

JANUS

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE
NORTH CAROLINA
FOSSIL CLUB

1998 NUMBER 4

This fall we lost three of our best-loved members, Thelma Bennett, Alison Chambers, and Bill Little. I have asked club members who knew each of them to write a tribute. If anyone else wishes to contribute a short memorial piece, I will be happy to publish it in a later issue of *Janus*. Each of the three was an amateur (in the very best sense of that word) who positively delighted in introducing young persons into an awareness of our wonderful hobby.

I, with Becky's help, would like to pay tribute to **Thelma Bennett**. The world of paleontology, as the world as whole, will sorely miss this good Christian woman. She was an avid fossil hunter who hunted with Becky and me in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Nebraska, and stops in between. As a little insight, Thelma, Becky, and I went to Onslow Beach with a bitter, drizzly northwest wind off the cold Atlantic to hunt fossils. After much too a long stay with too little to be found, I, the strong male figure, in desperation cried quits. Mind you, neither of the women would give up, but I did. We returned to the vehicle to turn on the heat and get out of there. I took Thelma's cloth coat which must have weighed half a ton with the water it had absorbed, but she was still game for more hunting. We admired and loved her and will sorely miss her. *Frank Hynes*

The passing of Fossil Club member **Bill Little** on Oct 25, 1998 will leave a void for some time to come, especially in our club activities at the Belgrade Quarry where he loved to work with the school children, helping them find fossils and giving lectures.

I had the honor of knowing Bill for 33 years, during which we shared many a happy time, fossil hunting and working together. He will always be remembered as an easy going, lovable sort of guy who would always help anyone in need. He will surely be missed by all who knew him. *Richard Tellekamp*

Alison Chambers died November 24 after a brave 3½ year battle with ovarian cancer. She was an active member of the North Carolina Fossil Club for more than 11 years and gave numerous exciting fossil talks and programs to school children in Durham, Chapel Hill, and throughout the state. She enthusiastically shared her knowledge with people everywhere, including her doctors and other patients during her illness.

At her 52nd birthday party celebration on August 20, Alison was presented with a cast of the foot of a newly discovered Triassic reptile that was found in the Triangle area. It was the top predator at the dawn of the age of dinosaurs. This new genus and species will be named in her honor and will be the most famous fossil known from North Carolina. It will be published in 1999 and exhibited in the new NC Museum of Natural Sciences when it opens next fall.

Alison had a real passion for paleontology, an indomitable spirit, and an exuberant zest for life. Her cheerful attitude and optimistic outlook were an inspiration to all who met her. She was an unforgettable role model of how to live life to its fullest. She will be terribly missed by all who knew her. *Trish Kohler*

Two items of importance:

This is the last issue of *Janus* for 1998. This means that it is now time for you to renew your membership for 1999. Use the renewal form inside the last page. Note: there is now a place for your email address (if you have one).

Relevant to renewal, we have changed mailboxes. The new official address of the NCFC will be **P.O. Box 13075, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.**

Trip Reports, Fall – 1998

PCS Phosphates Fossil Trip, September 12, 1998

It was a perfect early fall day for fossil collecting. The temperature was supposed to be high but the humidity still low. Everyone was full of anticipation for collecting in the rumored new area the mine would open this season. On the drive in on the second bus we learned much to our disappointment, that the new area was not ready yet and we would be still collecting in the “old area”. I hear that the new area is now open and is truly spectacular and yes, those of us who have not been fortunate enough to visit it are tired of hearing what we are missing!

I pursued a cursory walk around the center of the quarry finding very little. I retreated back to the old, old area close to the bus taint had served me well last spring, and resorted to hands and knees collecting for the day. The abundant rain falls of the recent weeks had worked their magic on the mine producing plenty of teeth in the small sizes to be discovered by the discerning eye.

I spent the majority of the day in the weed forest that was growing up in that part of the mine. I saw few other club members and guess few saw me since the weeds were as much as 4 feet tall in places forming a loose canopy over head. I collected a nice handful of common shark teeth but nothing truly remarkable. Late in the day when I was no longer doing the hands and knees exercise, I was blinded from looking at the bright ground, I discovered a corner of a large reworked tooth sticking out of the hill side. It was hiding next to a black rock I had just bumped aside. It turned out to be a mostly complete 6 inch tooth but in horrible condition. Its only redeeming characteristic being large size. Having not really entertained the possibility of even finding any tooth this size in the old area I was very thrilled to say the least.

