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DEPARTMENT OF INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY NEWSLETTER

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FANTASTIC VOYAGE

By Dave Pawson



US Fish Commission Steamer *Albatross* (1883-1921)

Smithsonian Networks is making a 30-minute TV documentary about the life and work of Austin H. Clark (1880-1954), Curator of Echinoderms here at NMNH from 1908 until his death in 1954. Also featured is the US Fish Commission Steamer *Albatross* (1883-1921). Clark was a naturalist on the *Albatross* in 1906 for a seven-month cruise to Alaska and Japan. Mollusks Curator Paul Bartsch, and Crustacea Curator Waldo Schmitt were also on board at various times between 1907 and 1914.

The filming of the documentary involved a trip to the Smithsonian's Pennsy Drive facility in Landover, Maryland. This gigantic warehouse, 330,000 square feet in area (about 7.5 acres), looks very much like the warehouse featured at the end of the first Indiana Jones movie. The Smithsonian warehouse holds thousands of interesting objects, one of the most interesting being a nine-foot-long model of the *Albatross*, which was presented to the Smithsonian in 1883, the year in which she entered service. The ship was the brain-child of Smithsonian Secretary Spencer F. Baird, and we assume that the model was presented to Baird by the US Fish Commission – which he headed - as a token of thanks.

The model had been taken out of its box and was on display in all its glory, and glorious it is! Made almost entirely of wood, and beautifully painted, it is a very detailed representation of the ship as she appeared in 1883. The model looks fresh and new, and it was difficult to believe that it was 126 years old. Having studied numerous publications about the ship, and having read Austin Clark's daily letters to his wife on his seven-month cruise, Doris and I looked upon the *Albatross* model as an old and familiar friend, and it was an emotional experience to see many things...

We saw where Austin Clark's cabin was located. We looked at the locations of the large upper laboratory, and in the lower laboratory is where Clark spent hundreds of hours sorting, labeling, and preserving the huge collections. On the forward deck is the trawl winch, and it was there that the ship's mascot, Buck the goat, would stand and oversee the trawling operations. The wardroom, where officers and scientists relaxed and dined, is where Lieutenant Hepburn was thrown to the floor during dinner when the ship gave a sudden lurch, and he was showered with plates, knives and forks, and food. The poop deck was where the Captain, Leroy Garrett, was relaxing in a deck chair after dinner. Again, the ship gave a lurch and the chair slid clear across the deck, hit the starboard rail, and threw Captain Garrett overboard. They searched for him all night but no trace was found. According to Joel Hedgpeth (1945) the list of scientists who served on the *Albatross* reads like a "Who's Who" of American biology. Austin Clark belonged on board!

We spent about three hours with the *Albatross* model. It was an unforgettable treat. My only regret was that I have spent 45 years at the Smithsonian and hadn't studied the model sooner!

INVERTEBRATES AS DANGEROUS GOODS

By Paul Greenhall

Staff and colleagues Be Aware that Customs Agents from European Union (EU) Countries are enforcing a 2007 regulation governing the import of biological or museum specimens, in any form. Museum specimens are subject to seizure at Port of Entry. Please note: The recipient must apply for the import permit from their designated governmental organization prior to import, and provide this documentation day of import before customs agents' will clear and release the shipment to them. This may affect the outcome of USNM Borrow Returns, Disposals, and Loan Requests to the EU; EU colleagues and their agencies are making an effort to comply. (The EU comprises of 27 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Wet preserved specimens pose additional challenges to collections management and research staff whenever sending them to countries which do not accept deliveries of dangerous goods in any quantity, the more expensive Door-to-Airport delivery being available albeit very expensive or another option chosen. For example, is it plausible to mail the material in a non-dangerous liquid non-regulated liquid, such as 24% or less alcohol, draining off all the preservative and sending the specimen as dry, "dry, hydrate immediately upon arrival". Keep in mind the specimen may be in transit for at least a week, it should be sufficiently hardy to withstand such transport and the plastic bag with specimens may contain literally no liquid preservative droplets or free-flowing preservative.

