

## HK Penn-MD Quarry Trip Report 9-11-21 by Dave Lines - Pictures by Rich Simcsak



“We drove into Pennsylvania to rockhound in Maryland?” Huh? Yup. The quarry actually *straddles* the Mason Dixon Line --- which is the official boundary between these two (2) states. In fact, one of the original Mason Dixon rock markers which were placed every mile apart is actually on this mine property --- we all drove right by it when we caravanned into the mine. The rock is protected by a vertical section of corrugated culvert pipe which is painted bright yellow. The mine manager, Jay, said they will eventually have to move the rock marker to mine *under* it. (Can you imagine the paperwork/legal/surveying hassle that will entail!?) Their plan is to mine all the way to the road by power plant that we drove past just before PA-MD state line.

Most of us arrived about 7:45 am, changed into our safety gear and started looking (and collecting some specimens) near where we parked. Earlier, Rich and I had stopped at the nearby Royal Farms station/food court and purchased a gift certificate to give to the miners at the quarry as a gesture of our thanks. Everyone donated generously toward this effort with a cash donation. Shortly before 8:00 am, I went in to talk with Jay for a while and gave him the gift certificate. He was genuinely appreciative. It never hurts to recognize the mine manager and his team for their personal sacrifice to come in on a Saturday morning (normally their time off) to baby sit rockhounds. My son Jeff (a mining engineer in Colorado) says food is *always* a suitable gift because miners love to eat.

As soon we (Ralph G. and Mary, Rich, Bill and Debbie, Ralph B., Tim and Lorna S. and daughter Francesca, Orion and Kim, Harry and Tina, Jim W., Joe and Paula, and I) had all arrived, we signed the waiver in the mine office, and then received a safety/mine status brief from Jay. He said we were the only club to visit since a group in July and we were only the second club since the end of 2019. They had done a tremendous amount of work since we were there last. Regarding safety, he said no walking on the shot and to stay off all the berms. He said to stay *on* the quarry floor. He specifically mentioned being unhappy with folks who climbed on berms. One of our group had brought a long handled hoe to reach up on the berm to drag down stuff --- Jay said that was okay as long as they stood on quarry floor and pulled down rocks --- but didn't pull a big rock onto themselves and get hurt.

Regarding mine status, the sloughing of the highwall on the north side of the quarry in the Fall of 2019 caused them to change the road into the pit. The access is now from MD side --- so we had to go around the office on right (west) side instead of going to the left (east) side.

There are currently 5 levels in the mine. Level 5 was flooded and all under water. Level 4 was very muddy and wet and had a new shot, but was not washed off from any rain. Jay advised that we not drive down into level 4 because of the mud and to tell him before any of us wanted to walk down to level 4. Joe and I

eventually walked down there to check it out --- it was a waste of our time and there no place to walk unless you walked in deep mud.



At about 8:30 am, we caravanned to Level 3 --- it was super. The plentiful rain from the remnants of Hurricane Ida had washed everything off and the berms/floor were full of goodies. Lots of green translucent serpentine, picrolite, antigorite and pretty rocks --- especially on MD side of the level. Minerals like brucite and mcguinnessite were easily seen since they were so clean. Ralph G. said he and Mary also found specimens of chalcedony plus many rocks that looked like they held good micros. Joe found a very interesting fist sized piece that was botryoidal stalactites in shape, but covered with small yellowish quartz crystals.

We stayed there until 11:00 am when moved up to level 2 which was not as good since it was very limited in size and the rocks were mostly covered in gray dust, so we could not see "color". A few, small areas had clean rocks and that is where we looked. We found much more mcguinnessite on level 2 however. We stayed on level 2 until 11:45 am and then we all caravanned out.



Overall, everyone found lots of nice green rocks for lapidary and we left plenty.