



Bulletin of the MPE

The business plan is moving ahead!

On December 3rd, 2010, a "starter" workshop was held in the Quebec City offices of Desjardins Marketing Stratégique (DMS). In addition to steering committee members, Michel Chartier and Richard Cloutier were present. Remember that the steering committee includes Mario Cournoyer, Jacques Lachance and Jean-Pierre Guilbault from the Museum and Charles Gagnon from RESO. In January, DMS analyzed the content and presentation of 17 "comparables", which are museums working in the same field as the MPE, that could serve as a source of inspiration for the design of the upcoming museum. There were some world-renowned museums as well as small Quebec museums. In the case of museums working in various fields, only the paleontology department was considered.

On February 1st, the "creative workshop" took place. The workshop was a brainstorming session to find creative ideas for the museum's design, not a session to resolve legal and economic problems. Present were a few of our members, Charles Gagnon, Richard Cloutier, people from DMS and some marketing experts invited by DMS. This exercise was somewhat "esoteric" for us from the MPE; still, it served to establish an initial communication between, on one hand, Richard Cloutier and ourselves and on the other hand, Philippe Lupien (architect) and Andrea Hauenschild (museologist), in addition to generating some excellent ideas.



Clockwise, starting from the left foreground: Philippe Lupien, architect of the firm Lupien Matteau; Charles Gagnon from RESO; hidden by Charles, Dominique Laflamme of DMS; then, Marika Gagnon, also from DMS; Richard Cloutier of University of Quebec in Rimouski; Michel Chartier, advisor at MPE; Jean-Pierre Guilbault, vice president of MPE; Jacques Lachance, advisor at MPE; and finally, in the right foreground, Jean-Paul Desjardins of DMS. The photo is taken by Mario Cournoyer, president of MPE.



On March 4th, DMS sent an interim report entitled "Definition of the museum project." They formally presented it, March 8th, at a meeting held at the RESO offices in Montreal.

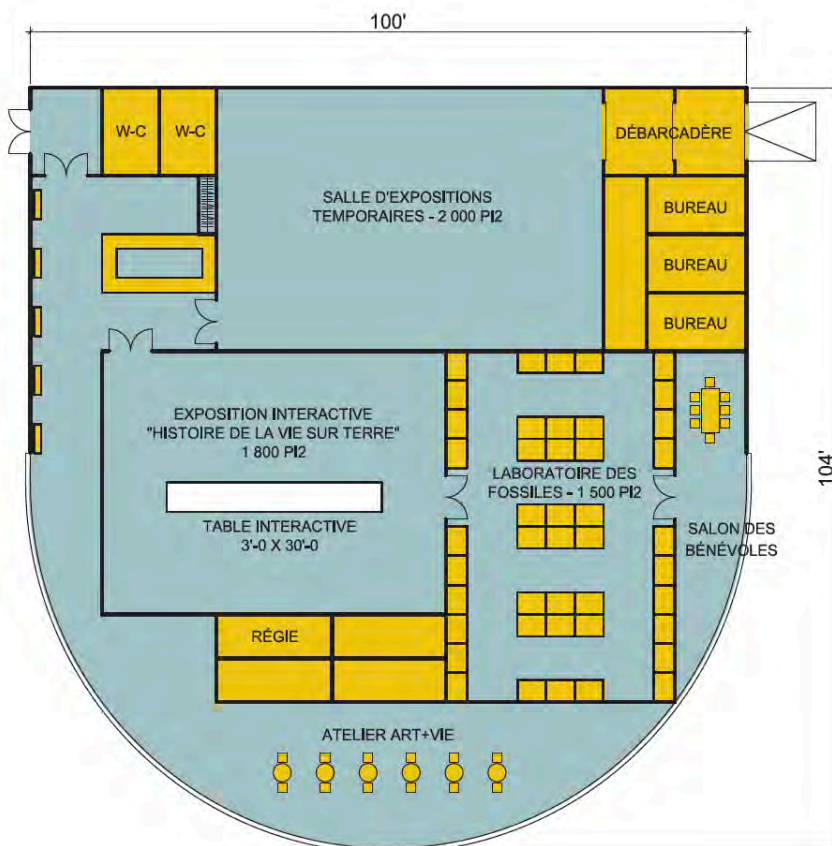
Let's look at the content of the DMS proposal (see illustration). To begin, it is assumed that the museum would be housed within a project called "Bassins du Nouveau Havre", at the site of the former postal sorting office, as already discussed. The MPE would be on the ground floor of the cultural building called "Cité des Artistes," where we would be tenants according to a housing co-operative scheme. The surface would be approximately 11,000 ft².

