

## COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHTS

<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p><i>Collections stewardship is a priority and a challenge</i></p> <p><b>PAGES 1-2</b></p>	<p><b>COLLECTIONS SPACE</b></p> <p><i>An Institution-wide look at collections space conditions</i></p> <p><b>PAGE 2</b></p>	<p><b>CONSERVATION</b></p> <p><i>Collections conservation and preservation projects</i></p> <p><b>PAGES 3-12</b></p>	<p><b>AUDIT STATUS</b></p> <p><i>Progress on collections related recommendations</i></p> <p><b>PAGE 13</b></p>
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**Smithsonian collections—137 million objects and specimens, 1.9 million library volumes, and more than 100,000 cubic feet of archival material—are a global resource accessed by millions of visitors and researchers who wish to explore subjects from aeronautics to zoology.**

Collections stewardship is among the Smithsonian’s highest priorities and in some cases, the greatest challenge. The volume, characteristics, complexity, and age of Smithsonian collections, as well as the variety of discipline-specific standards that apply to their care, make their management as complex as the collections themselves.

With targeted funding, the Smithsonian has made significant strides in improving the management, care, and accessibility of collections. The Smithsonian approaches collections pragmatically and strategically through assessments, long-term planning, and prioritization, measuring many factors, including: the greatest importance in supporting the Smithsonian’s mission and strategic plan; the most urgent collections preservation needs; and the highest current or potential use for research, education, and exhibitions.

Holistic collections management has capitalized on economies of scale and improved comprehensive care that benefits the greatest number of items in an efficient, practical, and cost-effective manner.

The series of Smithsonian Office of the Inspector General’s (OIG) reports on the state of collections and their security illustrate that stewardship is not a single process, but a series of components that are interwoven, interdependent, and ongoing. The reports delineate the challenges facing collections today, and will help guide strategies tomorrow.

Some collections challenges have been best addressed through a coordinated, Institution-wide approach. Several important strategic initiatives are currently under way which will greatly improve collections care and accessibility, including:

- Creation of the Deputy Under Secretary for Collections and Interdisciplinary Support position and office for greater supervision and improved coordination of collections-related activities;
- Implementation of an Institution-wide collections assessment program to guide long-term strategic plans for collections care, identifying areas where improvements are

needed, establishing priorities, and providing a practical framework for the allocation of resources;

- Development of a digitization strategic plan and a central program office to guide the digitization of collections and research holdings; and
- Establishment of the collections space steering committee to develop a master plan for addressing current and projected Smithsonian-wide collections space requirements.

Recent projects, such as renovation of Pod 3 and construction of Pod 5 at the Suitland Museum Support Center; lease and development of the Pennsy Drive Collections and Support Center; construction of Hazy I and II; lease and move of collections to Capital Gallery in the District of Columbia and to an off-site facility in Newark, New Jersey; as well as a number of revitalization efforts at Mall museums and the Zoo, have also provided safer environments for millions of collections items.

A diversified funding strategy for these capital and collections improvements will continue to be a priority. From fiscal years 2006 to 2012, requests to the Office of Management and Budget have continually included increases for collections care totaling

\$45.3 million (including staff) to incrementally reverse staff erosion and address reduced funding that have impaired the Smithsonian’s ability to sustainably support collections management. Increases in Federal appropriations from fiscal year 2006 through 2011 total \$15.7 million, enabling significant improvements in collections management, such as:

- Addressing OIG audit recommendations regarding deficiencies in collections inventory;
- Stabilizing, re-housing, and inventorying millions of collections items for long-term preservation and accessibility;

- Purchasing space-efficient storage units and replacing substandard cabinetry; and
- Conducting collections and preservation assessments to establish priorities and action plans for the allocation of collections care resources.

The Smithsonian also has been successful in obtaining private funding and grants for collections care and digitization.

The Institution will continue to take a strategic multifaceted approach—both localized and pan-Institutional efforts—by prioritizing and systematically addressing critical collections care needs based on current care

methods, assessments, project-driven activities (including collection moves) and economies of scale. It will continue to address OIG recommendations and will align inventory policy and plans to reflect updates in collections management methods. As part of the Federal budget request and National Campaign, the Smithsonian will continue to seek additional public and private funding, as well as external partnerships, to improve collections care while leveraging available resources to support Institution-wide initiatives that strategically address the most critical collections care needs.

