

# MAPS Digest



Volume 3 Number 6

February, 1980

Official Publication of the  
Mid-America Paleontology Society

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings to MAPS members all over the earth.

Our official membership count on our 2nd anniversary was 216 and dues are still coming in. Madelynne is starting to compile the list of names with nodule sketches and this will be ready by Expo II time. If there is any status change (e.g.--different address, etc. ed. note special fossil interest) from your original, please notify her.

Expo II's plans are being finalized and reservations are starting to pour in to the DeRosears. Let me (Don Good) know if you'd like a set of the registration material.

The February meeting was real enjoyable. Great strides were made toward the preparation of a slide program. Also, members of various Expo committees had the opportunity of meeting and working on their respective committees. The all day meeting concluded with a delicious pot luck dinner.

My request for live auction material is getting a nice response from our members. Members from Ohio and California have written that they were mailing specimens to Gil to be used in the  
(Continued page )

THE EVOLUTION OF \*\*EXPO II\*\*

this issue is

dedicated to a page of history

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- 1 Mar MAPS Meeting -- Augustana College  
2 p.m. Slide program LaBrea Tar Pits. Courtesy Dick Johannesen
- 22 - 23 NATIONAL FOSSIL EXPO II  
Mar Western Illinois University  
Macomb, IL
- 12 - 13 Cedar Rapids Show/Swap  
Apr Cedar Rapids, IA
- 7 - 8 Old Capitol Show/Swap  
June Iowa City, IA
- 6 - 8 Rocky Mountain Show  
June Topeka, KS
- 12 - 15 National Midwest Show  
June Lincoln, NE
- 4-5-6 MAPS July Meeting -- Field Trip  
July Carthage, IL
- 2 - 3 Bedford Swap  
Aug Bedford, IN
- 2 Aug MAPS Meeting -- 11 a.m. Bedford

## MAPS MINUTES -- FEBRUARY

The regular meeting of MAPS was called to order at 2 p.m., Saturday, February 2, 1980, in Aledo, IL, home of Don and JoAnn Good.

The Secretary was not present so no minutes were read.

Alberta Cray submitted the Treasurers report--balance \$290.83.

A note from Harrell Strimple was read and a \$10 donation graciously accepted.

A note from Jean Valey, Lockport, IL was read received from her a check for \$15 in lieu of a specimen for the auction. Thank you Jean.

It was decided to hold the August meeting at the Bedford, IN Swap. Meeting to be held other than during Bedford program. (Ed. note, see Mark Your Calendars.)

The morning of February 2 had been spent in a workshop putting together a 35MM film for the June National Show. Allyn Adams was appointed chairman to continue organizing the film and photography. Dick Johannesen assisting. Bob Kenyon in charge of art.

Jim Frink will be asked to photograph MAPS March Expo II, prints to be used at the National in June.

Louis and Lois Rabe, Port Byron, IL to assist in areas of photography and planning where needed.

March meeting program LaBrea Tar Pits narrated and filmed by Dick Johannesen while visiting the Tar Pits in October, 1978. 10 a.m. meeting of slide committee possible; 1 p.m. Executive Board meeting; 2 p.m. membership meeting.

"The Animals of the Burgess Shale", a reprint from Scientific American, was distributed by Alberta Cray.

Meeting adjourned for a pot luck.

Respectfully submitted  
Jerry Norris  
Secretary Pro Tem

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT, Continued

auction. One member from Lockport mailed us a \$15 check in lieu of sending fossils I'm greatly encouraged and know everyone will want to do his part.

If you want somewhere to go during the 4th of July, we'll have a 3 day field trip near Carthage, IL (near the IA, IL and MO tri-state border). We'll be collecting from 2 Pennsylvanian ages (plants) and 2 Mississippian ages (crinoid heads and other sea life). The campground and motel list will be given in a later news letter. Also, bring material to show (braggin material) and swap.

Don Good

## NATIONAL MIDWEST SHOW -- HERE WE COME

A meeting at Don Good's home, February 2 resulted in an excellent start for the slide program we expect to have ready for the American and Midwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies Show at Lincoln, NE in June. The program, titled "The Story Fossils Tell", is designed to show basically what fossils are, what they are composed of, slides of the more common fossils, the time zone they flourished in and where they are found.

