5-Year Acquisition Plan Begins

A new program to strengthen the Smithsonian’s major collections acquisitions, scholarly research and educational outreach has produced results in its first months of operation.

The 5-year program, approved by Secretary Ripley and the Board of Regents, has enabled two museums to purchase important new items for their collections. In addition, it has permitted organizations throughout the Institution to undertake new or expanded research or educational activities.

The Museum of Natural History acquired 185 Mexican Indian masks of the Donald Creddy collection, considered one of the most extensive and best documented of its kind. The Museum of History and Technology purchased a quartet of stringed instruments—two violas, a viola and a cello—handcrafted by Italian masters of the 18th century.

At least one other Smithsonian museum is actively considering a major acquisition under the program, which was launched last January when the Regents approved a fiscal 1978 allocation of $2 million—$1 million for acquisitions and $500,000 each for scholarly and outreach programs—from unrestricted trust funds. A similar sum was later approved for fiscal 1979 and, while it was agreed that a new assessment of spending plans would necessarily have to be made each year, there was the firm intention to continue with such trust fund expenditures in the future, providing funds were available.

As a result of the program, the Institution was able to provide additional support to outreach programs ranging from audiovisual equipment for Mall museums to research assistantships.

In general, the Educational Outreach Program is designed to reach primarily people who are not members of the National or Resident Associates or of the Friends of the National Zoo. Although continued attention will be given to these membership groups, the new outreach program will aim to attract and serve people who do not necessarily have opportunities to visit the museums or join SI programs.

Thus far, outreach projects recommended by appropriate screening committees and approved by the Secretary include:

- Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory:
  - A science intern program for high school students and a reprinting of the booklet "Space for Women: Perspectives on Careers in Science."

- MNH: Van visits to classrooms and to groups of elderly, handicapped and institutionalized persons; the extension of the Friday film and lecture programs to weekends and holidays.

- Tropical Research Institute: Research assistantships for students planning careers in science; environmental training seminars for teachers.

- Office of Museum Programs: Funds for a museum training program for employers of Native American and Eskimo organizations.

- Traveling Exhibition Service: Support for development of educational materials designed to accompany exhibits for children.

- Office of Public Service: Assistance to develop brief radio features by the Telecommunications Office; to develop services for high schools in the area by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Resident Associates; to fund a colloquium by the Office of Seminars and Symposia in observance of Einstein’s birth in 1879, to fund the 1979 Fourth of July celebration to be produced by the Division of Performing Arts and MHT.

Scholarly projects at the Institution have been supported by trust funds ever since the original Smithsonian bequest. Over the years, federal funds, contract monies and grants have supplemented the original bequest. (See Trust Funds, Page 2.)

Kudos From GAO

The Smithsonian was singled out for effective procedures in a newly published General Accounting Office report on how federal agencies deal with auditors’ findings.

The report by GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, noted that “the government relies on audit as the basic tool for preventing unauthorized expenditures” but concluded, on the basis of a survey of 34 agencies, that $4.3 billion in audit findings had not been resolved.

The report contended that most of the 34 agencies “are not in full or even substantial compliance” with the Office of Management and Budget requirements for audit resolution systems. “In our judgment,” the report said, “only the Department of the Interior and the Smithsonian Institution appeared to be in substantial compliance with the (OMB) circular.”

How Will Federal Freeze Affect SI?

A memorandum outlining procedures for implementing the federal hiring limitation ordered by President Carter as of Oct. 25 has been circulated to heads of agencies, bureaus and offices by Under Secretary Collins following an Executive Committee decision-making meeting on the question.

The presidential limitation provides that one-half of those vacancies occurring on or before Oct. 25 will not be filled. A vacancy existing before Oct. 25 cannot be filled except through use of one of the permitted appointments resulting from new vacancies.

The White House action does not provide for automatic exemptions in any job category. However, under Office of Management and Budget guidelines, occupations relating to the safety of life and property may be exempt from the hiring restrictions.

At the close of business Oct. 24, the Institution had approximately 180 vacancies. Excluding guards, the attrition rate of the Institution is about 10 percent yearly.

The Executive Committee decided that as a first step bureaus are to assign priorities to all vacancies and provide a list to the permanent Executive Committee members with a copy to the personnel office. The list is to indicate those vacancies existing before Oct. 25 and those which occurred thereafter. Based on this data, the Executive Committee members will determine which positions can be filled promptly.

In addition, inasmuch as it is Institution-wide hiring which will be monitored by OMB, the Ex Com decided to empower Collins to respond to critical hiring needs in instances where a particular assistant secretary may not have sufficient vacancies in his area to fill a crucial position.

