

Tar Heel Tailings

A newsletter for Gem and Mineral enthusiasts in and around the Raleigh, North Carolina area.

Special Interest Articles:

- Prez Sez
- Little Pine Garnet Pine

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Prez Sez By Cindy Hummel

August is one of our more popular meetings because it involves food! August is our Ice Cream Social. Bring Ice Cream and toppings to eat and an ice cream scoop. The club provides bowls & spoons. The Social part is talking about a rock story with the rock as a demonstration. So bring a rock with an interesting story. We will have a short business meeting after/during the eating of our treat.

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Little Pine Garnet Pine

By George Harris

**Little Pine Garnet Mine
Madison County, NC
Sandy Bottom Trail
Rides
1459 Caney Fork Road
Marshall, NC 28753**

The Little Pine Garnet Mine is a great place for collecting almandine garnets. You will find many garnet, some the size of baseballs, if you go into the back of the mine. The crystals are well formed and embedded in a soft matrix. You'll need a head lamp, rock hammer, chisel, ear plugs, and sturdy shoes. There's not much light in the back of the adit, so you need the head lamp.

The world famous

Little Pine Garnet Mine has been a mecca for rockhounds near and far for decades. The Ball family has owned the mine since 1913 and has always allowed rockhounds to visit and collect the giant garnet crystals for their mineral collections.

Tucked away on a secluded property between

Marshall and Mars Hill and just minutes from Asheville is one of the literal gems of Madison County. Little Pine Garnet Mine had been mined before current owner Jackie Ball's grandfather Logan Ball purchased the mine and the property in 1913.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.tarheelclub.org

Program & Refreshments

REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE:

Coordinator: Need Volunteer

August Ice Cream Social

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

August	Ice Cream Social
September	Dan Cathey, Poland Mining Camp, Maine
October	Gary McCutchen, Filing a Claim, How to Get Your Own Mine, grab bags
November	Elections/Movie: Mount St. Helens

Remember, the club will reimburse you for up to \$75 (bring your receipts to the treasurer).

August B-Day Members

Ann Christ
Lloyd Christ
Ken Fersch
Robert Hodges
Ashley Jackson
Julie Niederkorn
James Tunney
Kenny Williams



Membership applications may be mailed to:

Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.
Attention: Treasurer
10609 Chelsea Drive
Raleigh, NC 27603

Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. - July Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 21st, 2015

Attendees = ??

Opening of Club Meeting:

Cyndy called meeting to order.

New Business:

Visitors greeted: Amelia Orina, Debra Pricket, Grayson Pricket and Michael Simpson

July birthdays acknowledged: Charles Neal

Old Business:

Updates – Melissa Whitfield volunteered to update the website. She is updating the contacts on the old website which are out of date. She's also helping with the new website. The new website will be designed by her and contain a link to her website in consideration of her work for the club.

Club T-Shirts. Member Greg Dillon bought a t-shirt business. He is willing to work on the new club t-shirts for a competitive price. Shirts for the officers/Board members may be embroidered. Other member t-shirts will likely be printed in on ink color. It is less expensive. The club is trying to avoid a big overstock like the last time t-shirts were ordered five years ago. Smaller quantities will be ordered in men's sizes only.

Refreshments:

Volunteers needed.

Prez Sez

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On the agenda for the meeting is the updating of the website to current officers. Melissa is working diligently on this. We hope it will be ready by meeting night.

The current club t-shirts are available upon request. We will bring the shirts to each meeting with an email request. The shirts are \$5 each. We have all sizes and men & women's types. Specify type, size and number of shirts.

More New Business:

Gerald Beck noted that his name was wrong in the June newsletter. His name is Gerald Beck not Gerald Cook.

There is an opening for the show next year. A chairperson is needed for Hospitality. Two co-chairs can also serve. The position(s) require a commitment for a large part of the show. There are instructions provided by the previous Hospitality chairperson. This position is critical for the show next year.

Program:

The presentation was Photographing Minerals by Scott LaBorde.

Door Prize:

Jerry Miller won the mouse pad and Melissa Whitfield won a mineral specimen.

Field Trip:

Field trip to quarry in Maysville was discussed.

Close of Meeting:

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted
Tracy Soderberg

In regards to the t-shirts for next year, I will attempt to print out the colors from the catalogue provided by Greg Dillon in our 6 previously selected colors.

See you next week,

Cyndy Hummel

President,

Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.

