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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES AZMILS DATA

PRIMARY NAME: EL MARMOL MINE

ALTERNATE NAMES:
SUPERSTITION SECRET STONE CO.

PINAL COUNTY MILS NUMBER: 72B

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP 1 S RANGE 11 E SECTION 22 QUARTER NW
LATITUDE: N 33DEG 20MIN 06SEC LONGITUDE: W 111DEG 13MIN 38SEC
TOPO MAP NAME: PICKETPOST MTN - 7.5 MIN

CURRENT STATUS: PAST PRODUCER

COMMODITY:

STONE MARBLE DM
LEAD
SILVER
COPPER
ASBESTOS
GEMSTONE SERP MARBLE

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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MINERAL AND WATER RESOURCES OF AZ. USBM BULL.
180, 1969, P. 390
STEWART, L.A., CHRYSOTILE-ASBESTOS DEPOSITS
OF AZ, USBM IC 7745, 1956, P. 41
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1980, P. 53

EL MARMOL MINE

PINAL

ABM Bull. 180, p. 390

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Active Mine List April 1969 - 4 men - Neil E. McNeice, Pres., Superstition Stone Co.
Active Mine List Oct. 1969 - 4 men - " " " " " "

Visit Superstition Stone Co. They are selling most of their polishing stone to rock hounds. FTJ WR 11-28-69

Visited McNeice at Superstition Stone Yard - his stone business has fallen off for the last two months. FTJ WR 3-27-70

Active Mine List May 1970 - 4 men - Neil McNeice, Pres.

Visited Neil McNeice - says his business is slow. FTJ WR 9-25-70

Active Mine List Oct. 1970 - 3 men - Neil McNeice, Pres. Superstition Stone Co.

Went to McNiece's work shop at Florence Junction where a sign on the door indicated it would be closed until September 1, 1972. GW WR 4/3/72

McNeice Stone Works were closed Until September 1. FTJ WR 4/13/72

Went to McNiece Rock Shop at Florence Junction but it was boarded up and Mr. Wagner's trailer house was gone. GW WR 9/27/72

Went to Florence Junction; McNeice stone works was closed. FTJ WR 10/11/73

El Marmol Mine

Pinal County

Engineer called at the plant of the Superstition Stone Co. and talked with Mr. Neil E McNeice, President. He advised they have not been very busy during the summer, but their work is picking up now. Three men are employed.

Robt F. Playter 10/18/67

Interviewed Paul Bryant, Mgr. McNeice Stone Works at Florence Jct. Because of trouble with the Forest Service, they were forced to remove their equipment from El Marmol Claim in Hewitt Canyon.

CLH WR 2/24/68

Mr. Curtis Height and Mr. Ira Stockman, both of Riverside, California Developed the Height-Stockman Silver Recovery Process - in general terms the process consists of crushing and pulverizing the ore, putting it through some undisclosed chemical treatments, then passing it five times through and electronic charge.

The operators set up a pilot plant at the McNiece Stone works at Florence Junction. This they also tested out using their own operators, their own sealed chemicals, as before, with the same results. (See report on the Height-Stockman Silver Recovery Process in the "Process file" Correspondence files)

CLH 4/8/68

Active Mine List Oct. 1967 - 3 men

Mining of a rare variety of banded, multicolored serpentine-marble ornamental stone was discontinued at the El Marmol Mine in Hewitt Canyon, and machinery was removed from the property on the insistence of the Forest Service, which classified the material as "Common variety building stone".

CLH Quarterly Report 4/1968

Active Mine List Oct. 1968 - 3 men

Conference with Neil E. McNeice, President 2/17/65

Addresses: Neil E. McNeice, 7032 N. Via Pisa, Tucson (PH 297-2426).
Paul Bryant, Superior (PH 689-2627)

The plant is now sawing the serpentized marble into veneer slabs up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet square, tile up to 1 foot square and various ornaments such as book ends. They recently completed an order for an interior decoration job in Tucson. A new 2-foot polishing lap is being installed for polishing larger slabs. The old one was 10 inches in diameter. Due to checks in the rock it is not believed that slabs of over $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet can be consistently cut. Such slabs range in thickness from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. Numerous colors and designs are available. The material that is too small to cut will be converted to terrazzo chips and mural wall chips. Two men and Mr. McNeice were working. Mr. McNeice said that the heavy rains had made their Hewett Canyon road (to the quarry) nearly impassible, but they were now repairing it. An 85-foot core drill test hole was all in workable material and they were able to determine the bed sequences.

