

# Tar Heel Tailings

## Special Interest Articles:

- Prez Sez
- History of Corundum in North Carolina
- American Federation Trip Report

## Individual Highlights:

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A newsletter for Gem and Mineral enthusiast in and around the Raleigh, North Carolina area.

## Prez Sez

By Anthony Andreoli

Thank you to all who attended last month's meeting. All of your feedback and suggestions from this years' show were much appreciated!

This month's guest speaker is Jeff Schlotmann, who will be doing a presentation on "Digging the Guibault Claim (in Hiddenite)."

Renny will be bringing beverages to this months meeting, but we currently need a volunteer to bring food. Remember you will be reimbursed up to \$85 combined for food and drinks, just keep you receipts, and bring them to the meeting.

We will also be having our raffle drawing for the trips to wild acres or William Holland for those of you who volunteered at the show for 8 hours or more.

See you all on May 21st.

Anthony Andreoli  
President, Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.

## History of Corundum in North Carolina and Where to Find Them Today

North Carolina is well known for its variety of corundum stones, though not all are gem quality. Joseph Hyde Pratt declares in his 1933 mineral survey that "no state or country excels [sic] North Carolina " in this regard, and describes a plethora of colors: "ruby red, sapphire blue, dark blue, various shades of green, violet, purplish, rose, pink, brown, yellow, grey, and colorless." Macon County, he says, produces the "greatest variety." The Corundum Hill Mine in this county was opened in 1871, and the value of most of the stones was more "scientific" than financial, so the owners decided to mainly sell the material for abrasives. However, a few very notable stones were found among the magnesian rocks. A green sapphire, also called "oriental emerald" despite not being a true beryl emerald, was found measuring 4 x 2 x 1.5 inches.

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**Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.**

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**We're on the Web!**  
See us at:  
[www.tarheelclub.org](http://www.tarheelclub.org)

**Program & Refreshments**

REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE:

Coordinator: Open

May: Open  
Beverages: Renny Young

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

January - Tom Todaro- Safety Briefing  
February - Michael Frankilin  
March - Grab Bags / Postcards  
April - Post-show Discussion  
May - Jeff Schlottman-Digging the Guibault Claim  
June - TBA  
July - TBA  
August - Cathy Young  
September - Paul Byrne  
October - Grab Bags  
November - Election

Remember, the club will reimburse you for up to \$85 (bring your receipts to the treasurer).

**April Treasurer's Report**

TGMC Treasurer Report - April 2019		
<b>Beginning Balance:</b>	4/1/19	6,988.79
<b>Income:</b>		
	Show Vendor Fees	7,764.00
	Show Hospitality	1,325.55
	Show Silent Auction	1,100.70
	Show Geodes	7,412.35
	Membership Dues (Stripe/checks)	643.09
	<b>Total Income:</b>	18,245.69
<b>Expense:</b>		
	Club/Officer Mtg - Refreshments	35.55
	Membership - badges	34.95
	Junior Member Prize	100.00
	AmFed conference (Cyndy)	773.03
	Stripe Fees (April)	11.16
	Show - labels, badges, misc	473.10
	Show - Dealer Refunds	133.00
	Show - Food	1,738.28
	Show - Square fees	94.97
	Show - signage	157.50
	<b>Total Expenses:</b>	3,551.54
<b>Ending Balance:</b>	4/30/19	21,682.94
<b>CDs</b>		
	32-90 day	5,377.34
	91-181 day	5,700.68
	<b>Total CDs</b>	11,078.02

**May B-Day Members**

- Vince Hagerty
- Jason King
- Sherry Page
- Corinne Hummel
- Jim Davenport
- Rachel Nagy
- Tim Grinnell



Membership applications may be mailed to:

Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.  
Attention: Treasurer  
PO Box 33783,  
Raleigh, NC 27636-3783

## Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. – April Meeting Minutes

Minutes 04/16/2019  
7:30 pm

Attendees (Members): 40  
Visitors: 4  
New Members: 8  
TOTAL Attending: 52

Birthdays:  
Membership table: Linda Searcy, Treasurer  
and Karen Santala, Membership

Food: Pot luck

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Anthony Andreoli,  
president

### Discussion: Gem and Mineral Show

Cyndy will report out at next meeting

### Comments/recommendations by attendees:

- Someone that did not attend did not see much promotion about it
- One attendee was surprised at the amount of jewelry pieces-was looking for more natural pieces- Encourage balance of vendors at show
- Partner with Museum
- First time to show- loved it brought 19 YO son
- Thank you for all the hard work
- Did not attend but loved the grab bags in the past years
- Stumbled upon it Sunday morning- went very well this year
- Loved grab bags and silent auction
- Grab bags and silent auction- need more kids
- Expand silent auction
- Greater advertising- need more presence
- Need junior members
- More grab bags
- Higher technology
- Vendor at front of building (outside- to catch attention)
- Boy Scouts- Geology badge- booth?

### Recommendations by President and club members:

- Grab bags
  - Need more Grab bags for next year
  - Need material for grab bags

- Thank you to Silent auction and Geode Booth for additional material provided during show
- Suggestion: each filed trip, attendees fill 1-gallon bucket with rough and turn into Executive members for grab bag material
- Move dates of grab bag creation to two dates- fall (August or October) and winter (February?)
- Provide more instruction on distribution of materials that go into grab bags (quality/quantity control)
- Increase price to \$2.00? Not a favorite amongst members
- Create a second level of grab bag for sale- different color bag with higher quality items
- Reinvest our monies into grab bags- can't rely on members only donating to the cause
- Tuscan show mentioned- but too close to show date to obtain materials
- Food chair- need a food chair for next year's show
- March 2020- dedicate this meeting to the organization of show
- Advertising
- Facebook had only one posting for show- need to blow it up next year before, during and after
- Twitter and other social media
- Get junior members involved in this
- Advertising Chairperson needed
- Highlight/spotlight vendors during the show on Facebook
- Communication
- Color coded t-shirts for volunteers- easily identifiable at the show
- Need to put up signs – what do we do with the money?
- Google docs for volunteer sign up
- Survey our vendors to see what we are doing right and wrong and what they need
- Announce/spotlight our vendors during the show

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly L. House,  
Secretary of Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.

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This partially transparent stone was displayed in the American Museum of Natural History in New York, along with two rubies. Also produced from this mine and displayed at that time in the US National Museum in Washington were a “wine yellow” 3.25 carat sapphire, a 1 carat violet sapphire, and three dark blue sapphires measuring between .75 and 1.5 carats. The Cowee Creek area, also in Macon County is noted by Pratt for rubies. The substrate here is different than at the Corundum Hill Mine, a “hornblende-gneiss,” though amphibolite occurs in both locations. Though the rubies did not occur in high enough quantity to justify a commercial operation, the quality was said to rival Burma rubies, in the sought-after “pigeon-blood red” color. The largest fine piece discovered was one by one-half inches, in a hexagonal crystal. Other notable locations included Grimshawe Mine in Jackson County and the headwaters of Ellijay Creek in Macon County. Fittingly, the town of Sapphire in Jackson County was also a good spot for Sapphire hunting. Though usually not considered gem quality, a few interesting variations occurred as well: Corundum Hill mine produced some banded deep blue and white/clear sapphires, and the Ellijay Mine produced what was known as “Pearl Corundum,” a brown/bronze variety with a cat’s-eye type chatoyancy. In Clay County, near Buck Creek and Shooting Creek, attractive combinations of mineral-quality ruby or pink corundum with “grass-green” or blue amphibolite were found that apparently took a nice polish.

