

Northwest

Micro Mineral

Study Group

Micro Probe



FALL, 2025

VOLUME XIV #2

FALL 2025 MEETING

November 8, 2025 **10 AM to 4 PM**

Sons of Norway Columbia Lodge

2400 Grant St,

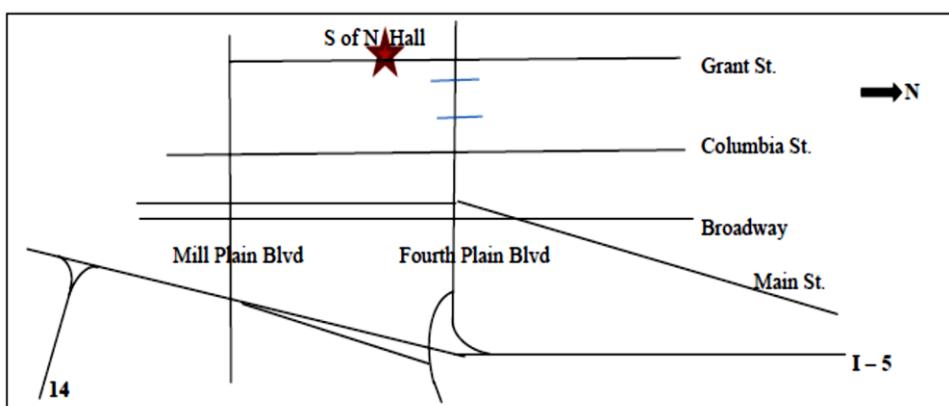
Vancouver, WA 98660

Please read the President's message on page 2 for important meeting information!

Directions:

FROM WASHINGTON HWY 14: Continue west to Interstate 5, keep right and take I-5 North. Then keep right and continue to Exit #1D -Fourth Plain Blvd

FROM INTERSTATE 5: In Vancouver, take Exit #1D to Fourth Plain Blvd. Head west on Fourth Plain Blvd. to Grant St. and turn left. Go two blocks to 24th St.



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President's Message:

It is that time again. The Fall meeting will be Saturday, November 8, 2025.

Please note the new starting time of 10AM.

As I mentioned in an earlier email, I will be bringing about 15 bankers boxes full of egg cartons with specimens from many places. This is from the James Daly collection (Saukton Sales) and is what he had not gotten ready for sale. In May of next year, I will be bringing his trimmed and prepared stock. Both are world-wide collections.



I currently am cataloguing his personal collection so I can find things in it. It is supposed to be about 26,000 pieces but I think it will be somewhat less, maybe 21,000 or so. I will not know until I reach the end. There is one whole section that is type locality specimens. Another section is from the Arthur E. Smith, Jr. collection. Many other names pop up now and then. Jim was good at keeping the older labels so ownership can be traced but this makes for a large amount of typing in order to get it all in my catalog. See article on page 4.

Remember to bring your lunch sandwich, or whatever, and a salad, desert or snack item to share with the other members. Coffee, water, ice and soda pop will continue to be provided.

Again, I remind you to please submit article and pictures for the Micro Probe. We all need your input. This edition is shorter not only because I am busy cataloging but also because not much was submitted.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the next meeting, November 8th. Please bring lots of flats, boxes and buckets of minerals for the free tables. Also, any reports/projects/eye candy photos that you can share with the group.

I will have a presentation, but I am not sure what it will be yet.

Also, it is time for elections again. I know our Treasurer is still looking for a replacement and if someone would like to be President, please let me know. Thank you.

Beth Heesacker, President/Editor

CORRECTION**Hydroxylclinohumite**

Don Howard



Hydroxylclinohumite. Twinned monoclinic crystals about a vertical plane perpendicular to the page. Notice the hexagonal shape of the individual nearest the center. (4 mm FS)

Last Spring issue we reported on a red mineral from the Jensen Quarry, one of the set of quarries that comprises Crestmore in Riverside, California. At that time we speculated on the possibility that the mineral might be Hydroxylellestadite, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{SiO}_4)_3(\text{SO}_4)_3(\text{OH},\text{F},\text{Cl})_2$.

