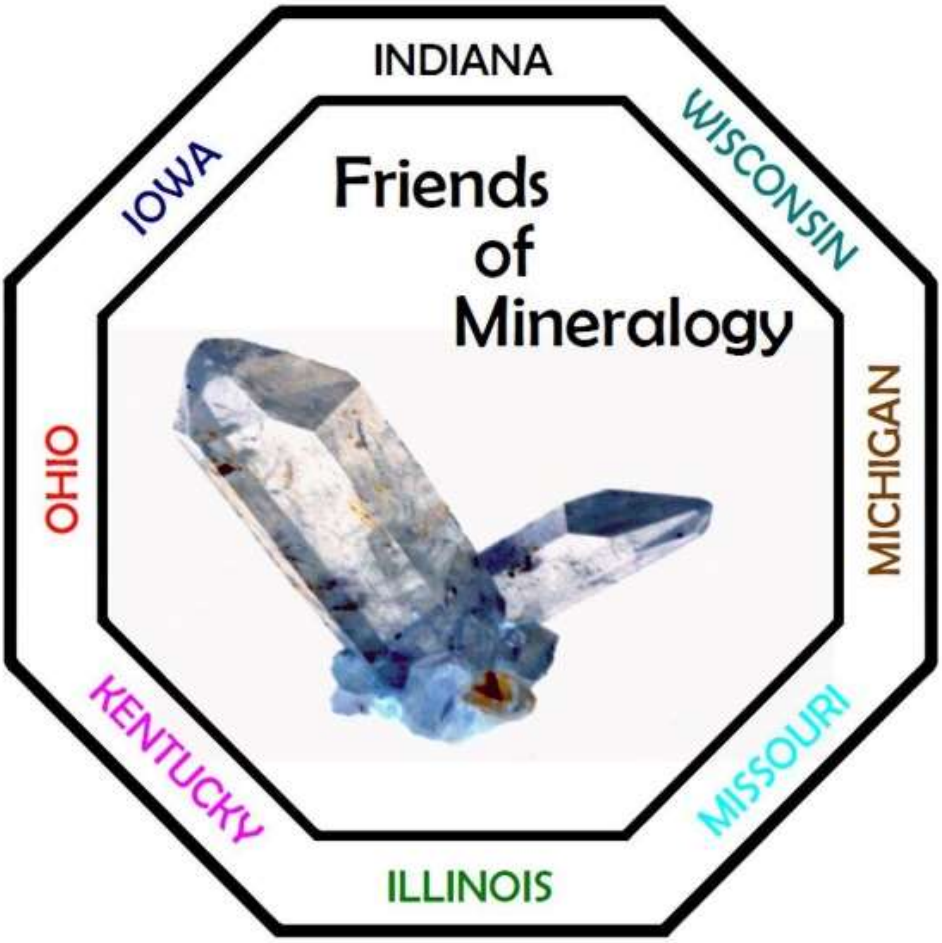
FRIENDS of MINERALOGY Midwest



Chapter Newsletter for September – October 2021

Congratulations!

Dr. John C. Medici Wins the 2020 Carnegie Mineralogical Award

"The award honors outstanding contributions in mineralogical preservation, conservation, and education"

Click the link below to view the article from the Carnegie Museum of Natural History website.

https://carnegiemnh.org/press/dr-john-c-medici-wins-the-2020-carnegie-mineralogical-award/

Help Wanted!

The 76th Annual Greater Detroit Gem, Mineral Fossil & Jewelry Show is scheduled to take place on October 8, 9 & 10 at Macomb County Community College South Campus's Sports & Expo Center. It is Michigan's largest show, and it features over 60 dealers, displays by the A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum, Cranbrook Institute, Wayne State University and Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, live talks, children's activities and more. The show's theme was changed in July, it is now "Discovering Earth's Treasures". The hours are: Friday 11-6; Saturday 10-7; Sunday 11-5. Those who've previously attended will note that the show begins later on Friday. The busloads of students who usually attended from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM will not be at the show this year.

FM Midwest had educational tables at the last two events (2018 and 2019), and we will once again have a table at this year's event. It will include information about our organization, specimens, and theme-related information. We will answer visitor's questions, provide a bit of information about our group, and help with mineral identification. We are looking for volunteers to assist at the table, and anyone who is interested can contact Frank Konieczki at secretary@fommidwest.org for further information.

Datolite

By Frank Konieczki

Datolite is a basic calcium boron silicate mineral $CaB(Si0_4)(OH)$ that occurs in schists, tuffs, skarns, and most often as a secondary hydrothermal mineral in mafic igneous rocks, such as basalt[1]. It is a widespread but relatively uncommon mineral, and some of its most frequent associates are quartz, calcite, prehnite, copper, danburite, and zeolites.

Datolite most often presents as blunt, wedge shaped to short prismatic crystals that are colorless, pale green or pink, red, or grayish tinged, are clear to translucent and have vitreous luster (See Fig. 1). Its crystal symmetry is monoclinic and most crystals are under 1 cm, but some large crystals (6 cm or more) have been collected from San Luis Potosi, Mexico, and formerly in Michigan. Its hardness is 5-5.5, its specific gravity is 2.8-3.0, and it exhibits irregular cleavage.

