So You Want A Good Museum

A GUIDE TO THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL MUSEUMS

by CARL E. GUTHE
Research Associate
The American Association of Museums

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FOREWORD

The attitude of the majority of the civic-minded sponsors of small museums, whom we met in a great many cities and towns throughout our country, may be paraphrased in the following words: "This is a small museum with many faults. We can not do all we would like to do because of lack of funds. We know we have much to learn, but we believe that if a start is made support will be secured. We are convinced that the people of this community will welcome the services offered by a good, though presently small, museum."

Today the small community museums, many of which have been organized in the decade following World War II, far outnumber the larger, well-known and economically sound museums. Each is a local expression of a deep-seated, but vague, nation-wide recognition of the educational and cultural opportunities offered by community museums. The museum movement is one of the constructive forces in our changing social structure. Increased leisure and broader recognition of educational resources contribute to its strength.

Mrs. Guthe and I have had the privilege of visiting more than one hundred of these small museums during the past three years. Some are wholly or partially supported by tax funds. Others are maintained by a small group of civic minded citizens. A few are private collections which have been opened to the public. Most of them are history museums; a number are art centers or museums; and a few are either general or natural history museums. We have observed their achievements and their faults. We have discussed with their staffs and their sponsors their hopes, their disappointments and their problems. The great majority of those with whom we have talked is enthusiastically dedicated to the museum ideal of rendering constructive educational and cultural services to the community through the use of the objects in the collections. Usually, the interest in and support of the small local museum by individuals in the community is the result of the stimulation they experienced when visiting larger, well-established museums in the course of their travels.

These individuals are well-intentioned, intelligent citizens who use their common sense and experience in developing their museums. Unfortunately, most of them are not acquainted with the knowledge of museum management which has accrued over several generations and is now generally accepted. As a result, there is a tendency, through the use of trial and error methods, to repeat mistakes and struggle with difficulties which have long since been recognized and corrected in successful museums. In many instances, we were impressed by the nature and variety of the questions which were asked, and by the eagerness with which some

of our recommendations were discussed and accepted. The staffs and sponsors of the majority of the small community museums are hungry for information on how to run their organizations.

This pamphlet has been prepared to satisfy partially that hunger. It is a short presentation of the fundamental elements of good museum management, with clarifying comments for those least familiar with museum work. Categorical statements and generalizations have had to be made with which some experienced museum workers may disagree. A number of useful details and alternatives have been omitted for the sake of brevity. We are convinced that the ingenuity of those responsible for small museums will enable them to invent additional or equivalent procedures, which will meet the individual needs of their respective museums.

This pamphlet seeks to answer most of the questions and correct some of the mistakes we encountered during a three year first hand study of conditions in small museums, following twenty-five years of experience as an administrator in large museums. We extend our thanks to the hundreds of individuals associated with museums scattered through twenty-six states, who helped to make this pamphlet possible by discussing frankly with us their achievements and problems, and to several friends in the museum world for their kindness in reading and commenting upon the manuscript. Acknowledgment is made to Mr. William A. Bostick for typographical design. We greatly appreciate the encouragement and endorsement of our work by our museum colleagues who designated me a Research Associate of the American Association of Museums. We are grateful for the financial aid generously given by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, III, and by Mr. Stephen C. Clark, in the form of grants to the Association in support of the project.

It is hoped that this pamphlet may serve as a guide to the small museums in their efforts to attain their respective interpretations of a true museum—an institution which assembles and preserves, in an orderly manner, collections of objects of natural or cultural origin, in order that they may be used as stimulating agents for broadening the intellectual horizons of visitors, or as source materials by scholars for increasing the knowledge of the world and of men, which is our cultural heritage.

CARL E. GUTHE

March, 1957

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COLLECTIONS

The heart of the museum is its collections. An organization may be an art or history center, a comunity cultural activity, or a children's recreational service, but it can not be a museum without permanent collections, and the manner in which they are cared for and used by the museum, determines its standing among other museums, and its prestige in its community. The organization, the management and the activities of the museum exist solely to insure the continuous adequate care of the materials in the collections and their effective use for cultural and educational purposes. The first obligation of a museum is to recognize and assume the responsibilities inherent in the possession of its collections, which are held in trust for the benefit of the present and future citizens of the community.

Collection Limitations

A small community museum has a unique opportunity possessed by no other museum or organization. By exhibiting materials from the collections it may demonstrate the individuality of the community it serves, in an intimate and authentic manner which can not possibly be achieved by a museum, no matter how large, in another community. This distinctive feature will stimulate the interest of the citizens in the museum and will aid visitors in understanding the community. In order to realize this objective the majority of the materials in the collections must be related directly to the factors which give the community its individuality. If the museum is dedicated to the fine arts, its collections should illustrate the aesthetic interests and accomplishments of the citizens. A history museum's collections should reflect the story of the development and the achievements of the community. In a natural history museum the collections should epitomize the geology and geography, and the natural environment and resources of the region. The first limitation a small museum should place upon its collections is a geographical one.

When there is only one small museum in a community there is a natural tendency to accept all manner of things for the collections, partly because there is no other local organization which will care for them, and partly in the hope they will interest visitors. Yet a small museum is limited in its facilities. A decision must be reached to restrict the museum's collections to one of three general fields; fine arts, history or natural history. Some small museums attempt to cover two fields—history and fine arts, or history and natural history. This is usually a mistake, because available physical facilities and personnel of small museums tend to prevent giving adequate attention to both subjects. If local conditions are such that acceptance of materials in more than one general field can not be avoided, then the secondary collections should be subordinated and isolated from

those which represent the major interest of the museum. The second limitation a small museum should place upon its collections is one of subject matter.

A museum collects objects for only two reasons. First, it is a repository for objects which must be preserved because of their aesthetic, historic or scientific importance. Such objects must be fully documented, that is, their history, in the greatest possible detail, must be on record, otherwise their value for scholars and students is lost. Secondly, the museum is a storehouse for materials which have educational usefulness. These are typical, and often commonplace, objects, again accurately identified and documented, which may be used to demonstrate physical characteristics, associations, principles, or processes. Many items in the collection may belong in both categories. However, the museum will be asked to accept for its collections materials which do not fulfill these requirements. They may be interesting and valuable items which are not typical, nor adequately documented and identified. There is no place in museum collections for materials which can not be used. It is always necessary, but often difficult, to refuse to add to the collections an attractive article which is either irrelevant or useless. The third limitation a small museum should place upon its collections is that of function.

All small museums are naturally interested in increasing the size of their collections. If the three limitations just discussed are not recognized or taken seriously, there are two errors which may be committed, and which will damage the reputation of the museum.

Most human beings are inveterate collectors. Many of us have had the poignant experience of breaking up a home, spending many hours sorting and disposing of the accumulations in the attic—discarded and broken furniture, old clothing, meaningless photographs, scrap books, a partially destroyed insect collection, unlabeled rocks, and annual bundles of Christmas cards. Of course all these things had a meaning once, but now most of them are useless, either because of their physical condition or because of the lack of appropriate records about them. A community museum must not become a community attic, full of discarded junk.

Another error stems from the desire to attract visitors through their interest in strange, unusual or grotesque things—the river pebble shaped like a foot, the model church built of burnt match-sticks, the piece of marble chipped from an ancient Greek temple, the two-headed calf, the ashes from a cigar smoked by Teddy Roosevelt, the tree trunk with a cannon ball embedded in it, the crocheted American flag. None of these are truly typical, documented objects, nor do they have intrinsic aesthetic, historic or scientific value. They belong in amusement arcades or in fair midways, certainly not in museums.

Adequate and useful museum collections can be developed only when definite policies are established and followed, limiting the origins, categories, and functions of the materials in the collections.

There are three other supplementary considerations governing additions to museum collections, on which policies should be formulated. They relate to gifts, loans and purchases.

A gift should constitute a complete transfer of ownership of materials, without restrictions, from the previous owner to the museum. As a matter of principle, the museum cannot afford to limit the usefulness of a gift by agreeing, in advance,

to keep all the items in it together as a unit collection, or to display them at all times, or to associate the name of the donor publicly with the objects every time they are used. It is better to lose an important addition to the collection than it is to mortgage the museum's future in order to avoid offending a potential donor.

Accepting or declining gifts requires tact and diplomacy. A bank president is supposed to have said that a bank loan can be granted in two minutes, but it requires at least half an hour to deny one. So it is with museum gifts. A museum can accept a gift in a very few minutes, but a much longer time should be taken to decline one, explaining why the conditions or the materials of the proffered gift are unacceptable.

Most museums receive offers of long-term or permanent loans of objects. Avoid such entanglements at all costs, regardless of the attractiveness of the bait. It is possible the owner is seeking social prestige by having materials on display in the museum. It is probable the owner wishes to place discarded, but cherished, objects in a safe, but rent free storage warehouse. The owner can make trouble by insisting that the loan be always on display, by criticizing the manner in which it is cared for, or by demanding its return at a most inconvenient moment. If the owner dies before the loan is withdrawn, then the heirs, perhaps years later, without a clear knowledge of the nature of the loan, may even bring legal action against the museum because of differences of opinion concerning the loan or its present location. Decline graciously any proffered long-term loans.

The borrowing of museum objects on a temporary basis is an entirely different matter. When the museum wishes to install a special exhibit for two weeks or a month or two, it may accept, as a temporary loan, an object from a private or corporate owner, to fill a vital spot in the exhibit. However, it is important to return the loan immediately when the exhibit is dismantled, and to secure a written receipt for it.

Small museums, almost without exception, cannot afford to purchase articles for the collections. If, as sometimes happens, an extremely desirable article is for sale, the usual practice is to persuade some friend of the museum to buy it and present it to the collections. It could be pointed out that the sum involved may serve to increase the total permissible deductions for contributions in the donor's federal income tax returns. Occasionally, a small museum may have funds which are earmarked for the purchase of objects for the collections. Then the recommendations of a trustworthy and disinterested appraiser should be secured.

These are the essential limiting factors which need to be considered in assembling museum collections. Definite policies concerning each should be formulated while the collections are still small.

Collection Records

In seeking accurate information it is possible to discover facts in an encyclopedia by interpreting the small black symbols on the printed page. But in a museum accurate information can be secured by seeing and studying objects which are, or illustrate, the facts sought. By the use of its collections a museum is able to render a unique educational service which no other type of institution can perform. The truthfulness and extent of this service depends, of course,

upon the amount of accurate information the museum possesses about the materials in the collections.

