

# geology tour



## INTRODUCTION:

For over 100 years, industrial excavation at the Don Valley Brick Works provided local geologists with a unique glimpse into Toronto's past environments, revealing a fossil-rich **interglacial period** that occurred between successive ice ages (see Figure 1 on reverse).

The discovery of this period, now known as the **Don Formation (120,000 years ago)**, made the Don Valley world-famous.

### A. Legacy (the mud beneath our feet)

Artist: *David Hind* Materials: reclaimed aluminum, wood, steel galvanizing and beeswax.

This sculpture is a tribute to Toronto geologist A.P. Coleman, who discovered the interglacial period that was preserved on site. He was a hands-on geologist that rarely had clean boots!

### B. Coleman's Notes and Photograph

Fossils were key to understanding geological periods. These entries, taken from A.P. Coleman's notebook, offer a glimpse into Coleman's discoveries as they unfolded.

### C. Deep Time

Created by *Ferruccio Sardella*

An artistic rendition of the glacial and interglacial periods that affected this particular region. As seen in Coleman's notes (on the Cistern), this region was once home to giant prehistoric beavers, bison, deer and catfish.

### D. Interglacial Photograph – East Wall, Bldg 10

On this image, each DV unit represents a separate layer of history with varying climates, ancient rivers and evolving life. (Drawing courtesy of Queen's Printer of Ontario.)

### E. Archival Photos – North Wall, Bldg 9

These photos highlight the excavation process, as it revealed the site's geological changes throughout history. The bedrock of Toronto is exposed at the bottom of the quarry. Workers on site played a crucial role in the discoveries on site—while digging out clay, they found fossils for Coleman to interpret!

### F. Pink Boulder

This boulder (Gneiss) was found in the quarry during excavation. It is more typical of rocks found in the Muskokas region to the north, a fact that led geologists to theorize that it was dragged on the bottom of a glacier and deposited here.

### G. North Slope

On this hillside, A.P. Coleman found evidence of the unique geological stages that occurred here over time. His findings revealed that, during the Don Formation, the climate in this area was over two degrees warmer than it is today.

### H. Rocks by Path

The fossils in these rocks are very old! They include species such as Mussels (Pelecypods) and Trilobites, and can be found in the bedrock of the Georgian Bay Formation, dating back over 450 million years.

### I. Watershed Wall

For approximately two million years, advancing and retreating glaciers have shaped the landscapes of Canada. Many lakes were carved out by the moving ice and filled with leftover melt water. Soil and rocks were scooped off the Canadian Shield and deposited over southern regions, such as present-day Toronto.

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# EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS

G

Weston Family Quarry Garden  
and The North Slope

F

E

A

B

C

D

H

Chimney Court

I

Bike  
Works

Farmers'  
Market

Café Belong

Evergreen  
Garden  
Market

A-I

Self-guided Tour



Signs illuminating  
site features

FSC logo

## Geological Timeline of the Don Valley

Figure 1

LAKE IROQUOIS SAND  
12,000 yrs. BP

Boreal

SUNNYBROOK DRIFT  
60-75,000 YEARS OLD

Glacial Till and  
Glaciolacustrine complex

POTTERY ROAD FORMATION  
106-75,000 YEARS OLD  
Glaciofluvial

SCARBOROUGH FORMATION  
115-106,000 YEARS OLD  
Delta in cold lake  
Boreal

DON FORMATION  
120,000 yrs. BP  
Shallow Lake +2°C  
Arctic

GEORGIAN BAY FORMATION  
450,000,000 yrs. BP  
Tropical Sea

