

THE MOUNTAIN GEM
Volume MMXV JANUARY 2015
Number 1
Official Bulletin
Of
Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina

A schedule of our monthly meetings is on the back cover of *The Mountain Gem* as well as on the Society's webpage. Meetings are held at the Macon County Community Facilities Building, Highway 441 South, Franklin, N.C. Visitors are always welcome.

Forms for membership can be obtained by attending a meeting. Two meetings are requested before joining.

Dues are \$15 for first family member with \$10 for each additional member. Members under 18 years of age dues are \$3. Membership privileges include newsletter and attending Dixie Mineral Field Trips.

The objectives of this society shall be to effect a close association of those persons who are interested in the study of gems, rocks and minerals and the sciences and arts related to them. We are a working organization that operates and maintains the

Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum.

The Society and Museum are self-supporting on a 100% volunteer basis.

**FRANKLIN GEM
AND MINERAL MUSEUM**

is operated under the direction of the
Board of Directors of
Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, NC

School tours are always available by contacting our Education Chairman, Diane Aiello.



**Franklin Gem and Mineral
Museum**

25 Phillips Street

Franklin, NC 28734

Phone: 828-369-7831

In the Old Jail House

FREE ADMISSION

May 1 - October 31

Monday Thru Saturday 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

November 1 – April 30

Only Saturdays: 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Open Year Round For Tours

And Special Requests

www.fgmm.org

Society email:

franklingemsociety@gmail.com

Editor: themountaingem@fastmail.fm

The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina, is a founding member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

2014-2015 Officers

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President	Al Pribble	369-2548
Past President	Arlon Eldridge	369-5271
Vice President	Tom Sterrett	349-3774
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Assistant Treasurer	Norm Holbert	634-0350
Director 2016	Ray Behr	349-0827
Director 2016	Claudette Rollins	349-4834
Director (2015)	OPEN	
Director (2015)	OPEN	

Museum Managers

Museum Manager	Tommy Marsh	369-8915
Museum Ass't. Mgr.	TBA	
Curator	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Curator Ass't	Christine Hubinger	349-7360
Gift Shop.	Elena Marsh	369-8915
Ass't. Gift Shop	Anamay Rossomando	
Museum Workshop	TBA	
Ass't. Workshop Mgr.	TBA	
Calendar Chairman	TBA	

Committee Chairmen

Budget & Finance	Marie Tsacrios	369-5791
	Norm Holbert	634-0350
Door Prizes	Arlon Eldridge	369-5271
Education	Diane Aiello	371-2436
Field Trips	Marsha Harmon	369-7262
Gemboree	Jack Jungles	369-6664
Gemboree Ass't.	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Historian	TBA	
Librarian	Dean Plesner	349-4224
Membership	Claudette Rollins	349-4834
Publications	Linda Behr	349-0827
Publicity	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Programs	TBA	
Refreshments	Dean Plesner	349-4224
Scholarships	Christine Hubinger	349-7360



American Federation

Bulletin Awards

1994 (7th), 1995 (2nd),

1996 (2nd), 1997 (5th),

1998 (5th), 1999 (3rd),

2000 (5th), 2004 (7th),

2005 (2nd) 2006 (10th)

2008 (5th) 2010(3rd)



Southeast Federation

Bulletin Awards

1976, 77, 78, 79, 92, 94, 95

1996-99 (1st)

2003 2nd New Editor

2004 (2nd), 2005 (2nd)

2006 (1st), 2008 (2nd),

2010(1st)

American Federation (AFMS): www.amfed.org

Southeast Federation (SFMS): www.amfed.org/sfms

Franklin Gem Museum and Society:

www.fgmm.org

www.facebook.com/franklingems

General Meeting

Date: January 29, 2015
Day: Thursday
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: Robert C Carpenter Community Building
 Center on 441 South

Program: **Show and Tell**

Our program for January will be Show and Tell, so bring your favorite item whether specimen or work of art (lapidary art) and show it off.

Al Pribble, President

As the new President of the Society perhaps I should introduce myself.

