Merry Christmas!

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION • WASHINGTON, D. C.
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CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY THE LAST DAY OF THE MONTH.

THE SMITHSONIAN TORCH

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December 1956

MERRY CHRISTMAS! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

All of us at the Smithsonian during this season want to wish one another a most Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. Certainly the past year has brought many blessings, including an appropriation for a new building to the Smithsonian, and we all believe that throughout the year the Institution has in countless ways played a constructive and wholesome part in the life of America. What better hope can we all have for 1957 than that the Smithsonian may have an even more useful year than it had in 1956? Mrs. Carmichael, our daughter Martha, and I send warmest greetings to everyone associated with the work of this old and distinguished Institution. We are looking forward to seeing each of you at the Christmas party in the Great Hall on December 20.---Leonard Carmichael

MOONWATCH REHEARSAL POSTPONED

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, associate director of the Astrophysical Observatory, recently announced that the Smithsonian's MOONWATCH rehearsal program, originally scheduled for this month, has been postponed until spring.

The reason for the postponement is to allow MOONWATCH teams to become better organized and better trained in observing techniques.

MOONWATCH, the satellite tracking program, was described in the September 1956 issue of The Torch.

An interesting article about the satellite program and MOONWATCH appears in Science News Letter for December 1, 1956. The article is entitled "Seeing Earth Satellites" and is written by Ann Dring.

CENTENNIAL FOR FISHES

December 15th marked the hundredth birthday of what is now the division of fishes.

The centennial anniversary date is established by the first entry in the division's specimen catalog. This entry, dated Dec. 15, 1856, reads:

"Catostomus robustus, locality Lake George, New York, collected 1850 by J. F. Lord. Today, all that remains of the first recorded specimen is a well-preserved pharyngeal bone that was removed from the fish long ago.

If you were to visit the division of fishes today you would be able to see many of the more than 1 1/2 million "alcoholic" fishes that are sorted and labeled as specimens in the national collections. You could also see some of the million or more larval and postlarval fishes in storage there waiting around for someone to sort them.

The fishes are preserved in about 39,000 gallons of alcohol in containers ranging from small jars to 190-gallon tanks. There are more than 170,000 glass jars of fish stored on more than 2 1/2 miles of steel shelving in the division.

The specimens range in size from a one-third inch gobie from the Philippines to a 6 1/2 foot giant sea bass weighing 337 pounds.

There are 25 file-cabinet drawers filled with 9,200 drawings and photographs of fishes. These illustrations...
are filed alphabetically according to genus and species.

The division library includes most of the important books on systematic ichthyology. There is also a collection of photographs of ichthyologists. This collection was started in 1937 and now contains pictures of 876 individuals.

The number of research publications written by staff members over the past hundred years is difficult to determine because accurate records have been kept for only 22 years. However, records of the Smithsonian Institution indicate that about 450 scientific publications have been authored by members of the division of fishes since 1887. The records before that date are too incomplete to be included.

Almost every ichthyologist of importance in North America has worked on the collection of fishes in the National Museum. Many of these scientists have written voluminous and valuable works on the fishes of the world, including the monumental 4-volume "Fishes of North and Middle America" (Museum Bulletin 47).

Dr. Spencer F. Baird, Theodore N. Gill, and Charles Girard, M.D., were the first to assemble a collection of fishes in the Smithsonian Institution for the purpose of performing research. This early collection consisted of Baird’s private fish specimens and the materials collected by the U. S. Government explorations and surveys, including those of the Wilkes Exploring Expedition, 1838-1842. The oldest specimens, however, are some collected in the 1820's by Louis Agassiz, the outstanding zoologist of the period.

Charles Girard, a student and assistant of Agassiz showing scientific aptitude in systematic zoology, was brought to the Smithsonian Institution in 1852. Dr. Baird and Dr. Girard collaborated in this early period on several papers that were published from 1853 to 1859.

Dr. Girard remained here for 10 years, but then he had to return to his native Switzerland because he was caught carrying on a business in medical drugs with the Confederate army.

