

## Obituaries

### Former SVP President William D. Turnbull Passed Away Oct. 5

*from the Field Museum of Natural History*

It is with great sadness that the Geology Department marks the passing of Curator Emeritus William D. Turnbull. Bill passed away Wednesday following a short illness. Born in 1922 in Milwaukee, Bill attended the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and graduated in 1942. After serving in the Army during WWII, Bill joined the Field Museum as a fossil vertebrate preparator in 1946.

Bill earned his PhD degree in Paleozoology from the University of Chicago while working at the museum, and ascended to the post of Assistant Curator of Fossil Mammals in 1956. He was promoted to Associate Curator in 1963, and again to Curator in 1973. He also held lecturer status at the University of Chicago and University of Indiana at South Bend, and was a research associate at the University Texas at Austin and the Western Australian Museum. He served the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology as Vice-President from

1975-1976 and as President from 1976-1977. Bill retired in 1987, but continued to come to work daily as long as weather and health permitted.

Bill was an avid field paleontologist and his collecting efforts ranged widely in the US from the South to the western states, as well as farther afield in Australia. He made significant contributions to the Museum's collections, and his collections of Eocene mammals from the Washakie Basin are spectacular. Several of Bill's most spectacular finds are on display in "Evolving Planet," including the mosasaur *Globidens*, the turtle *Naomichelys*, and the aïstopod amphibian *Pseudophlegethontia turnbullorum* named in honor of Bill and his first wife, Priscilla. Bill's scholarly publications ranged widely, covering topics such as jaw mechanics of archaic Mesozoic mammals, descriptions of marsupial and rodent faunas of the Australian late Neogene, to Pleistocene mammals of the Midwest. Bill was working on manuscripts on the remarkable Eocene finds he had made in the Washakie Basin in Wyoming, the mammalian fauna from the Madura Cave in Western Australia, and on the history of the department, when he fell ill. During his long tenure at the Museum, Bill interacted with generations of scientists, ranging from Elmer Riggs, the first vertebrate paleontologist in the Museum's history, to the current cohort of curators. He collaborated with colleagues from across the globe. He will be remembered as a dedicated professional, a wonderful citizen to the department and the institution, and as a warm and caring family man. His legacy lives on in innumerable ways, including in the many specimens and scholarly contributions with which he enriched our exhibits and science, and in the memories we all have of his life as a Museum scientist.

Bill is survived by his wife Hedy, his stepdaughter Eve Band and her husband Steve and their two daughters; his granddaughter Lindsey Goodwin; his stepson Harry Brotman and his two daughters; his brother Alan Turnbull, sister Jane Przedpelski, and their spouses and children.