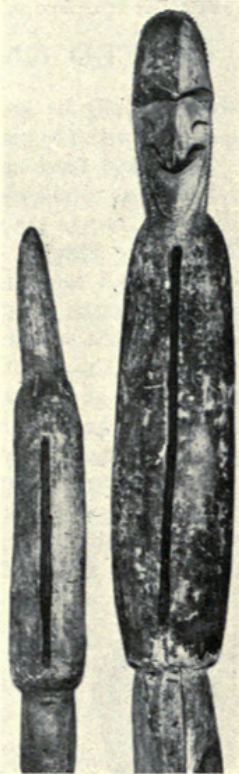


These figures are usually dark gray or black, and show signs of weathering, but occasionally one may see a newly made figure, covered with clay to form a smooth surface, and painted white and black, perhaps with some red. Around and over the figure is constructed a sort of shed to protect it from the weather. This is open at the front and sometimes at the sides. Such shelters decay in a short time, and the clay washes off, so most of the figures appear quite weather-worn. After they have once served their purpose, no further attention is paid to them.

#### TALL DRUMS OF WOOD

In addition to the tree-fern figures, there will also be some upright drums of different sizes, and probably some carved wooden posts and figures at the sides of the open space or clearing. This space serves as a dancing ground and show-place for the various ceremonies. The drums will be beaten for the dances. The large ones may serve also as signal drums.



Wooden Drums from  
New Hebrides

These instruments are sounded at the ceremonial dances, and sometimes used for transmitting signals.

If the tree-fern figures are compared, they will be found to differ in certain respects. The style of each figure indicates the rank of its owner, and such figures are set up at the ceremony given when, and by means of which, he attains the rank indicated. All the men are divided into a number of classes or ranks. In Ambrym there are ten of these ranks or degrees, but in other islands the number varies from three or four to as many as twenty. A man can advance from a lower to a higher rank only by means of a special ceremony, for which he must provide a certain number of tusked pigs—that is, boars whose tusks have been allowed to grow beyond their usual length. This occurs when the upper tusks have been knocked out, so that the lower ones do not wear down. Such pigs are usually kept tied up in the house, and fed on soft food. The lower tusks then continue to grow, finally forming one, two, and in rare cases, even three complete circles. The longer the tusk, the more valuable becomes the pig. The number of pigs required as an offering at each ceremony increases with the rank. In Ambrym, for example, to

attain the fifth rank, fifteen must be offered. For the ninth rank, one hundred pigs are required. Only an old and very wealthy man can hope to reach the highest rank.

#### FREE LECTURES FOR ADULTS WILL BEGIN MARCH 2

The seventy-third course of free lectures on science and travel for adults will be presented by Field Museum on Saturday afternoons during March and April. Scientists, naturalists, and speakers of renown have been engaged for this series. All of the lectures, except one, will be illustrated with motion pictures, and in the case of the exception, stereopticon slides will be shown. The lectures begin at 2:30 o'clock and are given in the James Simpson Theatre. Admission is restricted to adults. Following is the complete schedule of dates, subjects and speakers:

- March 2**—Springtime in the Rockies  
Mr. Alfred M. Bailey, Colorado Museum of Natural History
- March 9**—Social Insects  
Dr. Alfred Emerson, University of Chicago
- March 16**—Penthouse of the Gods  
Mr. Theos Bernard, New York
- March 23**—Threshold of a New World  
Mr. Vincent Palmer, New York
- March 30**—Our Attic Stairs—Southeastern Alaska  
Mr. Karl Robinson, New York
- April 6**—Snow Peaks and Flower Meadows in the Canadian Rockies  
Mr. Dan McCowan, Banff, Alberta
- April 13**—Africa Smiles  
Mr. Herbert S. Ullmann, Chicago
- April 20**—Birds of America  
Dr. Arthur A. Allen, Cornell University
- April 27**—Return to Malaya  
Mr. Carveth Wells, New York

No tickets are necessary for admission to these lectures. A section of the Theatre is reserved for Members of the Museum, each of whom is entitled to two reserved seats on request. Requests for these seats may be made in advance by telephone (Wabash 9410) or in writing, and seats will be held in the Member's name until 2:30 o'clock on the day of the lecture. All reserved seats not claimed by 2:30 o'clock will be made available to the general public.

