

The Central Michigan Lapidary and Mineral Society is a non-profit organization, meeting to promote interest and increased knowledge in the fields of mineralogy, geology, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. It was organized May, 1957.

Meeting Place: Cafeteria, Everett High School, 3900 Stabler, Lansing, Michigan.

Meeting Date: Third Thursday each month, except July and August.

Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m. Doors open for a social period at 7:00 p.m.

Annual Dues: Adults - \$3.00. Students - \$1.00.

Permanent Mailing Address: 14933 Brown Rd., Lansing, Mi 48906.

OFFICERS FOR 1976

President:	Eva Whipple, 6115 Marscot Dr., Lansing, Mi	882-8136
Vice-Pres.:	Wesley Manley, 700 Barry Rd., Haslett, Mi	655-3854
Rec. Sec.:	Lola Pearson, 6975 Foster Rd., Haslett, Mi	655-2554
Corr. Sec.:	Eleanor Owens, 621 E. Jolly, # C-301, Lansing, Mi	882-8502
Treasurer:	Marshall Davis, 3925 Barton Dr., Lansing, Mi	372-7760
Directors		
1 year:	David Toman, 3314 Karen, Lansing, Mi	393-0947
2 years:	Bessie Rogers, 234 W. Marshall Rd., St. Johns, Mi	517-224-7596
3 years:	Dave Van Geison, 2319 E. Jolly, # 10, Lansing, Mi	394-1863
Past Pres.:	James Patterson, 14933 Brown Rd., Lansing, Mi	482-3437
Roster Sec.:	Sally Barber, 3215 Karen, Lansing, Mi	882-7621
Liaison Officer:	Bettie Patterson, 14933 Brown Rd., Lansing, Mi	482-3437

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN - 1976

Program:	Wesley Manley, 700 Barry Rd., Haslett, Mi	655-3854
Membership:	Ruth Hillis, 1920 Ray St., Lansing, Mi	482-8855
Education:	William Gardiner, 4518 Sandstone Dr., Williamston, Mi	655-3608
Library:	Preston Whipple, 6115 Marscot Dr., Lansing, Mi	882-8136
Field Trip:	Sharon Davis, 119 E. Syringa Dr., Lansing, Mi	393-3020
Display:	Nancy Smith, 3435 Dietz Rd., Williamston, Mi	655-2736
Financial:	Kenneth Kurtz, 800 Frost Rd., Williamston, Mi	655-2051
Publications:	Florence Hill, 3135 Okemos Rd., Mason, Mi	349-3554

Vol. XX, No. 1

ROCKHOUND NEWS

January 1976

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This will be my last message to you as President. I started and will finish my term with the theme "Involvement". I know my begging, pleading and bullying has convinced a few more people to get into the "clique". I am very pleased with the number of new members who have come forward and helped on committees and other work and deeply appreciate the continued support of the "faithful few". I thank everyone who has helped me and our club during the past year. It has been a pleasure to work with you during this time.

You have a very good President for the coming year. She is a relatively new member and will need all the help you can give her. I hope you will ask yourself, "What have I done for my club since I joined, besides paying club dues?" If your answer is not very positive, why not start out the new year right and volunteer for something? See, I am plugging to the very end!

With that, I want to wish everyone a very Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Jim Patterson

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PROGRAM

January -- Plate Tectonics, or the Theory of Continental Drift, is the subject selected by Dr. F. W. Cambray, Chairman of the Geology Department, MSU., who will be the guest speaker for our annual banquet on January 15, 1976.

Dr. Cambray is very knowledgeable in his field and well qualified to speak on this subject. It promises to be a very interesting and informative program.

December -- Dr. B. T. Sandefur presented a very interesting program, "Minerals Make History". He illustrated how natural resources determined where the centers of population developed and how they governed the strength of a country.

Visitors at the December meeting were Rod Gasche, Denny "Rocky" Bechner, Sandy Hufnagel, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Adams, and Maynard Smith.

It is with great shock and deep regret that we share the sorrow of the passing of Henrietta Myers. She has been a faithful member almost from the club's beginning and a silent worker by Read's side in many club projects. She will be sorely missed by her many friends, and we offer our heartfelt sympathy to Read, their sons and families.

We also offer our deep sympathy to Mary Ellen Smith and family in the passing of her husband, Jack D. Smith. The Smiths joined our club in the early fall and were enthusiastic members.

Frank Swagart is recuperating at Clinton Memorial Hospital, St. Johns, Michigan 48879, where he will be confined for about two weeks.

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DUES!!!

