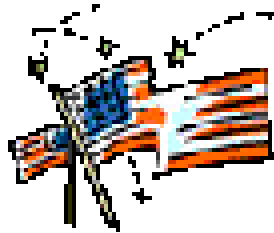


GEM & MINERAL JOURNAL

Volume 20 Issue 7
July 2011

Presidents Message:



Hello To All,

Before I forget to mention this, at the Uncle Billy's Day Festival someone left a piggy bank at the GMSL sales booth along with some other papers, if this belongs to you please claim it at the July 20th meeting. If not claimed it will be sold on our silent auction table.

Thanks again to all of you that volunteered and worked at the sales booth at the Uncle Billy's Day Festival. It was a great success and gave us a good idea of the best selling items that we can make for the upcoming Amherst County Apple Harvest Festival in October. There will be Saturday workshops at Dave Callahan's on June 25, July 23 and August 27. We will be making items to sell at future festivals, and we will assist anyone that wants to come and make an item for personal use. The Club has all types of equipment for members to use, from large and medium slab saws to small trim saws. There are several types of cabbing machines for cutting and polishing cabochons. You can also make bookends, clock faces and rock

spheres. If anyone is interested we can give you basic hands on demo on a gemstone faceting machine. We also can show you how to make your own gem tree. Not all activities can be offered at the same time so please signup at the meeting for the project you are most interested in doing. The Club is fortunate to have members that are willing to give instructions and help with your project.

All this gives you another dimension for your collected specimens and gem rough. Please come out and join in the fun, you will be glad you did. It is the best way to learn a new skill and the best way to get to know other Club members. The workshops start around 9:00 AM and you can work as long as you like. Pack a lunch or eat at a local Deli less than a mile away. I hope to see you there and also at the July 20th meeting.

Keep Looking Down,
John Haskins

From the First VP:

Please be sure to attend our July meeting. Natalie Darling, our newsletter editor, will present a talk entitled, "Treasures of the Middle East" which will include photographs and artifacts from her and Siglinde's trip to the Middle East last year.

Let's continue our study of lapidary science by focusing on the fine art of tumbling. This is another fine article written by Donald Clark CSM of the International Gem society. Remember the workshop schedule Dave Callahan gave us at our last meeting? Let's take advantage of our club's equipment and our member's expertise.

Continued on page 8

2011 ELECTED OFFICERS**John Haskins - PRESIDENT**

(434) 525-8430

JMHaskins1@netzero.net**First Vice President****Jack Curtin**

(434) 384 -6249

jackwcurtin@gmail.com**David Callahan****Second Vice President**

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midkiff@aol.com**Members At Large-**

Bernardino Rivera &

Tony Shields

COMMITTEE**CHAIR PERSONS:****Field Trips**- David Callahan**Hospitality**- Monthly Volunteers**News Articles**- Natalie Darling**Silent Auction**- Warren Darling**Swap for Rocks**-Warren Darling**Website**- Casper Voogt**Workshops**- Dave Callahan**FRA Adult Liaison**- Daryl Grant**Membership**- Ralph Torning

June Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Wednesday, June 15th, 2011**Attendance:** 26 members and 1 guest**Hospitality:** Our hosts for this evening were Tom and Linda Noble. Our host for July will be Bernard Rivera. Thanks to all who volunteer to keep up our refreshments.**On Time Drawing:** Winners were Dakota Tolley, Jon Glass, Bill Livingston, Tommy Conner, Dave Woolley, Dean Brown, Nona Haskins, Breanna Tolley, Heinz Mueller*****Lost and Found: Piggy Bank was found in the trailer at Uncle Billy's Day*******Old Business:** Uncle Billy's Day was a success and we had lots of volunteers to help. Thanks to everyone who participated.**First Vice President:** Jack Curtin: Tonight's program will be a video on how the Grand Canyon was formed. We are in need of speakers, so if you have any contacts please let Jack know. Jack is also trying to contact the Geologist from Radford for a possible program.**Second Vice President:** Dave Callahan: Field Trips/ Activities: 6/25- 9:00AM workshop at Dave Callahan's; 7/9- DMC trip to Marble NC for staurolite crystals; 7/16- US Silica Quarry; 7/23- Workshop at Dave's starts at 9:00

AM; 7/28-7/31 Franklin NC for field trips and gem and mineral shows; 7/31-8/7 Spruce Pine NC, for camping, field trips, and gem and mineral shows. 8/27 Workshop at Dave's; 8/13- Field Trip to Thermal City Gold Mine in Union City, NC.

