



Voice of the Dinosaur

Newsletter of the Kawartha Rock and Fossil Club

April 2012 ~ Volume 24 ~ Issue 4

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LAST MEETING March 13, 2012

The meeting was chaired by the President, Mark Stanley and began with the regular business meeting. Minutes of the Feb. 2011 minutes had been distributed to members earlier so were accepted without being read at the meeting.

Committee reports were given as applicable and approved.

Bob Beckett, the Show Co-Ordinator thanked everyone who had assisted at the Show and stressed the point that any Show's success depends upon the assistance of the members.

Feature Presentation - Despite the breakdown of visual aids, George Thompson was able to give us an interesting presentation on the Beekmantown Formation using many actual samples taken from his own collection of quartzes and calcites from this formation.

Tom Jenkins held a silent auction.

NEXT MEETING April 10, 2012

Place - Orientation Centre, Peterborough Zoo

Time - 7:00 pm.

Agenda - Regular April Meeting

Field trips will be discussed.

Feature Presentation: Steve Wesley will discuss the history of the Fission Mine near Wilberforce, ON.

We will have Tom's silent auction.

For Fossil and Mineral of the evening - Bring in something that you would like identified or that you have already collected this year.

NOTE: Tom Jenkins would very much appreciate it if the members would save the clear milk bags, cut them open at the top, clean them, and give them to Tom. They are great for wrapping samples for the Kids Auctions, etc.

Bill Rawson is still looking for suggestions for field trips or, at least let him know your interests, re: fossils, minerals.

THE FIELD TRIP CORNER

2012 Fossil Collecting

By Kevin Kidd

As I wrote in the last issue, the next few months will detail my fossil collecting exploits for the 2012 season.

Sunday, March 11

After enduring weekend after weekend of bad weather since the Super-Bowl, and after being stymied on the 10th as well, the forecast looked promising and I couldn't wait any longer. Before dawn I was finally heading back to the quarry.

I arrived about 8:00 am, just as there was getting to be enough light to hunt. It was still chilly, but who cares. I was back doing what I love. I got my gear together and headed for a spot that had been very good to me in the past. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case this trip. I did find an enrolled *Isotelus* trilobite, somewhat damaged, as well as the usual brachiopods and bivalves, but not the big score I had been hoping for. As I was poking around here, another collector joined me. We chatted for a bit then headed down a level to an area where I knew cystoids and starfish were found last fall.

The area we were in was still entirely shaded and cool, but the sun was out and all throughout the quarry, you could hear ice falling from the walls (Figures 1 & 2). Hard hats are mandatory!!



Figure 1.

View of the quarry from the second level looking southwest. You can see the very bottom is still flooded/frozen and since they haven't started blasting yet this season, there was no sense going all the way down.



Figure 2.

Icicles on the second level. Pretty to look at, but don't get too close. Most of these had fallen by the time we left this level.

It wasn't long before I found another trilobite. It needs to be prepped to confirm the ID, but I believe it's a *Flexicalymene* (Figure 3). They are much less likely to be found prone, as opposed to enrolled, but this one happens to be right on the corner of a piece of rock and may have some damage!



Figure 3.

Probable *Flexicalymene*

Not long after, I found a couple of notable trilo-bits – the cephalons (heads) of an *Achatella* (Figure 4) and an *Amphilichas* (Figure 5). Complete specimens of these trilobites are exceptionally rare, especially the *Amphilichas*, and any recognizable pieces of them are tough enough to find that they are worth keeping. That was about all I found in this spot; no cystoids, no starfish, but not a total loss either.



Figure 4.

This piece had more than I thought. The *Achatella* cephalon (head) is in the center. Above it at about 1:00 o'clock is a cephalon from a *Hemiarges* and above that is one from a *Flexicalymene*. At about 3:30 from the *Achatella* is a cephalon from a small *Ceraurus* and towards the bottom is a pygidium (tail) from a species I have yet to identify. Five genera of trilobite on one little piece, not bad!



Figure 5.

