

The Danburite

The Danbury Mineralogical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 2642, Danbury, Connecticut 06810-2642

JANUARY 2010

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PAGE 1

NEXT REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY FEBRUARY 4, 2010
DOORS OPEN AT 7:00 PM - MEETING STARTS AT 7:30 PM
THE MEETING WILL BE AT THE MILL RIDGE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
DMS WEBSITE <http://www.danburymineralogicalsociety.org>
AFMS WEBSITE <http://www.amfed.org/> EFMLS WEBSITE <http://www.amfed.org/efmls/>



Feldspar with graphite - Limecrest Quarry - Sparta NJ

H.Henning photo

JANUARY MEETING

**WILL BE OUR ANNUAL SEMINAR AT
CHUCKS STEAK HOUSE**

IN DANBURY CT ON SUNDAY JAN. 10

see the December Danburite if you need more Information

The speaker is **Ted Johnson** and the program is

Mineral Collecting in Southern California

This trip starts out in the Mojave desert where we collect Barite crystals in the old underground workings of Lead Mountain.

Still in the Mojave, we travel to the small town of Boron to collect at the extensive workings of U.S. Borax mine. There are numerous Boron minerals to be found here, including Colemanite,

Ulexite, Tunnelite and others. From here we shift focus to the main objective of this trip.

PEGMATITES. The highlight of the trip is the rare opportunity to collect underground at one of the most famous gem mines in North America. the Himalaya mine. Here we'll collect gem tourmaline crystals along with other pegmatite minerals.

We'll also collect at other famous San Diego Co. pegmatites, such as the Stewart Lithia mine and the Maple Load mine.

The talk finishes up with a selection of slides showing the wonderful minerals found in San Diego Co. and neighboring Riverside Co.

PRESIDENT	Jack Pawloski, Squash Hollow Road, New Milford CT 06776 (860) 354-0296	e-mail j.a.pawloski@att.net
VICE PRESIDENT	Robert Burke, 9 Prospect Court, Brookfield, CT 06804 (203) 775-7032	e-mail rburke04@snet.net
SECRETARY	Susan Margolis, 51 Caudatowe Drive, Ridgefield, CT 06877	e-mail animalsculpture@aol.com
TREASURER	Pat Hackett 1 Lakeview Road, New Milford, CT 06776 (860) 355-9799	e-mail prh@prhackett.com
MEMBERS AT LARGE	Hank & Meryl Silverstein, 129 Dannell Dr., Stamford CT 06905 (203) 588-0026 John Schroder, 41 Buddington Road, Shelton CT 064812 note new address Rick Sinclair, 275 South Kent Road, South Kent CT 06785 (860) 927-4454	e-mail merylandhank@optonline.net e-mail rsinclair03@snet.net
WEBMASTER	Pat Hackett e-mail prh@prhackett.com	
Bulletin Editor	Hank Henning e-mail hank@bestweb.net	

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

December 25, 2009

I am writing this Christmas morning before all the family gathers to celebrate this joyous day. This is the first of my monthly messages as President to DMS members. As many of you know, I have been a member since just after time began, and have held office numerous times. You could say I have been a dedicated member, and will continue as long as possible.

As you know, the DMS has had a few struggling years recently, lacking a president, no field trips, poor meeting attendance, etc. It is my wish to reverse this trend and breathe new life into the club. But to do this I will need your help since no one person can do everything. To start, I will need a field trip coordinator, auction organizer, and someone to plan the picnic to be held in conjunction with the museum's mineral swap/show.

To start the ball rolling, I will coordinate a collecting trip to Arkansas for quartz crystals. This trip will take place from October 23 to October 30. There are numerous mines where fantastic crystals can be found. You should be able to fill buckets with quartz. Let me know if you might be able to go on this trip.

Planning on making a New Year's resolution? How about choosing to be a volunteer and help make the DMS a more vibrant, active club. Let me know how you would like to help.

