

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB

May 2009

the Prez sez ...

First of all, even though it has been posted before. **THERE WILL BE NO MONTHLY MEETING IN MAY** due to no meeting space being available at The Nature Museum as well as our old meeting space at Discovery Place.

As many of you know, one of the reasons that we left Discovery Place was the extensive renovation project that the center is beginning. We have had a display case filled with rocks and members at Discovery Place for years and now we must move it for about a year.

If any member knows of a library, school or other venue where we could loan out this case, we need to find a home where it would offer some exposure for our club. Otherwise, Danny Jones has very kindly offered to store it in his basement.

This past Saturday, our club had three tables at The Art of Craft at Historic Rosedale. I as well as members Scott, Eric, Gigi and Robyn spent the day showing our jewelry, rocks and minerals as well as having our club posters to hopefully attract new members. Eric brought his Genie and we did cabochon demonstrations thru out the day. Every kid that visited the

booth was given their choice of a tumbled gemstone as well as a hunk of obsidian compliments of Robyn. (See photos page 6-7)

I have had several persons ask for another cabochon class in May and I ask all that are interested to contact me and lets find a date which will work. Other members have asked about using the clubhouse on their own and your board is working on some rules and regulations which should move this forward.

Ken Anderson has gathered information on how other clubs who have had a clubhouse for years and is currently working on drafting rules and regulations for board approval at our next meeting.

At this time, the board has agreed that clubhouse use must be done with a minimum of two members in attendance. Also, folks wanting to use the clubhouse independently of sanctioned classes must have attended at least six classes and must achieve a certification status by two instructors.

Members with prior experience will not have to go thru the six class minimum process but can apply for individual certification

by the club. Safety is our biggest concern as well as the protection and care of club equipment as well as the facility. Look for more information on this after our next board meeting.

The interest in Mary Fisher's junior rockhound program is growing and this is the future of our club. I have appointed Scott Stewart to a new position of events, promotions and publicity committee person and Scott has accepted this responsibility.

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ity. We need to grow our club and I feel that Scott's fresh ideas and passion for what we do will bring much to our club.

If any members wants to offer ideas and commitment to club needs, I, as well as any of our board members look forward to hearing from you. We are also looking for field trip locations as well as a person who would like to take on this position of field trip chairman.

Mary has held a couple of junior field trips and I really think that we need to be more proactive in the field trip area. Some members who only make jewelry may not be interested in field trips but I feel from what I have heard that many folks want to go dig and find their own treasures.

In closing, I want to tell you all about the fantastic new book that I purchased from our newsletter editor, Ron Gibbs. I have a lot of

coffee table books on rocks and minerals and I can tell you that this ranks right up there at the top.

It is titled: Agates and Jaspers and is going to be the definitive works in the world of rocks and minerals. The photography is absolutely stunning and everyone that I have showed my copy to wants one.

Contact Ron on how you can obtain a copy and I am sure that he will have copies at the June meeting. Look for a very exciting June program set up by our vice president, Murray Simon.

I am happy to say that Murray is recovering nicely from his shoulder surgery but he is not ready to resume teaching yet.

Enjoy this beautiful weather and I look forward to seeing you at the JUNE meeting.

*Jack King, President,
Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club.*

Charlotte Jr. Rockhounds

Saturday, MAY 30th, 2009

10:00 am - 11:00 am

CGAM Club House

At Cmaera World on Commonwealth Ave.

Show & Tell

Bring a favorite Gem or Mineral to show the group!

Topic for May:

Geology

Meeting is limited to 12 students.

Parents are encouraged to attend with students.

*In order for materials to be ready, you must sign up ahead of time:
Contact Mary Fisher at mefisher@att.net*

No May General Meeting!

There is a scheduling conflict with the Charlote Nature Center and we can no longer meet in Discovery Place as they under go renovation. Hence we have no meeting place for May.

