



# STONEY STATEMENTS

A monthly publication of the Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society

VOLUME 45

August 2019

NUMBER 8



**NEXT MEETING:** August 19, 2019  
**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Clear Lake Park Building  
 5001 Nasa Parkway  
 Seabrook, Texas

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

August Meeting	1	<p><b><u><a href="#">AUGUST MONTHLY MEETING</a></u></b></p> <p>Healing Gemstones and Their Meaning. We will talk about the different types of gemstones that heal for your mind and body plus the meaning behind them. Also the 7 primary Chakra colors which are typically broken down into seven colors of the rainbow and their meanings and attributes of healing techniques and healing stones. The jewelry that you can make and give for gifts to people that are struggling in their lives with either illness or mental balance. This will open for a general audience. Visitors are always welcomed. <a href="http://clgms.org">clgms.org</a></p>
Meeting Minutes, August birthstone	2	
Program listing	3-4	
Lightning Ridge Opals	4-7	
Upcoming Programs and Shows	8-9	

**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 17, 2019 CLGMS MEETING**

Morgan will finalize the 2019/2020 budget:

- The Scholarship (tentatively) will be the same: 3x \$2000.- (Committee - subject to change based on 2020 revenue).
- The Community benefit: 3x \$500.- (Charlie/Bernice Timme)
- Library donation: around \$500.- (Committee)
- Advertising for 2020 show: \$2500.- (Cyndi McGowan)
- Equipment Supplies/repair: \$5000.- (Trina -Genie wheels)

Other topics:

- Need to order promotional merchandise (blue bags and foam rocks) (David).
  - We will have Rock Table (Sandy) and Dino Guy (Trina) to attract more children.
  - Need to start printing flyers and postcards (David/Sara).
  - Fix the Gem mine gate structure.
  - To pay the PCC in full instead of partial payment to secure future dates.
  - Possible increasing the table price due to increasing cost of setting up.
- Congratulations to our winners of the three (3) \$2000.00 Scholarships.

**Board of Directors (BOD) minutes, June 3, 2019:**

There is no formal July Board of Directors (BOD) minutes as the quorum was not met (only a total of 3 people showed up). However, we did a quick discussion on try to figure out on the cleaning up of the storage room especially dealing with the display cases. We will keep a few good ones and try to see if we can get a cabinet maker to build the collapsible ones.

Peridot



Sardonyx



Spinel



The August birthstone was originally sardonyx, and then peridot was added. August babies have a plethora of options given the addition of spinel, which can be found in a variety of colors!

**Upcoming Program Listing - We are looking forward to programs.**

2019 Program drafted listing is updated below with additional topics to make this an exciting year.

Date of Program	Topic	Presented by
August 19, 2019	The healing power of various stones/rocks	Theresa Lowdermilk
September 16, 2019	<p>Ten years of revealing “Lost” Cities and other ancient secrets with Airborne Lidar.</p> <p>Since 2009 researchers from the NSF National Center for Airborne Laser Mapping (NCALM), which is jointly operated by the University of Houston and the University of California at Berkeley, have aided archeologists working in Mexico and Central America to uncover what is hidden under the dense forest canopies. Employing airborne light detection and ranging or lidar for short NCALM’s maps have unveiled tens of thousands of ancient Maya structures and, hundreds of settlements, many of which were previously unknown to modern science, and built by the Maya and other cultural groups through Mexico and Central America. In addition lidar has contributed to mapping ancient agricultural and irrigation systems along with topographic modifications used as for transportation and defensive mechanisms. This evening Dr. Juan Carlos Fernandez-Diaz of NCALM of the University of Houston will provide an overview of lidar technology and the many archaeological projects that NCALM has undertaken which have</p>	<p>Juan Carlos Fernandez Diaz, PhD Senior Researcher University of Houston National Center for Airborne Laser Mapping <a href="http://ncalm.cive.uh.edu/berkeley.edu">ncalm.cive.uh.edu/berkeley.edu</a> Airborne Operations Coordinator / Electronics Engineer</p>

	enabled a revolution in the way archaeologists identify and map ancient human settlements.	
October 21, 2019	<a href="#">Magnetic Mars</a>	Christine Shupla, Lunar and Planetary Institute, Universities Space Research Association, Houston, Texas;
November 18, 2019	Show and Tell	Open
December 16, 2019	Show and Tell	Open

