

## Exhibitions and Updates

### A Timely Story: *On Time*

*On Time* opened in fall 1999 to tell the story of how and why clocks and watches have become so significant in American life. Its five engaging historical sections—Marking Time, Mechanizing Time, Synchronizing Time, Saving Time, and Expanding Time—chronicle the ways in which people have measured, used, and thought about time over three centuries. A concluding section asks visitors to pause and consider what other kinds of time besides clock time they experience everyday.

Landmark objects, such as the unique 18th-century four-sided Ellicott Clock, represent each section. Interactive stations provide “virtual showcases,” and activity carts enable visitors to participate in time-related projects. The exhibition’s sponsor, Timex Corporation, lent the watches for a changing exhibit case, which currently spotlights “Inventing the Mickey Mouse Watch.”

### The Star-Spangled Banner Conservation Continues

**The Star-Spangled Banner Preservation Project** is made possible by major support from Polo Ralph Lauren, with additional generous support provided by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the United States Congress, and The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The Museum also extends its special thanks to former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and the White House Millennium Council, and to Save America’s Treasures at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, for their leadership.

After close examination and documentation of the Star-Spangled Banner, the conservation staff spent most of 1999 removing the 1.7 million stitches that had attached it to the 1914 linen lining. After adding a temporary support layer, the flag was turned over to remove the remaining stitching and detach the linen. Next, a detailed

examination and evaluation of the newly revealed side of the flag will be followed by research and decisions regarding cleaning. Various materials will also be considered for possible support of the fragile Star-Spangled Banner.

The Museum continues to engage the public in this significant work. Members of the project team lecture on the subject and lead twice-weekly tours of the Star-Spangled Banner conservation exhibition. A public relations campaign in conjunction with the conservation lab and exhibition won the Silver Anvil Award of Excellence from the Public Relations Society of America.

The Web site ([americanhistory.si.edu/ssb](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ssb)) for the project, launched in November 1999, features innovative design, interactives for people of all ages, and updates on the preservation effort. This site has been recognized by an American Association of Museums award in 2000 and commendations from *Communication Arts*, [www.4kids.org](http://www.4kids.org), and [www.surfingthenetwithkids.com](http://www.surfingthenetwithkids.com).

On July 4th, 2000, *The Today Show* and *Good Morning America* interviewed Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence Small and Chief Conservator Suzanne Thomassen-Krauss for national broadcast. Concurrently, Museum historian Lonn Taylor published *The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag that Inspired the National Anthem*. The book documents the flag’s history as it relates to our National Anthem, the Armistead family, the Smithsonian, and the American public.

Now in the planning stages, a permanent exhibition called **For Which It Stands** will reveal the role of the American flag in daily life throughout our nation’s history. The team is currently collecting stories, objects, and photos that represent a diverse cross-section of the country. A new Web site, catalog, and Hands On History Room activity are also in development.



The Ellicott Clock, an American-made tall case clock built in 1769. It plays one of 24 musical selections on the hour, and the orrery side shows the phases of the sun, moon, and planets.



### ***Piano 300 Plays On***

The Museum began the year-long ***Piano 300: Celebrating Three Centuries of People and Pianos*** in grand style. Billy Joel, Dave Brubeck, and Jerry Lee Lewis were on hand at the exhibition's opening to receive the James Smithson Bicentennial Medal. They later taped "Piano Grand! A Smithsonian Celebration," co-produced by Smithsonian Productions and Maryland Public Television, which aired nationwide on PBS. A PBS documentary based on the exhibition is in development.

Drawing from Museum collections, ***Piano 300*** traces the instrument from its origins in Italy to its American incarnations and its modern-day manufacture in Asia. It features 25 keyboards, including a Florentine piano made in 1722 by the inventor Bartolomeo Cristofori; an 1854 Erard grand piano presented to Prince Albert by Queen Victoria; the 1893 concert grand created for Paderewski's American tours by Steinway & Sons; Irving Berlin's customized transposing upright piano; and Liberace's rhinestone-encrusted Baldwin grand. Manuscripts and first editions by masters from Mozart to Gershwin, lent by the Library of Congress, are also on display.