As some in the club know and give me all the Texas Jokes they hear, I am a Texan by birth but my ancestors on both sides of my family moved to Texas from the Carolinas in the 1800s, so I just got back as soon as I could. I received a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas Tech (now University) in 1963 and worked most of my career for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft in West Palm Beach and San Antonio, Texas. I have three children spread out from Texas to Southern California to Washington State. Our daughter who lived in Macon County passed away in 2003. I have ten grandchildren two of whom graduated from Franklin High and more grandchildren than you want to know about.

Well, enough of that stuff.

2014 is now history and it was a good year for the Museum and the Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin. I know things are looking up when I go to the Museum on a Saturday evening during the Christmas Season and find 15 or 20 members in the building talking to visitors and generally enjoying each others' company. It was great!

We did have some bumps along the way, like the October meeting when only those with great perseverance were able to find parking due to Halloween-in-the-Park. But for the most part it was a good year. One of our most memorable programs was Marty Martinez's presentation on Spanish gold from the Gulf of Mexico. We added a number of new members and the hard work that Tom and Elena Marsh, and Ron and Anamay Rossomando have invested in the Gift Shop paid off with the best sales year we have had in a long time. Also, we owe Arlon and his crew a huge THANK YOU for all the funds he brought in by transporting the tables to various shows in the surrounding area and the donation of his time and expenses for that. All of this means that we can continue to give scholarships to deserving college students. My hope is that we can increase the amount we give for these.



There are many others that also deserve special thanks – Norm Holbert for his excellent work in getting the May show organized and so many good vendors signed up. Jack Jungles and Fred Plesner and all the helpers who set up the shows and manned the front table and the demonstrators who worked the show. It was a great group effort and the club received the largest income we have had from the shows in many years.

Our End-of-Year party was a success thanks to the many who brought eats and the work of Jane Morgan and the ladies who helped her organize it. I also have to give some special thanks to a non-member – my wife Rosie for getting up at 6 am to cook the 22 pound turkey. I sure couldn't have done it myself.

I want to thank all the members who signed up to work during December and January. The schedule sheet for January was filled before Christmas and February is already being filled. Only two years ago I was sweating every week whether or not there would be two people to work each Saturday.

Just to let everyone know, we have had two Board members resign with a year left on their terms. Marty Martinez resigned for personal reasons and Tom Marsh resigned when he was elected as Museum Manager. In this case the President nominates an individual to fill each term and the Board votes to accept or reject them. My call for volunteers to be considered for Board members at the December meeting may not have been heard by all and for that I apologize but I have received five names for consideration. We also need a Programs Chairperson, and a Scheduling Chairperson. If you are willing to do any of these please let me know.

As I write this in the first week of January there have been two sessions of the Silver Work class, four people who have completed their rings. I expect to have one or two more classes by the end of the month.

The Museum now has a part time person working several days each week. Claudette Rollins will be working for us, thanks to the "State of Franklin" program.

If you want to use the workshop and have been "checked out" on all the machines, call me to see if someone will be there if you do not have a partner. Just remember to put a check in the envelope by the window for the usage.

Our program for January will be Show and Tell, so bring your favorite item whether specimen or work of art (lapidary art) and show it off.

I will be sharing other items in coming issues of the newsletter, but for now that is 'nuf said.

Minutes – November 20, 2014 – General Meeting
Gem & Mineral Society Of Franklin, North Carolina

The meeting was called to order by President, Arlon Eldridge, on Thursday, November 20, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Center building meeting room.

Arlon Eldridge passed around a sheet for anyone who has not already signed up to bring food for the End of Year Party being held this Saturday, December 6, 2014, at 12 noon.

Minutes - Arlon Eldridge asked for any corrections or additions to the August minutes and there were none.

Membership: Claudette Rollins reported 34 members and 2 guests in attendance. Four new members were introduced and welcomed: Ralph Crawford, Ellen Crawford, Stephen Dillon and Sherlene Dillon. Member identification pins were presented to new members Jerry and Diane Mason and there was one for Richard Hassle; however, Richard was not in attendance this evening.

Treasurer's Report – Marie Tsacrios reported \$2000 net income for October, not including money yet to be received for the gem show, which is not yet recorded.

Museum Manager – Al Pribble stated we should have the new video cameras installed by December and that we will be buying a new monitor. Eight hours of labor is being donated and we will purchase the cameras for \$600.

Curator – Fred Plesner reported that we have had a very good year. He suggested checking out our internet reviews and then he shared a few of them with us.

