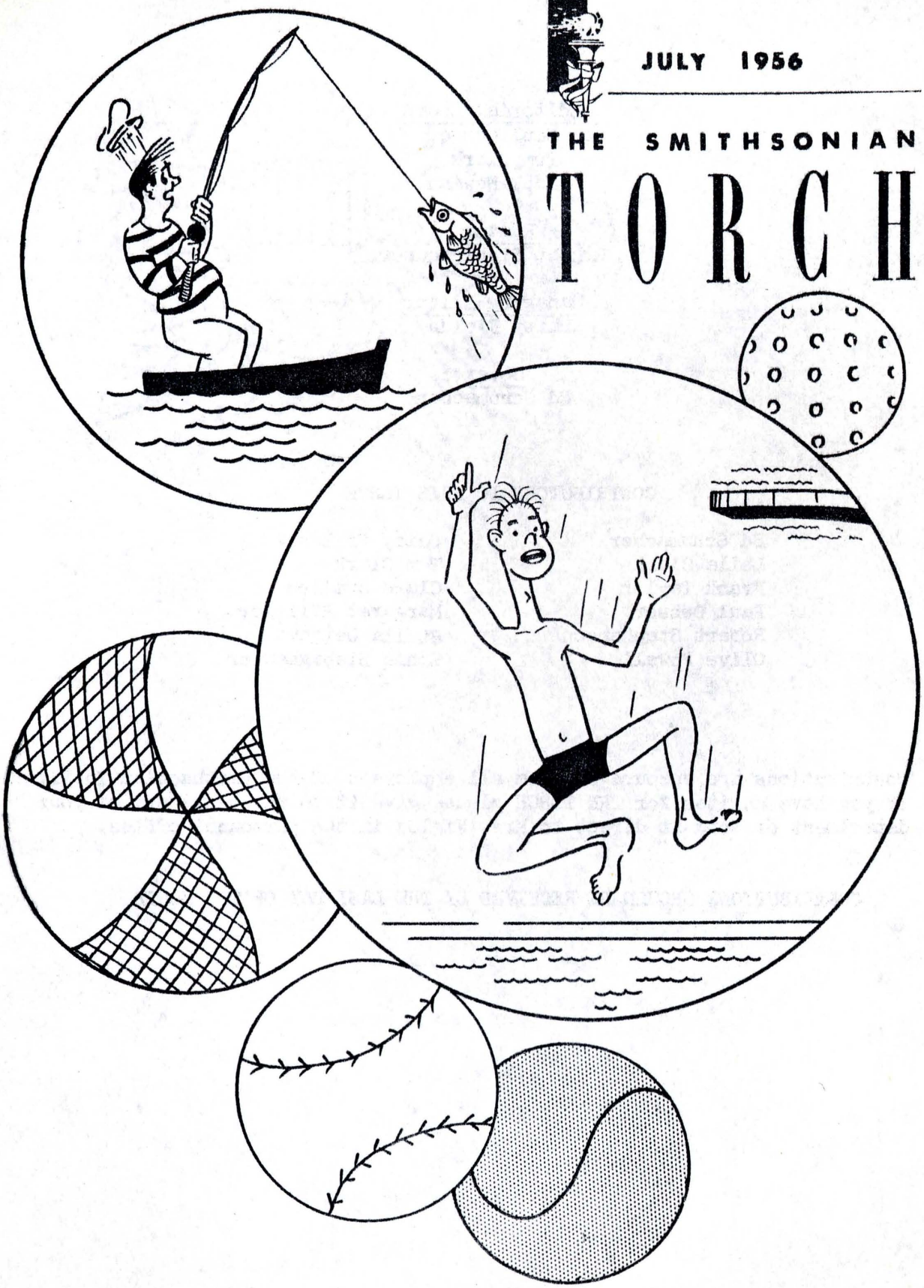
JULY 1956

THE SMITHSONIAN

TORCH



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Contributions are encouraged from all employees of the Smithsonian Institution. If you have an item for THE TORCH please give it to the secretary of your department or send it direct to Mrs. Fields in the personnel office.

CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY THE LAST DAY OF THE MONTH

THE SMITHSONIAN TORCH

(Published monthly for the employees of the Smithsonian Institution)

July 1956 Number 17

HOPE SIMMONS

Probably few members of the Smithsonian staff were more widely known throughout the Institution than Hope Hanna Simmons, Chief of the Acquisitions Section of the Library, who died in George Washington University Hospital on June 16 after a short illness.

Her long years of service in the Library and in the responsible positions she had held at one time or another in the Credit Union, Group Hospitalization, and the Federal Employees Union had put her in touch with almost everybody here. Her official contacts were not purely impersonal, however. Hope Simmons was intensely interested in people. She was extremely easy to talk to, and she had the rare and happy gift of making each person with whom she talked feel important. Quick in the expression of her sympathies, she was also practical in finding ways and means to help anybody who was in trouble. She will be greatly missed.

Hope Hanna was born in Indianapolis on Nov. 16, 1898. She received her elementary education in Indiana and attended Oxford College in Oxford, Ohio. She was married to Edwin J. Simmons in 1924, and two children, Henry T. and Ellen Hanna, were born to them. Mrs. Simmons joined the Smithsonian Library staff in 1927 and had served most efficiently from that time until her death.

Mrs. Simmons had always been interested in the support of cancer research, and although cancer was not the cause of her own death, upon request of her children, expressions of sympathy from her many friends took the form of contributions to the American Cancer Society.

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33 x 0126 = ?

The answer is $36,000,000. These characters are the symbol of the appropriations for the Museum of History and Technology. When President Eisenhower signed the appropriation bill for the Interior Department and related agencies on June 13 at Walter Reed Hospital he completed the action which appropriated to the Smithsonian Institution the entire amount estimated for the cost of constructing the new museum building.

On June 11 the partners and two associates of the firm of McKim, Mead and White met with members of the Joint Congressional Committee to report the progress made in the design of the building. They showed the Committee members more than 20 models of buildings which had evolved from studies of the Smithsonian's requirements and the site. The members and the architects concurred in their choice of designs which offered the best possibilities for further development.

It is expected that one or two more meetings will result in recommendations that will determine the general shape of the exterior of the building.

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NEW RESIDENT NATURALIST FOR CZBA

The appointment of Dr. Carl B. Koford as resident naturalist of the Canal Zone Biological Area has been announced by Dr. Carmichael. Dr. Koford assumed his new duties on June 30.

The new resident naturalist succeeds Mr. James Zetek, who, because of illness, recently retired after 45 years of service in the Canal Zone.

Dr. Koford has been a research zoologist at the University of California's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, where he has conducted research on the distribution, behavior, and ecology of birds and mammals.

Probably the best known of his works is a monograph on the California condor, published by the National Audubon Society. For that work he was made an elective member of the American Ornithologists' Union and received the terrestrial ecology award of the American Wildlife Society.

Dr. Koford has also conducted research at the Hastings Natural History Reservation in California and has collected many specimens of birds and mammals at localities in Mexico and South America.

He spent two years in Peru and Chile, making collections and gathering material for a treatise on the vicuna and for papers on tinamous, rodents, and other animals of the high Andes. En route to Peru he made his first acquaintance with Barro Colorado Island and the Canal Zone, where he will now be stationed.

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TO HELP DISTRIBUTE $90 MILLION

Dr. Carmichael has been appointed as member of a special committee to recommend a plan for the distribution of the 90 million dollars that the Ford Foundation awarded privately supported medical schools last Christmas.

H. Rowan Gaither, Jr., chairman of the board and president of the Ford Foundation, announced the names of the officers and members of the committee early in June. He said that Dr. Lee DuBridge, president of the California Institute of Technology, will be chairman and Dr. Carlyle Jacobsen, executive dean for medical education of the State University of New York, will be executive vice chairman.

There are 12 other members of the committee.

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RATED OUTSTANDING

Dean E. Clark, specimen custodian on the staff of the Missouri Basin Project at Lincoln, Nebr., was awarded an outstanding performance rating on May 28.

This performance rating was based on outstanding work in his department, which principally is that of receiving, processing, cataloging, preparing for storage, and maintaining archaeological materials.

Over the past 10 years, this work has involved more than a half-million specimens, and during that time there has not been a known instance where a specimen has been misplaced or lost.

