

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB
JUNE 2011

Prez Sez ...

Linda and I took our grandkids to the CG&MC-sponsored Cotton Patch Goldmine dig over the Memorial Day weekend and had a great time. While we didn't discover enough gold to buy the yacht we've been looking for, it was rewarding in a number of other ways. The most significant benefit to me was the learning experience – the history of gold mining in the Carolinas and how gold is currently mined on a commercial basis.

Our host/owner Jeff was very knowledgeable and led us on a tour of both the open pit mine and the materials processing center. He allowed us to take quartz specimens from the pits and suggested we might want to break them open when we got home in hopes of finding some gold pieces.

The equipment used to break up the rocks and reduce them down to a fine black sand/powder is quite impressive and you really have to have good mechanics to keep it all in working order.

There were a dozen or so CG&MC members there and that proved to be another benefit of attending

these digs. It's a great opportunity to get down and dirty with nice people who have the same interest and hobby that you do. There was a lot of sharing of tools, experience and stories throughout the day. We even made a few dollars for the club through the tailgating efforts of Jack King.

Below are some pictures of the sluicing operation. Most of us spent the better part of the day at the sluice troughs (relaxing work compared to most dig events) and pretty much everyone came away with a vial containing gold flakes.

Cotton Patch is an hour's ride from Charlotte and is open Thursdays through Sundays during the summer. It's a nice, relatively inexpensive way to spend a pleasant summer's day -either with or without kids.

And speaking of summer days, I'm sorry to have to announce that the CG&MC board has decided to cancel the picnic for this year. We've been very busy planning for our two major September events – Mathews Alive and Mint Hill Madness and putting together a

picnic was putting too much on our proverbial plate.

Once we've gotten the kinks out of doing two major public events in one month we'll get back to doing a summer picnic. Speaking of those two events, you will be receiving notices in the newsletters and email blasts asking for your help in putting them on. Mathews Alive is a three day event and Mint Hill Madness involves a Friday evening and Saturday from 8AM through 11PM

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so, as you can see, we will need a strong response from club members when we put out the call for volunteers. There is work involved and sometimes it gets a bit hectic but the rewards include the looks on those kids' faces as they discover what's inside their carefully chosen geode and/or bag of sluce material.

It also represents a great opportunity to promote the club and its activities and to raise money for our scholarship fund and operating capitol. So please be generous in your response when we put out the call for volunteers in the near future.

I hope you all have a pleasant summer and find effective ways to enjoy the hot weather we're having.

Murray Simon

major doyan, harbinger, and luminary of the Charlotte Rock & Gem Club.

Club Picnic Cancelled for this year.

Because of all the planning associated with the September events, it was decided by the club board to cancel the club picnic this year.

It was decided that our time could be better spent in over-seeing the building of the new sluce, tracking down the materials for making the sluce bags, and making the necessary test runs to iron-out any problems before the Mint-Hill Madness show in middle September.

The two events include the Matthews Live show from September 2nd to the 5th. At this show the

club will sponsor it's annual geode cut and sales. A large portion of the monies from this event are used to sponsor the club scholarship to UNCC and for our internal scholarships to the William Holland School and/or Wild Acres School. These are awarded at the annual Christmas Party.

On September 23rd and the 24th, the club will participate in the Mint Hill Madness. At this event the club will cut small geodes, and make our first run with the club sluce. There will also be room in the booth for members to submit items for sale in the art fair portion of the event. Details will follow on this in the near future.

We will need volunteers from the club to help man the booths during both shows. The Matthews live show runs Saturday, Sunday and half of Monday (remember it's the Labor Day weekend. The Mint Hill Show runs on a Friday night, and all day into the night on Saturday, but ends Saturday night. A larger number of people will be needed to work at the booth for the Mint Hill show as we will be operating both the sluce and doing Geode cutting.

People will be need to take money and make change, wrap geodes and recovered materials from the sluce, sell the craft and jewelry material and operate the saws and sluce.

Sign up sheets will begin to appear for both events either this month or next. Working these events will work toward making you eligible for the scholarship drawings in December.

Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club Monthly Meeting

June 16, 2011 Thursday -- 7:00 pm --

***Location: Charlotte Nature Museum
1658 Sterling Road Charlotte,
NC, 28209 (704) 372 - 61261***

“North Carolina Stoneware Clays”

***Michelle Flowers, previous scholarship winner
of the Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club***

A very interesting talk and slide presentation by one of our G & M C Scholarship recipients, Michelle Flowers, now a post graduate of UNCC. She will review her research and discuss her results on North Carolina Pottery and its relationship to the areas she investigated.

There is **NO** pre-meeting Jewelry Class this month.

Jack King has offered to give his tips to new and interested members on starting a rock and mineral collection at 6:00 PM prior to the meeting

Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club Junior Rockhounds Meeting

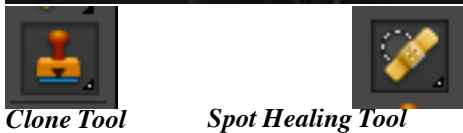
Vacation continues until the group starts up again in the fall!

If you have questions about the group and it's various activities please feel free to contact Mary Fisher, the group leader, and creator of the Jr. Rockhounds.
Contact Mary Fisher for further information mefisher@att.net

Using a Digital Camera to Photograph slabs, cabs, gemstones, minerals and jewelry - Part XX *by ron gibbs*



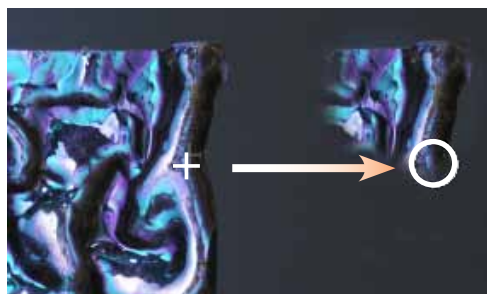
So we've taken a collection of photographs using our table top techniques and we begin to examine them in our editing program. What? We forgot to clean the background before we took the pictures. There is dust and other debris around our object. We need to remove it now in the post production editing.



Clone Tool

Spot Healing Tool

Photoshop and Photoshop Elements provide a variety of ways to remove these little specks. Perhaps two of the easiest tools to use are the Clone Tool and the Spot Healing Tool (their icons shown at the left.) As the Clone Tool is by far the oldest one in the software, I still tend to use it over the somewhat easier, but more limited Spot Healing Tool.



Clone Tool at work

The Clone Tool picks-up information from one spot and paints it over a second spot on the screen. See the illustration to the left where I am duplicating a piece of dichroic glass from one place to another. Thus it can be used to cover the annoying white dust by painting some "background" from nearby and covering the dust. After selecting the Clone Tool, the Option or Alt key is pressed and a target appears on the screen. Click the mouse once to select a target area *from which* information will be copied. Then move the circle pointer over the area to be covered and click and drag over it. The area originally under the target will be copied to the current position of the mouse pointer.



Target

Clone

In the bottom image notice that all of the dust has been covered from nearby clean-background and now the image appears to be dust free. (See bottom left image pair.) There are some other useful adjustments that can be made to the Clone Tool. The size or "area" to be copied can be adjusted and the percentage of covering can be adjusted using the Opacity control. (see control panel at bottom of page)



Before

After

The Opacity can be used to reduce an effect or part of an image without totally replacing it. For example a reflection may be too strong in an image and I want to reduce its effect but not remove it entirely. On the image of the bracelet (top of next page) the object was placed on a mirror and the resultant photo was somewhat distracting because the reflection portion was just as strong as the original item. I used the Clone Tool with an opacity value set to about 25% to cover part of the reflection removing some of its significance in the second picture. (I used the Clone Tool set at 100% on the right side of the second image)



soft or hard edge brush

size of brush

opacity of brush

to show how the reflection could be totally removed.) In both cases I simply selected a clean portion of the background and copied it over the reflection. Another use of this tool is to remove unwanted clutter or props from a photo. The bead in the third image was strung on a wire and then photographed, I use the Clone Tool to remove the wire on one side to illustrate the technique. (The wire could easily be removed from both sides if desired.)

The Spot Healing Tool accomplishes many of the same functions but works a bit differently. Once the circle is drawn around the blemish using the spot brush, it samples the background from around that circle and tries to remove the blemish by covering it with the near-by sampled area. This works really well when the blemish is on a continuous area without a break in the background pattern. See the example at the bottom of the page on the left. The dust on the solid black background is nicely replaced in one click.