To the MEMBERSHIP:

Your dues are due as of January 1, each year. The only exception is a new member joining in November and December of 1975. In order to be listed in the 1976 directory, they must be paid by the March meeting. Because of the banquet on January 15, I will Not be taking dues there. If you would care to mail them or wait until the February meeting, either will be appreciated.

Thank you,

Sally Barber, Roster Secretary

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All the constitution guarantees is the pursuit of happiness. We have to catch up with it ourselves.

From The Conglomerate

FIELD TRIP.

January 24, 1976

The year's first field trip will be a Show Workshop at the home of . . .

Walter and Sharon Davis
119 East Syringa, Lansing
January 24, 1976 at 2:00 PM

The workshop will be used to begin work on the grab-bags and on identification and mounting of specimens for the children's table. Materials to be donated to the children's table can also be brought. Everyone is invited as there are lots of things which may be worked on now.

In addition, clear plastic pill bottles, styrofoam, clear glass vitamin bottles, and other small glass bottles are needed.

Walter Davis, Field Trip Chairman

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LIBRARY

As you all probably know, there will not be a library table at the banquet at the January meeting, thus you may enjoy any books you have out for another month. I feel we have had a very successful year in the library. There has been a very substantial addition of good material to the library for your pleasure. Quite a bit of material has been ordered for members at quite a savings due mostly to our membership in the Mineral Literary Center. Also a small amount has been added to our Treasury through the magazine subscriptions made through our library.

Eva Whipple, Librarian

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I want to thank all the women that brought cookies to our Christmas meeting. Also, Wilma Hopkins, Kathleen Martin and Wanda Tyner for all their help.

Ruth Hillis, Membership Committee Chairman

14 YEARS of 24 KARAT MINING

by Tom Segall, Geology Division
and Glenna Segall, MNR Magazine

Yep! There once was gold in them thar hills in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. One mine was probably as productive and as ornery as most any of our western El Dorados. And in fact, friend, there may still be gold up there in them hills!

The first gold mine in Michigan was dug on a discovery located just north of Ishpeming in Marquette County. It was named the Ropes Gold Mine after its founder and major owner, Julius Ropes. He was a canny prospector who started hunting for gold in the region after wood-choppers uncovered an unusual deposit of asbestos. Asbestos is sometimes found in association with gold deposits. Ropes heard about the asbestos and began to poke around in the region. On May 17, 1881, he sank his miner's pick into a rock outcrop which turned out to be loaded with gold and silver. He kept hunting in the same location and soon found more outcrops, some assaying out as high as \$442 of gold per ton. News of the Ropes' find was published in the local paper, but oddly didn't seem to stir much interest. Perhaps local residents thought it just another pie-in-the-sky gold scheme. Others, however, decided it was on the level, and investors came forth steadily.

Soon after, the Ropes Gold Mining Company was organized with 80,000 shares of common stock. The first shaft was dug on an elevated location about 1,200 feet from the main vein outcrop. The main shaft was called the Curry in honor of one of the mine's chief supporters, S. S. Curry. By the time the shaft had reached a depth of 30 feet, the first crushing mill was completed and ready for stamping. This was a little "five-stamper" built by Frazer and Chalmers of Chicago. The ore came out of the

mine as lumps of rock. The crushing mill reduced all of this material to a fine powder, which was then put through a water trough, or sluiceway. The gold and silver, being heavier, sank to the bottom. In that way, most of the rock dust could be skimmed off the top and the "amalgam" in the bottom of the sluiceway could be collected for smelting in the company's small furnace. After the material was melted in the furnace, it was cast into small bars, and a few days later a team and buckboard headed for the National Bank in Ishpeming, loaded with three armed guards and the precious bullion. It was Michigan's first shipment of gold and silver. At the bank, it was weighed, and calculations showed that in the first month about 100 tons of ore crushed by the stamp mill had produced \$704.62 in gold and \$98.81 in silver. The tailings -- rock material left after the bulk of gold and silver was removed -- had been sifted a second time to produce an additional \$9 in gold and \$2.72 in silver, for a total of \$815.15, all from 100 tons of ore! At today's prices, that doesn't seem like much, but back when dollars were real dollars that was Big Stuff. The owners were excited, the local residents were astonished, and word drifted throughout the Midwest that a minor, but important new strike had been made.

