

Memorial to Edwin Chester Allison 1925—1971

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Ned Allison loved the sea, the hills and deserts, and the least of us, as few men have. He was life scientist and earth scientist. He was a student of the ocean basins and the continents, and he worked on all scales: from the high-powered microscope to the synthesis of crustal plates.

Born in San Diego on September 21, 1925, he studied at San Diego State, Stanford, and the University of California at Berkeley, obtaining his doctorate in 1964. He worked as a paleontologist for Standard Oil of California (1952-1956), as curator of paleontology at the University of California, Berkeley (1956-1960), and as a member of the faculty of San Diego State from 1960 to 1971. During the latter period he served for a year as visiting professor at Berkeley and taught a summer session at the marine station at Bodega Bay. He also held an honorary position on the faculty of the University of California at San Diego, Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Ned was past chairman of the Pacific division of the American Malacological Union and past president of the Pacific Section of the Society of Economic Mineralogists and Paleontologists. He was also active in the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and the Paleontological Society of America. He was an honorary fellow of The Geological Society of America.

His work extended from Alaska to the South Seas and from Sonora to the Indian Ocean. The titles of his publications tell of his travels: Punta China, Baja California (1955), Vancouver Island (1956), Bahia Tortuga, Baja California del Sur (1957), Clipperton Island (1960), northern California and Oregon (1962), Imperial Valley (1962), Hawaiian Islands (1962), Gulf of California (1963), Pacific guyots (1967), southeast Pacific (1967), Southern California borderland (1969), Santa Ana Mountains (1970), and Horizon guyot (1970).

Ned was an experienced diver and sailor and a durable field geologist under all climatic conditions, but his greatest value as a scientist lay in his good judgment—his credibility. The tremendous respect which he enjoyed made him part of countless expeditions and co-author in a wide variety of projects.

He was an early and persistent proponent of dredge hauls as a relatively inexpensive method of exploring the ocean depths, and this persistence was in part responsible for work around the Hawaiian Islands, the western edge of the Americas, the South Pacific, the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of California, and since his death, the mid-Pacific Mountains. He initiated paleontologic research into the Middle Cretaceous, Upper

Cretaceous, Paleocene, Miocene, Pliocene, and Pleistocene along the west coast of Baja California. Just two months before his death he edited the SEPM-AAPG-SEG Guidebook publication entitled *Pacific Slope Geology of Northern Baja California and Adjacent Alta California*, contributed largely by his former students and close associates, which brought together for the first time a comprehensive picture of the work which had been accomplished. He is also co-author of *The Reconnaissance Geology of the State of Baja California* which will be published as a Geological Society of America Memoir in the near future.

Ned was the first to realize the faunal relation between the Middle Cretaceous strata of northern Baja California and that of southern Arizona, western Sonora, and southern Mexico. This recognition may be an important key to reconstructing the Mesozoic framework of western North America (Gastil and Phillips, 1971). Two days before his death he helped measure the most northwesterly section of marine Cretaceous yet discovered in Sonora, and a week before his death he helped collect the most northwesterly marine Upper Jurassic section yet discovered in Sonora.

As involvements accumulated, responsibilities multiplied, and the number of students increased, stopping places became fewer, and the nights grew shorter. Finally, the man who never stinted, never seemed to tire, and always had time to talk a little longer, literally fell to the ground—with his field map in his hand and a student at his side. Within a few weeks, students were back in the same area to carry on the work. There have been many more famous paleontologists, but few who so strongly influenced the lives of their students and colleagues. The heritage of Ned Allison is not the papers which he published, the problems he solved, nor the theories he devised, but rather the questions that he asked, the problems which he raised, and those he left in pursuit of answers.

Ned worked hard for that which he loved, and this included San Diego State. He contributed immensely to building a large and respected department of geology. One of his special contributions was in the accumulation of library and invertebrate collections. He served as first director of the Bureau of Marine Sciences, as founder of the intradepartmental Paleontological Council, and was a prime mover in planning the new geology building, the joint doctoral program with the University of California at San Diego, the marine landing facility, and a broad-spectrum program of scientific cooperation with Mexico. He had unlimited faith in the future of San Diego State and looked forward to the day when its program would be on par with any university in the world.

Few men have been as universally loved by those who knew them. Having known him, we are each a little stronger in the task of carrying out the objectives of which he dreamed.

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