



Celebrating 100 Years of  
Microscopical Magnificence



# The Leidy Letter

Volume 1

Newsletter of The Leidy Microscopical Society  
April 2025

Number 4



Frank James Keeley  
(1868 – 1949)

Samuel  
George  
Gordon  
(1897 – 1952)



Arthur Montgomery  
(1909 – 1999)

## 2025 Officers of the Leidy Microscopical Society

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Vice President – John Ferrante  
[jjf41@comcast.net](mailto:jjf41@comcast.net)

Secretary – Karenne Snow  
[minerals.fossils.rocks@gmail.com](mailto:minerals.fossils.rocks@gmail.com)

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## Editor's Note:

Merriam – Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines the word Trilogy as, *"a series of three dramas or literary works or sometimes three musical compositions that are closely related and develop a single theme."*

In writing, the rule of three as described in Wikipedia.org, *"is a writing principle which suggests that a trio of entities such as events or characters is more humorous, satisfying, or effective than other numbers. The audience of this style of text is also thereby more likely to remember the information conveyed because having three entities combines both brevity and rhythm with having the smallest amount of information to create patterns."*

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## Meetings of The Leidy Microscopical Society are held at the

The Community Center at GIANT  
315 York Road  
Willow Grove, PA 19090

On the third Wednesday evening from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM in September, October, March, April, May & June and the third Saturday from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM in November, December, January & February.

The Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium is held in March.



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Some of the great threes include: The Holy Trinity, (FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST); Hat Trick, (the scoring of three goals in hockey or soccer by the same player); Triple Crown, (a series of horse races for three year old thoroughbreds consisting of the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes); Triple Play, (the act of making three outs during the same play in baseball); Three Rock Types, (igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary); and the three individuals who contributed significantly to the understanding of Pennsylvania's mineral resources, (Samuel George Gordon, Frank James Keeley and Arthur Montgomery).

With March being the third month of the year, the Leidy Microscopical Society continued to celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a very hectic month. The beginning of the month was the very successful 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium (Please see the write up by Steve Stuart in this newsletter. Thank you, Steve!). The middle of the month featured our regular Society meeting. At the end of the month, the Society provided a working demonstration about micromounting at the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society & Delaware Valley Paleontological Society's 2025 Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair.

During all three of these events, the Symposium, the Meeting and the Demonstration, the highlight was always minerals under the microscope in 3D!

### **Program for April 16, 2025**

The April 16, 2025, meeting of the Leidy Microscopical Society will feature micromounts of Don McAlarnen. Members and guests are requested to bring six of their best Don McAlarnen micromounts for viewing. The group will then vote on the best overall Don McAlarnen mount that was viewed. Everyone is invited even if you do not have a microscope or any Don McAlarnen mounts.

PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE NOW INTO OUR WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE UNTIL NEXT NOVEMBER. THE MEETINGS WILL START AT 6:30 PM. HOWEVER, YOU CAN ARRIVE EARLIER TO GET YOUR MICROSCOPE SET UP.

### **The Symposium**

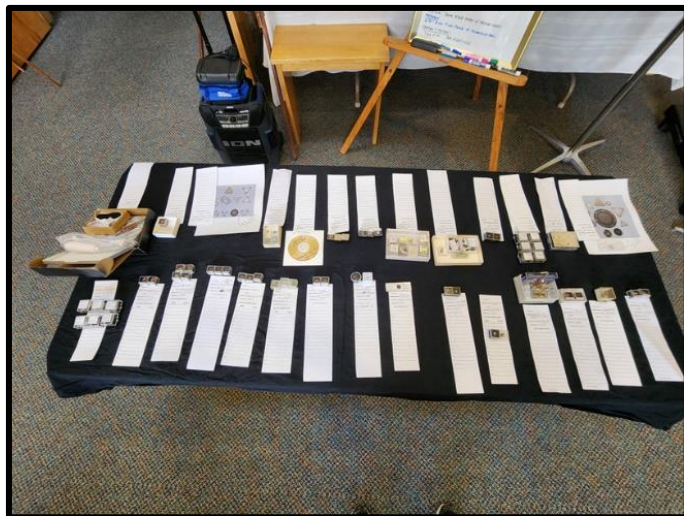
**By Steve Stuart**

The 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium was held on Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Advent Lutheran Church in Richboro, Pennsylvania. The Leidy Microscopical Society celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, although precursor organizations stretch back to 1858 when a group of medical doctors, including Dr. Joseph Leidy, formed a Biological Study Group associated with the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences. The association faded away by 1924, and in 1925 several former members re-established a private, non-profit society and named it the Leidy Microscopical Society.



