

Architect, Director Named for Hirshhorn

Selection of Gordon Bunshaft as architect and Abram Lerner as director of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden has been announced by Secretary Ripley.

Mr. Bunshaft, 57, a partner in the New York firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, has designed a number of significant buildings, including the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library which will rise on the University of Texas campus in Austin.

Other notable designs by Bunshaft are the Lincoln Center Library in New York City, the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, the Banque Lambert in Brussels, Belgium, and the Lever House, in New York.

A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he currently is a member of the Commission on Fine Arts in Washington.

Mr. Lerner, 53, has for the past ten years served as curator of the Hirshhorn Collection, which the New York financier-philanthropist donated to the United States in May 1966.

As curator, Lerner was charged with the awesome task of cataloguing the 4,000 paintings and 1,500 pieces of sculpture that comprised the most valuable collection of its kind in private hands.

Lerner's influence and guidance on the growth of

the \$25 million collection is a result of both his curatorial ability and training. The native New Yorker holds a B.A. degree in art history and education from



Gordon Bunshaft



Abram Lerner

New York University. He also had five years of subsequent study in various art schools in the City.

Lerner was among those who advocated that the Collection be turned over to the U.S. and located in Washington, D.C. Said Lerner: "The new museum will

give the Nation's Capital a fresh look at 20th century American art and focus its attention on recent developments here and abroad. In addition, the Museum will house an unequalled survey of sculpture from the middle of the 19th century to the present."

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden will embrace many of the things other Washington galleries have been trying to put together, and, as Lerner emphasized, "it will complement and add new perspectives to the fine collections that already exist in the National Capital."

As director, Lerner envisions a program of rotating exhibitions from the permanent collections, special exhibitions reflecting current trends in painting and sculpture in the United States and Europe, and an active educational program directed towards meeting the enormous new public interest in the visual arts.

He also expects that the new museum will become an important center of modern sculpture with international exhibitions in this medium held at regular intervals.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, which carries with it \$1 million for the purchase of additional works, will be situated on the National Mall. It is expected that it will be completed within the next three years.



NOT FOR SALE—Six-month-old cheetahs attract the attention of downtown shoppers to their temporary home in the windows of Woodward & Lothrop Department Store. A gift from the store to the Zoo, they were put on display after Christmas along with exotic birds and a baby elephant.

Although Zoo personnel supervised the care of the animals the elephant died, from a congenital lung deformation. The cheetahs and the birds, some of them donated to the Zoo by Woodie's last year, left the windows January 26 for their permanent home in Rock Creek Park.

Associates Add Courses, Clubs, Kites to Program

The growing Smithsonian Associates will expand their activities for children this spring with junior clubs, nature walks, zoo mornings and a kite festival, program director Lisa Suter has announced. Plans also are developing for increased adult activity.

The need for more youth programs was dramatically illustrated at the opening natural history lecture for children January 14. Nearly 600 six- to ten-year-olds showed up to hear an illustrated talk by Dr. William Melson of the Department of Mineral Sciences.

To follow up on interest developed by the natural history lectures and last fall's subscription courses, Mrs. Suter is planning a group of junior clubs in such areas as aviation, natural history, stamps, etc. Volunteers to help with supervision are being sought among parents of children enrolled in the courses, and if there is enough response the clubs will begin in February.

A kite festival is scheduled for the four Saturdays in March, D.C. law per-

mitting. (See About SI People, page 2.) Illustrated talks on the national origins, practical uses and types of kites will occupy the first two sessions, and the third week will be a lesson in how to build one. The lessons will be given practical application on March 25 with a kite contest on the Mall.

Nature walks, such as rock and fossil hunts and bird walks, are on tap for April, and zoo mornings for children of the Associates will continue with What Is a Bird? and What Is a Mammal?

Adult Associates can look forward to a travel service which will offer tours led by SI scholars and assist members in arranging for trips to "exotic places," Mrs. Suter said. She is aiming to offer at least one trip this year.

Registration begins January 30 for the second semester of subscription classes initiated last fall. More art courses, including one on collecting art, have been added by popular request.

Local membership in the Associates is up to more than 3,000.

