

The National Museum of Natural History's Sant Ocean Hall opened in September 2008. This 23,000 square foot exhibition combines state-of-the-art technology with hundreds of marine specimens and models to explore the past, present, and future of Earth's ocean system and humanity's impact upon it.

Smithsonian Highlights Fiscal Year 2008

Introduction

This report presents programmatic and management highlights for the Smithsonian Institution in fiscal year 2008, a year of great change at the Smithsonian.

On March 15, 2008, the governing Board of Regents announced its selection of **G. Wayne Clough** as the 12th Secretary of the Institution. In his previous position as President of the Georgia Institute of Technology, Dr. Clough dramatically raised that university's profile as a top-tier national research institution. He also serves on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, the National Science Board, and the Council on Competitiveness (as Vice Chair).

Prior to Dr. Clough's arrival, the Board of Regents, working with Acting Secretary **Cristián Samper**, took steps to address acknowledged weaknesses in the Institution's governance policies and processes.

Public Impact

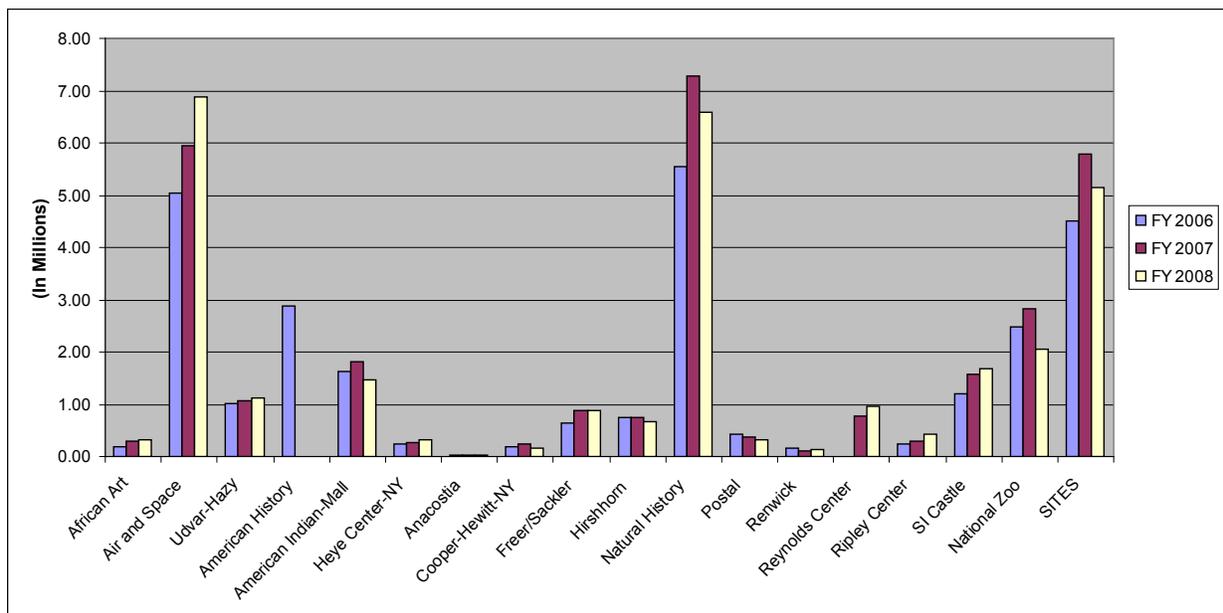
Visits to the Smithsonian

In fiscal year 2008, the Institution counted **24.0 million** visits to its museums in Washington, D.C., and New York, plus the National Zoo and Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center—down **2 percent** from fiscal year 2007. This small decrease follows a strong surge in visitation in fiscal year 2007, and reflects the general downturn in the economy.

The Smithsonian also counted approximately **5.15 million** visitors to 58 traveling exhibitions mounted by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, on view in 510 locations in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia, Guam, and American Samoa.



Visits to Smithsonian Museums and Traveling Exhibitions
Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, and 2008



Smithsonian Online

Smithsonian websites logged **173 million** visits in fiscal year 2008, down less than **1 percent** from the fiscal year 2007 figure of 183 million (which was itself a 31 percent jump over the previous year).

