

# Bulletin of the MPE

## New acquisition: A walrus skull from St. Nicolas

In the 1990s, we heard that a walrus skull had been found in the Langlois sandpit in St. Nicolas, near Quebec City. In 1997, several MPE members, including the author of this article, visited Mr. and Mrs. Ricard, residents of the village of St. Nicolas. They indeed owned a splendid walrus skull, the second only ever to be found in the Champlain Sea deposits.

One day in the early 1990s, the Ricards ordered a truckload of sand from the Langlois sandpit to do work on their property. While unloading the sand, a skull suddenly emerged. One of the tusks was missing, so they searched the sand for any fragments, but found nothing. They spent many years wondering what to do with the skull. Give it to a museum? Sell it? Then, in 2012, they decided to offer it to us for sale. We had it evaluated and, finally, the transaction was completed in January 2013. The walrus skull is now stored in our collections at the Laboratory for Conservation and Research of the MPE.

(Continued on next page)



<sup>1</sup> The first was found at Ste. Julienne de Montcalm in 1990. It is now in the Musée de la Civilisation in Québec City.

dated.

J.-P. G.

The skull is 33 cm long, 22 cm wide and 37 cm high (tusk included). One tusk is missing while the other is slightly chipped. Fragments are stored separately. The mandible is also missing. Preservation is quite good considering the fact that it was resting in porous sand. The only other walrus skull found in Champlain Sea deposits was from Ste. Julienne de Montcalm in 1990. It was imprisoned in clay and both tusks were present. It was broken into four pieces. The jaw was missing. The present specimen represents a major addition to our collection, and especially to our collection of fossil bones from St. Nicolas, which are well described and



**Professor Michel A. Bouchard (center), measuring the walrus skull at the Ricard residence in Saint-Nicolas in 1997. He is surrounded (left to right) by Nathalie Daoust, Michel Chartier, Martin Dubreuil and Jean-Pierre Guilbault. Photo: Mario Cournoyer**

## (very) Moderate progress towards the opening of the Museum

In this bulletin, we have some interesting news in several departments: laboratory acquisitions, visits, travels, new members, but no breaking news in what interests us most, that is, the physical development of the Museum's future location and exhibitions. This does not mean that we remain idle. However, none of our efforts have yet led us to a decisive outcome. If such an outcome were to occur, we would immediately issue a special edition of the MPE's bulletin.

For now, we must say that the "CN Shops" option, also known as the "Building 7", is once again in the news. The owners sold their rights to the "Fonderie Darling", an organization dedicated to the development of arts (this can include us) through exhibition venues. The Fonderie Darling is itself part of a larger group called "7 à nous" (sounds as "it belongs to us"), which is active in the South-West Borough. Here, the number 7 is of course referring to Building 7. The previous owner has also donated \$ 1 million to do the most urgent repairs. However, the building is in poor condition and its renovation will require much more money, money that "7 à nous" does not yet have. Note also that the transfer of rights is a long and complex procedure that is not yet complete. Building 7 is very large and the plan is to subdivide it into 2,500 square-foot units. This would give us far less space and a much smaller museum than that proposed by Desjardins Marketing (10,000 square feet), but it would also be cheaper. One would expect the rent to be reasonable, but this is pure speculation at the present time. On the positive side, it should be emphasized that RESO would support our wish to be located in Building 7. In the meantime, we are still pursuing other options and other sites.

We've also undertaken to find sites for temporary exhibitions. One exhibition would be "Montreal: a sea of fossils" with revised texts (read: more easily readable by the public) and a title with less focus on Montreal. Others would include, one on the Champlain Sea, which would be based largely on fossils from St. Nicolas, and another based on Allan Petryk's Anticosti collection and specimens that the Geological Survey of Canada is extremely keen to lend us. With this in mind, we have made some improvements to our website. On the home page, if you click on "Photo Gallery", you will see the names of four series of photographs of specimens, namely: the Petryk collection (Anticosti), invertebrates and vertebrates of the Champlain Sea, and fossils of La Prairie. These images represent interesting specimens from our collections. Yes, all these specimens really do belong to us! The goal is to develop an interest in our future exhibitions when they open and, in the case of La Prairie, to offer visitors of this site some help in fossil identification.

