

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club
December 2007

The President Sez ...

All I want for Christmas is some rain. A LOT of it. Forget the white stuff! We need some water falling for days.

That being said, now on to the business at hand for the Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club. Our year draws to an end and is a time for rejoicing for our blessings and the fellowship that we have shared in our hobby and crafts.

Our clubhouse is near completion, but was delayed for over a week when Tom got hurt and had to lay back on the physical exertion. Our other elves and helpers have had other obligations at this time of year. Hopefully, we will begin our new year with our new clubhouse up and running shortly after that.

We will have a new Genie and New Pixie waiting to cut beautiful cabochons. We have been fortunate to have shop lights donated by Wayne Abercrombie, and the drainage system will be donated by Murray and Linda Simon. A local restaurant owner is donating stackable chairs, lockers and tables!

After the first of the year, our most competent and talented newsletter editor is heading out for an extend-

ed trip to Quartzite, Tucson and far off places on the west coast. If anyone would like to step up to do the newsletter while Ron is away, your club would appreciate it. We need help with the February issue.

It is my wish that you all have a blessed holiday season and a new year that is fulfilled with happiness, good health and prosperity. Of course, I wish that you have some good rock, gems and minerals and all of our related crafts times with family and friends.

Your board is working hard on an action plan that will bring our club to new horizons in the coming year. I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president and I look forward to hearing from you all on how we can grow our club and how we can improve our club.

Jack King, President

Jan Board Meeting - 2008

The January board meeting will be held in the new club house at 7:00 pm. It will be held on the second Tuesday of the month, Jan. 8th.
(map follows)

Club House *(above Cameraworld)*
1809 Commonwealth Ave,
Charlotte, NC
(704) 375-8453



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2008 CGMC Officers & Board

President

Jack King
tackyjackie@bellsouth.net

Vice President

Murray Simon
drsimon@mindspring.com

Secretary

Pat Walker
704/523-5261

Treasurer

Gale Blevins
Blevins.family@mindspring.com

Directors at Large

Mario Caceres
mariojessicajulia@yahoo.com

Tom Shope
tomshope@yahoo.com

Bulletin Editor

Ron Gibbs
theimage1@aol.com

Past President

Jimmy Strickland
704/537-6010

CLUB CHAIRPERSONS

SFMS Contact

Ken Anderson
27K.DA66@RJSONLINE.NET

Stamp Chair

Pat Walker

Points Scholarship Chair

Linda Simon

Geode Chair

Jimmy Strickland

Show Chair open

Hospitality Chair

Linda Simon

lsimon1@carolina.rr.com

Refreshments Chair open

Workshop Chair open

WebMaster

Ron Gibbs

Librarian

Pat Walker

Membership

Linda Simon

Christmas Party Chair

Pat Walker

November Meeting & Club Auction - most everyone left with something!

Our November meeting was our annual auction to raise some funds for the Club. Lots of materials were donated and available, and some spirited bidding ensued. Most everyone managed to take home a few things with a few taking home many things. Besides the normal supply of slabs, mineral samples, jewelry, gemstones, petrified wood (a very popular item) and general rock paraphernalia there was also some stained glass, camping gear, books, and even a fine gnome. More than \$600 was raised for the club.

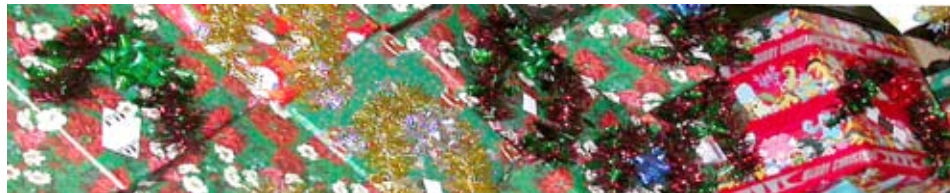
Point sheets were turned in for the year and in December there will be a drawing to see who gets the scholarships to attend the SFMS Wildacres Workshops or William Holland School. See next page for the 2008 schedule of classes. Each year club members have the opportunity to gain points for helping out with club activities.