There would be 5 parts to the museum. First, the highlight would be an 1800 ft² interactive gallery with, at its center, a 3 by 30 feet "multitouch" table. This table is actually a kind of gigantic Ipad on which several people can "work" simultaneously without interfering. With it, we could present various topics of interest for the target audiences: the geological periods, the tree of life, the principles of evolution, Quebec fossils, etc. in one single device and one single gallery, without having to acquire or even borrow any specimen, except maybe their computerized image (3D if desired).

Such interactive tables already exist; they are not a programmer's dream. Guides would also be present in this room to answer visitors' questions, at least during peak hours.

The second room would be completely surrounded by glass shelves on which beautiful specimens from our collection would be exposed, with an emphasis put on Quebec material. The concept is to make visible an important part of the collection. This room would be called the "Fossil Depository." Tables would be placed in its middle part to be used for demonstrations, microscopy, and preparation of fossils, etc.

A 2000 ft² room for temporary exhibitions would complement the exhibition area. It appears that many traveling exhibitions are calculated for such an area, give or take. If they are somewhat larger, it is usually possible to squeeze a bit. The "Atelier Art-Vie," or Art-Life Workshop would occupy the semi-circular part of the building. This would be a place where the visitor could deploy his/her artistic talents. It would be aimed towards children, but not exclusively. The presence of a community of artists in the building might give rise to a certain synergy.



Finally, outside, it is proposed to create a "Fossil Park." It would be a freely accessible area, with stones, real fossils, 1 or 2 plastic dinosaurs, and some games. Plants of "living fossils", such as Ginkgo and Metasequoia, were also considered, but the Montreal climate is perhaps not favourable.

Since the tabling of the report, DMS has undertaken the second phase of the business plan: they will conduct opinion surveys with the general public and interview well-informed persons in the fields of tourism and culture. Once the report on this part of the project is complete, DMS will proceed with the business plan proper, that is, the financial aspect.

J.-P. G.



A visit to Mr. René Bureau

On 23 November, 2010, following a telephone conversation with Mario Cournoyer, the latter, accompanied by Michel Chartier and Jean-Pierre Guilbault, went to visit Mr. René Bureau at his home in Sainte-Foy. The motivation for the visit was the Daveluyville whale. Since the bones of the whale were loaned to us on November 10th, 2010, we have tried to learn more about the context of their discovery, and especially what happened from the time of their discovery, in 1947, to their arrival at the University of Quebec at Trois-Rivières, in the late 1970s. But before entering into details, let's talk about Mr. René Bureau, a real treasure, himself!

Abbé Laverdière, Professor Rasetti and Miguasha

Mr. Bureau is 95 years old. He is a privileged witness to the history of Quebec paleontology. Not only did he see the events happen, but also he has been part of them. When he was younger, Mr. Bureau would often spend time at Laval University where he met Abbé J.W. Laverdière, first director of the Department of Geology (1930 to 1967). Noticing a keen interest for geology and paleontology, in the self-educated Mr Bureau, Abbé Laverdière invited him to be his assistant. Mr. Bureau held the post of assistant curator from 1944 to 1968, and then chief curator until his retirement, in 1979. Subsequently, Laval University's geological museum was renamed in his honor: The René-Bureau Museum of Geology.

During the 1940s, Mr. Bureau was lucky enough to meet another famous figure: Professor Franco Rasetti. A famous physicist, Professor Rasetti was the Director of the Department of Physics at Laval University from 1940 to 1947. Best known for his work on nuclear fission, along with Enrico Fermi, and also for refusing to work on the Manhattan Project (which led to the first atomic bomb), Franco Rasetti was a renowned expert on trilobites. He contributed much to the knowledge of Cambrian trilobites from the Lévis region, but also those from the Rocky Mountains of Western Canada.

However, what makes Mr. Bureau famous himself is his contribution to a major project in Quebec: the establishment of the Miguasha Park. The site was first reported to the provincial government by Abbé Laverdière and Father Leon G. Morin (founder of the Department of geology at the University of Montreal) in 1937. Both decided to send Mr. Bureau to Miguasha to mount a fossil collection. Despite the fact that the site had been known the scientific community since 1842, no french-speaking institution in Quebec had undertaken to sample it scientifically. In the 1970s, Mr. Bureau was able to convince the Quebec Government to protect the cliffs at Miguasha and then a series of steps followed that finally led to the opening of Miguasha Park, in 1978. In 2007, to thank Mr. Bureau for his contribution to the establishment of the Park, the Miguasha outcrops along the Baie des Chaleurs were named the "Falaise René-Bureau".



Scanned at the American Institute of Physics

From left to right, behind: Abbé J.W. Laverdière, G.D. Maxey (assistant to C.E. Dresser), and René Bureau. In front: Paul Koenig, Franco Rasetti, and C.E. Resser. Photo taken by Father Léo G. Morin (Université de Montréal) in 1941 at Ross Lake, British Columbia, and published in *Franco Rasetti, physicien et naturaliste* by Danielle Ouellette.



