



THE GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB

JUNE 2016

THE EDITOR SAYZ

This year for the Charlotte Gem and Mineral club has been an exciting time. We have accomplished so much to improve everyone's experience of the club.

The most important change within the club would be the acquisition of the ART at the Dairy workshops. If you have not taken a class yet, you are truly missing out. Currently we are hosting classes for cabochons, wire wrapping, polymer clay, and beading. We are working on developing faceting classes too!

If you are interested in learning to cut a stone like a real pro, talk to Kim Gywn. He is working on figuring who and what type of schedule will work for potential students. Kim will be the instructor.

His faceting work is spectacular. He has trained under multiple faceting masters for many years. You could not find a better value for your time.

Martha Rodgers has been heading up our Beading classes. She has a remarkable amount of experience in this area. Students of her classes are extremely happy with what they have created under her instruction. When it comes to cabochons, our instructors are top notch. Our head cabochon instructor, Sara Lee Boyce is the cream of the crop in the world of stone cutting. She has been teaching cabochons and opal cutting for decades. Her work is world renown. She is a respected expert in the field of opals. She has cut stone for people all over the world. People have trusted her to cut opals worth in excess of \$50,000. I don't know about

you, but you would have to have one heck of a reputation to trust someone with that kind of stone. Besides cabochons, she is also a master faceter. She is a wealth of knowledge and a pleasure to learn from.

We also have Murray Simon as another fine cabochon instructor. He has been cutting cabochons for many years for his own

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pleasure as well as his own jewelry business he runs with his wife, Linda. This pair creates some of the most wonderful jewelry you ever saw. Murray specializes in bordered cabochons that is a combination of intarsia and cabochons. His creations are highly desired and collected by people from all over the country.

Zach Blackburn has also been instructing cabochon classes. Zach started stone cutting about six years ago. He started his education with the same classes he now teaches. He has also taken five classes at William Holland School of Lapidary Arts in opals and advanced cabochon cutting. Zach's classes are dedicated to quality not quantity.

We also have Linda Simon who teaches our wire wrapping and polymer clay classes. Linda has been pursuing the jewelry arts for many years now. She has developed multiple new types of wrapping styles that are not only easy to learn, but beautiful. Her work has been featured in many jewelry shows. Her and Murray are vendors at gem shows all over the east coast. Their work is highly prized by collectors.

We also have Kim Gwyn who is developing faceting classes. Kim has been faceting for about seven years. His work is remarkably precise and beautiful. His technique is next to flawless. If you have interest in cutting a professional quality stone, talk to Kim.

These classes are all taught by volunteers from the club. These people only do it for their passion and to keep these skills in the hands of the everyday people. Quality gem cutters are few in numbers. By learning these skills you carry on the tradition that has been passed down for centuries. Do yourself a favor and sign up for a class today!

Zach Blackburn: Newsletter Editor
Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club

Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club Monthly Meeting

Thursday June 16, 2016

Social Hour from 6:00 - 7:00

Meeting to Start at 7:00

Location:

Tyvola Senior Center

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

We will be having a silent auction before the meeting.

Our Monthly Presentation:

Gold Prospecting in the Carolinas

**By: Greg Fisher of the Gold Prospectors of
the Americas, Matthews Chapter**

***We will not have a general meeting in July due
to our yearly picnic on July 30th.***

***There will not be a jewelry making class before
the meeting. Sign up for a jewelry class at the
Dairy workshop.***

WORKSHOPS AT THE DAIRY

Location:

Art in The Dairy
7701 Tuckaseegee Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28214



Currently scheduled classes:

Faceting Classes are available on an “as available” basis. If you are interested in learning to facet, contact Kim at gwynkim@gmail.com to arrange a time(s).

June 18 – Cabochon Making (3 openings)

– \$40 class fee



June 18 – Wire Wrapping (4 openings)

– \$40 class fee + Materials fee is provided by instructor

Contact Martha Rodgers to register for a class.

Email: lindadairy@yahoo.com

Call: 704-543-6651.

ROCK OF THE MONTH

LAKE SUPERIOR AGATE

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



A cabochon of Lake Superior agate



The **Lake Superior agate** is a type of agate stained by iron and found on the shores of Lake Superior. Its wide distribution and iron-rich bands of color reflect the gemstone's geologic history in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. In 1969 the Lake Superior agate was designated by the Minnesota Legislature as the official state gemstone.

