



Carroll's Corner Mastodon Days

History

On October 22nd, 1991, the Museum of Natural History in Halifax received a call from the National Gypsum Quarry advising that quarry worker Stanley McMullin of Lake Egmont had just unearthed "a tusk and some big teeth" in the Carroll's Corner section of the Milford Quarry.

Museum staff were on site within an hour and the lengthy and difficult excavation process began. Working under a shelter of wooden walls and plastic roof, in the fall and winter of 1991, staff and volunteers excavated and documented many mastodon bones and fragments, including 65% of an adult skeleton and 5% of a juvenile. Bones adequate for display were parts of the tusk, jaw, leg bones and molars.

The actual site appears to have been a gypsum sinkhole infilled 70,000 to 80,000 years ago. It is thought that the environment at the site was dominated by a fast flowing stream, followed by a period of peat and clay buildup, followed by another period of fast flowing water. This resulted in alternating layers of clay, peat and pebbles and sandy ash. Throughout the layers were logs, branches, and occasional fruit trees. Many of the bones found were located above the ash bed, except those found directly under the skull. Also found were Ice Age pine cones, snake bones and mastodon droppings.

Specimens were preserved by the Museum of Natural History and a documentary was filmed during the excavation process. This documentary is often replayed on the local cable channel.

The community of Carroll's Corner was and is very proud of "their Mastodon". He was named "Stanley" after his founder and an annual celebration called the *Carroll's Corner Mastodon Days* was held in his honour. The event is the largest fundraising effort in support of the Carroll's Corner Community Centre and their programs each year.

This is the 19th year for this event and the organizing committee and local volunteers are excited to share the origins and history of the Mastodon discovery with younger generations. Plans are underway for the 20th anniversary in 2011.

This year, many activities and events are planned for the week of July 12th – 18th, including Cribbage Tournament, 45's Card Party, Pre-Teen Dance, Teen Dance, Old-Time Dance, Fireworks, Saturday Fun Day, Pancake Breakfast, Parade, Kids Games, Bouncy Tents, Soccer Tournament, Local Entertainment, Scavenger Hunt, Adult Dance, Show N' Shine Car Show, Sewer-Washer Tournament, and much much more.

In special honour of "Stanley", the Grand Opening of the *Mastodon Walking Trail* will be held on Saturday, July 17th at 11:00 am. The walking trail is Phase 1 and will continue to grow to follow the footsteps of "Stanley" to his final resting place at the National Gypsum Mine. Completion of the trail will connect the communities of Carroll's Corner and Dutch Settlement including a look-off at the quarry and a picnic area.

Please join us in celebrating *Carroll's Corner Mastodon Days 2010*.

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