

New Compactable Storage System At Great Smokies

By Kathleen Manscill and Jim Wood

A new "Aisle-Saver" compactable storage system has been installed in the museum and collections storage room in the lower level of the Sugarlands Visitor Center at Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GRSM). This system enabled the park to recall natural history specimens which because of lack of space had been placed on long-term loan almost 20 years ago to colleges in North Carolina, Tennessee and Michigan. The return of this valuable material now makes Sugarlands a veritable treasure house for research.

An open house was held on April 22, 1986 to permit some 75 park employees and visitors to view the newly refurbished area. A press release publicized this event the preceding week and resulted in coverage by the *Sunday Star* and Channel 6 (ABC's television station in Knoxville).

Here, under tight security in a climate-controlled area, are stored the skins and skulls of birds and mammals collected in the Smokies as early as 1931 by the Komarek brothers, E.V. and Roy, who at that time were associated with the Chicago Academy of Sciences and are the first scientists known to have collected specimens in GRSM. Here, too, are collections of fish, amphibians and reptiles dating back to the Civilian Conservation Corps era, when men like D. Willis King were hired as wildlife technicians; plants collected by prominent early botanists R.H. Whittaker, Jack Sharp and Royal Shanks; and a variety of plants and animals collected by Arthur Stupka, GRSM's first park naturalist.

This room also houses the park's archival collection, which contains bound volumes of the Superintendent's monthly narrative reports dating from 1931, when Major J. Ross Eakin served as GRSM's first Superintendent, until 1967 when the report was discontinued. Here are land records from the North Carolina Park Commission and the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, the two organizations instrumental in the purchase of lands for the park during the 1920s. Here, too, are records of the lumber companies that logged the area, scrap books, correspondence, memorabilia, and photographs of historic structures, people living in the park, and CCC and park development activities.

Employees and visitors also toured the Park Library, where Librarian Annette Evans had created an exhibit of a portion of Arthur Stupka's personal library, which was donated to the NPS in 1983. Final processing of this extensive and valuable gift had been completed only shortly before the open house. Mr. Stupka, who was an honored guest, expressed his pleasure with the display and with the return of the natural history specimens after so many years.

The specialized library contains books, oral history tapes and transcriptions, and pamphlets and periodicals mostly relating to GRSM. Here researchers find copies of theses and dissertations by former students from various colleges and universities who have used the park and its facilities in their research. A genealogical shelf contains material relating to individuals and families who once lived in the area that now comprises the park, and there is an extensive vertical file system.

The Interpretive Workroom houses the slide file, AV equipment, photo duplicating machinery, a newly

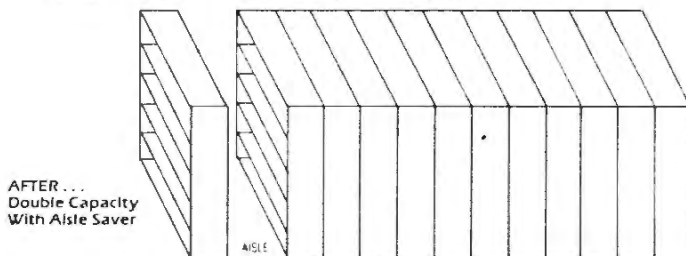
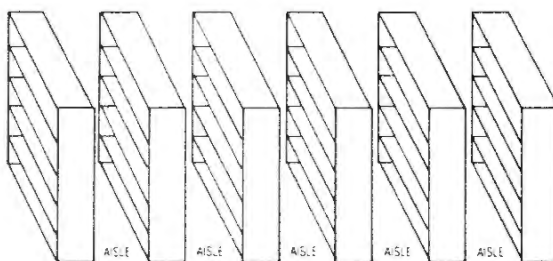


Superintendent Cook examines preserved specimens of striped skunks, part of the study collection housed in the cabinets of the new compactable storage system now in use at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

THE CONCEPT:

Open an aisle where and when you need it

BEFORE . . . With Conventional Systems



AFTER . . .
Double Capacity
With Aisle Saver

The Advantages

- DOUBLE your present storage area by removing unnecessary aisles
- Alternately, DECREASE your present space in half
- Expand in a SAFE, COST JUSTIFIED manner
- Provide secure areas and minimize deterioration
- The solutions bolt together construction allows future modifications and minimizes equipment obsolescence
- Allows use of your existing shelves, bins, racks, cantilever shelves and cabinets

acquired Kroy lettering system, and space for interpreters to plan and view their evening programs, work on bulletin boards, and prepare themselves for the visitors' questions at the Information Desk.

The Aisle-Saver system installed at Sugarlands Visitor Center is the first of its kind in the Southeast Region. It has a load capacity of 1,000 pounds per carriage foot; its double-faced shelving is 36 inches deep and 84 inches tall, and the shelves are adjustable. The carriage on which the museum cabinets are mounted was built to specifications by the company so that standard museum cases and entomology cabinets could be mounted back-to-back. Only

one pound of effort is required to crank the handle to move 1,000 pounds of carriage, shelving, and stored items in this manually operated system (see accompanying photos and drawing).

For more information on the Aisle-Saver compactable storage system, contact Kathleen Manscill at the Sugarlands Visitor Center, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg, TN 37738.

Manscill is a Museum Technician at Great Smoky Mountains NP; Wood is Writer/Editor of the NPS Servicewide Science Publications Office, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, Georgia.