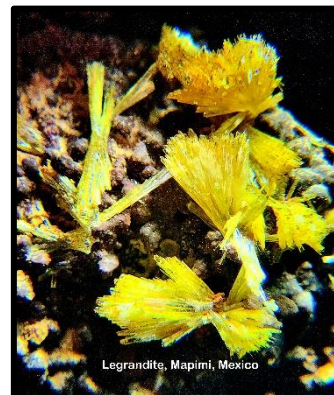
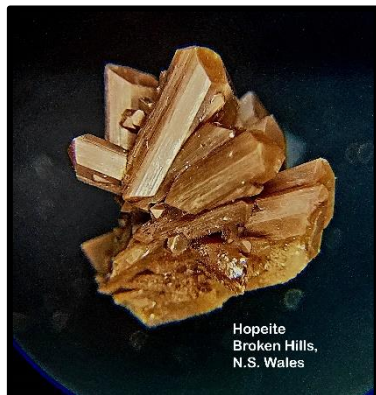
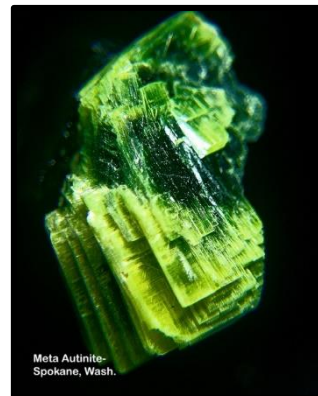
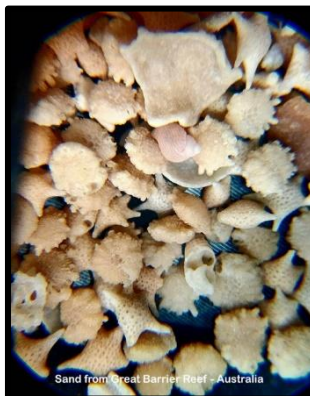
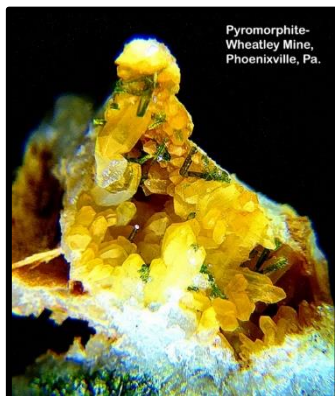
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The silent auction table was set up on Friday for the Saturday auction which ended about 1:30 pm.



Left: The silent auction set-up around 9:30 am on Saturday. Right: About 5 minutes before closing on Saturday afternoon. Don McAlarnen photos.

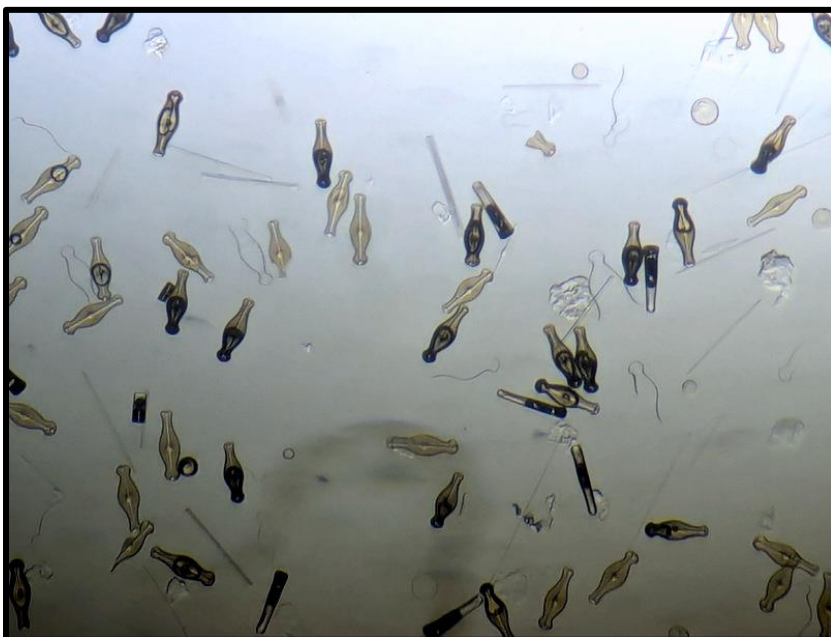
John Ferrante brought a selection of micromounts from the Carl Rilling collection for viewing by attendees. Dr. Carl A. Rilling, MD was inducted into the Micromounters Hall of Fame in 2014. He passed away in 1970. His collection resides with John Ferrante. Here is a selection of photos provided by Don McAlarnen.





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John Ferrante also brought some antique microscopes to allow attendees to view diatom slides. One was a Joseph Zentmayer “American Centennial Stand” fabricated in 1876. The other was a R. and J. Beck microscope of similar vintage, crafted in England.



**Left: Zentmayer microscope. Right: Diatoms through the 150-year-old optics. Such clarity!!**  
**Steve Stuart photos.**



**Left: Beck microscope. Right: Diatoms though the Beck microscope. Not quite as clear as the Zentmayer ‘scope.**  
**Steve Stuart photos.**

