

# The Lost World

## A Childhood of Adventure

from *"The T. rex & the Apple Orchard"* by Wayne Thompson



### STORYBOOK LAND

One part of Dinosaur Land was the fanciful "Storybook Land" in which dinosaurs and other extinct creatures came to life to form a musical ragtime band, a city jail complete with jailed cave men and dinosaur guards, and

other magical scenarios. Storybook Land was for three young kids the gateway to Carbonero Creek a once-wild and untouched area of Scotts Valley where rich deposits of turtles and arrowheads could be found.

### THE ENCHANTED FOREST

The Enchanted Forest, also known as the Tree Circus and Mystery Forest, was the creation of Axel Erlandson, a farmer from Turlock, CA, whom my father Larry met in the late 1950's. I spent half my childhood growing up in the Enchanted Forest. They struck up a friendship and when Axel could no longer care for his



### Dinosaur Land

This area of the Lost World Amusement Park was where I spent the first 18 years of my life as a young boy. Growing up in a somewhat "real life" Jurassic Park provided countless hours of wonder and a myriad of whimsical stories. I remember when the motors inside the animatronic Triceratops would break down my brother and I would jump for joy because it meant we could climb inside the belly of the huge beast to rock the giant I-beams supporting the head and growl in our best dinosaur voice for the customers strolling through the park.

Wayne Thompson



incredible creations my father purchased the Circus and built the Lost World around them so that passers-by on Hwy 17 would see the large dinosaurs and be attracted to the Forest. These 70 incredible trees were each a unique friend to a young and impressionable boy who grew up in the forest.

## GREETING THE PUBLIC AS THEY ENTERED THE LOST WORLD



***Favorite Friend;*** A cave boy.

***Best conversation as a kid;*** My animatronic tree; with my mom on the other end at the microphone greeting customers.

The Castle at the Lost World is where I grew up. There was a gift shop in front and our quarters to the rear. I remember best spending summer nights in the park. The entrance to the park via our animatronic tree; it would bat its eyelashes, move its “limbs” and we would talk to customers through the microphone. The Triceratops with the goldfish pond below it was my favorite reading spot after school. It was a signature attraction and I remember it arriving on the long tractor trailer one day when I was less than five. Dino the baby “brontosaurus” was a favorite of children for photographs. My mother’s belt from one of her

dressess formed the leash harness. This tree still stands today at the front of Gene Bustichi’s Tree Circus Center on Scotts Valley Drive



The Lost World was filled with magic and wonder for the children who grew up in the Enchanted Forest, Storybook Land, and Dinosaur Land.

## ANATOMY OF THE ENTRANCE

This is the castle where I lived growing up.

Entrance to the park via our animatronic tree.

I remember playing on these huge redwood rounds as a boy.



This tree still stands today.

The Triceratops with the goldfish pond below it was my favorite reading spot after school.

Dino the baby “brontosaurus”



## A WORLD OF WONDER

Little did I know it at the time but in a very fundamental way my experience with dinosaurs, sunday school, and the sense of place I was immersed in while my mother ran the park would sculpt my dichotomous world-view for years to come and allowed me a perspective of life that would be difficult to duplicate today; all childhoods are unique.



## THE MYSTERY FOREST AKA THE TREE CIRCUS

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