MEMO LAS 2/17/65

EL MARMOL MINE AND MILL

FLORENCE JUNCTION AREA, HEWITT WASH, PINAL COUNTY.

Conference with Neil E. McNeice, Pres. Superstition Secret Stone Co., at the Mill 2/16/66.

Mr. McNeice said that he had been unable to mine for two months since Hewitt Wash had run considerable water for two months and the sand has become almost quicksand. It is going down now so that he hopes to rebuild his mill stock pile of serpentized marble, soon. He has adequate material for the present. He reported that he had a considerable variety of colors, but not too much in one particular color. However he has a purplish-red and a green serpentine that are more prevalent than the others (which usually are banded and contain two, or more, colors alternately. The solid single colors could be useful to the terrazzo people. He was referred to Del Peterson, U. S. Marble, and other terrazzo brokers in Los Angeles and Dallas, the latter being the Fritz Chemical Co., which makes terrazzo tile ($\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{31}{32} \times 11\frac{31}{32}$ inches) of $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch chips cemented by white Gorgia marble fines and resins. Peterson also ships to these people. It was suggested that El Marmol make up a small sheet with samples of their rock pasted to it for presentation to customers.

At present, El Marmol are fabricating electric clocks inserted into their polished rocks, bookends and other objects of art (table tops, fire place mantle sheets, etc.) Fortunately he has now acquired a few dealers to handle his products.

Conference LAS 2/16/66

Active Mine List Oct. 1966 - 2 men

Visit and Conference with N. E McNeice and Son.

The McNeices said they were doing a fair business in small sheet cuts (floor size tile up to 15" squares), shaped ornamental electric clock holders, book ends, and various other shaped goods. Some special end table tops are also cut. They are looking for material that can be cut into large slabs (4x6 or 4x8 feet) if it can be had locally.

MEMO LAS 11/9/66

Active Mine List April 1967 - 4 men

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DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES
STATE OF ARIZONA
FIELD ENGINEERS REPORT

Mine SUPERSTITION SECRET STONE COMPANY CLAIM Date 7/18/63
District SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN DISTRICT PINAL CO. Engineer Lewis A. Smith
Subject: Mine Visit with John A. Gordon and Neil E. McNeice

LOCATION: 4½ miles N-NE of Queen Creek Dam, near the base of Robles Butte and along Hewett Canyon.

PROPERTY: 1 unpatented lode claim (active since 1949). One additional claim is to be laid out.

ACCESS: The claim is reached by following Hwy. 60-70 for 2 miles east of Florence Junction, thence 4 miles northeast along the paved Queen Creek Dam road. Prior to reaching the Dam, the road forks off and follows the Magma to Florence Junction dirt road and the Superior R. R. for 2½ miles, part of which follows Queen Creek, then turn north into Hewett Canyon for 2½-3 miles, just past Robles Butte.

Owners: Superstition Secret Stone, Inc.
John A. Gordon, Box 546, Apache Junction, President and Mgr.
Neil E. McNeice, 7032 N. Via Pisa, Tucson, Arizona
William Lyle, Phoenix Title & Trust Co. of Tucson.

WORK: (1) 4 miles of sandy bulldozer road up Queen Creek and Hewett Canyon. (The future road will later be connected to the old Superior Highway, and will consist of ½ mile of mountain all-weather road).
(2) One deep bulldozer cut was made at the foot of the Mescal limestone hill. This is up to 20 feet deep, 75-100 feet long and up to 20 feet wide.
(3) A bulldozer road, forming a loop over the area, was built for access to the upper portions of the block.
(4) A trench, that is 60 feet long, 4-6 feet wide, and up to 12 feet deep, was excavated at the crest of the limestone exposure.
(5) Another bulldozer cut, perhaps 70 feet long, 15 feet wide and up to 10 feet deep, was made. This begins at the entrance of the trench (4) and trends SE, from that point.