Education – Diane Aiello reported a tour of 17 students from Franklin High School Earth Sciences class. Al Pribble and John Hayes are slated to be present for this tour.

Gift Shop – Elena Marsh welcomed new members and stated current members will teach new members how to host, just to let her know, and she encouraged everyone to give of their time to host at our museum. She said the January schedule is now available and explained that during the winter we need hosts on Saturdays from 12 to 4. She mentioned Winter Wonderland that will be held downtown on two nights, November 9th and December 6 from 5 until 8 p.m., during which time the museum will be open and we need extra hosts. A sign-up sheet for this is at the membership table.

Raffle – Susan Fritz reported that the original winning ticket for the raffle had been contacted on numerous occasions without a response. The second winning ticket holder was contacted for the sapphire pendant and earrings and these were shipped to James Blanton of Little River, South Carolina, who was thrilled to have won. The tourmaline donated by Emma's Place will be our raffle item for next year.

New Business

Life membership Chairman, Fred Plesner presented Jack Jungles with a Lifetime Membership certificate.

Linda Smith told the group that she will be teaching classes on how to make gem trees at Emma's Place starting most likely in January. The only stipulation will be that you will make one for yourself and make another to donate to our gift shop to be sold. She did mention that you must be a member of the Gem & Mineral Society in order to take this class. She requested that anyone interested please contact Emma's Place for further detailed information.

It was announced that the deadline for the newsletter will be January 12, 2015.

Arlon Eldridge reported that Tom Sterrett and Lon Peden contacted him to say they would be absent from our meeting tonight because they are Shriners and the Shriners' Club is providing Thanksgiving dinner to the Macon Valley Nursing Home (formerly Britthaven) residents this evening.

Cont'd to next page.

Our secretary, Susan Fritz, will send cards to any club member that would love or needs to hear from our Society. Just please let her know.

General Minutes cont'd

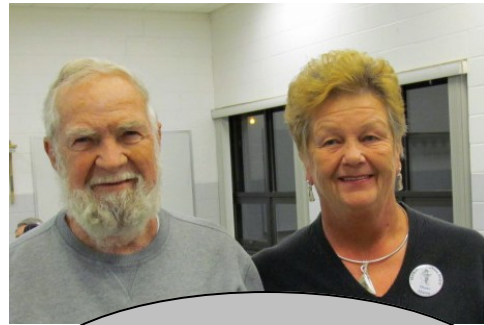
Arlon also stated that this would be his last general meeting as president.

Garrett Morgan drew tickets for door prizes.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m. followed by refreshments and a presentation by Kim Cochran on gold.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L. Fritz, Secretary



Jerry & Diane Masson

New members



Jack Jungles, latest

Life Member



Sherlene and Stephen Dillon

New members

Jack Jungles was given this Life Membership for his many years of volunteering for the Gem & Mineral Society. Jack was museum manager for several years. When he was manager, it was required for the manager to be at the museum every day-all day.

Currently he is serving on the gem shows as chairman as well as being past assistant chairman.

He also helps Linda Smith with making the name tags for our members.

February Birthdays

- 12 – Diane Mason
- 17 – Rex Larkin
- 20 – Vicki Knisley
- 22 – Tom Sterrett



February Anniversaries

- 6 – Wally & Doris Smith
- 11 – Tom & Elena Marsh
- 15 – John & Sande Lolli (Hagdorn)

Many of you will remember the great fruit bowl at the dinners and the Gemborees. These were provided by

Alex Vuillemin.

Alex passed away on November 24, 2014 at the age of 66. He will be sadly missed.

Although Alex was not a member, he would join us in many of our events. He also was a volunteer for the Franklin Chamber of Commerce.



R. J. Bob Shabilion, one of the founding members of the Gem & Lapidary Wholesale Trade Shows passed away on November 13, 2014.

We will always be grateful for his influence in having their shows in Franklin as well as other cities.



Correction

In the article from the /Mini Miners Monthly, it incorrectly states that in 1828 it states that the first gold rush in the USA was in Georgia. Actually gold was found in NC in 1799 near Charlotte. It was first made known about 1802 which started the rush. Later a US Mint was built there. You can read about it here:

<http://goldfever.uncvtv.org/history>

and here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolina_Gold_Rush

This article was published in *The Mountain Gem* Nov/Dec 2014. Thank you, Al for this correction.