Upon returning to the bus I heard tell of a truly amazing, fresh tooth found by Daniel Beane. He had left on the 2 PM bus. Upon returning to the parking lot I saw the tooth of the day, a beautiful 4.5 inch lower tooth of particular beautiful proportions, finish and color. It was slightly dulled on the very tip, the only defect. He had found it within 30 minutes of entering the quarry (first bus), so there is something to getting in on the first bus after all! This was the only large tooth I saw other than my ruined giant. Everyone seemed to have at least one small *megalodon* tooth as well as other nice fossils such as

seal teeth, whale teeth and a seal jaw with teeth (I only heard about this one, never saw it). It appears to have been another successful collecting trip.

I would like to thank John and Janie Smith for taking the phone reservations for this trip. What a pleasure it was to have someone to relieve me of this duty.

John Timmerman

Green’s Mill Run, September 27, 1998

About twenty club members met at the specified time and place for the Green’s Mill Run excursion. Earlier storms had rearranged the stream bed and it took us some time to locate productive sites. Then the “good stuff” started to surface: belemnites and shark teeth were found by all. The Dubrock family found a large *C. megalodon* tooth. At least four mosasaur teeth were found. During the Spring, 1998 trip, Scott Chapman found what at the time was thought to be a sperm whale tooth. It is now believed that it is some kind of tusk, perhaps walrus. On this trip, Scott found its mate. Adair Poole found a “genuine” sperm whale tooth, and a nice one at that. Numerous large-sized great white teeth (*C. carcharias*) were found in excellent condition.

Doug Meier

October 25, 1998

The North Carolina Fossil Club meeting was called to order by President Richard Tellekamp. Minutes were read by Joanne Panek-Dubrock. Treasurer Trish Kohler reported that we have \$5099.07 in the treasury and that if anyone needed reimbursed to turn a receipt in. Ramona Krailler reported that the T-shirt & sweat shirt sales have almost broken even. New spring T-shirts design ideas were solicited. Joy Pierce reported that she has received \$800.00 from book sales including the mail order sales. The NC Aquarium has ordered 60 copies for their museum shop. Royalty payment for John Timmerman was on schedule.

Richard Tellekamp renewed interest in acquiring A.F.F. insurance by distributing insurance information to new members present and suggested that a committee be formed to arrange for an insurance representative to discuss insuring members at the next Raleigh meeting. Sam Smith volunteered to chair with Richard Olsen and Mike Hogan completing this committee. A request for committee to seek replacements for outgoing officers and outgoing board members was made with Ramona Krailler, Joe Magura and Mike Hogan forming this committee.

Richard also discussed the upcoming Fossil Fair on November 7. Setup time is 8:00 A.M. and the fair

hours are from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. with the N.C.F.C. election meeting to follow. It was reported that Onslow County had donated the use of a dump truck to supply the fair with reject material. A large crowd was expected and 33 tables were booked for exhibits. The election of new offices and new board member will be held at the meeting immediately following the fair.

Appreciation and thanks were given to Richard Chandler for sending out the reminder cards for pending meetings and for presenting an excellent program on saw fish at the last meeting.

Richard Tellekamp reviewed a letter of resignation from John Timmerman in which he resigns from his board position, but will remain as the P.C.S. call-in person and will remain as artist for the Janus. We were reminded that John's position was an appointed one as past president and need not be addressed by the elections committee.

Long-time members Alison Chambers and Bill Little are under the care of hospice.

Joy Pierce reported that she had sent 12 Neogene books to Mr. Jacoby of P.C.S at his request and that this gift has not been acknowledged.

Frank Hyne suggested that the club purchase and donate specimens to the local museums instead of awarding scholarships to nonmember young people. Mike Hogan reinforced that idea and volunteered to chair a committee. John Everette mentioned that the Tar Hill Gem and Mineral Club donates a specimen every year. He also informed the members about a raffle benefiting the Aurora Museum, the prize being a cast of a 7 1/8" megalodon tooth.

A suggestion was made for a list of members available to visit schools. New member were acknowledged and refreshments were served before the program by John Smith was presented. John Smith presented a video, slide show and many examples of Moroccan sharks' teeth.

The meeting was adjourned.

November 7, 1998

After the Fossil Fair was completed the North Carolina Fossil Club meeting was called to order. The nominees for new officers and replacement board members were read by Ramona Krailler as follows. President: Doug Meier, Vice President: Ramona Krailler, new Board members: Richard Aultman, Joe Magura, Richard Olsen, and Adair Poole.

