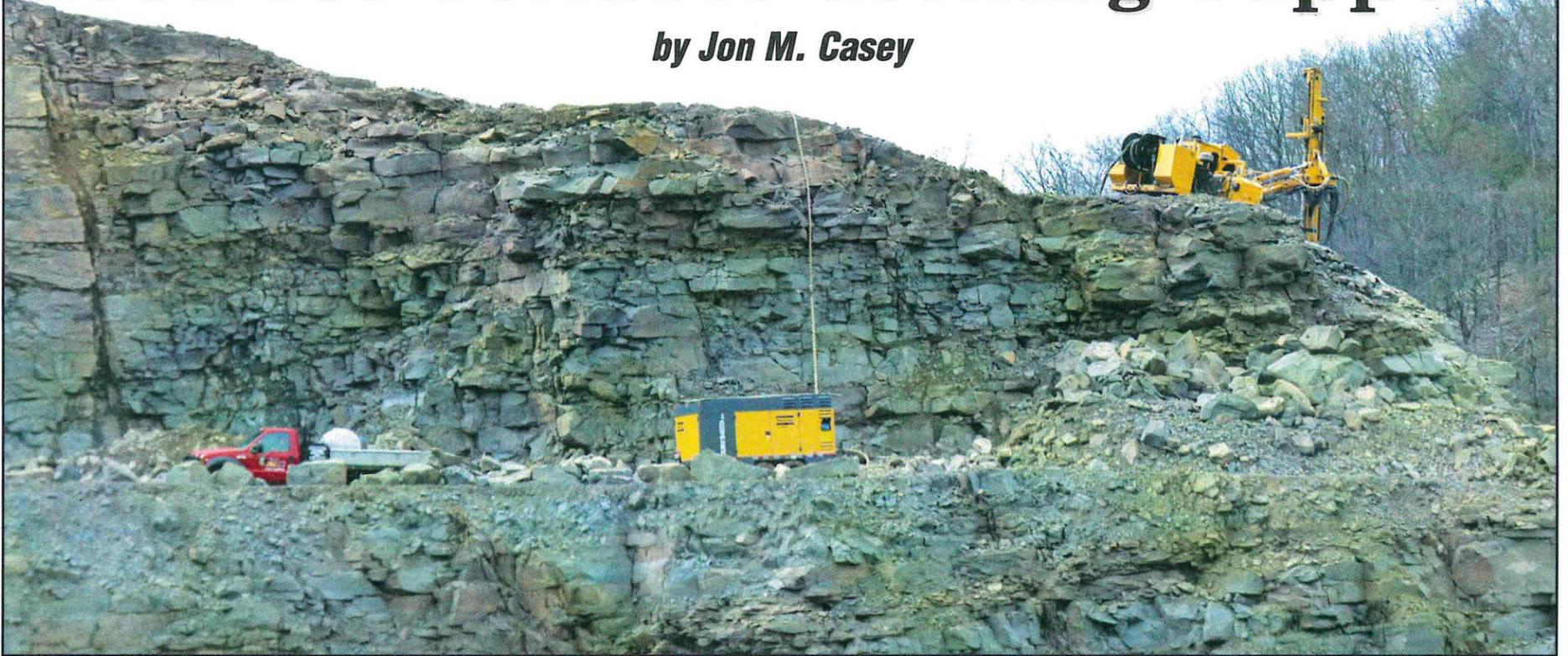


# Mine Drilling Services fills the need for reliable drilling support

by Jon M. Casey



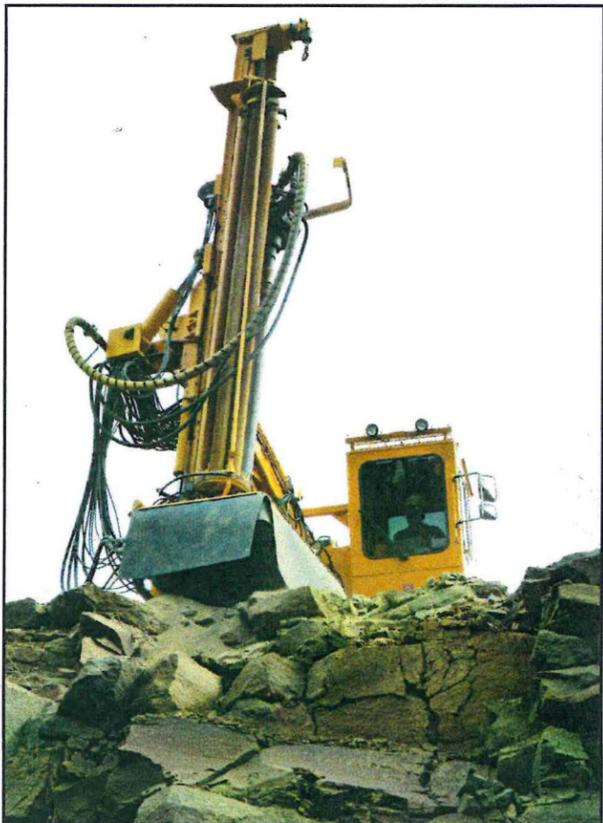
One advantage of drilling with a Gill Beetle drill rig is its agility in difficult locations. With the unit's air compressor located on a lower bench, the drill operator is able to work on a small area above.

For Randy May, owning a blast hole drilling company has been a dream come true. Randy, co-owner of the recently formed Mine Drilling Services of Clearfield, PA, has a long history working with drillers and blasters in the quarry industry. It was not however, until he formed a partnership with long time business associate and friend, Grant Wise, that Randy was able to set out to serve regional customers with their blast hole drilling needs in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York and surrounding areas.

"I had been involved with drilling in some form for most of my career," said May during a recent visit to the Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. Hagermans Run Aggregate Facility near Williamsport, PA. We were visiting this particular quarry because MDS's new Model 300C Gill Rock Beetle® was busy drilling more than two dozen blast holes atop a bluff there. The rock is scheduled to be mined for aggregates that will primarily be used to support the Marcellus Shale Gas



Work is progressing nicely on the recent relocation of Hagerman's Run's processing plant. The entire plant was moved a short distance at this site to allow for additional mining of rock close to the plant.



Guy Kitchen bores a hole atop a bench at Glenn O. Hawbaker's Hagerman's Run quarry.

drilling industry in the area.

