

STAFFORD CITY LIBRARY
PLEASE RETURN

2nd ISSUE/1983

KANSAS!

Published quarterly by the Kansas Department of Economic Development, the official agency responsible for promoting and recording the economy of the state.

CONTENTS

- 4 **A Gusty Sport**
Windsurfing is gaining popularity across the state.
- 6 **Chariots of Trego County (1)**
Harness racing is a part of the fun.
- 8 **Full-time Fossil Finder (2)**
Marion Bonner hunts fossils regularly near Healy.
- 10 **Climax of Color (3)**
Willard Sainer initiated this garden lover's delight.
- 12 **Hoofing it to Dodge (4)**
Boot Hill Museum's cattle drive to Dodge City is held in June.
- 15 **Shutter Color**
- 18 **Lived in Originals (5)**
Chanute is filled with elegant, historic houses.
- 20 **Resort to Lake Perry (6)**
This scenic paradise offers water sports, theater and more.
- 22 **Wordly by Design (7)**
Maupintour of Lawrence is known round the world.
- 24 **Neighbors on Parade (8)**
The 4th of July is for everyone at Collins Park in Topeka.
- 26 **Images of Aging (7)**
Older Kansans share their lives through art and prose.
- 28 **Art is Her Business (9)**
Lindsborg's Maleta Forsberg loves to paint her surroundings.
- 30 **Prairie Potpourri**

COVER: L. A. Utley photographed this mare and foal in the Flint Hills near his Emporia home.

Andrea Glenn, Editor
Galen D. Senogles, Art and Design
Jean Cook, Subscriptions Coordinator

John Carlin, Governor
Charles J. Schwartz, Secretary of KDED
Cathy L. Kruzic, Director of Travel and Tourism

KANSAS!
(ISSN 0022-8435)

Newsstand price per issue \$1.50; Subscription price \$4.00 per year. Kansas Department of Economic Development, 503 Kansas Avenue, 6th Floor, Topeka, Kansas, 66603, (913) 296-3479. Second class postage paid at Topeka, Kansas. POSTMASTER, Send address change to KANSAS! Magazine, KDED, 503 Kansas Avenue, 6th Floor, Topeka, KS 66603.

JUN 30 '83

From the E

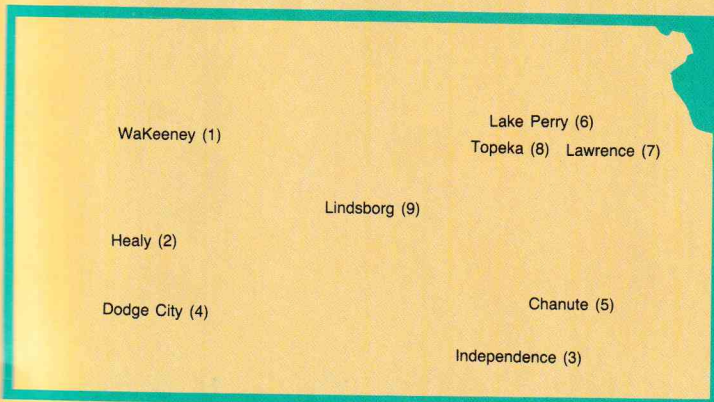
Dick Herpic opposite page have taken the seat of representatives a but it is a variety artworks an state employ remind myself take a peel

The overwhelming, intricately-painted rotunda, the John Stuart Curry and Lumen Winter murals which so accurately depict Kansas history and the new Pete Felton statues of four of our more famous citizens are guaranteed to make Kansans swell with pride. I feel fortunate to live and work so close to this building which has been the symbol of Kansas' state government since it was first occupied in 1869.

How about a trip to our State Capitol sometime soon? For those interested but unable to make the trip, more information about the building is available through our office at the address listed on this page.

Enjoy an exciting Kansas summer.

Andrea

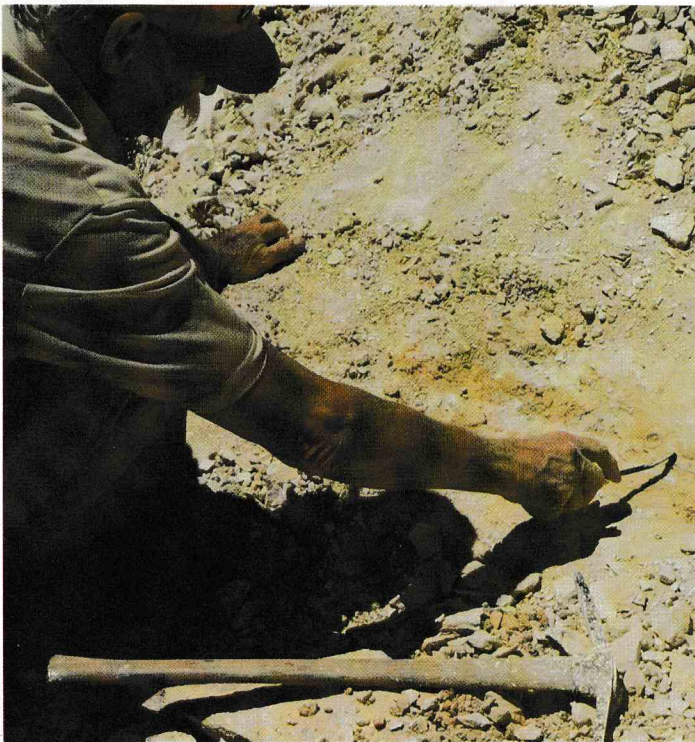


Completed in 1903, the Kansas State Capitol in Topeka is surrounded by park-like grounds featuring a variety of flowers, trees and shrubs. Photograph by Dick Herpic.

