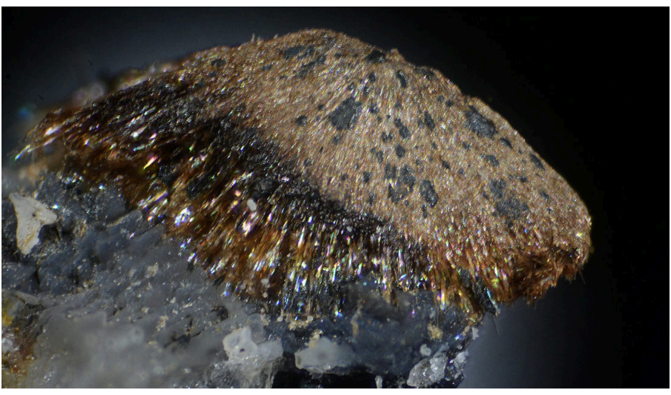
FOMS NEWSLETTER — 2026.06

Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society

FRANKLIN, NJ
June 2026



Bostwickite - Taylor Mine, Franklin Mine, Franklin, Sussex County, New Jersey, USA. Width of the field of view: 2 mm. Photograph © Peter Chin, used by permission.

June Dig and Meeting

!! > New link < !!
You can now RSVP for all the digs at once with Google.
Use the QR code above, or open the form here.

***DIG UPDATE* FOR ALL 2026 DIGS**
MEMBERS ONLY ON DIGS (CHECKED AT SITE)
RSVP REQUIRED, ONE WEEK PRIOR TO DIG
NO ADDITIONAL RESERVATION NECESSARY
To RSVP, use the Google form for all digs
or email:
Email: digs@foms-nj.us

DIG: JUNE 20, 2026 (SATURDAY)
Taylor Road Dump
Meet at Franklin Mineral Museum at 8:30 a.m.
(no bathrooms, closed in the morning) for 9 a.m.–12 noon dig.
All PPE required. Families welcome. Poundage fee: $2, payable to FMM.
Members join or renew.

MEETING: JUNE 20, 2026 (SATURDAY)
General Membership Meeting
Franklin Mineral Museum Pavilion (outside) 1:30–3:00 p.m.
Open to members and the public.

Speaker
Dr. Steven Kuitems
"Clinohedrite Lecture and Workshop" (90 min.)
FOMS will meet at 1:30 p.m. in the museum pavilion for a very special lecture and workshop on our famous fluorescent calcium zinc silicate, clinohedrite! Dr. Steven Kuitems will help us understand the characteristics of this mineral. Attendees are highly encouraged to bring their own specimens, and Dr. Kuitems will guide us with hands-on identification techniques. Not sure if your fluorescent orange specimen is clinohedrite, wollastonite, pectolite, or johnbaumite? This is a great opportunity to learn the difference! UV lamps will be available for this lecture, but attendees are welcome to bring their own.

At our meeting, FOMS merchandise will be available for sale, including stickers, patches, and old *Picking Table* volumes! Bring a friend and sign up a member on the spot!

You cannot view the whole newsletter in your email alone!
View this email in your browser
See link at top of all newsletters!

Looking Ahead….

FOMS SUMMER VACATION
July and August: No scheduled FOMS digs and FOMS meetings.

Despite being "on vacation," FOMS members will be working on *The Picking Table* and will be in and around Franklin and Ogdensburg. Feel free to reach out if you have questions. Contact us at newsletter@foms-nj.us.

FOMS FALL DIGS AND EVENTS
September 26, Hamburg Quarry / Meeting 1:30–3:00 p.m., FMM, public invited.
October 17, Braen, Lime Crest Quarry / Meeting 1:30–3:00 p.m., FMM, public invited.
November 21, Andover Mine / Meeting 1:30–3:00 p.m., FMM, public invited.