Special ***Piano 300*** events have included: performance tours led by professional pianists and Museum staff; concerts at NMAH and the Quad; affiliated concerts and activities at the Kennedy Center and the Freer Gallery; and gallery talks. On view at the Smithsonian International Gallery through June 3, 2001, ***Piano 300*** has been setting attendance records. It was made possible by NAMM–International Music Products Association with additional donor support.

### ***Opening Doors on The Disability Rights Movement***

Since July 2000, a groundbreaking exhibition has been changing the way Museum visitors view the subject of disabilities. ***The Disability Rights Movement***, located next to the Greensboro lunch counter on the Museum's second floor, examines the civil rights struggle faced by people with disabilities. Handmade keys exemplify the desire of individuals to escape the confinement and loss of control in a mental health institution, while t-shirts, buttons, and news headlines advocate equality and autonomy for people with disabilities.

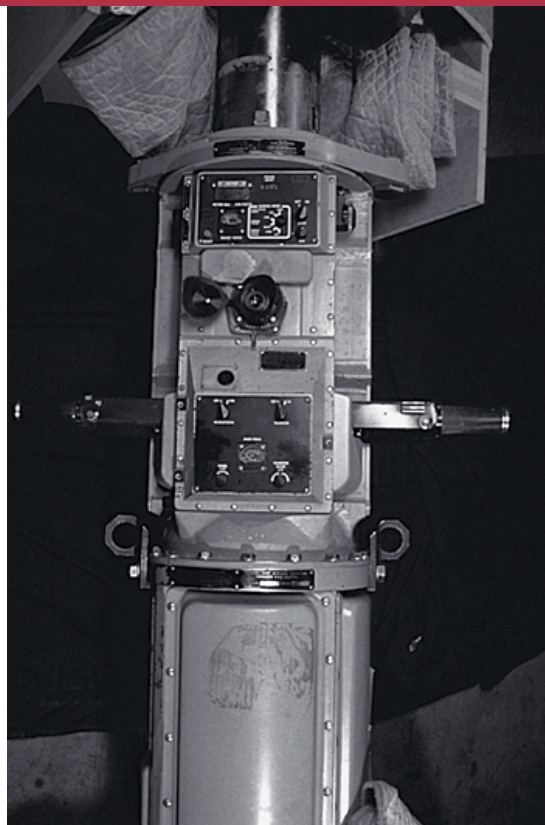
Prototype kiosks, designed and donated by NCR and isSound Corporations, make the exhibition's components accessible. Visitors can listen to information, study the enlarged print and images, hear audio descriptions of objects, or read captions. The Web site supports the content

Visitors at the Star-Spangled Banner Conservation Laboratory

"World's Fair" grand piano, Steinway & Sons, 1939



Periscope from the attack center of the USS *Trepang* (SSN-674)



and accessibility of the exhibition kiosk while brochures incorporate inclusive graphic features like large print and Braille. As exhibition curator Katherine Ott explains, “To universally design for a wide range of people opens up the Museum for all our visitors.”

### ***Fast Attacks & Boomers: Submarines in the Cold War***

Opening in April 2000 to coincide with the centennial of the United States Navy’s submarine force, this comprehensive exhibition tells the story of American submarines from 1945 to 1991. The exhibition explains the role of subs in the cold war, explores the life and work of sailors on board, and touches upon the lives of submariners’ families.

The exhibition features material declassified by the Navy for the Smithsonian and reveals aspects of submarines never before seen by the public. The exhibition

starts by explaining the cold war context of the nuclear submarine with a photographic timeline and a video narrated by Walter Cronkite that introduces the cold war years. Video dramatizations demonstrate some of the missions of the U.S. submarine force during the cold war, such as firing a missile, tracking enemy submarines, and observing missile launches. Using equipment from decommissioned submarines, the exhibition lets visitors see a sub’s attack center, nuclear power room, and crew dining and bunking areas. An interactive kiosk helps visitors learn about underwater acoustics. The NMAH Web site ([americanhistory.si.edu/subs](http://americanhistory.si.edu/subs)) features a virtual version of the exhibition.

