



# ***THE MOUNTAIN GEM***

**Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina  
May 2021 Newsletter**

[WWW.FGMS.ORG](http://WWW.FGMS.ORG)

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**Cover Photograph – Wulfenite from the Mammoth  
Mine, AZ**

**Photograph by Stacy Walbridge**

## APRIL 29<sup>th</sup> GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Susan Fritz, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Jane Morgan on Thursday, 04/29/21, at 6:30 p.m., at First Christian Church of Franklin.

Participants: Jane Morgan, Al Pribble, Stacy Walbridge, Kathi Walbridge, George Fritz, Susan Fritz, Marsha Harmon, Tom Parker, Mark Laing, Robby Morgan-Kirkpatrick, John Hayes and Norman Holbert.

Jane Morgan asked for a motion to accept the previous month's minutes as printed in the newsletter. Marsha Harmon made a motion to accept seconded by Stacy Walbridge.

Kathi Walbridge reported that we are in the black in terms of funds. She says that the gift shop is now open and that will be helpful in terms of generating revenue.

Mark Laing reported on the recent 2-day cleaning of the museum. There seemed to be a real bug problem but the museum was extensively sprayed and windows opened. It was felt that Terminix has not been very effective so that contract is going to be put on hold. However, the contract for termites with Terminix will be renewed.

Jane Morgan announced that Larry Ellert's brother has passed away. It was noted that Dean Plesner has supposedly had a stroke and was recently hospitalized, Lee Bender broke her shoulder and is facing shoulder surgery, Jenny Mooney has upcoming surgery, and Jeanne Hayes has two eye surgeries coming up in the very near future.

Gift Shop Manager Anamay Rossomando will not be in Franklin until the end of May; however, Robby Morgan-Kirkpatrick has offered to assist with the gift shop.

Stacy Walbridge announced the newsletter deadline will be Wednesday, 05/19.

George Fritz has been working on getting a proof ad together for the Board's approval. Discussion followed and it was ultimately decided that at this point we do not need a display ad regarding the museum opening but rather postings on social media and in Community Happenings in the Macon County News and other area newspapers.

George Fritz inquired about volunteers that would be required to cover as hosts for the museum opening the first part of May for four days each week. We discussed current membership, unpaid dues and apparent lack of interest by current members. Therefore, Al Pribble made a ***motion*** that we start by only opening on Friday and Saturday, May 7 and May 8, and going forward each week with that schedule until we see if we have enough members who will volunteer to cover four days a week for six hours a day. Stacy Walbridge seconded the motion. Voted and passed.

Al Pribble requested a new membership list from Tom Parker. He will then make phone calls to those who are unpaid as to whether or not they wish to continue their membership.

Jane Morgan reported she will follow-up on State of Franklin.

Marsha Harmon reported she is stepping down as Field Trip Coordinator and Lake Holland is also stepping down as her assistant. Marsha is willing to continue to coordinate tours/education as well as being willing to mentor her successor. She also stated she had a lot of equipment to loan out for trips. Stacy Walbridge stated he felt it was not necessary for the field trip coordinator to go out on every single trip. He stated he is willing to help out with this with this but cannot be the coordinator.

Kathi Walbridge did not have a program scheduled for this evening since she was unsure of what to expect in terms of participation in the General meeting. She is stepping down as Program Coordinator and a successor will be needed.

According to Norman Holbert, per Linda Harbuck, the July Gem Show is filled. There was much discussion regarding renting out our tables, mats, etc. We discussed the fact that our association with the Chamber of Commerce was never formally legalized. John Hayes feels that if we do not participate we may get cut out forever. Al Pribble suggested we can help set up and take down but we may not have enough people to actually do this. Another problem has been getting volunteers to come and man a booth and we would also need demonstrators. The July Gem Show is scheduled for July 22, 23, 24 & 25. Norman noted that the Faceter's Frolic is back at the same time.

Al Pribble stated the First Christian Church will be holding a community garage sale on their premises on Saturday, June 19. We can set up tents outside. Our

club members can donate items for sale. There are no fees. George Fritz will place an ad in the papers stating this is a multi-group garage sale.



**March Meeting Members (left), President Jane Morgan (right)**

Photographs by George Fritz

First Christian Church has offered us a double-wide trailer with two large rooms and two bathrooms located on their property. This building could be utilized for workshops, classes, meeting rooms. This offering was discussed at length by the Board members at their meeting this past Tuesday and Board members toured the building. We agreed that there would be no movement of any equipment until the building is in proper shape and it will require work to be done that will involve a monetary investment and manpower.

