

ESCONI

EARTH SCIENCE CLUB OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

FIRST MEETING NOVEMBER 11, 1949.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS WERE ADOPTED AND THE FIRST OFFICERS WERE ELECTED AT THE JANUARY 1950 MEETING.

ON MARCH 30, 1951 ESCONI BECAME AN INCORPORATED GROUP "GENERAL - NOT-FOR-PROFIT."

IN 1951 ESCONI JOINED THE MIDWEST FEDERATION.

PURPOSE:

THE AIM OF THE EARTH SCIENCE CLUB OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS - ESCONI - IS TO PROMOTE AN INTEREST IN THE EARTH SCIENCES, AMONG THESE ARE GEOLOGY, PALEONTOLOGY, MINERALOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY, MICROMOUNTING, AND THE LAPIDARY ARTS.

ESCONI BULLETIN:

THE EARTH SCIENCE NEWS, HAS BEEN PUBLISHED 11 TIMES PER YEAR CONTINUOUSLY SINCE JANUARY 1950.

NAME CHOSEN MARCH 10, 1950 --"THE EARTH SCIENCE NEWS"

CLUB OFFICIAL EMBLEM APPROVED MARCH 10, 1950 AND USED ON THE BULLETIN SINCE APRIL 1950 ISSUE.



WILLIAM ALLAWAY

1ST PRESIDENT OF ESCONI

HONORARY PRESIDENT

B EFORE **E** SCONI

HOW IT HAPPENED - BEFORE ESCONI AND THE EARLY DAYS

We have heard many times about the small group of people who met in 1949 with the resulting formation of the Earth Science Club of Northern Illinois. Although I had heard a few remarks about why that first meeting was held, I thought it must have been the result of foresight, planning and effort. It must be a story that all Esconians would want to hear - a story that should be in our club records. Accordingly, I requested Bill Allaway, or first chairman (we did not have a president until 1957), to write an account of what preceded the first meeting in November 1949. Bill's reply follows:

How it happened--

It was 1943, with World War II upsetting the equilibrium of everybody, then suddenly the war was over and people were beginning to look for action to fill the vacuum of the sudden cessation of hostilities.

Some people, including myself had always been rock and fossil hunters and interested in natural history. Clubs were forming to bring people together that had similar interests, so they could exchange ideas and study their interests more effectively.

At the Western Electric Company, a few of the employees, including myself tried to get our social organization, the Hawthorne Club to sponsor such a group. We were told in no uncertain terms that they had a Science Club, a Coin Club, a Stamp Club, etc., and there wouldn't be enough interest in the organization we were proposing. How could they be so wrong?

Steve Norvell, Carl Hoffman, B.J. Babbitt, Roy Beghtol and myself let this stop our efforts for a little while. Steve and Cora Norvell joined the Marquette Geologists Association and became very active. However, they weren't too satisfied with the way things were run and wanted greater stress put on Education. They were not broadening out in their activities. We then decided something should be done.

During this period of indecision, a group of boys, Herb Beck, Guy Spiesman, and Wally Bridgeman, called on me one afternoon and asked me if it would be possible to find any Indian arrow heads around Downers Grove? I looked at my watch and told them if they would get in my car we could probably find one in 15 minutes. I had been passing a field on Highland Avenue several times and the gradual slope of the land that had recently been plowed had looked like a good place to get started hunting. We drove up to the field, parked the car and started going up and down the plowed rows of dirt. The Lord was on my side because in about 5 minutes I spotted a point sticking out of the top of a furrow and uncovered a beautiful projectile point. We searched for quite a while but had no further luck, but the boys were all enthusiastic. They asked me if it was alright for them to bring their fathers over to see my collection that evening, so I said, "O.K."

How it happened (cont.)

When the boys, together with their fathers met in my basement with Jay Farr and I that cold winter evening in 1949, they asked us to help form a club to study the specimens they had gathered and also to find places where they could go on field trips to add to their collections. So we agreed to meet the next month at the Spiesman's house and 30 people attended the meeting. Esconi was organized and we started to meet each month. The number of club members seemed to double each meeting so we had to find larger places to meet. We tried the Congregational Church basement in Downers Grove, the Library Hall in Maywood, the Avery Coonley School in Downers Grove, the Odd Fellows Hall in Downers Grove, the Cafeteria room in the basement of the Downers Grove High School and finally in April 1951, a little over a year after our first meeting we were able to persuade the Board of Education members that we had 130 members and growing fast, and they allowed us to use the big Assembly Hall of the Downers Grove High School for meetings. We can thank the High School Principal Clarence Johnson and a few other friends for this favor.

When Drs. Wilson and Fleener found out what we were doing they came over to Downers Grove, joined our club and were a great help in advising, giving programs and teaching courses in Earth Science. It was their efforts that helped make Esconi the successful club it became.

