



What's new at MPE?

2008 Annual General Assembly

We held our Annual General Assembly (AGA) on Wednesday November 5, 2008, at the Laboratory for Conservation and Research – MPE, located at 541, de la Congrégation Street in Montreal. During this assembly, we elected a new board of directors which included Mr. Daniel Beaudriault, Mrs. Chantal Claude, Mr. Michel Chartier, Mrs. Véronique Poirier, Mr. Jacques Lachance, Mrs. Diane Beaudriault, Mr. Martin Dubreuil, and Mr. Mario Cournoyer. We will soon publish the executive functions of each of the members.

After the AGA, Prof. Gilbert Prichonnet, honorary professor and associate professor at the Département des Sciences de la Terre et de l'Atmosphère (Dept. of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) at UQAM presented the chapter describing (at last!) the "Geological Heritage" in the publication of the Société patrimoniale et histoire de l'Île Bizard et Sainte-Geneviève. This is an encouragement to defend **all** the heritages in the country...

LAFARGE - SAINT-CONSTANT
GEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION CENTRE : 2003



"They will orient me...fully N-S...towards Mount-Royal,
...and I will find peace again... as during the last 15,000 years!"

Among the various ways of valuating the geological heritage, Mr. Prichonnet reminded the case of the Saint-Constant erratic which is now accessible to the general public at the Lafarge cement plant (Canada Cement). This erratic block and the glacial deposits in which it was found are 15,000 years old and illustrate the large-scale ice flows of the last glaciation.

Professor Prichonnet's talk was followed by a discussion about the need to pursue the project entitled "Geological Heritage of Quebec" so as to let MPE members express their opinions and suggestions about the survival and development of this project.

The "Geological Heritage of Quebec" project revisited

This project was born through an initiative of Prof. Michel A. Bouchard of the Université de Montréal and regrouped about one hundred participants of various origins, universities, museums, ministries, associations, clubs and societies, all related to earth sciences and based in Quebec. The objective was to publicize as much as possible our geological, mineralogical and paleontological heritage.

The first meeting of the project took place in 2000 in Montreal and the second one in Quebec City in 2004. The proceedings of the first meeting were published by Géologie-Québec and are edited by G. Prichonnet and M. A. Bouchard (Publication no. MB2004-05). Unfortunately, the permanent conference, which was meant to insure the continuation of the project, could not achieve its goals.

Considering the situation, Prof. Prichonnet interviewed the MPE members about their opinion concerning the survival of the project and how enthusiastic they were about taking charge of the paleontological theme. The answer was clear: the MPE members are interested inasmuch as other organizations join the venture, because it is only through a large number of participants that the concept of Quebec Geological Heritage will make itself known of both the public and the governments.



Important steps for 2008

Members of the Board of Directors (B.A.) have been working since June 2008 on a major project following a meeting, in February 2008, with Mr. Charles Gagnon of the Regroupement Économique et social du Sud-Ouest de Montréal (RESO). On that occasion, Mr. Gagnon told us that RESO was interested in supporting financially the writeup of a business plan whose target would be the public opening the MPE somewhere in the Southwest Borough of the City of Montreal. The condition for obtaining this help, and a prerequisite to the preparation of a business plan, was for the B.A. to deliver a strategic plan listing, on one hand, our strengths and weaknesses as an organization and on the other, the opportunities and threats presented by our social environment.

A first draft was written up during the summer of 2008 by the B.A. with the help of Mrs. Cindy Morin and Mr. Jean-Pierre Guilbault, both new members of the Museum and respectively heritage consultant and micropaleontologist. Mr Gagnon received the draft in

September 2008 and his comments were enthusiastic. He asked to meet us in October and, when we met, he told us that RESO would be ready to support financially—for the most part—the rest of the strategic planning, as well as a few other steps leading to the business plan. We are presently waiting for news from his side before proceeding.

These steps come in line with many others already engaged toward the opening of the MPE. Whether it is the short-term expositions presented in Old Montreal in 1996 and 1997, or the traveling exposition "Dinosaurs and Co." which, to this day, is still traveling across Canada, or the setting up of the Laboratory of Conservation and Research – MPE, all are meant to regroup, organize and publicize the MPE collections. Strategic planning, market studies and business plan won't be completed until a few years but are necessary steps toward the opening of the MPE.



The temporary exposition given in Old Montreal in 1996 was a fine achievement. Many fossils belonging to MPE members were exposed. In addition, partners such as Redpath Museum and Parc de Miguasha loaned us great specimens.



Conservation and Research Laboratory – MPE

Summary of Activities

Research work has been temporarily pushed aside this year, as we concentrated on tasks related to the conservation of specimens in the collection of the Museum of Paleontology and Evolution.

Activities listed below are the most significant done at the laboratory since the first report dated April 29, 2007 and reported to members on the last annual general assembly of the MPE held on that date.

Conservation

On November 3, 2008, the MPE's collection contained a total of 4591 fossils and other specimens. For various reasons, the three main actors involved in the cataloguing of the collections, that is, Mario Cournoyer, Martin Dubreuil and Michel Chartier, have not been able to do as much work than during the year preceding the last report. Nevertheless, the cataloguing of the specimens from the Saint-Nicolaas sand pits has progressed to the point where nearly all the fossil assemblage has been integrated into the laboratory's database.

(continued on p. 4)

FOSSIL LOAN

During the summer of 2008, Mr. Frank Habets, amateur paleontologist from the Ottawa region, contacted us to lend us a dozen specimens from his personal collection. He collected this superb material himself in Ontario; it is primarily of Ordovician age (\pm 450 million years). The specimens had been exposed at the Prescott-Russell Natural History Museum in Hawkesbury, Ontario, until it closed recently.

