

Penn Dixie Chronicle

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HAMBURG NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Summer 2018

SITE:

4050 North Street
Blasdell, New York 14219

MAILING:

Hamburg Natural History Society
3556 Lakeshore Rd. Ste. 230
Blasdell, NY 14219

HOURS:

Monday-Saturday: 9-5
Sunday: 10-5

Weekends-Only after September 3
Last Day of Season: October 28

Members welcome anytime

PHONE: 716-627-4560

WEBSITE: penndixie.org

SOCIAL MEDIA: @penndixie

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Phil Stokes, PhD
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DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:

Holly Schreiber, PhD
holly@penndixie.org

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Director's Note

Summer is here! After a snowy April, the warmest May recorded in Buffalo brought excellent weather for our spring programs.

For the first time ever Dig with the Experts sold out. We welcomed 400 guests for a weekend of shale splitting and science fun. I thank our experts -- Dan Cooper, Don Bissett, James Boyle, Dan Krisher, Jessica Hesske, Joe 'PaleoJoe' Kchodl, Erin Schuster, and Will Philipps -- and our many volunteers for their help in making this a tremendously successful event.

The BIG news is that we're planning a truly historic undertaking: On Saturday August 25 Penn Dixie will attempt to set the Guinness World Record for World's Largest Fossil Dig. We hope that you can join us for the day -- it should be an incredible moment for our organization and community. We thank Evans Bank and the Evans Agency, Phillips Lytle LLP, and RP Oak Hill for sponsoring the event and helping us provide shirts, collecting bags, and tools to our guests. For full info and to register visit penndixie.org/the-big-dig

If you live in Buffalo and watch the local news then you may have seen our new TV spot. For the first time, Penn Dixie was able to professionally film and edit a 15-second ad to be shown on WGRZ and WIVB. We thank our volunteer child actors -- and their parents -- for their assistance with this unique project. And, we thank Mike Menasco once again for the

use of his fabulous Devonian artwork.

I offer my deepest condolences to the family and friends of longtime Penn Dixie volunteer Frances M. Bastedo who passed on May 21.

Allow me to reflect for a moment on the valuable contributions of our dedicated volunteers like Mrs. Bastedo. HNHS/Penn Dixie began as an all-volunteer organization. In our first decade, all programming was facilitated by volunteers who shared a passion for our vision of hands-on science learning. In our second decade, Penn Dixie continued to rely heavily on volunteers to organize and run many of the tours and community events that helped build awareness in the community.

Today, as a direct result of the efforts of Mrs. Bastedo and our many dedicated volunteers, Penn Dixie continues to grow and thrive. Attendance is up, demand for programs has increased, and we're planning for the future. This summer we hired 14 seasonal educators and two interns to bring our total staff to 19. Despite a larger staff we still need our volunteers to help with large tours, community programming, and site maintenance. And, of course, I must mention that our wonderful board of directors -- 15 in total now -- is all-volunteer.

There's more big news on the horizon, but at the moment all I can say is that we're moving forward on a very important long term goal. Go, Bills!

Phil

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DIG INTO MEMBERSHIP!

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

1. Support conservation of the Penn Dixie Site, a 54-acre preserve in Blasdell, NY
2. Unlimited free admission to the #1 fossil park in the U.S., science lectures, and for most special programs and astronomy nights
3. Discount admission for summer camps, Dig with the Experts, and other special programs
4. Receive The Penn Dixie Chronicle newsletter
5. Receive Penn Dixie eNews updates
6. Merchandise and partner discounts – see our website for the latest info
7. Support the science education efforts of the Hamburg Natural History Society, a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit

Membership Categories:

- **STUDENT** (K-12 or College):
1-year \$25 • 2-year \$35
- **SENIOR** (65 & up):
1-year \$25 • 2-year \$35
- **INDIVIDUAL**
1-year \$30 • 2-year \$45
- **FAMILY** (2 adults and all household children):
1-year \$45 • 2-year \$70
- **GRANDPARENTS** (2 grandparents and 5 grandchildren):
1-year \$50 • 2-year \$85
- **ASSOCIATE** (includes fossil set):
\$80/year
- **CORPORATE** (includes fossil set and guided tour for 10): \$100/year
- **PATRON** (includes fossil set and guided tour for 10): \$100/year

JOIN ONLINE AT
penndixie.org

Complete an application at the site, or call 716-627-4560 to request a paper application via mail.

