

# Stenomylus, Baluchitherium are famous Nebraska names

by Bruce Wimmer  
NU School of Journalism

The air is humid, the temperature stifling, birds call through the dense jungles and a lizard slithers through the tall grass. Insects buzz annoyingly and a crocodile slides into the water beside a seemingly undisturbed elephant.

Sounds like Africa or maybe a remote South American jungle, but it isn't. The scene describes Nebraska . . . 20 million years ago.

"Too many people just think about Indians and settlers, maybe several hundred years, when they think about Nebraska's history," according to Dr. C. B. Schultz, curator for the University of Nebraska museum in Morrill Hall, said, "Nebraska has a very rich geologic history that goes back millions and millions of years."

The world famous paleontologist said the state was under water, shallow lakes, much of the earth's history but "when terrestrial life began, and from that time on, at least some part of Nebraska was dry land." Such a history, Schultz said, has made Nebraska important to paleontology.

While many Nebraskans are familiar

with famous names like Morton, Bryan, Pershing and Norris, few would recognize names like *Gomphotherium*, *Aphelops*, *Stenomylus hitchcocki* or *Dinotis*. Yet these names have made Nebraska equally famous.

The geologic history of the state and Morrill Hall are almost synonymous. At the University museum the history of life as far back as the Cretaceous (180 million years ago) is laid out in exhibits.

**Elephants and Giants**

One of the best known exhibits is known as Elephant Hall. There visitors can see the giant four-tusked mastodon skeleton, the woolly mammoth, the scooped-mouthed mammoth that roamed the state, and compare them with today's Indian and African elephant.

Elephant Hall is also the site of the world's largest known elephant skeleton, a mammoth found near Lincoln.

Schultz said a new exhibit, the Hall of Giants, features an 18-foot-high and 30-foot-long beast called the *Baluchitherium*. This life-like reproduction of the world's largest land mammal, a giant ancestor of the rhinoceros, will join elephants, giraffes and other

animals we consider "big" today.

The museum is also proud of a skeleton of the *Aphelops*, the world's largest mounted skeleton of an American rhinoceros. Variations of this animal roamed Nebraska during the Tertiary.

The animal most important to the state's fame, however, Schultz said, is the camel. The origin of all camels, from the llama of South America to the humped backs of Asia, can be traced to their ancestral home in Nebraska over 35 million years ago.

Camels haven't been missing from the state for a very long period of time, geologically speaking, Schultz said. Twelve-inch high gazelle-like camels lived in Nebraska only 8000 years ago.

The remains of the chief predators of the early camel are also often found in the state. This fierce predator, the saber-toothed tiger, is the same animal that is the house pet of the Flintstone cartoon family.

Nebraska was also a tromping ground for the dinosaur, giants of the Reptilian era.

The most common fossil dinosaur

found in the Cornhusker state is the duck-billed dinosaur called the *Hadrosaurus* or *Trachodonts*. They frequented the shores of rivers and lakes that dotted eastern Nebraska during the latter part of the Cretaceous era, 80 million years ago.

Also on display is the head of the most terrifying dinosaur of all time, the flesh-eating *Tyranosaurus* "Rex," the king of dinosaurs. This reptile stood nearly 20 feet high and is the largest terrestrial flesh-eater in history. Its knife-like teeth were often over seven inches long.

Also on display is a full skeleton of a *Stegosaurus*, a plant eating dinosaur with a spine covered with bony plates and long spikes in its tail.

A host of other fossils from the dinosaur era are on display in Morrill Hall. Visitors can see everything from the femur (thigh bone) of a 40 ton *Brontosaurus* to the flying reptile.

If individuals don't know what role the *Picary Platygony Leptorius* played in the history of Nebraska, Morrill Hall has that answer and many more.



The *Baluchitherium*, world's largest land mammal, dwarfs the elephants in Morrill Hall and the homo sapiens looking on.

# Tooth transplants are routine, safe and 90 per cent successful

by Dana Parsons  
NU School of Journalism

The life-saving successes of heart transplants made up perhaps the most dramatic medical story of the past decade.

These operations no doubt caught the public's fancy because of the difficulty and risk involved in the process of substituting one human heart for another. Failure meant death and even a successful operation could not insure a person against a future coronary malfunction.

But there is one kind of transplant which has become a fairly routine surgical task, so much so that it is successful about 90 per cent of the time. This is the tooth transplant.

Dr. Alvin E. Kleitsch, assistant professor of oral surgery at the University of Nebraska's Dental College, said the success ratio is high because surgeons are very careful in choosing patients for dental transplants.