THE SMITHSONIAN TORCH

Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

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International Symposium Set for February 16-18

Some 300 scholars, administrators, legislators and members of the Smithsonian staff will participate in an international symposium on "The Quality of Man's Environment" February 16, 17, and 18.

The symposium, supported by the Ford Foundation, is the second annual international convocation of scholars in

a series that began with the James Smithsonian Bicentennial last year.

The Right Honorable Jennie Lee, Minister for the Arts in Great Britain, will chair the meeting, which aims to provide "a re-examination of the premises underlying present attitudes and methods for dealing with the physical environment," Secretary Ripley said.

He added that he hopes the symposium will give planners of the physical environment "a new sense of direction and a new structure of knowledge, derived from past experiences and able to influence present and prospective purposes."

David B. Chase is acting as staff director for the symposium. Program Committee members are Chase, Charles Blitzer, director of the Office of Education and Training; Richard H. Howland, chairman of the Department of Civil History; and Philip Ritterbush, special assistant to the Secretary.

General counsel Peter G. Powers is heading the committee handling arrangements for the three-day session. Working with him are B. Richard Berg, director of public information; George J. Berkley, press officer; Chase; William H. Crocker, associate curator of cultural anthropology; John Fesperman, associate curator in charge of the Division of Musical Instruments; Carl Grimsley, chief of the Protection Division; Howland; Harry Lowe, exhibits curator, NCF; Andrew F. Michaels, director of BMD; George W. Riggs, assistant building manager, MHT; Kennedy B. Schertz, director, Foreign Currency Program; Robert Tillotson, administrative officer, office of director, MHT; Wilcomb Washburn, chairman, Department of American Studies; and Brenda Lansdown, conference assistant.

General sessions of the symposium will be held on February 17 and 18 in the Departmental Auditorium.

The proceedings of the symposium will be edited for publication in a single volume as the second in a series that began with the Bicentennial Papers.

In addition to Miss Lee, speakers will be Robert McC. Adams, director of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute; Wolfgang Braunsfels, professor of art history at the University of Munich, Germany; Asa Briggs, vice-chancellor of the University of Sussex, England;

(Continued on Page 2)

Emperor, Baker Nunn to Share Space on Stamp

Ras Tafari Makonnen, king of Abyssinia, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Lion of Judah, the Elect of God, Emperor Haile Sellassie of Ethiopia will share a commemorative stamp with an SAO Baker Nunn outfit to mark the opening of a new science research station at Debre Zeit.

A cooperative venture of the Haile Sellassie I University and SAO, the station will be dedicated by the Emperor on February 8, when the Ethiopian government will issue the stamp.

Robert Citron is field manager of the station, which is equipped with a giant, 3-ton, 8-foot-high camera capable of recording images 3,000 times fainter than those seen by the unaided eye. An electronic clock, accurate to one thousandth of a second, will help make the observations precise.

Construction of the station last summer was accompanied by what could have been a disaster for SAO. Deep cracks opened in a valley of the Main Ethiopian Rift, about 44 miles southeast of the Debre Zeit facility. Such activity is frequently followed by volcanic eruptions, and there are two volcanoes within 70 miles of the SAO outpost.

The eruptions did not occur, and there was no immediate damage to the station. But there could have been an effect that won't show up for years. The geographic position of the facility could have been changed by the earth movement. Surface surveys and geodetic measurements by satellite photography will determine any shift.

Ironically, the Baker Nunn camera made its first successful satellite photograph in its new site on a day of intense fissuring.



JOY FOREVER—People will go to strange lengths to achieve their concepts of physical beauty. Those lengths are brutally illustrated in this 7 by 12 foot mural now hanging in the Hall of Physical Anthropology. Entitled "Cultural Mutilations in the Pursuit of Beauty," Alton Tobey's work depicts such quaint folk customs as Caucasian and Japanese tatoos, platter-shaped Ubangi lips, bound, mutilated feet of Chinese women, decorative African scars and other glamour treatments.

Neither Strike, Nor Wreck Nor Revolution Stays SAO

By John White

"Mr. Smithson would have been astonished to learn that his bequest to the United States would have led to support of astrophysical studies in Argentina, 5,000 miles away. During the past 12 months the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory has designed modern controls for the largest telescope in South America—the 61-inch reflector of the Cordoba Observatory, located on a 4,000-foot mountain in Western Argentina near the SAO satellite tracking station at Villa Dolores."

