

APRIL 1956



THE SMITHSONIAN

## TORCH

## MIT ARCHITECTS NAMED

The architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, New York, will design the new Museum of History and Technology.

When the contract was delivered on March 20, Lawrence G. White and James K. Smith, partners of the firm, expressed to Dr. Carmichael their gratification on being selected for this assignment. Mr. White and Mr. Smith with two other architects in the firm, Walker G. and Edwin Olsen, devoted a part of three days to an initial study of the Smithsonian building for the building. They expressed great enthusiasm for the project. Mr. Cain said that the office competition between at least three teams of design would inaugurate their attack on the problem.

The architects are expected to complete the working drawings and specifications for the foundation about a year from now, so construction should begin about that time.

The firm of McKim, Mead & White was founded in 1879. It has designed numerous buildings for public, institutional, and educational as well as commercial buildings.

The firm's founders, Charles McKim, was one of the architects who participated in the design of the McKim Building. Later the firm designed and prepared the architectural plans for Memorial Bridge.



Mr. Smith is a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and president of the American Academy in Rome. (An article about the American Academy in Rome appears below.)

The Museum of History and Technology will be located on Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets, NW. The cost ceiling for the new structure is \$36 million. It will have about 1 million gross square feet and will be fully air conditioned.

## AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

The American Academy in Rome consists of a school of fine arts and school of classical studies. It is situated in Rome, Italy, and was founded under the leadership of Charles McKim in 1894.

The aim of the Academy is to contribute toward American arts and letters by giving selected artists and scholars an opportunity for study and travel in an atmosphere of art. There is no formal instruction but certain work and travel are prescribed.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION • WASHINGTON, D. C.

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One of the firm's founders, Charles F. McKim, was one of the architects who participated in the preparation of the McMillan Plan of 1901 for downtown Washington and the Mall. Later the firm designed and prepared the architectural plans for Memorial Bridge.

Mr. White is president of the National Academy of Design and until recently a member of the Smithsonian Art Commission. Mr. Smith is a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and president of the American Academy in Rome. (An article about the American Academy in Rome appears below.)

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as Fellows through an annual competition.

The Academy is administered by a director and staff in Rome and a president and board of trustees in New York.

#### ARTHUR LECTURE

Dr. Donald M. Menzel, director of the Harvard College Observatory, will be the speaker at the 23d Annual James Arthur Lecture on the Sun. The lecture, "The Edge of the Sun," will be given in the auditorium of the Natural History Building at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 26.

Dr. Menzel has been deeply engaged in solar research for many years. He has observed seven total solar eclipses and has founded two solar observatories -- one in Climax, Colo., and the other at Sacramento Peak, N. Mex.

In his talk Dr. Menzel will describe the studies leading to an understanding of solar activity and its effects on the earth. Motion pictures of solar explosions, including those of the recent outburst in February 1956, will graphically portray what happens when large spots appear on the face of the sun.

Smithsonian employees are invited to attend the lecture.

#### NEW ETHNOLOGIST

The Bureau of American Ethnology is happy to announce

the addition of Dr. William C. Sturtevant to its staff.

Dr. Sturtevant is replacing Dr. Philip Drucker, who resigned last November, and will take over the duties of his office on July 2.

Congratulations to the Bureau and best wishes to Dr. Sturtevant.

(Jessie Shaw says the important question now is: Can he bowl?)

#### ALEXANDRIA HISTORY IN ART

The Alexandria Association, of Alexandria, Va., is sponsoring an exhibit that will tell, in works of art, the history of the Old Port.

"Our Town, 1749-1865," is the title of the exhibit, which will be shown at historic Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria from April 12 through May 12.

Thomas Beggs, director of the National Collection of Fine Arts, and Malcolm Watkins, associate curator of ethnology, are on the Association's advisory committee for the exhibit.

More than 200 portraits, miniatures, silhouettes, drawings, engravings, and pieces of sculpture have been loaned for this visual record of more than a century. Every exhibit will be described in a catalog, where much information will be given about the subject and his place of residence, business, and activities in the community.

