

THE CARAVAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF LOREN EISELEY

Vol. 9, No. 2

Fall 1995



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

Chris Lesiak will present the Friends of Loren Eiseley program at the Fifth Nebraska Literature Festival. Chris will discuss her role in writing, directing and producing *Reflections of a Bonehunter* for Nebraska Educational Television. We are glad to have Chris as one of our new board members, as she brings a wealth of information and expertise on Loren Eiseley matters to us.

The Education/Outreach Committee will be presenting a program and hosting a booth at the fall meeting of the Nebraska Association of Science Teachers. The committee, chaired by Bing Chen, is preparing lesson plans for classroom teaching which cross curriculums in English and science. Again the talents of new board members are allowing us to grow in new directions.

Our Annual program on October 22nd will feature Gale Christianson of Indiana State University, the author of *Fox at the Wood's Edge*, Loren Eiseley's biography. He will speak on Loren Eiseley's Lincoln years. All members of Friends of Loren Eiseley are cordially invited to attend a reception for Dr. Christianson which will be held at the home of Bing and Georianne Chen on Saturday October 21st in Omaha. This special event is intended to promote membership and we encourage you to join at this time. New memberships will be good through 1996.

Please help support the new projects we are developing with your financial contribution. The first annual Spring Caravan Tour to Ashfall received a surprise gift of \$100 from a member, and we are very pleased to have this indication of support.

Kira Gale, President



Pink and Yellow Roses, is the only known surviving painting done by Loren Eiseley's mother, Daisy. Signed D.Corey, it hangs in the Heritage Room of the Bennett Martin Public Library in Lincoln which also houses our Eiseley archives. Dr. Eiseley's long time friends, the late Wilbur and Elizabeth Gaffney, contributed this and much other valuable Eiseley material to the Heritage Room collection. The picture, 10 by 16 inches, is displayed in a frame which is supposed to have been painted from the same bottle of gilt paint which the young boy used to paint his little crosses as we are told in *All the Strange Hours*.

Lemonade with Daisy Eiseley

by David W. McShane, DD

Sunset had brought modest respite from the cruel heat. The dust laden wind of the day had calmed. It was Lincoln, Nebraska during the drought. A slow stroll around the long single block from Twenty-second Street to Twenty-fourth Street between Ryons and South streets was the best adventure to be had. The noise of the street car rumbling down South Street and the incessant whizzing voice of hundreds of cicadas would be missed. She was deaf.

Dad often made a pitcher of ice cold lemonade and set it on the round wicker table on the front porch. The wicker rocker and the three person swing swayed slowly back and forth as we shared the news of the day. If there was a cooling breeze we might be on the patio in the back yard. I can still taste that delicious lemonade. I hope she can too, in her final rest.

I was a little boy and I remember her so vividly because of her awkward croaking speech. Her's was the first voice of a deaf person I had ever heard and the impression was indelible. We would have our lemonade treat several evenings a month and occasionally we would be joined by Mrs. Eiseley, Loren's mother.

She walked slowly, erect, but with her head tilted down. I now know it as the posture of shame. She wore plain looking flower print dresses. She was thinner than my mother and she seemed to be very shy.

She did not speak often and I remember asking her questions so I could hear her strange voice, but my mother would intercept and answer for her. I could only catch an occasional word, but my mother seemed to understand all she said. My sister remembers that she was very proud of "my son Loren." That phrase I came to understand because she used it often. She never stayed very long. In her croaking voice she would thank my father for the lemonade and he would tell her to come back again. The first time she joined us my mother had gone down the steps and out to the sidewalk to get her attention and bring her up to the porch. I remember once when we were on the patio in the back yard having our lemonade the door bell rang. My father went to answer and came back with Mrs. Eiseley. I am grateful she felt free to do that.

It is my presumption that her social life was barren at best. Many years later, when I came to know her son and shared these boyhood memories with him, Loren was surprised to learn of her friendly association with neighbors.