Mr. Clark also has improvised a great deal of laboratory equipment. And he has done such an efficient job in his own work that it has been unnecessary to hire additional laboratory assistants on many occasions.

As a result of the saving in funds made possible by his efficiency, Mr. Clark also was presented with an Award of Merit for the past year. This award carried with it a cash stipend of $90.

SATELLITE TRACKING

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory this month began a monthly supplement to Sky and Telescope, an astronomical journal. The new supplement is called Bulletin for Visual Observers of Satellites.

In the first issue of the bulletin, for July 1956, Dr. Fred L. Whipple, director of the Observatory, and Dr. J. Allen Hynek, associate director of the tracking program, are authors of "A Message to Volunteer Observers," which is reprinted below.

A Message to Volunteer Observers:

The satellite program of the International Geophysical Year offers a unique opportunity for the volunteer visual observer to make a significant scientific contribution. On him will rest the responsibility for obtaining the first and the last scientifically valuable visual observations of the satellites. Such observations will support the early radio tracking, and will probably be the only observations available of the dying satellite. The visual work will have particular importance for the calculation of the density of the upper layers of the atmosphere near the limit of measurements obtained with modern high-altitude rockets.

The early satellite tracking is necessary for the calculation of preliminary satellite-finding ephemerides, essential to aiming the photographic Schmidt telescopes that will make the precision observations of the satellites. Should a satellite's radio fail or some satellites be launched without self-contained radios, the full weight of responsibility for the critical initial observations of the satellite will fall on the shoulders of the volunteer visual observers.

The earth satellite program has been developed by the U. S. National Committee for the International Geophysical Year. This Committee was established by the National Academy of Sciences to plan and direct the IGY program of the United States, and to coordinate our efforts with those of some 46 other nations, through a special international committee set up by the International Council of Scientific Unions. Thus the satellite program is part of an unprecedented study of the earth and its atmosphere, in which the principal scientific institutions and the leading geophysicists of the world are involved.

The National Academy of Sciences, through the National Science Foundation, has assigned to the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory the initiation of an optical tracking program for the earth satellites. A vital part of this program can be carried out only by a corps of qualified visual observers, who in organized groups will man selected strategic observing stations.

We hope that publication of this bulletin from time to time will act as an effective means of dissemination of authoritative information about the progress of the satellite program, methods and means of observing and reporting, and related topics.

We at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory are grateful for your co-operation. The work required of the volunteer observer will be exacting and time consuming; but it will confer that most satisfying of all rewards to the person interested in science: the knowledge that he has contributed significantly to a unique international scientific effort of prime importance.

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REPRESENTED IN "MODEL" BOOKSTORE

A Smithsonian publication, "Smithsonian Physical Tables," 9th edition, compiled by William Elmer Forsythe, has been selected for display in the "model" American bookstore exhibit at overseas trade and other major fairs.

The bookstore itself is being purchased by the U. S. Information Agency, and its stock of 5,000 books is being contributed by the American Book Publishers Council and the American Textbook Publishers Institute.

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ETHNOLOGIST FOR BAE

Dr. William C. Sturtevant arrived July 2 to take up his duties as ethnologist with the Bureau of American Ethnology. His office is in the tower of the Smithsonian Building.

Dr. Sturtevant came to the Smithsonian from Yale University where he was assistant curator of anthropology at Peabody Museum.

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ATTENTION, G I'S

The Treasury Department has $26 million it would like to pay out to 130,000 World War II veterans still holding Armed Forces Leave Bonds. The last of these bonds matured in October 1951, nearly five years ago, and have drawn no interest since that date. Anyone holding these bonds is urged to cash them immediately.

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ELECTS ZOO POLICEMAN

An election to choose an employee member of the Board of Review of Performance Rating Appeals was held on June 19, 1956. Donald B. Bell, Policeman at National Zoological Park, was elected. John W. Brown of the exhibits Laboratory, who received the second highest number of votes, was elected alternate.

MINIATURE MONSTER

One of the earth's most fantastic animals--the three-horned chameleon of East Africa--has just been added to the reptile collections.