Educator's Note



It's SUMMER!!! After a cold spring, we are happy that summer has finally arrived. Field trip season was a blast -- and a bit exhausting. Penn Dixie welcomed its largest field trip ever this spring. Clarence Center

Elementary visited at the end of May with all 380 students and 40 staff members. Though the weather was hot, everyone had a fantastic time. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers that helped during the busy school trip season!

This summer we have a lot of exciting events happening at Penn Dixie. Throughout summer we have Saturday programming. Fossil Hunting for Beginners is a very popular program for those starting out in fossil collecting. We will also be having a Fossil Prep day in September. Please see our calendar for a complete list of our upcoming programs. Summer day camps are also ready to blast off this year with our new Space Camp. Campers will learn about astronomy, rocketry,

meteorites, and many other "out-of-this-world" things. In addition to Space Camp, we have summer day camps for all interests, including Paleozoo and Fossil Hunters.

This summer we are also preparing for a new undertaking -- introducing Western New York to Teen Science Café. This fall Penn Dixie is facilitating the start of the Buffalo Niagara Teen Science Café. The Café will serve the greater Buffalo area. Cafés will be held at the Central Branch of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System and will focus on all aspects of STEM. Speakers will be drawn from the diverse pool of scientists in the Buffalo area. If your teen is interested in participating please contact me at holly@penndixie.org.

We still have availability for summer and fall field trips and on-site programs. It is a beautiful time to come to Penn Dixie and embark on a fossil hunting adventure! For more information on site visits, to book your group visits, or anything else please call me at (716) 627-4560 or email at holly@penndixie.org.

Holly
Director of Education

An Excerpt From: Celebrating Penn Dixie's Heroes: Eileen Eich, Liz Gonsiorek and Sheila Kelly

By Elizabeth Schiavoni



I met Eileen Eich on the Penn Dixie Site in the Summer of 2017. She spoke excitedly from her wheelchair about climbing over the piles of rocks and collecting fossils on the site in the 1970's, before it was

a Fossil Park and Nature Reserve. Accompanied by her daughter, Judy Klump, who shared fond memories of the site and the role her mother played in creating the site's operating organization, the Hamburg Natural History Society in 1993. Judy and Eileen then introduced me to Liz Gonsiorek and Sheila Kelly.

Liz Gonsiorek regularly wrote about the threat of industrial development on the Penn Dixie Site in local papers as developers showed interest from 1989 to 1992. While talking about pleasant walks on the site Liz noted her motivation, "I'm always

interested in more green space and preserving that type of activity for people."

Sheila Kelly also signed on opinion articles for the preservation of the land with Liz and Eileen. She later stayed with the HNHS in different leadership roles until the mid 2000s. She was honored for her outstanding service to the organization in 2002. Eileen, Liz, and Sheila all attended town meetings arguing against development and for preservation. Liz reflected, "I was really happy that other people were interested in doing something like this."

The Town purchased the land to be deeded to the HNHS on February 27th, 1995. I asked Sheila if there was anything that she ever wanted to see happen when she worked with the group that didn't happen. She couldn't think of anything. "I think they really exceeded expectations. I never thought in my imagination that it would ever be this big."

Pictured: Standing: Sheila Kelly (left), Liz Gonsiorek (right) and Seated: Eileen Eich.

Penn Dixie Summer 2018 Calendar UPDATED 7/5/18

SAT., JULY 21 • ALL DAY

HAMBURG BURGERFEST

It's burger time! Penn Dixie's free fossil dig and exhibit booth will be setup in the Village of Hamburg as we celebrate the birthplace of the hamburger. This community event is a great place to share our mission with the public and we hope to see you there!

