

Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club



Rock Talk



June, 2018

Next Meeting:
June 26, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

Program:
 Remarkable Rocks, Minerals, Silicates,
 Elements, and Gemstones
 Orion and Kimerlynn Jurkowski

Refreshments
 Orion and Kimerlynn Jurkowski

**Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift
 Road. Clinton. MD.**

President's Message

Greetings,

Summer is finally here and brings lots of opportunities for collecting specimens. Club field trips are a good way to socialize with fellow rock hounds, enjoy the weather and who knows find that awesome specimen just hiding under or within a rock.. On days when there are no club trips planned, don't forget about rock and mineral trade shows, especially those hosted by American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) clubs. Attending rock show is an inexpensive way to spend the day rock-bonding with people also enjoy looking, talking, and learning about rocks and minerals. Attending AFMS trade shows also supports the efforts of the host clubs.

The May meeting program on safety was presented by SMRMC member Sondra. It was an opportunity to refresh our acknowledgement of the role of safety when collecting specimens and generated good

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audience participation as members shared their knowledge.

Please consider attending our field trip this month.

Sondra Fielder, President, SMRMC

Upcoming Program Speakers

June 26 - Orion and Kim Jurkowski

July 24 - Bill Stephens - tentative date

August 28 - Auction

Refreshments

June 26 - Orion and Kim Jurkowski

July 24 - Ralph Gamba

August 28 - Pot Luck

Upcoming Shows and Events: 2018

June 28-29: 39th Annual Champlain Valley Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show sponsored by the Burlington Gem & Mineral Club. Tuttle Middle School, 500 Dorset St; So. Burlington, VT.

June 28-29: LIMAG Annual Gem & Mineral Show sponsored by the Long Island Mineral & Geology Society. Mattituck High School, 15125 Main Road, Mattituck, NY 11952.

July: 14 - 15: 2018 Gem World sponsored by the Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse. SRC Arena, Onondaga Community College, 4585 W Seneca Tpk, Syracuse, NY 13215.

ITEMS WANTED/FOR SALE

For Sale – Virginia unakite slabs (approx ¼ inch thick) – \$0.50 per square inch (this is half off regular price). Call Dave (240) 427-7062.

For Sale – SMRMC t-shirts for sale: size small (1) at \$9.00; medium (2) at \$5.40 each, large (5) at \$9.00 each, and xtra-large (2) at \$9.00 each. Contact Tina @ htleague@comcast.net

Wildacres Retreat Little Switzerland, NC MAY 21-27TH 2018

(article and photos by Cheryl Reese)



I took off for Wildacres, not exactly sure of what I was getting myself into. It turned out to be a very enjoyable and memorable experience and I am greatly looking forward to returning soon. There were numerous classes to choose from but I settled on the basic and intermediate silversmithing class. By the end of 4 days of instruction, I had 3 pendants and 1 pair of earrings that I fabricated myself.

The retreat center is located high in the mountains northeast of Asheville, NC. It was a beautiful setting with 2 lodges, a dining hall, various studios and an auditorium and library. There are plenty of well-marked trails to get out in nature. There were 3 other groups, cellists, dulcimers and potters, having workshops too. We were lucky to have been given a small concert from the cellists and a few musical tunes from Don Pedi who plays the dulcimer.

Days consisted of talks by Helen Serras-Herman, a Glyptographer, which is a carver of gemstones. Her talks were very interesting and informative and she was a delight to listen to with her thick greek accent. After the talks, we would go to our class and work on our projects till lunch, then return at 2:00 for the afternoon to continue our learning. Social hour, then dinner, followed by another lecture by Helen. Two of the evenings, in lieu of lectures, were an auction in which donated items were auctioned off and a show and tell on the last night where we got to display our finished pieces and see what everyone else did in class. The auction raised \$4200 which goes to the Wildacres endowment fund for EFMLS to offset the cost of the week for

participants. I considered it a bargain at \$425 for lodging ,classes and 3 good meals a day! (material fees are extra) We had 1 free day to do as we pleased and I chose to go on the field trip to Sinkhole mine, looking for moonstone, garnets and apatite. This day was followed by a tailgating session where you could sell your own items brought from home.



