



What's a Stonehammer™ Geopark and how does it work?

SAINT JOHNERS will tell you that our city is built on rock hills. Whether it is striding up King Street (the shortest, steepest main street in Canada) or walking along the rocky carved coastline or river gorge that ends the Saint John River's journey – our city is definitely built on hard rock.



Photo Credit: © 2010 Katherine Krampol

It's just a fact of life to Saint Johners, but to a wider range of people our surroundings are of particular scientific interest. For over 185 years, scientists interested in rock history or geology realized that the Saint John area offers an almost complete history of the world's creation and evolution. The city's layers of rock are like the pages of a geologic history book spanning over a billion years. With the exception of the Jurassic period, all eras of geology are present in the city and its surroundings.

There are so many examples and stories of geology in early Saint John. In the 1840's, Charles Lyell, the father of geology, suggested the first ever geology field trip. It's destination – Saint John. Discoveries like Will Matthew's trilobites in the 1880's put the city on the map of world-wide scientific interest.



Photo Credit: © Toronto Star

While visiting the *Skywalk™* observation deck, you are standing on rock formed from a collision of the African and South American continents. How's that for your travel journal?

So with that in mind, a group of informed citizens started to lobby the international group that designates geoparks, or areas of geologic interest or history, to consider Saint John as a possible site for the first geopark in North America. The focus of a geopark is not only rocks, but also how the terrain shapes the people, society and culture of the area. Their efforts resulted in the granting of the Global Geopark Network Designation in 2010 with the final **UNESCO Global Geopark Designation** in 2015.



Photo Credit: © 2018 Dominion Park with Go Fundy Events - Kayak Tour

So *Stonehammer™* is a 2500 square km geopark in and around Saint John. There are over 60 sites within the boundaries of the park; twelve of the major sites are accessible. From exploring the Caves at St. Martins, zip lining over the Reversing Rapids, kayaking on the lower Saint John River to see stromatolite fossils or walking the streets of uptown Saint John admiring the sandstone carving on many of the buildings, you can find pockets of rock history. **And it ROCKS!**

Come and see for yourself!



[Stonehammer™ - A Billion Years of Stories From Saint John](#)

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