SAT., JULY 28 • 5 TO 11 PM

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S ADVENTURE

Join us as we venture out to our collecting site to search for fossils at night, but don't forget your lantern or flashlight to help you find your fossils. Sunspot viewing will be available until dusk. After dark, telescopes will focus on various constellations and planets. No preregistrations required.

Adults: \$10, Children 3-17: \$7, Children 2 and Under & Penn Dixie Members: FREE

FRI., AUGUST 3 • 5 TO 9 PM

FOSSIL FRIDAY!

Penn Dixie will stay open late for afterhours fossil collecting from 5 to 9 pm. If the skies are clear we'll bring out telescopes for some daytime astronomy, too. Admission is \$5 for children and adults; Penn Dixie members attend for FREE. No reservations needed.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 11

10 AM TO 12 PM

FOSSIL HUNTING FOR BEGINNERS

New to fossil hunting? Learn the tricks of the trade from paleontologist Dr. Holly Schreiber. Tour the site and learn all the best spots to hunt for fossils. Dr. Schreiber will teach you how to find, dig, and preserve all the fossil treasures you find. No experience necessary. All ages welcome. Bring your own tools or borrow from our limited supply. Included with admission or FREE for members.

SAT., AUGUST 25 • 9 AM

WORLD'S LARGEST FOSSIL DIG!

Unearth the Unexpected and help set a GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™ title for the World's Largest Fossil Dig. Admission is reduced to \$5 per person and includes a commemorative shirt, fossil collecting bag, and all of the amazing Penn Dixie fossils that our guests may collect. No fossil digging experience is necessary as volunteer stewards from several community groups will be on hand to facilitate the dig. Or, invite your friends and register a team of up to ten diggers for just \$40. Stay after the dig to collect fossils and enjoy food trucks at Penn Dixie Fossil Park and Nature Reserve.

Full info at penndixie.org/the-big-dig

MON., SEPTEMBER 3 (LABOR DAY)

10 AM TO 4 PM

Penn Dixie open! Come and dig for fossils!

MON., SEPTEMBER 3

Penn Dixie returns to weekend-only hours.

SUN., SEPTEMBER 9 • 10 AM - 4 PM

GRANDPARENT'S DAY

In recognition of Grandparent's day, all grandparents accompanied by grandchildren are admitted for free. Our experts will also be on site to help identify your fossils, rocks and minerals. Weather permitting, our telescopes for viewing sunspots and solar flares will be available as well. No pre-registrations required.

Adults: \$10, Children 3-17: \$7, Children 2 and Under & Penn Dixie Members: FREE

SAT., SEPTEMBER 15 • 10 AM - 12 PM

FOSSIL PREP FOR BEGINNERS

You have your fossils, now what? Learn how to identify, preserve, and prepare your fossils. No experience necessary. All ages welcome. Bring your own tools or borrow from our limited supply. Included with admission or FREE for members.

SAT., OCTOBER 6 • 9 AM - 4 PM

21ST ANNUAL WNY EARTH SCIENCE DAY

Come talk to earth scientists and watch as they exhibit and demonstrate various aspects of their professions. Learn about drill rigs and watch a demonstration on rock coring and drilling operations. Sunspots and solar flares will also be visible through our telescopes along with fossil collecting and a wide variety of other activities. No pre-registrations required. FREE event.

SUN., OCTOBER 28

PENN DIXIE'S LAST DAY OF THE SEASON.

THURS., NOVEMBER 8 • 6 TO 9 PM

HOPS 'N ROCKS FUNDRAISER AT BUFFALO RIVERWORKS

Join us for our 23rd annual fundraiser dinner. The night will include silent and voice auctions, raffles, dinner, music, and much more! The public is welcome to attend and will be a fun filled evening for all. Donations of themed baskets, gift certificates, artwork, toys and tickets to sport games are all welcome. Tickets TBA at penndixie.org/fundraiser.