August Treasurer's Report

May Ending /	
Jun. Beginning Balance	\$5,797.99

Deposits (+)	
Members	\$75.00

Sub total	\$75.00

Checks Written (-)	
Newsletter	\$138.08
Motor Vehicles	25.65
Plates, cups, etc.	25.98
May food	75.00
June food	77.00

Sub Total	\$341.71

Jun. Ending /	
Jul. Beginning Balance	\$5,531.28

Jun. Ending /	
Jul. Beginning Balance	\$5,531.28

Deposits (+)	
No Deposits	\$0.00

Sub total	\$0.00

Checks Written (-)	
EFMLS Wildacres	\$205.00
Newsletter	138.08
Meeting Food	20.07
New Checks	39.95
Shelves , etc.	293.22

Sub Total	\$696.32

Jul. Ending /	
Aug. Beginning Balance	\$4,834.96

Little Pine Garnet Pine

Continued from page 1

Logan and his son Jack continued to mine it until the early 1950s. Jackie remembers spending time with his grandfather as a small boy, but he himself never worked in the mines. His favorite story is about how Tiffany had a contract in the 1940s and got all the good garnet stones out to ship to their stores in New York City.

stones that garnets can be found in) to that Talc Mill for it to be ground up for use in pencils. The talc pencils were what steel mill workers used to mark steel for cutting before newer equipment took their place.



1 pound polished garnet crystal, now residing in the Henderson County Mineral and Lapidary Museum, Hendersonville, N.C.



Weight: 5 pounds. Now resides in the Henderson County Museum.

If you talk to the "oldtimers" in the county, they can still remember the Talc Mill in Marshall where Jackie's father used to take the soapstone (that's one of the

Jackie bought the property in 1961 and allowed people to dig in the "spoil piles" from the old mine. But it wasn't until 1998 that Jackie and his wife started to

promote it as a tourist attraction with his Sandy Bottom Trail Rides. Whether you are a serious rockhound or a casual, curious amateur, you can spend a few hours or a day digging in those spoil piles at the mouth of the old mine or venture into the mine itself. At one time the mine went all the way through the mountain but a cave-in closed off a large portion.



Garnet crystal in matrix just removed from the mine.

Geology of the Little Pine Garnet Mine

There were three mountain building stages that formed the Appalachian Mountains. It is believed that the Little Pine matrix was formed during the first mountain building stages. That would make the garnet crystals in the mine around 450 million years old. The matrix is a metamorphic material made up of a chlorite / mica schist. There is some iron and quartz also in the mix. The majority of the garnet crystals in the mine are being replaced by the chlorite and mica; this makes them unsuitable for abrasive or gem material. The crystals have retained their excellent shape which makes them much sought after by local collectors. Some of the garnets have been distorted during their growth which gives rise to some unusual shapes. I have had two theories given to me by geologists. The first theory was that the extreme heat and pressure while the crystals were forming caused the elongated shapes and distorted crystals. The second theory was that it is simply caused by the atomic makeup of the crystals, perhaps one of the

atoms ended up in the wrong place while the crystal was forming. Either way, they are some of the most unusual garnet crystals in the world.



5 pound double crystal.

History of the Little Pine Garnet Mine

The Little Pine Garnet Mine was worked in 1904-1905 for abrasive garnet to be used as sandpaper etc. The mine was closed for several years and then purchased in 1913 by Logan Ball. Logan worked the mine for many years locating many gem quality specimens. Tiffany's of New York visited the mine at one time to determine if there was enough gem quality material to be productive in a large scale mining operation. Gem quality material was not as abundant as Tiffany's would have liked and they declined to do any major mining at the site. But there were numerous specimens for collectors to be found. After several more years passed, Logan opened the mine to local collectors/rockhounds for the fee of \$1.00 per day. The mine had become famous over the years for its large well-formed crystals of almandine garnet, some up to 8-10 pounds! Eventually the mine was passed on to Jack Ball Sr. He continued to allow collecting at the site for \$5.00 per day. As the years have passed, many fantastic specimens have been found. Today, the mine is operated by Jackie Ball, Jacks Son, and he too allows collecting for the fee of \$25.00 per day.



Garnet crystal in matrix rock at the Little Pine Mine.



Rules for mining at the Little Pine Garnet Mine

Mining the Little Pine Garnet Mine

The mine, actually an adit, is located up the hill from the parking area. It's a easy walk up a gravel road, maybe 5 minutes at the most. There is a picnic table and port-a-john near the entrance to the site. There's a small creek running next to the road leading to the mine. There's a spoils pile that can be searched for kids and those not wishing to venture into the mine. The mine entrance is large and easy to find. The mine goes directly into the hillside with a slight upward grade. The pocket layer is a about a 45 degree angle from the front of the mine. Most of the good digging is at or near the back of the mine, again head lamps required unless you can see in the dark. Since the mine floor is sloped at 45 degrees and covered with tailings and dust, sturdy shoes and careful walking is necessary. I was wearing L.L.Bean Costal Clogs (aka Crocs), which was not the appropriate attire. I almost took a couple good spills walking through the mine.

