

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

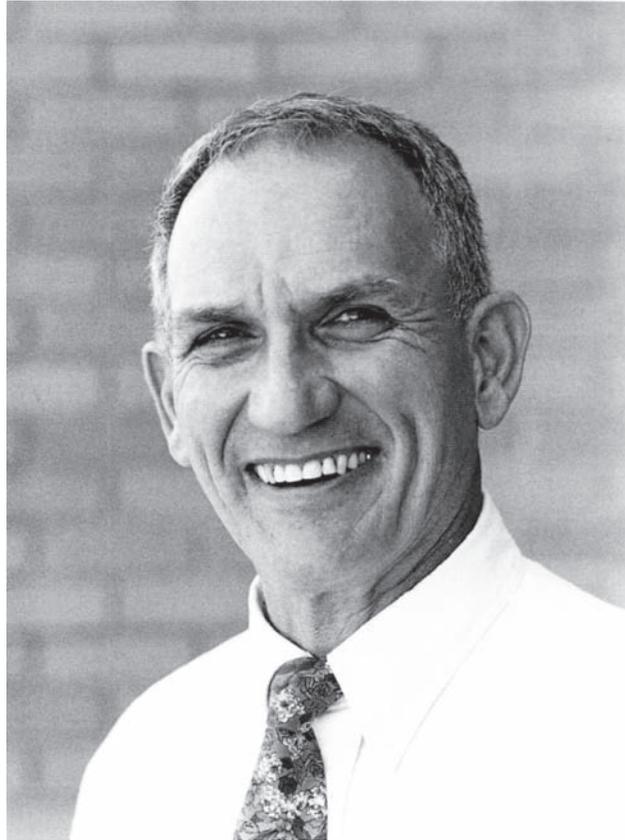
The American Association of Stratigraphic Palynologists

bestows upon

VAUGHN M. BRYANT, JR.

its Distinguished Service Award

in recognition of his dedicated service to the Association by providing leadership in various offices and committees as well as his outstanding contributions to furthering the science of palynology by bringing it to the attention of the non-palynological public through both the popular press and the video media



VAUGHN M. BRYANT, JR.

PRESENTATION BY KENNETH M. PIEL

Had I been asked to sketch a profile of the ideal candidate for the AASP Distinguished Service Award, I could have selected a no more appropriate model than the man we honor today. The professional career of Vaughn M. Bryant, Jr. has most capably addressed most of the objectives of AASP: *to promote the science of palynology; to foster the spirit of scientific research among its members and others engaged in this field of science; to discover and gather*

information and data on the subject; to disseminate that information and data to its members and the public alike; and to educate its members and the public in general in this area of science. Indeed, those phrases constitute a ringing echo of Vaughn's AASP service.

Vaughn joined AASP in 1968, in its first year of existence, and his first AASP contribution was a co-authored paper presented at the 1971 AASP Annual

Meeting in Tucson. His 1975 suggestion that AASP begin its own journal, rather than continue using *Geoscience and Man*, presaged an intense involvement in the Association's activities which has continued unabated for 24 years. His clear and persuasive reiteration of the advantages of having our own journal convinced the Board of Directors Meeting in 1976 to launch AASP's own journal—titled simply *Palynology*. Vaughn was Co-Editor of the first issue of *Palynology*, assumed sole editorship the next year, and in 1979 was elected the first Managing Editor of AASP's then burgeoning series of publications—a position he held for 4 years.

Vaughn was elected President-elect of AASP for 1983–1984, and served as its President for 1984–1985. Since 1990 he has held the position of Trustee and Secretary of the AASP Foundation, and he was the AASP Representative to the International Federation of Palynological Societies from 1992–1996. Vaughn has been the General Chairman for two AASP Annual Meetings; and prepared the initial bid document for, and was Co-Chair of, the 9th International Palynological Congress. And, incidentally, along the way he found time to chair the Logo Selection Committee, the Nominations Committee, the Ballot Committee (twice), and the Public Relations Committee (for 4 years).

Those whose tenure on the Board overlapped Vaughn's were witness to his boundless energy, and the eagerness and willingness with which he undertook any responsibility, no matter the number of tasks to which he might already have been committed. Vaughn was one of two AASP representatives on the Search Selection Committee for the first Director of the AASP Center for Excellence in Palynology (*CENEX*) at Louisiana State University, and subsequently served as one of three members of an AASP Liaison Team which smoothed the Center's establishment.