René Bureau besides a picture illustrating the "René Bureau Cliff" at Miguasha Park, Gaspé region.



A visit to Mr. René Bureau (cont.)

The whale of Daveluyville

We have now reached the subject of our visit last fall to Mr. Bureau. We knew that Mr. Bureau was part of the research team that had traveled to see the fossil whale discovered, in 1947, in Daveluyville. Upon arrival at Soucy farm, two weeks after the discovery, Mr. Bureau, accompanied by Abbé Laverdière and Dr. Paul-Émile Auger (another eminent Quebec geologist), took note of the state of the bones that were stacked beside a barn. The fossils remained the property of the Soucy family, but Abbé Laverdière published an article in 1950 (Laverdière, JW 1950. La baleine fossile de Daveluyville, Québec. *Naturaliste Canadien*, Vol. 77, pp. 271-282), reporting the discovery. The article includes a photograph of the skeleton showing forty lined-up vertebrae, all well preserved. But we can see neither the skull, nor the fins. Still, the article describes this fossil as a nearly complete skeleton of a 9-metre long fin whale!



René Bureau and the book on Franco Rasetti by Danielle Ouellette

In the previous newsletter, we wrote that the fossil was exhibited at the Archaeology Museum of the University of Quebec at Trois-Rivières (UQTR) from 1980 until the mid-1990s when it was transferred to the *Musée québécois de culture populaire* (Museum of Folk Culture), in Trois-Rivières. In an article reviewing the whale and seal fossils 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), Richard Harington of the Canadian Museum of Nature indicates, after contacting Mr. Ribes of UQTR, that the skeleton no longer includes all the bones originally listed in the article. Only the posterior portion of the skull, a partial mandible, some vertebrae and ribs (number not indicated), part of a scapula, some bones belonging to a fin, and some undetermined fragments still exist. Essentially, these are the bones were that we recovered last fall.

But what has happened between 1950 and 1981 for the backbone, which counted more than 40 vertebrae at the outset, to have almost completely disappeared? And what about the fossil's present miserable state? Mr. Bureau knew a bit more on the subject, and he was quick to tell us (he sent a subsequent letter, dated November 25th, 2010, recounting the following): "These ... bones, after having been exposed to the public at the time of discovery, without however having been properly treated, were purchased by an individual who set them up in a vehicle and exhibited them at various centers across the country and the United States, before abandoning the remains to Mr. Côté." The Mr. Côté mentioned here taught biology at the Collège de Victoriaville and it was his son who, in 1976, met Dr. Robert Ledoux, director of the Department of Geology at Laval University, to offer him these "dinosaur bones" discovered several years earlier in the Arthabaska region. Mr. Bureau was instructed to investigate this subject. The fossil fragments were accumulated partly in the attic, partly in the basement, "dried, cracked and uninteresting." The fossil was given to the Archaeological Museum of Trois-Rivières, at the suggestion of Mr. Bureau.

It is these remnants that we recovered last year, and it is with them that we try to restore the fossil whale. Regarding the vertebrae, Mr. Bureau thinks it is possible that the buyer, after touring the continent, resold them. But the story of the whale does not stop here. We must investigate a fossil vertebra that was carbon-14 dated, which possibly belongs to the Daveluyville whale. It is kept at the Biology Department at Laval University. Keep reading our bulletins as we uncover more on this saga.

We wish to thank Mr. René Bureau for a great afternoon that we are not about to forget!
M. C.



Our website is open, at last!

The website was announced a bit prematurely in the December newsletter. In practice, the site was ready and all that was left to do was to upload the content. Unfortunately, we encountered some technical difficulties, beyond our control. We had to find a different host than originally planned, get permissions, which can take very long, and eliminate a whole series of bugs. The site is now hosted by the office of Stéphane Pélouquin, in the Eastern Townships. Stéphane is an expert in remote sensing who is also very skilled in computer science. He owns several servers for his work and he has made one of them available to us. He also corrected several bugs that were found during testing and he taught Mario the basics of the RapidWeaver program, so that he can make changes to the site by himself, as needed.

The French language version of the site was officially announced, by e-mail, to all members and friends of the Museum on February 15th, 2011. The English language version was announced on April 29th, 2011. It is a close translation of the French site. For the moment, the site is mostly limited to a description of the MPE and an explanation of the benefits of contributing to our fundraising campaign. But one can also find all previous museum bulletins, since the first in 2007; the list of outings for 2011 (recently updated); a list of our publications, some of which are downloadable; and a series of interesting links. Later the first chapter of the Guide to the Fossils of Quebec (the one on Champlain Sea fossils), as well as a history of Life on Earth, derived from the texts accompanying the thermometers of the fundraising campaign, will also be published on the site.

