



FM GLA SOUTH ROCKWOOD FIELD TRIP IS A COLLECTING SUCCESS

A total of 29 FM collectors were in attendance on July 15, 2017 at our field trip to Great Lakes Aggregate in South Rockwood, Michigan. Unlike our 2016 trip, temperatures were easily bearable rising to only the low 80s by the end of our time there (last year it was 93!). Although the temperature was cooler than a year ago, the collecting heated up. Many of our collectors found nice specimens to take home. I saw more worthwhile specimens this year and took more pictures than in any single year, and maybe as many as all the years we have been there. We spent about 3/4 of the day on the upper bench where there is mostly calcite. Celestine was hard to find on the upper bench, but what was found made very attractive specimens. The upper bench Celestine manifested itself in pockets that were filled with fine clear Celestine blades. Before this article concludes, all photographed finds will be mentioned, but the real Celestine dazzler from the upper bench was found by Pam Lauer (Crestline, OH). During the last part of the day FM collected on the middle bench where the rocks encased larger blue masses of Celestine which was blocky, rather than in fine blades like on the upper bench.

My camera lens was treated to images of three types of specimens: (a) Calcite, (b) Celestine, and (c) combo specimens of Calcite & Celestine. Keep in mind that during the course of a field trip, due to time constraints, I only get photos from a few collectors, so there are more members in the "clubs" below. I just did not get to see what everyone collected. Collectors in the "Calcite Club" were: Mike Royal (Defiance, OH), Tom Bolka (Xenia, OH), Cliff Harness (Columbus, OH), Marty Povirk (Franklin, MI) & Mick Pinka (Bellville, OH). In the "Celestine Club" besides Pam were Jeff Schaumberg (Columbus, OH), Mike Royal, Lawrence Hull (Lexington, OH) and Mick Pinka. The lone member of the "Combo Club" that I saw was Cliff Harness.



Lawrence Hull - Celestine



The FM South Rockwood Collecting Group

As aforementioned, the weather and collecting on this trip to South Rockwood were markedly different than last year. What was not different was the excellence of our host. Bill Begley is a veteran plant manager with a geology degree from MSU. What is noticeably special about him is his warmth as a host, knowledge of the quarry, and sense of safety awareness. On this trip, his knowledge about the quarry was important; Bill knew when to move the FM group to the lower bench. There was not as much material for inspection as on the upper bench. Our move was like an orchestral conductor waving the baton at the right time. Last, but not least important, Bill is a safety expert. Although we claim to have the best training of any club in the region, Bill showed he was the sharpest safety guy in the quarry, checking on finer details like wheel chocks, condition of our equipment and positioning of collectors. Thank you for keeping us safe Bill, and thanks to Great Lakes Aggregate having FM as guests.

It is what we collect that allows us to support the recipients of our charitable efforts. Mining companies like GLA have an interest in education in mineralogy and the geological sciences. Because of their supportive view of education and their belief that they can have a positive effect on the community outside the quarry through public relations efforts, it is easy to see why Bill Begley, GLA quarry manager, and Chris Kinney, GLA President and CEO have, in a period of a few short years, become FM favorites.