J.-P. G.

## “A quickly evolving museum” fundraiser

Officially started in June 2009, the fundraising campaign "A quickly evolving museum" reached its goal of \$ 45,000. On December 31, 2012, 106 donors had given \$ 45,955. Donations are divided as follows:

- Donors (under \$ 100) gave a total of \$ 1,825
- Major donors (\$ 100-499) \$ 7,004
- Giant donors (\$ 500-1999) \$ 12,203.28
- Extreme donors (\$ 2000 +) \$ 24,922.72

The campaign is officially over, but as your Museum continues to grow, your continued support and contributions are vital. At the closing event, a large chart will show the names of donors and their class although the exact amount of their contribution will be kept confidential. Those who have contributed since January 1st 2013 will also be included.

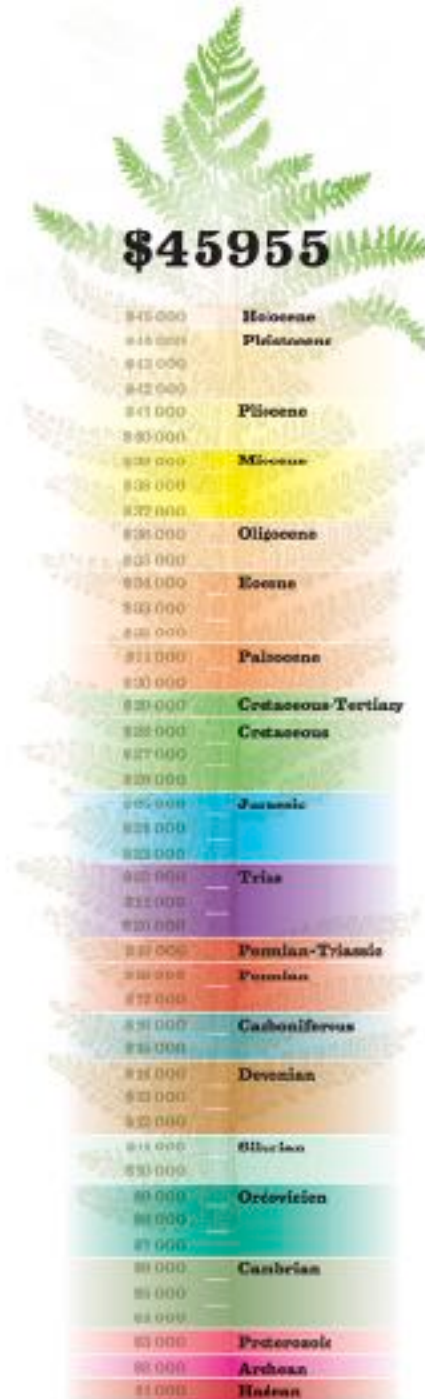
Yes, I did indeed write : "closing event". A campaign like this is worth celebrating! You have all read in the last newsletter (July 2012, page 4) that Sylvain Bélair, director of the Laval Cosmodôme, had become a member of the MPE. He offered us the Cosmodôme, well, at least, the exhibition hall, for our closing party. This is a golden opportunity to increase our visibility. Note that the exhibition hall at the Cosmodôme is quite large. It includes large-scale models of planets, rockets, etc. Fridges and a kitchen are also available at the Cosmodôme, everything we need to organize a banquet! However, it was decided that the fare would be more modest given the limits of our bank account, and that there would be a participation fee (this will be a benefit event). Details, such as the ticket price, are yet to be fixed.

It is still planned to have a slideshow showcasing the exploits of the Museum, a few spectacular specimens and some images of what could be the future exhibition halls. Activities are planned, but we are still in the early stages and not yet advanced enough to talk in detail about it.

J.-P. G.