FULL-TIME FOSSIL FINDER

Story and photography by Kathy Hanks





Fossils found by Bonner and his family are in museums across the country.

FOR 72-year-old Marion Bonner of Healy a day spent hunting and collecting fossils in the Niobrara chalk beds of western Kansas begins early, well before the sun has risen. The tools of his trade, including a rock hammer, a Marsh pick and several shovels, are packed into his 1968 Oldsmobile. He also has packed neatly the gliptal, paper towels, burlap and plaster for collecting what he hopes to find.

He heads toward Scott County Park, then north into Logan County. His favorite spot to hunt fossils is the "Big Place," named by his eight children who spent much of their childhood collecting fossils there.

It is a large expanse of outcroppings that almost sneaks up on its visitors. The early morning sun shines on the beautiful world of palisades, canyons and spirals in the most majestic of colors.

It has been 56 years since Bonner first came to these fossil beds. "Our science teacher took us out to hunt in his Model T Ford. The first thing I found was a dinosaur, I thought, but it was only some vertebrae of a fish," Bonner says.

The anxious, young boy soon learned that dinosaurs were not common in western Kansas, once covered by a great inland sea which stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to Alaska. Marine fish including giant swimming reptiles, were more prevalent in the area.

During the 1920's he once spent three weeks out in the beds with some classmates. "It was a different place then, there were very few fences and the fossils were pretty much untouched. There were fish lying everywhere. Then in the 30's the dust blew and covered it up," Bonner says.

His interest grew into a passion over the years, especially as he became more knowledgeable with collecting complete specimens.

In a 1928 fossil hunt he met the late George Sternberg, already well known for his discoveries including the famous fish within a fish. The seasoned hunter taught Bonner many things including how to collect with burlap and plaster.

On this particular morning at the "Big Place," Bonner anxiously heads for a cretaceous teleost fish or boney fish he

found a few days before and didn't have time to collect.

He spots the site where he has covered the fossil with a small pile of rocks. "It's a beautiful day!," Bonner exclaims over and over again as he inhales the fresh morning air.

From the bluff, Bonner is surrounded by the outcroppings that lean different ways and are eroding from 90 million years of exposure to the elements. The saourdock is in bloom and the chalk lilies erupt through the cracked dry earth. The smell of chalk permeates the air as Bonner begins hacking away at the rock surrounding the fish.

As he begins to uncover the tail of the fish, delicately brushing it with an old paint brush used just for that purpose, he begins reciting the poem, "The Shooting of Dan Magrew." Barely stopping to catch his breath he gets back to the fossil at hand.

His brushing has uncovered another fish on top of the first. "It looks as if a fleet of them died here," he chuckles.

As Bonner works intently, it is very apparent he is a man in love with his work. With precision, slowly, yet accurately, he works around the fossil.

The excitement to Bonner comes in knowing that just underneath an overburden might be found something new to science. The passion for finding fossils has had its rewards over the years. There are now several fossils named after the Bonner family, including Pecten Bonneri, Pteranodon Bonneri and Niobrarateuthis Bonneri.

He claims his best find so far has been a complete plesiosaur which is the best of the short neck variety in the world, according to Bonner.

"We were hunting north of Russell Springs. I knew I was on to something big when I found the paddle. It was a very exciting time for me," he says.

Bonner donated the plesiosaur to the Sternberg Memorial Museum in Hays, where it is on display today.

Fossils found by Bonner and his family are in museums throughout the country including the American Museum of Natural History, New York City; the Field Museum, Chicago, and the largest collection is on the Bonner Wall at the Los Angeles County Museum.

Bonner stops for lunch, picnicking in the shade of the car. Lunch on the fossil hunt is brief. There are no afternoon siestas in the shade.

As Bonner peels a hard-boiled egg, he recounts his life. He recalls lonely times but emphatically states he is never alone when out hunting fossils. It is a time when he feels whole and complete.

He explains that hunting fossils is a lost art, something that takes time and patience. He hunts year round except when the ground is frozen in the winter. His favorite time to hunt is early morning; especially in the spring and fall.

"On a mid-summer day you earn what you find," he says. "Generally the heat will be 100-115 in the shade. But there is no shade."

Back at the specimen he picks and hacks away removing the overburden even more. As he works he stops often to contemplate life, the state of the nation and then explains that the fish is going to have nice scales.

Bonner announces proudly, "I'm really enthused, this is going to be a dandy." He is delighted and rewarded for his patience. Out of the clear blue he begins reciting the lines from another poem. As his eyes are cast off into the distant scenery, he begins in a deep affected accent for all to hear—

"Oh earth what changes have you seen.

Here where the long street rolls, has

been the stillness of a central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they pass.

They melt like mist, the solid lands, like clouds,
they shape themselves and go"

author unknown

Bonner's favorite spot to hunt fossils is the "Big Place," a large expanse of outcroppings in Logan County.