Points can be earned for just showing up at meetings, and for helping with shows or demonstrations, for taking on a committee chair or officers job, leading a field trip or just showing up for one, presenting a topic at a club meetings, providing refreshments for a meeting, writing for this very newsletter, and we can award more for things you haven't even thought up yet.

To collect on this booty all you need to do is summarize the points once a year to be automatically entered into a drawing for a free class at one of the above schools. So what's holding you up?

A slate of new officers was voted in and they are listed in the column to the left. They officially take office in January of 2008. Thanks go to Kim Tyler who kept the crew in food and drink, helping to keep the cash flowing at the auction.

Everyone is looking forward to our annual Christmas party in December and the end of another successful year. In January we will begin to work toward the opening and out-fitting of our new Club workshop (a.k.a. "the clubhouse"). Think about the classes that you might like to see and let us know if you would like to teach one ... or two... or three!



SFMS Wildacres & William Holland Schedule for 2008

Julia Larson, SFMS Education Chair (Article forwarded by Ken Anderson)

One of the unique facets of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies is the Workshop Program, which offers members the opportunity to gather for week-long, hands-on seminars taught by experienced instructors. Whether you are a newcomer to the lapidary arts and want to learn the basics, or whether you're an old hand who wants to learn something new or move on to the next level, the Workshop Program has something for you. We look forward to seeing you in 2008.

Session One - William Holland - June 8-14, 2008		Session Two - Wildacres - June 18-24, 2008	
Class	Instructor	Class	Instructor
Beading, traditional	jCase Leeser	Cabochons	Betty James
Cabochons, beginning	Jerry Mason	Facet/intarsia, beg	David Lonser
Chainmaking, beg.	TBA	Chainmaking, beginning	Roy Deere
Enameling	Rene Wright	Gem Ident/Appreciation	Ben Smith
Glass fusing	Julia Larson	Metalsmithing, Advanced*	Jeff Sheer
Lampwork, beginning	Cindy Reed	Jewelry Photography	Ken Kipnis
Opal cutting	Sara Lee Boyce	PMC 1	Ken, Mary Ann Devos
Scrimshaw techniques	Gino Deskins/Betty Porter	Raku Pottery	Jim Cullen
Silver, beginning #1	Dan Haga	Seed Bead Techniques	Vivian Heath
Silver, beginning #2	Allen Jewell	Silver, beginning	Nancy English
Wire sculpture*	Diane Mason	Wire, beginning	Rowan Rose
Session Three - Wildacres, September 15-21, 2008		Session Four - William Holland - October 12-18, 2008	
Class	Instructor	Class	Instructor
Cold Connection	Kim St Jean	Cabochons	Anita Westlake
Enameling	TBA	Chainmaking	Bill & Dee Conybear
Chainmaking, advanced*	Roy Deere	Cold Connection	Kathy Morris
Facet/Intarsia, beg	Tom Wilkie	Faceting Two	David Corn
Casting Finishing	Gino Deskins	Fused Glass	Addy DiPietro
Opal Cutting	Sara Lee Boyce	Gourd Carving	Pat Davis
PMC 2	Ken, Mary Ann Devos	Opal cutting	Joe DiPietro
Seed bead tech.	Roz Evans	Lost Wax Casting	John Iacullo
Silver, beginning	Zane Purcell	Jewelry Photography	Ken Kipnis
Stained glass, beginning	Julia Larson	PMC	Pam Hall
Wire Weaving*	Louise Coulson	Scrimshaw	Gino Deskins/Betty Porter
		Seed Beading	Vivian Heath
		Silver, beginning #1	Dan Haga
		Silver, beginning #2	Don & Ann Monroe
		Silver, intermediate*	Allen Jewell
		Beginning Wire	Janet Corn

(classes with an asterisk (*) may have prerequisites)

Often classes fill relatively quickly so be certain to register as soon as possible. Check on the SFMS WEB page for the necessary applications and all other necessary information ...

<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/wildacres-retreat.html>

Please Note!

Applications will be accepted beginning February 1st, 2008 - not before!

