



October Newsletter

10/2021

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[Meeting at Fairview Heights Recreation Center](#)
3621 Campbell Ave
Lynchburg Va. 24501
3rd Wed of the month
7:00 pm until 9:00 pm. It will be in the Aviary through the rest of the year

[Wintery weather meetings schedule is if the Lynchburg schools are down for weather then the meeting is cancelled](#)

[Workshop is the 2nd Saturday](#)

President's Meanderings:

By James Tomlin

Hello Everyone,

I am so happy to report that the Willis Mountain trip was absolutely wonderful! We are so fortunate that during this pandemic we are able to get out and safely collect with some of our peers. I don't think we could have enjoyed better weather or nice and cool temperatures. Being that this is one of the only trips on the eastern seaboard this season, we had a great turnout. We had 104 people in attendance spanning 10 surrounding clubs including our own. Might I add, we opened with everyone signing in and on time. We got some great and useful knowledge from the site supervisor Mike on the safety and hazards of the mine as well as a couple of funny jokes. We started our climb up the mountain side via a caravan of Rockhounds and enthusiasts at 9am. Once we were up to the top of the mountain I believe we all stood there for a moment in awe and took in the view of the original part of the mountain that still stands. We then dispersed, some went and started looking right away, others watching as the veterans of Willis Mountain began in the runoff trenches looking for clues and some just chatted, catching up with old friends. There were so many great finds that day with a variety of minerals with lots of oddities and rare occurrences. Some left with a couple of pieces, others left with buckets and a few left with boulders! We finished the day at 1pm with a drive back down the mountain. Those of us that met in the parking lot and the pavilion for lunch swapped rocks and stories of our finds that day. I consider myself very fortunate to not only still collect in such a wonderful location, but also meet so many new friends and put faces to names. (See pictures at the end on this newsletter).

We are in need of volunteers for the upcoming Roanoke Gem and Mineral show. The show will be held on the 26th through the 28th of November. Any capacity you would like to help will be much appreciated. If you help, you will receive a ticket for each day you help out that will go into the drawing being held in December for the William Holland/Wild acres scholarship. It will be in addition to the one ticket you get per person initially. Help will be needed running

of the month.

2020 Officers

PRESIDENT

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Members At Large -

Eric Routon

Youth Out Reach

the clubs sluice, sales, picker's wheel, setup and breakdown.

There will be a signup sheet at the October and November meetings or you may sign up and ask questions through our email lynchburgrockclub@yahoo.com . More information will be available if you are interested.

Next month will be our club auction, we will have a lot of slabs for sale. We will also have some of the club's older equipment up for auction that never got to happen during COVID. Pictures of the club equipment will be at the meeting to view but will be at a different location to pick up.

This month's meeting will be held at Fairview Heights Recreation Center 3621 Campbell Ave, Lynchburg, VA 24501

Your Fellow Rockhound,
James Tomlin
President GMSL

October Meeting Presentation Preview

The Historic Rutherford Mine Pegmatite #2, Amelia Courthouse, Virginia,

by Scott Duresky

Until its permanent closure in 1998, the Rutherford Mine was one of the most important locations in the United States for the collectors of rare-earth and Niobium and Tantalum-bearing minerals. It was also known for some of the finest gem-quality Spessartine garnets in the world, beautiful crystalline masses of Albite var. Cleavelandite and a number of other rare mineral species.

Although I had collected in the Mine many times during the 1960's and 1970's, after unexpectedly acquiring a very large quantity of virtually unexamined mineral specimens 10 years ago, and aware that the last of many research papers was written at the time of the Mine's closure, I made the decision to re-examine the mineral species that occurred in the pegmatite, using modern research tools such as Electron Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS).

The Rutherford Mine was particularly noted for the world-class Microlites, which in the late 19th and early 20th centuries found their way into the collections of major natural history museums in the United States and Europe. The Microlites had been a particular interest of mine as well, and I was aware that in 2010, the IMA had organized the Microlite Group as a member of the larger Pyrochlore Supergroup.

