

# Mammoth bone used in class demos for over 40 years

History of massive leg bone remains a patril mystery

by Matt Murray

There is always an element of mystery in any fossil that is discovered, whether it be from where it came or from who or what it was.

The mammoth bones in the science department are no exception. Since they first appeared at New Trier over forty years ago, the origin story of the mammoth remains, particularly the massive leg bone, has been shrouded in mystery.

“[The mammoth bone] was definitely here before I started [teaching at New Trier]. That much, I know,” said science teacher John Burnside.

“I, at one point, heard a rumor that Rory Wagner, a now-retired science teacher, was part of the acquisition of it, but I don’t have a definite answer,” he added.

Although the leg bone was first used for educational purposes in Wagner’s Earth Science class, it was actually Wagner’s student who brought the bone, along with similar fossils that he found on his grandfather’s farm in Indiana, into class. The fossils reportedly included three to four neck vertebrae, a tooth, and a piece of a tusk in addition to the



Mammoth bone rumored to be found in an Indiana farm decades ago currently sits in science room W318 | Towers

massive humerus.

The unknown student, believing that the bones originated from a dinosaur, volunteered to bring in the bones since the class was in the midst of a dinosaur unit. However, Wagner eventually found that assumption to be false after studying the bones with the class.

“[The class] looked at [the fossils] and said, ‘This is really extraordinary, but it’s not a dinosaur bone’ because it wasn’t old enough,” said Wagner. “And again, it came from Indiana, and there have never been any dinosaur bones found in Indiana, because the rocks there were

not old enough.”

After ruling out the possibility of the bones having originated from a dinosaur, Wagner and his colleagues in the science department eventually settled on two possible species: a mastodon or a woolly mammoth.

After extensive research, they eventually found the bones to have originated from the latter.

“We were looking at books to find out what bones matched, and it was actually the tooth that gave it away,” said Wagner.

Despite his triumphant discovery, Wagner approached the student at the end of the year about

what he should do with the bones, assuming that the student would want to take them home. The student replied that he would indeed take the bones home, but never came to collect his woolly mammoth remains.

“I never followed up with [the student] because I just assumed that he was going to come back and take the bones home, but he just never did,” said Wagner.

The student not reclaiming the bones proved to be a blessing in disguise for the science department. The bones became popular items for teachers to use for class demonstrations once they were

transferred to the East Campus in 1980.

“They’ve been used in biology classes and comparative anatomy classes, so they have been used tremendously since then,” said Wagner.

The most frequently used of the mammoth remains still seems to be the humerus bone.

Antony Harper, a retired science teacher and current assistant coach of Science Olympiad, frequently used the humerus bone during his thirty-three year teaching career.

“When I taught human physiology and anatomy, I taught it from an evolutionary perspective, and the [mammoth leg bone] would appear from time to time as a variant of what a humerus bone could be,” said Harper.

“I also taught zoology, and I used that bone almost every semester when we [talked about] mammals,” he added.

Although there now appears to be certainty as to where the bones came from, both in terms of mammal and geographic location, the identity of the student who first brought them here has become a mystery.

“I would see the bone every now and then when I was still teaching at New Trier and think, ‘I wonder if the kid ever misses his bone, he should really have it back,’” said Wagner.

“But, by that point, I had no idea who to contact.”

## Torino Ramen hits the spot

Japanese restaurant brings ramen dishes to Wilmette

by Connor Caserio

Over the past few decades, diners have discovered Japanese cuisine’s unique deliciousness.

Today, several restaurants in and around the New Trier township area satisfy residents’ appetite for Japanese food. These restaurants, which include a teppanyaki steakhouse and several sushi joints, cover a not insignificant portion of Japan’s culinary range.

However, until recently, no restaurant in the township area served one of Japan’s staple dishes—ramen.

A Japanese version of Chinese wheat noodles, ramen has been popular in Japan since the early 20th century. In the 1980’s, it rose to worldwide prominence with the development of easy to make pre-packaged noodles.

Because no understanding of Japanese culinary culture is complete without ramen, I was pleased to see Torino Ramen open at 1162 Wilmette Ave last year.

Torino is conveniently located in the heart of downtown Wilmette. There are usually many parking spots available in the area. When my friends and I went to Torino, we all had no difficulty finding parking close to the restaurant.

When we entered Torino, I was immediately struck by how the restaurant’s architecture blends sleek modern design with traditional Japanese touches. Metallic grey tables and chairs help create a trendy environment, while abstract paintings that feature assorted kanji symbols let diners know they are in a legitimate Japanese eatery.

Because my friends and I went to Torino in the middle of the afternoon, the restaurant wasn’t as crowded as it might usually be. Nonetheless, the staff was friendly and welcoming, and quickly got us a table. The metal seats were surprisingly comfortable, though a bit stiff.

Torino’s menu features a wide range of Japanese drinks. At the beginning of our meal, one of my friends ordered Ramune, a Japanese marble soda (I stuck with Sprite). He said it was good, but he also warned me that Ramune has a uniquely Japanese flavor, which can take some time to get used to.