Mike Hogan moved that the nominees be accepted as presented. Vincent Schneider seconded and this

was affirmed by those present. The remainder of board members all having term expiration dates of 1999 are: Mike Hogan, Joy Pierce, Vincent Schneider, and Sam Schmidt. It was confirmed that Joanne Panek-Dubrock would be our new Secretary (replacing Judy Stiles) and Robert and Roxada Story would be new membership chairpersons (replacing Barbara Shaw and Mike Milton).

A change of the club's post office box was requested by Bob Story and the new P.O. # will be printed in the Janus. Richard Chandler will also edit the membership application form in *Janus* to reflect this change. We will maintain the old box as well for one year to facilitate a smooth transition.

Richard Tellekamp reported that approximately 750 people attended the Fossil Fair earlier and about 200 children had fun on the reject pile.

On a sad note we were told about the passing of long-time members Thelma Bennett and Bill Little and a minute of silence was observed. Trish Kohler reported that Allison Chambers was under the care of Hospice and was to have a reptile named for her, with the dedication to be on her birthday. A card was signed by the members present and it will be sent to her. The meeting was adjourned.

Joanne Panek-Dubrock

NCFC FOSSIL FAIR AT RICHLANDS, NC

The Fossil Fair at Richlands couldn't have been better. Fifty eight club members either displayed their fossils or helped in many ways throughout the day. These members will have priority placement for the Spring PCS fossil trip.

The pile of screening material trucked in from Aurora was about 4 feet high and 8 feet in diameter, but when the day was through, it was almost a hole in the ground. Needless to say, that feature of the Fossil Fair was quite successful, as were the fantastic displays inside the museum. I have already had people ask when we are going to host another Fossil Fair at the Onslow County Museum again.

The entire day seemed to go very well and the fellowship among club members was really strong which made this writer very Thankful. It was a great day for the NCFC. I would like to thank everyone for the extra effort put forth to make this one of the finest Fossil Fairs ever.

Also, I would like to thank the entire staff of the Onslow County Museum for their expert help and advice. They were truly instrumental in helping us

achieve our yearly mission of holding a successful North Carolina Fossil Fair.

Thank you, *Richard Tellekamp*, NCFC President

Thirty-two Fossil Club members and guests attended the **Belgrade Fossil Trip** on 29 November, and a fun time was had by all.

The weather was perfect for a fossil hunt and everyone either dug in the Pleistocene-Pliocene gravel layer or roamed the quarry looking for the elusive *Carcharodon megalodon* prize of the day

The greatest find of the day was a perfect, almost jewelry class *Carcharodon auriculatus* approximately 2½" by Joann DuBrock. Another *C. auriculatus* was found by Nancy Timmerman, about the same size, it was a little worn, but still very nice.

Scott Chapman did it again. He found a nice *Carcharodon megalodon* approximately 4½", while he was walking along the road. It was a bit worn, but a keeper none the less. Pam Tellekamp found a small *Squalodon* molar, a bit worn, but for this area a great find. Needless to say, she was elated.

Adair Poole and Cousin Davis found a variety of shark and porpoise teeth, plus some bone fragments and one piece of Mastodon tooth enamel They were happy with their finds.

There were a lot of newcomers at this dig, and they needed a little advice as to where and how to look for fossils. Fred Mount once again showed how to find the often hard to find gravel layer and provided his advice on what to look for. Thanks, Fred!!

Surely a lot of fossils were found and were not reported to this writer, for one reason or another (couldn't find me for one)

The hot dogs were delicious as well as the salads, etc. and to everyone who helped in this endeavor, being my last NCFC dig as President of the Fossil Club, it was a fond one indeed. Thanks, ☺ ☺ ☺

Richard Tellekamp

Fossils on the Internet and World Wide Web

NCFC members who have or have access to a Windows® equipped personal computer and subscribe to a national or local internet provider (like AOL or Coastalnet), may be surprised at the wealth of fossil related information and excellent fossil photos available on the "net". The best way I've found to access the web sites of interest to fossil collectors is to use the "search" capability of the Microsoft or Netscape internet browser furnished by your internet provider. Specify Yahoo as the search engine of choice, and type in "fossils" as your search item. A

page will appear displaying a list of responses sorted into categories. The two categories containing sites of interest to collectors are:

- Science: Earth Sciences: Paleontology: Fossils
- Business and Economy: Companies: Scientific: Paleontology: Fossils