Figure 1. Cluster of datolite crystals, size unknown. Photo courtesy of R. Weller/ Cochise College.

Notable worldwide locations for datolite include Russia, Japan, Norway, Germany, Italy, Austria, Mexico, and the United States. Fine specimens have been extracted from numerous sites in the Eastern U.S., including: Hartford Co., Connecticut; Hudson, Essex and Passaic Counties, New Jersey; Hampden Co., Massachusetts; Loudoun and Prince William Counties, Virginia.

Excellent datolite crystals that are similar to the previously referenced locales have been taken from about half a dozen mines in the Keweenaw Peninsula. Houghton County locations where crystalline datolite has been collected are Osceola (which yielded crystals to 5 cm) and Laurium, and the Keweenaw County sites are Copper Falls, North Cliff, Agency, and Clark[2].

Another form of datolite is unique to Michigan's Ontonagon, Houghton, and Keweenaw counties and also a few sites on the north shore of Lake Superior in Minnesota. Most of the datolite in these locations is found as nodules in amygdaloidal basalt, and also in veins filling fractures in the host rock and in conglomerate lodes. The nodules are generally small, but nodules exceeding 30 cm diameter have been discovered. Although datolite nodules' exteriors are most often lumpy and drab gray to brown, they can be attractive display pieces. Rough specimens are often cut and polished so that their interiors are revealed, and they are often exhibited as pairs. This datolite is usually opaque, but is sometimes translucent, and in Michigan, it comes in a wide array of colors. White, pink, red, orange, reddish-brown, and gray are the most common colors, but blue, green, and yellow are also found, and the latter three are the most prized colors for collectors. There are also specimens that are zoned and/or multi-chambered and these may include several colors (See Fig. 2 & Fig. 3).

Figure 2. Translucent, multi-celled datolite in epidote matrix, 9.3 cm., Nebraska Mine, Mass City, Ontonagon Co., MI. Author's collection and photograph.

Inclusions of finely disseminated copper and chalcotrichite impart red, pink, orange, and reddish-brown hues to many of the datolite specimens found in this region. Blue-green dots in specimens, most notably from Centennial Mine, are due to oxidized copper inclusions. Datolite nodules in Minnesota are almost exclusively white.

Some of the world's finest examples of Keweenaw Peninsula datolite are on display at the A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum in Houghton, MI, along with superb displays of other minerals from worldwide locations. The museum is renowned for its collections of Keweenaw Copper District and Lake Superior Iron District minerals, and also for other comprehensive mineral displays. Photographs of several outstanding datolite specimens may be viewed online by visiting the museum's website and choosing the A.E. Seaman Collection portion of the portrait gallery.

Visit https://museum.mtu.edu/ and follow the links to Collections and then A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum Collection.

Figure 3. Datolite nodules from Mesnard Mine, Hancock, Houghton Co, MI. Largest specimen is approximately 10 cm. Photo courtesy of A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum.

The most common source of the nodules are the poor rock piles of the now closed copper mines, but datolite can also (but infrequently) be found on the shores of Lake Superior, and also on its floor[3]. The vast majority of the closed mine properties are private and closed to collecting; however, there are several opportunities for obtaining access to these sites. The A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum continues to host Keweenaw Mineral Days, a series of events that include lectures and mineral auctions/sales, and it also includes mineral collecting events at several mines, including several known to produce good quality datolite. Details pertaining to the events are available at the museum's website. Additionally, the Copper Country Rock and Mineral Club sponsors collecting trips for its members. The Caledonia Mine in Ontonagon County had been open from June through August for mineral collecting by reservation until 2018. Most recently, the mine was then owned and operated by Evergreen Explorations, LLC, who had succeeded Red Metal Minerals, Inc. as the owner, but another possible change in ownership has rendered future collecting at this famous location uncertain.

Datolite and native copper in basalt matrix 5.6 cm, Mass Mine, Mass City, Ontonagon Co. MI. Author's collection and photo.

The author has made numerous forays to Michigan's Upper Peninsula to collect minerals, including datolite, over the last dozen years. Searching for the nodules is certainly challenging. They are almost always small and unbroken nodules are very difficult to detect because the exterior colors are almost identical to the host rock. These trips yielded datolite nodules from Caledonia Mine (about 60 specimens collected 2008-2012), Central Exploration (2013), Wolverine #2 (2015), Delaware Mine (2015) and Mandan Gravel Pit (2016, 2018) as well as a single specimen of well-worn, copper included crystals from Laurium Mine (2019). Of these, a few are especially interesting. First, a 9.0 cm datolite and quartz specimen collected at Caledonia Mine contains several sprays of pinkish natrolite, which is an uncommon association in Michigan. Second, a pair of datolite nodules collected at Delaware Mine contain small, well-formed pumpellyite Inclusions. Last, one datolite after prehnite pseudomorph was recovered from Central Exploration Mine. It is certainly not very showy, but relatively rare and very interesting!