The web address in English is: <http://www.mpe-fossils.org/>
The web address in French is: <http://www.mpe-fossiles.org/>
You can send a message to the Museum at info@mpe-fossiles.org.
J.-P. G



Jean-Pierre Guilbault (left) watching Stéphane Pélouquin (centre) as he sets up our website.

Mayor Benoit Dorais pays us a visit

We have had two visits in the past 6 months, one by the director of the Caisse Desjardins Atwater-Centre (see the article on the fundraising campaign, page X) and the other by the Mayor of the Sud-Ouest Borough of Montreal, Mr. Benoit Dorais. On the afternoon of February 10th, 2011, Mr. Dorais and his political aide Mr. Eric Cimon were received at MPE's laboratory by Mario Cournoyer and Jean-Pierre Guilbault. The visit lasted for approximately an hour, which is fairly long for busy people such as a mayor and his aide. The interest from them was palpable. We had many visitors, but few have been so interested specifically in our collections. They took pictures and as soon as they returned to their office, put them on their Facebook page, along with positive comments. You can see them yourself on the MPE's Facebook page.



Mario Cournoyer (right) explains to Mayor Benoit Dorais (left) the organization of MPE collections while Jean-Pierre Guilbault (in the back) listens carefully.

We want to remind our readers that last year, Mr. Dorais sent us (see December 2010 bulletin, page 5) a letter of support in which he insisted on the educational value the MPE would have, once open to the public, and its importance in reducing the number of students dropping out of school. He also mentioned the possibility of establishing links with schools in the borough. This means that in his opinion, the importance of our future museum goes beyond simple intellectual curiosity. On the other hand, Mr. Dorais advised us that unfortunately, the Borough would be unable to renew its \$ 1,000 donation of last summer.
J.-P. G.



Fundraising campaign "A quickly evolving museum"

The fundraiser, "A quickly evolving museum," has made significant progress since December, 2010. Since the beginning of this year, we have undertaken the campaign's "home stretch" and we managed to raise \$ 8147, bringing the total to \$ 34 766! Once again, lots of people—plus one organization—have contributed to the campaign, most of them residents of the borough, but also members and friends of the Museum, plus some researchers. Here is the list of major donations:

- La Caisse Desjardins Atwater-Centre - \$ 1 000
- Mr. Gilles Chatel, Les Aliments Chatel - \$ 550
- Ms. Madeleine Poulin, a member of the Museum - \$ 500
- Ms. Francino and Mr. Michel Bouchard, membres of the Museum - \$ 500
- Ms. Marguerite Blais Provincial minister (via the program "soutient au bénévolat") - \$ 200
- Our vice-President, Mr. Jean-Pierre Guilbault - \$ 1 000

Other people also contributed:

\$ 100 \$ to \$ 499

- Guy Gélinas and Aurore Côté; Martine Lapointe; Nancy Fontaine and Eric Daoust; Stéphane Perron; Normand Pineault; Karine Boivin-Roy; Angelo Georgescu; Pierre Gauthier; Réal Daoust; Martin Dubreuil; Elsa and Christophe Hellmann; Jean-Yves Pintal; Nathalie Daoust; Mario Cournoyer.

Under \$100

- Frank Habets; Alain Picot; Mario Lacelle; Graham Young; Lionel Zaba; Luc Pelland; Jacques Letendre; Isabelle Ruiz; Chantal Claude; Sally McQueen; Louise Vinette; Sergio Mayor; Snežinka Koen; Pierre Richard.

We are proud to see that our fans care about the Museum project. We remind you that the goals of this campaign are, first, to fund our share of the costs of the business plan and, second, to improve the conservation laboratory (equipment purchases). We have a special message to all those who have expressed their interest in participating in this campaign:

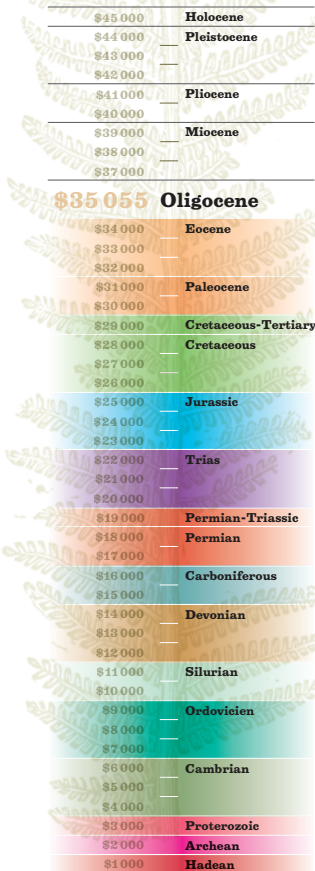
"Now is the time to make the gift that you have promised, a good time ago. Your contribution is crucial to helping us achieve our target of \$45,000, for which we are only \$10,000 short. Go ahead! Make a small effort on behalf of the Museum!"

