

lives in Chicago with their lively and alertly intelligent son, John Paul.

Jun's Chicago years were equally productive. Growth of single crystals of refractory silicates and aluminates and thorough wet-chemical analyses of new or hitherto inadequately described mineral species attracted his scientific attention. Several papers were incomplete at his death, including studies on boron-rich humites, micas, and amphiboles from the Franklin marble. Jun often commented on the close interactions he had with students at Harvard, something he perhaps missed at Chicago owing to spatial

separation from the other mineralogists. But he attended departmental seminars and interacted with the group on the electron and ion probe analytic facilities through providing wet chemical analyses and a subsequent arsenal of standards. Devoted to his family and always rich with humor and abundant with dedication to his work, the loss of one of the most creative analytic chemists in the world and the very special human warmth, sensitivity, and sensibility left a pronounced gap in the mineralogic community.

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### **Memorial of Leo Neal Yedlin March 20, 1908–October 7, 1977**

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The death of Leo Neal Yedlin on October 7, 1977 brought about the loss of an amateur mineralogist whose practical knowledge of mineral specimens and mineral species was truly phenomenal. This knowledge ultimately earned him recognition as a Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America and many good friends among professional mineralogists. His own private collection of microscopic mineral mounts, which he bequeathed to the Smithsonian Institution, numbered approximately 20,000 specimens representing innumerable worldwide occurrences and over 800 species. Its contents clearly reveal a broad knowledge of crystal morphology, habit differences, compositional differences, mineral paragenesis, and mineral esthetics. His extraordinary collection of mineralogical books was the source of much of this knowledge.

Born on March 20, 1908, Neal's youth was spent in Brooklyn, New York. At Boys' High School of Brooklyn he was an outstanding student and athlete and even became president of the student body. He and some of his friends very early fell under the influence of the Brooklyn Childrens Museum where dedicated curators, such as Jack Boyle, introduced



Neal to the joys of mineral collecting and mineral study. Every spare moment was spent at the Museum—specimens, simple equipment and a microscope being made available there for mineral study. Paterson and other quarry sites in the New Jersey trap rocks were within reach of an extensive public transportation system, some determined hiking and numerous school holidays and weekends. These expeditions provided most of Neal's early specimens as well as a solid beginning in species recognition and descriptive mineralogy. They also began to put him in touch with other major collectors of the time.

Neal's formal education was in the law. He attended Columbia University for two years then acquired his law degree from the Brooklyn Law School in 1928 and passed the bar in May 1930. The great depression made things difficult for new lawyers, but a short stint of law practice at Cedar Grove, Maine, and finally enlistment in the Air Corps on June 27, 1942—which he served in various legal capacities—got him started toward a career in the law. Later, after his discharge as a Lieutenant in 1946, he was to settle in the New York area and turn his attention to the legal and financial aspects of construction contracting. Until his death this provided a comfortable living for him as well as sufficient leisure time to pursue his mineralogical hobby.

By February 28, 1942 Neal was already recognized as a knowledgeable mineral collector and a strong figure in the amateur mineralogy movement when he was elected president of the New England Federation of Mineral Societies at its first meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Through the years he held a number of other official positions in amateur mineralogy, including two terms as president of the prestigious New York Mineral Club. In May 1950 Neal and Helen, whom he had married in 1947, moved from Long Beach, New York to their new home in New Haven, Connecticut. This house was to become the crossroads gathering place and news center for the rapidly expanding hobby of micromounting in the United States. Helen, whose death came very shortly after Neal's, with her effervescent personality quickly became a friend of all his mineral-collecting friends. Using this home as a base Neal developed a voluminous correspondence, entertained numerous visitors,

and wrote his magazine columns, all of this activity directed toward enjoyment of his hobby. The long series of magazine columns on micromounting which he wrote first for *Rocks and Minerals Magazine* ("The Micromounter") and later, until his death, for the *Mineralogical Record* ("Yedlin on Micromounting"), was followed devotedly by hundreds of collectors and enthusiasts.

Neal also made a point of attending any sort of gathering where micromounters might be found. He was among the hardy few at the first Baltimore Micromount Symposium in 1951 and attended religiously each year as the Symposium gained steadily in significance and prestige until he was physically unable to do so. The Pacific Micromount Conference, the Canadian Micromount Symposium, and numerous other gatherings profited from his lectures and attendance and in turn helped to reinforce his own interest. He earned for himself the title of "Mr. Micromounter" by which he was frequently addressed through both affection and respect.

Neal never claimed to be a trained scientist. Nevertheless, his encyclopedic memory of species and their occurrences and properties was impressive. He was happy to share it all with others and did so frequently through his writing and his numerous popular lectures. These lectures were always beautifully illustrated with startlingly good color slides of his own creation. Always he would remark that "a mineral specimen photograph is no good if you can't identify the species by looking at it." At the time of his death, at the urging of his publisher and friends, he had been writing and assembling material for the book on micromounting he had long thought of doing. The book is scheduled to be published posthumously.

It seems only fitting that well before Neal's death his friends had dedicated a new mineral species in his honor.<sup>1</sup> This well-known, very popular collector, lecturer, raconteur, writer, and accomplished amateur had found the species himself on specimens from the Mammoth Mine, Tiger, Arizona.

<sup>1</sup> W. J. McLean, R. A. Bideaux and R. W. Thomssen (1974) Yedlinite, a new mineral from the Mammoth Mine, Tiger, Arizona. *Am. Mineral.*, 59, 1157-1165.