### “Lightning Ridge Opals”

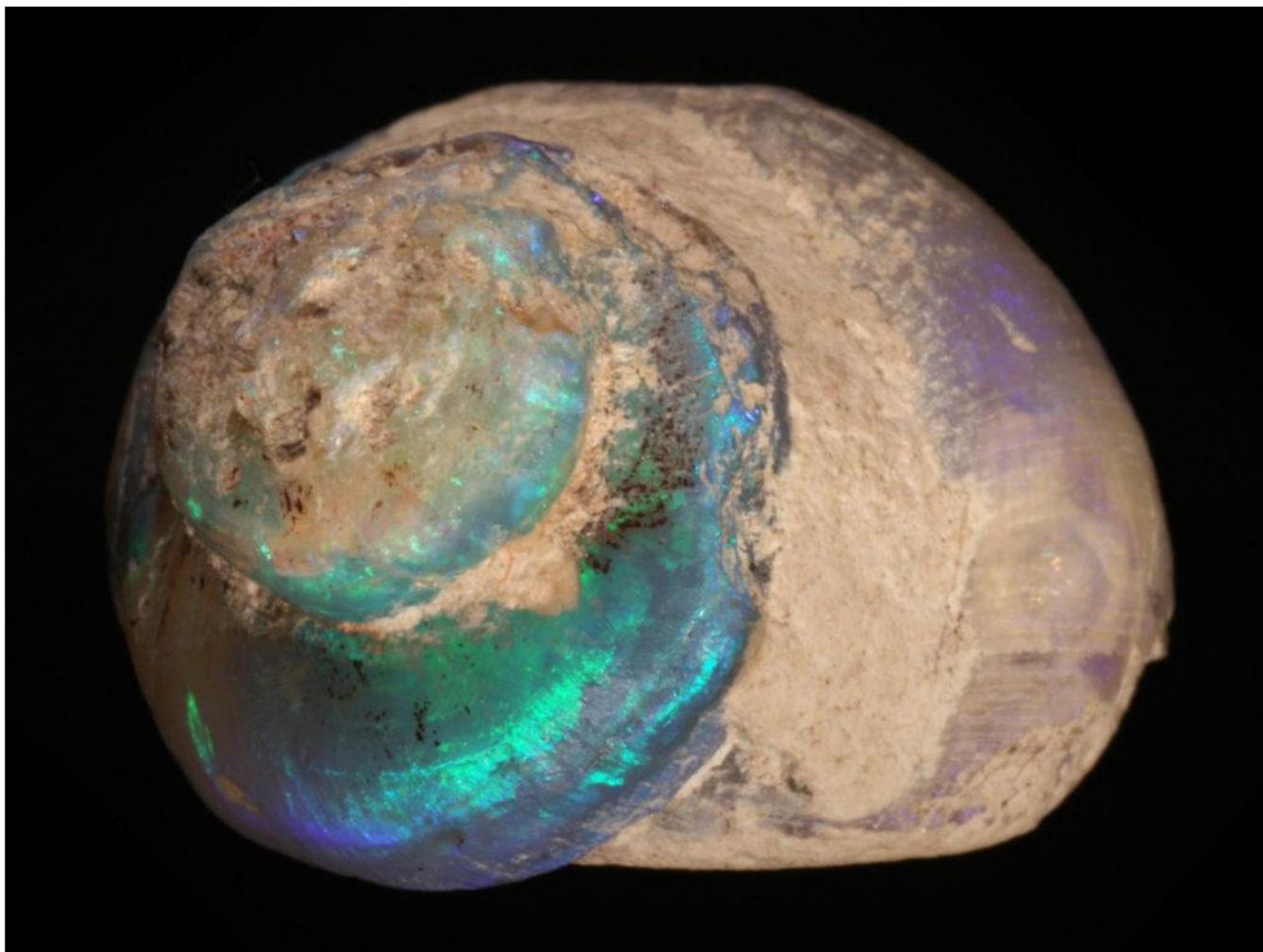
**CLOAKED IN** white dust and surrounded by expansive plains, the town of Lightning Ridge produces the bulk of the world’s precious black opal. This rare gemstone, prized for its dazzling play of color, hides out of sight in the Australian outback beneath a town roughly 450 miles northwest of Sydney. People have come to the Ridge to find their fortune chasing precious opal for more than 100 year.