Almost all the historic Alexandria residents of the period will be represented. Among these residents were George Washington, Lord Fairfax, George Mason, and THE Lees.

This exhibit marks the beginning of a "Documentary of Art" in Alexandria from the early days of the Republic.

#### ON TELEVISION

Dr. David H. Dunkle, associate curator of vertebrate paleontology, appeared on the WRC-TV program "Our World in Space" on Sunday, March 25. Dr. Dunkle answered questions pertaining to the history of life after its first appearance on the earth.

Dr. Frank H. H. Roberts, Bureau of American Ethnology, will appear on the same program at 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 15. His subject will be "The Age of Man."

#### SIGHTS SET ON FLORIDA

Mr. and Mrs. John A. Seitz were guests of honor in the Regents Room of the Smithsonian Building on the afternoon of March 27. The occasion was a "send-off" for Mr. Seitz, who retired at the end of March after more than 24 years' service on the guard force of the Smithsonian.

Mr. Seitz came to the Smithsonian in 1931 after retiring as a quartermaster sergeant in the marine corps. He had been assigned to the east door of the S. I. Building since 1937.

Dr. Carmichael presented Mr. Seitz with a "Smithsonian Card" designed by Mr. Hellyer of the International Exchange Service and upon which were printed the names of the guard's many friends who contributed to a gift in token of their esteem. In making the presentation, the Secretary stated that Mr. Seitz

had been a faithful guardian of the east door, having escorted many visitors to his office and always having the ability to locate any member of the staff.

Mrs. Seitz was presented with an orchid corsage.

The couple is planning to live in Florida and will move there shortly.

#### CREDIT UNION NOTES

The Smithsonian Institution Employees Credit Union now has 700 members and assets of \$149,000.

There are 144 credit unions in the District of Columbia. These credit unions have 155,000 members and assets of \$36 million.

The Detroit Teachers Credit Union, with 12,500 members, has passed the \$20 million mark, making it the largest credit union in America in assets. The largest number of members is the New York Municipal with 42,000; it has \$12 million in assets.

#### ABOUT A WEDDING

Following are excerpts taken from a syndicated column by Jane Eads which appeared in the Plainfield (N. J.) Courier-News and many other papers on February 29.

"The recent marriage of Margaret Brown and Frank Klapthor has given each of two museums two curators for the price of one. Shop talk and exchange of ideas



highlight the young couple's association.

"The bride is assistant curator of the Smithsonian's civil history division. Klapthor is curator of the Daughters of the American Revolution Museum. They met while he, then a Smithsonian Museum Aid, was assisting her in designing the Institution's new White House Ladies Gallery.

"The couple also met Mamie Eisenhower, whose pink inaugural gown was to be featured in the collection of First Ladies' dresses in the new hall, which opened last May. Upon their marriage the couple received a telegram bearing the personal good wishes of the Eisenhowers.

"Mrs. Klapthor told me the First Lady had visited the museum on several occasions and had been cooperative and generous in sending things down for use in the exhibit. 'She was especially interested in the collection of dresses and the backgrounds we were arranging for them,' Mrs. Klapthor added. 'It was one of those pleasant associations.'

"The bride, who has written a book on 'Dresses of First Ladies of the White House' and a booklet on the First Ladies Hall, says her favorite dress in the collection is that worn by Harriet Lane, niece of James Buchanan and the bachelor president's official White House hostess.

"A wedding gown of stiff white moire taffeta, it features a low round neckline, short sleeves and a billowing hoop skirt. Mrs. Klapthor's own wedding gown bore a striking resemblance, but with a ballerina-length skirt."

#### GONE TO PERU

Dr. Marshall T. Newman, associate curator of the division of physical anthropology, left for Peru on March 16. He will be gone until August 1.

Dr. Newman will spend most of his time at Hacienda Vicos in north-central Peru, where he will study the local population. Since the nutrition and hygiene of this population is undergoing rapid improvement, Dr. Newman hopes to obtain a record of physiques that will serve as a base line for future observations. There is good evidence that the human body responds to changes in environment but as yet the relation of food to physique is not clearly established.

