

THE GLACIAL DRIFTER VOLUME 12 No. 10 JUNE 1970

Grand Rapids Mineral Society Meeting

Date - June 10

Place - Ideal Park

Time - 6:30 Supper (Picnic)

Program - Supper and speaker, J. C. Tharin. Please bring specimen contribution.

With this issue of the Drifter we start our summer schedule of bulletins. No features or reprints will appear during June, July, and August except for the completion of Rich Van Boek's fine series on the Indian Mounds.

The editor would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who helped with news items and activities this past year. The fun has been all ours, as we had access to all the exchange bulletins from all over the United States.

May Meeting

As usual, the annual pot luck election meeting was a pleasure. The meal was wonderful and the fellowship tops. The program arranged by Mrs. R. C. Smith was one of the highlights of our year. Dr. Parsons, Professor of Geology, Wayne State University, took us all on a dramatic photographic and verbal trip to active volcanoes in Guatemala, San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

It was a special pleasure to welcome as guests Dr. LeFebre and Dr. and Mrs. Luckie of Grand Valley. Accompanying them were five students from Grand Valley geology classes. Come again soon.

The election of officers produced this slate for 1970-1971

- President: Art Ferguson
- Vice-President: Arnold Wendt, Sr.
- Secretary: June Smith (Mrs. R. C. Smith)
- Treasurer: Dorothy Ferguson
- Historian: Emily Van Vuren
- liaison Rep.: Mrs. Roger King
- Board of Control: Ted Dunrey, Mrs. Ted Dunrey, Lucille Pearl, James Van Vuren

NOW LET'S GET BEHIND THESE PEOPLE AND MAKE OURS A GO-GO CLUB FOR '70-'71!

SWAP SWAP SWAP

ROCK E. SWAPPER sez: THINK SWAP!!

SWAP AUGUST 15 - ALLENDALE TOWN HALL - TRADE AUGUST 15 - 1PM - 10PM DICKER AUGUST 15 - POT LUCK AUGUST 15 - SWAP

JUNE MEETING

Our June meeting will be a fine one too. We will meet at Ideal Park for a picnic supper (6:30) and will later listen to Dr. J. Colter Tharin of the Hope College Geology Department discuss the "Continental Drift" theory. Dr. Tharin's fee is a specimen of fossil or mineral that can be used in Hope's Geology Department. Give, you rockhounds. Let's have a good specimen from each member or family. Summer is upon us and we can replenish our stocks.

And don't forget the goodies for the picnic.

AUGUST
15, 1970
ROCK SWAP

NEWS

The Drifter has a scoop. The Indian Mounds have been placed under the control of the Grand Rapids Public Museum. It will be recalled that as long as two years ago the Grand Rapids Mineral Society went on record supporting such a move. Now it is a reality, and the future of the mounds area looks much brighter. It will take time and money to accomplish the things Mr. Frankforter has in mind for the area, but perhaps we are now on the way. Rich Van Beek's efforts in this direction should not go unnoticed.

ROCK SWAP

ROCK SWAP

ROCK SWAP

THOSE INDIAN MOUNDS
(Part IV)

We concluded last month's installment by telling you about Museum Director H. E. Sargent's report to the Board of Library Commissioners on April 3, 1915, which was published in the Grand Rapids HERALD on May 2, 1915. We will continue with this report. After writing rather prosaically about the five skeletons found in the first mound excavated in 1915, contrasted to the very dramatic account by T. O. Manchas in the article we quoted last month, he gives in addition a detailed account of the artifacts found.

Of the second mound excavated he writes:

"A little below the surface level we encountered a bank of clay, which extended partially across the floor of the pit, similar to that of the mound previously opened and about five feet in diameter. ... Experiment with the clay of this bank convinced us as to its adaptability for pottery making, and we arrived at the conclusion that from this pit was doubtless obtained the clay from which the pottery found in the mounds was made.

"If this is the case, the question arises as to why it should have been so carefully covered, suggesting the probability that the region was deliberately abandoned by the mound builders in the natural course of events, and that the mounds represent the sites of the places of community interest, among which the clay pit would naturally be one."

Few artifacts and no skeletons were found in this second and last mound excavated in 1915.

In spite of the publicity given this excavation at the time it seems to be all but forgotten today. Newspaper references in later years usually give the date as 1917, while the sign at the Norton Mounds Park gives it as 1918 and some accounts ignore it entirely, saying that these mounds remained relatively untouched

for 90 years after 1874. However, we have positively ascertained that the Sargent³ excavations were begun in the fall of 1914 after "the museum secured the authority from the Boulevard association", were suspended because of the coming of winter, and completed in the spring of 1915.

