

# THE CARAVAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF LOREN EISELEY

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Fall 1996



**Loren Corey Eiseley**  
September 3, 1907 - July 9, 1977

*"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."*

-- *The Immense Journey*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

On Sunday, September 8th, at 2:00 O'clock, we will premiere our new videotape, "Loren Eiseley's Lincoln." The event will be held at Trinity United Methodist Church, 16th and 'A' Street in Lincoln. Reverend Darrel Berg, former pastor of Trinity, and his wife Ruth, will be there, coming from their new home in Coupeville, Washington. You are invited to attend. Darrel is featured in the video as our tour leader.

Darrel has contributed much to the Friends of Loren Eiseley. In Phase 1 of his retirement, he served as campus minister at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. There, in 1992-93 he and his tennis partner, Dr. Bing Chen, presented a series of six one-hour talks on the writings of Loren Eiseley, at Brown Bag Luncheon programs. Bing is a professor of Engineering, a solar energy specialist, and has long used Loren Eiseley in his teaching. Bing will give a talk, "Loren Eiseley: Modern Shaman," at the Sixth Nebraska Literature Festival, which will be held at the East Campus Union of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln on September 21st.

Darrel was also featured in the Nebraska ETV video, "Reflections of a Bonehunter," created by Christine Lesiak. Both videotapes are available from the Friends of Loren Eiseley, and each makes for fascinating viewing. Darrel has made a significant contribution to Eiseley interpretation by emphasizing what I call the "universal childhood" aspect of Eiseley's writings. When I went on the neighborhood tours led by Darrel in 1993-95, I discovered that Eiseley's childhood experiences -- his sense of neighborhood -- was everyone's childhood.

In answering the question, "Where are you from?" people generally answer with the name of the place where they first learned the names of neighborhood streets. Loren Eiseley was definitely "from Lincoln." Recently I created a brochure, "Loren Eiseley's Lincoln." The brochure includes a map, reader's guide, and an image of "Archie," the life-size bronze mammoth, who will eventually grace the front yard of the University of Nebraska State Museum, next door to our famous "Go Big Red" football stadium. Over 10,000 mammoth skeletons have been found in Nebraska, and as the saying goes, "We have barely scratched the surface." Archie after he is in place, will probably join Chimney Rock as a symbol of Nebraska. Both are intimately connected to Loren Eiseley, as the Chimney Rock area is where Eiseley went on paleontological digs. Archie is a project of the Friends of the Museum and a cause dear to Morrie Tuttle's heart, so perhaps he can find room for a photo in this issue.

Kira Gale, President

## Nebraska Association Of Teachers Of Science Conference

Mike Antrim

For the second consecutive year, the Communications Outreach Committee will present a display table at the Nebraska Association of Teachers of Science (NATS) Conference on October 24-26 at Camp Calvin Crest near Fremont. Our display features general information about Eiseley's background, his writings, samples of his books (also for sale), information about the Friends, brochures, copies of *The Caravan*, a continuous running of *Reflections of a Bonehunter*, and numerous curriculum materials developed by our committee. We will also make a one hour presentation to the conference which will focus on our curriculum materials.

## Eiseley Friends Tour To Ashfall

Steve Shively

The door to the past is a strange door. It swings open and things pass through it, but they pass in one direction only. No man can return across that threshold, though he can look down still and see the green light waver in the water weeds.

--Loren Eiseley, *The Immense Journey*

On June 1, 1996, the 22 participants in the Second Annual Friends of Loren Eiseley Spring Caravan Tour to Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical State Park got to stand on the threshold of the door to the past and look down on treasures that are ten million years old.

Ashfall is a beautiful place, but it is significant mostly because it contains the fossilized remains of creatures that died at a watering hole following a massive volcanic eruption. The site is unique because the bones of these creatures were not scattered or torn apart, nor were they damaged by weather, erosion, or human activity. A deep layer of volcanic ash protected them for ten million years.

Our guide to this record of ancient times was Dr. Michael Voorhies, Curator of Paleontology at UN-L and member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Loren Eiseley. Mike is the keeper of this door to the past, but he is much more than doorkeeper -- he discovered the door, and he saw to it that a path was built so that we could come to the door. The excavation work he has supervised, combined with the interpretive facilities and services provided by the University of Nebraska State Museum and the Game and Parks Commission, lets us see these ancient treasures. Loren Eiseley was right and we cannot cross the threshold into the past, but at Ashfall we who live in the present can meet the past, look upon it, wonder at it, and learn from it.