## The evolution of a museum Fundraising Campaign

Musée de paléontologie  
et de l'évolution



## Cataloging and evaluating the collection

This is a recurring chapter in our bulletin. Cataloging and evaluation are never complete as we continue to receive fossil donations. At the time of writing, 29,000 specimens have been cataloged, which corresponds to 5900 entries in the catalog, that is to say 5900 "samples", each sample comprising one or more specimens. We say in our website that there are approximately 60,000 specimens in the collections. This is because there are thousands of uncataloged specimens placed in cardboard boxes on the top row of the metal cabinets (<http://www.mpe-fossils.org/laboratoire/laboratoire.html>). These specimens are often duplicates or material of lesser interest. However, occasional forays into these boxes reveal the presence of interesting specimens.

Evaluation of the collection is slightly less advanced. The exact figure value is confidential, but the fact that we do not publish it suggests its importance. Independent evaluators must be called in to assess high value specimens (\$ 1,000 or more). They have to be familiar with the market for fossils. They are expected to give us an assessment of the price found in stores, not the prices offered by resellers. This price does not generally take into account any scientific or educational value. But it may reflect the factor for regional rarity: for example, trilobites of Anticosti, although common in certain places and similar to trilobites of the same age from other countries, are still rare on the market, giving them greater value. We are pleased to announce that we have "acquired" an additional evaluator, that is to say, we now have a "roster" of evaluators. Fortunately, their opinions do not differ much. J.-P. G.

## A new name for the Museum

On December 16, we launched a competition asking the public to propose a new name for our museum. So far, the response has been moderate. Some have even found that the current name in itself was very good and did not require improvement. For an amateur, it's easy to understand: "Museum of paleontology and evolution" describes well the subject. However, the general public has difficulty with the word "paleontology".

In addition to having negative comments from marketing experts, I have heard confused pronunciations for the word paleontology, such as "paleotheology" and others, the most common being "pantology." The challenge is to find a name that describes us well, is evocative, simple, and easily remembered. J.-P. G.

## Québec Mines 2012

From November 27 to 29, 2012, the MPE set up a booth during the Québec Mines 2012 congress, at the Centre des congrès de Québec. More specifically, it was located in the "Québec Mines pour tous" showroom, which aims to familiarize children and teenagers with Earth sciences, as well as the mining industry. We set up two display cases showcasing superb specimens of trilobites and crinoids. In addition, we had several fossils available for handling by students. The majority of visitors were surprised to see that Quebec had such an abundance of fossils. Mario Cournoyer and John Iellamo assumed animation at our booth, while our President, Jean-Pierre Guilbault, met with Québec Mines congress exhibitors to inform them about the MPE project. M. C.



John Iellamo at our booth during the "Québec Mines pour tous" show in November 2012.



## We now have a collection management policy!

Some time in 2011, after having talked about it for a long time, the MPE went ahead and wrote a collection management policy. Such a policy is not so much about preservation techniques, protection against heat, humidity, etc., than about all the rules concerning the acquisition of specimens (or artifacts), their evaluation and eventual disposal, as well as access to the specimens, loans, etc... This policy, which we dreamt about for quite a while, would still be a dream without the efforts of one of our most dedicated members: Amy Vandal. To simplify, we can say that there are two kinds of museum professionals: those dealing with the conservation of collections and those who set up exhibitions. Amy belongs to the first group. She produced a thirty-page document (including index and appendices), which frames all of our conservation activities. First, a small committee reviewed the manuscript, then discussed, modified and improved it for most of 2012 and the Board of Directors adopted it on November 25th, 2012.

Here are some examples of what is found in the policy:

- A list of criteria for the acquisition of specimens is presented.
- Procedures for loans and borrowings are defined.
- Board members and staff agree not to acquire specimens for themselves, so as not to compete with the Museum.
- There is a list of criteria for the disposition of the specimen.
- The document defines "educational collection" and "permanent collection."
- All the mandatory tasks of the laboratory manager are spelled out.
- The evaluation of a fossil donation can be done internally for specimens worth less than \$ 1,000. For specimens worth from \$ 1,000 to \$ 9,999, we must refer to an external evaluator. For a specimen worth \$ 10,000 and over, we must refer to two external evaluators.



