

Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club News

May, 2015

Always Looking for Places to Dig!



April 1 at the Ace of Diamonds Mine (see page 4)



Website

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



Fossils and Dinosaurs on Postage Stamps (see page 2)

Club Meeting, Friday May 8th, 7 PM

Presbyterian Church, Maple Court, Newark, NY

Program: Recent Finds and Show Plans

Let's share what we have already collected this year.

WCGMC has been busy digging already



April 1



April 4



April 18

"Herkimers", Trimerus trilobites, corals, etc.

And come help plan **GemFest 2015** !

Work Day with Club Collection, Tues. May 5th

When: 9:00 AM until everyone is tired

Where: Linda Schmidtgall's garage
1267 Wiley Rd, Savannah, NY

What: We will be organizing and cataloging the club collection. And generally having fun!
for more info call Linda at 315-365-2448

Club Workshop, Saturday. May 23rd

When: 10:00 AM til mid afternoon

Where: The Weiler's Barn / WCGMC 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/visit for adult club members, children are free

Upcoming WCGMC Field Trips

Thurs.-Fri. April 30-May 1, Pennsylvania

Both Mt. Pleasant Mills Quarries, Jermyn, Carbondale, and maybe more
Wavellite, fluorite, black fern fossils, and more

Sat., May 2nd, Penfield Quarry Open House

746 Whalen Road in Penfield
Arrive 6:30 AM for safety briefing, dig until noon. Hard hats, steel toed boots, eye protection and long pants required.

For contact info and details, see page 7



Cubic multi-colored fluorite on a dolomite matrix.



Penfield Quarry, May 2014

And don't forget to block out **June 6-7** on your calendar for our big show in Canandaigua.

GemFest 2015 is just 6 weeks away!



FOSSIL FODDER

By Stephen Mayer



Fossils Tell Stories with Stamps

In the WCGMC March 2015 Newsletter, Fred Haynes introduced a method of collecting minerals and gems in the winter when the ground was covered knee-deep in the white stuff. Simply they can be acquired by collecting postage stamps. Fossil hunters shall not be left behind! Fossils are also depicted on many postage stamps. In fact, the American Topical Association (ATA) lists more stamps with fossils than minerals. The ATA recognizes 3535 stamps from around the world depicting fossils ranging from diminutive invertebrates to enormous dinosaurs.



In 1982, the US commemorated fossil fuels with a stamp that included both a fern and a trilobite fossil.

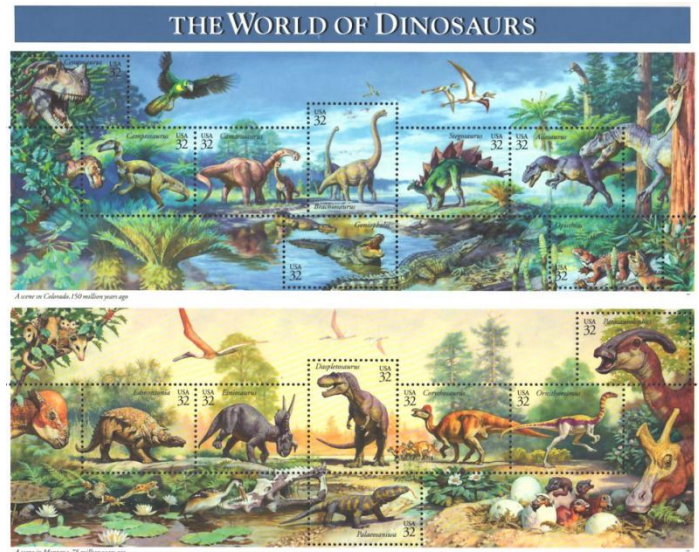
Algeria is credited with issuing the first fossil stamp (below left). The country commemorated the XIX International Geological Congress held in Algeria in 1952 by depicting an ammonite (Berbericeras sikikensis). The first set of prehistoric animals was issued by Poland in 1965 (one is depicted below right). Colorful and popular this set of 10 stamps was the first of literally a couple thousand dinosaur stamps issued globally in the later half of the 20th century.



Prehistoric life on postage stamps provides a basis for numerous sets (multiple stamps connected together by perforations issued at the same time by a particular country). Some countries have carried it

one step farther by issuing sets over several years with the same theme but different stamps with different rates.

The United States has issued several prehistoric sets. One of the favorites is a 1997 set of 15 beautiful dinosaur stamps issued in a panorama setting known to philatelists as a souvenir sheet. There are two panes in the sheet, the upper half contains eight stamps and depicts a Jurassic scene in Colorado, while the lower half depicts seven stamps in a Cretaceous scene in Montana.