Mike's skills as teacher and storyteller enhanced our understanding and enjoyment of Ashfall. Everyone's favorite spot seemed to be the rhino barn, where we got an up-close view of the fossil remains of rhinos, miniature horses, camels, birds, turtles, and other creatures. Mike also took us on a walk through time along an adjacent gully, pointing out the secrets locked in different layers of sediment and bringing to life the geography, the climate, and the lifeforms of the past.

One of Willa Cather's priests said that miracles depend "upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always." As the sun graced our caravan after a long, wet spring, and as we stood on the grassy uplands above Verdigre Creek and felt the wind blow away several layers of human concerns, we heard Mike Voorhies tell about his discovery of the Ashfall site. It was a miracle to us, but to Mike it was a matter of seeing what had always been there. Because of visionaries like Mike Voorhies and Loren Eiseley, we can join the caravan and enjoy the miracles of the past.

Such trips can be taken without the help of many and we especially want to thank Barb Sommer, who made the trip arrangements, and to Bev Grenier, Mike Antrim, and Steve Shively, who drove.

## SOME VIEWS FROM OUR TOUR TO ASHFALL

**YOU ARE  
BEGINNING AN  
IMMENSE JOURNEY.**

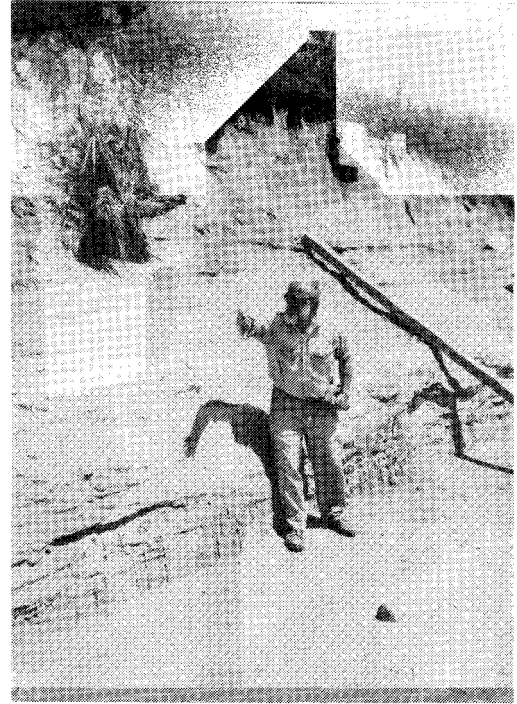
**THE ASHBED AT  
THE END OF THE  
SIDEWALK IS  
10 MILLION YEARS  
OLD.**



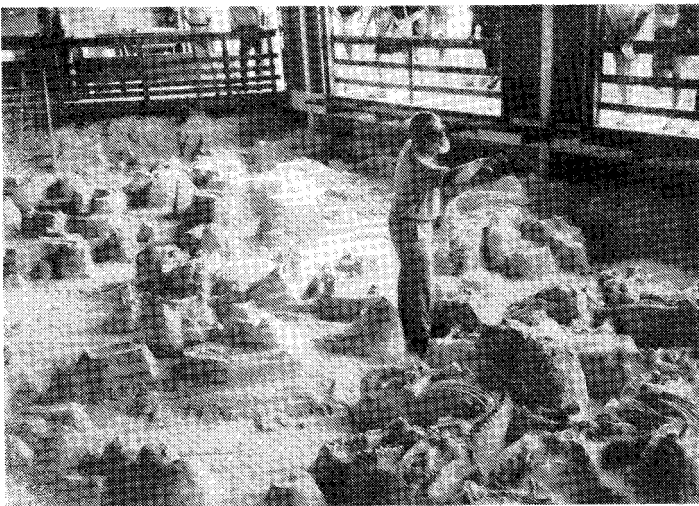
**AT THIS SCALE,**

**EACH STEP WILL  
CARRY YOU BACK  
30,000 YEARS AND**

**ALL HUMAN HISTORY  
OCCUPIES LESS THAN  
3 INCHES (RED LINE).**



On the left we see signs posted at the start of the long walk to the excavation site. If distance to the site was a measure of all time back into that distant past when the animals died, the width of the red line on the side walk before us suggests the tiny portion of that time represented by the whole of human experience. On the right Mike tells us about the layers of earth laid down since the ash layer that was deposited when the rhinos were killed. He stands generally on top of the ash layer containing their fossil bones.



These views are taken in the barn which covers the principal excavation site. On the left Mike is shown telling visitors the Ashfall story and on the right we see two partially exposed skeletons showing how little they have been disturbed though all the ages. All photos on this page were taken by Kira Gale.