Treasurers Report: Treasury balance at this time is \$6,600.00. UBDay netted 1,239.00. Thanks to Tom and Lynn Powers for taking care of the cash box.**New Business:** Lee New donated some specimens to the club. Once John has had a chance to go through them he will bring some to the meetings.

We need to purchase 15 gallons of saw oil and new batteries for the sluice. The total cost will be between \$350-\$400. A motion was made and carried by the members in attendance.

Tonight we had our silent auction, and Dave Woolley and Dave Callahan had items for sale. Anyone interested in joining or attending a meeting of the Central Virginia Gold Prospectors in Dillwyn contact Dave Callahan or Bill Brown.

Minutes submitted by

Brenda Glass, Secretary

The purpose of the Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg, VA, INC. is to promote education in The Earth Sciences including: Mineralogy, Geology, Gemology, Paleontology, and Crystallography

*The Gem and Mineral Society of Lynchburg VA, Inc.
Meets on the third Wednesday of each month,
From 7:00pm- 9:00pm
In the auditorium of the Parks and Recreation Building
301 Grove St. Lynchburg, VA 24501
Public is invited, Please join us!*

Programs

The program for our June meeting was a video on "How The Grand Canyon was formed." For July we will enjoy "Treasures from the Middle East" by club members Natalie Darling and Siglinde Allbeck, who visited Doha, Qatar and Dubai, UAE last spring.



Bench Tips by Brad Smith

*More Bench Tips by Brad Smith are at:
groups.yahoo.com/group/Bench Tips/
Or facebook.com/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 form 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.

They are 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.

LOWERING THE NOISE

A simple way to cut down the noise when you're hammering on your mini anvil or bench block is to place it on an old mouse pad or other similar rubber material.

Rudy's Rock Mine Sale

Hosted by Rudy Bland

**Saturday July 30, 2011
7am until noon**

Collect on the Rock Pile
\$5.00 per 5 gallon bucket
(bring your own bucket)

Mineral flats from \$5.00

Rudy's back yard
5904 N. Crestwood Ave
Richmond, VA 23230
Phone 804-282-5010



Contact Information for Field Trips:

David Callahan,

Field Trip Chairman

Home phone 540-297-1853-----

Cell phone-----540-874-520-----

E-mail dbc11@aol.com

By special invitation

PLEASE NOTE...**VERY FEW SLOTS ARE AVAILABLE**

YOU MUST CONTACT ME AT ONCE TO GET ON THE LIST. WE WILL HAVE A RESERVE LIST IN CASE MORE SLOTS BECOME AVAILABLE. **DO NOT JUST SHOW UP....YOU MUST SIGN-UP.**

David Callahan...540-297-1853....dbc11@aol.com.

The Shenandoah Valley Gem and Mineral Society is hosting the following field trip:

U.S. Silica Quarry in Montpelier, VA

Saturday, July 16, 2011

7:45 am - 12:15 pm

Site address: 17359 Taylor Creek Road

Montpelier, VA 23192

From Lynchburg and Roanoke, the quarry is about 120 miles so allow about 2.5 to 3 hours driving time. From Roanoke, add 1 hour.

Here is the route I will take from Lynchburg. From Roanoke, stay on 460E. Follow US 460 to Appomattox (about 20 miles, 30 min). Rt. 24N to Mt. Rush (20 mi, 30 min). US 60E to US 522N, just before Powhatan (40 mi, 1 hr.). US 522N to Gum Spring at I-64. (16 mi, 20 min.). Continue on US 522N, cross I-64 and continue for about 2.1 mi. Turn right on Owens Creek Rd. (Rt. 663) for about 1.5 mi. Turn left on Holly Grove Dr. (Rt. 610) for about 4.1 mi. to the Louisa / Hanover County line. The road changes to Taylors Creek Rd. (Rt. 610). Continue about 3.25 mi. to Bethany Church Rd. on the left. Taylors Creek Rd. bears to the right. Follow Taylors Creek Rd. (Rt. 677) .8 miles to the quarry on the right.