In ending I hope that all of you have a happy and healthy 2010, and that all your collecting pails be filled with beautiful minerals.

Jack Pawloski

THE NEW 2010 DMS OFFICERS

President	Jack Pawloski
Vice President	Robert Burke
Treasurer	Patrick Hackett
Secretary	Susan Margolis

DECEMBER MEETING NOTES

The December meeting included a short business session. Acting President Jack Pawloski presided. Officers were elected for 2010. There were no additional nominees to those reported in the December Danburite. Bob Burke led a discussion about the final arrangements for the January Seminar. If the weather turns out to be a problem and the Seminar is canceled, the new date will be scheduled and announced. We could not get an automatic commitment from the restaurant for the following weekend. Bob Burke also reported on his investigation toward using the Brookfield Library for meeting during the summer months when the Schools are closed. He will try to arrange to have the next BOD meeting at this location. There were no other reports.

The program for the evening was a demonstration and discussion of flint knapping and stone tool making by Jeff Kalin. Below is a photo of Jeff and his stone materials as he produced some very fine stone arrow heads and knives.

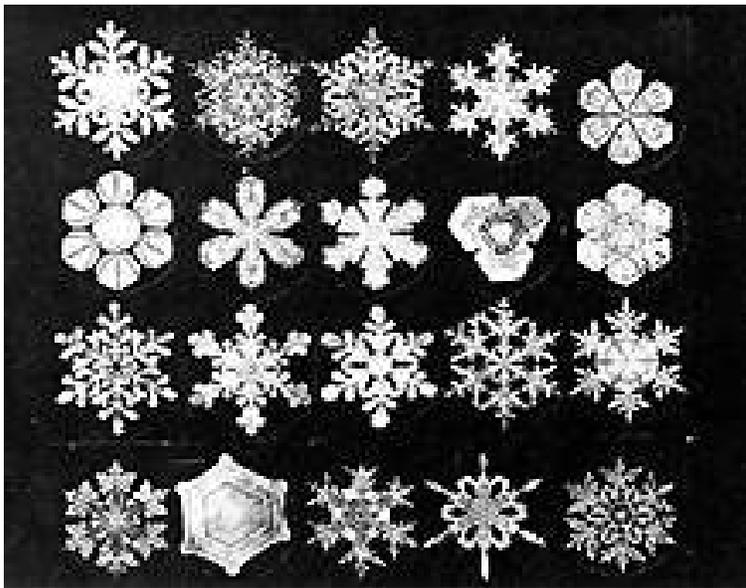


The scheduled December BOD meeting was canceled because we could not get access to the Brookfield Library for the meeting

SNOW CRYSTALS

ARE EVERYWHERE THIS TIME OF YEAR

by Hank Henning



from W.A. Bentley "Snow Crystals"

Snow Crystals or Snowflakes are indeed minerals, but they get little attention as minerals form rockhounds because [notwithstanding that deep snow everywhere in New England this year] you cannot easily collect them. Even if they didn't melt so quickly, even a skilled micromounter would have a difficult time creating a display of snow flakes. They are very small and very fragile and they evaporate quite rapidly, even while still frozen.

A snow crystal is not only a beautiful thing to behold, but if you can see it properly it is a super example of how crystals form in nature. If you happen to be a rockhound with an interest in doing something a bit different you might consider collecting and photographing snow crystals. Others have begun to examine snow crystals, but there is still a lot that hasn't been seen yet. For example, I still haven't seen a **3d** picture of a large snow crystal. You will need to build your own custom microscope to work outdoors in the coldest winter weather. Once you have designed and built the apparatus, you will likely spend years collecting and photographing the tiny crystals. But, in the north, rockhounds do need to find something to do waiting for the weather to moderate so we can collect "real" rocks again.

There have been a few trailblazers who have collected snowflakes and made some fine pictures in the short time before they were gone, melted away or simply evaporated into the cold dry air of winter.