Amphilichas cephalon. Looks similar to *Hemiarges* but is larger. This one is actually small at around ½ inch wide.

We continued to walk around this level and saw that another couple of collectors had arrived and were exploring the opposite side of the quarry. I picked up a few more pieces from this level, including another *Achatella* cephalon (Figure 6) and an uncommon *Hindia* sponge (Figure 7).



Figure 6.

The second *Achatella* head I found (lower left). The round object on the opposite end of the piece is a hypostome (mouth part) from a *Ceraurus* trilobite.



Figure 7.

Sponges (*Hindia* sp.) The two small ones may or may not be sponges, I can't tell, but when the larger one is put under magnification, it is possible to see the pores on the surface.

Another piece I saw, but didn't take due to its size, was a slab with several trilobite pathways and resting traces called *Rusophycus* (Figure 8).

Figure 8. *Rusophycus*. On the left side of the slab, you can see the trilobite pathway. The thicker parallel lines are the resting traces (you can see one just under my hammer head).



Figure 8.

We stayed on this level until about 1:00 pm, and by that time it was getting warm. I decided to climb around on the crush pile, while my partner was content to stay on flat ground, one level up.

I was hoping to find some enrolled trilobites in the pile, but my luck just wasn't working this particular day. Maybe the mild winter didn't 'frost-pop' the goodies to the surface, or maybe we need a good rain first. Whatever the reason, I didn't find much of anything on the pile. One of the other collectors was up there as well and he had found one nice roller, but I was expecting to have a few in my pocket by now. I walked across the pile a bit longer, but it got too hard on the legs and was really sucking the energy out of me. The first trip of the year really has a way of showing you how out of condition you get over the winter. I had one more area I wanted to check before calling it a day (Figure 9).

In this new spot, I continued finding more of the usual types of fossils, but nothing great (Figure 10).



Figure 9.

The view from the top of the crush pile looking north.



Figure 10.

Common fossils of the Verulam formation. Different species of Brachiopods (top) a Gastropod (lower left) and a Bivalve, lower right.

With my energy almost gone, at about 3:00 o'clock I finally found my first enrolled *Flexicalymene* of the season (Figures 11 & 12).



Figure 11.

***Flexicalymene senaria* as found.**



Figure 12.

Same "Flexi" after some prepping.

They aren't rare, but they are always nice to find, and it had been a long time since I've had the pleasure. I think all of the trilobites I found last fall were *Isotelus*, so this little guy made my day.

About this time, I saw another two collectors had joined us. Six people in that quarry, not as a group, is a busy day. The new arrivals were atop the pile, and I wasn't climbing up there to see who they were. It turned out they were a couple of the KRFC's newest members, Beth and David. I'd met and hunted with them before, and both are nearly as fossil crazy as I am. Not quite, but nearly.

Until next month – Happy Hunting!

Field Trip Equipment and Etiquette

by Bev & Ken Fox

Soon we will be heading off on field trips to working quarries, old mine sites, etc. Much of the following info is "old hat" to inveterate rockhounds, but there are some members new to the game.

When rockhounding in working quarries the following items are required for each person entering:

- hard hat
- CSA approved boots with the green triangle
- safety glasses
- fluorescent orange vest

Not required, but indispensable:

- pair of heavy leather work gloves
- rock hammer (no carpenter's claw hammers, mechanic's ball peen hammers etc.)
- several sizes of cold chisels (heads should be trimmed so no pieces fly off when used)
- sturdy bag or back pack to carry items
- bucket for samples
- some members find pry bars and sledge hammers quite useful.

Some quarries allow rock saws to be used, but permission must be granted first.

Old clothes or overalls are a given, and rain gear, an extra sweater, even a change of clothes might be handy at times. Don't forget lunch!

Once samples are collected, they should be well wrapped. Newspapers, bubble wrap, egg cartons for small samples are some of the more common items used. Do label samples as to date and place where collected.