M. C.

The evolution of a museum

Fundraising Campaign

Musée de paléontologie et de l'évolution



Donation of a \$ 1000 check by the local branch of Caisse Desjardins. From left to right, Mr. Bernard Circé, director of the local Caisse Desjardins, your president, Mario Cournoyer, your vice-president, Jean-Pierre Guilbault and Mr. Laurent A. Bleau, deputy director of the Caisse.



The MPE mounts an exhibition!

The MPE has received an unexpected invitation. Ms. Julie Émond, Executive Director of the Centre Culturel Georges Vanier (www.ccgv.ca), invited us to create a temporary exhibit for a hall in the cultural center, later this year. The 680 square foot hall is situated on the ground floor, to the left of the entrance (easy to see on the Center's website title page). The exhibit will be open to the public, and admission will be free.

Ms. Émond requests the exhibition to be about fossils; but it is left to us to decide what we will show. From the outset, we were thinking about an exhibition on the Ordovician. As the title is not really a seller, we thought about "The Fossils of Montreal" or "Montreal, 450 million years ago."

Finally, we decided to show Paleozoic fossils of the St. Lawrence Lowlands. We'll have to find a somewhat more attractive and accessible title, but the exhibition will be organized around an as yet undetermined number of modules like, "what are fossils?" or, trilobites (with collection-grade specimens), other major groups (brachiopods, bivalves, gastropods, echinoderms, here too, with high-quality specimens), small fossils illustrated with photomicrographs, large fossils (cephalopods, eurypterids), trace fossils, sedimentary structures, and poorly known fossils. There will be a module to briefly outline the geology of the St. Lawrence Lowlands, another one—situated close to the exit—to introduce visitors to the MPE and, in one corner of the room, the Daveluyville whale as a reminder that the Pleistocene existed, too. Some of these themes are more essential than others and some of them could be restructured with the development of the exhibition. Originally, we thought of presenting fossils in the stratigraphic order in which they appear but we abandoned the idea, as it was too complicated.

It has been decided that the exhibit will be held from Monday, October 3rd to Thursday December 1st, 2011, inclusively. The preparation of this exhibition will be a challenge given all the preparatory work of making fossils available to loan, designing the modules, taking photographs, and making drawings; and the need to do this early on so that we can proceed with the construction of tables (for which a supplier has already been found).

Once the tables are built and delivered, the whole exhibit will have to be assembled. The hall will be available beginning Monday, September 26th for installation. The week up till October 3rd is likely to be quite hectic. However, we will need all hands and brains available at all stages from now until October 3rd.

In addition, we'd like to have a guide on site, or at least someone who can answer questions. Mario Cournoyer does a lot for the museum, but cannot be present the entire time that we expect to be open. Therefore we need volunteers. Your museum needs you!

J.-P. G.

Wind of change at MPE

In the previous bulletin (December 6, 2010, p. 4), we announced that a "wind of change" was blowing through the MPE. That breeze was due to the arrival of new members, mostly university students, three of whom have joined the board of administrators. At the last general assembly (December 8, 2010), there were some departures freeing up positions on the B of A. These positions were immediately filled by three of our young and talented new members, Vanessa Jetté, Lionel Zaba and Alexandre Guertin-Pasquier. All three bring their own personal expertise to the board: Vanessa holds a MA in museum studies, Lionel studies accounting at HEC (University of Montreal's school of business administration), and Alexandre is a MA candidate in geography. So here is the Museum's new Board of Administrators :

Mario Cournoyer - President
Jean-Pierre Guilbault - Vice-President
Alexandre Guertin-Pasquier - Secretary
Jacques Lachance - Treasurer
Michel Chartier - Advisor
Martin Dubreuil - Advisor
Vanessa Jetté - Advisor
Lionel Zaba - Advisor

M.C.



The Daveluyville whale visits the Scouts

On Wednesday, March 22nd, 2011, your president, Mario Cournoyer, gave a workshop on paleontology to a group of Cub Scouts from the 95th St. Zotique St. Henry division, from southwest Montreal. It is not the first time that Mario has given a workshop on fossils for this division of Scouts, and for a change, he decided to introduce them to the whale of Daveluyville, and especially its incredible story. The workshop began with a presentation on paleontology and fossils, their formation and the reason for studying them. Subsequently he presented the environment in which the whale lived, that is, the Champlain Sea, 10 000 years ago. Mario then told the story of the discovery of the Daveluyville whale (see p. X, the article on René Bureau), the sequence of events that led to its eventual submission to the Québec Museum of Folk Culture in Trois-Rivières through the University of Québec in Trois-Rivières, and finally its loan to our museum.

