



THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina

ESTABLISHED 1972

October 2021 Newsletter

WWW.FGMM.ORG

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Cover Photograph – Cabs & Slabs By Stacy Walbridge



!!!!!! NEW MEETING TIMES !!!!!!
**Beginning this month the Board and General Meeting start times are moved up
a half hour to start at 6:00pm**

SEPTEMBER 30th GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Susan Fritz, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Jane Morgan on Thursday, 09/30/21, at 6:30 p.m., at First Christian Church of Franklin.

Minutes – Jane Morgan asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the August meeting as printed in the newsletter. A motion was received, seconded, and the vote passed.

Treasurer - Kathi Walbridge provided an overview to the attendees' stating income is higher than expenses. Donations in the Donation Box have been steady.

I would like to give big **Thank You** to all the museum hosts and volunteers, our gift shop manager, and all those who donate their handmade creations to the gift shop.

Museum Manager – Larry Ellert reported that he was ready to start the replacement of the sink and cabinet in the museum. He asked that anyone having personal items in the museum workshop to please remove them. an inventory is going to be done and if it's in the workshop it will be inventoried as museum property.

Mr. Ellert also introduced Matt Caster as the new workshop manager.

Museum Curator – The Bressler collection has finally been cataloged in and we will soon be putting it on display. There will be some displays that will have to be moved around to fit the new glass case into the States room. I will be calling on some people to help me set up the display. We will have to probably start on a Monday to have it finished for when the museum opens on the weekend.



Jane Morgan Presiding Over her Last Meeting as President



Gift Shop – Anamay Rossomando reported that the gift shop has been doing good thanks to volunteers keeping the museum open. If anyone has stuff to donate to the gift shop please leave your name and phone number so I can know who to thank & ask questions to. There is a sign-up sheet in the museum for people to volunteer for Pumpkinfest Sat.10/23 9a.m.-3p.m. We need help.

We could use some wire wrapped pieces & gem trees if anyone can make some. I asked for feedback on want/need for new t-shirts. Special thanks to Stephanie Brundage, & Ted Reckwerdt for making & donating jewelry to the gift shop, Ron Bischoff & Ron Rossomando for re-purposing the shelves from the old library & making us a used book section in the gift shop

Newsletter Editor - Stacy Walbridge stated the newsletter deadline will be October 20th.

Field Trips / Education - Our field trip program is back in action with Chunky Gal Mountain and Little Pine Garnet Mine having gone well. We are looking for someone to take over Field Trips and will provide all the training and assistance needed. We are currently waiting on the Dixie Mineral Counsel to decide if they are back in business? We will continue to provide trips to all our active members with or without them. A Graves Mountain trip is available for October 1,2, and 3. Call Marsha for additional information. Corundum Hill, a private location, will be next on our list.

The Education program has had no calls due to Covid. Local schools are not sending students out of the schools. We have had one request for a family group of 12. It is much easier to take groups over 10 privately. We usually bring them in in the morning and they seem to appreciate the extra attention. Please call Ron or Marsha if someone is interested.

Membership – Tom Parker & Diane Mason provided the following report:

1. 39 Members in attendance
2. 2 Guests
3. Welcome 2 New Members to the club; Donovan McDonald & Larry Crary
4. We have begun collecting dues for the 2022 calendar year as is our policy we begin collecting on the 1st of October but our By-Laws allow us to begin in September so with the General Meeting being held on 30 September we had a head start.
5. As a friendly reminder to all FGMS Members, only those Members current on their dues payments may participate in the club Field Trips and FGMS sponsored classes.
6. FGMS Members may pay their dues with cash or personal check.

Scholarships – Al Pribble reported that there had been no requests for scholarships or for Mini Grants from any teachers. He then stated that he would be calling to get workers for the Museum since Mark would be out for a time. We need a few workers for the end



of October and for the Leaf Lookers Gem Show. For the new members that have not hosted we will set up times for training in the procedures of hosting and will always have experienced members work with the newer members.

