Debris from construction work in the old Herbarium above the Great Hall is removed via a third-floor window chute. Renovation will bring extensive changes to the Castle interior. See story below. Photo by Albert J. Bickhame.

Work Underway in Castle, Other Smithsonian Buildings

by Mary M. Krug

The openings of the Fine Arts and Portrait Galleries may now be history, but restoration, renovation and expansion continue in other parts of the Institution.

In fact, work in the SI building is of such proportions that it has done away with a Smithsonian tradition. Former Secretary Charles Greetey Abbot no longer occupies the top of the tower. Construction work has forced him to return to a south-yard office that he occupied for 20 years as director of SAO, but the 96-year-old scientist vows to occupy the tower in two years.

Main phase of the work on the castle is conversion of the old Herbarium space above the Great Hall into two floors of offices. The rooms will be used at first for temporary relocation of east wing offices while central air conditioning and a new heating system are installed, Robert Engle, engineering assistant to the Assistant Secretary told the TORCH. Permanent assignments of the much-needed facilities—both for administrative and academic purposes—will of course be determined at a later date.

Sizes of the new rooms have been varied to avoid a static floor plan. The west end will be kept open in a two-story salon to show the original architecture. The ground floor stack area in the west wing will probably become the SI archives. Engle says, with the room formerly occupied by the Smithsonian Associates converted into a common room.

The castle is closed to the public while construction is in progress. Although the Great Hall itself is being left as is, work is going on in adjacent areas. An elevator is being put in the south tower, and the west stair on the north side is being reopened.

When renovation is completed, about a year from now, the south entrance will be reopened as the main vehicle approach to the SI building. Ultimately, the south sheds will be removed, giving an unobstructed vista from the castle entrance through L'Enfant Plaza all the way to the river.

A less extensive renovation is taking place in ADD. The refrigeration unit for air-conditioning the castle will be placed in that building, in anticipation of some day handling the needs of ADD as well. And office space is gradually being provided for groups moving out of SI.

But by far the most visible, and impressive, work being done is the restoration of the suite occupied by the staff of Frank Taylor, Director General of Museums. The northwest-corner rooms will soon look as they did when the building was first constructed. Paint has been removed from the panelling in hall and

Year-Long Survey Seeks Visitors' View of Museums

Would you mind telling me how old you are?

Where is your home?

Why did you come to this particular museum?

What is your occupation?

Did you have difficulty finding a place to park?

These are among the nearly 50 questions being asked visitors to the Museum of History and Technology and the Museum of Natural History in an attempt to find out what people think of the Institution, its exhibits, its services, and how things can be improved.

The questionnaire also is designed to help the Smithsonian learn what kind of people visit the Institution.

"It's a kind of self-examination and research into the role of the public museum," explains Frank A. Taylor, Director-General of SI Museums. "We want to find out if we are having the impact we think we are."

Further, he said: "We want to learn about the public reaction to exhibits in order to improve them. Are people having difficulty finding what they are interested in? Are orientation methods or other directing devices needed to help them? Is there a noise annoying them? Are they having parking problems?"

President Signs Bill Establishing Wilson Center

Congress passed and President Johnson signed a bill late last month to establish within the Smithsonian a Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars—the culmination of seven years of work by the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Commission.

"Under the guidance of a distinguished Board of Trustees, I am confident that the Woodrow Wilson International Center will further the ideals of scholarly research and international understanding that guided the life and work of the twenty-eighth President of the United States," Mr. Johnson said at the signing.

"My President first expounded the idea of such a center in his speech at the Smithsonian Bicentennial Convocation in 1965. He said at that time, "We can support the proposal very interesting, and we are happy to join with the people of the Hot Springs area in giving it serious study."

A couple of weeks ago, Frank A. Taylor, Charles Blitzer, and John Dobkin represented Secretary Ripley in exploratory talks with the development group. Governor Winthrop Rockefeller, a supporter of the proposal, took part in the discussions.

Following this meeting, a study of all aspects of the subject has been undertaken by Brian O'Doherty, a consultant for the Smithsonian. Areas to be looked at will include feasibility of the project, potential location, purpose, and design, possible audiences, financial aspects and other related matters.