Dr. Newman's work is being financed by grants from the National Science Foundation and the Public Health Service.

#### JUNIOR LEAGUE GUIDED TOURS

On March 21, Dr. Carmichael and our Junior League chairman, Mrs. Robert Nelson, officially inaugurated guided tours in the First Ladies Hall. This tour in the Arts & Industries Building is limited to students in the 5th and 6th grades.

As with the popular tours of the American Indian Hall, this new History of America tour will be conducted by volunteers in the Junior League. Tours must be arranged in advance by calling Mrs. Nelson, OL 4-1158, or the vice-chairman and docent, Mrs. Alexander Chilton, JE 3-8085.

In addition to the above, the following Junior Leaguers

will conduct the tours in the First Ladies Hall: Mrs. William Evers, Mrs. Walter Graves, Mrs. Harold Hull, Mrs. John W. Kern III, Miss Mary Louise Krayenbuhl, Mrs. Peter MacDonald, Mrs. Jay B. L. Reeves, Mrs. John Schoenfeld, and Mrs. Andrew H. Brown.

For the wonderful guide service that has been going on in the American Indian Hall since January 25, congratulations and thanks go to the following: Mrs. John Mashburn, Mrs. George Goodrich, Mrs. George Wyeth, Mrs. Bolling Powell, Mrs. William McClure, Mrs. Walter Flowinski, Mrs. Robert McCormick, Miss Mary McNeil, and Mrs. John Manfuso.

#### LECTURES IN WISCONSIN

Dr. T. D. Stewart, curator of the division of physical anthropology, gave an All-University Lecture at the University of Wisconsin on March 29. His subject was the "Diseases of Prehistoric Man."

#### DISTINGUISHED GREAT-GRANDFATHER

All the world loves a lover, but did you know that the Smithsonian Institution has a reason to be especially interested in the Prince Rainier III - Grace Kelly romance?

The Prince's great-grandfather, His Serene Highness Prince Albert I of Monaco, was a distinguished scientist and patron of marine zoology. Around the turn of the century he founded the famous Institut Oceanographique and Museum

of Monaco, with which the Smithsonian Institution has been in exchange ever since. Many sumptuous volumes and bulletins have come and are still coming to the library as a result of Prince Albert's deep interest in and generous support of science.

In 1921, Prince Albert visited America for the last time, and the Regents and Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution gave a reception in his honor after his address before the National Academy of Sciences in the auditorium of the Natural History Building.

The late Austin H. Clark, then curator of echinoderms, who was detailed to act as the scientific aide-de-camp to the Prince during his stay in Washington, had many interesting stories to tell about the days he spent escorting the quiet, scholarly old gentleman about the city.

All good wishes to the great-grandson of this distinguished man, Albert I of Monaco!

#### ACTIVE IN PAN AMERICAN MEETING

The third meeting of the "Program of the History of Americas," co-sponsored by the Commission on History of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, and the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Pan American Union, was held on March 26-28 at the Library of Congress.

Drs. T. D. Stewart, Clifford Evans, and Betty Meggers, of the department of anthropology, were active participants in the conference.



## RECENT VISITORS

During the past month the department of zoology had the pleasure of visits from two zoologists from Europe on their way to the symposium on marine biology at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at La Jolla, Calif.

Dr. H. Caspers, of the Zoologisches Museum und Institut, Hamburg, Germany, is a marine ecologist who at the moment is principally interested in the ecology of the estuary of the Elbe River in the vicinity of Hamburg.

Dr. Gunnar Thorson, of the Zoologiske Museum in Copenhagen, Denmark, is well known for his work on marine bottom communities and on the larval stages and development of marine invertebrates, especially mollusks.

The division of mollusks recently had visits from Dr. William K. Emerson, who has recently been placed in charge of the invertebrate collections (outside of insects) of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and Dr. John W. Wells, professor of geology at Cornell University and one of the country's leading authorities on corals.

## STUDIES SKULL OF INDIAN CHIEF

When Lewis and Clark arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River in 1805, they met Comcomly, chief of the Chinook tribe. This chief figures in the founding of Fort Astoria and is mentioned by various travelers to this region in the early years of the 19th century.