By clicking your mouse on each category you then see a list of the specific web sites, with a short explanation of the information they contain. By clicking again on the blue highlighted portion of each individual site's name, you are automatically transferred to the individual web site you wish to browse. Sites in the Science category contain sites sponsored by individuals, museums and non-profit organizations. These sites are variable in quality, but many are full of useful information, photos, illustrations and links to other interesting sites. Some even contain information on collecting sites and provide names of contacts and directions. There are too many sites listed in this category to allow for much individual analysis or evaluation. I suggest you visit those which seem to best fit your own areas of interest. One which is not listed directly, but of obvious value to NCFC is the Lee Creek Home Page (www.elasmo.com). This site contains information on collecting conditions and weekly trip results from the various groups visiting the PCS mine. Sites in the Business and Economy category are primarily sponsored by fossil dealers, but do not let this deter you from visiting these sites. They contain excellent photos, lots of scientific information, and let you get a feel for current fossil prices. Many sites allow you to access enlarged photos of specimens, which can aid in identification of your own finds. Many of the specimens are of the spectacular or one of a kind variety and are fun just to drool over. Several good sites are listed below along with their complete web addresses. My favorites are Extinctions and Paleosearch, which update daily and monthly, respectively. I have made purchases over the net from Extinctions and been completely satisfied with service and value. Though I can make no assurances about the others, many have been in business awhile and are probably similarly legit. Those I recommend for browsing are:

extinctions.com	stonesbones.com
stonecompany.com	twoguysfossils.com
paleosearch.com	henskensfossils.com
xfossil.com	megalodontooth.com

(Note: all require <http://www>. in front of the names listed above if your browser doesn't add it automatically.)

You will probably find many others of interest; please email me at the address shown below with new sites or comments. Enjoy your cyber field trips!

Rich Olsen

fisherman@coastalnet.com



The Paleontological Society



April 13, 1998

Department of Geosciences
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Mr. LeGrand Smith
27 Willowood Drive
Apt 101
Yorktown, VA 23693-4731

Dear Mr. Smith:

I'm delighted to inform you that you will be the recipient of the Strimple Award of the Paleontological Society at the Society's luncheon at the Toronto meeting of the Geological Society of America, October 25 - 29, 1998. The luncheon is scheduled for Tuesday, October 27.

The Strimple Award is given to recognize outstanding achievement in paleontology by an individual who does not make his or her living full-time from paleontology. It is a richly-deserved award - Congratulations!

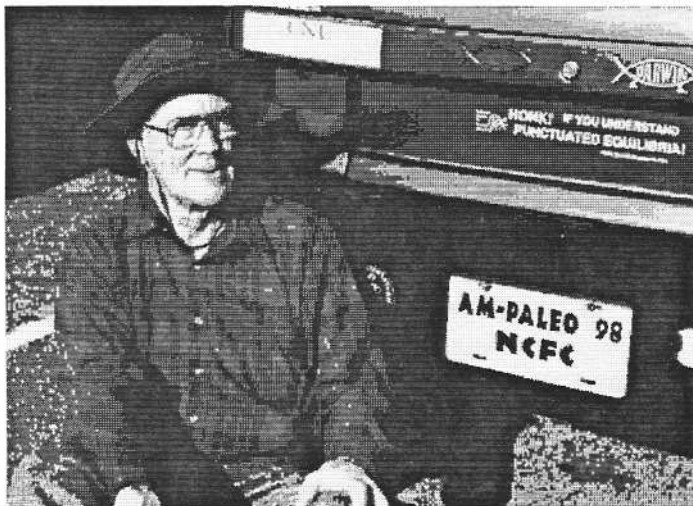
Woody Henry, Secretary of the Paleontological Society, will be contacting you about some of the details surrounding the award and the associated ceremony. In the meantime, you may wish to give some thought to who your citationist will be.

The Paleontological Society will be pleased to re-imburse you for your travel to the meeting.

Sincerely,

Karl W. Flessa
President

cc Woody Henry
Peter Crane



LeGrand writes: "Dear Richard, I may have gotten the Strimple, but the N.C. Dept. of Motor Vehicles has not given permission for me to drive with this plate. Have a Merry Christmas,
LeGrand"

Asheville, NC, October 19, 1998

Mr. Richard Tellekamp, Pres.
North Carolina Fossil Club
P O Box 2777
Durham, NC 27715

Dear Mr. Tellekamp and fellow club members,

Since I am now a legitimate resident of the state of North Carolina, I had looked forward to participating in membership meetings. However, the luck of the draw, this coming Sunday I will be travelling to Toronto at the invitation of The Paleontological Society.

You may be interested in the fact that a NCFC member will be the recipient of the Strimple Award which is given to amateur paleontologists at the recommendation of the award committee. Enclosed you will find copies of the announcement and of the words I will address upon reception of the prize. I am especially grateful to Dr. Richard Chandler for his kind words on my behalf.