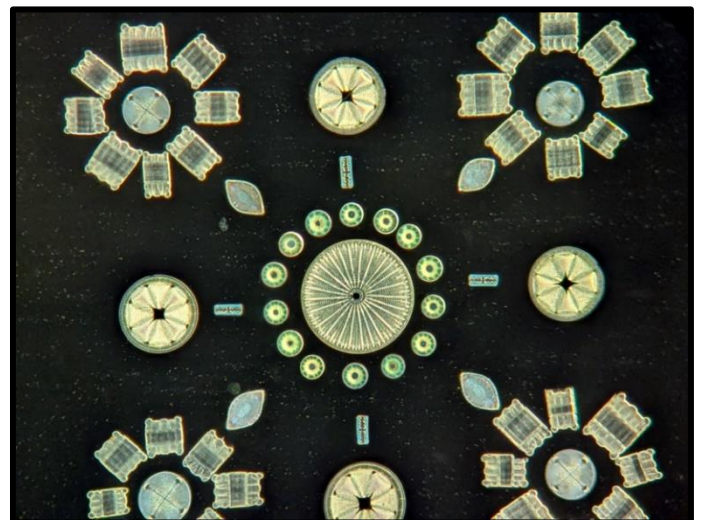
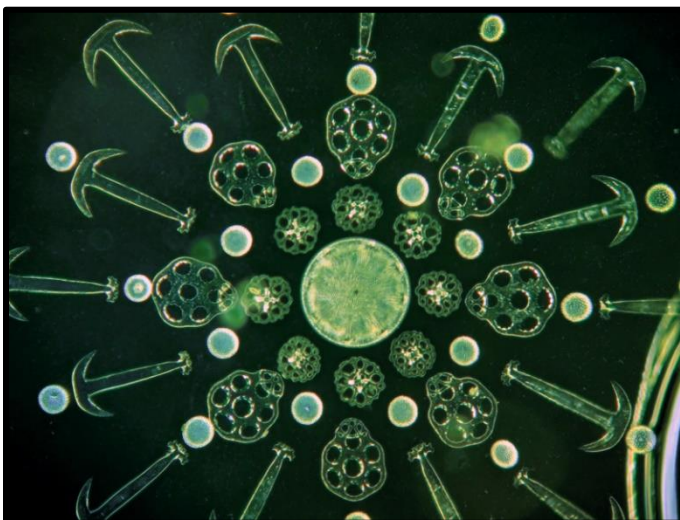
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A table was allocated to view stereophotographs taken by Dr. Carl Rilling of the Frank Keeley micromount collection. Two viewers, owned by Dr. Rilling, were provided for attendees to peruse the slide decks. There was also a modern microscope provided by John Ferrante to view diatom slides and other biologicals. Frank Keeley was inducted into the Micromounters Hall of Fame in 1986. He passed in 1949.



**The viewing table with stereophotograph viewers and a microscope.**

Here are some photos of diatoms through the microscope taken with a smartphone camera.



**Diatoms photos by Steve Stuart. The anchors on the left are actually sponge spicules.**



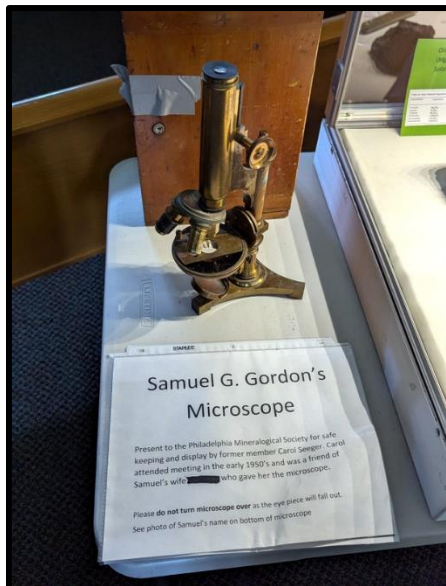
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The Saturday session ran from 9 am to about 6 pm. There were two speakers. The first presentation before the lunch break was by Chris Duerr, a member of the Pennsylvania Mineralogical Society. It was entitled “Diving into Olivine”.

It was a highly technical talk with phase diagrams and discussion about the temperatures and pressures within the earth that favors the formation of olivine in volcanic basalts. Chris contributed a display case to accompany his presentation. The olivine gemstone is called peridot or chrysolite. It was mined by Greeks, Romans and Middle East kingdoms on Zabargad Island in the Red Sea. There are also green sand beaches in Hawaii and other places with olivine grains. The display also included a brass microscope owned by Samuel G. Gordon, a Pennsylvania mineralogist.



