



50 Years  
1972 - 2022

The Mountain Gem

September 2022

# THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina

ESTABLISHED 1972

September 2022 Newsletter



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

Cover Photograph: - Cobaltoan Calcite on Malachite covered Matrix, from: Kamoto Principal Mine, Kamoto, Kolwezi District, Katanga (Shaba), Democratic Republic of the Congo; Source: exceptionalminerals.com



## August General Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Chandra Fox, Secretary

Photographs by George Fritz

**August 25, 2022**  
**Thursday 6:30 P.M.**  
**First Christian Church of Franklin**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Al Pribble. ([alton36@gmail.com](mailto:alton36@gmail.com)).

A motion was made, and accepted by the attending members, to accept the minutes published in the July Newsletter.

**Treasurer:** Kathi Walbridge. ([kwalbridge@mail.com](mailto:kwalbridge@mail.com))

Reported that the Folk festival brought in roughly \$450 dollars. She announced that the Gift Shop sales are doing well and the Club table at the July gem show sold raffles, t-shirts and tools totaling around \$1800.00 dollars in revenue.



**Museum Manager:** Larry Ellert. ([clellert@yahoo.com](mailto:clellert@yahoo.com)) Announced that all old entry codes for museum access have been changed for security updates. If anyone needs a new code please contact Larry.

**Curator:** Assistant Curator Bushy Hartman. ([bushyhtm@yahoo.com](mailto:bushyhtm@yahoo.com)) Bushy Hartman ([bushyhtm@yahoo.com](mailto:bushyhtm@yahoo.com)). Reported that she is updating the Museum inventory spreadsheet and is gathering additional information

**Workshop:** Matt Castor. ([combatflyfisher@yahoo.com](mailto:combatflyfisher@yahoo.com)) Reported that the workshop cabbng machines, Pixie and Genie, have been repaired and ready for service.

**Gift Shop:** Anamay Rossomando. ([anamay@verizon.net](mailto:anamay@verizon.net)) Announced that the Museum Gift Shop is doing well. Additionally, she informed everyone that the Streets of Franklin Fall Festival will be held on September 3<sup>rd</sup>; that the museum will have a table and may offer geode cutting.





**Newsletter Editor:** Stacy Walbridge. ([fqmseditor@gmail.com](mailto:fqmseditor@gmail.com)) Announced that the deadline for the September newsletter is September 19, 2022. He informed everyone that August will be the last edition with Stacy as editor. He asked everyone to please welcome Mike Hartman as the new editor, and to feel free to send interesting tidbits, news articles and announcements to Mike Hartman ([fqmseditor@gmail.com](mailto:fqmseditor@gmail.com)).

**Publicity:** George Fritz. ([fritzga@hotmail.com](mailto:fritzga@hotmail.com)) Resigned as Publicity manager.

**Scholarships:** Al Pribble. ([alton36@gmail.com](mailto:alton36@gmail.com)). Nothing to report.

**Membership:** Tom Parker ([tthom2p@gmail.com](mailto:tthom2p@gmail.com)). Reported that 46 members and 6 guests attended the General Meeting. He announced that starting in September we will begin collecting dues for the coming year. Dues stand at \$20 single member, \$30 Family, \$5 Pebble pups (under 18 years of age). Membership buttons are also available.

## New Members



Susan Ray



Mike White

**Field Trips:** Helen Rogers. ([helen.rogers.clay@gmail.com](mailto:helen.rogers.clay@gmail.com)) Announced that there will be a trip on September 17<sup>th</sup> to Cullasaja River for panning. The plan is to have a stop over a Jack the Dipper Ice Cream afterwards.

**Education/Tours:** Marsha Harmon. ([harmonmarsha06@gmail.com](mailto:harmonmarsha06@gmail.com)) Reported that lots of updating has been completed at the courthouse exhibit. The exhibit is entitled "Rock Art", and there is room for 8 or 9 more specimens or pieces of art, ranging from jewelry to rock houses. If you have a piece you would like to include in this exhibit, please contact Marsha.



**Gem Show:** Chandra Fox. ([franklingemboree@gmail.com](mailto:franklingemboree@gmail.com)) She provided a big and gracious thanks to all of the volunteers who participated in the July Gem Show. She announced that we had a great turn out and fantastic representation of our club at the museum tables. Our next Gem Show will be October 21st-23rd. Our tables this show will be located in the center of the main Gym. We encourage members to volunteer once again to man our tables as well as demonstrate cabbing, faceting, jewelry making and fossil rock art.