So begins a report on "The Cordoba Project" by SAO's Thornton Page. Pity we haven't space to print his whole report *verbatim*; it's most interesting—sort of tragicomic, with a happy ending. Here are some of the high, and low, lights:

1) The big telescope which had been at Cordoba since 1932 was optically good but mechanically bad when Dr. Page had occasion to use it, for study of southern-sky galaxies, in 1964—the battery-powered motor drive was "so antiquated, inconvenient and inefficient" that three people were needed to man the controls. So

2) He appealed to Smithsonian, and in the spring of 1965 was granted \$10,000 to modernize the control mechanisms.

3) The Argentines were pleased about the proposed modernization and suggested that a power line be run 10 miles up the mountain. Cost: \$100,000.

4) SAO's instant response to that suggestion was delayed—the country's postal workers struck, and when they unstruck "they burned all the accumulated mail."

5) A suitable 10-kw generator was got from U.S. surplus and a ton of electrical equipment bought or built at our model shop—but how to get it to Cordoba? Not easy. Because, last June,

6) there was a revolution in Argentina,

7) and for two months it was almost impossible to move anything through Customs;

8) there was also our own airline strike, which didn't help.

9) However, SAO engineer Julio Monjes (an Argentine by birth) managed to shepherd most of the stuff to New York by truck, to Buenos Aires by unstruck airline, through Customs as property of the new government, on to Cordoba by airplane and truck, and all seemed well, except

10) at Cordoba the airline would not release the shipment for a long time—"no evidence of payment of \$1,400 air-freight charges"—and

11) officials were so busy that Monjes and his moving companies had to wait around for five days.

12) At last, everything was released and cleared, and once more all seemed well, except

13) as Monjes' Merry Movers moved up the steep mountain road from Cordoba to the Observatory in a 1938 station wagon, the brakes gave way.

14) Nobody was hurt.

15) Meanwhile, back in Cordoba, Prime Mover Page wandered into a student riot, and "was dispersed by tear gas and police dogs."

16) . . . end of disasters? . . .

17) Maybe.

18) We hope so.

19) And we think it is Amazing and Wonderful and a great credit for SI, SAO, TP, JM and everybody else concerned that, today, one man alone can operate, very efficiently, South America's largest telescope, in the Astrophysical Station of the Cordoba Observatory in Argentina.



MAESTRO—Janos Scholz, prominent cellist and viola da gambist, brought his own valuable instrument, made by Jacob Stainer in 1669, with him when he played in a concert staged by the Division of Musical Instruments January 19. But he couldn't resist staying over to try out SI's viola de gamba, above, in the MHT instrument storage room. He was delighted with the Barak Norman instrument, nearly 250 years old and the finest bowed stringed instrument in the SI collection.

