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INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

The Institute of Jamaica pursues a varied programme specially suited to the cultural needs of the Jamaican people.

Libraries

A major event for the Institute of Jamaica during the past year was the opening of the new West India Reference Library. This event marked the gratifying climax of 15 years of planning for the preservation of the priceless heritage which the new Library houses. This collection, considered to be the most important on the English-speaking West Indies in the area and the most complete collection on Jamaica in the world, is now appropriately housed, with a staff steadily advancing in qualifications and experience.

The new Exhibition Gallery on the ground floor, which will be fitted out and completed during the current year should be one of the outstanding showplaces in Jamaica. The exhibits will be drawn from the West India Reference Library collections of maps, prints, manuscripts, photographs, etc.

The removal of the West India Reference Library collections into their new quarters released space in the old Library building for the expansion and improvement of the General Library facilities and the Institute's administrative offices. The staff picture has also greatly improved in the libraries and most of the vacant posts have been filled.

Port Royal Project

The Port Royal marine archaeological project, regarded by many as the most important undertaking of this type in the world today, has completed its first year of activity. The purpose of the project is to recover artifacts and building materials from the famous 17th Century Town which was destroyed by the earthquake of 1692. It is intended that there should be, at Port Royal, a Williamsburg-type reconstruction of the more important 17th Century buildings, and museums will be created to display the artifacts which are recovered. Items recovered to date include, pieces of eight, pewter dishes, clay pipes, pottery and wine bottles, as well as large quantities of bricks, marble, nails and flooring tiles. A very successful exhibition of some of the artifacts was recently held in New York and Chicago.

Junior Centre

The two Junior Centres have pursued their full schedule of activities with the enthusiastic participation of approximately 8,000 children between the two Centres.

Exhibitions

Regular exhibitions have been held in the Art Gallery and the usual programmes of Lunch Hour Concerts have taken place in the Lecture Hall.

Art Collection

Several important items have been added to the contemporary art collection and it is now proposed that paintings be loaned to official overseas Missions and ultimately returned to a main national collection.

Museums

In addition to the proposed museum for Port Royal artifacts, the Museum Programme continues to expand.

INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA
WEST INDIA REFERENCE LIBRARY

/ Folk Museum

Folk Museum - White Marl Museum

The Folk Museum in Spanish Town has continued to attract interest and it is important to note that of the 19,000 visitors during the past year, almost 7,000 were school children. Likewise at the White Marl Indian Museum, schools have been taking full advantage of the new instructional exhibits and, during some months over 2,000 children have visited the museum and open-air displays.

Denbigh Agricultural Museum and Seville Museum

The establishment of both the Denbigh Agricultural Folk Museum and the proposed Seville Museum of the Spanish period will receive special attention during the current year. It is expected that the Agricultural Museum will be a feature for the Annual Agricultural Show at Denbigh next August. It is expected that plans for a Military Museum and a Railway Museum will be formulated in 1967/68.

Natural History Division

The Natural History Division has continued its special programmes and important tasks and special attention is being directed to the Natural History Museum.

Jamaica School of Art

The Art School formerly called "The Jamaica School of Art and Crafts" has been given the new name "Jamaica School of Art". This change was made because crafts are being developed by other agencies and it was felt that the shorter name would be more descriptive and convenient. This does not, of course, preclude the teaching of Applied Art which is a very important objective of the School. A sub-committee has recently been set up to make recommendations for the future development of the School.

Publishing Programme

The new edition of Lady Nugent's Journal has appeared and has been well received. An expansion of the publishing programme is contemplated and it is hoped that a full-time editorial post will soon be established on the staff, in order to bring about the re-establishment of a Journal of the Institute of Jamaica.

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