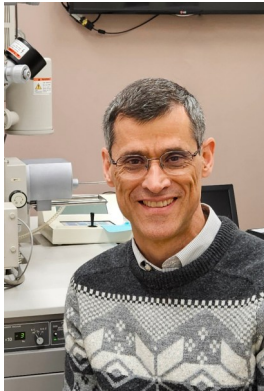


December 2025

NEWSLETTER



From the Director and Curator *by John A. Jaszczak*

It is a privilege for our team to provide the best possible stewardship of all aspects of the museum, including its collections, programs, resources, people, and gifts. Thanks to the generous support of so many of our friends, the museum has been able to grow its fabulous collections, enhance the exhibit hall and displays, expand its outreach programs, give away over 1,000 new museum coloring books to children, and begin offering self-guided experiences for its visitors. I don't know which of these I'm most excited about, but you can read more details below. Send us a note or visit us and let us know what you are most excited about at the museum. Thank you for your continued support!

Gallery Updates

Thanks to the generosity of our friends during our fall 2024 fundraising campaign, numerous updates have been made in the museum's Thomas D. Shaffner Exhibit Hall. Our exhibit designer, Bob Barron, has completed updating all of the lighting in our Introduction gallery, which was rather complicated with all of the little individually lit compartments, but very important since it is the entrance to the museum's exhibit hall. The uniformity of color temperature and brightness of the new lights (ITS West, Inc.) is a huge improvement over the prior lighting.

As part of our efforts to further contextualize the splendor and usefulness of the minerals, we have been working to enhance the mining corner of our Mineral Treasures gallery. Bob Barron built a replica ore chute



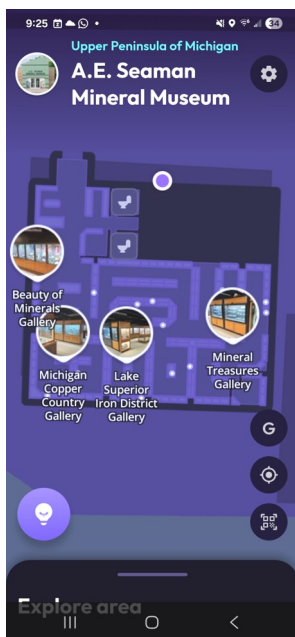
behind which is a large wall print of a trammer and miners working underground at the Calumet & Hecla mine. Behind the one-man drill on loan from the Quincy Mine Hoist Association is a near life-size print of a miner in the Calumet & Hecla mines. More work is underway so stay tuned for updates in a future *Showcase*.

Media

The A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum was featured in a [Family Destinations Guide](#) story that highlighted the museum's impressive collection of over 25,000* specimens, including fluorescent minerals and renowned Lake Superior copper. The museum also continues to be highly ranked by Tripadvisor, where it is listed as #1 of 18 things to do in Houghton. **Note from the Curator: The museum actually curates over 35,000 specimens, including those from both the Michigan Tech and the University of Michigan collections.*



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Self-Guided Experiences in the Museum with the Amuse App

We are very excited to have launched a new self-guided tour/experience that visitors can use in the museum with their personal mobile devices. The experiences can be accessed via a web browser (go.amuseapp.com) or by the app called “[amuse](https://go.amuseapp.com)”, which is available for free online at <https://bit.ly/4qG1boT>. Guests can also just scan QR codes on selected cases to see extra content about objects on display, including videos. Our goal is give a meaningful and enjoyable experience to our visitors, including students, and to continually develop more content. The phone version has a neat interactive map that guests can use to navigate in the museum.

The Amuse team recently posted a very nice blog post on their website about our partnership. Check it out at

<https://www.amuseapp.com/blog/partner-spotlight-a-e-seaman-mineral-museum>.

New Student Voices in the Museum *Sarah Fayen Scarlett*

Michigan Tech students have produced five new short videos for visitors to enjoy in the galleries. Museum staff worked this fall with Prof. Sarah Fayen Scarlett in the Department of Social Sciences, who was teaching a brand new course called “Experiencing Museums.” Part of the University’s new Essential Education program, this course immerses students in the role museums play in American communities. For a culminating group project, students worked in groups of 3 to create 1-minute interpretive videos for the Amuse app digital platform now widely available throughout the museum’s galleries. Students chose a specimen on view, met virtually with staff from Amuse to learn about



“short-form storytelling,” and then developed their own script with input

from Mineral Museum staff.