O'Doherty—a former art critic for the New York Times, a native of Ireland, and a consultant for the Smithsonian's Audubon exhibit is going to the center annually. "If I knew what I was going to be looking for and what I was going to get," he told a local newspaperman, "I would be a

Ripley to Open Zoo Talk Series

Secretary Ripley will open a year-long lecture series on "Our Wild Animal Resources" with an historical review of man's use and misuse of wild animals on November 25 at 8:15 in the Zoo Elephant House.

Sponsored by the Friends of the National Zoo, the series will include seven monthly lectures on such subjects as conservation and possible treatment of wild animals, and misuse of animals by vested interests.

Further information on the series and other Friends activities is available from Robert Mason on 5811.
Art Guide Program Aims To Produce Professionals

by Benjamin Rube

An innovative information guide program is being operated by the Office of Academic Programs to interest students in becoming art museum professionals. It is part of the continuing Smithsonian attempt to provide new and improved visitor services.

The pilot project has been under way at the National Collection of Fine Arts since the start of summer. It will run one year.

An elite group of nine colleagues from around the country completed the 13-week summer phase of the program. They worked full time and were paid a stipend. When the academic year began in September, 15 students from Washington area schools were recruited for the fall term. They are putting in a 12-hour week. A third group will be recruited for the spring semester.

Guiding visitors around is the principal duty for the students. But they do much more. They take their turn managing information desks. By their presence, they augment the security force. They attend seminars. And they do research in the library.

The summer contingent completed the term by preparing and delivering illustrated lectures to their fellow guides and to interested outsiders. Ellen Gross, of Cornell, delivered a talk on the Wash­ington area museum color palette, including a prominent member of the school, Paul Reed, along with James Harris, director of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, among others. The paper will be published in an art magazine.

All of the reports are kept on file for reference and for the use of docents and incoming guide classes. A number of the papers will serve as the basis for honors theses.

Laurel Arnold, a Mount Holyoke College student, did her paper on artist Jasper Johns. Why Johns? "Because I didn't understand him." Does she now understand him? "No." Miss Arnold's lecture about the painter was highly perceptive.


Miss Rozen and Brian Murtagh, a Georgetown graduate now attending George Washington Law, are the only fall holdovers from the summer program. The current group includes four students from George Washington, three from the University of Maryland, and two from Trinity, Howard, American University and Georgetown.

Smartly clad in blue blazers, the guides themselves offer visitors knowledgeable help. But each guide is also required to carry information request slips to supply to visitors whose questions cannot be answered. The student must research the question and type up a reply.

As program supervisor Patricia H. Calhoun points out, the queries can be knotty.

"How old are the trees in the courtyard?" was one of them. Answer: Civil War era. Research failed to produce a more precise answer.

Freer Portrait Show Honors NPG

A small but highly select exhibition of old Japanese and Chinese portrait painting has been put on display by the Freer Gallery of Art.

The showing honors the National Portrait Gallery. Selected from the museum's permanent collection, the Freer exhibition ranges over eight centuries of Oriental art, and is a variety of painting styles.

A number of the works have rarely been seen by the public. Some of the paintings are realistic while others are idealized renderings executed in some cases, hundreds of years after the death of the subject.

Dr. Harold P. Stern, Assistant Director of the Freer, says of the display: "As a complement to the opening of the National Portrait Gallery, our exhibition at the Freer provides an exquisite and illuminating look at the magnificent portrait traditions of the East reaching across it's top. A precise translation of the classical calligraphy awaits deciphering by Freer experts."

The remaining paintings in the exhibition are:

- A delicate portrait of the Japanese prince Moso Kokushi (1727-1859) created as a hanging scroll and dating from the 15th century.
- A scene from the drama "The West Chamber" showing a lady with her lover and their maid go-between. This Chinese Ch'ing Dynasty work is dated 17th-18th Centuries.
- A Portrait of Prince Shotoku Taishi (572-621) at age 14, portrayed as Jizo — The Japanese work is of the Namboku­cho period and dates to the 14th Cen­­tury.
- An elaborately decorative Japanese portrait of Fujisawa No Kamatari (614-690) from the late 14th Century.
- A Shih-te Laughing at the Moon," by Chang Lu (1464-1536). Painted during the Ming Dynasty in China, it mixes profound humor with a characteristic Zen fashion.

