



SEMINARS - ANCON CONFERENCE ROOM

No luncheon talks scheduled for Tuesday, October 6, or Tuesday, October 13. Anyone interested in giving a talk, please call Vielka Vergel at Ancon.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

October 6 - Departing, RICHARD COOKE, on official business to Washington, D.C. until October 12.

ON LEAVE

Maria Morello, Oct. 12 - Nov. 9

Anyone requiring permits during above period, please see Ms. Morello as soon as possible.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Recent reviews by Procurement on incoming mail have shown that mailing privileges have been improperly used. Once more we would like to remind you regarding the mailing policy.

APO address should be used only for shipping/receiving research equipment, supplies and official mail.

Non-official and personal mail can be sent to:
Smithsonian Tropical Research Inst.
Attn:
Apartado 2072
Balboa, Republica de Panama

SMITHSONIAN CREDIT UNION NEWS

All STRI employees are reminded that the Smithsonian Credit Union now has a Management Committee here in Panama, composed of Elena Lombardo, Barbara Cusatti and Arcadio Rodaniche. Anyone seeking information or help with credit union matters (enrollment forms, direct deposit, etc.) are welcome to contact any of the above representatives.

Se les recuerda a todos los empleados de STRI que ahora tenemos un comite local para el manejo de asuntos relacionados con el SI Credit Union. Las personas que necesiten informacion o ayuda con formularios, etc. pueden contactar a los miembros del comite--Elena Lombardo, Barbara Cusatti y Arcadio Rodaniche.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 1987						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

October 2 - Declaration of Panama National Parks CHAGRES, CERRO HOYA, and SARIGUA in 1984.

October 7 - Anniversary of the University of Panama.

October 12 - Columbus Day, STRI holiday.

October 20 - Scientific staff meeting.

October 24 - United Nations Day.

October 31 - Halloween.

LIBRARY NEWS

The STRI Library will be closed at 4 p.m. on Friday, October 2, and all day Saturday, October 3, for fumigation.

FOR SALE

1980 Honda Accord, white, 4-door, 5-speed. Has A/C, radio cassette, power steering and brakes. \$2,800. Call John Christy at 28-4273 weekdays.

IV CONGRESO CIENTIFICO NACIONAL

The IV National Science Congress in Panama will be held on December 2 - 4 at the University of Panama. All scientists are encouraged to attend. For more information, see your local bulletin board.

El IV Congreso Cientifico Nacional se llevara a cabo en la Universidad de Panama del 2 al 4 de diciembre. Este congreso sirve como foro docente para la presentacion de los resultados de investigaciones nacionales. Se le exhorta a todos lo investigadores que participen.

II INTERNATIONAL CRACID SYMPOSIUM /SEGUNDO SIMPOSIO INTERNACIONAL DE CRACIDAE

28 febrero - 6 marzo de 1988
Caracas, Venezuela
For more information see bulletin board.



ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

In September, 1838, the British clipper ship *Mediator* arrived in the United States with a unique gift for the young country: 105 bags containing 100,000 gold sovereigns worth more than \$515,000. A huge sum in those days, the money comprised the entire estate of James Smithson, a prominent English chemist and mineralogist who had died in 1829. Its size is said to have rivaled the federal budget of the United States.

A bachelor, Smithson had left his fortune to his nephew. But his will stipulated that if his nephew died childless (as he did in 1835), "the whole of my property" should go "to the United States of America to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

Smithson, who had never set foot in America, gave no reason for his unusual bequest. The little that is known about his life offers few clues, and the mystery of his generosity to his homeland's rebellious lost colony remains unsolved.

Born in France in 1765, James Smithson was the illegitimate son of English parents, Hugh Smithson and Elizabeth Keate Macie, a wealthy widow. In 1766, King George III created Hugh first Lord and Duke of Northumberland, and the new peer took the name of Percy. (His legitimate son, Lord Percy,

The will of James Smithson

half-brother of James, fought as a British officer during the Revolution at the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill.)

The future scientist, then called James Lewis Macie, was graduated in 1786 from Pembroke College, Oxford University, and described as the "best chemist and mineralogist of his year." In 1787, Britain's Royal Society elected him a fellow, and he began his life's work of experimentation, research, field study, and scientific writing. Not until 1802, at age 37, did he start to use the name Smithson. He then vowed that the name "shall live in the memory of man when the titles of the Northumberlands and Percys are extinct and forgotten."

As a scientist, Smithson skillfully analyzed a wide variety of substances, from artichokes to ladies' tears. He identified a new mineral, zinc carbonate, called smithsonite in his honor, and even tried to find a better way to make coffee.

During his last years, he lived on the Continent. He died in Genoa, Italy, where he was buried in a small English cemetery.

The arrival of Smithson's gift in 1838 caused a debate in the Congress of the United States that lasted eight years. One faction, led by Sen. John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, argued that Congress had no right or power under the Constitution to accept such a bequest. Former President John Quincy

Adams, then a member of the House of Representatives from Massachusetts, headed the group that favored acceptance.

In 1846, Congress finally decided that the federal government did indeed have authority to receive and administer the gift. On August 10 of that year, President James K. Polk signed an act that established the Smithsonian Institution and created a board of regents to govern it.

Builders completed the institution's first structure, now known as the Castle, in 1855. Forty-nine years later, a quarry threatened the cemetery in Italy where Smithson lay, and the board of regents voted to bring his remains to America. Alexander Graham Bell, one of the regents, escorted it. Smithson's body was then reinterred in a specially built room in the Castle. On exhibit in the room are his portrait, his scientific publications, and his famous will.

Today, the Smithsonian Institution includes 14 museums and galleries and the National Zoological Park. Except for the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York, all are in Washington, D.C., and nine are on the National Mall between the Capitol and the Washington Monument. A leading research center, the institution also operates facilities and conducts activities throughout the country and overseas. Its total budget for fiscal 1987 is \$273.4 million.

As the world's largest museum complex, the Smithsonian hosts about 23 million visitors a year. Its National Air and Space Museum, the world's single most popular museum, sees 10 million visitors annually. Among the space exhibits is a flat slab of moon rock that children of all ages can touch (James Smithson would probably like that).

The Smithsonian continues to grow. A new \$73 million complex will open to the public on September 28. Located on the National Mall and known as the Quadrangle, the four-acre expanse lies between the Castle and Independence Ave. On the site are two museums, the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of Near Eastern and Asian Art and the National Museum of African Art. Below ground level is an International Center with galleries, lecture halls, classrooms, and other facilities.

Enriching the Quadrangle is an extensive garden featuring fountains and pools. At its center is a Victorian parterre of flower groupings laid in swag and ribbon shapes reminiscent of Victorian embroidery. Among specimen trees, shrubs, and tropical plants is a collection of 19th-Century cast-iron outdoor furniture. The garden opens to the public late this spring.

Admission to all Smithsonian Institution museums is free. Major buildings are open daily, from 10 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., except December 25.