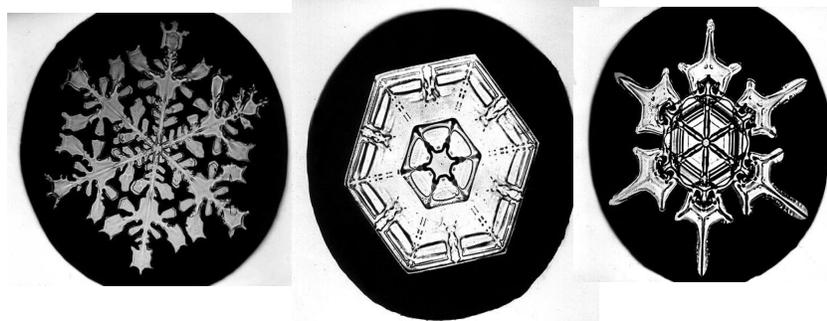
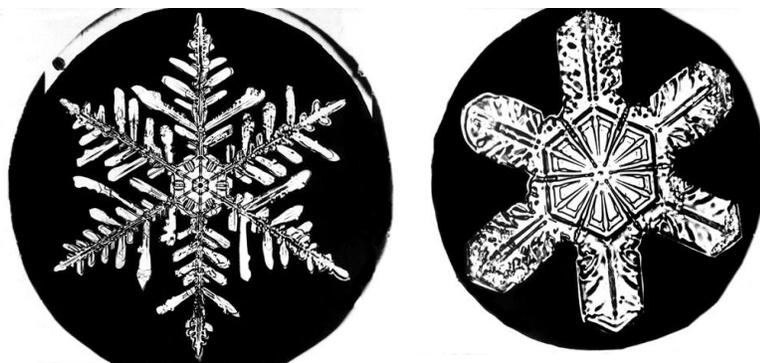
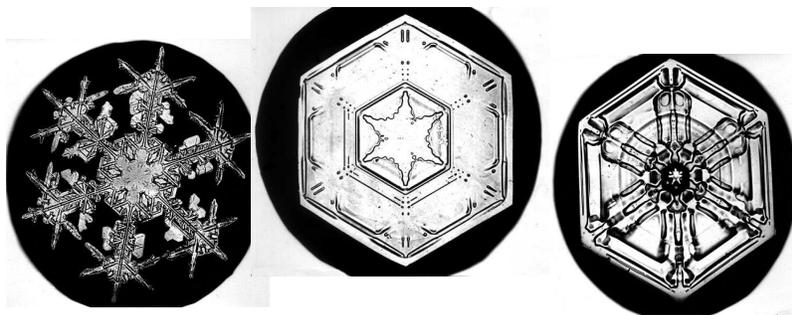
The first snowflake pioneer photographer we know about was a gentleman from Vermont named

Wilson A. Bentley. The snowflake images shown here are from his book published in 1931. The photos are in the public domain because he did not copyright his book. You can learn more about Mr. Bentley's work on the internet. One place to start is the website of the Jericho Historical Society.

<http://www.jerichohistoricalsociety.org/>

Click on the link below and discover the archive of the annual snowflake newsletter.....

<http://www.snowflakebentley.com/news.htm#n13>



More recent and more advanced work has been done by Kenneth G. Libbrecht. This professor at Caltech has created his own snowcrystal photography gear and has made an extensive collection of snowflake photographs. He has published the photos in several books and he maintains a website describing his work and his equipment in detail. The link is here.....

<http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/>

EFMLS Convention - March 2010

from The Delaware Mineralogical Society

The Delaware Mineralogical Society invites you to join us for our 47th Annual Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show, which will be held in conjunction with the 60th EFMLS Annual Convention. The event takes place from Friday through Sunday, March 5-7, 2010 in Stanton, Delaware.