It fails, however, when the background is less uniform. See the next example where the dust crosses the bracelet. The Healing Tool tries to copy it's best guess of the background over the area, and manages to get the two different tones pretty well, but it fails to understand that the pattern in the reflected bracelet is opposite that of the real bracelet and thus produces a similar, but wrong pattern. See second set of images at the bottom right of the page. The result joins the two patterns and produces a small bulge in the bracelet. Here I would use the Clone Tool with a small brush size and carefully clone out the dust.

The Spot Healing Tool tends to fail when the item needing removal crosses or is near to multiple different background items with contrasting color or more complex pattern. It is a powerful tool, but does fail in some cases.

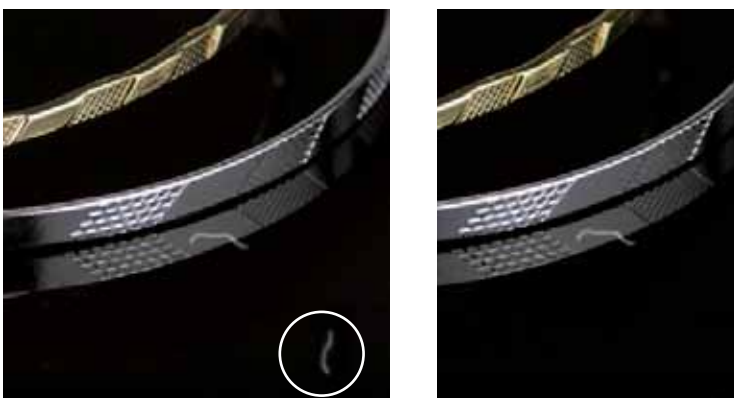
This completes a series of 20 articles on close-up photography for lapidary and jewelry. If you would like to have the complete set in one document you can download it from my WEB site at:
<http://www.theimage.com/apubimages/20photopaper.pdf>



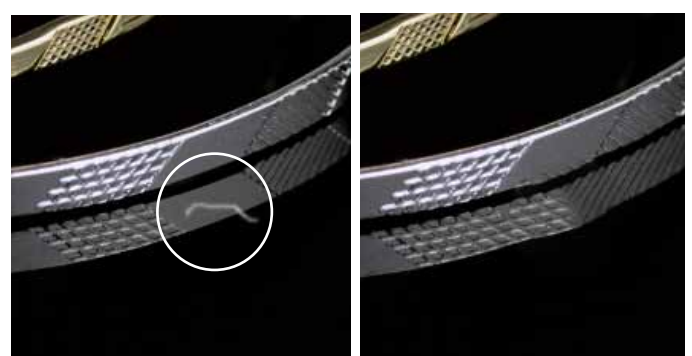
Shadow reduced on left and removed on the right



Used to remove part of hanging wire



healing tool circles spot - one click - gone!



healing tool circles spot - one click - opps, wrong pattern created where the dust used to be

HOW TO PRICE YOUR HANDMADE JEWELRY

By Cindy Bernnan, Arlington Gem & Mineral Club

As an appraiser of jewelry and gemstones, I am called upon daily to analyze the values of a wide range of items, for an unending variety of reasons. I thought it would be helpful to the AGMC members to know how the process works, as an aid for establishing value for their won jewelry creations.

Whenever anyone asks me to tell them “What’s this worth?” If only there were a “one-size-fits-all” value, my life would be much simpler, my library much smaller, and I wouldn’t ask “Why?” The market place is a wide and varied forum for the buying and selling of goods, and many purposes, relationships, and circumstances can influence the value dramatically.

For example, let’s imagine a beautiful, high quality, handcrafted sterling silver pendant set with a rare pietersite. The piece is gleaming and polished, displayed all by itself in a dramatically lit case, in an exclusive gallery in the mountains. The staff is expertly trained and caters to an upscale clientele. Upon purchase, the pendant is put into a velvet box, and polishing cloth tucked into the signature bag along with it. The salesperson gives the customer a statement of replacement for insurance purposes and instructions on how to return the piece if it ever needs repair. The price tag of this pietersite pendant? \$300? \$500? More?

Same pendant, different circumstances. Imagine the same piece of jewelry, but now it is tarnished, scratched, thrown into a shoebox, dumped on a table in the yard next to an eggbeater and an old pair of bowling shoes. Now how much is the price tag on this pendant? \$3? “Would you take a buck for that, lady?”