## Mark Your Calendar for the Friends of Loren Eiseley Annual Program and Dinner

Barbara Sommer

The Annual Program and Dinner of the Friends of Loren Eiseley has been set for Sunday, October 20, 1996 at Morrill Hall on the UN-L campus. Our speaker will be Dr. James Estes, the new Director of the University of Nebraska State Museum. Dr. Estes recently moved to Lincoln from the University of Oklahoma where he was a professor of botany and director of the Robert Bebb Herbarium. We are very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce Jim to the Friends and to have his participation in our program. As a botanist, Dr. Estes is interested in Nebraska's grasslands and grassland ecology. His presentation will be entitled, "How Grasses and Sunflowers Changed the World, and Vice Versa."

We are also very excited about our afternoon program being arranged for us by Tim Knott of the Wachiska Audubon Society. It will be a guided tour of the Nine Mile Prairie area, the large tract of natural native grassland situated just out side of town. The afternoon will serve as a fine introduction to Dr. Estes's program for the evening.

This year our afternoon program breaks with tradition for it replaces the usual tour of Eiseley sites in Lincoln, but be assured that this popular tour will remain a part of our long-term programming and will be frequently offered in the future along with other programming.

The 1995 tour of Eiseley sites, led by Rev. Darrel Berg and Dr. Bing Chen, was videotaped for the Friends by the Nebraska State Historical Society. Darrel has taken the responsibility for editing the tape into a one-hour program and he has completed that work. Note Kira's invitation to join us on September 8th at Trinity Church to see the first showing and watch for it to be shown soon on Lincoln's cable public access channel. The Historical Society also videotaped Gale Christianson's presentation on *Loren Eiseley's Lincoln* given last October. They are editing this

and it will also be shown on the cable channel. You will be receiving an invitation and we hope to see everyone at the 1996 Annual Program and Dinner on Sunday, October 20, 1996 at Morrill Hall!

## 1996 Nebraska Literature Festival Don't Miss It!

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's East Campus Union and Lincoln Wagon Train Project will be the locations of the Sixth Annual Nebraska Literature Festival. The Eiseley Friends expect to play an active role in the day's activities and we want to meet you there.

The two day festival begins on Friday, September 20, with the Nebraska High School Day. Nearly fifty high schools from across Nebraska have already pre-registered teachers and students to attend writing and performing workshops related in a variety of ways to Nebraska Literature under the leadership of many prominent Nebraska authors and teachers.

The public joins the Festival late Friday afternoon at the Wagon Train Project, 512 South 7th, in Lincoln's Haymarket district. Festival participants will pre-register using the program brochure for one of 18 round table workshop/discussion groups to be held in the Wagon Train's newly renovated loft. Subjects cover a wide range of issues, but one that will be of particular interest to Eiseley Friends features John Janovy, an internationally recognized author and biologist, who will help participants to make discoveries about "Nature Writing: What is It?." The two hour workshops will begin at 4:00 and a general session will follow featuring readings and performances by the various session leaders. Hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar will be offered for refreshments.

Everything on Saturday, September 21, takes place in the East Campus Union on the University's East Campus. The Book Fair will be of special interest and the Eiseley Friends will be represented with a table. Many book dealers will be present and other tables will offer material on such issue as intellectual freedom and literacy. Many writing groups will invite your participation in their activities. The Nebraska English Language Council

will have their new Nebraska Map of Literary Authors for sale and many authors will be doing book signings. Throughout the day those selected as this year's "Twelve Nebraska Authors Reading Series" will be presenting their own work in the Cottonwood room.

Each hour on Saturday will offer several concurrent workshops featuring, among other things, presentations from each of the Nebraska authors groups. The Eiseley Friends are pleased to present our board member Bing Chen talking about "Loren Eiseley: Modern Shaman." Bing will discuss *The Immense Journey* and *The Unexpected Universe* in which he finds that Eiseley gives us a perspective on where we've come from and what negative directions we may be taking as a society and as a civilization. Bing is a professor of computer and electrical engineering and he is also Chairman of our Education Committee. He has incorporated Eiseley into his UN-O course entitled, "Technology, Science and Civilization."

The Saturday luncheon provides an opportunity to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Mari Sandoz and the announcement of the winner of the 1996 Mildred Bennett Award. Finally on Saturday evening from 5:30 to 7:00 will be a social time for all participants held in the Union's Great Plains Room. Jim Cidlik will play jazz piano for us and there will be a cash bar and hors d'oeuvres.

