

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB
OCTOBER 2010

Prez Sez ...

By the time you read this, we will have had our annual picnic at Frank Liske Park in Concord. I would like to thank those who volunteered to prepare the food, do the set up and clean up as well as members who brought side dishes.

Our next meeting is Thursday, Oct. 21st. and I hope to see you there. I am happy to report that Mary Fisher's junior rockhound program is growing. Mary always needs rocks and minerals to give to the kids and if you have any duplicates, please bring them to a meeting.

Mary, at this time is having to hold meetings in Concord and in Matthews on the same day. If any members knows of a church or meeting place that would be more central and for FREE, she needs a space on one Saturday a month for about six hours.

Please network and let's find Mary a location where she will not have to drive so much to do her programs.

Linda Simon's classes in wire wrapping which start two hours before each club meeting are a bit hit. There is a very nominal fee for

each class as Linda furnishes the copper and all the tools that you need.

Our November meeting is our annual auction. We invite you to bring something to sell and bring some extra money as this is a major fund raiser for our club.

Sara Boyce will return from teaching at William Holland the first week in November and after she gets settled back in at home, we will resume cabochon classes as soon as possible.

Ron Gibbs just returned from weeks of teaching photography and advanced cabochons at William Holland School of Lapidary in Young Harris, Ga. and I will go teach cabochons the last week in October and the first week in November.

If you are new to the club, you may have missed classes for this year, but if you do not know what a tremendous value this school is as is the one at Wildacres in Little Switzerland, NC, ask any of us in the club who have been there.

For about three hundred dollars a

week you get a good place to sleep, great food, a class and the best fellowship in what we do anywhere.

Our Christmas party date has been set by Jimmy Strickland. Look for an announcement soon.

I am currently working on a private field trip to somewhere that few have been. It is a fossil location near Kingsport, TN and I am told by my contact that November,

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tackyjackie@bellsouth.net

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drsimon@mindspring.com

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www.charlottegem.com

December or January would be a great time. I would like to know how many are interested.

North Carolina Minerals Museum and would also like to know how many would be interested.

We could car pool or perhaps rent a van. I am also checking into a train trip to Raleigh to visit the

Jack King, President
Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club

Dues are Due! - Already Dones Due! *Do it before the Dew sits in*

The 2011 annual club dues are payable by the end of the year, the club treasurer will be available at the October and November meetings as well as the Christmas party in December.

The Christmas party has been scheduled for Friday, December 10th. Mark it on your calendars now. Point Sheets ("already dones" credit scores) must be turned in before the Christmas party meeting. The point sheet is available from the club WEB site. Points are earned by donating your time to the club events. Those with sufficient points are placed in a drawing for a free week (tuition and room and board paid) at William Holland Lapidary School or the Wild Acres Lapidary School.

Matthews Live - Club Event - Revisited

The club made just over \$4,000 on the three day event selling geodes. Here is an example of one of the best geodes from the weekend, it's an unusual geode with what appears to be amethyst and rose quartz.



Junior Rockhounds Meeting Information

It's Field Trip Time!

Saturday, October 23

10:00 AM – Meet at the site

Diamond Hill Quartz Mine, Antreville, S.C.

(about 2.5 hours from Charlotte)

<http://www.gamineral.org/commercial-diamondhill.htm>

All CGAM Club Members are invited to join us!

Fees: Surface Collecting: \$4 per person

Digging (ages 16 and older): \$15 per person

To Sign Up, contact:

Mary Fisher

mefisher@att.net

704-786-6621

Be sure to let Mary know if you are coming, so she can send additional information, and update you on any change of plans!

Regular Monthly Meeting Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club

Thursday October 21st, 2010 7:00 pm

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

METEORITES - THE RETURN OF NARTU GLICTO !!!

The September meeting was somewhat of a disappointment for those who attended. Due to an intergalactic travel problem for our speaker, Professor Nartu Glicto, we were unable to experience and enjoy his presentation on ***“Meteorites – Ambassadors from Outer Space”***.