Mount Holyoke student Laurel Arnold explains a painting by Richard Linder to two young tourists at the National Collection of Fine Arts.

"What is the significance of the ball held in Jonah's hand in the Ryder painting?" was another. Dr. Robert Gold now at the University of Chicago, spent four hours researching that one. Her answer, in brief: The ball represents divinity and sovereignty. It is a traditional medieval religious symbol.

Designed with the long-term goal of attracting the brightest young art majors to museum careers, the innovative project has the valuable short-range effect of providing the short-staffed NCF with additional help.

Mrs. Chieffo sums up: "It has been terribly successful. The minimal and stripped modern paintings offered many visi­tors. We've gotten many letters from the public saying that the students helped to educate them about contemporary art."

Watson In Japan To Establish Bird Treaty

Dr. George Watson, curator of verte­brates, who is in Japan this month represent­ing the United States at a meeting to establish a migratory bird treaty between the two nations. The ornithologist will also consult with scientists in Thai­­land, India, Greece, the U.A.R., and Great Britain before returning November 18. Other Smithsonian travelers for November include:

- Dr. Francis L. S. Williamson, Ecology, in Holland, England, to explore opportunities for cooperation in research programs with the Zoological Society of London.
- Dr. Lee M. Talbot, Ethology, in India, Pakistan, and Pacific Islands to develop cooperative research programs with the Foreign Currency Program.
- Robert M. Vogel, Mechanical and Civil Engineering, attending a conference on "The Future of Industrial Archaeology," at Bath University, Eng­land.
- Victor G. Springer, Fishes, studying blemished fish specimens in various muse­ums in Holland, England, Austria, and Germany.
- Wilcomb E. Washburn, American Studies, attending a conference on "Nau­tical Science in the XV and XVI Centuries" in Coimbra, Portugal, and studying archival records in Spain related to the discovery of America.
- Carl H. Scheele, Philately, in Mexico to attend an international philatelic posi­tion and supervise installation of an SI exhibit there.

Staff Rates Set For 'Star' Benefit

Special staff rates will be offered for the Washington premiere of "Star!" which will take place November 7 at the Warner Theater for benefit of the Smith­­sonian Associates' scholarship fund.

Staff members, with the wearing of the costumes from the movie, are available in MHT before the film. Regular prices for the event are $7.50 for the movie only or $15 for movie and dinner. The Associates will provide around 1,000 scholarships for deserving Wash­ington area youngsters this year to par­­icipate in courses given at the Smith­­sonian.

Another bargain the group is offering is the staff is special membership rates. Single membership is $5 per year, double $10, and family $15. For further information on Associates' programs, phone 5157.

Published monthly for Smithsonian Institution Associates by the Office of Public Affairs, 1200 Independence Ave., S.W., 31st copy to TORCH, Room 131, SI Building.
Picturesque Bhutan Poses For Mrs. Ripley’s Camera

Bhutanese mule and muleteer on the trail in northern Bhutan.

Mrs. Ripley crossing a river on the trail in northern Bhutan, elevation about 11,500 feet.

Secretary Ripley describes the size of a rare bird to His Majesty the King of Bhutan.

Indian road workers celebrate an autumn festival with a dance, as the Ripleys are enroute to Thimbu, capital of Bhutan.

Not Shangri-La, but the castle of Lingshi Dzong at an elevation of 14,500 feet in northwest Bhutan. In foreground at left is the Ripley camp.

Mrs. Ripley spent the month of September on an ornithological expedition to remote Bhutan. Before the trip Mrs. Ripley received instruction in photography from the National Geographic Society (See June TORCH). The excellent results of that instruction are shown on this page. The pictures, all of which were taken by Mrs. Ripley except the one in which she appears, are courtesy of her and the National Geographic.

The excellent results of that instruction are shown on this page. The pictures, all of which were taken by Mrs. Ripley except the one in which she appears, are courtesy of her and the National Geographic.
in this effort. Their work will help draw at­
tention to this building as architecturally and historically important in its own right."

Acquisition of additional off-the-Mall space will give the Institution additional storage area for uses similar to Silver Hill. Building 3 of the former Federal Records Center at Alexandria was turned over to the Smithsonian by GSA in July. Assistant Secretary for Science Ted Melson is chairman of a committee to determine utilization of its 100,000 square feet.