#### Museum in Education Conference

Miss Miriam Wood, Chief of the James Nelson and Anna Louise Raymond Foundation, acted as chairman at one of the meetings of the National Conference of the Progressive Education Association, recently held in Chicago. The subject of this meeting was *Museums as a Resource for Education*. The main discussion was led by Miss Frances Pressler of the Winnetka Public Schools. Field Museum was represented further by other members of the Raymond Foundation staff, and by Director Clifford C. Gregg. Delegates were present from school systems and from museums in many parts of the country.

#### LEON MANDEL EXPEDITION BACK FROM CARIBBEAN

Birds, mammals, fishes, and reptiles which inhabit certain islands and keys of the Caribbean where practically nobody ever goes were brought to Field Museum last month by members of an expedition which sailed to the most out-of-the way bits of land in that sea.

The returning collectors are Mr. Rudyerd Boulton, Curator of Birds, and Mr. D. Dwight Davis, Assistant Curator of Anatomy and Osteology. The expedition from which they returned was conducted aboard the yacht *Buccaneer*, and was led by its owner, Mr. Leon Mandel. Since the first of January the *Buccaneer* has been piloted between and around the coral reefs, and through remote and tortuous channels leading nowhere of importance so far as trade routes are concerned. Purposely sought were spots which most vessels would avoid.

The places visited are almost forgotten tiny possessions of the United States, Cuba, Honduras, Mexico, and British Honduras. Some of them are scarcely a square mile in extent, too insignificant to figure in international altercations and economic struggles, but nevertheless of great interest biologically. From them, Messrs. Boulton and Davis brought back approximately 150 exotic birds, 350 reptiles and amphibians, and 500 specimens of fishes, many of them exceedingly vari-colored and strange in form. They obtained also great quantities of mollusks, marine invertebrates, microscopic creatures accumulated in masses known as plankton, and other minute organisms. Color motion picture studies were made of many of the animals collected, in particular, slow motion analysis of sea birds in flight. In most of these places little or no scientific collecting had ever been done before. At Half Moon Cay, British Honduras, after material had been collected for exhibits representing a great colony of red-footed boobies which live there, a storm of hurricane force suddenly struck the *Buccaneer*, causing the breakage and loss of heavy chains and anchors, and a hurried departure out to sea for safety.

The most isolated of the islands visited was Swan Island, which consists of two mile-square specks of land belonging to the United States but probably unknown to most of this country's citizens, or even its government officials. It lies almost midway between Cuba, Honduras, and the Yucatan Peninsula. There the expedition obtained specimens of Nelson's yellow warbler, and a species of palm lizard, both of which are most exclusive hermit-like creatures, inhabiting, so far as is known, no other place on the earth's entire surface. Also collected there were representatives of a nesting colony of brown boobies, and various sea birds.

What is perhaps the largest colony of sea birds in the West Indies was found on Mu-



jerres, Cancun and Contoy islands off the coast of Yucatan, Mr. Boulton reports. So far as known, no other ornithologists have reached these spots before. Collections were there made of pelicans, cormorants, frigate birds, and other feathered creatures, including, on Contoy, a specimen of the great white heron, regarded as a great prize.

In the Bay Islands, belonging to the republic of Honduras, the expedition obtained snakes and lizards by the hundreds. Off Glover's Reef, British Honduras, using a special small motor cruiser carried aboard the larger vessel, the principal fish collections were obtained in the waters over a coral reef, fifteen miles long and five miles wide, which represents the ultimate development of coral reefs to be found in the West Indies. In the clear water, the fantastic and bizarre fish could be seen to depths of about 100 feet, swimming among coral "trees" as much as thirty to forty feet in height.

Other places in which collections were made are Misteriosio Bank, Rio Encantada (Enchanted River) in the Zapata Swamp of Cuba, and Turneffe Cay. The primary objectives of the expedition were to make an assay of the wild life of these little known places, and to obtain for the Museum exhibits and study collection a representation of the faunas of such circumscribed ranges for comparison with other faunas which usually range for thousands of miles.

### History of a Geographical Name

In 1799, when Alaska still belonged to Russia, a hunting party of Aleutians made a meal of sea-mussels of a species (*Mytilus edulis* Linné) which turned out to be poisonous. Shortly after their meal, more than a hundred of the men fell ill, suffered from painful convulsions, and within a few hours were dead. Russians thereafter called the place on Sitka Island, where this occurred, "the Pogibshi Way," which translates to "the Peril Way." This name has never been changed.