To all appearances Mrs. Eiseley was a normal woman save the fact that she was deaf. What havoc that impairment can wreak. Was it, perchance, one of the clues to Loren's genius with our language? A father declaiming in Shakespearian rhythms, and a mother who was both hard to understand and hard to reach with words. How hard Loren must have tried. If it be so, God has blessed her deafness with some of the finest writing in our language. Next time you have a lemonade thank Mrs. Eiseley for giving us her son.

We thank David McShane for sharing his very special memories of Daisy Eiseley and for giving us this beautiful essay. He has been a member of the 'Friends' for some time, but only now have we enjoyed making his acquaintance and must say a special thanks to Ruth Thone for helping to

make this possible. While we have not actually been together, several letters have passed back and forth and we have had some good phone conversations. He once mentioned that he would like to come to our October event and so now we want to restate that invitation publicly.

During our initial visits we talked about his associations with Dr. Eiseley and asked him to write some of this out for us. The result was a wonderful letter which he has since given us permission to share with you. So now what follows is the better portion of David's letter.

I was born in Lincoln and 2219 South Street was my official address until I graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago in 1952. I was a philosophy major at Nebraska University graduating in the class of 1949. The Eiseleys lived down around the corner when I was a little boy. All I remember of Loren from those days is the infatuation my older sister had for him because he was a poet. Loren never knew of his young neighbor girl's admiration. I remember my sister running to the front window to look out when he walked up the sidewalk. He took long strides and some-times walked with his hands behind his back. I presume he was on his way to his aunt and uncle's house down on 23rd Street.

In the late 1950's I was a Presbyterian University Pastor in Kalamazoo, Michigan serving at Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College. Dr. Eiseley came to lecture at "K" College. By that time I had been captured by *The Immense Journey*, and I made bold to make his personal acquaintance because of our common past in Lincoln.

At the end of the 1950's I became Director of The Westminster Foundation in Philadelphia, which was the Presbyterian ministry to higher education institutions in the Philadelphia area. My wife and I and two tiny children (we have four now and

five grand children) lived in Wynnewood. My office was in The Christian Association building on the University of Pennsylvania campus. Sometimes I would go to work by riding the Pennsylvania Railroad commuter, embarking from the Wynne-wood station. Several times Loren was waiting for the same train and we sat together and would walk from 30th street station over to the University.

I returned to Kalamazoo in the late 1960 and became Pastor of First Presbyterian Church. When Loren came to town to lecture we would have lunch or breakfast together. Those were highly privileged moments for me. One of my prized possessions is a copy of the limited publication of *Man, Time and Prophecy* with a note from Loren on the fly leaf. I retired from the pastorate in June of 1987 and after a year of commuting to Chicago to teach three or four days a week at McCormick Seminary we moved for winter times to our house on Marco Island in Florida. We summer here not far from Kalamazoo and three of our four children.

I own and have read most of the books Loren Eiseley has written. One of the curses of living in two places is having half of one's library at the other end of one's life. All of Eiseley's, except duplicates, are in Florida. I have quoted him frequently in sermons. I have thought I might ask for permission from the publisher to photocopy the title chapter from *The Star Thrower* and hand it to people whom I see taking live shells as I stroll the beach on Marco. This experience of meeting you (I hope in person some day) may move me to do so.

Eiseley Friends Look Forward to Annual Program in October

The Annual Dinner and Program of the Friends of Loren Eiseley will take place on Sunday,

October 22. Activities will begin during the afternoon and will culminate in the evening with a talk by Eiseley biographer and acclaimed author, Dr. Gale Christianson, who will speak on "Loren Eiseley's Lincoln." In his presentation, Dr. Christianson will discuss the relationship between the City of Lincoln and the life experiences of Eiseley as reflected in his writings.

