

Gilsum Rock Swap – 2022

Tom Mortimer

This June, the Gilsum Rock Swap returned after a two year hiatus. The swap has been my favorite annual event since the mid 70's. My recollection is that I have missed just two in the past decades. The mine tours have long gone, along with the collectors with tables filled with self-collected specimens to swap. I added many specimens to my collection from swaps during these early years. My Manchester magnetites and Winchester epidotes traded especially well. Connecticut swappers always had nice trap rock prehnite and zeolite specimens.

This year, at 9 am, the Gilsum ball field was full-up with mineral dealers and jewelry purveyors. Saturday was sunny and hot. Soon the parking lot was at capacity. Cars were parking on the Gilsum side streets. This is a family event. Parents, kids, grandparents, and lots of pets roamed the ball field. The Gilsum Historical Society was doing a great business with their iced lemonade.

As in past years, Bob and Marlene York graciously hosted my card table of sale specimens in the rear of their "Prospector's Pick" booth. My offerings were mostly all New Hampshire and New England specimens. Many of these were from the large lot gifted to me from the estate of Leroy Grant in 2018. (I have to find a home for this massive hoard of un-cleaned, un-trimmed, material that has languished in tubs and flats for decades.)

I continue to be disappointed in the paucity of New England specimens offered for sale. My only purchase was a Willington, CT thumbnail magnesite – a cluster of nice cream-colored rhombs. I did not have a New England magnesite, an uncommon carbonate mineral in the northeast.

Several MMNE members stopped by to chat at the Prospector's Pick booth; Bob and Anna Wilken, Scott Dion, Don Dallaire and Peter Cristofono.

After some conflicting thought, the lingering COVID risk in the crowded church basement supper (with its endless pies) outweighed my attendance at this traditional event.



Gilsum ballfield, June 2022



Prospector's Pick booth, Gilsum, 2022