



The Tidewater Prospector



Newsletter for the Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society July 2020 Virginia Beach, VA

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Notes from the President

by Robin Stoughton



I hope everyone is doing good and hanging in there through this ongoing mess. I know all of you want to get back to the meetings and so do I. I had planned

on having the meeting this month since our show was cancelled but got a message from the church saying we cannot have our meetings until possibly September. I was quite annoyed with this and called the church and was told they have decided not to let any groups meet due to the virus concerns. They are allowing church service on Sunday but that is it. So, once again we will not be able to have a meeting.

We are still trying to plan a rock sale at our house but it has also been delayed until late August or September.

There are no workshops scheduled for the next two months or so.



TREASURER'S REPORT



I hope the club is able to resume meetings at the church in July! It has certainly been a long time since our last meeting in February!

It was another quiet month for the club's treasury. Two adults mailed their club dues for a total of \$25. Our only paid expense was \$136 rent for July's storage unit. The treasury balance is about \$4,449 with 67 adults and one child paying dues for 2020.

CLUB DUES DEADLINE **EXTENDED (again!)**

Due to the coronavirus preventing the club from meeting, the deadline to pay club dues for 2020 has been **extended** until Friday, August 21st. Dues are **\$15 for adults** and **\$7.50 for children** under 17 years old. You can pay your club dues any time by sending a check to the **club's P.O. Box address** (on last page).

Editor's Note: Lloyd sent in his report before we were told that we were not having a meeting this month.

ROGER'S REFLECTIONS

By Roger Tiangco

"SPACE AND TIME! NOW I SEE IT IS TRUE - SPEEDING THROUGH SPACE. SPEEDING THROUGH HEAVEN AND STARS. SPEEDING AMID THE SEVEN SATELLITES AND BROAD RINGS AND THE DIAMETER OF 80,000 MILES. SPEEDING TAILED METEORS THROWING FIREBALLS LIKE THE REST!" These are the word-for-word recollection of then 41-year old Mr. Walt(er) Whitman, USA famous poet. (1819 – 1892). The Southern Delta Aquarid meteors peaked on July 20, 1860 at the rate of 15 – 20 meteors per hour. This also caught the attention of Mr. Frederick Church – New York landscape Painter and was inspired to paint this strange huge meteor procession and titled it: **THE METEOR OF 1860.**



June 30, 2018 – was proclaimed "ASTEROID & METEORITE DAY" in Arizona (USA). This is in celebration of Baringer Crater (Meteor crater in Arizona Desert, east of Flagstaff). It measures at 3900 feet wide x 560 feet deep. That happened 20,000 years ago! Its destructive force was bigger than a 30 megaton H-Bomb or 30 million tons of TNT! Whereas, in the morning of June 30, 1908 – another gigantic meteorite, devastated an enormous area of Tunguska, Siberia region. The blast had flattened trees over several miles and the effect was felt over 1500 square miles - strangely enough – no crater was seen!

The biggest meteorite strike so far – witnessed by man, also occurred in Siberia in 1947. Hundreds of people saw a brilliant ball of light as it sped southward across the sky shedding a trail of sparks. Within 4 or 5 seconds – it vanished, then a giant pillar of smoke, rose 20 miles into the atmosphere. On the slope of Sikhote-alin Mountains, investigators found over 100 holes, up to 75 feet across and 40 feet deep. The meteorite apparently broke up just before impact and strewed meteoric iron for miles and miles. The Chelyabinsk meteor or February 15, 2013 – was called a "superbolide" – that entered Earth's atmosphere over Russia. Property damage was over 7200 buildings and over 1600 non-fatal injuries. Pieces from the outer portion of the meteor were found typical of the "stony type" – 90% Silicate, 5% Sulfide, 5% iron-nickel.

Scientists believe the birthplace of meteors is the region between Mars and Jupiter. Some have suggested that asteroids, bolides, comets, planetoids, tektites/moldavites and NEO (near earth objects) – represent the debris formed when a "planet" once orbiting between Mars and Jupiter blew up and disintegrated. About the size of a grain of sand – Meteors become visible as they burn up in the Earth's atmosphere. Friction with the air causes them to glow and vaporize, resembling a swift streak of light, we called "shooting stars". When the Earth crosses the orbit of a comet, whole swarms of meteors called "meteor showers" can be seen burning up in the atmosphere. A meteorite - is a meteor that reaches the Earth's surface, before it completely burned up in the atmosphere. Many meteorites ultimately find their way into "rock and mineral collections".