Recent opalized fossils of important scientific value have been discovered: Bones, teeth, shells, and plant material turned to opal, embedded in the ancient claystone. These 100 million years old gemstones form under a thin veneer of sediment. Some of the opalized fossils unearthed at Lightning Ridge represent animal species found nowhere else, and they are packed with information from the Cretaceous Period — the tail end of the age of the dinosaurs. The prehistoric remains — some smaller than a fingernail — can be found edging out of mine face, or in the piles of discarded opal-bearing dirt, churned out by miners by the truckload.

“If it were not for the opal miners — many of whom have sharp eyes and regard the fossils with as great a sense of awe as paleontologists do — we would not have, or know anything about, these fossils,” says paleontologist, gemologist, and long-term resident of the Ridge, Jenni Brammall. As valuable as the fossils might be to science, miners are usually the first to lay eyes on them, and this presents a conundrum: Opal miners hold the mineral rights to whatever opal they find in their

registered mineral claim, and that includes opalized fossils. When money gets tight — and it often does — a miner might destroy an opalized fossil in the hope of extracting saleable precious opal, or sell the fossil overseas where it can fetch a hefty sum. Sometimes they keep the fossils they find for their sentimental value, leaving them tucked away in private collections.

- For decades, Brammall and a small group of peers have been treading a fine line to help the community understand the value of opalized fossils while urging them to donate particularly rare finds. A cornerstone of their efforts is the Australian Opal Center, which was founded in the late 1990s and has quickly outgrown its small showroom on the main street of town. The center holds the most diverse public collection of opalized fossils in the world, largely amassed through donations by opal miners, many of whom bestow their finds through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, which offers tax deductions to donors.



An opalized freshwater snail, donated by opal miner David Sanders. *Visual: Robert A. Smith / Australian Opal Center*

But despite these efforts, countless opalized fossils are being lost to the black market, pushed out of the reach of research institutions by the highest bidder. This is why Brammall and her colleagues are ramping up their efforts, planning and designing an iconic museum and research facility to be built at the historic Three Mile opal field outside of town to showcase the unrivalled natural heritage of the region. They are also working to raise funds to purchase precious fossils unearthed at the Ridge so they can be preserved in perpetuity in a public collection, accessible to both the community and researchers. The mining community, which is struggling through the current drought and always at the mercy of opal buyers and their temperamental tastes, recognizes that things need to change to ensure a sustainable future for the town, and they are largely supportive of the paleontologists' efforts.

Echoing other residents, Barbara Moritz, who came to Lightning Ridge with an opal miner in the 1990s, says the new Australian Opal Center “can't come soon enough.”



The opalized remains of Eric, a pliosaur from the Mesozoic Era, were discovered in 1987 by an opal miner at Coober Pedy, South Australia. Today they're displayed at the Australian Museum in Sydney.

*Visual: Stuart Humphreys via Australian Museum*

**OPAL IS** found commonly around the world, but precious opal is very rare and geologists say nothing compares to that produced in Central Australia. Opalized fossils have likewise been found at other opal fields in Australia, but Lightning Ridge stands out for preserving the greatest diversity of extinct freshwater and land-living creatures, including dinosaurs galore. A hundred million years ago, the now-arid interior of Australia was flooded by a vast inland sea and Lightning Ridge sat on its edge. As the sea retreated, the leading theory goes, it exposed a peculiar mix of sediments forming a sandstone laced with reactive minerals. Rocks nearer the surface began to weather, producing a groundwater rich in silica. It lay in cracks in the rock and filled any cavities, including the skeletal remains