I included the above picture in my presentation to the NCMA in El Dorado, California, along with the suggested identification. That was immediately questioned. Paul Adams suggested instead that it might be clinohumite. That has been confirmed recently by Travis Olds using XRF at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Hydroxylclinohumite, $\text{Mg}_9(\text{SiO}_4)_4(\text{OH})_2$, is also monoclinic. The Mindat listing includes the note under **Twinning** [*Not reported but clinohumite shows twinning on {100}*]. It was not previously included in the list of minerals present in the Jensen Quarry, though clinohumite is in the list for Crestmore. The prefix *hydroxyl* is a fairly recent addition to clinohumite to differentiate it from the fluorine-bearing form of clinohumite.

If you picked up a piece at the last meeting, I hope this update has sufficient information to allow you to update your labels. There should be some more at this Fall's meeting.

Collection Hoarding

Obsession, Addiction, Passion, or Monomania

By Beth Heesacker

Whatever it is, I have it bad. I now own, not only my own self-collected micro-collection but major parts of quite a few others. Some people look at the sad eyes of a puppy or a fuzzy kitten and know that they want it. Some people do not stop at one, or two pets but garner a whole pack of dogs, or a clowder (I had to look that up) of cats.

Me, I look, or hear about, a micro-mount collection that is an orphan and I go all soft inside. Sometimes it is a few flats, or the jumbled-up mess in an old storage shed. Other times there are many flats or even cabinets full of minerals.

Sometimes If I feel a vague longing for some addition to my collection and I send an email to a dealer or two asking about micros. This time it was to Mike Shannon. He responded that he had a collection, in fact 2 collections from the same person. One the very large personal collection, mounted in perkys with cabinets and another collection which was the sales stock since this person was a dealer.

Well, I went all soft inside and asked for more info. I told him I probably could not afford the personal collection but let's see what we can agree upon for the sales stock. Some of it was in egg cartons (rough) and some wrapped individually in toilet tissue and then put in zip-lock bags (ready for sale). We made a deal on the sales stock and then I waited for it to arrive. I kept following the tracking number as it made its way up from Arizona to Oregon. Sometimes I wonder about the logistics planners that ship things around. The path they plan is not always logical to the simple user.



That shipment made it just fine, and I started to sort it all out. First the boxes of egg cartons and I was amazed at the quality and amount. Then the zip-lock bags and I was even more amazed. Even better quality and greater variety. Worldwide and maybe, I should have stopped there.

But no. I asked about the personal collection. Mike Shannon had taken it to a show and had sold some. Also, he had pulled some for his research collection. He took a while to come up with a count of specimens and a price.

I knew that there would be some overlap in content with the sales stock since I would think that he would grab the best for his collection before selling it. Overlap did not bother me.



So, we finally agreed to a price for the collection and the cabinets, with shipping. I came to Paul, my husband, with a bit of trepidation. Can we afford this? How would we pay for this? We knew that we were not traveling anymore so calculated what we would save over three years or so in gas, repairs, etc. for the motorhome. He said OK to the purchase.

I emailed Mike and told him it was a go. Then the long wait for the shipment. It took much longer than the first one due to a holiday and some weird shipping logistics again. All this waiting time made me very anxious, but arrival date finally came.

We were thankfully blessed with dry weather and so we had time to size up the situation, clean out and prepare a place for it in my mineral room. Our son Patrick helped move it all inside and into position. It fit very nicely. Some was in the cabinets and some in small flats (see pics below).



The only downside was that the collection did not have a catalog. How was I ever going to find anything without that? That defined my next project. I had designed an Access database for my original micro collection so I made a copy, cleaned out the data, and then edited the tables, forms and reports to fit the new collection.

I have been entering specimen data since mid August, 4-6 hours most days, and am a bit over half way. I include in

the “notes” field for each specimen all the old label information so I can maybe figure out the life story for the collection. Portions of it have gone through a few other collectors before finally ending up with me. It looks like Jim Daly had a soft heart for orphan collections also judging by the number of names and various labels used.

A good portion of the collection was from Arthur E. Smith, Jr. and he noted on his labels who he received/bought it from so finding out all the previous owners is a sub-project that I will tackle later. He was a well thought of and prolific collector who died in 2009. Artsmithite is named after him (<https://www.mindat.org/min-26878.html>).