NEW BUSINESS:



John Hayes presented the museum with an antique sign from the Crater of Diamonds Mine in Arkansas and related the story of how it came into his possession. In August of 1969, he visited the Crater of Diamonds Mine in Arkansas with the hope of finding a fortune in diamonds.

At that time, the management of the mine had a policy of acknowledging those visitors who discovered a 3 ct. or larger diamond with a sign commemorating their discovery. During his visit he noticed that many signs were being removed to make room for new ones. Not being shy, he asked the workers what they were going to do with the old signs. Their answer was that they would be destroyed. So, he asked if he could have one of them, and they gave him one.

Well, 50+ years ago, John had a burning desire to form his own gem and mineral museum and this sign would be part of his exhibit of mining memorabilia. John never started his own museum, but he was instrumental in forming our Society. You see, in 1971 John had to return to Michigan and could not be part of the founding of the Gem and Mineral society, but up to that time he was actively part of the founder's group. So fast forward to today, John donates the sign to the Museum, fulfilling a wish that it be exhibited. Our new sign commemorates Mrs. Callie Jemison of Louisiana, for finding a 3.65 ct Faubus Diamond on July 5th, 1959. To finish the story, John never discovered any diamonds, but he did take home 3 lbs. of clay with the thought of making clay pottery with the hope that the purchasers would find diamonds in the clay.



Prior to the close of the business meeting there were two special announcements. The head of the Life Membership committee, Fred Plesner, announced that there was a unanimous selection of a three new life members. Al Pribble, Jane Morgan, and Susan Fritz were called to the front of the room and after a brief recitation of all the work that they have done for the society over the years Fred Plesner was pleased to award each of them a well-deserved lifetime membership.



New Life Members (l. to r.) Jane Morgan, Susan Fritz, and Al Pribble with Fred Plesner

As President Jane Morgan was ready to close the business meeting, Diane Mason wanted to make another announcement. Diane proceeded to walk to the front of the room with a wrapped package under her arms. Diane mentioned that she and Jane had once admired a Thomas Kinkade painting and it was now her privilege and honor to present Jane with a Library Edition Thomas Kinkade print titled, "End of Perfect Day II".



A Surprised Jane Morgan

There being no further business the business meeting was adjourned by President Jane Morgan at 7:15 p.m.

Door prize winning tickets were drawn followed by installation of the new officers.



NEW CLUB OFFICERS INSTALLATION

The highlight of the evening was the installation of new officers. Special guest, Franklin Mayor Bob Scott performed the swearing in ceremonies, which was followed by a pizza dinner. Congratulations to the new officers:

President – Mark Laing

Vice President – Al Pribble

2nd Vice President and Museum Manager – Larry Ellert

Treasurer – Kathi Walbridge

Assistant Treasurer – Charlotte Frye

2-year Board of Director – Marsha Harmon

2-year Board of Director – Matt Castor

1-year Board of Director – Charlotte Frye

1-year Board of Director – Susan Fritz



(l. to r.) Mayor Bob Scott, Kathi Walbridge, Mark Laing, Marsha Harmon, Al Pribble, Susan Fritz, Larry Ellert, Charlotte Frye, Matt Castor



President's Report



Hi! As the new president of the Gem and Mineral Society I'd like to thank everyone who has helped in the last year and a half. Keeping the museum open has really been difficult this last year; meetings have had few members attending and field trips have been sporadic.

In the coming weeks we will have a new display in the museum. Dave Bressler has donated his deceased father's entire mineral collection. I have finally cataloged it into our system and we are ready to put it on display.

There are still a few positions open in our club and would really appreciate people volunteering to help. If you can fit a Saturday afternoon in at the museum, it would be a great help.

Don't forget that the Leaf Lookers mineral show is this weekend. Hope everyone gets a chance to go.