These are two widely different markets, and two common markets where

jewelry is sold at retail. Retail, by the way, is simply a descriptive term of a particular type of transaction, an item sold to the end consumer, not for resale. Retail is not a price! In the first instance, the retail price is influenced by added value—the prestige, the box, the warranty, the knowledgeable staff; in the second example, value has been subtracted—the piece is selling far below the intrinsic value of the materials.

For most of us, pricing our jewelry will fall somewhere in between these two extremes. (If you’re planning a garage sale, though, let me know.) When pricing your jewelry, think first in terms of a retail transaction, the highest level of the market you can claim. Think: ADDED VALUE. I know you would like a simple formula, but I’m not going to do that.

Instead, I’m going to send you shopping. Keep a notebook and record the retail prices you see on silver jewelry. Some of it is handmade; some of it is not. Some of it is made in countries where labor is very inexpensive. Keep catalogs, clip out pictures. Go to museum gift shop, Neiman Marcus, Service Merchandise, art fairs, the Internet—and collect data. It is important to write it down, with your observations: “6/10/99 Art fair, low grade lapis cab about 14 x10, in thin gauge silver, sloppy bezel, \$25, huge inventory of them” or “7/3/99, Neimans, David Uyrman sterling cable bracelet, amethyst cabs with 14K trim, \$1200.”

This gives you an important feel for the market. What sells where and for what price. As you look at this jewelry, ask yourself how your creations differ. Is your quality better than what you’re seeing? Heavier gauge? How does yours measure up to really expensive, commercially produced jewelry? Are your ideas more creative than most? Do you do production pieces, or are

each of your pieces one of a kind? What kind of guarantee will you offer?

What is your unique vision worth? You’ve got something else in there besides raw material—your time and your talent. Consider the investment you’ve made in equipment and education. Bringing your jewelry to the market also has a cost—advertising, phone, rent.

The moment of truth arrives. One of your acquaintances admires the pietersite pendant (or bolo) around your neck. “You made that?!? Can you make me one too?” “Sure,” you say. “How much is it?” she asks. You tell her the price readily, with confidence. She gasps. You tell her how reasonable it is for handmade work, how many hours it took you, how you cut the stone yourself from rough you had shipped directly from the mines, etc. But whatever you do, don’t waffle and cut the price. Your work is worth every penny you’re asking! Be creative is you have to (“OK, \$50 cash and 20 jars of your homemade strawberry jam”), but don’t sell yourself short.

There are, of course, other types of transactions that may require different kinds of pricing strategies. In the preceding example, your customer wanted one pendant for herself. If she wants to commission you to make five for her daughters, use a discount with discretion. Remember, she is the end consumer of your product and, as such, she is the highest level of the market for you. That is terrific!

But suppose she says, “Say, I like your jewelry. I’m opening an art gallery and I’d love to feature your work.” Now you need to decide whether you would like to sell on a wholesale basis or offer your work on consignment.

A wholesale transaction is simply a purchase made for resale. Like retail, it is not descriptive of a price. **WHOLESALE IS NOT A PRICE!** What is confusing is that wholesale prices are generally less than retail prices, but **NOT ALWAYS!** For example, I recently

bought a couple of pieces of ulexite for the kids at the AGMC Show, about \$1.00 each. A few weeks later, I saw a “close-out” at a retail craft store. Five pieces of ulexite for \$1. I also know where I can buy ulexite from a dealer who sells only wholesale accounts at \$3.50 each.

The advantage of selling wholesale is twofold. First, your wholesale customer buys a larger dollar amount or quantity of items to qualify for the substantial price reduction (usually half or more of the retail price). Most wholesale suppliers set a minimum purchase for establishing an account. Second, an ongoing and mutually profitable relationship frees you to make more jewelry instead of interacting with the public. That is also terrific!

If you choose to do consignments, my advice is to find the middle ground between your wholesale and retail price. Leave room for the consignor to make some money, but let them know that they’ll get a better price if they purchase outright from you. Have your price structure prepared in advance. There are more risks for you in a consignment sale. Get everything in writing! State clearly what your terms are and that the receipt is NOT a bill of sale. Specify the date of return. Ask for references if you are unsure. Consignment may be a good way to “test the waters,” to see how well your jewelry sells in that venue, and what retail prices can be supported.

