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# Children's Museum

News

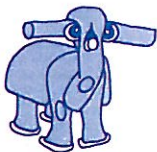
December 1980

Boston Children's Museum, 300 Congress St., Boston, MA 02210

## More roundup

### Boffo beasts

The Recycle staff are up to their usual tricks and their latest creation is a Boffo Beast Kit. The kit costs \$2.50 and with just a few minutes of diligent labor you can have your very own 10 inch high Boffo Beast. They are cute, cuddly, and are reputed to be quite witty.



### Free visits

Most of the slots for school group field trips are filling fast but there's plenty of space for after-school and community group visits. Don't forget that nonprofit community groups from Massachusetts are admitted free under an appropriation from the state legislature through the Department of Education.

During the winter, the museum is available for community and after-school

groups, Tuesday-Friday, 2-5pm; Saturday and Sunday, 10am-5pm. Advance reservations are required; call the Reservations Office before you plan to bring your group.

### Volunteers

More positions are now open in the Volunteer Staff program: community liaison consultant, Meeting Ground; Design and Production staff assistant; exhibit staff assistant; festival planning assistant; Meeting Ground; public relations survey manager; school services assistant.

Some openings that appeared in the last newsletter require several volunteers. Perhaps you'd like to help the Kit Rental Department repair artifacts or plan menus for Development Office staff and their guests.

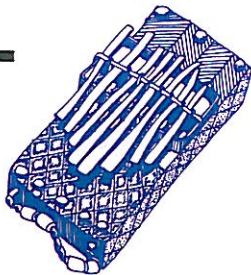
The volunteer program needs many skills; call Evelyn Berman, volunteer coordinator, for an appointment.

## Music maker

A mbira or thumb piano is just one of the authentic musical instruments that's part of the new music unit in the African Arts kit.

The mbira, together with a drum and rattles, enable children to play their own African music.

Like many of the museum's kits, this unit has a comprehensive kit guide; source materials -- in this case, books, pamphlets, and a prerecorded cassette of African music -- artifacts and objects; and materials and instructions for activities.



The Resource Center's kits cover more than 75 topics and teachers can obtain a complete list by calling the Kit Rental Department or stopping in the Resource Center.



We're celebrating the holidays in style. Join us for: **Celebrations workshop**, holiday traditions from around the world; **Stocking Stuffer Store**, open November 28 through December; **Vacation week specials**, music, stories, and children's performances; **Recycle workshops**, packaging with pizzazz; **Japanese New Year's party**, the Year of the Rooster. Details inside.

# What's Up?



## What's Up Line

Call (617) 426-8855 for a complete listing of hours, exhibits, special events, and travel information. To reach all museum departments, call (617) 426-6500.



## New exhibits

**Living Things:** the animals are back! Opens late November. **Small Science:** little bubbles, bubble domes, giant soap film windows, geometric bubbles, bubble sandwiches, and floating bubbles. Installation begins in late December and the exhibit will be completed in late January.

## Ongoing exhibits

Giant's desktop, Playspace, Factory, Small Science, Living Things, City Slice, Grandparents' House, Work, Computers, How Movies Move, WKID-TV and Instant Eye, We're Still Here, Ruth Harmony Green Hall of Toys, What If You Couldn't, Meeting Ground, and Japanese Home. Check the What's Up Line for schedule of Japanese Home tours.

## Japanese New Year Festival

Celebrate the Year of the Rooster at the annual O-Shogatsu, Japanese New Year's party. Always a colorful and popular event, this year's festival will be an extra special celebration since this is the first New Year's for the Japanese Home. Help make mochi-tsuki, pounded rice cakes; try your hand at kaki-zome, calligraphy contest; learn to play fuku-warai, the smiling goddess of good luck game; and make a beautiful nanga-jo. New Year's greeting card. Lots of other activities and performances all day, Sun, Jan 4. Food samples, too.



## Friday Night Performance Series

Every Friday at 7pm and 8pm. Admission to each show is 75¢ in addition to museum admission; tickets go on sale at 6pm.

