



THE GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB

APRIL 2014

THE PREZ SAYZ

I took a ride last week to the Reel Amethyst Mine with Neil Hohmann and Chuck Bora-wa, two guys who volunteered to manage the April 19 dig that the club is hosting for the SFMS. It was a rainy day but the gravel road leading to the mine was quite pass-able and we were able to climb in and out of the digging pits without any trouble. I came away from that visit more optimistic and enthu-siastic about this event than I had been. Although my arthritis doesn't allow me to do much digging these days, I have been to a number of mines in past years and the Reel looks like an excellent choice for a CG&MC dig for the following reasons:

- It's only an hour's ride from my home
- The digging pits are 15+ feet deep; a good depth for finding amethyst
- Just walking around without tools we each picked up a specimen or two
- There's a nearby creek that looks inviting for gold panning
- The mine access road is lined with overburden with spec-imen collecting potential for the younger kids (or older adults)
- If you want to take a break from digging, there are interesting

hiking trails on the property

- Francis Sutphin, the current owner/operator is a really nice guy who is working hard to make digs like ours a success

Two interesting side notes to get everyone more excited about this dig. I was at the Hickory Gem & Mineral Show this week. Among the dealers was a booth featuring incredible museum quality speci-mens with price tags in the thou-sands of dollars. One particularly noticeable piece was an amethyst cluster the size of a soccer ball full of deep purple, gem quality amethyst. The card identified it as having come from the Reel Mine in Iron Station, NC. The price was \$3800!!!

In a conversation with Mr. Sutphin I mentioned that some members with little or no experience would be attending this dig. He told me about a rainy weekend club dig last fall. One inexperienced club mem-ber tried to come down the muddy access road in a (low rider) Mini Cooper, got stuck part way down and had to be towed to the mine parking lot. He had no tools with him because he didn't know what to bring so a club member drove him to a nearby Loews in his jeep to buy some basic tools. A few of the more experienced rockhounds in the club pointed out a level area

where he could probably dig with-out getting into too much trouble. [Can you see where this is going?] Over two days digging in that same location he wound up with a pile of outstanding specimens that Mr. Sutphin loaded into his own

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Cooper up the muddy access road, transferred his "treasures" from the SUV to the Cooper, and he drove off badly in need of a shower but with a big smile on his face.

These digs are a wonderful venue for exercise, fresh air, good fellowship and stories to take back to school, the office or club meetings. I won't be down in the pits but I'll be there watching and urging you on. Come on out, you won't regret it.

*Murray Simon, President
Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club*

WIN A RON GIBBS ORIGINAL!

The April meeting is your last chance to get in on the awesome raffle. Members that are up to date on their dues may purchase raffle tickets to win an original Ron Gibbs "Cabtarsia" design.

This piece is a beautiful Mookaite stone bordered with black Australian Jade. It was wire wrapped in silver by our own Linda Simon.

This is a one of a kind design that you will never see again. Get up to date on your dues and buy some tickets!



BIRTHSTONE OF THE MONTH DIAMOND



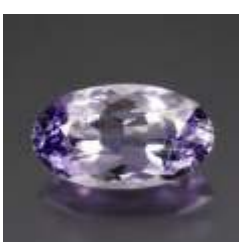


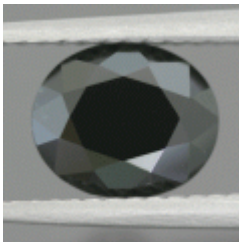
As the April birthstone, diamonds are the ideal gift for a loved one. And now you have more choices than ever. Get creative and give the ultimate gift of beauty: a fancy-color diamond. Fancy-color diamonds are natural, rare and truly exotic gem of the earth. Diamonds in hues of yellow, red, pink, blue, and green range in intensity from faint to vivid and generally the more saturated the color, the higher the value. In fact, diamonds sparkling with intense color are rare and may be priced higher than a colorless diamond of equal size. Because fancy-color diamonds are very desirable, color is sometimes introduced in a laboratory. These are correctly called color-treated diamonds. When purchasing a fancy-color diamond, the shopper should ask if any enhancements or treatments were used to improve its color and/or clarity.