Amy Vandal

The collections policy completed, we wondered if it was a bit long, considering the size of our museum. The author herself was of that opinion. We quickly changed our minds and decided it was better to answer as many contingencies as possible now, rather than having to rewrite the policy in a rush in a few years when problems arise. J.-P. G.

## "Montréal: a sea of fossils" in Pointe-Claire

The exhibition "Montreal: A sea of fossils" was presented at the Pointe-Claire Cultural Centre, from October 20th to November 18th, 2012. Actually, it was a smaller version of the original exhibition that we had installed in the children's corner. There were the modules on trilobites, featuring a cast of *Isotelus rex*, the largest trilobite in the world, and on different fossil groups, such as mollusks, corals and echinoderms (starfishes and crinoids). In addition, we installed panels introducing basic concepts on fossils, paleontology and geology. We thank the Royal Ontario Museum for the loan of the *Isotelus rex* cast, and other fossils. For two days, Mario Cournoyer hosted the site during an open house event. M. C.



## The MPE took part in the 2012 Canadian Paleontology Conference in Toronto

The Canadian Paleontology Conference (CPC) is an annual meeting that brings together paleontologists from across Canada. In 2006, the MPE was co-organizer, with the Redpath Museum, of the CPC meeting held at McGill University. In 2009, we were part of the CPC meeting in Sudbury, where we had a poster presentation. In practice, we do not attend very often because of the costs associated with transportation to distant areas of Canada. In 2012, a CPC meeting was planned in Ottawa: the Geological Survey of Canada was going to be the host. Last minute budget cuts made them abandon the project. The University of Toronto took the lead and the CPC was held in September, as usual, in Toronto. Not having the time to organize field trips, they instead arranged a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), a mere few hundred meters from the conference venue. This year, several members of the MPE had different subjects to present. This was our most visible presence at a scientific meeting. Mario Lacelle, an MPE member and very professional amateur with several publications in peer-reviewed journals to his credit, produced two poster presentations on his favorite subject: the trace fossil record of the Potsdam Group of the Greater Montreal region:

• Lacelle, M., Hagadorn, J.W. & Groulx, P., 2012. Prolific Potsdam *Protichnites*: Giant euthycarcinoid trackways from Beauharnois, Québec. Canadian Paleontology Conference 2012, Proceedings No. 10: 43.

• Hagadorn, J.W., Lacelle, M. & Groulx, P., 2012. Mirabel's ancient surfers: Insights from Cambrian trace fossils and sedimentology of the Potsdam Group, Québec. Canadian Paleontology Conference 2012, Proceedings No. 10: 37.

Alexandre Guertin-Pasquier, our Vice President, made a poster presentation on his master's thesis (Geography, University of Montreal): a fossil forest on Bylot Island, just north of Baffin Island. The subject here is not about petrified wood, but wood preserved by mummification due to the cold climate of the region. The third author, Professor Pierre Richard of the University of Montreal, is also a member of the MPE:

• Guertin-Pasquier, A., Fortier, D. & Richard, P.J.H., 2012. Paleoeology and paleoclimatology of the Plio-Pleistocene Bylot Island fossil forest, Nunavut, Canada. Canadian Paleontology Conference 2012, Proceedings No. 10: 35-36.

Finally, Michel Chartier made an oral presentation on the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) metatarsal found in St-Nicolas:

• Chartier, M.D., Cournoyer, M.E., Harington, C.R., Fulton, T.L. & Shapiro, B., 2012. "I bet we'll find that bear": A case of perseverance and serendipity in the Champlain Sea. Canadian Paleontology Conference 2012, Proceedings No. 10: 25-26.

This bone has been dated by carbon 14 and identified through DNA sampling. Dr. C. Richard Harington, of the Canadian Museum of Nature, had anticipated the discovery of such a fossil and encouraged us to pursue field research, although it was expected that we would find remains of polar bear rather than brown bear. Note that this "brown" bear may either be a grizzly bear or an Alaskan brown bear (also called "Kodiak"): DNA identification is not accurate enough to differentiate them. This species disappeared from our region long ago; in fact, this is its first confirmed presence in Quebec. It may have left our province soon after deglaciation. A publication on this bone is in preparation. C. R. Harington will be the first author, followed by members of the MPE and other collaborators.