ABOUT SI PEOPLE

MNH Begins Flora Study; Bedini Directing Flood Aid

SILVIO BEDINI, assistant director of MHT, is coordinating a Smithsonian aid program to the Florence Museum of Science, one of many structures nearly destroyed by the recent flash flood which ravaged that part of Italy. Mr. Bedini has seen to it that such things as dehumidifiers and space heaters have been sent promptly and without red tape to the small museum. So hard hit was the museum that its director, Prof. RIGHINI-BONELLI, lost all her personal belongings. Also swept away were her library and photographic laboratory . . . According to MNH plant specialist STANWYN SHETLER, the Smithsonian soon will launch an enormous project, perhaps its largest, with the organization of the "Flora of North America." Shetler says that a group of botanists from the U.S. museum and academic communities, as well as a Canadian representative, will attempt to catalog all vascular plants north of Mexico. Some 15 to 20 thousand species would be involved in the project estimated to last 15 years. Once produced, the 4- to 6-volume "Flora" would be the first completed work of its kind. Mr. Shetler is executive secretary of the editorial committee, which will meet here February 1 to launch the project formally . . . Who planned the City of Washington? MAJOR PIERRE L'ENFANT? According to SI's annual report, the caption under a picture of a diorama in the Hall of Physical Sciences states that in 1792, when (L'Enfant)—originally appointed planner of the City of Washington—was discharged after a quarrel with the commissioners for the city—ANDREW ELLICOTT completed the job. That little ditty was brought to our attention by JOHN LEA of the Smithsonian Press. Mr. Lea has the awesome task of editing the Institution's annual report, the 1966 version of which will be released in a week or so . . . Those of us who were both amused and perturbed by the recent article, "The Smithsonian Looks Forward," which appeared in the *Washingtonian*, had a treat awaiting our attention in the January issue. In it appeared a semi-blistering letter to the editor which ended with "I would like to say I thought the picture of the elephant's hindparts was cute, but I do hope the article has not made hindparts of your magazine." The letter was signed "Ra." You'll remember that in the article the author referred to an SI staffer "who thought he was the Egyptian Sun God Ra." The *Torch* learned that Ra is the "pen name" of ROBERT JENKINS, a museum technician in MNH's division of cultural anthropology. A Washington correspondent for the *London Daily Telegraph* thought the exchange of barbs between Ra-ber and the author was so interesting that he filed a story on it which appeared on January 12. Under the headline, "Rats and Gods," the first part of his short piece had to do with some sort of slum exhibit that the Smithsonian is supposed to be considering . . . DOROTHY VAN ARSDALE, the astute and energetic chief of the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service, reports that 1,250,000 persons viewed SITES road shows during 1966 . . . DR. MARTIN MOYNIHAN, director of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, has acquired a boat to be used for science studies. With an over-all length of 34 feet, the boat is constructed with a fiberglass hull and has space for 25 researchers and cargo . . . The name of our first secretary, JOSEPH HENRY, soon will grace a classroom building now under construction by the George Washington University. It will rise on 21st and Pennsylvania . . . ROLLAND HOWER, who goes by the title "exhibits specialist," is really a chemist by profession. His research in freeze drying has been revolutionary in the museum world and, indeed, has almost made conventional taxidermy obsolete. Over the past six years since he first used this technique through which subjects are preserved without being stuffed, Rollie has freeze dried more than 1,800 specimens ranging from tiny fiddler crabs to what he describes as a "massive" Palas Cat. He recently acquired a larger chamber in which he has a 10-foot albatross being readied for the oceanic hall . . . PAUL GARBER, NASM's distinguished historian, has recaptured his youth and plans a Kite Festival for the kiddies in March. Mr. Garber also plans to give lectures on kite flying to all the children he hopes will participate in the festival. He has to hurdle one obstacle: the District of Columbia which has on its books an 1891 law that states that no one may fly a kite, parachute, or balloon here under a penalty of \$10.00. No person to break the law, Garber is still hopeful the festival will go off as scheduled . . . "Our hopes for what we consider to be appropriate expansion" may have to be curtailed for the time being, SECRETARY RIPLEY told interviewers on the Voice of America's "Press Conference U.S.A." program recently. Replying to a question on the effect the war in Vietnam will have on the SI budget, Mr. Ripley said, "We have two galleries, NCGA and NPG, which are going to be suffering very much and may not be able to open, in fact, on schedule because of the austerity of the President's budget." He qualified, however, that "I believe that many of the sorts of things which we are interested in doing in this very task of achieving an understanding about a role that museums should play in the community can be done with innovative and imaginative grants. There should be possibilities of interesting foundations or parts of the government in the sorts of things that we would like to do." . . . 1967 marks the 45th year of government service for FRANK A. TAYLOR, Director of the U.S. National Museum . . . The month of February marks the last for B. RICHARD BERG as an employe here. Mr. Berg, who came to SI in August of 1965 as the first Director of Public Information in our long history, has accepted the position of vice president at Lindenwood College near St. Louis, Missouri. Lindenwood is the second oldest women's college in America and has an enrollment of 800.