A guided tour of sites in and around Lincoln important to Eiseley's work and life, led by Rev. Darrel Berg and Dr. Bing Chen, will begin the day's events. This will be followed with a tour at 5:00 P.M. of the new gallery at the University of Nebraska State Museum (Morrill Hall). This gallery, named *Mesozoic Monsters, Mammals and Magnolias* is described elsewhere in this newsletter and has special significance for Eiseley readers. The tour will be followed with a social time, dinner in Elephant Hall and the evening's program. In addition to Dr. Christianson's presentation, the winners of the Loren Eiseley Medal and the Loren Eiseley Essay Contest will be announced and honored.

We encourage everyone interested in the works of Eiseley and his unparalleled contributions in the fields of science and the humanities to plan on joining us for an informative tour, an excellent dinner, and an exciting program. Watch for further information and invitations which will be coming in the next several weeks.

While Dr. Christianson is in Nebraska he will be interviewed by Dr. Otis Young for a discussion on the Nebraska Public Radio Network program *All About Books* concerning Christianson's new biography of astronomer Edwin Hubble, *Navigator of the Nebulae*. On Monday evening October 23 at 7 P.M. in Omaha he will speak about his new biography to the University of Omaha Library Friends at the UNO Alumni House. Everyone is welcome at this event.

Barbara Sommer
Vice President

The Fifth Nebraska Literature Festival






September 23, 1995

Nebraskan Student Union

University of Nebraska at Kearney

and

Copeland Hall

8:00 a.m.	Registration, Book Fair, Photo Display, Open Microphone: Nebraskan Student Union/UNK UNK Ambassadors will assist you in parking at parking lots East of the Student Union on 28th St. and 9th Ave. See map below.				
	Aspen-Maple-Willow	Music Room	Copeland Hall	Copeland Hall	Cottonwood
9:00-10:15	Workshop: Writing Your Family Tree Marlene Plambeck	Writers Reading: Brian Jones Terri Shiffens J.V. Brummels Nancy Westerfield	"Visit with Black Elk" Hilda Neihardt 	"Aldrich and Cather: Their Early Stories" Diana Wendt 	Meet the Publishers and Producers Don Cunningham Carolyn Johnsen Hilda Raz Dan Ross
10:30-11:45	Workshop: Writing From Your Life Ruth Raymond Thone	Writers Reading: Eamon Wall Roy Scheele Nancy McCleery Marge Saiser	"Dramatizing Cather" Joel Geyer 	"Reflections of a Bonehunter: The Life of Loren Eiseley" Christine Lesiak 	Sponsored by: NEBRASKAland Nebraska Public Radio Prairie Schooner University of Nebraska Press
11:50-1:25	Festival Luncheon Ponderosa Ball Room Host: Helen Winter Stauffer Program: Betsy Downey: "Mari Sandoz's 'Love Song to the Plains'"				
1:30-2:45	Workshop: Organizing Writers' Support Groups Jennifer Henry Diana Lambson	Writers Reading: Susan Deal Hilda Raz Ted Kooser Barbara Emrys	"Mari Sandoz: Her Young Adult Novels" Sandoz Society and Friends 	"Wright Morris: Female Voices in His Life" Lone Tree Literary Society	Storytelling: Native American Stories Matt Jones
3:00-4:15	Workshop: Writing Poetry Ted Kooser	Writers Reading: Annette Murrell Bill Kloefkorn Twylla Hansen Don Welch	"Our State Capitol as 'Text'" Robert Ripley	"The Nebraska Roots of Weldon Kees" Steve Shively	Slide Presentation: "Kate Cleary: A Gallant Nebraska Lady" Susanne George
4:30-8:30	Voices of Color in Nebraska: The African Americans An evening of music and readings with buffet Host: Dr. Gladys Styles Johnston, UNK Chancellor Featuring: Annette Murrell Lincoln's Queen of Jazz & Blues; and Images. Special programs in the galleries with Mary Cloud and Rick Wallace Museum of Nebraska Art 24th Street and Central Ave. (free parking)				