After Comcomly died, sometime before 1835, his skull was obtained by Dr. Meredith Gairdner and sent to England where it ultimately was placed in the Royal Naval Hospital Museum in Gosport, Portsmouth, England.

Recently the Clatsop County Historical Society in Astoria, Oreg., arranged to have Comcomly's skull returned to this country. Stanley P. Young of the Fish and Wildlife Service, who is stationed in the National Museum, learned about this skull and suggested to Dr. T. D. Stewart that it might be possible to obtain it on loan for study purposes.

Dr. Stewart followed up this suggestion and is now studying the specimen, which arrived at the Museum on March 23. He points out that it is unusual to have such full documentation of the skull of an Indian, let alone that of such a famous Indian chief.

## MARRIED

Miss Hilda C. Schmaltz and Dr. Ernest R. Sohns were married on March 24 in Scranton, Pa. Dr. Sohns is associate curator of grasses. Mrs. Sohns is a former employee of the Smithsonian.

Miss Elaine Joy Smith became the bride of John E. Knott on February 18. Mrs. Knott works at the sales desk in the Freer Gallery. Miss Patsy Stanley, of the Freer office, was maid of honor at the wedding.

## S. I. AND OUTER SPACE

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory has been assigned the task of initiating an observation program for the earth satellite which will be launched next year.

"After all the planning, trouble, and expense of placing a man-made satellite in the sky, we cannot afford to let it get lost," said Dr. Fred L. Whipple, director of the Observatory. "Our carefully selected sites throughout the world for the precise observation of the satellite could come to naught if a preliminary orbit calculated from the observations of volunteer observers around the world were not made available as quickly as possible after launching."

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, secretary of the American Astronomical Society, recently was appointed associate director of the Smithsonian's satellite tracking program. Mr. Armand Spitz, director of the Spitz Laboratories, has been selected to coordinate the observations.

Although the visual satellite observer corps will be operated on a volunteer basis, the selection of members will be based on the observer's skill and willingness to accept the responsibility for training his instrument skyward at specified times while the satellites are aloft. The principal reward of these observers will be the knowledge that their work will have unquestioned scientific value. Appropriate recognition to observers who have successfully taken part in the program will be made by the officers of the Satellite Program so that there will be a permanent record of their contribution to

this unique scientific undertaking.

According to Mr. Spitz, observers who wish to be part of the program should contact their local amateur astronomy organizations, which will have received full instructions from central organizations.

## MAKES APPEARANCE

Frank A. Haentschke, Jr., came into the world on March 12. His father works at the Freer Gallery.

## BOTANIST RETURNS FROM CUBA

Conrad Morton, curator of the division of ferns, returned early in March from a 10-week collecting trip in Cuba. He managed to wangle the loan of a "munitions carrier" from the U. S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, a perfect truck for negotiating the difficult mountainous roads of eastern Cuba.

Mr. Morton reports that the Cuban forests are being rapidly destroyed by indiscriminate cutting and that many of the interesting endemic plants are in imminent danger of extinction.

## WE'VE GOT TERMITES

A collection of 230,000 specimens of termites, including 1,286 distinct species of the approximately 2,000 known in the world, has been presented to the Smithsonian Institution



by the U. S. Department of Agriculture Forest Insect Research.

This collection, probably the second most valuable of its kind in the world, represents the work of more than 46 years during which Dr. Thomas E. Snyder, retired Department of Agriculture entomologist, has collected termites in the Western Hemisphere and has also obtained many Old World species by exchange and gift. Among the specimens are 943 "type specimens" -- that is, individuals to which all others of the species must be referred for final identification. When Dr. Snyder started his collection in 1915 there were only 12 identified species of termites in the Smithsonian collections.

Termites are found over most of the world except the Arctic and Antarctic, Dr. Snyder explains, and probably many kinds still remain unknown. Only those that do damage to human structures have been intensively studied, and extermination of these is now a multimillion-dollar business in the United States. There is always the danger, he says, that some foreign species may invade the country at any time, and therefore means of immediate identification, such as is provided by the Smithsonian collection, may prove invaluable.