It is sometimes described as a replica, in miniature, of the ancient monster dinosaur Triceratops, which has been extinct for about 75,000,000 years. However, the two are not directly related.

The three-horned chameleon grows to a length exceeding 12 inches. The curious horns, an inch to an inch and a half long, protrude from the nose and between the eyes of the males. Females are hornless.

These chameleons are extremely pugnacious animals and sometimes use their horns in fights to the finish. At times the contests develop into tedious pushing matches, with the horns interlocked. At other times a really vigorous fighter will dispose of a weaker adversary in a few minutes.

Males are brilliantly colored with blues, greens, and yellows. Uganda natives are terrified by the demoniacal-looking animals , which actually are harmless to man. The popular superstition is that if one happens to see one of these lizards when it is enraged and hissing the person will die in a few days. The curse of the chameleon may be partly averted, it is believed, by capturing and roasting it, and then wearing part of the burned body as a talisman. Still the unfortunate person is supposedly sure to die quite young.

The creature is most abundant in arid areas covered with low shrubs. It is an aerial acrobat and can leap as much as 2 feet from branch to branch. The chameleon has a prehensile tail, like that of various monkeys, and with the tip of this tail alone it can hang from a branch.

It sits motionless for hours at a time and feeds almost exclusively on flies, butterflies, beetles, and bees which may come within reach of its darting tongue.

The creature is a great bluffer. Apparently it never tries to hide or run when confronted with an enemy. Instead it tries to frighten the foe, including man, by inflating its body so that the otherwise loose skin is drawn taut.

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VISITS NEBRASKA OFFICE

Dr. Frank H. Roberts, Jr., director of the River Basin Surveys, visited the Lincoln office of the Missouri Basin Project at the end of May. He spent a week there, going over administrative matters and helping to arrange details of getting the summer field work underway.

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FRANK COLE

Frank H. Cole, 90, a carpenter at the National Museum for 44 years, died at Le Deau Gardens, Forest Glen, Md., on June 14.

Mr. Cole retired in 1937 as assistant superintendent of the National Museum carpenter shop where he had introduced several innovations. Among the devices which he developed was a thief-proof display case for valuable stamps.

During the early years of this century Mr. Cole supervised the exhibition of Smithsonian displays at 10 world's fairs throughout the United States. In 1907 he made two trips to Bordeaux, France, to arrange Smithsonian exhibits for the French Maritime Exposition.

He also helped Smithsonian Secretary Samuel Pierpont Langley build his famous motor-driven flying machine in 1903. Although the machine failed it was one of the important early experiments in flight.

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GETS PhD

Robert L. Stephenson, chief of the Missouri Basin Project, River Basin Surveys, at Lincoln, Nebr., recently drove to Ann Arbor, Mich., where the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology was conferred upon him by the University of Michigan on June 16.

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ATTENDS BIOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

Lucile Hoyme, museum aid in the division of physical anthropology, spent part of her vacation attending the annual Symposium on Quantitative Biology at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, New York. This year's topic, "Genetic Mechanisms," covered all phases of heredity--from the physical structure of nucleic acid components to the environmental factors which modify the expression of the genes in plants and animals. Some 300 scientists and graduate students from all over the world were present.

The sessions were planned to allow plenty of time for swimming, shop talk, and sightseeing. Local points of interest included St. John's Episcopal Church--the site of the wedding rehearsal which recently appeared on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post--and a whaling museum.

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THE DIVING HISTORIAN

An article about the Smithsonian's diving historian, Mendel Peterson, acting head curator of history, appears in the July issue of American Magazine. There is an accompanying photograph showing Mr. Peterson with some of his "treasures."

The story states that Mr. Peterson is an adventurous historian who uses his talents as a diver to do historical research, and it describes some of his underwater research at shipwreck sites in the waters off the Florida Keys.

The article also tells how Mr. Peterson, interested in diving as a hobby since his World War II Navy days, began his explorations in 1951 when he met Mr. E. A. Link, manufacturer of the Link Trainer, who is financing the underseas research project.

This interesting article was part of a swan song. The American Magazine ceased publication with the same issue.

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RBS FIELD TRIPS

Five more field parties of the River Basin Surveys and four from other institutions have started digging in the Missouri Basin since the beginning of June.