Students found inspiration from the Fall Break field trip to six museums in Milwaukee, where they encountered a wide range of interpretive strategies and new media used for visitor engagement. This field trip, a centerpiece of the new course, was funded this year by a grant from the Chipstone Foundation, a non-profit focused on innovative museum practice and American material culture history. The course brought students from majors all across Michigan Tech into the Mineral Museum—many for the first time! Next time you visit the galleries, see what these new student visitors have to say!



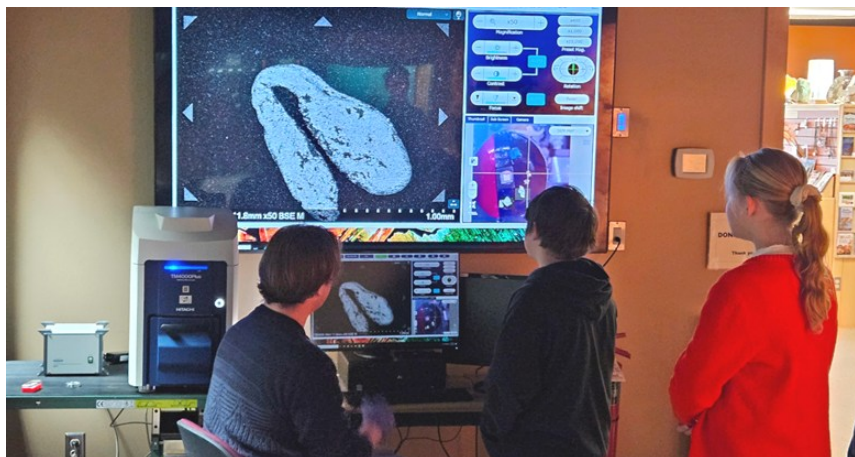


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School Tours

In October, nearly 40 fifth-grade students from Barkell Elementary School in Hancock visited the museum for a special afternoon of tours and the opportunity to see and use a remarkable Hitachi tabletop scanning electron microscope that we have on loan thanks to the Hitachi High-Tech [Inspire STEM Education](#) program. It is a collaborative effort between the museum and several other departments at Michigan Tech.

Just before Thanksgiving, the museum participated in a collaborative outreach program for fourth grade students and their teachers called “Stories & Semiconductors.” Approximately 140 students from four local schools enjoyed using optical microscopes and going on a scavenger hunt and in the museum. A highlight was the Hitachi tabletop scanning electron microscope, which many students had the opportunity to use under the guidance of graduate student and museum gift shop assistant Owen Wells.



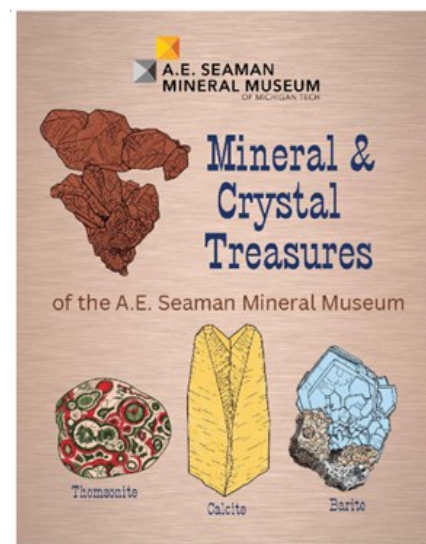
Owen Wells guiding students in the use of the Hitachi tabletop scanning electron microscope to image a microscopic gold nugget.



Hands-on activities were popular with 5th-grade students from Hancock's Barkell Elementary School during their visit in October.

Museum Coloring Book

In the spring of 2024, the museum partnered with Powell Publishers (Rochester, NY) to produce a coloring and activity book about the A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum and its minerals. Authored by Darryl Powell and edited by John Jaszczak and Patty Cobin, the 40-page book was completed in January 2025. Thanks to the generous support of the *Elizabeth Bekkala Endowed Memorial Fund for the A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum*, we have been able to distribute over 1,000 coloring books free to children visiting the museum. Now in its third printing, the coloring book has been a hit with the children, and we have discovered that it is also very popular with adults as well. Copies are available for purchase in the museum's gift shop.





