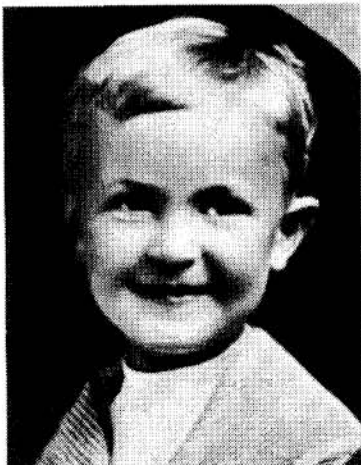
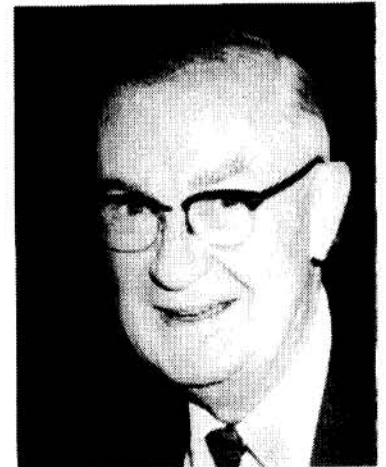
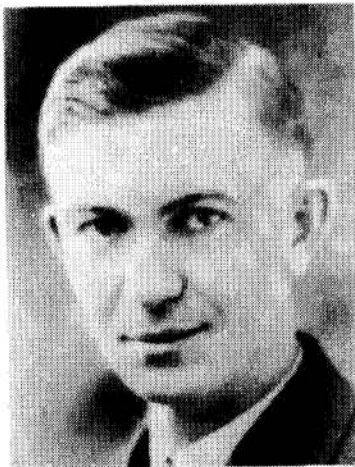
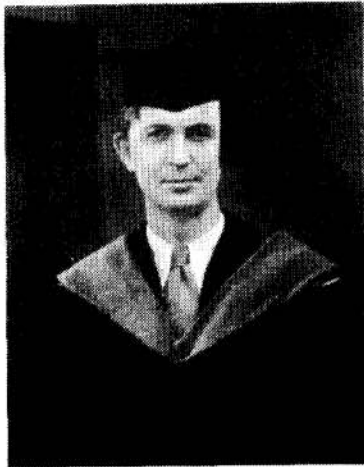


Aurora Sporealis

December 1995



91st

Birthday

Carl J. Eide



**Department of Plant Pathology
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108**

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

Greetings from all of us here in the Department of Plant Pathology. We want to wish all of you a wonderful and productive year and special success in your research activities.

This past 1994-95 academic year all members of the department had their usual responsibilities plus the added adventure of a CSRS Review. We spent two days in a December 1994 retreat to plan our report document and to make plans for the reviews. The most valuable part of the exercise was our self scrutiny and our plans for the future. The review took place April 10-14, 1995. Panel members were Walt Stevenson (Extension), Laura Sweets (Industry), John Hill, Jo Handelsman, Don Mathre (Teaching-Research) and Ken Barker, Chairperson. They were a very able, professional and helpful committee. Like most departments we have taken our retrenchment lumps. Since 1988 we have lost 5.25 Civil Service positions, 4 Faculty members, 1.25 Research Assistants, and 1 position in our Plant Disease Clinic. We have been cut some 30% in State and Federal funds during this period, however our faculty have increased their funding from outside sources 86%. Our department is number one in the college in terms of number of research papers per professor! The panel was complementary regarding our senior faculty and their research, teaching and outreach activities. They were especially pleased and had high praise regarding the performance of the new faculty members. We asked the review panel to rank us among the nations departments of Plant Pathology. They placed us somewhere between 4-6. With help from all of our present faculty and staff we of course intend to improve our position and we pledge our very best efforts toward that goal. The review panel also indicated we had the most enviable and best endowment plans of any Plant Pathology department in the U.S. Credit for this of course is due our Old Timers who have continued to encourage and support us. In these days of decreasing State and Federal funds, our endowment funds have allowed us to keep our Library and to enrich our teaching and research efforts.

Now just a few news items: In September 1995 our first PhD with a molecular biology/resistance gene mapping emphasis was graduated. The distinguished scholar was Dr. Vergel Concibido who completed his work with Professor Nevin Young. His thesis title was — "Identification and Characterization of Soybean Cyst Nematode Resistance Genes Using DNA Markers."

This past August we celebrated Dr. Eide's 91st birthday anniversary. Carl and Mrs. Eide were with us for morning coffee and it was a very special occasion. Dr. Eide enjoys receiving correspondence so a note to 2228 Hillside Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108, USA from Old Timers will bring him a lot of good cheer. We have a new Dean and a new name for our College. The new Dean is Michael V. Martin, an economist, with a lot of energy and we believe Mike is going to be an effective spokesperson for the College and Agriculture. The new name of our college is: College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences.

