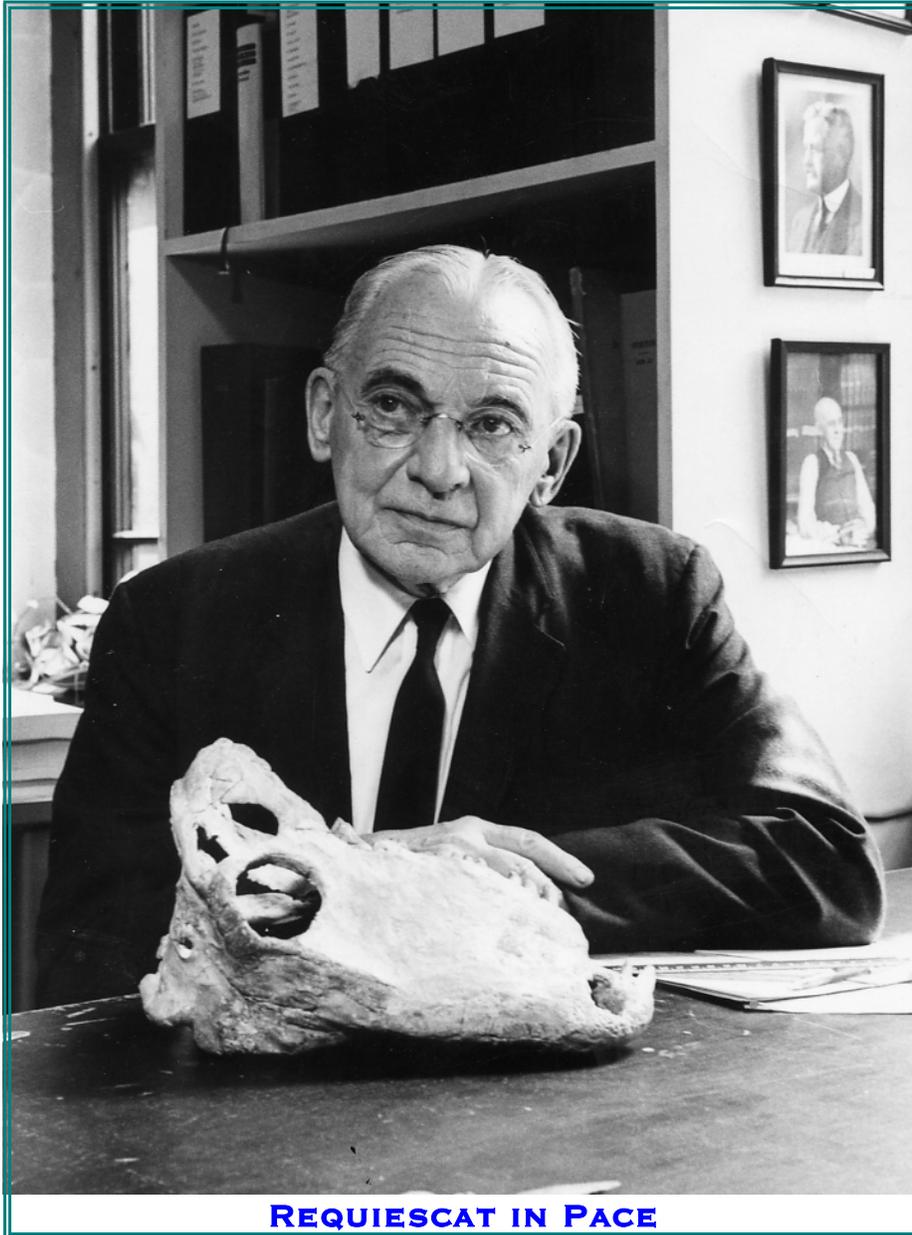


2.9.1 Alfred Sherwood Romer, Ph.D.



REQUIESCAT IN PACE

This was a giant of a man. Intellectual giant. A left over from a by-gone era that was populated by erudite, sophisticated, authentic, self confident men and women. I feel privileged even today to recall that I was met him and was his friend, that I was able to experience the remnants of an era where the privileged and educated men and women were true renaissance men and women. They don't make people like that any more - nor would it be possible if there were the desire and money. Globalization and the explosive growth in information have narrowed the scope of 'stuff' that one person can handle so playing a recorder, being a physicist and watching movies & TV is about the limit for most people.

Perhaps more telling, the mores of today insist on equality, on fairness, on diversity, which are commendable values to be sure. The problem is that in the process of 'enforcing' these views -yes, they are enforced by the mind police in the universities, government and liberal institutions- people are unfortunately homogenized, people are reduced to insipid, bland, look-alikes. The differences between me and thee are what interest me, not the similarities.

