



THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina

January 2020 Newsletter



Franklin Gem and Mineral Society

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, (828-349-9615)
 Museum Manager: Duane Haskell, (828-349-5123)
 Director (2020): Larry Ellert, (828-349-0774)
 Director (2020): Tom Parker, (828-342-3619)
 Director (2019): Diane Mason, (706-379-1718)
 Director (2019): Tom Sterrett, (828-349-3774)

Committees

Membership: Tom Parker and Diane Mason
 Museum Curator: Larry Ellert, (828-349-0774)
 Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)
 Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807), Vicki Knisley (828-371-4954), & Diane Mason
 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: Norm Holbert (825-421-7776)
 Education/Tours: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)
 Asst Education/Tours: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Web Master: Melissa Barfield (803-724-8312)
 Newsletter Editor: Stacy Walbridge [fgmseditor@gmail.com]

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



The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina, is a 501 (c)(3) organization and donations may be tax deductible. Please remember us when planning your estate.

Franklin Gem and Mineral Society

Minutes: December 14, 2019

Susan Fritz

Photographs by George Fritz

As President Jane Morgan was busy assisting in taking care of our refreshments, Al Pribble called the meeting to order on Saturday, December 13, 2019 at 12:50 p.m., at First Christian Church.

Today is our end of year holiday party; therefore the business meeting was very brief.

Al Pribble noted that we need people to provide refreshments in the coming year.

He also noted that we need a Calendar chairperson or persons (scheduling hosts at the museum). Jay Mooney has agreed to continue doing this until May but he will need time to train someone. It was suggested that a committee be formed.

Al Pribble brought up having all of our meetings at First Christian Church. Tom Parker mentioned that there is no water at the community building in terms of serving refreshments and often times the room is not even set up for us. There is a full kitchen available at the church. Tom Sterrett mentioned that we can store our refreshment containers at First Christian Church instead of having to transport them each month. He also mentioned that audio/visual equipment is available here at the church. Al Pribble stated that there was no charge for use of the church facilities; however, discussion ensued about making regular donations, which everyone seemed to be in agreement that we should make.

Stacy Walbridge then made a motion that our General meetings be moved to First Christian Church. The motion was brought to a vote and unanimously passed.

Stacy Walbridge stated that the deadline for the newsletter is January 17, 2020.

Tom Parker made a motion for adjournment. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Club Website: <http://www.fgmm.org>

Club Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/franklingems>

Club Newsletter: fgmseditor@gmail.com,

Club Contact E-mail: franklingemsociety@gmail.com

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



A prayer was given by Dean Plesner. Thanks to all who brought food! Following dinner, the membership enjoyed an afternoon of rock bingo.

Christmas Party Pictures

Photographs by George Fritz



Al Pribble called the meeting to order



Rock Bingo Prize Table



Donated Centerpieces



Preparing the food.