Regent Ryan Dead

Rep. Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif.), 55, a member of the Smithsonian Board of Regents since last August, died Nov. 18 when a fact-finding mission he was leading was attacked in Port Kaituma, Guyana. "I am shocked and saddened," Secretary Ripley said in a statement, "by the death of Leo Ryan and the other members of his party." Although Ryan had been a Regent only a few months, Ripley said he had taken an active interest in Institution affairs.

Rep. Ryan, elected to the House in 1972 after serving in the State Assembly, was a member of the Government Operations and Interior and Relations committees. In a statement on his appointment as a Regent he spoke of the Smithsonian’s "extremely significant impact" on American life.

Museums Set For Holiday Festivities

By Linda St. Thomas

There’s always been a lot of action at the Smithsonian during the holidays, but this year the museums seem to have outdone themselves. You could easily spend much of the last two weeks of December visiting special holiday exhibitions, picking up gifts in the shops, attending parties or just enjoying the decorations. Among those invited to join Mr. and Mrs. Ripley at the annual staff Christmas party Wednesday, Dec. 20, from 3 to 5:15 p.m. in the Museum of Natural History Rotunda.

It’s up to you to find the best office party, but here’s a roundup of the official Smithsonian happenings this month.

Trees of Christmas

Last year’s “Trees of Christmas” exhibition was so popular—and crowded—that it now extends to two floors of the Museum of History and Technology. Among the decorated trees will be the “U. S. Community,” a basic modern American yuletide tree complete with tinsel and shiny ball ornaments. Other trees include Russian, Pioneer, Tidewater Plantation, Dried Flowers, Ecclesiastical Ornaments, Gold Thread Embroidery on Silk, Williamsburg Folk...
Reform Act Implemented at SI

How does the long-debated Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, signed into law by President Carter on Oct. 13, affect federal employees at the Smithsonian?

From the start, the Civil Service Commission itself will disappear in January 1979 and its functions will be divided between two separate, independent units—the Office of Personnel Management, representing the civil service, and the Merit Systems Protection Board, with adjudicatory power to hear employee appeals. That change alone is significant for the Smithsonian's Office of Personnel Administration, since it would create two agencies that would have to prevent the same individuals from having to deal with management and employee situations simultaneously. The principal advantage here would be the avoidance of conflicting representation for all.1 Toy made these points about the Act:

1. The law requires agencies to come up with job-related criteria to employees in the annuity system by July 1, 1981. Toy explained, performance ratings have been used for years but only as job-related judgments. The new appraisal system will be the basis for rewarding, developing, assigning, promoting, demoting and separating employees.

2. Pay increases for white collar managers and supervisors in the GS-13 through 15 levels will depend on performance rather than longevity, which means no one within each grade will receive the same raise. Rather, they will receive a minimum of one half the cost-of-living increase given to all federal employees. Merit raises for this group will be derived from a pool fund which includes modesties that would have been used for step increases under the old system; the remainder of the cost-of-living increase for that year. This change does not apply to those GS-13 through 15 employees who are not supervisors or managers.

3. Employees involved in reduction in force procedures, or those who have their positions reclassified downward, will now receive both grade and pay for a 2-year period. Previously, only the pay was retained.

4. The burden of proof for firing employees remains with each agency.

5. Reduction in rank, such as losing a supervisory title or reporting to a lower ranking manager, will now longer remove to the employee, providing the grade and pay are not changed.

6. The law also provides that total federal force on Sept. 30, 1979, should not be greater than the total as of a year earlier.

7. A Senior Executive Service will be created for managers and supervisors now in GS-16 through Executive Level IV or the equivalent. SES members, who will receive added responsibility based on their performance, can raise their level of earnings up to a maximum of $66,000 per year, including base pay, performance awards and honorary rank payment.

8. Performance evaluations in SES are based on improvement of efficiency, productivity, quality of work, reduction of burden of work, or process of performance, meeting affirmative action goals and cost savings and efficiency.

The Smithsonian could not accurately evaluate the new law's total impact because the Civil Service Commission had not yet fully interpreted it.2 Johnnie Douthis

Fund Supports Research, Outreach

(‘Trust Funds,’ From Page 1) but these sources have not always been available at the appropriate time or in sufficient amounts.

The new program enables the Smithsonian to provide support for the following activities:

• MNH: Automated equipment for the execution performance appraisal categories of outstanding, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The new procedure provides for the establishment of a rating system of acceptable and unacceptable based upon performance standards and critical elements of each position.