SPECIAL NOTE

Everyone MUST be there between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. for mandatory sign in paperwork (waiver) and safety instructions! If you miss this deadline you WON'T be permitted into the site!

They won't have any staff at the main entrance building to let you in after we begin the drive into the mine, so please be there on time. We will begin collecting after all safety information has been given out and we drive into the mine as a group.

We will go if there happens to be light rain or drizzle, but the trip will be cancelled should there be an extended heavy rain or any sign of thunderstorms.

Everyone will enter the mine together and collect in one side of the mine first. We will move as a group by driving to the other side of the mine. Nobody is permitted to wander off and collect in other areas without the group! We all need to keep an eye out for each other and make sure nobody wanders into unsafe zones. Everyone must stay away from the high-walls at all times!

Their plant manager will be in the quarry with us to answer our questions and as a safety lookout.

Required Equipment: Steel-toed shoes, hard hat, safety glasses and gloves.

Optional Equipment: Standard rock collecting items such as: chisels,

Continued on next page

Up Coming Field Trips

Continued from page 4

rock hammers, shovels, sledge hammers, 5 gallon buckets (for larger specimens), smaller containers for smaller specimens, water, snacks, knee pads, sunscreen, rain poncho, camera, paper to wrap delicate pieces, flathead screwdriver or butter knife to pry items out of dirt/ground, etc.

Mature children (6+ yrs. old) are welcomed to participate, but parent must sign for child and closely supervise them at all times. No children should be using hammers or chisels.

Minerals previously found at this site include: Actinolite, Albite (var: Andesine), Albite-Anorthite Series, Amphible Group (var: Uralite), Anatase, Anthophyllite, Apatite, Biotite, Garnet, Goethite, Hornblende, Illite, Ilmenite, Kaolinite, Microcline, Moonstone, Muscovite, Prehnite, Pyrite, Quartz (var: Blue Quartz), Rutile, Sericite, Spessartine, Titanite and Zircon.

They do have a restroom available at their main office where we check in. Collectors will be allowed to drive into the collecting areas. Of course safety is number one and anyone disregarding the quarry's safety regulations will be asked to leave the site immediately. Since we will be collecting during a very hot time of year, please be sure to bring adequate water and snacks to stay well hydrated.

Other July and August Field Trips.

Plans are being finalized at this time for these two trips

You must contact me by phone, email or sign up at the June meeting.

Do not delay!!!

First Trip: Franklin, NC.

Date: July 28 thru 31, 2011 (show dates)

Field trip leader for the Franklin trip will be Royce Wickham

Royce will have the final plans at the July meeting.

To date we have only 7 signed up to attend (Royce, Dwight, Ted & Dennis and Tom, Tommy and Bill from the Lynchburg Club) there is still time to sign-up. It will be a great trip.

THE TRIP:

Camping sites are available for RVs, individuals, groups or Motels available

Mineral collecting field trip to Chunky Gal Mountain for corundum and Buck Creek for garnets. There are many tourist gem mines with sluices in the area with native and salted material. Very nice large gem show and mineral museum. More information will be available as it's developed.

Will probably drive down on Friday July 29, collect Saturday and return home on Sunday, July 31, 2011.

Web site: www.franklin-chamber.com

Second Trip: Spruce Pine, NC.

Date: July 31 thru August 7, 2011 (show dates)

Field Trip leader for the Spruce Pine trip will be David Callahan

SPECIAL NOTE:

We only had 5 people sign-up for this trip with no interest in reserving the group camp site. (David, Carole, Bill, Thom and Linda) Therefore, everyone will be responsible for making their own lodging reservations. If you are interested in attending the field trips and the shows please contact me at once for additional information. We will meet Saturday morning August 6, 2011 at 9:00AM at the Wal-Mart near Grassy Creek by the gas pumps as we have in previous years. We will drive to the Ray and Sinkhole mines from there

The Trip:

Camping sites at the Bear Den Campground for RVs, groups and individuals as well as cabins.