### Gutta-percha

Gutta-percha is obtained from a tree of the star-apple family, native to the Malayan Peninsula, Borneo, and other islands. The tree attains a height of sixty to seventy feet. It yields a milky juice which solidifies into a white rubber-like substance. The most important of the numerous uses of gutta-percha is for covering the electric wire of telegraph cables, because it is a perfect insulator, and it is said to be practically indestructible under salt water.

### Visiting Hours Change March 1

Beginning March 1, spring visiting hours, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., will replace the winter schedule of 9 to 4. The new hours will continue in effect until April 30, after which the Museum will be open from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. until September 2 (Labor Day).

## MUSEUM TO CONTINUE "HOW DO YOU KNOW?" ON RADIO

Field Museum's new series of weekly radio broadcasts, which began January 25, will continue during March, and for several more months. Those presented to date have been enthusiastically acclaimed in letters from listeners, and in comments by the editors of newspaper radio pages and radio magazines.

The programs, which are given under the title "How Do You Know?" are presented from coast to coast over the Blue Network of the National Broadcasting Company. Outside Chicago, they are heard each Thursday from 1 to 1:30 P.M. (Central Standard Time). In Chicago they are rebroadcast on Saturday afternoons from 4 to 4:30 o'clock over station WENR.

The programs are presented in co-operation with the University Broadcasting Council, of which Field Museum is a member. Members of the Museum's scientific staff supply the answers to the various questions of scientific fact and theory. The results of their own research, and also that of other scientists, are drawn upon for the purpose. Preparation of the scripts is in the hands of Mr. William C. Hodapp, a radio writer of the NBC staff. Facilities and personnel for dramatic presentation are contributed by the National Broadcasting Company. The programs have the expert supervision of Miss Judith Waller, Director of Education, NBC—Central Division, and Mr. Allen Miller, Director of the University Broadcasting Council.

Following are the subjects scheduled for broadcasting during March:

National network	In Chicago	Subjects:
		HOW DO YOU KNOW—
Mar. 2		—when the cliff houses were built?
Mar. 7	Mar. 9	—the truth about superstitions?
Mar. 14	Mar. 16	—whales are not fishes, bats not birds, etc.?
Mar. 21	Mar. 23	—Irish potatoes are not Irish?
Mar. 28	Mar. 30	—how prehistoric people lived?

The questions upon which the programs are based are typical of the countless queries the Museum and members of its staff are constantly receiving from Museum visitors, children, teachers, the press, business houses, authors, and innumerable other sources which may be grouped collectively as "the

general public." Included not infrequently among the information seekers are professional writers and technicians concerned with various other radio programs in which some scientific question may arise. The



Museum Radio Script Conference

Before giving the public the answers to the questions propounded in the Museum's "How Do You Know?" radio series, Mr. William C. Hodapp (center), the script writer, first obtains the information in consultations with members of the Museum staff. In this photograph, Director Clifford C. Gregg demonstrates facts about Museum methods with a reproduction of a Java watersnake. At right is Miss Judith Waller, who is Director of Education for the Central Division of the National Broadcasting Company.

"How Do You Know?" series, besides answering specific questions, illustrates vividly the wide scope of information the Museum has available for the answering of thousands of other questions, and calls attention to the many services it is equipped to perform for persons in practically any walk of life. The programs are arranged in a style having universal appeal and application. They are presented simply enough to be interesting and understandable to the school child, but they are definitely on a level suitable for adults.

### Large Cycad Cones

Cycads produce cones, from the center of the cluster of leaves, which vary in size and form according to the various species. In a botanical garden in the East London region of Africa, one large plant of a species of *Encephalartos* produced three female cones which weighed more than 140 pounds. Single cones may weigh ninety pounds, but are not found in the wild state because the baboons carry them away before they are ripe. Specimens are on exhibition in the Hall of Plant Life (Hall 29).

Worthy of special attention by visitors interested in North American archaeology are the exhibits of rare Basket Maker and Cliff Dweller material in Hall 7.





1940. "Leon Mandel Expedition Back From Caribbean." *Field Museum news* 11(3), 2–3.

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