Agates - some classification Part II

by ron gibbs (personal WEB site: www.theimage.com)

Last month we talked about fortification agates and moss agates, and this month we'll explore plume agates, and dendritic agates.

Another well known agate variety is the "plume" agate. The characteristic feature of this agate is basically another organic like growth that may appear as a tree, plant or feather duster floating in transparent to translucent chalcedony.

Again it is likely that the plumes (mostly mixed metal oxides and hydroxides) are formed after partial solidification or gelling of the silica media. Under basic (as opposed to acidic) conditions many metal salts will produce flocculent oxy-hydroxy precipitates. If these are produced in a gel with limited migration, they might appear to be

trapped as plumes or flow structures.

Although plumes are found in nodular agates they are often found in seam or vein agates too. Many times the plumes seem to be anchored to the edges of the vein or originate at the point of contact between the agate vein and the host material. There are several possible causes for this, including that the sides may offer a point of nucleation for crystal growth, or may provide the point(s) at which seepage of a basic solution intrudes in to the forming agate.

Thundereggs are another great source for plumes. Thundereggs are likely created in high-silica rhyolitic welded tuffs, where gas bubbles are frozen in time, and

then filled in by silica solutions. Like most plumes, the brownish varieties are usually some form of Fe (oxy-hydroxide) (goethite, limonite, etc.), and the black varieties consist of mixtures of Mn (oxy-hydroxides) (romanechite, vernadite, etc.)

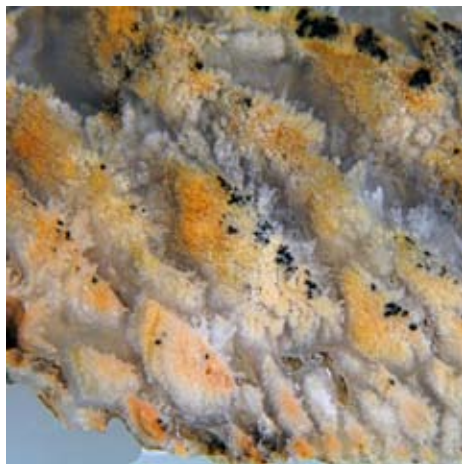
White plumes appear to contain no metal(s) and are likely different phases of silica (likely hydrated) in the chalcedony. (varieties of opal.)

Similar to plume agate is dendritic agate where the encapsulated material looks like feathers of ferns. Dendrites are often found in conjunction with other types of agate. In the Sheep Creek Plume agate photo below there are black dendrites mixed with the orange-brown plumes.

These colored elements are usually made up of manganese or iron



Prudentman Plume Agate (Idaho)



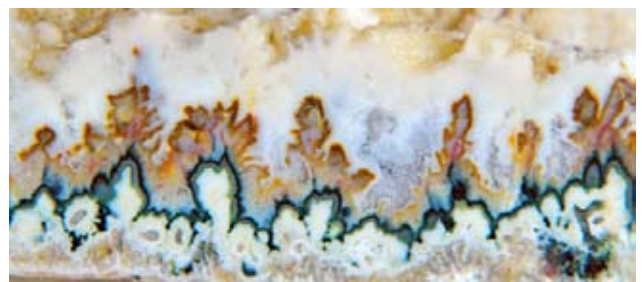
Sheep Creek Plume Agate (Oregon)



Stinkingwater Plume Agate (Oregon)



Graveyard Point Plume Agate (Oregon)



Forest Green Plume Agate (Oregon)