A special guest for these days will be John Cole, director of the National Center for the Book at the Library of Congress in Washington. He will speak in one of the afternoon sessions.

Complete information about the festival is offered by the festival brochure and we will be glad to send you one if you will write to our box and make a request. It will be an exciting day and you will want to be a part of it.

## Surfing Down The Net

Mike Antrim

The Communications Outreach Committee has produced a Loren Eiseley Web site. The site is temporarily found at:

<http://www.esu19.k12.ne.us/burke/EISELEY>.

Currently, the site provides a general information section on Eiseley, numerous selected Eiseley passages (selected by the committee), information on the Friends, and lists of Eiseley's works (by category). Future updates to the web site will include articles from *The Caravan*, copies of curriculum lessons and study guides, messages from several past Eiseley Award winners, updates on the Friends activities, information on the Eiseley Essay Contest, and pictures.

Visitors to the site can send comments or questions directly to Outreach Committee person Mike Antrim from the site. Since the site has been up (since April), we have received several responses from around the nation -- ranging from requests for locating Eiseley material, to inquiries regarding specific quotes. Several visitors have joined the Friends as the result of the web. This site can be accessed by directly going to the above address. However, most visitors find the site by doing a web search on the Eiseley name using a search engine such as AltaVista. (e.g., AltaVista on "Eiseley.") It is interesting to note what else (besides our home page) comes up from such a search. Recently, the search resulted in several sites that include information about Eiseley; but no other web sites were found to be devoted specifically to Eiseley.

### Eiseley Videotapes

These videotapes can be ordered from our box number or by calling (402) 435-5454.

*Reflections of a Bonehunter*, by Christine Lesiak (1995), one hour video produced by Nebraska ETV. Interviews with Gale Christianson, science fiction writer Ray Bradbury, and much more. Postpaid prices: members \$22.50 and nonmembers \$25.00.

*Loren Eiseley's Lincoln* (1996), one hour video produced by Friends of Loren Eiseley. Guided tour by Darrel Berg of sites associated with Loren Eiseley to be found in Lincoln. Postpaid prices: members \$12.50 and nonmembers \$14.50.



Caroline Werkley shown working with Dr. Eiseley in the office at Penn. We thank the University of Pennsylvania Archives for their permission to print this photo.

## Death of Caroline Werkley

Morrie Tuttle

We have just learned through Don Lago's good offices of the recent death of Caroline Werkley, Loren Eiseley's long time associate and friend. For many years she was in a nursing home in Moberly, Missouri, but more recently her son brought her to be near him in Grand Forks, North Dakota, where she died on April 20. It was Don who brought her to Lincoln on those last visits and so it was because of his role that our Eiseley Friends were able to meet and know her. She came to us several times to speak or join in our Friends' activities. She also gave a paper here for a 1987 meeting of the Western Literature Association in which she told of Dr. Eiseley's book collecting and his library.

In the Spring of 1986 she told the Eiseley Friends of her own background. Raised in Moberly, Missouri, she attended the Journalism School at

the nearby University of Missouri. Her husband to be, John Werkley, was her classmate and on their graduation they both began careers in journalism. He was, in time, killed in a plane crash in Asia. She later attended the Graduate Library School of Long Island University and gained the MSLS degree. Just at the time she was finishing her library studies, Dr. Eiseley was in New York and on leave from Penn with an Ettinger Fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute. A friend of her husband knew Dr. Eiseley and also knew that Eiseley was looking for someone to help him, so he made the introduction. She worked for Dr. Eiseley in New York and after he returned to Penn, he then wanted her to join him there. So she moved to Philadelphia with her son, Christopher, and continued to work for Dr. Eiseley until his death. She ultimately returned to Moberly to live in the family home.

She told the Eiseley Friends emphatically that she was not his "secretary." While we don't know her official title, in one of her published articles we find her referring to herself as his "research librarian and editorial assistant." But refining these

terms in no way begins to tell the many ways in which she served him, doing everything from keeping all intruders at a safe distance from his office door to caring for every detail of his activity. A Philadelphia bookseller friend, who with our cousin was a member of the same social club as Dr. Eiseley, told us that Eiseley would regularly come to his shop and spend a very long lunch hour searching his shelves with great concentration, but always leaving empty handed. But our friend knew that in a couple days Caroline would appear with a long list of books to carry back to their office just to the other side of the river.

With her son, she lived in the same apartment complex as did the Eiseleys and the two families were continuously together. After Dr. Eiseley's death she remained in his office for two more years, cataloging the material and making it ready for transfer to the University Archives. In addition to the catalog, she prepared, *A Report of the Loren Eiseley Collection*, an unpublished manuscript, now in the University of Pennsylvania Archives, which describes the significant holdings of the collection. A copy of this can also be found in Lincoln's Heritage Room.