On June 2, Harold Huscher, field assistant in the Missouri Basin Project, and a party of three began an intensive survey of the sites in the newly activated Big Bend Reservoir in South Dakota. Mr. Huscher's party is based at Pierre, S. Dak., and is examining the entire area of Missouri River from that city to Chamberlain, S. Dak. They will visit all known archaeological sites in the area, examine the area for new sites, and record and test all sites visited. They want to determine how much additional excavation will be needed in the area before it is inundated by the Big Bend Reservoir.

On June 5, Dr. Waldo R. Wedel, curator of the division of archaeology, and a party of seven left Lincoln to begin Dr. Wedel's third season of work at the Cheyenne River Site at the mouth of the river in the Oahe Reservoir area in South Dakota. With him was his assistant, George Metcalf. Both archaeologists are on loan to the Missouri Basin Project from the U. S. National Museum for the summer. Dr. Wedel's party will conduct several weeks of intensive excavation to complete the work at the Cheyenne River Site. They will then move to a nearby area known as the Black Widow Site and excavate there for the remainder of the season.

On June 11, Robert Neuman joined the staff of the Missouri Basin Project as field assistant. The next day he took an 8-man field party to start excavations at three archaeological sites in the Lovewell Reservoir in north-central Kansas. This is a small reservoir, and the party is expected to remain there only about four or five weeks; they will then move to the Glendo Reservoir in east-central Wyoming.

On June 21, Carl F. Miller headed an 8-man party to begin excavations at the Hosterman Site near Whitlocks Crossing in the Oahe Reservoir area, Potter County, S. Dak. For the next ten weeks this group will be excavating a deeply buried fortified earthlodge village.

On July 2, Dr. Robert L. Stephenson took a party of eight to the Sully Site near Pierre, S. Dak., to begin excavation of another large earthlodge village. He will map and test as much of this large area as possible, and on the basis of the results of these tests he is planning a longer season there next summer.

A group from the University of Wisconsin under the direction of Dr. David A. Baerreis began work in June at two earthlodge village sites in the vicinity of Mobridge, S. Dak., in the Oahe Reservoir area.

Also, the University of South Dakota has a party excavating at three similar village sites in the Oahe Reservoir area near the town of Alaska, S. Dak. These excavations under the direction of Roscoe Wilmeth, are a continuation of last season's work by the University at the Swan Creek Site.

The State Historical Society of North Dakota is conducting excavations under the direction of Alan R. Woolworth at the Fort Yates Site in the Oahe Reservoir area near the border of the Dakotas.

The parties from the Universities of Wisconsin and South Dakota and the State Historical Society of North Dakota are working under cooperative agreements with the National Park Service and in direct cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution.

The final party operating in the Missouri Basin this season is that of the Nebraska State Historical Society. This group, under the direction of Marvin F. Kivett, is excavating the historic site of Fort Atkinson in the vicinity of Omaha.

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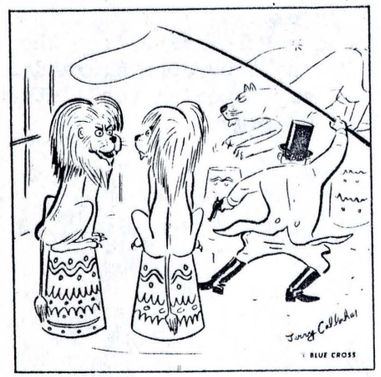

"Frankly, I'm waiting for the day he carelessly lets his Blue Cross expire."

AWARDED DEGREE

Esther Miller, an executive officer at Bio-Sciences Information Exchange, was awarded the master's degree in public administration by American University on June 10, 1956.

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BARRO COLORADO ISLAND(Part 3)

Following is the third and final part of an article by Eleanor H. McIlheny titled "Canal Zone's Barro Colorado Island Is Unique Natural Wildlife Preserve," which appeared in the March issue of the Panama Canal Review.

"For many years Barro Colorado had heavy financial going. At first it was financed almost entirely by gifts and by the 'table contributions' of scientific institutions and universities; that is, each institution or university financed a laboratory table. Wealthy friends gave money, buildings, or equipment but still, and especially during the depression years, Mr. Zetek had to scrounge and stretch to make ends meet.