GEOLOGY: The general geology consists of the Apache Group, principally Mescal limestone that plunges under thick flows of andesite that in turn is overlain by dacite, to the West NW. The upper portion of the Mescal limestone beds was intruded by a thick sill of diabase. The limestone block appears to be bordered on the NE and SW by diabase both contacts having been caused by faults, both of which zones form branch canyons. A nearly parallel fault, of minor apparent throw, splits the limestone block into nearly equal portions. This fault is marked by strong oxide-iron staining and minor metallization by copper, lead and silver, were reported by Mr. Gordon. At a short distance below the diabase contact chrysotile semi-harsh asbestos occurs in fiber beds ranging from 1/64 to ½-inch in thickness. The extent of this asbestos seaming is not known, but it is seen from the bottom to the top of the previously mentioned trench. Strong serpentinisation has occurred well below the diabase seam, in the form of alternatively banded microlite and antigorite with local thin seams up to 2" thick that have been variably opalitized. Much of the asbestos exposed in the cut is "shorts" (1/64 to 1/4 inch).

The lower half of the block is variably marbled and is banded closely by predominately

red and green alternate layers. The limestone beds range from 1/4 inch up to 3 1/2 feet thick but appear to average closer to 8 inches. In most places the stain-bands are closely spaced. The limestone beds dip between 20 and 30 degrees SE. They have locally been crinkled, especially near the faults. The Mescal block, as a whole appears to be slightly domed. The intrusive that could have created the dome and the metamorphism, is buried. However, dacite porphyry and andesite porphyry dikes have been reported within the general area, and one of these (or a small mass) may be responsible. Farther up the canyon, 1/4 to 3/8 of a mile, the diabase and andesite, locally have brilliant red and maroon staining and could furnish contrasting rock to that in the Mescal Block. On the whole the area has a large tonnage of ornamental and decorative rock, that has a wide range of colors. Some portions of the Mescal Block have beds that appear to polish well.

EQUIPMENT: (1) At the mine there is a portable crushing and screening plant that has a Pioneer portable 10x36 inch jaw crusher, a set of 18x24 inch rolls, and a multiple shaking screen assembly. The screen sizes will be determined by market size demands. Air is furnished by a Chicago Pneumatic, 125 cubic-foot, rotary type compressor, in addition to a wagon drill and jack hammers. There is also a 300 ampere arc welder, a Victor acetelene type.

(2) The proposed fabrication plant that is to be situated 1/2 mile east of Florence Junction and immediately north of Hwy. 60-70, will soon be erected. This will consist of a 3-wire gang saw, a Gantry type of diamond saw, an overhead polishing Lap (capable of polishing blocks up to 4x6 feet square), and a lapidary section for small work. Power is available nearby. The plant will not, for the present, use over 100 HP Motors. As contemplated, for the immediate future, the principal products will include chips for making wall panels and terrazzo, ornamental rocks, and smaller polished slabs, or blocks. Some of the equipment is to be in very soon.

The company has one 2-ton truck and one 8-yard truck, for hauling from the mine to the plant, and visa versa.

Water will be obtained from a drilled well that is now calculated to be 375 to 400 feet deep

Gordon and McNeice - Forest Service refused to allow mining of ornamental marble in T1S, R11E. 4 lode claims originally located about 1941 for gold-lead-silver or asbestos. In 1962 located as a placer for marble. Gave up 3 of 4 claims and held one. Samples unusual.

PK Note 7/17/63

DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES
STATE OF ARIZONA
FIELD ENGINEERS REPORT

EL MARMOL

Mine (SUPERSTITION SECRET STONE CO. CLAIM)

Date 10/7/63

District SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN DIST., PINAL COUNTY

Engineer Lewis A. Smith

Subject: Visit to the plant 10/7/63

This company is completing a cutting and polishing plant, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of Florence Junction on Hwy 60-70. The plant is comprised of Tysaman equipment, including a three wire, wire saw, a polishing lap, and a diamond saw for small pieces. The wire saw has $\frac{3}{8}$ inch wires that are braided. The machine has an available cutting span of about 10-12 feet. The wires are mounted on two 3-foot grooved pullies driven by electric motors. A mixing tank and hose set-up furnishes water and abrasives throughout the length of the cutting span. At present the wires are set at about an inch apart. The polishing lap is about 2 feet in diameter and is rotated from above on a stationary base. The diamond saw moves horizontally on a carriage permitting a long cut.