The exhibition was made possible through generous support from the National Commemorative Committee for the Submarine Centennial and its corporate members, the assistance of the United States Navy, and other donors.

### ***Re-Visiting History Within These Walls***

Final work is being done on *Within These Walls . . .*, an exhibition featuring a mid-18th-century house from Ipswich, Massachusetts, and stories from the lives of many of its inhabitants. Through the history of the house and five of the many families who lived there, the exhibition explores some of the important ways that the daily lives of ordinary people have been part of the great changes and events of American history. This year, historians and specialists

have uncovered additional information about the house’s architecture, wood frame, and paint. With the exhibition design complete, construction of the exhibition space has begun.

USS *Tru* (SS-416)



Public programming will include a Web site, a family guide, and a brochure that will encourage visitors to research the history of their own homes. The National Association of Realtors is sponsoring the exhibition and is working closely with the Museum on Web possibilities. The exhibition will open in May 2001.

### Other Exhibition Highlights

The Museum's new *DigiLab* debuted in December 1999 thanks to financial support, consulting, and equipment provided by Hewlett Packard, Intel, Polaroid, and ArcSoft. On-site demonstrations relate the applications of 21st-century technology to the Smithsonian's traditional mission for the increase and diffusion of knowledge. Visitors can view the process of scanning—both of 2-D materials like photographs and 3-D objects—to create digital images for Web sites and other digital archives. In an adjacent companion exhibition, *DigiLab* provides a unique behind-the-scenes view of modern technology's role in digital archives, printing, and graphic arts. One glass case highlights Superman artifacts from the Museum's Popular Culture collections, including a costume worn by Christopher Reeve in *Superman IV*.

An expanded exploration of electricity and electrical invention, *Lighting a Revolution* opened in March thanks to the support of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. This renovated 1979 exhibition expands the Museum's presentation of the history, technology, and consequences of electric lighting and brings this story of electrical innovation into the modern era. *Lighting a Revolution II* includes interactive stations that help visitors learn about various light sources and two computer stations with the companion Web site, [americanhistory.si.edu/lighting](http://americanhistory.si.edu/lighting).

The personal history and artistic development of one of America's great songwriters was the subject of the temporary exhibition *This Land is Your Land: The Life and Legacy of Woody Guthrie*. This exhibition was organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, with the generous



support of the Woody Guthrie Archives in association with the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

This summer, a traveling exhibit of Roger Shimomura's painting series, *An American Diary and Memories of Childhood*, provided a moving personal account of the experiences of Japanese-Americans interned at Camp Minidoka, Idaho, during World War II. *Artificial Anatomy: Papier-Mâché Anatomical Models* featured scientific learning aids from over a century ago that were used to supplement medical training when cadavers were unavailable. *History in a Vacuum* focused on housework with an emphasis on the changing practices of cleaning carpets and floors. *Exhibiting George Washington* featured commemorative objects and personal belongings of the country's first president.

*History in the News* showcases illuminate the connection between the past and present-day news. *Panama's Canal: Dawn of a New Era*, which opened in November 1999, focused on the treaty period from the 1960s to 2000 and emphasized the contributions of the people of Panama to the operation of the canal. *Census 2000: Counting America, 1790–2000* opened in March and drew comparisons between census procedures from the past and present. It was produced in collaboration with the U. S. Census Bureau. *Rube Goldberg: Comic Art and Invention* opened in July. It relates the Lemelson Center's theme, "Invention at Play," to Rube Goldberg's playful—yet guarded—enthusiasm for man's inventiveness.

Located in the Printing and Graphics Arts hall, *DigiLab* presents new imaging technology within the context of printing history and recent changes in the printing trade

## Programs

### *American Slavery in History and Memory*

For three days in March, the Museum joined with the University of Maryland, Howard University, and the National Archives and Records Administration to sponsor a conference that explored public perceptions of slavery and uncovered the attitudes and conceptions of participants. The sold-out conference focused on many of the popular notions conveyed in films, books, television shows, schools, and museums.