The Harrel J. Strimple Award, granted each year since 1984, has recognized the contributions of some impressively gifted amateurs. The results are published each July in the Journal of Paleontology. I am convinced, from the associations I have had with NCFC members that there are several that could well be candidates for this recognition. Someone has to get the process under way.

I enclose an order blank for a subscription to FOSSIL NEWS which Lynne M. Clos has just resuscitated; I believe there is even a club subscription rate. The good people writing for JANUS could well glean from the very special experiences of the club and submit articles for publication and general knowledge.

Cordially yours,

LeGrand Smith

Draft of Acceptance Speech Strimple Award, 1998

Paleontologists are great people! Certainly no amateur should be mistaken as to who makes the lasting contributions by rugged field work, meticulous laboratory detail, and inspired breakthroughs in theoretical insights. My life has been unusually enriched by my association with a number of their very special clan. Besides my young Argentine friends, Luis and Maria Gabriela Buatois who were in a post-doe program at the University of Kansas when they took the initiative to nominate me for the Strimple Award, nine professional paleontologists from four continents wrote most moving recommendations, along with seven fans, the companions of numerous expeditions, many of whom taught me a great deal about their own specialties. Not least, I have my very supportive wife to thank for cooperating with the Buatois initiative.

In the course of the years my paths have crossed with outstanding amateurs. If I am the 1998 recipient of this distinguished recognition it is undoubtedly because it has been my good fortune to be in unusual places at very special junctures in the history of this scientific pursuit. This was true when I picked up the holotype of *LeGrandella lombardii* on a hillside in the interior of Bolivia, most certainly when I placed it in the hands of Niles Eldredge and saw him practically levitate with excitement. The association with this gifted paleobiologist led one of his disciples to

exclaim, "You may not be aware of it, LeGrand, but at the AMNH you are known as a folk hero."

There are many capable scavengers of the outcroppings. I do not view myself as particularly gifted, but again, long odds have placed me in a number of great localities. As a minister of The United Methodist Church, work-related residence and travel has made this possible. To cite a case in point, a change of assignment took us from the Patagonia to northern Argentina. Traveling through the province of Neuquen we sought out some Jurassic sediments. I came away with what looked like bivalves but on professional scrutiny turned out to be an unusual set of ammonite jaws.

Long ago I ceased to be a collector. Thousands of specimens have found permanent homes in the American Museum of Natural History, New York; the Australian Museum, Sydney; the Museo de Historia Natural, Cochabamba; my alma mater, Vanderbilt University; and La Universidad San Juan Bosco, Comodoro Rivadavia, Argentina, which bestowed on me the Albatross Plaque. Thus far, eleven scientific publications have illustrated specimens that I contributed. Along with these I have received four namesakes, those prizes most appreciated by an amateur. Now with the Strimple Award, my cup truly runneth over.

LeGrand Smith

Webpage: buncombe.main.nc.us/~lsmith

FOSSIL NEWS
1185 CLAREMONT DRIVE
BOULDER, CO 80303-6601

Yes, Ms LYNNE M. CLOS, ed. JOURNAL OF AMATEUR
PALEONTOLOGY, I WANT TO READ ABOUT DINOSAUR
TRACKS IN BOLIVIA AND OTHER STRANGE TALES. PLEASE ENTER
my subscription. Enclosed: \$28.00

NAME:

Address:

City: STATE & Zip:

Tucson II

Well, I went back to Tucson (and Quartzsite) again this year. There were a number of changes in my plans very late in the process, but I made it back to Arizona for the gem mineral and fossil bazaar which I will refer to collectively as the Quartzite Shows and the Tucson Shows. My schedule at work limited my stay to six days, one and one half of which were consumed in travel to and from Washington and my destinations. Since I knew more about what kind of dealers (and merchandise) were at the different shows and how to get around at the shows, I was able to use my time better during the shorter time period I would be there. As it turned out, the timing of my visit was more of a limitation than the brevity of my visit. Last year

I was in Arizona for nine days and a little later (six days) in the year. Once I arrived at Quartzsite and at Tucson I discovered that two of the shows I wanted to see would not start until the day I was to leave. At first, I was very disappointed, but I got over my disappointment, made the best of the situation, and had a wonderful time. If you would like to optimize your value for your expense try to hit Tucson and Quartzite starting the first Wednesday in February, then you can visit all of the retail shows. If you can't get there on the first Wednesday but have to go earlier or later, there is still something for everyone.