Throughout the workshop, some of the strongest bones (vertebrae, radius, rib) were presented to the young people. Needless to say they were surprised to learn about this fabulous fossil and its history! Until the whale is formally exposed to the public, this workshop was a great opportunity to show it. Let's recall that Mario has given workshops about fossils in Quebec to schools, since 1994, under the "PaléoVision" business name. J.-P. G.



Welcome to the new (and to former) members of the Museum

Since early 2011, many new members have joined the MPE. There are presently 14 new members, some of who are already involved in various aspects of the Museum's operation, not to mention the B of A that was significantly rejuvenated (see p. 7). Remember that being a member gives privileges and constitutes major encouragement to the Museum (see "Membership Card", p. 14)!

The newcomers are:

Mr. Pierre J.H. Richard, professor at the University of Montreal (Geography), Ms. Louise Vinette, Mr. Sergio Mayor, MS student in Earth Sciences at UQAM, Ms. Victoria Cournoyer, high school student (our youngest member), Mr. Yvon Savoie, Ms. Amy Vandal, MA student in Museology at the University of Montreal, Mr. André Martel, researcher at the Canadian Museum of Nature, Mr. Stéphane Clermont, Ms. Ha-Loan Phan, MS student in biology at the University of Montreal, Ms. Fanny Morland, Ph. D. student in anthropology at the University Montreal, Mr. Christian Monette, Ms. Caroline Legault, Ms. Rachelle Ménard-Côté and finally, the *Musée québécois d'archéologie de Pointe-du-Buisson*, the first organization to join the MPE.

In addition, here is the list of members who have renewed (note: two associated persons designate a "family member"):

Mr. Martin Dubreuil, Ms. Chantal Claude, Mr. Luc Pelland, Mr. Jacques Letendre, Mr. Jean-Pierre Guilbault, Ms. Karine Boivin-Roy, Mr. Egide Dandenault, Mr. Mario Lacelle, Mr. Pierre Bédard, Ms. Vanessa Jetté, Ms. Emeline Raguin, Mr. Lionel Zaba, Mr. Michel Chartier, Mr. Jacques Lachance, Mr. Pierre Cardinal, Ms. Sylviane Thibault, Mr. Daniel Lapointe, Mr. Stéphane Perron, Mr. Jean-Yves Pintal, Ms. Madeleine Poulin, Ms. Elsa Mustière and Mr. Christopher Hellman, Ms. Mélanie Letendre and Mr. Patrick Thibault, Ms. Martine Lapointe, Ms. Isabelle Ruiz, Mr. Alexandre Guertin-Pasquier, Ms. Ginette Cournoyer, Ms. Nathalie Daoust and, finally, our president, Mr. Mario Cournoyer.



Work at the laboratory

We are happy to report that various kinds of paleontological work continue to be done at the Laboratory for Conservation and Research of the MPE. The number of fossils preserved is such (and we continue to receive more, see p. X "Donations") that the lab cannot remain idle. This work is a credit to volunteers who regularly lend a hand, thus ensuring the development of the Museum's laboratory.

Take for example Chuck Billo who comes regularly (almost weekly) to perform various tasks such as processing samples of fossil-bearing rock. Painstakingly, he searches the rocks, removes fossils that will be identified, catalogues them in our databases and then deposits them in our conservation cabinets. He has worked on a shale sample for more than a dozen sessions, about 50 hours! Shouldn't we call that patience...? In addition, he does some preparatory work such as repairing broken specimens using acryloid glue (acetone based). Earlier this year, he reassembled several large fragmented Ordovician gastropods from Anticosti Island and internal casts of cephalopods from the St. Lawrence Lowlands. Recently, Chuck has begun repairing some bones of the Daveluyville whale (see the Bulletin of December 6th, 2010, p. 6-7). He consolidates the broken bone surfaces with a very liquid Acryloid glue solution, so that it penetrates the bone. Once the surface is less brittle, he proceeds with the fragment reassembly (using a denser solution) so that the bone may regain its original appearance. This work requires time and effort and we are very grateful to Chuck Billo.



Chuck Billo searches for fossils in a shale sample of the Nicolet Formation, collected at a viaduct excavation site in St. Hubert.



The Daveluyville whale will undergo a facelift thanks to the efforts of Chuck Billo who patiently repairs and consolidates its bones.

Alexandre Guertin is another volunteer and, moreover, our new secretary. Every two weeks, he comes to assist Mario Cournoyer in the photography of fossils from our collection. The goal is to digitize the specimens so that eventually, photos and the accompanying information will be available online. Last winter, they concentrated on small specimens which they photographed using the Leica stereomicroscope equipped with a digital camera (acquired thanks to the generous donation of the Canadian Geological Foundation). These specimens were generally 1 to 25 mm in diameter. Note that, in parallel, Mario takes pictures of the larger specimens. Some were so big that he needed the help of another member—Patrick Thibault—to move them; we would like to thank him too! As of May 19th, 2011, close to 4200 fossils (or samples, or sets of specimens) have been photographed and their pictures included in the database. This indicates that soon, most of the specimens will have been photographed, bringing us closer to the time when the content of our collection will be available online.