Among the other online highlights for the Smithsonian in the fiscal year were the following:

- The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences announced the winners of its prestigious annual **Webby Awards** in June, and the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum's *Design for the Other 90%* exhibition website won in the Cultural Institutions category. In addition, the Cooper-Hewitt's online **Educator Resource Center** and *Piranesi as Designer* exhibition site were Official Honorees in the Education and Art categories, respectively; and for the second consecutive year, the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies' **SmithsonianEducation.org** won the People's Voice Award for Best Cultural Institution website.
- The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, in partnership with Verizon's Thinkfinity.org, launched the *Smithsonian History Explorer*, offering free, standards-based, innovative resources for teaching and learning American history.
- The Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press and Smithsonian Institution Libraries completed digitization of more than 1,000 legacy volumes of the **Smithsonian Contributions** series of research works on a wide range of subjects, and have made them available online in PDF format.
- The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies launched *Smithsonian across America*, a website that provides information on Smithsonian programming across the country.
- The Smithsonian Photography Initiative launched *click! photography changes everything*, a web-based forum that seeks to stimulate a dialogue about how photography shapes our lives.
- The National Museum of African American History and Culture's new website offers an innovative feature called *Memory Book*, which allows site visitors to upload stories, images, and audio.

Exhibition Highlights

The **Sant Ocean Hall** opened in September 2008 at the National Museum of Natural History. The 23,000 square foot exhibition features state-of-the-art media technology and nearly 700 specimens and models. Created in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Hall is named in honor of Washington philanthropists Victoria and Roger Sant, who donated \$15 million to endow the new exhibition and related programs.

The National Air and Space Museum's completely renovated *America by Air* civil aviation gallery reopened in November 2007. In addition to displays of classic airplanes and walk-in exhibits of a 747 nose and DC-7 fuselage, *America by Air* offers a wide range of artifacts, photographs, artwork, and interactive displays that tell the story of commercial aviation.

On February 15, 2008, the National Museum of Natural History premiered *Butterflies+Plants: Partners in Evolution*, a permanent exhibition that combines traditional and experiential learning. An immersive Live Butterfly Pavilion gives visitors a close personal look at the living results of this evolutionary story.





The 42nd annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival drew hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Mall from June 25 through July 6, 2008, to see featured programs on *Bhutan: Land of the Thunder Dragon*, *NASA: Fifty Years and Beyond*, and *Texas: A Celebration of Music, Food, and Wine*.

The inaugural exhibition of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits*, co-sponsored by the National Portrait Gallery, was on display in the Portrait Gallery from October 19, 2007 through March 2, 2008, before moving on to the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans.

A new exhibition from the Anacostia Community Museum, *Separate and Unequaled: Black Baseball in the District of Columbia*, was on display from May 18 through October 5 at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., along with a complementary exhibition from the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, *Discover Greatness: An Illustrated History of Negro Baseball Leagues*.

From July 12 through October 5, 2008, the Smithsonian celebrated the imagination of Muppets creator Jim Henson with the exhibition *Jim Henson's Fantastic World* in the International Gallery of the Ripley Center. After its run here, the show—which features Henson's original artworks, props, photographs, videos, and of course, Muppets themselves—began a national tour.

Smithsonian art museums presented a diverse array of exhibitions to suit every art lover's taste. The following are only a small sampling of the variety of exciting shows offered in fiscal year 2008:

- The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden presented *The Cinema Effect*, a two-part exhibition of contemporary film, video, and digital works that explores how moving pictures have blurred the distinction between illusion and reality.
- More than 100 beautiful works from the collection of Etsuko and Joe Price, one of the finest private collections of Japanese art, were featured in *Patterned Feathers, Piercing Eyes: Edo Masters from the Price Collection* (November 10, 2007–April 13, 2008) at the Sackler Gallery.
- **RECOGNIZE! Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture** (February 8–October 26, 2008) at the National Portrait Gallery focused on the broad cultural impact of hip hop music. In addition to paintings and photographs, it featured video, poetry, spoken word, and graffiti displays.
- *Georgia O'Keeffe and Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities*, on view at the Smithsonian American Art Museum from September 26 through January 4, 2009, examines the friendship of two iconic artists who were attracted to the distinctive landscapes of the American West.
- *El Anatsui: Gawu* (March 12–September 7, 2008) at the National Museum of African Art featured huge metal “tapestries” and other imposing sculptures by one of Africa's leading contemporary artists.
- Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum presented *Rococo: The Continuing Curve, 1730–2008* (March 7–July 6, 2008), exploring the Rococo style and its revivals through the present day