Did you know there is a National Rock and Lapidary Hall of Fame in Murdo, South Dakota? Well, while at Wildacres, Bernie Emery, who is the Cabochon instructor was inducted into this organization for his dedication and expertise in Education of Cabbing. He was totally surprised and it was exciting to see. He has taught at Wildacres for at least the last 25 yrs. I am hoping to get into his cabbing class next spring! I encourage everyone to take advantage of this great opportunity to further your skills in jewelry making or whatever classes they offer that you may be interested in. There has unfortunately been a drop in recent years of registrations and the fall classes have been in peril of being cancelled. There is a spring and fall session. This session was attended by

quite a few “newbies” like me whom had never been there before. Everyone was thrilled at how many were new and want to spread the word about the place. As the sign stated “Leaving Wildacres, entering the real world” I really felt rejuvenated and ready to get back to my own workshop and start building on the skills I learned while there.



Vulcan Quarry/ Stafford, VA/ May 19, 2018 Report

Article and Photos by Tina League

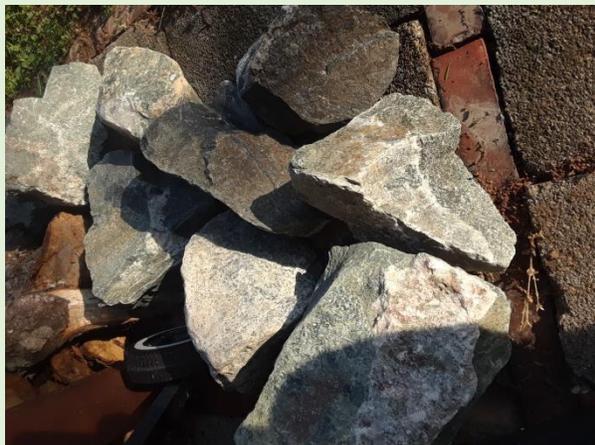


This past Saturday SMRMC was invited to join the Montgomery County Club on a field trip to the Garrisonville Rd. Vulcan Quarry. Harry, Tim and myself joined three members from Montgomery County and one local rockhound to collect in the muddy pit.

We met in the parking lot by the office at 7:30 for the safety briefing and signing of forms. It was raining steadily until we drove down into the quarry and then to everyone's delight the rain stopped. The previous rain did a fine job of washing off the rocks which made collecting a bit easier. Everyone spread out through the quarry and began hunting.



There were plenty of nice specimens of Pyrite and Chalcopyrite to be found. Jonathan worked diligently on a large boulder extracting specimens of Stilbite. Harry and I perused thru the entire bottom level and found plenty of Laumontite, Calcite, Feldspar, small Quartz crystals, some possible garnet (not sure if that's what it actually is) and some very impressive Pyrite/Chalcopyrite on Calcite and other materials.



Everyone worked hard and before we knew it our time was up. And wouldn't you know it, the rain started back up as soon as we were done. We thanked our Quarry host Richard and headed home for the day. I tested some of the material we brought home, but did not have any that fluoresced.

**“Many Shades of Green” HK
Penn-MD Quarry, Peachbottom,
PA** by Dave Lines (Photos by Dave Lines
and Robin League)



As soon as we got out of our truck, I looked down and spotted a small piece of green rock. I pried it out of the gravel and held it up to the sky ---- it was very translucent --- almost

clear --- and the color of a green beer bottle. Maybe it was a piece of “williamsite” --- the clear to translucent green variety of “antigorite”. Williamsite is a great lapidary material. Awesome!

All over the quarry, the rocks had been washed clean from all the recent rain. And looking closer, there was a LOT of green showing. I grabbed a rock pick and started filling my bucket with green rocks --- bright green, dark green, pale green, milky green, green with black specks, green with black stripes, green on white rock --- many shades of green!