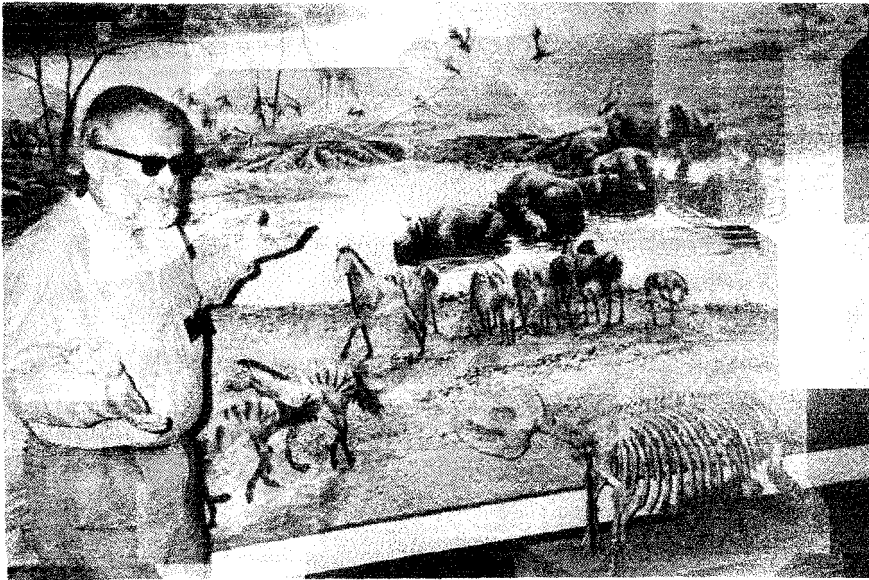
Author's Images David Reuter ©

Nebraska Literature Festival

The Nebraska Literature Festival will return to the University of Nebraska at Kearney on Saturday, September 23rd. Visitors will experience programs about Nebraska Authors, enjoy a buffet with special music and readings expressing the voice of African Americans in Nebraska, browse the book fair and exhibits, and learn more about our most admired institutions, such as the state capitol, *NEBRASKAland* magazine and the rich story tradition of Nebraska's Native Americans. Many of Nebraska's best known writers, publishers and producers will read from their works, talk about how to get one's work into print or on the air, and assist and advise budding authors. Special programs for high school students and their teachers will take place on Friday, the day before the festival.

The Friends of Loren Eiseley will present a program given by Chris Lesiak, producer and writer of the television documentary *Reflections of a Bone Hunter* and the Friends will also have a booth at the book fair where we will be selling copies of her video. Be sure to participate in this event which is now in its fifth year.

Some events require prior registration. Register now by calling or writing the Kearney Community Theater ticket office, (308) 234-1529 or by writing KCT at 83 Plaza Boulevard, Kearney, NE 68847.



These photographs were taken on our spring tour to the Ashfall Fossil Beds. In the upper left, our host, Dr. Michael Voorhies, speaks to us in front to the mural showing the setting for the ancient catastrophe which created this site. In the lower left, we stand in the great shed which has been built over the principal excavation where partially excavated animal fossils can be viewed. In the photo on the right Dr. Voorhies points to a spot where a mother rhino and her baby have rested for 10 million years.

First Annual Friends of Loren Eiseley Spring Caravan Tour

Sweeping across the plains like a grey blizzard, volcanic ash blew in from the west and blanketed the landscape. Confused and choking animals began to die around a water hole. Within weeks the local wildlife was devastated. Locked in death poses, the ash bed lay undisturbed for ten million years. Now they are giving us a detailed view of a vanished world.

