

National Limestone Quarries - By Dave Lines

Took these pix this past Saturday on PA trip to National Limestone quarries.



The 1st pic shows 16 folks --- there were 17 as another one was taking the pic --- 11 of them were from the Delaware club, 2 from So Md club and the rest from Montgomery County club.



The next 4 pix are of Middletown (?) Quarry about 10 miles away --- Jonathan Harris lead a group of us to this location for the 1st half of the day in

order to have less people at the Mt Pleasant Mills quarry (i.e., the wavelite site). The large yellow boulder (with Rich Simcsak of So. Md club standing next to) is "flowstone" (travertine --- dissolved calcite which re-deposited in a limestone cave) --- if you look closely at the boulder, you can see it is a huge stalagmite.



The next 4 pix are of the Mt. Pleasant Mills quarry which I took after returning from the Middletown quarry. This quarry is much smaller. [Note --- unfortunately, there were several folks who were not wearing hardhats when I snapped the pic --- perhaps they forgot in their enthusiasm over finding calcite xls. But shame on us for not correcting the situation immediately.] Rich and I stayed there about 20 minutes ---- we found small calcite xls --- some coated with an iridescent hematite coating -- in small vugs. I saw some strontianite but the delicate tuffs had been damaged.



The last 3 pix were taken on the backside of the mountain at the wavellite location --- actually there a 2 locations --- the first was not very productive and we saw another truck about 100 yards further up the (narrow) road. Rich checked it out and said we should move. We did and spoke to one of the fellows who had spent the whole morning digging there. He showed us some beautiful dark green, well-formed wavellite balls (1/4" to 1/2" diameter) on the sandstone matrix. The best specimens I have seen from this location. He suggested we start digging in the hole on the right side. We did, but it was about 3 or 4 feet deep and the edge had just caved-in and buried the area in 2 feet of rock and mud. Rich and I spent the next 1-1/2 hours removing that overburden without finding a single piece of wavellite. Then we saw some broken wavellite on one of the solid rocks on the backside of the wall --- but we could not get to it safely until we removed more overburden. So-o-o we spent about 20 minutes caving in the back wall and moving the dirt and rock out of the hole. Then we spent another 1/2 hour with chisels and wedges carefully removing the very solid bedrock where we had seen the wavellite indications. The bottomline --- after investing over two (2) hours of hard work digging out rock and hammering wedges, we finally collected about a flat of material (which we did not have time to clean or examine because it was time to go home).

That evening back in MD, Rich and I divided our finds. The rest of the story will be in our next newsletter --- go to SMRMC.org.

Best, Dave