John Hayes suggested perhaps equipment could be moved this Fall after the museum is closed for the winter months. Pros and cons were again discussed at length. If the offer is accepted, the church is requesting a monthly donation and payment of the electric bill for that building. Mark Laing, who will be running for President, and our current President, Jane Morgan, will meet with the church Trustees to discuss pertinent details and report back to us.



**Potential Workshop-Classroom Facility**

John Hayes has sold his property (closing 05/24). He has three very sturdy 4 x 8 tables of half-inch plywood that he would like to donate to the museum but they will have to be removed from his property.

## Dates to Note:

May 8 – downtown Mother’s Day weekend – we will have a booth outside the museum.

May 29 – downtown Memorial Day weekend – streets closed – we will have a table.

July 3 – downtown – 10 to 4 – music and shops open.

It was noted that Robby Morgan-Kirkpatrick has taken on the following responsibilities: gift shop assistant, Librarian, Calendar Coordinator, web pages, and social media!!

It is also noted that we very much need volunteers to host at the museum on Fridays from 10 to 4 and on Saturdays. These hours can be split if you cannot work six hours.



**Robby Morgan-Kirkpatrick with New Member  
Crystal Morgan-Kirkpatrick**  
Photograph by Robby Morgan-Kirkpatrick

Thank you to Stacy and Kathi Walbridge who brought some specimens in from their trip for us to see and thank you to Tom Parker who provided refreshments for us this evening.

There being no further business, Norman Holbert made a motion for adjournment seconded by Marsha Harmon. President Jane Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

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  **What are Those Things?**    
Mark Laing, Museum Curator

Within the museum there is a locked and private room on the second floor that is rarely visited. Dim bulbs light the room. Some say a ghost can be seen there late at night. No one knows exactly the history of that room or what may have happened there years ago. When you enter it takes several minutes for your eyes to adjust to the dark. You can slowly start to make out shelves bending under the weight of numerous objects. Some sparkle in the low light, some are just dark.

What are those things? Come to the museum and maybe you can identify them.

Mark Laing is looking for volunteers to assist in cleaning the display cases. He has scheduled the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> of June for you to come clean a display case or two, dust off some of our unique specimens, and maybe get a chance to identify those mysterious items. If you have an hour or two or more and would like to help preparing our museum for the summer contact Mark at [mw.laing@hotmail.com](mailto:mw.laing@hotmail.com).

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## Bench Tips: Separating Discs

By Brad Smith



Separating Discs (also called Cutoff Wheels) are inexpensive and do a great job cutting or shaping steel. You can use them to sharpen tool points, cut piano wire to length, make slots, and sharpen worn drills. Other uses include modifying pliers and making your own design stamps.

My preference is the one-inch diameter size. Be sure to hold the wheel firmly so nothing moves to break the disc, and definitely wear your safety glasses. Those are little flakes of steel coming off the disk.

BTW - Separating Discs are rather poor at soft metals like copper, silver and gold. Soft metals clog up the cutting edges.

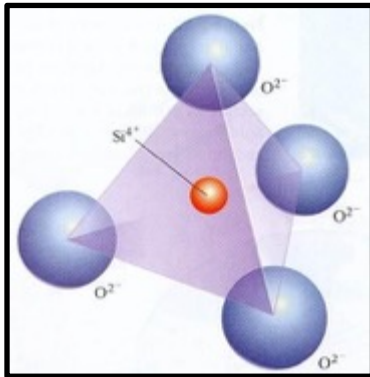


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## Meet the Nesosilicates

By Paul Ledman

Adapted from the May 2021 Newsletter of the Maine Mineralogical & Geological Society



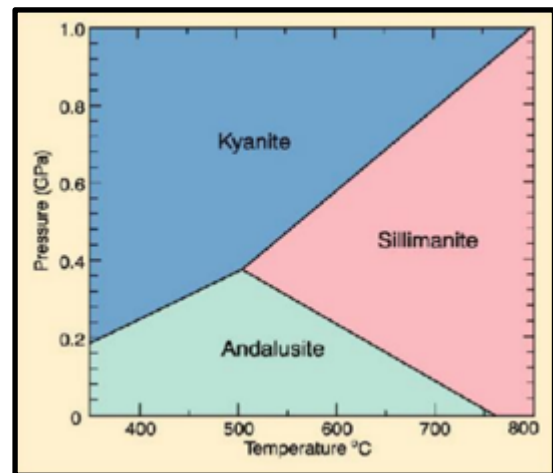
Isolated Tetrahedron

Nesosilicates are minerals that consist of four oxygen ions and one silicon ion that are structurally linked so that they form a stand-alone tetrahedron. Because these individual tetrahedra have a -4 charge, they link with positive cations such as Mg<sup>+2</sup> or Fe<sup>+2</sup> to balance the charge.