Many trays of slides were reviewed and out of them came the nucleus of the program. However, we still need more slides especially those of field trips with views of the terrain and closeups of fossils as found at the sites. Anyone wishing to help can bring their slides to a MAPS meeting, leave them at the information booth at the National Fossil Expo, or mail them to me Allyn Adams, 612 West 51 St., Davenport, IA 52806. Duplicate slides will be made and the originals returned to you.

Allyn Adams  
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By Devonian time coiled ammonoids had evolved from a nautiloid stock. They were to become the dominant invertebrate group of the Mesozoic Era....It is felt by most authorities that they were dominantly swimmers and floaters, which made them ideal index fossils.

EVOLUTION OF THE EARTH  
Robert H. Dott, Jr.  
Roger L. Batten

Harrell Strimple  
Research Investigator and Curator  
Geology Department  
University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

Submitted by: Alberta Cray, 1125 J Avenue, NW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

As Harrell approaches his retirement, I felt it would be a nice tribute to him to have an article in our bulletin. I hope, too, that this will introduce you to a man who has made great strides in the professional world of paleontology, and has been a source of encouragement to the amateur as well.

Best of all, Harrell Strimple will be our Banquet speaker at Expo II, at Macomb, IL March 22, 1980.

As I visited with Mr. Strimple, I was reminded time and again of the quote, "You can be, or do, anything with your life that you choose to do." The tremendous works that Harrell Strimple has accomplished, the number of papers he has written the graduate students he has influenced in the course of their studies, and all with a minimum of academic training in his profession, certainly bears out the above quote.

His life is a cause for reflection by many of us!!

Harrell was born in Yates Center, Kansas, January 7, 1912. As Harrell was growing, the family moved about from state to state many times. So many times that Harrell spent very little time at any one school, often having a favorite subject, or study, interrupted by a move. Upon arriving at the next school, he sometimes found a particular subject was not offered, or he found he was at a different level. In one instance, to finish Chemistry, he had to stay after school for a semester to make up work. Just as it was nearly completed, imagine the frustration of having to move again. Also, adding to his frustrations was the fact that he never really had a good school chum due to his short stay.

At one point, when Harrell was a young boy, they moved from Texas to Wyoming. Harrell, of course, had seen sea shells in Texas. When hiking in the hills of Wyoming he found some similar 'sea shells.' His curiosity was whetted. There was no ocean anywhere around. How could there be sea shells here? he reasoned.

He signed up for a Geology class; however, that was soon interrupted, not to be taken up again for sometime, as it was not offered at the next school.

Harrell was graduated from Tulsa Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1928.

In 1933, Harrell went to work as an accountant for Phillips Petroleum Company where he stayed until 1959. While at Phillips, in 1935, Harrell took one semester of Invertebrate Paleontology and Stratigraphy in night school.

Shortly after that, a friend asked him if he had ever found, or could find some Pennsylvanian crinoids in the area. Harrell went hunting. Sure enough, he found some crinoids. His friend was very excited as he had never seen this species before. One species was described by the late Edwin Kirk as Allagecrinus Strimplei.

Harrell was anxious for the other crinoids to be written up but his friends urged Harrell to do the study on them. In 1938 he published his first paper. His career in Paleontology, at least in the area of scientific papers, was launched. He was still employed as an accountant when he did two more papers in 1939, three in 1940, etc. adding up to 36 papers in the decade of the 40s.

All totalled Harrell says he has authored and co-authored about 280 papers, articles, etc. Six of these are major works: one of the most significant being that he was a major author of Part T Echinodermata 2 (Crinoidae) of the Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology. He also stated that there are seven more papers with editors, at this time, two of which are considered major works.

Nearly all of his research and papers have dealt with the echinoderms of the Paleozoic and the crinoids of the Carboniferous Age. "Geographically the research has spread to far away places: a tin mine on Belitung Island, Indonesia; Ellesmere Island in the Arctic; Lake Titacaca in Bolivia." His personal collecting has been much closer to home. His countenance, as he relates tales of some of the collecting spots, reveals the marvelous times he has had.