• NMNH: Automated equipment for the execution performance appraisal categories of outstanding, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The new procedure provides for the establishment of a rating system of acceptable and unacceptable based upon performance standards and critical elements of each position.

• Public outreach activities are encouraged in support of the Institution’s work in collecting, preserving and making available the products of human ingenuity. The Institution is committed to the belief that knowledge is a public trust and that information generated by research is the heritage of all humanity. Public outreach activities are encouraged in support of the Institution’s work in collecting, preserving and making available the products of human ingenuity. The Institution is committed to the belief that knowledge is a public trust and that information generated by research is the heritage of all humanity. Public outreach activities are encouraged in support of the Institution’s work in collecting, preserving and making available the products of human ingenuity. The Institution is committed to the belief that knowledge is a public trust and that information generated by research is the heritage of all humanity.
The year now ending marks the 75th anniversary of the teddy bear, so this holiday season warrants a show in Teddy's honor. The Political History Division has assembled a case of memorabilia, including the original bear made in 1903 by the Ideal Toy Company and presented to President Theodore Roosevelt.

MHT has also scheduled demonstrations of the construction and manufactured items. "A Century of Mechanical Christmas Music," which was so popular last year in MHT, will again give visitors a chance to listen to old music boxes, phonographs and types of Christmas music in the Hall of Musical Instruments.

Even areas normally not associated with festivities will get into the holiday spirit. Model trains will chug along the Railroad Hall. In the Astronomy Hall, visitors will learn how to make a galaxy of paper stars, candles, lamps and traditional Danish paper stars used as tree ornaments. A gingerbread house maker and cookie decorators will demonstrate their work in the Museum's cafeteria.

Holiday Decorations

The showcase shop this year will be the Arts and Industries Museum shop where the gazebos will be decorated as a Christmas carousel with elaborate stuffed animals specially designed for the Smithsonian by Michelle Lipson. The A&I shop will be the only one to carry all items shown in the 1978 Christmas catalog. But for the first time this holiday season, shops decorator, Eileen Ritter, has selected a single theme—the Christmas carousel—and carried it into all the shops.

The shop display case in MNH will be transformed into a Christmas fantasy with toy animals wandering in a frosty forest.

Renwick Offers Crafty Gifts

One of the cases in the Renwick exhibit

The old what-to-buy-for-the-man-who- has-everything theme may be solved this holiday season by a trip to the Renwick Gallery's shop. There you can select a sheepskin cap, a pewter flask, a goblet, a handcut wooden pipe made in New Jersey or a handicrafted deck chair and chair on sale for $2,500.

"Gifts for Men" is the most elaborate sales exhibition at the Renwick so far," shop display manager Eileen Ritter said. "We've decorated the shop and nearly vestibule in a classic understated holiday style, using brown, burgundy and colorful ribbons."

As always in Smithsonian museum shops, the gifts are related to the collection. In "Gifts for Men," the craft items have been chosen primarily from the works of Native American craftsmen. While the crafts are handmade and many are one-of-a-kind items.

More than 75 items, from pottery bowls to animal weather vanes, have been on display since early November. Not all items are available at the shop immediately. After the gifts are purchased, some of them will stay on exhibition until December, when visitors return to pick them up in time for the holidays.

Among the gifts are pottery mugs for $10, wool caftans made on a handlooms for $125, leather jackets made by Country Leather Works in Rochester, silk scarves for $24, a carved walking stick for $40, and flamingo boxes with inlay and curving from $35 to $58.

Planning for the holiday exhibit began back in May when shop buyer Walter Vandiver met with Renwick Director Lloyd Herman, Curator Michael Monroe and merchandise manager Josephine Rowe to choose a specific theme.

"The Renwick," Herman explained, "first became interested in sales exhibitions as a way to show a wider range of current craft works than we normally do... The exhibits also provide a dignified sales setting for the craftsperson. Before these sales exhibitions, our shop carried only books and a few items related to the current show. The vestibule was just a vestibule. Now, the shop area is a lively place for visitors to see and to purchase beautiful objects they may not be able to find otherwise."

Thus, the spring sales exhibit, "The Art of the Turned Bowl," showed the work of four craftspersons whose wooden bowls would probably never have been the subject of an entire Smithsonian display. But, in Herman's view, it was just right for the present's sales exhibitions.

The museum initiated its sales exhibits in January with a South Carolina Mount Pleasant Baskets show. Other exhibits were a wooden bowl show, "Catwawa Pottery," and "Southeast Highland Handicrafts" made by members of a nine-state Southern crafts guild—Linda St. Thomas.