More recently, in 1990, four star rubies were found near Asheville by Jarvis Wayne Messer. The “Mountain Star Collection,” as they are called, weigh 342 carats together. Currently being moved to an auction house in New York, it’s estimated the collection could sell for more than \$90 million. One of the stones is known as the “Smoky Mountain Two-Star Ruby” due to the stars on it’s front and back. The single largest stone, the “Appalachian Star,” weighs 139 carats. Such star rubies are rarer and more valuable than diamonds of the same size.

Today, rubies and sapphires can still be found in North Carolina, in Macon county. The International Gem Society ranks the Cherokee Ruby and

Sapphire Mine as one of its top 10 sites for finding gems in the United states. Located in Franklin, NC, this mine offers unsalted buckets of ore at their flume, though this is not a location where rock hounds can dig freely.

If you decide to search for corundum in any of the counties or areas described above, check to be sure you are on public land (or get permission on private land) and checking with the Bureau of Land Management is recommended (see: <https://www.blm.gov/basic/rockhounding>).

Rockhounding is allowed on most public land, but there are exceptions for national monuments and national wilderness areas such as Linville Gorge. There may also be restrictions on where you can park. Usually, in public areas, collection is limited to less than 10-25lbs of material.

## Resources:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=OhgtAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA26&hl=en#v=onepage&q&f=false>

<https://www.wbvtv.com/story/37912368/ultra-rare-rubies-found-by-modest-mountain-man-in-nc-could-fetch-90-million/>

<https://www.gemsociety.org/article/mined-in-america/>

<http://cherokeerubymine.com/>



Image: Guernsey’s Auction House

## American Federation Meeting Trip

By Cyndy Hummel



Let me begin by giving a great big Thank You to my Club, for sending me as a representative to the annual meeting. I could not have participated without the club's financial support.

I was a first-time attendee. My club was the host for the Annual meeting in 2018, but I was not able to attend any meetings since I needed to be at the show as Show Chairperson. In Iowa, I attended the AFMS Board Meeting, AFMS Lunch, Cracker Barrel/potluck (with a speaker on Iowa's state rock – the geode) and the AFMS awards banquet.

Cedar Valley Rocks & Minerals Society know how to host – longest line up of food for the potluck that I have ever seen! Great host hotel – I really appreciated the shuttle, which took me to the show on Saturday, along with multiple attempts to locate a state of Iowa lapel pin around town (found a colorful button at the show). I was delivered to Czech Village to look around and purchased a small vase of glass flowers and 3 decorated chicken & goose eggs. I would have loved to have gone on a field trip for geodes, but those areas were a couple of hours away. In the afternoon, I attended a couple of presentations at the show – Why Iowa has so many geodes & Rock Collecting in Eastern Iowa. The show featured many kid's areas like a pebble pit with lower priced items, silent auction, casting of fossils, geode cracking and mineral sluice. At the awards banquet, we were given a plaque with an

opened geode attached as a souvenir. I received a lot of comments on my Southern accent, as Iowans don't really have one.

Wonderful information was included in the Welcome package including – a newsletter with a welcome to all delegates on the cover, a fact sheet about the host club, a Geologic map of Iowa postcard, a flyer on the State rock - the geode, from the geological survey, a limestone handbook, various ink pens and other items from Iowa Limestone Producers and a wonderful volume on the buildings and grottos in Iowa made with local stone, titled Iowa Geology 1996, #32.

I only took money for meals and did not anticipate purchasing rocks! I bought, from 3 different dealers, Mexican Laguna agate geodes, which I have not seen for sale in NC. I was compelled to make a purchase of a hand-sized quartz geode from Iowa. This caused a ruckus at the Airport. Apparently, this was a "void" on the X-ray and I was pulled aside to wait for an inspection of my bag. I opened it up, removing the rubber band, tape and bubble wrap, thereby proving that nothing was inside but quartz crystals. Time was already tight to get on my flight. When I arrived at the terminal, no one was waiting, but I heard my name announced, along with 2 others. I was late enough that they were looking for me!

If you haven't been to the Mid-West, let me tell you that Iowa remarkably flat. Their crop fields are divided into rectangular sections with straight lines and dirt roads. NC divides our fields with shrubs and trees and plots are in all shapes and sizes.

