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Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu

Creator: Reed, Theodore H. interviewee

Title: Theodore H. Reed Interviews

Dates: 1989-1994

Quantity: 35 audiotapes (reference copies).

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9568, Reed, Theodore H. interviewee, Theodore H. Reed Interviews

Use Restriction

Restricted.

Historical Note

Theodore H. Reed (1922- ), veterinarian and zoo administrator, received the D.V.M. in 1945 from the School of Veterinary Medicine, Kansas State College. From 1946 to 1955, he practiced as a veterinarian in Oregon and Idaho. He gained experience with exotic animals while serving as a veterinarian to the Portland Zoological Park from 1951 to 1955. In 1955, Reed was appointed Veterinarian at the National Zoological Park (NZP). In 1956, he was named Acting Director after the retirement of William M. Mann, and in 1958, he advanced to Director. During his tenure, Reed oversaw a capital renovation of the NZP; development of the Conservation and Research Center (CRC) in Front Royal, Virginia, in 1974; a transition from display of exotic specimens to breeding of endangered species; and many advances in exotic animal care and medicine. Reed retired from administration in 1983 and from the NZP in 1984.

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 conduct 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.
Reed was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of his distinguished veterinary and management career, contributions as a Smithsonian administrator, and long tenure as director of the National Zoological Park. Additional information about Reed can be found in the Records of the National Zoological Park which are also housed in Smithsonian Archives.

Descriptive Entry

These interviews of Reed by Pamela M. Henson discuss his youth; education; veterinary practice; experiences at the Portland Zoo; and career at the NZP, including his tenure as Veterinarian and achievements as Director, especially renovation and modernization of facilities, development of the Cap-chur Gun, acquisition of such animals as the Giant Pandas, Komodo dragon, and white tigers, development of research and educational programs, creation of an endangered species program and the CRC, participation in the Species Survival Program, his role in the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums and the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens; and reminiscences of such colleagues as William Mann, John Perry, and Leonard Carmichael. An additional interview of Reed by Pamela M. Henson, Historian, Smithsonian Institution Archives, and Caroline Winslow, Graphics Department, National Zoological Department was conducted in 1992. Reed was interviewed about the 1958 Safety Brochure that was created by the Zoo in response to the death a little girl by a lion at NZP. The collection consists of 13 interviews totaling 31.5 hours of audio recordings and 790 pages of transcript. Box 1 contains transcripts of the interviews. Box 2 contains cassette recordings of the original reel-to-reel recordings, which are in security storage.

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
  Records of meetings, organizations, and professional societies
  Zoos

Types of Materials:
  Audiotapes
  Interviews
  Oral history

Names:
  American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums
  Cap-Chur Gun.
  Carmichael, Leonard, 1898-
  Conservation and Research Center (National Zoological Park)
  Henson, Pamela M. interviewer
  International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens.
  Mann, William M., 1886-1960
  National Zoological Park (U.S.).
  Perry, John.
Container Listing

Box 1

Transcripts of Interviews
Interview 1: 11 April 1989
Interview 2: 12 April 1989
Interview 3: 12 April 1989
Interview 4: 14 April 1989
Interview 5: 3 August 1989
Interview 6: 17 August 1989
Interview 7: 24 August 1989
Interview 8: 14 September 1989
Interview 9: 13 October 1989
Interview 10: 16 June 1994
Interview 11: 23 June 1994
Interview 12: 12 July 1994
Interview 13: 24 August 1992

Box 2

Audio Recordings of Interviews
Interview 1: 11 April 1989
Interview 2: 12 April 1989
Interview 3: 12 April 1989
Interview 4: 14 April 1989
Interview 5: 3 August 1989
Interview 6: 17 August 1989
Interview 7: 24 August 1989
Interview 8: 14 September 1989
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Interview 13: 24 August 1992