Puppets Top List of Kids' Holiday Fun

The Smithsonian puppet theater, closed for renovation since spring of 1977, will reopen just in time for the holiday school vacation.

The new theater, known as Discovery Theater, will open its season Wednesday, Dec. 27, with "Discover the Voice," a presentation with Boston ventriloquist Susan Linn and her hand puppets. Ceramic music and demonstrations all serve to help visitors become more involved with the region's folklore. "Discover the Voice" continues through Jan. 7. General admission is 75 for children and $2.25 for adults. Admission cards for 12 performances will be sold for $18. For tickets and information call 247-5395.

Children will also get special attention at the Hirshhorn Holiday for Children on Dec. 23. Discussions and workshops will be featured for youngsters 6 years old and older. The Lincolns will make their third appearance this year. At the Museum of African Art there will be free pre-Renwick workshops every weekend offering children an opportunity to make crafts. The symbols of the African-American holiday for gifts. For work shop schedules, call 547-7424.

By Elizabeth C. Clark

"Northeast," covers more than 73 tribes in the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada from the Mississippi to the Atlantic, from North Carolina to Quebec. Among the tribes described are the Anacostian, who lived on the banks of the Potomac in what is now the Nation's Capital.

..."Northeast," a 940-page work edited by John P. Johnson, professor of anthropology at McGill University, contains 73 chapters by 54 outstanding authorities on the Indian cultures of the region. Over all, the encyclopedia, called the "Handbook of North American Indians," is considered a general education of William C. Sturtevant at the Smithsonian.
Comings and Goings

David Revere McFadden has been appointed curator of decorative arts at the Cooper-Hewitt. McFadden comes to New York from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, where he also held the title of curator of decorative arts. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he is new to the Smithsonian in just the right moment, Chris's Lindberg Ammenberg Hall of New York City. Hall is the sister of Janet Ammenberg Hooker, whose gift last year of a 75-carat emerald brooch was recently placed on display at MNH.

Mary Reed Dies; Raised Zoo Tigers

Mary Elizabeth Cornwall Reed, 55, wife of National Zoo Director Theodore Reed and herself a skilled and loving foster parent of some of the zoo's rarest creatures, died at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md., after an 18-month battle with leukemia. Mrs. Reed, who took an active role in Zoo projects, serving as her husband's assistant in his duties and companion, profoundly missed her. With her were two of the Zoo's famous white tiger cubs, Raimi and Moni, as well as leopards and at least a half-dozen bear cubs. In a National Geographic article on the raising of Raimi, she wrote: "Occasionally, we would let her roam free in the house. I still have vivid memories of corny films she would watch under the table." The interview in the Zoo continued despite her illness. After she was confined to a wheelchair, she made Zoo staff members work overtime to keep the bears happy for the sake of the cubs.

Mary Reed was raised on a farm. She met Ted Reed when both were students at Kansas State University. They married in 1943. She was killed by suicide when her husband was 50. She was survived by her daughter, her mother and two step-siblings.

A memorial service, attended by many Institute staff members, was held at St. John's Church, 15th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington. Mourners were asked, in lieu of flowers, to send contributions to the church or the American Cancer Society.

Managers Sharpen Skills in Workshop

Twenty-five employees and five alternates were selected by the Executive Resources Board to attend an Smithsonian-sponsored Contemporary Management Skills Workshop held Sept. 18 through 22 at George Washington University. The employees were selected from 49 current and alternate employees of the Kennedy, Francis, and management grades, 11 and above or the equivalent, who nominated themselves for membership in the workshop selected by the Board.

The workshop was set up to allow the free exchange of ideas, problems, questions and solutions relating to contemporary management on a national basis. It was led by Dr. A. R. Whitley, professor of public administration, and Dr. Erik R. Winslow, associate professor of management at the State University of New York at Binghamton. Dr. Peter Thompson, professor of business administration, led the group. The workshop was attended by Michael Collins, SI director of human resources and assistant director for education and training, and James Mello, assistant director for human resources.

THE PERFECT GIFT . . . This necklace of 42 cushion-shaped, soft blue sapphires weighing almost 209 carats, and embellished by dozens of diamonds weighing close to 100 carats, was given to the Smithsonian in just the right moment, Chris's Lindberg Ammenberg Hall of New York City. Hall is the sister of Janet Ammenberg Hooker, whose gift last year of a 75-carat emerald brooch was recently placed on display at MNH.

Sports

The SI football team's winning record (5-1-0) before the fact that, offensively, they are having problems. In spite of the team's sluggish offensive attack, Coach Joe Bradley of computer science reaps the benefits for his relentless efforts. The defense recovered a fumble, grabbed two interceptions and sacked the opposing quarterback for a safety in the most recent games.