One more thing in closing: You’re probably wondering how to price your jewelry to your friends, family, and fellow AGMC members. Using your established retail price, you can always give a “professional courtesy” or “friends and family” discount. But don’t call it wholesale.

From The Rockhound Gazette, 3/02

Charlotte Gem & Mineral sponsored field trip to the Cotton Patch Gold Mine

On Saturday, May 28th, the Charlotte Gem and Mineral club met its obligation to host a field trip this year in conjunction with the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies. A good group showed up, and rumor had it that Murray Simon bought nearly half of the available material for sluicing and panning.

Thanks goes to Murray Simon for providing the photos of the event. Murray and Linda hosted some of their grandchildren at the dig. Hence buying about half of the mine output.



Ashville Show - June 17-19

If you want a cool weekend break from the Charlotte heat, why not drive to Asheville for the Colburn Museum annual GEM FEST? Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 17-19 are the dates. Last year it was a no admission fee show. The show draws a good amount of rock and mineral dealers. In addition, the museum has a very nice display of rocks, minerals and gems both from our state and also from around the world. Asheville is close enough where you can make a day trip of it or a great place to spend a weekend. We will call this one our field trip for June.

Jack King, *field trip chairman.*

July and August Field Trips supported by our club ...

An Official Field Trip of Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, NC (Franklin, NC) (HOST)
An Official Field Trip of the (Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club)

10:00 AM to 2:00PM
Saturday, July 9, 2011

Pacesetters Camp, Marble, North Carolina

WHERE: Pacesetters Camp; 562 Fairview Road; Marble, NC (Please see attached map.)

WHEN: Saturday, July 9, 2011; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

COLLECTING: Staurolite crystals (some maybe be twinned)

EQUIPMENT: Shovel, bucket, half-inch screen (crystals will be in the river).

GENERAL INFORMATION: No admission fee. This site is being made available by the pacesetter organization and has agreed to allow us to use the restrooms and parking area. Bring a lunch and beverage (no alcohol). Dress according to working in a river; high boots would be handy.

Contact Info.:

John Hayes, Field Trip Chair
jfhayes@dnet.net
828- 524-8062

The Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina, Inc.



twinned staurolite

An Official Field Trip of The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society, Inc, Columbia, SC (HOST)

9:00 AM,
Saturday, August 13, 2011

Thermal City Gold Mine – Union Mills, North Carolina
Fee Area

The Columbia Gem and Mineral society, NC. would like to extend an invitation to fellow DMC clubs to join us panning for gold for genuine placer mining site in Rutherford County, NC. Thermal City Gold Mine consists of one mile section of the Second Broad River and about 80 acres of Placer Gravel Deposits, having one of seven veins from the mountain supplying it. Panning material is brought from the river by backhoe for you to pan. The gravel is not “enhanced or enriched”. The gold found in the natural state; right where nature deposited it. Gold found as flakes and maybe small nuggets. Ample shade, parking and instruction in panning are always available when needed.

FEE AREA: The fee is \$5.00 to pan all day. The fee is \$50.00 for a front-end load.

CHILDREN: Children under adult supervision are welcome. Rocky Rockhounds with leader are welcome.

PETS: Pets are allowed on a leash.

Collecting: We will be collection gold.

WHAT TO BRING: Shovels and pans are furnished or you can bring your own. Other equipment is



available for rent or Purchase For additional information on the site, including details about a “front-end Road” or overnight stay contact the mine at 82-286-3016 or visit the website at <http://www.thermalcity-goldmine.com>”;

HISTORY: This is an unsalted site and many people have had success finding gold here. The mine’s aim is to provide an authentic experience. The mine is located on the actual site of the earliest placers in Rutherford County. It opened in 1839 and has produced gold ever since then.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Camping facilities with full hook-ups to primitive on a first come first serve basis. Call 828-2863016. No drug, alcohol or fire arms are allowed. The grounds are almost level and a short distance from panning to camping to restrooms.

DIRECTIONS FROM ASHVILLE, NC: From Ashville take I-40 east to exit # 85 (Marion/Rutherford); proceed south on US-221 for 8.5 miles to the Rutherford County line; the entrance to the mine is on the left (look for signs along the way). The mine address is: 5240 US-221 N Hwy, Union Mills, NC 28167. Travel time should be about one hour from Ashville.