Before his death Dr. Eiseley had decreed that his notebooks and certain other papers not turned over to the University Archives were to be destroyed. Acting under that mandate Caroline disassembled the materials and prepared them so that Mabel could complete the destruction. But this final act did not actually happen and Caroline told us how she later rediscovered the material and how she discussed the destruction decree with Mabel. Urging Mabel to save the notebooks, she told how together they conspired to burn certain sections they felt unimportant as a token satisfaction of the mandate. Once salvaged and gathered, this material was little more than a scrap heap of paper for, as we have said, the notebooks had already been disassembled and the material scattered. Because of her familiarity both with the material and with Eiseley's handwriting she was able to sequence and reassemble this so that Eiseley's friend and editor, Kenneth Heuer, who had also actively been urging its preservation, could then select passages, edit, and give us that wonderful final volume, *The Lost Notebooks*.

Caroline undoubtedly came to her interests in library science because her mother was a librarian. Caroline's father had died when she was only four years old. Caroline's many contributions to various library journals tell about her mother and her charming article, *Mr. Carnegie's Library*, was published in the *Journal of Library History* in April, 1969 and was then republished in *American Heritage* in the February, 1970 issue. Most libraries would have this so it should be easy for you to find it. Introducing this article in the *Journal of Library History*, editor Richard Bartlett says, "Here is a nostalgic description of the small town Carnegie 'Library' (as the natives called it) in which Caroline Werkley's mother held high court. It is about the old library in Moberly, Missouri, but in a larger sense it is about a thousand small town libraries of yesteryear. As such, Mrs. Werkley's essay is a distinct contribution of American social history."

Writing in the *Library Journal* for June 15, 1969. Caroline purposes in the article, "A!L!A!!, A!L!A!!, Here We Go!, Rah!, Rah!, Rah!," to tell all about her mother taking her to library conventions when she was a child, but for us she tells a great deal about herself. These samples suggest some of the charm of that lady we were able to meet much later in her life.

. . . And though I went dutifully to the conventions with Mother, it was not culture I was after, but the enchantment, the beautiful bluebird that one thinks can only found out in the great world, and never in one's back yard.

I may as well admit that enchantment to me, from the time I read my first fairy tale, was synonymous with a knight in clanking armor or a prince from a far country. I did not demand that the object of my search wear a coat of silver metal or the ermine robe of a prince. I would recognize him, naturally, even though he were disguised in a striped blazer and white flannels. But he never revealed himself to me in the vast auditoriums filled with book displays and library equipment and busy librarians.

But for her mother Caroline tells us that these

meetings were all business, that she "was not looking for enchantment." Nevertheless, she did find it at one of those meetings and Caroline speaks of "Mother's Library Beau," but then says, "she chose to pass it by."

Caroline first went to these meetings because her mother felt she was too young to leave at home with her two older sisters:

... The ALA would give me more attention than they, their young heads filled only with dates and dances and silliness. Too, there was the hope that I would learn something of value there. . . Mother recognized in me a bookish individual somewhat like herself. Our idea of a wonderful Saturday evening -- at least before I discovered the joys of dates and dances and silliness -- was a dime's worth of Woolworth candy and a new book from the library. My sisters being older and more sophisticated, could easily take culture and Woolworth candy or leave them alone. I was a reasonably good travelling companion in that I was perfectly willing to curl up with a book on the train and was not likely to embarrass or worry Mother by talking to strangers (as my oldest sister did).

My Mother did not know that I was much more dangerous than either of her other daughters because of the enchantment I constantly expected to find. A seeker of enchantment is often wild and mad in a quiet unrecognized manner until she has run off with the Sheik of Araby, or has been converted to a strange and unpopular religion. . . Fortunately for my Mother's peace of mind, she did not know the inner me, did not know that the books she thought were adding to my culture were also introducing me to the wonders and dangers of life.

In closing this article she tells that the time came finally when these trips came to an end:

There was some change in our lives . . . Mother no longer went yearly to the library conventions. Sometimes one or two years would go by without a trip to these meetings.