He has been the quintessential volunteer, and the depth of his commitment was never more evident than in his efforts

on behalf of the 9th IPC. In the two months prior to that meeting, in addition to his teaching load, chairmanship of the Anthropology Department, his Congress responsibilities and overseeing the construction of his and his wife's dream home, he dealt with both a severe family illness and an injury he suffered in a serious laboratory accident. Despite all of this his dedication never wavered, his work on the Congress continued unimpeded, and its success reflects the inestimable value of his leadership and management skills.

Alongside this array of leadership accomplishments stands an equally impressive list of technical achievements. Among these are: 5 symposia organized and chaired at AASP Annual Meetings; 7 books; 44 book chapters, invited articles and short articles; 35 refereed journal articles; 13 technical reports; 13 articles published in magazines and newsletters; 1 web site publication; and 14 papers presented at AASP Annual Meetings. And Vaughn has given 6 interviews or video presentations on major television networks, including CNN Science News, Fox News, PBS and NBC's *Today* show.

Not only have Vaughn's written and oral presentations been noteworthy for their clarity and erudition, but his work has attracted the attention of both the popular press and the video media, and he has used these avenues to promote palynology before the non-palynological public. Major contributors to his success in these endeavors include an infectious personal charm, a relaxed manner, and the ability to write in a fashion which appeals to the audience of the moment.

In 1993 Vaughn's technical presentation won the Unocal Best Applications Paper Award, an unusual and signal achievement for a non-stratigraphic paper.

Vaughn the Association herewith publicly acknowledges your rich history of leadership and technical excellence, and expresses its deepest and sincerest appreciation in the tangible form of its 11th Distinguished Service Award.

RESPONSE BY VAUGHN M. BRYANT, JR.

I would like to thank Ken Piel, members of the AASP Awards Committee, and the AASP Board of Directors for bestowing this great honor upon me.

In 1968, Al Traverse was teaching at The University of Texas in Austin and convinced me to join the newly formed pollen society. In fact, even the name of the society was not yet determined. Also, at that early date one could not join AASP without a recommendation from two AASP mem-

bers in good standing. I remember that I was a bit concerned, as were some of the founding members of AASP wondering if there was really a place in the society for palynologists working with post-Tertiary deposits.

Within a few years I discovered that I suffer from a genetic defect that prevents me from saying NO when asked to help. In 1975, I remember recommending that AASP begin its own journal. Rick Pierce, the editor at that

time, was not overly excited about the work and task of switching from GEOSCIENCES AND MAN to a new journal done entirely by AASP. Nevertheless, Rick and the AASP Board agreed and within a year we had produced the first volume of our current journal PALYNOLOGY. Thus began my journey of volunteerism within AASP.

I am certainly not alone. There are many others in AASP who suffer from the same inability to say NO when help is needed. Over the years the reason AASP has been so successful and has remained one of the best values for your annual dues is because of all those who have devoted thousands of hours of time to the benefit of our AASP society. My secretaries, graduate students, and even the dean of my college often ask, "when is your term of office in AASP over?" I usually smile and reply, "I was appointed for life."

During my 31 years in AASP I have had the good fortune of seeing AASP grow from only a few founding members to over 1,000 during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Unfortunately, more recent figures show that our membership is slowly waning as industry cuts back their emphasis on pollen research and as some of our members retire.

Like many of you, I worry about what may happen to the discipline of palynology and to AASP in the years to come. Both have been a big part of my life for more than three decades. What I want most is to find a way to help the younger generation enjoy the same benefits that I have been privileged to enjoy. Perhaps volunteerism is one way.

What I don't want to happen is for some future archaeologist to uncover the dusty remains of a once thriving discipline and then record in the history books that this now extinct group should be named *Extinctasaurus palynomorphous*.

MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

The American Association of Stratigraphic Palynologists
bestows upon

AUREAL THEOPHILUS CROSS

its Medal of Excellence in Education

in recognition of his years of dedicated service as an internationally recognized teacher and educator,
not only to his own students, but to palynologists and paleobotanists throughout the world



AUREAL THEOPHILUS CROSS

PRESENTATION BY LEONARD E. EAMES

Good afternoon, AASP members and guests, it's an honor and privilege to be here at our 1999 annual meeting to present our first AASP Medal of Excellence in Education. I am sorry my friend, colleague, and co-nominator, Dr. Gordon D. Wood could not be here today for us to jointly recognize and make the presentation to Dr. Aural T. Cross. In Gordon's absence I will relate some of my personal experiences that I and many of Dr. Cross' other students have experienced under his tutelage.

I remember in great detail my first meeting with Aural after being accepted to his graduate program at Michigan State University. At this meeting, Dr. Cross outlined his expectations of what would be required of course work and other student efforts to meet his and the university's requirements.