When a museum has adopted a collection policy and begun to accumulate objects, the next most important responsibility is to establish a practical system of keeping collection records. While the collections are still small, there are two pitfalls which must be avoided.

In a small museum the individual in charge is likely to be personally interested in each object added to the collections. He tends to postpone the chore of making a written record about it, because he is sure he will remember all the details. But as the collections increase, his memory about certain items may become vague and incomplete, or may be lost entirely. If, for any reason, his association with the collections ceases, his information about them goes with him. It is extremely disheartening to attempt to build an adequate museum around a collection of interesting objects for which there are only fragmentary records.

The other pitfall is the reverse of this situation. When the individual in charge is a meticulous person, he may wish to organize a system of records which should answer every conceivable future question concerning the items in the collections. This could lead to the creation of an extremely complex system, on which a great deal of time must be spent continuously to keep it up to date. Such a program can hurt a museum because, either the elaborate records can not be kept up to date, or the staff is so busy doing the recording there is insufficient time to carry out the other responsibilities of museum work.

The fundamental reason for keeping collection records is deceptively simple. It amounts to this: It must be possible to identify every item in the collections quickly and accurately. That's all. Of course, the more information the museum has about an object, the more complete and accurate the identification will be.

Adequate identification is often considered a relative concept. In most small museums identification records are comparatively brief and couched in general terms. But in the larger museums and in university museums, which employ research scholars, great emphasis is placed upon recording every available scrap of detailed information on the objects in the collections, because of their importance as source materials for research. The absence of some apparently minor detail in the record may cause an item to lose much of its research value. Small museums sometimes receive as a gift or a bequest a collection assembled by a student of some special subject, or acquire a fine or rare specimen. The museum may not realize what it possesses until some visiting scholar recognizes the research value of the material. If the identification data are incomplete the scholar is likely to consider that fact an irreparable calamity caused by carelessness or ignorance.

Therefore it is advisable, even in the smallest and newest museum, to preserve carefully all possible identifying information on all objects received, even when it seems unnecessarily detailed. Every bit of information which can be obtained from a former owner, either in written or verbal form, as well as from other sources, should be recorded. Such detailed data need not be incorporated in the working records, but may be filed in a letter-sized accession folder.

Theoretically, accurate identification of the objects in the collections would be assured if each were accompanied by a manuscript containing its complete record. This is impractical, for it would involve a tremendous amount of paper

work and the use of a variety of techniques to insure that the object and its record never became separated. Museums have solved this problem by making the master record of identification only once, and filing it in an appropriate place. This record has a different key number for each object and all information relating to it. By placing this number permanently upon the object a direct relationship is established between it and the written record. This is the critical element in the entire system. If the number on the object is illegible, misplaced or destroyed it loses its identity and much of its value to the museum.

A small or new museum should adopt a recording system which provides an immediate, brief and permanent means of identification; is easily understood and used; and can be expanded as the collections grow larger. The following statement of procedures has been prepared with the collaboration of Miss Dorothy H. Dudley and Miss Irma Bezold, compilers of the forthcoming book, *Museum Registration Methods,* to be published by the American Association of Museums.

A highly practical and widely accepted registration system uses numbers of two or three units, separated by decimal points. Each of the units has an independent number series. The controlling first unit indicates the year an accession was received and accepted. The last two digits of the year are used (57.). The century digit may be used if it seems advisable to distinguish between 1857, 1957 and 2057 (857., 957., 057.). The second unit is the number assigned to each accession in the order of its receipt during a single calendar year. The third unit records the number of each object in an accession consisting of several objects received at one time from a single source such as an expedition, bequest or gift. Thus, the registration number 57.17.21 refers to the 21st object in the 17th accession received during the calendar year 1957. Units may be added to identify the component parts of a complex object. Let up say 57.17.21 is a teapot. Then 57.17.21.A is the pot itself, and 57.17.21.B is the cover.

There are three basic permanent museum records, all of which use the accession number described above. The first is the accession record, or register, arranged numerically with a new number in regular sequence for each accession whether it consists of one object or several received at one time from a single source. The accession record is kept in a bound or loose-leaf book or in a rod-locked card file or, if necessary, in both; when only one entry is made in a book for an accession consisting of several objects it may be necessary for individual cards recording each object in the group to be made later and filed numerically. Some museums prefer to make all accession records on cards rather than maintain two accession files. An accession consisting of several objects may be recorded on one card just as it would appear in a book and individual cards bearing the accession and serial numbers for each object may then be made after the exact number of objects has been determined and filed behind or in place of the original entry. The accession file, whether on cards or in a book, records the data necessary to identify the objects and summarizes the business transactions by which they were acquired. It should contain at least the following information:

1. *Accession number:* The complete number, consisting of two units when the accession is one object and three units when the accession consists of several objects.

2. *Name:* A brief and accurate description of the object or objects in an accession, preferably accompanied by a small photograph.
3. *Origin:* When and where it was made or found and, if possible and appropriate, by whom it was made and how it was used.
4. *Source:* The name and address of the individual or organization from whom it was obtained, and the manner of its receipt, whether by purchase, or as a bequest, gift or exchange, or through a collecting expedition.
5. *Date of receipt:* The date or dates on which it was received and accepted as an addition to the collections.
6. *Location:* Its location in the museum or, if away on loan, the place and dates of the loan. Its disposition must always be recorded in the accessions file if it has been canceled from the collections.

The second basic record is the catalog, usually containing more information than the accession record. It may be created easily from the accession file. The cards may be duplicated as many times as desired, photographically, mechanically or on the typewriter, with curatorial data added when available. Or new cards may be prepared with additional curatorial information when it is available, abbreviating or omitting the business data which have already been recorded in the accession file. These cards can then be sorted and filed in groups which are most useful to the museum. The catalog is usually kept in rod-locked card trays.

The third basic record is an alphabetical file of cards, each containing the name and address of a single donor, vendor or other source of an accession. On these cards are listed the numbers of the accessions received from that source. Its function in answering inquiries is obvious.

If it seems advisable for a small community museum to accept reluctantly any long-term loans, or to request temporary loans for special exhibits, it is vital that the loan record is kept physically distinct from the collections record. However, the same registration system may be used, provided the loan register is clearly identified by a symbol, such as the letter "L," prefixed to each number.

And finally, it is advisable to supplement the accession file proper with folders, each of which should bear the appropriate accession number, for the larger documents relating to the accession, such as letters, legal papers, obsolete inventories, detailed identification data, and extended notes upon one or more items in the accession.

The physical character of the museum records can facilitate their use. To obtain uniformity and complete information it is helpful to prepare mimeographed, multilithed or printed forms showing the several types of information needed on all the various kinds of museum records. This serves as a reminder to record the essential data, and insures that analogous information will be placed in the same position on each record. The permanent museum records should always be on good paper.

Many small museums which have been resuscitated recently face the difficult problem of deciding what to do with a miscellaneous collection of objects inherited from a previous organization. The laborious task of sorting these collections must be undertaken. The titles to objects which appear to have been received as loans should be cleared with the lender or his heirs. Other objects,

because of irrelevancy, lack of data or poor physical condition, could not possibly serve a useful museum purpose. These must be given away, sold, destroyed or buried, for they should not clutter museum shelves.

The records on most of the materials in such old collections are incomplete. The normal two- or three-unit accession number cannot be used. But another two- or three-unit number may be substituted, in which the first unit indicates, by an arbitrarily chosen letter, the unknown part of the record. The other units give the serial number of the individual object in the several groups of incompletely recorded materials. For example, X.364 would refer to the 364th object in a group of insufficiently documented materials. If, at a future date, complete information on one of these objects is obtained, it may be incorporated in the normal accession file simply by assigning the appropriate two- or three-unit number to it, and changing the records in the files and on the object accordingly.

A closing observation on records is to emphasize the importance of keeping the records up to date. Whenever the physical location of an object is shifted, or whenever an object is withdrawn from the collections, either temporarily or permanently, for any reason—then a clear notation needs to be made in the records. Some museums make such notations in red ink. The obsolete record should, under no circumstances, be withdrawn or destroyed. It continues to be a part of the permanent museum records.

And finally, a few comments on the subject of marking specimens. In all cases, the accession number should be placed in an obvious but inconspicuous spot on the article, to avoid destroying its usefulness as a display piece. Linen tapes or cloth covered tags, on which the number is written in india ink, may be sewn on most textiles, including certain types of baskets. The number may be applied directly to firm surfaced materials (stone, glass, ceramics, wood, bone, metal) with indelible ink or oil paint thinned with quick-drying oil. Chinese vermilion is least likely to blend with the object's color. Porous surfaces may be prepared to receive the number by applying several coats of lacquer, or of a thin solution of cellulose acetate. When the number is dry it should be covered with lacquer or some other transparent substance to insure permanence. Do not use gummed paper labels to mark articles permanently. They dry out, curl up and fall off. Pins will leave rust marks. Adhesive tapes, tags and similar expedients should be used only for very temporary identification. A variety of methods are practiced in marking natural history specimens, depending upon their nature. When marking such collections, it is best to follow the advice of biologists on the faculties of nearby universities or colleges.

The maintenance of collection records is a vitally important part of good museum management, for the services a museum can render its community are directly proportional to the availability, accuracy and quantity of information the museum possesses about its collections. A small young museum which fails to adopt at the start an adequate system of keeping collection records has done itself a great disservice. A later reorganization of unsatisfactory records requires a tremendous amount of otherwise unnecessary identification and transcription, and may result in the loss of information and materials.

Museum collections are assembled in order that the objects in them may be used. Their usefulness depends in large measure upon the physical disposition made of them and the care which they receive. In many small museums it is assumed that all of the materials in the collections must be exhibited. This mistaken notion usually results in crowded and unattractive displays, and constitutes a wasteful use of floor space. Exhibit rooms are analogous to the reference rooms of a library. Generally speaking, most of the materials in the collections should be housed in a compact and orderly fashion in filing rooms, analogous to library stacks, which are not open to the general public. A good rule of thumb is to assign as much floor space to these rooms as is used for exhibits.

The efficient use of wall and floor space will greatly relieve congestion. The judicious arrangement of simply constructed tiers of shelves and drawers, built by a local carpenter, will multiply the floor space many times. They can provide filing room for a tremendous number of objects.