Since I thought the Arizona Mineral and Fossil Show did not start until February 3, I drove from Phoenix to Quartzsite first. Quartzite is a community of around 1,000 inhabitants in the summer, but swells to perhaps more than one hundred times that size in January, when most residents live in RVs, some of which seem to park at random locations in the desert. Consequently there is almost nowhere nearby to stay. I stayed in Yuma 85 miles to the south (cheaper and closer than Phoenix, nothing was available in nearby [-20 miles] Blythe, CA). The main attractions at Quartzite are flea markets and gem and mineral shows. There are several of each and although only one is truly a gem and mineral show (the Quartzsite Improvement Association Pow Wow, beginning on the first Wednesday of February). There are some good fossils also at the Cloud's Jamboree, but this is not entirely a gem and mineral show. I was able to find several interesting items there.

At Cloud's, here's what I found. There were several dealers who offered petrified wood in varying qualities and price ranges. I purchased some from Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Australia. I also bought some silicified dinosaur bone (in unidentifiable, weathered masses) from Utah and some fossilized hackberry seeds from Wyoming. I also purchased numerous small agates and jaspers for my collection and for my sons' lapidary work. My main objective in Quartzite was to limit my purchases so that I could buy more fossils in Tucson.

En route between Quartzite, Yuma and Tucson I took quick side trips to Imperial National Wildlife Refuge, near Martinez Lake, Arizona, Kofa National Wildlife Refuge in the middle of nowhere, and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in south central Arizona (almost in the middle of nowhere). Wildlife was scarce except for waterfowl and birds at Imperial, but all were well worth the visit.

I arrived at Tucson only to find that I was there too early for many of the retail shows I was interested in seeing. Most of the shows open were wholesale shows or wholesale previews for retail shows. I found one of the "decorator" materials dealers where I bought some colorful, small petrified wood heels (end-polished) and rounds (cross-section slabs) from Madagascar. I also found some unusual *Squalicorax* sp. shark teeth from

Morocco, some Oligocene fossil shark teeth from Germany, and an ammonite from Madagascar. I then retreated to one of the three motels where the Arizona Mineral and Fossil Show was to be. This year there were to be more than 300 dealers at this show. I tried to link up with the my friends Sergey and Ilia Grigorash ("the Russians"), who were at the location where most fossil dealers were last year. They had not arrived yet, so I just looked around the dealers who were there for what turned out to be a wholesale show as a prelude to the retail show. There were hundreds of marvelous fossils from all over the world from museum quality to study specimens, in rarity from the unique to the abundant. That day, I purchased three *Isurus hastalis* from Florida and *Woodworthia* a rare petrified wood from Arizona.

I found the Russians on Monday and began the process of helping them get set up for the show. The first part of the set up was retrieving of shipped specimens and unpacking. Several hours were consumed unpacking large suitcases and boxes that the Russians brought as accompanied baggage. I also spent a lot of time trying to retrieve a suitcase containing ten thousand dollars worth of Russian trilobites which did not make it in accompanied baggage but had made it through customs in JFK. The suitcase arrived the day I left after I continued my calls to Delta from Washington. We had to retrieve other shipped packages from a U.S. intermediary used by a number of Russian dealers. Soon after starting to unpack, we were besieged by anxious fossil shark tooth dealers, the most persistent of which was a dealer from Florida, Vince Valle. Vince, apparently a good customer, sought hundreds of large teeth to include in his shark tooth necklaces, popular tourist items in Florida, where the supply of and cost of local teeth cannot keep up with the demand. At times it was like a feeding frenzy where shark tooth dealers were looking for new and unusual shark teeth, before they could even be unpacked.

Why were these dealers so interested? The retail value, quality, scarcity and appearance of the Kazakhstani fossil shark teeth were good. These fossil teeth were different species/varieties and were less common than other fossil shark teeth available at the show. Although the Moroccan Eocene teeth have a pleasant color and size, most are common, many were damaged, and some were even reconstructed. Most fossil shark teeth at the show were the abundant, relatively large *C. megalodon* teeth collected by divers from the Miocene of South Carolina and other localities. Last year when I had arrived at the beginning of the retail show, most of the interesting Kazakhstani fossil shark teeth were already purchased by dealers. This year I had a better opportunity. To give an idea of the level of interest, at one time the following were in the small motel room looking at fossil shark teeth: David Ward, Gordon Hubble, Vince Valle, Mark Palatus, and Eric Prokapi (in

addition to Ilia, Sergey, and me). Soon afterwards we had a visit by Chuck Ball and Glenn Zamenski, fellow members of the Maryland Geological Society. Others were also showing interest, but couldn't fit.