Mr Habets is particularly interested in our young museum and wants to contribute by lending specimens for an indefinite length of time. He intends to send more specimens from his personal collection in the spring of 2009. Watch closely the following bulletins to see these new specimens!



Limestone slab showing many trilobites (*Ceraurus* sp.) from Belleville, Ontario.



Another trilobite (*Asaphus* sp.) from the same locality in Ontario.



**Conservation and research Laboratory
– MPE (Continued)**

The Saint-Nicolas collection will have been completely catalogued once a few invertebrates from the preceding years have been accessed, in addition to fossils of the last field season which include a few tens of shells and a dozen of bony specimens.

In addition to Saint-Nicolas, a small number of fossils of various origins given to the MPE through the years have been incorporated into the database. We accessed also the Cincinnati collection, made up of fossils from the Upper Ordovician of Sharonville (a northern suburb of Cincinnati).

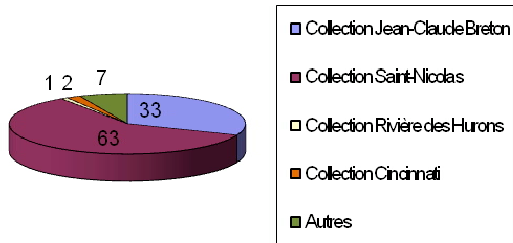
(continued on p. 5)



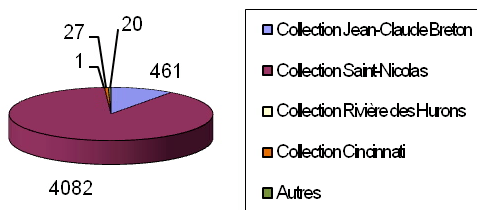
A complete 2nd rib of a bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*) found in the Saint-Nicolas sand pit

**Status of the MPE collections
as of November 3, 2008**

**Catalogue des accessions -
Collections du MPE**

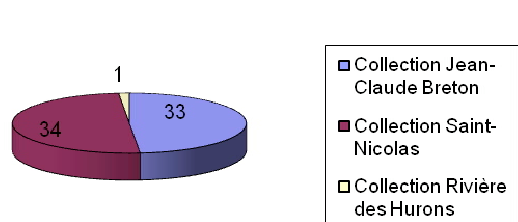


**Catalogue des spécimens -
Collections du MPE**

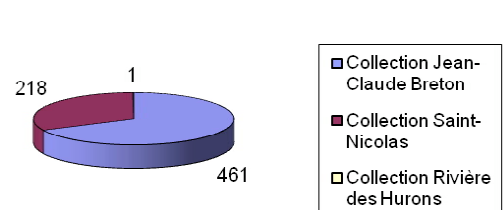


**Status of the MPE collections
as of April 29, 2008**

**Catalogue des accessions -
Collections du MPE**



**Catalogue des spécimens -
Collections du MPE**



Note: An accession corresponds to a set of specimens collected the same day on a single site to which we assign a single collection number (that is, the accession number). This collection may come from a donation, a field discovery, or a purchase.



Conservation and research Laboratory
– MPE (Continued)

The future of the Laboratory for Conservation and Research

During the last year, six metal cabinets for the conservation of fossils, given by the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, were added to the four we already possessed. In addition, this museum seems to be ready to yield to us approximately ten more cabinets during the coming winter. Therefore, the MPE will soon have at its disposal about 20 cabinets for the conservation of its collections.

These cabinets, though old, are in very good state and will insure storage and durability of a good part of the present and future collections. It goes without saying that we greatly appreciate the support shown by the Canadian Museum of Nature though this invaluable donation.

Unfortunately, the laboratory cannot accommodate more than 5 or 6 cabinets for the time being. For that reason, Mr. Cournoyer considers carrying out this winter some extension works that will add one room to the laboratory. This new room will be entirely dedicated to conservation and will contain 4 or 5 additional cabinets.

During the coming months, we expect, among other things, to start developing a database for the cataloguing of the Museum's library (books, periodicals and other documents).



Cabinet no. 1 is the first to be completed! It holds nearly all the fossil bones from the Saint-Nicolas sand pits. The lowermost drawers contain the most significant fossil invertebrates (mollusks, crustaceans, etc.) from that locality.



Descriptive card of the specimen

Specimen number :	MPEPI04.1
Identification:	Mollusc, cephalopod
Genus and species:	cf. <i>Centrotarphyceras</i> sp.
Age:	Early Ordovician
Geological formation:	Romaine Formation
Locality:	Pointe Enragée, east of Havre-Saint-Pierre
Finder:	Mrs Thérèse Roberge
Date:	1985



This specimen was found by Mrs Thérèse Roberge in 1985 on the rocky shores of Pointe Enragée near Havre Saint-Pierre. It has been somewhat difficult to identify. Initially, Jean-Pierre Guilbault and Mario Cournoyer thought they could recognize a gastropod of the Macluritidea family, but after consulting Twenhofel (1938) they rather opted for a cephalopod (i.e. a cousin of squids and octopuses). Its age is about 480 million years.



Reference : Twenhofel, W.H. 1938. *Geology and paleontology of the Mingan Islands, Quebec*. Geological Society of America, Special Papers No. 11. p.86-87. Pl.16 Fig. 6.

Membership

As at the beginning of every year, we must inform you that your membership card must be renewed. Please find attached to this bulletin a copy of the membership renewal form. Remember that you can also make a donation, as the Museum is a charity, duly registered with Revenue Canada, and entitled to issue receipts for income tax purposes.

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Board of Directors 2007-2008

Mario Cournoyer — President

Martin Dubreuil — Vice-President

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Daniel Beaudriault — Advisor

Michel Chartier — In charge of the Conservation
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Our location

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