From: www.americangemsociety.org



RAREST GEMSTONES IN THE WORLD

Very rare gems hold a special interest for the collector. Most rare gems are rare specimens of a more common species, such as ruby or sapphire. A clean Burmese pidgeon-blood ruby over 5 carats, for example, would count as very rare. But there are some gemstone varieties which are themselves so rare that any gem-quality specimen counts as very rare.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Red diamond is the rarest and most valuable of all gemstones, with the finest specimens selling at auction for more than \$1 million a carat. The largest red diamond known is the 5.11 ct. Moussaieff Diamond. The rare red hue is caused by microscopic defects in the crystal lattice. |
|  | Painite is a rare borate mineral that was first discovered in Burma in 1954 by the British mineralogist A.C.D. Pain. The material contains zirconium, boron, calcium and aluminum, with traces of vanadium and chromium. Hardness rating is 8 on the Mohs scale. Until 2005, only 25 crystals were known to exist, and only a few stones had been faceted. Since then some additional specimens have been found in northern Burma. |
|  | Taaffeite is extremely rare and most of the early finds were misidentified as spinel, a gem it closely resembles. In fact taaffeite was first discovered as a faceted gem, when Austrian gemologist Richard Taaffe (1898-1967) discovered that one of the spinels in a parcel he purchased from a Dublin dealer was doubly refractive. Lab testing confirmed that it was a new species, beryllium magnesium aluminum oxide by chemical composition. Thus far taaffeite has only been found in Sri Lanka. Musgravite, a polytype of taaffeite, is equally rare. |
|  | Jeremejevite is a rare aluminum borate mineral that was discovered in 1883 in Siberia and named after a Russian mineralogist. It has a hardness of 6.5 to 7.5 and ranges in color from colorless to yellow to blue. Some facet grade material was recently discovered in Namibia. Like tourmaline, jeremejevite is piezoelectric. |
|  | Poudretteite is a rare borosilicate that was first discovered in Quebec, Canada in the 1960's and named after the family that operated the quarry where it was found. It is usually pink or purple or colorless, with a hardness of 5 to 6. Specimens have also been discovered in Burma. |
|  | Serendibite was first found in Sri Lanka, and the name comes from the old Arabic name for Sri Lanka. At one time only 3 small faceted sub-carat stones were known to exist. Two of them were purchased by the late Edward Gubelin. In 2005 a deposit was found in Mogok, Burma and this rare gem is now available to collectors. |

GUIDE TO GEMSTONE FRAUD, RIP-OFFS AND SCAMS

The most common gemstone fraud is not synthetic gems as natural, but rather the selling of low quality stones as fine gemstones, especially stones that are poorly cut, heavily included or of mediocre color.



Fine Ruby, Top Color, Clarity & Cut

The gemstone business probably has more than its share of fraud, rip-offs and scams. It takes specialized knowledge to determine the authenticity of a natural gem. It is not difficult for a dealer to pass off a synthetic gem as natural, or sell an inexpensive gem such as kyanite as a more expensive sapphire. Even examining the gems in person is unlikely to protect the consumer against fraud, since sophisticated gemological instruments are usually required to detect synthetic or treated gems.

Having noted that, you might be surprised to hear that outright fraud of this sort is actually not common at all in the gemstone business. The reason is that dealers who engage in blatantly fraudulent practices don't survive long in the gemstone business.

Smart consumers prevent most outright fraud by buying only from dealers who have their gems certified by independent gemological laboratories. These labs are expert at gem identification and use high-tech instruments to determine if gemstones are natural or have been treated by various methods.

However, it is important to understand that gemological labs mainly do quantitative analysis -- they can tell you that a particular stone is a natural unheated sapphire, but they can't tell you if the stone is a high quality specimen or even if it is gem quality. They also won't give you any idea of the value of your stone.

Most of the fraud and rip-offs in the gemstone business have to do with qualitative issues, where a poor quality stone is sold as a high quality gem. This kind of fraud is unfortunately all too common, particularly among dealers who sell on price. When you see gems on offer at what seem to be exceptionally cheap prices, that is the time to raise the fraud alert.



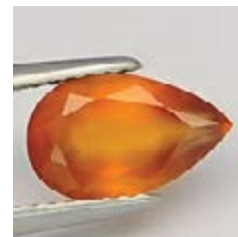
**Windowed, Beryllium
Treated Sapphire**



**Weak Color, Poorly
Cut Spinel**



**Badly-Cut
Fracture-Filled Ruby**



**Heavily Included
Spessartite Garnet**

The most common gemstone fraud is offering poorly cut or included gems as fine gemstones. Though the prices asked for these gems is well below the market price for high quality gems, these low quality stones in fact have little or no value in the market. The same is true for natural gems which have poor or mediocre color -- jewelers and dealers in fine gems will not touch these stones. But some dealers offer these leftovers to unwary buyers as "fine gems" at what seems to be an attractive price.