What did the Russians bring? There were hundreds of *Striatolamia rossica*, which may really be *S. macrota*. Many of these teeth are larger and more robust than what we find in Virginia and North Carolina. The next most plentiful is *Macrorhizodus (Isurus) praecursor*, followed by *Jaekelotodus trigonalis*. I think that this is the first time the Russians brought *Carcharocles* sp. teeth. These were large for Eocene teeth and many were damaged. It is not clear what species they are, I'll seek opinions from local experts. There is much more opinion than fact in the identification of extinct organisms, based only on one part of their skeletal anatomy. There also were several *Notorhynchus* sp. identified as *N. kempfi* also available. The Russians had also brought some shark teeth in matrix specimens most likely from a different sediment layer, because there were smaller teeth, often completely different from the teeth found free from the matrix. It was fun to search through boxes of *Striatolamia*, *Macrorhizodus*, and *Jaekelotodus* to pick out strangers. I found *Mennerotodus gluckmani*, *Isurolamna affinis*, unidentified Lamnids, and several unidentified *Odontaspis/Carcharias* sp. (many of the strangers were missing cusplets or portions of the root). Unfortunately for me, there were very few of the smaller species that I enjoy, with the exception of a large collection of 21 different Russian and Kazakhstani species sold only as a collection. There were also collections of twelve different species, including small teeth, available. Unfortunately one of my intended quarry was not available: a Russian *Paleocarchaodon orientalis*, not a surprising event since most of these fossils are Eocene and *P. orientalis* is usually Paleocene.

What about other fossils? In addition to the trilobites, mentioned earlier, which I didn't get to see, the Russians had brought other fossils. There were fewer of the Oligocene crabs (*Coelima* sp.) than last year, but I suspect more are being cleaned, since we bought engravers at Home Depot (more about tool purchases later). There were ammonites in matrix very similar to those found in the Pierre Shale and Bear Paw Shale of South Dakota and Montana, respectively. These ammonites have some of the nacre (mother-of-pearl) shell material from the original shell and are very iridescent. Another attractive group of ammonites were free from matrix and totally replaced by hard pyrite. Several different species (Genera?) of these ammonites from Michailov, Russia were sawn in half, exposing the chambers, and then polished. The ammonites were exceptionally beautiful because they were all shiny pyrite with hollow chambers walled with sparkling miniature pyrite cubes. Moroccan and French pyritized ammonites are not nearly so pretty, because the pyrite is

not hard or is at least mixed with limonite and the chambers are filled with another translucent mineral, likely calcite.

After daily closing time for the show, we went out to eat at our favorite local steak house and then headed to Home Depot buy supplies. As last year, we bought Estwing hammers and chisels. Also purchased were diamond engravers, which I assumed were for cleaning crabs, but couldn't be sure of my translation. Another new tool request was what I call a ceramic tile nipper. This tool is effective in trimming thin matrix from specimens and looks like larger pair of pliers that chip instead of grip. Badly needed display lights, were next on the list. One last item, which took a while for me to understand in Russian-English, was an item I recommended last year — the American remedy for many problems — duct tape.

After solving logistical problems, unpacking specimens wrapped for shipment to Tucson from Russia, the meal and shopping, I found out more information about Mangyshlak. Sergey even gave me some photographs.

First, let me clarify, at no offence to Ilia, that I am not always certain that the nuances of my questions are translated and that I understand the translation of the answer. From the pictures, it appears that the fossil bearing strata are in buttes and bluffs above a plain. Where shark teeth are found, the strata weather more easily than the other non-fossil bearing strata. Sergey hunts the buttes, bluffs and the talus slopes where the sediments above have washed. There must be some areas where the fossil bearing strata are on the surface, but this was apparently lost in the translation. Based on the photographs it did not look like the fossil bearing strata were in the large expanses of the plains thus eliminating the my dreams of surface collecting over broad expanses not traveled by many. It may be just as well that the major part of the area is not exposed and never hunted, because of weathering. It appears that at least some of the fossil shark teeth have been bleached or spotted by exposure to the sun. From the coloration and species distribution of the fossils, it appears that there are at least three major fossil-bearing strata. The most highly fossil bearing strata appear to be late Eocene. Fossils are found on the surface, no one digs and/or screens. Some of the fossils are found in thin compacted bone beds, one centimeter thick or less. These fossils might be extracted by acid treatment of this bone bed, as is done for some Texas fossil sediments and some Moroccan sediments. My guess is that Sergey had brought about one thousand teeth (one inch long or longer). Ninety percent of these were sold in one lot as necklace material. I don't know how long he worked to find these teeth or what portion of his finds made it to the show. He said the summer collecting season was better than the winter, so I'll be interested to see what he has at the Denver show in September. Because of the dealer interest, I am

sure he will be looking for more *Carcharocles* sp. in the next season.

