

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH 2014

Volume 1

Issue 1

AMERICAN ROCKHOUND

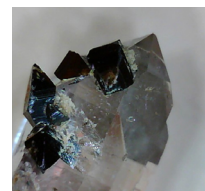


FEATURES

- 5 The New Kids On the Block!
6 Our Staff
10 North Carolina, The Emerald Capital of North America
10 Hiddenite Mining District
Richard Jacquot
24 Crabtree Emerald Mine
Richard Jacquot
28 The Future Of Emerald Mining In North Carolina
Richard Jacquot
29 Interview with Emerald Hunters Jamie Hill, Mark Randle and Geologist Wade Edward Speer
Richard Jacquot



Butch and Jamie p. 23



Shingletrap p. 55



Rockhound News p. 49



NAEM emeralds p. 16



Crabtree emeralds p. 26

REGULAR COLUMNS

- 37 Field Trips: Crabtree Emerald Mine
Richard Jacquot
46 Crabtree Specimen In Space
Ken Brandt, M. Ed.
47 Kids' Corner
with Steve Barr
49 Rockhound News: A Current Look At The Rules And Regulations For Mineral Collecting In The North Carolina Forests
Richard Jacquot
55 Ghost Mines: Memories of Shingletrap
Rob Whaley
59 Rockhound Recipes: Grilled Southwest Chicken Tenders With Roasted Corn And Cilantro-Lime Butter!
Adam Flinchum
60 Rock Shopper & Shows

ON THE COVER:

Top left: The "NAEM Emerald" from North American Emerald Mines in Hiddenite, North Carolina. Specimen Houston Museum of Natural Science, photo Harold and Erica VanPelt. Bottom right: The "Carolina Emperor" from the Adams Farm in Hiddenite, North Carolina. Specimen North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, photo Richard Jacquot. See related article titled "North Carolina The Emerald Capital of North America," beginning on page 10.



Left to right: John Deney, Steve Barr and Richard Jacquot working a vein in the floor of the quarry at the North American Emerald Mines, May, 2012. Pete Hornish photo

The New Kids On the Block!

Welcome to the first issue of American Rockhound Magazine! We are very happy to be here and I hope you will find this publication to be an effective tool to help advance and enhance the hobby of rock, gem, mineral, fossil and artifact collecting. We want this magazine to be a useful source to keep you up to date on new dig sites, mine closures, collecting on private property and current information on Forest Service and BLM rules and regulations for rockhounding. We offer advertisement for our readers to promote their various hobby related venues, show dates and a classified section for those wanting to get their message out to our readers.

We have some great regular features as well to include interviews with professional miners, rockhounds, prospectors and mine and land owners, to let them give you first hand information on the status of their latest finds, adventures and get the latest collecting site information straight from the source.

Each issue will feature fantastic gems, minerals, fossils and cover historic finds made across the country, plus lots of other cool hobby related stuff. The "Kids Corner" is hosted by rockhound and professional cartoonist Steve Barr. Steve will keep the kids informed and educated about the hobby while making the learning fun. Our "Field Trips" section will cover trips to locations all over the United States. Many trips will be M.A.G.M.A. hosted trips here in the southeast, while others will be submitted by our members and readers across the country. Our "Rockhound News" section will cover every aspect of the hobby. If it is news that affects our readers and mineral collecting, we will have it here. "Rockhound Reflections" will give our readers a chance to share with us how this great hobby has changed their lives.

We are just getting started and the magazine will grow as we get settled in. If you have suggestions for us on how we can make this publication better, new categories to add, new features, information that you feel needs to be shared with our readers, please don't hesitate to contact us. I can be reached anytime by email: rick@wncrocks.com, phone: 828-683-1048, 828-779-4501 or write us at: American Rockhound, PO Box 542, Leicester, NC, 28748.

This is all new to us, so give us time to adjust and get things rolling, I guarantee you won't be disappointed!