The 30-foot-tall sculpture *Modern Head* by Roy Lichtenstein went on view at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in August, 2008. As well as being an example of a major artist's best work, the sculpture was a silent witness to history, having been on display one block from the World Trade Center at the time of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack that brought down the twin towers.



A unique portrait of self-proclaimed national treasure **Stephen Colbert** of Comedy Central was on temporary display at the National Portrait Gallery—outside the Presidents gallery, between two restrooms. It proved to be a sensationally popular backdrop for picture-taking by visitors.



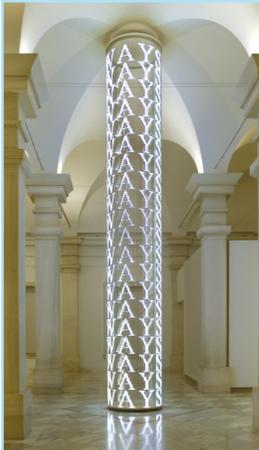
Collections Highlights

The Smithsonian is the steward of more than **137 million objects and specimens**, documenting both the nation’s heritage and the natural diversity of the planet. Smithsonian collections include the Hope Diamond, the Burgess shale fossils, the Star-Spangled Banner, Lincoln’s top hat, Gilbert Stuart’s portrait of George Washington, the Wright Flyer, Kermit the Frog—everything including the kitchen sink (from Julia Child’s kitchen). New acquisitions this year included the following:

- After a seven-year, three-billion-mile journey to rendezvous with a comet, the **Stardust return capsule** joined the national collection of flight icons at the National Air and Space Museum, where it will be displayed in the central *Milestones of Flight* gallery along with treasures such as Charles Lindbergh’s Spirit of St. Louis, Chuck Yeager’s Bell X-1, and the Apollo 11 Command Module.



- At a ceremony at the El Portal Theater in North Hollywood on January 29, **nine leading ladies of Hollywood and Broadway** donated objects from their careers to the collections of the National Museum of American History. These included Carol Channing’s diamond dress from *Lorelei*, Tippi Hedren’s script from *The Birds*, Angela Lansbury’s costume from *Mame*, and Julie Newmar’s Catwoman suit from the *Batman* television series.



- The National Museum of American History also received a collection of objects from the acclaimed 1990s television sci-fi series *The X-Files*. Series creator Chris Carter presented the Museum with items such as an annotated script from the series pilot and props.

- On November 3, 2007, the Smithsonian American Art Museum unveiled a large-scale, site-specific light sculpture by Jenny Holzer, an artist renowned for her pioneering work incorporating texts into light-based art. The sculpture, titled *For SAAM*, is on display in the museum’s third-floor Lincoln Gallery.

- Two female **Przewalski’s horses** brought from Europe to the National Zoo’s Conservation and Research Center gave birth to foals sired by a National Zoo stallion. These births infuse genetic diversity into a captive population descended from just 14 animals. The species, native to China and Mongolia, is extinct in the wild.

- On March 7, a **North Island brown kiwi chick** hatched at the National Zoo. These birds are one of the world’s most endangered species, and are extremely rare in captivity.

- The Smithsonian American Art Museum acquired the definitive documentary record of a major early work by renowned artists **Christo and Jeanne-Claude**, *Running Fence*. The work itself, a white fabric and steel-pole fence over 24 miles long and 18 feet high, existed for only two weeks. The collection acquired by the Museum includes over 350 sketches, scale models, photographs, films, and other items of material culture pertaining to the project—including a fabric panel and pole from the work.

Education, Event, and Program Highlights

The Smithsonian Channel, a joint venture between the Institution and Showtime Networks, won its first Emmy Award this year, for the cinematography in “The Magic of Motion,” an episode of the popular series, *Nature Tech*.