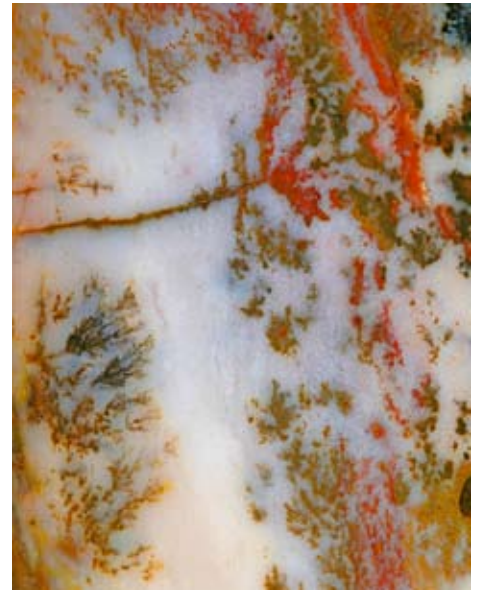
oxide. They may form via slow precipitation and metal migration caused by slow pH change in the silica gel. These may have been formed after the bulk of the chalcedony was in a semi-rigid state, or perhaps in way similar to the moss agate, but with more limited mobility or fewer fractures.

The process may also be aided by “electrochemical displacement”. Metals can be ordered in an activity series where they are rated in their ability to reduce other metals. (reduce: means to cause ionic precipitation to the metallic state.)

Thus in the following series Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, are in order of their ability to reduce the metals below. If an iron nail (solid metal) is placed in a solution of copper

(e.g. copper sulfate) the copper will plate out on the iron. Some iron going into solution to replaced the reduced copper. Synthetic dendrite structures induced in agate have been described by George W. Fischer (<http://www.ganoksin.com/borisat/nenam/dendrites-moss-plume.htm>) and Vince King (http://www.bovagems.com/eclectic/HTML/19961201_FISCHERSTN.html).

Continued next month with sagenitic agate, and tubular agate.



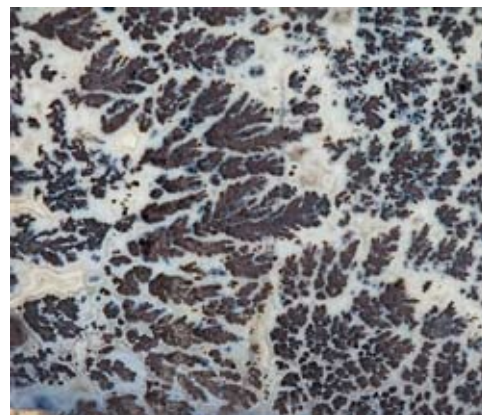
Paiute Creek Dendrite (Oregon)



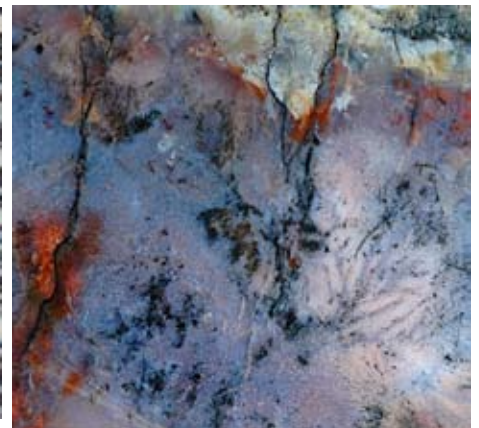
Sheep Creek Dendrite (Oregon)



Nydegger Plume Agate (Oregon)



Unknown Dendritic Agate



Amethyst Sage Dendrite (Oregon)

Memories of rock hunting in the Spruce Pine area in the late 50's.

by Jack King

It is hard to believe that more than 50 years has passed since I used to actively hunt rocks and minerals in the North Carolina mountains. Before I was old enough to drive, my dad would take two of us up there on weekends.

Benny Crabtree was my rock hunting pal and our dads would trade off taking turns driving us up to the mountains. To put this in perspective as to how times have changed, there were no interstate highways to get us there. It was one small town after the other. My dad would get on the phone and call a local roadside, "Tourist Camp" as they called them before they called them motels. Little family run places with six or so cottages or rooms. No Internet, No Hotels.com.

At that time there were many working feldspar and mica mines in operation. Mica was still used in great quantity for vacuum tubes for radios and televisions. One of my favorite mines was the now famous Ray mine near Burnsville. At that time in society, folks were not as litigious as they are now. We could walk into a mine while the workers were working and were welcome to hunt wherever we pleased.