Before entering a working quarry you will be required to fill out a legal document called a "release." This protects the quarry operator from responsibility in cases of personal injury or death. It is your responsibility not to put yourself or others in danger by careless practices. Stay aware of what is around and above you. Watch for overhanging ledges and rocks. Always stay away from walls a distance roughly equal to the wall height. Walls in quarries can be very unstable, particularly after recent blasting and after the freezing and thawing of winter and spring. When using hammers, etc. check to make sure you will not hit anyone with the tools or flying rock pieces. If you are on a rock pile, do not throw rock down without checking first to make sure no one will be hit.

You may come across unexploded explosives. Ammonium nitrate and fuel oil are often used for blasting and this will look like white granular material, probably with an oily smell. It is relatively insensitive and is not a great danger, but it should be treated with respect. Dynamite, either as sticks or large cartridges, is used for some blasting or as a detonator for ammonium nitrate. The sticks or cartridges which I've met up with are covered with heavy brown waxed paper. If the cartridge is broken, it may look like brown mud. If you get your hands into it or rub any on your face, you will get a terrific headache. Dynamite is not extremely sensitive, but it can be detonated with a sledge hammer and anvil, so deserves a lot of respect. If you come across any, stay away and warn others. Explosives can also be in a rope form called Primacord (other names possible) and looks like a piece of braided rope with a soft core. It's pretty much the same as dynamite and should be given the same respect. The blasting caps used to detonate the dynamite look like a silvery metal tube two or three inches long and may have either wires, a fuse or plastic tube coming out one end. These are extremely sensitive and could be detonated by stomping on them with a hard boot or by a relatively light hammer blow. For their size, they are very powerful and can easily remove a few fingers or toes. Keep away from them and warn others if you find any.

The trip leader for the day has full control of the group and may require anyone engaging in unsafe practices to leave the quarry immediately. There have been cases of irresponsible behaviour on the part of a rockhouser leading to a total ban on any group entering quarries.

A quarry operator will give times when you may enter and when you must leave. Respect these times. When you leave a site for the day, make sure to tell the trip leader or someone else in the group that you are leaving.

There are dangers in rockhounding in abandoned areas such as old mine sites. Great efforts have been made to fill abandoned mine shafts, but there is no guarantee that they have all been filled. It used to be that, on closing a mine, the shaft would often be covered with a timber bulkhead. These rot out leaving hidden holes. There might also be pieces of metal, concrete and broken glass covered with vegetation.

Another hidden danger is old mine workings that consisted of a trench in the ground. The walls were blocked up with timber where necessary, but by now the timber has rotted and the walls can easily fall on anyone who is hacking at the base or walking on top.

If you wish to rockhound on private property, always request permission from the owner.

Do not leave garbage or rubbish. Take it with you for disposal in the proper places.

By taking simple precautions and using common sense, rockhounding can be a safe and rewarding hobby.

Have fun collecting!

THE FOSSIL CORNER

A New Group at the ROM

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) has a new "Friends Group" called "The Friends of Palaeontology". This group offers an exciting opportunity for interested individuals and families to become involved in a community of individuals and families who are fascinated by fossils (including dinosaurs) and the history of life, and who are interested in supporting palaeontology and palaeontological programming at the ROM.

Friends of Palaeontology members receive all the benefits of ROM membership PLUS...

- at least one free lecture annually - hear the exciting stories behind palaeontological collections and research at the ROM

- invitations to events/programs highlighting the research, fieldwork, and discoveries of ROM palaeontologists and their colleagues around the world

- two e-newsletters each year featuring updates on the ROM's amazing fossil collections, new acquisitions, gallery developments, feature exhibitions, curatorial achievements, upcoming events, and more

- opportunities to make new friends and gain exclusive insights into the ROM's exceptional contributions in palaeontology, past and present

- and now you can follow our palaeontology experts on twitter @ROMpalaeo!

Museum Circle, Director's Circle, Young Patrons' Circle, or Royal Patrons' Circle receive one complimentary Friends group. Each additional Friends group is \$57/year.

Join one or several Friends. Each Friends group is \$57 per year. (\$114/Friends for 2 year ROM memberships)

For more info, contact the ROM at:
<http://www.rom.on.ca/members/>

The ROM and the Burgess Shale Fossils

The ROM has the most extensive collection of Burgess shale fossils in the entire world and is engaging in many projects related to the fossils.