Documents mailed Registered Air Mail international are limited to 4 lbs or less (scales vary so always opt less than exactly 4 lbs) and require the small rectangular green and white Customs Declaration form. Mailings in excess of 4 lbs may not be mailed Registered, and required the larger multi-copy Customs Declaration form (its plastic pouch is affixed to the top of the parcel). Countries with no COSE - When it comes to the import of any CITES protected species from a country that is not a signatory to The Convention a completed CITES Export permit is required and should accompany the parcel with specimens upon import to the US. By law FWS – Law Enforcement Baltimore MD verifies the original CITES Export permit to ensure that it was validated upon export. Validation takes place by the country's Management Authority on day of export. This means the number of specimens noted on the CITES permit has to be verified that they are (or a lesser number) is indeed being exported, and the inspector records this number (in Item 14 or other item number) on the permit affixing a stamp. This action validates the CITES Export Permit. Upon import to the US a non-validated CITES permit will not be acceptable, and may result in an illegal import. If there is some doubt regarding the validation of a CITES permit, contact your IZ Shipping Manager.

ALL CITES Imports must be declared to FWS-Law Enforcement day of import, especially hand carried specimens. These require special arrangements with FWS-Law Enforcement prior to arrival so that an Inspector can clear the import at the airport Port-of-Entry.



ISABEL C. PÉREZ FARFANTE CANET

(July 24, 1916 - August 20, 2009)

Carcinologist Emeritus, U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, Systematics Laboratory. Born in La Habana, Cuba, she received her Ph.D. from Radcliffe College (1948). She was professor and researcher at the University of Havana; director of the Cuban Centro de Investigaciones Pesqueras; and associate in Invertebrate Zoology, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University. She has authored zoology textbooks, and numerous papers on the systematic of penaeoid shrimps, most notably landmark studies of the commercial genus *Penaeus*. She is the senior author of the book “Penaeoid and sergestoid shrimps and prawns of the world” (1997).

We will miss Isa.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Thomas Iliffe
Institute of Marine Science, Texas A&M University

“I am now in Puerto Morelos, Mexico working on ecological investigations of the underwater caves (cenotes). Photos from this trip are on-line at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/tamarathomsen/crustacea>
<<http://picasaweb.google.com/tamarathomsen/crustacea>>”

“In September, I begin work on a NOAA Ocean Exploration project that will use multibeam sonar, ROVs and deep mixed gas rebreather dives to search for caves formed during the Ice Ages at 60-200 m depths around the perimeter of the Bermuda seamount.”

John Fornshell
MSC, S.I.

I will be going to the NATO Undersea Research Center, NURC, in La Spezia, Italy from September 1, 2009 until December 1, 2009 as a participant in that institution's Visiting Research Scientist Program. I will be conducting research in the use of Very High Frequency SONAR to detect marine arthropods.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TIM COFFER

By Stephen D. Cairns

Congratulations to Museum Specialist Tim Coffe, who recently was promoted to Deputy Collection Manager, in charge of the dry collections (both specimens and paper) at NMNH. Tim's first task is a daunting one: how to compress the remaining IZ staff from the first and second floors onto the third floor (west wing). And all that by November 27. We wish you luck, Tim.

LEAVING ON A JET PLANE

By Trang Nguyen*

Greetings fellow invertebrate enthusiasts. As some of you know I am one of the many USAP (United States Antarctic Program) workers you see scurrying around the department. My time has consisted of performing tasks associated with the cataloging and physical care of invertebrate specimens and digitizing Antarctic invertebrate media, focusing mainly on Mollusks. After spending a little over a year with the team, I am leaving to conduct volunteer research for the US Fish & Wildlife Service on Midway Atoll for 3 months. My main duties will be conducting seabird surveys, native plant restoration, and assisting with a marine debris study. I never had a chance to do a lot of field work so I think this experience will be quite exciting.

I will return November 23rd, hopefully with a bountiful knowledge of the local marine life, exotic stories, and a great tan. See you all in November!

*Miss Trang Nguyen is an alumna of USAP. The primary investigator is Rafael Lemaitre and Jen Hammock is the Asst. Project Manager. The Funding Agency at NMNH is the National Science Foundation. Trang joined the project as an intern in June of 2008. Upon completion of her internship she became an IZ staff member when she accepted the post of Technician for USAP.