### **COLLECTIONS SPACE PLAN**

*The National Collections Program and the Office of Planning and Project Management, Office of Facilities Engineering and Operations, are leading an Institution-wide initiative to develop a Smithsonian collections space plan with near-term, intermediate, and long-term recommendations for addressing current and projected Smithsonian-wide collections storage requirements. Although the Smithsonian has made significant progress in improving collections care through facility capital projects and revitalization efforts at Mall museums and the National Zoological Park, the collapse of Garber Building 21 in February 2010—which housed 2,200 objects from the National Air and Space Museum—reinforced the need to develop and implement short and*

*long-term plans to replace substandard facilities and to improve collections space across the Institution. This initiative directly supports the Smithsonian’s priority of strengthening collections and is being conducted in an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and accountable method based on the principles of the strategic plan. Recent activities include:*

- *Completion of a survey of over 2.1 million square feet of collections space. Data were collected from over 30 properties, representing 1,800 spaces or 17.5 percent of the Smithsonian’s total square footage. The baseline data provide a snapshot of current collections space conditions and characterizes the quality of collections space, storage equipment, accessibility, environmental conditions, security, and fire safety.*

- *Contractual assistance from the architecture and engineering firm Ayers Saint Gross, a specialist in campus planning. The firm worked on master planning at the National Zoological Park and National Air and Space Museum. From June to September, staff from Ayers Saint Gross conducted interviews with Smithsonian collecting unit staff and conducted site visits to assess survey data results and to gather additional information about projected collections growth and long-term collections space needs.*

- *Recommendation from the collections space steering committee for a fiscal year 2013 capital project to begin to address severe space deficiencies at the Garber Facility in Suitland, Maryland.*



*The Smithsonian Institution's collections require high standards of care in order to ensure their current and future availability for exhibitions, educational programming, research activities, and online access. Preservation is an ongoing process involving the protection and stabilization of collections and the information they contain through a coordinated set of activities that minimize chemical, physical, and biological deterioration and damage and prevent loss of intellectual, aesthetic, and monetary value.*

*The following stories provide a sampling of the many collections stewardship activities taking place behind the scenes at the Smithsonian. The stories also showcase recent collections preservation and conservation projects accomplished with external and internal support, such as the Save America's Treasures Federal grant program and the Smithsonian's Collections Care and Preservation Fund.*

## **SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES**

The Save America's Treasures (SAT) Federal grant program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) in partnership with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Each year, competitive grants are available for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites. Intellectual and cultural artifacts include objects, collections, documents, sculpture, and works of art.

Save America's Treasures is a competitive grant program. In fiscal year 2010, the program received 338 eligible applications requesting a



total of \$90.4 million, of which 61 applications were awarded a total of \$14 million. All awards require a dollar-for-dollar non-Federal match. To date, the Smithsonian has received over \$7.1 million in support of collections care from the SAT program and leveraged an additional \$7.1 million from private supporters.

Although NPS will not accept applications or award grants in fiscal year 2011, six Smithsonian units received five SAT awards totaling over \$1 million in 2010: the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Museum of

the American Indian, the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, and a collaborative award for the National Museum of Natural History and Smithsonian Institution Archives. Descriptions of their projects begin on page three.

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## **COLLECTIONS CARE AND PRESERVATION FUND**

Since fiscal year 2006, the Smithsonian's annual Federal appropriation has included an Institution-wide funding program to address critical needs in collections care and preservation. The Collections Care and Preservation Fund (CCPF) provides strategic funding in support of projects that address the Smithsonian's strategic plan priority of strengthening collections. Resources from the CCPF are available to eligible Smithsonian units on a competitive basis for unit-specific, multiple unit, and pan-

Institutional projects that improve the care of collections, mitigate deterioration, and maintain state-of-the-art collections management systems. Administered by the National Collections Program and the Smithsonian Collections Advisory Committee, the CCPF supports a comprehensive and pan-Institutional approach to collections care that ensures the preservation and accessibility of the Smithsonian's cultural and scientific collections.

From fiscal years 2006 through 2011, \$10.2 million has been awarded to 114 projects through the CCPF. Descriptions of several projects begin on page six.

## SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES



*Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.*

### *Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum: Renovation of a Landmark Building*

The Renwick Gallery's distinction as the capital's first art gallery was recognized with the receipt of a prestigious SAT award. The grant of \$335,000 marks a propitious start for the building's renovation campaign. Now known as the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the National Historic Landmark building was last renovated in 1967.