The format was unique in its incorporation of panel and audience discussions, living history presentations, and a resource room. At the beginning of some sessions, a living history performer or multimedia presentation sparked audience interest. A panel leader would briefly introduce a topic like "Others Have Spoken for Us," which examined what has been written about slavery. The discussion would then be opened up for audience participation. Conference leaders and panelists included prominent professionals such as journalists, educators, film makers, and historians.

Department of Cultural History Chair Rex Ellis examines shackles worn by slaves



A summary version of this year's conference is being created for the Web.

"We were surprised at the number of people who felt that understanding slavery was central to understanding American Identity," commented Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs Lonnie Bunch. *American Slavery in History and Memory* is the first in a series of annual seminars dealing with issues of ethnicity, race, diversity, and American Identity.

### Other Programs

Each year, the Museum hosts several popular annual festivals and an ongoing series of public programs. Mimes, magicians, music, and a host of other festive experiences welcomed Museum visitors during December's **Holiday Celebration** in 1999.

In March 2000, the Museum hosted a series of films for the **Environmental Film Festival** in the Nation's Capital. Films included *The Hudson Riverkeepers* and *Empires of Industry: Timber!* The exploration of American Identity continued with the **Looking American** programs, including presentations of *George Washington: The Man and the Use of His Image* by Lisa Kathleen Graddy and *Partisan Fashion: American Campaign Clothing* by Harry Rubenstein.

**ENCUENTROS: Latino America at the Smithsonian** debuted several important programs this year. In May and June, *Art in Progress with Ping Chong*, a behind-the-scenes glimpse of Ping Chong's oral history project *Undesirable Elements*, was performed in the Carmichael Auditorium and the GALA Hispanic Theater. This original work explores the effects of history, culture, and ethnicity on the lives of individuals who share the common experience of having been born in one culture and now are part of another. Both programs were sponsored by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives, GALA Hispanic Theater,

Washington Performing Arts Society, and Ping Chong & Co.

Visitors watched their favorite children's stories and Museum objects come to life during the second season of the family program series **OurStory: History Through Children's Literature**. The highlight of the season was the November 1999 *Tales from the Land—Cuentos de la Tierra* program, produced in conjunction with **ENCUENTROS**. This unique family day explored stories from a variety of American cultural backgrounds. Other popular **OurStory** events included *Home Sweet Home: Five Generations of Little House, A Chinese American Celebration*, and *Symbols of Our Nations: Iroquois Tales and Traditions*.

**The Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra** explored the musical contributions of two great jazz musicians at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall. On January 27 and 28, **Bebop in the New Millennium** featured the great jazz master, James Moody, on saxophone, flute, and vocals. In May, **The Musical World of Mary Lou Williams** showcased the incredible compositional and arranging talents of this great lady of jazz—an instrumentalist, composer, arranger, and educator.

## Education Highlights

On a daily basis, the Museum provides visitors with educational experiences through its docent-led tours, activities, and hands-on rooms. This year, the Education and Visitor Services Division added three new docent-led activities in conjunction with the new **On Time, Piano 300**, and **Fast Attacks and Boomers** exhibitions.