"In 1940 Congress passed a bill 'authorizing the setting aside of an area within the Canal Zone to preserve and conserve its natural features for scientific study,' and authorized up to $10,000 a year for its support. The act did guarantee the permanency of the Biological Area but Congress did not follow through with an appropriation. During the war years, when important work--much of it still secret--was done on Barro Colorado, funds came from several government agencies. Finally, in 1946, the Canal Zone Biological Area became a Department of the Smithsonian Institution and its financial plight was somewhat eased. Some support still comes from scientific groups and from universities, and small fees--just

enough to cover board and lodging—are charged scientists and the day-to-day visitors.

"Two of the important projects on Barro Colorado are what are called 'continuing ones.' For many years Mr. Zetek has experimented with various types of treated wood to find some barrier against omnivorous termites. He is too modest to admit it, but he is considered an outstanding authority on termites and their ways. The other continuing experiment is carried on by the Tropical Research Branch of Eastman Kodak. In a special laboratory on the island, papers, film, lenses, glues, and other Eastman products are tested for the effects of the tropics, especially in connection with fungus and the effectiveness of various fungicides.

"Because of a recent bout of ill health, Mr. Zetek is not making many visits to the island right now. He runs its affairs from his Amador Road Office in a building which was built from the shell of the old Culebra Post Office. There he is ably assisted by Mrs. Gomez, who makes trips to the island at least once a week, assists scientists and visitors, and between times, helps with the voluminous paper work any such job entails.

Last June the Smithsonian Institution paid tribute to her efforts. In the presence of more than 60 top scientists and officials of the Smithsonian, she was given a Certificate of Award for her 'outstanding accomplishments in the administration of the Canal Zone Biological Area'."

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LEST YOU FORGET

Please remember to notify the Superintendent's Office (extension 387) when you are taking leave, either sick or annual, so that somebody on the pending parking list may use your parking permit while you are away.

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THANK YOU

Margaret Pflieger of the Superintendent's Office thanks all the Smithsonian friends who were so thoughtful in sending cards and flowers and calling while she was ill.

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PUBLISHED IN JUNE

"Chazyan and Related Brachiopods," by G. Arthur Cooper (Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 127, 2 vols., 1245 pages).

"A Revision of the Flies of the Genus Rivellia (Otitidae, Diptera) of America North of Mexico," by Ryoji Namba (Museum Proceedings, 64 pages).

"The Diné: Origin Myths of the Navaho Indians," by Aileen O'Bryan (Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 163, 194 pages).

"Chinese Porcelains from the Ardebil Shrine," by John Alexander Pope (Freer Gallery, special publication No. 4231, 194 pages).

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RESIGNS, WEDS AND MOVES SOUTH

Smith Hempstone Oliver, curator of land transportation in the division of engineering, resigned on July 13. He married Miss Hedwig Margarete Rohling in Washington on July 16. Immediately after the ceremony the couple moved to Florida to make their home.

Mr. Oliver came to the Smithsonian almost 10 years ago. He has been active in the rehabilitating of old automobiles and is the author of three books which were published as Bulletins of the U. S. National Museum.

These publications are: "Catalog of the Automobile and Motorcycle Collection of the Division of Engineering, United States National Museum," published in 1950 as Bulletin 198; "Catalog of the Cycle Collection of the Division of Engineering, United States National Museum," published in 1953 as Bulletin 204; and "The First Quarter-Century of Steam Locomotives in North America, Bulletin 210, which is to be published very shortly.

A revision of the first book soon will be issued as Bulletin 213, with the title of "Automobiles and Motorcycles in the U. S. National Museum."

The bride is from Bavaria, Germany. She came to Washington from there seven years ago, and Mr. Oliver says he met her the day she arrived. She has been attending George Washington University, where she recently received a bachelor of science degree in pharmacy.

On July 13 a farewell party was held for Mr. Oliver in the Arts and Industries Building, where his friends presented him with a gift.

The Olivers expect to reside somewhere in Palm Beach County." The former curator says his greatest regret is having to leave his friends at the Smithsonian, and that he would like to see all of them in Florida.

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