Jay Farr, who became our second Chairman did such a great job with our Juniors that his lectures were published by the Earth Science Magazine and junior groups became a major factor in the club's activities and is to this day.

Thirty-five years have passed and Esconi is still taking honors as they have done right from the start. Hat's off to those who have carried on so well.

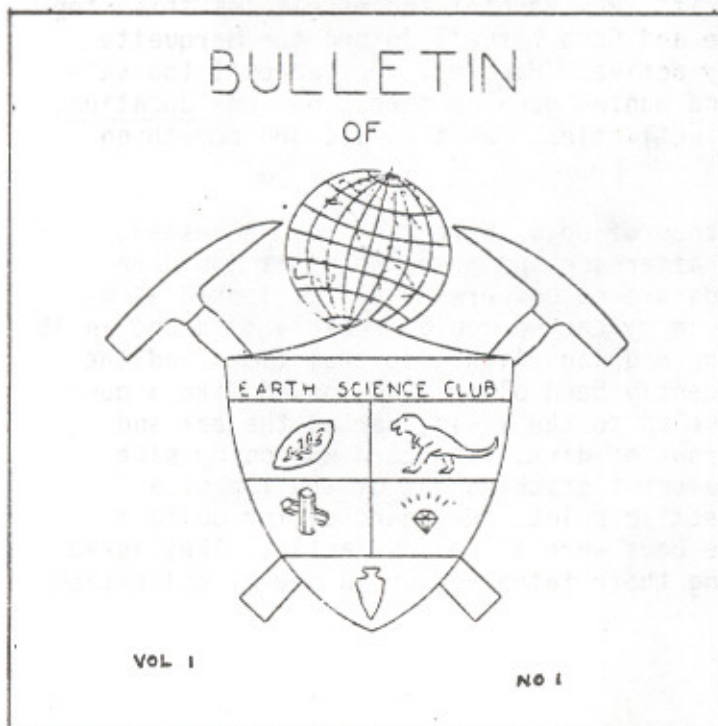
Bill Allaway

We can all be grateful the Hawthorne Club refused to sponsor an earth science club, so that the resulting club was open to all interested persons instead of only Western Electric Company employees, and now with the Hawthorne Works closing that club would have ceased to exist. Thank you Bill, and again our thanks to all those who made our club existence possible.

John Ade

Copy (reduced) of the cover to the first bulletin.

Vol. 1 No. 1 - Earth Science News



40**YEARS OF ESCONI****1949**

On November 11, 1949, thirteen people, each interested in some phase of the Earth Sciences, met in the basement of the W. H. Allaway home in Downers Grove, Illinois to discuss their common interests.

They were:

Jay Farr	Helen Allaway	Herb Beck
Roy Beghtol	Steven T. Norvell	Bob Beck
LeRoy Beghtol	Dr. Spiesman	Arnie Besser
W.H. Allaway	Guy Spiesman	Harry Thayer
	Donald Thayer	

Out of their enthusiasm and discussion, the idea grew that there must be more people in the western suburbs interested in these same subjects in this vicinity. They adjourned for the evening with plans formulated to circulate the idea among friends and acquaintances and to call a special meeting on November 25th for further discussion.

November 25, 1949

Thirty-two people arrived at the home of Dr. Spiesman to discuss the idea further. Mr. Allaway acted as temporary chairman and Guy Spiesman as temporary Secretary. Committees were appointed to begin the ground work for a club that would embody geology, paleontology, paleobotany, mineralogy, ancient man and the lapidary arts.

Committees were:

Nominating - to appoint a slate of officers
Constitution and By-laws
Meeting place
Membership Chairman -Roy Beghtol

Discussion of a name for the new organization to be presented at the next meeting with a prize offered for the winner. It was decided to print a bulletin at regular intervals. Herb Beck agreed to print announcement cards for the next meeting to be held January 6, 1950.

December 12, 1949

A special meeting held in Bill Allaway's basement with three other colleagues, Roy Beghtol, Jay Farr, and Steve Norvell, decided to sponsor the January 6, 1950 meeting to be held in the basement of the Congregational Church in Downers Grove.

1950

January 6, 1950

First regular meeting - 62 present with 27 becoming regular members.

Officers Elected:

Chairman	W.H. Allaway
Vice-Chairman	Roy Beghtol
Recording Secretary	Jay Farr
Treasurer	Steven T. Norvell
Historian-Curator	Ethel Whitney

Meeting established - 2nd Friday of each month except July and August. The club will produce a monthly bulletin.

Constitution and By-laws presented and accepted.

Earth Science Club of Northern Illinois was selected by popular vote as the club name. Mrs. B.J. Babbitt won the prize of a piece of Eden Valley opalized wood.