Work at the laboratory (cont.)

A trainee at the lab!

During the months of March and April 2011, a trainee brought some unexpected help to Alexandre and Mario. After receiving a call from the person responsible for assigning training periods at the Department of Geography, University of Montreal, the MPE offered to host a trainee in the laboratory. It was under an "observation" internship that Richard Labrie, an undergraduate student, came to work at the lab. During five sessions lasting four hours each, Richard assisted Alexandre and Mario in taking photos of smaller specimens. In five sessions, they photographed over 500 specimens! Beyond these results, two things stand out: 1) It was a great working experience for Richard who, all at once, learned to catalog collections and had the opportunity to observe the nature of the preparatory work (because Chuck Billo was often present at the same time) 2) Following the end of the course, Richard came back on a voluntary basis, to continue the photography of fossils!

A beautiful friendship has been created among those who go to the lab to do work. A sign that things are going well at MPE.
M. C.



Alexandre Guertin-Pasquier (in front), assisted by Richard Labrie (right), takes pictures of small specimens with the Leica stereomicroscope, courtesy of the Canadian Geological Foundation.

Additions to the MPE library

Each year brings a crop of new donations and in this respect, 2011 started very well! We received a series of reprints and documents, which belonged to the late Dr. Yvon Globensky, from the Montreal office of the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife (MRNF). Mr. Globensky was chief geologist at the Montreal bureau of mines, and has worked with, among others, Prof. T. H. Clark (McGill University), on geological reports about the St Lawrence Valley. These reports are still essential today, in the search for fossils.

In April, Mr. Jacques Martignole, a retired geology professor, from the University of Montreal, gave us a series of volumes of the journal "Precambrian Research" and several MRNF geological reports on the Laurentian region. Mr. Martignole specializes in structural geology and the Precambrian Shield (visit his website: <http://www.mapageweb.umontreal.ca/martigno/index.html>).

From time to time, we also receive small packages or even boxes that contain a variety of documents related to the vast subject that is paleontology. Often, these items are no longer available, or are very rare, which greatly enriches our library. These donations result from the hard work of university professors or researchers who clean their offices ... a habit that we strongly recommend! There is nothing but beneficial fallout for both parties. In this regard, we thank Mr. David Rudkin, paleontologist at the Royal Ontario Museum and Mr. Daniel Brisebois, geologist at the Petrolia Company, for their donations, as well as Mr. Martignole and the MRNF!

A brief note to say that the Museum has also purchased three volumes of "Palaeontographica Canadiana", a series published by the Geological Association of Canada (GAC). All three are about Anticosti Island fossils and are essential resources for the identification of our fossils. Thanks are extended to Jacques Letendre, a member of MPE, for sharing his GAC member discount.

M. C.



Two fossil collections donated to the Museum

St. Lawrence Lowlands Fossils

In addition to the documents mentioned in the previous article, the Montreal's Bureau of Mines of the Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife (MRNF) gave us a collection of fossils from the St. Lawrence Lowlands, which is the region that stretches along the St. Lawrence Valley from Quebec City to just west of Montreal. These fossils, found by the late Dr. Yvon Globensky, while preparing geological reports on the Lowlands, are treasures! They include: specimens that have been figured in the report "Geology of the Lowlands of the St. Lawrence" (Yvon Globensky, 1985, MNR, MM 85-02); thirty samples of rocks representing different geological formations of the Lowlands, and several other specimens including a large-sized orthocone cephalopod (see photo)!



Limestone slab preserving many tests of receptaculitids from Grondines, Québec. The position of this group of fossils in the biological classification is still unknown. They are relatively uncommon.



Limestone block retaining three valves of inarticulate brachiopods. This specimen is figured in the publication "Géologie des Basses-Terres du Saint-Laurent" by Globensky (1985, see text).



Three bryozoan colonies of the genus *Prasopora*: from above (left), from below (top) and a polished vertical cross-section (right). These specimens are reproduced in "Géologie des Basses-Terres du Saint-Laurent" by Globensky (1985, see text).



Internal cast of a large orthocone cephalopod, Rivière Ouareau, Quebec



Two fossil collections donated to the Museum (cont.)

Allen Petryk samples from Anticosti Island

As of June, we will have hopefully completed the transfer of a fossil collection given to us by the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC). It consists of samples collected on Anticosti Island in the 1970s and 1980s by Mr. Allen Petryk, a geologist at the Quebec Department of Resources Natural and Wildlife (MNRF), Quebec City offices. We say “hopefully” have completed the transfer, because it is a big collection that weighs about 1.5 metric ton! These samples have quite a story. After collecting and meticulously documenting them, Allen Petryk later gave them to Dr. Paul Copper of the Laurentian University in Sudbury (Mr. Copper, and his students have produced many studies on the fossils and geology of Anticosti, over the years).