Worse, old-fashioned values like respect for people and courtesy are not only not practiced today, they are actively scorned in schools, universities and more importantly, in the media and entertainment worlds.

Finally, those with constipation and knotted panties aggressively and urgently dig up dirt of anyone who dares excel, trying I suppose -though I don't grant them any credit for good intentions- to prove to the rest of us that these people are no better than we are. Sad, most sad. Heros exist no more, and Renaissance people are gone. Our culture is impoverished by this loss. However, as long as one doesn't know s/he's lacking something, s/he won't miss it, now, will s/he.

Dr. Romer dominated the professional side of our lives in Boston. "Al." That's what he told dad to call him, that's what Ruth Romer told dad to call him, but dad never did. His respect for "Al" was too great. "Al" was forever "Dr. Romer". Not surprising when you consider the gulf, the abyss really, between them in terms of education, erudition and background.

Dad was raised on a dirt-poor farm, a high-school drop out.

Dr. Romer, attended Amherst, earned a Ph.D.,

Dr. Romer eventually became internationally known for his excellent work, and was the author of the standard work for college zoology courses entitled "The Vertebrate Body." I have a copy that I stole from a professor in the Radiology Department at BSU. Really.

Dr. Romer always treated me well. I appreciated that. I understood that he was important and the dominant figure of the museum but he was courteous.

He didn't lavish attention on kids but he was aware we were around and would talk kindly to us if we asked a question. But he was one of the lower gods so I didn't test the limits in any way. I liked him and admired him and never had any complaints or concerns about him. He impressed me

Dinner in Provo many years later illustrated Dr. Romer's erudition. He talked comfortably with me, an opinionated undergrad minoring in Classical Greek, about classical subjects, I thinking snottily that I really was the more knowledgeable of the two of us. At one point I remarked something about the Sack of Troy and stating the date when it allegedly happened. "Oh," he said, "Didn't that happen in such and such a year?" "No, I corrected him, It was (whatever I had said)." He looked down at his dinner, took a bite of food, started talking to dad, and let it go. That made me uncertain. I checked the date later. He was right. Well. But note. Not only did he know more than I did, from his undergrad days several decades previously, but he did not correct me, he didn't argue with me. He knew the answer better than I, but he didn't need to win an argument with a brash young man who overstepped the boundaries of his own knowledge. That smarts more than if he'd argued with me. Then, at least, I would have been able to be indignant that he had argued. I don't know whether I think it was a good thing or not that mom and dad didn't know the situation.

At that same dinner with the four of us at the long dining room table at 2821 North, Dr. Romer told many interesting funny things. His comments didn't feel like he was showing off. He was just chatting, bringing in to the conversation things from his past that were apropos to whatever the topic was at that moment. He talked about his undergrad days at Amherst and then recited a long poem - in Latin. Later in the same meal, he recited a long Samuel Taylor Coleridge poem about "Kubla Kahn"^[1], a gorgeous poem I had never heard of it. He spoke both

¹ I can't resist inserting the first stanza to give you a sense of its beauty:

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted

with humor and security, a most remarkable performance, there in the dry sparsely educated Utah desert.

Well, that's the man and his background. His education was enormous. He was one of the truly grand, broadly educated men from a by-gone era when that was possible, when well-heeled men -usually men- were able to get themselves around most of the natural sciences, a bit of philosophy, some current events and speak intelligently about them all. This type of figure is gone today, the result of many forces, not least of which are (1) the geometric growth in knowledge and (2) the concomitant shrinkage in the scope of an individual's area of specialization. It is impossible, today, to keep abreast of developments in the natural sciences, philosophy, cosmology, sociology, political science and so on. So it is sort of unfair to lament the disappearance of a type that was destined to be extinct. But I do. It is such an impressive thing to see a person with such a large scope of abilities.

Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

Ruth Romer



Ruth Romer
Requiescat in Pace - 1992

This is Ruth, wife of Alfred, a matched pair. I wish I had a more dignified photo of Ruth to use but I don't so I'll use what's at hand. This is actually a good way to show her, because it illustrates that she wasn't a stay-at-home society woman who didn't participate in things. This photo was taken in the foothills of the Andes in Argentina in 1956, and shows several important things about Ruth.