We will now move ahead 48 years to the summer of 1963 when five mounds were excavated by a team of graduate and undergraduate students of the University of Michigan under the direction of Dr. Richard Flanders, professor of anthropology at Grand Valley State College and Dr. James Griffin, Director of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of Michigan. Interest in this project was developed largely through the efforts of the W. L. Coffinberry Chapter of the Michigan Archaeological Society and the Grand Rapids Public Museum and was financed largely by the Grand Rapids Foundation.

Archaeological procedures and techniques had been greatly refined since the previous "digs" and the records kept were much more detailed than previously. The mounds were marked off into ten foot squares and accurate drawings made of all material within each square before removal. In addition, photos were taken from a scaffold, permitting nearly vertical "shots".

Fourteen skeletons were found, nine being adults. Many relics were found, including turtle shells engraved with pictures or geometric figures which were apparently used for dishes. These are found only in Michigan.

In 1964, with funds from the National Science Foundation, the largest of the Norton Mounds, sometimes called "the Central Mound" was excavated. It is the middle one of the three largest, being about $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and about 100 feet in diameter. It was the first one excavated by Coffinberry, who after 14 days' work found only one copper needle as was told in last month's article.

First the top of the mound was cut off; in a search for Coffinberry's original excavation of 90 years previous and evidence of this was found. Then trenches were dug in the sides so as to show the various layers of soil in the mound. They also noticed that there was evidence of the dirt having been brought in in baskets--the outlines of the individual basket-loads could be seen. The volume of the mound was computed as being 262,000 cubic feet or about 500,000 individual basket-loads! Twelve skeletons were found in this one mound--Coffinberry had missed the burial pit! The conclusion of Coffinberry and his colleague, Prof. Strong, that the Hopewell people had engaged in a widespread commerce was confirmed with the finding of conch shells from Florida, obsidian from the Rocky Mountains, and mica from the southern Appalachians.

The contents of these six mounds were taken to the University of Michigan for study and have been returned to the Grand Rapids Public Museum, where the long range plans call for them to be placed in a forthcoming new and greatly expanded display on archaeology and Indian lore. Dr. Flanders based his doctoral dissertation on the excavation and study of these mounds and their contents, comparing them with another group of Hopewell mounds, the Knight Mounds of southern Illinois. Presently in the hands of the publisher, this book will appear early this summer and will be available at the museum.

Now that we have briefly surveyed the excavations of the Norton Mounds from 1874 to the present, let us return once again to the 1870's and follow Capt. Coffinberry on some of his excursions to other mounds in western Michigan. But let us listen to Coffinberry speak in his own words in a report to the Kent Scientific Institute dated November 19, 1875.

"Late in the fall of 1874 we opened a mound on the farm of Mr. James Royce in the Township of Wyoming adjoining the farm of Capt. A. N. Norton, but

before we completed the examination winter set in, and the work was abandoned until the spring of 1875, and in June of this year, we finished the exploration of two mounds on the Royce farm. In July 1875 we examined a group of seven mounds in the village of Grandville, four of which were thoroughly examined to the bottom.

"In August we examined externally a group of three mounds at Spoonville the mouth of Crockery Creek, Ottawa County.

"And lastly, two at Lamont, Ottawa Co., examined externally.....

"In one of the Grandville mounds we found a stone which had been wrought by human skill for some purpose, which your committee cannot determine; the specimen accompanies this report.

"In another of the Grandville mounds was found a group of human bones very much decayed....Nothing more was found in the mounds.

"We procured from some of the citizens of Grandville one of those "axes", so called, a dark colored Granite rock which accompanies this report properly labeled."

We think that you may be interested in the financial statement of the committee:

July 14th	Paid Steamboat fare	.75
" 14th	" Railroad fare	.60
" 16th	" " "	1.60
" 16th	" Two men for digging \$1.50 each	3.00
" 16th	" for 1/2 pound of nails to repair fence	.05
		<u>6.00</u>
August 2nd	Paid railroad fare for two men to Nunica and back	2.80
	Total expenditure for Grandville and Spoonville	<u>\$8.80</u>

How times have changed! Can you imagine taking a steamboat or train to travel between Grand Rapids and Grandville? Compare this sum with the \$12,700 expended for the excavations of 1963 and the \$18,000 grant from the NSF for excavating the central mound in 1964. The increased cost is not only due to inflation but is also a measure of how much more painstakingly and scientifically the excavations of the 1960's were carried out as compared to the cursory "digs" of Coffinberry, and also includes the cost of laboratory analysis, preparation and publication. Coffinberry apparently spent only two days at Grandville and one at Spoonville and in another instance reported excavating three mounds in one morning. Compare this with the ten weeks spent on the Central Mound in 1964. But in all fairness to Coffinberry it must be said that since, with the exception of the Norton Mounds, most if not all of these mounds have long since been obliterated we are indebted to him for most of the knowledge we have of these mounds today.