I was re-invited to collect in Mangyshlak and reiterated my desire but also my constraints (time and money). Sergey said it would take a minimum of three weeks to get to/from Moscow and to/from Mangyshlak to collect. Even if it is not as much fun as collecting fossils yourself, you can buy quite a few inexpensive and even a few expensive Russian teeth for a fraction of the cost of collecting them yourself. In spite of what I believe is a genuine open invitation, I don't think I would want to be in competition with a friend who earns his living collecting. Earning a living in Russia today is difficult enough, without competition from a collector.

If you really like to dream, Sergei said that he has heard of an old location in Russia, perhaps the one where new species were described by Glückman, where you could find 50,000 fossil shark teeth in a day. Now, would the possibility of collecting at that location make it worth the expense to travel to Russia or Kazakhstan ??? *John Smith*

Thank you

*Thank you so much for the
flowers, cards, and expressions of
kindness that we received during the
illness and passing of our Mother. The
times that Mom spent with her fossil
friends were among her most treasured.
The family of Thelma Burnett*

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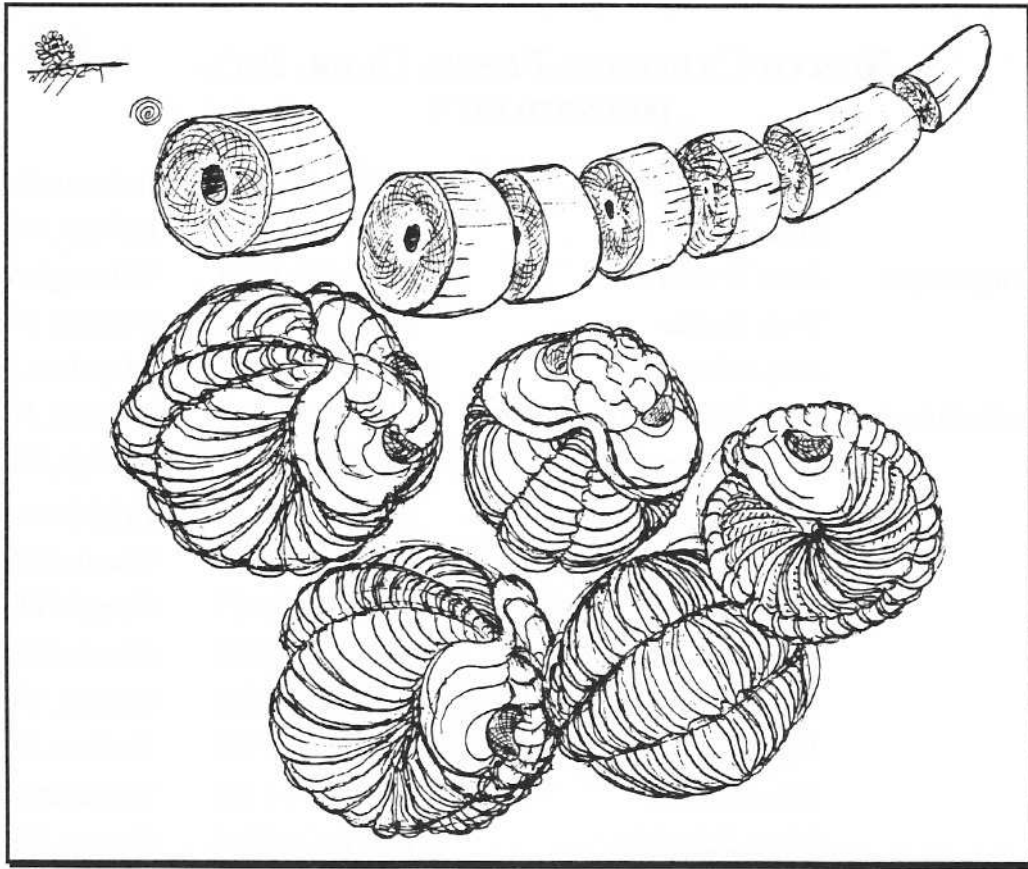
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“I’ve got those long, dreary, ‘Will this meeting never end?’, blues” – John Timmerman

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