We will more than likely drive down Friday, August 5th, field trips on Saturday August 6th and return home on Sunday, August 7th. I can reserve a group tent camp site for Friday and Saturday nights if we have 6 to 8 tenters. There are many RV sites and cabins also available for individuals. See www.bear-den.com.

Mineral collecting Saturday at the Ray and Sinkhole Mines.

Continued on next page

Up Coming Field Trips

Continued from page 5

Spruce Pine, NC.

The Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce has arranged for several fee sites to attend Saturday, but you must make your own reservations for these trips thru the C. of C. There are many local tourist gem mines offering salted material. Two very nice shows at the Pinebridge Center and outside at Grassy Creek. Web site: www.sprucepine.com and the C of C's new site www.ncgemfest.com

When you search for Spruce Pine of Franklin information, be aware there is much information out there that goes back many years. It can be difficult to distinguish the current information from years past. The dates are a week later this year.

Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips

**An Official Field Trip of The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., Columbia, SC (HOST)
An Official Field Trip of the (Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg, Inc. and Roanoke Valley Mineral & Gem Society, Inc.)**

**9:00 AM, Saturday, August 13, 2011
Thermal City Gold Mine – Union Mills, North Carolina**

Fee Area

The Columbia Gem and Mineral society, NC. would like to extend an invitation to fellow DMC clubs to join us panning for gold for genuine placer mining site in Rutherford County, NC. Thermal City Gold Mine consists of one mile section of the Second Broad River and about 80 acres of Placer Gravel Deposits, having one of seven veins from the mountain supplying it. Panning material is brought from the river by backhoe for you to pan. The gravel is not "enhanced or enriched". The gold found in the natural state; right where nature deposited it. Gold found as flakes and maybe small nuggets. Ample shade, parking and instruction in panning are always available when needed.

FEE AREA: The fee is \$5.00 to pan all day. The fee is \$50.00 for a front-end load.

CHILDREN: Children under adult supervision are welcome. Rocky Rockhounds with leader are welcome.

PETS: Pets are allowed on a leash.

Collecting: We will be collection gold.

WHAT TO BRING: Shovels and pans are furnished or you can bring your own. Other equipment is available for rent or purchase. For additional information on the site, including details about a "front-end Road" or overnight stay contact the mine at 82-286-3016 or visit the website at <http://www.thermalcitygoldmine.com> **HISTORY:** This is an unsalted site and many people have had success finding gold here. The mine's aim is to provide an authentic experience. The mine is located on the actual site of the earliest placers in Rutherford County. It opened in 1839 and has produced gold ever since then.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Camping facilities with full hook-ups to primitive on a first come first serve basis. Call 828-2863016. No drug, alcohol or fire arms are allowed.

The grounds are almost level and a short distance from panning to camping to restrooms.

DIRECTIONS FROM ASHVILLE, NC: From Ashville take I-40 east to exit # 85 (Marion/Rutherford); proceed south on US-221 for 8.5 miles to the Rutherford County line; the entrance to the mine is on the left (look for signs along the way). The mine address is: 5240 US-221 N Hwy, Union Mills, NC 28167. Travel time should be about one hour from Ashville.

Echo of the Past by Rudy Bland, Editor

Reprinted from The Mineral Mouse, July 2011

The time: November 1965. My new rock shop had just been open a few months when Tom Smith, one of the RGMS club members walked into my shop with some crystals he had just found in downtown Richmond. He was dressed in a brand new business suit that day. When he showed me the crystals, I could hardly contain myself. The crystals were pale blue-green in color and about 1 inch long protruding from a mass of gray clay. It was vivianite! I told him what it was and wanted to know if there was more. He did better than that. He offered to take me and my mother down there personally. I wasted no time putting my closed sign on the door, and off we went.

