



# LIZZADRO MUSEUM OF LAPIDARY ART

## NEWSLETTER & CALENDAR OF EVENTS SPRING 2014



### Return Service Requested

#### Museum Hours

Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed Mondays.  
Closed Easter Sunday.

#### Admission

\$5.00 Adults, \$4.00 Senior Citizens  
\$3.00 Students & Teenagers  
\$2.00 Children 7 to 12 yrs.  
Free for children under 7 yrs.  
Friday is Free day.  
Members of the Lizzadro Museum and active members of the Armed Forces are admitted free of charge on any day the Museum is open to the public.

#### Group Tours

Tours can be arranged for groups with special interests or needs. Reservations are necessary for guided tours.



The Museum has facilities to provide access for physically disabled visitors.

#### Visit us at [lizzadromuseum.org](http://lizzadromuseum.org)

See the Museum Shop online.  
Volunteer forms are available.



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[facebook](#)



Smithsonian Institution  
Affiliations Program



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# Italian Shell Cameos in the Lizzadro Collection



*Sardonyx shell, Madonna and Child*



*Carnelian shell, guardian angel*

The Lizzadro Museum collection contains numerous shell cameos; some are on permanent exhibit beside the agate and hard stone cameos. Our spring special exhibit features 22 religious themed shell cameos including the Stations of the Cross. The cameos were carved in Torre del Greco, Italy and purchased by Joseph Lizzadro in the first half of the 20th century.

The art of shell cameo and coral carving has been handed down for generations in the Campania region of Italy. Along the Mediterranean Bay of Naples, Torre del Greco is just north of Pompeii and just south of Naples. For centuries, fine jewelry has been created here. Shell cameos are carved in relief. The multi-colored layers of particular seashells and agates are the best-suited materials for cameos because of the excellent effect of contrast between the relief and the background.

Anna Miller has described the historical context of cameos in her book *Cameos Old & New*: “The cameo has been produced in Italy since the Roman artists engraved gemstones for their emperors and rich patrons. Rome became the center of the glyptic arts. After the fall of the Roman Empire, glyptic artists remained in Naples and continued engraving seals for merchants and others using agates and other hard stones. These materials were costly. Fisherman brought exotic multicolored shells from the East African coast. The carvers saw the shells as an abundant replacement for the agates and soon began incorporating shells as their carving material.”

The helmet shell species has been used for cameo carving for centuries. Two varieties of the helmet shell are best suited for cameos. Found on the East African coast, the *Cypraecassis rufa* or carnelian shell has a reddish-orange background and a pale yellowish outer layer. The *Cassis madagascariensis* or sardonyx shell is reddish-brown with a white top layer. Although this shell was named for Madagascar it is actually found in the Bahamas and the Caribbean Sea. Both shells have been exported to Italy for over 100 years and both varieties are represented in the special exhibit.

The cameos are exceptionally fine examples of hand-carved shells. The exhibition features the 14 Stations of the Cross, the Last Supper after Leonardo da Vinci's painting, portraiture styles of St. Francis, St. John and St. Teresa, Madonna & Child, Blessed Mother and guardian angels. The exhibit will be on display through May 11, 2014.

## References:

Miller, Anna M., *Cameos Old & New*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1991.  
*Lizzadro Museum Publication*, Winter-Spring 1980 & 1989.

# Geology in Your Own Backyard!

By Sara Kurth



*The Mazonia Braidwood Fish & Wildlife Area is the site of Pitt 11, an old coal strip mine.*

A drive through Illinois might make one think that Illinois is a lot of prairie, farmland and most noticeably, very flat. However, throughout our geologic past, Illinois has looked quite different. From a tropical sea teeming with life to a frozen tundra buried under miles of glaciers, Illinois is rich with geologic history. Within an hour drive from Elmhurst, one can discover some of the many treasures locked in the land if they know where to look. This article should help shed some light on the mysterious geology of our prairie state.