These words taken from displays in the visitor's center at the Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park introduce the special experience we shared on the first Sunday in June when about 30 people "joined the caravan" for the First Annual Friends of Loren Eiseley Spring Caravan Tour to Ashfall. After lunch at Green Gables Restaurant just outside the park, we moved to the interpretive center inside the Park where our tour guide Dr. Michael Voorhies, Curator of Paleontology at UNL and our very own bone hunter (as a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Loren Eiseley), told us the story of the area. Beginning his discussion with reference to the work of Loren Eiseley, he gave us an excellent introduction to this ten million year old volcanic ash bed which he discovered some years ago. In 1971, when Mike discovered a baby rhino skull which recent rains had exposed in a gully, he sensed the greater significance of this find and he pursued the investigations which led to the discovery and development of this site.

A few photos taken that day will help to tell the Ashfall story. The first of these shows Dr. Voorhies speaking in front of the mural painted by museum artist Mark Marcuson picturing this place in north central Nebraska as it was some ten million years ago. A dark ash cloud in the upper left drifts in from an explosion which has occurred a thousand miles distant in south western Idaho, an eruption which was perhaps a

hundred fold more catastrophic than the recent Mount St. Helens event. That cloud would soon wipe out all the unsuspecting rhinos and other critters enjoying this shallow pond. Unlike the eruption of Vesuvius, death causing heat and gasses such as enveloped nearby Pompeii were not a factor here. This eruption having occurred so far distant, these deaths instead would come from inhaling the volcanic ash, a lethal dust comprised of tiny shards of glass. So these animals would not die instantly as it took time for the glass to complete it's damage. It is estimated that while the smaller animals died quite soon, the largest ones could have lingered for a few weeks. Soon the ash cover in the depression, in which this water hole was situated, would continue to fill with additional ash blown in from higher surrounding ground until it was covered with an ash layer many feet deep, forming a tomb which would rest undisturbed until our own time.

The mural shows other animals from the site, such as several species of primitive horse, an early giraffe-like camel and a crane very much like cranes found today in Africa. These all used the pond and the fossil remains of over 40 species of animals and plants have been found here. Standing on the floor in front of the mural is a full skeleton of a baby rhino.

The next photo is taken inside the shed which has been built over the principal excavation allowing visitors to watch the work in progress and permitting this site to be preserved over time, protected from the elements. Unlike other museum displays, this one intends to show how the animals existed in nature, remaining in the ground in their death pose as they have been for the last ten million years. There is no intention to actually remove them in the foreseeable future, the usual objective of such a dig.

This site represents a unique circumstance because at the time of death these bones were not scattered or ripped apart by carnivores. Nor were they later ravaged by the elements, being moved by wind or erosion, as is usually the case. Most fossil finds yield incomplete or scattered

specimens. While some of these bones have been chewed or have been stepped on by larger animals, but because these were covered relatively quickly by the ash, their bodies were not only kept intact but also remain exactly placed as they were when they died. Ordinarily over the long expanse of time, specimens tend to be crushed by the burden of material that ultimately forms over them, but here the deep layer of ash covered them so quickly they were preserved before their bodies could collapse. Then the ash cushioned the remains so that the forming overburden did not later crush them. So these fossils remained throughout the ages in their original three dimensional state. The contents of their bodies, undigested last meals and remains of the unborn, further enhance the picture we have of that way of life which ended here.

The trauma to the earth's surface more recently caused by Ice Age glaciation generally changed things so radically that if there had been similar deposits elsewhere they were probably destroyed. The miracle associated with this site is that the glaciation did not reach into this area, making *this deposit so unique*. The great ice sheet missed covering this place by only a few miles. Mike said that the ash from this eruption carried to the east well out into the Atlantic, but the ash layers formed over this vast expanse were probably later destroyed by the movement of the ice sheet.

At the time the ash cloud came overhead this area was a near tropical savanna, having a climate which was probably relatively warm with a very narrow temperature range, mostly from 75 to 85 degrees. Fossils recovered within the ash layer indicate that it could never have frozen for many of the species found here could not have survived such temperature extremes. The large animals were grass eaters needing great amounts of green fodder every day. Fossil seeds found in the animal teeth have helped to identify the kinds of grasses and other vegetation which then grew here.