This became my primary area of research – to determine that in addition to **Fluorcalciomicrolite** ($(\text{Ca},\text{Na})_2(\text{Ta},\text{Nb})_2\text{O}_6\text{F}$), which had been confirmed as the dominant member of the Microlite Group in the pegmatite, if other members of the group may have occurred as well. I can now confirm that while one species,

Oxycalciomicrolite ($\text{Ca}_2\text{Ta}_2\text{O}_6\text{O}$) has been tentatively identified, two others have been confirmed: **Kenoplumbomicrolite** ($\text{Pb},\square)_2\text{Ta}_2\text{O}_6(\square,\text{OH},\text{O})$ and **Oxystannomicrolite** ($\text{Sn}_2\text{Ta}_2\text{O}_6\text{Oto}$). **Kenoplumbomicrolite** is the only lead-bearing member of the group, and **Oxystannomicrolite** is the only tin-bearing member, and each of these to date has only been identified from a single other worldwide pegmatite.

Oxycalciopyrochlore ($\text{Ca}_2\text{Nb}_2\text{O}_6\text{O}$), a rare member of the Pyrochlore Group, was also tentatively identified.

Three other species have been confirmed that have not been reported in Mindat:

Brockite ($\text{Ca},\text{Th},\text{Ce}$) $\text{PO}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$)
Columbite $-(\text{Mn}) (\text{Mn}^{2+}\text{Nb}_2\text{O}_6)$

Phlogopite ($\text{KMg}_3(\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_{10}) (\text{OH})_2$)

After seven years of intensive research, what has been assembled is likely the most complete collection, including the newly identified rare species, of the minerals that occurred in the pegmatite.

The Rutherford Mine Research Collection

It is very rare that a complete collection from a historic locality is preserved for future generations of collectors and researchers. With this in mind, and beginning in the late Fall of 2021, this entire collection will be photographed and then stored as part of the Virginia Mineral Project, an entirely separate entity associated with the Friends of Mineralogy, Virginia Chapter.

Protocols and procedures have been developed for the purpose of making this collection available to others, but right now, I am making this request:

If you collected at the Rutherford Mine, you may have specimens which have been some of the stars of your personal collection. If you're thinking of what to do with these special memories of your collecting days, we're asking you to consider donating some of your specimens to the Rutherford Mine Research Collection. We're always looking to upgrade what we have in order to make it more essential and valuable for all.

Programs for the rest of the year*

NOVEMBER MEETING

Happy Thanksgiving. We will have the annual club fundraising auction

DECEMBER MEETING

Merry Christmas. Potluck dinner with a dirty Santa gift exchange.

First Vice President

Virginia is the best commonwealth to find rocks and minerals because Virginia has the Rutherford pegmatite. Pegmatites are **unusually coarse-grained crystalline igneous rocks**, usually of granitic composition and characterized by interlocking crystals several centimeters up to tens of meters in length. From: Encyclopedia of Geology (Second Edition), 2021. As for the name Rutherford, the pegmatites are named after the farmer on whose land they were discovered in 1873. However, mining operations didn't begin until 1881, with collecting getting started a couple of years later. Courtesy of Scott Duresky.

The October meeting will feature the Pegmatites of Rutherford presented by Scott Duresky. Let's give Scott a big welcome.

Thank you to Zachary McKinney for the September presentation of Flying Drones and Geology. I was surprised by how many club members fly drones.

And for the November meeting, we are soliciting items for the club auction. Contact a club officer if you are able to help the club with an item for the auction.

If you would like to present a program or suggest a program for a meeting, please talk to an officer or send an email.

Cheers, Steve Boylan



Field Trips

Our next endeavor is the Roanoke Club's Salem Show on November 26th – 28th where we will be selling, slushing and spinning the picker's wheel. We need all the help we can get so sign up to help.

Note from the Editor

Hi All,

Well, I was unable to make the Willis Mountain trip and it was down to the night before. Oh well, that is the way life is but it will make the next trip that much more exciting for me.

I would love some pictures from any of you and about anything to put in the newsletter. I am giving out of my own pictures so please send me some of yours. Or give me something else to put in the place. That would give me some other inspiration and maybe bring joy to others also.

That is all for now,
Steve

Note from the Membership Chair-person

Debbie Wade

Hi GMSL,

I am hoping one of you would be willing to take over being Membership Chairperson from me.

