



A tunnel on the front page?

see page 5



<http://www.wcgmc.org/>



see page 2



The February workshop (more on page 6)

Next Club Meeting

Friday March 10th, 7:00 PM

Presbyterian Church, Maple Court, Newark, NY

PROGRAM: Review of 2016 Field Trips,
Planning 2017 Field Trips

- 1) A presentation of all our 2016 trips and activities. Come see what you did. Or come see what you missed.
- 2) We'll also talk and schedule for the coming field season. April is right around the corner.
- 3) GemFest 2017 planning. Bring any ideas.

WEATHER: Yes, it is that time of year: An e-mail note will be distributed if a Friday meeting must be cancelled. Or call Bill Lesniak (315-483-8061), Fred Haynes (585-203-1733) or Glenn Weiler (315-594-8478).

Saturday, March 18th

WCGMC March Workshop

When: 10:00 AM til mid afternoon

Where: The Weiler's Barn and Club Workshop
6676 E. Port Bay Rd, Wolcott, NY

Rules: BYOR (Bring your own rocks) to saw, grind, polish or even facet. Training on equipment is available. Eye protection is recommended. \$5/adult to offset maintenance costs

February Called Auction

The annual winter auction was a huge success. Seventy-four lots, split among raffle lots, white elephant lots and a standard called auction were offered and all sold. The auction netted the club over \$750 which will be used to offset costs of upgrading our storage facility (pg. 7) and maintaining our workshop (pg. 6). Most material was from the club collection; however Kathleen Cappon is thanked for her contribution of backyard Lockport Formation stromatolites. Thanks also to our collection curator, Linda Schmidtgal, for picking out the specimens and set up bidding tables. But most of all, thanks to the 35 members who attended and participated in the lively auction. We hope all who went home with new specimens, went home happy.



Glenn Weiler points out a bidder during the auction.

Can you spot the man in the yellow vest on the far left? Bill Lesniak was the runner showing the specimen being auctioned to anyone interested. The crowd kept him quite busy all night.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: PICNIC IS AUGUST 5



Mineral Musings

Let's Collect Rocks With Faces

by Fred Haynes



We are always looking for new places to dig. Sometimes it is hard to find them. But we could tinker with that theme a bit and start "looking for new things in old places". There is a museum in Chichibu, Japan, two hours from Tokyo that houses over 1700 rocks, all of which resemble human faces. They call the museum Chinsekikan (which means museum of curious rocks). Apparently, the owners have been accumulating the odd collection for over 50 years with the lone requirement that Mother Nature was the only artist (Strategy, 2016).

How about we all scour our garages, our basements, and our collections for "rocks that look like faces"? And this summer when you are out, whether it is on a club trip or a family outing, keep your eyes open for faces in the stones. Maybe next year we can pool our finds and produce a club collection worthy of an exhibit at GemFest.

Remember the face must be natural to the rock. No carving and no make-up.



Rock Display at Chinsekikan

from Strategy, 2016

There are rocks with names and those that remain nameless at Chinsekikan. Visitors are invited to name the rocks. Do you see any you would like to name? How about the two below that are not part of the Japanese museum, but have been posted recently on rock hound Facebook pages?



The Japanese call the rock on the left simply "Elvis". It is 100% natural and counts as a collectible. The rock on the right has a name, but it is not an allowable piece. Besides I don't think it would fit in Glenn's truck.

References:

Strategy, J., 2016, The Japanese Museum of Rocks That Look Like Faces; [Colossal Webpage, Nov. 14th](#)

Rockhound Connection Facebook Group



Sorry Linda, these do not qualify.

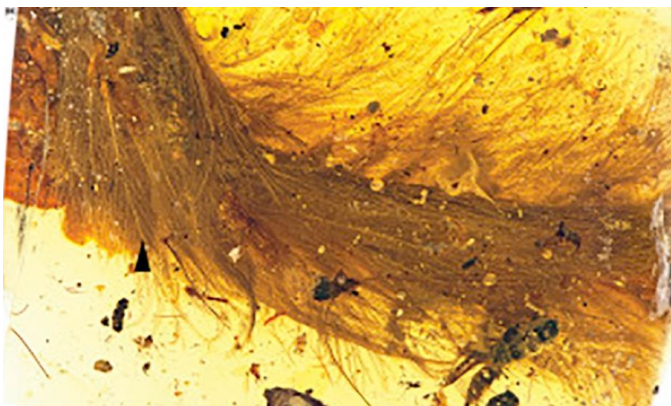
FOSSIL FODDER: DINOSAUR FEATHERS

BY FRED HAYNES



You may have heard the theories that modern birds are descendent from dinosaurs that roamed the planet in the Mesozoic Era (225-65 million years ago), like the Velociraptor depicted above. And that some of those dinosaurs, both large and small, are now purported to have had feathers. But, have you seen any of the direct evidence?

