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**Fabricating Tooling & Accessories  
North American Quarried Stone**

# A long-standing source of Pennsylvania sandstone

*Dating back to the 1800s, the sandstone quarry now operated by Russell Stone Products, Inc. of Curwensville, PA, is rich in history and continues to produce stone for many prominent projects*

by Jennifer Richinelli



Originally opened sometime during the 1850s or 1860s, the sandstone quarry in Curwensville, PA, remained dormant from the 1930s until it was purchased by Daniel and Cynthia Russell in 2002.

**W**ith a history rooted back to the mid-1800s, the sandstone quarry owned by Russell Stone Products, Inc. in Curwensville, PA, is a valued asset. Although the site had remained dormant for a lengthy period of time in the 1900s, today it is

a viable source that has extensively supplied material for many prominent projects nationwide.

"The quarry was opened sometime between 1850 and 1860," explained Dave Curulla of Russell Stone Products, Inc. "Italian immigrants

moved into the area and settled in the town of Curwensville and were the main source of labor and the craftsmen who made the quarry famous. The quarry was owned and operated by various owners until the 1930s. After that, it was closed until 2002 when it



Today, Russell Stone Products, Inc., as it is now called, primarily services the East Coast with its two varieties of sandstone: Bloom Run Stone and Roaring Run Stone. Additionally, the company owns the Eagle Ridge fieldstone quarry in Howard, PA.



was purchased and reopened by the current owners, Daniel and Cynthia Russell of Curwensville. We also own and operate a quarry, Eagle Ridge, where we mine Pennsylvania fieldstone in Howard, PA."

The sandstone site spans more than five active acres, and it has a remaining life span of approximately a couple hundred years at the current rate of production, according to Curulla. "The intention is to work year-around, however, sometimes winter conditions cause the quarry to be idle for extended periods of time," he said.

Two distinct varieties are produced from the Curwensville quarry: Bloom Run Stone, a lighter color range with a smaller amount of iron veining but natural coloring; and Roaring Run Stone, a deeper color range with shades of brown, buff, tan, beige, pink and crème with a bit more iron veining.

"The average size of the blocks extracted at the quarry are 5 by 10 by 40 feet," said Curulla. "They are then sized to 5 by 5 by 12 feet before going to the shops. We can pretty much size to the customers' demands."

During the extraction process, the overburden (topsoil) is removed from the area and then sections are drilled horizontally and vertically. Once drilled, explosives are used to fracture the rock. It is then removed in blocks using excavators and then hauled to the company's shops where it is sawed into desired sizes.

The machinery in the quarry consists of Caterpillar, Kobelco, Komatsu

"The average size of the blocks extracted at the quarry are 5 x 10 x 40 feet. "They are then sized to 5 x 5 x 12 feet before going to the shops," said Dave Curulla of Russell Stone Products, Inc.



The company maintains a cutting facility where it has the capability to customize stone pieces to meet the needs of each customer.



Blocks are first cut into slabs with either a Park Industries Eagle or Wilson saw.



A Jaguar II bridge saw is also on hand in the shop to assist in the fabrication process.



Additionally, a Gmm 6-axis CNC bridge saw is used to cut stone pieces.

and Tamrock drills. At the present time, there is between eight to 10 employees working in the quarry.

### The sawing facility

Shortly after the company reopened the quarry, it built its fabrication facil-

ity. "We started with one building and have continually expanded over the last 16 years," explained Curulla, adding that the buildings total approximately 40,000 square feet. "The shops were opened to saw and size the material to provide craftsman quality pieces

to service our wide variety of products and anything the imagination might require. We currently have between 20 to 25 employees in our fabricating areas, shops and trucking."

The company's sawing facility includes two large saws: a Park



Among the many renown projects completed by Russell Stone Products, Inc. is the landscape design at the Brandywine campus of Pennsylvania State University.

Industries Eagle and a Wilson, as well as a Jaguar II bridge saw, hydraulic splitters and a thin stone machine, also all from Park Industries. Additionally, it operates a Gmm Litox 5-axis CNC bridge saw, which gives them the capability to do stone carvings.


“Our stone is a dimensional sandstone and is used for facings of buildings, panels and veneers, steps, bridges, patios, flooring, datum block benches, carvings and various types of landscape projects,” explained Curulla. “It is used for all types of buildings and streetscape projects on the East Coast, however, we have also serviced the West Coast, as well as projects overseas.”

With the sandstone quarry only a short distance away from the main campus of Pennsylvania State University (PSU), it is not surprising the material was used for the landscape of the school’s famed Nittany Lion sculpture, which sits prominently on campus. Moreover, Russell Stone Products, Inc. has supplied sandstone for numerous landscape projects throughout PSU’s 24 branch campuses.

Among other high-profile projects for the company are the Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, D.C., where Bloom Run Stone was used for the walls in both honed and polished finishes, and the steps for the Philadelphia Museum of Arts in Philadelphia, PA, where Rocky runs up in the movie. □

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