"In the past, I had worked with York Drilling, DNX Drilling, a division of DYNOL Nobel, and I was the drilling and blasting superintendent for Pennsy Supply. More recently, I worked as a sales representative for Orica Mining Services in their blasting division. There, I worked closely with the drillers who prepared the quarry sites for Orica's blasters."

May said that it was from this close relationship with Orica that he realized that he might be able to start his own drilling company. Orica had acquired the D.C. Guelich Explosives Co., a drilling and blasting company, in north central Pennsylvania, but after

overseeing blast drilling for a short period, Orica was looking to divest itself of its drilling assets.

"That was when I approached Grant Wise, to discuss his becoming a partner in ownership of the new company," said May. "Grant owns J. Roy's, Inc., a construction drilling and blasting company from Denver, PA. We developed a working relationship over the years, and because MDS was going to solely serve the quarry industry, and because Grant's company primarily served the construction industry, we agreed that we could work together to serve both industries successfully. Since both businesses specialize in

MDS 4

blast hole drilling, if MDS has the need for additional drilling equipment during especially busy times, it is an added benefit to have J. Roy's, Inc. available to help us out if they have extra available rigs."

May said that in addition to the newly purchased Beetle, MDS also has five additional Gill Rock Beetles and three smaller pneumatic top hammer drills. "We acquired the drilling assets from Orica in 2010," he said. "We negotiated to hire 10 employees to do the drilling as well. Most of our people have from 10 to 30 years drilling experience, so it was a good fit from the very beginning."