Dr. Theodore Nicholas Gill "was included in the group who were being paid for the preparation of zoological reports for the Northwestern Boundary Survey, and the following year he was working on the fish report for the North Pacific Exploring Expedition." Dr. Gill, although not an official member of the fish division staff, did most of his ichthyological work on the fish division collections.

Dr. G. Brown Goode came to the Smithsonian in November 1872 to assist Dr. Baird. In 1873 he was given the title of zoologist, and in that year he assisted Dr. Baird in arranging the fish specimens according to Dr. Gill's fish classification published in 1872. Dr. Goode was made assistant curator of the National Museum in 1872.

Dr. Baird's keen interest in the fishes of North America and his close association and study of the fish division collections up to 1870 made him an outstanding authority.

During a few summers spent on the coasts of New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maine, he was much interested in the causes of decline in the abundance of food fishes along those coasts. Through the influence of Dr. Baird, Congress created the U. S. Fish Commission in 1871 and Baird was appointed to serve without salary as commissioner. Immediately, Baird began to gather around him in the "department of fishes" men who could assist in the work of the new Fish Commission. One cannot distinguish where the early work of the museum fish department was separated from the Fish Commission. Thus, the U. S. Fish Commission arose out of the Fish Division of the U. S. National Museum in 1871.

The first official full-time staff member of the fish division was Tarleton H. Bean. He was appointed assistant curator in 1882, aide in 1890, and was appointed assistant curator in 1890, a position he filled until his retirement in 1932. He was in charge of the division from 1891 to 1909. Dr. Barton Warren Evermann was curator from 1906 to 1913. Dr. George S. Myers was assistant curator in charge from January 1913 to August 1936. The present curator, Dr. Leonard F. Schultz, came to the division in December 1936 to fill the position vacated by Dr. Myers. The division did not have a full curator from 1913 to January 15, 1938, when Dr. Schultz received that title.

Dr. Hugh M. Smith, former U. S. Commissioner of Fishes, held the title of associate in zoology beginning in 1922, but he worked full-time in the museum only from 1935 to 1941. His research, mostly on Siamese fishes, resulted in the publication of "The Fresh-Water Fishes of Siam, or Thailand" (Museum Bulletin 180) in 1945.

Dr. Samuel F. Hildebrand, ichthyologist of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, worked full-time in the division from August 1942 to March 1950. During this time he wrote "The Shore Fishes of Peru" (Museum Bulletin 189), which was published in 1946.

In addition to the curator, the staff of the division includes Dr. Ernest A. Lachner, associate curator (1949); Dr. William Ralph Taylor, associate curator, who came to the division a few weeks ago; Robert Panasuk, aide (1950); James Bush, aide (1944); and Mrs. Mary Grace Chapman, secretary (1953).

Isaac Ginsberg, ichthyologist of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, began working in the division in 1942, and even though he retired from government service in October of this year he is continuing to work full time.
Another ichthyologist of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Dr. Giles V. Head, began working in the division of fishes last November.

Mrs. Mildred Carrington, also of that agency, is working in the division as secretary to Dr. Head and Mr. Ginsburg.

Since Dr. Baird's time the division of fishes has enjoyed cordial relations with the Fish and Wildlife Service.
SPECIAL ART EXHIBIT

The National Collection of Fine Arts is presenting an exhibition of "Paintings of Life in Greece, Spain, and the United States" by Demetrios J. Kokotsis.

The exhibition is being presented under the sponsorship of the Ambassador of Greece, George V. Mielas. It opened on December 2 in the foyer of the National History Building and will continue through December 24.

The artist was born in Crete and studied art in Athens. He won a scholarship provided by the Obon Stothates Foundation that enabled him to study six years at the Beaux Arts Academy at Athens and for four additional years of travel in Italy, Spain, France, and other leading countries of Western Europe. He was honored with a first prize in the International Exhibition in Prague in 1924 and in Paris in 1921.

His works have been exhibited in the principal cities of the United States and Europe.