The **National Science Resources Center** held two important national outreach events:

- Working with the Indiana Governor’s Office, Indiana State Department of Education, and other partners, the Center hosted 125 business, government, and education leaders at the 2008 *Indiana Building Awareness of Science Education Symposium*. Held on April 25, this event was the first step in a proposed 10-year partnership to help Indiana reform its K-16 science education programs.
- In partnership with the North Carolina Science, Math, and Technology Education Center and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, the Center held its second annual *North Carolina Science Education Strategic Planning Institute* for 15 school district leadership teams representing over 130,000 students, nearly half of whom live in poverty. The Center has a 10-year agreement with North Carolina to help it establish effective K-12 science programs for all students.

More than 9,000 people visited Cooper-Hewitt during its second annual **National Design Week**, October 14–20, 2007. A highlight was the eighth annual National Design Awards Gala, attended by nearly 500 guests, including many prominent names in the design world.



In January, the Conservation and Research Center of the National Zoo, in partnership with George Mason University, launched an **undergraduate semester in conservation biology program** at the Zoo’s facility in Front Royal, Virginia.

In December 2007, the Friends of the National Zoo held **ZooLights**. For 25 nights, the Zoo shone with thousands of environmentally friendly LED lights and animated exhibits featuring the Zoo’s most popular animals. ZooLights attracted 43,000 visitors.

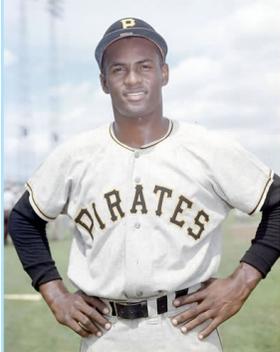
The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies hosted its annual **Smithsonian Teachers’ Night** on November 2, 2007, welcoming 2,800 educators to the National Air and Space Museum to learn what the Institution offers.

The **Masters Program in the History of Decorative Arts and Design**, a joint program of the Parsons School of Design and Cooper-Hewitt, celebrated its 25th anniversary in January.

National Outreach

Smithsonian Affiliations offers museums, cultural institutions, and educational organizations across the country access to Smithsonian collections and resources. Through the Affiliations program, the Smithsonian fulfills its outreach mission of sharing artifacts, programs, and expertise. Since its founding in 1996, Smithsonian Affiliations has established partnerships with more than **160 museums and educational and cultural organizations in 40 states, Panama, and Puerto Rico**. Smithsonian Affiliations hosts a national conference each June in Washington, D.C. This year’s conference drew representatives of 68 Affiliates from 34 states, Puerto Rico, and Panama; a congressional reception in the Rayburn House Office Building drew 30 Capitol Hill attendees, including five U.S. Representatives.

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) continued to sustain a high level of outreach activity through its traveling exhibitions. In fiscal year 2008, SITES put the following new shows on the road:



- *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits* opened at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles.
- *The White House Garden* debuted at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C.
- *The Working White House* opened at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines.
- *Beyond Baseball: The Life of Roberto Clemente*, opened at the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory in Louisville, Kentucky.
- *The Dancer Within* opened at the Ypsilanti District Library in Michigan.
- *Ancestry & Innovation: African American Art from the American Folk Art Museum* opened at Reynolda House Museum of Art in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.
- *Freedom's Sisters* opened at the Cincinnati Museum Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- *Beyond: Visions of Planetary Landscapes* opened at the Monmouth Museum in

Lincroft, New Jersey.

- *Singgalot (The Ties that Bind)* launched at Remy's on Temple Art Gallery in Los Angeles, California.
- A special poster exhibition of satellite images, *Earth from Space*, opened in more than 300 locations in September 2008.



The Smithsonian Associates coordinated **Teaching American History workshops** in three school districts in New York and Michigan at which Smithsonian educators were joined by historians, performers, and interpreters to teach the principles of object-based learning to dozens of K-12 public school teachers.

The first group of Smithsonian-trained **Teacher Ambassadors** from 20 states completed a year of service, demonstrating how to use Smithsonian educational resources to other educators across the nation.

The Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, under the direction of David Baker and accompanied by National Museum of American History Director Brent Glass, undertook a tour of **Egypt**, performing at the Pyramids, Cairo Opera House, Alexandria Opera House, and Cairo American College.