Patiently waiting to begin the festivities

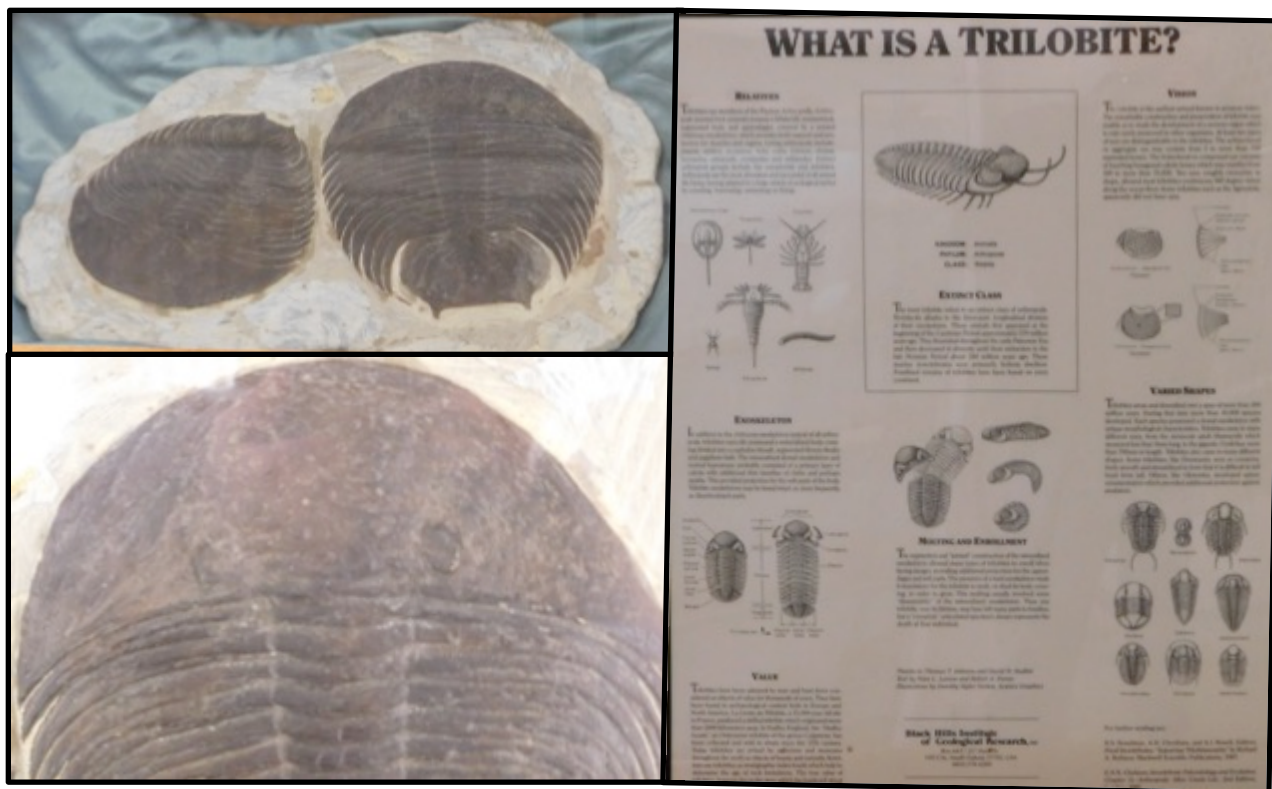
The Mountain Gem

January 2020



MUSEUM NOTES

At the end of last year a unique donation was made to the museum of a large pair of Trilobites. Kirt Armantrout was very generous in donating this unique specimen. Larry Ellert made a show case for the pair and placed them in a prominent location upstairs in the fossil room in the museum. Trilobites roamed the seas for about 300 million years and disappeared 252 million years ago during the Permian–Triassic extinction event. With the prominent eyes and body shape they appear to be Xandarellidae but unfortunately, the location where they were found and their exact species are unknown. Any Trilobite experts, or non-experts, that can identify them should contact Larry at the museum.



Photograph by Stacy Walbridge

FIELD TRIPS

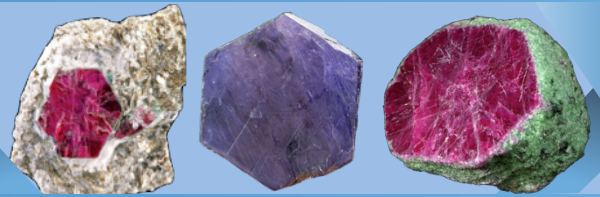
Marsha Harmon

Upcoming Trips: There is not a lot going on this time of year but there is a medium-length destination trip to Brookwood, AL on February 29. This is a DMC trip and you need to RSVP if you plan to attend and there is a limit of 75 people. I have been to this location and I found a variety of agate, jasper, petrified wood, oolite, Indian paint pots and smooth quartz pebbles. If you are interested contact Marsha or look on the board in the back of the museum. This is a great location with a 2–5 gallon limit at no cost.

Due to construction at the Brookwood Quarry site by an agency that has rented the property, we will not be allowed access to the property on the planned date of the DMC field trip – so it is cancelled. The Alabama Mineral and Lapidary Society is searching for an alternate location.