After an in-depth discussion of what was expected, my first reaction was: "What am I getting myself into with this program? How long will it take to complete? And, does this man ever slow down?" But in continuing our interview I had a feeling that if I, as a potential student of Dr. Cross', could commit to the criteria for the program, Dr. Cross would make a similar commitment to me. I found this very much to be the case. Once I had entered the program, Dr. Cross' support and encouragement were there for me through my tenure as his student. He made a similar commitment to his other students.

Aural's students quickly learned that the scope of his program included much more than formal class requirements. Some of the diverse learning experiences included conversations with him late at night while working in his

laboratory. It was not unusual for Aureal to open a dusty box or pull out a drawer with its labeled specimens and call over any of his students to hear an impromptu lecture on who had been with him to collect the materials, the weather that day, the locality, and other facts about the megafossils and the colleague who helped him carry out the “tonnage.”

His reference files and collections were extensive. In fact, his retired father-in-law came to the lab frequently to catalog and curate those references and collections. Dr. Cross truly loved to share his past experiences with his students. In fact, there was a sign over his microscope at the lab, “At 2 a.m. in the morning, who’s watching the spores and pollen?”

The field trips were legendary in their own right. We students met at his house to prepare for the upcoming trip. These meetings always included all of his students and their spouses or friends. The evenings would start with a sit-down meal prepared by his tireless wife and companion, Aleen. After everyone was fed, we always viewed a slide show of various subjects related to our trip. The multiple slides were varied and included fossils, rocks, plants,

scenery, and anything else we might encounter on the trip. The trip preparations included packing all of the equipment, meals, supplies, and references that we might need. The references included everything from A to Z (beginning with astronomy and continuing through zoology).

The trips were those of a Classic Naturalist and, except for the duration and hardships, could certainly be compared to the “Voyage of the Beagle.”

This gives you a glimpse of what one learned and experienced on Aureal’s field trips. He even awakened a group of us camped in Baja at 3 a.m. in the morning to see a comet blazing across the sky. Those of us who did field work with him also quickly realized that his stamina and energy level allowed him to stay ahead of even the most physically fit students.

There are many other experiences I could relate, but I shall leave them for another time. It is with great pleasure that I ask Dr. Aureal T. Cross, my friend, teacher, mentor, advisor, and scientific colleague, to come to the podium to receive the AASP Medal of Excellence in Education.

RESPONSE BY AUREAL T. CROSS

upon receiving the

AASP MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

— with gratitude, some reflections, admonitions, and credits —

This is an amazing event for me — a happy, yet sobering happening that was never included in my plans or expectations for this or any future year. I am emotionally overwhelmed — almost speechless. As I reflect on my sixty years of teaching and research, I have some thoughts on the past and remonstrances for the future to share with all of you. My students would have expected it!

At the annual meeting of the American Association of Stratigraphic palynologists in New York, October, 1986, considerable concern and discussion centered around the viability and future of the science of palynology and its utilization. Because of the economic state of the petroleum industry and, perhaps more importantly, because of the introduction of new technologies, palynology was being decreasingly supported by the major oil companies, the largest users of the science and its practitioners. But this did not mean that the science was dying or was no longer needed. The science was still there!

The ideas that were generated by Muller, Tschudy, Wilson, and Hoffmeister for their respective oil companies, that led to the application of palynology as a useful tool for finding oil, beginning in the mid-forties, were derived from the earlier study of the palynology of peat in the ‘teens of the Twentieth Century, and the palynology of brown coals and

coals of higher rank in the late ‘20s and ‘30s in Europe, Russia, and America. The extrapolation of this technique or tool, by those four pioneers, to resolution of biostratigraphic, paleoecologic, and similar biologic and geologic problems for a broad spectrum of sedimentary rock types, was based on the knowledge of a so-called “pure” science. Basic concepts and data had been slowly accumulating in Europe and America out of the persevering research of such early workers as Potonié, Luber, Waltz, Naumova, Raistrick, Simpson, Knox, Schopf, Wilson, Kosanke, Dijkstra, Muller, Tschudy, Traverse, and Evitt. It was a utilitarian science for selective application to exploration for petroleum. Its time had come!

This science will be rejuvenated or not depending on the vigor of the practitioners and their development of new data, new ideas and new applications. Certainly, at least a few will carry on with uninterrupted fervor. Hunger often makes us lean and keen, sharpens our senses, and stimulates our mental prowess.

There are no bounds for the imagination and drive of youth. Our students and other younger scientists may “rediscover” many things without realizing the repetitive nature of their “discoveries.” But along with such duplication of effort, there is a net move forward in the science, with new clarity of understanding of old problems, and new

directions, occasionally quantum jumps, in fundamental knowledge and technology. The support of the academic environment for education of our youth, adequate to maintain qualified, mentally stimulating, disciplined, and inspiring teachers, is requisite for sustaining the flow of new talent into palynology, coal sciences or any other related professional discipline.