## December

5, Donna Gibelli, mime, characterizations, and theater funny business  
12, Tom Smith, folksongs and stories  
19, Mr. Green the Clown  
26, Reg Bacon, music and buffoonery

## January

2, Larry Sayco, yoyo champ  
9, Tom Smith, folksongs and stories  
16, David Dunton's Puppetroupers  
23, Gerwick Puppets, "Mid-winter Magic"  
30, to be announced

## Family Activities in the Resource Center

On alternate Sundays in January from 1-3pm, there'll be games, arts and crafts activities, a chance to sample cultural traditions, and messing about with science equipment for a limited number of families. First come, first served. Call the What's Up Line for schedule. All activities free of charge.

## Christmas vacation

Planning is now underway for the Christmas vacation, Dec 20-31. There'll be special events each day and children's performing groups. The What's Up Line will have all the details.

## Winter orientation

Teachers who have school group reservations February-June should attend one of the winter orientation sessions: Thur, Jan 22, 4-6pm, for elementary teachers; Thur, Jan 29, 7-9pm, for preschool and kindergarten teachers.

## Admission

Exhibit Center: children, 3-15, and senior citizens, \$2.50; adults, \$3.50; children under 3 and members free. Friday night, 6-9pm, \$1.50. All groups of 10 or more must make advance reservations (426-6500). The Resource Center and Recycle are free.

## Hours

Tue-Sun, 10am-5pm; Fri until 9pm. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, and Mondays except Dec 22 and 29.

## Travel

The museum is at Museum Wharf, 300 Congress Street, on Boston's waterfront. MBTA Red Line to South Station.



## Roundup



## After hours

The museum is now renting out space in the Exhibit Center for functions -- private parties, fund raisers, weddings, and meetings.

The Exhibit Center is available every evening except Fridays and Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's and members receive a discount. If you'd like more information, call Klare Shaw, functions coordinator.

## Weather watch

The museum rarely succumbs to the weather but if a big winter storm arrives right before you plan to bring your family or class, you can check to see if the museum has closed by listening to one of four Boston AM radio stations: WBZ, WEEI, WHDH, and WRKO.



## First dibs



PHOTO BY STEVE ROSENTHAL

Brimming with holiday goods and decorations, the Stocker Store is now back in operation, and the Museums' Shop is presenting First Dibs, a special shopping evening for adult members, on Monday, December 1 from 7 to 10pm.

New this year are candy hanging ornaments -- toy soldiers, rocking horses, sailing ships, and fire engines -- made especially for the store from antique candy molds.

The sweetest stocking stuffer of them all is a miniature version of the Hood Milk Bottle. Hand made by Harbor Sweets of Marblehead, the bottle is dark chocolate with peppermint crunch, topped by a cap of white chocolate. The miniature box describes the Children's Museum, the Museum of Transportation, and the history of the Hood Milk Bottle.

Mulled wine will be served throughout the evening, and, of course, members receive a 10% discount on purchases.

First Dibs is for adult members only since the Exhibit Center will be closed.



## One last fling

The museum's Americana collection got a fascinating addition recently: a set of two wheel roller skates that might present a challenge to even the most skilled of the skateboard generation.

Manufactured by the Samuel Winslow Skate Manufacturing Co. of Worcester, Massachusetts, the skates have a single wheel on either end of the metal frame, and they are believed to date from the 1920s or 30s.

When the skates remained unused by her children and grandchildren, Mrs. B. P. Smith of Windsor, Connecticut, thought of the museum.

"Thanks to my mother's surrogacy in contacting you," she wrote to Sylvia Sawin, developer of the Americana program, "the one wheel roller skates (2 wheel?) are now headed

for the museum where ALL collectibles belong. I'm so pleased you want them. I wish these could be "hands-on" (feet on!) pieces for the interested children and parents who come to your marvelous museum. They are great fun."



Many years have passed since Mrs. Smith first tried on the new, shiny skates at the age of 10 but being a grandmother didn't stop her from a brief nostalgic trip back to her childhood. "I gave them a last fling," she wrote, "and they go as well as ever."

## Try this

Try making this replica of an African mbira or thumb piano with your children. The instructions and illus-

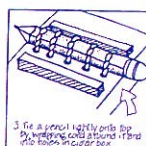
tration are from the museum's African Arts kit. Copyright © 1980 by Children's Museum, Boston.



1 Make marks in lid of suitcase can or cigar box



2 Glue two wooden strips across the holes



3 Tie a string tightly onto top by weaving coils around ridges into holes in cigar box



4 Place four nails under string as shown



5 Tighten coils under lid



6 Now you are ready to play your mbira

## WORK PHONE