MEMBERSHIP – SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We have sent out several receipts and membership cards to folks who have joined recently and whom we have not met in person. You are encouraged to join our club and to be active with all of our programs.

Please attend our meetings and consider helping out with our ongoing projects. This does not mean that you have to do a lot. Just do a small amount occasionally. Anything and everything is always appreciated.

There are three months a year that we traditionally do not have a specified program (or speaker) at our meetings. Instead in July we have an ice cream social, in September we have the induction of new officers with a dinner, and in December we have our Christmas dinner with fun and games. These three are a short meeting with a social time. This allows us to become more acquainted with members and their favorite stones or likes.

2022 dues are due between October 1 and December 1, 2021. If you joined or paid dues before September 30, 2021, then you are now due for next year. Instead of dropping them off at the museum, why don't you bring them to a meeting? We would love to meet and see you in person. Also, if you joined using an out of town or out of state mailing address, please make sure to give us your local contact information.



We encourage you to come and be a rockhound with us.....since that is what we all are !!!.

Thank you.

Tom Parker/Diane Mason
Membership Committee

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A DIAMOND

P



During the October meeting we will hold an auction for some recently donated items from the Crater of Diamonds State Park. There will be 2 bags of Lamproite ore, a book and a DVD on Genuine Diamonds Found in Arkansas and 2 screens for finding the hidden diamonds.

WIRE RETREAT

Diane Mason

Seven students are gathering at my studio on November 8 for a week-long Wire Retreat. This will cover Prongs, Prongs, Prongs, more Prongs, and Bracelets. I am very happy to announce that 4 members of FGMS are among the students. We should have a nice display for you at the November meeting. Please come out and see their work. If you miss the meeting then you will miss it.



BENCH TIPS

Photograph and Article by Bradford Smith

NO SCRATCH VISE JAWS

If your bench vise has replaceable jaws, there is a simple modification to customize it for bending sheet metal and holding jewelry pieces without worrying about the jaws leaving scratch marks.

I make a duplicate set of jaws from high density plastic such as Nylon or Delrin. Remove the jaws and use them as a template. Cut two pieces from a 1/2 inch sheet of scrap plastic. Then clamp the steel jaw over the plastic and drill through the steel side and into the plastic. Finally, use a larger drill to countersink the plastic for the screw heads.



Plastic can be obtained from the scrap bin at a local plastics store, can be purchased online from Ebay, or can be repurposed from an old kitchen cutting board.



Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

CORUNDUM HILL MINE

By Fred Plesner, Curator Emeritus

Photographs & Maps NC-47 Corundum Hill Mine Report

If you have lived in Macon County any length of time you have probably been made aware of the Corundum Hill Mine. It had a tremendous impact on the county which is still felt to this day.

The mine is about 7 miles southeast of Franklin on the Cullasaja River, a tributary of the Little Tennessee River. Work at the mine was started by Colonel C. W. Jenks