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Copper Country III Now in Print!

A third "Copper Country!" special issue of the *Mineralogical Record* magazine has just been published in November-December 2025. The issue contains two extensive articles by Chris Stefano (former associate curator) and Philip Persson focusing on the mines and minerals from Ontonagon County, Michigan. A total of 128 specimens from the A. E. Seaman Mineral Museum's collection and three from the University of Michigan's collection, the latter of which are curated by the museum through the Michigan Mineral Alliance, are featured through photographs by Stefano as well as several by John Jaszczak (museum curator and director). Congratulations to Chris and Phil for another fantastic series of articles highlighting the mines and minerals of Michigan's Copper Country. Copies of this new issue, as well as copies of the earlier Copper Country I and II issues, are available for sale in the museum's gift shop.



*Cluster of unusually sharp silver crystals
collected by Bob Barron from the
Adventure Mine, Ontonagon Co., Michigan
in the summer of 2021.*



- 1852-1878 - WILLIAMS FAMILY HISTORY**
- Feb. 1852 - Ben Williams born in London, youngest son of John & Leah Williams of Glamorgan, Wales, a copper smelting family.
 - 1855 - Williams family moves to U.S., settling in Connecticut. Works in brass industry.
 - 1860-1867 - John Williams works in a copper refinery at Hancock, Michigan.
 - 1874 - Williams family moves to San Francisco with D. W. Bisbee, Ben's brother-in-law.
 - 1874-1878 - Williams family engage in smelting in California, Nevada, Montana.

Keweenaw Mineral Days 2025

The annual Keweenaw Mineral Days events were as successful as ever! Our first event was an evening lecture by Evan Jones, whose presentation was titled "Ben Williams – First Superintendent of the Copper Queen Mine." Evan revealed that Ben and his family actually lived in Hancock, Michigan from 1860 to 1867 when his father John worked at a local

copper refinery. Approximately 40 people attended the lecture, held in the Michigan Tech Memorial Union Building Ballroom the night of August 4. We also revamped the annual Surplus Mineral Sale this year, held on August 6, by moving it to the cement pad instead of the grassy field next to the museum for more even footing for customers and workers alike. We also offered a new discount deal at the sale: discount tiers! A star stamp on a mineral's info card was a 20% discount, and a crescent moon stamp on the info card was a 40% discount. This benefitted both customers and the museum as we were able to reduce some of our long-held stock, and customers got some great deals! While it's difficult to estimate how many people attended the sale, suffice it to say the parking lot was packed and we had a line to get into the sale area at 10am.





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New Acquisitions

In February 2025 we received the donation of a remarkable slice of the Seymchan pallasite meteorite from meteorite expert Graham C. Wilson. The 60×30×1.4-cm slice weighs nearly 20 kg, and is composed primarily of nickel-rich iron with prominent feathery inclusions of schreibersite. Since it also contains small forsterite olivine grains (at the top edge), it is classified as a pallasite meteorite. Professional preparation, including mild acid etching and polishing, helps reveal its magnificent texture called the Widmanstätten structure, which results from the very slow cooling and crystallization of the component nickel-iron alloys kamacite and taenite in the parent asteroid.



Seymchan meteorite (left) on display in the museum's exhibit hall. Gift from Graham C. Wilson.

James Hird (below) presenting the painting Susan Robinson created for the celebration of the museum's 100th anniversary, and which Jim successfully acquired at the "Centennial Ball" auction. On the back of the painting is a page of signatures of many of the descendants of A. E. Seaman who also attended the celebration.



Bob Price (above) standing next to the large sheet copper from the White Pine Mine, Ontonagon Co., MI that he donated to the museum. It now on display in the Beauty of Minerals gallery. Bob also donated a large specimen of bright blue chrysocolla from Arizona, and a suite of exquisite datolite nodules, many of which were originally collected by Bob Barron.



Happy Holidays from us to you!