Scholarship

Because of its famous collections and museums, the Smithsonian is often referred to as the “Nation’s Attic,” but that is only half the story. Historian David McCullough offered a more complete description of the Institution as a “storehouse of ideas.” The Smithsonian conducts cutting-edge research around the globe, deepening our understanding of the origins of the universe, the diversity and evolution of life on

Earth, the history of America, and the diversity of our cultures. On the science side, the Smithsonian's laboratories, observatories, field stations, expeditions, libraries, and living and natural history collections rank with the world's finest in many areas. In the arts and history/culture fields, Smithsonian researchers not only have access to unrivalled collections of art, cultural artifacts, documents, photographs, films, and archival materials, but are constantly searching for new acquisitions to collect, study, and document. The following are just a few highlights of Smithsonian research from the past fiscal year.

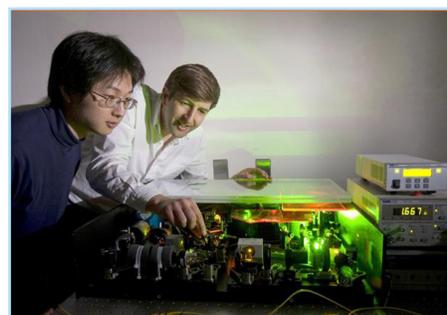
Science Units

Smithsonian scientists discovered a new species of bird in Africa; their findings were published in the international science journal *Zootaxa* in August. The previously unknown **olive-backed forest robin** (*Stiphornis pyrrholaemus*) was first observed in 2001 during a field expedition of the National Zoo's Monitoring and Assessment of Biodiversity Program in southwest Gabon.



On October 9, 2007, National Zoo Director John Berry and U.S. Representative Frank Wolf of Virginia formally opened the **Cheetah Science Facility** at the Zoo's Conservation and Research Center in Front Royal, Virginia—the first new research facility to be constructed on the property in 22 years. NZP has been a leader in cheetah conservation efforts, both in the wild and in captivity, for the last 30 years.

Scientists from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics have invented a revolutionary new laser device to improve measurements of minute velocities (down to one centimeter per second) in astronomical sources. The “**astro-comb**” produces an extremely fine, stable yardstick of reference wavelengths.



Astronomers including Jonathan Weintraub of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics have taken the closest look ever at the giant black hole in the center of the Milky Way by combining telescopes in three locations. Their observations are among the highest resolution ever achieved in astronomy.



A study published in *Geology* (January 2008) by the National Museum of Natural History's Jeffrey Post and six other researchers probed the mysterious phosphorescence of NMNH's famous **Hope Diamond**, which glows fiery red in ultraviolet light. They discovered that almost all natural blue diamonds display phosphorescence that mixes blue and red light, but that the characteristics are unique to each diamond, thus providing a “fingerprint” that can be used to identify individual gems.

The most comprehensive investigation to date of **evolutionary relationships among hard corals**, conducted by an international team including Natural History's Nancy Knowlton, has provided evidence that many of the traditional assumptions about family relationships among corals are incorrect. In addition to setting the record straight, the research could have implications for coral conservation efforts.

The discovery by NMNH's William DiMichele and a colleague of a **300-million-year-old rainforest covering** in Illinois coal mines made national news. The forest was preserved when an earthquake dropped the area a few feet, allowing flooding from an adjacent river to bury the plant life in sediment.



In June, the Center for Tropical Forest Science of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) launched an ambitious **long-term study of ecosystem services**—water, carbon and biodiversity—provided by tropical forests. The findings of this study, conducted on a 3.3-square-mile site in Panama, will have implications for tropical land use worldwide.

Seven years ago, STRI's Jeremy Jackson and his co-authors published a landmark paper about how marine environments have been radically altered by human exploitation. In the August 12, 2008 issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Jackson outlines steps that could **reverse the decline of the oceans**.

STRI and its partners met in Shanghai in December 2007, to launch China's contribution to the **Smithsonian Institution Global Earth Observatories** program. STRI is also collaborating with local partners to establish observation plots in India and Brunei.

