

RAISING THE ALLOSAURUS:

May 16, 2002

Dear Doug:

I wanted to give you the update on the incredible ALLOSAURUS skeleton your team excavated on last week. Today, Thursday the 16th of May, we found the right lower jaw of our Allosaurus. It lay just beyond where Mark DeRosa of Creation Expeditions, had told Dr. Bruce to dig for the skull. At that exact spot, we uncovered another eight or nine vertebrae. They were articulated! Just inches away a young Mr. Blanco Fossil Museum team member, Jordan Hall uncovered a bit of dark brown bone. As I began to trace the bone, it fanned out. As is often the case, it was familiar, but confusing. Several bones seemed to be a possibility. Finally, etching downward through the rock-hard sandstone, a long slit in the bone began to appear. Peter DeRosa, also of the Florida based Creation Expeditions, was looking down into the recess. At the same time, we realized what it might be. "Don't say it!" I smiled as he muffled his remark. Sure enough it was a lower jaw! The excitement was infectious. But was it? Another veteran Mt. Blanco team member, Phillip Hall and I, quickly calculated how far it would be from the back of the jaw to the last tooth in the giant lizards jaw. We were exactly right. But getting there took Peter and I a torturous hour to finally expose the tooth. Just as we hoped a perfect tooth one inch long was finally exposed to human view after so many thousands of years!

I must confess, I am not one to get emotional over a fossil bone. I have seen thousands. But, I was not alone. Several of us had tears welling up into our eyes. No, it was not only the excitement of finding something as rare as an Allosaurus, but the fact that so many hardships had been overcome in the process was an emotional experience. These magnificent beasts of God's creation are rare. This one is over 60% complete, a rarity in itself. It measures 22 feet in length, 10 feet tall and had a head over a yard long!

Let me tell you some of the exciting facts of this animal. The first bones excavated after Dana Forbes, of the Forbes Fossil Ranch, found them were over twelve feet of vertebrae. But the significance of that was that they were all still articulated, just as the animal lived, and had not been moved since it was buried! All of the small "Y" shaped chevron bones under the tailbones were still exactly where they had been placed by the hand of God when He created it! One has to realize that in this part of Colorado, vast sections of the earth have been stood on their sides. At this location, our site is under layers of rock, two hundred feet thick. There is a giant long-necked dinosaur fifty feet above it, and another one hundred and fifty feet below it and others even deeper. The bones are enormous. All of them are buried in flowing mud and water! This is not all. There is wood from trees mixed with it. The amazing thing is that some of them are both petrified and un-petrified in the same piece of wood! The animal is lying on a bed of leaves and plant debris. On another dinosaur excavation of the same Morrison group of animals, a huge log was excavated. The log was totally petrified, but the bark was not. It was carbon dated at 5,000 years.

What about the skull? The seasoned bone digger, never expects to find the skull. When one finds it, the feeling is wonderful. As we began to excavate between the lower jaw and the eight now articulated vertebrae, a strange set of bones began to emerge. They do not look like anything familiar. Tonight, we projected a drawing of the skeleton of our Allosaurus up to scale, and we all agreed that the several bones of the back of the skull strongly resemble the strange bones. Tomorrow, we will chisel through some very unrelenting rock and find out. The significance of this find cannot be underestimated.

God bless you

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