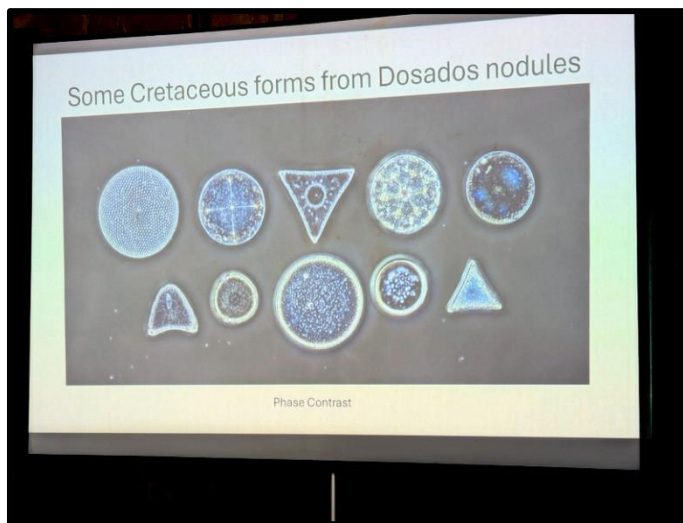
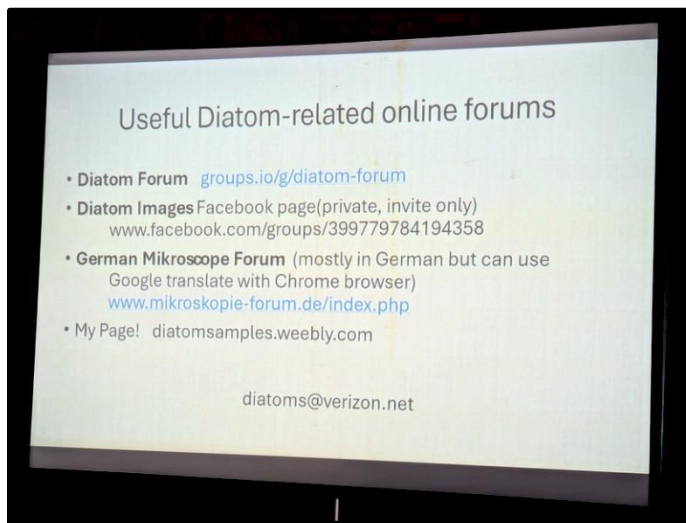
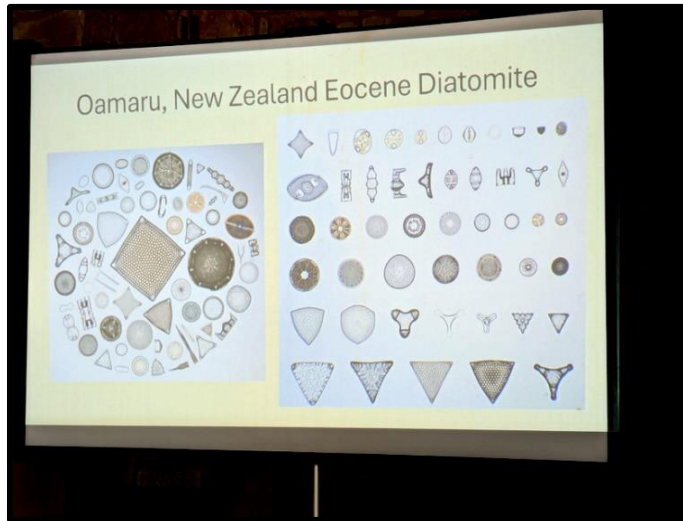
**Left: Chris Duerr discussing olivine. Steve Stuart photo.**  
**Right: Olivine display case. Don McAlarnen photo.**



**Samuel Gordon's microscope.**  
**Steve Stuart photo.**

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The Saturday afternoon presentation was by Bill Dailey, a collector of high-quality samples of diatomite, a.k.a. diatomaceous earth, and freshly collected diatom samples from all over the world. He has been doing this for 25 years. His talk was entitled “The Fascinating World of Diatoms”. His freshly collected diatoms come from local streams in Maryland. He discussed the preparation process for harvesting the algae from rocks and pond scum, washing with hydrogen peroxide and sodium metaphosphate, and preparing slides for microscopic examination.



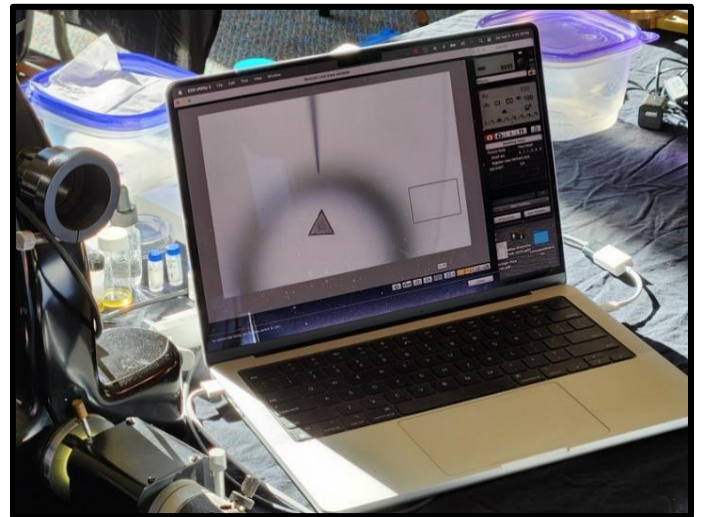
**Photos by Steve Stuart**

Diatomites are fossilized diatoms from deposits around the world. His talk focused on Eocene-era diatoms from Oamaru, New Zealand, and on Cretaceous-era diatoms from Dosado Canyon, California.