There are three (3) principal kinds of meteorites - A). Stony meteorites: consist chiefly of Silicate with some minute ferrogenous element. B). Iron meteorites: consist of Iron, Nickel, Siderites and Cobalt. C). Stony-Iron meteorite: consist of 50 % metal and 50% stone (some may have Diamonds within them). Meteorites often show a "flowage" or near flowage pattern on their surface, due to extreme heating.

Meteors are just not easy to find – as one geologist "meme" have noted - meteorite discoveries have been made "by chance" - many times in the form of a farmer plowing his field and turning up a meteorite, bringing to the point that Meteorites can bury themselves to a considerable depth and then somehow gradually get closer to the surface - where some of them are eventually turned up. This phenomena is often referred to as "stone object working its way up – in climates with cold winters, solid rock conducts heat more rapidly than an equivalent volume of soil. As the soil freezes and then expands, a rock object is thrust upward by force of the ice crystals growing beneath it and eventually, the object will reach the surface.

Per research of our own Editor: Ms Judy Hyszczak, "Odd-looking rocks are almost never meteorites. Many Museums have collections of stones that people have brought in for analysis: they are often referred to as "METEORWRONGS".

Brad's Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

SHEET & WIRE STORAGE

The more you work with jewelry, the more problems you have finding the piece of metal you need. My pieces of sheet were generally stored in various plastic bags, and the wire was in separate coils. Few were marked, so it often took me a while to locate that piece of 26 ga fine sheet I bought last year, especially since I usually take my supplies back and forth to classes.

A tip from a friend helped me organize everything. I bought an expanding file folder from the office supplies store (the kind that has 13 slots and a folding cover) and marked the tabs for each gauge of metal I use. Then I marked all my pieces of sheet with their gauge, put them in plastic bags, marked the gauge on the bag, and popped them into the folder. I usually store coils of wire loose in the folder, but they can also be bagged if you prefer. I use one tab for bezel wire and one for the odd, miscellaneous items.

The resulting folder is really convenient when I want to take my metal out to a class or workshop, and it's colorful enough for me to easily find in the clutter of the shop!



Be More Productive With Brad's "How To" Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

LITTLE BALLS

I often use little balls of silver and gold as accent pieces on my designs. They can be made as needed from pieces of scrap. Cut the scrap into little pieces, put them on a solder pad and melt them with a torch. Then throw the balls into a small cup of pickle.

If you need to make all the balls the same size, you need the same amount of metal to melt each time. The best way to do that is to clip equal lengths of wire.



But there's an easier way to get a good supply of balls. Some casting grain comes in near perfect ball form. Just grab your tweezers and pick out the ones you need. When you need larger quantities of balls, pour the casting grain out onto a baking pan, tilt the pan a bit, and let all the round pieces roll to the bottom. Bag the good ones, and pour the rest back into your bag for casting. Balls can be sorted into different sizes using multiple screens.



This and that

Arm Chair Field Trip...

Included with Brad Smith's article, he wrote:

In the last couple months, I've shared the news about my Culver City, CA club starting to hold our monthly meetings online to try and keep the club active and together. We have done three already, and the presentations are going over well with our members. The neat thing is that the speaker does not have to be from our local area. As a result we have a far greater variety of presentations to choose from.

Here's our June presentation - a field trip to Davis Creek, CA for obsidian, presented by Terry Wilson from the Ventura, CA club. Good explanations of what to look for in the field and how to cut the material for best color.

https://zoom.us/rec/play/vp0kfuqorT43GICdswSDA_YqW9W0fa6shiMarKcMzEi3AnlWYFv3ZeARNDWgwM-CFwwbJm1BT6bCAks

Password: #1meeting

DO YOU KNOW?

Which of the following topaz varieties are really some other mineral?

- Bohemian Topaz
- Brazilian Topaz
- Bahia Topaz
- Citrine Topaz
- False Topaz
- Gold (or Golden) Topaz
- Indian Topaz
- King Topaz
- Madeira Topaz
- Occidental Topaz
- Oriental Topaz
- Smoky Topaz
- Spanish Topaz
- Star Topaz
- Topaz Quartz
- Topaziolite



Answers are on page 8

PROJECT OF THE MONTH



Since we have been in a stay at home and restricted movement order, I was wondering what the others club members have been up to the last few months. I miss the meetings where we can show off each other's individual projects and share information about them.

