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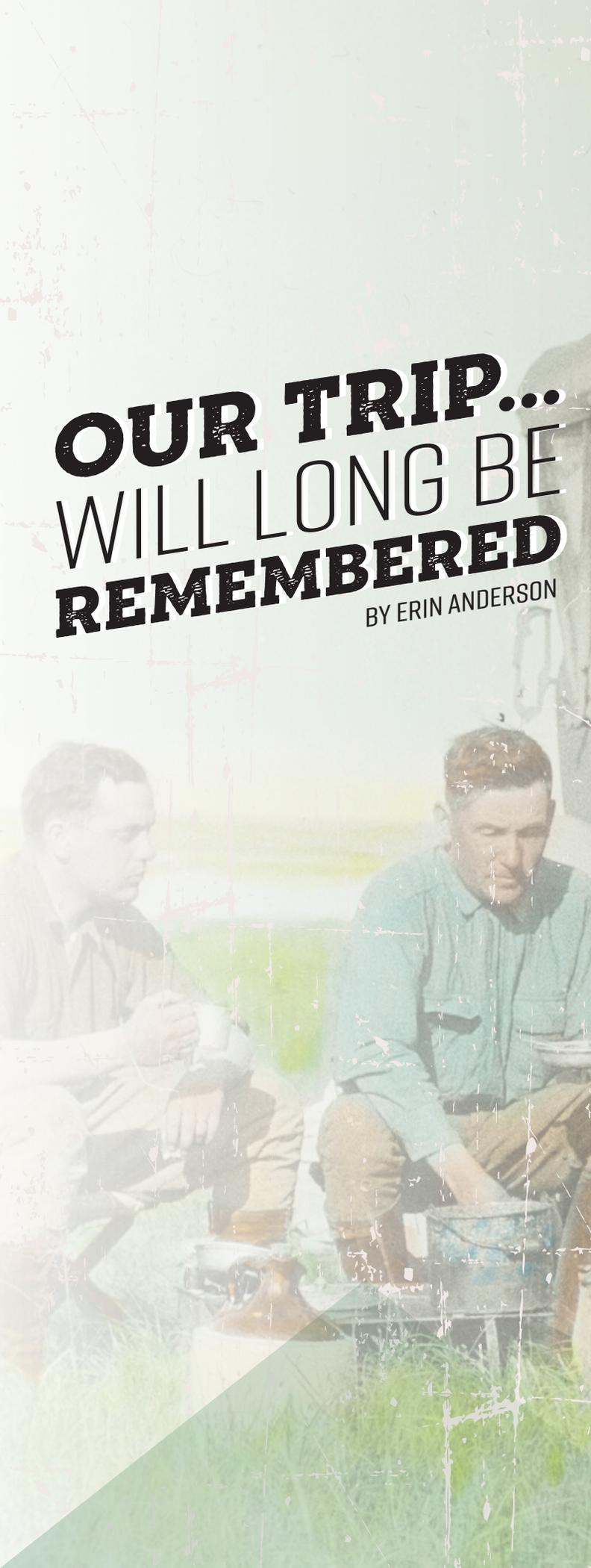
**“OUR TRIP...
WILL LONG BE
REMEMBERED”**
FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF A
BIRD WATCHING ROAD TRIP



FALL 2019 - SUMMER 2020

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OUR TRIP... WILL LONG BE REMEMBERED

BY ERIN ANDERSON

THIS EXHIBITION IS SOMEWHAT NON-TRADITIONAL IN ITS SUBJECT MATTER AND APPROACH.

It does not cover a major global or regional event or explore the life of someone famous. This is the story of two friends on an adventure, and it is a story that, as with much archival research, required disparate pieces to be assembled.

At the 1924 meeting of the newly established Iowa Ornithologists' Union, Walter Rosene and Walter Bennett planned a birding road trip to the wetlands of eastern North Dakota. This 1,600-mile trip would remain a memorable and important experience throughout their birding careers, and the detailed notes taken on this trip represent some of the earliest observations of birding areas, such as Chase Lake, that are now well known for their value to ornithological study.

Walter Melvin Rosene, Sr. spent most of his life in Ogden, Iowa. He worked his way up the ranks from bookkeeper to president at the City State Bank of Ogden and was an active member in many professional and community organizations including the Iowa Bankers Association and the Methodist church choir. Most important to our story is Rosene's interest in and commitment to conservation and ornithology. Rosene served as the first president of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, a statewide birding and ornithology club founded in 1923. He served in a number of other related roles including the secretary of the Wilson Ornithological Club, a member of the Iowa Fish and Game Commission, and a faculty member of the American School of Wildlife Protection.