Primary duties include the following:

- Getting mail from PO Box at Odd Fellows Rd
- Inputting new members on Excel spreadsheet and keeping it maintained
- Mailing new members badges, welcome letters and such
- Checking Facebook to approve qualifying membership requests and Instant Message others with a "please join us" script
- Forwarding any membership payments to the Treasurer
- Keeping Steve and Dave apprised of new members for workshops and newsletter
- Attend Board Meetings

I would gladly sit down with you at my home and show you what I do and pass on all of the equipment and supplies I have here for the club. Of course, I still want to be an active member, just not Membership Chairperson.

Thank you,

Debbie Wade debbie5227@yahoo.com

P.S.: We have 134 members currently in the club

Gem & Mineral Society of Lynchburg Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2021 @ 7:00

Attendance: 26 members 1 guest

Meeting Called to Order By: James Tomlin

On Time Drawing Winners: Brian White, Clint Ferguson, Sydney Tomlin, Nona Haskins, Tyler Stickle, Joan Moore, Holly Bush, and 3 new members that I was not able to get names for

50/50 Winner: John Haskins won \$5.00

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Sign ups for the Willis Mountain trip end tonight.
- Next month (October) we will be at the Fairview Heights building on Campbell Avenue across from the Citgo.
- Starting in November we will be in the Aviary until the end of 2022
- The Salem show is after Thanksgiving on November 26th, 27th and 28th. Please attend and/or Volunteer!
- We will have our annual club auction in November
- We will have our annual Christmas party in December

Program:

- Dave Callaghan have a safety briefing for the Willis Mountain trip
- Zachary McKinney of Zachary McKinney Technology spoke about Drones & Rockhounding

Picture from the Willis Mountain field trip





One of the Dave Woolley's trip notes

By Dave Wolley

Trip #4

St. Augustine

9/29/21

With only two of four washing machines and two of eight driers still running on campus, yesterday afternoon was wasted waiting for machines to become available. Good thing I just purchased new undies, as I ran out of time to get my old ones washed.

A pre-final Closure Disclosure document has been signed: Oct 5 is fast approaching and our vacation will soon be over.

St. Augustine postponed: we have to pick up Cammy's new medications this afternoon from a compounding pharmacy. I hope she likes the added fish flavor. She didn't.

We stopped by the house and met the previous owners, nice folks. Packing like crazy. Nothing to do but we stopped by Hogtown Creek for 5 minutes. This is what we found. Top left is a snaggle tooth shark, Carcharhiniformes: Hemigaleidae - Common. The bars are Cownose ray teeth, Rhinoptera - Common.



Tomorrow, bank transfers for the house and if enough time, St. Augustine.

Bank time was 1:00pm due to Covid short handedness. No St. Augustine today. 9/30/21

Noel drove us by the house again. In driving the neighborhood, we found a small but high-end rock shop 6 blocks away! How is that for rock hunting in the backyard? Feels like home!

If you are interested in all of Dave Woolley's trip notes on his move to Florida let me know and I will send them to you. Write me and request his notes and I will get them out to you.

[Other Links that you may want to check out:](#)

International Gem Society

<https://www.gemsociety.org/reference-library/>

Mineral Cleaning for Amateurs

John's website is full of information that all mineral collectors will find useful and interesting.

<http://www.johnbetts-fineminerals.com/>

Morefield Mine Tour:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5aQp57HMso>

Impromptu lecture on crystallography:

The crystallography talk can be found in the You Tube videos at https://youtu.be/sTtxMrh9_QI, or copy and paste in your browser: [Crystallography by Dave Woolley](#).

A Guide to Ethical and Conflict-Free Jewelry

<https://ethicaljewellery.org/introduction>.

Insurance Institute of Jewelry Appraisal

https://instituteofappraisal.com/Investigation_of_Artificial_Color_Infusion_of_Gemstones.pdf

https://instituteofappraisal.com/Exposing_the_GIA_Juggernaut.pdf

Rock collecting guide for geology beginners

<https://www.basementguides.com/rock-collecting-and-geology-basics/>

Facebook Link for the club

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/432839874271992/?ref=share>

Link to Mindat web page for Willis Mountain

[Willis Mountain Mine, Sprouses Corner, Farmville Mining District, Buckingham Co., Virginia, USA \(mindat.org\)](http://www.mindat.org/willismountain)

If you need to renew your club membership you can let me or Debbie Wade know and we can email you the form. You can make checks out to GMSL.

Our Mailing address is:

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