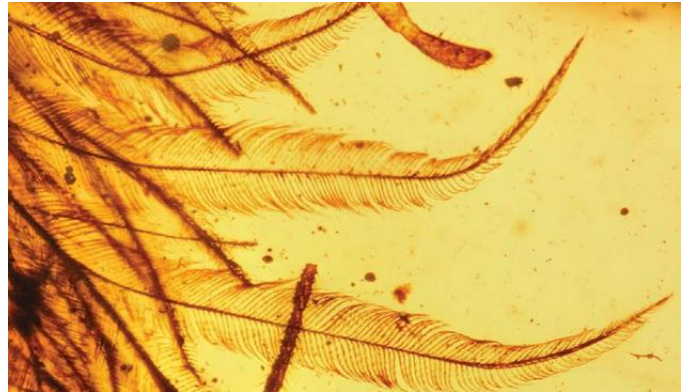
Well, researchers in Regina, Saskatchewan working with colleagues in China have made a remarkable find within a 99 million year old piece of amber. Chinese researcher Lida Xing had acquired the amber in 2015 from collectors in Myanmar and immediately recognized the significance of the preserved material. Ryan McKellar, curator at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, helped to identify feathers attached to a small dinosaur tailbone preserved within the amber.



The tailbone of a Cretaceous Period juvenile dinosaur remarkably preserved in amber and covered in feathers. Field of view in this photo is about 2". The darker specs within the amber are ants, pieces of beetles and a bit of plant material. (from Graham, 2016)

Although fossilized and preserved feathers have been found in proximity to dinosaur remains for nearly two decades, it is often difficult to prove they were actually from the dinosaur and not perhaps

from prey recently captured by the theropod predator. Furthermore, the intricate morphology of previously discovered Mesozoic theropod feathers was often disturbed or destroyed by the processes of burial and lithification. Not so in amber where the finest detail of the original feather can be observed.



A close-up of dinosaur feathers preserved in amber: Note the perfect preservation in this piece that is only 3 mm across. (from Xing et. al., 2016)

Because of the excellent preservation provided by the amber, McKellar could observe the morphology of the tailbone and identify the 8 connected vertebrae of a small dinosaur. He could also study the detail of how the feathers are attached.

Chinese researchers (Xing, L., 2016) have used specialized X-ray equipment to study soft tissue (muscles and ligaments) and even trace amounts of hemoglobin trapped within the amber. The recognition and isolation of preserved organic molecules dating to the Mesozoic is not a precursor to the cloning or revival of extinct species. Proteins and amino acid remnants in preserved organic matter are not DNA. However, it is an incredibly important find for researchers working to accurately place dinosaurs and other extinct species into the evolution of life on earth. The world of paleontology has a new frontier to explore.

References:

Graham, J., 2016, Saskatchewan researches helps ID feathered dinosaur tail trapped in amber, Canadian press, Dec. 8, 2016 [Link to story](#)

Greiner, Michael, 2016, personal communication

Xing, L., et. al., 2016, A Feathered Dinosaur Tail with Primitive Plumage Trapped in Mid-Cretaceous Amber, Current Biology, v. 26 #4, p. 3352-3360 [Link to Abstract](#)

My Little Slice of Heaven

By Linda Schmidtgal

After 22 years as a manager in the banking industry, I retired in 2009. For many years my husband, Les, and I traveled by motorcycle all over North America including a 10,000 mile trip to Alaska. Wherever we went I collected stones but never knew what I was sending home. After I retired I read an ad for the **Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club** and decided to attend a meeting. I have attended every meeting since and have learned so much. I only wish I had done it years prior.



My collection from WCGMC collecting trips over the years.

Even though I am mostly interested in minerals, I will usually go anywhere just to be out there. With approximately 2 dozen digs a year from 1 day to 10 days I have a fairly extensive collection in a short time. On the shelves my husband has graciously built for me there are rocks and minerals that I have collected from Canada to Florida and from North Dakota to Arkansas. Someday soon I hope to get to Arizona.

In the large antique case pictured at the top of the second column are the minerals I have purchased from wherever I go. I have also added saws, grinders, and polishers to my area to continue my obsession during the winter. My husband and I went to North Dakota to his family farm and brought back about 3000 lbs of petrified wood. A little crazy but I love it. The largest log is about 700 lbs. I don't sell my finds but have been known to do a little trading along the way.

Every trip I have gone on is special. Maybe not what is in the bucket but always the camaraderie of a group of fun loving rock hounds. We always have a lot of fun...rain or shine. We share info, ideas, and help getting that certain piece into a bucket. Since WCGMC is a very active club, we have members from all over



My purchases in the case.