Our last was in 1935, in Denver. I had just graduated from college and could not have cared less about a library convention. All I wanted to do was to return home to see the boy to whom I had become engaged. For I had found enchantment at last in journalism school in college. The knight was not wearing a suit of armor but a battered felt hat pushed back off his forehead in the fashion of aspiring journalists of that period. I remember mother asking me if I thought I would ever like to be a librarian, in case I did not get a job on a newspaper, which was my dream. I responded dramatically that I would rather die than be anything but a reporter. Fortunately, I achieved this ambition shortly thereafter at a salary of ten dollars a week. Even librarians, I am sure, were doing better than that, but then, they did not have bylines.

Dr. Eiseley dedicated *Another Kind of Autumn* to this mother, "a very brave woman, and to her equally brave daughters."

In addition to her articles in library journals and an October 1970 celebration in *Esquire*: "Guernseys I have loved--There's a Divinity Doth Hedge a Cow," Caroline also published some journal articles on a topic being of particular interest to us and these will be easy for you to locate in a university library. We encourage you to seek these out because here you will enjoy her descriptions of Dr. Eiseley's working environment and his collections:

"Eiseley and Enchantment," *Prairie Schooner*, 61(3):60-3, Fall, 1987.

"Of Skulls, Spiders and Small Libraries," *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 44(2):188-96, October, 1969.

"Professor Cope, Not Alive But Well," *Smithsonian*, 6(5):72-75, August, 1975.

"Vignettes: Lost Pumas, Pincushions and Gypsies," *Journal of Library History*, 11(4):343-53, October, 1976.

We will offer just a sample taken from the *Wilson Library Bulletin* article cited above. Here she tells

of herself:

. . . As for the librarian, each day she climbs a treacherously curved flight of stairs into an old hall, then up a few more steps into a tower that was a small museum theater. Now she is in the office-library of the professor whose books and bones and spider webs she guards.

She later indicates that she,

. . . view(s) with horror the encroachment of technology on my domain. A small personal library, such as that which I serve, is one of the last refuges of the librarian- bibliophile who does not want the computer to come between her and the true heart of the library -- the book.

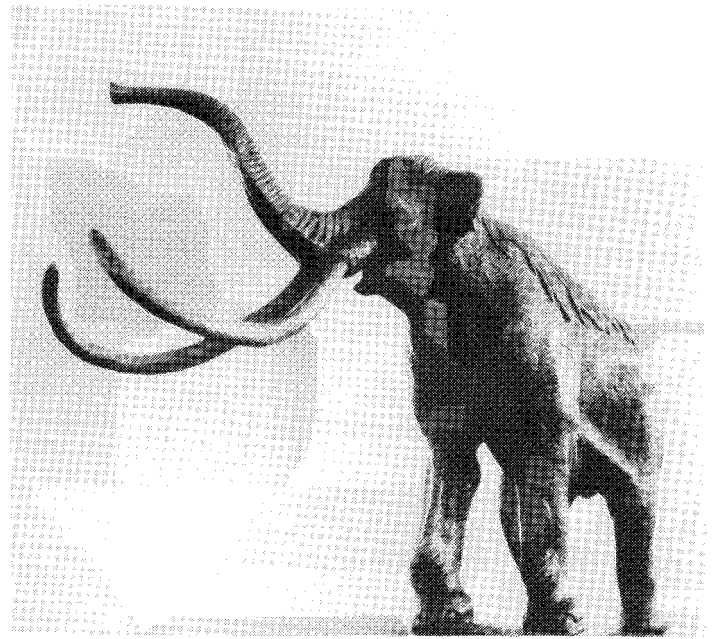
Admitting that there might be a place for computers in the university library, she says:

. . . There is a constant flowing of books from the great library into his smaller one for examination, and whatever machines are needed over there to make more and more books easier and easier to come by is alright with the professor. Just don't get too new-fangled in his domain.

I will be the first to admit that the professor's library would probably confuse a great many librarians. It is a working collection geared to the needs and interests of one patron alone, the naturalist-anthropologist. Skulls and fossils and ancient seeds nestle comfortably -- and with much disorder -- among his books.

She told us how she managed to keep all of this, bones and books, even preserving cobwebs joining the horns of bison skulls.

We have lost a fine lady and those who appreciate the works of Dr. Eiseley should also appreciate the significant role she played in helping him to give these things to us.



Model of the mammoth sculpture by artist Fred Hoppe. Photo courtesy of the University of Nebraska State Museum.

## Archie

Morrie Tuttle

For the past couple years the Friends of the University of Nebraska State Museum have been raising funds to place a full life sized cast bronze sculpture of an Imperial Mammoth in front of Morrill Hall on the university campus. The artist, Fred Hoppe, created this design consulting with museum paleontologists to assure its scientific authenticity. Fred has built a special building on his land near Lincoln in which to erect the huge clay figure which will then be taken to a foundry in Wyoming for casting. With its shoulder standing 18 feet above the base and the tip of the trunk rising further to 22 feet. The work to model the huge clay version is just beginning. Meanwhile the Museum Friends have been selling 1/12th scale models of the sculpture to raise the necessary funds and this effort has been going very well. (Anyone who would like information on how to obtain one of these models can write us at our box and we will flood you with information.)