During the AFMS Annual Meeting, reports and memorial tributes were given. Boundaries were discussed as we have seven regions with boundaries. Think Eastern Region and SouthEastern Region. Part of SouthEastern is in the Eastern Region. Out west, boundaries do not cross and permission is needed to visit another Region for field trips.

There was no unfinished business and new business included approval of the budget, which passed, and a proposal to make a change to the Conservation and Legislation Committee that is intended to help in getting information on issues from all across the country to all the regions. This new business was

tabled as it involved a change to the bylaws that required additional clarification and documentation before a vote could be held and the plan implemented.

The AFMS Scholarship Foundation is important to note. Two \$4,000 scholarships in six regions is awarded each year to graduate students. As of 2015, 610 scholarships have been awarded at 132 universities totaling 1.7 million dollars in awards.

During the awards banquet, the Lilly Turner Award was presented to a very deserving Junior displayer and the AFMS new officers were sworn in. John Martin received the 2019 Recognition Award, which is presented annually to someone who has served the AFMS in an exceptional manner. Nominations are obtained from the Past Presidents and then a committee of the last three Past Presidents selects the recipient from among those nominated.

The next 3 Annual meetings are being scheduled and should be – Knoxville, TN for 2020, Sandy, UT for 2021 and Texas for 2022. It is my hope that the Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club become more involved in the Federation. To that end, I have agreed to be the State Director for North Carolina. I will be able to conduct business via phone and email. As a first-time attendee, I did learn that the Federation can offer more than what we have accepted so far. We receive

Show insurance from one Region and Field Trip insurance from another. I have been asked why the club is part of 2 organizations. Part of the answer is that SouthEastern split from Eastern in the seventies. The current answer is so that we can be part of 2 Regions and participate in activities for both. SouthEastern & Eastern have different weeks of residency at Wildacres. They also have a different style and classes given from each other. Thus, club members are able to select classes from either Region to attend classes.

As a (hopefully) future attendee, I would encourage clubs to host the Annual Federation meeting as we would like to visit different club shows across the country. I very much appreciated and enjoyed a different show from our own and others that I have seen locally. Each group does things a bit differently and I can appreciate these differences as Show Chairperson. Iowa really focuses on kids. How can our club fine tune this and bring more focus on kids? Children are our next generation of club members, after all.

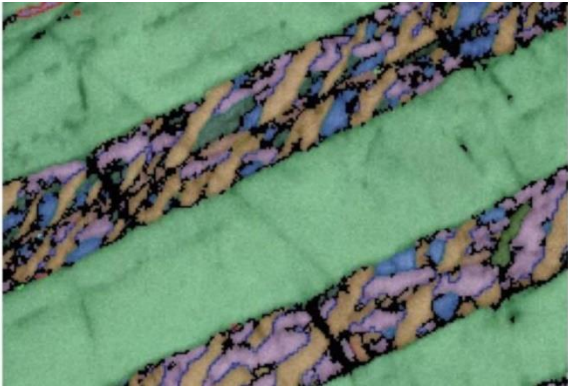
Gratefully,  
Cyndy Hummel  
Show Chairperson, Board Member, Federation Liaison



Images courtesy of Cyndy Hummel

## Scientists Find the Ghost of a New Mineral

By Brooks Hays



*When scientists examined monazite samples from two ancient meteorite craters under a microscope, they found the ghostly signatures of a new type of mineral.*

Image courtesy of Curtin University

April 17 (UPI) -- Researchers have identified the "ghosts" of a new mineral at a pair of ancient meteorite impact sites.

The mineral is a new type of monazite, which only forms under the high-pressure conditions created by meteorite impacts.

Scientists found the new mineral after examining rock samples from impact craters in Germany and Canada. Researchers used an electron scanning microscope to study the tiny rock fragments.