Scientists from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) published six papers in *Reviews in Fishery Science* that summarize their research on replenishing the **blue crab population** in the Chesapeake Bay. This research is widely recognized as some of the world's most comprehensive work on fishery stock enhancement.

A study by SERC's Donald Weller and Kathy Boomer (with Thomas Jordan) in the *Journal of Environmental Quality*, comparing actual **sediment measurements** in Chesapeake watershed streams with predictions from the most up-to-date models, finds the models' predictions to be extremely unreliable. This surprising finding appears to result from the models' use of a mathematical equation originally developed for a different purpose.

In the past 200 years, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have increased by 35 percent; oceans and waterways have been soaking up excess carbon, and growing more acidic. Whitman Miller of SERC is investigating the effects on the Chesapeake Bay's **oyster population**, which today stands at 2 percent of what it was in colonial times.

Jeff Speakman of the Smithsonian's Museum Conservation Institute (MCI) and his collaborators published a paper in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* describing the discovery of a **4,000-year-old gold necklace** at an archaeological site in Peru's Lake Titicaca basin—the oldest worked-gold object found to date in the Americas.

Using the Mars Subsurface and Ionospheric Sounder aboard the European Mars Express Spacecraft, scientists from the National Air and Space Museum's Center for Earth and Planetary Studies (CEPS) discovered a low-density area on **Mars** indicating either volcanic ash or buried ice deposits. If confirmed, the possibility of ice may support future manned landings on Mars.



Art Units

Smithsonian art museums published numerous catalogs to accompany this year's exhibitions, including the following:



- *Japanese Masterworks from the Price Collection* from the Freer and Sackler Galleries, as well as the second and third volumes to accompany the Freer and Sackler Galleries' monumental 2007 *Encompassing the Globe* exhibition;
- *Ballyhoo! Posters as Portraiture* and *Zaida Ben-Yusuf: New York Portrait Photographer* from the National Portrait Gallery;
- *The Cinema Effect: Illusion, Reality, and the Moving Image* and *Amy Sillman: Third Person Singular* from the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden;
- *Piranesi as Designer* and *Provoking Magic: Lighting of Ingo Maurer* from Cooper-Hewitt; and
- *Inscribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art* by the National Museum of African Art's Christine Mullen Kreamer, which was awarded the Secretary's 2008 Research Prize for Outstanding Publication.

Smithsonian American Art Museum Senior Curator **Virginia Mecklenburg** was honored by the National New Deal Preservation Association for her work with New Deal-related art.

The second book in the Archives of American Art's publishing partnership with HarperCollins was released in January 2008. *With Love: Artist's Letters and Illustrated Notes from the Archives of American Art* was co-authored by curator Liza Kirwin and Archives technician Joan Lord. The Archives also launched a re-designed and expanded version of its *Archives of American Art Journal*, featuring full-color images and greater focus on scholarship that makes use of the Archives' collections.

Stephen Van Dyk of the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum Library worked with photographer and design historian Andrew Garn on the book *Exit to Tomorrow: World's Fair Architecture, Design, Fashion 1933-2005*.

History and Culture Units

In September, the third annual **Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium**, a national conference of scholars and philatelists sponsored by the National Postal Museum and the American Philatelic Society, was held in the Museum's Blount conference center.

National Museum of American History research staff published several books: *The Star-Spangled Banner: The Making of an American Icon* by Lonny Taylor, Kathleen K. Kendrick, and Jeffrey L. Brodie; *America's Forested Wetlands: From Wasteland to Valued Resource* by Jeffrey K. Stine; *The Kennedys: Portrait of a Family* by Shannon Thomas Perich; and *Holidays on Display* by William L. Bird.

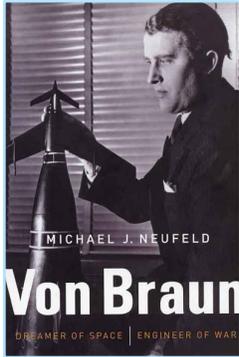
National Museum of the American Indian Research Unit staff organized the symposium *Mother Earth: Call to Consciousness on Climate Change*, which brought together scholars and community members engaged with climate change issues in Indian Country. Unit members have also accepted positions in the Cultural Studies Association, Indigenous Studies Association, and American Academy of Religion.