The last photo shows Mike pointing to a place in the excavation where a mother and baby rhino still lie together in a nursing position, a common occurrence among these specimens. Mike says that for climatic reasons the babies tend to be born at almost the same time each year and so the babies found here are nearly all at the same stage of development. Even so, there are many instances of fetal rhinos still inside their mothers.

We owe many thanks to Barbara Sommer who made all the arrangements and who served as our wagon master for this exciting tour.

Barbara wants to express her special thanks to Dr. Voorhies for his hospitality and for being an excellent tour guide, to Larry Sommer and Christine Lesiak for helping drive the rental vans that day, and to Morrie Tuttle who kept the finances for the trip in order. In spite of the overcast weather and occasional rain, the day was a wonderful success for all who attended.

Eiseley Film Featured at Great Plains Film Festival

During the last half of July the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater of the University of Nebraska Lincoln Campus presented a major event, the Great Plains Film Festival, which is a biennial showing of the works of independent film and video artists working in the United States and Canadian heartland. The festival seeks to nurture a better understanding and a greater awareness of the media arts being produced in our region in terms of their aesthetic, cultural and social values. In addition to showing the films, the festival offers a forum for artists and audiences to meet during panel discussions and special appearances. We were very pleased that *Reflections of a Bonehunter* produced by Chris Lesiak was one of the films selected to be featured during this important festival.

Editorial Excavations

Mesozoic Monsters, Mammals and Magnolias, a new gallery to be opening at the University of Nebraska State Museum on the first of October, will become available just in time to view when the Friends of Loren Eiseley gather at the museum on October 22nd. A special feature of that day will be a guided tour lead by museum personnel at 5:00 that afternoon. One portion of this exhibit will be of particular interest in terms of Dr. Eiseley's writing and we will come to this in a moment.

The Mesozoic era represents that great span of time from 250 to 65 million years ago which included the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The new gallery specifically focuses on the most recent portion of that era, the Cretaceous, when a great salty sea covered the region of what is now Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota. During this period beginning 145 million years ago, invertebrates, amphibians and fish were plentiful, enormous saltwater reptiles swam in this inland seaway and flowering plants first began to appear. This was still within the age of dinosaurs, but by the end of the Cretaceous period they would all be gone.

This gallery has long been in preparation and this development has been supported, in part, with funds from the National Science Foundation. Three of the principal exhibits are each presented with a beautiful mural painted by museum artist Mark Marcuson. Interactive exhibits will invite visitors to shake and sort microfossils, investigate early flowering plants and operate a dunk-a-dinosaur model in water to measure the size of a living dinosaur. Other multimedia exhibits, using video and computer simulations, will provide information relating to important Mesozoic excavation sites in North America.

The first of the principal exhibits, a walk-in "fossil aquarium," presents life as it was in the inland sea. This includes a fully mounted skeleton of a mosasaur, a mount of *Xiphactinus*, one of the largest fish skeletons ever collected from the Niobrara Chalk, and a plesiosaur neck and head

set in a display embedded in the floor of the gallery. And all of these are shown before a great mural revealing each of them in life cruising the inland sea.