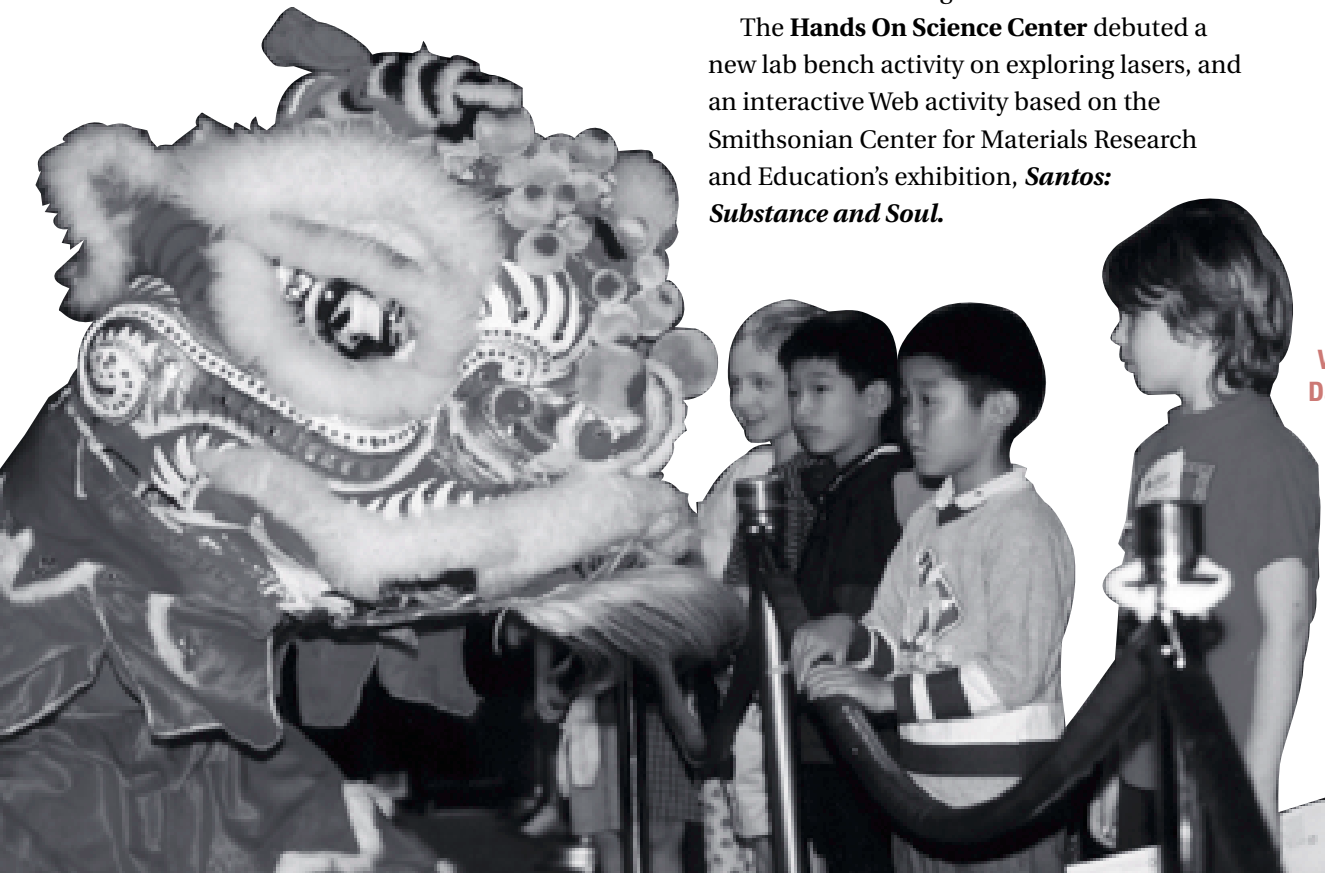
In its second year, the **Story In History** project continued to serve fourth graders and families from metro area "Title One" schools. In addition to free books, **Hands On History Room (HOHR)** visits, and participation in the **Family Literacy Festival**, the project expanded to include story and object-based lessons in the classroom. The combination of stories and HOHR visits have been particularly important to children and their parents who are new immigrants to America.

In an ongoing effort to adapt HOHR activities to the Web format, the staff completed a new educational Web activity entitled, "Tracking the Buffalo: Stories from a Buffalo Hide Painting."

The **Hands On Science Center** debuted a new lab bench activity on exploring lasers, and an interactive Web activity based on the Smithsonian Center for Materials Research and Education's exhibition, **Santos: Substance and Soul**.



Storyteller Lilyan Jones, *The Symbols of our Nations: Iroquois Tales & Traditions*, at the April **OurStory** program



Wong Chinese Lion Dancers entertain kids at an **OurStory** event