The National Geographic Society team was the latest to feel the defensive power of SI. The Geographic team lost on two separate occasions, 6-0 and 10-6. SI's first win was a defensive feat in which the only scoring occurred with only 20 seconds of play remaining. Tommy Brown of protection services scored the winning TD in a 20-17 loss to the DOT Cavaliers. Brown scored two touchdowns in the final minutes. Brown scored on both second-half touchdowns.

Bowling

The SI bowling team is still adjusting to its new Silver Hill location. The move is taking a toll on the bowling averages. Ray Suggs of MNH, however, has taken the high set for men, bowling a 590. Suggs is captain of the Thunder Strokes, which has the league's high average with 290 points and 3 losses. The Zenith team is in second place with 230 points and 3 wins. Gerald West bowling, 173, remains the leader in men's high average. His nearest competitor is John Ramey, bowling 172.

Faye Norman continues to lead the women with her 153 high average. Sylvia Pinkney, MNH, who bowled a 505 high set, leads the women in that category.

S I Sets Up New Science Office

The establishment of a Smithsonian Office of Biological Conservation and the appointment of Dr. Edward S. Ayensu as its first director was announced by Smithsonian Secretary S. Dillon Ripley.

Ayensu, formerly chairman of the Museum of Natural History's Botany Department, has directed the Smithsonian's Endangered Flora Program since 1973. As director of the new office, Ayensu will coordinate the various environmental conservation activities already in progress in the Institution and encourage a variety of projects related to the activities of an environmental conservation, especially within the areas of staff interest. The new office will form part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Science and Concerns the secret office of the morning." Ripley said. ""Our status will be the status and national and international efforts devoted to the protection of plant and animal species threatened with extinction, their educational and legislative programs, and our liaison with various governmental and non-governmental organizations in the United States and abroad.

In order to improve our understanding of the conditions in our changing natural environment, the knowledge developed by scientific staff at the Smithsonian, and the status of vulnerable species that we are concerned about, changes constantly. Nature is constantly in a state of change, but man-made changes threaten to become irreversible. The Institution is working hard as a monitoring and warning system.

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Women Who Met the Challenge

By Sheila Reines

Contrary to popular opinion, not all Victorian ladies spent their time sitting primly in the parlors. As education became more widespread, growing numbers of American women in the last century traded lady flocks for white coats and tock to lab and field to conduct important research in astronomy, biology, botany, zoology, anthropology and the other sciences. Their contributions are currently being honored in the Museum of History and Technology exhibit, "Women in Science in 19th-Century America," on view until February. Eight display cases summarize the story of the woman's struggle to join the all-male exploration party pushing back the frontiers of science. Samples of women's discoveries include a specimen of the Chesapeake Bay blue crab, named Callinectes sapidus (Latin for "tasty beautiful swimmer"), by Mary Jane Rathbun, the first woman scientist at the Smithsonian.

Deborah Warner

Biography: Memoir or History?

Was Boswell's "Life of Johnson" a biography or merely a personal memoir, albeit a brilliant one, providing source material for Voltaire's "Candide"? Was Darwin's "Life of James Boswell's old friend, the 18th-century writer-lexicographer? Can the biographer penetrate the subject's secret emotions and self-image, or should that even be attempted?

Filling 2,000 Yule Orders Daily

A fulfillment center may sound like the place to go for an intense EST experience, but at the Smithsonian's center, located in a Virginia industrial park, staff members work day and night filling Christmas catalog orders in time for the holidays. Last year, catalog sales were so successful that the fulfillment operation virtually tripled the size of its quarters in the Arts and Industries and 1111 North Capital Street buildings—personnel, boxes and equipment had to be moved into the hallways. This September, Donald Street building personnel, boxes and catalog orders in time for the holiday season.

Dr. Mead Dies at 76

Margaret Mead, 76, the noted anthropologist, died in New York on November 15. Dr. Mead had been a frequent participant in Institution education and research activities and served for 10 years as consultant to the Office of Symposia and Seminars.

Rathbun, with no more than a high school diploma, was hired as a clerk and trained herself to become one of the leading crab experts in the world.

There is also a copy of "The Chemistry of Cooking and Cleaning" co-authored by Ellen Swallow Richards. Richards was the first woman admitted to the graduate program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, but as a special student rather than a doctoral candidate. According to one story, MIT's president didn't want one of his school's doctors to be awarded to a woman.

