

Tar Heel Tailings

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

Special Interest Articles:

- June – Agates and Jaspers of North America
- Gem hunter's giant amethyst at SC Museum.
- Glendon Field Trip Report

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JUNE PROGRAM - Agates and Jaspers of North America

At the January or February meeting a sheet of paper was passed around for members to write down what they would like to see or do as programs at meetings. In

reviewing that list I was pleased to see so many interested in our local geological offerings. Whether it be reports on field trips and information about where to hunt rocks

and gems in North Carolina, polishing cabochons and faceting gem stones, or lectures on how the geology was formed, the main interest seems to be
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Gem hunters' giant amethyst spotlighted at S.C. museum

By Wayne Ford | wayne.ford@onlineathens.com | Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald on Wednesday, July 15, 2009

In the spring of 2008, Chester Karwoski and 11 other rock hounds all gathered at a remote place in upstate South Carolina called Diamond Hill to dig for crystals. They had done this many times before, but on this day they found a virtual treasure.

Unearthed from the grayish clay was a solid cluster of amethyst crystals so impressive that it now is on permanent public display at the South Carolina State Museum in Columbia.

On a recent hot June

afternoon, David Smith, who actually went down into a trench and carefully removed the crystal cluster from its earthen tomb, was visiting at Karwoski's home in Watkinsville to recall that moment a year ago. "How long did it take to expose it to the

mineral hunter at the dining room table. "I don't know," Smith said as he mulled the question. "Probably half a day." When the amethyst - weighing 118 pounds - was removed and cleaned, it revealed large crystals of brilliant light to dark purple.
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May Meeting Minutes;

Tuesday May 18, 2010
Tar Heel G&M Club minutes
Head count estimate 35

Walt called the meeting to order at 7:35. The munchies were provided by Sarah & Barret Redpath for the meeting. Thank you!!

Two new members attended. They were Dave, Chuck has taken to colored stones.

Birthdays in May. Corrine. Cyndy was 5 years old. She talked about how she got into rocks/minerals. Nancy. Nancy was thinking and talking about mineral trips.

Cyndy commented "You too will go there to Diamond Hill one day!"

Walt recited his "Rock Joke".

Bob wanted to state a correction in the newsletter. About the cost of the microscopes. The correction was noted. As of these notes Obsidian apologizes for the misprint of information.

It was suggested to place the "Rock Joke" in the newsletter. Walt read briefly about the minutes from the previous meeting. The Month stated in the April newsletter was listed as "March"?? Walt talked about who accepted the minutes as read. They were seconded and carried.

Corrine talked about the treasurers report.

Walt talked about the details of the storage unit. The club is doing a 10x10 Secure Care Self storage. On Hillsborough Str. Corrine mentioned about replacing Joe's Tall Cans with sharks teeth with new tall cans. Shelving? Walt went over the ones he researched. Was a metal wire mesh type. At Sams. Corrine recommended at least 1 for

the storage unit. One stock of Herkimer's were taken to the silent auction at this past April Show.

2 minor things/topics. Walt asked about a motion to spend. George made a motion to spend up to \$250. for shelving for the storage unit. Corrine seconded the motion. And carried.

By laws are not being done this meeting. For revising. Deborah Miller offered to assist in updating the By-Laws at a board meeting. Bob at large offered also to assist in updating the By-Laws at a board meeting..

New Business.

Jeanette Baugh Talked about a woman named Lee Mitchell who is in charge with Display cases at the Raleigh Civic Center display cases for Art Pieces. Jeanette is to get further information from Lee to present to the club members. a choice of 5 or 6 cases. Motion was made to go for it by Jerry. It was seconded. And carried.

Bob talked further about the microscopes. And had two on display at the meeting. And has to take names for people who wish to buy one from him by ordering.

Walt also talked about a listing of people who volunteered at the show to be put into a drawing for one of 3 scholarships.

The names of the various parts of the show were announced. A motion was made to delay till the next meeting to do the head count for the scholarship. A motion was made and second to do something special for the children who volunteered at the April show. Gift \$50. certificates, minerals for ideas.

One name is pulled out. At the next meeting.

A letter from Kentucky was read asking about minerals from the state of North Carolina to assist in their learning.

Barret Redpath did a presentation Using a black light on various minerals that glow. Way to go!! Good Job!

