



THE VILLAGES GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY – Field Trip Information

MICHIGAN



Gitche Gumee Agate and History Museum

E21739 Brazel St Grand Marais, MI
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The museum is located in Grand Marais, Michigan on the south shore of Lake Superior, about half way between Marquette and Sault Saint Marie

Exhibits and Displays

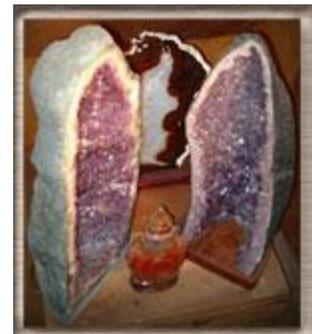
Mineralogical Displays

Enjoy a large collection of incredible Lake Superior agates. Marvel at the contraptions designed and constructed by Axel to facilitate 71 years of agate hunting on local beaches. Become mesmerized by other displays that will help you to understand and appreciate:

- Lake Superior agates
- Agates From Around the World
- The Beauty of the Banded Agate
- The Agate that Changes Color
- Axel's Numbered Agates
- Fluorescent Minerals
- Rocks and Minerals from the Michigan Region
- Upper Peninsula Mining Display
- Agate First Cousins
- Beach Rocks
- Giant Crystals



Banded Agate Display



Amethyst Towers

Historical Displays

Learn what life was like in Grand Marais over a century ago. Various displays and interpretive signs will help you probe the questions listed below. Each year significant changes will be made to the historical displays.

What was Grand Marais like a century ago? How hard was it to make a living as a lumberjack in the woods during fierce Upper Peninsula winters? How challenging was it for commercial fishermen to battle the power of Lake Superior in hand-made fish tugs? What was it like to work in the copper and iron mines? How different were the tools, clothing, and cost of goods in 1899 compared to today?



Logging History Display



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Gitche Gumee Agate and History Museum (Continued)

The Niemi Family Display

The house to the west of the museum was the Niemi family's homestead. Otto Niemi emigrated from Finland in 1905 to work in the Grand Marais lumber mills. He married and started a family only to suffer with many others when the mills closed in 1910. Being resourceful, self-sufficient Finlanders, the family built a series of three fish tugs and made a living off the lake for almost a half century. The museum has several displays honoring the Niemi family's work ethic and self-reliance. The premier display is the fish tug, *Shark*, which is located outside the museum. The Michigan Maritime Museum, that owned the tug during the mid-1990s, verified that it is the last hand-made fish tug left intact in the entire Great Lakes region. It was quite a project to acquire, move, and refurbish the fish tug so that it could return back to Grand Marais.



Niemi Family Display

Museum Gift Shop

A unique gift shop is open any time the museum is operating, or by appointment. The gift shop has Lake Superior agates, other minerals, handcrafted agate products, and other unusual items. Some of these items can be purchased from the On-line Gift Shop. For previous visitors who have not been to the museum in recent years, an addition was added onto the north porch in 2006 to significantly expand the floor space of the gift shop. All sales from the gift shop support the museum's operation.



Gift Shop Agates



Gift Shop Counter



Gift Shop Stones