

# THE CARAVAN

## NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF LOREN EISELEY

Vol. 3, No. 1

SPRING 1989

*"We have joined the caravan, you might say, at a certain point; we will travel as far as we can, but we cannot in one lifetime see all that we would like to see or learn all that we hunger to know."*

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

May got away from us this year without our Annual Spring Potluck Picnic at the beautiful home of Marian and Burt Schultz in Lincoln. We have rescheduled this for September 23rd of this year and have planned our Annual Dinner Meeting for April of 1990. We have made these changes in order to accommodate our speaker, Dr. Dale Christianson, the publication of whose definitive biography of Eiseley has been delayed until January 1990. He has agreed to talk with us about his completed work and perhaps by then we can have read it and can make this an exchange. You will get a flyer about the picnic early in September and further details about the Dinner Meeting in the next Newsletter.

The resignations in early spring of our President, Jim Bellman, and Newsletter Editor, Kathy Bellman, due to a demanding new job and a menacing dissertation due date respectively, pointed up anew the fact that Eiseley readers are deeply involved in many differing human concerns and short on time.

With this in mind and for greater efficiency in operation, we have decided to limit the Advisory Board meetings to two annually. An Executive Committee of Officers will deal with business the remainder of the year meeting on call. Advisory Board Members will serve as resource people and a letter will be sent to present Board Members asking if they wish to participate in this way. We need interested people to help so let me know if you have time for this much involvement regardless of whether you have been active previously. Call

(402-488-7020) or write to 4625 South Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

The present Executive Committee consists of Sherrill Daniels - Secretary; Boy Boyce - Vice President; Morey Tuttle - Treasurer; and Naomi Brill - President Pro Tem.

NAOMI BRILL



### CARAVAN QUOTATION

The Eiseley Quotation for this issue comes, very appropriately in light of the ongoing battle to preserve the Platte River, from his essay, "The Flow of the River". This, which is reproduced in full in the May 1989 issue of the Audubon Magazine along with a memorabilia by Dick Wisner, was quoted as follows in the Baltimore Sun:

(Haunted by a near drowning as a child, Eiseley could not swim. But on this day he walked into the river, feeling the sand bottom between his toes. Then he laid on his back and began to float.)

"The sky wheeled over me. For an instant, as I bobbed into the main channel, I had the sensation of sliding down the vast tilted face of the continent. It was then that I felt the cold needles of alpine springs at my fingertips, and the warmth of the Gulf pulling me southward."

----The Immense Journey

(Send us your favorite quotation for future CARAVANS.)

## CARAVAN FEATURE ARTICLE

### EISELEY'S EARLY DAYS AT THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER

In 1927 the University of Nebraska's now prestigious little literary magazine, The Prairie Schooner, was founded by Dr. Lowry Wimberly, professor of English. At that time Eiseley was an undergraduate student on the campus and "fascinated by the Doc's distrust of the twentieth century, Loren soon became a fixture in Wimberly's Andrews Hall office where they took turns haranguing each other on the foul state of the human condition."

In the ten years after the Schooner was born, Lincoln was described by Ralph Umland as a place where "from every nook and cranny in the city poets and storytellers crawled. Scribble, scribble went their busy pens. Tap-tap-tap went the keys of their typewriters. From that single decade (1927-1937) came three geniuses and a dozen other writers of books". (The geniuses, according to Umland, were Mari Sandoz, Weldon Kees and Loren Eiseley.)

But in spite of this literary outpouring, the young Schooner lacked the needed number of different contributors so Eiseley wrote, not only under his own name but under three pen names, Eronel Croye, Silan Amon and Tlo Honda. Morey Tuttle searched these out for us from the 1927 and 1928 Schooners.

(Quotations by permission from Dale Christianson's paper, "Loren Eiseley and Lowry Wimberly, Companions in Alienation" and from the Prairie Schooner.)

-- Naomi Brill

### GRAVEYARD STUDIES

Silas Amon

#### DAGUERREOTYPE ON A TOMBSTONE

The face  
Is gone. Years and  
Rain -- the victors. Where are they  
Who strove to image here your face  
Forever?

### A SUNKEN GRAVE

Ice breaks  
With a freezing  
Tinkle. -- Child, is your sleep  
So deep that you can weather all  
This rain?

### THE SANTA FE TRAIL

Wind in  
The starlight stirs  
The dust over your grave . . .  
Coyotes wail . . . An owl hoots from the  
Mesa . . .

Prairie Schooner, Oct. 1927

### DEATH IN AUTUMN

Eronel Croye

I go  
Down . . . forever,  
Into darkness wearily  
As this red drift of leaves turns back  
To earth . . .

Prairie Schooner, Oct. 1927

### NIGHT SNOW

Tlo Honda

Nothing  
Is lonlier  
Than snowflakes at midnight  
Drifting out of the dark above  
Street lamps.