Our club is honored to host the convention and we look forward to all the excitement and camaraderie that comes with the convention. The theme of the show is '50 Years, 50 States', which alludes to our club's celebration of 50 years as an incorporated mineral society. We plan to have many exhibits showcasing the official rocks, minerals, gems, and fossils of all 50 States.

Stanton, Delaware borders the port of Wilmington, our largest city. We are located about 30 miles from Philadelphia, and can be reached by several major airports, Interstate 95, Amtrak, and by boat. Our area has a full range of amenities, such as modest to premium lodgings, great local and starred eating establishments, and entertainment from museums to nightlife. Just about 1 mile from our show is Delaware Park, a prime entertainment complex. National and natural history abound throughout northern Delaware and Philadelphia. Various historic sites mark the events and places on the founding of our nation, all within about 30 miles of our show. From architectural tours of 'The First State' places in New Castle County to the Liberty Bell in Philly, a vast array of stone architecture underlies our forefathers' lifestyle. You can witness garnet schists and gneisses which constitute Delaware's Piedmont Province. Our famous Wilmington Blue Rock, aka Brandywine Blue Gneiss, is prevalent in long-standing buildings and stone walls crisscrossing our hilly expanses. In fact, our city's Carolina League baseball team is the Wilmington Blue Rocks. (Note the rockhammer in their logo.)

For rockhounds, we offer newly renovated University of Delaware Mineralogical Museum in Newark. Director Sharon Fitzgerald has reorganized the displays by State. An adjoining building houses the Delaware Geological Survey whose lobby hosts a fine collection of Delaware minerals and fossils. And, the Iron Hill Museum nearby has the largest collection of Delaware Minerals in the county.

Within the walls of the Delaware Natural History Museum in Wilmington and The Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia lie dinosaurs for your perusal.

The Conservatory at Longwood Gardens

Though winter here, Longwood Gardens boasts grand conservatories housing tropical plants and luxurious fountains, some reminiscent of paleoclimates.

The Show

Our Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show takes place at Delaware Technical & Community College, just off of Interstate 95, Stanton exit. Show hours are Saturday 10-6 and Sunday 11-5. The show has 19 dealers, featuring minerals, fossils, gems, beads, jewelry-making tools and supplies, and lapidary items. We have educational exhibits, a large fluorescent mineral display hall, and lapidary demonstrations. Our junior booth offers tons of specimens and rough at rock bottom prices. We have a raffle, door prizes, cafeteria, and ample free parking. You can see pictures of our past shows by visiting our website <www.delminsociety.net> and clicking on the "March Show" tab.

Convention Hotel

The convention hotel will be the Hilton, located just a few minutes from the show. Other nearby hotels include the Fairfield Inn and Hampton Inn. We'll have more information about lodging and the show next month and in the convention packets that will be mailed out shortly.

WILDACRES

Each year the EFMLS sponsors two 1 week long "workshops" at Wildacres, in North Carolina. The first 1 week session in the Spring and another in the Fall. Many interesting courses are available during the week, taught by experienced EFMLS members and other experts in crafts of interest to rockhounds and lapidaries. This year the Spring session is April 23-29 and the Fall session is September 6-12. Additional information including class schedules and application forms for both sessions can be found in the January EFMLS bulletin which can be downloaded as a PDF file from this link.....<http://www.amfed.org/efmls/efjan10.pdf>

WHAT IS A GEM?

"A 'gem' is a gemstone that has been cut, polished and/or shaped to make it more beautiful."