American banker, philanthropist, and art collector William Wilson Corcoran (1798–1888) believed that the arts are as crucial as industry and technology to the growth of a democratic society. He chose to place his art gallery in a symbolic location across from the White House. Today the museum fulfills the purpose carved into the front of the building, "Dedicated to Art," by collecting, researching, and exhibiting the finest examples of decorative arts and contemporary craft.

Architect James Renwick had recently completed the Smithsonian Castle when Corcoran commissioned him to design his art gallery. Each had visited the 1854 Paris Exposition, where they saw the "new Louvre" built in the elegant modern style known as Second Empire. The Renwick Gallery, with its character-defining mansard roof and decorative ironwork, is the first example of the Second Empire style in the United States. In 1861, the building was conscripted for war service as the Office of the Quartermaster General; it returned to Corcoran for his original purpose as an art gallery in 1869.

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy rallied support for the first renovation of the building in 1962 as part of her plan to restore Lafayette Square. She observed, ". . . it is really quite lovely and a precious example of the period of architecture which is fast disappearing. I so strongly feel that the White House should give the example in preserving our nation's past."

### *Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage: Preservation and Digitization of the Moses and Frances Asch Collection*

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) received a SAT grant to preserve and digitize the Moses and Frances Asch Collection in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections. The Moses and Frances Asch Collection contains

original recordings, business records, correspondence, photographs, album artwork, and film from Folkways Records, which was founded in 1948 by Moses Asch and Marian Distler. Before the Smithsonian acquired Folkways Records and its business records in 1987, Folkways Records released nearly 2,200 recordings of traditional and contemporary music from around the world, spoken word in many languages, and documentary recordings of individuals, communities, and current events. The Asch Collection includes recordings from such great American musicians as Lead Belly, Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger.

The \$335,000 grant will allow CFCH to digitize and perform conservation treatments on materials in the Asch Collection. Using existing Smithsonian systems for presenting digital content to the public, CFCH plans to make a significant portion of its paper and visual collections accessible.



*Some artwork and production materials in the Asch Collection have been damaged by mold and mildew. Conservation treatment will be conducted during the two-year Save America's Treasures grant project.*

*National Museum of African American History and Culture: Jim Crow Railroad Car and Conservation Project*

The National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) received a \$222,128 SAT grant toward the restoration of a donated, classic Pullman-built Jim Crow railroad car. Fabricated around 1922, the car was reoutfitted in 1940 with “white” and “colored” passenger compartments to accommodate segregationist practices on public transportation. The restoration will be based on extensive archival materials that document both the original construction and later partitioning of passenger cars. The restored railroad car will feature prominently in the new museum, which is scheduled to open in 2015. It will be installed so that visitors can walk through and around it as part of the museum’s interpretation about the era of segregation.

Over the course of nearly a century, from emancipation through the middle of the 20th century, segregation permeated nearly every aspect of public life. Today, however, Jim Crow laws and practices seem foreign and archaic, especially to younger Americans who have little understanding of how legal segregation affected social, political, and racial relations in the United States. Artifacts such as the Jim Crow railroad car assist in conveying the demeaning experience of segregation in United States. It will provide a dramatic focal point in the

museum’s explanation of the galvanizing role segregation played in the long struggle for full rights of citizenship for all Americans, and honors the commitment of those who protested peacefully to bring about the end of Jim Crow with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



*Exterior view of the Jim Crow railroad car in the NMAAHC collection*

*National Museum of the American Indian: Museum of the American Indian/Heye Foundation Archive Collection*

The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) received a \$29,905 SAT grant to ensure the long-term preservation of the manuscript records and motion picture films in the Museum of the American Indian (MAI)/Heye Foundation collection at the NMAI Archive Center. This collection, the largest in the Archive Center, documents NMAI’s predecessor, the MAI/Heye Foundation (1916–1989) in New York City, and contains annual reports, board of trustee records, correspondence, memoranda, field notebooks, unpublished manuscripts, scrapbooks, object collection listings, exhibit planning materials, expedition and collector files photographs, and audio/visual

materials. The audio/visual items include 16mm and 35mm motion picture films depicting Native life ways and traditions of native communities from North and South America.

The collection provides unique details and specific documentation of the various cultures the MAI anthropologists, collectors, and scholars visited and studied during the late 19th and early 20th century. The field notebooks and accompanying film provide detailed histories of indigenous communities that otherwise may have never been known and are invaluable for contemporary Native peoples, research, and scholarship. The hemispheric depth and diversity of the collection makes it an invaluable resource for the study of Native life and culture for scholars of various disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, history, and art history.