Phil Larsen is back in the department and is getting tooled up to teach and do research in Urban Plant Pathology. Phil still has a one-half time appointment as Director of the Kellogg Initiative. Some of the departments travelers were Drs. Chet Mirocha and Bill Bushnell who were in Japan this autumn to participate and celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the U.S.-Japan Physiology of Plant Disease Symposium. Both Bill and Chet presented papers at this symposium as well as at the original conclave. Dr. Linda Kinkel gave a paper at the Microbiology of Aerial Plant Surfaces Symposium in France this fall. Dr. Sagar Krupa had air pollution conferences in Finland and Mexico in June, Dr. Robert Blanchette in Viet Nam in forest decay problems, and Dr. Richard Zeyen was in Wales working with OT Dr. Timothy Carver on barley mildew research.

There continues to be a lot of very wonderful and exciting research going on in the Department. This fall we've had a series of seminars by faculty summarizing their work. Seminars were given by Ruth Dill-Macky, Linda Kinkel, Chester Mirocha, Frank Pflieger, Deborah Samac, Ward Stienstra, Les Szabo, and Richard Zeyen. In light of this wonderful work we remain positive about tomorrow. It would be fun to know how professors and administrators viewed the times during the 1930's when resources for research were really limited. From what we remember from visiting with Drs. E. C. Stakman and J. J.

Christensen, and from gleanings from Carl J. Eide and other Old Timers, they were so busy solving problems and laying foundations for future successes in Agriculture that they did not have time for hand wringing. That's our way of doing business too because good teaching — good research — good outreach always pays off down the road. As the old wagon driver suggested when they came to a long hard hill, "Them thats going on with us, get out and push. Them that ain't, get out of the way." Have a wonderful time pushing your teaching, research, and outreach activities this academic year.

Sincerely,



Neil A. Anderson

EDITORIAL

Do Scientists Become Obsolete?

Perhaps it is the specter that most haunts working men and women: the planned obsolescence of people that is of a piece with the planned obsolescence of the things they make. Or sell. "Studs Terkel, Working."

Recently, I was given pause to think about what we do as plant pathologists and scientists in general and what I do specifically. The reason for this introspection is, a friend of mine, about my age, recently told me he was obsolete. He proceeded to confess that most of what he had done throughout his adult life was now being done faster and more accurately by a computer program. My friend has a Business Masters from a respectable university but his perception of what he had become was, he was a nurse maid to the machine. "In reality," he confessed, "my work could be done by any person with normal intelligence, a high school education and minimal computer skills. I need to redefine what I do, to identify the uniqueness of my product." My friend, in fact, has a good head for business and understands the company he works for. He is a valuable asset who is unique in what he does. He should stop thinking of the computer program as his replacement and start thinking of it as a tool.

I'm writing this editorial on my word processor. Because of frequent disruptions, advancing old age, poor memory and a general lack of cerebral ability, I am forced to frequently correct, add, subtract or otherwise edit words and phrases; however, all are done with relative ease. The word processing program in this wonderful computer is state of the art; however, in a short time it will be obsolete, a technological dinosaur to be cast

aside. I may eventually be forced to learn word processing on another program and computer to maintain the veneer of being scientifically "with it". I wrote my PhD thesis on a typewriter and did statistics on a mechanical calculator that sounded like a clacking abacus and was only somewhat faster. I will struggle. Young people who have been succored on modern technology will relearn easily. Admittedly I take some small consolation in the thought that present graduate students will undoubtedly share my present angst when their familiar tools become obsolete and they will be forced to struggle with technology with which they are not conversant. However, at the risk of sounding priggish, neither I or the graduate student will become obsolete.

Although the machinery we work with inevitably becomes obsolete, scientists, unlike Studs Terkel's haunted working men and women, have the capability within themselves to defray obsolescence. Education, imagination, will power and "grantsmanship", in a sense, allow a scientist to control his destiny. I suggest that scientists become obsolete when they confuse the machinery used in the research process with the reasoning used in the scientific method. One is constantly in flux, the other immutable.

Dr. Carl J. Eide was born 28 years after the Battle of the Little Bighorn. His life has spanned technological events from buggy whips to laser beams at the grocery checkout counter. However, it could be argued that a plant pathologist does research in 1995 much the same way it was done in 1904. The basic premise is still to control plant diseases, regardless if you are working on the most sophisticated piece of equipment in a laboratory or conducting a survey in a field study with a