After accession numbers have been assigned recently received materials, the objects should be cleaned with caution, being careful not to destroy any surface condition which is a part of the material; repaired if necessary, to insure preservation; and, in the case of materials subject to insect attack, thoroughly fumigated. Then, after the registration number has been placed permanently upon them, they are ready for filing. Similar materials are usually filed together, regardless of their registration numbers, to facilitate their use. This physical grouping is equivalent to, and should agree with, the major and minor categories adopted in a museum catalog, if a catalog is part of the museum records.

Unexhibited collections stored in large wooden boxes and sealed cartons are practically inaccessible and correspondingly useless. All collection materials should be easily available. But most of them need to be protected, individually or in groups, to keep them safe and clean. Every drawer or container should have the registration numbers of its contents clearly visible, so that articles may be located rapidly. Fragile articles should be braced or cushioned in their containers to prevent accidental breakage. Small objects may be placed in paper, cloth or plastic bags, or in small boxes or vials, to keep them together. Textiles, skins and natural history objects, subject to destruction by insects, must be kept in reasonably air-tight cases, and fumigated at regular intervals. Very large articles, such as furniture, may be covered by sheets of muslin or plastic.

Custom-built containers of various sizes are convenient, efficient, and neat in appearance. Most small museums cannot afford such luxury. Instead they use suit and shirt boxes, shoe boxes and large and small cartons, gathered at regular intervals from the stores of local merchants, who would otherwise discard them.

A large number of methods and recipes for the care and preservation of museum articles have been developed by museum workers through the years. It would require many pages to list these. However, there are a few admonitions which may aid those just entering upon museum work. The most important of these is: Never guess or experiment in caring for a valuable article. If there is doubt as to what should be done to clean or preserve it, write to a well-established museum for advice.

Oil paintings are complex and irreplaceable objects. They should be cleaned only by a trained expert restorer, preferably recommended by a large art museum. The service is expensive, but is worth it. Do *not* attempt to clean oil paintings unless properly trained in the techniques.

Documents of all kinds—personal letters, deeds, commissions, newspapers—should be filed flat and unfolded. The paper tends to discolor and crack along the folds. They should be kept away from light in folders or covers. Original documents should not be put on display, for daylight will fade them. Use photostats instead.

Wire clothes hangers are a great temptation in museums. Unfortunately, they tend to rust. If they must be used, wrap them firmly with cloth or plastic, to prevent rust stains. Some museums file large textiles, including clothing, flat and folded, using crumpled tissue paper between the layers to prevent creasing at the folds.

The use of commercial transparent cellophane tape is an inviting means for making repairs. It tends to shrink and dry out in a few weeks. It discolors paper badly, and destroys the surface it adheres to when it is removed. Its use in museum work should be scrupulously avoided. Librarians, in mending papers, use a special almost transparent adhesive tape.

Constant protection is an important element in collection care. Periodic inspections should be made of filing units and exhibits, looking for dust, deterioration and other hazards. Articles may often be saved if corrective measures are taken in time. Another form of protection is to insure the collections against loss by fire, theft or accident, while in the museum and while in transit to or from the museum. Policies and premiums differ according to the materials insured, their physical location, and the type of the protection normally accorded them. Insurance arrangements must be worked out to fit the needs and conditions of the individual museums. It is highly desirable that small community museums insure their collections.

It seems to be a human failing to allow recent accessions to accumulate before they are completely registered, or before they are permanently filed. It is a time-consuming chore, but a never-ending and important museum responsibility to give proper care to the collections. A needed article in temporary "storage" awaiting processing, will be dirty, disheveled and possibly injured. Time, which is especially important at that moment, will be required to put it into shape for use. In the care of collections, the most important adage to keep in mind is: "A stitch in time saves nine."

ORGANIZATION

Collections alone do not constitute a museum. It is an institution which cares for and uses collections of natural or cultural objects for the benefit of the public. It must have legal status. It must be able to enter into contracts, hold title to its collections, its equipment and its real property, and collect and disburse funds. Directly or indirectly, a museum must be chartered or incorporated according to the laws of its state. By the nature of its work and its objectives it is a non-profit, educational organization.

Organizational Pattern

Many small public museums are not independent corporations. They achieve legal status by virtue of their association with a larger parent corporate body. A museum may be a unit of the city, county, state or federal government. It may be a part of a city or county school system, a high school, a library, a college or a university. It may be one of several activities conducted by an incorporated society, institute or academy. It may be an educational agency maintained by an industrial concern, a philanthropic foundation or research corporation. Such museums are usually controlled by the governing body of the parent organization, or by a committee, commission or council appointed by that body.

A museum may, however, be an independent corporation. In that case its corporate name is usually the name of the museum, alone or followed by the word "Association." In those instances where the museum is the sole activity of an historical or scientific society, or an art institute or association, the corporate name may be that of the parent organization. An independent museum has its own articles of incorporation, constitution and bylaws, and Board of Trustees. It is usually a non-profit educational membership corporation.

Not infrequently a museum is controlled by two corporations, a situation which sounds much worse than it is in practice. This usually occurs when the museum is a part of a governmental unit, or closely associated with a large educational institution. Then, the second group is a private membership corporation, usually called a "Museum Association." The responsibilities for the policies governing the museum are divided between the two corporations. In a number of instances, this type of dual control seems to be the most effective organizational pattern.

These many forms of control which exist among small museums are a demonstration of the fact that they must be so organized as to fit into existing administrative patterns and thereby become an integral part of the community mechanism.

The fundamental elements of the system of dual control may be of interest to newly formed small museums. The principles are the same, whether the parent

organization be a city government, a county government or an educational institution. The museum, let us say, occupies a city-owned building, located in a city park. The city council (or commission), recognizing the cultural value of the museum as a public agency, agrees to keep it open for the benefit of the public. The city appropriates funds to meet the museum payroll, cover the cost of utilities, and insure that the buildings and grounds are properly operated and maintained in good repair. The city museum commission, frequently composed of five or seven prominent citizens appointed by the mayor or city council, is responsible for the effective, legal and ethical use of the city funds and services assigned to the museum.

On the other hand, the Museum Association, the private corporation created to work with and for the museum, may own the collections, and be responsible for the policies governing the maintenance and increase of the collections, the performance of museum activities and services, and for the expenses incurred in carrying out these policies.

Minor adjustments in the pattern may be made to fit individual situations, for example, when the city owns part of the collections, or the Association owns the building.

Every museum should have a charter or articles of incorporation and a constitution and bylaws, prepared with legal advice. In some instances, the latter two are combined into a single statement. These documents conform to the usual pattern. There are only four sections which relate specifically to museums. These are: The purpose of the organization; the obligations of the governing board; the responsibilities of the standing committees of that governing board; and the duties and privileges of the administrative officer of the museum and his staff.

Whenever possible a museum should acquire the status of a "tax-exempt educational institution," which carries with it certain privileges and exemptions. The Federal Internal Revenue Service has established definite procedures which must be completed before it will officially designate a non-profit educational organization as a "tax-exempt educational institution." The local office of the Service should be consulted for advice and instructions.

The Governing Board

The governing board of a museum should be called a "Board of Trustees." (Unfortunately in some instances the governing board has the ambiguous and confusing title "Board of Directors.") This body assumes the grave obligation of guiding the destinies of the museum, which it holds in trust for the present and future citizens of the community. An individual in accepting membership on the Board agrees, by implication, to use his best judgment, derived from his knowledge and experience, as a Trustee for his constituents, in participating in the Board's deliberations. Membership on the Board of Trustees should never be a sinecure or a social honor.

Boards of Trustees vary in size, usually from as few as nine to as many as twenty-four members. There are larger Boards, but these tend to be unwieldly, and to include a number of inactive members. The term of office most frequently is three years, staggered, so that one-third of the Board is retired each year. Mem-

bers may or may not be eligible to succeed themselves. They may be elected or appointed by the parent organization, or elected by the membership of the corporation. The Board may be composed of representatives of a number of cooperating agencies, each of which annually elects its quota of membership on the Board. Or it may be self-perpetuating, that is, the Board members themselves elect each year the successors to those whose terms have expired. This last procedure is essentially undemocratic and may result in extreme conservative control by a firmly entrenched minority.

It is customary for the officers of the Board to be elected by the Board membership each year for terms of one year. Some organizations have a Chairman of the Board, in addition to a President; a practice likely to create jurisdictional complications. Most museum Boards have an Executive Committee, with power to act for the Board between formal meetings, consisting of the officers and from one to three members appointed by the presiding officer. The number of meetings a year is, of course, determined by the Board itself. The Executive Committee may meet once every month or every three months. The full Board always holds an annual meeting. In some museums the full Board meets twice a year, or even quarterly.

The composition of the Board of Trustees should represent as many community interests as possible. Bankers, lawyers and members of the press are obvious assets. Prominent merchants, professional people, civic and social leaders, business executives, industrialists, labor representatives, patrons of the arts and sciences—all of these are useful as members of the Board, provided they are really interested in the museum. Each board member represents some distinctive group of citizens, and serves as the museum spokesman within that group. He brings to the board his own special talents and knowledge and, indirectly, those of his associates. Museum boards may designate the Mayor, the President of the Board of County Commissioners, and the Superintendent of Schools as ex-officio members.

In some communities it seems advisable to secure the active support of a larger number of leading citizens without imposing upon them the responsibilities assumed by the Board of Trustees. This is done by creating an "Advisory Board," or "Museum Council," consisting of former Board members, social and civic leaders, patrons of the arts and sciences, and noteworthy contributors to the museum. Such an organization may have many members, who are encouraged to identify themselves with the museum and its activities, and to anticipate being called upon for special services. This is an important organizational mechanism for strengthening community interest in the museum.

The two functions of a Board of Trustees are vitally important to the welfare of the museum. The first is an economic one. The Board, as a trust body, must establish a financial program which will insure the receipt of sufficient funds, annually, to support the work of the museum, and must authorize and support the museum's annual budget. The second function is a legislative one. The Board must formulate a code of policies for the management of the museum in accordance with the public trust imposed upon it. The actual daily administration of the museum is carried out by the salaried executive officer, who, as agent of the Board, performs his duties in accordance with the policies and within the budget limitations established by the Board.

By the very nature of the organization, the members of the Board of Trustees can devote only a small portion of their time and energy to the interests of the museum. Each is primarily concerned with his own vocation or avocation. It is his obligation to attend meetings of the Board. (Sometimes an unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings is considered equivalent to resignation from the Board.) He is expected to assist in making wise and practical decisions in determining the policies which guide the destinies of the museum. There his responsibility as a Board member ends. The Board is not an administrative body. Its members lack the knowledge, the interests and the time to administer the affairs of the institution. The Board is expected to invite the executive officer of the museum to present problems of policy and make recommendations, which should be discussed from all points of view before a decision is reached.