Finally, we must say that Michel Chartier presented his subject with humor, which pleased and entertained the audience. It was a ray of sunshine that cheered a more serious meeting.  
J.-P. G



Michel Chartier, during his presentation on the bear metatarsal from Saint-Nicolas, which featured, among others, Kevin Seymour, vertebrate paleontologist at the ROM. Kevin was the one who pointed out that the bear metatarsal from Saint-Nicolas likely belonged to a land mammal. We see him on the far left, and one wonders what he was thinking when he saw himself on the screen ...



## New fossil acquisitions for the MPE

The second half of 2012 once again brought us some nice surprises. Among the donations received were two sets of fossils from various localities, mostly in Quebec. In all, more than a hundred fossils, mainly trilobites and echinoderms, were kindly donated by Mr. Frank Habets and Mrs. Nathalie Daoust. Here's even a scoop: among the fossils donated, is a group of fossils that are currently under study for a scientific publication. To be continued ... M. C.



Clockwise, starting top left:  
*Cincinnaticrinus* sp., a crinoid from the Quebec City area;  
 cf. *Hibbertia* sp., two trilobites from Laval;  
 an indeterminate crinoid from the Quebec City area;  
*Bathyrurus* sp., a trilobite from Joliette;  
*Ateleocystites* sp., a carpodid from the Quebec City area;  
*Ceraurus pleurexanthemus*, a trilobite from the Quebec City area.  
 Donated by Frank Habets





(cont.)



Clockwise, starting top left:  
*Iocrinus trentonensis*, two crinoids from the Quebec City area;  
*Meadowtownella* sp., a trilobite from the Quebec City area;  
 an indeterminate crinoid from the Quebec City area;  
 an indeterminate starfish from the Quebec City area;  
*Arthroclema* sp., a bryozoan colony from the Quebec City area;  
*Flexicalymene* sp. (left) and cf. *Meadowtownella* sp. (on the right and rolled-up on itself), two trilobites from the Quebec City area.  
 Donated by Nathalie Daoust





## New fossil acquisitions for the MPE (cont.)



Three crinoid calyxes of the species *Ectenocrinus geniculatus*. Specimen discovered at the Hanson Brickyard (La Prairie) in 1983 by Mr. André Bérard, former president of the Club de Minéralogie de Montréal, who then gave it to the late Mr. Louis Habets. Donated by the Louis Habets Succession

New

members

Last year, the MPE had another record membership with 58 members. Year after year, we are slowly progressing, our base remaining stable and even increasing slightly. Among these members, there were 43 individual members, 5 family members, 8 student members and 2 institutional members. Since the beginning of the year, fifteen members have already renewed their membership, these are: Ms. Francino Bouchard, Mr. Michel A. Bouchard, Ms. Isabelle Ruiz, Ms. Victoria Cournoyer, Mr. Jacques Letendre, Ms. Nathalie Daoust, Mr. Michel Chartier, Mr. Michel Bovo, the Musée québécois d'archéologie Pointe-du-Buisson, Ms. Ginette Amyot, Mr. Daniel Lapointe, Ms. Kellyann Cournoyer, Mr. Jean-Pierre Guilbault, Ms. Marie-Reine Vézina and Mr. Mario Cournoyer. Now we would like to welcome six new members: Ms. Laurence Dumouchel, Mr. Sylvain Bélair (director of the Laval Cosmodôme and board member), Ms. Anne De Vernal (micropaleontologist and professor at Géotop of UQAM), Caisse Desjardins Atwater-Centre, the Miguasha National Park and Desjardins Marketing Stratégique. We would like to remind you that, at the beginning of every year, your MPE membership needs to be renewed and, above all, that your membership is essential for us to send a clear message to the various levels of government, to museums in Quebec and Canada, to future financial partners and to the public, that the MPE has its place as a museum in Montreal.