Twenty three (23) souls had showed up for our joint Field trip with the Montgomery County Gem and Mineral Society to the serpentine quarry which is situated exactly on the Maryland – Pennsylvania state line. Nine of us (Dave, Rich, Ralph G., Mary C., Harry, Tina, Robin. Joe and Cheryl) were from Southern Maryland club. Some had visited this same quarry back in December 2017 and really liked it. Despite a dreary weather forecast (60% chance of all day rain), the early clouds gave way to a warm sunny morning --- wonderful short sleeve shirt conditions.

The quarry manager welcomed us and directed us to the tiny scale house where we read and signed a site specific list of rules and restrictions. Then after our group photo, we received a safety brief in which the quarry boss advised us where we could and could not go. He asked that we stay off the berms, out of the 5th level down which was filled with water and to remain away from the “sumps”

which were used to collect water before pumping it out of the quarry.



At about 8:15 a.m., we returned to our vehicles and followed his truck down a fairly steep perimeter road into the quarry to the 4th level where we all spread out and parked. There was adequate room for us to search for specimens with many rows of boulders lined up in rows awaiting further processing. There was also a wide, open, flat area with a couple of shallow trickles of water flowing across. These “streams” came in handy for rinsing off our specimens.

At about 10:00 a.m., a group of 10 or so Pennsylvania Geology Teachers who were attending a nearby conference drove their multi-passenger van into the quarry and began collecting specimens as well. They spent about 40 minutes, mostly discussing the geological formations as they observed the highwalls. There was still plenty of room for everyone.



According to Mindat, there are 31 mineral recorded for the nearby “Cedar Hill Quarry”, which is immediately adjacent to HK Penn-MD quarry. Mindat’s description of Cedar Hill, which also applies equally to Penn-MD, says it is “...an aggregate quarry exploiting the serpentinites of the Baltimore Mafic Complex, State Line District.” The most famous mineral in HK Penn-MD quarry may be williamsite, but the more abundant minerals --- at least in the color green --- seem to be many variations of antigorite and picrolite. These specimens are distinguished by long striations or very thin columns of mineral. “Columnar” better describes the appearance.



There are several other interesting minerals which would probably make good micro specimens, but on a macro level, the most

striking one that I saw was a hand size rock found by “Lee” of the Montgomery County Club --- it was covered in a quarter inch thick layer of bright, electric turquoise blue color. It was exquisite.



Checking back over the Mindat descriptions and pictures, I believe it was “Mcguinnessite”. I found a few small (tiny) pieces of the same blue and a one inch square of material with a thin layer of this blue material. There was also familiar minerals --- such as one that appeared to be mica. I noticed pyrite in one of my specimens. I noticed a good deal of quartz in the form of a light tan colored, bubbly chalcedony in a thin coating on some boulders. This may have been the “prase” referred to in Mindat.

By 11:00 a.m., several attendees had already departed, and at 11:30, Rich and I headed back to our truck and began packing up for the trip home. By 11:45 most of us were out of the quarry and by 11:55 everyone was out. I thanked the quarry rep again for allowing us to collect and for their hospitality.

Overall, this quarry is definitely a “keeper”. It is within a 2 hour drive, it provides easy accessibility and excellent specimens. You can simply drive in, get out of your vehicle,

walk on a level gravel surface and find stuff. That is about as good as it gets.

Member’s Finds

Photos of additional material collected from the HK Penn/MD Quarry in Peachbottom, PA, taken by Robin League



Collected any interesting specimens? Send a photo or two to the editor at bmorebugman@yahoo.com for inclusion in the next issue of Rock Talk

Official Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club(*) Field Trip Notice**National Limestone Mt. Pleasant mills and Middleburg Quarries on Saturday July 28, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. – noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

(* This trip may include other local EFMLS clubs if I need to get more people.)

Meeting Time --- Meet at the Quarry Office parking lot at Mt Pleasant Mills Quarry. 217 Quarry Rd., Mt. Pleasant Mills, PA 17853 **at 8:45 a.m. (no later!!)** for listening to owner's Christian testimony (his personal requirement as the cost of admission), a Safety Briefing and signing waiver forms. We plan to break for lunch together at 12 noon, then drive 8 miles to Middleburg Quarry, 3499 Quarry Rd., Middleburg, PA 17842 as a group by 1:00 p.m..