The Imperial Mammoth (*Mammuthus imperator maibeni*) was the largest mammal known to have walked on the great plains 30,000 years ago. The pride of the museum displayed in Elephant Hall is a fossil

skeleton widely known as "Archie," (short for Archidiskodon). Officially designated the state fossil, this once fifteen ton fellow is the largest mounted mammoth skeleton in any American Museum. He is also represented in the mural painted by Mark Marcuson which fills the south end of Elephant Hall showing a herd of these as you would have seen them had you been on the banks of the Platte River in those distant times. Among Dr. Eiseley's earliest papers to be published in science journals were articles concerning this species.

Just how this fossil was discovered is a good story and is told by this text presented with the museum display:

Originally chickens found the bones of this uncommonly large mammoth! In 1922 a farmer and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Karriger, noticed their chickens persistently pecked at some limy material at the bottom of a small canyon on their farm in Lincoln County, Nebraska. The chickens ate some of the bones before anyone realized that the soft limy deposits were fossil bones of great size. Paleontologists, with the help of the Karrigers, carefully excavated the ice age bones.

## Editorial Excavations

Morrie Tuttle

We have before us the May issue of *NEBRASKAland* and it is a beauty featuring an article on "Sandoz Country" which is illustrated with gorgeous photos taken by Eiseley Friends President, Kira Gale. Her photos are presented with appropriate quotations from the writing of Mari Sandoz mostly taken from her biography of her father, *Old Jules*, who was one of the earliest settlers of the region. Mari was born on his homestead near Gordon in Sheridan County, Nebraska. The article opens, "Between the great highways, far from the cities, lies a hidden treasure, the Nebraska Sandhills. Waves of grass, the inheritance of an ancestral inland sea, stretch as far as the eye can see. It is the largest sand dune area in the Western Hemisphere, and beneath it, the High Plains Aquifer hold the world's largest supply of high quality underground water." Kira's pictures beautifully show the wide sweep of the land and the great sky. This year is the centennial of Mari Sandoz's birth and Kira is an active board member for the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society.

We were pleased to have a letter from an old friend, Dimitri Breschinsky, a professor in the Department of

Foreign Languages and Literature of Purdue University. You have read in these pages over the years about his devotion to translating Dr. Eiseley into the Russian language. For many years he has been working on these translations and his efforts culminated in 1994 with the publication in Moscow of a beautiful volume containing a dozen of his translations of Dr. Eiseley's essays and stories. This was reported in the *Caravan* for Spring 1995. He now tells us that he has recently published another of his literary translations: Eiseley's essay "One Night's Dying," from the 1971 autobiography, *The Night Country*, which appeared in the December 1995 issue of the St. Petersburg journal *Zvezda* (the Star), a widely read and highly regarded literary monthly. Dimitri says that he is also trying to publish in Russia his latest translation of "The Secret of Life." And he is also now working on a new translation of "The Time of Man," the concluding essay from *Darwin and the Mysterious Mr. X*. He says this one may be his last one, but we do hope this isn't so.

We hadn't looked at the periodical indexes on our university computers for some time and so when we recently did so, we were pleased to find the citation of a paper by another friend, Robert Franke, who has done many papers on Eiseley over the years. This one appeared in the Spring 1995 issue of the *Journal of American Culture*. His title is, *A Great Stage, a Great Play: The Theatrical and Tragic in Loren Eiseley's Essays*. Here are a couple interesting sentences taken from the abstract showing on the computer with this citation: "His writing contains many of the elements of good script writing and he uses many other literary devices. His essays have a theatrical impact that creates an impression of personalized incidents. The dependence on myth gives a tragic sense to his writing."

Something quite wonderful blooms on the pages of the April/May 1996 issue of *National Wildlife*, published by the National Wildlife Federation. They welcomed spring with a spectacular presentation using text excerpts from Dr. Eiseley's essay, "How Flowers Changed the World," illustrated with large color pictures of wild flowers. This presentation fills three double page spreads in the magazine.