In some museums the Board of Trustees has established a group of standing committees dealing with special categories of policy, such as finance and budget, membership, accessions, exhibitions, activities, and similar groupings at the discretion of the Board. The function of each committee is to become better informed than can the Board as a whole, upon the operation of the Board's policies in the category assigned to it. As an agent of the Board, its powers are limited to those vested in the Board itself. Each must render periodic reports to the Board as a whole. These committees serve in an advisory capacity to the executive officer, and have no administrative authority. A disagreement between the committee and the executive officer on the methods used becomes, automatically, a problem of policy, and must be referred to the Board, either by the committee or by the executive officer, for a decision.

The Staff

Public recognition of the museum as a cultural and educational community agency is derived from the day-to-day activities of the institution. These, in turn, reflect the abilities of the salaried executive officer who devotes full time to the affairs of the museum. Occasionally, in small museums, this position carries the title "Curator," for the primary responsibility is, of course, the care and use of the collections. However, in most large or small museums the title is "Director," in recognition of the variety of duties which must be performed in the best interests of the museum as a community agency.

The Director is the personification of the museum. The uninformed majority of those who visit a museum will judge it by the exhibits and by the demonstrated ability and personality of the person on duty at the museum. A museum director should have the same standing in a small community as the head of the local library, the principal of a public school, and the administrative officers of similar cultural and educational community agencies.

The understandable desire on the part of the governing board of a small and newly organized museum to open it at all costs, as soon as possible, can bear bitter fruit. When a part-time caretaker or receptionist, without administrative authority, is the only person on duty when the "museum" is open to the public, the organization will gain the reputation of being an impractical expression of the hobby interests of a small group of individuals. Once such a reputation is

prevalent, it is hard to overcome. It is better to store the collections until the museum can be established upon a dignified and business-like basis, than it is to open a museum prematurely.

The selection of a museum director is a difficult task. He (or she) should be familiar with the methods and objectives of museum work. He should be dedicated to museum ideals with an almost missionary zeal. He should like people and feel at ease with individuals in all walks of life, especially children. He must run the museum on a business-like basis, and be able to explain its functions intelligibly to business leaders and professional men. He needs to have self-confidence, patience and ingenuity. It is a great asset if he is familiar with the community. The museum's governing board should choose as director an individual in whose competence and judgment it can have confidence. A small leaflet, "Code of Ethics for Museum Workers," issued by the American Association of Museums, contains the following sentences: "While on the one hand the trustees should trust to the judgment of the director and give sympathetic consideration to his recommendations, the director must so act as to inspire the confidence of his trustees. . . . A director should be loyal to the trustees and the trustees loyal to the director. When this condition cannot exist it is time relations were severed."

The Director is a salaried employee of the Board of Trustees, charged with the administration of the affairs of the museum, in accordance with the policies and within the budget limitations established by the Board. According to the "Code of Ethics for Museum Workers:" "A museum director is responsible to his trustees for the treasures within the museum, the character of the service it renders, and the expenditures of the funds it receives. He should, therefore, expect and the trustees should grant a wide range of freedom in carrying on the work of the museum. He, in return, should make a strict accounting to the trustees at frequent intervals of the condition and activities of the museum, should make no large expenditure of funds without their approval, and should obtain their sanction to all change in policy. He should neither expect nor ask an action from his trustees until he is sure that they thoroughly understand the matter which they are asked to consider, and if the action is contrary to his wishes, he should patiently wait until conditions have changed before presenting the matter again." Furthermore, since it is the Director who must work daily with his staff, he should have the privilege of choosing, employing and dismissing staff members, reporting his actions or recommendations to the Board of Trustees for approval and as a matter of record.

There are no schools which give adequate training for directorships of small community museums. In order to secure a director with museum training and experience, it is usually necessary to entice a subordinate staff member away from another, larger museum. The alternative may be to find a director within the community. In a number of small museums unfortunate choices have been made, because sentimental and personal considerations have been allowed to outweigh the necessary qualifications of a museum director. There may be in the community a college graduate, possibly a teacher trained in history, art or natural science, who possesses the needed personality traits. This individual, blessed with the missionary zeal which is the earmark of all good museum directors, can, under

the guidance of the Board of Trustees, learn through experience. The first step in this learning process should be a trip of at least three months' duration, with expenses paid by the museum, to visit and study methods and conditions in as many other museums as possible.

Some small, or newly organized community museums start with one, two or three full-time staff members. When there is only one staff member, it must obviously be the director, who does the janitorial work, the correspondence and filing, the installation of exhibits, the handling of the collections, the guiding of visitors, the writing of publicity, and the making of speeches at schools, service clubs, women's study groups and church suppers. When there are two staff positions, the second is the janitor, or "maintenance man," a title used in recognition of the variety of his duties. In some museums janitorial services are furnished by the city, or another parent organization, as part of the maintenance of the building and grounds. In this situation the second position may be that of an assistant to the director. It can properly carry the title "Staff Assistant," indicating that duties consist of performing all manner of assignments given by the Director. The use of the high-sounding title "Assistant Director," is inadvisable, for it implies a complexity and quantity of administrative duties which simply do not exist in a small museum.

In museums with three staff members, the third position may be a staff assistant, a second staff assistant or a secretary, depending upon whether janitorial services are furnished the museum by an outside agency. The term "secretary" is used for an assistant to the director, whose principal duties involve paper work and the keeping of records, subject always to interruption to carry out some special assignment. The nature of the duties and the degree of initiative and judgment required in this position make it comparable to that of a private secretary in the local business community.

When the museum is able to employ more than three staff members, the titles and the duties assigned to the additional positions should be determined by the director, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the needs of the museum.

Some small museums employ a full-time director and a number of part-time assistants as maintenance and office help, possibly because of the great variety of museum tasks, no one of which requires the full-time services of an individual. A part-time employee divides his loyalty between his museum assignments and his other activities. He usually works on a restricted time schedule, and fails to develop a sustained interest or responsibility in his work. He requires considerable supervision by the director, including an explanation of why and how to finish a task begun by another part-time employee. As a rule, the employment of part-time assistants is an inefficient use of payroll funds. A possible exception to this rule is the fortunate museum which is able to give part-time employment to college students who consider their museum work a part of their training. Usually it is far better to use restricted payroll funds to employ a few full-time staff members, each with a variety of duties, than it is to dissipate these funds among a larger number of part-time assistants.

One way of augmenting the work done by the museum staff is to use volunteers, who may be recruited from the local chapters of the Junior League and

the AAUW, from civic groups, hobby clubs and even high school students. However, volunteer services should not be accepted casually. Volunteers must be taught that the privilege of working in a museum carries with it responsibilities, including a respect for the materials and equipment used. Services should be accepted only on the basis of not less than a full half-day tour of duty. Each volunteer may report for a half day's work once or twice a month, depending upon personal wishes and upon the number of volunteers. For best results, the director should become acquainted with the abilities and interests of the volunteers, and assign duties accordingly. In those museums in which volunteers are used most successfully, the volunteers are organized into a club or museum auxiliary, with officers and committees in charge of various classes of museum services. Through this organization the volunteers do their own policing, work out schedules with the director, and furnish substitutes when the volunteer on regular assignment can not report for duty. The variety of services volunteers may perform is limited only by the imaginative leadership of the director and the abilities of the individual volunteers. In some instances a remarkably high group morale, and a well deserved social prestige has been achieved by museum volunteer organizations.

A director who is respected in the community, who has the confidence of an interested and active Board of Trustees, who commands the loyalty of his staff, no matter how small, and enjoys the enthusiastic assistance offered by an organized group of volunteers, will most assuredly develop his museum into a recognized cultural and educational community agency.

ADMINISTRATION

The administration of a museum is like that of any organization. The processes used in the daily conduct of the museum's activities are determined by the abilities and personalities of the director and his staff; the relative importance of the immediate tasks to be done; the character of the ephemeral difficulties encountered; and the nature and variety of the transient demands made upon the museum and its staff. These differ in each museum, and change from day to day. The important thing is to get the job done as efficiently and effectively as possible, using patience, tact and common sense in dealing with each situation as it arises. One thing is certain—museum administration is never a routine activity.

There are, however, three general considerations which affect administrative work in all museums: The nature of the physical plant; the financial income; and the annual budget.

Physical Plant

An important and practical problem in establishing a small community museum is to secure adequate space in which to house it. Rarely does a small museum rent quarters, or carry a mortgage on property it has purchased. A city or county government, a library, or a college may offer the museum the use of vacant rooms. A publicly owned land mark, often with historical associations, or an obsolete and vacant school building may be leased to the museum for a nominal sum. Or, a civic minded individual or group may give or bequeath to the museum corporation or to the city government, a large residence with the stipulation that it must be used as a museum. A small, newly organized museum seldom has a choice in selecting its first home. It must use the facilities it can get, while the Board of Trustees dreams of the time when it will be possible to construct a new and adequate museum building.

In considering the feasibility of using any kind of space offered a museum, a few important factors need to be studied. The accessibility of the quarters for adult and youthful visitors should be examined in terms of traffic patterns and bus routes. The extent of the security afforded the collections against fire and theft should be investigated. Reasonably fireproof quarters are an important consideration. Finally, the costs of repairs and alterations of the premises to make them suitable for museum occupancy should be estimated, and funds to cover them secured. Whenever possible, the donor of the property should be persuaded to make the necessary repairs and changes without cost to the museum.

Alterations of the potential quarters should meet the museum's needs. A portion of the floor space, easily accessible to visitors, must be used for exhibits. Since even in a small museum it is usually impossible to place all the materials in the collections on display, a part of the floor space should be reserved for the

compact and orderly filing of those portions of the collections not on exhibit. There should also be an office with space for the director's desk and the museum records. A work room is needed in which essential museum activities may be performed beyond the gaze of the public. It is well to plan for some space in which group meetings may be held, with the aid of folding chairs, either in a separate room or in an exhibit hall with a substantial area of unused floor space. A rule of thumb is the formula 40-40-20, 40% of the floor space for exhibits, 40% for the collection filing rooms, and 20% for offices and workrooms.