Ruth was tough. Really tough when she made up her mind. You'll see this below in a letter dad wrote to her daughter Sally, describing what Ruth did when her fossils were stolen in Argentina - by the police, no less. My perception -which is obviously based on limited data- is that Ruth was Al's equal, just as mom was dad's equal. There was a pairing, a balance, a symmetry to their personalities. Their relationships allowed the men to go out and get famous. While they stood on the shoulders of their women. Yep. That's how it is.

Ruth obviously supported Al in his work. She literally went out on expeditions and dug with him, on her hands and knees. Under circumstances that are always crappy and rough. Not the sort of place a fastidious, shrinking violet will choose. But she was out there. This particular photo was taken of her down in the dirt during the first Harvard Expedition to the foothills of the Andes in western Argentina. Six months in 1956 this little tribe of ruffians dug and poked around in the dirt, discovering a large number of things, some of the new. She was there with them.

Ruth was also intellectually curious. She wanted to know what was going on, what things fitted together, what Al was doing. That is something that impresses me because my own experience was diametrically opposed. It is a wonderful thing for spouses to share things like that, ideas and concepts.

Ruth had a deep appreciation and affection for my mom. I was aware of it at the time in a limited sense, but didn't comprehend the uniqueness of that. I was, instead, impatient with my mom who didn't have much education, worrying that she might embarrass me. My, my. What an arrogant young whelp I was. My mom was steel and sturdy and waded into that social life with fortitude at least equal to dad's. In a short time, Ruth came to rely on mom to help her when she had big parties at her home on Avon Street, a posh neighborhood in Cambridge for the high-ranking Harvard faculty, doctors, lawyers, and blue bloods.

An excellent example of the stuff that formed the basis of Ruth's dependence on mom involves George Gaylord Simpson, a man I never met, but whose work I am familiar with. It was George who estimated, on the basis of the known fossil record at the time, the number of species extant at the present time, a few assumptions, and the passage of eons, that the total number of species alive today represent perhaps 8% of the total number that have ever lived on this earth.

That sticks in my mind because it was a shock, an enormous shock, to realize that. Do you see the implications? What the concept did was put the Sierra Club and allied Greenies into perspective, and relegated them to the sandbox in the back room for wayward children who are determined to act out - simply for the attention they receive, not because they really have something meaningful to contribute to the common discourse. Dr. Simpson made it clear that every specie is going to die at some point in time - with, or without, the assistance of man- so get over it is how I view the deal today. Oh, I don't favor thoughtless destruction of habitats, but I sure as h--- don't think it reasonable for the snail darter to have the extraordinarily powerful influence it had on things. The Sierra Club *et al*/seem to think that if one specie can be saved that it will save another, that the

inexorable destruction of species, the relentless turnover of species, can be halted. Poppycock. Bunch of self-righteous prigs, whiners, cry babies who think they are so noble. Nature is nature and "tooth and claw" is the law that governs it all. Together with inexorable changes in habitat, topography and climate, every specie is destined to become extinct. So "Get Over It Sierra Club."

Now I'll tell you why mom was such a remarkable person in that challenging settings with rich people, famous people, and powerful personalities. Any way, this is the man himself who is the subject of this story, the same that I told in an earlier volume but which I could not find this morning in the 2,000+ pages of stuff. You poor kids..... I'll tell the story again -somewhat differently of course- in this context because this is when it actually happened. This is how Ruth came to rely on mom to bail her out sometimes in her home during social events.

Dr. Simpson was a crusty old goat with hide like a porcupine, who spoke his mind to the extent that he was carefully left to his own devices by those tender, less secure, younger personalities who feared causing umbrage, intentionally or not, consequently being skewered by ol' George. He had a way with words that apparently made it real clear what he had on his mind about 'you.

Ruth had one of her fine parties going on at Avon Street this evening, and in addition to the MCZ staff -which obviously included the Romers, the Lewis', Jensens, Don Baird, Nelda Wright, Dick Van Frank, Tilly Edinger, Liska Deichmann, etc- there were a few 'visiting firemen' as they were termed by the MCZ staff. Dr. Simpson was one of them this evening.

The Romer home was a gracious, large one with easy chairs and couches spread around the living room and hallways where people could congregate and chat. Mom and dad arrived early as usual so that mom could help Ruth complete setting things up and adding finishing touches on the table. As the evening progressed, mom noticed one unfamiliar guest who sat by himself in an easy chair. People acknowledged him as they walked past with a nod of the head but none did more



Figure 3 [George Gaylord Simpson](http://paleo.amnh.org/portraits/1957-45.jpg)

<http://paleo.amnh.org/portraits/1957-45.jpg>
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than welcome him or comment on the weather. Mom was a natural born rescuer, even when she didn't always know the depth she was jumping into. That's the measure of a hero, isn't it.

