

# WHAT'S IN THE World's Fair Time Capsule?

By HANS FANTEL

JUST 25 YEARS AGO, on Sept. 23, 1938, a unique "Time Capsule"—an age-proof package of mementos of our civilization—was buried at the site of the first New York World's Fair.

From its contents, future historians may gain a glimpse of our times. Die-stamped on the capsule are instructions that say in effect, "Do not open until 6939"—5,000 years from the date of that World's Fair.

But history is in a hurry these days. So much has changed in 25 years that the Time Capsule already needs a lot of revision. To bring it up to date the Westinghouse Electric Corporation will bury a new capsule alongside its old one at the next World's Fair, which opens in April. The capsule's contents, which will be announced early next year, will supplement the old capsule, adding such later events of civilization as World War II, atomic energy, space exploration, commercial tv, jet aircraft, antibiotics, polio vaccine, and the United Nations.

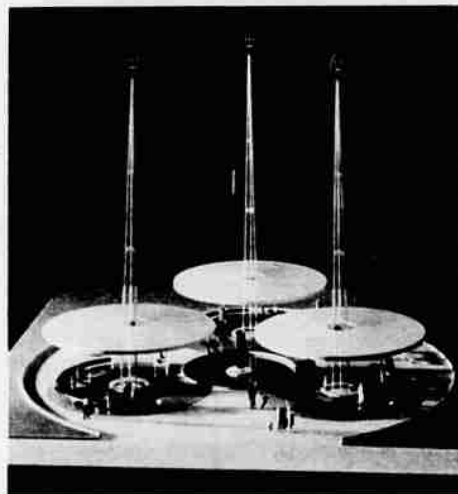
But the torpedo-shaped "missile to posterity" that celebrates its 25th anniversary this week still carries the main message of our age. More than anything else, common household articles are the key to a civilization. That's why the capsule contains such homey articles as an alarm clock, a can opener, a fountain pen, a light bulb, a padlock and key, a toothbrush, a slide rule (with instructions), a telephone, a watch, a safety pin, eating utensils, a camera, and a doll.

To give some idea of our personal habits, there's an electric razor, a woman's make-up kit, a nail file, and a woman's hat designed by Lilly Daché. And as clues to our spare-time pursuits, posterity may ponder over a golf ball and a tee, some poker chips, a baseball, a smoking pipe, and a deck of cards together with a copy of *Hoyle's Rules for Games*.

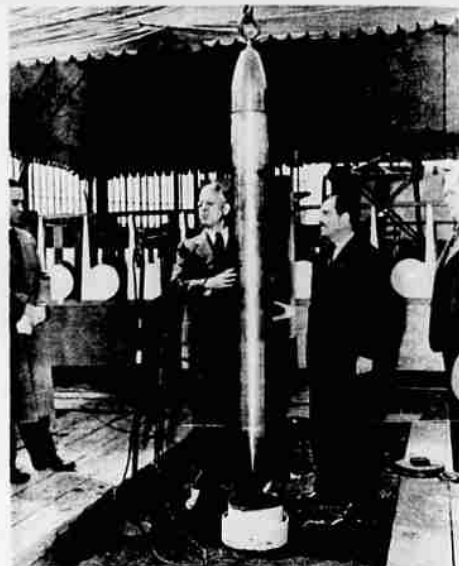
To wrap up our entire era in a "capsule digest," the seven-foot, six-inch container has been stuffed with microfilmed records of our history, religions, arts, sciences, and customs—some 10 million words, the equivalent of 200 full-length novels. In this tightly packed kaleidoscope of 20th-century U.S.A., historians of the 70th century will find a treatise on science next to a Mickey Mouse comic strip, a monograph on metallurgy wrapped around *The Reader's Digest* on the same microfilm reel, or a history of art snuggled against *Spalding's Baseball Guide*.

Our arts and entertainments are documented by microfilmed reproductions of a Picasso painting, the music of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and "Flat-Foot Floggee," the famed novel, *Gone With the Wind*, and a collection of Broadway plays, vintage 1937.

Countless industrial reports will tell our distant progeny how we made everything from metals to women's wear. And to convey the flavor of everyday life in the United States, the capsule



New capsule, suspended from three pylons, will be displayed during 1964-65 Fair and buried later.



The capsule was lowered into its 5,000-year resting place in 1938 at site of the N.Y. World's Fair.

contains microcopies of almost every American magazine published 25 years ago.

Since a language is organic and ever-changing, Westinghouse has tried to preserve English for future historians. The translation aids include the Lord's Prayer in 300 languages and dialects, on the chance that one or more of them might still be known in 6939. By comparing those languages with English, scientists may find clues to the meaning of our words, just as we deciphered the hieroglyphs of Egypt by comparing them with Greek.

Thoughtfully a microscope for reading the film has been included, just in case the knowledge of optics is lost along the way.

All the items in the capsule were made of material certified by the U.S. Bureau of Standards to stay fresh 5,000 years. Moreover, everything was sealed in a Pyrex cylinder filled with chemically inert nitrogen to forestall corrosion. Finally, the tube was housed in a shell made of the most durable metal then known—Cupaloy, a highly tempered copper-chromium-silver alloy.

Three thousand copies of "directions" were printed with special ink on permanent paper and distributed to libraries, museums, monasteries, lamaseries, and similar permanent and presumably safe archives throughout the world. "Dig a hole in 6939," the notice says, and then gives the exact location of the site, along with a basic key to our language.

Of course, that's just like saying, "Do not open till Christmas." Westinghouse hopes that future scholars will be able to contain their curiosity.

Here's the "inside story" of the package for posterity that was buried 25 years ago this week—and how it will be brought up to date at the new World's Fair

## COVER:

Ozzie Sweet caught Sandy Koufax, star left-hander of the Los Angeles Dodgers, in action. Despite the serious injury to his pitching hand last year, Koufax is winding up a record season. See his story, p. 15.

**Family  
Weekly**

September 22, 1963

LEONARD S. DAVIDOW President and Publisher  
WALTER C. DREYFUS Vice President  
PATRICK E. O'ROURKE Advertising Director  
MORTON FRANK Director of Publisher Relations

Send all advertising communications to Family Weekly,  
153 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill.  
Address all communications about editorial features to  
Family Weekly, 60 E. 56th St., New York 22, N. Y.

Board of Editors

ERNEST V. HEYN Editor-in-Chief  
BEN KARTMAN Executive Editor  
ROBERT FITZGIBBON Managing Editor  
PHILLIP DYKSTRA Art Director  
MELANIE DE PROFT Food Editor

Roselyn Abrevaya, Arden Eidell, Hal Londen,  
Jack Ryan, Peer J. Oppenheimer, Hollywood

© 1963, PROCESSING AND BOOKS, INC., 153 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill. All rights reserved.