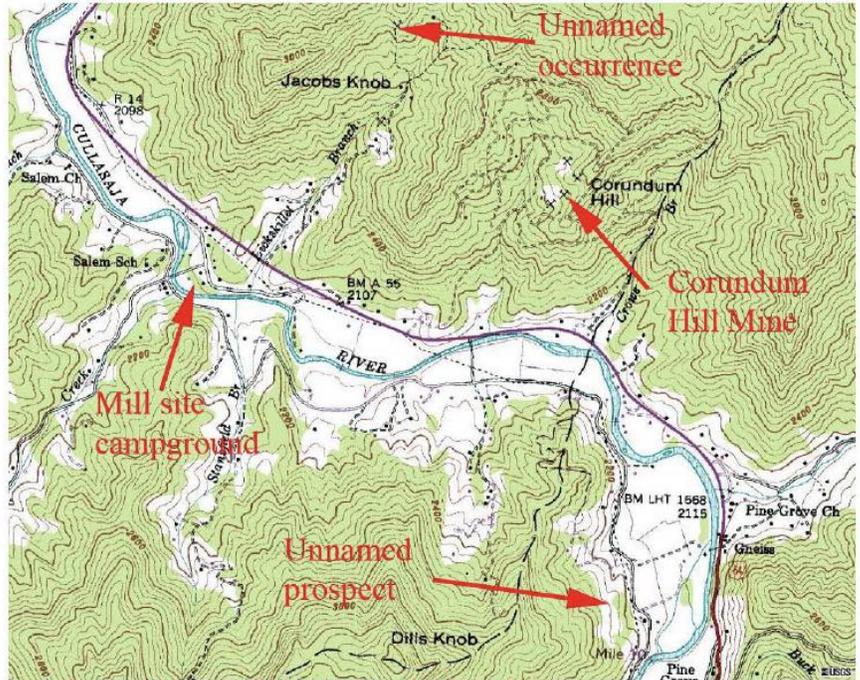


after he purchased and leased the land around the site of the original corundum find. The summit of the hill rises about 500 feet above the Cullasaja River.

The financial crises of 1873 forced the shutdown of Mr. Jenk's operation. The mine was purchased by the Hampden Emery Mine Co. of Chester, Massachusetts and reopened under the direction of Dr. S. F. Lucas.

During its commercial mining operations the mine has produced thousands of fine gems and many fine cabinet specimens. The largest crystal produced weighed 312 pounds and was 22 inches long and 18 inches wide. This massive crystal was red on the surface and graduated to a blue gray in the center. This crystal found its way to a display cabinet in Amherst College, Massachusetts. Another fine specimen was displayed at the British Museum of Natural History in London, England. This specimen was 10.24 inches long and 7.08 inches wide and of a reddish color.

Corundum Hill Mine Macon County



USGS Topographic Map: Corbin Knob 7.5' Quadrangle 7-1-87

The Corundum Hill Mine was operated primarily as an abrasive mine and produced 100 to 200 hundred tons of corundum annually. This material was carted to Dillsboro for shipment by rail. Approximately 100 tons of this material was shipped to the S. S. White Dental Company of Philadelphia and to Pusey Jones & Company of Wilmington, Delaware.

Many shafts and tunnels were dug and eventually these tunnels reached a length of about 1280 feet