"In the course of time I have proposed or co-proposed 4 new subspecies, 537 new species, 1 new subgenus, 105 new genera, 6 new subfamilies, 32 new families, and 17 new superfamilies of echinoderms." Harrell stated.

He explains, "Most of my research work has been taxonomic (identification and description of species), phylogenetic (working out natural lineages), morphologic (functional structure) and stratigraphic (dealing with age and position of strata in which material is found).

In addition to his duties as Research Investigator and Curator, Harrell works with graduate students who are involved in dissertations on echinoderms and related areas.

Though he will officially retire June 30, 1980, he will still have a small office in the Geology Department. He still has one Ph.D. candidate with whom he will be working.

Harrell does not really expect to retire--just slow down a bit, he says.

Harrell was a Curator for Geological Enterprises 1960-61, and a Consulting Paleontologist 1959-62. He came to the University of Iowa in 1962 as a Research Investigator and Curator, where he has remained till the present.

Harrell served his country in the U. S. Signal Corps from 1942 to 1945.

Harrell has a list of credits a mile long. It would boggle the minds of most of us.

Yes, it is true, you can do anything with your life that you really want to. Harrell has come a long, long way.

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While most of Harrell's writings are of a scientific nature, he also made several contributions to the Earth Science magazine. As Earth Science is available to most of us, you may want to look these up: Sept.-Oct., 1969, "Invertebrate Fossil Type Specimens," Sept.-Oct., 1971, "Pennsylvanian Crinoids" by H. L. Strimple and Cecelia Duluk; Mar.-April, 1979, "A Cinderella Fossil," May-June, 1975, "The Fascination of Crinoids," Jan.-Feb., 1977, "Discovery of a Middle Devonian Edrioasteroid Colony." While you are looking up these back issues, you may also want to pick out July-Aug., 1968, for the article entitled, "Christina Cleburn." Christina became Harrell's wife a bit later.

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**DON'T MISS HISTORY**

It's almost countdown!! Are you ready? Swapping material labeled and packed? Display specimens labeled and ready for that spruced up case? Auction specimens tucked in? Bag ready to be packed, belts laid out for all your clothes? Then, pack your bag, car or camper and head for Macomb, IL and NATIONAL EXPO II.

There will be an air of festivity. We have members in 26 states now. Let's see how many will be represented. Tanner Hall is spacious and light. A circular main floor will house fossil-lover private, choice specimens in lighted, imaginative displays. It will be a difficult decision to make: do I go to the permanent displays on first floor or up the wide open stairway to the circular floor above where table after table of swapping/selling material await? Everywhere one looks is another breath taking fossil--remnant of another age, mute testimony to life on earth thousands and millions of years ago.

There's an excitement and an awe for two days. Gathered here are not only the incredible rocks of bygone eras but the people, like yourself, all of whom have this appetite, this compulsion, this curiosity, this energy to discover these incredible remains scattered like Easter eggs all over the Universe. The people are as interesting and as fascinating as the rocks they collect. For two days it's almost a Utopian Society. You'll meet the personality to go with the name you've been writing to, the name who found the specimen you love so much. You'll meet the officers who are able to keep a club together composed of people sprinkled from Japan, to California, to Maryland, to England, to India and many stops in between.

There's no way to define why? or for what reasons we gather. When we leave again to go back to quarries, or road cuts, or sea shores to crack rock, climb steep cliffs, or with chisel or air dent we remove a beautiful specimen we will go having made new friends, having learned a little more about this fascinating hobby and we'll, no doubt, all be able to pick up a piece of rock, hold it in our hands, smile and remember an exciting 2 days with friends.

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**... and HERE'S A PIECE OF THE ROCK**

Apparently about 225 million years ago, there was only a single land mass or supercontinent, called Pangaea after the Greek earth goddess.

About 180 million years ago, Pangaea began to break up, initially forming a long, thin, east-west trending basin, like the Red Sea or the Gulf of California. Two subcontinents, designated Laurasia and Gondwana, were separated by this Sea of Tethys. Then Antarctica and Australia moved southward, perhaps connected to each other for a while. Around a hundred million years ago North America followed by South America was split off by the development of a north-south ridge system under Laurasia, then Gondwana. The Americas moved westward as the Atlantic Ocean opened between them and the remaining continental mass; this process is still happening. Finally India separated from Africa, and moved rapidly northward to collide with Southern Asia. This collision caused India to move under part of Asia, buckling the land above and creating the Himalayas, the world's highest mountains. Today the Pacific Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea are closing, the Atlantic and the Red Sea are becoming wider and Africa, underlain by a developing rise system, is apparently going to break into two parts.