Sterling Dig Report

by Dave Kaminski and Tommy Hennighan, VP2

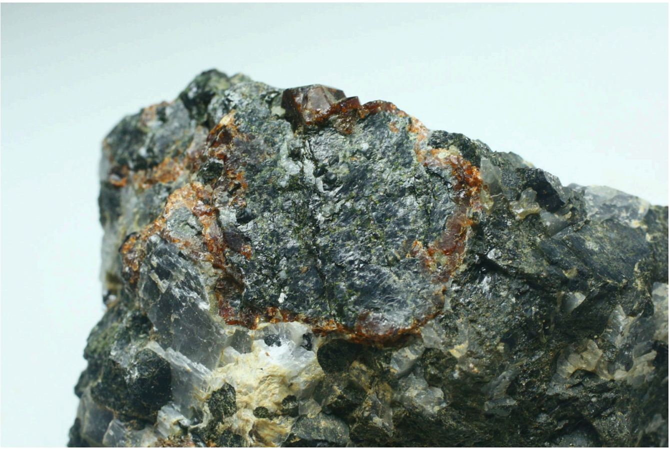
On May 16, 2026, about 55 members of FOMS attended the dig on the property of the Sterling Hill Mining Museum. Bill Kroth and Doug Francisco brought up what Bill called "the brightest green and red" on the property. This ore was available by the ton, with freshly-cut faces from the diamond saw. The Society diggers enjoyed it and hammered away. As it turns out, some of that ore also had sparse sphalerite, and some smaller percentage of it was almost what one would call "shot ore" and also had a nice mix of pink, yellow, and green willemite. While Bill Kroth insisted this was not unusual on the property, a lot of us had never collected it. Some of us mentioned that it looked more like Franklin "Parker Shaft" ore. It is unclear how broadly this type of ore has been documented and discussed relative to the Sterling Hill Mining Museum property.

Minerals found on the dig included spessartine, augite, azurite, cerussite, copper minerals, magnesio-riebeckite…and…send us the long list and photos for our database.

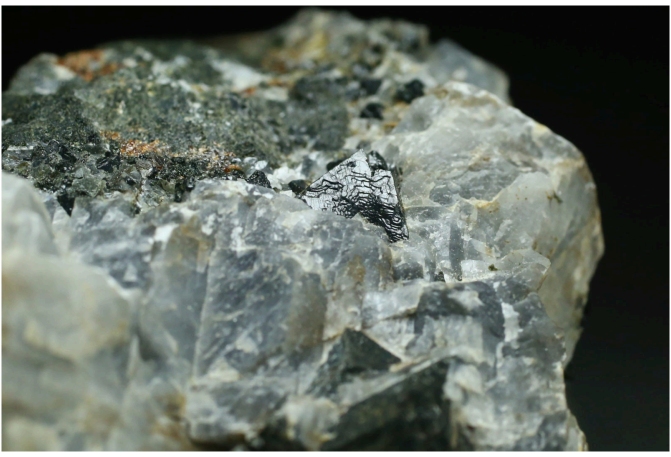
FOMS and its Board would like to thank Bill and Denise Kroth for the generous and welcome hosting of this dig, meeting, and the presentation by Dr. Charles Merguerian.

Sterling Hill Mining Museum Property Specimen Photos

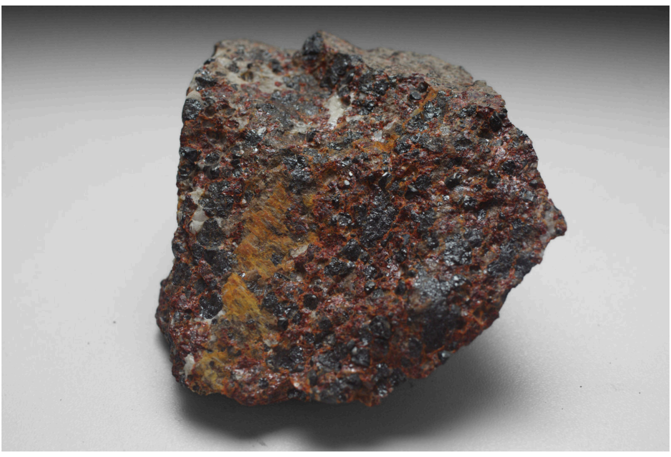
As with all photos from recent digs, the identification of minerals is preliminary and certainly incomplete. If you would like to follow up on a particular specimen, please contact us. Notice in these photos that spessartine is listed for a mineral that most Franklin diggers would likely misidentify as andradite. Links have been added to aid the viewer's understanding and to deepen the educational value of these photographs.