When the museum is offered rooms in the City Hall, the County Court House or the Public Library, it may reasonably be assumed that they are the least attractive ones in the building. Frequently they are in the basement. Paint and wall board or plywood can create a transformation. Temporary partitions will add extra rooms; false walls will hide rough, unsightly basement walls; fluorescent lights will make the rooms attractive. If a maze of pipes and conduits are hung just below the ceiling, paint the ceiling, the pipes and the conduits all black, and hang the light fixtures just below the black area. Then these unsightly but necessary structural features will disappear. The smaller the amount of available floor space, the greater the care which must be taken in planning its efficient use. The advantage in using such quarters is that the cost of maintaining and operating the physical plant and the utilities is borne by others.

When a museum is offered a publicly owned historic building or a vacant school, it is probably in disrepair. An architect and a contractor should be asked to make a careful appraisal of what needs to be done to make the structure safe and suitable for a museum. Then a definite understanding must be reached as to how this capital expenditure will be met. The annual cost of maintenance and subsequent repairs and replacements, after the building is put in condition, must be investigated. If this is a museum responsibility, it is important to determine whether the annual income of the museum can afford such an expense. The growth of the museum may be seriously hampered by assuming responsibility for the maintenance of a large and expensive physical plant. Finally, another group of capital expenditures must be met before the museum can be put into operation. Additional electric outlets may need to be installed; new lighting fixtures may have to be purchased and hung; exhibit cases may need to be secured, refinished or constructed; and equipment may need to be obtained for the workshops and laboratories. The extent of such capital costs can be small or large depending upon the immediate needs of the museum and the amount of the available funds.

When a museum is given the opportunity to occupy a residence, either as its own property or as city property designated for museum use, the problems just discussed must be considered with relation to this property. If the museum's Board of Trustees is given the opportunity to discuss the matter in advance with a donor offering the property either as a gift or as a bequest, every effort should be made to obtain with the gift an endowment fund, the income from which will cover the annual cost of maintenance and operation of the buildings and grounds. It is worth investigating the situation with regard to unpaid property taxes, and, if such exist, how that matter will be adjusted. It is possible that the gift is being made to relieve the donor of a heavy tax burden. However, a museum, as a non-profit, educational corporation, is tax exempt.

These are some of the problems which a museum faces in negotiating for a home, even when no rental fees or purchase price are involved. The details of the agreements are highly individual in nature, and must be worked out in accordance with the specific situation.

The Board of Trustees of a small museum quite naturally considers facilities of this kind as temporary quarters, to be accepted with appreciation, until a permanent and adequate museum building can be constructed. No two such buildings are alike, because each is the expression of the individuality of the museum it houses, and the judgment of the Board of Trustees. However, some general statements can be made. There is a trend at present toward highly functional, simple one-story buildings, with flexible exhibit facilities. Because of the specialized and complex physical requirements of a functional museum building, it is vitally important that the director, or the future director, if the museum is not yet functioning, work closely with the architect and contractor in the planning and construction of the building. Museums, in the very nature of things, increase in size. Provision should be made, in planning a museum building, for its possible future expansion.

Exhibit cases, a capital investment, are a type of equipment closely related to the physical plant. Objects which cannot be injured and cannot be moved, either because of their size and weight or because they are securely anchored, need not be displayed under glass. But small and fragile objects must be protected by glass fronted cases. Those manufactured commercially are expensive and usually completely beyond the means of small museums. It is common practice to watch for and secure, either as gifts or at small cost, discarded show cases from local stores or unused exhibit equipment from larger museums. These will be heavy, obsolete pieces of furniture of several sizes, patterns and types of finish. The resulting unsightly situation may be corrected with little effort. Several coats of paint can establish color uniformity. The more clumsy, old fashioned units may be partially dismounted if necessary and either covered with panels to give them a modern uniform appearance, or installed with false wall fronts of plywood or masonite as recessed exhibit cases. Ingenuity, coupled with a knowledge of the museum's needs, can work wonders in transforming equipment discarded by others into effective museum furniture.

One final word about the physical plant and its equipment, which exists solely for the protection and the use of the materials in the museum collections. The museum is responsible for literally thousands of objects, including tools, supplies and records. If they are misplaced, they are likely to be lost for a long time. There must be a place in the museum for every object, and the staff must be trained to return each object to its permanent place when finished with its use. Many strangers go through the exhibit halls. The property of the museum must be reasonably and unobtrusively guarded. Doors to rooms which are not occupied should be kept locked. Exhibit cases also should be locked, and inspected at regular intervals to insure proper protection for the materials on display.

Sources of Income

A museum must have a dependable annual financial income sufficient to meet the expenses of running the organization. Since it does not sell a tangible com-

modity, it must depend upon the good will of those it serves. This good will is expressed financially according to an individual's understanding and appreciation of the museum's objectives and services. Many different methods are used in persuading potential contributors to assist the museum. All of them are not equally applicable to every museum. The Board of Trustees and the Director of a small museum must choose and adapt those methods which seem most practical in terms of the interests and attitudes in their own community.

The potential sources of museum income may be grouped under the following categories:

1. Proceeds from endowment funds
2. Membership fees
3. Appropriations from tax funds
4. Organization grants
5. Fund raising activities
6. Private gifts
7. Admissions, sales and rentals.

1. Fortunate indeed is the small museum which has received substantial sums as gifts or bequests from one or more private sources, which enables it to establish an endowment fund, the proceeds of which will yield an appreciable operating annual income. Even if the endowment fund is small in the beginning, a policy of grateful acceptance of additions to it is good business. Dividends derived from the sound investment of endowment funds are stable sources of income.

2. Most museums offer individuals the opportunity to become members of the museum. This practice of encouraging the people of the community to identify themselves with the museum and its work serves as a secondary source of financial income. In order that each member may contribute according to his ability and interest, it is customary to establish a graduated scale of memberships, with a title and fee for each class.

The Federal Internal Revenue Service permits the deduction, in income tax returns, of gifts to educational, non-profit organizations, within legal limits. However, deductions may not be made for dues, in return for which personal benefits are received. Therefore it is advisable in preparing a table of membership classes to state that contributions are tax exempt and to distinguish clearly between dues and contributions, as shown below.

Student member	$ 1.00 (annual)
Active member	5.00 (annual)
Family membership	10.00 (annual)
Contributing member	25.00 (annual)
	($5.00 active plus $20.00 contribution)
Sustaining member	50.00 (annual)
	($10.00 family plus $40.00 contribution)
Commercial member	100.00 (annual)
Life member	200.00 (one payment)
Patron	500.00 (one payment)
	($200.00 life plus $300.00 contribution)
Benefactor	1,000.00 and over (one payment)
	($200.00 life plus $800.00 or more contribution)

The amounts shown in the table are illustrative only. In some communities a $5.00 fee for active membership may seem high; in others, low. Members tend to respect the privileges they receive according to the fee they pay. Do not sell the museum short. Compare the cost and benefits of a year's membership with those of one formal party, or of a month's supply of cigarettes. All pupils in the school system and students in nearby colleges and universities should be eligible for student membership. The family membership includes the husband, the wife and the children in one family. The commercial membership offers commercial firms and industrial plants the opportunity to give tangible support, as organizations, to the purposes of the museum. Some museums use a graduated scale for commercial memberships, according to the number of employees in the organization, starting with a minimum of $100.00 annually. Such commercial memberships may be charged off to "public relations" or "promotion" for tax purposes. The last three membership classes, requiring only a single payment, may be earmarked for the endowment fund, with the express statement that such contributions will not be used for operating expenses. In some instances, an individual may be designated a Patron or Benefactor, upon giving to the collections materials which have a value approximately equivalent to the contributions listed for that class of membership.

As a rule, the broader the base of support the more stable the economic status. It is more desirable to have 100 members at $5.00 a year, than one Patron who has contributed $500.00.

At least one small museum has adopted a variant of the annual membership fee, apparently for psychological reasons. It asks for pledges of monthly contributions. Certainly the average individual will find it much easier to part with fifty cents, $1.00 or $5.00 a month, than to write a check once a year for $6.00, $12.00 or $60.00. However, the collection procedures are likely to be a burden.

3. Most small community museums receive financial support from their city or county governments, or from both. A museum which is either entirely, or almost entirely, supported by tax funds, is usually a unit of the city or county government, either as an independent department, or subsidiary to the city library, the park commission, or the school system. Some city and county governments assist a museum by rendering essential services, such as the maintenance of the buildings and grounds, and the furnishing of utilities. Sometimes, either in addition to or in place of these services, the government makes an annual appropriation to the museum, designating that the allotted funds must be used for the payment of salaries and wages, the costs of maintaining the buildings and grounds, and the utility charges. In other instances the city or county government appropriates annually an unrestricted sum to the museum, which is added to the general operating fund to be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

A museum must maneuver for, and strongly defend, its annual request for tax fund support. The only reason for such an appropriation is that the museum renders cultural and educational services to the citizens of the community. The size of the appropriation granted by the city or county officials, who are hard-headed business men and politicians, will be determined by their own evaluation of the services rendered the community by the museum. The returns on such an investment can not be measured in economic gains, or in terms of miles of city

pavement, police protection or park recreational facilities. The dividends of an investment in a museum can only be measured in terms of guidance and stimulation received by the voters who visit the museum, and the instruction the children of voters receive there in connection with their schooling. The need for continued financial support of this guidance, stimulation and instruction must be demonstrated to the City Fathers in budgetary and statistical terms. The amount of municipal or county support a museum receives depends upon those services it renders which can be documented as having a distinct and worthwhile impact upon the cultural and educational interests of the citizens of the community.

When the community museum is not an integral part of the school system, it is sometimes difficult to secure financial support from the schools, depending largely upon school laws. One solution is to arrange for a charge against the school budget for instructional services rendered in connection with the curriculum, measured by the number of classes or the number of different school groups or the number of pupils visiting the museum on officially approved assignments. Another means of cooperation is to persuade the school superintendent that a sufficient number of school classes visit the museum to justify the assignment of a teacher in the school system to full-time duty at the museum to work with these children. This teacher, while in effect an additional staff member of the museum, receives salary from and is subject to regulations of the school system.

4. In most communities there are a number of organizations interested in civic improvements, which make it a practice to assist through financial grants or services in the development of some specific phase of the cultural life of the community. If a community museum is able to convince such an organization that it is an institution contributing to the growth of the particular project in which the organization is interested, the museum may gain its substantial support.

There is no universal pattern to follow in attempting to interest these organizations. In each instance the negotiations must be conducted with patience, tact and diplomacy, and with due consideration for the conditions within the community, the special interests of the organization which is being approached, and the personalities of the individuals with whom conversations are held.