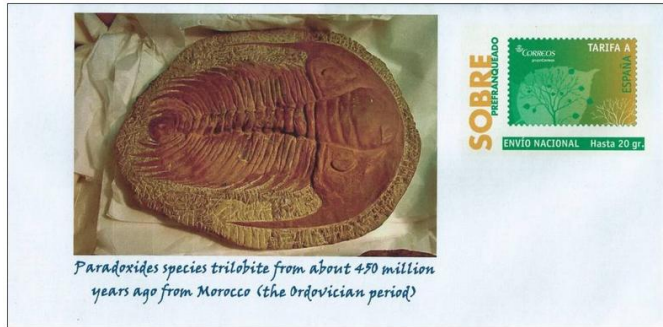


But my personal favorite prehistoric life stamps may be from our neighbor to the north. In the final decade of the 20th century, Canada issued four prehistoric life sets including Paleozoic invertebrates, Mesozoic dinosaurs and Cenozoic mammals. Here we will discuss the initial set of Paleozoic invertebrates issued in July 1990.

We will start with the stamp in the lower right of the grouping of four depicted at the top of the next page. The stamp depicts the Silurian Sea Scorpion Eurypterus remipes, which is moderately rare but can be found in rocks of Southern Ontario. These animals were formidable predators in the Silurian seas, evolving into several different species ranging from a few inches to over 7 feet. Some Eurypterids possessed swimming paddles while others wielded large, dangerous, lobster-like claws. Furthermore, New York State elevated the Eurypterid to the status of State Fossil.



The stamp in the lower left of the block depicts the Cambrian trilobite *Paradoxides davidis* from the Avalon Peninsula of Southeast Newfoundland. This trilobite is also common in Wales and helped geologists reconstruct the configuration of the continents and ancient oceans as they existed 500 million years ago. Furthermore, this trilobite in association with other fossils from the same rocks has provided important evidence for continental drift (Owens, 2007).



Paradoxides is so well known that a fossil from Morocco even found his way onto a Spanish postal card in 2013.

Precambrian Stromatolites are illustrated on the third stamp (upper left). Stromatolites are layered accretionary structures formed in shallow warm water by the trapping, binding, and cementation of sediments by microbial mats of cyanobacteria. Blue-green algae first evolved approximately 3.5- 3.8 billion years ago and constitute the first record of life on Earth. Although extremely primitive life forms, they are still living today and can be observed in

Shark Bay in Australia (Riding, R. 2007). A collector can find Cambrian Stromatolites while digging Herkimer diamonds in the Little Falls Dolomite Formation, or Silurian Stromatolites while digging for fluorite and calcite in the Lockport Formation at the quarries of western New York.

The final stamp in this set portrays an extinct creature of the most peculiar morphology. Initially presented in a scientific meeting in 1972, *Opabinia regalis* was regarded as a hoax but was soon recognized as one of the soft-bodied organisms of the Middle Cambrian Burgess Shale fauna from British Columbia (Smithsonian - Department of Paleobiology, 2015). Indeed this creature with its 5 dorsal facing eyes (possibly for vision in all directions to avoid predation) and long proboscis used for feeding surely qualifies as an oddity.

So it is seen that when the snow is a mile high and the temperatures are bitter cold, a fossil collector may still find an amazing array of prehistoric animals, despite being on paper in the form of postage stamps.

References

- Owens, R.M., 2007. A Welsh Fossil on a Canadian Postage Stamp in www.museumwales.ac.uk.
 Riding, R., 2007. The term stromatolite: towards an essential definition in *Lethaia* 32 (4): 321–330.
 Smithsonian, 2015.
Paleobiology.si.edu/Burgess/Opabinia.html.

Editor's Note: If either the minerals or fossils articles on stamps has piqued your interest, you can be sure to find some at the Rochester Philatelic Stamp Show (ROPEX) which will be held in the same venue as GemFest, just 3 weeks earlier on May 15-17. Visit <http://www.rpastamps.org/ropex.html> for details.

On another note, the Dry Dredgers Club of Cincinnati is visiting a famous Ontario Eurypterid site, Ridgemount Quarry in southern Ontario, on Friday June 12th and individuals are able to join them if prior arrangements are made. Contact Fred Haynes or Stephen Mayer for contact information and details.





Mineral Musings by Fred Haynes



Field Season Has Arrived

Spring has arrived and WCGMC did not let any grass grow under its feet before activating its field season. In fact, we did not even let the snow melt.

It was April, it was opening day, and there were diamonds involved. But no, it was not baseball. Rather, April 1 is opening day for "Herkimer diamond" hunting at Ace of Diamonds Mine in Middletown, NY and 14 intrepid WCGMC members put on their boots and their woolies and made the annual trip. Exposure was limited and the snow prevented the owners from bringing in new rock. But there were still "diamonds" to be found and the sun was out to warm our hearts if not our hands. April 1 may actually be more tolerable than August 1. We even signed up a new member while digging, welcoming Donna Dow to our growing family of crazed collectors.