Mr. Kokotsis first visited America as an exhibitor at the New York World's Fair. Not long after, he decorated the Greek classroom in the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and has since painted many religious subjects for church decoration. In 1948, Mr. Kokotsis gained first prize for portraiture in the annual exhibition of the Society of Buffalo Artists; and in 1959 he was awarded honorable mention at the International Exhibition of Art in Havana for a figure painting titled "A Monk in Prayer ."

Kokotsis' paintings in the current exhibit include peasants in national costume and portraits of young and old of Greece, Spain, and other lands visited by the artist. He has portrayed, from life, George II, King of Greece, Premier Venizelos, and many other notables.

HOLIDAY SEASON

Thanksgiving is gone and over
The Turkey is in the stew
When the pot is empty
What then, will you do?
Mayhap, glance at the calendar
And conceive with joyful delight
That the furious little snowflakes
Are here.
And Christmas is almost in sight
The bearded man will soon take leave
To make place for the young
And soon we'll all be gayly caroling
A happy Easter song — — - Jerey Wells
(BSIE)

THREE WEDDINGS

Mrs. Roxie Collie Simpson was married to Mr. Edgar G. Laybourne on Saturday, November 10, in the Centreville Methodist Church at Centreville, Va.

Mrs. Laybourne is a taxidermist for the wildlife research division of the Fish and Wildlife Service. She works in the Natural History Building. Mr. Laybourne is a specialist in molding the models of reptiles and fish for the Smithsonian's Office of Exhibits. The couple left for Chicago immediately following the ceremony. They will make their home near Manassas, Va.

Miss Gail Ulrich, secretary in the editorial and publications division, became the bride of Mr. James Sullivan on November 24 at a nuptial mass in the Church of the Nativity, Washington, D.C. Following a reception at Hotel 2400, the couple left for a honeymoon in New York City.

Mr. Sullivan is employed by the printing firm of Judd and Detweiler. Miss Muriel Kennedy, secretary in the personnel division, and Mr. William Kidwell took the solemn vows to "have and to hold until death do us part" in a charming ceremony on November 30 in the First Wesleyan Methodist Church, Falls Church, Va. Many Smithsonian friends of the bride attended.

After a brief honeymoon the young Kidwells settled down to home-making in Arlington.

ARCHITECTURE EXHIBIT

An exhibition on "New Hospital Architecture" will be on view in the gallery of the American Institute of Architects through January 31. The designs were selected by members of the AIA Committee on Hospitals and Health from those shown recently by the American Hospital Association in Chicago. The work of 26 architectural firms are included in the current showing.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Museum Curator:
Rodrin C. Roth (History)
Museums Aid:
John L. Dawl (Naval History)
Systematic Zoologist:
Bertha M. Couture (Zoology)
Administrative Assistant:
Lucilia S. Goodall (APO)
Clerk-Typists:
Barbara Roche (Off. of Dir.),
June W. Knight (Off. of Dir.),
Sue R. Barrs (Off. of Dir.),
Joyce E. Jameson (Off. of Dir.),
Elizabeth F. Chandler (Fiscal)
Clerk-Biographer:
Brigitt Baker S. Jensen (APO)
Clerk-Dictating Machine Transcriber:
Diane H. Bloom (APO)
Senior Clerk:
John Corriss (BSIE)
Junior Clerks:
Martha E. Yingst (BSIE),
Elizabeth A. Burke (BSIE),
Reba Hall (BSIE),
William Trueassell (BSIE),
Guard:
Robert A. Carter
Joseph F. Bowers
Milauri J. Benson
William T. Mitchell
George S. Benson
Laborers:
Joseph A. Mickens
Arthur Quarles
Irwin L. Walls
Coleman L. Deyon
William H. Bradley
Esther G. Simon
Cabinetmaker:
Paul H. Willis
Carpenter:
Robert E. Lehan
Electrician:
William J. James, III
Painters:
Alfred T. Pearson
Dillard R. Williams
On this visit, as so often in the past, he presented to Dr. Kellogg a number of interesting modern gold coins and some medieval silver pieces that had been lacking in our collections. One of the most valuable additions is a large gold piece issued in 1617 in Quedlinburg. I was a coin collector, and I told him that I did not want them, and knew no one who might care to have them. Then I let them go to the highest bidder as the stock-in-trade of modern advertising. When the public began to realize that glowing testimonial letters to the virtue of everything from oatmeal to hair oil were prepared in New York ad agencies and did not, in fact, come from the pens of satisfied customers in unheard-of numbers, the "unsolicited testimonial" disappeared from the newspaper and magazine ads.