"We found microscopic evidence that monazite, a rare earth element phosphate, transformed to another crystal structure under high pressure from a shockwave, similar to how graphite can turn into diamond under pressure," Nick Timms, an associate professor of earth and planetary sciences at Curtin University in Australia, said in a news release.

Interestingly, the new mineral form didn't last. It came and went. But Timms and his colleagues were able to see the mineral's ghostly signature.

"The mineral reverted to its original crystal structure instead of maintaining this new structural form, and while the new mineral only existed for fractions of a second as the shockwave passed through the Earth close to ground zero, it left unique crystallographic clues to its existence," Timms said.

Timms suggests it's possible scientists will never directly observe the new mineral.

"The mineral is not stable at the Earth's surface and readily transforms back to monazite again," he said. "Therefore, we have really only seen, and will probably only ever see, its 'ghost.'"

Researchers described their ghostly discovery this week in the journal *Geology*.

## UPCOMING SHOWS

**July 5—July 7, 2019** — Treasures of the Earth Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show—Our shows feature estate, classic, handcrafted and fashion jewelry made from a variety of metals, as well as a vast array of crystals, minerals and fossils. Jewelers and wire wrappers will be on site who can design, remount or repair jewelry.

Promoter:

Treasures of the Earth, Inc.

Ellen White

(804) 642-2011

[Ellen@treasuresoftheearth.com](mailto:Ellen@treasuresoftheearth.com)

<http://treasuresoftheearth.com/>

North Carolina State Fairgrounds—1025 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh,  
North Carolina 27607

Park in the Cates Ave. Parking Deck off Jensen Dr. Enter Thompson Building directly across from the parking lot.

# Our Next Meeting is

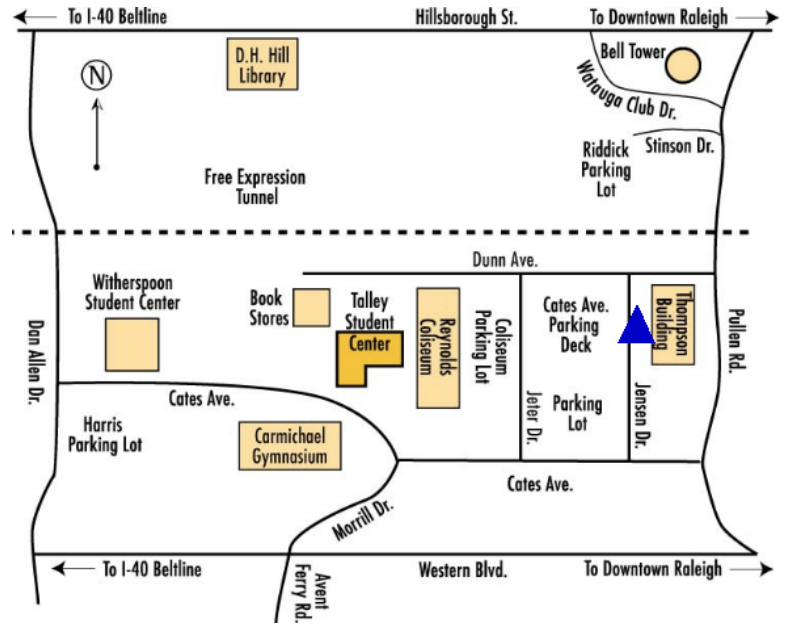
**May 21, 2019 @ 7:30PM**

## Thompson Building / NCSU Campus.

### About Our Organization...

The Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. was formed in 1974 as a nonprofit educational organization for people who enjoy the lapidary arts, earth sciences, and related subjects. The main objectives of the club are to investigate, preserve, and share knowledge of rocks, minerals, and precious stones, and to promote interest in mineralogy, paleontology, earth sciences, and lapidary techniques, among club members and among the general public. The club pursues these goals through publications, meetings, lectures, field trips, exhibits, demonstrations, and other activities.

**Come and be a part of the Fun!**



**TAR HEEL GEM & MINERAL CLUB**  
 PO Box 33783,  
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