Another example is selling heavily-treated gems to consumers who don't fully understand the implications of the treatment. For example, some dealers sell ruby which has been fracture-filled with lead glass. But it is not

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enough just to disclose the treatment. The fact is that these rubies are not durable at all, and the glass filling is easily affected by household chemicals and routine heating by a bench jeweler during the setting process. These fracture-filled rubies should be not be purchased at any price. In fact the best gem labs now identify these stones not as ruby but as “composite ruby” or “hybrid ruby” to indicate that they cannot fairly be compared with natural ruby.

A gem dealer’s reputation is his most important asset. This is a business that is built on trust. Dealers who engage in fraudulent practices by offering low quality stones as fine gems should be exposed. Fortunately internet consumers are vigilant and report dealers they suspect of fraudulent practices. There are well known consumer sites that report rip-offs and unethical practices. Some consumers have gemological knowledge and are generous enough to share their expertise in these forums. Like any other product in the market, you usually get what you pay for. But in the case of gemstones, fine gems have lasting value while low quality stones are essentially worthless.

Copied from: www.ajsgem.com/articles/guide-gemstone-fraud-rip-offs-and-scams

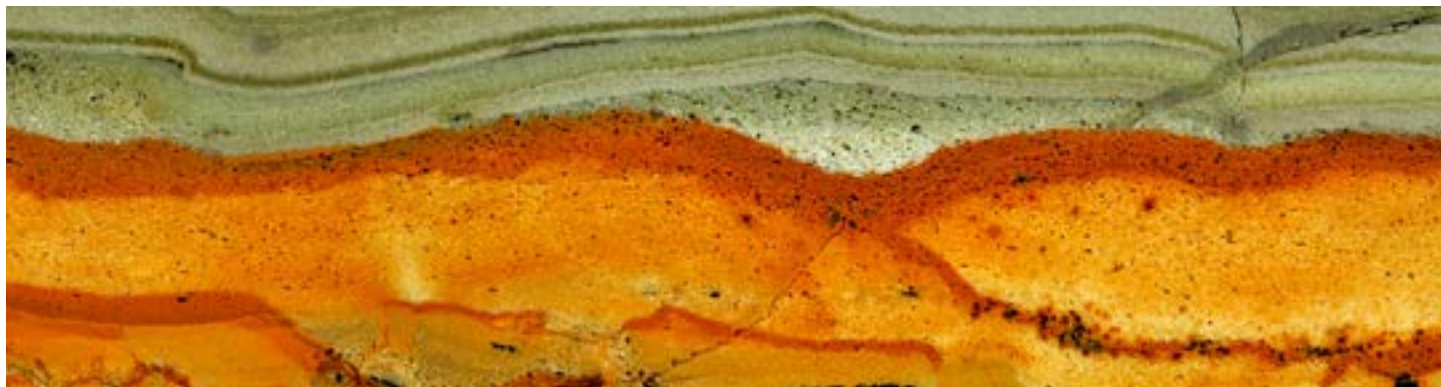
William Holland School of Lapidary Arts

Are you interested in taking your gem and mineral hobby or business to the next level? Then William Holland School of Lapidary Arts is the place for you! Registration for the 2014 season is open now.

Learn about silver smithing, faceting, cabochons, opals, and tons of other interesting and exciting topics. Spend one week immersed in rockhounding pursuits in the beautiful Georgia countryside.

Learn more at:

<http://www.lapidaryschool.org/>



Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club
Monthly Meeting

Thursday April 18, 2014

Gathering at 6:30, Meeting to Start at 7:00

Location:

Tyvola Senior Center

2225 Tyvola Rd. Charlotte, NC 28210 (704) 522-6222

Our speaker for the April 18 meeting will be Dr. Peter Lyckberg. Dr. Lyckberg will be speaking about his adventures in mining in Russia. He is will discuss the dangers and obsession of trying to remove gems and minerals from this country.

***Jewelry Making Workshop**
prior to the meeting*
5 to 7 pm

*Linda will conduct a jewelry making class in the club meeting room. This class make a wire wrap and bead necklace designed to display a pendant.
Class/materials fee is \$10.*

Charlotte Junior Rockhounds

Saturday April 26, 2014

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Location:

Matthews Community Center

100 McDowell St. Matthews, NC 28105

*Contact Mary Fisher to sign up for the class:
mefisher@att.net*

Jewelry Making Classes



Learn the art of wire wrapping from our own Linda Simon. Linda is an accomplished artisan and instructor. She and her husband have been creating and selling handmade jewelry for many years. Their work has been exhibited and sold in shows around the country. The above work of art is an example of what you will learn in class. Classes are available to all up to date members.