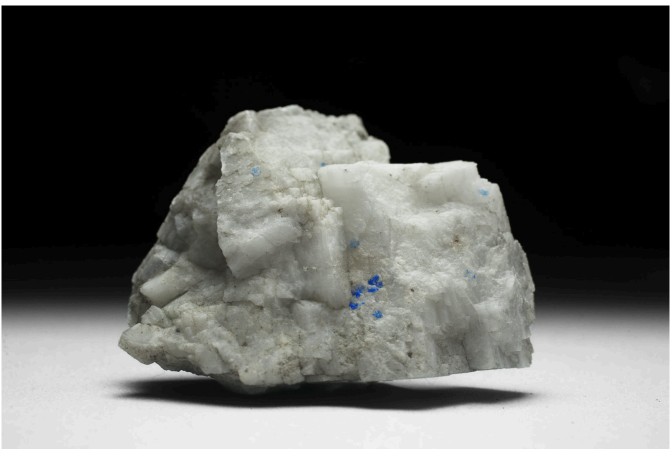
Incomplete gahnite grain, with a ring of spessartine in a matrix of calcite, augite, and franklinite, SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Photograph by Itsuki Imaeda.



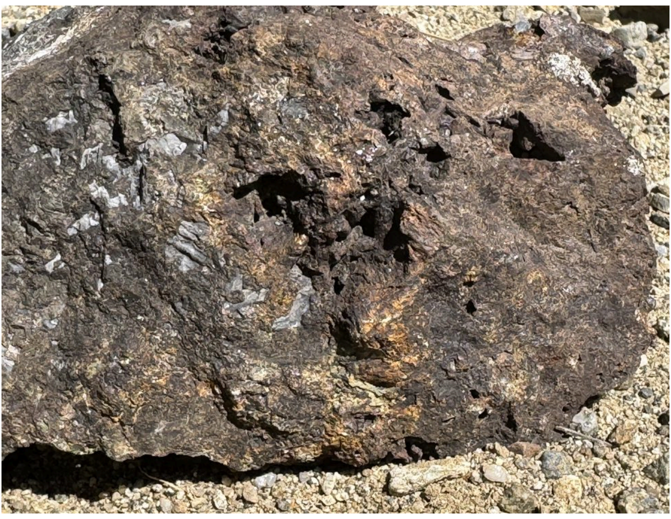
Franklinite crystals with spessartine in calcite, SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Photograph by Itsuki Imaeda.



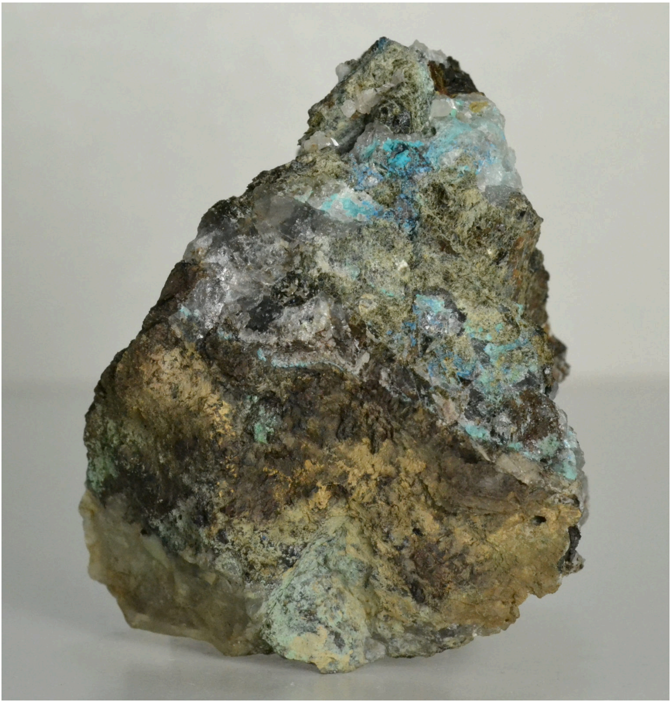
"Calcozincite" (orange coating) in classic Sterling ore of zincite, franklinite, and calcite, SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Photograph by Itsuki Imaeda.