Although termites are customarily referred to as "white ants," Dr. Snyder says, there is little, if any, relationship between ants and termites. These two kinds of insects have developed only roughly similar body forms and ways of life by quite independent routes. Termites, he explains, are more nearly related to the roaches, which were among the earliest forms to appear on earth

approximately 250,000,000 years ago. The termites, as indicated in fossil deposits, made their first appearance not much more than 50,000,000 years ago and represent a long road from the primitive roaches. They have been termed "social cockroaches." The first ants did not make their appearance until about 30,000,000 years ago. They took on the environment and habits of the termites and, being more advanced organisms, soon drove the older creatures to a wholly subterranean habitat. The ant is much better equipped as a predatory animal.

#### FORMER EMPLOYEE RECEIVES AWARD

Miss Marjorie Kunze, a former S.I. employee, recently received an award for meritorious service at the Bureau of Ordnance Technical Library, Department of Defense.

Miss Kunze formerly was librarian of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Laboratory. Her many friends here congratulate her and wish for her continued success.

#### RELEASED

F. M. Setzler has announced that on March 29 a special investigative Federal Grand Jury met for the last time. Frank was sworn in as one of the foremen of this special grand jury on September 30, 1954, and has been on call during the past year and a half. The jury examined 153 individual witnesses,

some more than once, whose evidence amounted to 8,541 pages of transcript.

Upon completion of his civic duty, he left with Malcolm Watkins for Marlborough Town, Va., at the junction of Potomac Creek and Potomac River, where they, together with Prof. Oscar Darter of Mary Washington College, will conduct excavations to determine, if possible, the size, number, and type of colonial structures that may have existed there near the end of the 17th century. This field work has been made possible through a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

#### NEW RESIDENCE FOR COW BIRD

An Old World bird that is a constant companion of cows has become established in the United States in the past 15 years. Unknown in this country before its first appearance in Florida in 1942, it now numbers approximately 2,000 in that State, according to a recently published Smithsonian report by Alexander Sprunt, Jr., of the National Audubon Society.

This bird is Bubulcus ibis, the cattle egret, well known for many years in southern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. It is a small, white egret with dark-brown feet and yellow legs and bill. The creature is most remarkable for its strange, constant association with cattle. Says Mr. Sprunt:

"The close proximity to cattle is little short of astonishing. It is a positive wonder

that it is not stepped on! It keeps pace with the animal continually, usually close by the head but sometimes near the fore or hind feet and occasionally under the belly. When an insect is disturbed, the bird darts out, catches it, and returns. Now and then, it reaches up and picks off something from the body of the cow, or its legs. Whether these tidbits are flies, ticks, or what, I do not know, but it is a frequent practice. At times, the cow may be seen to push the bird aside with its muzzle, but appears not to object otherwise to the immediate closeness of its satellite.

"A very peculiar and, as far as I know, unexplained characteristic of the bird is the habit of weaving the head and neck from side to side . . . . A bird will suddenly stop feeding, stand perfectly upright, and weave the upper part of the body in a sort of hula-like motion."

It feeds chiefly on grasshoppers and crickets. This may explain its fondness for cattle, which disturb these insects in the grass while grazing.

How the cattle egret got to the New World, especially the United States, is hard to explain. It first was observed in British Guiana in 1937, but did not appear in this country until 5 years later.

The cattle egret population is concentrated in Florida but stray specimens have been observed as far north as Maine and even Newfoundland, and inland to Chicago.

In the Old World it is known as a great wanderer. Mr. Sprunt believes that a few pairs may have been blown over the Atlantic by wind currents.