The Burgess Shale projects are a series of integrated and collaborative research programs that Jean-Bernard Caron, Associate Curator of Invertebrate Palaeontology, implemented soon after joining the ROM in early 2006. These projects are primarily focussed on the study of fossils from the extensive Burgess Shale collection, with the intent to fulfil the ROM's collaborative agreement with Parks Canada (for whom we hold the fossils in trust) to present (interpret) Burgess Shale fossils to the public (as stipulated by the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO).

For a list of some of the most recent publications on the fossils go to:

<http://www.rom.on.ca/collections/research/jcбургесс.php>

This site provides access to many project related to the fossils.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Probably in reading this Newsletter you noticed there was no "Mineral Corner". That's because there is no one to write on minerals at this time. Sooo..if anyone is interested in writing on a mineral or some aspect of mining, mineralogy, geology, etc. please do so and submit your article to me. Of course, fossil and related articles are welcome, also.

If you're not into writing, but would like to see an article related to some aspect of geology, mineralogy, etc., contact me with your idea. Field trip articles are always welcomed by the members.

Thanks very much to Kevin Kidd, Bob Beckett, Ken Fox, Tom Jenkins and Mark Stanley for their contributions to this issue.

Before I close there is one topic not really related to our club interests, but of much concern to many people, scents in public areas. Many medical offices and hospitals are requesting that anyone entering those premises not use perfumes, colognes, aftershave, scented fabric sheets or fabric softeners, scented deodorants, scented hand and body creams, and many other products that are scented. The reason for this is because many people are coping with cancer, chemotherapy, asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and other physical problems that interfere with proper breathing and scents exacerbate the problems.

Several of our members do have problems that are made worse by scents. Please, could we show them some respect and limit the use of scented products when attending meetings. They will thank you.

COMING EVENTS

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| Apr 10 | Regular KRFC April meeting
Place - Orientation Centre, Peterborough Zoo
Time - 7:00 pm.
Agenda - Regular April Meeting
Field trips will be discussed.
Feature Presentation: Steve Wesley will discuss the history of the Fission Mine near Wilberforce, ON. |
| Apr19-22 | 39th Rochester Mineralogical Symposium
Website: http://www.rasny.org/MinSymposium/MineralSymp.htm |
| May4-6 | Canadian Micro Mineral Association 49th Annual Symposium
Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.
Speakers: Dr. Julian Gran and Andre Lalonde
Contact: Bill Lechner at 416-438-8908 or bill.lechner@rogers.com
* Registration form available by request to the above. *
Website: http://www.canadianmicrominerals.ca |

- May 4-6** **Robert Hall Originals – Annual Spring Open House & Demonstration**
Weekend 10:00 am to 5 pm each day
Rocks, minerals, gems, beads, lapidary demonstrations & more!
A Free Weekend of Fun...
"Mineral Madness"
Inland lapidary Equipment - Free
Demo Pewter Tour 1:00 each day - Free
Wire Art - Free Demo
Explore Outdoor Rock Piles
Free Coffee & Treats!
138 Sugar Maple Road, St. George, Ontario N0E 1N0
Phone: 519-488-1236, 1-8000-360-2813
Website: <http://www.roberthalloriginals.com>
Email: robert@roberthalloriginals.com
- May 5** **The Kitchener-Waterloo Gem and Mineral Show**
Location: Waterloo Community Arts Centre (aka the "button factory")
25 Regina St. S., Waterloo, 10 AM - 4 PM.
Rocks, minerals, gemstones, jewelry, fossils, meteorites.
Free admission. Free rocks for kids.
Contact: kwgemandmineralclub@hotmail.com
Website: www.calaverite.com/kwgmc
- May 16** **Mineral Identification Night at the ROM**
4:pm to 5:30 pm.
President's Choice Entrance on Queen's Park, doors nearest Museum subway stop.
Website: www.rom.on.ca/programs/id_clinics.php