Prairie Schooner, Winter 1928

## **BOULDER PEDESTAL FOR EISELEY BUST SELECTED**

## **1989 LOREN EISELEY MEMORIAL AWARD GOES TO WAYNE STATE PROFESSOR**

In 1986 the Friends of Loren Eiseley were asked to develop criteria for selecting a recipient for a memorial award to be presented annually by the Bishop Clarkson School of Nursing and the Clarkson Corporation in Omaha, Nebraska. These criteris, still being used, are:

1. Recipient should be chosen regardless of sex, creed, color or area of expertise.
2. Recipient should have shown through teaching and/or writing the blending of science and humanism that Eiseley demonstrated.

Past awards have gone to John Janovy and Paul Johnsgard, Professors of Biology at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, and to Amy Haddad, Professor of Philosophy and Nursing, at Creighton.

This year's award was presented on March 10 to Dr. Russell Rasmussen, chemistry, from Wayne State. In his fifteen years at Wayne State, Dr. Rasmussen has combined teaching in both humanities and science and has been active in the Neihardt Scholars Program. In his classroom teaching, in his contacts with students, and in his outside activities, Dr. Rasmussen exemplifies the balance between the sciences and the humanities as personified by Eiseley.

"We must bear in mind that a man may be both a scientist and an artist--an individual whose esthetic and humanistic interests are as much a part of his greatness in the eyes of the world as the technical skills that brought him renown."

-- from The Night Country



When Loren Eiseley was a young student living in Lincoln, Nebraska, a favorite pastime was taking long walks in the country with a companion. When they paused to rest and talk, they often sat on one of the beautiful glacial erratics that are scattered around the prairie. Through the efforts of Burt Schultz and Dick Herman, one has been selected and picked up by the state and the bust in the Nebraska Hall of Fame at the State Capitol will be mounted on it. Marian Schultz describes it as a particularly beautiful stone--soft gray with several greenish white pebbles embedded in it. It will complement, in a meaningful way, the magnificent bust of Eiseley that we dedicated in 1987.



## **FRIENDS PURCHASE EISELEY BOOKS AND DOLLHOUSE FROM WERKLEY COLLECTION**

The Friends of Loren Eiseley have purchased from Caroline Werkley, Eiseley's Research Assistant at the University of Pennsylvania, a collection of essays, poems and papers by Eiseley and personally inscribed by him. These include translations of his works published in India, Germany, Iran, Argentina, Sweden, Egypt, Greece, Korea, Holland and Portugal. They have been donated to the Lincoln City Libraries and, when catalogued, will be available for use by scholars in the Heritage Room at the Bennet Martin Library in downtown Lincoln.

In addition, through the good offices of Marian Schultz, the Friends purchased from Caroline Werkley, an antique dollhouse, inspiration for the poem, "The Doll House" published in Eiseley's book, "Another Kind of Autumn". Reportedly a friend asked him if there should not be a tiny man doll in the house of his poem and he replied that he planned to enter it himself one day and take tea before the fireplace. The house, too, was donated to the Lincoln Libraries and will be featured, with original furnishings at the September picnic.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Friends of Loren Eiseley has around three hundred members from throughout the state of Nebraska and from twelve other states extending from New York to California and from Texas to Michigan.

We welcome new members. \$5.00 will keep you on the mailing list for a year and insure that you receive the Newsletter. You can be a contributing member for \$25.00, a supporting member for \$50.00, and a patron for \$100.00. Dues are payable the first of the calendar year. Currently, we have a healthy balance in the treasury of over \$2,000.00 and no outstanding debts. Send your membership check to: Friends of Loren Eiseley, P.O. Box 80934, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-0934. If you paid in January, you are paid up for 1989.



## EVENTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

### RICHARD E. LEAKEY TO SPEAK IN OMAHA

Eiseley readers will be interested in hearing distinguished researcher and paleoanthropologist, Richard E. Leakey, who will speak in Omaha, October 27, 1989 on "The Origins of Mankind". Group discounts for ten or more people are available. We are especially invited to attend this event which is being sponsored by Bishop Clarkson College. For further information, call 1-800-647-5500.

### THE DINOSAURS: LIVE ON TOUR

From August 27 through September 30, the University of Nebraska State Museum (Morrill Hall where Eiseley worked as a student) and the Lincoln Folsom Children's Zoo and Botanical Garden are sponsoring an exhibit of animated dinosaurs and related exhibits in Lincoln. This is designed to raise money for conservation and restoration of fossil exhibits in

Elephant Hall and for educational programs at the Children's Zoo. As this coincides with our Fall Picnic, you might be interested in attending. Reservations are not necessary on weekends or for small groups. Details at the picnic.

## REMEMBER

- to mark your calendar for the Potluck Picnic at the Schultz's September 23, 1989!
- that Comments and Contributions for the Caravan are welcomed (250-500 words or less). Send to: Friends of Loren Eiseley, P.O. Box 80934, Lincoln, NE 68501-0934. (Enclose stamped self-addressed envelope if you would like manuscript returned to you.)
- that there is a deep and continued interest in Loren Eiseley and his work. Tell people about the Friends and solicit membership to enable us to keep in touch with his readers and increase awareness of his work. (Address above) Let us know if you would like an active role.