Symposium

(Continued from Page 1)

Hiroshi Daifuku, Monuments and Museums Division, UNESCO; Rene J. Dubos, Rockefeller University, New York City; Edward T. Hall, professor of anthropology, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago; Philip Johnson, architect, New York City; Bertrand de Jouvenel, Societe d'Etudes et de Documentation Economique (SEDEIS), Paris; Leo Marx, professor of English and American studies, Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.; Ian McHarg, chairman, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Pennsylvania; and Robert C. Wood, U.S. Undersecretary of Housing and Urban Development.

SMITHSONIAN TORCH

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WHADDYA MEAN, PART OF THE EXHIBIT? WE IS TOURISTS!!

"MILDEWED OLD FOSSIL"

Was Twain's SI Potentate Just an Innocent Abroad?

by Samuel T. Suratt

In June of 1867, Mark Twain prepared to embark upon the ship *Quaker City* which would carry him to Europe and the Near East and on to greater fame as a comic author when his account of the voyage was published as *Innocents Abroad*. On examining the passenger list he found "a gentleman who had 'COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO EUROPE, ASIA, AND AFRICA' thundering after his name in one awful blast!"

Twain went on: "I state frankly that I was all unprepared for *this* crusher. I fell under that titular avalanche a torn and blighted thing. I said that if that potentate *must* go over on our ship, why, I supposed he *must*—but that to my thinking, when the United States considered it necessary to send a dignitary of that tonnage across the ocean, it would be in better taste, and safer, to take him apart and cart him over in sections, in several ships."

Mark Twain was relieved later when he found this august personage "was only a common mortal, and that his mission had nothing more overpowering about it than the collecting of seeds, and uncommon yams and extraordinary cabbages and peculiar bullfrogs for that poor, useless, innocent, mildewed old fossil, the Smithsonian Institute."

Was this grand "Commissioner" an invention of Mark Twain's creative mind? Not quite! In April, 1867, Joseph Henry, Secretary of the Smithsonian, received a letter from William Gibson of Jamestown, Pennsylvania. Gibson wrote that he was leaving "on an excursion up the Mediterranean on the 8th of June next . . . If I can be of service to the Smithsonian Institution in collecting items or specimens of any kind I will cheerfully do so."

Gibson intimated that some sort of authority from the Smithsonian Institution would be welcome as it would give him "more freedom of access to facts abroad." Henry thanked him for his interest in the aims of the Smithsonian and added that "we shall be most happy to obtain by your aid any collections of rare or choice mineral specimens." Nowhere in his reply did Henry infer that Gibson had a commission from the Smithsonian or the United States Government. It is possible that he obtained his glorious title from some other source. Gibson mentioned that he had corresponded with the Commission-

er of Agriculture who could conceivably have sent him some sort of document which gave him an official aura.

Mark Twain gives the impression that the "Commissioner" was an imposing person, but, in reality, Gibson was a representative of the small town gentry with which Twain was most familiar. William Gibson was 54 years old when he joined the company of innocents on their Mediterranean cruise in 1867. He was the only physician in Jamestown, Pennsylvania (population in 1870—572), the president of the Jamestown Banking Company, President of the Jamestown and Franklin Railroad and one of the founders of the Jamestown Seminary. But for all his titles of importance in Jamestown, he was probably the epitome of an "innocent" in Europe and the Near East.

Dr. Gibson, along with Twain, was a member of a five-man committee which composed and delivered an address to the Russian Czar, which began "We are a handful of private citizens of America, traveling simply for recreation and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state, and therefore we have no excuse to tender for presenting ourselves before your majesty." Twain reported that the Czar listened to this address "with unflinching fortitude; then took the rusty-looking document and handed it to some great officer or other, to be filed away among the archives of Russia—in the stove."

The mystery of how Dr. Gibson gained his title still stands. Was it Twain's imagination or did some other agency give him a commission? Was Dr. Gibson really the "Commissioner of the United States of America to Europe, Africa, and Asia" or just another innocent abroad?

REGENT—U.S. Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania has been appointed to the Board of Regents, replacing recently-retired Senator Leverett Saltonstall.

Already a member of the Oriental Art Committee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Senator Scott is a recognized authority on Chinese art and author of "The Golden Age of Chinese Art; The Lively T'ang Dynasty," scheduled for publication this spring.

A lawyer, he earned an A.B. at Randolph-Macon College and his LL.B. at the University of Virginia. He is serving his second term in the Senate after 16 years in the House of Representatives.