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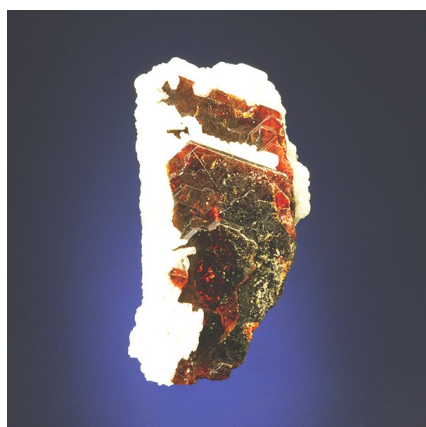
TanzaniteOne Reference Collection

This past year the museum was able to purchase a special collection of 45 specimens originating from the Merelani tanzanite gem mines in northern Tanzania. Bryan Lees of Collector's Edge Minerals in Golden, Colorado, knew that we are strategically building a very unique collection of minerals from this amazing locality since we had the opportunity last year to acquire an important selection of exotic and beautiful Merelani minerals from Simon Harrison (see our 2024 Newsletter). Several years ago, Collector's Edge acquired the collection from an affiliate of the TanzaniteOne Mining company after the company closed and its assets were disbursed. Bryan kept the reference collection intact and showed it to us in Tucson this past February. We were not only impressed by variety of specimens preserved, but also truly amazed at the size of some of them- especially a 26-cm-tall group of quartz crystals (on prehnite/graphite/tanzanite matrix) and a giant 13-kg (29-lb) specimen of lustrous pyrite that is over 27 cm long. One of the curator's favorites is a specimen of graphite-rich host rock surrounding a vein of selenite that contains a large gemmy section of blue-purple tanzanite.

We are grateful to our museum membership, as well as to three major donors for making it possible for the museum to purchase this collection earlier this fall. We thank Bryan Lees for preserving the collection and making it available to us to acquire. We are also grateful to Paul and Kelli Cory (Iteco Inc., Powell, Ohio) for transporting the collection across the country and making it easy for us to pick up in Ohio.



A selection of the newly acquired TanzaniteOne collection of Merelani minerals, temporarily on display in the Director & Curator's office. From left to right: tanzanite in selenite boudin in graphite matrix; tanzanite with prehnite; tanzanite with calcite and millerite; quartz with tanzanite and prehnite; yellow prehnite; a large tanzanite crystal; green tremolite; and the giant pyrite crystal.




Donate to Our Specimen Acquisition Fund

In this "golden age" of mineral collecting, the museum has many opportunities throughout the year to acquire select mineral specimens for the collection. As an example, one special specimen that we would like to acquire is the rare 4-cm-tall wurtzite crystal from Merelani, Tanzania shown at the left. It is one of the finest examples known and was illustrated in the article about "Spectacular Sulfide" minerals from Merelani, published in the *Mineralogical Record* in 2014. Might you consider making a special donation to our Specimen Acquisition Fund? Simply denote fund #2957 when you give by check or donate online.

Giving to the museum is easy! Visit us at museum.mtu.edu/support-us/giving or scan this QR code:



ANNUAL BENEFITS			Please Mail To: Julie Stark A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum Michigan Tech 1400 Townsend Drive Houghton, MI 49931 
Individual	Free admission for member for a year.	\$30	
Couple	Free admission for either or both individuals for a year.	\$55	
Family	Free admission for your immediate family for a year.	\$100	
Crystal	Free admission for your immediately & extended family for a year.	\$300	
Copper	Free admission for your immediate & extended family for a year, and name on a Copper Level case.	\$500	
Silver	Free admission for your immediate & extended family for a year, name on a Silver Level case, and free admission for 2 accompanying guests per visit.	\$1000	
Gold	Free admission for your immediate & extended family for a year, name on a Gold Level case, and free admission for 4 accompanying guests per visit.	\$2000	
Connoisseur	Free admission for your immediate & extended family for a year, name on a Connoisseur Level case, and free admission for 10 accompanying guests per visit.	\$5000	



Return Mailing Address:
Julie Stark
A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum
Michigan Tech
1400 Townsend Drive
Houghton, MI 49931

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please see reverse side for details on the benefits of each membership level.

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