It is in this setting that “budding” scientists, our students, if they are to grow and “bloom”, must be “planted” in the fields of fundamentals of science located in library, classroom, laboratory and field; “injected” with the growth hormones of curiosity, desire, self-discipline, personal integrity, and orderly work habits; “fertilized” with information resource bases in peripheral fields of science, economics, communication skills, and ancillary fundamentals of mathematics, chemistry, physics, statistics, and applied technology; “watered” with good health, social responsibility, support and understanding of family, friends, peers, and faculty; “lighted” with respect, encouragement, compassion and financial sustenance; and “pruned” or “shaped” to develop more perfect flowers of new ideas, scientific writings, and other professional and societal contributions.

In science, serendipitous discoveries are always waiting in the wings of our minds and we must learn to recognize and seize upon unusual ideas and recognize their significance. We must be wise enough to search related, even unrelated fields of science and technology, to attend meetings with scientists in other fields, to read their journals, to bring our concerns to their attention, to bring their insight and ideas to bear on the resolution of our own problems. Let the facts be our base of reference; let the theories fall into line.

This brings me to my final points. Who is to be credited for this gracious happening in my life? How many do I represent in receiving this high honor from my colleagues? On whose shoulders do I stand? What is the lineage or professional genealogical pedigree of each of us and of each of our predecessors in the science?

I owe my start in botany and geology to L.R. Wilson and he to N.C. Fassett, Fred Thwaites, Wm. H. Twenhofel, of Wisconsin, and others. My paleobotany training and the stimulation of research on fossil plants was from J. H. Hoskins, a professional F1 generation of Mottier (Earlham College), Merle Coulter and C.J. Chamberlain in botany and T.C. Chamberlin and Salisbury, geology, from U. of Chicago. Jim Schopf was the real motivator for my expanding from paleobotany and palynology into coal geology and coal petrology. His mentors included John Bucholz and Gilbert H. Cady of Illinois. Walter Bucher and Kenneth Caster (Cincinnati) provided the greatest stimulation for my paleontological interests and application. Harold Wanless (Illinois) generated my interest in stratigraphy and sedimentary processes, especially of coal-bearing rocks and for the importance of interpreting sedimentary features

and lithologic characteristics of rocks to unravel their history, environments of deposition and energy conditions at the sites of accumulation. E. Lucy Braun (Cincinnati: ecology, systematics and taxonomy) in her inimitable way, demonstrated convincingly, that ecological interpretations of living plants and animals and their community relationships could be applied to ancient biocoenoses and in some cases to thanatocoenoses. The list could go on.

I have told the students in nearly all of my classes in geological sciences that there is a story in every rock — something of the time, the life, the space, and the energy of its being. Such information is not always determinable but we must employ our every talent and the knowledge we have gained from our forebears as we study each microfossil, each rock or outcrop, to unravel or determine the bits and pieces of information of the time, the life conditions, the nature of the space it occupied at the time it lived or was formed, and the space and energy conditions that characterized its site and environment. We must learn to think. It is a certainty that ideas are also gleaned from professional meetings and field trips, from casual and planned conversations with colleagues in other fields of science and technology, and above all, by design or chance, from our students. I have learned much from farmers and amateurs and rock hounds, from miners and dentists, from tombstone cutters and observant fishermen. They have supplied me — and you — and our predecessors — with specimens, localities, ideas, techniques, photographs, occasional lodging, physical field assistance, and money for research.

To whom do we give credit? How is it possible to acknowledge adequately the credit due to others? I have always told my students to be generous and honored to give credit for literature sources and to their colleagues, and to any who have contributed ideas, materials, or facts to their research. Such credit will not diminish us — but will enhance us.

With this I will close, with appreciation and credit to all those who have gone before, known and unknown, and who have brought me, and all whom I represent today, to this honor. To my teachers, colleagues, especially my students, to librarians and technicians, field and office assistants, and friends and, most of all, to my loving, understanding, patient, durable, persevering wife, Aleen, and my children who are or were at various times my field assistants, lab preparators and clean-up squad, draftsmen, “gophers” and “happy campers.”

I am immensely proud, but humbled, by this signal honor of receiving the first AASP MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION and the privilege to be recognized by friends and colleagues, and especially by my more than three-score graduate students, many of whom were like sons or daughters to me. Carry on Leonard and Gordon and Denny, and all you others who bear my scars and my love. It is your turn!

Thank you all.