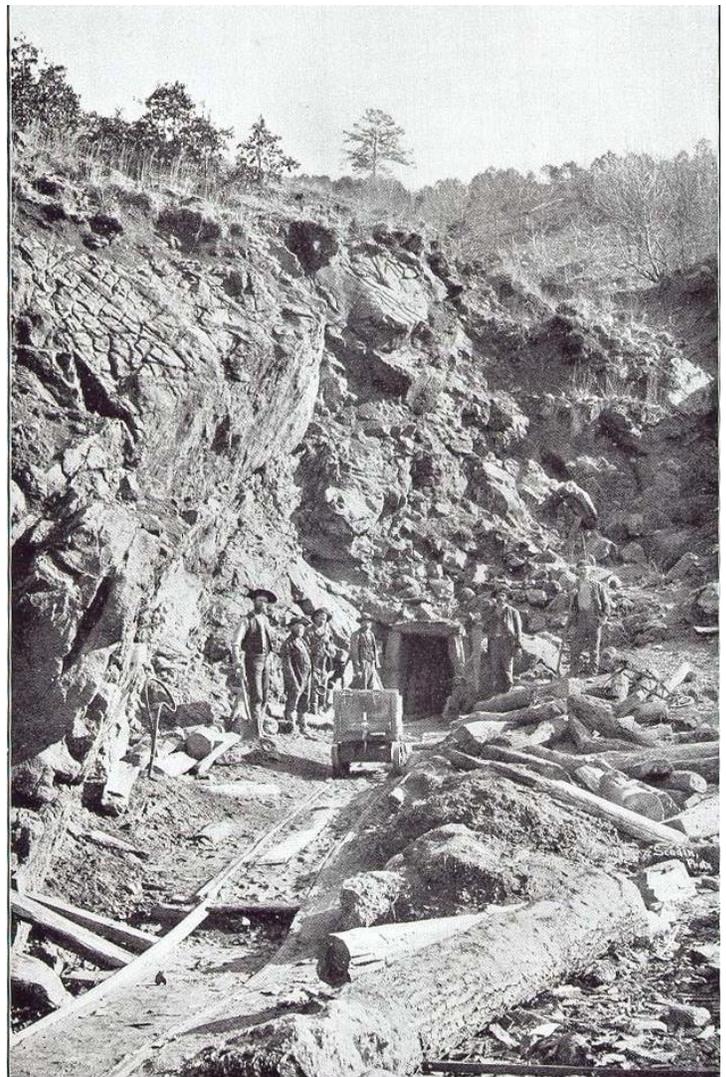


**Peridotite Formation at Corundum Hill
(Pratt & Lewis 1905)**

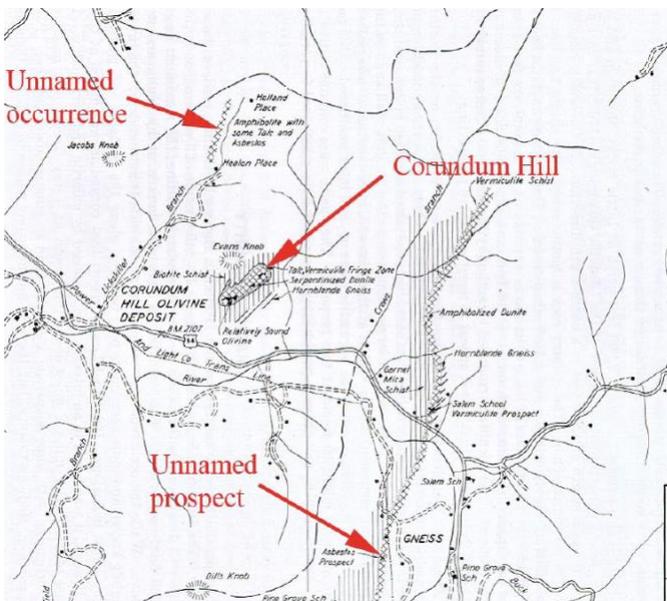
The Corundum Hill Mine eventually came under the control of the International Emery and Corundum Company of New York, who also owned the Buck Creek Mine in Clay County, North Carolina and the Laurel Creek Mine in Pine Mountain, Georgia.



View of Corundum Hill from the south



**Entrance to Tunnel on Big Vein
(Pratt & Lewis 1905)**





UPCOMING SHOWS

November 13 – 14, 2021; Melbourne, FL
 Canaveral Mineral & Gem Society Annual
 Parade of Gems Show & Sales
 JEWELRY & GEM CHRISTMAS GIFT
 SHOW
 Saturday & Sunday, From 10am - 5pm
 At the Melbourne Auditorium
 625 E Hibiscus Blvd
 Melbourne, FL 32901
<https://www.canaveral-mgs.com/our-show.html>
 \$5 door donation or \$4 with coupon on our website or FB page



Columbia Gem & Mineral Society
A Non-Profit Educational Organization

Try A Trilobite

53rd Annual 2021



Gem Mineral & Jewelry Show

Jamil Temple
 206 Jamil Rd.
 Columbia, SC 29210
 Exit 106 Off I 26

www.facebook.com/cgms

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 803-736-9317

\$1.00 Off
Coupon

Nov. 19, 10-6
Nov. 20, 10-6
Nov. 21, 12-5

Adults \$5.00
 Children 16 & Under Free
 All Military Free
 3 day pass \$10

2021 CGMS
Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show
 19-21 November 2021

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.





