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Personnel profile - Alvin L. Throne

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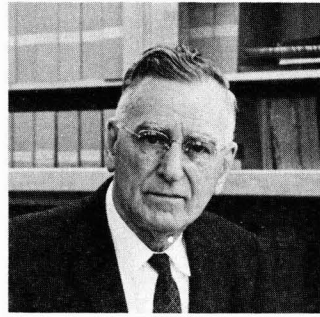
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-- Alvin L. Throne



The UWM Field Stations Committee is composed of dedicated individuals interested in preserving natural areas for educational and scientific purposes. Success in the acquisition of such areas is often the result of the extra effort of one person. Such is the role played by Professor Alvin L. Throne, the Chairman of a previous committee and a former member of the present one. Until this *Bulletin* came into existence, there was no way to inform his many students and friends of his contributions, so this belated article is an expression of appreciation to Professor Throne for his years of dedicated service.

A biographical sketch of Professor Throne was compiled by Mrs. Gertrude M. Scott (*Wisconsin Academy Review* 12 (2):46. Spring, 1965) which will not be repeated here. Instead, this article is chiefly concerned with Professor Throne's participation in the acquisition and development of the Cedar-Sauk Field Station. It is also intended to give the readers a chronology of events which led to the present status of this facility.

Professor Throne's interest in the Cedarburg Bog and adjacent area extends back over forty years. It was one of his favorite places for field trips with his biology classes. He believed intensely that students should have intimate contact with natural biotic communities, and many of his students will vividly recall tramping through mucky terrain or stomping through deep snow to see the plant zonation, pitcher plants and evergreen ericaceous shrubs. He was equally adept at unfolding details about animal and bird life from tracks, droppings and evidences of browsing. His analyses and presentations were so vivid and informative that students not only praised his teaching but many were stimulated to enter careers in biology.

During his tenure as a staff member, beginning in 1926, he witnessed the transformation of the former State Normal School, to a State Teachers College, and finally its merger with the Extension Division of the University of Wisconsin to form the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee in 1956. In the present institution he was one of the group of biologists in the Departments of Botany and Zoology interested in obtaining a natural area for education and research activities. This group, named the Natural Areas Committee, approached the University administration to secure such land. From 1957 to 1961 this group continued its interest in this project, without success; however, the Provost (now the Chancellor) of UWM thought this request had merit and on March 2, 1962, appointed a UWM Arboretum Com-

mittee, with Professor Throne as Chairman, to look into ways and means of obtaining such property. Although no money was granted, the tremendous work of this Committee, particularly the Chairman, did much to pave the way for the eventual acquisition of the present Cedar-Sauk Station.

The Committee met frequently and on April 24, 1962 decided that the area most suitable was a 200-acre tract of upland hardwoods and bog area adjacent to Cedarburg Bog in the Town of Saukville (Ozaukee County). This was reported to the Dean of the College of Letters and Science and the Provost. Since there were no guide lines for acquiring such land for the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, Professor Throne and this Committee had to explore all possibilities to obtain title to this site. Professor Throne carried out most of the correspondence and spent many long hours meeting various persons who might assist the Committee in this project. Land descriptions and ownership titles had to be determined, arrangements had to be made for soil surveys, appraisals of property were needed and possible sources of funds had to be explored. Outside funding agencies were contacted, particularly the National Science Foundation, and these organizations required detailed proposals to be submitted for evaluation. Throughout most of 1962 and 1963 many hours of his time were given to this project, without any prospects of success.

Fortunately, the Nature Conservancy, a fledgling organization in Wisconsin, decided to make this area its first major project in eastern Wisconsin. The National Office of this organization agreed to lend some funds for the project, which enabled options to be secured from owners of various parcels of this land. The Wisconsin Chapter of this organization conducted a successful fund raising campaign, during the latter part of 1963 and the early part of 1964, and purchase of the property was assured.

After most of the details of the task were completed and because of the strenuous nature of the project, Professor Throne stepped down as Chairman, on July 1, 1964, but remained a member of the Committee until his retirement from the University in January, 1965. Prior to his retirement, the Committee was reconstituted and renamed the Field Stations Committee. This change was made because it was felt that programs for this area are very different from those of an arboretum, and that granting agencies are more receptive to contributing funds for basic research activities associated with a field station. Although the National Science Foundation did not support the original request which he and the Arboretum Committee submitted, a revised proposal submitted by the new Committee was supported with sufficient funds for the construction of a small laboratory and the erection of a fence about the premises. Professor Throne remained on the present Committee long enough to see the initiation of this work.

Professor Throne now resides in Waukesha, Wisconsin, but is continuing to pursue his biological interests, especially in the insect group known as the Neuroptera. He occasionally visits the Cedar-Sauk Field Station and we hope he will continue to be a visitor for a long time.

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