

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS



Smithsonian
Institution

OCTOBER 2017

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL ARTIFACTS ADDED TO NATIONAL SPORTS COLLECTION

The National Museum of American History added more than a dozen significant artifacts from the careers of Major League Baseball players Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, Ted Williams, Stan Musial, Yogi Berra, Brooks Robinson, and Ozzie Smith to the national sports collection during a special donation ceremony.

The collection is a gift from private collector Thomas Tull who is the founder, chairman and CEO of Tulco and the founding chairman and former CEO of Legendary Entertainment. The artifacts include baseball jerseys, gloves, bats, and other objects used by these baseball legends that represent six of the major league teams they played with during their tenure.

One of the significant objects in the collection is a baseball signed by the 1927 New York Yankees team, including Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, which won the World Series that year. Also from the New York Yankees are a bat and glove used by Berra in the 1950s. The Boston Red Sox are represented by a hat and jersey used by Williams; the San Francisco Giants with a hat, glove, and shoes worn by Mays; the Baltimore Orioles with a glove used by Robinson; the Milwaukee Braves with a glove and bat used by Aaron; and the St. Louis Cardinals with a jersey and glove worn by Smith as well as Musial's jersey.

"Baseball, the nation's first popular team spectator sport, has had a long and lasting impact on our nation's cultural consciousness," said John Gray, the Elizabeth MacMillan Director of the National Museum of American History. "It does so in a way that is both unique and vital. The players and teams represented in this donation are called legends for a reason. Thanks to the passion and generosity of Thomas Tull, these objects are now national treasures that belong to all of us."

These 14 objects from America's favorite pastime will join the museum's sports collection, which includes autographed baseballs, a ticket booth from the original Yankee Stadium, uniforms and equipment, including Roberto Clemente's batting helmet and jersey, and other historically important artifacts representing all aspects of the sport.



Ray Mabus, Mike Heffner, Thomas Tull, John Gray and Eric Jentsch at the donation ceremony of objects to National Museum of American History's national sports collection by board member Thomas Tull

NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK

DAMA GAZELLE BABY BOOM

The Cheetah Conservation Station at the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park is celebrating a baby boom of critically endangered dama gazelles. The Zoo announced the birth of the first calf, a male born to 10-year-old female Adara, on September 7. The second calf, a female, was born overnight on September 16 to 8-year-old Fahima. The third and final calf, a male, was born on September 18 to 7-year-old female Zafirah. All three calves were sired by the Zoo's 3-year-old male, Edem.



A female calf (left) was born Sept. 16 to mother Fahima. A male calf (right) was born Sept. 18 to mother Zafirah.

Keepers are closely monitoring the calves, who appear to be healthy, nursing regularly, and growing and behaving normally. For the next several weeks, the calves will remain in a quiet, off-exhibit area where they can bond with their mothers and acclimate to the habitat. They will make their public debut in mid-to-late October, weather permitting. Visitors can see Edem at the Cheetah Conservation Station in the morning before 10 a.m.

Native to Chad, Mali and Niger, dama gazelles are listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Less than 500 dama gazelles remain in the wild due to habitat loss from human and livestock expansion, hunting and drought. SCBI conducts veterinary and reproductive

research in order to maintain dama gazelle populations.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SUPPORTS EMERGENCY EFFORTS IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD

FEMA and the Smithsonian Institution co-sponsor the Heritage Emergency National Task Force (“HENTF”), a partnership of more than 50 national service organizations and federal agencies created to protect cultural heritage from the damaging effects of natural disasters and other emergencies.

HENTF has established a Facebook page dedicated to sharing information related to arts, cultural, and heritage organizations that have been affected by the recent Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and José. The page serves as an online bulletin board to share preparedness and response information.

The Preparedness and Response in Collections Emergencies (“PRICE”) team is a pan-Institutional body that serves as the Smithsonian’s collections emergency support team. The purpose of PRICE is twofold: to advise and provide subject-matter expertise, consultation, and assistance to the National Collections Program (“NCP”), Smithsonian collecting units, and Smithsonian senior management; and, when activated, to provide collections support, response, and recovery as requested by NCP, as part of the Smithsonian’s Emergency Operations Center.



The Rockport Center for the Arts, an art center and 10,000-square-foot sculpture park near Corpus Christi, TX has sustained serious external damage. While this museum is not a Smithsonian Affiliate, there are 11 affiliate museums in Texas.

Four PRICE members recently participated in outreach efforts in the U.S. and abroad. Becky Kaczowski and Cathy Hawks presented on risk mitigation for collections as it relates to climate change at the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (“SPNH”). SPNHC is an international society whose mission is to improve the preservation, conservation and management of natural history collections to ensure their continuing value to society.

Becca Kennedy and Katie Wagner traveled to Peru with members of Smithsonian’s Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management to discuss fire prevention and recovery techniques for collections.

COLLECTIONS CARE AND PRESERVATION FUNDS AWARDED TO NOTABLE PROJECTS

Since FY 2006, the Smithsonian’s annual Federal appropriation has included central funding to address critical Institution-wide needs in collections care and preservation. The Collections Care and Preservation Fund (“CCPF”), managed by the National Collections Program, provides funding to projects that support the Smithsonian’s Strategic Plan goal of ensuring the preservation of the world’s natural and cultural heritage, while optimizing the Institution’s assets; maintaining the utility of its collections in perpetuity; and taking more sustainable approaches to the preservation, storage, and management of Smithsonian collections by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and risk-based decision-making. CCPF funding is available to eligible units on a competitive basis.

In FY 2017, a number of Smithsonian collecting units received awards. The Archives of American Art (“AAA”) received a CCPF award for the project “Digital Reformatting of Oral History Program Video.” The award completes the conservation digital reformatting of audiovisual media within AAA’s Oral History Program. This project specifically addresses the preservation of sixteen video interviews totaling approximately 134 hours, representing a diverse group of artists.

The National Air and Space Museum (“NASM”) was awarded CCPF funding for the project “Conservation Triage V, Stabilization Treatment for Objects Identified as Requiring Immediate Treatment.” The award supports NASM’s continuing efforts to perform conservation treatments on 474 objects identified in the FY 2009 to FY 2016 CCPF-funded collection surveys as being in poor condition and needing immediate treatment. This award will support two NTE conservators to perform triage treatments on 474 actively deteriorating objects.

The National Museum of Natural History received an award for the project “Conservation and Physical Curation of the Grasses (Poaceae).” The award supports significant conservation, curation, specimen reconciliation, and accountability for the Department of Botany’s largest and most important collection, the grass family (Poaceae). This project will improve the conservation of individual specimens through mounting and repair, resolve a longstanding problem involving substandard housing materials, provide improved physical access to a collection of more than 500,000 specimens, modernize the taxonomic finding aids for this family, prepare the collection for long-term management of digital surrogates, and continue pioneering efforts in museum collection digitization for preservation.

The National Postal Museum received funding for the project “Conservation of 1933 World’s Fair Postal History.” The award supports conservation treatment of 55 blueprints from the 1933 World’s Fair held in Chicago and post-treatment imaging to ensure their long-term care and accessibility for researchers. This project specifically addresses unknown and undocumented



In 1933, the city of Chicago staged its second world’s fair, A Century of Progress, to celebrate its centennial. The U.S. Post Office Department issued three stamp designs for the 1933 fair, with seven varieties.

provenance information on permanent collection objects, currently inaccessible in the blueprints due to their fragile condition. The funds will support the hiring of a contract conservator/conservation studio to perform conservation treatments and post-treatment preservation imaging.