Well, she saw this man by himself and could tell that while people acknowledged him, no one would engage him in conversation. Not even dad ventured over, rather he held forth in some other corner of the room. Mom was not so much sympathetic as curious I suppose about this man who didn't look mean or angry. She went up to him, introduced herself and started asking him about himself. He responded pleasantly, she took a chair and spent the evening with him. They got food from the table and had a grand time getting acquainted.

When the evening was over, Ruth took mom aside and thanked her profusely for taking care of that problem. Mom didn't understand. A problem? Yes, Ruth said. Do you know who that man was? Mom said that yes, she had learned his name when she introduced herself. Ruth asked if she knew his reputation. Mom admitted that she didn't whereupon Ruth explained that *George Gaylord Simpson's* acerbic tongue intimidated people so people feared and avoided him, which would have left him alone in the corner for the evening. This is the type of thing mom did that gave Ruth confidence in her. They stayed in touch until the time of her death in 1992, 31 years after they had left MCZ.

I want to make a point about Dr. Simpson. Somewhere in the 1960's, he wrote a book -which I have lost and the name of which I cannot recall- in which he discussed the extinction of species. Based on the sketchy fossil record of all kinds of species and calculations of the number of species extant at the time, he concluded that the total number of species alive today represent perhaps 10% of the total number of species that have lived on this earth. That obviously means that 90% are extinct. So tell me, please, why should we get so exercised about species being destroyed today, lose our balance over the snail darter and the spotted owl?^[2]

Peoples' livelihoods and entire communities are destroyed by excessive zeal, zeal of people who have lost their sense of balance, a zeal that becomes a religion hereby bestowing righteousness on their radical actions, which even lead to

² No, I don't believe it is right to intentionally destroy any specie. I find bird hunting for sport abhorrent. When I stand by a Canadian goose with its black hood and white chin strap, I feel like weeping for the creature. No, extinction that happens through our thoughtlessness is not what I encourage. But I think it is more foolish to harm families and communities in the pursuit of the preservation of a specie, particularly when the loss of species is inevitable anyway.

criminal acts in the extreme cases. The blind unreasonable determination to save every specie come hell or highwater is as foolish as trying to stop the flow of the Amazon with one hand, when one understands Dr. Simpson's statistics. Even if he has massively overestimated the number of lost species, the result is the same. Every creature will in time disappear only to be replaced by another fit for the ecological that was temporarily vacated by the now-deceased specie.

Back to Ruth: she wasn't always a sweetie, however. As noted above, she was tough when toughness was demanded. A great example of this shows in the following snippet from her June 20, 1967 letter to dad that also tells about Tilly's unexpected death. The background was that dad had become convinced that the national Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) had not only a duty, but a god-given obligation to take up the battle to protect all of the fossils in the United States of America, under the guise of the enforcement of the relevant portions of Antiquities Act.

Well, he ended up making this desire into a crusade, which was most unfortunate for various reasons. In the end, he hurt no one but himself and it was a mortal wound that he inflicted as far as vertebrate paleontology goes. His conviction and the attendant urgency that translated into hostile pressures on the SVP in their annual meetings antagonized so many members of the SVP that he ended up a pariah. Which was a shame because his initial work at Harvard with Dr. Romer, and his astonishing mount of *Kronosaurus*, had earned him a good reputation. Even Arnie Lewis turned against him. I don't know the particular event that ruptured their ancient friendship but know it was so severe that when I dug Arnie up to tell him of dad's death, expecting sympathy, his response was flat, uninterested. He wasn't unpleasant to me, but it was crystal clear that he had not interest in anything to do with dad. He actually said in his own words that he didn't anything to do with dad, sort of shocking to hear.

Ruth as Dutch Uncle

I give you that brief history so that you have the context for this excerpt from Ruth's letter which reveals the clarity with which she would talk when necessary. She was in tune with what was going on in the SVP through Al and through other friends. She knew the score. Dad obviously wrote her a letter whining about what was going on, about not being accepted or not being listened to

Jim, you really need talking to like a Dutch uncle (wherever that expression comes from). Don't give up and sulk just because you feel that some people aren't as interested as you had hoped in your campaign against the rockhounds. I suppose it's partly because a lot of paleontologists don't run into those problems in their areas and therefore aren't as keen to put their energies into the campaign. But I'm sure many of them are interested and can be made to see the light. Anyway, however that may be, it's no excuse for you to start running yourself down and giving up association with other v.p.'s. And cut out the nonsense about your lack of education. So please snap out of it and write me that we'll be seeing you in New Haven next November. And come up to Cambridge too. You know the welcome mat is always out for you at the MCZ and at 38 Avon Street. (Don't you want to hear about our trip to Argentina?)

by the SVP and complained that it was because he wasn't educated. She knew dang well that the negative, even hostile responses, had little to do with his education, and a lot to do with his rudeness. So she talked to him, the only person in the VP world who could do it, in a way that called a spade a damned old shovel. It didn't help, however, and he continued to burn his bridges, but not because no one called him to attention for his petulance.