It has been demonstrated repeatedly that the local chapters of the Junior League of America and the American Association of University Women are interested in aiding the community museum. This is also true, to a much lesser extent, of Parent Teacher Associations, Junior Chambers of Commerce, and certain service clubs. Small philanthropic foundations, established to promote cultural and educational activities within a single community or a restricted region, may be approached for help. The college or university located in the community may be willing to contribute funds or services to the museum on the basis of its value to the student body.

The continued support of such organizations depends upon the strength of the bond which can be established between the objectives and interests of each organization and the policies and activities of the museum.

5. Some museums conduct their own annual fund raising campaigns, either as an undisguised drive to raise funds, or as an annual membership drive, usually held in the fall. Entertainments of various kinds may be used to secure funds—an annual costume ball, subscription dinners with a well-known after dinner speaker,

fashion shows, card parties, rummage sales, and similar events. These may be organized and sponsored by cooperating organizations or committees of museum members or the volunteer organization. It is well to anticipate that each of these will clear only a few hundred dollars at the most, but several in the course of one year may add a substantial sum to the museum's income.

6. All museums, except possibly some of those whose entire income is derived from tax funds, receive financial gifts from time to time. A substantial sum may be an unexpected windfall, but all contributions, no matter how small, deserve a note of acknowledgment. Some may result from the frank admission that money is needed to meet a budget deficit. Many are given without restrictions as to use. But often the "angel," as the donor is called in museum circles, makes a contribution to cover the expenses incurred in some single activity or service in which he is especially interested. Newly organized or re-organized museums have been known to receive a pledge from an angel to pay the salary of a Director for a limited number of years, to insure the employment of a competent administrative officer. Contributions from private sources may cover the expenses of conducting Saturday morning children's classes, the cost of renting temporary exhibits, or the charges involved in profitable staff travel.

Frequently gifts from private sources are used for capital improvements. An angel may underwrite the cost of a new exhibit, a planetarium, an adding machine, or a slide projector. If the specific needs of a museum are publicized, angels are more likely to materialize. Some museums make lists of needed equipment, ranging from reference books in the library, office equipment, and technical instruments to power tools for the shop and elaborate specialized exhibits, with the estimated price of each. Half facetiously, the contributors may be dubbed "Cherub," "Angel," or "Arch-Angel," according to the cost of the article underwritten.

It is unwise to place too much dependence upon gifts from private sources. Each is a single contribution and carries with it no assurance that it will be repeated another year. On the other hand, if an angel acquires the habit of making a substantial annual contribution to the operating costs of the museum, he may, especially if he is a member of the Board of Trustees, come to consider the museum his special hobby or charity, and seek to control its policies and activities. Such an unfortunate development must, of course, be avoided.

7. Some income may be received by a museum in the course of its normal daily operations. Rentals are a source of income. If a hobby club holds regular meetings in museum rooms and is assigned private space in which to keep its materials and records, the museum may charge a nominal rental fee for the use of these facilities. Similarly, when a lecture room is made available in the evenings to various civic and study groups for meetings or special programs, a rental fee may be charged to cover janitor and guard service and the use of the utilities. In some art museums, art objects are rented to museum members for nominal monthly or semiannual fees, which are later deducted from the price, if the objects are purchased.

Some museums maintain a sales desk near the entrance to the museum, where materials relating to the museum interests may be purchased. They include picture postcards, pamphlets or books descriptive of the museum and its collec-

tions, children's books dealing with museum objects, replicas of specimens, and museum materials of educational value. It is generally agreed that trinkets and curios such as appeal to tourists should not be handled by museum sales desks. The gross income of such a service, especially if it handles articles retailing at less than $1.00 each, may be several hundred dollars a year.

Admission fees provide an income for some small museums. There are those which claim they could not operate without them. The advisability of charging a fee, however small, to visit a museum raises a difficult, and, according to some, an ethical problem. Perhaps strangers, particularly out-of-town visitors, should pay for the privilege of seeing exhibits which have been constructed and are maintained through the efforts of a relatively small group of museum sponsors. It is said visitors appreciate more fully that which they have paid a small fee to see, than they do exhibits which they may examine "for free." Certainly an admission fee keeps out the casual visitor who uses the museum halls as a convenience and a place to meet friends, and the bands of small children who use museum halls habitually as a playground.

On the other hand, a small museum should be an educational agency, dedicated to creating an atmosphere of contemplation in its exhibit halls, where the visitor may gain intellectual stimulation while enjoying the exhibits. It should not be mistaken for nor compete with commercial tourist attractions. It should not discriminate against those who can not or do not wish to pay an admission fee. As a public agency, it should welcome all visitors. When a museum receives a part or all of its support from city or county appropriations and services, some citizens will resent paying an admission fee to an agency which they help support through the payment of taxes.

Occasionally, museums straddle the issue by displaying prominently a receptacle for voluntary contributions, with some success.

The Board of Trustees of a small community museum should consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of charging admission and its effect upon the standing of the museum in the community.

Operating Budget

A museum's worth is expressed in terms of its capital assets and its operating income. Capital assets include investments of endowment funds, real property, the permanent collections and all furnishings and equipment, as well as instruments and tools. Movable exhibit cases, banks of permanently installed exhibit facilities, and tiers of shelves and storage cabinets in the library and the collection filing rooms are all capital assets. Capital expenditures cover the non-recurring costs of improvement, repair, replacement of and additions to these assets. In some museums the total cost of construction and installation of long-term complex exhibits, such as natural history habitat groups, may be charged to capital expenditures.

An operating budget is an estimating device used to determine as accurately as possible the amount of the anticipated operating income for the coming fiscal year, and the approximate portions of it which should be allocated to each of several categories of expenses. The latitude allowed the director in transferring funds from one to another of these categories, and the number of times the oper-

ating budget should be adjusted during the fiscal year, are determined by the Board of Trustees.

If it is found that the minimum operating costs of a small museum are likely to be greater than the anticipated income, the Board of Trustees should develop, in advance, ways and means of increasing the income to equal the costs.

The largest single category in a small museum's operating budget is, normally, the payroll. This covers salaries of full-time staff members, wages of part-time workers and occasional labor, and the museum's portion of the social security taxes. It also includes the cost of staff benefits which may be authorized by the Board of Trustees, such as the payment in whole or in part, of premiums on Blue Cross, Blue Shield, insurance and annuity contracts, and any contributions made to a pension plan.

The salaries of museum personnel are a vital consideration in the development of a small museum. Inadequate salaries will not attract nor hold competent staff members. There are no generally accepted standards for museum salaries, because of the variation in economic conditions between communities, and in the size and quality of small museums. A fairly practical rule of thumb is: The director's salary should be equivalent to that of the city librarian, the principal of a public school, or the administrative head of a similar community service agency; the minimum salary for a staff assistant should be comparable to that of a teacher in the public schools; the salaries of office and maintenance personnel should approximate those paid equivalent positions by business firms of the community.

There are two considerations which determine the salary of a museum director. His income should be such that he can reasonably meet the economic and social obligations of his standing in the community as the administrative head of a public service agency. He also is entitled to a fair compensation for the use of his academic, technical and personal qualifications as the administrator of the museum and its spokesman in the life of the community. However, it is unfortunate if there is too great a discrepancy between the salary of the director, created in order to attract a desirable candidate, and the salaries of the remainder of the museum personnel. It tends to cause unrest among the staff members, and to establish a barrier on economic grounds between them and the director.

The range of the directors' annual salaries in small museums (1954-1956) were found to be so great (from $3,000 to $10,000) that it has no value as a guide in this matter. However, the records of twenty-six small museums, each of which employs from two to four staff members, show the mean annual director's salary to be $6,000. That is, thirteen directors receive $6,000 or more, and the other thirteen $6,000 or less. In seven of these museums the directors receive $6,000.

In preparing a budget it is important to know approximately what proportion of the operating costs should be assigned to the payroll. In the twenty-six museums just mentioned, the mean proportion assigned to payroll is between 60 and 61 percent. That is, thirteen museums use 61% or more of the operating funds for payroll, and the other thirteen use 60% or less for the payroll. A survey of about one hundred large and small museums (1954-1956) shows that the majority devote between 60% and 70%, approximately two-thirds, of their operating income to the payroll.

It is now possible to estimate the probable operating costs of a very small museum. If the director, as the only full-time staff member, receives a salary of $6,000, the annual operating budget should be $10,000, in order that the museum may have a reasonable life expectancy. If the assured income is less than $10,000, the staff is likely to be less competent, the management unsatisfactory, and the available funds inadequate to meet the expenses of normal operation. A realistic appraisal of economic factors forces the conclusion that it is better to store the collections and delay opening the museum, until the annual income of the organization is large enough to cover adequately the minimal expenses of operation.

If the annual operating income is in excess of $10,000, then the sum allocated to the payroll should be increased proportionately and the staff enlarged. An income of $12,000 calls for a payroll of approximately $8,000. When the annual operating incomes reach $15,000 or $18,000, the sums assigned to the payrolls should be in the neighborhood of $10,000 and $12,000 respectively.

The remaining one-third of the operating income is usually assigned to all other categories of operating costs, in a budget authorized by the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendations of the Director. Suggested budget categories in a small museum include: Administrative expense (office supplies, telephone and telegraph charges, postage, travel, and membership costs); building, grounds and equipment maintenance (insurance, supplies, repairs); collection care (insurance and supplies); exhibits (construction supplies, and insurance, rental fees and transportation charges on borrowed exhibitions); activities (lectures, movies, concerts, social events, membership programs, catering costs); and finally a financial cushion (miscellaneous, contingency, or undistributed).

A small community museum operated under a practical budget, based upon a realistic estimate of annual income, satisfies the economic standards of the members of its Board of Trustees, wins the respect of the citizens of the community, and restricts its services and activities to those which can be performed adequately within the limits of its facilities.

ACTIVITIES

The accumulation, recording, preservation and care of museum collections; the creation of a formal, business-like organization; and the development of sound practices in the administration of the physical and financial facilities of that organization, are all essential to the establishment of a unique institution, the community museum. Its purpose is to contribute, through the use of objects, to the cultural and intellectual life of the community. The success of this undertaking is measured by the community's reaction to what the museum does.

The proper maintenance of the collections is a museum activity taken for granted by the community. Research work upon the collections is an esoteric museum activity only vaguely understood by the community. It cannot be conducted in the majority of small community museums because of lack of time and qualified personnel. The interpretation of the materials in the collections is *the* museum activity by which the value of the museum to the community is judged.