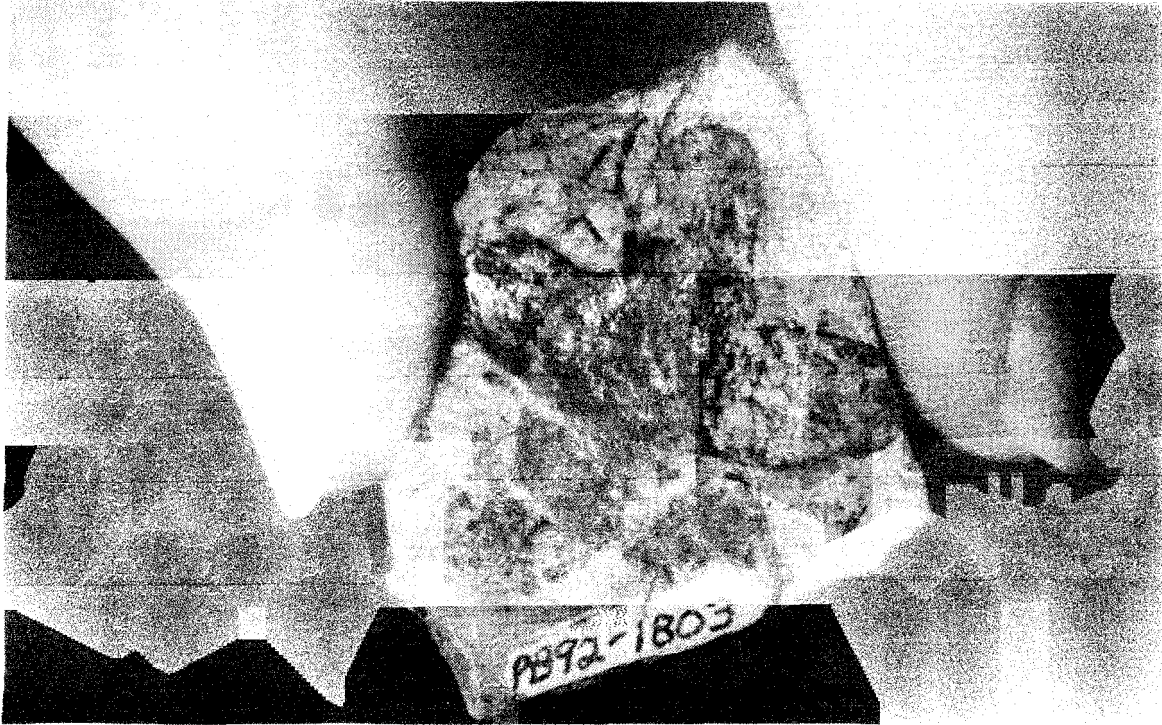
Plesiosaurs, looking very much like everyone's image of the Loch Ness Monster, swam here at a time when dinosaurs ruled the land elsewhere. The museum's specimen, a 90 million year old head and neck was found near Valparaiso in Saunders County, Nebraska in 1964. As just this portion of its body exceeds 21 feet, this giant was probably greater than 40 feet overall and it is thought to be from the largest plesiosaur yet discovered.

The museum's specimen of *Xiphactinus*, a tarpon like bony fish, is more than 12 feet long and this was preserved with a partially digested 6 foot fish still between its ribs. *Xiphactinus* is thought to be the largest of the known bony fishes.

Mosasaurus, 30 foot sea lizards, were dominant predators in the late Cretaceous sea. Being true lizards, they had only recently evolved from dry-land ancestors which had entered the sea and are closely related to the monitor lizard family of today. Their legs were less paddle-like than the Plesiosaur so they probably swam by lashing their long tail from side to side. A complete skeleton found in Kansas will hang from the ceiling and another skeleton will be shown as it was discovered in 1987 at Niobrara State Park in Northern Nebraska.

At the opposite end of the gallery a triceratops dig site features the skull of the animal and recreates a site from which a triceratops was excavated by the staff of the Museum's Division of Vertebrate Paleontology. And this exhibit also includes mural created by Mark Marcuson.

The skeleton of *Chasmosaurus*, a plant-eating dinosaur that lived 80 to 100 million years ago, stands in front of a mural showing a pair of these animals being chased by a large predatory dinosaur which is approaching from a great distance. This scene suggests a view of Nebraska



A fossil specimen of the hundred million year old Rose Creek flower to be displayed with a quotation from Dr. Eiseley's essay, "How Flowers Changed the World," in the new Mesozoic Gallery in Morrill Hall. This wonderful photograph was taken by Jon Farrar and was provided to us by the University of Nebraska State Museum.

on one of its rare appearances above sea level about 100 million years ago. The original of this skeleton was discovered in Western Canada at a place which might have been on the western shore of the great inland sea. Standing ten feet high and 14 feet long, his large head with its hawk like beak will look all visitors straight in the eye as they invade his space.