Special June Meeting

June 18th, 2009

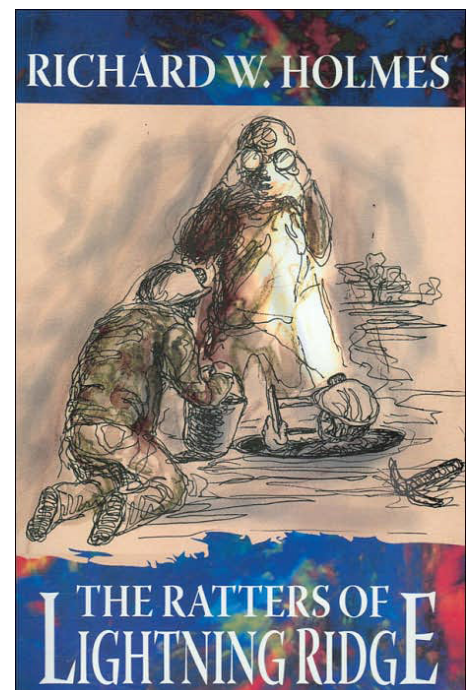
On our regular June meeting night we are privileged to have **Mr. Richard Holmes**, - author, adventurer and opalholcic
He will be giving a presentaion on Opals from Australia.

THE HUNT FOR THE ELUSIVE BLACK OPAL

Richard has been to Lightning Ridge, Australia 10 times in the last 20 years and has mined black opals for fun and profit.

Don't miss this special event!!!

Richard Holmes takes the reader into the little-known world of the black opal: the volatile nature of the business and the people who mine and sell this product of the earth. Descending into a three-foot diameter shaft six stories down, shared by poisonous spiders and snakes, to chip at rock is not something the average person would find appealing. The "Wild West" nature of Lightning Ridge and its part-time inhabitants will appeal to the American reader, however.



Dark Field Photography on a Boom Microscope

by ron gibbs

For a while I have been wanting to try out dark field illumination on my microscope. Dark field photography is used to illuminate gemstones to better resolve the inclusions found within. It requires a light and a condenser which makes the light hit the stone at a high angle and not travel directly through it.

The first problem is that my scope does not have a dark field condenser and the bigger problem is that it is a BOOM microscope and has no sub-base. Thus no lower light.

So I went to good ole E-Bay and began a search, and sure enough I found what I thought might be just the answer. I found a dark field condenser for sale by itself that was designed to fit into the subbase of a non-Boom microscope, and would use the built-in subbase lighting from that type of scope.

Then I found a nifty LED light system that was also designed to be used in the sub-base of a scope but was a flat LED.

I bought the two pieces for about \$170 and combined them when they arrived on my table top. After a little playing around I found they worked great! I could get a nice bright field and look at gems and other things in dark field illumination and see them quite nicely. (with my eyes!)

When I began to try and photograph the results, the LED was far too weak to let me focus through the camera. What worked fine with my eyes was insufficient to work for photography. So I tried several other light sources with mixed results, then it occurred to me that the ideal light source might be my camera's flash. Obviously bright enough, and the camera would calculate roughly correct exposure on the fly.

After a few false starts I worked out the system and it works pretty well now. I use a large acrylic block on which the dark field condenser sits, and then flash it from the side.