*The Native American artifacts collected by George Gustav Heye (1874–1957), seen here with his wife and Native American elders, became the core of the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian.*

Moreover, this collection is a major archive of primary source documentation of endangered indigenous life ways, traditions, and history, and is a key resource for their revitalization. Used extensively by scholars and Native communities, the collection consequently requires preservation and conservation for its continued use. The threat of deterioration to the collection from age and handling will be mitigated through conservation stabilization treatments, after which the materials will be digitized to ensure ongoing access to these invaluable resources.

*Smithsonian Institution Archives and the National Museum of Natural History: Working Together to Conserve Field Notebooks*

The Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) and the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) Department of Botany are the beneficiaries of a 2010 SAT grant to conserve 19th and 20th century field notebooks located at the Archives and at Natural History. The \$96,783 grant will support the stabilization of the primary sources that document scientific explorations and discovery from the 1800s and 1900s, including field research conducted during Smithsonian expeditions. The notebooks, diaries, and journals of scientists have long been an important collection of specimen collections in the Department of Botany. In addition to the SAT funding, SIA

and NMNH received support in 2009 from the Council of Library and Information Resources to locate and catalog the field notebooks. The second part of the project, stabilization for digitization and conservation treatment, started in summer 2011 with support from the SAT grant. For the third and final portion of the project, the digitization of the field books, the Archives is actively seeking additional funding. Highlights can be seen on the project's blog <http://nmnh.typepad.com/fieldbooks/>.



*A field notebook selected in a pilot test for digitization preparation in the SIA-NMNH Botany Field Book Project. It was determined that this book could not be easily digitized due to its binding and structural condition.*

## COLLECTIONS CARE AND PRESERVATION FUND

### *Smithsonian Institution Libraries: Conserving the Train Africana Scrapbook Collection*

In 2004, the Smithsonian Institution Libraries (SIL) acquired the Russell E. Train Africana Collections, consisting of approximately 2,000 printed books and more than 2,800 archival and non-book primary

source materials on the history of African travel and exploration during the 19th and 20th centuries. These materials were collected over a period of approximately 50 years by the Honorable Russell E. Train, a former judge, Environmental Protection Agency administrator, and past president of the World Wildlife Fund.

The African scrapbooks of the Train Africana Collection constitute a hidden resource at the Smithsonian. With the generous assistance of CCPF awards totaling \$118,500, SIL performed a detailed collection condition assessment of selected scrapbooks, including initial comprehensive and detailed documentation, page-by-page digital scanning of the books in their original condition, and completion of a written description of items. Individualized conservation treatments are being performed with a scheduled completion date of September 2011, after which SIL will store the objects in the environmentally controlled rare book vault with the remainder of the Russell E. Train Africana Collection. The materials, in addition to digital images of the items in their original state, will be made available to researchers. The information will improve the accountability and accessibility of this important collection.

*National Air and Space Museum: Collections Care and Preservation Fund Projects*

The National Air and Space Museum (NASM) has received 12 CCPF awards since 2006, totaling more than \$1.5 million. Several of the more recent and notable results of the CCPF projects include:

- conservation assessment surveys completed for 13,000 objects
- new artifact records created for 650 objects
- preventative conservation treatments performed on 600 objects
- high-resolution digital images taken of 9,000 objects
- existing storage areas reorganized to enable 200 percent more usable space
- handling trays and/or rehousing completed for 6,500 objects
- replacement of the space suit heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system

NASM is currently implementing three fiscal year 2010 CCPF awards: a survey of 12,000 objects in the Small Artifacts collection, a survey of 1,400 vintage aircraft tools, and the rehousing and digitization of 6,200 glass plate negatives of Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Company corporate records. These collections are slated to be transferred to a new collections facility at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center and were identified as being in greatest need of a thorough assessment and storage improvements.

With CCPF funding from fiscal years 2009 and 2010, three times

the number of condition/conservation surveys recorded before 2009, an increase of 20 percent, will be entered into the NASM collections database when the 2010 CCPF-funded projects conclude. These surveys are accessible to NASM staff and are actively utilized as valuable tools to the Collections and Curatorial divisions during object evaluations for display, loan, treatment, storage requirements, or shipment.

Additionally, information such as dimensions, markings, manufacturer data, and descriptions are added to the object records.