I have not looked at all the specimens as I go through the cataloging process but the ones I have taken some time to inspect are absolutely wonderful. I do not have any specimen pictures yet

since I want to get the catalog finished sometime in my lifetime. ☺ Another couple of months should do it then I can start photographing some. I am sure that many of the photos will be seen here in the Micro Probe in the future.



James Daly and the contents of one of the 88 drawers and 60 small flats.



**REMEMBER TO
FALL BACK
ON NOVEMBER
2ND**

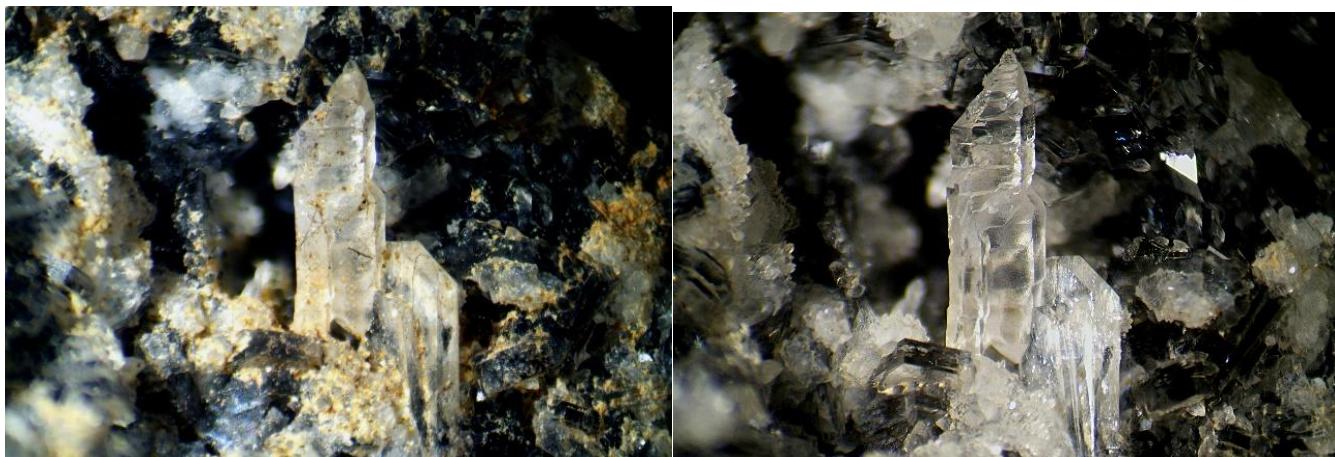
Sceptre quartz of Whitianga road cutting

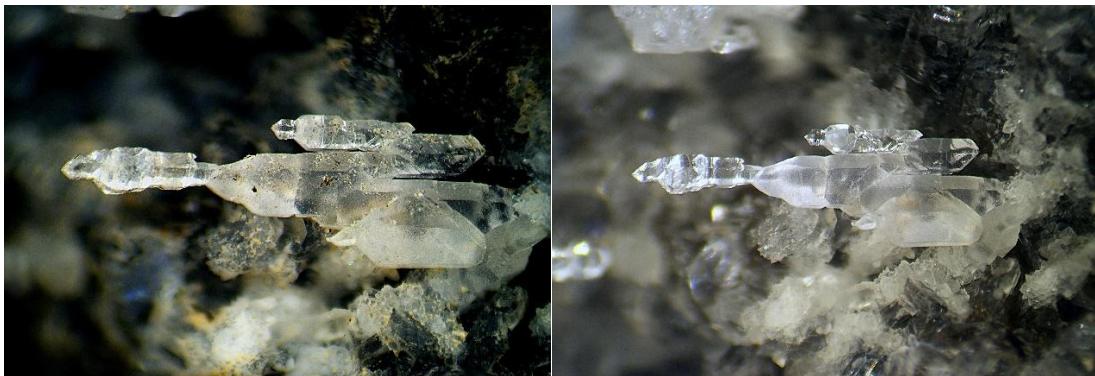
Several years ago, I started working on material from the Whitianga road cutting – a site well known for its sceptre quartz crystals, heulandite and stilbite. The material that I had was collected many years ago and had been gathering dust, but the real problem was that many of the cavities had been exposed to the elements and the crystals were partly covered in dirt, roots and debris. Could they be cleaned up and salvaged?