Amid these displays and just to the rear of *Chasmosaurus*, we will find that special fossil mentioned earlier which has such particular interest for the Eiseley reader. 100 million years ago the first flowering plants, perhaps blooming near a creek or maybe near the edge of the inland sea, were engulfed by water and mud. And there they have remained undisturbed for all the years since, holding fast to the secrets of the earliest flowering plants while buried in a layer of clay. This site, near the town of Fairbury in

Jefferson County of south eastern Nebraska, is now a clay pit owned by a brick yard and it is near Rose Creek by which name these fossil flowers are now known.

This clay pit is part of a greater geologic area known as the Dakota Formation which was formed from sediments washed westward to the shore of the inland sea. The blanket of sand thus formed during the Cretaceous era became the Dakota Sandstone. Within the area, beds of clay formed in abandoned stream beds or tidal marshes at the edge of the sea. The Dakota Formation has long been a source of fossil plants, but has recently produced some of the world's earliest evidence that flowers were taking over from more primitive plant forms. The Jefferson County rocks, once sand and mud adjacent to the inland sea, have preserved the oldest complete fossil flowers found anywhere.

The five-petaled Rose Creek flower, perhaps related distantly to the wild rose, but also somewhat resembling an apple blossom, is the world's oldest most complete flower, complete with its petals, stamens, pollen, fruits and seeds. While pieces of older and equally ancient flowers have been found elsewhere in the world, none have been found so perfectly intact. Large numbers of fossil specimens of this blossom have been found at the Rose Creek site along with fossil specimens of many other plants resembling magnolias, laurels and sycamores.

These flowers have come from that period when plants were first evolving, a period when perhaps plants and animals were both evolving a cooperative way of living that would allow each to flourish. It was within that period of transition between the time when seed-bearing evergreen conifers or palm-like cycads dominated the earth some 125 million years ago and that of the flowering plants which dominate today.

Dr. Eiseley considered all of this in his essay, "How Flowers Changed the World" from *The Immense Journey*. Displayed with the Rose Creek flower, a fossil the likes of which Dr. Eiseley could never have had the chance to see, are a pair of lines taken from this essay:

. . . the true flower -- and the seed it produced -- was a profound innovation in the world of life.

Dr. Eiseley tells us in his essay, "Flowers changed the face of the planet. Without them, the world we know -- even man himself -- would not have existed. . . It was the rise of flowering plants that provided the energy and changed the nature of the living world. Their appearance parallels in quite surprising manner the rise of the birds and mammals." Thus Dr. Eiseley speculated on the changes in plant life, as when in the early Cretaceous period the plant world shifted suddenly, in evolutionary terms, to become one dominated by flowering plants. He recognizes the great mystery that remains as to how this could have happened, but goes on to consider the implications this had for warm-blooded animal

life needing foods to fuel their high rates of metabolism. The one's need for means of pollination and seed dispersal linked to the other's need for high energy food led on to the unique forms of specialization which the various species of each would adopt in the great onward course of evolutionary development. Dr. Eiseley closes his essay:

Without the gift of flowers and the infinite diversity of their fruits, man and bird, if they had continued to exist at all, would be today unrecognizable. *Archaeopteryx*, the lizard bird, might still be snapping at beetles on a sequoia limb; man might still be a nocturnal insectivore gnawing a roach in the dark. The weight of a petal has changed the face of the world and made it ours.

Morrie Tuttle

DUES REMINDER

Dues are now being received and appreciated. Remember, if you paid after September 1, 1995 you are considered paid up for all of 1996.

The dues structure is as follows:

Individual member - \$10.00
Contributing member - \$25.00
Supporting member - \$50.00
Patron - \$100.00

Send checks to: Friends of Loren Eiseley
P.O. Box 80934
Lincoln, NE 68501-0934

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