In 1992, Mr. Petryk’s samples were transferred to the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC), in Ottawa. Unfortunately, the GSC never received Allen Petryk’s field notes, which makes the collection less relevant to them. The GSC is very demanding with regards to the documentation that accompanies specimens. Last year, following a visit of our President and Vice-President to the Geological Survey and to Ms. Jean Dougherty, curator of its fossil collection, it was suggested that we be given these samples. Despite the fact that we do not have access to field notes, this collection remains very relevant for us. We recovered fine trilobites (some very rare, see photo), several coral species, many brachiopods, molluscs, etc. ... and even graptolites, from the few remnants of the Macasty Formation (equivalent of the Utica Shale in the St. Lawrence Lowlands) that were collected on the beaches. Ultimately, these samples have traveled a lot, and are finally back in Quebec, where they will be preserved and will be displayed to future generations.



Trilobite of the genus *Isotelus*, Upper Ordovician, Anticosti, Quebec



Cyrtoconic cephalopod, Upper Ordovician, Anticosti, Quebec



Slab with colonies of tabulate corals of the genus *Favosites*, Lower Silurian, Anticosti, Quebec



Rare complete specimen of the trilobite genus *Diacalymene*, Lower Silurian, Anticosti, Quebec



Two fossil collections donated to the Museum (cont.)

Fossil purchase

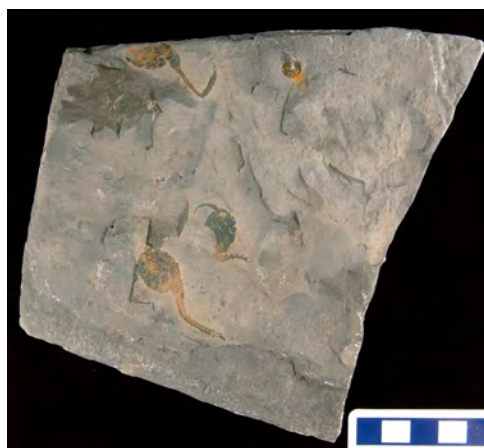
This winter, we purchased several fossils. These were aimed at increasing the diversity of our collections, especially regarding material from Quebec. More specifically, they are fossils of less common species, which we have fewer chances of finding during our fieldwork. Thanks to a donation made especially for this purpose, we were able to acquire a series of specimens from the greater Quebec City region. They are trilobites of the genus *Ceraurus* and *Flexicalymene*, rare echinoderms such as *Ectenocrinus*, *Homocystites* and even *Syringocrinus*. These names will cause the more savvy collectors to be stirred! As to the uninitiated, they are welcome to admire the pictures on this page! The seller also donated some specimens to the Museum; he wishes to remain anonymous.

Furthermore, we bought on the Ebay electronic auction site, a few fossils from Ontario and upstate New York, whose age is similar to the Quebec fossils. These fossils may help us illustrate the faunas of ancient seas, close to those of Quebec. Also on Ebay, we procured modern shells that may be regarded as “living fossils”, the descendants of species that haven't changed for hundreds of millions of years.

We wish to thank the organizations and individuals who gave fossils and money donations. All of these acquisitions, both purchases and gifts, increase the size and value of our collection allowing it to become the nucleus of a future province-wide reference collection. M.C.



Ectenocrinus sp., Quebec City area



Syringocrinus sp., Quebec City area



Homocystites sp., Quebec City area



Ceraurus pleurexanthemus,
Quebec City area



Cupulocrinus cf. *jewetti*, Ontario



Dalmanites limulurus, New York State



Descriptive card of the specimen

Specimen number :	MPEP387.1
Identification :	Nearly complete specimen
Genus and species :	<i>Bumastoides</i> cf. <i>billingsi</i>
Age :	Upper Ordovician
Geologic formation :	Vauréal
Locality :	North shore of Anticosti Island, Quebec, near the mouth of Rivière aux Saumons
Finder :	Allen Petryk
Date :	1976

In Quebec, it is rare to find complete trilobites of this size, especially of this genus, which belongs to the family Illaenidae. The Illaenidae include many genera and species that are difficult to differentiate due to the scarcity of distinctive characters. You will notice, despite the specimen being damaged, that both extremities, the "head" (cephalon) at the top, and the "tail" (pygidium) at the bottom, are nearly identical. However, the slightly broader cephalon has notches while there is almost no visible detail on the pygidium.



Membership Cards

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 renewal of membership card. Remember, 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 tax purposes.

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