Using a water-blaster was out of the question due to the delicate nature of the crystals and the somewhat crumbly matrix. I remembered a tip I had come across a while back that mentioned using hydrogen peroxide solution to help loosen mud and organic matter. With that in mind, I bought a bottle of 3% solution from a seller on Trademe, put a specimen in a plastic container and poured in enough solution to just cover it. I added a couple of drops of dishwashing detergent as well and left it to soak for a week. I then took the specimen out, gave it a quick wash and placed it in an ultrasonic cleaner for a few minutes.

To be sure, a lot of fine mud and debris came loose but the specimen was still quite dirty and there was only so much I could remove using a spray bottle with water. In the end I found that the most successful method was to immerse the partly cleaned specimen in a tray of water and use a small soft paint brush to gently brush away the remaining mud – all this under the microscope so I could see what I was doing. When the water starts getting a bit murky, simply rinse and repeat. It is a bit tedious, but I think the effort is worth it.

These before and after photos show the results (FOV is about 5.5mm):





Sceptre quartz – what is it and how does it form?

This is a complex subject, but a very good description is given on a web site called The Quartz Page http://www.quartzpage.de/gro_text.html#scepter

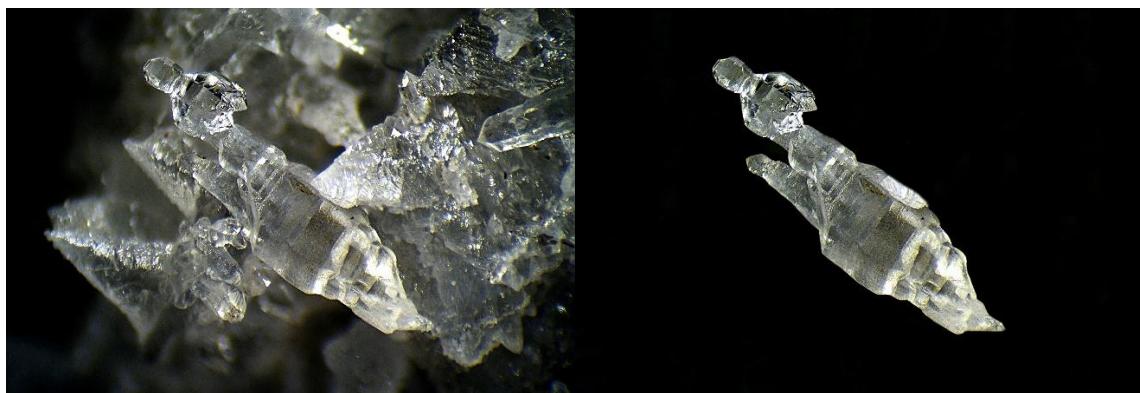
A quick note on spelling – **sceptre** is British English as used in UK, Australia, NZ; **scepter** is the American English version.

At the Whitianga site, I suspect that calcite has interfered with the quartz crystals as they were growing; this can also produce growth-inhibited quartz crystals which are occasionally found at this locality. The Quartz page has a section on these as well:

http://www.quartzpage.de/gro_text.html#inhibition

Along with the classic 'sceptres', we find reverse sceptres (the crystal decreases in diameter), side-car crystals, slightly bent crystals, asymmetric crystals, 'rice-grain' quartz and other such oddities. All of these can be found alongside perfectly normal quartz crystals, so why are some crystals affected and not others? In such cases, the 'normal' crystals are the odd one out – most of the surrounding crystals are deformed in some way or another. Perhaps the normal crystals grew last, after the factors influencing the sceptres had dissipated... who knows?

The following photos are just a few of the odd quartz crystals I have found from this site.



In this photo I have cropped away the background to give a better idea of the complex nature of this crystal and its multiple terminations.



Typical quartz sceptre FOV 1.8mm



Double-terminated quartz sceptre FOV 6.6mm



Quartz with offset reverse sceptre FOV 4.4mm



Quartz reverse sceptres FOV 3.4mm



Quartz sceptre on heulandite FOV 5.2mm



Double-terminated quartz sceptre FOV 5.2mm



Double-terminated quartz with reverse sceptre tips FOV 4.4mm

Thanks to Rod Martin and Lyn Hellyar for supplying the rough material from which these photos were taken.

Article and photographs by Tim Saunderson.

Via the Micro-Scope (New Zealand), 3/25

THE MICRO PROBE

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