An opalized dinosaur toe bone, donated by Matthew Goodwin. *Visual: Robert A. Smith / Australian Opal Center*

**Reference:** <https://undark.org/article/chasing-opal-fossils-australian-outback/>

**UPCOMING SHOWS AND PROGRAMS**

SCFMS and MEMBER CLUB GEM SHOWS			
	<b>Aug 10-11, Gonzales, LA, Baton Rouge G&amp;MS, Lamar Dixon Expo Center,</b> <a href="http://www.brgemandmineral.org">www.brgemandmineral.org</a>	<b>Aug 17-18, Bossier City, LA, ARK-LA-TEX G&amp;MS, Bossier Civic Center,</b> <a href="http://larockclub.com">larockclub.com</a>	<b>Aug 24-25, Jasper, TX, Pine Country G&amp;MS, The [Jasper] Event Center,</b> <a href="http://www.pinecountry-gms.org">www.pinecountry-gms.org</a>
<b>August 31 – Sept 2, 2019 Silver City, NM: Grant County Rolling Stones Gem &amp; Mineral Society; Grant County Veterans Memorial Conference Center, 3031 Hwy 180 East</b> <a href="https://rollingstonesgms.blogspot.com">https://rollingstonesgms.blogspot.com</a>	<b>Sept 14, 2019 Rockford, IL: Rock River Valley Gem and Mineral Society; Odd Fellows Club, 6219 Forest Hills Rd</b> Email: <a href="mailto:tcdc78@comcast.net">tcdc78@comcast.net</a>	<b>Sept 21-22, 2019 Grand Junction, CO: Annual show; Grand Junction Gem &amp; Mineral Club; Mesa County Fairgrounds, 2785 Hwy 50</b> <a href="http://www.grandjunctionrockclub.org">www.grandjunctionrockclub.org</a>	<b>Nov 8-10, Humble, TX, Houston G&amp;MS, Humble Civic Center,</b> <a href="https://hgms.org">https://hgms.org</a>
<b>Nov 23-24, Mesquite, TX, Dallas G&amp;MS, Mesquite Rodeo Center Exhibition Hall,</b> <a href="http://www.dallasgemandmineral.org">www.dallasgemandmineral.org</a>			

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 Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc  
  
 PO BOX 891533  
 Houston, Texas 77289

Meeting 3rd Monday of the Month  
 7:00 P.M.  
 Clear Lake Park Building  
 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook, Texas  
 Member of



**Next Annual Show**  
 February 20-21, 2020  
 Pasadena Convention Center

American  
 Federation of  
 Mineral Societies

South Central  
 Federation of Mineral  
 Societies

CLGMS is on the Web:  
<http://www.clgms.org>  
 2/20-21/2020

**Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc**

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and South Central Federation of Mineral Societies

PURPOSE: To promote education and popular interest in the various earth sciences; in particular in those hobbies dealing with the art of lapidaries and the earth sciences of minerals, fossils and their associated fields.

2019 OFFICERS:	President	David Tjiok	
	Vice President	John Caldyne	
	Secretary	Trina Willoughby	
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	Board of Directors:	Sandra Christiansen	Sara Tanner
		John Caldyne	Donna Nelson
Jim Edwards		Jim Hawkins	
2020 Annual Show	Sandra Christiansen		
Newsletter Editor	Vince Barrows		

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Constitution & Bylaws.....	Sara Tanner	WWW System Admin..	Mike Flannigan
Community Benefits.....	Charlie Timme	Refreshments.....	John Caldyne
Historian.....	David Tjiok	Education/Field Trips.....	Annabel Brownfield
Publicity.....	Cyndi McGowen	Hands On.....	Theresa Lowdermilk
Facebook.....	Trina Willoughby		

Membership Dues Jan. to Dec. 2019: Adult \$15:00, \$5.00 per additional adult at same address, Junior \$5.00, \$5.00 per member with adult at same address, Family Dues \$20.00 (4+) at same address. Send Dues to CLGMS, PO BOX 891533, Houston, TX, 77289