Ed Smith watches as Bill Lesniak applies the lick test to his find. If it is cold and melts it is not a quartz crystal.



Cheyenne Daniels does not need a lick test to know she has a Herkimer diamond. Can you see it in the vug?



The Weiler clan was there to play in the snow and mud.



Ed Smith found these three nice "peas in a pod."



Exposure of the Rochester shale and its 430 million year old fossils.



The St. John family seeking trilobites.

Both species of trilobites known to inhabit the Middle Silurian of the region (*Dalmanites limulurus* and *Trimerus delphinocephalus*) were recovered in their entirety. Ken St. John unearthed a partial cephalopod that we suspect is from the Genus *Dawsonoceras*. Specimens of the brachiopods *Coolina subplana* and *Leptaena rhomboidalis* were frequently encountered in the shaly units of the Rochester shale. Below is a small sample of our successful day alongside the canal.



Trimerus delphinocephalus trilobite



complete *Dalmanites limulurus* trilobite



Strophomenid Brachiopod

Coolina subplana

Three days later it was colder with a brisk wind, but seven fossil enthusiasts gathered at the Long Pond Road site on the Erie Canal in search of trilobites. The Middle Silurian Rochester shale along the Erie Canal is only exposed when the water level is lowered in the winter and the snow and ice are not present as overburden. Practically speaking this means just a few short weeks in latest March or early April and even then conditions can be less than ideal.

Our third trip of April took 8 of us to East Bethany on April 18th and a pair of outcrop exposures where fossils are practically lying on the surface waiting for the curious collector to happen upon them. Good variety and abundance is somewhat offset by quality as most specimens appear to have been abraded and tumbled a bit before they found their final resting place on the Middle Devonian seabed for burial, preservation, and mineralization. Nevertheless it is fun to collect and identify the coral and brachiopod species.

The first stop was along Bethany Center Road where corals of as many as 5 species can be picked off the surface or unearthed just below to crusted soil surface. The north side of the old railway line exposes Centerfield limestone member of the Ludlowville Formation.



Dan, Sue, Doris, and Christine hunt for corals alongside Bethany Center Road.

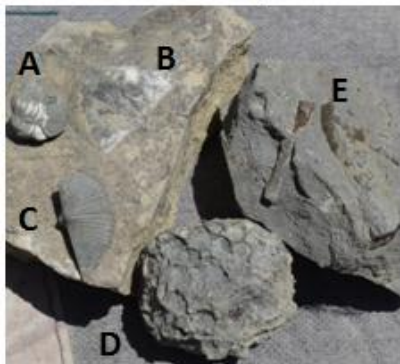


Some of Christine VanNeel's finds off Bethany Center Road. Unwashed on the left, cleaned and scrubbed on the right. Can you see the various corals, a few brachs, and the bryozoa? Photo by Christine VanNeel

Around noon, the group moved a bit west and a bit up section in the Ludlowville Formation to look for trilobites and other goodies in the Wanakah and Ledyard members off Francis Road. Fossils are sparser along the old railroad bed here, but the variety is good and the chance for trilobites holds the collector's attention.



STOP to fossil collect just off Francis Road in East Bethany.



Some of the groups' finds from the Francis Road site. A. Sue's enrolled trilobite, B. a Strophomenid brachiopod on matrix, C. Fred's *Mucrospirifer*, D. Gary's *Pleurodictyum americanum*, and E. Jerry's fossilized nautiloids.

Wayne County Gem & Mineral Club

**Gem Fest
2015**



Sat. June 6 10-5

Sun. June 7 10-4

NEW LOCATION

Greater Canandaigua Civic Center
250 N. Bloomfield Rd, Canandaigua

Soapstone Carving, Wire Wrapping, Sluice
Vendors, Exhibits, Free Prizes, and much more

UV Bob's Ultraviolet Show

Gems, Minerals, Fossils, Beads & Jewelry

visit <http://www.wcgmclub.org/> for details

We will need all available hands to pull off a successful show in our new venue. If you can help with set-up on Friday or can man a registration table or a club table for a couple hours on Saturday or Sunday, please let us know at the May 8th club meeting or by e-mail or by carrier pigeon or by any means possible. We will also need a lot of hands on Sunday afternoon to take it all down.



The picture did not scan well, but yes, that is Bill Chapman and he is at it again. He assisted more than 170 youngsters like this young boy polish stones at the Che-hanna Show in late March. Bill Chapman gets yet another "Attaboy" for his community service. Picture from the Daily Review March 29, 2015 edition (Towanda, Pa.)