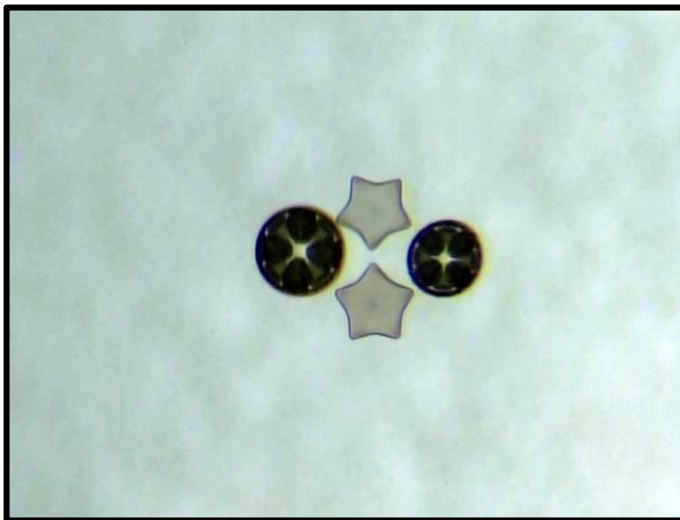


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Bill also keeps alive the Victorian art of creating arranged diatoms slides. He brought a microscope, a fine tungsten needle for manipulating individual diatoms, and a laptop computer for viewers to see the process. Fascinating!



**Don McAlarnen Photos**

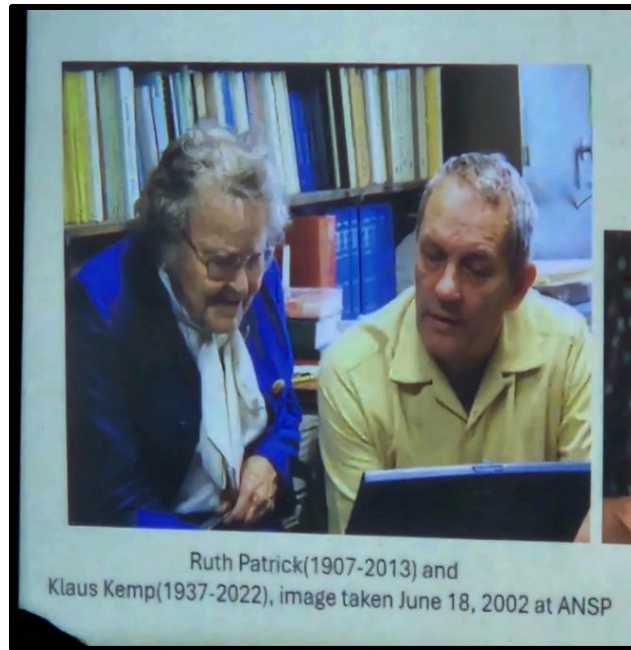


**Steve Stuart Photos**



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Bill was mentored for many years by Klaus Kemp in England. Klaus passed away in 2022 and was the premier modern day diatom arranger.

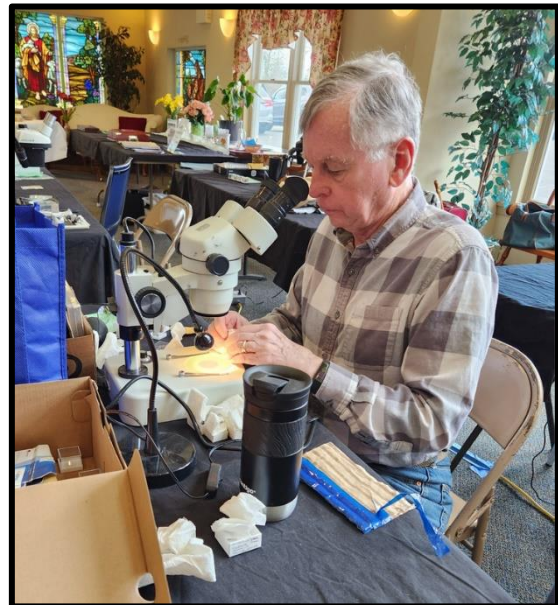


A slide from Bill Dailey's  
 presentation.  
 Captured by Don McAlarnen.

The giveaway tables were heavily laden with treasures awaiting discovery by attendees.



**Above: The Giveaway Tables Photo by Steve Stuart.**  
**Right: Proof that your author was actually there!**  
**Don McAlarnen photo.**



The Symposium hosted eighteen attendees on Friday, fourteen members and four guests. On Saturday, there were fourteen members and six guests for a slight increase to twenty.



Above Left: Eric Brosius and Dave Fryauff.

Above Right: Opening remarks on Saturday by Eric Brosius. John Ferrante is seated.



Left: Don McAlarnen (standing) and Al Pribula (sitting).

Steve Stuart photos.

## The Meeting

By Eric Brosius

The March 19, 2025, meeting featured “Your Best Treasure Obtained at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium”. Discussion at the meeting also included ways to improve the symposium for the future. Additionally, a special thank you was given to our symposium chairmen, John Ferrante and Don McAlarnen, for all the hard work they put in to making the symposium a success.