The vast amount of information collected during these surveys reduces the need for objects to be physically accessed. It also provides supporting information for the museum's long-term preservation strategies, and allows NASM to strategically focus its resources on the collections in greatest need.

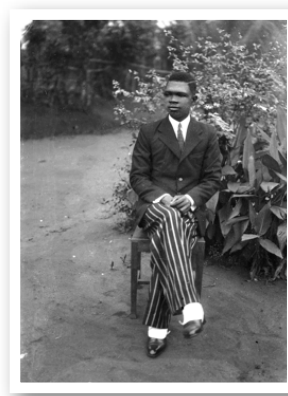
*National Museum of African Art, Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives: Chief Solomon Osagie Alonge Photographic Collection*

The Chief Solomon Osagie Alonge photographic collection spans six decades (1926–1989) and represents a dynamic, continuous record of the Benin Royal Court, Nigeria. As the Royal photographer to Akenzua II (1933–1978), Oba (king) of Benin, Chief Alonge documented the ritual, pageantry, and regalia of the Obas, their wives, and retainers for over a half-century.

In 1942, he established the Ideal Photography Studio in Benin City and photographed studio portraits of everyday people. The National Museum of African Art is organizing a major exhibition scheduled to open in February 2012, that will showcase the photographs of Chief Alonge.

In fiscal year 2009, a \$37,600 CCPF award supported the preservation, duplication, and rehousing of the 150 glass plate negatives and 1,800 large format film negatives from the collection by a contract conservation center. Preservation, duplication, and scanning of the glass plates and film negatives has allowed cataloguing to proceed and will make the collection accessible to scholars, researchers, and the general public.

In fiscal year 2010, the Archives received \$87,200 from CCPF for the preservation and treatment of the photographic albums, photographs, and paper-based items in the collection. A contract paper conservator is currently treating the photographic albums and vintage prints.



*Self-portrait of Chief Alonge, seated outside his studio wearing formal attire and spats, Benin City, c. 1942.*

**National Museum of American History:  
Conservation Treatment of The Life and Morals of  
Jesus of Nazareth (The “Jefferson Bible”)**

The National Museum of American History (NMAH) received a fiscal year 2010 CCPF award of \$155,500 for the conservation treatment of the “Jefferson Bible” and two source books used to make it. The goal of the project is to preserve the volumes and “restore” their usability. Preservation-quality, color digital images of the Bible will be made accessible to the public via the web and used to produce Smithsonian Press facsimile editions.

At the outset, conservators examined the book and prepared a full bibliographic description and thorough condition record with over 20,000 data points. The work confirmed that the book is not an ordinary 19th century book, but rather more like a scrapbook. Created by Thomas Jefferson, the book is composed of clippings cut from other Bibles and glued to the pages. The clippings are arranged so densely that each page appears to be a single imprint, but it is actually an assemblage. Close study provided a unique view of Jefferson’s extraordinary mind and dexterity through his meticulous handwork, his tidiness and planning, his almost surgical approach to “extracting” the clippings, and his painstaking attention to detail.

Examination documented that the volume’s inflexible, stubbed binding structure had severely damaged the paper over time; the brittle pages broke against the stubs every time the pages were turned. The effects of oxygen, humidity, and light exposure combined with acid migration from the

adhesives had embrittled the paper and exacerbated the damage. Concurrently, a remarkable diversity of constituent materials was indexed: 12 different papers, four manuscript inks, six printing inks, and two adhesives.

Conservators have completed the first phase of testing and instrumental analysis to identify the elemental composition and molecular components of materials, as well as to provide data for understanding the state of their deterioration and relative stability. The accumulated research record was brought to bear on the question of how to balance

the binding integrity against the needs of the Jefferson “document” bound inside. In the end, the evidence demonstrated conclusively that if the physical damage to the paper were not addressed, the Bible would remain too fragile to use again. Conservators disbound the volume, separating the cover and spine from the text block,

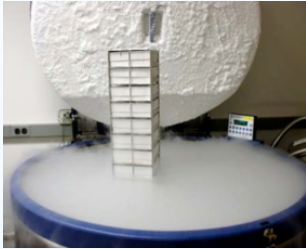
removing the restrictive spine linings beneath and snipping the sewing inside the pages so they could be separated into loose folios. The pages were dry cleaned and physically repaired using Japanese paper and reversible adhesive. By mid-2011, the book will be rebound in a flexible structure, using original materials where possible and in other cases

employing new materials and techniques sympathetic with the artifact.