This was the same time that mom was waiting until dad had gone to work to go to the mailbox and remove his letters to SVP members. She'd carefully steam them open and read them to see what he had said. In cases where he was just too

intemperate, she simply destroyed the letters and never told dad about doing this. Both Ruth and mom tried to help dad, to no avail.

Story of Ruth

As I think of dad's attitude toward Dr. Romer I find that I actually don't know what it was directly. He never talked about his bosses. Never. Not in any job. He was silent about those relationships so I don't really know from his own words. So I'll give you his own words in the following letter that he wrote many years later which characterize his attitude. It was written to Sally, the daughter of Al and Ruth. I was aware of Sally but was younger, consequently out of her bubble of consciousness, which was fine with me. She was intimidating in her lovely confidence and sociability.

The reason for this letter was Sally's thoughtfulness, an example of the quality of her education. Upon Ruth's death Sally sent notices of the event to those who cared about Ruth. Sally took Ruth's address book and carefully identified the people and sent letter to them all, pretty damn impressive. In it you get a sense of dad's affection and admiration for Al and for Ruth:

(Dad didn't date his letter which frosts me. Why don't people date their writings? Grrrr. The only way I can approximate the date of this letter is the date -Sept. 21, 1992- on the Thank You note that Sally sent to dad in response to this letter:)

"Sally Romer Evans
210 Elm Street
Northampton, Mass. 01060

Dear Sally:

Thank you very much for your kindness in sending the card announcing your mothers passing. It was very thoughtful of you.

Your parents played a prominent and very important role in my life. Dr. Romer brought me from Alaska to what was a very different life style at MCZ, in paleontology, and New England. What a tremendous new chapter in my life that move began. I admired and respected him so much I could never call him anything but Dr. Romer, even though we spent a lot of time--nearly two years all together—in the badlands collecting fossils. Ruth insisted I call him "Al" as we

spent months living in the intimate environment of tents in different places (I couldn't call my Dad "Sam" either).

Your mother was on all of our expeditions and Arnie and I loved her for after about two and a half months—excepting South America—she would say: "Al, these boys have been away from their wives long enough. It's time they were getting back". I could relate a thousand scenarios of her power and influence, in as many places, but there was one in South America which I must tell you. It was a good example of her indomitable spirit and courage and occurred on our first expedition.

As you no doubt know, she never did anything half way. This event took place at the end of our first trip, the time we were installed in that wonderful oasis Samay Huasi near Chilecito. We had contracted with the owner of a truck line to haul our fossils to Buenos Aires in a big semi. The fossils were stacked at Samay Huasi in six huge crates all ready to go while Arnie and I made a last trip over the mountains to our Rio Gualo camp to load up the last great box of specimens (which would ride in the back of our truck to B.A.), break camp and return to pick up Dr. Romer and Ruth and head out across the pampas to B.A.

Well, it didn't work out that way. The last great blow of intrigue and deceit, which had harassed us for six months, was about to fall. The perpetrators were several and well known to us but not yet in their final roles. For one thing, the owner of the truck line happened to be the Provincial Governor's brother-in-law. The Governor had long been casting covetous eyes on our success, played up too much (of course) in the media, and was determined to get his grubby claws on the treasure, by hook or crook, and mostly by the latter he succeeded.

Arnie and I left for our task the day before the truck was scheduled to pick up the fossils at Samay Huasi. Innocently it pulled into the compound and a crew of peons sweat and heaved the boxes, each weighing in the neighborhood of 800 lbs. in place. No doubt with a twisted smirk, the driver eased the truck on out of the walls of the compound, through the archway, and into the clutches of the local constabulary. Samay Huasi was federal property so they couldn't touch us there.

The truck was immediately placed in custody by a group of officers waiting there, and the whole mess headed for the slammer in Chilecito—pursued by Dr. Romer and Ruth in our jeep, with her at the wheel. Can you image the grim look of anger, frustration and determination on her face? God bless her. I know it was there. The result of six months of hard work had been stolen by nothing less than highway robbery! The next scene is at the jail with the truck backed conveniently up to its door.