The Lake Superior agate was selected because the agate reflects many aspects of Minnesota. It was formed during lava eruptions that occurred in Minnesota about a billion years ago.^[1] The stone's predominant red color comes from iron, a major Minnesota industrial mineral found extensively throughout the Iron Range region. Finally, the Lake Superior agate can be found in many regions of Minnesota as it was distributed by glacial movement across Minnesota 10,000 to 15,000 years ago.

Geologic history



Lake Superior Agate - Duluth, Minnesota

More than a billion years ago, the North American continent began to split apart along plate boundaries. Magma upwelled into iron-rich lava flows throughout the Midcontinent Rift System, including what is now the Minnesota Iron Range region. These flows are now exposed along the north and south shores of Lake Superior. The tectonic forces that attempted to pull the continent apart, and which left behind the lava



flows, also created the Superior trough, a depressed region that became the basin of Lake Superior.

The lava flows formed the conditions for creation of Lake Superior agates. As the lava solidified, water vapor and carbon dioxide trapped within the solidified flows formed a vesicular texture (literally millions of small bubbles). Later, groundwater transported ferric iron, silica, and other dissolved minerals passed through the trapped gas vesicles. These quartz-rich groundwater solutions deposited concentric bands of fine-grained quartz called chalcedony, or embedded agates.

Over the next billion years, erosion exposed a number of the quartz-filled, banded vesicles—agate—were freed by running water and chemical disintegration of the lavas, since these vesicles were now harder than the lava rocks that contained them. The vast majority, however, remained lodged in the lava flows until the next major geologic event that changed them and Minnesota.

During the ensuing ice ages a lobe of glacial ice, the Superior lobe, moved into Minnesota through the agate-filled Superior trough. The glacier picked up surface agates and transported them south. Its crushing action and cycle of freezing and thawing at its base also freed many agates from within the lava flows and transported them, too. The advancing glacier acted like an enormous rock tumbler, abrading, fracturing, and rough-polishing the agates.

Description



Lake Superior Agate from the Lake Superior region in Northern Minnesota.

The Lake Superior agate is noted for its rich red, orange, and yellow coloring. This color scheme is caused by the oxidation of iron. Iron leached from rocks provided the pigment that gives the gemstone its beautiful array of color. The concentration of iron and the amount of oxidation determine the color within or between an agate's bands. There can also be white, grey, black and tan strips of color as well.

The gemstone comes in various sizes. The gas pockets in which the agates formed were primarily small, about 1 cm in diameter. A few Lake Superior agates have been found that are 22 cm in diameter with a mass exceeding 10 kilograms. Very large agates are extremely rare.

The most common type of Lake Superior agate is the *fortification agate* with its eye-catching banding patterns. Each band, when traced around an exposed pattern or "face," connects with itself like the walls of a fort, hence the name fortification agate.

A common subtype of the fortification agate is the parallel-banded, onyx-fortification or water-level agate. Perfectly straight, parallel bands occur over all or part of these stones. The straight bands were produced by puddles of quartz-rich solutions that crystallized inside the gas pocket under very low fluid pressure. The parallel nature of the bands also indicates the agate's position inside the lava flow.



Probably the most popular Lake Superior agate is also one of the rarest. The highly treasured eye agate has perfectly round bands or “eyes” dotting the surface of the stone.

Cutting and polishing

A gemstone can be used as a jewel when cut and polished. Only a fraction of the Lake Superior agate are of the quality needed for lapidary. Three lapidary techniques are used on Lake Superior agates:

- Tumbling—Small gemstones are rotated in drums with progressively finer polishing grit for several days until they are smooth and reflective.
- Saw-cut and polish—Stones up to 1/2 kg are cut with diamond saws into thin slabs, which then are cut into various shapes. One side of the shaped slab is polished producing fine jewelry pieces and collectible gems called cabochons. (Note the value of large Lake superior agates, which weigh a few pounds or more, will lose most of their value if cut into slabs.)
- Face polishing—Polishing a curved surface on a portion of the stone and leaving the major portion in its natural state is called face polishing.