Nancy talked about living on little light. And bio-luminous. Keith Lees presented a article in a publication called Scientific American.

After food & drink people went into small groups of 5. Learning about each other. And their interests in various subjects.

Club members commenced into a Rock & Mineral Scatagory. There were 2 groups that had 1 point each. And there was 3 rounds of minerals.

Group 2 "Fire" has 11 points. Joe, Eileen, Ken & Grant. Sadly, I'm missing the fifth person in this group, I apologize! Group 3 "Scopes" has 8 points. Group 1 "Earth" has 7 points. Group 5 "Magma" has 7 points. Group 4 "Wind" has 6 points.

Walt handed out a quick questionnaire for people to answer.

The door prize was called and Joe Moylan was the winner! Joe Moylan chose a Fossiliferous Limestone Bowl for his door prize. Way to go!

Jeanette commented that for the June meeting no one volunteered to sign up for bringing food & drink.

A motion was made and seconded to close the meeting.

Happy Rock Hounding.
Obsidian Harris

Gem hunters' giant amethyst spotlighted at S.C. museum

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The normal order of business for those engaged in a groupwide search for minerals is to divide the bounty they find during a dig. But this chunk of amethyst was extremely unusual, and nothing like it had been found in the mine.

"We all agreed that it was so good that it would be a shame for one of us to keep it at home ... and we decided it would be better in a museum where it could be appreciated," said Karwoski, a retired professor at the University of Georgia. He and his wife, Gail, own the mine he calls the Diamond Hill Quartz Prospect in Abbeville County, S.C.

The State Museum has the crystal - the largest amethyst ever found in the state - prominently displayed in its natural-history section. Amethyst is South Carolina's official state gem.

"People are not used to seeing something that big straight out of nature," said Tut Underwood, the museum's public relations specialist.

"I know of one guy who has an amethyst that weights more than this cluster, but it's more smoky than amethyst," Karwoski said. "This weighs only about 120 pounds, but some of the crystals are roughly 14 inches long and are pure amethyst. It's the largest cluster of large crystals which are pure - and that statement may apply to all of North America."

Karwoski said quartz crystals and amethyst have been found on the Diamond Hill land for more than a century.

"People have found quartz crystals there probably at least a hundred years, and I can speculate that people a hundred years ago would find quartz crystals and say something like, 'It looks like a diamond.' And maybe at one time there was a little hill there," he said of his theory on how the land acquired the name Diamond Hill.

Then about 50 years ago, people began looking more seriously for crystals at the site and found large

quartz crystals along with amethyst, known for its various shades of purple. About 25-30 years ago, George Browning of Anderson, S.C., purchased the mine and brought in heavy equipment to open up the land for crystal hunting, according to Karwoski. The mine soon earned a reputation among mineral hunters throughout the Southeast as a good place to find crystals, including smoky quartz. When Brown aged, he sold the mine to a friend of Karwoski, who later sold it to Karwoski.

While the entire property covers 13 acres, the site where the crystals are mined is less than two.

"About 30 years ago, some amethyst crystals were found near the town of Due West (S.C.), and they are some of the finest specimens in the world," Karwoski said, adding that some of these are in the Smithsonian Museum. Due West is also in Abbeville County. Both Karwoski and Smith, who lives in Bowersville, are members of the Athens Rock & Gem Club. The two met at a dig for amethyst at a location in Wilkes County.

Smith, a retired aquatics biologist for the Environmental Protection Agency, moved to Athens in 1966. The Aubrey, Texas, native then moved in 2004 to Bowersville, where he has developed his own rock garden.

Karwoski, who was born in Plymouth, Pa., and grew up in Connecticut, moved to Georgia in 1974. His wife, Gail, is an author of books for young readers, including one called "Julie the Rockhound," inspired by her husband's hobby.

People of different backgrounds are drawn to rock hunting. Karwoski even has turned it into a business called Oconee Minerals. He often is seen manning a booth at festivals throughout the area.

But it was in the spring of 2008 that Karwoski and his friends made their biggest find.

A backhoe was working in a trench as the dozen rock hunters scoured the site for crystals.

"My recollection," Karwoski said, "is there was a hole 6 to 7 feet deep. Suddenly the scoop (on the backhoe) went into the dirt and we heard a loud clunk. At that point, we told him not to do anything further. He moved the bucket out, and David went down into the trench."