The National Museum of the American Indian and the Heard Museum published *Remix: Modernities in a Post-Indian World* to accompany an exhibition of the same name. The book focuses on the work of 15 contemporary artists of mixed Native and non-Native background.



The Anacostia Community Museum launched a **documentation project on Korean American merchants and African American residents** in D.C.'s East of the River communities, using archival and library research, surveys, oral history interviews, photography, and material culture. The Museum hopes to partner with local cultural and community organizations to spread this research model to other cities.

In February, the exhibition catalog for the National Museum of African American History and Culture's *Let Your Motto Be Resistance* won the Outstanding Contribution to Publishing Citation from the American Library Association.



Two books from the National Air and Space Museum's Space History Division recently received awards. *After Sputnik: Fifty Years of the Space Age*, edited by Martin Collins, won second prize in the Washington Book Publishers 2007 Book Design and Effectiveness Awards. Michael Neufeld's *Von Braun: Dreamer of Space, Engineer of War* won the Richard W. Leopold Prize of the Organization of American Historians.

The Eugene S. Ferguson Award of the Society for the History of Technology has been awarded to the Smithsonian Institution Archives' Joseph Henry Papers Project for *The Papers of Joseph Henry*, documenting the life of the Institution's first Secretary.

The Smithsonian Networks film *Sound Revolution: The Electric Guitar*—based on the Lemelson Center's research on the history of the electric guitar—won a Gold World Medal in the Arts category at the New York Festival's television broadcasting awards.

Management Excellence

Leadership Milestones



On July 1, **G. Wayne Clough** assumed his duties as the 12th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, taking over from Acting Secretary Cristián Samper, who returned to his previous post as Director of the National Museum of Natural History.

In September, the Board of Regents elected **Patricia Stonesifer** to succeed Roger Sant as Chair of the Board, effective January 2009. Stonesifer, senior advisor and former chief executive officer of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has been a Regent since 2001. As chair, she will serve as leader of the Board and its executive committee.



In March, **John W. McCarter, Jr.** was appointed to the Board of Regents. Since 1996, McCarter has been President and Chief Operating Officer of the Field Museum in Chicago. He previously served as Senior Vice President of Booz Allen and Hamilton and as President of the DeKalb Corporation.



Charles Alcock became Acting Under Secretary for Science in April. An internationally renowned astrophysicist and member of the National Academy of Sciences, Alcock joined the Smithsonian as Director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in 2004, and will continue to serve in this role while functioning as Acting Under Secretary.

In April, the Smithsonian’s art units were organizationally joined to the history and culture units under a renamed Office of the Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture. **Richard Kurin** will serve as Acting Under Secretary for this new division.



Eldredge “Biff” Bermingham was named the director of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama City, Panama. Bermingham has been the Institute’s acting director since March 2007. He joined the Institute’s scientific staff in 1989 and has served as deputy director since 2003.

Martin E. Sullivan was named Director of the National Portrait Gallery. Sullivan previously served as Chief Executive Officer of the Historic St. Mary’s City Commission in Maryland and Director of the Heard Museum in Phoenix. He has also chaired three national boards concerned with advancing museum standards, ethics, and practices.



Information Technology

In May, the Smithsonian launched the **Smithsonian Digitization Strategic Planning Committee (SI-DigiSPC)** to develop a pan-Institutional digitization strategic plan by fall 2009. Chaired by Katherine Spiess, Director of the Central Digitization Office, it includes 14 senior unit representatives.

The Smithsonian joined **Flickr Commons**—a leading photo-sharing community—posting 861 images with no known copyright restrictions from seven of its museums, research centers, and archives. In the first three weeks, these images were viewed over 286,000 times. The Smithsonian hopes to learn more about its audiences through their interactions with Smithsonian images on Flickr.

To address the need for a pan-Institutional, centrally-supported video teleconferencing (VTC) system, the Smithsonian’s Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) completed installation for a pilot run of **Cisco Meeting Place**. (Currently, several differently-configured VTC systems are scattered across the Smithsonian.) The system is expected to be in production in the first quarter of fiscal year 2009.