November 20 – 21, 2021; West Palm Beach, FL

Gem, Mineral Jewelry, Bead and Fossil Show

Gem & Mineral Society of the Palm Beaches

Sat: 9AM-6PM; Sun: 10-5PM, South Florida Fairgrounds, Expo Center East,
9067 Southern Blvd., West Palm Beach, FL 33411, FREE Parking

Adults/Seniors \$9; Children under 12 free; 2-day pass \$14; see website for \$1 off coupon

<http://www.gmspb.org>

December 10-12—LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA:

Annual show; Bellpoint; Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, 2405 Sugarloaf Pkwy., Enter on Davis Rd; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$5, free admission for children under 15 when accompanied by a paying adult. Select dealers from near and far selling exquisite minerals, gems, jewelry, beads, rocks, healing stones, geodes, fossils, crystals; contact Damian; Email: mbellpoint@gmail.com;

January 14-16—LARGO, FLORIDA:

Annual show; Pinellas Geological Society ; Central Park Performing Arts Center , 105 Central Park Drive; Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5; Adults \$2, ages 12 and up; contact Leona Feldhausen , 2655 Nebraska Avenue #247, Palm Harbor , FL 34684, (727) 709-3236; Email: Sheffieldleona@gmail.com

February 10-13 TUCSON, ARIZONA

The Year of Fluorescent Minerals. The Fluorescent Mineral Society (FMS) celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. In recognition of this milestone, the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society has invited the FMS to feature fluorescent minerals at its fluorescent themed 2022 Show and will be providing space for the FMS to organize a world-class exhibit of fluorescent minerals. The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show® is the main event for the more than 40 individual rock/gem/mineral shows that come to life every February in Tucson, AZ. Visit <https://tucsongemshow101.com/schedule-2022> for more information.

February 18-20—LIVE OAK, FLORIDA:

Annual Federation Rockhound Roundup; Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies ; Suwannee River Music Park, 3076 95th Drive; Fri. 10-5, Sat. 9-4, Sun. 9-4; Free; SFMS Member vendors from seven States: FL, GA, TN, MS, NC, SC, AL. Rough rock, slabs, jewelry, cabs, minerals, fossils and more!; contact Jerri Heer, 9016 122nd Ave, Tampa, FL 33637, (419) 344-9999; Email: jheerx6@aol.com;



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leaf Lookers Gemboree

October 22, 23, and 24

10 to 6 Friday & Saturday, 10 to 4 Sunday

Macon County Community Building
1288 Georgia Road
Franklin, NC

October Board Meeting

6:00 pm Tuesday, October 26, 2021

First Christian Church of Franklin
156 Belleview Park Road
Franklin, NC

October General Meeting

6:00 pm Thursday, October 28, 2021

First Christian Church of Franklin
156 Belleview Park Road
Franklin, NC

Streets of Franklin Halloween Candy Give Away

Saturday, October 30, 2021

3:00 to 4:00 pm non-sugar treats, 4:00 to 6:00 pm treats of all kinds

Main Street
Franklin, NC



Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina
Established 1972

Club Officers and Board of Directors

President: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)
 Past President: Jane Morgan, (828-342-8703)
 Vice President: Al Pribble, (828-342-3119)
 2nd Vice President: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)
 Secretary: Vacant
 Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)
 Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Frye, (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 Frye, (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 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: Matt Castor, (828-421-8701)
 Publicity: George Fritz, (828-524-4936)
 Field Trip Coordinator: Vacant
 Program Coordinator: Vacant
 Museum Calendar: Vacant
 Gembores: Vacant
 Education/Tours: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)
 Asst Education/Historian: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Web Master: Melissa Barfield (803-724-8312)
 Newsletter Editor: Stacy Walbridge, [fgmseditor@gmail.com]



**November Newsletter Deadline is
Wednesday, November 10, 2021**