Beginning approximately 542-million years ago, when life “exploded” on earth, Illinois was in the heart of that explosion. Life on earth during the early part of the Paleozoic Era was confined to the oceans. The seas were a smorgasbord of life, from scavenging trilobites to ammonites hunting prey. Illinois was a vibrant environment during this time of tropical seas, as can be observed in the limestone quarries located throughout the Chicago area. The limestone/dolostone quarries found here are Silurian in age, approximately 444-million years old. The closer you get to the Illinois/Wisconsin border, the older the rocks become. Rockford quarries tend to be much older, dating to approximately 488-million years ago (Ordovician Period). Further south, near Ottawa, Illinois, the same aged sandstone forms the remnants of Starved Rock State Park. This overlying sandstone represents a beach environment, when Illinois had beachfront property!

The coming and going of oceans is not uncommon in the geologic record. During the Pennsylvanian Period, approximately 318-million years ago, the oceans of Illinois disappeared and left swamplands. The swamps of Illinois covered much of the state, but only advanced north enough to cover Grundy County (just south of DuPage County). These nutrient rich swamplands provided Illinois with coal, as well as some very interesting fossil specimens. The Mazon Creek fossils are found in ironstone concretions dating back to approximately 300-million years ago (Pennsylvanian Period). These fossils are famous for their soft-bodied preservation. The Mazon Creek *Lagerstätten* is a rare geologic phenomenon.

Much of Illinois’ history has actually been lost to glaciers! Approximately 1.8 million years ago glaciers, thick ice sheets that descended from Canada, covered Illinois. These glaciers advanced and retreated many times for the next million years or so. The glaciers scraped off millions of years of Illinois’ geologic past, including any rocks with clues about dinosaurs that may have lived in Illinois. The glaciers left many traces of their presence, including glacial erratics (rocks not indigenous to Illinois that have been tumbled smooth) and glacial moraines (an accumulation of unconsolidated debris). Moraines can be found all around the Chicago area. A prominent moraine can be found along the Illinois Prairie Path in Glen Ellyn. Evidence of the massive glaciers can be seen all around, once you know where to look!



*Farm Quarry near Rockford, Illinois shows layers of an Ordovician sea floor.*

To see more of Illinois’ geologic past, join the Lizzadro Museum and travel by motor coach to collect fossils this summer. Two trips are tentatively scheduled for June and July to visit Rockford, Illinois to collect Ordovician Period marine fossils 450-million years old. Collectable fossils include: brachiopods, cephalopods, corals,

crinoids, gastropods, and more. Mazon Creek collecting trips are scheduled in March and this year another field trip is tentatively scheduled for September. Collecting field trips fill up quickly, so make your reservations early!



**PICK UP YOUR PASSPORT  
TO ADVENTURE HERE!**

**Summer is a great time to visit the museums in Kane and DuPage Counties. Designed for ages 4 to 12, each site has an activity for children to complete. Visit 7 or more sites and win a prize!**

**The Summer Passport program begins on Memorial Day and ends on Labor Day.**

*Passports will be available at the end of May at participating sites.*

**Check Out the Museum Shop!**

**New merchandise is in with unique gifts for Grads, weddings, Mom’s & Dad’s Day!**

**Visit the Museum Shop on-line at:**

**[www.lizzadromuseum.org](http://www.lizzadromuseum.org)**

**or come in and see what’s new.**

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS APRIL THROUGH JUNE 2014

## SPECIAL EXHIBIT

### "Italian Shell Cameos"

MARCH 4 THROUGH MAY 11, 2014



Carved in Torre del Grecco, Italy, these cameos are rarely displayed pieces from the Lizzadro Collection.  
*Regular Museum Hours and Admission*

APRIL 13

### "Elizabeth Taylor's Collection"

Steven Zick, Vice President and Director for Christie's in Chicago presents the landmark auctions of The Collection of Elizabeth Taylor at Christie's New York in 2011. With every single item sold, the sale drew unprecedented interest from bidders throughout the world. Her collection included jewelry, fashion, decorative arts and film memorabilia.