Distribution of Lake Superior agate

One of the most appealing reasons for naming the Lake Superior agate as the Minnesota state gemstone is its general availability. Glacial activity spread agates throughout northeastern and central Minnesota, northwestern Wisconsin, Northern Iowa, and Michigan’s Upper Peninsula in the United States and the area around Thunder Bay in Northwestern Ontario, Canada. Lake Superior agates have been found in gravel deposits along the Mississippi River basin. Other types of agate similar to Lake Superior agate have been found in southwestern Wisconsin.



CHARLOTTE GEM AND MINERAL CLUB ANNUAL PICNIC

Saturday, July 30
(Rain or Shine!)

12:00 - 5:00

Location: Art in The Dairy

7701 Tuckaseegee Rd. Charlotte, NC 28214

- Make reservations by contacting Martha Rogers at:
- martha4854@gmail.com
- Bring your own chairs
- Children and spouses are welcome
- Food will be provided
- Come out and play a round of corn hole, eat some good food,
and talk about our favorite subject, Rocks!



UPCOMING SHOWS

June 18-19—NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE: Annual show; Intergalactic Bead Show, TN State Fairgrounds; 500 Wedgewood Ave; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Admission \$4-\$5; Do you love great quality and prices? Then shop The Intergalactic Bead Show! Our shows provide attendees with the world's finest and rarest beads, precious stones, gems, freshwater pearls and an exquisite collection of finished jewelry. Shop quality. Shop Intergalactic Bead Shows. ; contact Shawwna Whitson; e-mail: Info@beadshows.com; Web site: www.beadshows.com

June 24-26—FISHERSVILLE, VIRGINIA: Annual show; Treasures Of The Earth Gem & Jewelry Shows, Augusta Expo; 277 Expo Road, (I-64 Exit 91); Fri. 10 -6 , Sat. 10 -6 , Sun. 11 -5 ; \$4 Admission, Children under 16 free; Annual show. Jewelry makers, goldsmiths and silversmiths from all over the U.S. who can reconstruct, repair, design or make original jewelry from customer-selected gems, stones, opals and crystals. Wire wrap, wire sculpture, stone beads, pearls, stone setting, amber, opal, mineral and fossil dealers. Hourly door prizes including a Ring with a precious stone that will be given as a Grand Prize. Free Parking.; contact Van Wimmer - Show Director, 5273 Bradshaw Road, Salem, VA 24153, 540-384-6047; e-mail: van@toteshow.com; Web site: www.toteshow.com

July 15-17—VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA: Retail show; Treasures of the Earth Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Shows, Virginia Beach Convention Center; 1000 19th Street; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$5, Students 16 and under free; Vendors from across the United States bring a variety of merchandise. Their items include 14K and sterling silver, classic, estate, fashion and handmade jewelry. Loose stones, beads and findings, pearls, mineral specimens, rocks, crystals, lapidary supplies. Jewelers and wire wrappers who can design, remount and set stones and make repairs on site. Display of rocks and minerals and demonstrations of lapidary arts by the two Gem and Mineral Societies of the area. ; contact Jane Westbrook, PO Box 59, Gloucester Point, VA 23062, (804)-642-2011; e-mail: ellen@treasuresoftheearth.com; Web site: www.treasuresoftheearth.com

July 28-30—FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA: Annual show; United States Faceters Guild, The Factory; 1024 Georgia Rd. (US441); Thu. 9-5, Fri. 9-8, Sat. 9-4; Free Admission ; 9th Annual Franklin Faceters Frolic. Gem cad classes, faceting supplies and rough, speakers & demonstrations; contact Norman Holbert, 180 Camelot Estates Road, Franklin, NC 28734, (828)-634-0350; e-mail: normholbert@comcast.net; Web site: www.franklinfacetersfrolic.com

July 28-31—FRANKLIN, NORTH CAROLINA: Annual show; Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin NC, Robert C. Carpenter Community Building; 1288 Georgia Road ; Thu. 10-6, Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; Adults/Seniors \$2, Students \$1, Children under 12 free; There will be demonstrations, door prizes, rough & cut gemstones, finished jewelry (gold & silver), beads, specimens, minerals, jewelry repair and construction on site. ; contact Linda Harbuck, 425 Porter Street, Franklin, NC 28734, (800)-336-7829; e-mail: lindah@franklin-chamber.com; Web site: www.visitfranklinnc.com