Smith said the backhoe had uncovered a vein of amethyst. As he carefully removed the clay from around the stone, he could tell it was big. But he was surprised at the size of what he uncovered, and so was everyone else.

"I cleaned it the best I could, then I lifted it out," Smith said.

It took hours to remove the cluster from the ground because too much haste could damage the stone.

"If one point is chipped, it damages its value and the interest in it considerably," Karwoski said. "When we say value, we mean not only monetary value, but also aesthetic value."

Smith said digging for amethyst is unpredictable.

"It's not like there is one vein that goes on and on with any regularity that we can predict," he said. "There's a little vein here, a pocket here or a crystal here, and each will have its own type of crystals."

And while Diamond Hill has contributed a prized stone for the state of South Carolina, it's unknown if a future digger will brush away the earth to expose another rare stone.

"I'm skeptical of finding anything else (as good)," Karwoski said.

But Smith looked across the table at the retired professor with a look that seemed to say, "Maybe there is."

Diamond Hill is open twice a year, and mostly rock and gem clubs schedule times to dig in the mine. For more information, contact Chester Karwoski at gailkarwoski@hotmail.com.

JUNE PROGRAM - Agates and Jaspers of North America

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on right here in our own backyards. And well it should be. North Carolina is home to more different types of minerals than any other state. So with that in mind, I offer this as a suggestion for the June program. A group of rockhounds and lapidaries from the western United States has decided there is a need for a database of Agates and Jaspers of North America. There are several good publications of these materials from either certain special areas or from all over the world, but few that cover all the varieties found in North America. There are many types of agates and jaspers that are really only known about locally, or have local colloquial names, that have never been recorded in any database let alone one so communally accessible. By that I mean, compiled by rockhounds for rockhounds. This group is advertising

their request for pictures of specimens on a couple of different internet boards. And I quote from them; "The American Agate/Jasper Index is designed to be a database of material found in North America. The main goal of this collection is to aid people with the identification of specimens as well as act as a visual guide to quartz gem materials. Each index will focus on a different region. These are designed to be downloaded for free and are created from photo submissions by rockhounds across North America. Updates will occur periodically as new material is submitted here and via email." "We are requesting material from any of the great states east of the Mississippi to be used to help improve the database and therefore to be more helpful to fellow rockhounds. The

images can be of rough, polished specimens, cabs, or tumbled stones." "As this is not a fieldguide, direct directions are not necessary for material, but nearest town or county is appreciated. Also, if the material is known by different names, please provide those, as an index is being prepared which will include that information to help researchers." North Carolina, as yet, is woefully under represented in this database with maybe three entries. So bring in your agate and jasper specimens from North America and we'll try to identify and take pictures of them. But let's do all the North Carolina ones first. It will be interesting to see how many different NC varieties we can come up with. I hope this idea is agreeable to everyone. See you on the 15th!
Respectfully Submitted; Joe Moylan

GLENDON FIELDTRIP REPORT

On Saturday, May 15th, we were again allowed the privilege of entering the Standard Minerals pyrophyllite quarry outside of Glendon, NC in Moore County to hunt and dig for pyrite and fluorite. The Glendon quarry has long been a favorite destination for rockhounds in central NC and this is the second year of resumed access after a brief two year period of closure to rock clubs and collectors. The company has not mined this quarry in the past five years and during this two year period of closure persistent pleading and inquiry from individuals, clubs, and organizations about access for rock collecting finally paid off. The company has resumed it's schedule of allowing two annual digs, one in the spring and one in the fall. The spring dig has been given to the Southeastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies to coordinate and the fall dig to the M.A.G.M.A. rock club.

Only 120 people are allowed on the dig at one time. Each club will usually announce when they are accepting names for participation and how to apply on their respective websites about six weeks before the dig. You have to be on your toes looking and waiting for it to get in. This past SFMS dig was full within two days of announcement and last falls MAGMA dig was full in about 8 hours. If you would like to go on this Glendon dig sometime, and you are not familiar with either of these two groups, you need to do so. The Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club is a member of the SFMS, so we are eligible to go on this, or any, SFMS sponsored fieldtrip. There website is; sfms@amfed.org. M.A.G.M.A. is a rock club that conducts fieldtrips all over the southeast. For more information about them visit; http://www.wncrocks.com/magma/magma_join_club.htm.