This month Linda will conduct a jewelry making class in the club meeting room. This class make a wire wrap and bead necklace designed to display a pendant. Class/materials fee is \$10. If you have tools, we encourage you to bring them. If not, we have some for your to use.

***Next Class is Thursday April 18th
from 5 to 7 prior to the club meeting***

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

Reel Mine Dig

Saturday April 19, 2014

We are hosting a Dixie Mineral Council (DMC) dig at

The Reel Mine in Iron City, NC

Looking for Amethyst ????? DIG HERE !!!!

Reel Mine is located on the premises of:

Mr. Francis Sulphin

375 Timber Road

Iron Station, NC

(704) 736-0506

DIRECTIONS: Ninety minute drive from downtown Charlotte, NC. From I-485 find Exit 16 West, from Charlotte. Proceed on Hwy 16 Brookshire Turnpike, west to Hwy 73. Take a left on Hwy 73 and travel to Timber Road. Take a left on Timber and proceed on the asphalt until it becomes a dirt road. Travel on the dirt road until you reach the mine entrance. If the weather is bad, you can stop at Mr. Sulphin's house and park, and walk a half mile to the mine. GPS coordinates are: Longitude -81.124309, Latitude 35.456221

HISTORY: Specimen types usually found here, include amethyst, beryl, ironized quartz, smokey quartz, and associated gems and minerals. This mine has been intermittently opened and closed for many years. Mr. Sulphin has recently reached an agreement with the County on how field trips will be scheduled and conducted. Since the reopening at two digs have been conducted a month. The Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club (CGMC) has scheduled its planned dig for the Southeast Federation for Saturday, April 19, 2014. However, to comply with the County agreement,.

ASSEMBLY: CGMC officials will be at the mine entrance beginning at 8:00 AM, Saturday, April 19, 2014, to collect the fees and to provide water and instructions for the dig. You will be responsible for bringing any food, digging tools or collection containers for you and/or your party. There will be two porta-potties provided and space is available for camping depending on the weather.

COST: \$25 for each digger (children under 13 free when accompanied by a paid digger). Diggers must be current paid members of an SFMS club (insurance liability issues). This fee will be collected at the entrance in the form of cash or personal , check by the CGMC official.

RESERVATIONS: REQUIRED!!! Contact Neil Hohmann at gisusainc@aol.com, or Chuck Borawa at chuckborawa@gmail.com.

EQUIPMENT: Hand digging tools (shovels, spades, picks, post holes diggers, forks, rakes, and other similar digging utensils and equipment are to be used. No large electrical drill hammers, backhoe, ditch digger, or motorized digging or drilling equipment will be allowed.

COMMENTS: There are many members of our club, including Chuck, Jack King, and others who have been to this mine, and your attendance at the February 2014 Charlotte Gem and Mineral meeting will avail you ample information and a chance to talk about the dig. Phone contact for Neil Hohmann (704) 752-2889 or Chuck Borawa at (704) 545-6126



*Actual Amethyst Cluster From The Reel Mine

UPCOMING SHOWS

May 1-4—FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA:

2nd annual wholesale and retail show; T & D Gem Shows; corner of Lake Emory Road and Rte. 441; next to Franklin Ford; Thu. 9-8, Fri. 9-8, Sat. 9-8, Sun. 9-8; free admission; contact Henry Stelling, 212 Mi Mountain Rd., Franklin, NC 28734, (828) 371-2954; e-mail: gemshowman@outlook.com

May 3-4—NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA:

Annual Jewelry, Gem, Mineral & Arts Show; Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society; Charleston Area Convention Center; 5001 Coliseum Dr., Exhibit Hall A; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; contact Karen Havenstein, (843) 795-2956; e-mail: webmaster@lowcountrygemandmineralsociety.org; Web site: www.lowcountrygemandmineralsociety.org

May 7-11—FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA:

Wholesale and retail show; Damian Belghali; Echo Valley Show Place; 6456 Sylva Rd. (across from GLW); Wed. 9-5, Thu. 9-5, Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-5; free admission; wholesale and retail dealers, open to the public, minerals, fossils, gems, rough rock; contact Damian Belghali, (678) 852-8273

May 9-11—FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA:

Annual show; The Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin; Macon County Community Center; 1288 Georgia Rd. (US 441); Fri. 10-4, Sat. 10-4, Sun. 10-4; free admission; rough, supplies, minerals, fossils, finished jewelry, crafts; contact Norm Holbert, (828) 634-0350; e-mail: norm-holbert@comcast.net