To fill my time, I have been investing more time into my lapidary projects and thinking it would be nice to see some of those projects in the newsletter as a Project of the Month. I might like to try one of them myself. We have sculptors, cabbers, silversmiths, wire wrappers, display artist, those that cut opals and the list keeps on going. I hope other members can and will submit a project of theirs in the upcoming months. We have many talented people in the club and I enjoy seeing their accomplishments.

This project is one of many that I have worked on. I call it the Blue Water Pendent project, I had the idea, but had to figure out how to accomplish each step, so it took about 3 days to finish.

I started with faceting and piece of blue glass using a Jim Perkins Twisted design from Rock & Gem Magazine. It was a fascinating cut, ending in ½ inch across. This took a day.

Next, the Blue stone was mounted into a part of a sea shell that was collected on the beach in Hatteras, North Carolina. I drilled two holes using diamond drill bits into the shell. The small hole at the top for the Jump Ring and the larger one for the stone in the center. Next, I beveled the hole in the center and cut flats with diamond jeweler files to fit the stone in place. The diamond drill bits I purchased online via Amazon and the diamond files from Harbor Freight for this. Both were inexpensive. Then I epoxied the stone into its final shell setting, cleaning off any excess glue with acetone.

The gold colored jump ring and chain was added to complete the project. I thought the gold color would go well with the brown and cream in the shell. But a leather or simulated leather strap could be used in place of the chain to give it a more coastal vibe.

This was a simple project, but came out very nice. I believe it will be a gift for one of my daughters or granddaughters.

Project of the Month Idea and Project by Martin Salyers

Gold & Magnetite Field Trip Report

JUNE 27, 2020

It was a beautiful morning - we had to rise with the sun to make the 3 ½ hour drive to the Lee Wayside Historical Village. We participated in the Central Virginia Gold Prospector Club (CVGP) meeting that was held outside in order to maintain the social distance guidelines for COVID -19. The CVGP club has some very nice and informative members. The door prizes were amazing - various equipment and several significantly sized gold nuggets. They also provided a very detailed safety brief. A huge thank you to our very own, Tom Leary who was our very gracious and knowledgeable host for this trip.

The CVGP Club leases seven claims on 1866 acres that are teeming with wildlife. So while you are looking for gold and various minerals, you must keep an eye out for snakes, bears and other sometimes aggressive animals. This land is shared with a hunting club so you may run into a hunter now and again. You also have to keep an eye out for not so nice plants such as poison ivy. The roads are dirt but fairly well maintained to certain points where you either have to have a 4 x 4 vehicle or hike in. Because of the vastness of the area and the somewhat hostile wildlife it is highly recommended to stay with the group. We did "lose" one member who thankfully after about five hours, was able find a way back to "civilization" – safe & sound.



Tom took the group to claim one - we drove most the way then had a nice leisurely walk about 1/8th of a mile. Along the way Tom pointed out the various quartz and garnet veins – we actually found a few nice garnets right on the road. At the end of the road we crossed the creek and looked to the right, just in the woods a bit, was a very nice small waterfall. We put in near the base of the waterfall and panned for about an hour. We then moved to another branch of the creek taking sample pans along the way. I did find a nice flake of gold in this area and took a scoop of pay dirt to process later. I am very happy to report, I found more color!

We then drove to the Kyanite area where everyone was able to collect a few specimens. As we gathered at the vehicle site Tom actually found an old (1920's) silver quarter just lying on the road. The value today should be worth approximately \$3.50. Silver & Gold – that's a great day! Then the group went to the magnetite area and back to pan for gold again.



We had seven TGMS members in attendance – a good number considering the distant drive and these uncertain times that require patience and flexibility. Thank you to all who attended, I enjoyed getting to know you better and enjoyed seeing some of the projects you have been working on these past few months. I actually joined the CVGP club and will spend the summer getting to know the area a bit better. If there is enough interest, I will try to plan another field trip to this location in the fall .