*The “Jefferson Bible” before treatment and opened to the title page. At the outset, the book was too fragile to handle, display or digitize without incurring significant damage. Each time the pages were turned, the brittle papers were cracked or torn against the stiff, inflexible edges of the stubs used in the binding structure.*







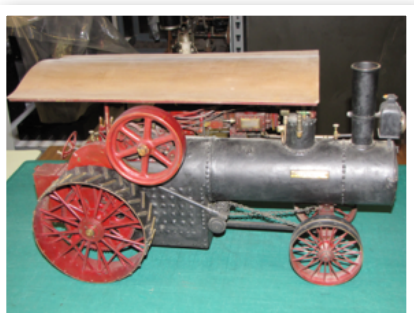
*Frozen tissue samples at NMNH before (left) and after (right) inventory, re-packaging, and labeling.*

*National Zoological Park, National Museum of Natural History, and Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute: Care and Management of Frozen Scientific Collections*

Fiscal year 2010 and 2011 CCPF awards to the National Zoo’s Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, the National Museum of Natural History, and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute kicked off a pan-Smithsonian initiative to address urgent needs of the Institution’s frozen scientific collections. The collections had been inconsistently housed and organized throughout the Institution, greatly reducing the accessibility of the information contained in them.

For more than 30 years, these units have been and storing frozen materials, including samples of DNA, somatic cells, tissues, blood products, germplasm (sperm and eggs), and embryos, as well as other animal, plant, and soil products. Today, these collections comprise more than 150 freezers

and liquid nitrogen tanks containing at least between 691,600 to 942,000 frozen samples from more than 17,000 species. In addition to being large both in size and diversity, these scientific collections are growing at a fast rate, with thousands of incoming samples per year. The value of a systematical and organized biorepository extends far beyond ensuring the protection of the world’s unique animal and plant species. When collected, stored, and used properly, these frozen biological materials can significantly improve the development of scholarly knowledge, help understand and preserve biodiversity, and contribute to the improvement of human health. The fact that some of the samples currently stored in these collections are no longer available in the natural world reflects the critical importance of properly preserving and maintaining these collections.



*Working tractor model (with hidden miniature bottle of moonshine) after being cleaned. Dating from the 18th century, these collections are among the oldest and most significant at the museum. They chronicle American working life, the country’s growth into an industrial nation, and the impact of technological and scientific change on workers, families, and communities.*

*National Museum of American History: Agriculture and Natural Resources Collections Care*

The National Museum of American History (NMAH) received \$319,400 from the CCPF across fiscal years 2009 and 2010 to support two phases of a project to account for and preserve the museum’s Agriculture and Natural Resources Collections.

The overarching goals are to foster responsible stewardship over the collections and to lay the cornerstone for broadening access to them.

In September 2010, NMAH completed a collections inventory to address major accountability shortcomings. During Phase 1, a team of staff and contractors worked to establish inventory control over 27,118 objects and to create and link 47,186 digital images to the NMAH Collections Information System.

Capitalizing on these accountability improvements, NMAH has moved to the next phase of work—broadening access to the collection—and has completed a first upload of 2,600 object records to the Smithsonian’s Collection Search Center <http://collections.si.edu/search>.

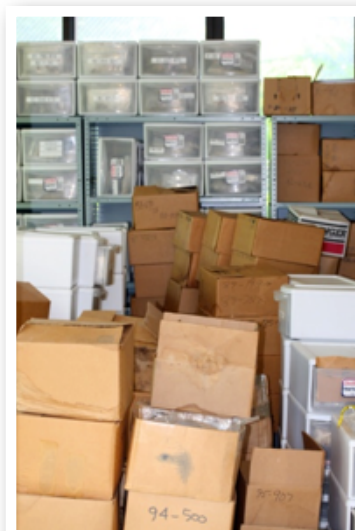
Building on the inventory control, NMAH initiated Phase 2 of the project in fall 2010 to address significant preservation deficiencies. Storage room integrity was improved by replacing leaking pipes and reorienting obstructive elements. Collections work is now underway for objects whose preservation needs were identified during the inventory. Eight new storage units have been purchased and installed. Over 700 objects (70 percent of the work planned) have been surface-cleaned and rehoused, then placed in or readied for new storage cabinets. Over 1,000 objects have been regrouped for more intellectual coherency (30 percent of the work planned). A survey is being conducted to determine which objects contain hazardous materials or require urgent conservation treatment. Work is underway to develop a preservation plan for the nearly 26,000 objects requiring specialized attention. The plan will specify storage unit upgrades/replacements; adaptations to make open shelving suitable for use; housing improvements; a new floor plan to facilitate access; and needed personnel, actions, and schedules for

implementation. NMAH will seek additional funds in order to implement the plan in the fall 2011.