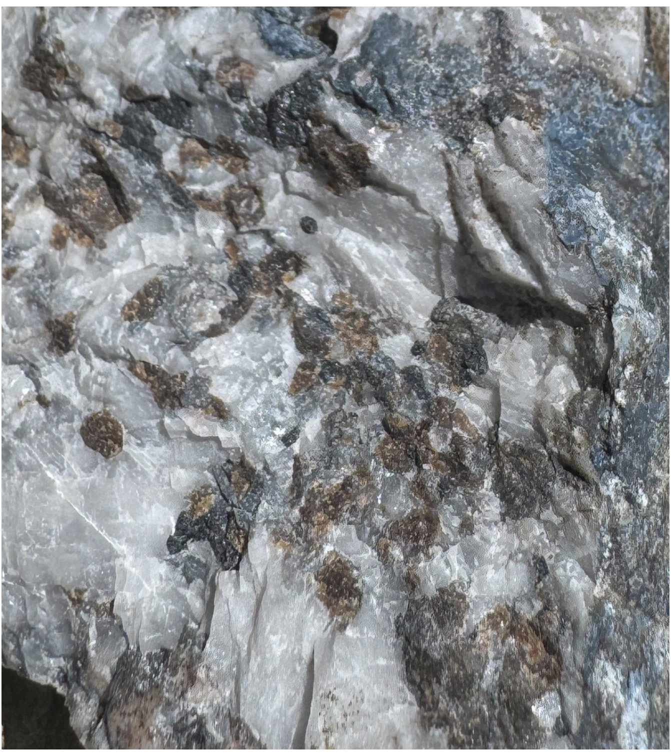
Tiny azurite blebs on calcite exhibiting prominent cleavage. SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Photograph by Itsuki Imaeda.



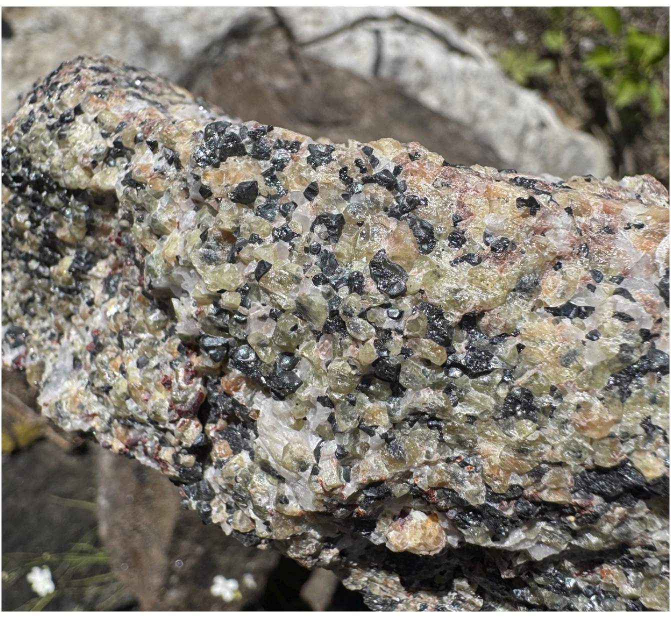
Augite (possible "jeffersonite") with franklinite and calcite, SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Collected by Dennis Buffenmyer. Gifted to Dave Kaminski. Photograph by Dave Kaminski.



Preliminary identification: *Secondary copper mineral with minor cerussite and additional unidentifed minerals*, SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Photograph by Noah Horwitz.



Magnesio-riebeckite. (See bluish mineral that is prominent along the right edge of the photo.) SHMM property, May 16, 2026. Collected by Gary Quam. Gifted to Dave Kaminski. Photograph by Dave Kaminski.



Pink, yellow, and green willemite with calcite, franklinite, zincite, and minor sphalerite. SHMM property, May 16, 2026. This specimen was the generous gift of Tom Heiden. Photograph by Dave Kaminski.

Dr. Charles Merguerian’s Presentation

Speaker Review, May 16, 2026

Dr. Meguerian provided a broad and riveting overview of more than 100 years of science fiction media as it relates to actual space exploration, as he promised. However, that was only the opening to his thorough explanation of the evolution of rocket technology and the competition for space exploration, the methods used to date the moon with crater impacts, and the description of some examples of thin sections of lunar rock.

Dr. Meguerian’s 112-page PDF which he used to present his talk can be found on his Duke Labs site along with additional media that he has created for public education.