Carl Condit Lists 'Human Community' as Mall Need

"Human community." That, according to prominent architectural historian Carl Condit, is what the Mall is lacking.

Dr. Condit is working at the Smithsonian as a visiting post-doctoral research associate, developing a course on the history of building techniques and civil engineering that he will teach next year at Northwestern University. He discussed his work here, as well as the Mall and other aspects of Washington architecture, in an interview with the *Torch*.

The city has other lacks, Condit pointed out. It "lacks what a great city always has, density, power and intensity." He explained that the power he referred to was not political, but the visible images of architectural power. He doubts that the city can ever gain these qualities with the height limitations imposed on buildings here.

His criticisms of the District, he hastened to add, were not of its slums, or its transportation problems, or any of the other shortcomings common to all modern cities. They were aimed at "the part of the city that was most carefully planned," which turned out, ironically, to be "bland."

The Smithsonian came in for some praise, however. Asked what in Washington he would consider good architecture, he cited the new free flight cage at the zoo. It has a "soaring intensity," he said, that actually captures the feeling of flight.

He anticipates that the headquarters of the new Department of Housing and Urban Development, going up at 7th and D Streets, S.W., will also exemplify good contemporary design, and he praised Washington's "scenic values," such as Rock Creek Park and some of the Potomac vistas.

As for the Mall, it suffers from "an excessive area of level lawn" and a "lack of spatial definition." His suggestions for improvement were similar to those advanced by other planners—kiosks, walkways, "things to attract people." He also proposed pedestrian tunnels under the streets, explaining that the Mall "turned out to be made for cars."

The new Smithsonian buildings will both help, Condit thought, in defining the edges of the Mall and closing gaps. And the Mall sculpture garden that will accompany the Hirshhorn gallery is the sort of thing needed to bring the missing "human community" to the area.

Smithsonian architecture in general "is not without charm," Condit said. Although the buildings represent the architecture of different periods, they are not discordant, he contends, because of their similar proportions and related silhouettes. MHT did not escape his critical eye, however. He described it as a little too cold and blank-walled. "It lacks articulation and definition," he explained.

Condit is a man of quite varied background and interests. His BS was in mechanical and civil engineering and his

MA and PhD in English, and he has taught mathematics, mechanics, humanities, and, currently, art and the history of science. The course which he is developing here will cover bridges, tunnels, and superhighway systems, as well as buildings. He categorizes all of them as "structures."

He came to the Smithsonian to work because it has become "a major research center in the history of technology." Robert M. Vogel, curator of the Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, has built up archives which are "unusually extensive and rich," he said.

He is also taking advantage of his proximity to the Library of Congress, the American Institute of Architects, and the Association of American Railroads in developing his course, which exists in somewhat related form only at Columbia University.

A book may also come out of his studies here, but not in the near future. Dr. Condit, who authored *American Building Art: the 19th Century*, *American Building Art: the 20th Century*, and *The Chicago School of Architecture (The Rise of the Skyscraper)*, has a volume on the history of U.S. building techniques, especially Colonial and early Republican, coming out in early spring, and is working on another book on Chicago.

Young Viewers Of 'Smithsonian' Send Fan Mail

The "Smithsonian's" some five million viewers are happy. Some fans of the NBC-TV series—most of them school children—have even been moved to write enthusiastic letters about the show, and a Chicago schoolteacher noted that her 5th and 6th graders were disappointed when the educational show was preempted.

The ultimate compliment came from an 11-year-old boy who noted that "The show *Combat* has been on for five years, but I think your show will be on for ten."

The NBC series might have inadvertently helped out a CBS special. Another boy said that "My favorite program was 'Dem Dry Bones.' It prepared us for 'Dr. Leakey and the Dawn of Man.'"

One youngster wants "The Smithsonian" preserved for posterity. "I hope the program continues for year after year, so my children can watch it and learn as I did."

Other comments:

• "When John Glenn came to earth, didn't he say he saw a train in space?"

• "Please keep the Smithsonian on television. It is much better than cartoons."

• "My favorite program of The Smithsonian was about the prehistoric bones. In the beginning I liked the song 'The Knee Bone etc.'"

