

IMAGES

... then and now

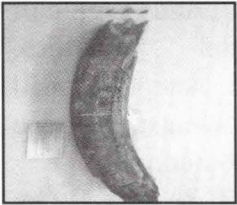
From The Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham
Lodge**

The Mammoths of Ice Age Camp Dennison

Camp Dennison's Grand Valley was owned by the Ohio Gravel Company prior to its sale to the Village of Indian Hill. While excavating gravel, "a prize fossil, an intact mammoth tusk ten feet long was unearthed at a depth of 25 feet" and was donated to the Cincinnati Natural History Museum in the mid 1900s.



These extinct animals were dinosaurs of the Pleistocene Epoch – the Ice Age. There were many types of mammoths, and each adapted to its era and terrain. All were related to elephants of today. The first mammoths originated in Africa 4-5 million years ago. Their descendants moved to Europe and Asia, and over centuries, their offspring crossed the Bering Strait and entered North America 4 – 5 million years ago. Remains of the Columbian Mammoth and the Woolly Mammoth have been found in the continental U.S. Current knowledge of these creatures is based on fossil records, preserved frozen carcasses, historic cave drawings, and knowledge of modern day elephants.

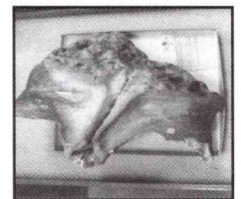
Adult mammoths grew to a maximum height of 13 feet and weighed about 9 -10 tons. A large hump on their shoulders and backs served as a storage area. It increased in size during warm seasons when food was readily available, and was depleted during the winter months. The mammoth's long flexible trunk was used to grasp food, access water, and to stroke family members. These creatures had small ears and large wide feet, which acted as enormous snowshoes supporting the mammoth's weight and had rough soles for gripping slippery ice.

The woolly mammoth's outer coat was furry, and up to 3 feet long. The next layer was of dense thinner hair for insulation – then a 1 inch layer of skin and 4 inches of fat – all helping to withstand cold weather. The Columbian Mammoth was not as woolly; its hide probably resembled the African Elephant. Adult mammoths had only 4 teeth – 2 upper 2 lower which were ridged to increase the chewing surface of these plant eaters. Mammoths grew 6 sets of teeth in their lifetime; and when the last set of molars wore out, the animal could no longer chew and eventually starved to death.

Mammoths had 2 ivory colored curved tusks – elongated upper incisor teeth growing from the jawbone – typically 10 feet or longer. Tusks grew about 6 inches per year throughout a life span of 60-80 years, with male tusks being longer than those of the female. Tusks were used as shovels to sweep aside snow while foraging for food, and as weapons against predators.

Mammoths were social animals living in herds dominated by females. They consumed 300–700 pounds of vegetation each day, including sedges, willows, water-rooted plants, and flowers. During the Ice Age, glaciers periodically advanced and retreated on North America. The Woolly Mammoth lived on Arctic steppes and the Columbian Mammoth in low latitude temperate grasslands of current day U.S.

Ancient humans interacted with mammoths. Prehistoric artists in France and Spain painted images of mammoths in caves about 20,000 B.C., drawing them in hunt scenes with great accuracy. Mammoth bones were used to build huts and make tools, and their meat was a source of protein. In some places, human burial sites were covered with their giant bones. Mammoth tusks (sometimes engraved) were made into jewelry, harpoons, needles, combs, and figurines. By 9000 B.C. mammoths had started to die out, and by 2000 B.C. the species was extinct. There are several theories about why they vanished. Over-hunting by man, a climate change resulting in different/less plant material for sustenance, or a plague type disease have been mentioned as possible causes. No one knows for sure.



Glenn Storrs, PhD., curator of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Cincinnati Museum Center, recently displayed partial remains of mammoths (pictured here), and stated, "We can document the presence of mammoths in the Camp Dennison area according to these specimens." These behemoth mammals which grazed in nearby Grand Valley thousands of years ago are worth remembering while gazing over the serene lake there now.