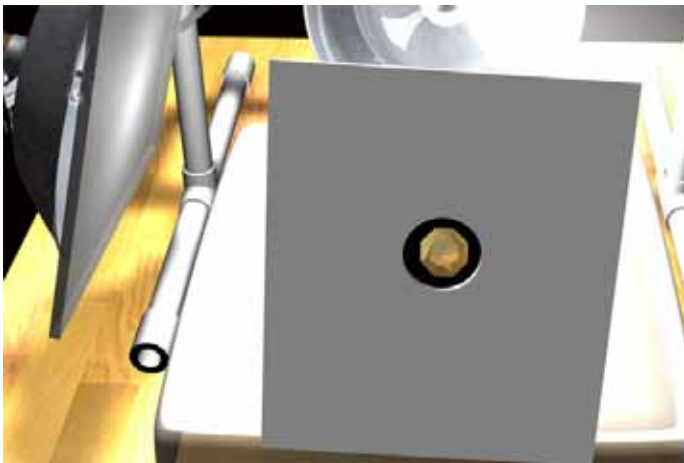
But space travel problems have been solved and Professor Glicto assures us he will make it through the ionosphere to be on hand Thursday evening October 21 at 7:30 PM at the Nature Museum to deliver his amazing extra terrestrial talk. Meteorites represent a fascinating subject and Professor Glicto's experience as an outer space traveler certainly qualifies him as an expert on the subject!

So don't miss this unusual event. Let's have a big turnout and show Professor Glicto just how spaced out members of the CG&MC really are!

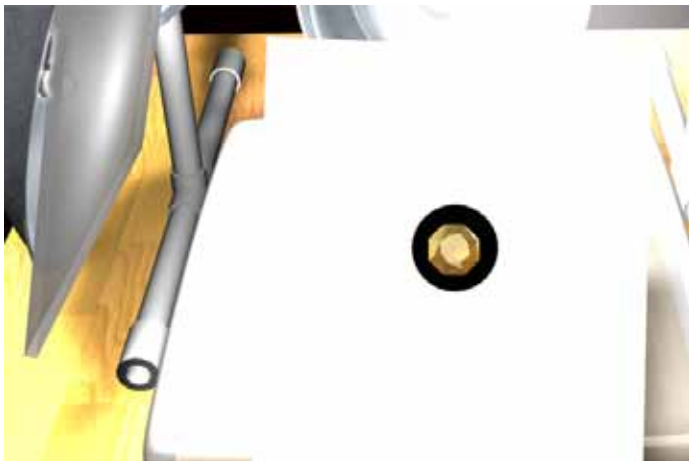
Using a Digital Camera to Photograph slabs, cabs, gemstones, minerals and jewelry - Part XIV by ron gibbs



lighting set up



camera's point of view 1



camera's point of view 2

Successfully shooting a faceted gemstone is one of the most challenging photos to make. By their very nature faceted stones need to have the light enter almost directly into the table of the stone, and that is exactly where the camera needs to be to get the best image. So how do you get two objects in the same spot at the same time without resorting to the basic time-space warping phenomena often used in sci-fi movies?

One of the best set-ups is illustrated in the first image to the left, one light with strong diffuser is set up at about a right angle to the stone, this provides the overall illumination of the "scene" and provides enough light to make camera focus easy.

The second light is placed BEHIND the stone and pointed toward the camera. A position must be selected where the resultant light does not cause lens flare in the camera. This light is then reflected using a large white card with a hole in it. The camera is positioned to shoot the image through the hole. The card can be manipulated to direct the desired reflected light directly into the gemstone.

The amount of reflection and the angle of the card provide a wide variety of different possible images. The next two illustrations (taken from where the camera's point of view) show how the position of the card controls the number of facets receiving direct light. In the lower of the two illustrations, there is nearly a complete reflection in the crown of the stone.

At the top of the next page are two images of the same stone using different amounts of card reflection. The left most stone has

nearly full-on 100% reflection, and the second has only a slight reflection directly mainly to the right.

Two more examples can be seen in the next pair of images, one using the reflector and one using two lights from the side.

The stone being photographed can also be turned slightly away from the camera, and a single reflector (without a hole) can be used to illuminate as much of the table facet as desired.

The card not only directs the light into the stone, but a portion or all of it can be made to reflect directly on the table of the stone. This produces a highlight that can be accurately controlled to whatever level the photographer desires. (See line of images at bottom of page.)

