

❧ Town of Gilboa ❧

October 1869, flooding destroyed businesses and homes in the village of Gilboa. While blasting rock along the creek, workmen discovered fossil tree stumps. January 1870, resident Daniel Mackey contacted State Paleontologist James Hall describing this discovery. Hall came to take two stumps as requested and secured the area. He realized how important and unique they were. Immediately they were put on display in the State Museum of Natural History in Albany. Samuel Lockwood (1819-1894) amateur naturalist and Minister of the Gilboa Reformed Church from 1852 to 1854, discovered a cast of a portion of a Devonian age tree trunk in the Schoharie Creek.

All that so I can talk about Winifred Goldring (1888-1971). She was born near Albany. In 1912 earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She did her graduate work in Geography, Paleontology and Paleobotany (study of fossil plants) at Harvard, Columbia and John Hopkins. She was first hired in 1914, at the age of 26, at the New York State Museum as Scientific Expert in Paleontology. Winifred Goldring was most famous for her work here in Gilboa! In the 1920s, she took over the task of scientifically describing and illustrating Gilboa fossil material, the most impressive display of the early land flora. Hundreds of fossil tree stumps were discovered. She studied these and plant fossils. She was appointed State Paleontologist in 1939, the first woman to hold this position. She wrote and published several guide and handbooks. Such as a Handbook of Paleontology for Beginners and Amateurs and a guide book of the Geology of John Boyd Thacher Park and vicinity. Along with Geological mapping. She was the first female Curator of the Albany State Museum. Goldring was the first woman to serve as State Paleontologist of New York and as President of the Paleontology Society. She was one of the most prominent United States Paleontologists. Goldring retired from the Albany State Museum in 1954 at the age of 67. She died in 1971, two days shy of her 83rd birthday.

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Maple Fest 2024