New York State. It is a great club with members young and old working and learning together.

Many times I have stepped back and looked at a certain stone and remembered when I collected it and who was with me. Lots and lots of memories and even though I am now close to 70 I hope I am able to continue for many years and make many more memories. To think if I had overlooked that ad all those years ago what I would have missed.



A couple of my recent creations.

Linda is a WCGMC Board of Director and also the Curator of the Club Collection.

**48th ANNUAL
GEM & MINERAL SHOW**
Presented by
Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club, Inc.

MAR. 25, 2017 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
MAR. 26, 2017 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
**** NEW LOCATION ****
WYSOX VOL. FIRE CO. SOCIAL HALL
111 LAKE ROAD, WYSOX, PA

Mineral, Gems, Fossils, Jewelry Dealers, Geode Cutting
Exhibits including Carnegie Museum, Cabochon Making,
Mini-Mine for Kids, Fluorescent Mineral Program,
Door Prizes, and much much more
Adults \$3.00, Students \$1.00, Under 8 Free00



GOTTHARD BASE TUNNEL

by Fred Haynes

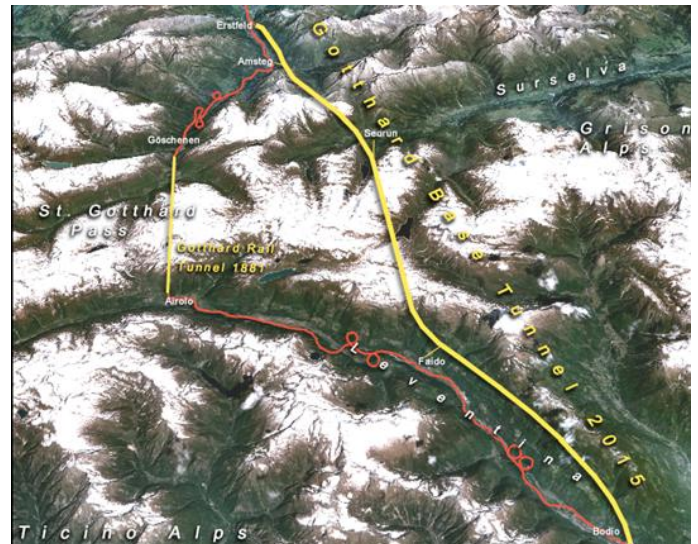
WCGMC loves to dig and we are always looking for new places to dig and new tools to use while digging. But there are some folks in Switzerland that we must acknowledge have done a little more digging than us while deploying more sophisticated and larger tools. In fact, they have been digging on the same project for 17 years. And in June of 2016 they completed their mission. All they had done was dig a 57 km (35 mile) railway tunnel through the Alps in south-central Switzerland: the Gotthard Base Tunnel.

All told this massive project removed 28 million tons of igneous and metamorphic rock (dominantly gneiss). That is enough rock to build a rectangular regular pyramid that is 5200' high. Think about that! At its deepest points the Alps tower more than 2000m (6500') above the tunnel floor.

So how did they do this? They used four of the largest TBM (Tunnel Building Machines) the world has ever seen. The TBM were 19.25m (~62') in diameter. A rotating cutting wheel supported by lubricated disc cutters creates compressive stresses that fracture the rock in front of the TBM. The rock chips are transferred through openings in the TBM and removed on conveyor belts. This process is preferred to conventional drilling and blasting because it leads to less damage of the surrounding wall and ceiling.



Tunnel boring machine used to excavate the Gotthard Base Tunnel. Just think what we could do with one of those things. Maybe Glenn can build one? Please!



The 57 km Gotthard Base Tunnel (bright yellow) replaces a winding surface route (red) and a shorter tunnel that was built way back in 1881. *from Wikipedia*

I can find no information as to whether any wonderful minerals or rocks with sphere potential were encountered. It would be a true shame if all that rock was simply dumped and covered without evaluation. Imagine if they did this through the Adirondacks.

I can not tell you how to get a rock from the tunnel, but I can tell you how to get a very small piece. On the tunnel's opening day of June 1, 2016, the Swiss postal system issued two stamps, one depicting the south entry point in Bodio, the second the northern entry point in Erstfeld. The intervening portion of the souvenir sheet shows the mountains between. And they incorporated rock from the tunnel into the stamps! About 15 kilos (33 pounds) of the rock removed from the tunnel was ground into dust and applied to the stamp using a unique style of printing and a special varnish. You can own a piece of the Alps if you purchase this issue.



References:

Fabbri, D., 2004, [The Gotthard Base Tunnel Overview](#)
 Linns Stamp News, 2016, [October issue, Gotthard Tunnel](#)
 Wikipedia site: [Gotthard Base Tunnel](#)



The club workshop was a busy place in February. There was cutting, polishing, and sphere making going on at all stations. Our coordinator was called on to fix one of the grinders also (upper left). March 18th we do it again!