**Programs:** Vacant. Al Pribble mentioned that we needed someone to volunteer for this position.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:** General Meeting voted for new board members. Ballots were passed out, collected and counted. The results are as follows:

- President:** Stacy Walbridge
- Vice President:** Mike Hartman
- Second Vice-president:** Larry Ellert
- Treasurer:** Kathi Walbridge
- Assistant Treasurer:** Charlotte Ellert
- Secretary:** Chandra Fox

**Two Board of Directors Positions were available and filled by:**

- Charlotte Ellert
- Brad Fleszar

**Other positions retained:**

- Museum Manager:** Larry Ellert
- Curator:** Mark Laing  
(Acting) Bushy Hartman
- Gift Shop:** Anamay Rossomando
- Workshop Manager:** Matt Castor
- Field Trips:** Helen Rogers
- Education and Tours:** Marsha Harmon or Ron Rossomando
- Publication:** Mike Hartman



**Marsha Harmon and Susan Fritz Counting Votes**

- Membership:** Tom Parker
- Scholarships:** Al Pribble
- Gem Show:** Chandra Fox
- Publicity:**
- Programs:**
- Future Vision Committee:** Ron Rossomando



Al Pribble called for a motion to Adjourn. Matt Castor seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm, followed by a presentation by Stacy Walbridge on Identifying Specimens. Please join us for our next monthly meeting on September 29th, 2022 at 6:30 pm at First Christian Church of Franklin, for the Installation of Officers dinner.

**Refreshments Provided by Kim & Sean Price**



**Thank you Kim and Sean Price for the Wonderful Refreshments!**

**Donated Tool Sales for the Gift Shop**



**Bushy Hartman & Anamay Rossomando selling donated tools**



Donated Tools

## A Tribute to Arlon Eldridge (1944-2022)

By Stacy Walbridge & Ron Rossomando



We are all saddened by the loss of a great friend and member of the Gem Society, Arlon Eldridge. Arlon passed away on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Funeral services were held on Aug 29<sup>th</sup> in Lebanon, TN, where he was interred at the Wilson County Memorial Gardens. As owner of the Cowee Mountain Ruby Mine, Arlon unselfishly supported our club in countless ways. He was an active member of the Society for

over 20 years, serving as Vice President 2016-19, President (2013-14) and Board Member (2009-11). Arlon was behind the scenes for many events of the club. For those of us who hosted we were touched by his generosity; he donated hundreds of dirt bags for resale at the gift shop and the rocks we gave to the kids; for many years, he provided the door prizes for our general meetings, and the ice cream for our ice cream socials. He was always available to help with setting up and tearing down the tables at the Gemborees. He hosted the Federation Field Trip in 2016. The Board presented him with a Lifetime Membership Award in 2016. Many of us will remember his warm smile and willingness to help whenever we needed it. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife of 48 years, Sonja, and his extended family. The family requests donations be made to the Franklin Gem and Mineral Society or the Shriners Hospital.





## Education/Tours

By Marsha Harmon

I have been busy planning and setting up our club entry for the County Fair. This year's theme is, "there is Country in the air". It is nothing fancy but it is a good reminder to our friends and neighbors that we are still here. If you go looking for our entry, it will be inside the educational section of the fair.

The work on our rotating educational cases that can be found in our Public Library, Rickman's Store and the County Courthouse are still in work. Slowly progressing towards completion. The Courthouse is still looking for more additions to our "Rock Art" exhibit, stop by and check it out! What is "Rock Art"? I believe it is whatever you think it is. Thank you to those who have chosen to participate thus far!

Each time we work outside of the walls of our Museum and encourage people to visit us, we grow. Sometimes in membership, often in donations and in our value to the Macon County community.

Questions and/or suggestions appreciated. Marsha Harmon  
harmonmarsha06@gmail.com



## Gift Shop News

by Anamay Rossomando

Cowee Festival was a big success, great sales, the geode cutting was a big hit. Thanks to Larry & Charlotte, Ron B. for being on hand to showcase his Cairns & autograph booklets, Brad & Jacey for helping out all the kids to not be afraid to cut the geodes, Ron R. for keeping the sales \$\$ organized, also for our club members for stopping by for support Ted & Joellyn, Stephanie, Bernd & his wife.

