

The Kentucky Three-Day Event

By Mike Saniga

Four members of the SMRMC traveled to Kentucky for a three day field trip. The first day was agate day. Tina, Harry Mike, and Pat from the SMRMC met up with three members of the Blue Grass Gem and Mineral Club in the small town of Irvine. Tom, the group leader from the Blue Grass Club, received permission for our group to collect agate from a heavily wooded hillside just outside of town. The last portion of road (the collecting area) was only passable by a four wheel drive vehicle with plenty of ground clearance. The small stream which the agate was located had to be driven across many times, and at times it was the road. Even the rain storm didn't dampen the spirits of the group, but it did make the road very slippery. The stream bed and the gravel banks produced a small amount of agate and copious amounts of banded chert. Other specimen "flower bed" rocks were also collected.

One of the other neat things about the day's journey was the butterflies. Every opening in the forest was inhabited by hundreds of butterflies.

The second day was spent looking for fluorite in the hot humid country side. The members of the Southern Maryland Club met up with Tom and his wife Jane from the Blue Grass Club in Lexington. After about a half hour drive we got the opportunity dig for fluorite with about 30 other club members. Two trenches several feet deep and about 40ft long had been bull dozed on the edge of a farm field. Fluorite was scattered everywhere. Some people found good specimens by just walking around and looking at the over turned dirt. Most spent much of the time digging on the edge of the cuts. By early afternoon the 100 degree temperature and high humidity forced all but the hardest to call it a day. The days dig was very successful with many nice specimens being found.

On the final day we met Tom and Jane in Lexington who then lead us to the outskirts of Danville. The parking area was in a dried up stream bed that was coated with geodes! So many geodes that everyone ran out of buckets to put them in. In fact I had several rolling around the car on the way home. Some of the other items that were found in the stream included pieces of chert, fossils, and pyrite balls. By early afternoon the car was heavily weighted down with rocks and I called it a day.