A museum's program of interpretation should be an organized one. It should be limited to the cultural and intellectual interests which are related to or derived from the broad field of knowledge represented by the materials in the collections. It should be a dignified reflection of the policies of the Board of Trustees, the interests of the director and the staff, and the desires of the citizens of the community. An overly eager effort to involve the museum in all manner of community projects, in order to demonstrate that it is a community service organization, will lead to dissipation of the energy of the staff, inadequate museum participation in any one project, and confusion on the part of the community regarding the museum's objectives.

The variety of possible interpretive activities seems almost limitless in scope and character. No one museum could or should attempt to perform all of them. The essential characteristics of a number of widespread museum activities are discussed here, as suggestions which may stimulate those in charge of a small museum to adapt some of them and invent others as practical and popular services appropriate to its individual situation.

Exhibits

The most universal museum activity is the installation and maintenance of public exhibits. They are the show windows of the museum. The visiting public will judge it by their condition and arrangement. Three types of exhibit policies, used either singly or in combination, are found in small community museums.

The first of these is associated with the practice of displaying all of the materials in the collections. The exhibit rooms contain too many cases, each of which is overcrowded with a neglected, poorly labeled miscellany of objects. The visitor is expected to use his own initiative in discovering the materials in which

he is interested, and then supply his own interpretation of their significance. Most museum visitors lack the necessary initiative, and soon lose interest.

The second exhibit policy calls for the systematic arrangement of groups of essentially similar objects, often neatly and attractively displayed. The assumption is that the visitor is most interested in the individual historic associations or the intrinsic aesthetic or scientific value of the objects themeslves. Admiration for the physical attributes of the several objects may be aroused, but the visitor must supply his own interpretation of their social, scientific or artistic significance. Exhibits in a number of successful community museums follow this policy.

The third, and more rare exhibit policy is that in which objects are subordinated to a theme which is carried through one or more exhibit cases. The theory is they have more meaning if they are used to illustrate principles of association or change or growth in art, history or science. An effort is made to interpret the objects in relation to subjects in which the visitor is or may become interested. This policy approximates the current concept of good exhibit techniques.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the philosophy which motivates exhibit policies in the larger museums is that of creating a hospitable, relaxing environment, in which the visitor is encouraged to identify himself with the exhibits, either by recalling some past personal experience, or by associating what is seen with some current activity or interest. An atmosphere of enjoyment and curiosity is created, which stimulates the visitor to seek further information on the subjects illustrated by the exhibits. Attractively arranged objects, accompanied by brief, accurate and factual labels, and supplemented by charts, drawings and photographs, contribute to creating the desired mood on the part of the visitor. Exhibits should not be illustrated textbooks, but rather the settings for a stirring experience, an exciting adventure.

An exhibit program is never static. It should always be studied for possible improvement. Even a semi-permanent exhibit is subject to change. Any suggestion which may enhance an exhibit is worth trying. Install the exhibit, live with it, watch visitor reaction, and then change it, drastically or slightly, as experience seems to indicate. This takes time and effort, but it is worthwhile, for the exhibit epitomizes the quality of the museum and its objectives.

Most of those who visit museum exhibit halls do so during their leisure time. Possible exceptions are scholars, students and school classes. A museum is a potentially strong social instrument for encouraging the purposeful use of leisure. It can have a constructive influence upon adult and juvenile delinquency and upon the social adjustments of the aged. In attempting to serve these larger social purposes a museum is in competition with other leisure time attractions, such as media of mass communication (movies, radio and television), spectator sports and recreational activities. The exhibit halls of a museum should be as inviting and attractive as possible.

There are myriads of details which must be considered in planning and installing a museum exhibit. There is no simple set of rules which may be followed. The details are dealt with according to the size and shape of the exhibit space, the size and nature of the materials displayed, and the discernment, good taste and sensitivity of those responsible for the exhibit. In addition to attractive ma-

terials, appropriate secondary explanatory "art," and simple short labels, other factors which contribute to a good exhibit include a knowledge of balance and composition in the creation of a three dimensional "picture," the judicious use of one or more colors for their tonal qualities, and careful experimentation with lighting effects. When designing exhibits it may be possible to enlist the aid of window display specialists in local stores on a voluntary or part-time basis.

An exhibit hazard encountered in some small community museums is the staff's lack of technical knowledge required for the identification or placement of an article, or the preparation of a label. Inaccurate exhibits offering misinformation are inexcusable. Expert advice and assistance can usually be had for the asking. A surprising wealth of specialized information may be found even in a small town. The city librarian may aid by recommending specialized reference books. Teachers in the public schools and professors in the local college or university will gladly furnish technical information upon their special interests. Professional men, collectors, and hobbyists may possess the information sought.

It is good psychological practice to change some exhibits in the museum with reasonable regularity. This is an indication of museum activity and encourages return visits. Some museums set aside a small case for the display of a single object, under the caption "Treasure of the Week," or "Treasure of the Month." Some art museums place great dependence upon regional and national traveling exhibitions. Reservations need to be made in advance, and there are usually rental fees and transportation charges on such exhibitions, but their use greatly simplifies the problem of scheduling changing exhibits, and serves as excellent supplementary material to a relatively small permanent collection.

This very brief discussion of the essential elements of exhibit policies and procedures may, because of the complex subject, seem discouraging to the very small museum struggling with a minimum of facilities and a small staff. The intention is to encourage small museums to experiment with exhibits in an effort to approximate the policies discussed. Attractive exhibits have been built with almost no expense and relatively little effort. As is true of many museum activities, success depends upon ingenuity and perseverance.

Activities for Children

Among the most rewarding museum activities are those designed for children. The eagerness with which they use the many opportunities the museum offers more than compensates for the time and energy the staff devotes to these activities. The benefits the children receive from their museum experiences are recognized and appreciated by the parents, parent teacher associations, school authorities and child welfare organizations. An organized program of children's activities is one of the best ways of winning community support.

Some community museums concentrate their attention upon rendering services for children. Some may be general museums, in that their collections contain materials in art, history and science. Others are nature museums, capitalizing on the children's normal interest in natural history and natural resources. These museums need not be but often are called "Children's Museums," or "Youth Museums." This designation is unfortunate, for they can and do render worthwhile services to adults. Their name causes teen-agers to think of museum ac-

tivities as "kid stuff." Adult visitors tend to feel they are intruding and possibly hampering the smooth progress of the museum's work.

The integration of museum services with school instruction is widely practiced. It is predicated upon the recognition that the pupils will take a greater interest in their studies if they are given an opportunity to see and handle, if possible, materials in the museum collections. Arrangements and schedules for class visits to the exhibits should be made with the principals and supervisors of the public and private schools of the area. Museum visits are school assignments, not sightseeing excursions. If pupils are briefed in advance concerning what they will see and why, they will be more tractable and observant during the visit. Follow-up discussions and assignments in the class room will increase the instructional value of the visits.

Unfortunately, many teachers are not aware of the valuable instructional aids which may be found in museums. The class tour may be directed by a museum staff member familiar with the class needs and its background in the subject discussed. It is often more satisfactory if the teacher acts as guide, for she is able to relate the materials seen more intimately with the classroom instruction which should precede and follow the visit. Notices should be sent the schools encouraging teachers to make reservations for class visits, and to visit the museum personally in advance, as a preparation for the visit of her pupils. Some museums have adopted the custom of holding an open house or an after-school tea for teachers, or even offering brief training sessions for them at the beginning of each school semester.

A fairly complete record should be kept of museums visits by school classes, either on a 5 x 8 inch record form, or in a notebook. The information should include the date, name of the school, the class grade, the number of pupils, the name of the teacher, and the subject studied. Such information, compiled statistically for each school year is useful when requesting financial support for the museum from school authorities or government officials.

Other museum activities for children are those which are conducted outside of school hours. They include classes in painting, modeling, ceramics, various crafts and nature study, held on Saturday mornings or during after-school hours once or twice a week. Care must be taken to avoid allowing the late afternoon classes to deteriorate into a form of "baby-sitting." Sometimes a small tuition fee is charged for these leisure time children's activities to cover the cost of supplies and the employment of a teacher. Museum games, based on mimeographed questionnaires or guides may be developed. Another method of encouraging children to participate in museum activities is to organize groups of volunteer junior guides and junior curators, titles granted after they have completed certain training requirements.

Other Activities

Those small museums which are organized as membership corporations should offer certain membership services. The most important of these is the preparation and distribution once a month or quarterly of a bulletin or newsletter, to remind the recipients regularly that they are members and keep them informed on what is transpiring at the museum. This need not be an elaborate publication. Some

small museums issue a mimeographed newsletter on a single sheet. The contents of each issue may vary according to the time of year or the importance of the news items. During the course of one year the bulletin or newsletter may contain a calendar of museum activities, a list of special events for the members, notices of new accessions to the collections, news of important visitors or unusual episodes in the museum, and lists of the names of the officers of the corporation, the members of standing committees, and new members. These are only suggestions. The success of a newsletter depends upon its individuality and the accurate reporting of interesting activities within the museum.

Membership services should also embrace a series of special events to which only members are invited. Often these are evening programs, held once a month or occasionally once a week, which may be the showing of documentary films, illustrated lectures, demonstrations of arts and crafts, or just entertainments or receptions, commemorating anniversaries or festivals, such as founders' day and Christmas. Other membership events could be annual dinners, garden parties, week-end excursions to points of special interest, picnics, and nature walks.

Membership privileges may include the use of the museum library, the purchase at reduced rates of publications and tickets to public events for which admission is charged, and the rental of objects in the museum collections. In some museums enrollment in Saturday morning children's classes is restricted to children of members, or to those sponsored by members.

Special events open to the public may be organized and sponsored by a small museum. Among these are commemorative and seasonal exhibits outlining the history of well-known buildings, organizations or industries; celebrating anniversaries of significant events or traditional customs; honoring the achievements of artists, scholars and community leaders; or dramatizing the seasonal changes in nature. Other special events could be public evening programs, organized and scheduled months in advance, similar to the membership programs, including documentary films, lectures, concerts and demonstrations. These special events are usually considered community services offered to the public without charge.

Some community museums sponsor hobby clubs interested in subjects related to the museum's work, and encourage these clubs to use its facilities. The lecture hall or study room may be made available on an organized schedule to regular meetings of the astronomy club, the stamp club, the numismatic society, the natural history society, the print club, the art league, the craft guild, and similar organizations. This hospitality is a cultural service to the community. If the subject studied by a hobby club is closely related to the materials in the collections, the members can be given special privileges of access to them, a courtesy which may result in gifts of worthwhile accessions from that group. By sponsoring hobby groups the museum is brought into contact with amateur and professional experts in many fields, whose interest in and identification with the museum and its work may be expressed in the form of advice and technical services freely given.