Walter Waldo Bennett spent his early career lecturing on bird life and as a biological investigator for the U.S. Biological Survey. He worked as a naturalist for Yosemite National Park and as a refuge manager at Crescent Lake, Nebraska, before settling in Sioux City, Iowa, and starting an insurance firm. While Bennett had moved away from a professional career in ornithology, he remained passionate about bird study and especially bird photography and film. He was well known for his pioneering work with color film and motion picture cameras.

The anchor of this exhibit is Rosene's travel journal, which provides a detailed account of the two men's journey including mileage, route, and bird observations *and* poetic descriptions of the landscape and fascinating accounts of area history. Excerpts from this journal are spread throughout the exhibit to guide the visitor along the route through Rosene's own eyes. These excerpts are complimented by photographs and hand-colored lantern slides taken on the trip, and maps and supplemental materials place the road trip in the larger context of environmental and social concerns of the Great Plains in the early 20th century.

PUTTING TOGETHER THE PIECES OF THIS ROAD TRIP STORY

BY AMY BISHOP

Working with archives can feel like putting together a puzzle. Paging through documents, you begin to recognize patterns, find connections, discover repeated names, and trace development and change. As you find the interlocking pieces among the documents, individual details resolve into narratives; you begin to see the picture of a life.

The majority of items in this exhibition come from the Walter M. Rosene, Sr. Papers. Like many archival donations, this one began with an inquiry from Rosene's son. The initial donation was for a small but significant collection of correspondence on the founding of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. That donation became the nucleus of a related collection, the Iowa Ornithologists' Union records. That first inquiry was only the beginning of a much longer relationship. Over the next twenty years, Walter Rosene, Jr. located additional documents of his father's that he donated to the Iowa State University Library, Special Collections and University Archives, including photographs, lantern slides, glass plate negatives, and paper documents, including the trip diary featured in this exhibition.

The result of these periodic donations was a collection that grew organically. Each time new materials were added, the organization of the collection had to shift to accommodate them. The collection was grouped into different series to account for the different types of materials: lantern slides, photographs, and bird watching records. As a result, the original connections between the North Dakota travel journal and the photographs and lantern slides associated with the trip were obscured.

These connections, and the pieces of the road trip story, were revealed through the work of Erin Anderson as project coordinator for the grant-funded Avian Archives of Iowa Online project. Anderson served as the primary selector of documents to be included in this online portal of ornithology-related historical records. Paging through Rosene's trip journal, she discovered that Rosene had made notes about taking specific photographs, and many of those images could be identified in other parts of his collection. Captions on the photographs give the dates and location where the pictures were taken, as well as more detailed descriptions of the subject matter. This information enabled Erin and me, as exhibit curators, to match photographs and lantern slides to specific segments of Rosene and Bennett's journey as described in the journal. Together, the journal and the images enable the 21st century viewer to step into the shoes of these early 20th century travelers and citizen scientists.

Archival researchers know that documents can raise as many questions as they answer. These questions offer opportunities to explore resources beyond the documents themselves to find other points of view, corroborating or contradicting evidence, or historical context. In developing this exhibition, we experienced this phenomenon, as well. Particular stories and statements in the journal intrigued us, and we wanted to know more. The fruits of our research can be found throughout the display in textual panels that give information on environmental and water level changes at Stump Lake, the history of buffalo bone collecting on the Great Plains, and Native American communities in the region, particularly the Spirit Lake Reservation.

We hope you enjoy the picture created by these interlocking puzzle pieces of historical documents. Please join us now as we take the journey along with Rosene and Bennett, motoring along the 1920s highways, boating across lakes, and observing shorebirds from the cover of blinds. And if you would like to make your own discoveries among historical documents, please take a look at the Avian Archives of Iowa Online.

EXHIBITION

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL MATERIALS IN THE EXHIBITION ARE FROM THE WALTER ROSENE SR. PAPERS, MS 589.