People look forward to each spring to the conference celebrating the work of John Neihardt at Bancroft, Nebraska. This year John Schneider, professor of Religion and Theology at Calvin College in Grand Rapids Michigan was one of the speakers. We were pleased to discover that he has published, *Spiritual Visions of the Great Plains: Religious Narratives of Crazy Horse, Black Elk, John Neihardt, Mari Sandoz and Loren Eiseley*.

While Gale Christianson wrote about Eiseley as just one "fox at the wood's edge," the recent June issue of the *Atlantic* gives us a poem by Jane Hirshfield, "Three Foxes by the Edge of the Field at Twilight." There was not time to secure permission to reprint this poem, but it is something quite fine and we encourage you to look for it on page 98 of the magazine. As a teaser, we give you her final lines:

Something looks back from the trees,  
and knows me for who I am.

An interesting book review appeared in the English magazine, *New Scientist* for June 24, 1995, entitled "Romantics Versus the Reductionists." Here reviewer Jon Turney considered the report of a conference held at Jesus College, Cambridge in 1992 as reported in a book by John Cornwell which had the name of this conference in its title, *Nature's Imagination: The Frontiers of Scientific Vision*. The conference considered, among other things, various ideas (forgive our gross oversimplification) on scientific method and investigation.

Reductionism, or stripping the whole into parts and examining them independently, has been a long practiced and productive method of investigation. Isolate the elements of a complex system and consider them one by one in analysis. An extreme view presented held that a reductionist, materialist program could give us all the knowledge we should ever need about everything, but that true knowledge attained by science must sweep away not only religion, but ultimately the arts and humanities as well.

However, other views rose to challenge the purely reductionist game plan for it is increasingly recognized that complex systems often display properties not present in their components. A debate about more holistic approaches and the notion of emergence is becoming more active and we could see that this must have been a lively conference indeed. We cannot here begin to touch the depth of the issues raised by this discussion.

Turney reports that some of the best writing in the book appeared in the introduction written by an American philosopher of science, Freeman Dyson. He tells that Dyson says that science has never had a unitary method. That methods employed often depend on factors relative to the problem being studied and that what unites scientists as intellectual types is that they always want to challenge conventional wisdom. Dyson is then quoted:

Science is an alliance of free spirits in all cultures rebelling against the local tyranny that each culture imposes on its children. . . Like Loren Eiseley, I feel myself a traveller on a journey far longer than the history of nations and philosophies, longer even than the history of our species.

The reviewer concludes that while Dyson's vision may not convince either side, it at least demonstrates that one might be a brilliant physicist and still remain a romantic at heart.

It seemed very fortunate to have found Turney's review just at a time when we were thinking of giving you something from another one of Dr. Eiseley's reviews. We have in past issues looked at several of his appearances as a book reviewer, a form of his writing which has not been collected. While book reviews are generally short business like affairs, in these we can often nevertheless find short flashes of vintage Eiseley. In this case it is interesting, in company with Turney's comments about the meeting, to be able to present Dr. Eiseley suggesting some of his own views and thereby most unexpectedly having an input to this dialogue.

Under the heading, "There is Room for Doubt," Eiseley reviewed Jean Rostand's book *The Orion Book of Evolution* for the *New York Times Book Review* on June 25, 1961. He calls this book, "a terse well illustrated review of the history of evolution." After providing something of the scope of the work, Eiseley offers some his observations:

What makes this author a happy contrast to many of his English and American colleagues is his capacity for doubt. Not doubt about the reality of that great enigma we call evolution, but doubt that we have sufficiently mastered its secrets to become dogmatic about the way life achieves its mysterious destiny. Unlike those frequent and stiff textbooks that express with undeviating formalism the triumph of neo-Darwinism in all its impressive chromosomal array of linkages, genes and mutations, Rostand refuses to see in them the whole story of organic evolution.

After presenting some quotations to illustrate Rostand's ideas, Eiseley then concludes his review:

. . . These views the author readily admits are not orthodox and can be, and are, shrugged off by the convinced experimentalist. Yet who, really, can experiment with the past except within the tiny domain of the present? Are we, he questions, so

saturated with the evolutionary story that we are apathetic and no longer realize the wonder of the facts we mouth? Some how, somewhere, "nothing" brought forth a world of substance and light. Similarly life has emerged strangely, even if one avoids the word, miraculously, out of inorganic substance.

There is an odd little light in our heads -- nature looking at itself, nay, even putting itself into those ghostly immaterial symbols we call words. Rostand doubts that we know a tithe of this hidden story. It would be well if all of us could coax our students to forgo the many certainties of their science to contemplate for one humbling moment, the unknown darkness out of which we came and into which each one of us -- like an infinitesimal universe -- will dissolve in his due season.

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