"Our people are the best at what they do," he noted. "If it wasn't for them, we wouldn't have been able to start right up doing the kind of business that we are currently doing. Drillers like Guy Kitchen and John Hudson, who are working this job today, are the reason that things have gone as smoothly as they have. Guy has more than 30 years experience and John, more than 10. They know the customer's needs, they know the quarry and blasting industry and they know safety. That is an excellent combination. They all work well together to get the job done."

"We are the exclusive drillers for Orica," noted May. "I take care of the sales work and scheduling, and because of the relationships that I had developed with several of the quarry producers over the years, we were able to work with them to provide their blast hole drilling needs. We have been able to not only keep all of our crews busy since we started business officially on October 11, 2010, but we have picked up new accounts as well. We have hired two new people recently, and will be looking to add a couple more in the coming months."

May said that he prefers using the Gill Rock Beetle over truck mounted drill rigs because the Beetle, with its maneuverability and separate air compressor, allows MDS drillers to drill in places where other larger equipment would be prohibited from accessing. "The articulating arm on our new Beetle makes it easy for Guy to move from one bore hole to the next one," said May. "In a year's time, an experienced driller like Guy can do more drill footage with a drill like this one."

May said that MDS works out of their headquarters Clearfield, PA facility, from which they serve quarries throughout the area. The shop formerly housed the drilling equipment and crews when it was under Orica ownership. "We kept the same facility because our crews all live in the area," he said. "That makes it easier on them." For more information on Mine Drilling Services, contact Randy May at 717-599-2028 or at ramay5143@aol.com.



John Hudson guides the air hose as drill operator Guy Kitchen moves the Gill Beetle to the next drill site.

## Gill Rock Drills offer customers distinct advantages

by Jon M. Casey

During our recent visit with Randy May, it didn't take long to realize that his company's reliance on Gill Rock Drills was born of experience with aggregate blasting drilling. Randy's appreciation for the agility and maneuverability of his company's new Model 312 Gill Beetle® Drill, was evident as we watched Guy Kitchen and John Hudson drilling blast holes atop a new section of rock that was due for mining in the coming days.

He noted that because of the drill's smaller size, MDS is able to serve their customers more effectively without sacrificing drilling production. "With the remote air compressor positioned on a lower bench, we are able to take the Beetle up to the higher level and do drilling that other, larger drills could not access," said May. "We were able to move this rig around to the top of the bench to an area where a truck mounted drill could not safely go. As you can see, Guy

and John can position the drill safely and do the work up here where a larger rig would not be able to go."

Eric Crosson, vice president of sales for Gill Rock Drill Co., Inc. agrees. "We have developed new technologies on our latest model the 312 Beetle Drill that makes them better equipped to drill rock on rougher terrain," he said. "That helps equip our customers to be more productive, and at the same time, our equipment is safer to use than ever."

Crosson recalled that Gill Rock Drill Co., Inc. has been servicing the MDS fleet for a long time. "Our history with Randy and Grant Wise goes back a number of years," he said. "We originally worked with the D.C. Guelich Explosives Co. and then with Orica's drilling division, before Randy and Grant bought out their assets. We also have worked with J. Roy's, Inc. in Bowmansville, PA, Grant Wise's drilling operation; so we have a long working relation-

ship with them."

"That is one of the advantages of owning a Gill Rock Drill," said Crosson. "We can jump at a moment's notice to serve our customers if they have a need for parts or service for their equipment. We manufacture all of our parts for the drill rigs at our manufacturing plant in Lebanon, PA, so we stock a complete inventory of whatever a customer might need for his Beetle Drill. Because we have an experienced service team, we also are able to not only repair equipment when it is not working properly, but we can also train our customers' service staff to maintain and service their drill rigs to help keep them running smoothly for many years. Similarly, we are able to train the drillers on how to operate the latest models of our drills."

For more information on Gill Rock Drill Company, Inc. contact them at 800-334-3117 or visit their Web site at [www.gillrock-drill.com](http://www.gillrock-drill.com).



A peek at the drill rig's Atlas Copco drill bit.