Gift Shop By Elena Marsh,

Happy New Year! As 2015 begins, during the month of December, the gift shop and museum did not miss a beat and continued to amaze the many visitors during Winter Wonderland and the holiday season. We were even visited by Santa himself – don't believe, well, check out the sign in sheet – we have his autograph! More than 150 visitors came through on the two nights of Winter Wonderland and each Saturday open in December brought quite a few local folks with their families or guests that were in town. Sales during the month were very good.



Anamay and Ron were here for almost a month – lots of changes in the gift shop occurred during that time. Ron was gracious enough to host two Saturdays which was greatly appreciated. Thanks to the other members who spent time hosting during this time – what a blessing!

Anamay and I will be attending the gem show in Ashville on January 6th, hoping to find some interesting items to sell. We will be going through some of the specimens designated for gift shop sales and getting them ready to display and sell as needed. Remember, if you haven't visited the museum or gift shop lately, when you come in, you will be surprised to see what we have that is new and interesting.

Am hoping to get some gem trees to sell from classes Linda Smith will be teaching in the near future. Remember, if you take the class, one tree is yours and one tree will be donated to the gift shop. A great way to 'pay it forward' to the club. Thank you Linda for stepping up to teach our members.

Training for hosting at the museum is available for all new members and to anyone else who thinks they need a refresher course. Please contact me (phone number listed in newsletter) to set up a time or times to come down to museum. We will accommodate your availability.

Let's hope this new year is as successful as last year – with new officers, managers and committee chairs, we all need to work together, supporting the club and the museum in any way possible. Please remember to sign up for hosting. Giving a few hours of your time goes a long way to strengthen our club and keeps our museum open for any and all visitors of Franklin.

See you in the museum soon! Elena and Anamay

Gold

By Fred Plesner for *The Mountain Gem*

Gold", the mere mention of which draws immediate attention, is one of those things that we sell at the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum. I am sure that you have noticed those small bottles of "Gold" suspended in water or what appears to be water. Yes, it is water and it is pure "Gold." So, you might ask, how can we sell such a precious item at such a low price?

It is pure (24 karat) "Gold Leaf." "Gold Leaf" is pure "Gold" that is hammered so thin that it can take as many as 300,000 units (layers) to make a stack that is ! (one) inch high. A single layer of such "Gold" would be as thin as 0.0000035 (3.5 millionths of an inch thick). This may vary widely according to the manufacturer and it is sometimes called "Gold" foil. It is probably most familiar to most of us as embossed printing on leather.

If you are a mineral collector it's a cheap way to add an expensive item to your collection in a very inexpensive way. If you have "Gold" fever, go for it and have fun.

Farm Bureau N.C. September/October 2009 • Category: *On The Lighter Side*



A mechanic is removing a cylinder head from the engine of a Harley motorcycle when he spots a well-known heart surgeon waiting in the shop to have his bike looked at.

The mechanic shouts across the garage, "Hey, Doc, I gotta question for ya."

The surgeon, a bit surprised, walks over. The mechanic straightens up, wipes his hands on a rag and says, "Look, Doc, tell me if this ain't the same as surgery. I open the heart of this engine, take the valves out, fix 'em, put 'em back in, and when I finish, it runs like new again. So tell me why it is that I make a mechanic's salary while you get the big bucks...seein' as you and I are doin' basically the same work?"

The surgeon leans over and whispers to the mechanic...

"Try doing it with the engine running."

<http://dhmine.com/3.html>

Gem & Mineral Society will hold a field trip for members.

Location: Diamond Hill Mine 100 Diamond Hill Rd, Antreville, SC

January 31, 2015 (Rain Date is February 7)

Leaving from Franklin Museum 7:30 a.m. and returning by 6 p.m.

We will be hunting/digging Quartz Crystals as pictured //dhmine.com and returning to Franklin later that afternoon. The mine has very good information on line about fees, what you will need for digging, rules, directions and camping if you choose to stay overnight. There is also a "how to" video available that is very helpful.

All of the needed information will be posted on information board in museum with a sign up list, entry necessary for reservations.

POC Marsha Harmon, (828) 369-7262

Any questions can also be left with signup sheet and Marsha will get back to you ASAP.