The story of these women is a story of "firsts." One case displays a geologic map, a 1903 field notebook and rock samples collected by Florence Bascom, the first woman to be granted a doctorate in geology by Hopkins University. In another are the Harvard College astronomical records kept by Williamina Fleming, the first woman to receive an official appointment from the Harvard Corporation.

Featuring among the trailblazers and space travelers of the comet in 1847 resulted in international recognition, including a medal from the King of Denmark. In 1865, when Vassar College opened, the first woman's college as an endowment anywhere near that of a man's school, Mitchell became director of the Vassar observatory. Her telescope dominates the entrance to the exhibit.

"The exhibit dramatizes that women did participate in science in the 19th century," said MHT's curator of the history of astronomy, Deborah Warner, who put together the exhibit.

WOODBLOCK PRINTS AT THE FREER... This charming picture of men washing a horse in a waterfall, from a Japanese artist Hokumon (1760-1849), can be seen at the Freer in a recently installed gallery of Edo prints. The museum's four other Japanese galleries are showing displays of Buddhist and Shinto art, Japanese screens, the work of selected artists and paintings from the Ukyo-school.

Geologist Readies for Antarctic Stay

By Arlene Walsh

Antarctica: raging winds, intense cold, masses of blue ice and swirling snow. The continent is a polar desert. Nothing grows but hardy lichens, and the only animals are seals and penguins living along the coastline. This frozen world, undiscovered until the 19th century, is still partially unexplored. International treaties protect most of the continent for scientific research, and the most exciting new discovery is a treasure trove of fallen meteorites.

Until eight years ago, about 2,000 different meteorites, some represented by hundreds of specimens from the same fall, were known in the world. But in 1970 Japanese scientists exploring the Yamato Mountains, across Antarctica from the U.S. base at McMurdo, discovered large concentrations of meteorites lying on patches of blue ice. Since then, several Japanese expeditions, plus two others led by Dr. William Cassidy of the University of Pittsburgh, have added more than 1,000 specimens to world collections.

The search for still more meteorites is one part of the 1978-79 United States Antarctic Research Program sponsored by the National Science Foundation. The program will conduct a 9-week meteorite hunt there beginning in December.

Among the team of American and Japanese scientists, led by Cassidy, will be Dr. Ursula Marvin, a geologist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Marvin, a past president of the American Meteoritical Society, has been studying meteorites and lunar samples for many years.

She has been on numerous expeditions in the past, but none has required so much endurance as the Antarctic. Marvin, a self-described oddball, fashion-forward, field exploration geologist, said she has taken to running every day along the banks of the Charles River in Cambridge to get in shape.

Marvin also had to get special equipment for the trip. She bought dark glasses, with plastic "spaghetti" covering the metal, and

Marvin bundles up for Antarctica

Jensens flashed with silver for protection against the bright reflection off the ice. She is packing a double parka and goose down pants and special expedition footwear constructed with sheepskin-lined boots inside heavy leather spiked outers. Each foot will carry four and a half pounds.

Marvin will arrive at McMurdo in early December after a flight by Navy transport plane from California to Christchurch, New Zealand. Survival gear will be issued at Christchurch before the party proceeds to Antarctica. At McMurdo, all field workers will attend survival school, where they will be encouraged to use a "bivi," by chopping a trench in the ice, covering it with ice blocks, and actually sleeping in it.

The team members will search from a helicopter for meteorite concentrations, easy to spot on the ice. If a promising lode of meteorites is found, they will set up a camp and go to work.
A New Feature For Blind Visitors

By Louise Hall

When James Gasel visited the National Air and Space Museum's Benefits from Flight Gallery, he made just one stop to read the text printed on the walls: a few words by philosophers who have speculated about life in the future. His interest was not surprising. What was unusual was the way Gasel, who is blind, obtained the information.

Gasel, chief of the Washington office of the National Federation of the Blind, may have been the first visitor to use NASM's new paperless braille reading machine. The device is a kind of personal cassette and display that information in braille on demand. The electronically encoded messages on the cassette tape are sent to a series of 12 braille cells on the outside of the machine. The braille dots are raised or lowered, enabling a blind person to read the material stored on the tape.

Developed in France, the machine was introduced in this country barely a year ago. And the only one in America that a blind person can own is at NASM.

Noting that braille is "the only system that allows blind people to maintain their literary skills," the Hedwig said, "It is encouraging that the Smithsonian recognized this.

A number of the visitors in the gallery were more interested in seeing Gasel operate the new machine than in reading the text. A special information station on the TV screens are available for the sighted. Several had never seen braille before, much less a braille machine that translates from machine code to braille.