Another Lapidary Machine for the Workshop

Those of us who visited the Rochester Lapidary workshop in March were impressed by their pair of sphere making machines. But while most of us went home wishing we had one, Glenn Weiler went home and actually built one! When we all arrived on April 11th for our monthly workshop Glenn was working on his fifth sphere. While he admits the "contraption" needs a few design improvements before achieving perfection, Glenn's ingenuity was once again demonstrated. Below is a picture of the machine and his first five products. The small blue sodalite sphere at the top is gorgeous. The layered orange sphere looks like Jupiter to me. Glenn will have a complete Solar System soon.



A few of the first creations from WCGMC's "sphere" machine. Can you see the Herkimer diamond at the right end of the vug in the largest sphere?

April 10th was Fossil Night for WCGMC

Fifteen club members packed up their best New York fossils and brought them to the club meeting in March. It took three 8' tables to display all the goodies. Everybody was immediately ready to plan field trips!



Some scenes from Fossil Night in Newark.

These were not the only fossils on display on April 10th. Your editor turned 60 years young that day and I'd like to take a moment to thank those who helped me celebrate. The cake was great and the centerpiece setting cut down to expose exactly 60 quartz tips is a piece I will display prominently and treasure proudly. Linda, you are so resourceful.



Fred Haynes turned 60 during the April club meeting. Photo by Matt Weiler



Or as I prefer to call it "Survival of the Pinkest"



This little fellow was out enjoying the April weather along Francis Road during our fossil hunt. We did not know the Genus, so we let him be.

WCGMC 2015 Field Trip Schedule

last update (4/26/2015)

Collecting season has commenced! We've worked out some May and June activities and blocked a week in July for Ontario. You should always contact the trip leader for details and possible changes. Or come to our monthly meeting and help plan. This list is forever in flux and additional dates will be added with each newsletter, and are also posted on the website. You can always contact the listed trip leader, or Bill Chapman, if you are uncertain whether you have the latest information.

Remember to attend a WCGMC field trip you must be a club member, or a member of an affiliated club if you do not live in our region.

April 30-May 1 (Thurs.-Fri.) - Pennsylvania: Pleasant Mills for wavellite, calcite and fossils, Jerymn and Carbondale for plant fossils (motel in Sunbury) -- *Leader – Bill Chapman*

May 2 (Sat.) – Penfield Open House, 746 Whalen Road, Penfield. Arrive 6:30 AM for safety meeting, Dig until noon. (Hard hats, steel toed boots, eye protection and long pants required).

May 16 (Sat.) - Penn-Dixie Fossil Park, Hamburg, NY *Dig with the Experts, \$30 fee (\$25 for members)*
see: <http://www.penndixie.org> or 716-627-4560

May 24th weekend: Hickory Hills will likely be open this weekend for Herkimer picking. (Contact them directly).

May 30th (Saturday) – Ilion, NY for travertine (and probably an additional fossil stop) *Leader – Bill Chapman*

June 12-14 (Friday-Sunday)- Some of us will accompany Dry Dredgers of Cincinnati to Ridgemount Quarry in Ontario on a Eurypterid hunt (10 miles from Buffalo) and then to Penn-Dixie or other Buffalo area sites.
(Contact Stephen Mayer or Fred Haynes if interested)

June 19-20 (Friday-Saturday) Do we call this a dig! Bill Chapman is having his more or less annual "Rocks by the Pound" extravaganza at his rock pile(s) in Prattsburgh (*Learn more at May mtg. or visit Bill at the show*)

July 19-26 –Bancroft, Ontario (5-6 days in/ around the "Mineral Collecting Capital of Canada") We may add Cobalt to the agenda. Planning will continue but this will be the week *Leader – Fred Haynes.*

Later in the Summer – Watch this space

Fossil Trips proposed include Deep Run, Green's Landing, Alden, Indian Creek, Syracuse area, Second Creek in Sodus, and more. Mineral trips to Ilion, Walworth, West Pierrepont+Powers, Rose Road, and more

SHOWS and OTHER EVENTS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR in the next 2-3 months

May 2-3 (Sat-Sun.) Treasures of the Earth, in Pitston, PA -- Mineralogical Soc. of Northeast PA
for details visit <http://msnepa.org/> (*Bill and Pat Chapman will be there*)

May 5 (Tuesday): Club collection work day to organize and catalog the tons of club material currently stored in Linda Schmidt Gall's garage. Arrive anytime after 9 AM and stay as long as you want. We need to sort and inventory the collection and select material for the show and future workshops. It will be work, but it will be fun.

May 23 (Saturday): Club workshop day in Wolcott (see page 1 for details).

June 6-7 -- THE BIG EVENT -- GEMFEST 2015 IN CANANDAIGUA www.wcgmc.org for details

July 11-12 GemWorld 2015 in Syracuse visit <http://www.gmss.us/annual-show/2015-annual-show> for details

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

Mini-miner 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. Send to WCGMC, P. O. Box 4, Newark, NY 14513

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



Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club
P.O. Box 4
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