We decided to try a few appetizers before we ordered ramen. Because one of my friends is vegetarian, we began with edamame (\$4). I recommend that anyone who visits Torino gets this appetizer. I found that the warm and umami-tasting edamame helped cleanse my palate before we moved onto heartier appetizers and ramen.

The second appetizer my friends and I tried was the karaage fried chicken (\$7). The chicken was a bit dry on its own, but it was significantly improved by Torino’s signature hot sauce, lemon and sriracha aioli. The moderately spicy sauce brought out tempura-esque flavors in the chicken’s breading, and enhanced the flavor overall.

I recommend this appetizer for anyone who likes spice like me, but I would advise anyone who would eat the chicken on its own to look elsewhere on the menu.

We ordered our main dishes as we were finishing our appetizers. They came out of the kitchen relatively fast—a testament to Torino’s high quality service.

My vegetarian friend ordered the Torino salad (\$10) for his main dish. The salad comes with shaved cabbage, romaine, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, corn, carrots, edamame, and scallions, and is tossed with a

sesame vinaigrette.

My friend really enjoyed his salad, pointing out that the ingredients are a good balance of smoothness and crunchiness. However, he added that there may not be enough protein in the salad. If not for the edamame appetizer, he felt he might have still been hungry.

My other friends and I all ordered the Kitano ramen for our main dish. One of them had been to Torino before and said it was the best thing on the menu.

As far as I am concerned, he was absolutely right. The Kitano ramen contains wheat noodles and miso with pork and chicken broth topped with pork chashu, a soft boiled egg, naruto, corn, bok choy, menma, bean sprouts, and scallions.

I was blown away by how Torino perfected all the simple aspects of the dish. The pork, perhaps my favorite part of the dish, was cooked to perfection. It was crunchy on the outside, but soft and ideally fatty on the inside. The noodles were also perfectly cooked. They were a pleasure to slurp down on their own.

Ultimately, my main takeaway from the Kitano ramen was how homey it tasted. The broth, in particular, was warm and comforting. I cannot recommend this dish enough.

For dessert, my friends and I had the one dessert Torino makes: a doughy pastry surrounding rich vanilla ice cream on a stick. I was pleased with this dessert. Similar to the edamame appetizer, I found that this dessert provided a necessary palate-cleansing end to my meal.

Overall, I give Torino Ramen an excellent 5 out of 5 stars. It’s not perfect—no restaurant is—but it’s pretty close. I can say that the Kitano ramen is one of the best things I’ve had to eat in a very long time. I look forward to returning to Torino Ramen as soon as I can.

## “Homecoming” celebrates Beyoncé’s path to success

Documentary shares look into 2018 Coachella show

by Nadia Jaikaran

With Coachella season having just ended, Beyoncé decided to drop the documentary “Homecoming” on Netflix based on her legendary performance last year along with behind-the-scene struggles.

From juggling motherhood to getting in tip-top shape, Beyoncé once again showed the world how fast she can get back up on her feet.

The documentary began with the singer strutting across a boardwalk dressed as Nefertiti in honor of the Egyptian queen. Alongside were her dancers who wore catsuits that had images of the ancient Sphinx.

Beyoncé wanted full control of the performance — from choosing every light and dancer, to demanding every patch be hand-sewn. Every detail had a clear intention.

The first twenty minutes of the documentary featured the beginning of the singer’s performance, including songs “Crazy in Love,” “Freedom,” and “Formation.” The clips changed from the performance to the behind-the-scenes of rehearsals. In doing so, Beyoncé weighed in on how she planned to perform at Coachella the year prior but had twins unexpectedly.

The singer explained her recovery after her emergency C-section and how she created her own homecoming. The show was certainly no ordinary festival performance. Beyoncé made it a goal to make everyone watching feel represented and as if they were on stage.

The performance showcased everyone who’s ever been

marginalized to feel empowered. The orchestra had a school-band feel which was just one of the many symbols Beyoncé wanted used.

Symbols were not only used in the music and choreography, but Beyoncé’s Coachella crest included an image of Nefertiti, a black fist alluding to Black Power, a bee in honor of her fanbase known as the “Beyhive,” and a black panther crediting the Black Panther Party.

Another outfit was a pair of jean shorts and a yellow crop top that was embellished in Greek letters that praised Divine Nine, the Black Greek letter organizations that were founded with the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in America in 1906.

Beyoncé exhibited a virtue of American culture that is not always seen in the media — the black fraternities and sororities established at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

According to the documentary, she wanted her viewers to feel individual pride and to be “thankful for the beauty that comes with a painful history and [to] rejoice in the pain.”

Included in her show were voice clips featuring Malcolm X, Maya Angelou, Nina Simone, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

A persistent detail throughout the behind-the-scenes footage was that it used a vintage filter—an aesthetic feel that added a timelessness, symbolizing that black excellence in itself is never-ending.

Her performances, the music, and the details that went into each and outfit were incredible and worth noting. From symbols of feminism to black oppression, Beyoncé succeeded in making every song with the empowering message to all people of color—that if you dream it and work hard and grind it, you’ll own it.