Have you visited Stephen and Tammy Mayer's train room? Can you see the stratigraphy in the cliff beside the tunnel? Apparently there are diamonds in the gray unit at the base. They are being loaded into the back of the 1961 Chevrolet Apache pick-up. The red 1949 Buick Roadmaster must belong to the mine owner. Ask Stephen and Tammy what other finds they have incorporated into their layout.

Photo by S. Mayer

The Buffalo Geological Society, Inc.
49TH ANNUAL
Gem Mineral Fossil Show
Sat, March 25, 2017 • 10am-6pm | Sun, March 26, 2017 • 10am-5pm
\$5 Per Person • Special 2 Day Admission \$7 • Scouts in Uniform & Children 12 Yrs & Under FREE

GARNET: OUR STATE GEM

A GREAT FIELD TRIP FOR THE FAMILY
A real learning experience
ALSO SHOWING
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• NYS Dept. of Environment & Conservation
• Penn Dixie

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Demonstrations • Beads • Jewelry • Presentations
Private Gem Collections • Unique Gifts
DRAWINGS & REFRESHMENTS

In the Grange, Marketplace, and NYS Police Buildings at The Fairgrounds in Hamburg, NY

WCGMC 2017 Field Trip Schedule (still early)

(last update 2/22/2017)

It is only the end of February, but that does not mean we cannot start planning for the field trip season. We need your input. Where you want to go? Come to the March meeting to contribute. Who wants to take a week long trip to Canada this summer? When can you go? There are options. On the more local scene where might you like to go? Who is OK with weekday trips? Let's get busy soon. Next month this calendar will fill.

April 1 (Saturday): Ace of Diamonds Mine, Middleville, NY *Leader – Bill Chapman*

Opening Day for Herks (\$10/person). Meet there at 9 AM <http://www.herkimerdiamonds.com/index.htm>

April 29th (Sat.) – Franklin New Jersey Super Dig. WCGMC often plans a weekend around this event. Should we this year? As of the end of February, registration was not yet open for the Super Dig.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: CLUB PICNIC IS AUGUST 5th

Two shows in March (same weekend, one for Saturday, one for Sunday!):

March 25-26; Buffalo Geological Society Annual Show at the Hamburg Fairgrounds, for details visit [Buffalo Gem Mineral and Fossil Show](#) (also see page 6)

March 25 -26 Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Show, NEW LOCATION: Wycox Vol. Fire Co. Social Hall, 111 Lake Road, Wycox, PA for details visit [Chehannarocks show page](#) (also see page 4)



**WCGMC Collection
Workday: Feb. 9, 2017**



As many of you know, WCGMC has a rather sizable inventory of rocks and minerals and supplies which was greatly enhanced by a large donation two and a half years ago. Well, several members spent some quality time organizing this material and storing it such that we can find anything and everything. Or so we hope. Our master builder Glenn Weiler constructed 30" deep floor to ceiling sturdy shelving units lining a 25' wall in collection curator's (Linda Schmidtgal) oversized garage. Items were sorted, combined, labeled, inventoried, and stored. Some material was moved to the workshop in Wolcott (see page 6) where it can be used and abused during future workshops. In addition to Glenn and Linda, Ed Smith, Fred Haynes, Matt Weiler, Bill Chapman, Bill Lesniak, Bob Linderbery, and Debbie Breese all assisted with this undertaking.

Wayne County Gem & Mineral Contacts

ELECTED OFFICERS

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Eva Jane Weiler – Secretary gwexterior@gmail.com
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Linda Schmidtgal lees@tds.net 315-365-2448

Gary Thomas gftthomas956@gmail.com 585-489-2162

Fred Haynes fredmhaynes55@gmail.com 585-203-1733

Visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1675855046010058/>

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Bill Chapman – Field Trip Chair
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Fred Haynes – Newsletter Editor
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Bill Lesniak – Website Coordinator

Glenn Weiler – Workshop Coordinator

Linda Schmidtgal – Collection Curator

Eric Elias: GEMFEST Show Chair

thecrystalnetwork@hotmail.com

Fred Haynes – Facebook Administrator

Club meets 2nd Friday of each month starting in Sept.

Social meeting at 6:30 PM.

Regular meeting at 7:00 PM

Park Presbyterian Church, Maple Court, Newark, NY

Website – <http://www.wcgmc.org/>

Dues are only \$15 individual or \$20 family for a full season of fun. Renewal is in October Send to:

WCGMC, P. O. Box 4, Newark, NY 14513

The Public is always welcomed
First Class: Dated, Meetings & Time Values



Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club
P.O. Box 4
Newark, New York 14513