

# Milestones at the Ross Biological Reserve

Ecologists celebrate Lindsey's 100th birthday in May 2007.



**CELEBRATE**  
THESE MILESTONES  
WITH US AT THE LINDSEY  
LAB ON THE SATURDAY OF  
HOMECOMING WEEKEND, OCTOBER  
3, 2009. WE WILL HAVE AN OPEN  
HOUSE WITH PANCAKE BREAKFAST  
FROM 8AM UNTIL NOON, WITH HIKES  
AND A GATHERING TO CELEBRATE THE  
RESERVE AT 10:00.  
FAMILIES WELCOME.



Story and Photos by: Dr. Kerry Rabenold

This year we are celebrating the **60th anniversary of the Ross Biological Reserve** and the 10th anniversary of the **Alton A. Lindsey Field Laboratory**. Dr. Lindsey would have been 102 this May, and it has been nearly 50 years since he and students started characterizing the Reserve's forests in a tree census. It has been more than 70 years since he returned from the second Byrd expedition to the South Pole, and more than 30 since he was named Eminent Ecologist by the Ecological Society of America for a career that stretched from pole to pole. "Few investigators, past or present, have achieved excellence in such varied aspects of ecology," the ESA article noted. As has been the case for six decades, dozens of undergraduate and graduate students from several departments benefitted from Lindsey's legacy this year by conducting ecological research in the Reserve, on topics from songbird communication to long-term changes in the species composition of the forest. Ecology faculty and caretaker alumni contributed funds to pay for the decadal tree census that establishes the Ross Reserve as one of the best-studied cases of forest dynamics in the country. Ecology grad students recently organized an exotic-plant-removal day, and Biology Club volunteers planted trees demonstrating the Biological Sciences community is still very committed to the Reserve.

## MEDAL OF HONOR



**Elizabeth Lindsey**, pictured here with her daughter Louise Lindsey, wears her late husband's recently restored Congressional Medal of Honor. Dr. Alton A. Lindsey served as a vertebrate zoologist for the Byrd Antarctic Expedition II of 1933-35. According to a New York Times article about Dr. Lindsey, published after his death in 1999, the pioneer ecologist was believed to be the last living scientist from the Antarctica expeditions led by Admiral Richard E. Byrd. Elizabeth thinks she is the last living widow.

The Times article goes on to say "Dr. Lindsey lived his life at the environmental ramparts. He studied penguins and seals in the Antarctic, permafrost in the Arctic and an enormous lava bed in New Mexico that became the 114,000-acre El Malpais National Monument. He studied starlings, volcanic vegetation, ducks and the sand dunes on the Indiana shore of Lake Michigan, which became the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore partly as a result of his labors. Dr. Lindsey's influence is suggested by the many things named after him. At Admiral Byrd's suggestion, 12 islands on the coast of Antarctica are named the Lindsey Islands. A new genus and species of bug was named after him, the *Lindseyus coastus*. Purdue University dedicated the Alton Lindsey Field Laboratory at its Ross Biological Reserve, which Dr. Lindsey founded in 1949."



"What he loved the most, though," Elizabeth said, "was surveying nature with his students, writing about, and working to preserve the natural areas of Indiana during his 27-year tenure at Purdue University."

Article taken from Keeping You In the Know at Montreau.