BOOM MICROSCOPE



Dark Field Condensor



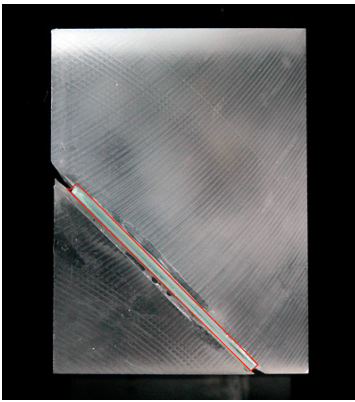
Flat LED light plate



Condensor on LED light plate



Acrylic block before mirror insertion



Acrylic block cut and reglued with mirror at 45 degree angle



Wrapped in Al foil



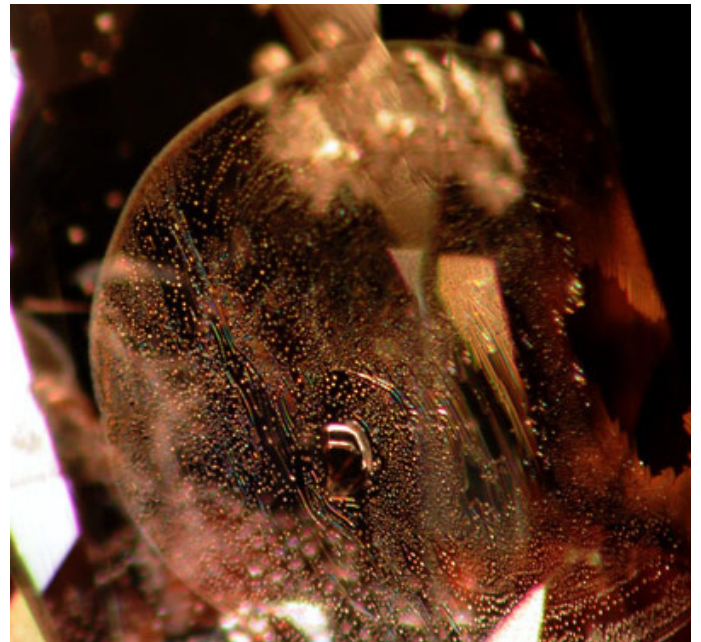
Acrylic block with mirror, flash and fiber optic used to illuminate, DarkField condensor on top.

1.) I cut the plastic base into two pieces and inserted a mirror between the two at a 45 degree angle to maximize light output. I then glued the three pieces together using epoxy. The red outline show the mirror.

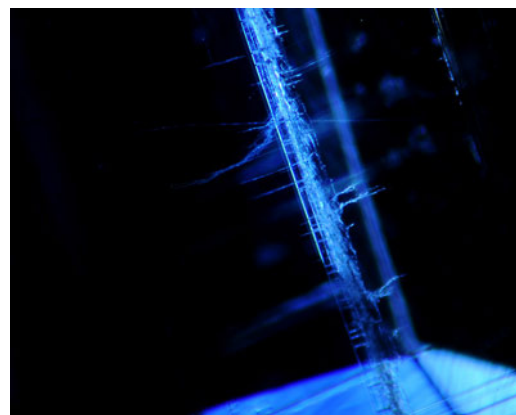
2.) I wrapped the outside of the plastic with aluminum foil to cut down on over-flash and to direct the light right through a hole in the top.

3.) Now the flash and one or two of my flex lamps can share the open side to illuminate the top. This flex light provides much better light for focusing the camera. The flash then boosts the power for the photograph.

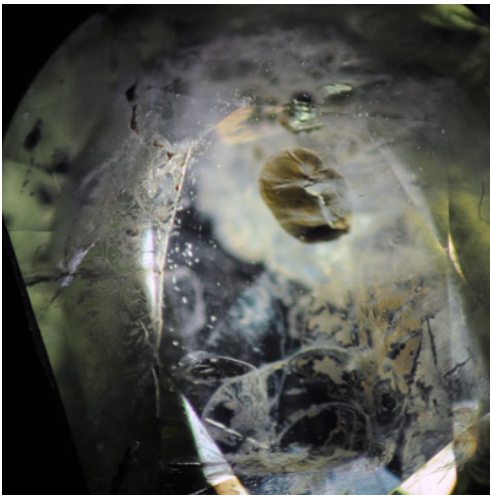
Here are a few results ..



