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Elso S. Barghoorn Journals

1944-1984

2 boxes (1 linear feet)

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The paleobotanist Elso Barghoorn exerted an enormous influence on the scientific understanding of the early evolution of life on earth. After receiving his doctorate at Harvard in 1941, Barghoorn taught briefly at Amherst College before returning to Harvard five years later, eventually becoming the Richard A. Fisher Professor of Natural History. A pioneer in paleopalynology, he and two colleagues announced the startling discovery of a well-preserved Archaean fossil flora in 1954, including the first solid record of fossil bacteria and cyanobacteria from the Gunflint chert of Ontario. Culminating in a landmark 1965 publication (with Stanley Tyler), his work demonstrated conclusively the existence of unicellular fossils and helped to revolutionize study of deep evolutionary time.

The Barghoorn collection consists of seven bound journals containing notes from trips to Panama (1944), Europe (1957-58); Ghana, South Africa, and Tonga (1971-1972); Europe (1972); Hawaii, the South Pacific, and Africa (1975); Greenland (1977); South Africa and Australia (1978); and Australia and the South Pacific (1981). Comprehensive typescripts are available for each journal.

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Background on Elso S. Barghoorn

The paleobotanist Elso Barghoorn exerted an enormous influence on the scientific understanding of the early evolution of life on earth. After receiving his doctorate at Harvard in 1941, Barghoorn taught briefly at Amherst College before returning to Harvard five years later, eventually becoming the Richard A. Fisher Professor of Natural History. A pioneer in paleopalynology, he and two colleagues announced the startling discovery of a well-preserved Archaean fossil flora in 1954, including the first solid record of fossil bacteria and cyanobacteria from the Gunflint chert of Ontario. Culminating in a landmark 1965 publication (with Stanley Tyler), his work demonstrated conclusively the existence of unicellular fossils and helped to revolutionize study of deep evolutionary time.

Scope of collection

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Inventory

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journals (typescript)

1944-1984

9 folders

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Panama (typescript)

1944 July 24-1945 Feb. 7

125, 20p.

Box 1: 1

Trip to biological field station on Barro Colorado Island, Panama, to study fungal degradation of military canvas tents, clothing, food, and other supplies.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Europe (typescript)

1957 Sept. 3-1958 Jan. 12

109p.

Box 1: 2

Trip to France, Spain, Netherland, Germany, England, Austria.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of World Trip (typescript)

1971 Oct. 21-1972 Jan. 21

67p.

Box 1: 3

Trip to Ghana, South Africa, South Pacific.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of World Trip (typescript)

1972 Aug. 22-Sept. 5

25p.

Box 1: 4

Trip to Denmark and England.



Hoba West meteorite, Nov. 1971

12 miles west of Grootfontein, South West Africa

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to South Pacific and Africa (typescript)

1975 July 7-Sept. 3

73p.

Box 1: 5

Trip to Hawaii, South Pacific, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, East Africa, Guinea.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Greenland (typescript)

1977 July 13-20

14p.

Box 1: 6

Trip to Thule.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to South Africa and Australia (typescript)

1978 Oct. 17-Dec. 14

43, 15p.

Box 1: 7

Trip to South Africa and Australia.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of World Trip (typescript)

1981 May 3-June 11

38, 10p.

Box 1: 8

Trip to Ghana, South Africa, South Pacific.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal: Miscellaneous

1984

67p.

Box 1: 9

Correspondence between Geraldine Kline and Lynn Margulis regarding transcribing the Barghoorn journals; inventory.

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journals (typescript)

1944-1984

9 folders

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Panama (original)

1944 July 24-1945 Feb.

208p., inserts

Box 1: 10

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Europe (original)

1957 Sept. 3-1958 Jan. 12

Box 2: 1

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of World Trip (original)

1971 Oct. 21-1972 Jan. 21

Box 2: 2

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of World Trip (original)

1972 Aug. 22-Sept. 5

25p.

Box 2: 3

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to South Pacific and Africa (original)

1975 July 7-Sept. 3

Box 2: 4

Barghoorn, Elso S.: Journal of trip to Greenland (original)

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Box 2: 6

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Michael Dolan, 2014.

Using funds from the Commonwealth Book Fund, the Barghoorn journals were obtained by Lynn Margulis after Barghoorn's death to prepare typescripts.

Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, Apr. 2014.

Language:

English

Copyright and Use (More information)

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Search terms

Subjects

Harvard University--Faculty
Margulis, Lynn, 1938-2011
Paleobotany
Palyndology
Panama--Description and travel

Contributors

Barghoorn, Elso S. (Elso Sterrenberg), 1915-1984 **[main entry]**

Genres and formats

Diaries

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Botany and horticulture

Protistology



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