Hand-colored lantern slide of Walter Rosene and Walter W. Bennett eating lunch. 1924. *Facsimile. Box 4, folder 44.*

Walter Rosene journal of a bird watching trip to Iowa, Minnesota, and North Dakota. 1924. *Box 13, folder 1.*

Page one from Rosene's journal when they left Sioux City, Iowa. June 14, 1924. *Facsimile. Box 13, folder 1.*

Map of entire road trip. No date. *Facsimile. Created by Erin Anderson using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors, cartography license CC BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Map of Fargo to Stump Lake. No date. *Facsimile. Created by Erin Anderson using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors, cartography license CC BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Image showing colony of Bank Swallows, North Dakota. June 16, 1924. *Box 9, folder 4.*

Photograph of umbrella blind used in photographing birds. Caption reads: "Umbrella blind used by the author in photographing birds. Note the different apertures through which photographs may be taken. Also the entrance on the left side." No date. *Box 19, folder 23.*

Image of Walter W. Bennett photographing a Black Tern's nest while both terns are in the air flying above, June 17, 1924. *Facsimile. Box 2, folder 36.*

Pages from Rosene's journal, discussing trip to Loon Island in Schindele's boat and then trip to the town of Tolna. Rosene writes "This trip will long be remembered..." June 21, 1924. *Facsimiles. Box 13, folder 1.*

Photograph of Walter Rosene standing next to a boat at Stump Lake, North Dakota. June 21, 1924. *Facsimile. Box 4, folder 33.*

Page from Rosene's diary including a discussion of changes in water level and numbers of islands. June 18, 1924. *Facsimile. Box 13, folder 1.*

Photograph of Walter Bennett with Loon Island. Caption on back: "View of Stump Lake from Lakota Bungalow showing Loon Island in the distance." June 18, 1924. *Box 18, folder 9.*

Image of posted sign at Stump Lake. Caption reads: "Government sign on what was formerly an island in Stump Lake but is now connected with the main land." June 20, 1924. *Box 18, folder 9.*





Image of a Sharp-tailed Grouse nest on the ground with several eggs and two chicks that have just hatched. Slide originally titled "Sharp-tailed Grouse Eggs Hatching." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 20, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 3, folder 40.*

Photograph of a young Ring-billed Gull perching on a rock close to the shore of Stump Lake, North Dakota. Slide originally titled "Ring Bill Chick." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 21, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 49.*

Photograph of a Double-crested Cormorant colony with three young in nests. Slide originally titled "Double Crested Cormorant Young." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 18, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 56.*

Image of a Double-crested Cormorant nest colony located on Loon Island, Stump Lake, North Dakota. Slide originally titled "Double Crested Cormorant Nests." June 18, 1924. *Box 6, folder 2.*

Three pages from Walter Rosene's journal describing a Double-crested Cormorant colony on Loon Island. June 18, 1924. Facsimiles. *Box 13, folder 1.*



Map of Stump Lake. No date. Facsimile. *Created by Erin Anderson using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors, cartography license CC BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Map of Stump Lake to Chase Lake. No date. Facsimile. *Created by Erin Anderson using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors, cartography license CC BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Pages from Rosene's journal recounting the collection of buffalo bones. Facsimile. June 21, 1924.

Print illustration of men curing buffalo hides and bones in Harpers Weekly, supplement. p. 307. Facsimile. April 4, 1874. *Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.*

Photograph of a flock of White Pelicans in flight. June 24, 1924. *Box 6, folder 1.*

Image of Ring-billed Gulls and young on the beach of Loon Island, located at Stump Lake, North Dakota. Slide originally titled "Ring Billed Gulls with Young." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 21, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 54.*

Page from Rosene's journal that includes description of driving to Chase Lake. June 14-30, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 13, folder 1.*

Photograph of two young Ring-billed Gulls standing in the sand on the shore of a lake. Slide originally titled "2 Ring Bill Chicks." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 18, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 50.*

First page of Bennett's article in Wilson Bulletin. Facsimile. *Courtesy of the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive.*

Image of four young Marsh Hawks in a nest with beaks open wide, waiting to be fed. The nest was located approximately one-half mile from Stump Lake, North Dakota. Slide originally titled "Young Marsh Hawk." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 20, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 1, folder 5.*

Image of a flock of young White Pelicans huddling together, no date. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 40.*



Photograph of a young White Pelican sitting on the ground,
no date. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 39.*

Photograph of old and young pelicans at their nest. June 24,
1924. *Box 6, folder 2.*

Image of a White Pelican nesting colony. June 24, 1924.
Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 34.*

Photograph of two young White Pelicans and an egg in a nest
located on the ground. Slide originally titled "Pelicans." The
lantern slide is hand-colored. June 24, 1924.
Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 38.*

Image from lantern slide of young pelicans standing by a lake. No
date. Facsimile. *Box 4, folder 43.*

Journal entry describing night in camp on Chase Lake. June 24,
1924. Facsimile. *Box 13, folder 1.*