The Armed Forces Institute of Pa­

tology, home of the old Medical Mu­

seum, is due to be torn down by February to make way for the Hirshhorn Gal­

tery. Final drawings for the new art mu­

seum should be completed by January. Engle says, and a contractor is expected to have a site plan this summer.

Restoration of the Smithsonian’s other new art facility, the Renwick Gallery in the old Court of Claims Building, is almost complete. The construction con­
tactor is scheduled to be finished by the end of the year. After that, however, there remains about a year of prepara­
tion by the Buildings Management Di­

vision before the gallery will be ready to open to the public.

At the Zoo, construction is proceeding on a new animal hospital and research building. It should be ready by next June. Final designs are now being made for a multi-climate house, and construction should begin around July.

Shops to Show Curators’ Books

MNH authors will be honored in a special display of curatorial publications sponsored by the Museum Bookshops. MNH November 26 through December 31.

Included in the exhibit, which is or­

ganized by Bookshops manager Florence Lloyd, will be original photos, models, and materials used in the books’ prepara­
tion. The publications, which can be pur­

chased in the Shops at a 10 percent em­

ployee discount, will be displayed to ac­

quaint museum visitors with SI research activities.

Among the authors included will be Paul Desautels, Mason Hale, Clifford Evans and Betty Mergers, S. Dillon Rip­

ley, Stanwyn Sheller, George Watson, Paul Ritterbusch, John Napier, Nicholas Hutton, and John Ewers. Others will be added later.

Melson Chief Investigator

On ESSA’s Oceanographer

William G. Melson, supervisor of the Division of Petrology, last month went to sea as principal investigator aboard one of the nation’s newest and most expens­
equipped oceanographic ships, the Environmental Science Services Ad­

ministration’s Oceanographer.

It marked the first time ESSA’s U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey had turned over a vessel for the complete use of the Smithsonian, reports Dr. I. E. Wallen, head of the SI Office of Oceanography and Limnology and a member of the in­
ter-agency committee that determines use of the ship.

Dr. Melson used the ship to study the geology of the ocean crust near the Juan de Fuca Ridge in the Pacific. With

miles, he says, good-naturedly.

Dr. Wetmore, who was Secretary from 1925-44, began field work in Pan­

ama in 1946 and spent two to three months there each year until 1966. He says he is looking forward to another expedition early next year. “I am so much at home there that Panama is almost my second country,” he says. He has explored it from north to south, including some of its outlying islands.

On a recent expedition, Dr. Wetmore went into the mountains by helicopter after advanced men set up camp. On one of his first trips he went up the partly uncharted Rio Jaque by dugout canoe. “Now we use outboards. In 1946 we rode horseback. Now we use jeeps. Times change,” he observes.

Dr. Wetmore is writing his book from field notes arranged into looseleaf volumes by species, and from hundreds of study skins he brought back from expeditions and has stored in MNH. The completed project “will be a refer­
ence work that others may use for further writing and study. I am attempt­
ing to present a summary of what types of birds there are on the Isthmus and where and under what conditions they can be sighted. Much work remains to be done,” he notes.

The former Secretary, whose kindly face, white hair and posture seem to call for a clerical collar, has made the birds of Latin America the major re­

search interest of his lifetime. He finds

the fauna of Panama especially intrigu­ing.

Geologists say that South America was once separated from Panama by a strait at the Isthmus, he explains. After the continents were joined the Isthmus became the crossing point for migrating species, so it is interesting to see what has developed there.

Dr. Wetmore does not limit his atten­

tion to living species. Fossil birds of the region are the ones of his interest. Writing about them “is a relief from this other,” he says, nodding toward his Panama manuscript. “I suppose I’ve named as many fossil birds as living kinds, maybe 200 or more, of the two combined.”

Identifying bird fossils usually demands working from mere fragments, but the challenge does not shake Dr. Wetmore. “It’s just like using a typewriter,” he con­
tends. “You know where the keys are.”

With field research dating back to the last century, Dr. Wetmore probably knows where the keys are as well as any man.

Alexander Wetmore examines study skins collected on his expeditions for his next volume of The Birds of Panama.