Rose River Field Trip

Saturday, July 18

I hope you can join us to collect Unakite on the **Rose River** in Syria, VA. We will meet at 9:00 AM at the Graves Mountain Farm & Lodge parking lot (see red pin in map below). Then after the safety briefing, we will caravan as a group to the collection spot. There is no fee for this dig as it is along an open river that cuts through the Graves' Mountain Lodge. We should have no issues with social distancing as we spread out up and down the river.



You can drive up for the day or drive up Friday & stay for the whole weekend. Graves' Mountain Farm & Lodges have many types of accommodations available from tent camping to cabins and lodge rooms – call early if you are wanting to make a reservation. They also have a general store and a café, so after a long day of searching you can drop in to the café for a bite to eat before heading home.

Please contact Kelley Finch, at 757-630-6607 (leave a message) or via email at KelleyFinch@gmail.com to sign up for this event.



Map / Address / Website:

205 Graves Mountain Lane
Old Blue Ridge Turnpike
Syria, VA 22743

<https://www.gravesmountain.com>



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About This Publication

The Tidewater Prospector is the monthly newsletter of the Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society, Virginia Beach, Virginia, associated with the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Permission to copy freely granted when proper credit given to both the publication and the author.

The Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit organization devoted to the collecting and study of minerals, gemstones, geology, paleontology and the lapidary arts as well as the love and deep appreciation of the great outdoors.

Meetings are the third Friday of each month at 7:30 PM at Memorial United Methodist Church located at 804 Gammon Road, Virginia Beach, VA Our monthly meetings are open to everyone, no admission is charged.

Website: <http://tgms.weebly.com/>
Please contact Brooks Britt with any photos that you would like to add to our site. Email him at: bhbritt@verizon.net You can also view this newsletter on the site.

Email hyszczak@cox.net to submit articles to the newsletter editor. Deadline is third of the month for material for the newsletter - but the sooner, the better!

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com> Login to FB, then go to Groups and in the search box, type in "Tidewater Gem & Mineral Society", The page is open to view by anyone. Click "join" to join the group to add photos of your own and to post information. Brooks administrates the site and will get back with you.

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DO YOU KNOW ANSWERS:

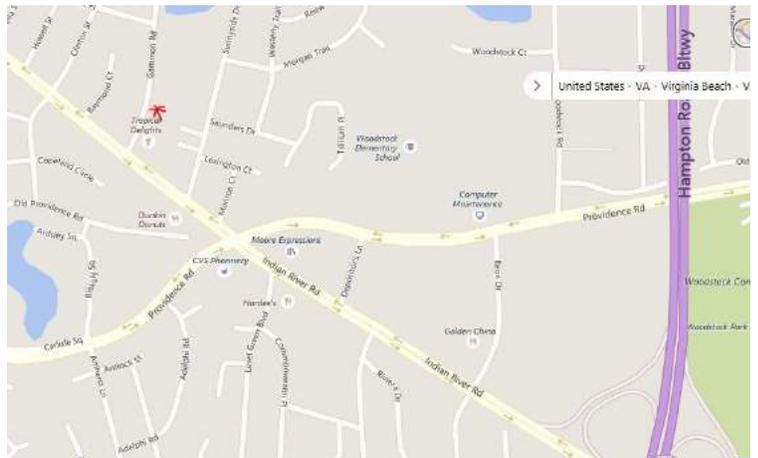
Which of the listed topaz varieties are not really topaz? Most likely, all of them! The only possible exception is "Star Topaz," which might be topaz, but is usually in fact yellow star sapphire.

The names Bohemian Topaz, Brazilian Topaz, Bahia Topaz, Citrine Topaz, False Topaz, Gold (or Golden) Topaz, Madeira Topaz, Occidental Topaz, Spanish Topaz, and Topaz Quartz are all applied to yellow or golden quartz (i.e., citrine).

Indian Topaz, King Topaz, Oriental Topaz, and sometimes Brazilian Topaz are names used for yellow-brown corundum (i.e., yellow-brown sapphire).

Smoky Topaz is another name for smoky quartz, and Topaziolite is another name for yellow-brown andradite garnet.

Yeah, you've got to be careful when someone offers to sell you a "... topaz!" Source: H. Albert Gilg, *Topazius: A Story of Fact and Fiction in Topaz: Perfect Cleavage (Lithographie)*



Unfortunately, the Church is not allowing us to have our meeting in July at the church.