**Photograph of a Pintail Duck nest containing nine eggs and
two stones.** Slide originally titled "Pintail Nest with 2 Stones."
The lantern slide is hand-colored. June 25, 1924. Facsimile. *Box
1, folder 48.*



Image of a Blue-winged Teal nest containing twelve eggs found
on Pelican Island, Chase Lake, North Dakota. The nest was
constructed with fine weed stems and very dark down. Slide
originally titled "Blue Winged Teal Nest 12Eggs." The lantern
slide is hand-colored. June 25, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 1, folder 64.*

Photograph of an American Avocet nest containing one egg and a
newly hatched chick that is leaving. Slide originally titled "Avocet
Hatching Leaving Nest." The lantern slide is hand-colored. June
25, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 1, folder 59.*

Map of Devil's Lake. No date. Facsimile. *Created by Erin Anderson
using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors, cartography license CC
BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Historic map of Graham's Island. No date. Facsimile. *Created
by Erin Anderson using ©OpenStreetMap and its contributors,
cartography license CC BY-SA (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).*

Description of Wilson's Phalarope at Mauvais Coulee in Rosene's
journal. June 26, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 13, folder 1.*

**Image of a male Wilson's Phalarope swimming in a marshy
area.** Slide originally titled "Wilson's Phalarope-Male." The
lantern slide is hand-colored. No date. Facsimile. *Box 3, folder 52.*





Group photo of the former Iowa Ornithologists' Union presidents who held the position from 1923-1932 and the 1933 president. From left to right: Dr. George O. Hendrickson (1933-1934), Dr. F.L.R. Roberts (1931-1932), Walter W. Bennett (1929-1930), Arthur J. Palas (1927-1928) and Walter M. Rosene (1923-1926). The photograph was reproduced in the June 1933 issue of "Iowa Bird Life." Photograph originally titled "Group photo of IOU presidents." May 6, 1933. *Box 19, folder 9.*

Page detailing the companions leaving Fargo for home in the rain from Rosene's journal. June 28, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 13, folder 1.*

Photograph of Walter Rosene posing with owls. Slide originally titled "Walter Rosene and Owls." April 28, 1929. *Box 9, folder 1.*

Image of Walter Rosene reading poems on a field trip in McGregor, Iowa. No date. *Box 13, folder 4.*

Photograph of faculty members from the American School of Wildlife Protection. August 1928. *Box 13, folder 4.*

Image of bird hike at McGregor, Iowa. August 1935. *Box 19, folder 11.*

Photo illustrating gumbo roads as described in Rosene's journal. August 1, 1919. Facsimile. *Courtesy of the National Archives. Series: Photographs of American Military Activities, ca. 1918 -ca. 1981. Record Group 111: Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1860-1985.*

Stories of bird tragedies: Western Meadowlark killed by garter snake. No date. *Box 19, folder 7.*

Bird migration records, North Dakota, 1924. May 5, 1925. Iowa Ornithologists' Union. *MS 166, Flat Files.*

Photograph of nest of Western Meadowlark. May 19, 1927. *Box 19, folder 7.*

Photograph of meadowlark coming up from back of her nest with food in mouth. June 5, 1929. *Box 19, folder 7.*

Letter from Edward Preble to Walter Rosene about migration report. May 27, 1925. *Flat Files.*

Photograph of garter snake trying to devour a young meadowlark in nest on Ogden Golf Grounds. August 3, 1927. *Box 19, folder 7.*

Spring poem. No date. *Box 13, folder 7.*

Page from Rosene's journal discussing end of trip, meeting on Iowa Ornithologists' Union matters, dropping off film for development, and catching train to head home. June 30, 1924. Facsimile. *Box 13, folder 1.*

Letter proposing the founding of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union by Charles R. Keyes, Dayton Stoner and T.C. Stephens. 1923. Iowa Ornithologists' Union. *MS 166, Box 4, folder 15.*

ABOUT THE AVIAN ARCHIVES OF IOWA ONLINE

Many of the documents and photographs displayed in this exhibit are from the Walter M. Rosene, Sr. Papers and are part of a much larger project called the Avian Archives of Iowa Online (avIAN), a newly launched web portal of Iowa ornithological primary sources supported by a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR). The avIAN project documents nearly 100 years of bird study in Iowa. In addition to Rosene's papers, the project includes materials from several other prominent Midwest conservationists including Philip DuMont and Frederic Leopold as well as nearly a century of records from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU). For more information and to explore the project, visit: avian.lib.iastate.edu.





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AVIAN ARCHIVES OF IOWA ONLINE (AVIAN)

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