"Several conditions must be met before we'll even consider a dental transplant," Kleitsch said. "First we must be sure the person's oral history warrants such an operation.

"Several conditions must be met before we'll even consider a dental transplant," Kleitsch said. "First we

must be sure the person's oral history warrants such an operation.

"Second, we must be sure there is adequate width between the teeth where the transplant is to be made," he said. "Also, there must be no pathological condition present in the host site."

**Patient is Donor**

Tooth transplants are somewhat different from other transplants in that the new tooth comes from the patient himself. Kleitsch said the most frequent recipients are young people whose teeth have not fully grown.

"There is often a loss of the first permanent molar in the teenager," he said. "We can take the developing third molar and transplant it to the site of the first molar."

This is possible, Kleitsch said, because the third molar can grow back whereas the first molar, once lost, cannot. "After the transplantation," Kleitsch said, "acrylic wire is tied in a figure-8 pattern between the teeth on either side

of the transplant. This affords stability to the new tooth."

As would be expected, much progress has been made in dental transplants since they were originally performed in the early 1950's.

**Few Transplants Here**

"The operations used to be done in the surgery ward," Kleitsch noted. "Now we can do them here at the school."

Kleitsch recalled only one transplant performed at the Dental College in the past few years. It was done for a 16-year-old boy in February, 1969.

"As far as we know, that operation was a complete success," Kleitsch said. "We don't do many transplants here because the operations are a little beyond the undergraduate level."

Despite the relative ease of transplanting teeth, the practice still is not widespread. "There are so many other ways to save teeth," Kleitsch said, "that we just don't need to use it that often. It is sort of a safe last resort.

"When we transplant teeth we have

to consider the neighboring teeth. People don't realize that the damage done to one tooth affects the whole dentition.

"We can't predict with complete accuracy that the new tooth will grow properly. If it doesn't, then it can affect the teeth above or on either side of it."

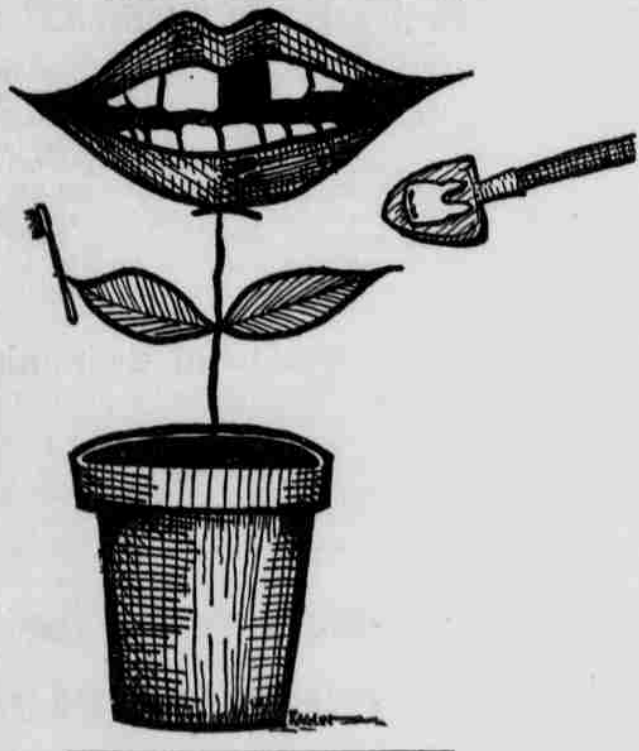
**Simple Operation**

The mechanics of the operation are simple," Kleitsch said. "We can use either local or general anesthesia," he noted. "After the transplant has been inserted, it must remain immobilized for two or three weeks."

What risks are involved in dental transplants?

"Since we do select our cases rather discriminately, we are usually successful," Kleitsch said, "but there are some risks.

"Since we are manipulating with tissues during the operation, there is the fear of making a mistake. The only other problem is that sometimes the new tooth will stop developing and fail. But we can't predict this."



## Coach trains future stars

Groups of lanky boys of various sizes who look more youthful than the average college student head toward the Coliseum. They are dressed in shorts and T-shirts.

What, did the All-State program start a section in basketball? No, it's the Cornhusker Basketball School under the direction of basketball coach Joe Cipriano.

The basketball clinic runs for four weeks, beginning June 7 and ending July 4. Each week a different group of boys between 11 and 11th grade age will participate. A total of 510 boys are registered.

The youths are divided into three leagues, majors, minors and midgets. In the morning they receive individual instruction in basketball fundamentals. Afternoons are taken with team skill and league games are played in the evenings.

## Summer Nebraskan

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