Finally one additional way to get more “fire” from gemstones with higher refractive index is to use LED lamps which act as very bright point sources. I use a microscope LED ring light. Like the hole in the reflector the open ring can be used to center the stone and the photograph is taken through the center hole.

The LEDs work exceptionally well with CD, diamonds, and zircons.



two orthoclase faceted stones



two sides lights/ no reflector

one side light / with reflector

reflwctor card

LED light

microscope LED ring light



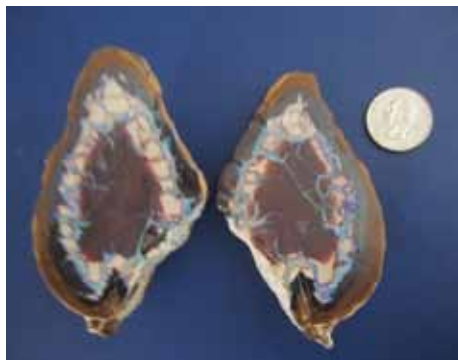
An Opal Journey In 2010

by *Richard Holmes*

(member of Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club)

I have just returned from a 6,000-mile trip covering several of the Australian opal fields. My Australian 'mate' and I traveled in his F250 Ford diesel air-conditioned truck pulling a 22-foot off-road camper. We had originally planned an off-road trip into the Australian bush looking for gold with two metal detectors, but the extensive rain in eastern Australia prevented us from making any off-road ventures. Instead, in our two months of travel we 1) attended the Yowah Opal Festival in Queensland, 2) took a trip to Koroit picking up Queensland boulder opal from a miner there, 3) attended the Lightning Ridge Opal Festival, 4) followed these with a 5 day journey up the Stewart Highway in South Australia to Coober Pedy.

The Yowah Opal Festival It was a beautiful day at the festival. We camped there that night. There were about 100 tables of opal out in the open with only 250 attending. Len Cram and his family were there along with Steve Aracic and his lovely wife Mary. I was very fortunate to have purchased two beautiful Yowah nuts as show below:



The Journey to Koroit The next day we left for Koroit traveling on a hard gravel road covering at least 200 miles and never meeting an oncoming vehicle or having one overtake us. Again, it was a beautiful day. We found that there is no town of Koroit, but merely a cross-road. The area is roughly 10 miles around with approximately 10 miners using very large backhoes to dig up large river boulders from as far down as 90 feet. In talking with local people, currently, there were only two miners working the area. We were fortunate to find one of these miners and purchased some mahogany colored Koroit opal. Below is a picture of one of their boulders which I would estimate weighed at least 2,000 pounds. Returning to our base at Cumborah, N.S.W. we encoun-

tered many wild pigs, kangaroos, emus, wallaroos, goats, sheep, feral cats, beautiful fat cattle, and even a wild fox. For the first time in 7 years eastern Australia has had an abundance of water with more wild grass than the animals can eat.



The Lightning Ridge Opal Festival The following week we attended the Lightning Ridge Opal Festival. What a big disappointment this was. This was my 8th trip to Australia with my desire to see this festival for the first time. It rained a lot that weekend. There were about 150 tables of which one-half or two-thirds were outside in the rain and mud. I would guess there were only about 400 people attending this festival (unlike the stories I had heard in the past of a show of 10,000 people with lots of events). There were other vendors there that gave it the feel of a poor flea market. Many of the same vendors from the Yowah Opal Festival also showed up at the Lightning Ridge festival. It could have been a better festival had the people who manage the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club moved the vendors out of the muddy parking lot onto part of the tar parking lot in front of the bowling club – this did not happen.

What a miserable sight it was!



Lighting Ridge Images

Our Journey to Coober Pedy It took us 5 days to reach Coober Pedy in South Australia up the Stuart Highway. The tar roads were wonderful – without any potholes even with all the rain in the area. However, should one be unfortunate to get off the edge of the road, a vehicle could sink down to the axle. Traveling along the road we saw lots of animals all looking very healthy since the rains had brought on more wild grass than there were animals to eat it.