Work at the mine progressed rapidly after this first recovery, and year by year the yield of gold and silver kept coming out of the Curry shaft. By 1887, the average annual yield had reached \$43,156, of which amount \$4,654 was silver. The mine was proving a very prosperous venture for its officers and owners. Just for the record, it should be noted that Captain Richard Trevarthen was in charge of underground work, Julius Ropes was president, and S. S. Curry was superintendent. The board of directors included W. F. Swift, W. H. Rood, and

Dr. W. T. Carpenter, as well as Ropes and Curry.

In 1888, these men expanded the mine's operations by construction of a dam on the Carp River about a mile east of the mine. This provided the mine with all the water it would need for its sluice-ways. Also, the stamping operation was expanded from five stamps to 45 stamps, so production could be increased very substantially. These raised production in 1889 and 1890 to an average of \$57,685 annually. A new mill also was built containing an additional 40 stamps, and some of the older stamps were discontinued at this time.

Through most of the 1890's, the mine continued to prosper, but by 1897 production began to fall off and costs of mining were steadily increasing. The ore deposits increased in size and value below the 600-foot level, but the ore became more difficult to recover and process. Finally, in June 1897, conditions had reached a point where costs were higher than income and so, sadly, the crew was told the mine would have to close down. It had reached 800 feet into the earth to extract \$647,902 in gold and silver over a 14-year mining history. That was a very successful record considering the fact that those who operated the property had started as strangers to the business of gold mining and milling.

After the mine closed, the property was sold several times, and a few owners even reopened operations briefly. In all these later attempts, however, the main vein was increased only about 500 feet in length, and none of the attempts proved very successful.

The Ropes was not unlike many other gold producers that were operating successfully in those days, and it had all the earmarks of being one of America's very best gold mines. Its ores, in fact, were richer than those of the Homestake, Treadwell Island, and other mines that proved more prominent in

America's gold mining history. Recently, with gold reaching record high prices, the Ropes mine has been sold again, this time to the Callahan Mining Corporation of Darien, Connecticut. At present, the company has adopted a wait and see approach to whether or not the mine will be reopened. William A. Nicely, secretary of the Callahan Company, has stated that the mine might be opened in the future, depending on results of geological exploration on the 80-acre parcel of land.

The Ropes, however, was not Michigan's only gold mine. A second glory hole that became well known was the Michigan Mine, also located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, about five miles west of Ishpeming. It was started on August 15, 1887 by F. P. Mills, superintendent of the Cleveland Iron Mine, at that time the principal operation of the Cleveland Iron Mining Company at Ishpeming. A deposit of unbelievable richness was found near the surface in a vein of sugar quartz. Samples assayed out to a value of \$50,000 per ton! Unfortunately, there weren't any tons of such rock and the find appeared to be a single instance of one small but valuable deposit of gold. Nonetheless, work continued at the site until the winter of 1887 by which time a shaft 77 feet deep had been dug. The vein of quartz ore held, being about 10 feet thick, but the gold had thinned out and work was suspended. In May, 1888, work was resumed at another point on the vein, with another strike of great richness being found, assays running better than \$100,000 to the ton! But again, the tons were lacking and the vein thinned out. However, specimens from this find were taken to Chicago and exhibited at the general offices of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. As a result, the company built a spur line westward from Ishpeming, paralleling the "gold range" and ending at a station named "Golden!" Finally, however, the Michigan quit entirely and work was stopped. The vein had played out. Later the property was purchased

by another company and worked for its silica deposits.

Michigan also had several other smaller mines. We even had a mythical mine. Around 1924, reports were received in the Geological Survey Office of an "important gold occurrence" in Alpena County. Geologists realized at once that something was wrong. It sounded as though someone had struck a concentration of yellow material in a shale formation and had mistaken pyrite for gold. Pyrite is a mineral often found with shale. It's bright yellow in color and has been mistaken for gold so many times it's often called "fool's gold." In this case, however the gold deposit was supposedly found in limestone deposits in that area. Now gold ore occurs almost solely in "igneous" rock forms -- those where great heat has melted the rock and the gold into complicated masses. Limestone is not that kind of rock, being sedimentary, or rock that has been formed by settlement of fine materials in underwater deposits, where such deposits are buried under many later layers of material thus causing great pressure which finally forms them into rock slabs. So the idea of a gold strike in Alpena County sounded to geologists like a hoax. An investigation was started, but no gold was found. After that, everyone expected the excitement would die down, but that was not to be the case, and several more rumors and announcements of gold strikes continued to be heard. In a few cases, unsuspecting individuals, with big pictures in their heads, gave up their hard-earned cash to fast-moving promoters. They had to learn the hard way about the practice of "salting." Salting is usually accomplished by loading a shotgun shell with gold dust and then shooting it into a vein of rock. Back in those days of gold fever, a promotor with half a dozen gold-dust shot-shells blasted around into a small rock formation could usually convince half a township to turn loose its cash, meantime asking everyone to keep news

of the find -- and the promotion -- very, very quiet "so claim jumpers don't beat us to it." Naturally, once the investors had invested, the promoter left on the first train west.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, one-gallus prospectors again roamed across both peninsulas of Michigan, looking for the answer to their dreams, but none ever struck it rich, or even found driblets of the yellow metal. Is there a big, rich vein of gold still down there somewhere beneath Michigan's topsoil? No one knows for sure, but our past history at least offers the possibility. In any case, most of us will just have to wait and see.