Bibliography

1. **Chesterton, Charles W. (1976). *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Rocks and Minerals*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf**
2. **Robinson, G. W. (2004). *Mineralogy of Michigan-Revised and updated*. Houghton, MI: A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum, Michigan Technological University**
3. **Lynch, Dan R. & Bob. *Michigan Rocks and Minerals*. Cambridge, MN: Adventure Publications**

Sylvania Quarry, South Rockwood, Michigan

Several members from FM joined with the Dayton Gem and Mineral Society on a field trip to the South Rockwood Quarry on July 10th. A special thanks to Kathy Bailey for arranging the trip.

There was plenty of material for everyone to look through, I believe everyone found some nice specimens. Johan Maertens collected this (above right) very nice Celestine spray. Tip to base (beyond calcite) = 80 mm = 3 1/4". Calcite = 19 mm on edge.

The collecting including some very hard rock. The result of trying to work some of this material is shown below. This FM member will have a tough time straightening these pins!

Obituary

John D. Vasichko

John D. “Bud” Vasichko, age 76, of Wooster Ohio passed away peacefully wrapped by the love of his family on Friday, August 6, 2021 at Lifecare Hospice in Wooster Ohio after a difficult journey with Pancreatic Cancer and Kidney Disease.

John was born March 21, 1945 in Columbus, Ohio and was the son of John J. Vasichko and Louise K. (Shust) Vasichko. On March 16, 1974 he married the love of his life Mary J. Parker of Columbus, OH at Saint James the Less in Columbus, OH.

Surviving In addition to his wife, Mary are daughter Jennifer (Vasichko) George (Sam George) of Shreve and son Joseph Vasichko (Paula Vasichko) of Wooster, grandchildren Zachary George and Bethany George, sister-in-law Marianne Parker, sister-in-law Betty Ann Rudisill (Terry Rudisill) and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, in-laws Elizabeth (Gerber Parker) Schultz and Lee Schultz, James Parker, sister Barb (Vasichko) Loos, brother-in-law Don Loos and brother-in law John Parker.

John grew up in Obetz, Ohio and attended Aquinas High School, later earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Industrial Engineering from the Ohio State University. As an engineer, he worked for The Jeffrey Company in Columbus OH, Hart and Cooley in Holland, MI, The Akron Brass Company in Wooster, OH and Bauer Corporation of Wooster, OH. John retired from the Bauer Corporation as vice-president in 2015 after 30 years of service to the company.

John’s greatest enjoyment in life was supporting his children’s and subsequently his grandchildren’s interests, school activities, and sports teams. In all respects, he was the model family man, father, and mentor. He spent countless hours developing the softball pitching talent of his daughter, traveling to cheer at various elementary, junior high, high school, and college ball games, attending his son’s concerts and musicals, helping with 4-H and science fair projects and just spending time with the family.

In his younger years, John enjoyed small game hunting with his cousins and father and was particularly fond of squirrel, rabbit, pheasant and grouse. Later in life, John spent hundreds of evenings in the warmer months at Shreve Lake and other local ponds fishing for Bluegill and Crappie with his son. He

often commented that it was “The Best Eating Fish Around”.

From a young age, John’s hobby was collecting rocks and minerals. John spent a great deal of time collecting with his close friends Douglas Core and Fred Rentzl and then later with his son as well. John had a particular interest in North American Minerals as well as personally collected minerals from Ohio, the Midwest United States, and Ontario, Canada. As part of his collecting interests, he designed and built custom drawer cabinets to display his mineral collection. John was a member of the Columbus Rock and Mineral Society for more than 50 years and was instrumental in organizing many of the first organized gem mineral and fossil shows for the club.

John was an active member of the Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Wooster, Ohio. He served faithfully in the Saint Vincent de Paul Society for which he went on many home visits to provide prayerful support, guidance, and financial support to those in need.

Mass of Christian Burial will be Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Wooster with Rev. Fr. Stephen Moran officiating. Burial will follow at St. Mary's Cemetery in Wooster.

Visitation will be Monday from 6 - 8 p.m. at Custer-Glenn Funeral Home , 2284 Benden Dr., in Wooster. The Rosary Prayer Service will be held at the funeral home at 5:30 p.m. Monday.

(The family requests that no flowers to be sent due to severe allergies)

Memorial contributions may be made in lieu of flowers: The Saint Vincent de Paul Society, c/o St. Mary Church, 527 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691, or Ohio's Hospice LifeCare, 1900 Akron Rd., Wooster, Ohio 44691.

Words of private or public condolences may be shared with the family at: www.custerglenn.com.

Custer-Glenn Funeral Home in Wooster is privileged with serving the family.

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Our purpose is to organize and promote interest in and knowledge of mineralogy; to advance mineralogical education; to protect and preserve mineral specimens and promote conservation of mineral localities; to further cooperation between amateur and professional and encourage collection of minerals for educational value; and to support publications about mineralogy and about the programs of kindred organizations.