Microprocessor chips and memory storage chips used in the device at the National Air and Space Museum are also used in paperless braille. Paperless braille requires only the space it takes to house a cassette, whereas traditional braille is large and heavy. Thus, libraries will be encouraged to stock the new machine when braille books are prohibited.

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Our Wares

The Smithsonian, an upbeat story in the December 1978 issue of Conservation and Research magazine, carries an article as an "informal consultant" to the National Zoo, where he assisted veterinary teams, Dr. Mitchell Bush, in orthopedic operations on various Zoo inhabitants. Other helpful specialists from Children's have included a neurosurgeon who operated on the brain of a thesis student. Gasel, a delegate to the International Braille Conference, said, "We are direct- ing our efforts to solving the braille problem."

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The film also features Dr. Farouk El- Baz, director of NASA's Center for Earth and Planetary Studies, discussing the moon as a "window to the early history of the Earth."

Smithsonian personnel from the Office of Telecommunications, headed by Nazaret D. C. Stearns, talked with the show's producer Peter Vogt and others at WETA.

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Designers Help Create New Office Space

By Kathryn Lindeman

Thinking about redesigning your office space or launching a new exhibit? Interior design services are now available within the Smithsonian. James Shelton, chief of the new Visual Communications Branch, and his assistant, Fran Gallagher, provide interior space planning, develop visual presentations and coordinate all Smithsonian exhibits related to construction projects. The branch is located in the Office of Facilities Planning and Engineering Services.

"In the past, some interior design was provided on an informal basis," Shelton said, "but with specialization in interior space planning, we can develop greater expertise." Shelton also expressed that suggestions for furniture, fabrics, carpets, lighting and graphics are included in the design package, along with budget estimates when requested. "We have up-to-date information on new items available to the interior space planners, and the resource library includes retail furniture catalogs, samples and materials for furnishings, floor coverings and fabrics."

"We interview the client, conduct an in-depth study of his needs and let function determine design. A possible solution for Smithsonian offices with space problems is the use of office landscape systems—modular, interconnecting units designed to meet 20th-century space requirements. Office landscape systems can be less expensive, more functional and can produce a more organized work atmosphere. Modular systems have recently been put to use at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama and the Office of Protection Services.

Through visual presentations which include renderings, photos and graphs, a client can visualize how a proposed project will appear—before funds are committed. This approach can help the Smithsonian save money, Shelton said. Clients of this service range from the SI Board of Regents and volunteer workers to bureaus to organizations, such as the National Capitol Parks and Planning Commission, the Fine Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, which have specific interest in commissioning projects. These groups frequently request drawings of proposed projects so members can more easily visualize the proposed concepts.

In addition to space planning and presentations, the branch coordinates reviews of exhibits—through the requesting office and the offices of Plant Services, Protection Services and Facilities Planning and Engineering Services—to insure compliance with Smithsonian construction review policies and federal and state laws.

A new mineral has been named Desaulestite in honor of Paul E. Desaulniers, curator of MNI's Department of Mineral Sciences. The new species was discovered at several localities in late 1977 and has been characterized as a totally new chemical compound, a magnesium manganese carbonate hydroxyl hydrate. The bright orange crystal habit is found on altered serpentine rocks from San Benito County in California and from the Cedar Hill Quarry in Lancaster County, Pa. Desaulniers has been characterized by scientists at the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Michigan.

Brocke Hindle, senior historian at MHT, has been elected to the Board of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Hindle's main interests are the Federalist and Republican party organizations in Revolutionary-era New England. He has published two books on the New England Federalists and is currently working on the institutional development of the Federalist party in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The winter edition of the Smithsonian magazine, read her poetry in at the National Association of Independent Schools meeting at Williamsburg, Va. She found that speaking at a professional education conference, giving as illustrations two innovations in a new method of knitting, Frederick Steck, secretary of the Kennan Institute and member of the traditional jazz band, the Federal Jazz Commission, was pictured with the group in the Oct. 26 issue of the National Association of Independent Schools. The Smiths have just cut a record, "The Federal Jazz Commission at the National Press Club.

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Books

If you have written, edited or illustrated a recently released book, please notify Smithsonian Press Assistant Director Felix Lowe, so that your publication can be listed in Torch. Smithsonian books for this month:

- "Settlement and Metamorphosis of Marine Invertebrate Larvae," edited by Fu-Shiang Chia, University of Alberta; Mary E. Rice, MNH; Edward E. Ruppert and John F. Pilger, SI postdoctoral fellows; Elsevier North Holland, 1978.