North Carolina The Emerald Capital of North America Hiddenite Mining District

Richard Jacquot

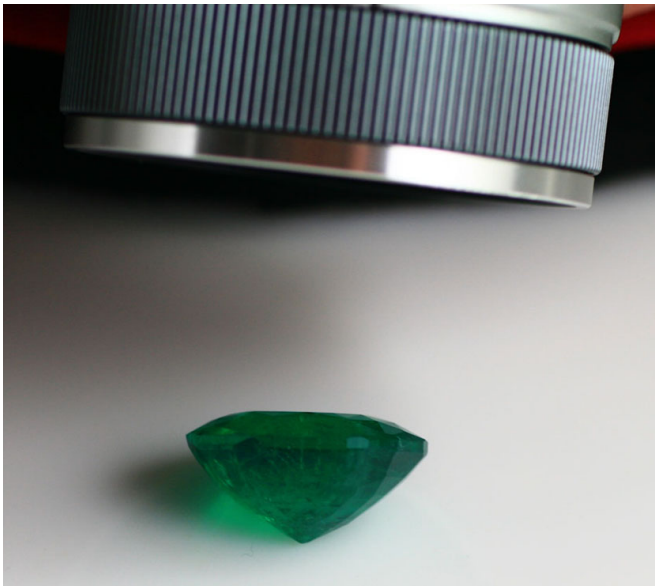
In all of North America, there is one shining star when it comes to emeralds, North Carolina. The town of Hiddenite and the Grassy Creek Township are home to the top producing emerald mines in the country. It's no wonder that emerald is the official North Carolina state stone.

We'll start in Hiddenite. This small town, located in Alexander County in the mountain foothills of Western North Carolina, has consistently produced record setting emerald specimens since the 1800s. The current record holders are the 1,869 carat "NAEM Emerald", the largest emerald specimen ever mined in North America (NAEM, 2003), the 64.83 carat cut stone "Carolina Emperor" which holds the North American record as the largest faceted emerald (Adams Farm, 2009) and a 591 carat, 10" twin crystal found at NAEM in 2006, the longest emerald in North America. While emeralds have been found sporadically at a few locations in Alexander County, there are two main mine sites in Hiddenite that produce these gems, the Adams Farm (formerly the Warren Farm) and the North American Emerald Mines (formerly the Rist Mine.)

The emeralds were first discovered in 1874, but it was a man named John Adlai D. Stephenson who first brought the emeralds of Hiddenite to light in 1875. He realized what the emeralds were and began purchasing them from local farmers. The farmers called the emeralds "Green Bolts," believing the emeralds were fused green glass caused by lightning strikes. Stephenson also found pieces of another green stone that he originally thought was diopside, which was later identified as spodumene and given the name "Hiddenite" after the mineralogist William Earl Hidden.

One of the early dig sites in Hiddenite was known as the Warren Farm, which was the site of the first commercial mining operations in the area. W.E. Hidden formed the Emerald and Hiddenite Mining Company in 1880 and mined the Warren Farm until 1888. Early finds included a 1,270 carat twin crystal found in 1881 and a 1,276 carat hexagonal crystal found in 1886. These two emeralds held the record as North America's largest emerald specimens at the time. The 1,276 carat crystal resides in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C.. The 1,270 carat twin crystal specimen was deposited in the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Unfortunately, in 1950 it was stolen and never recovered.

After the Emerald and Hiddenite Mine was closed, the property was mined off and on with moderate success by various other entities including the American Gem Mining Syndicate and the Hiddenite Mining



Photographing the Carolina Emperor

I spent a day at Terry Ledford's in 2011 with Mark Randle and Ed Speer photographing the Carolina Emperor. It was mined in North Carolina and remained in North Carolina at the state museum in Raleigh. A big thank you to Terry Ledford, Renn Adams and the anonymous donor that made that happen.

*Top left: Getting a close up with my macro lens.
Photo Wade Edward Speer*

*Top right: Two of the smaller stones that were cut from the same crystal as the Emperor.
Photo Richard Jacquot*

*Left: Mark getting a closer look at the Emperor.
Photo Richard Jacquot*

*Bottom left: Ed Speer positioning the Emperor for a picture.
Photo Richard Jacquot*

*Bottom right: Holding the Emperor.
Photo Richard Jacquot*





Top left and center: The Lofgren, Kehoe emeralds with a total weight of almost 400 carats. Some of these emeralds have since been cut into nice faceted stones.

Photos courtesy Terry Lofgren, John Kehoe, Richard Jacquot and Amberlyn Studios.



“You know in life you have things happen that you consider as one of the best things that could ever happen, and this emerald find is up there as one of my top picks.” Terry Lofgren