a real mountain drive through three passes all over 10,000 ft., one over 11,000. The train ride is well worth the \$6.50 fare for the scenery alone, with the additional fun of riding again behind a steam locomotive. The track follows along the Las Animas Perdidas (Lost Souls) river. It climbs nearly 3000 ft. in its 45-mile run to Silverton. At one point the train overhangs a 400 ft. cliff with the river at the bottom. Silverton is a living ghost town which exists mainly on tourist trade. As we got off the train, we were approached by several small children with rock specimens in boxes. At camp we had been told about them so we looked over their wares eagerly, but

(Westward, Ho! --con't.)

they didn't have another specimen of quartz crystals like the lady at camp had bought from them. We did find one in a rock shop nearby at a reasonable price. The kids did have some other specimens of ore which we bought. The drive back through the mountains was a little hairy as it got dark and we had to drive through the Red.Mt. pass in the rain. This was the last rain for the whole $2\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, and stopped at a lower elevation.

Camped at Gunnison, elevation nearly 8000 ft., and it was the coldest morning we had, 40° at 7 a.m. The camp manager had told us to expect freezing temperatures but we were not unhappy to have it warmer. Then we continued east through the highest pass of the trip, and the only one we hauled the trailer through. This was Monarch Pass, 11,312 ft. Near Canon City we visited Royal Gorge and the highest suspension bridge in the world. It is 1053 ft. above the Arkansas River and the Rio Grande R.R. It is a wooden plank suspension bridge and it sways a little in the wind, and the boards rock as the cars pass. We walked across, taking pictures a little nervously. Spent the night at Pueblo, Colo. in a commercial camp.

Friday we bid a sad farewell to the mountains and went across the plains to Dodge City, Kan. We did not see Marshall Dillon, but we did see the Long Branch and Boot Hill at the replica of old Main St. Sat. on to Nevada, Mo. for the night. We had planned to go to and from the west as fast as practical in order to have as much time as possible in the far west. So we did not do much collection in the between-states.

Sunday we drove up and down around El Dorado Springs looking for agate geodes. All we found was some gemmy chert and fossils. As we pulled into camp in St. Louis, we popped the welds loose on the trailer hitch. So we dropped anchor in the middle of the camp driveway. No harm had been done, do after a \$6 weld job, we were on the way again Monday morning. We reached home Tuesday afternoon in fine shape, with many pounds of food less, and many pounds of rocks more in the trailer. We had covered over 4400 miles, and we are ready to go back again any time.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We're glad you had such a wonderful time, and particularly appreciate your taking the trouble to write this up and thus share your experiences with us. We hope other club members will do likewise. Any club members planning a trip in these areas can see Art for more helpful hints and details.)

FLINT SHOW CANCELLED: A note from Show Chairman M.R.Gingery says, "The Flint Gem & Mineral Show, which was to be held Oct. 21, 22 1967, had to be cancelled. Due to the riots in Detroit last summer, the National Guardsmen have been ordered to drill every weekend. Therefore, we have been denied the facilities of the Natl. Guard Armory that we had rented for two years....Our club at its last regular meeting voted to have a Show in the spring of the year if we can find adequate facilities which we can use year after year....Please pass this information to your members."

THE ART OF SWAPPING

Swapping can be lots of fun if you know how. Most of us swap with friends and club members all the time but get cold feet at the very thought of swapping with strangers at shows or swap fests. This can be the most fun of all, and it is one of the most painless ways to get to recognize cutting materials, minerals, etc.

The first rule is: LEAVE THE CRUD AT HOME. If you don't want it, what makes you think someone else does? Take a good variety of material with you and a few extra pieces. At first you'll probably get the short end of a lot of trades, but you will also come home with several extra nice slabs or specimens to add to your collection. As the price of learning, it's worth it, and now you know which is your most desirable material.

You don't need to know the dollar value of a piece of material unless you are a dealer. What you do need to know is the quality and/or rarity of the material being offered to you. Once you have learned this, don't hesitate--because someone else will have that good piece before you make up your mind.

Bring at least three grades of material. Take one plastic dishpan full of slabs. Some cabbings quality, some good only for tables. Trade this group one for one. Forget the value. This keeps trading active and helps the beginners gain confidence in themselves. The second group be a little more particular about. The third, your premium group, should be traded for something outstanding and something you want--try not to duplicate.

Now you have arrived at the swapping area and assigned a spot. What will you do now? Put your material out but keep your prizes in your car. Then look the tables over and see if there is anything you want to trade your prizes for. Well, I've got news for you. You're not as clever as you thought. 90% of those there have done exactly the same thing. Put ALL of your material on display and learn to say "NO" if you are not satisfied with the trade offered. After all, it's easier to tell a stranger "no" than a friend. Then soften the blow and offer to trade anything in group 1 or 2 or both for what he has.

Don't let the pitiful looking old gentleman in the baggy overalls and the knapsack over his shoulder fool you. He'll pick out a prized slab or plume agate and offer you an apache tear for it and it will nearly break your heart. Keep him digging in his knapsack until he comes up with something you want or until he decides that he just might have something better in his camper. Then set aside the things he wants and wait until he gets back before you trade them off. You'll be amazed at the lovely crystals he'll come back with. Then trade!!!!

I prefer to do my swapping with rockhounds and my buying from dealers. If you are a beginner or couldn't bring material with you, buy a few slabs, etc. from a dealer and start swapping. I know a girl who bought 2 slices of Brazilian agate and 2 Mex. nodules which she had sawed free in a working exhibit, and shee traded all afternoon at a federation show.

--from The Agatizer, via Esconi

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