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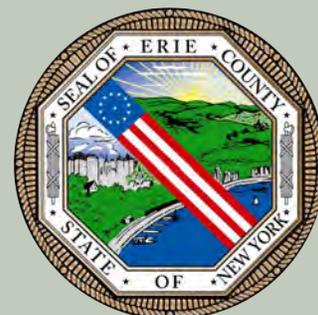
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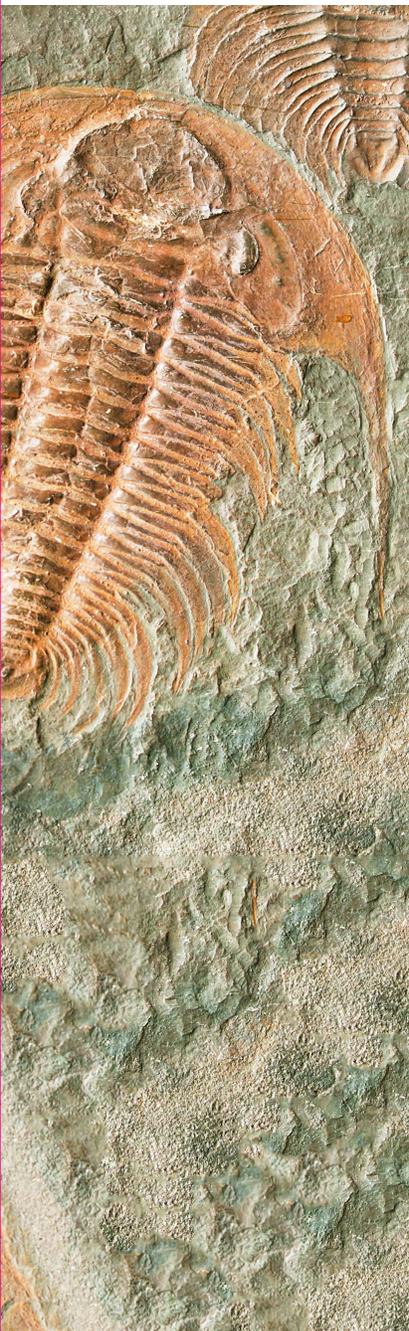
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BBB
A+ Rating



The programs of Penn Dixie are supported by public funds from the County of Erie, the Town of Hamburg and Hamburg Gaming and by our members and friends.





Night sky looking East around 9:30 pm, middle of July. Summer Triangle highlighted in yellow.

Constellation: Cygnus “The Swan/Northern Cross” *By Rich Switzer*

MYTH: Some say the constellation Cygnus is related to the shape of a swan that Zeus assume to court Leda, the wife of King Tyndareus of Sparta. Others tell the story of Cygnus and his mother Hyria, wife of Apollo, who took their lives in a nearby lake. Apollo then transformed his wife Hyria, and son Cygnus, into swans whose shapes can be recognized among the stars.

WHAT TO VIEW: The brilliant white star Deneb marks the top of the Northern Cross Constellation, or the tip of the tail of the Swan Constellation. Albireo is one of the most beautiful doubles in the sky. Cygnus lies in the Milky Way. Use binoculars to sweep this area for many stars and clusters. Connecting the star Deneb in Cygnus, Star Vega in Lyra, and the star Altair in Aquila makes up the Summer Triangle. This triangle includes the region known as the

‘coal sack,’ which is a dark area in the Milky Way caused by an obscuring cloud cosmic dust with no stars nearby to illuminate it.

Fossil collecting will be available:

Monday-Saturday: 9 am to 5 pm
Sundays: 10 am to 5 pm
Weekends-Only after September 3
Last Day of Season: October 28

Holidays:

Penn Dixie will be open 10 am to 4 pm
Labor Day: (Monday, September 3rd)

We return to weekend-only hours following Labor Day and will close for the season on Sunday, October 28th.