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



NOTES FROM THE CLASSROOM

Diane Mason

Photographs by Stacy Walbridge

A Brief History of The Gem and Mineral Museum of Franklin, N.C.*

Ron Rossomando, Historian, June, 2015

The Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum was born on June 2, 1973 when the Macon County Board of Commissioners granted The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin permission to use the abandoned old Macon County Jail building, in which to establish the Museum, which would be open FREE to the citizens of this community and the general Public. We are most fortunate to have copies of all editions of the Mountain Gem from 1973 as well as photos of events and activities of the Society since 1973.

We need to continue on with this long-time tradition of adding to our Photo-gallery pictures of member, events and activities. So, if any of you have any pictures and/or newspaper or magazine articles about the Society or the Old Jail, and you would like to donate them, or a copy, please bring them to the Museum. There is a HISTORIAN folder in the Library slot in the meeting room. I would ask that you identify your items with the name, date and description of the event. Much has been accomplished in the past 47 years and with everyone working together just think of what can be accomplished in the future.

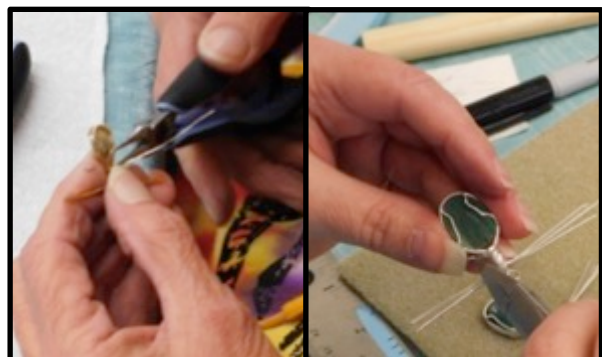
*Excerpts from:
The Mountain Gem, April, 1976, Helen Coe, "A Brief History...."
Shirley Baughman, Historian, Feb.24, 2000, (28th Anniversary). "Summary of the Beginning...."

Wire Wrapping Class: There will be a Spring 2020 Beginning WIRE I class starting on March 6, 2020. Seven spots are available. The sign up sheet and all required information is on the bulletin board at the Museum. If you are interested, please make a copy of this information, order your wire, and contact the instructor (Diane Mason) when you have your wire in hand. The first (7) seven to complete this will make up the class.

Make It Day: On January 17th several members joined Diane Mason to make earrings for the gift shop. The stones and wire were provided by the club and the members provided their time. Thanks to Diane Mason, Melissa Barfield, Barbara Rizzo, Kathi and Stacy Walbridge.



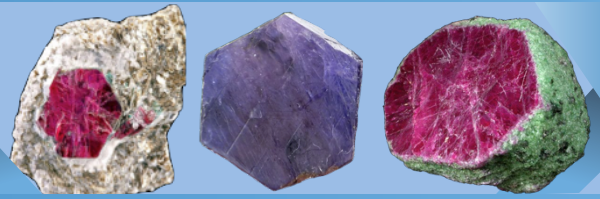
Melissa Barfield (l) and Diane Mason (r)



Melissa and Diane working on the details

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



Mark Your Calendars

There will be another Make It Day on Valentine's Day, February 14th to wrap earrings for the Gift Shop. Wire and stones will be provided. Just bring your tools and your enthusiasm.

Cabochon Class

On 16 and 17 January Jerry Mason conducted a cabochon class with students Jenny and Jay Mooney making several unique cabochons. Their work will be on display at the next meeting.



JEWELRY BENCH TIPS

EMERY BOARDS

The sanding boards for doing your nails are one of my favorite finishing tools. I use the ones with a thin foam core. They have enough resistance to sand just the high points off a flat surface and yet give a little when you're trying to smooth off a curved surface. Plus they're inexpensive and come in a variety of grits. Some grits are so fine they give an almost finished surface. Pick up a few at a beauty supply company or at your local drug store.