A real, honest-to-goodness testimonial is today so unusual that the following paragraph from a recent letter received by the Department of Anthropology seems worth quoting. The underlining is shown here just as found in the letter.

"I hope that I will not seem too abrupt if I both thank and congratulate you for the prompt and straightforward reply to my questions in my last letter of 11 August. The Institution was the only museum out of all those I wrote to which gave me just the information I requested.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely, Christopher P. Bannister"

FRERE CURATOR REPORTS

Because October 31 was, in effect, "Retirement Day" and it was not possible to attend all the parties, we are using this medium to tell all Mr. Stubbs' Smithsonian friends about a farewell party for him in the staff room of the Freer Gallery.

The party planners had tried to keep the arrangements a deep, dark secret from the retiring curator of art, but about midday Jack Newman and Daisy Fields of the personal office courteously came to say "good-bye" to him and their parting words to him were nearly their last. Before a
bands of so many of the Freer staff
was	names of donors and a picture
join in the
Mr.
authority on
the highlights of Mr.
of a
career.
Wenley presented the honoree with
Because no clocks would be neces­
sary in the future, an
1919·
Mr. stubbs' service in the
charge _ of
the National History Building in
his first
service at the Freer Gallery on
the festivities with a
tracks! The concealed cat
in
the Natural History Building in
is an
Smithsonian Institution. His first
organized to meet from time to time ·
looked at Biology and
spoke on
Origins of
Science Club.
The first meeting was held on
December 6 at the National Science
Foundation. Two illustrated talks
were presented. Dr. Raymond Sites,
curator of education at the National
Gallery of Art gave a lecture on "The
Origins of Art and Science in the
Work of Leonardo da Vinci," and Mr. Leikind
spoke on "Antique Eyes: Their Impact
on Biology and Medicine."
If you are seriously interested
in joining the club, call Dr. Multhauf
on Ext. 200.

VOICE OF AMERICA

Recently the staff room of the
Freer Gallery was the scene of a
recording session for the Voice of
America when Mr. Mahmud Danialhvar
and Dr. Stithinghausen discussed the
Freer Collections in the Persian
language. The Voice will rebroad­
cast the discussion in the Middle
East where Persian is spoken or
understood.

VISITOR FROM JAPAN

On his way around the world to
consult with technical personnel in
museums, Professor Kazuo Yamasaki of
Nagoya University, Chemical Division
Faculty, recently visited the Freer
Gallery.

With Mr. A. J. Gettens, the Japan­
ese professor discussed the identifi­
cation of materials such as ancient
glass and the analysis of ancient
Chinese bronzes. He also visited the
National Museum's department of
geology, the National Gallery of Art, and
the U. S. Geological Survey.

"You don't have to preach honesty to men
with creative purpose. Let a human being
throw the engines of his soul into the
making of something,
and the instinct of
workmanship will take care of his honesty."

W.H. Lippmann

RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

A special exhibition of illustrations
for the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam by the
Iranian contemporary artist Hossein Behzad
is being displayed in the Natural History
Building. The exhibition, under the spon­
sorship of the National Museum of
Arts and his wife, has been arranged by the National
Collection of Fine Arts. It opened on
December 9 and will continue through
December 28.

The exhibit comprises paintings illus­
trating 50 of the Rubaiyat quatrains.
Behzad's work is very well known and admired in
Iran, but it has been shown in the
Western world only in an exhibition in
Paris two years ago.