Upon arriving at Coober Pedy we found many houses abandoned and commercial buildings boarded

up. The locals said that just about all the mining equipment was up for sale. In talking to the locals, we estimated there could be no more than a half-dozen miners still mining opal. The best thing in town is the UMOONA Opal Mine and Museum, run by Yanni Athanasiadis, which I would consider an absolute “must see” should one venture to Coober Pedy

My Assessment of the Opal Industry – or Lack Thereof

From what we determined in our



travels looking for opal, there is no opal industry. Even in the whole Lightning Ridge area, including the Coocoran field, we do not believe there are more than a dozen miners. For the time being, the boom in opal mining is over. With new regulations and fees, the feeling is

Coober Pedy Images



that the day of the small miner is over. Should a new surge in demand occur, it was felt that several millions of dollars would have to be spent with large open pit operations cutting through a large area. However, in the Lightning Ridge area open pit mining is not allowed. Also, I spoke with one major black opal wholesaler, who has always sold in Tucson, who stated that in February, 2010, 85% of their sales came from selling boulder opal and not Lightning Ridge black opal (they are not sure they even want to go back to Tucson in 2011).

The Australian Economy Wow! Other than opal and opal mining, the Australian economy is going gangbusters. The news reported that Australia has had 20 years of continued growth with 2010 growing by 3.3%. New buildings are going up and people are buying new cars. Their rail now covers all of Australia from all four directions.



Pre-Meeting Jewelry Class

Before the regular monthly meeting of the Gem and Mineral club, Linda Simon has an open workshop and teaching session for the creation of wire-wrap and simple jewelry. The class utilizes, beads, bangles, copper, silver or gold filled wire to create jewelry pieces.

Linda has the needed tools and can sell you the small amounts of wire necessary to complete any project. Ear-rings, bracelets, pins, and necklaces (pendants) are all open game for creation.

The classes begin about 5:00 pm before the 7:00 pm start of the evening meeting. They meet at the Nature Museum and are very informal. Even if you are not currently interested in taking a class come out to visit and watch what they do. Who knows you may not be able to stop yourself from the creative process.

The whole mining sector is on the move with new discoveries in coal, gas, uranium, iron ore, diamonds, as well as other minerals. With the substantial rains that Australia hasn't seen in 7 years, and in some places 30 years, there will be bumper crops of wheat, chickpeas, and canola this year.

There is more wild grass than there are grazing animals to eat it. Based on my two months of traveling all over New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, I believe we will see an economic explosion with continued growth for the next 20 years – at least.

I thoroughly enjoyed my travels and the friendly people I met, and would encourage everyone to see Australia. It is a beautiful and charming continent.

An Official Field Trip of Mid-Tennessee Gem & Mineral Society, Inc. An Official Field Trip of the (Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club)

10:00 AM until 4:00 PM CDT
Saturday – November, 6th 2010
WHERE: Cumberland Furnace, TN
WHEN: Saturday – November, 6th 2010

DIRECTIONS: From Nashville, TN off of I-40 take exit 196 for US-70 S (Bellevue/Newsom Station) go 0.2 miles. Turn right at TN-1 W/US-70S W go 1.8 miles. Turn left at TN-1 W/US-70 W/Charlotte Pike go 16.1 miles. Turn right at TN-47 (White Bluff) go 9.6 miles. Turn right at TN-48 (Charlotte) go 6.8 miles. Take a slight left at Earl Leech Rd go 0.2 miles. Turn left on Cinder Road. You will see a log cabin (Starks Cabin) on the left hand side of the road. You can park in the field next to the cabin.
ASSEMBLY TIME: For those meeting in Nashville, we will leave at 9:00 from the old cinema in Bellevue (there is a Mapco gas station nearby). Take exit 196 off of I-40 (Bellevue / Hwy-70), the cinema is on the right.

COLLECTING: We are heading to Cumberland Furnace to collect slag. The slag was a byproduct of making iron. Some of the slag is quit colorful in shades of blue and green ... some with swirls.

AGE LIMIT: Everyone is welcome but children must be 6 years or older.

EQUIPMENT: You need to bring a hand tool, trowel, small shovel, etc to dig in the slag pile and gloves to protect your hands. Bring a back pack or small buckets for carrying. Boots or wading shoes are recommended as your feet may get wet otherwise.

CONTACTS: For further information or alternative directions contact: John Martin, MTGMS President at President@mtgms.org or call my cell phone 615-210-5385 Visit our website www.mtgms.org