Work Smarter With Brad's "How To" Jewelry Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



MOTHERS DAY GEMBOREE

May 8,9,&10, 2020

Our annual stand alone club show may be several months away, but planning is already in the works. As usual, help will be needed to set up, man the club show tables, put out road signs, tear down and of course other things that I can't think of right now.

Again this year, club members are being offered a single table at a discount rate (6ft. table for \$60.00 – normally \$75.00). That one table may be shared with one other club member if you want. If you want more than one table, then you will have to be a regular vendor. Most of us have gem and jewelry materials at home that you acquired or made that could bring you some money so you can buy more “stuff.” All members that took us up on this offer last year made a profit. Consider being a “member vendor” at our show. Regular contract for vendors and contracts for member vendors are posted on the bulletin board at the museum (make a copy and replace the originals). If you aren't able to get one at the museum, then you can email me (normh929@gmail.com) and I'll send you a contract.

If that offer doesn't appeal to you, but you have more lapidary stuff than you need, you might want to donate items to our silent auction. Ron Bischoff has volunteered to head up the silent auction this year. You can contact him at 828 534-2761.

Looking forward to seeing many members at our May show.

Norm Holbert
828 634-0350-home
828 421-7776-cell

EDUCATION/TOURS

Marsha Harmon

We have had a request by Franklin Middle School for a small tour with additional focus on Fossils. The particulars are in work at this time but probably it will happen the 1st week in February. I am in need of Fossil folks (old or young) or those willing to do a little brushing up in this area.

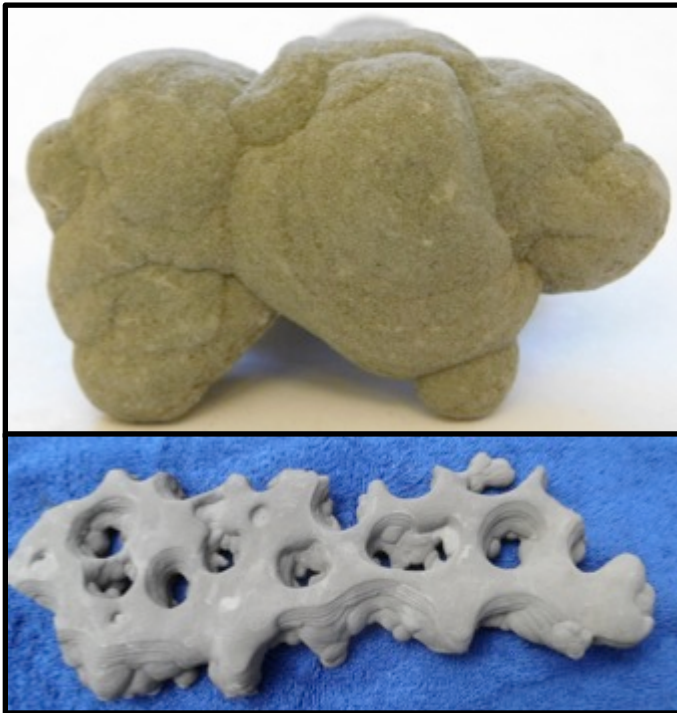
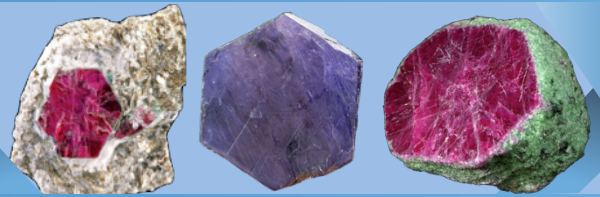
Concretion, Nodule, Thunder Egg or Geode?