Mr. John A. Gordon, Mgr., was away but 3 men were working at the plant.

MEMO

EL MARMOL

PIONEER DIST.
PINAL CO.

The mill was working on an order for veneer sheets for a building now being erected near Apache Junction. The rock is being sliced into slabs of 1 x 2 feet and 1 x 1 feet by $\frac{5}{8}$ inch thick for the veneer. Negotiations now are under way for a second contract. A small production of rock table top slabs has been made on individual orders. Certain of the less common colored stone will be reserved for special purposes (book ends, pen holders, etc.). The land situation controversy with the Forest Service apparently has improved a bit especially since the new soft asbestos streak $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2" thick was encountered. Wilson was up there and now views the property with more favor, according to Gordon. Thus far most of the mined material indicates that it is best to cut slabs that are 2 feet x 3 feet or less in sections. Larger slabs are apt to be checked by the more recent fracturing. The earlier fractures are commonly sealed by the opalite that commonly replaces certain bands in the serpentinized limestone. This selective replacement of the limestone has caused some trouble when the sections are polished. The variable hardness sometimes causes a wavy surface and makes it difficult to completely remove saw marks. Since the present polishing lap is 1 foot across, it was suggested that a 2 foot lap be installed so as to cover the entire rock section width. This would entail the purchase of a larger lap holder and laps. Mr. Gordon said that he had adequate power for such a lap. The larger lap would exert steadier and more even pressure over all of the surface instead of over $\frac{1}{4}$ of it. This might help to grind off the hard and soft spots more uniformly and decrease the waviness. It would also mean less work for the polisher and more speed in polishing in that the lap could be set in one position for a longer time instead of having to be continuously moved over the surface in all directions. As explained by Mr. Gordon the opalite causes some difficulty in slicing the rock due to its hardness. Nevertheless it serves the purpose of solidifying the limestone into a more durable rock and makes it polish better. It has in many instances secured the older checks and fractures. On the other hand care must be exerted against cutting slabs that are under $\frac{5}{8}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in thickness since thinner sections proportionally become more breakable because the minor checks are more apt to part under torsional stresses of polishing or other types of wrenching, particularly when the sheets are placed on uneven surfaces. No terrazzo has yet been made and this produce will be made at the mine, when sufficient market develops.

Memo - LAS - 11-26-63

Active-10/1963

Mr. Waughtel said that Superstition ~~Secret~~ Stone Company had been idle since spring.

9-16-64 LAS conference with Roy Waughtel.

DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES

STATE OF ARIZONA
FIELD ENGINEERS REPORT

110
AUG 1963

EL MARMOL

Mine (SUPERSTITION SECRET STONE COMPANY CLAIM) Date 7/18/63

District SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN DISTRICT PINAL CO. Engineer Lewis A. Smith

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FPK Note 7/17/63

STATE OF ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES
MINERAL BUILDING, FAIRGROUNDS
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007



April 16, 1968

To: Frank P. Knight, Director
From: C. L. Hoyt, Field Engineer
Subject: Interview with N. E. McNeice, Florence Junction.
Re: Height-Stockman Silver Recovery Process.

Mr. McNeice is less than enthusiastic about this process. He said that in the laboratory under control of the developers it apparently worked beautifully. On the strength of these demonstrations, he added an extension to the Stone Works building and built the pilot plant to the developer's designs. The developers kept asking for changes in the equipment, before making a full run of the plant; this resulted in postponement after postponement of the trial run. They finally returned to California and the plant has stood idle for many months without having ever made a trial run.

Materials which they have brought in for testing are some gray shale-like material from Colorado, what appears to be some smelter flue dust, and other non-conventional appearing materials.

The plant seems to consist of two rather conventional leaching and treatment sections. The discharge is through a launder made up of a series of 3" pipe tees and nipples. An electrode projects into each of the tee sections, connected to some sort of electronic generating equipment.

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