The site was at 14th and Ballard Streets, next to what now is I-95 and Broad St. Construction workers were finishing up for the day on a tunnel project that would connect two future buildings. We obtained permission to collect with the provision that we not dig in the wall. The deposit consisted of a mixture of illite clay (marl) with a layer of earthy dolomite concretions spaced along a horizontal zone. Vivianite was quite evident in the cracks of the concretions, but the real surprise came later when I discovered that spectacular clusters and "Power Puff" masses of vivianite occurred in the soft clay surrounding many of the concretions. All one had to do was to feel around in the soft clay and pull out the specimens. Fortunately I had a couple of buckets, but Tom just had his new business suit. Soon he had filled his pockets and then his jacket. So much for the suit. This would prove to be the biggest find of vivianite to hit the U.S. since the famous Idaho find many years earlier.

In March of 1966 Rocks and Minerals Magazine published my article on the discovery. I had also donated a number of pieces to the University of Virginia which had been photographed for the article. These samples would remain in the UVA collection throughout several moves to other facilities.



Richmond Vivianite Site, above and two of the collected specimens (right).

Article continued on next page

Echo of the Past... *continued from page 7*

The time: May 2011. In March of this year was once again hired to curate the Books /UVA collection in Charlottesville, VA. While going through the many cabinets and drawers I ran across a card board box about 3x4x6 inches with specimens of something wrapped in yellowed tissue. To my surprise it was the same vivianite that appeared in the R & M article.

Anyone familiar with the physical and chemical properties of vivianite knows that it tends to lose water content, turn black and fall apart. For years no one knew how to slow this process. It was found that a mixture of 5 parts acetone and 1 part Duco Cement would seal the material and preserve it without leaving a false luster. Not knowing how badly the material had deteriorated I chose to transport the material home and open it there after I had bought the glue. Amazingly the vivianite had remained fairly stable. Several coats of this mixture saved the day. Not bad for fifty years of hibernation.

To give a bit of background about the Brooks/UVA collection: During the years of 1961 to 1964 I was hired as curator at the Brooks Museum. My job was to clean and catalog the vast collection of minerals and rocks dating back to 1875. After all these years and three or more moves around the State, the collection has landed at the Division of Mines and Minerals and Energy in Charlottesville. Once again I find myself in the unique position of once again having to restore the collection. At the moment this is taking place with limited grant money to restore the Virginia portion of the collection. We are looking into the possibility of obtaining private funding to restore the entire collection so that it will be available for research and public viewing.

The Author, Rudy Bland publishes the electronic Gem and Mineral Newsletter "Mineral Mouse." It is filled with educational articles and photographs. If you would like to receive the publication please email Rudy at rudybland@att.net to get on his mailing list.

Fundamentals of Lapidary Part 3, Tumbling

By Donald Clark CSM

Submitted by 1st VP Jack Curtin,

Introduction

Tumbling is a simple process where the rough material is put in a revolving barrel with abrasives. Progressively finer abrasives are used until a polish is obtained. This process closely resembles what happens to rocks in a stream or on the beach, except that the level of polish is much higher.

This is the simplest and least expensive of the lapidary arts. It requires a minimum of equipment and the minimal skills of being able to read the instructions and measure the abrasives. It is an ideal activity for children, or for families to do together. It is especially enjoyable if you are working with material you have found yourself. In addition, you get some beautiful treasures for your efforts.

Preliminary Considerations

Before you buying a tumbling machine, there are some important considerations to bear in mind. In order for the tumbling action to work, the stones must be a variety of sizes. They need to range from, not more than half the diameter of your barrel, to about 1/10th the size of the largest stone. You cannot simply put a few large pieces in the tumbling barrel and expect them to come out nice.

Now, simply gathering an assortment of sizes is not too challenging. If all the sizes you need are not readily available, simply use a hammer to create them. However, if you intend to work with stones the size of melons, you had better be prepared to gather a lot of filler!

If your intention is to just tumble a couple dozen agates you found on vacation, you have different considerations. A machine large enough to do them all at once might be more than you need. A smaller tumbler will require you to process your stones in two or more batches. However, if the machine is going sit idle most of the year, it would be a waste to purchase a larger unit.