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March 30, 1955  
from Jefferson, Texas



## NEW APPOINTMENTS:

## Guard:

Edward J. King  
 Samuel J. Duncan  
 William F. Steiner

## File Clerk:

Evelyn B. Stewart

## Ethnologist:

William C. Sturtevant

## Library Assistant:

Glenn H. Borders

## Sheetmetal Worker:

Lionel A. Sweitzer

## Laborer:

Ellen G. Hardy

## Clerk-Stenographer:

Annie Laurie Black

Jane J. Cromer

## Storekeeping clerk:

Ollie A. Turman

## Policeman:

Wallace J. Armstrong

## Illustrator:

Patricia J. Isham

## Secretary:

Beulah G. Moore

## SEPARATIONS:

Frances Antonakos  
 Lawrence H. Merritt  
 John A. Seitz  
 Juan M. Garcia  
 Edgar C. Burton  
 Charles Semple  
 Oliver K. Tyler  
 Peggy M. Crowl  
 Ceclia W. Stein  
 Dorothea S. Michelman  
 John W. Harvey  
 Patricia A. Kelly

## TESTIFIES IN SMUGGLING CASE

Dr. Herbert Friedmann, curator of birds, recently returned from Jefferson, Texas, where he

testified as a bird expert in a parrot-smuggling case.

The curator left Washington on Sunday, April 1, and returned on Wednesday April 4. On Monday and Tuesday he sat in a hallway outside the courtroom, except for a 15-minute interval when he went inside and testified that "exhibit A" was not a native of the United States.

Dr. Friedmann says he believes his testimony was outstanding in that he was the only witness for the prosecution who was not a reformed bird-smuggler. But we think he meant he was the only government witness at the trial who had never been a smuggler.

## NEWS FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Word reaches us now and then from the Smithsonian-Bredin Expedition down in the West Indies. The group consists of Dr. Waldo L. Schmitt, head curator of zoology; Dr. Fenner A. Chace, Jr., curator of marine invertebrates; Dr. J.F. Gates Clarke, curator of insects; and Dr. A.C. Smith, curator of phanerogams.

Sailing from New York on March 2 by regular steamship, they met their chartered yacht, the Freelance, in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, a few days later. They are now working their way up through the islands, visiting a number of obscure ones as well as the better-known ones, to Puerto Rico. From Puerto Rico they will return home, probably by freighter, about May 1.

Following are excerpts from two of Dr. Schmitt's recent letters:

"Port Castries, St. Lucia, March 20, 1956.... We have been

chief crop is copra (dried coconut meats) for oil and soap production. Almost all of the islands grow bananas, coffee, cocoa, and almost anything else the tropics produce--papayas, mangoes, cassava, yams, and what not....

"Martinique, March 22, 1956. We are moving along. Hope to leave here (Martinique) Sunday and may reach Dominica on Monday, the 26th, where Jack Clarke is awaiting us. Things have been going quite well, and I'm sure that we shall have some very worthwhile collections with us when we return about May 1."

## EXCUSED LEAVE FOR VOTING

On May 1, 1956, the residents of the District of Columbia will have an opportunity to vote in primary elections.

Employees of the Smithsonian Institution who are residents of the District of Columbia may be granted a maximum of two hours excused leave for the purpose of voting on May 1. Please refer to Section 430-5h in the Smithsonian Institution Manual for further information.

## ADD NEW RATS

"Rats that walk like men" and many other small mammals of the North African desert have just been added to the mammal collection. They were collected by Dr. Henry Setzer, associate curator of mammals, during his expedition to

kept pretty busy--one collecting station after another and often with more material than we could pickle down the same day. I had intended to have some mail ready for sending out at this place, but only by staying on board am I able to get a few notes written. It is too late to mail them here, but will get them off from Martinique, where we are due on the 22nd. The West Indies are a delightful cruising ground.... The weather, except for two or three rather windy days, has been most delightful--rather warm mid-days, but beautiful balmy moonlit nights. Between Trinidad and here (St. Lucia), the smaller islands are rather dry, despite frequent rains. It is the dry season, but, even so, we have some kind of little shower or drizzle out of almost a clear sky. Then again everything clouds up and there is a proverbially tropical rainstorm--pelting, driving rain for some minutes, and then it's over. But for these frequent rains even in the dry season, there would be no living down here; most of the smaller islands have to depend on roof-caught rain water. The larger ones, like Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Martinique, have tropical rain forests, much water, and many streams. Others, like Union, Tobago Cay, Mustique, and others nobody ever hears of, have a tough time when the rains fail for longer periods, as they often do.