Sapphire showing heat treatment defect



*Fracture line
in Kyanite
Gem*

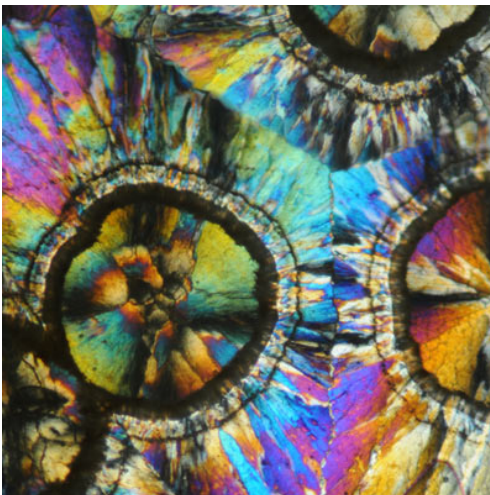


Lillypad defect in Peridot

By placing a pair of linear camera polarizers on the acrylic block in place of the darkfield condensor, it is possible to use the same set up to photograph mineral thin sections.



Ocean Jasper in thin section, with crossed polarizers



The Art of Craft at Historic Rosedale May 2, 2009

The Art of Craft at Historic Rosedale. I as well as members Scott, Eric, Gigi and Robyn spent the day showing our jewelry, rocks and minerals as well as having our club posters to hopefully attract new members.

Cabochons, polished pieces, geodes, septaria



The tables also had finished jewelry



Robyn demonstrates cabbng





Jack and Robyn chatting with potential customers/new members ...



Jack takes a turn at cabbaging...



Robyn checks out her creation.

Be Safe – Be Well

Safety Committee – Don Monroe, Chairman

(This article is taken from the April, 2009, SEFED, Lode-star newsletter.)

This article is a portion of an e-mail received by a dear friend of mine and forwarded to me.

Neither of us know who is the author because I would love to give that person credit. However this article is so good and so timely that I am including it for your education and enjoyment.

Tool Descriptions

DRILL PRESS: A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly-painted part which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

WIRE WHEEL: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard-earned calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, "What the...?"

ELECTRIC HAND DRILL: Normally used for spinning pop rivets in their holes until you die of old age.

SKILL SAW: A portable cutting tool used to make studs too short.

PLIERS: Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters.

BELT SANDER: An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs.

HACKSAW: One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

WISE-GRIPS: Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

WELDING GLOVES: Heavy duty leather gloves used to prolong the conduction of intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH: Used almost entirely for lighting various flammable objects in your shop on fire. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub you want the bearing race out of.

TABLE SAW: A large stationary power tool commonly used to launch wood projectiles for testing wall integrity.

HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK: Used for lowering an automobile to the ground after you have installed your new brake shoes, trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper.

EIGHT-FOOT LONG YELLOW PINE 2X4: Used for levering an automobile upward off of a trapped hydraulic jack handle.

E-Z OUT BOLT AND STUD EXTRACTOR: A tool ten times harder than any known drill bit that snaps neatly off in bolt holes thereby ending any possible future use.

BAND SAW: A large stationary power saw primarily used by most shops to cut good aluminum sheet into smaller pieces that more easily fit into the trash can after you cut on the inside of the line instead of the outside edge.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST: A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

CRAFTSMAN 1/2 x 24-INCH SCREWDRIVER: A very large pry bar that inexplicably has an accurately machined screwdriver tip on the end opposite the handle.

AVIATION METAL SNIPS: See hacksaw.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER: Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids and for opening old-style paper and tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER: A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws.

PRY BAR: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50 cent part.

HOSE CUTTER: A tool used to make hoses too short.

HAMMER: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent to the object we are trying to hit.

MECHANIC'S KNIFE: Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door; works particularly well on contents such as seats, vinyl records, liquids in plastic bottles, collector magazines, refund checks, and rubber or plastic parts. Especially useful for slicing work clothes, but only while wearing them.

DAMMIT TOOL: Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling "DAMMIT" at the top of your lungs. It is also, most often, the next tool that you will need.

BENCH SANDER: Electric tool used to turn major refinishing projects into sawdust -- secondary uses are removing ridges from knuckles and all traces of grooves on fingers.