Ojos del Salado: Highest Summit Elevation

There is one more extreme that a volcano can attain. That is the volcano with the highest summit elevation. That distinction goes to Ojos del Salado, a stratovolcano in the Andes Mountains that straddles the border between Chile and Argentina (The mountain has two summits; the higher summit is in Chile). It has an elevation of 22,615 feet (6893 meters). It is also the second-highest mountain in the Western Hemisphere, the second-highest in the Southern Hemisphere, and the highest mountain in Chile.

Volcanic Activity at Ojos del Salado

Ojos del Salado is considered to be an active volcano. The caldera contains several craters, cones and lava domes and has been the source of Holocene lava flows. About 1000 to 1500 years ago, an explosive eruption produced pyroclastic flows. The most recent activity was a minor gas and ash emission in 1993 which was reported by local people but unconfirmed by a volcanologist.

Contributor: Hobart King

<http://geology.com>

These three articles are from their website with more pictures.

Tamu Massif: The Most Massive Volcano

Most of the world's largest features are so clearly visible that they have been known and recognized for hundreds of years. One exception is Tamu Massif. It is now recognized to be a single volcano - instead of a volcano complex with multiple vents. Tamu Massif has a footprint that covers more area than any other volcano - about 120,000 square miles (310,800 square kilometers) - an area about the size of New Mexico. It also has a larger mass than any other known single volcano on Earth. How could this enormous volcano have escaped recognition until 2013?

Three things helped Tamu Massif escape recognition as the world's most massive volcano and the volcano with the largest footprint:

1) Remote Location: Tamu Massif is located in a remote part of the northwestern Pacific Ocean about 1000 miles (1609 kilometers) east of Japan. Its summit is over 6500 feet (2000 meters) below sea level. This remote location and great depth made it very difficult to collect information about the volcano. For decades, researchers knew more about the large volcanoes on Mars than they knew about Tamu Massif.

2) Not an Obvious Mountain: Most volcanoes are an obvious "mountain," but the slopes of Tamu Massif are very gentle. Just below the summit, the slope of the volcano is less than one degree. Near the base of the volcano, the slope is less than one-half degree. It is not a volcano that abruptly and steeply climbs skyward from the sea-floor.

3) Tamu Massif Fooled Scientists: They knew that Tamu Massif was a volcanic mountain; however, they assumed that it was a volcanic complex made up of multiple volcanoes that had merged together. It was not until seismic data revealed that its many lava flows emerged from a single vent and geochemical analysis revealed that the lava flows had similar compositions and were approximately the same age.

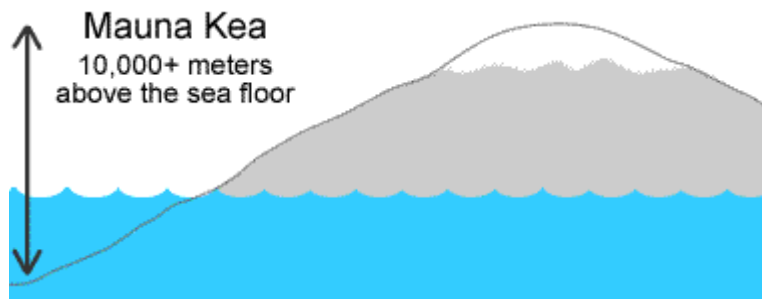
Tamu Massif is the largest volcano on Earth - unless an even larger volcano remains to be discovered on the deep ocean floor.

Ojos del Salado



Mauna Kea: The Tallest Volcano

Mauna Kea is a volcano on the island of Hawaii. The summit of Mauna Kea has an elevation of 13,796 feet (4205 meters); however, the base of the volcano is about 19,685 feet (6000 meters) below sea level.



If we measure from the base of the volcano on the ocean floor to the summit of the volcano, Mauna Kea is over 33,000 feet tall. This makes Mauna Kea taller than any other volcano on Earth. In fact, it is also the world's tallest mountain.

January Birthstone...Garnet

The following information was obtained from the GIA website: <http://www.gia.edu/garnet-description>

Thousands of years ago, red garnet necklaces adorned the necks of Egypt's pharaohs, and were entombed with their mummified corpses as prized possessions for the afterlife. In ancient Rome, signet rings with carved garnets were used to stamp the wax that secured important documents.