The common theme of the best micromount treasure, among the members present, seemed to be micromounts obtained from Al Pribula, President of the Baltimore Mineral Society. Incidentally, I would like to make note here that there was a trio of Micromount Society Presidents at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium; Al Pribula, President of the Baltimore Mineral Society; David Fryauff, President of the Micromounters of the National Capital Area; and Eric Brosius, President of the Leidy Microscopical Society. Additionally, a surprise found on the Giveaway Tables always provides a treat. Your author came out on top for the best





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micromount with two superb specimens of spessartine, Skardu District Gilgit, Pakistan obtained from Al Pribula. Bill Prince found the best treasures on the giveaway tables with three different specimens, a Sphalerite, Lafarge Quarry, Niagara Co., New York; Pinakiolite, Långban Deposit, Filipstad district, Värmland, Sweden and Tyuyamunite, Vanadium Queen Mine, San Juan Co., Utah.

### **In Other Society Business**

There were seven members (Paul Langer, Don McAlarnen, Leneord Porcelli, Bill Prince, Brian Schwab, Karenne Snow, Eric Brosius) in person attending the March 19, 2025, meeting. One member (Steve Stuart) joined the meeting via the Zoom on-line application.

Treasurer Don McAlarnen gave a very detailed report of the finances for the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Leidy Microscopical Society Micromount Symposium. He also provided a financial comparison of the past symposiums.

A motion was made and approved for the storage unit lease. As the contract expires at the end of May.

The Philadelphia Mineralogical Society & Delaware Valley Paleontological Society 2025 Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair at the Lulu Temple in Plymouth Meeting, PA is set for March 29 to 30, 2025. A plea was made for volunteers to staff the demonstration table the Leidy Microscopical Society provides for introducing and viewing micromounts to the public.

The George Butler Estate auctions continue with the next round of auctions going on-line March 27, 2025.

Confirmation was made that the May meeting is for May 21, 2025.

Our group welcomed Karenne Snow back after a scary medical emergency she had had earlier in the month that forced her to miss the symposium.

Mention was made that member Mike Rosso, who moved to North Carolina, was the furthest to travel to and attend the symposium. What dedication to the Leidy Microscopical Society, micromounting, and mineral collecting.

There will be no Zoom on-line application for the April 16, 2025, meeting as Don McAlarnen, who handles the technology set up, will be away.

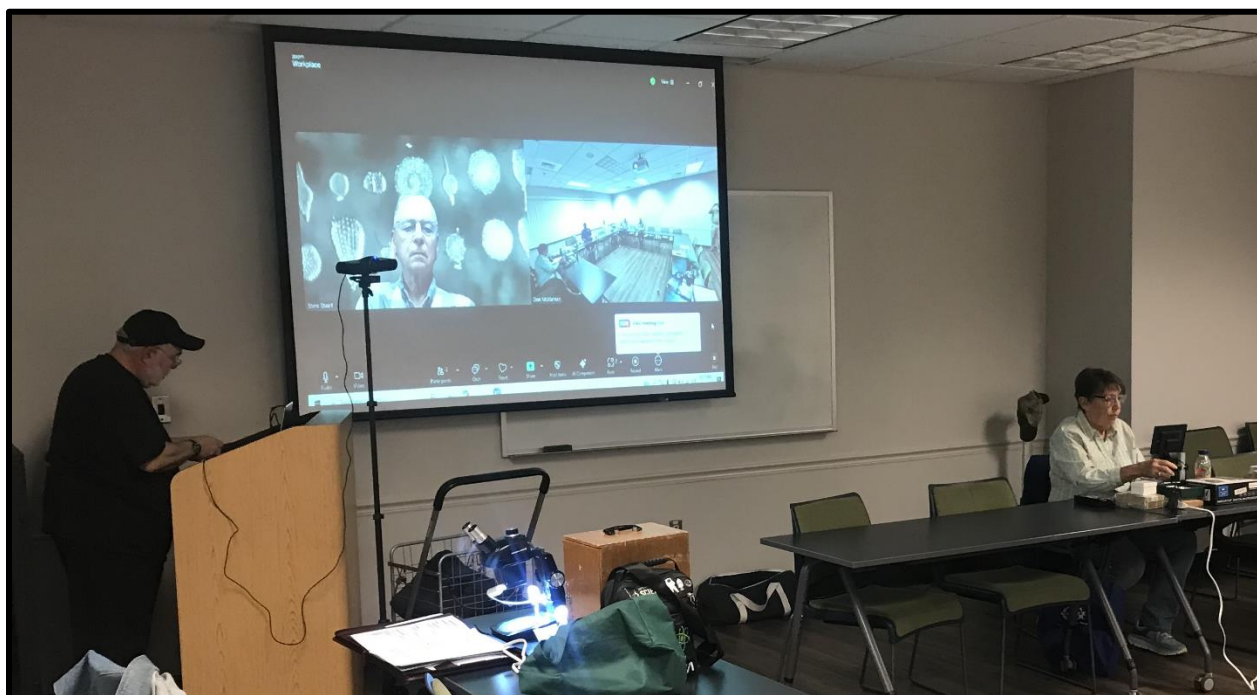
The April 16, 2025, meeting will feature micromounts of Don McAlarnen.