*National Zoological Park and National Museum of Natural History: Preserving Animal Tissue Collection*

The National Zoological Park (NZN) Department of Pathology has a tissue collection (formalin, frozen, histology) representing samples of endangered, rare, and wild animals obtained during postmortem exams and research. As one of the largest and oldest collections of its kind, the associated samples are an invaluable scientific resource to researchers within the Smithsonian and around the world. The ever-growing collection comprises over 15,000 necropsy cases dating from the 1960s. Before 2008, the formalin collection was warehoused in NZN’s necropsy facility in heat-sealed bags inside of cardboard or plastic boxes (top image). Many bags leaked, drying out tissues, damaging cardboard boxes, and creating a potential hazard from formalin fumes.

In 2007, Zoo pathology staff members met with NMNH Invertebrate Zoology (IZ) colleagues, who recommended using IZ space to process and curate specimens, provided guidance on curation protocols, offered staff expertise and aid, and offered temporary use of NMNH collection space to house



newly curated tissues (bottom image).

In 2008, NZN received initial CCPF funding for supplies and materials and, with the exception of samples received in recent years, the NZN tissue collection was moved to IZ space at the Museum Support Center (MSC). During the move and quarantine, many additional bags leaked. NMNH-MSC hazmat-trained staff quickly triaged and contained the leaking vessels.

In 2009 and 2010, larger CCPF awards supported the painstaking

curation of the collection. Labor-intensive work was conducted predominantly with student employees while staff organized, inventoried, and curated the tissues. The latter activity is a five-day process for each specimen to properly transition from 10 percent formalin to 70 percent ethanol solutions housed in glass jars with archival labels. The allotted shelving in IZ was quickly filled with organized, inventoried tissues and fully curated tissues.

Approximately 20 percent of the NZP collection that resides at MSC remains to be curated, and remaining 2010 CCPF funds are reserved for necessary labor. The project is a multi-departmental collaboration that provides unique curatorial experience and temporary employment to students.

#### *National Museum of African American History and Culture: Foundational Collections Support*

The National Museum of African American History and Culture received a fiscal year 2010 Collections Care and Preservation Fund award of \$205,000 to support the stabilization, rehousing, and processing of its foundational collections. The award provides support for contracting experienced object specialists and conservators to process collections, and represents a critical step in making the new museum's growing collections more accessible to researchers,

curators, and, eventually, the broader public.

The award focuses on three groups of collections: the Black Fashion Museum Collection and Archives, the Mae's Hat Shop Collection, and the H.C. Anderson Collection. The Black Fashion Museum Collection, acquired by the museum in 2007, comprises more than 700 garments, 300 accessories, and 60 boxes of archival materials collected by the museum's founder, Lois K. Alexander-Lane (1916–2007). The collection—one of the largest and rarest of its kind—includes a dress sewn by Rosa Parks shortly before her famous arrest in Montgomery, Alabama; a beige-patterned skirt worn by an enslaved child in Leesburg, Virginia; the original Tin Man costume designed by Geoffrey Holder for the 1975 Broadway musical *The Wiz*; and a replica of the inaugural gown created for Mary Todd Lincoln in 1865 by Elizabeth Keckley, a former slave. The Mae's Hat Shop Collection consists of 64 items that include unique hats, millinery tools, and shop furniture from a Philadelphia business owned by an African American woman. The H.C. Anderson Collection includes 75 artifacts representing the photography studio equipment and materials from a black photographer who operated his business in Greenville, Mississippi, during the segregation era of the mid-20th century.

To date, more than 900 artifacts in the Black Fashion Museum Collection have been



*A local fashion show in Greenville, Mississippi, c. 1950; from the H.C. Anderson Collection.*

photographed, cleaned, and stabilized for rehousing by Museum Conservation Institute conservators with CCPF funds; a conservative estimate forecasts an additional 200 artifacts will be processed with the use of these funds. With CCPF support, the collection's 77 linear feet of archival material are now well-documented in over 1,500 entries located in the finding aid for the museum's archives. Among Mae's Hat Shop objects, over 500 items, including hats, costumes, objects, photos, and papers, were processed by May 2011. Artifacts and archives of the H.C. Anderson Collection are scheduled for completion over summer 2011. To date over 3,900 negatives have been processed.