All the stones in your barrel need to be the same hardness. The reason is that harder stones will scratch softer ones. If you had even one stone that is harder than the rest, it will put scratches on everything else in the barrel. Of course, stones that are used just for filler can be softer than the

Continued on page 11

Caution, Falling Rock

By Ralph Gamba

Reprinted from JUNE 2011 issue of ROCK TALK, Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

We've all seen the sign CAUTION, FALLING ROCK that we probably take it for granted. Occasionally, we will see a few stones or maybe a boulder or two that fell from a road cut. Then there is the boulder that fell along side of US 321, near Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

We collect in quarries and near road cuts and need to be aware of the danger of falling rocks. The law of gravity has not been repealed. Just ask anyone who recently weighed themselves. Objects fall. The actions of water, freezing water, and temperature changes can dislodge rocks from road cuts and quarry walls. If we are not careful, these rocks can fall on us collectors, causing serious injuries and even death. A helmet, no matter how strong, would not protect anyone from a boulder like the one in the above picture. When collecting in quarries and road cuts, be aware of any danger. Examine your surroundings. If the rocks look loose, they probably are. Even if it looks safe, it still may not be safe. Stay a safe distance from quarry walls. Being foolish and unsafe could lead to losing our access to collecting in quarries. We could also lose our lives. Remember the boulder on the side of US 321.

CAUTION, FALLING ROCK.



*Jessica & David
Suit; Dean &
Wyatt Somers
from
Pamplin, VA*



*Felecia Petrie
& Paul
Westbrook
from
Lynchburg, VA*



*Dean
Brown from
Forest, VA*



*Bernadette
Ellis from
Coleman
Falls, VA*



*Karen &
Robert
Calhoun
from Forest,
VA*

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Up Coming Events



July 16th- 17th- Annual Show sponsored by the Saco Valley Gem & Mineral Club. Conway Middle School, Conway, NH

July 30th- Rudy's Rock Mine Sale- 7AM until noon. See page 3 for details.

July 31st-Aug. 7th Spruce Pine Weekend- Field trips, outdoor and indoor gem shows. Mark your calendar now- more information as we get closer to this date.


August 19th-21st Gem Miners Jubilee- Lebanon Expo Center, Lebanon, PS. www.gem-show.com or call 717-838-8870 for information.

Sept 3rd-6th- Hendersonville, NC gem show and sale Ihitmire Activity Bldg, Lily Pond Rd, Hendersonville, NC.

Sept 9th-11th- Winston Salem NC Forsyth Gem and Mineral Club. 40th annual Gem and Mineral Show - Educational bldg. Dixie Classic Fairgrounds, Winston Salem #9 from 27th St only. Contact wariona1@yadtel.net

Sept. 17th-18th- Annual Gem & Mineral Show sponsored by the Central Pennsylvania Rock and Mineral Club. Zembo Shrine, 2801 N 3rd St. Harrisburg, PA.

Sept 30th-Oct 2nd- Dallas NC, Gaston Gem, Mineral & Faceters Club. Show and swap. Resource Center; 1006 Biggerstaff Park, Dallas Cherryville Highway, Dallas., NC. Free admission. 9-6 each day. Contact Jackay McDaniel at 704-865-6748

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					7	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Meeting 7PM	21	22	23 Callahan's Workshop
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



THE MID-ATLANTIC'S BEST SHOW

RETAIL AND WHOLESALE EXHIBITORS
CLASSES, TALKING & CAMPING
BEAD, JEWELRY AND MINERAL RELATED DEMONSTRATIONS
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ❖ WHOLESALE ROOM

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, Aug. 19-20: 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.
SUNDAY, Aug 21: 10 A.M. - 4 P.M.

\$6 ADMISSION - CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE

Lebanon Expo Center: Route 72
5 mi. N. of PA Turnpike--Exit 266 (old exit 20),
right on Rocherty Road.
www.gem-show.com
(see website for updates)
(717) 838-8870

GEM MINER'S JUBILEE!

August 19 - 21

LEBANON, PA

**Beads! Findings!
Minerals! Fossils!
Gems & Jewelry!**

2011

Fundamentals of Lapidary *from pg.8*

Gems you want to polish.