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**Left: Brian Schwab, Paul Langer, Bill Prince and Leonard Porcelli waiting for the meeting to begin.**

**Below: Don McAlarnen working on the technology quirks with Steve Stuart on-line and Karenne Snow sitting viewing mounts before the start of the meeting.**



## **The Demonstration**

**By Eric Brosius**

On March 29-30, 2025, a few warm sunny days, saw numerous mineral collectors, fossil collectors and the public attend the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society & Delaware Valley Paleontological Society 2025 Mineral Treasures and Fossil Fair at the Lulu Temple in Plymouth Meeting, PA. Back in the corner of the entrance hall to the Lulu Temple sat a small table with two Bausch & Lomb Binocular microscopes with turntables that contained a selection of fine micromounts from

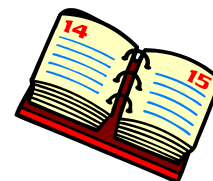




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Don McAlarnen's collection. Those who passed by the table were encouraged by the volunteers (Bill Prince, Leonard Porcelli, Mike Spevak, Wayne & Beverly Geller, Don & Judy McAlarnen, Eric Brosius) to view the microscopic treasures under the lenses of the scopes. Those who took a chance on the sights responded with oohs & aahs. Discussions about micromounting ensued and hopefully some will pursue this aspect of mineral collecting that all our volunteers enjoy. Small children were also enamored with a digital microscope of entomological specimens from Don McAlarnen's collection. The eyes of an arachnid spooked and attracted both the juveniles and adults. As Don McAlarnen frequently says, "Science.....because figuring things out is better than making things up."

We thank all the volunteers for donating their time and expertise. We also especially thank Don McAlarnen for providing the demonstration setup.



## **Calendar of Events**

**April 16, 2025 – Willow Grove, PA – Leidy Microscopical Society Regular Meeting 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM, Giant Community Center, 315 York Road, Willow Grove, PA,** the subject of the meeting will feature micromounts of Don McAlarnen. Members and guests are requested to bring six of their best Don McAlarnen micromounts for viewing. The group will then vote on the best overall Don McAlarnen mount that was viewed. Everyone is invited even if you do not have a microscope or any Don McAlarnen mounts.

**April 19, 2025 - West Friendship, MD - Chesapeake Gem, Mineral, & Fossil Show.** Howard County Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Rd, West Friendship, MD 21794. For additional information visit: <http://www.chesapeakegemandmineral.org/>

**April 25-27, 2025 – Franklin, NJ - Franklin Mineral Museum's Mineral Sale.** Franklin Mineral Museum, 32 Evans Street, Franklin, NJ 07416. For additional information visit: <https://www.franklinmineralmuseum.org/>

**April 26, 2025 – Franklin, NJ - Swap & Sell.** Franklin Mineral Museum, 32 Evans Street, Franklin, NJ 07416. Saturday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For additional information visit: <https://www.franklinmineralmuseum.org/>

**April 26-27, 2025 - Ogdensburg, NJ - Spring Mineral Sale in the Pavilion.** The Sterling Hill Mining Museum Pavilion, 30 Plant Street, Ogdensburg, NJ 07439. Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For additional information visit: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/574701857546267/?ref=share>



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**May 2-4, 2025 - St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada - 61<sup>st</sup> Micromount Symposium of the Canadian Micro Mineral Association.** Brock University, 1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way, St. Catharines, ON L2S 3A1, Canada. Registration forms and information are available online. For additional information visit: <https://canadianmicromineralassociation.com/>

**May 3-4, 2025 - Topsfield, MA - New England Gem & Mineral.** Topsfield Fair Grounds, 207 Boston Road, Route 1, Topsfield, MA 01983. Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For additional information visit: <http://www.northshorerock.org/>

**May 3-4, 2025 - Leesport, PA - 53rd Annual World of Gems & Minerals sponsored by Berks Mineralogical Society.** Leesport Farmer's Market Banquet Hall, 312 Gernant's Church Road, Leesport, PA. Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Admission is \$5. For more information visit [www.berksmineralsociety.com](http://www.berksmineralsociety.com)

**May 3-4, 2025 - Pittston, PA - Annual NEPA Gem & Mineral Show sponsored by The Mineralogical Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania.** Oblates of St. Joseph, 1880 Highway 315, Pittston, PA 18640. Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For additional information visit: <http://msnepa.org/>

**May 14-18, 2025 - Edison, NJ - The Spring NJ Gem Show.** New Jersey Convention and Expo Center, 97 Sunfield Avenue, Edison, NJ 08837. For additional information visit: [https://hartgem.show/?omnisendContactID=66f99a498d9b0ef2619d9f20&utm\\_campaign=campaign:+Attendees:+Be+Part+of+the+Biggest+Spring+NJ+Gem+Show+Yet+-+Nearly+200+Vendors!+\(67e18bf96c2b60c4ecad8773\)&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=omnisend](https://hartgem.show/?omnisendContactID=66f99a498d9b0ef2619d9f20&utm_campaign=campaign:+Attendees:+Be+Part+of+the+Biggest+Spring+NJ+Gem+Show+Yet+-+Nearly+200+Vendors!+(67e18bf96c2b60c4ecad8773)&utm_medium=email&utm_source=omnisend)

**May 16-18, 2025 - Newry, ME - New England Mineral Association Conference.** Grand Summit Resort Hotel at the Sunday River Resort, 15 South Ridge Road, Newry, ME 04261. For additional information visit: [http://www.nemineral.org/annual\\_conference/](http://www.nemineral.org/annual_conference/)