As I mentioned above, the company has not been working this quarry for the past few years. As a result there was a noticeable lack of surface finds as the area that they allow you to look in has been getting picked over. The best advice would be to choose a nice comfortable spot to settle into some hard digging. The pyrophyllite that is mined there is very soft, compared to other rocks, and you can find some beautiful pyrite specimens in it, but it seems there are more and bigger cubes encased in a quartz dike, or areas of quartz, presently exposed in an 'island ridge' running through the quarry floor. It is very tricky business trying to get the pyrite cubes out of the quartz whole. Many are already fractured insitu, and hammer and chisel are the only way to free them.

The digs start at 8:00 am and goes to 3:00 pm. There is no shade in the quarry and it can get very hot. But this time there were signs where the company had been digging into one wall and the company representatives on site said they would know sometime this summer if they will start working the mine again. There may be some nice new material to look at this fall, but this dig is always fun no matter what. Many thanks to Standard Minerals for allowing us access.

Respectfully submitted by Joe Moylan

Dear Club members

In putting together references for a research project, I need to look at back issues of several magazines. I need to see any back issues of Rocks and Minerals, Rock and Gem, Gems and Minerals, Lapidary Journal or any other journal sets. Since the cost of copying at a library is expensive, if I could borrow them it would be very helpful. I will come to you and pick them up and return them to you when I have finished with them. They will be treated gently and with loving care. This would be a huge and valuable help. Thanks!!

Kenny Gay
919-604-2376

Treasurers Report:

APRIL TREASURERS REPORT

Beginning Balance:	\$19,034.32	
Deposits:		
	9,205.00	Dealers
	805.00	Dealers
	3,918.50	Geodes Booth
	493.56	Silent Auction Booth
	714.25	Hospitality Booth
	45.00	Membership
	85.00	Membership
	<u>\$34,500.63</u>	
	14,171.66	Checks Written
Ending Balance:	\$20,328.97	

\$497.00	Advertising Show
410.00	Start up Cash
320.69	Geode Machine Belts, etc.
100.00	Raffle Specimens
1082.06	Friday Nite Supper
25.86	Trailor Repair
100.00	Raffle Specimens
27.49	Geode Sound Damper
50.00	Raffle Rough
715.85	Upstairs Food Expenses
32.52	Silent Auction Expense
177.27	Newsletter Printing
450.00	Dealer Refunds
10,084.00	Remainder of Funds due NC State Fair for Space
<u>98.92</u>	Secure Care Storage unit rental
\$14,171.66	Checks Written

TEA & SYMPATHY NOTES

Those of you who know Kenny Gay may wish to have an update. Kenny has made a recent trip to the hospital to check out some symptoms of concern. No clear cut answers from the doctors, naturally. Club members may wish to send good thoughts and vibrations to Kenny so he can hurry up and get well. Submitted by Corinne Hummel

Program & Refreshments

<u>REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE:</u>	<u>PROGRAM SCHEDULE:</u>
Coordinator: Jeanette Baugh villagegems@yahoo.com June: OPEN July: Ken Carlson - need one other volunteer Aug: Ice Cream Social Sept: OPEN Oct: Corinne & Cyndy Hummel Nov: OPEN	June: Agates and Jaspers of North America July: OPEN Aug: Ice Cream Social Sept: OPEN Oct: OPEN Nov: OPEN

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.
<http://www.rockhoundlounge.com> 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.

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.

Upcoming Local Events

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, N.C., Inc.
 44th Annual Gemboree
 Date(s): Jul 22, 2010 - Jul 25, 2010
 When: Thursday - Saturday 10am - 6pm, Sunday 10am - 4pm
 Where: Macon County Community Building US 441S
 Fine Jewelry, Rough & Cut Gemstones; Minerals, Fossils and More! Adults \$3, Children 12 and under free. Contact 888-337-7529 (Franklin Chamber of Commerce)

Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.tarheelclub.org

Membership applications may be mailed to:

Tarheel Gem & Mineral Club
Attention: Treasurer
10609 Chelsea Drive
Raleigh NC 27603

June B-Day Members

- Dave Hattori
- Kelly Hattori
- Shauna Stell
- Austin Kaptic
- Orion Healy
- Tom Gallian
- Bryan Schild
- Tim Milowic
- Zachary Blatt
- Kay Kimball
- Eleanor Maness
- Prep Maynard
- Grant Schulz
- Angie Tunney