*Sunday Lecture*

*Adult 2 p.m. 60 minutes*

*Regular Museum Admission*

*Reservations Recommended (630) 833-1616*

MAY 3 & 4

### Art in the Park"

Hosted by the Elmhurst Park District, artists from around the country will be selling their creations in Wilder Park. Outside the Museum, members of the West Suburban Lapidary Club will be demonstrating forms of lapidary art.

*Free Admission*

*Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

*Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.*

## SPECIAL EXHIBIT

### "Modern Designer Jewelry from the Smithsonian"

EXTENDED THRU SEPTEMBER 25, 2014



The exhibit features eleven pieces circa 1960 to 2010 from award-winning American jewelry designers in the National Gem Collection.  
*Regular Museum Hours and Admission*

### "Rock & Mineral Identification"

Geologist Sara Kurth presents an introduction to rocks and minerals. Learn to identify minerals through basic mineral testing. Hands on identification includes hardness tests. Great for teachers and rockhounds, this program qualifies for Scout merit badges. All materials are provided. Scout groups require adult supervision.  
*Activity Ages 8 yrs. to Adult 75 minutes*  
*Classes April 26, 10:30 a.m. for children, 1:30 p.m. for adults only.*  
*May 10, 10:30 a.m. adults & children.*  
*Admission: \$5.00 per person*  
*Museum Members \$3.00*  
*Reservations Required: (630) 833-1616*

MAY 10

### "Creative Crossweave Bracelet"

Pat Koko of the West Suburban Lapidary Club teaches an intriguing and fun bracelet technique using braided bead thread, crystals and seed beads. Students will learn a pattern that they can easily replicate on their own. All materials included. Necessary tools will be available to share. Complete a lovely bracelet to wear or give to Mom.

*Ages 15 yrs to adult 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.*

*Beginner to Advanced level class*

*Fee: \$40.00 per person*

*Museum Members: \$35.00*

*Reservations Required: (630) 833-1616*

MAY 18

### "Museum Day in Elmhurst"



Ride the trolley and see all three Museums in Elmhurst.

Participate in a variety of activities at each Museum.

At the Lizzadro Museum, see Modern Designer Jewelry from the Smithsonian and make your own rock critter to take home. At the Elmhurst Historical Museum, tour the "Cubs vs. Sox: The Chicago Civil Wars" exhibit, pose for your own baseball card and enjoy refreshments. At the Elmhurst Art Museum, view "Lifeloggers: Chronicling the Everyday" featuring artists who use data from their daily lives as inspiration for their work and enjoy a related craft. Get your Museum Day flyer stamped at all three Museums and be eligible to win a prize!

*1 p.m. to 5 p.m. All Ages Welcome.*  
*Admission is Free at all Museums!*

JUNE 7

### "Stone Hunt"

This hands-on activity allows children and adults to search for gems and minerals among more common rocks. Learn the difference between rocks and minerals and how to distinguish between them. Each rock or mineral found is identified and can be taken home.

*Activity Ages 5 yrs. to Adult 45 minutes - 2 p.m.*

*\$5.00 per person*

*Museum Members Free*

*Reservations Recommended*

JUNE 21

### "Fossil Collecting Field Trip"

Travel by motor coach to two quarries in Rockford, Illinois. Collect Ordovician Period (450 million years old) marine fossils in dolomitic limestone. Collectable fossils include: brachiopods, cephalopods, corals, crinoids, gastropods, and more.

*Field Trips Ages 8 yrs. to Adult*

*8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

*Fee: \$40.00 per person*

*Museum Members \$35.00*

*Reservations Required: 630-833-1616*



**LIZZADRO MUSEUM  
OF LAPIDARY ART**

220 Cottage Hill Ave. Elmhurst, IL 60126 • 630/833-1616 [www.lizzadromuseum.org](http://www.lizzadromuseum.org)

We would like to hear from you. Please direct questions or comments to [info@lizzadromuseum.org](mailto:info@lizzadromuseum.org)