**May 17-18, 2025 - Cologne, NJ - Cape-Atlantic Rockhounds Annual Spring Gem, Jewelry, Rock, Mineral & Fossil Show.** Clubhouse Grounds, 2653 Cologne Avenue, Cologne, NJ 08242

**May 17-18, 2025 - Bennington, VT - Southern Vermont Mineral & Gem Show.** Grace Christian School, 104 Kocher Drive, Bennington, VT 05201. Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. For more information visit: <https://www.manchestervermont.com/>

**May 25-27, 2025 - Aurora, NC - North Carolina Fossil Festival.** Aurora Fossil Museum, 400 Main Street, Aurora, NC 27806. For additional information visit: <http://www.aurorafossilmuseum.org/>

**June 7, 2025 - Macungie, PA - Pennsylvania Earth Sciences Spring Minerafest.** Macungie Memorial Park, 50 North Poplar Street, Macungie, PA 18062. Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For additional information visit: <http://www.facebook.com/Pennsylvania-Earth-Sciences-Association-PESA-minerafest-and-clubs-1555170821375067>



**June 7-8, 2025 - Monroe, NY - Orange County Mineral Gem Jewelry & Fossil Show.** Museum Village, 1010 Route 17 M, Monroe, NY 10950. Saturday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For additional information visit: <http://www.ocmsny.org/>

**June 14-15, 2025 - Cherry Hill, NJ - South Jersey Gem, Jewelry, Mineral, & Fossil Show** **\*\*NEW LOCATION\*\*.** Trinity Presbyterian Church, 499 Route 70 East, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034. Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For more information visit: <http://sjmineralshow.com/>

**June 21, 2025 - Newton, MA - Boston Mineral Club Annual Auction.** American Legion Nonantum Post 440, 295 California Street, Newton, MA 02458. Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For additional information visit: <https://bostonmineralclub.org/events/auctions/>

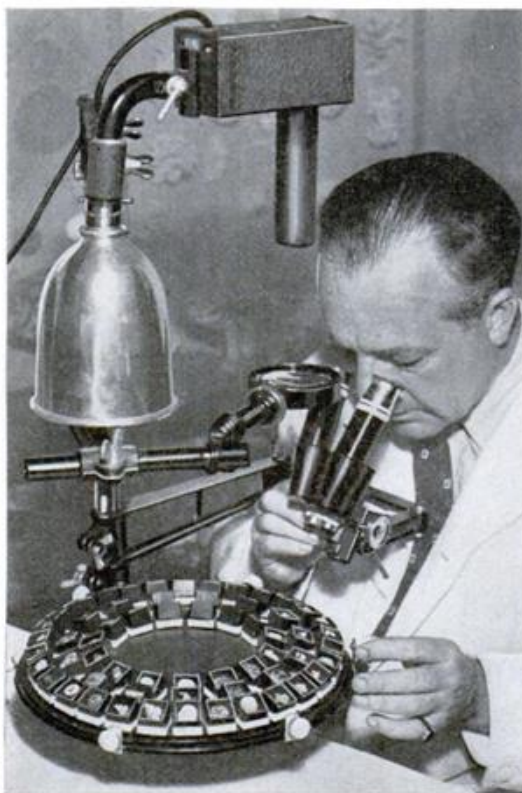
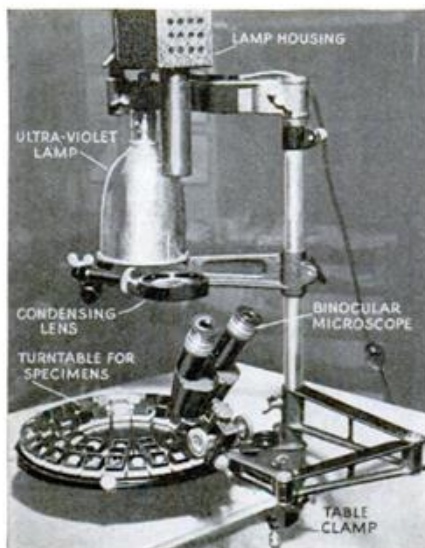
**July 26-27, 2025 – Pittsburgh, PA - The 2024 Monongahela Rockhounds Gem Mineral & Fossil Show.** West Mifflin Volunteer Fire Co., #4 Skyview Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15236. For additional information visit: <https://www.monongahelarockhounds.org/>

## Just for Fun

In the 1941 Popular Science magazine on page 94 there was this article about Jay T. Fox of Seaford, New York and his Microscope stand that holds sixty mineral specimens.

### Microscope Stand Holds Sixty Mineral Specimens

SIXTY mineral specimens are accommodated at once on a turntable which forms part of a universal microscope stand devised for amateurs by Jay T. Fox of Seaford, N. Y. Any specimen can be brought under the lens by turning the table. For studying single specimens, the turntable is replaced by a ball-and-socket arrangement which allows the mineral to be tilted at any angle desired. The mount also supports the binocular microscope and various accessories.



Jay T. Fox studying minerals with his composite microscope stand, also shown at the left. Specimens are mounted in tiny boxes on the turntable