There are support pillars located through the mine as you go in which have material. Please DO NOT mine the support pillars. It is tempting since they're located in the light, but this undermines the support and safety of the mine. At the back of the mine there is a lot of material readily accessible. There is a tremendous amount of garnet in the mine that can be extracted with a bit of work.

1. Trash, make sure to bring out any trash that you may bring into the mine area. Although this is common knowledge to most rockhounds, some need an occasional reminder.
2. DO NOT DIG on any of the support columns that hold up the ceiling of the mine, including the one on the right as you enter the mine. This should be obvious, but again, some folks need to be reminded of the common sense things.
3. Make sure to retain the ticket issued to you at the office. If you do not show the ticket to the trail ride employees, you will be asked to leave the mine.
4. Make sure to adhere to the parking rules, the rules on amount of material that can be removed from the mine, and the times for collecting.
5. If you cannot follow the above rules, or are caught violating any of the above rules, you will be asked to leave the mine. You will not be allowed to return to the mine in the future!

Resources:

<http://www.wncrocks.com/resources/Collecting%20site%20little%20pine%20mine.htm>

<http://www.visitmadisoncounty.com/activities/outdoor-adventures/gem-mining-for-garnets/>

<http://marklundquist.blogspot.com/2007/07/little-pine-garnet-mine.html>

UPCOMING SHOWS

September 11-13, 2014: Winston-Salem, NC - 43rd Annual FGMC Jewelry, Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show and Sale, Sponsored by the Forsyth Gem and Mineral Club. Education Building, Dixie Classic Fairgrounds in Winston-Salem, NC. Hours: Friday/Saturday, September 11-12: 10 AM to 7 PM, Sunday, September 13: Noon to 5 PM. This year's theme: The Beauty of Lead Minerals, Special presentation on North Carolina Meteorites at 2 PM and Saturday, September 6, by John Sinclair, Curator of Meteorites at the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute. Exhibits and displays featuring: Jewelry, Fossils, Minerals, Gemstones, Decorator Items. Geode sales - free cutting with geode purchases. Grab bags. Gold Panning. Demonstrations featuring: Wirewrapping, Gold Panning, Cabochon Cutting, Geode Cutting. Dealers Featuring: Minerals, faceting rough, supplies, fossils, jewelry, beads, beading supplies, decorator items. Adult tickets include hourly drawings for \$20.00 gift certificate. Admission: Adults - \$2.00, children through grade 12 - free with accompanying adult. Free parking - enter through Gate 9 on 27th Street. Contact information: Club website: www.forsythgemclub.com

October 2 – 4, 2015: Dallas, NC - 37th Annual Gaston Gem & Mineral Show. Gaston County Park, 1303 Dallas Cherryville Hwy, Dallas NC. 28034 (HWY 279); or GPS 120 Leisure Lane, Dallas, NC 28034. Hours: Fri & Sat, 9am - 6pm - Sunday 9am - 5pm. Minerals and Fossils from around the world. Cutting material, Quality Gemstones, Wire wrapping, settings, Geodes, Jewelry, etc. SLUICE - A real working sluice, \$3 & \$5 sand buckets; perfect for children and adults. Amethyst, Quartz Crystals, Faceted Stones mixed at random in buckets; you must might get that special stone or treasure! Hourly Raffles for Prizes, not just a jewelry show, FUN FOR ALL! FREE ADMITTANCE and FREE PARKING. Contact information: Show Chairman, Rick Perkins, at 704-915-8366. Club website: <http://gastongemclub.weebly.com/>

November 20 - 22, 2015: Columbia, SC - The Columbia, SC Gem & Mineral Society will hold its 47th Annual Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show. Jamil Temple, 206 Jamil Rd. (Exit 106A off I -26), Columbia, South Carolina 29210. Hours: Friday November 20, 10:00 - 6:00. Saturday November 21, 10:00 - 6:00. Sunday November 22, 12:00 - 5:00. Jewelry, beads, loose stones, fossils, minerals, gold, silver, & tools for sale. Geodes sold & cut. Club member's rock collections on exhibit & lapidary demonstrations. South Carolina amethyst on display. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, children sixteen & under are free with adult. All military & their dependants are free. Contact information: Sue Shrader...Publicity...803-736-9317 ashrader@mindspring.com Club website: www.cgams.org

November 27 - 29, 2015: Salem, VA - 36th Annual Roanoke Valley Mineral & Gem Society Show. Salem Civic Center, 1001 Boulevard, Salem, VA 24153. Hours: Friday, Nov 27, 2015 - 2pm to 7pm. Saturday, Nov 28, 2015 - 10am to 6pm. Sunday, Nov 29, 2015 - Noon to 5pm. Hobby related exhibitors, Fluorescent Mineral Display, Club member displays, Geode Cutting. Door prizes drawn hourly. Grand Prize drawn 4:30pm Sunday. Admission \$4, ticket good for all three days. Children under age 16 free. Free Parking. Contact information: CKWLT@aol.com.