This award has greatly enhanced the stewardship of NMAAHC collections, assisting the new museum in its goal to establish a world-class collection prior to its opening in 2015.

### *National Museum of Natural History: Improving the Physical State of Macroinvertebrate Type Collections*

The National Museum of Natural History Department of Paleobiology received a fiscal year 2010 CCPF award to improve the physical state of fossil type collections. The macroinvertebrate fossil type collections include 52 sub-collections (mostly taxa-based) and 150,000 type specimens. These specimens are stored in more than 300 quarter-unit cabinets, or just over 2,500 drawers.

Major care and conservation issues included assessments of physical damage, chemical damage, and data integrity loss related to inadequate storage. This award has been used to purchase supplies and equipment and to engage eight experienced contractors to rehouse specimens and mitigate specimen damage and data loss. Since October 2010, contractors have rehoused



*Many fossil specimens are too light to stay in place after their drawers are repeatedly opened and closed. In this drawer (left), several specimens are housed within acidic, yellowing paper boxes. Specimens are reorganized (right) so they do not shift in their drawer over time. Specimens that used to be in paper boxes are removed. The box tops are saved in archival sleeves to preserve specimen and handwriting data.*

specimens, conserved labels, organized drawers, and cleaned cases. Work is scheduled to be completed in 2012.

### **Smithsonian American Art Museum: Organizing the Nam June Paik Archive**

In 2009, the Smithsonian American Art Museum acquired the Nam June Paik Archive. It was the “art world equivalent of winning the lottery” according to the *New York Times* when the acquisition was announced. A generous award of \$223,000 from the fiscal year 2010 CCPF allowed the museum to begin organizing the archive contents, conduct condition assessments, and prepare archival rehousing and preliminary documentation for both the paper items and the objects and artworks in the collection. Museum staff and contractors have made great progress addressing these needs, which will bring the collection to a higher standard of care and eventually will facilitate scholarly and public access, as well as support the museum’s exhibitions and publications.

Nam June Paik (1932–2006) was a pivotal figure in the history of modern art. Arguably the most important video artist of all time and certainly among the most influential and prolific, he was a legendary innovator who had a profound impact



on late 20th-century art through his transformation of the medium of video into a contemporary art form. The ideas expressed in his writings and projects have had a deep and lasting influence on how video and new media have transformed a global visual culture into a media culture. The Paik Archive will provide a locus where Paik’s art and ideas are studied and made accessible to a worldwide constituency.

The Paik Archive is a blend of traditional paper holdings (letters, writings, and ephemera) and objects (studio effects, artwork, video and audio recordings, toys, and other raw materials for Paik’s work). The archive is unique, unparalleled in both size and variety. It presents a fascinating and far more comprehensive picture of the artist’s life, work, and creative process than a traditional paper-only archive could convey. Each aspect of the collection gains strength from the other; together they illustrate and represent a pivotal moment of transition between the art and technologies of the past century and the present day.

## AUDIT STATUS

*The Smithsonian's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has conducted a series of audits to determine whether physical security is adequate to safeguard the collections and if inventory controls are in place and working adequately to ensure accountability.*

*At right: the status of OIG audit recommendations as of August 2011.*

AUDIT (ISSUE DATE)	RECOMMENDATIONS		
	ISSUED	CLOSED	OPEN
<b>Collections Stewardship: Inventory Controls and Physical Security Measures</b>			
<b>NMNH (Sept 2006)</b>			
Inventory controls	8	8	--
Physical security	3	3	--
<b>NASM (Mar 2010)</b>			
Inventory controls	5	5	--
Physical security	10	7	3 Target: Dec-2011
<b>NMAH (Feb 2011)</b>			
Inventory controls	11	--	11
Physical security	<i>The physical security-related report has not yet been issued</i>		
<b>Collections Accessioning at NMNH (Nov 2010)</b>			
	13	8	5 Target: Dec-2011

*The National Collections Program will host an Institution-wide event on September 16, 2011, to highlight lessons learned from collections care projects across the Smithsonian, as well as to identify strategies for effective collaboration on future collections care projects. The agenda will showcase projects funded to date, and will feature tips for Collections Care and Preservation Fund awards program applications.*