Stacy Walbridge

One of the first collecting trips Kathi and I went on in Vermont was to an old gravel pit in Sharon, VT. We were looking for concretions. I was unfamiliar with the term concretions and wasn't sure what they looked like but was confident that we could distinguish them from a gravel pit. When we arrived at the site we were taken aback at the steep slope. We were supposed to climb up the slope while looking for odd shaped hard objects. After about a half hour looking at sand and clay I started to see slight differences in the texture of the slope and before long we were digging out our first concretions. When

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



Sharon, VT Concretions
Photographs by S. Walbridge (top)
Sylvia Dodge (bottom)

we got home I did a little research on concretions and found that concretions came in all shapes and sizes and were found all over the world. From pea to softball sized Moqui marbles in Utah to massive sized boulders in Kazakhstan. In fact, concretions were discovered on Mars in 2004. Called Martian blueberries, they are actually gray in color and pellet sized.

Since then I've tried to get a better handle on how concretions are formed and have found a wide array of explanations that smudge the differences between geodes, nodules, thunder eggs, and concretions. The widely accepted origin of a concretion is when native material forms around a small object, and through sedimentary compression is cemented into a shape that is harder than the surrounding material. Over time erosion eats away at the weaker native material leaving the concretion. Concretions can be created by concentric growth or random growth. As successive layers of mineral precipitate around the central object the result is a roughly spherical

shape whereas when voids exist in sediment, mineral precipitation can fill the void, which in time becomes a concretion. The odd shaped concretions that Kathi and I found in Sharon, VT are typical of the random formation.



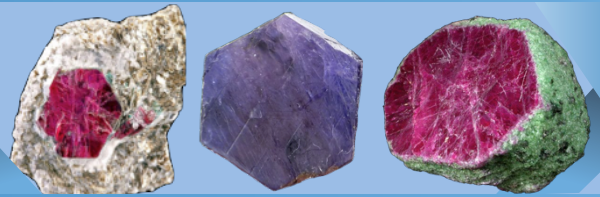
Moqui Marbles
Photograph by S. Walbridge

About 180 to 190 million years ago a huge sand dune field covered parts of Utah, Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, and New Mexico. The grains of sand were coated with a thin layer of iron oxide giving the sand its red color. Over time,

compression turned much of the sand into sandstone and slightly acidic water (carbonic acid from CO₂ and rain) precipitated the iron. The iron surrounded and cemented the sand grains and in time built up concentric layers of iron surrounding compacted sand. As erosion of the sandstone occurred these balls of sand surrounded by iron were revealed and are called Moqui marbles. An alternative formation theory has been proposed where microbes transformed the outer layer of the Moqui Marble from one mineral into another as the groundwater changed.

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



The word Moqui comes from the Hopi Tribe, who were previously known as Moqui Indians. There is an internet legend that the Hopi ancestors' spirits return to Earth in the evenings to play marble games with these iron balls, and that in the mornings the spirits leave the marbles behind to reassure their relatives that they are happy and content.

So back to the differences between geodes, nodules, concretions, and thunder eggs. I did read a tongue in cheek explanation where a nodule could actually be a geode, a concretion, or even a thunder egg, but not all geodes can be thunder eggs or nodules. Thunder eggs can be geodes or concretions, but not nodules, and nodules can be geodes but not thunder eggs. One definition states that geodes are hollow, while nodules are solid. So is a solid geode appropriately called a nodule? One definition says that a solid geode is a thunder egg. And then you have Septarian



Moqui Marbles

<https://geology.utah.gov/map-pub/survey-notes/glad-you-asked/moqui-marbles/>

Nodules that can be hollow or have a solid core. They are considered concretions due to the way they are formed however it appears that the outside hardened before the interior indicating that they are more like geodes. Some are solid and some are hollow. So then should a hollow Septarian Nodule be called a Septarian Geode and a solid one a thunder egg?



Septarian Nodule, Geode, Concretion, or Thunder Egg?

Photograph by S. Walbridge

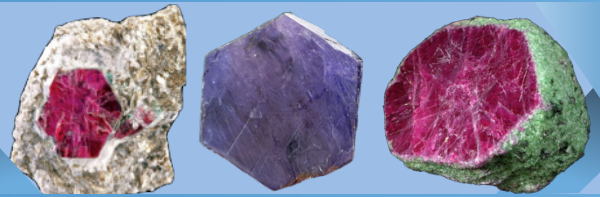
In any case, all of them; concretions, geodes, nodules, and thunder eggs are indications that the earth holds many wonderful and amazing treasures that will keep up guessing for many years.