Skids were placed at the rear of the truck for the obvious purpose of unloading the boxes. Now the real action is about to occur: The peons lay hands on the first box and Ruth comes flying out of the jail, handbag swinging, and the peons are frightened away. They are all married men and very able to recognize a mad woman when they see one. This buys some time for palaver. Ruth has a good command of imperative Spanish. She does the talking for our side. The peons lean on the truck, the truck driver trims his fingernails, and again the peons are commanded to unload the box. The swinging handbag assaults them from the jail once more and they quickly back off. More palaver.

Three times the handbag drives off the peons, who scatter like timid vultures, but Dr. Romer remonstrates with Ruth. There is no way they can win. She simply must let the fossils be unloaded and incarcerated completely out of their control. Jumpy peons with very alert, wary eyes, drag each box back to the edge of the truck, skid it down the poles and heave and shove it on rollers into the jail; all six boxes.

The next morning about four AM Arnie and I pull into Samay Huasi to find them pacing the floor. "Did anyone see you come into town?" they ask. Somewhat baffled by such an unusual welcome at that time of night we stammer; "We-1-1, not really. We did leave two people off at the pension. They rode in with us after we escaped the last flood".

They dump their story and Dr. Romer concludes; "you must get that seventh box out of the province as quickly as possible. Leave now. How much gas have we got? Have you anything to eat?"

We assure him we have enough gas for at least several hours travel and, no, we haven't eaten since yesterday noon. We were caught in a flood in the high granite mountains and had to wait four hours for it to subside enough for a mob of (us) travelers assembled to build a rough crossing. We have at the present moment been active for about 24 hours with little to eat. We had flood trouble three times during that period.

Ruth scrounged some dry crackers and a forlorn stale sausage and some chalky Argentine (ugh) chocolate from the jeep. We rounded up all our spare gas and loaded it into the truck and in less than a half hour, just as it was beginning to get light, we pulled out for a distant destination far away in another province.

They had talked over a possible escape and haven for the last box, safe from all La Rioja provincial authority. They recounted our previous experience at the Estancia Hollandaise, and the friendly Dutch matron there who had some of her property confiscated by federal authority because she had allowed an

American outfit to build a satellite tracking station on it. It was in the governments best interest, they said, with no intention of recompense. Ruth was sure that if we turned up there, on the lam, with a crate of hot fossils needing secretion, she would be only too glad to help us out—which she certainly was and did.

Well, to make a very long and arduous story short—our flight to safety—we eventually turned up again at Samay Huasi, much to the relief of our compadres. We had traveled through mountains and desert over 500 km, going hungry and sleepless most of the way. It was like a TV thriller but I won't burden you with it now, suffice it to say we all congratulated each other that we would at least have one crate of fossils to study. The four of us would pick it up on our way to B.A. Before leaving Chilecito we visited the jail again to say farewell to our precious cargo at which time Arnie took a picture of our fossil crates in jail.

Ruth and I had various experiences as together we went off in the jeep to get supplies at some distant place. I assured her I would never try to preach Mormonism to her. However, I had her promise that if she ever wanted to know she was to ask and I would deliver. She never asked. As I believe in a Hereafter, I told her I did not want her to come up to me inside the pearly gates, or where ever, and demand to know why I had never told her all the stuff I believed in. We got along together very well just as long as I remembered to put the damn lid on the pot when I was trying to boil water in camp. She was a good worker, never slacking in the face of difficult circumstances in food, weather and transportation. She was game for anything, which you know.

I lost track of Arnie ten years ago. He never writes and though he knows where I am, I don't know where he is. Somewhere in Florida I think.

Dr. Romer and Ruth are among some of the most important people in my life. I was just a peon but they always treated me as if I had some merit. I particularly enjoyed the Texas trips.

In loving memory of both of them,

Sincerely yours,

/signed/

James A. Jensen"

I like that letter. It gives a sense of dad's affection for both of the Romers. It was as if they were his parents, the older ones who took him under their wings and nourished and encouraged him, urging him to move beyond his own self-imposed limitations.

When dad caught Dr. Romer at the museum to tell him that he was taking a job at BYU and would be leaving in a couple of months, Al got tears in his eyes.