Q & A

Thanks to Steven Tatti, object conservator for the Hirshhorn Museum, the sculptor in the Museum's outdoor gardens are better able to stand up to years of weather and wind. In his position, he and an assistant take care of some 1,000 objects—about 900 indoors and 100 outdoors. Tatti, who has been at the museum for more than 3 years, studied conservation in Italy for 2 years after graduating from Ithaca College in New York and has worked with a private conservator in Baltimore and at the National Collection of Fine Arts and the Museum of History and Technology. He was interviewed by Torch staff writer Kathryn Lindeman.

Q. What makes it difficult to maintain sculpture outdoors?
A. I fight a constant battle against the elements. Most modern bronzes have artifici­
ally induced patinas applied by the artist or his foundry. What I try to do is maintain and preserve these surfaces. It's the atmos­phere and the fallout which contain the majority of harmful elements, converted by moisture into corrosive agents. The streaky, pitted green surface which covers most bronzes left unprotected in parks is what I'm trying to prevent.

Bronze wear and oxidation can also occur on unprotected bronzes due mainly to the modeling of the piece itself. Winter presents other problems. For example, moisture trapped inside a stone piece might freeze and cause the stone to crack open. Handling by visitors is still another source of wear on the surfaces. It is all these things which we are trying to control to maintain the sculpture out of doors.

Q. What steps do you take to prevent deterioration?
A. Each piece outdoors has at least one or more coats of protective substances—olive waxes, paint—to seal against moisture and retard corrosion. Recoatings are done—often—at least twice a year, in fall and spring. One simple thing we do is to hose down and wipe off the outdoor sculptures frequently in the summer because they collect dirt and fallout very quickly. Sometimes, though, if we do the hosing in the morning, the sculptures can be covered with dust again by afternoon. Our main priority is to protect the material; the secondary priority is to keep the surface aesthetically as the artist intended. The coatings which conserve best may not be best in texture or feel. For example, waxes, paint might be best for conserving the material but might result in a coating that the artist did not have because the artist aimed to have a different surface. Also, paints might be best for conserving museums, but might not be best for conserving objects. We try to stay up on the latest developments but also work with the exhibits staff on the properties of each piece—we can't always reach all the areas that we want to.

Q. What kind of equipment do you use?
A. We make our own coating mixtures—dirtier to control what's in them. For the outside sculptures we use waxes, lacquer, paint for protection or combinations of these. On one piece, we may use a lacquer first for protection and then a wax coating to make a less glossy finish. Sometimes, we spray the coatings on with a compressed air spray gun. In that case, the purpose of the coating or the physical intricacies of the piece—we can't always reach all the areas by hand.

Q. Is the mounting of the sculpture a part of conservation?
A. We work with the exhibits staff on mountings. The sculptures have to be prop­erly secured so they won't fall or blow over, but you have to be careful what metal you use for the mounting. Different metals may react chemically with each other, par­ticularly iron next to bronze, and could cause rust streaks on the sculpture. Mountings do weaken and have to be checked periodically along with the bases.

Books

- "Settlement and Metamorphosis of Marine Invertebrate Larvae," edited by Fu-Shiang Chia, University of Alberta; Mary E. Rice, MNH; Edward E. Ruppert and John F. Pilger, SI postdoctoral fellows; Elsevier North Holland, 1978.
- "Winter," by Winslow Homer, is on the cover of the catalog for "The American Skating Mania," an exhibit at MIHT opening Dec. 1. For some 20th-century skat­ting, try the Constitution Ave. rink, scheduled to open early this month.

Winter sports enthusiasts have been ex­citedly watching the annual transformation of the National Park Service's sculpture gar­den into a skating rink and hoping for a dry day in December. It's the responsibility of the rink manager to keep the rink open in the first week of December, weather permitting.

The rink will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sundays and from 11 a.m. to 9:15 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Holiday hours are from 9 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. The fee for each of the 2-hour sessions is $2. You'll find the rink most crowded during the three 1-hour lunchtime specials, at 11, 12:15 and 1:30, when admission is reduced to $1. The last part of the day also brings out the enthusiasts, so if you want to prac­tice your Hamill camel or disco technique, go on a weekday afternoon, when you may have the ice to yourself.

Skiing can be rented for 75 cents plus D.C. tax, in sites from a child's 9 to a man's 13. Identification—Smithsonian ID driver's license or credit card—is required. A small snack bar serves hot dogs, soup and the skater's staple, hot chocolate.

In case you haven't noticed, the skating rink is located at Constitution Avenue and Seventh Street next to the Museum of Nat­ural History. It will be open through the end of March. For further information, call 347-9041.