A final and important museum activity is the issuance of publicity in a manner commensurate with the policies of the organization and in keeping with its dignity as a service agency. Mailing lists containing the names of museums in other communities should be compiled, to which copies of the newsletter prepared for the museum membership are sent. In return the museum will receive their

bulletins or newsletters, thereby establishing inter-museum relations. Brief news items should be sent to the American Association of Museums and the regional museums conference to which the museum belongs. Directional signs should be erected on the access roads and on the street corners in the city, to guide the out-of-town visitor to the museum. Make sure that these are placed so that a stranger in the city can follow them easily. In some communities, the chambers of commerce or leading banks and merchants print small folders extolling the virtues of the city or of the sponsoring agency. It may be possible to secure a reference in such folders to the museum as a community service organization. These suggestions will bring to mind other and similar media through which the general public may be reminded of the existence and achievements of the museum.

The most frequent way in which any institution seeks to secure public attention is by using the columns of the local newspaper. This publicity medium can be used most effectively by securing the personal interest and the advice of an editor or a reporter on the local paper. Feature articles which are more descriptive than newsworthy are usually arranged for in advance with a staff member of the paper. News articles should be brief and written according to the newspaper code. The subjects of news items may be featured individuals at special events, important visitors to the museum, newly elected officers, changes in the museum staff, important accessions, the opening of new exhibits, the inauguration of a new project, and unusual episodes at the museum. Pertinent photographs are a great aid in securing the acceptance of a news item by the newspaper. Asking a reporter and a press photographer to witness a newsworthy event at the museum is the most satisfactory means of securing newspaper coverage.

The variety of the possible interpretive activities of a museum seems almost endless in scope and character. The exhibit program, activities for children, membership services, special events, sponsorship of hobby groups, and publicity work constitute the major groups of these. Some will be adopted and others omitted in each community, according to the policies of the Board of Trustees, the abilities and interests of the Director and his staff, and the attitudes of the citizens. Variants of the several activities should be worked out, and new ones developed as the opportunity arises and the need becomes apparent. An important guiding principle in conducting a program of interpretation is to study the interests, desires and needs of the citizens of the community in relation to the subject dealt with in the museum. Then determine, as wisely as possible, the services it should render in order to win their approval of its efforts and their support of its objectives. The closer the integration of the museum's activities with the life of the community, the more indispensable its services become.

EPILOGUE

Every small museum hopes to become a respected and popular institution, recognized as one of the important agencies devoted to furthering the cultural and educational interests of its community. It has the unique opportunity of presenting through the use of its collections an intimate and authentic survey of the origins, growth and extent of the environmental and cultural factors which characterize the individuality of its community. To approximate these goals a number of differing obligations and procedures must be welded together into one active and effective organization.

The one indispensable asset of a museum is its collections, just as books and documents form the core of a library. The reputation of a museum depends upon the judgment used in assembling the materials in the collections, the care devoted to the preservation and filing of the objects, and the attention given to the records associated with each item. Adequate management of its collections is the primary obligation the museum has assumed.

Small community museums cannot afford to employ scholars, as do larger museums, to study the materials in the collections, and thereby increase man's knowledge concerning them. However, they can keep detailed and accurate records of all objects in the collections, creating a storehouse of authentic source materials, which may be consulted by students within the community and by scholars from other institutions. The maintenance of this research facility is another of the major obligations the museum has assumed.

A visit to a museum should be an exciting adventure, whether the visitor be an inquisitive youngster, an adolescent searching for guidance to his personal future, a local citizen hoping to find something of interest, or a tourist looking for a new experience. Every purposeful visitor to a museum is in search of something. The responsibility of satisfying this quest is a third major obligation the museum has assumed.

In order to fulfill this obligation the museum should construct exhibits which will put visitors into the proper mood to gain the greatest benefit from that which they see. The exhibits should be sufficiently attractive to bring pleasure to the observers. The objects on display should be arranged to tell a story in terms of either time or space. Restraint should be practiced in the number of articles used and the information presented, in order to minimize museum fatigue. The more completely the organized exhibit can be keyed into the personal knowledge and experience of visitors, the more effective it will be. Every statement made in the exhibits should be factual, accurate, and authoritative. All elements which might be interpreted as propaganda or advertising should be scrupulously avoided. The construction of such exhibits requires long hours of planning, careful attention to details, and expert handling of all constituent elements.

A visit to a museum exhibit hall should be a rewarding experience. Visitors should have a sense of temporary release from the pressures and distractions of daily life. They should have the opportunity to observe and study the physical evidences of the world in which they live and of the achievements of their fellow men. They should be permitted to draw their own conclusions, uninfluenced by the thoughts of those who have written books and articles about these materials. Visitors will then be stimulated to become better acquainted with subjects which appeal to them, and thereby broaden their intellectual interests.

A museum which attains such visitor reaction to its exhibits has fulfilled one of its major obligations to society. However, its task is not yet done. It must furnish those it has stimulated with opportunities to pursue their new interests. This is the fourth major obligation a museum has assumed.

The facilities for continued study which museums may offer take many forms. They include lecture series, motion picture programs, leisure time classes for adults and children, study groups, hobby clubs, workshops in a variety of arts and crafts, and individual advisory services. These activities, which are secondary to the maintenance of collections and exhibits, should be carefully coordinated with the museum's objectives, effectively organized and realistically conducted.

It seems very clear that a museum should be capable of performing many different tasks in order to fulfill its four major obligations. It should be, directly or indirectly, a chartered or incorporated legal entity. It should be governed by a Board of Trustees, composed of interested and influential citizens. This governing board should formulate the policies under which the work of the museum is done and be responsible for the economic stability of the institution. The museum should have a full-time staff, the members of which are capable of carrying out the mandates of the Board within the limits of the physical and financial facilities available to them. Administrative procedures should be established for the effective discharge of the duties associated with the adequate care and use of the collections, the construction and maintenance of the exhibits, and the performance of services. In short, a small museum should be run on a business-like basis, as is any other successful community service organization.

This pamphlet has sought to present in brief form the essential and fundamental elements of good museum management, in the hope that it may aid the small museum in advancing toward the goal which it seeks—to become one of the respected and popular educational and cultural agencies in its community.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

These are a few standard reference books on museums. They may be consulted in the larger museums, and are available in most libraries, either directly or through the inter-library loan service. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are out of print.

Adam, T. R. — The Civic Value of Museums. American Association for Adult Education. New York City, 1937

Adam, T. R. — The Museum and Popular Culture. American Association for Adult Education. New York City, 1939

Burns, Ned J. — *Field Manual for Museums. U. S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D. C., 1940

Coleman, Laurence V. — *Manual for Small Museums. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York City, 1927

Coleman, Laurence V. — *The Museum in America (3 volumes). American Association of Museums. Washington, D. C. 1939

Coleman, Laurence V. — Museum Buildings. American Association of Museums. Washington, D. C., 1950

Dudley, Dorothy H., Irma Bezold, and others — Museum Registration Methods. American Association of Museums. Washington, D. C., 1957

Moore, Eleanor M. — Youth in Museums. University of Pennsylvania Press. Philadelphia, 1941

Parker, Arthur C. — A Manual for History Museums. Columbia University Press. New York City, 1935

Powel, Lydia — The Art Museum Comes to the School. Harper & Brothers. New York City, 1944

Ramsey, Grace F. — Educational Work in Museums of the United States. H. W. Wilson Company. New York City, 1938

Russell, Charles — Museums and Our Children. Central Book Company. New York City, 1956.

Stowell, Alice M. — The Living Museum. Vantage Press. New York City, 1956.

MUSEUM ASSOCIATIONS

The American Association of Museums. Founded in 1906, the Association seeks to promote the museum movement in the United States. A national convention is held each year in May or June. From its headquarters at the Smithsonian Institution it issues *The Museum News,* a fortnightly newspaper, containing high-spot news of museums, personal items, and notes on publications. Individual members pay annual dues of $5. Institution members pay annual dues from $15 to $100. A museum may join at $15, but after the first year it is asked to adopt the regular scale calling for $1 to be paid for each $1,000 of the museum's operating budget, between the limits named. Director: Mr. Laurence Vail Coleman, American Association of Museums, Smithsonian Institution Building, Washington 25, D. C.

There are six regional museums conferences, affiliated with the American Association of Museums, which hold annual conventions each fall, within their respective areas. The officers listed are for the year 1956-1957.

New England Conference. Secretary: Mrs. Louise L. Watkins, Director, George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum, Springfield, Massachusetts.

Northeast Museums Conference. Secretary-Treasurer: Prof. Walter K. Long, Director, Cayuga Museum of History and Art, Auburn, New York.

Midwest Museums Conference. Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Orvetta Robinson, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois. This Conference issues the *Midwest Museums Quarterly,* containing news and articles on museum practices related to a single theme for each issue. Membership dues, including a subscription to the Quarterly, are $2.00 a year.

Southeastern Museums Conference. Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. Joye E. Jordan, Museum Administrator, Hall of History, State Education Building, Raleigh, North Carolina. This Conference issues a mimeographed *Southeastern Museum Notes,* several times a year.

Mountain-Plains Museums Conference. Secretary: Mr. William C. Hassler, Director, Fort Worth Children's Museum, 1501 Montgomery Street, Fort Worth 7, Texas. This Conference has adopted the monthly Newsletter of the Clearing House for Western Museums as its journal.

Western Museums Conference. Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Frieda Kay Fall, Registrar, Los Angeles County Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles 7, California. This Conference has adopted the monthly Newsletter of the Clearing House for Western Museums as its journal.

There are two museum periodicals, both mimeographed, which are not issued directly by a regional museum conference.

Clearing House for Western Museums. This group issues a monthly *Newsletter,* containing articles on museum work, personal and institutional news items, and a bibliography of recent publications of interest to the western area. Annual subscription: For institutions, $5.00; for individuals, $2.00. Address: Dr. Stephan F. Borhegyi, Director, Stovall Museum of Science and History, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

The Museologist. This journal, issued to a nation-wide mailing list four times a year, is sponsored by the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences. It contains articles, letters and book reviews of interest to museum workers. Subscription rate is $2.00 a year. Editor: Mr. W. Stephen Thomas, Director, Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, 657 East Avenue, Rochester 7, New York.