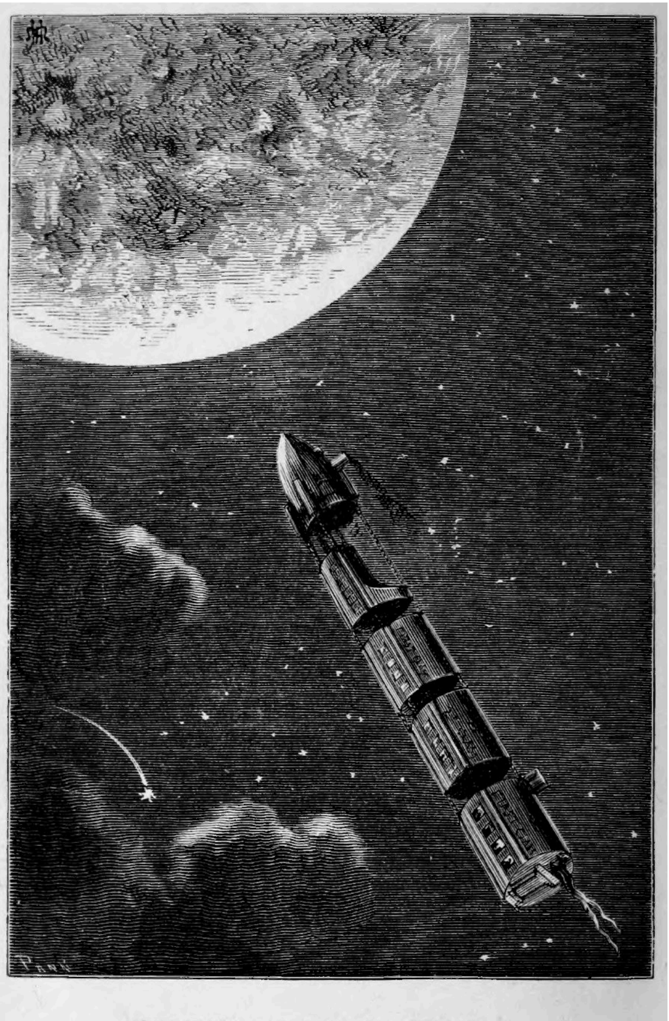
Banquet

Contact Banquet Co-Chair, Lois Verbeek, in advance for a fall Banquet ticket. The Banquet will be Saturday, September 19, 2026.

Our auction will take place after the dinner. Please contact Lois for information.
Email: loismverbeek@gmail.com
Cell: text or call 201-317-4040
Home phone: 973-786-5763

Society Contacts & Websites

SOCIETY EMAILS
info@foms-nj.us
digs@foms-nj.us
membership@foms-nj.us
newsletter@foms-nj.us
pickingtable@foms-nj.us



PROJECTILE TRAINS FOR THE MOON.

Projectile trains for the moon, in *The Earth to the Moon direct in ninety-seven hours and twenty minutes, and a trip round it,* Jules Verne, 1874. Thank you to Dr. Charles Merguerian for this inspiration in his slide show.

2026 Shows and Upcoming Events

June 6, PESA, Mineralfest, Macungie, PA
June 6, Connecticut Museum of Mining and Mineral Science, Kent, CT
June 6, (rain date June 7), NEMA Mineral Tailgate Sale, Poland, ME
June 6–7, GemFest, Wayne County Gem & Mineral Club, Canandaigua, NY
June 6–7, Orange County Mineral Show, Museum Village, Monroe, NY
June 12–14, Gem Miner's Spring Show, West Friendship, MD
June 20–21, East Coast Gem and Mineral Society, Southbury, CT
June 27–28, Gilsum Rock Swap & Mineral Show, Gilsum, NH

FOMS DIGS and MEETINGS 2026
All FOMS meetings and digs are held on Saturdays.
Members only on digs due to insurance. Join or renew.

DIG UPDATE
RSVP one week ahead is all that is required.
To RSVP, email digs@foms-nj.us

Not all locations are confirmed. Plan on 8:30 a.m. meetup, 9 a.m.–12 noon dig.
The monthly FOMS meetings are held at Franklin Mineral Museum from 1:30–3 p.m.

DIG: JUNE 20, 2026 (SATURDAY)
Taylor Road Dump
Meet 8:30 a.m. at Franklin Mineral Museum for sign-in.
32 Evans St, Franklin, NJ 07416
Orientation at 8:45 a.m.
All PPE required.
Members join or renew.

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FRANKLIN MINERAL MUSEUM DIGS ONLY 2026
June 6, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
July 18, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
September 5, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
October 3, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
November 7, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.

FRANKLIN MINERAL MUSEUM 2026
June 6, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
July 3–September 6, Summer Mineral Sale.
July 18, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
September 5, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
September 18-20, Fall Mineral Sale.
September 19-20, Fall Mineral Show (indoor and outdoor sale).
October 3, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.
November 7, Night dig on Buckwheat Dump at FMM, 6:30–10:30 p.m.

Advertising

The FOMS newsletter and *The Picking Table* will now begin to feature advertising. Please contact the newsletter or *The Picking Table* for more details.

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Our mailing address is:
Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society, Inc., PO Box 10, Stockholm, NJ 07460-0010 USA

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