The Streets of Franklin Fall Market Day was a little damp, but nothing could dampen the spirits of our members. Larry, Ron R., Stacy, Stephanie, Ron B., Larry & Judi, Bushy & Mike, Brad & Jacey all did their shifts with a smile for all the people who braved the elements. With Susan R. & Fred P. who kept the museum open for over 100 guests. Turning the day into a success. Another Thanks to Mike & Bushy for opening up Labor Day, Bernd for donating pin point laser flashlights we had requests for in the gift shop, & Ted R. for always remembering us with jewelry & gems & minerals he donates for us to sell in the gift shop. We have such a great bunch of members who take time out of their busy schedules to volunteer & the club couldn't be here without them. See some of the photos below:



**The Streets of Franklin Fall Market Day (Rain or Shine)**



**Ron & Anamay Rossomando**



**Bushy Hartman and Ron Bischoff**



**Visiting Newtyweds with Ron Bischoff  
(Ron is the one in the background)**



**Larry & Judi Crary and Ron Bischoff**

**October Field Trips**



**DMC Field Trip Sharing Program**  
The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc



The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve  
[www.southeastfed.org](http://www.southeastfed.org)  
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**An Official Field Trip of the Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society  
(Marietta, GA) (HOST)  
Sunday, October 23, 2022  
10am to 2:30pm Eastern Time**





**Chattooga County, GA  
Summerville Crazy Lace Agate  
RSVP if you plan to attend**

**TRIP:** This is a great site for children, and adults of all skill levels.

**COLLECTING:** Crazy lace agate, banded agate, druzy quartz, colored chert, oolitic chert and dolostone. Nice pieces for making cabochons can be found at this site.



Also bring sunscreen, plenty of fluids to drink and your lunch. We will have cold waters and snacks at the site while they last. Eye protection is a must for anyone wishing to break material apart with a rock hammer or sledge hammer. Make sure you are a safe distance from other participants if using a hammer.

**IMPORTANT:** This is an active quarry, no one will be allowed anywhere close to the machinery on the premises. Further, participants are to stay away from vertical walls and are not allowed to walk on the top of the quarry. The trip leader will ask any person who violates these quarry rules to leave as any violation of these rules will jeopardize our future use of this site.

**FEE:** There is no fee.

**REGISTRATION:** There is no registration required.

**RSVP:** Please email Helen Rogers if you are attending so we can have an idea of how many waters and snacks we need to have.

**CHILDREN:** This is a good site for children as well as adults of all skill levels. Children will need to be supervised by an adult.

**PETS:** No pets.

**FACILITIES:** There are no facilities at this site. You will need to drive approximately 2.2 miles into the closest town which is Summerville.

**COVID-19:** All participants are required to wear masks at the meeting site and when asking our trip leader questions. Masks will not be required at the collecting site. All participants (except family members) are asked to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet



between each other when possible. All attendees must supply contact information and agree to send email to [ccgms.fieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:ccgms.fieldtrips@gmail.com) if they test positive for COVID-19 after the trip. All other attendees will be notified via email of any such reports.

**WEATHER:** The field trip will be cancelled if there are severe weather warnings issued for Chattooga County, GA by the National Weather Service 12 hours in advance of the meeting time. However, we will meet if there is light rain or scattered rain showers in the weather forecast.

**Contact:** Helen Rogers ([helen.rogers.clay@gmail.com](mailto:helen.rogers.clay@gmail.com)) or Sean Price ([blackpinegeology@gmail.com](mailto:blackpinegeology@gmail.com)) for more information.

## October 15th

We will have an educational trip on October 15th to Grandfather Mountain. Grandfather Mountain is about a 3-hour drive from Franklin. We will caravan from the museum in Franklin and make stops along the way for pictures. Grandfather Mountain has a wonderful museum describing the geologic processes that formed the Appalachian mountains. We will have lunch after touring the museum, and then for the bravest of us, cross the swinging bridge! Please bring your lunch and a dessert to share.

We need to have a minimum of 15 people to get the group rate, so please sign up at the general meeting. The group admission is \$22 for adults, \$20 for seniors and \$9 for children.

More information about this trip will be available at the September meeting-Mark it on your calendar.

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## Bench Tips

by Bradford Smith

### Winding Jump Rings

If you need a few jump rings the same size, it's easy to grab a round rod and wind as many as you need. But when you need a lot of them, some form of winder saves a lot of time. A variable speed screw gun makes quick work of winding the coils. Screw guns are quite inexpensive at discount stores and are remarkably handy for odd jobs in the shop and around the house.





To wind a coil, just bend a right angle on the end of the wire about a half inch long and insert this into the screw gun chuck. Then wind slowly, keeping a tight coil. I like to rest the end of the mandrel on the edge of the table or bench pin. Finally, one note of caution. If you are winding an entire length of wire, be careful as you get near the end of the wire. If the end passes under your thumb, it can cause a nasty scratch or cut.

### Rockhounding Humor



### A New Class

We've created an Introduction to Cabochon class, taught by Stacy Walbridge, to provide an overview on the workshop equipment, safety rules, and practical experience in making a cabochon. Cherie and Jon Pinner recently completed the first class and made some great looking cabochons. They enjoyed it so much that they will continue on with the next cabochon class.