This bonding results in a wide range of minerals and mineral groups. Olivine, topaz, staurolite, garnets, datolite, and minerals in the Al<sub>2</sub>SiO<sub>5</sub> group are all Nesosilicates.

Many of these minerals in the Nesosilicate Group are well known to mineral collectors in New England, but perhaps some of the most commonly sought after are those in the Al<sub>2</sub>SiO<sub>5</sub> group: andalusite, kyanite and sillimanite. They have the same chemical formula but form at different temperatures and pressures, and have different characteristics and host associations.

Andalusite is formed at a lower pressure and at a mid temperature. If the temperature and pressure increase, the andalusite may convert to sillimanite. Therefore, andalusite provides clues as to depth and pressures of the host rock. It is associated with mica schist. (Ironically, andalusite was named after the Spanish province of Andalusia even though the first specimens that were identified came from Guadalajara, not Andalusia.)



Phase Diagram of Andalusite, Kyanite, & Sillimanite

Kyanite typically is a blue mineral that can be found in both aluminum-rich metamorphic pegmatites and in metamorphosed sedimentary rocks. When found in metamorphic rocks, kyanite generally indicates higher pressures. Its name comes from the same origin as that of the color *cyan*.

Sillimanite indicates formation at a high temperature. As can be seen from the phase diagram, it is not a good indicator of pressure since it forms in both low- and high-pressure conditions. It is usually found in metamorphosed gneisses and schists. This illustration shows the phase boundaries between the three minerals assuming that the required ions are available.

## Upcoming Gem & Mineral Shows

**GASTON GEM, MINERAL,  
AND FACETERS CLUB  
PRESENTS**

# SUMMER GEMBOREE

**42ND ANNUAL GEM, MINERAL, AND JEWELRY SHOW**

Johan Newcombe  
Event Center  
1840 E. Franklin Blvd.  
Gastonia, NC 28054



**June 19-20**  
**Sat 10-6**  
**Sun 10-4**

Free event for all!!  
Daily and Grand Prize Raffles

Masks Required Inside  
Social Distancing  
Observed

**Minerals, fossils, gemstones,  
jewelry, gem mining (\$5 and \$10  
buckets), and much more!!!**

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Facebook** 

## 2021 ASHEVILLE, NC GEM SHOWS

**DATES:**  
JUNE, 18TH - 20TH, 2021  
SEPTEMBER, 17TH - 19TH, 2021  
DECEMBER, 10TH - 12TH, 2021

**HOURS:**  
FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 9AM - 6PM  
SUNDAY 10AM - 4PM

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CAMP STEPHENS  
263 CLAYTON ROAD  
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**MOUNTAIN AREA GEM & MINERAL ASSOCIATION**

**July 22, 23, 24, & 25  
Franklin, NC**

**Macon County Gemboree, Robert C. Carpenter Community Building, 1288 Georgia Road  
Highlands Road Gem Show, 1602 Highlands Road  
Echo Valley Gem Show, 6456 Sylva Rd  
G&LW Gem & Lapidary Wholesalers, 6295 Sylva Road**





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**May General Meeting**  
6:30 pm Thursday, May 27, 2021  
This will be an In Person Meeting  
**First Christian Church of Franklin**  
156 Belleview Park Road  
Franklin, NC

**May Board Meeting**  
6:30 pm Tuesday, May 25, 2021  
**First Christian Church of Franklin**  
156 Belleview Park Road  
Franklin, NC

## Club Officers and Board of Directors

President: Jane Morgan, (828-342-8703)  
Past President: Al Pribble, (828-342-3119)  
Vice President: Arlon Eldridge, (828-369-5271)  
Secretary: Susan Fritz, (828-524-4936)  
Treasurer: Lake Holland, (828-369-5421)  
Assistant Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)  
Museum Manager: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
Director (2020): Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)  
Director (2020): Tom Parker, (828-342-3619)  
Director (2019): Diane Mason, (706-379-1718)  
Director (2019): Tom Sterrett, (828-349-3774)

**The Club is a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Southeast Federation of the Mineralogical Societies.**

## Committees

Membership: Tom Parker and Diane Mason  
Museum Curator: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)  
Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)  
Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
Museum Workshop: Virginia Bennis (631-830-5403)  
Publicity: George Fritz, (828-524-4936)  
Field Trip Coordinator: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)  
Program Coordinator: Kathi Walbridge  
Museum Calendar: Jay Mooney, (678-488-0620)  
Gemborees: TBD  
Education/Tours: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)  
Asst Education/Tours: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
Web Master: Melissa Barfield (803-724-8312)  
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