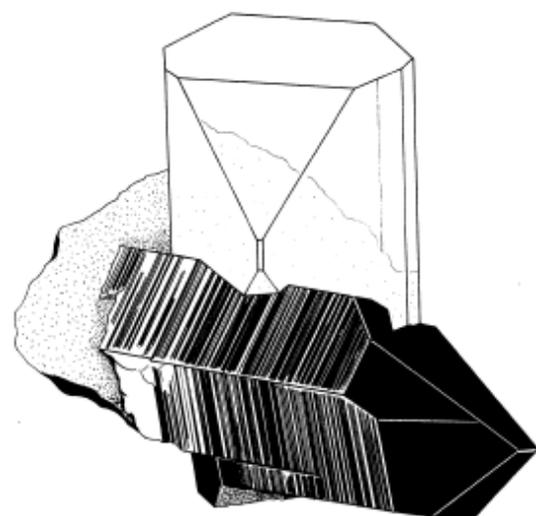
There is a difference between a "gem" and a "gemstone." A gem is the final cut and polished object. A gemstone is usually a mineral, but sometimes another natural material, in its untouched, natural form.

For a mineral to be considered a gemstone, it has to have three basic properties. First, it has to be colorful and beautiful to look at. Second, it has to be hard enough to be able to be shaped, cut or polished.

Its hardness is also important because gems are worn in jewelry, so a gemstone has to be hard enough to be worn in jewelry without being easily scratched, chipped or damaged. Third, a gemstone has to be rare.

Most gemstones are minerals. A mineral is a naturally occurring substance that was not created by a living organism and that has a known chemical formula and a regular internal crystal structure. Diamonds, rubies and emeralds are minerals.

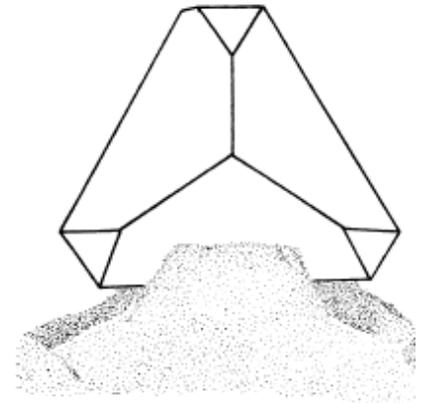
Opal is considered a gemstone, too. Opal is not really a mineral because it does not have a crystal structure.



There are also some gemstones that are naturally occurring, but were created by living organisms. Well-known examples of this category are amber and pearls.

Above: A dark blue benitoite from San Benito County, California

Left: A golden brown topaz crystal on smoky quartz from Pakistan.



The Danbury Mineralogical Society Inc. is a non profit corporation and is affiliated with: The Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Soc. and The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Meetings are held at 8:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month from October to June in the Mill Ridge Primary OR Middle School, at High Ridge Road off Mill Ridge Road, Danbury, Connecticut. Visitors and guests are welcome at all meetings. The January meeting is usually a dinner seminar. There are no meetings in July. August is preparation time for the annual mineral and jewelry show in September. Junior Club members meet at 7:00 pm before the regular meeting.

Our last dues increase was in 2002 to cover the increasing cost of the bulletin and liability and accident insurance to cover the members on field trips and other club activities. The current membership dues are \$12.50 per adult individual / \$17.50 per family (including children under 18) \$ 7.50 for students and senior citizens. Only dues paying members are covered by our liability and accident insurance and receive the print version of the *Danburite*.

The particular objectives for which this Society is formed are:

- To promote general interest in mineralogy
- To study rocks, minerals, fossils and the lapidary arts through lectures and discussion groups and field trips.
- To encourage the search for minerals indigenous to our areas
- **To keep an accurate and permanent record of all mineral localities visited by this society and to make such records available to all members.**

The Danburite is published monthly except July and August by the Danbury Mineralogical Society, Inc. The Danburite may be quoted and unless otherwise noted all material may be reprinted provided credit is given to the author and the Danburite. The Editor, the officers of the Danbury Mineralogical Society and The Danbury Mineralogical Society Inc. are not responsible for the accuracy or authenticity of information in articles accepted for publication, nor are the opinions expressed therein necessarily those of the editor and the officers and other members of the Danbury Mineralogical Society Inc.

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The Danbury Mineralogical Society, Inc. January 2010

Henry Henning, Ed. 1234 Peekskill Hollow Road, Carmel NY



IS SNOW
A MINERAL
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