from --- November-December 1975
Michigan Natural Resources Magazine

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BANQUET

The Central Michigan Lapidary & Mineral Society Banquet will be held at the Everett High School Cafeteria on Thursday, January 15, 1976, at 6:30 PM.

Please remember to bring a complete table service for every person that comes -- yourself and all your guests. For every two people, please have a dish of food large enough to serve ten people. We also encourage members to bring a bragging rock to stimulate conversation and add to the table decorations.

A reminder for board members: Please bring two extra place settings, and an empty coffee pot (to have coffee available on the tables and expedite coffee serving).

Please put your name on all covered dishes and serving pieces so none will be misplaced.

Sharon Davis, Banquet Chairman

January 1976

ROCKHOUND NEWS

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MEMBERSHIP

Ruth Hillis, Membership Chairman presented these applications for membership, which were approved by the Board of Directors:

Milton L. Adams

Angelina Adams

3431 Fanette

Lansing, Michigan 48906

482-5497

Dennis "Rocky" Beckner

3471 Stabler

Lansing, Michigan 48910

Mr. Beckner renewed his membership

* * *

MICA

Any of the several silicates of aluminum with potassium, sodium or lithium, or with iron and magnesium and sometimes other elements, may be described as mica. These silicates crystallize in the monoclinic system (although they appear to be hexagonal), forming nearly hexagonal laminated plates that exhibit almost perfect basal cleavage. Paper-thin elastic leaves can be peeled off them with a penknife.

The micas are classified in two groups:

1. The ferro-magnesium micas called biotite (black mica),
2. The alkali-micas described as muscovite (white mica).

The presence of other minerals in the mica may form the more colourful and interesting specimens known as lepidolite (purple), fuchsite and damourite (green), phlogopite (in various colours) but with the unusual property of asterism due to orientated inclusions of rutile, and zinnwaldite.

Biotite occurs as an accessory mineral in granites and many other rocks, in

which it appears as lustrous black specks with flat faces. Biotites that have lost much of their iron become golden yellow or silvery grey, when they resemble muscovite. Muscovite is transparent and more or less colourless. It often appears silvery owing to partial separation of its constituent leaves.

Very large crystals of mica occur in the pegmatitic veins associated with granite masses, and provide transparent sheets that are used for the windows of lamps and stoves, and for electrical insulation. Mica trimmings and small pieces are ground for use in making rolled asphalt for roofing, artificial stone and an insulating plastic, as well as being used in the manufacture of wallpaper and paint.

In Australia large Mica deposits are being mined on a commercial basis in several areas near Broken Hill, and in Harts Range.

Until the end of the 18th century mica was not distinguished from talc or gypsum (selenite) and lamp-chimneys and stove windows are still sometimes erroneously called 'talcs'. In Russia and elsewhere mica was once used for glazing the windows of buildings under the name of 'muscovy glass', and it was similarly employed in warships because it withstood the concussion of gunfire.

from The Lapidarian,
and The Rock Vein.

* * *

GARNET

January Birthstone

It is said that the wearing of the Garnet assures one of an imperial bearing for it is thought to be a stone fit for the Gods.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 15.....ANNUAL BANQUET, Everett H.S. Cafeteria, Lansing, 6:30 p.m.
January 24.....Workshop-Field Trip, 119 E. Syringa, Lansing, 2:00 p.m.
February 3.....Board Meeting, C.T. Barber's, 3215 Karen, Lansing, 7:30 p.m.
February 17.....Regular Meeting, Everett H.S. Cafeteria, Lansing, 7:30 p.m.

See you at the BANQUET!!!

January 15, 1976 6:30 PM

ROCKHOUND NEWS
Central Michigan Lapidary & Mineral Society
14933 Brown Road
Lansing, Michigan 48906



TIME VALUE

Ernest J. Fulton
615 West St.
Eaton Rapids, Mi 48827