HISTORY OF SCIENCE CLUB

Because of an increasing interest
in the history, philosophy, and soci­
ology of science, a group has been
organized to meet from time to time
to discuss their interests along this
line.

The name of the organization is
the Washington History of Science Club.
Its founders are Morris Leikind, chief
of the historical research division of
the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology's
Medical Museum; Robert Multhauf, acting
head curator of the Smithsonian's depart­
ment of engineering and industries; and
Raymond Seeger, assistant director of
the National Science Foundation.

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December 6 at the National Science
Foundation. Two illustrated talks
were presented. Dr. Raymond Sites,
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If you are seriously interested
in joining the club, call Dr. Multhauf
on Ext. 200.

WITHOLDING-TAX EXEMPTIONS

Are you up to date on your with­
holding exemptions?
Since the fiscal division uses
your withholding exemption certifi­
cate (Form W-4) to determine how
much income tax to deduct from your
pay, it is important that your cer­
tificate be accurate and up to date
at all times. If your exemptions
have changed, get a new Form W-4,
fill it out, and return it to the
Fiscal Division.

Usually your exemptions change
when you get married or divorced,
when a dependent is born or dies,
or when you begin or stop supporting
a dependent.

Be careful to avoid claiming
any exemption that the law does not
allow. Any taxpayer who claims an
exemption that he knows he is not
entitled to makes himself subject
to prosecution. However, you may
reduce or omit exemption claims for
the purpose of increasing your with­
holding so you won't have as much
tax to pay in the spring.

The Internal Revenue Service
now has authority to attach salary
due any employee who is delinquent in his taxes. During the past year
we have had to turn several pay
checks over to the Director of In­
ternal Revenue.

If you or your wife (or husband)
will reach the age of 65 during the
calendar year 1957 you are entitled
to an extra exemption for the whole
year.

For forms and further informa­
tion on all the above subjects, call
the Fiscal division on Ext. 395.

Also, if you have moved into
or out of the District of Columbia
recently, be sure to file the proper
D. C. certificate with the Fiscal
Division.

VOICE OF AMERICA

Recently the staff room of the
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Freer Collections in the Persian
language. The Voice will rebroad­
cast the discussion in the Middle
East where Persian is spoken or
understood.
The Rubaiyat illustrations of this special exhibit have never been publicly shown before, and it is the first extensive exhibition in the United States of Behzad's work. Each painting and each of the corresponding rubaiyat is in a specially painted frame by Youssefi, which differs in each case. These decorative borders have the same designs as found in fine old Persian carpets. They represent another type of painting in which Iranian artists have excelled for about a thousand years.

The following background material concerning the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and the artist and paintings featured in the Smithsonian's new exhibition was prepared by Dr. Richard Ettinghausen, of the Freer Gallery of Art, distinguished scholar in the field of Near Eastern art and literature.

With the obvious exception of the Bible, the piece of foreign literature most widely known, quoted, and treasured in English is probably Edward FitzGerald's translation of the "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam." One of the obvious unique rise to fame is one of "rags to riches," because FitzGerald was first unable to have it printed, and when his eventual publisher brought out only 200 copies in 1859 he left out the author's name; and being unable to sell the copies at the regular price, he had a sale of what remained of the edition at a penny each.

Only when by chance some of the better-known poets of the period, like Rossetti and Swinburne, recognized the poet's quality of the quatrains and praised them, did these translations catch on, and ever since edition after edition has been printed both in Great Britain and the United States.

The great enthusiasm for these English versions of the Persian quatrains also led to the poet's acclaim in other Western countries, to new translations in other languages, to the formation of Omar Khayyam clubs, and to a large world-wide literature, both popular and scholarly, which tried to evaluate and explain the extraordinary phenomenon.

In his own country, too, the poet was honored in 1934 when the Iranian Government erected a white marble monument over his grave near the city of Nishapur.

Little is known about Omar "the Tent-maker." In Iran he had been celebrated mainly as an astronomer and mathematician who was one of the advisers for a calendar reform in the 12th century. Before he died in 1132 he had written a few books on physics, metaphysics, and algebra, but his reputation as a poet was much more limited. However, what was known of his poems must have caught on at a very early date, because many quatrains in the same vein were composed and attributed to him.