When they were going to blast with dynamite, one of the workers would come and get us and we would all hide behind a truck. The Ray mine was famous for wonderful specimens of beryl and aquamarine. We would go up for a

weekend and come back with bags of crystals. After we turned 16 and got our driver's license we would save up some money and fill up my car with 25 cents a gallon gas and off we would go to the mountains. By this time the miners had gotten to know us and when we would leave they would ask when would we be back.

They showed us a stump in the woods near the mine entrance and told us to look there when we came back and they would save whatever they found for us. It was like a planted Easter egg hunt when we got back. The stump would be filled with specimens which we eagerly divided.

I currently still have some faceted stones from the crystals that we found. I now realize that I should have kept some of those six inch long perfect crystals that we found. After the blasting was done, the sides of the mountains would be like white snow. We would crawl out on those spoils trying hard not to slide down the hill and the picking was great.

One day I was finding so many loose crystals in the dust and my friend was finding none. It was that day that he realized that he was colorblind to the color of a clear aquamarine loose crystal. He could find the darker beryl crystals but he just could not see the good ones. He taught himself to look for the crystal shape only and began to

find a few. We usually would drive up on Friday night, hunt ALL day till dark on Saturday and Sunday and get back home at dark on Sunday.

I visited the Ray mine a few years back and could not believe how grown over it was. There used to be huge pits with white everywhere. In addition to the beryl, there were spectacular garnet crystals the size of a walnut. Finding a cluster with six or eight undamaged crystals sitting on a matrix of feldspar and quartz was a special find.

Also as exciting was finding a sheet of mica that had a garnet crystal embedded in it. These are memories of rock hunting that I will never forget. Benny Crabtree lives in Morehead City now, retired from a career as an educator. He still had his rocks on display in his home that we collected in our youth.

I will never forget the gift that my father gave me by taking his weekends to get me started in this wonderful hobby. I recently visited one of the mines at Spruce Pine. They have big iron gates to keep "trespassers" out. They do open them on special occasions. It is still good to drive up the hill to one of these mines that you can see from below as you can walk the roads and find rocks that have fallen off the trucks and pick up mica, garnets, smoky quartz and of course feldspar.

Sometimes, you can find minerals that fluoresce if you look carefully. If you have not been to the area, I highly recommend it. One stop that we always made when in the area was at Floyd Wilson's Rock shop

in Micaville. Floyd came home from the Korean war and enrolled in the Penland School to learn lapidary, silver, and gold work.

Floyd became a mentor to both Benny and me. He was the kind of guy that when we had saved up and had enough money to buy five dollars worth of rocks, he always gave us more than what we could pay for. This has been my standard whenever I have a chance to help youth with rocks.

This past summer when at the Spruce Pine show, the local club was sponsoring a four hour trip to one of the working feldspar mines. As soon as we got there our host said: “ No climbing on the walls! Do not go past the yellow tape.” I thought: “ Yea, right. I have climbed over these dumps from top to bottom.” But that was with the body of a teenager and it is different now. It was still a fun day that was flooded with memories.

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc

The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve.

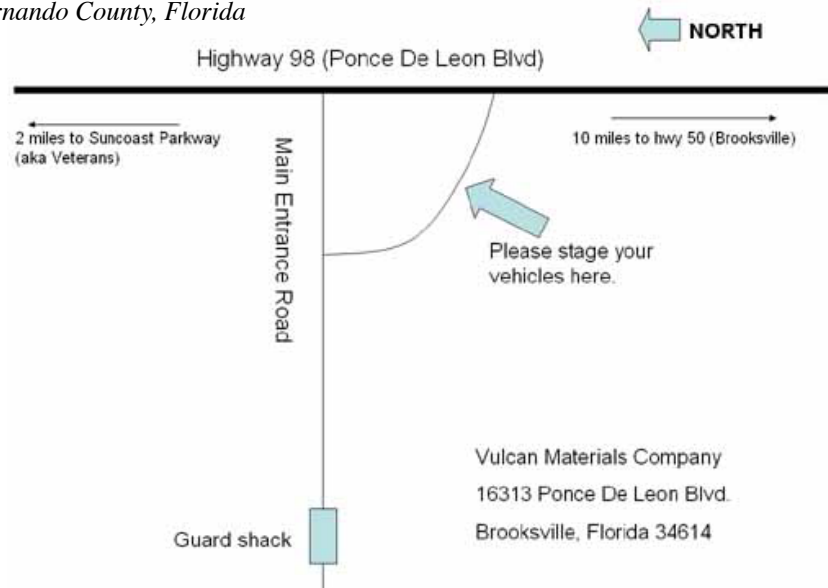
DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee

An Official Field Trip of The Jacksonville Gem and Mineral Society (Jacksonville, FL)(HOST)

An Official Field Trip of the (Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club)

9:00 am Saturday, January 19, 2008

Vulcan Brooksville Quarry
Hernando County, Florida



WHERE: Vulcan Quarry, 8 miles north of Brooksville, FL

WHEN: Saturday, January 19, 2008

TIME: Meet at staging area on map with signed waivers at 8:45am

DMC CONTACT: Mickey Cecil

904-725-6198 helpcecilhelp@juno.com

Stamp Program—Turn in Stamps and Help Earn Points

Our club is a participating member in the SFMS cancelled-stamp program. Our members are asked to save stamps from their mail by cutting around the stamp, leaving 1/4" so as not to damage the edges of the stamp. The stamps can be soaked off of envelopes, and our club will receive twice as many credits for stamps delivered in this condition than it will for those still stuck on the paper. Please check the SFMS website at

<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/stamp-program.html>

for specific information and instructions for the stamp program. Members are also asked to collect the “PB Meter” (Pitney Bowes) imprinted on the envelope. Members may turn in their collections to Pat Walker at regular meetings, being sure to include a piece of paper with their names. At the SFMS annual meeting, clubs contributing stamps will be included in a drawing. If a club’s name is drawn, it in turn will have a drawing from the names of contributing members for a workshop scholarship. Last year four workshop scholarships were awarded!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year



Bulletin Editor ron gibbs
theimage1@aol.com

The Goldrush Ledger is published monthly in Charlotte, North Carolina. Articles may be reproduced provided proper credit is given to the author and to this publication. Deadline for publication is the first Thursday of each month. Material may be submitted at club or executive board meetings, or mailed directly to the Editor, and will be in the next issue if still timely. All articles must be signed and, where applicable, references must be provided. The Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club is a member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, an affiliate member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and an affiliate of the Arts & Science Council of Charlotte, North Carolina. Annual dues of \$25.00 (family) and \$20.00 (individual) are payable in December for the following year. The purpose of this Club is to foster interest in, and promote knowledge of, minerals, gems, fossils, and all earth sciences. We also disseminate information and instruction in the lapidary arts and the utilization of precious metals in our crafts. These purposes are accomplished through regular meetings (usually the third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm, at Discovery Place, 301 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte) with informative programs, study groups, workshops and field trips. Visitors are most welcome to our club meetings. For more information, write our club at: P.O. Box 10233, Charlotte, NC 28212- 5667. [http:// www.charlottegem.com](http://www.charlottegem.com)

Dec 7-8, Norcross, Georgia North Georgia Trade Center; Georgia Mineral Society; North Atlanta Trade Center, 1700 Jurgens Ct.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; more than 40 dealers, gems, fossils, minerals, jewelry, door prizes. Mammoth Rock Shows, 7334 Quail Run Road, Lizella, GA 31052, website: www.mammothrock.com, e-mail: hightrp@mindspring.com.

Dec 8-9, Nashville, TN 7th Annual Earth Treasures Show, Middle Tennessee Gem & Mineral Society Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5 Tennessee State Fairgrounds - Creative Arts Building -- adults \$3, students 18 and under \$1, children under 12 free with adult - Jewelry, gems, beads, minerals, fossils, collectibles, tools, equipment, and door prizes Contact John Stanley, (615) 885-5704; jstanley@picagroup.com; www.mtgms.org.

Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 10233
Charlotte, NC 28212-5667