The term carbuncle was often used in ancient times to refer to red garnets, although it was used for almost any red stone. Carbuncle was thought to be one of the four precious stones given to King Solomon by God.

Centuries later, in Roman scholar Pliny's time (23 to 79 AD), red garnets were among the most widely traded gems. In the Middle Ages (about 475 to 1450 AD), red garnet was favored by clergy and nobility.

Red garnet's availability increased with the discovery of the famous Bohemian garnet deposits in central Europe around 1500. This source became the nucleus of a regional jewelry industry that reached its peak in the late 1800s.

Garnets are a set of closely related minerals that form a group, resulting in gemstones in almost every color. Red garnets have a long history, but modern gem buyers can pick from a rich palette of garnet colors: greens, oranges, pinkish oranges, deeply saturated purplish reds, and even some blues.

Red garnet is one of the most common and widespread of gems, found in metamorphic rocks (which are rocks altered by heat and pressure) on every continent. But not all garnets are as abundant as the red ones. A green garnet, tsavorite, also occurs in metamorphic rocks, but it's rarer because it needs unusual rock chemistries and special conditions to form.

Demantoid is a rare and famous green garnet, spessartine (also called spessartite) is an orange garnet, and rhodolite is a beautiful purple-red garnet. Garnets can even exhibit the color-change phenomenon similar to the rare gemstone alexandrite.

All garnets have essentially the same crystal structure, but they vary in chemical composition. There are more than twenty garnet categories, called species, but only five are commercially important as gems. Those five are pyrope, almandine (also called almandite), spessartine, grossular (grossularite), and andradite. A sixth, uvarovite, is a green garnet that usually occurs as crystals too small to cut. It's sometimes set as clusters in jewelry. Many garnets are chemical mixtures of two or more garnet species.



Editor's comment: One of my very favorite stones is garnet. And as the articles say, they come in many colors. Ask Susan to show you her demantoid.

122.52-Carat Blue diamond Sells for 'Disappointing' \$27.6 Million

A 122.52-carat blue diamond discovered by Petra Diamonds at its Cullinan mine in South Africa in June has been sold for \$27.6 million, which is below the figure that analysts had predicted it would fetch.

According to Petra, it itself is involved in the partnership that purchased the diamond, which includes a polishing partner that has requested to remain anonymous. The deal involves Petra receiving 85 percent, or \$23.5 million, of the agreed sale value immediately, and 15 percent of the proceeds upon the sale of the polished stone.

The blue stone, which is one of fewer than five blue diamonds weighing more than 100 carats ever discovered, is the largest blue diamond found at the South African mine by Petra since it bought the facility from De Beers in 2008. Since January, Petra has mined three large diamonds at Cullinan, two of which are blue.

"Whilst this is less than the \$35 million to \$40 million I had in my figures, given that the company does share in the upside it is not a disastrous number," Panmure Gordon analyst Alison Turner said, as quoted by Reuters. "Colored stones are particularly difficult to price given the intensity of the color can lift the value by a factor of 10 times relative to an equivalent white."

Another blue diamond mined by Petra at Cullinan is the 12-carat, cushion-cut aqua blue gem known as the "Blue Moon." It may provide clues about the earth's origin, said Jeffrey Post, curator of the National Gem and Mineral Collection at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The stone is valued at \$25.6 million.

What sets the Blue Moon apart is that, unlike other such stones, which when exposed to ultra-violet light emit off a blue-green glow for short lengths of time, Blue Moon displays an orangey-red phosphorescent glow for about 20 seconds.

Originally called the Premier mine, the Cullinan Mine became famous in 1905 when the 3,106.75-carat Cullinan Diamond, the largest rough diamond of gem quality ever found, was discovered on site by De Beers. The mine is known as the only significant source of blue diamonds in the world.

From *Gemwizard* October/November 2014 newsletter http://www.gemwizard.com/newsletters/view_article.php?id=244



**12 carat cushion-cut Blue Diamond.
Rough from which the Blue Diamond was cut.**

Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc

The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve.

DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee - Copyright © All rights reserved.

DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee

An Official Field Trip of the Western South Carolina G&MS (Greenville, SC) HOST

An Official Field Trip of the Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, NC

Saturday, February 28, 2015 9:00 am until dark Amos Cunningham Farm,

Due West, SC Abbeville County

FEE SITE

Children: 12 and under \$10 and must have adult supervision.

Pets: If controlled on a leash.

Fee: \$20 for an adult (over 12)

Collecting: Good sized beryl crystals, amethyst and smoky quartz. This site has the best South Carolina beryl specimens of any site that I know how to get access to. The crystals are well shaped hexagons with flat ends. The color is green though most have a blue cast. The beryl ranges from translucent to opaque. Most crystals are specimen quality though some gem quality is present.

Digging Conditions: The site is flat to rolling land of South Carolina red clay. The digging areas have been machine trenched down to white kaolite veins that have the beryl and quartz crystals. Dirt and rock removed from the trenches and piled up, also contain beryl and are good places to search especially after a rain. Beryl is often found by breaking open quartz rocks.

Bring: Bring picks, shovels, rock hammers, scratching tools, and screens. Large hammers will not be very useful. Also bring plenty of drinks and a picnic lunch unless you want to drive a few miles for lunch.

Contact info for Amos Cunningham: cunninghamamos@yahoo.com or

864-379-8918 or 864-992-7843

Contact numbers: 864-404-0025 Bill Wetzel Field Trip Chairman,

Western South Carolina G&MS e-mail address: wwetzel14@gmail.com

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More information will be on bulletin board.



Risks of Natural Gas

Some jewelers in the USA are tapping in to their home natural gas system to power their torch. Two students have asked me if this was safe. Because I'm not an expert in torch gas systems I called the engineering department of Smith Equipment Company and tech support at Rio Grande. Both told me it was not safe to use natural gas available in US homes.

NOTE: This applies to the USA only.
I know nothing about gas used in other countries.
70% of BenchTip members are in the USA.

The problem concerns a thing called a flashback arrestor that isolates your torch from the sources of oxygen and fuel gas. The people at both Smith (605 882-3200) and Rio (800 545-6566) explained that home natural gas comes in at too low a pressure for the flashback arrestor to function correctly. This means that a problem at the torch could propagate a fire back through the fuel hose and into your home's gas pipe system. And that can't be good.

Natural gas pressure in a US home is typically about one-quarter of one pound per square inch, very low. Flashback arrestors require at least two pounds per square inch to work properly. Special equipment is available to solve the problem, but it is extremely expensive.

So it's best to use bottled fuel gas through a regulator and flashback arrestor.

My jewelry bench is inside my home, not in a garage or separate shop building, so I'm obviously concerned that the operation is safe. My choice of fuel gas is to use propane in 14 ounce disposable cylinders. Unlike acetylene, it's clean-burning and there's not a lot of gas in the tank in case of a leak.

<https://www.facebook.com/BenchTips/posts/442777922432431>

Life

Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming, "WOW, What a Ride!"

Enjoy your life!



THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Linda Behr, Editor

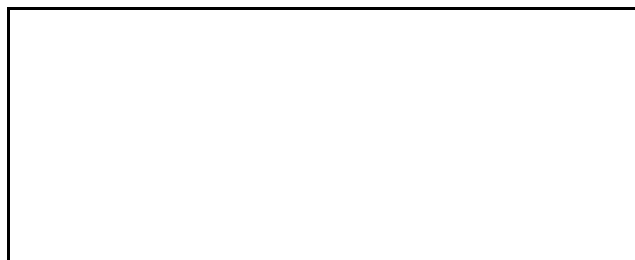
25 Phillips Street

Franklin, NC 28734



***January is your time to
shine with that special
rock, mineral or
“your” made item.***

First Class Mail



Month	Board Meeting	General
January	27	29
February	24	26
March	24	26
April	21	23
May	26	28
June	23	25
July	14	16
August	25	27
September	22	24 Banquet
October	27	29
November	17	19
December	9	12 end of Year party

Monthly General Meetings: 6:30 p.m. the last Thursday of the month in the West Large Meeting Room of the Macon County Community Facilities Building

HWY 441 S

Meeting changes will be posted in the monthly newsletter.

Board Meetings: 6:30 p.m.

At the Franklin Gem & Mineral Museum
All Board Meetings are open to the members.

If you want to submit something before the Board, contact the President prior to meeting.