Trip Leader --- Dave Lines

Location --- Our first 3 hours will be at National Limestone Quarry, 217 Quarry Rd., Mt. Pleasant Mills, PA 17853 (Approx. 200 miles and a 3-1/2 hour drive from La Plata according to MapQuest) and our second 3 hours will be at Middleburg Quarry, 3499 Quarry Rd., Middleburg, PA 17842.

Directions --- (recommend follow directions from MapQuest)

Special Requirements --- 1st, The road to the small wavellite area is on the back side of a ridge behind the first Quarry and is one way and narrow --- we may have to take turns digging. 2nd, The quarry owner collects rocks and would appreciate the gift of any labeled specimens. 3rd, kids (8 years old minimum and be a club member) are allowed, but must be closely supervised on a ratio of 1 parent per 1 kid (max) and remain next to their parent at all times.

Safety --- steel-toed boots, hardhat, safety glasses, long pants, heavy gloves and bright colored safety vest. Stay clear of all high walls.

Note to Experienced members --- please keep a watch on all of us and say something to those who may not recognize danger before they get into trouble.

What to Collect --- Mt. Pleasant Mills Quarry --- Strontianite, Calcite, Dolomite, sometimes Fluorite --- and Wavellite. Strontianite is best found by breaking open likely looking rocks. A LARGE sledge hammer is helpful. Strontianite is DELICATE. Bring toilet paper/old newspaper to wrap your specimens in. On the top of the ridge, above/behind the quarry, we can dig for Wavellite. Wavellite is found on chunks of limestone/sandstone, which is loose and covered with red dirt/mud. You may need to dig down through several feet of this material to find the "layer" that contains the best wavellite. A short shovel and a pry bar/digging bar help. A garden scratcher is good. Wavellite is best found by wetting promising looking specimens and brushing off the red clay/mud with a stiff scrub brush. Bring a bucket and fill it with water at the office/trailer. These specimens should be wrapped carefully, too. There are also fossils in the same pit with the Wavellite, Brachiopods and moonsnails seem to be most common. On occasion some rarer minerals have been found here as micros ---Variscite and Turquoise. Middleburg Quarry --- Lots of recent quarry activity in this quarry, so our best bet for finding calcite xls. Calcite and Fluorite are the most abundant. Also (fluorescent) flowstone (travertine stalagmites from ancient limestone caverns) and several minerals. Sphalerite and galena (other sulfides) have also been found there as micros.

Equipment/ clothing --- Full safety gear for everyone at all times --- steel toed shoes/boots, safety glasses, hardhat, work gloves, long pants. Recommended tools --- rock hammer, 3 - 4 pound crack hammer, chisels, stiff scrub brush, garden scratcher, 5 gal. bucket, old newspaper for wrapping specimens, small pry bar. Optional -- large sledge hammer, long pry bar, extra buckets, loupe/magnifying glass. Your best tools are sharp eyes. Clothing depends on the weather --- long sleeves are recommended. Rain poncho nice to have. A bow saw is nice to have if the road to the wavellite site has a fallen tree across it. Ticks and bugs – it will be summer and you should apply bug spray as a preventative – I use Deet.

Quarry Description / Hints --- Both quarries are limestone quarries mined for material to be crushed for road construction and riprap. **Hint** ---Carefully search and *investigate anything that is different*.

Vehicles --- We will be allowed to drive our vehicles into both quarries.

Misc. --- Drinking water, sunscreen, bug spray, lunch/snacks, "Thank" the quarry owner. Bring a camera and take some pictures for our Newsletter.

Sign-up List --- Best if you sign up early as it will help my planning. Also sign up at the May, June or July club meetings or by email to dave.lines@earthlink.net

****If you sign up and later find that cannot make the trip, **call Dave at 240-427-7062** and tell him.

The Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club

Meetings take place on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

Clearwater Nature Center, 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton, MD.

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