"There is a lot to tell, and much of interest. Grenada's principal crop is nutmegs. In the past they have been able to supply the world with them, but did you ever hear that the principal use of nutmegs is to flavor sausages? Here in St. Lucia the



Libya in search of mammals that serve as hosts of insect parasites and disease carriers. The country is largely desert, and its mammals are nearly all small creatures adapted through millenia for survival under desert conditions.

The biped rats are the jerboas, animals 7 to 8 inches long with big bushy tails, which ordinarily progress on their hind legs, somewhat after the fashion of kangaroos. They are probably the best-known creatures of the northern desert.

Jerboas have adjusted to desert conditions primarily by becoming seed gatherers. Through most of the year vegetation in the Libyan desert is very scant, but it becomes quite abundant after one of the infrequent rains and sets its seed very quickly. The jerboas gather seeds and store them in subterranean chambers. They are also, however, avid eaters of whatever vegetation they can find.

Other Libyan animals collected by Dr. Setzer are the mouselike gerbils and the desert hedgehogs that are related to the shrews and are quite similar to European hedgehogs.

#### FORMER CURATOR HERE

Dr. E. A. Chapin, former curator of insects, is at the Museum arranging a collection of Coccinellidae (lady beetles, to most of us). Dr. Chapin arrived at the end of March for about a 10-day stay.

#### YOU AND YOUR JOB

You can be heard in Washington. The National Federation of Federal Employees is your voice! For the past thirty-four years the N.F.F.E. has been the leader in representing Federal employees in all matters affecting their welfare.

The National Federation of Federal Employees was organized in September, 1917 of, by, and for Federal employees to enable them to better their working conditions and to improve the whole standard of the Federal service.

The leadership by N.F.F.E. in this immensely important task is widely acclaimed. It is the broadest, most intensive effort of its kind ever undertaken. It utilizes every medium of communication and the campaign is a continuing one: that of carrying on a continuous campaign of public education, bringing a new concept of the Federal service and a sympathetic attitude toward Federal employees in their efforts to improve conditions of employment.

Through this activity the N.F.F.E. tells the people of this country the facts about Federal employment and the men and women who are making a career of public service. It tells the truth and it refutes misstatements, misrepresentations, and distortions wherever and whenever they occur.

Our united strength is needed! You, as a Federal employee and as a patriotic American citizen, have a vital stake in the truth campaign carried on by the National Federation of Federal Employees. By joining the N.F.F.E. you immediately become an active participant in this work, so essential to the welfare of the Federal service and to your own progress as a Federal employee.

N.F.F.E. members in Washington enjoy unique advantages. We are located in the very heart of the administration of the Civil Service system and of all the sources of both action and information. It is in the National Capital that legislation is created and policies are set governing working conditions in the Federal service.

Legislative representation is only a part of N.F.F.E. service. Some of the many things N.F.F.E. has done for you: The first retirement law and its subsequent improvements; classification and the whole concept of equal pay for equal work; salary increases; extension and protection of the merit system; standardized annual and sick leave; within-grade promotions; rewards for meritorious service; awards for superior accomplishments; compensation for injuries while on the job; and greater opportunities for advancement.

These and scores of other legislative and administrative accomplishments which spell a better service for you and the Nation: Join now and help build an even better, more secure future!

Smithsonian has an organized branch of N.F.F.E. Our first meeting was held on February 15, 1952. John E. Anglim was elected to serve as the first president; Mrs. Hope H. Simmons, first vice-president elect; Miss Emma E. Kran, first secretary.

Present officers are David Ray, president (Library, ext. 246); Mrs. Mary Quigley, vice president (Div. Insects, ext. 317); and Emma Kran, secretary-treasurer (Dept. Zoology, ext. 262).

You are cordially invited to join the Smithsonian Branch Local No. 2, N.F.F.E. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 19, at 12:00 noon in Room 43, Natural History Building.