Ruth my Friend

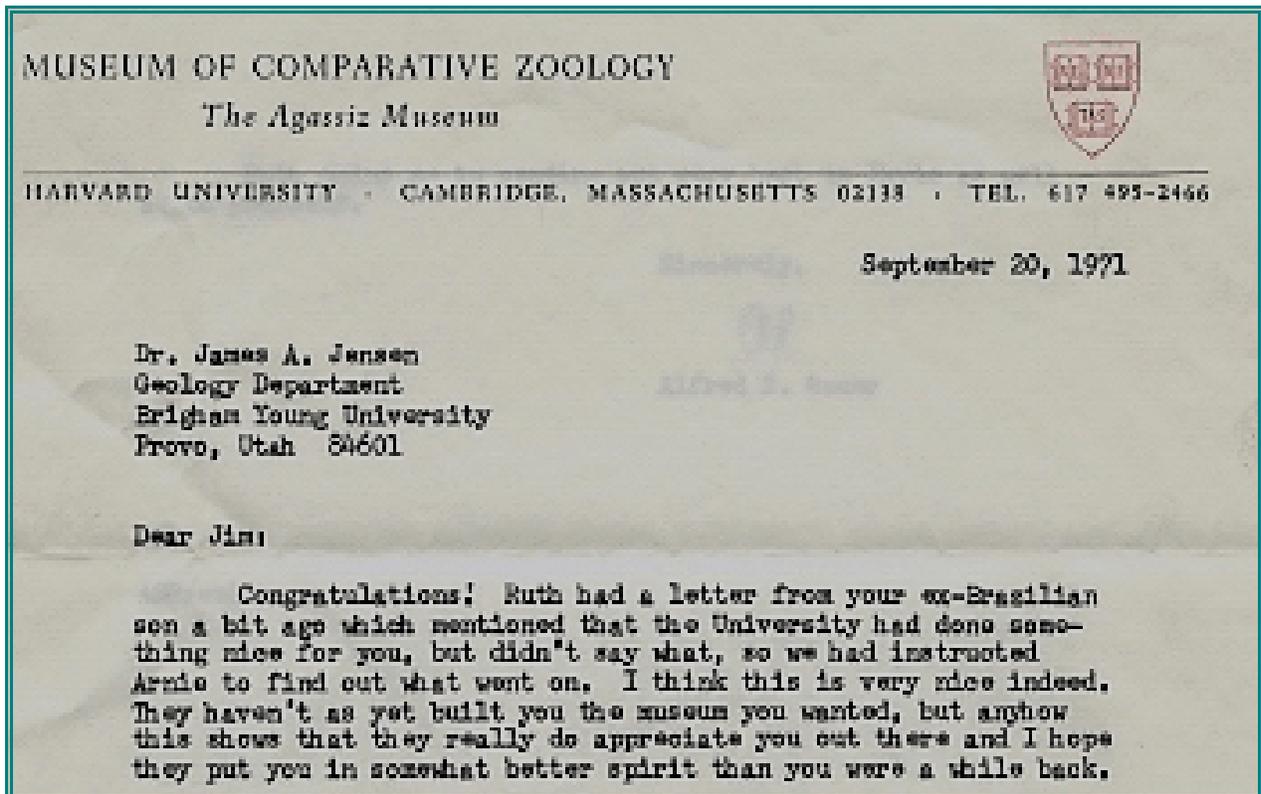
Ruth was also my friend, my own personal friend. I had actually forgotten that until I started researching this era for UBW where I ran across the evidence. I corresponded with her for years after I left Boston, going to Finland, SLC and Brazil. In retrospect it appears I stayed in touch with her for about 15 years. Not frequently to be sure, but several times a year and not just at Xmas. I suppose I viewed her as a surrogate grandmother in Boston, though I didn't actually think of her that way. She was more like I imagine family member should be than mine have been - the defect being perhaps entirely mine. She always was interested if I talked to her, she asked questions about what I was doing which showed she cared. Adults shout their lack of interest by the bored questions and perfunctory responses as their eyes anxiously search the environment for an escape. Particularly in a Harvard environment. But not Ruth. She was intent when she talked to anyone.

I need to go back and emphasize the "Harvard environment" for you. Do you have any idea how intimidating that was? Remember. I was 14 when we moved there, when I first went to MCZ, when I first met the Romers. I was an awkward kid who was naturally shy and insecure anyway. The move from rainy backward Seward to the elegant, historical, prestigious setting of Harvard and Boston upset my equilibrium. Dick and I were used to wearing tee shirts and dirty levis and boots every day walking around a muddy little town where the tallest building was 2 stories high, no concrete sidewalks, no paved streets, and street lights that went out occasionally. This was the equation that you need to think about Ruth and her chemistry.