At the end of February, OCIO released its updated enterprise architecture models and the Institution’s **five-year Smithsonian Information Technology Plan** for fiscal years 2008–2013.

The Getty Foundation has agreed to fund initial development of a **Smithsonian Enterprise Digital Asset Network (EDAN)** that gives scholars, scientists, and the public the ability to locate and retrieve digital files stored across systems within the Institution, without having to access each system individually.

In January, the Smithsonian’s first **secure wireless network** was rolled out by OCIO in the National Museum of Natural History. It enables staff to connect to the Smithsonian network and Internet while

minimizing risk to the former. It also features isolated “visitor zones” that allow visiting colleagues to connect to their home institutions. Additional secure wireless access points will soon be installed at the National Museum of the American Indian, National Zoo, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Smithsonian Institutional Traveling Exhibition Service, and Freer Gallery of Art.

Major Construction, Renovation, and Facilities Projects



The **Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard**, at the heart of the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture, opened to the public on November 18, 2007. The Courtyard, with its elegant glass canopy, was designed by world-renowned architects Foster + Partners.

At the end of fiscal year 2008, construction work on the most extensive renovations of the **National Museum of American History’s** public space in over 40 years was on schedule for the Museum’s reopening on November 21, 2008.

The second phase of the **National Zoo’s Asia Trail** project, *Elephant Trails*, will renovate and expand the historic elephant house and enlarge existing yard space into three habitat areas and a trail. Construction began in March 2008 and is on schedule for completion in April 2011.

Work continues on the design phase of the new **National Museum of African American History and Culture**. Museum construction and exhibit design, fabrication, and installation are scheduled to be completed by December, 2015.

The July 2008 award of a design and construction contract for renovations to the **Pod 3 storage facility** in Suitland, Maryland begins the next phase in the Smithsonian’s drive to improve care for its collections. The renovated Pod 3 will provide a consolidated location for proper care of frozen, refrigerated, gas-preserved, and dry collections, allowing the Smithsonian to vacate leased properties and freeing up congested space in the Hirshhorn, African Art, Freer/Sackler, and Natural History Museums.

The Regents voted in May 2008 not to proceed further with exploration of a public-private partnership to restore the mothballed **Arts and Industries Building**. A strategic planning process has begun to examine options for the building’s renovation and to identify opportunities for programmatic uses of this landmark building.

Conclusion

The Smithsonian is the repository of our nation’s values, icons, memories, and aspirations. It is a symbol of America around the world. For 162 years, the Smithsonian Institution has built its collections, disseminated its research, and welcomed millions of visitors to its museums. At a time when globalization is bringing countries and peoples closer together, yet when tensions among some nations and cultures are on the rise, the Smithsonian has an important role to play by showing the positive side of America to its own citizens and to the world.

Despite the difficult economic and budgetary circumstances, incoming Secretary G. Wayne Clough has brought an infusion of positive energy to the Institution. One of the first tasks being undertaken by Secretary Clough is a re-examination of the Smithsonian's role, through an extensive year-long strategic planning initiative that will involve staff and other stakeholders at all levels in setting goals and directions for the Institution.

While it is impossible to know what the future will actually bring, it is vital that the Institution understand the factors likely to shape it, as well as the challenges and opportunities it may confront not only in the next few years, but in the next decade, the next century, and beyond. By exploring different scenarios, the Smithsonian can position itself to respond nimbly and productively. Some of the key questions confronting the Institution under its new Secretary include:

- How can the Smithsonian become a leading destination of choice—in person or virtually—not only to its traditional adult and family audiences, but to younger generations and to America's increasingly diverse population?
- How can the Smithsonian play a positive role in fostering greater understanding among Americans of their nation's legacy, as well as greater understanding across nations?
- How can the Smithsonian become more self-reliant and entrepreneurial so as to generate the resources it needs to produce high-quality programs and support continued world-class research?
- How can the Smithsonian better apply its world-class scientific research to addressing dire global challenges such as climate change and loss of biodiversity, as well as pursuing exciting opportunities such as the exploration of space?
- How can the Smithsonian use emerging Web technologies to make a greater part of its 137 million-object collection—less than 2 percent of which is on display at any given time—accessible in useful ways to researchers, scholars, teachers, students, and the general public?