Cherie & Jon Pinner





**Upcoming Shows**

**October 14-16, Huntsville, AL**

Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society

Vendors, Displays, and Demos; Kids' Activity Area Extravaganza! minerals, crystals, jewelry, lapidary supplies, rock-hunting supplies, and more! You'll also see gem, mineral, and jewelry displays, and lapidary and related arts and crafts demonstrations! Hourly drawing for Door Prizes and Raffle Prizes

Fri/Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5; \$3 per person at the door, children under 5 FREE, \$1 Students; Jaycee Community Building, 2180 Airport Road SW, Huntsville, AL



**October 15-16, Tampa, FL**

Tampa Bay Mineral & Science Club,

63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fall Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show, Florida State Fairgrounds, Tampa, FL. Gem Minerals, Jewelry, Fossils, Beads, Kids Activities, Concession, ATM Onsite

\$8 Adults, \$7 Seniors, Kids under 10 Free



**October 21-23 Franklin, NC**

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin Show and Sale; Robert C. Carpenter

Community Building, 1288 Georgia Road, Fri/Sat 10-6, Sun 10-4; \$3 adults; 12 7 under Free. Website: [www.visitfranklinnc.com](http://www.visitfranklinnc.com)



**November 18-20 Columbia, SC**

Columbia Gem & Mineral Society

54<sup>th</sup> Annual Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show; Jewelry, beads, loose stones, fossils, minerals, gold, silver, & tools for sale. Geodes sold & cut. Club member's rock collections on exhibit & lapidary demonstrations. South Carolina amethyst on display. Lots of fun for the whole family.

Jamil Temple, 206 Jamil Rd., Columbia, SC; Fri/Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5; \$5 Adults, 16 & under FREE, All military & their dependents FREE.



**February 9-12 Tucson, AZ**

Tucson Gem & Mineral Society

"SILICA - Agates and Opals and Quartz, Oh My!"

Tucson Convention Center - 260 S. Church Avenue, Tucson, AZ

\$12 Adults, Children under 14 are FREE with a paying adult.

<https://www.tgms.org/show>





**Club Announcements**

**September Board Meeting**  
(All members are welcome)  
**6:00 pm Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
First Christian Church of Franklin  
156 Belleview Park Road  
Franklin, NC

**September General Meeting**  
**6:30 pm Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**Officer Installation Dinner**  
First Christian Church of Franklin  
156 Belleview Park Road  
Franklin, NC

**Newsletter Deadline for October is 10/17/2022**

**2022 SCHEDULE (Subject to change.)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Snacks</b>
September 29, 2022	General Meeting	6:30 PM	Installation of Officers	BBQ Dinner
October 21-23 Gem Show				
October 27, 2022	General Meeting	6:30 PM	Astro-Geology: From the Big Bang to the Earth by Larry Crary	Charlene & Gary Galbrecht
November 17, 2022	General Meeting	6:30 PM	Minerals of Morocco by Sean Price	TBD



**Club Officers and Board of Directors**

President: Stacy Walbridge, (802-598-9548)  
 Past President: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)  
 Vice President: Mike Hartman (850) 868-1576  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
 Secretary: Chandra Fox (706-982-0402)  
 Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)  
 Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
 Museum Manager: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
 Director (2023): Matt Castor, (828-421-8701)  
 Director (2023): Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)  
 Director (2022): Susan Fritz, (828-524-4936)  
 Director (2022): Charlotte Ellert, (828-200-6023)

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

**Committees**

Membership: Tom Parker, (828-342-3619)  
 Museum Curator: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)  
 Assistant Curator: Bushy Hartman, (850-868-1576)  
 Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)  
 Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
 Gift Shop Assistant: Bushy Hartman, (850-868-1576)  
 Museum Workshop: Matt Castor, (828-421-8701)  
 Publicity: Kim Price (336-653-1201)  
 Field Trip Coordinator: Helen Rogers (404-784-2531)  
 Field Trip Assistant: Sean Price (336-964-2061)  
 Program Coordinator: Kim Price (336-653-1201)  
 Refreshments: Charlene Galbrecht (954-592-1377)  
 Constitution and By-Laws: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)  
 Future Vision: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
 Museum Calendar: Vacant  
 Gemborees: Chandra Fox (706-982-0402)  
 Gemborees Assistant: Sean Price (336-964-2061)  
 Scholarships: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)  
 Education/Tours: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)  
 Asst Education/Historian: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
 Web Master: Melissa Barfield (803-724-8312)  
 Newsletter Editor: Mike Hartman, [fgmseditor@gmail.com]