Ruth was a reassuring adult who would pause and listen, and express authentic interest. She did not put on airs, was a down-to-earth person who liked everyone and treated them with consideration. It was a relief even though I didn't feel really comfortable, but at least I trusted her. It was OK when she kidded with me at her Thanksgiving dinner table saying that if I tipped the cranberry jelly

on its side that I would have bad luck. It was a tradition in the family that a can of cranberry jelly was cut open on both ends and the jelly was set upright on a bread plate. Then the jelly was passed around the table with each person taking a spoonful, being careful to not tip it over. It was fun when she did that.

Here's one of the snippets that shows I was still corresponding with Ruth in 1971. This is from Dr. Romer's letter to dad:



I am the 'ex-Brazilian son' having returned 2 years earlier from the Amazon.

I don't remember off the top of my head what the 'nice' thing was that BYU did for dad, but given the fact that I can only think of one -i.e. giving him the honorary (bribe) doctorate- that must be what I was referring to. It's the right era. In any event, Dr. Romer's note reflects awareness that I had written to Ruth - and that Ruth had told him, and that he had remembered it and that he told dad. Most remarkable, isn't it. You see Dr. Romer's humor as well. This letter was just a friendship thing, dated 10 years after dad left his museum.

The other snippet that I can show you to prove that I stayed in touch with Ruth comes from this letter to dad that was dated March 07, 1974 which was the second year I was in Ann Arbor. In addition to proving that I did stay in touch with her -proving it to me, not you- this snippet also reveals her on-going interest. She was a remarkable person in many ways and it was this interest that touched me and caused me to return to her in letters over the years.

18 AVON STREET
CAMBRIDGE
MASSACHUSETTS 02138

the only sizable piece of land left undeveloped in Pelham.

You didn't mention Rando (or Jim). I used to hear from him but haven't for some time. Do tell me how things are going for him and his wife. The last I heard they were in Bloomington.

Dr. Romer's summer home in Pelham, MA

The last item to include in this section about the Romers is their summer home because it figured in the social life of the MCZ staff. It was located near Worcester Mass half between New Hampshire and Connecticut. The red star in this map shows where it is located, just east of Worcester. Amazing how small New England is. You see all six states here. As noted before,



Massachusetts is only about 60 miles, north to west, about the same distance we drove from Boise to Ontario, Oregon. And when you look closely at Rhode Island, it's obvious the state is less than 50 miles from north to south, the long axis.

Our family went to the Pelham home one summer, around 1957. I believe we were still in Waltham. Given the short distance, less than 100 miles, it was a 2 hour drive over to the home so we didn't stay overnight. The party was hosted by the Romers each summer and attended by MCZ staff all of whom were invited.

This photo shows the entry way to the home. Nelda is sitting in the front with the Boston terrier, Don Baird is on the right next to her. On the back row Arnie is on the left and Dad is in the middle - I don't know who the man on the right is. In the middle is Ruth and Dr. Romer. You can see that it's a nice place.

The grounds were several acres and included a large swimming pool which we all used. Since families with small children were invited, the Romers had a temporary fence erected around

the pool to provide some control. Joe O'Leary is the guy standing on the left side of the photo, dad is the guy sitting with his feet in the pool, and in the distant background Dr. Romer (Right) is in a chair talking with someone I don't know.



The pool was not the usual gunite pool you're familiar with. It was actually a small pond (that's what they called small bodies of water in New England, e.g. 'Walden Pond') that had been re-shaped and converted into a "swimming pool." The bottom was mud and plants grew profusely everywhere, so squeamish people didn't go in.



Being an inveterate bug collector, I was interested to find enormous bugs - two inches long- that resembled water skimmers, except that they didn't skim the surface. There was an entomology doctoral candidate who was fascinated in these chitters when I showed them to dad. She asked me if she could have them to study which of course thrilled me, contributing to science again! Wow. She actually did a detailed analysis of both specimens and in the end, wrote a short article about the finding of chitin in the GI tract of this specie, something not previously seen in this specie. Somewhere in my stuff is an off-print (reprint) of the scientific article she wrote based on her findings, which is signed by her. She put a "thank you" in a foot note acknowledging the work of "Rondo Jensen" who provided her the specimens. Man alive.

This photo was taken at the same party and includes some heavy hitters. Dr. Romer is the man sitting on the left end of the middle row, to his right is Liska (Elisabeth) Deichmann, Danish invertebrate paleontologist and to her right is Tilly Edinger, Holocaust victim, Neuro-paleontologist. Mom is two chairs to Tilly's right, and Nelda is the right most person in the second row. Joe O'Leary is the second from the left on the back row. Dad is standing behind mom and I don't remember the names of any of the others. I'll tell you more later about the ones I remember.