(to be concluded)

Rich Van Beek

PICK UP AN EXTRA SPECIMEN OR TWO - OR THREE - OR FOUR ON YOUR FIELD TRIP - FOR THE ROCK SWAP ROCK SWAP

PASS - 10PM - 10PM - GRAND RAPIDS MINERAL SOCIETY JOINT SERVICE POTLUCK SUPPER - TWO DISHES - AUGUST 15, 1970 1PM - 10PM - GRAND RAPIDS MINERAL SOCIETY JOINT SERVICE

" SWAP ROCKS AT OUR ROCK SWAP " Spoonville Rock C.

SUMMER DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 10 Ideal Park - Picnic supper 6:30 P.M. Speaker - Dr. J. Colter Tharin, Hope College. In lieu of fee, Dr. Tharin has asked for fossil, rock, and mineral specimens. Contributions should be given to Rich Van Beek.
- July 8 Ideal Park - Picnic supper 6:30 P.M. Program not set.
- August 15. Allendale Community Hall. Joint rock swap with Indian Mounds Club. 1:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.
5:00 P.M. Potluck Supper. Bring two dishes to pass and own table service.
No selling - only swapping.
Bring your rock and mineral displays to view or trade.
No admission fee.

COMING EVENTS (via News Grinder)

- June 6-7 Des Moines Lapidary Society show, 3712 2nd Ave., Des Moines, Iowa
- June 6-7 Siouxland Gem and Mineral Society Show, Sioux City, Iowa
- June 18-21 American Federation/Texas Federation Show, Ft. Worth
- June 27-28 Sac and Fox Mineral Club Show, Ottumwa, Iowa
- July 3-4 Rockford Rock Club Show, Rockford, Iowa
- July 11-12 Old Capital Geological Society Show, Iowa City, Iowa
- July 11-12 Tri-State Gem and Mineral Society Show, Dubuque, Iowa
- July 19 Hawkeye Gem and Mineral Club rock swap, Corning, Iowa
- July 23-26 Midwest Federation Show, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- August 8-9 Mineral Study Club swap, Muscatine, Iowa
- Sept. 12-13 Blackhawk Gem and Mineral Club rock swap, Rock Island, Illinois.
- Sep. 11-13 Blackhawk Rock Club show, Oregon, Illinois
- Sept. 18-20 Water Wonderland Rock Swap, Muskegon, Michigan
- Sept. 26-27 So. Illinois Earth Science Club show, Carterville, Ill.
- Sept. 26-27 Lincoln Gem and Mineral Club show, Lincoln, Nebraska
- Oct. 3-4 All Illinois Rockhound Roundup, Mount Sterling, Illinois

We hope many of our members will be able to attend a show or two this summer (and tell us about them later).

How many rocks will a rock swapper swap,
when a rock swapper swaps rocks?

We do know that some of our members plan summer wandering.

During June, Esther Hall and Marion Jennings will be in North Carolina.

July 13 will find the James Van Vurens on their way to Brown County, Indiana.

The month of July will be travel month in the Lake Superior and Canada area for Mr. and Mrs. Henry Tzhozeski and Nancy.

Elaine Smith will be spending a part of the summer on Beaver Island in Lake Michigan.

Lucille Pearl will tour Eastern Canada during July.

Ruth Steele will spend a part of July in Nova Scotia. Later she will join Marie Spielmaker to tour Oregon and Idaho.

The Williams clan will leave Grand Rapids on June 20 and will join the Omaha, Nebraska, rock club at Farson, Wyoming, for a portion of a two week rock camp out. From there we will go on into Idaho and Montana (Glacier National Park) for some Montana agate collecting -- then home. We hope to get back with jade, opal, petrified wood, and agate. While in Farson we will be sharing some time with Mr. and Mrs. Watson of San Diego, Calif., editors of their bulletin.

Finally - Don't forget we have been keeping up the collecting notebooks that Elaine Smith started. They are full of good collecting information. If you want to look at them, be sure to call us before June 20 and make arrangements to get the material you want.

THINK SWAP HAVE A WONDERFUL AND SAFE SUMMER!

THINK SWAP

PUBLISHERS

MR. + MRS. ROBERT BEAUVAIS
3308 WILSON SW.
GRANDVILLE, MICH. 49418

- RETURN REQUESTED -



AFRICAN ELEPHANT HERD

VOLUME 12 No. 10 JUNE 1970



The
MINERAL
BULLETIN

Mr. & Mrs. James F. Van Vuren
3281 S. Division
Grandville, Mich. 49418