

Green Green

Field Trip to the Gettysburg Quarry

Ralph G. and Mary C.

On 26 July, Mary C., Jim W., and Ralph G. of the Southern Maryland Rock and Mineral Club journeyed to Gettysburg PA to collect minerals at Gettysburg Quarry, Figure 1. Joining us were six members of the Montgomery County and Northern Virginia clubs, including Jonathan Harris who arranged the trip. The weather was cloudy and cool, making it a comfortable day to collect.



Figure 1. Gettysburg Quarry

After signing release forms, Bruce from the Quarry gave a short safety briefing. The quarry shot some new material which no one had yet collected. He did warn that there was no berm on the cliff near the shot, but he would mark it with yellow tape. If we crossed onto the other side of the tape, everyone would be told to leave.

Bruce escorted us to the collecting site, Figure 2, warning us to stay clear of the high walls, but we could collect in the berms of the road leading to the collecting site and the pile of rocks from the shot.



Figure 2. Gettysburg Quarry Collecting Area

The Gettysburg Quarry, also known as the Valley Quarry and once known as the Teeter quarry, is a diabase (trap rock) quarry. The rock is approximately 90 million years old. Mindat lists 43 different minerals and mineraloids in the quarry. The most common minerals are epidote and stilbite. The mineralization occurred in cracks and seams in the diabase, with occasional vugs containing epidote. This occurrence does not allow for large crystal formation and the crystals easily break when splitting the rock.

At about 7:30, Mary C. made the first big find of the day. She spotted a boulder with blue-green areas indicating copper minerals, most likely chrysocolla. She broke the boulder into pieces and shared them with other collectors. We all gathered pieces of epidote, Figure 3, ranging in color from bright green to olive green. Mary, Ralph, and Jonathan found dendrites. Ralph found small pieces of chrysocolla and epidote in vugs.



Figure 3. Epidote

Around 10 AM, Jim, Figure 4, found a large boulder with intact stilbite crystals, Figure 5. After chipping what he could get, he let Ralph collect. Ralph obtained a few samples.



Figure 4. Jim Searching for Stilbite



Figure 5. Stilbite

Ralph and Mary left and celebrated their successful collecting trip with ice cream at McDonalds.