#### NEW MAIL SERVICE

Effective April 9, a combined mail-messenger service was consolidated with the Shipping Office to provide increased pickup and delivery service of mail for all buildings.

The new service is an organizational part of the Office of the Registrar, U. S. National Museum, and has its headquarters in Room 63-B, Shipping Office, Natural History Building. Helena Weiss, Registrar, is responsible for the over-all supervision of the combined mail-messenger and shipping service.

Alfred Hewitt (ext. 206) has general supervision of this combined service. C. G. Johnson (ext. 373), Mr. Hewitt's assistant, has direct supervision of the mail-messenger service. The following staff members are assigned to the new office: E. J. Carey, L. A. Gant, and R. C. Johnson.

It is important that each office in the Institution have designated trays for mail pickup and delivery.

#### TO EXCAVATE CAVE

The Bureau of American Ethnology is sending Carl Miller of River Basin Surveys to conduct archeological excavations in a cave in Jackson County, Ala., from mid-April to mid-June. A preliminary survey indicates that the deposits in the cave should go



back to the Paleo-Indian period and the oldest levels may well be some 10,000 years of age.

The cave is located in an isolated region, which accounts for its archeological nature being unknown until recently. It is in the form of a large rock shelter, 250 feet wide, 270 feet deep, and 25 feet high. An interesting feature is that it is naturally air conditioned. A fissure in the rear of the cave connects with a deep cavern through which flows a sizable stream. Through this fissure blows a current of cool air from the cavern.

In making preliminary tests, Mr. Miller found that the first three feet consisted of pottery-bearing strata representing the last 1500 years. Below this are abundant stone artifacts of prepottery age, deposited by the archaic peoples and early man. There is a good possibility that still deeper may be found indications of the culture of eastern Folsom man.

In addition to the archeological data, important evidence as to ecological changes should be found. In his test at a depth of only four feet, Mr. Miller found a group of large snails of a very rare type which are now extinct in the area. Bone and shell are abundant and beautifully preserved in the deposits. Changes in animal and bird life should furnish significant evidence as to climatic changes during the long period of occupancy.

The excavations have been made possible through the generosity of the National Geographic Society in providing

the necessary funds. Dr. Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., cooperated in the project by detailing Mr. Miller to the Bureau for a period of two months. The cooperation of C. K. Peacock, J. B. Graham, L. W. Pahmeyer, and Paul H. Brown of Chattanooga, Tenn., who hold the lease on Russell Cave, enabled the Smithsonian to conduct these archeological excavations.

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#### RETURNS TO RBS STAFF

Mrs. Evelyn B. Stewart has rejoined the staff of the River Basin Surveys at Lincoln, Nebr. Mrs. Stewart was employed there for several years as file clerk before transferring to the Veterans Administration. She is now returning in a half-time capacity.

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#### PUBLISHED IN MARCH

"Marine Polychaeta Worms from Labrador," by Marian H. Pettibone (Museum Proceedings, 54 pages).

"Bryozoa of the United States Navy's 1947-1948 Antarctic Expedition, I-IV," by Mary D. Rogick (Museum Proceedings, 97 pages).

"Revision of the Milliped Genus *Dixioria* (Polydesmida: Xystodesmidae)," by Richard L. Hoffman (Museum Proceedings, 9 pages).

Table of Contents and Index for Volume 103 of the Proceedings of the National Museum (40 pages).

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#### CANCER FUND CAMPAIGN

The month of April has been designated as Cancer Control Month by Act of Congress and Presidential proclamation. Again during this month the American Cancer Society asks the public to support its Nation-wide Cancer Control program.

Local Units of your Cancer Society are carrying on a continuous program through grants to hospitals, service to cancer patients, and community education.

The most effective way to support this splendid program is by contributing as generously as possible to its campaign for funds. Smithsonian Institution employees may forward their donations to Ed Roy, fiscal division. Employees of the National Zoological Park may turn their contributions in to Capt. W. R. James at the National Zoological Park.



Courtesy Nashville Commercial Appeal



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

CONTRIBUTIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 25TH OF THE MONTH