In their original Persian language Omar Khayyam's quatrains are in the usual form as developed in Iran, consisting of four self-contained lines with the first, second, and fourth rhyming, and expressing a thought in an epigrammatic form. In Omar Khayyam's case they usually reveal a kind of breadth of feeling and universality of thought which distinguishes him from many of his contemporaries with regard to God and human existence.

Fully aware of the frailty of human existence, the poet tries to overcome it by all worldly means, especially the enjoyment of love and wine. All this is expressed in vivid word pictures, full of overtones and allusions, which FitzGerald was able to capture to a high degree.

Since Omar Khayyam's quatrains express a mental attitude and not actions or episodes, the old manuscripts were never decorated with miniatures. It was therefore a happy thought of the distinguished diplomat Mr. Hossein Behzad to have this widely known classic of his native country illustrated by an outstanding Persian miniature painter. With this idea in mind, he had Hossein Behzad, the foremost traditional artist of the country, come to his house and paint a series of as many as 50 pictures to go with as many quatrains from FitzGerald's translation. This project took 8 years (from 1939 to 1947), since the artist was ill and sometimes had to be physically taken care of by his physician-host.

The result of this project is a unique collection of paintings which in their artistic idiom are fully in the Persian tradition, although certain new features, like the portrayal of emotions and implications of three-dimensional space and solid form, have been introduced.

They portray the tangible world and at the same time the visionary, the daily happenings alluded to in the poems, and the yearnings of the lover. The most extraordinary scenes are possibly those showing the poet in states of intoxication or ecstasy, communing with the apparitions around him.

All are executed with outstanding finesse and according to color schemes different from ours. But they are startling and romantically appealing, and FitzGerald's attention to detail is astounding.

To achieve maximum effects Behzad had the help of specialists for some of his compositions, a form of collaboration also found in some earlier western collaboration. The displays of flowers in the many garden scenes are by the well-known flower painter, Lotfi, and the rich decorative units such as doors and carpets are by Youssefi, a distinguished illuminator.

In the spirit of the old tradition, the time element was of no concern. For instance, the gold of the skies was polished by the artist for about two months and exposed to the sun to get the right kind of depth and texture. The result is an extraordinary feeling of "Persianess" which permeates these paintings. This makes them appear Persian even to those viewers who are little familiar with the art of the country, and clearly distinguishes them from the work of the visionary painters of the West, such as Blais, Ryder, and Heade.

Omar's quatrains have become, through the medium of these unusual illustrations, even more imaginative and colorful, but it is certain that Behzad's paintings can also be viewed by themselves and still captivate the onlooker by the sheer bravura of the colors and the often surprising handling of the themes.

There are naturally certain pictures which stand out above others and appeal more to westerners, but taken as a whole these 50 pictures are a real tour-de-force, which even in Iran will be difficult to match.

SAVE IN NEW YORK

Some hotels in New York City are offering special rates to government employees and their families. These rates apply whether the travel is for official or personal reasons. To obtain the special rate, ask Mrs. Fields, of the personnel division (Ext. 277) for a courtesy card.

Habit is like a good bed—easy to get into but hard to get out of.

Make your best accomplishments your yardstick for the future.
MOVIE PEOPLE

It would seem that November 16 was movie day at the Freer Gallery.
Mr. Keye Luke of "Charlie Chan" and "Dr. Kildare" movie fame was in to see ancient bronzes. He told of his latest movie, just filmed in England, of the incident on the Yangtze River involving a British gunboat. It was pleasant to hear Mr. Luke say that the Freer is known over the world for its collections and its courtesy.

At the time of Mr. Luke's visit, movies were being made in the Freer Gallery of Mr. Wenley and The Venerable Brah Bodhivamsa Vajirappanno Huot-Tath, Director of the Lycee Bouddhique Preah Suramarit, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Mr. Chea Ton served as interpreter.

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