References:

GLAD YOU ASKED: WHAT ARE MOQUI MARBLES? By Christine Wilkerson
Utah Geological Survey, <https://geology.utah.gov/map-pub/survey-notes/glad-you-asked/moqui-marbles/>
<http://forum.rocktumblinghobby.com/thread/28887#ixzz6Ada7tUOe>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concretion#Kansas_Pop_rocks
<https://sciencing.com/tell-difference-between-geode-nodule-7634451.html>
<https://steemit.com/geology/@roswellrockman/geode-vs-thunder-egg>

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



2019 Meeting/Event Schedule

January 30th – Mineral Collecting in Western North Carolina (DVD)

February 27th – Club Anniversary Night & Larry Ellert, Curator, talking about the Museum

March 26th - Collecting in the Sonoran Desert - Stacy Walbridge

April 30th - Regular Meeting

May 8th to 10th - Mother's Day Gemboree

May 28th – Opals – Tom Parker

June 25th – Brazil Minerals – Arlon Eldridge

July 24th to 26th - Faceters Frolic

July 30th – Show & Tell / Ice Cream Social

August 27th - Elections & talk by Kim Cochran

September 24th - Installation Banquet

October 17th - PumpkinFest

October 29th - Regular Meeting

November 19th - Regular Meeting

November 28th - Winter Wonderland

December 5th - Winter Wonderland

December 19th - End of Year Banquet

**February Newsletter Deadline is
Friday, February 14, 2019**

UPCOMING SHOWS

1-2 February 2020: Merrit Island, FL

Central Brevard Rock and Gem Club

Show Hours: Saturday 10am - 5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm

Kiwanis Recreation Center

951 Kiwanis Island Park Road

Vendors, cabbing demonstrations, displays, and activities for children

Admission: \$5 adults, free for children under 12 accompanied by an adult

www.centralbrevardgems.org

22 February: Lakeland, FL

Bone Valley Gem, Mineral & Fossil Society

First Presbyterian Church of Lakeland

175 Lake Hollingsworth Dr.

Show Hours: Saturday 9am - 4:30pm

Hourly Door Prizes, Spin & Win Mineral Wheel,

Kids Treasure Dig, Demonstrations, Educational

Displays, Silent and Chinese Auctions

Admission: \$5 adults

22-23 February 2020: Jackson, MS

Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Club

1200 Mississippi Street (Fairgrounds)

Show Hours: Saturday 9am - 6pm, Sunday 10am-5pm,

25 dealers offering gems, fossils, minerals, jewelry, lapidary, tools, beads, with demos, exhibits, and activities for children

Admission: \$6 adults, \$3 students, children under 5 free with adult

13-15 March: Augusta, GA

Augusta Gem and Mineral Society

Aiken Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Society

Julian Smith Casino

2200 Broad Street

Show Hours: Friday & Saturday 10 am - 6pm,

Sunday 11pm-5pm

Member display cases, demonstrations, dealers selling geodes, silver, jewelry, gemstones, cabochons, minerals, fossils, and activities for children.

Admission: \$5 or \$6 for 3 day pass, children 12 and under free with adult

The Mountain Gem

January 2020



The Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 6:30 PM on January 30th
at the First Christian Church, 156 Belleview Park Rd, Franklin, NC 28734.

Collecting in Western North Carolina DVD

FGMS Board meets the Tuesday before the regular meeting at 4:00 pm at the Museum

Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum

25 Phillips Street, Franklin, NC 28734

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Phone: 828-369-7831
In the Old Jail House
FREE ADMISSION
May 1 – October 31
Monday Thru Saturday: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
November 1 – April 30
Saturdays: 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Open Year Round For Tours
And Special Requests