M. C.

## Visit by Kraig Derstler of the University of New Orleans

Last fall, the MPE received a visit from Mr. Kraig Derstler, professor at the University of New Orleans. The purpose of his visit was to study our carpoid fossils from the Quebec City area. Professor Derstler wanted to reassess specimens of the genus *Syringocrinus* from Quebec and Ontario: some of our specimens may help confirm the identification. Further, he came to study a set of fossil carpoids likely belonging to a new genus and species. For the latter project, we went to visit the discovery site, taking field data that may help in the understanding of the geological context and faunal diversity found there.

During his stay (from October 10 to 14, 2012), he consulted our specimens stored in the laboratory, and used our equipment (microscopes, photographic table) to photograph specimens, take measurements and note characters which will help in the writing of his article. As in the case of Professor Heyo Van Iten's visit in June 2011 (from University of Indiana), Kraig Derstler benefited from our director's (Mario Cournoyer) house as accommodation. We can therefore consider that the MPE laboratory is becoming a destination of choice in Quebec for paleontologists from abroad!

M. C.



Kraig Derstler observing a limestone slab containing fossil carpoids.

Carpoid fossils are difficult to photograph, therefore we used two techniques: immersion in alcohol and the sprinkling of ammonium chloride. Both techniques increase the contrast by highlighting the anatomical details.



The field team, from left to right: Kraig Derstler, John Iellamo and Sergio Mayor-Pastor. Missing from the photo is Jean-Pierre Guilbault and photographer Mario Cournoyer.



## Edward Patrick welcomes us at his home

After the Canadian Paleontology Conference (September 2012) in Toronto, we were expected at the home of Mr. Edward Patrick, elder brother of the late Dr. Allen Petryk, geologist at the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife (MRNF). Mario Lacelle, Jean-Pierre Guilbault and Mario Cournoyer had the pleasure to converse on the life of Allen Petryk, and on his career as a geologist for the MRNF. Mr. Edward Patrick has a goal: to share his brother's works and achievements, produced during the years of his long career. Perhaps you remember that Allen Petryk had studied the geology of Anticosti Island during the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, he had a strong interest in the building stones, producing a book that enumerates all the limestone quarries located in Quebec, mostly in the St. Lawrence Lowlands.

This meeting was held for another important reason: we are still trying to find Dr. Petryk's field notes from the time of his explorations in Anticosti. Getting our hands on these notes would help identify the source of the samples that the Geological Survey of Canada gave us last year. Even if this last project fails, it will at least have had the merit of recognizing the work of Allen



Mr. Edward Patrick (left) showing archives he gathered in memory of his late brother, Allen Petryk, to Jean-Pierre Guilbault (center) and Mario Lacelle (right).

Petryk for paleontology in Quebec and in Canada.

M. C.

## Something new on the web site: photo galleries

For those who are not too inclined to read the texts on our website, we decided to add photo galleries. Joking aside, these galleries will be used to spread knowledge about fossils in several ways. The first is to highlight the diversity of fossils of Quebec, showing the fauna of a particular age or a geological formation, or fossils of a given region. Another is to showcase collections that we have been given. Ultimately, even without a permanent exhibition open to the public, our collections can be freely admired by all, on the Web. In addition to being attractive, these galleries can be used by amateur collectors, teachers and students of all levels to identify fossil species.

Four galleries are currently online on the website (<http://www.mpe-fossils.org/styled-2/musee.html>): the first presents some of the beautiful fossils from the Allen Petryk collection, the second and the third show fossils of the Champlain Sea (respectively invertebrates and vertebrates) and the final gallery displays fossils found in La Prairie, a site to which we bring organized field trips for the general public every season. Other galleries will be added over the coming months.

M. C.



The vertebrate fossils of the Champlain Sea gallery, one of four galleries now online on our website.



## Donation of documents - Dudley Brett estate

Last summer, we received a large donation of documents from the Dudley Brett estate. The late Mr. Dudley Brett studied geology at McGill University in the 1960s, his field of research being the geology of crystalline rocks. Thereafter, he taught Earth science at high school level in Scarborough (Ontario) until his retirement. He passed away in the spring of 2012. He also had an interest in paleontology, which led him to introduce his sons and daughter to Earth Sciences. One of his sons, Kevin, has even studied paleontology at the university level, and is particularly interested in trilobites. The donation of documents includes nearly 250 reports, books, reprints, etc. It includes, among others, old geological reports from Quebec and Ontario, as well as publications of the Geological Survey of Canada. The documents were accompanied by a small set of fossils, including fish from the Carboniferous of New Brunswick (see this month's specimen description on the last page of this bulletin). We thank the Brett family for this generous donation.