• "The only one I'll never forget is the one on 'How to Build a Better Moustrap.'" (sic)

Not all the comments have come from enthusiastic school children. A Bayside, Long Island, woman took exception to the show on meteorites.

"Have impression assertion was made that meteors are *never hot* when they hit the ground as meteorites. —How, then, did one burn a hole in the brim of my brother's hat? (that was about 5' 10" or less above ground surface.)," she asked.

Roy Clarke, Jr., chemist in the Division of Meteorites, replies that such an occurrence is most unlikely. Although large crater-forming meteorites are still hot when they reach the earth, there has not been a documented case of any small fragments retaining heat that long, he said.



Senator Scott

Volunteers Bringing Order To Tons of Air Documents

Most people think of a quantity of reference material in terms of number of volumes, or file drawers, or shelves. At the Air and Space Museum they're thinking these days in terms of tons—from 100 to 200 tons of documentary material donated through the years and waiting to be sorted.

Staff limitations have so far prevented the job from being tackled on any large scale, but an unusual volunteer operation is now beginning to bring order to some 12,000 volumes of books, 4,000 to 5,000 bound volumes of periodicals, 100,000 photographs, and several million pamphlets.

About a dozen members of the local American Aviation Historical Society, directed by NASM staffers Ernest Robischon, Robert Wood and Stuart MacKenzie, have been giving their Wednesdays and Saturdays since April to sorting and shelving for retrieval the museum's buried treasure. In return, they earn points for the number of hours they put in and periodically are allowed to bid these points for duplicates in the collection.

The duplicates, not yet accessioned or catalogued, can be utilized in this way, after being checked carefully by the curatorial staff to assure that they are surplus and can be spared. Auctions are held periodically as the duplicates accumulate and volunteers earn points. Other extras are kept for trading with institutions and individuals.

The volunteers, Robischon says, "give us better man hours than we could ever buy on the labor market." Being aviation enthusiasts, and well read on the subject, they are able to recognize especially valuable specimens as they come across them.

So far the volunteers have increased the museum's bound book holdings by some 400 percent and doubled the number of bound periodicals. These volumes are organized on the shelves alphabetically by author or periodical title, but not catalogued. (Present capabilities for cataloging indicate that over 100 years would be required to process these items.)

This has created something of a space crisis in NASM's temporary headquarters in A&I, but the East North Range is being remodeled as a reference reading room and stacks. At the present time books are stored in everything from old display cases to shelves made from

wooden boxes donated by the International Exchange Service.

The project has turned up such diverse items as scrapbooks and clippings, four copies of a rare 1918 *Air Service Medical Manual*, which the National Library of Medicine had been unable to locate, file after file on different kinds of aircraft (NASM hopes to build a file on every plane ever constructed), and even biographies of the infamous "Red Baron."

What treasures remain in the jumble of boxes in the basement of A&I is still unknown. Escorting the *Torch* reporter through the storerooms, Robischon opened a box at random and discovered volumes of the *Aeronautical Annuals* of 1895, 96 and 97, worth some \$500. He promises it was not a put-up job.

The volunteers, who contributed 100 hours of their time in the last quarter alone, are: John S. Bath, Charles J. Bury, Jack M. Freeburger, George E. Gillburg, James H. Nichols, Robert J. Tarca, Richard Wischnowski, Henry Ozarko, J. Roger Bentley, Al Blue, Col. Samuel Whitt (USAF retired) and family, Sam Norris, and Frank Holz.

Radiation Lab Offers Course

The Radiation Biology Laboratory will sponsor its first course, a graduate seminar in photobiology, this spring, according to acting director Walter Shropshire.

The course will be given here in cooperation with the Consortium of Universities of the Metropolitan Area, and is the first Smithsonian-Consortium joint effort.

Outstanding photobiologists from universities and government agencies throughout the country will lecture at the class in the MHT auditorium every Tuesday evening beginning February 2. Dr. Shropshire will present the opening lecture, "What Is Photobiology?"

Dr. Shropshire is chairman of a committee on photobiology which planned the seminar. Also on the committee from the Smithsonian is Charles Blitzer, director of the Office of Education and Training.