Vugsites The following are some links to Web-Sites that may interest some of our members:

<http://www.amfed.org/> / <http://www.amfed.org/sfms> These are the official sites for the organizing body that the Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club is founded under. I would strongly urge all members to check them out on a regular basis.

http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html The SFMS Lodestar Newsletter

<http://www.carolinageologicalsociety.org/CGS/Home.html> This site provides numerous downloadable field-trip guide books, maps, and charts of the Carolinas. It will prove to keep any avid rock hound busy for years. Great Site!

http://www.ncminerals.com/ncmineralswebsite_files/page0011.htm And while we are on the subject, try this link. Its titled: Links of Interest to Rock hounds in NC. It will take you to a list of links for North Carolina gems and minerals.

<http://www.rocksforkids.com/> Just like the name says, a nice place to steer the younger members. Information & photographs of over 6300 specimens from the Glenn & Martha Vargas Gem & Mineral Collection.

<http://www.rockhoundlounge.com> Scott Laborde, a club member maintains his own web site that might be of interest to people collecting in and around Wake County.

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29726500/ns/technology_and_science-science This site highlights a half dozen of the most recent significant fossil finds.

<http://appmodo.com/13971/mole-quest-for-the-terracore-gem-app-review-for-the-iphone-and-ipod-touch/> If you have an iphone or an ipod touch, this rock-hounding may be the game for you.

http://diamonddanpublications.net/index_files/page0009.html Diamond Dan's Mini Miner's Monthly

I would like to encourage all members of the THG&MC that maintain their own presence on the internet to send me a link to their site to be published in future Vugsites so that other club members may learn and enjoy the craft, the art, the interests that many of us have in common.

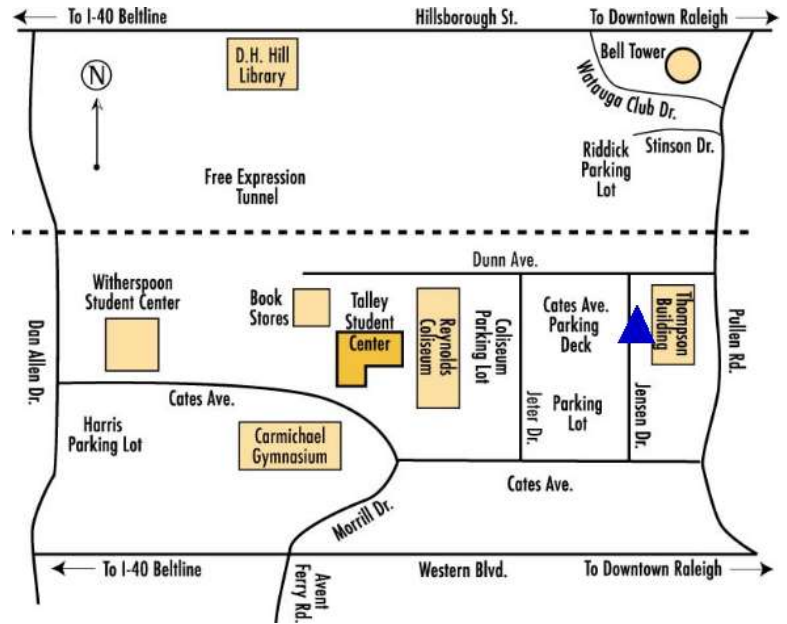
Park in the Cates Ave. Parking Deck off Jensen Dr. Enter Thompson Building directly across from the parking lot.

**Our Next Meeting is
August 18, 2015 @ 7:30PM
Thompson Building / NCSU Campus.**

About Our Organization...

The Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. was formed in 1974 as a nonprofit educational organization for people who enjoy the lapidary arts, earth sciences, and related subjects. The main objectives of the club are to investigate, preserve, and share knowledge of rocks, minerals, and precious stones, and to promote interest in mineralogy, paleontology, earth sciences, and lapidary techniques, among club members and among the general public. The club pursues these goals through publications, meetings, lectures, field trips, exhibits, demonstrations, and other activities.

Come and be a part of the Fun!



TAR HEEL GEM & MINERAL CLUB
10609 Chelsea Drive
Raleigh, NC 27603