M. C.

## The Daveluyville whale mystery

At the end of the article in the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011, bulletin (page 4) regarding the visit to Mr. René Bureau and about the Daveluyville whale, we mentioned a fossilized vertebra that was kept at the Department of Biology of Laval University. This vertebra (see photo) apparently belongs to the Daveluyville whale, which was carbon-14 dated (11 400 ± 90 years BP). This carbon-14 date was published in an article on the fossil record of whales and seals of the Champlain Sea (Harington, C.R. 1981. Whales and Seals of the Champlain Sea. Trail and Landscape, vol 15, no. 1, pp. 1-56).

At that time, Mario Cournoyer came into contact with Mr. Cyrille Barrette, retired professor at the Department of Biology at Laval University. Mr. Barrette made the remark that the vertebra belonged to an adult whale, unlike the fossil bones that we had borrowed from Trois-Rivières, which belonged to a juvenile (epiphyses of the vertebrae, and some other bones are not yet fused), something we had also noticed.

In November 2012, Mario Cournoyer met Mr. Barrette at his home near Quebec City, where he kept the vertebra, as well as the carbon 14 date report. They discussed this problem, proposing hypotheses such as: could there have been two fossil whales at the site of the discovery in Daveluyville, back in 1947, or was there confusion about the real origin of the vertebra? Mr. Jean Huot, retired biology professor, was the one who asked for the carbon-14 dating of the vertebra, in 1979. We have a copy of the correspondence between Mr. Huot and Dr. Harington of the Canadian Museum of Nature (Ottawa). The next step is to contact Mr. Huot to learn more about the origin of this vertebra. Meanwhile, Mr. Barrette gave the vertebra to the MPE. We thank him for his confidence and his insight for preserving the fossil.

M. C.

The vertebra on which a carbon-14 dating was performed. You can see in the picture on the right, repairs made on the periphery of the bone, after sampling.



**Descriptive card of the specimen**

Specimen number:	MPEP572.1
Identification:	Almost complete skeletons
Genus and species:	<i>Rhadinichthys alberti</i>
Age:	Mississippian
Locality:	New Brunswick
Donation:	The late Dudley Brett
Date:	July 2012



The MPE holds 3 fragments of shale containing 11 partial or almost complete specimens of *Rhadinichthys alberti*, given by the Dudley Brett succession. *Rhadinichthys* is a kind of rayed-finned (Actinopterygii) bony fish (Osteichthyes) from the now extinct family Palaeoniscidae. Our specimens are from the Albert Formation of the Horton Group (Lower Carboniferous) of Moncton in New Brunswick, which contains many of these fossils. Their preservation is exceptional. This formation is rich in *kerogen* (note the spelling), a substance that, when gently heated, releases oil. Under the name "Albertite" it was the object of significant production in the nineteenth century. The target market was that of oil lamps. The founder of the mine, Abraham Gesner, has coined the word *kerosene* (again, note the spelling) to sell his product. The environment in which the Albert Mines sediments were formed was a tropical lake whose bottom waters were devoid of oxygen. This explains the excellent preservation of both the hydrocarbons and the fossil fish. This sedimentation environment has much in common with that of the Green River Formation, which is of Eocene age, and located in the southwestern United States.

## Memberships

Just as at the beginning of every year, we wish to inform you that your membership must be renewed. Attached to this newsletter, you will find a copy of the membership renewal form. Remember that you can also make a donation; the Museum is a charitable organization duly registered with the Canada Revenue Agency (No. 890282445RR0001) and therefore authorized to issue receipts for income tax purposes.

## Editorial team

Mario Cournoyer (M. C.)  
 Jean-Pierre Guilbault (J.-P. G.)  
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