Lectures will be open to SI staff members. They will begin at 7:30 p.m. and last about 90 minutes, with a question and answer session following.



MILLIONS TO GO—Members of the American Aviation Historical Society make a dent in the millions of pieces of material that have to be sorted for the air museum. Shown at one of their regular Wednesday evening work sessions, from left, front, are Ed Wischnowski, Bob Tarca and Bob Wood. Left to right, rear, are Dick Wasicko, Jack Freeburger and Al Blue.

Travelers Off Again for '67

There may be no place like home for the holidays, but the New Year finds SI researchers abroad again for the increase of knowledge. DR. J. LAURENS

BARNARD (Crustacea) and family were not only away from home for New Year 1967, they will be gone for 1968 as well. The Barnards are in Hawaii until September 30, when they will travel on to New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa before returning home in September, 1968, with first-hand knowledge of amphipod collections in museums and related institutions . . .

Freedom Statue Leaves Rotunda

Miss Freedom, who has graced the rotunda of the Arts and Industries Building for about 75 years, was scheduled to be put into mothballs by February 1.

The 19½-foot-high plaster figure used to cast the statue atop the National Capitol will be shipped to SI's facility at Silver Hill, Md., where it will remain in storage until a suitable area is found for its display in the new Fine Arts and Portrait Gallery.

Designed in five sections, the statue was scheduled to be removed in only two, Leon Doane, of the Buildings Management Division, said. He was responsible for contracting a mover to bring in a crane to take the figure down.

The statue was to be put on two pallets and fork lifted onto a truck, Doane said. He called it a relatively simple moving job.

Miss Freedom was designed by sculptor Thomas Crawford in Rome in 1856 and came to D.C. in 1858. She was displayed in the old hall of the House of Representatives until space became a problem, then banished to the Capitol basement for about 30 years. She was given to SI December 15, 1890.

A pool filled the center of the rotunda before Miss Freedom's arrival. After she leaves, the area will be converted into a lounge where tourists can rest, according to Frank A. Taylor, Director of the U.S. National Museum.

DRS. DUANE HOPE and ROBERT HIGGINS of the Division of Worms are collecting and studying non-parasitic nematode worms in Pakistan and Egypt, where they might run into DR. SAMI K. HAMARNEH of Medical Sciences. The Hamarneh family is in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan until 1968 to study Arabic manuscripts on medicine, pharmacy, and allied sciences . . . There must be something about North Africa and the Middle East in January. DR. I. E. WALLEN, Limnology and Oceanography, is visiting the Mediterranean Marine Sorting Center in Tunisia and delivering lectures in Iran and Pakistan . . . Finally, DR. KARL V. KROMBEIN of Entomology is also in Egypt, collecting insects in the Gebel-Elba area.

Contemporary Steel Sculpture for Mall

The first contemporary sculpture on the Mall, and the largest piece of contemporary sculpture ever commissioned by the Federal Government, soon will rise on the South Terrace of MHT. Sculptured by Jose de Rivera, the stainless steel composition—16 feet long and 8 feet high—is scheduled to be installed late this Spring, according to MHT exhibits chief Benjamin Lawless.



LET THERE BE SOUND AND LIGHT—Jean Rosenthal, who has staged the lighting for numerous Broadway hits, and John Houseman, who will write and direct the presentations, reveal their plans for sound and light on the Mall to potential contributors. The Institution hopes to begin the son et lumiere programs this summer.

Who Is 'Smithsonian' Owl?

Who is the owl that greets viewers of the NBC "Smithsonian" series?

He is a figure on an ancient Greek coin, the reverse design of an Athenian tetradrachm of the late 5th century B.C., according to curator of numismatics V. Clain-Stefanelli, and he travels in the best of circles.

The symbol of wisdom, the owl once belonged to the goddess Athena and now belongs to Secretaries of the Smithsonian Institution. He was selected by Mr. Ripley to be the central figure on the Secretary's ceremonial badge of office.

The badge, which hangs around the neck from a cherry red ribbon, was made for the Bicentennial. It was de-



signed by English goldsmith Leslie Durbin and cast in gold given to the Smithsonian by the Imam of Muscat.