OCEANOGRAPHY  
M. Grant Cross

## THE FOLKLORE OF FOSSILS

by

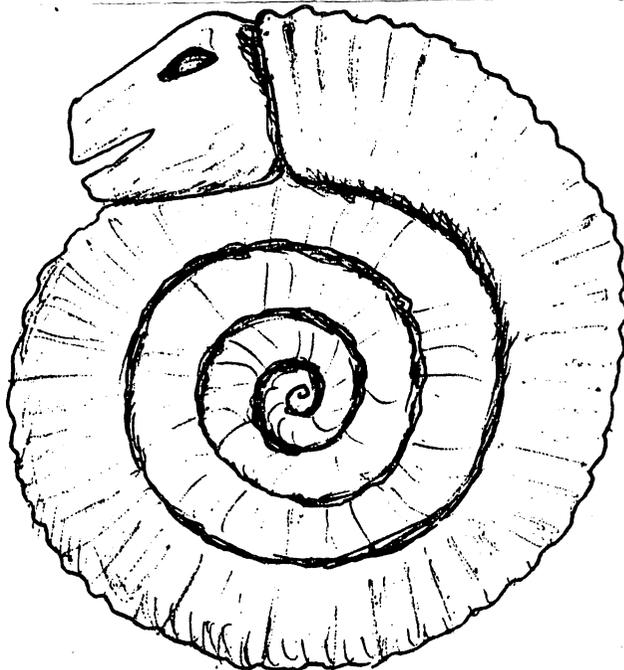
Ken Machin

16 Raven Crescent

Westcott Buckinghamshire, ENGLAND

Man's awareness of fossils must go back at least 500,000 years, to the beginning of the palaeolithic period. His extensive use of flint for tools and weapons would ensure that this was so, at least as far as Cretaceous fossils are concerned. Also, the occurrence of surface finds, of weathered out fossils, must have been far greater than it is today. Indeed, finds of fossils in an archaeological context, prove that primitive man collected and made use of them. What interpretation he put upon them we shall probably never know. The fact that some have been found at prehistoric burial sites, suggests a religious or ritualistic significance, but fossils found pierced for stringing in necklaces are often mixed indiscriminately with recent natural objects, which may suggest that he saw no significant difference between them.

As far as we can tell it was not until the time of the ancient Greeks, that scholars began to suspect the true nature of fossils. Then there is a long gap, until the early part of the 19th century when the science of palaeontology as we know it today, began to emerge. However, in the intervening period a few gifted scholars sought to place fossils in their correct context. It is in this intervening period that most, if not all, of the folklore and folknames of fossils arose. In the British Isles some of the oldest myths and legends would appear to originate from Saxon times, when Christianity was first introduced, with the subsequent attempts to suppress the older pagan religions.

Ram's Horns, Snakestones and Conger Eels

Dactyoceras  
with carved serpent's head

The serpent has found a place in many religions, so it is perhaps inevitable that in times past, the ammonite was seen as a coiled serpent and that the legends attached to it have been of a religious nature. Ammonites figure early in man's prehistory. In a Palaeolithic (Solutrean) site at Forneau du Diable in France, three *Aspidoceras lissoceratoides* were found, which had been pierced for use as pendants or for the inclusion in necklaces. During the Mesolithic period, rock-paintings include forms with a similar appearance to that of ammonites and these continue up until Celtic times. In fact, snake, ammonite and other spiral forms in prehistoric art are extremely difficult to tell apart. The ammonite was known in ancient Greece. The Greeks saw in it a resemblance to the horns of a ram, a sacred symbol of the God Jupiter Ammon and were therefore known as Cornu Ammonis (horns of Ammon) from which comes the name Ram's Horns.

