Paul Henry Oehser Interviews, 1974-1975

by Smithsonian Institution Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Creator: Oehser, Paul Henry, 1904- interviewee
Title: Paul Henry Oehser Interviews
Dates: 1974-1975
Quantity: 7 audiotapes (reference copies). 12 digital .mp3 files (reference copies).

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation
Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9507, Oehser, Paul Henry, 1904- interviewee, Paul Henry Oehser Interviews

Historical Note

Paul H. Oehser (1904-1996), began his career as an editor with the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, after receiving his B.A. from Greenville College in 1925. In 1931, he was appointed Editor of the U.S. National Museum, and in 1950 he advanced to Chief, Smithsonian Editorial and Publications Division. Oehser also served as the Institution's Public Relations Officer from 1950 to 1966. Following his retirement in 1966, Oehser was appointed a Research Associate of the Smithsonian Institution and Editor of Research and Exploration Publications for the National Geographic Society. In addition to his work at the Smithsonian, Oehser published essays, poetry, and books about the Smithsonian and its scientists, and was active in the conservation movement.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives’ record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conducts interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Paul H. Oehser was interviewed for the Oral History Program because of his extensive knowledge of the history of the Institution and because he made significant contributions to the Smithsonian throughout his career.
Descriptive Entry

Oehser was interviewed by Pamela M. Henson on 4 December 1974, 2 February, 5 March and 13 March 1975. The interviews consist of his reminiscences of his education, career as an editor for the Bureau of Biological Survey and Smithsonian, role as a public relations officer, and work as an author and conservationist.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:
Conservation of natural resources
Public relations
Publishing

Types of Materials:
Audiotapes
Interviews
Oral history

Names:
Henson, Pamela M. interviewer.
National Geographic Society (U.S.)
Oehser, Paul Henry, 1904-
Smithsonian Institution. Press. Editorial and Publications Division
Smithsonian Institution. Public Relations Officer.
United States National Museum. Editor.
United States. Bureau of Biological Survey.
Container Listing

Box 1

Transcripts of Interviews
Interview 1: 4 December 1974
Interview 2: 2 February 1975
Interview 3: 5 March 1975
Interview 4: 13 March 1975

Audio Recordings of Interviews:
Interview 1: 4 December 1974
Interview 2: 2 February 1975
Interview 3: 5 March 1975
Interview 4: 13 March 1975