Measuring the hardness of your rocks may seem daunting, but it can be accomplished with simple tools. A pocketknife is about 6 to 6.5 in hardness; a file is closer to seven. You can also assemble a set of stones of known value for your testing.

Materials of the same hardness will not scratch each other. Therefore, if you want to tumble some agates, use a piece of agate to scratch the other stones you intend to tumble with them. It should not scratch any of them, nor should it or show any wear. If suddenly it wears away on a stone, that piece is much harder and should not be included in your tumbler.

Not all stones will take a polish, just the harder ones. A simple field test will save you from bringing home a lot of useless rock. Try scratching them with a pocketknife. If you cannot scratch the specimen, it will take a polish. You will find others are nothing more than compressed mud. Not only will they not take a polish, they create quite a mess!

Location, location, location. While you are familiar with that saying for locating a business, you need to consider it for your tumbler. These machines are noisy and run 24 hours for days on end. Loreto makes tumblers with a rubber barrel to minimize the noise. While this helps, they are still noisy. You need more than one wall between your bed and the tumbler if you want to get any sleep. If you are using a steel barrel, you will need more than that!

Do not forget about your neighbors either. Simply putting it in the garage may help you sleep, but it may not ingratiate you with your neighbors.

If you do not have a secluded room or basement, consider making a container for it. A cardboard box lined with Styrofoam, or covered with an old blanket, will reduce the sound considerably.

Machines

There are two kinds of tumblers, rotary and vibratory. Rotary tumblers are the ones most people are familiar with. They can be found at any rock shop, scientific supply houses, and many stores that sell toys.

They are the least expensive and come in the widest range of sizes.

Vibratory tumblers shake the ingredients, rather than rolling them over each other. They have the single advantage of being faster. What would take weeks in a rotary tumbler can be done in a couple of days in a vibratory. They also have a significant disadvantage. The barrels do not stand up to coarse tumbling and wear out quickly. Hence, these are usually reserved for finishing and are not recommended for general-purpose use.

When choosing a tumbler, the primary consideration is what size stones you want to tumble. About half the diameter of the barrel is as large as you can finish. Therefore, your least expensive models with a barrel four inches in diameter can only finish two-inch diameter stones. Moving up to a machine twice that size will cost twice as much, require twice the abrasives, and finding twice the amount of filler. For the serious lapidary this is reasonable, but for the part time hobbyist it may not be justifiable.

When considering your budget, include an extra barrel for your machine. Reserve it for polishing only. This is especially important if you are using a rubber barrel. They are very difficult to get completely clean. If you have any abrasive, (even one or two little pieces,) left in the barrel when you try to polish, it will scratch your stones. They will look awful and you will have to go back, clean the barrel more thoroughly, and polish them again.

Successful results have more to do with your choice of abrasives than the machine. Most companies that sell machines also offer abrasives in a kit. They may even be included with the machine. Polishing kits are recommended for the beginner. As you gain experience, you can try different polishes, different combinations and save money by purchasing in quantity.

That's all for now folks, see you next time around.

Jack Curtin

Next month we will continue with "Tumbling Procedures."

The Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg, VA Inc.

Natalie Darling, Editor

211 Chesterfield Rd.

Lynchburg, VA 24502 www.lynchburgrockclub.org

The purpose of the Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg, INC. is to promote education in The Earth Sciences including: Mineralogy, Geology, Gemology, Paleontology, and Crystallography



Lynchburg Rock Raiders is the official FRA association of The Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg, VA INC



*The Gem and Mineral Society of Lynchburg VA, Inc.
Meets on the third Wednesday of each month,
From 7:00pm– 9:00pm
In the auditorium of the Parks and Recreation Building
301 Grove St. Lynchburg, VA 24501
Public is invited, Please join us!*



ON THE WEB: Lynchburg Gem and Mineral Society: www.lynchburgrockclub.org

The SFMS Newsletter, the Eastern Federation Newsletter, and the AFMS Newsletters are available for all members

to read on line at the Federation Websites:

www.amfed.org/sfms, www.amfed.org and www.amfed.org/efmls