In 17th century Britain, Dr. Robert Plot (1640-1696), First Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford was the author of two large, illustrated works. The Natural History of Oxfordshire (1677) and The Natural History of Staffordshire (1686). In his books he includes chapters on 'formed stones', many of which can now be identified as fossils. He describes Cornu Ammonis from Oxfordshire as being, 'all so curled up

within themselves, that the place of the head is always in the circumference and the tail in the centre of the stone'. This belief that ammonites possessed both heads and tails, (although never found preserved), coupled with the snake-like form, led to them being generally known as snakestones.

Whitby in Yorkshire and Keynsham in Somerset are the focal points of ammonite lore in England. William Camden (1551-1623) in his work Britannia (1586) records stones from the Whitby area which, 'if you break them you find within stony serpent, wreathed up in circles, but generally without heads'. Legend has it that serpents were common in the area until the 7th century A.D. At this time the Saxon abbess St. Hilda wishing to clear a site for a new convent, turned all of the snakes to stone. The heads were assumed to have been destroyed at the same time. Two of the commonest ammonites from the Jurassic, Upper Lias of the Whitby area are Dactyloceras and Hildoceras, the latter names in recognition of the legend of St. Hilda. The legend is also recalled in English literature such as in this passage from a poem by Surtees:

'Then sole amid the Serpent tribe  
The holy Abbess stood  
With fervent faith and uplift hands  
Grasping the holy rood  
The suppliant's prayer and powerful charm  
Th' unnumbered reptiles own,  
Each falling from the cliff, becomes  
A headless coil of stone'.

Sir Walter Scott also commemorates the legend in Marmion:

'Of thousand snakes each one  
Was changed into a coil of stone  
When holy Hilda pray's.'

The absence of heads is sometimes attributed to the further curse of another local saint St. Cuthbert.

In more recent times, local dealers and collectors, not to be outdone by St. Hilda, have frequently with a prayer and a skillful hand, restored the heads of the serpents and they then offer the completed reptiles for sale to tourists. Whitby ammonites are often preserved in jet, a substance which can be carved and polished to make beautiful ornaments and jewelry. This was much sought after, particularly in Victorian times, but snakestone brooches are known to have been highly prized as far back as the times of Queen Elizabeth I. By the 17th century, snakestones were recognised as an emblem of the town of Whitby and Tradesman' tokens as early as 1667 bear a device of three snakestones. In 1935 when Armorial Bearings were officially granted to the town, a similar device was incorporated in the Coat of Arms.

The Keynsham legend is basically the same as that of Whitby, but in this case it is attributed to St. Keyna for whom the town was named.

(continued MAPS Digest , March issue)

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There is something fascinating about science. One gets such whole-sale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.

Mark Twain  
LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

The Mid-America Paleontology Society (MAPS) was formed to promote popular interest in the subject of paleontology, to encourage the proper collecting, study, preparation, and display of fossil materials; and to assist other individuals, groups, and institutions interested in the various aspects of paleontology. It is a non-profit society incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa.

MAPS is affiliated with the Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies, and with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Membership in MAPS is open to anyone, anywhere who is sincerely interested in fossils and the aims of the Society.

Family membership \$6.00; individual membership \$5.00; junior membership \$3.00 (between ages 8 and 16); dealer membership (non voting) \$20.00.

MAPS meetings are held on the 1st Saturday of each month (2nd Saturday if inclement weather) October thru May at 2 PM in the Science Building Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

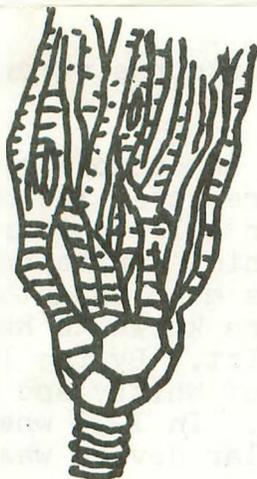
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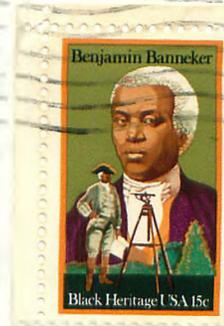


## CYATHOCRINITES

MID-AMERICA PALEONTOLOGY SOCIETY

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Dated material - Meeting notice



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