

No museum too small or out-of-the-way to bypass

By JIM WINDELL

Paul Fitzpatrick thinks he doesn't have much worth talking about.

"I spend so much time killing time," he said recently in his Birmingham ranch-style home. "I don't do anything constructive."

Fitzpatrick is, however, a collector. He has his collection of cameras, an unusual slide rule collection, classical records and shelves of art books.

But there is another collection that can't be displayed in the compact room that neatly contains his records, books, slide rules, cameras and several paintings and prints that retain personal value for him.

That's his collection of memories culled from 45 years of art museum hopping. It began when he moved to Washington, D.C., at age 25 and he has been on the go ever since, cramming as many private and public art museums as he could into any trip.

GETTING THE round-faced, gentle man to talk seriously about his art museum avocation is a chore. A martini generally helps. When he momentarily forgets the name of a museum he once visited he is quick to remind, "I'm 70 years old. That gives me an excuse for not remembering."

His favorite museums are scattered around the world. "In this country," Fitzpatrick said, "Phillips has a great collection in Washington, D.C. It's a variegated collection accumulated by Duncan Phillips."

"Over in London there's the Wallace Collection. A lot of Londoners haven't seen that one. Then, down in Cincinnati there's the Taft House where they must have 50 old masters, things like Van Gogh, Renoir and Picasso. It's not a big museum, but it's wonderful to see so much in a comfortable setting."

The best private collection of art Fitzpatrick said he has run across is the Frick Museum in New York City. The museum is maintained in the former coke and steel industrialist's 1913 home on 70th Street and Fitzpatrick likes the Renoirs and El Greco there. He is also partial to the McMichael near Toronto because of its collection of Canadian artists and he enjoys the Chicago Institute of Art because it has part of the Chester Dale accumulation of Impressionists.

"MY FAVORITE kind of artists are the Impressionists, which is why I like the Boston Art Museum and the Chicago Art Institute," Fitzpatrick said. "The Barnes Museum, outside of Philadelphia, is one of the most impressive museums in this country. It has a notable group of Impressionists. Only a limited number of people can get into this private museum."

WHENEVER HE travels, he said, he drags his wife of three years through every museum in the region.

"Cleora," Fitzpatrick said about his wife, "doesn't quite share my enthusiasm for museums. She's more interested in gardening and grandchildren."

Fitzpatrick was widowed six years ago and retired from General Motors as a patent attorney a year later.

"Before that," he said, "my only interest was

Overeaters Anonymous hosts marathon

Overeaters Anonymous invites all persons wishing to be introduced to the group to a mini-marathon, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 12 in Novi Community Hall, 26360 Novi Road, near Grand River.

A continuous marathon of speakers will dispense information about the group, which is based on the 12 steps and the 12 traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Thrust of the marathon is to let others know how Overeaters Anonymous functions and attempt to get another chapter started in the Farmington-Farmington Hills area.

"Members who live in this area have to travel long distances to get to a meeting," said a group spokesman, who remained anonymous in the group's tradition.

"Overeaters is a fellowship, not a diet club," she said. "We have no dues or weigh-ins. We work on the things that make us want to eat and overeat so that we may find a new and better way to live our lives free from the compulsion to overeat."

Because of the tremendous response to our sale last Saturday, September 27, Englander's Clearance Center will be closed this week only to enable us to restock. We will be open beginning next week on Saturdays only with regular hours 10 am to 5 pm, and everything at 1/2 off and more.

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traveling and seeing museums. My interest in art had been stimulated years ago by business lunches. "After a business lunch, I would walk around the Fisher Building and wander into the book stores. They had all these sale books and most of them were big art books, so I'd buy them."

As a result, he has an enviable collection of over-size art books. Although he said he has been to Europe eight times, he indicated he tried to make up for lost time after he retired.

Taking a three-month trip around the world, he once again found himself going into every art museum he and the Guide Michelin could find.

IN HIS SEARCH for new and unusual art museums, Fitzpatrick uses three books he discovered in book sales. These are "Museums U.S.A." by Herbert and Marjorie Katz (Doubleday); "American Art Museums" by Eloise Spaeth (Harper & Row); "Museum Directory of the United States and Canada" by the American Association of Museums and the Smithsonian Institution.

The even-tempered Mrs. Fitzpatrick endures her husband's follies. However, she said, their house was not designed with a collector in mind.

"Either Paul has to move or we have to break a wall out," she joked.

Fitzpatrick enjoys showing his cameras, many of which he has found in garage sales.

"I bought camera number one hundred and sixty-five," he said. That recent acquisition was a Contax, an early single-lens-reflex camera.

The Georgetown University Law School graduate (1941) has some advice for other people.

"People should realize they don't have to be young, good looking or rich to enjoy themselves. All you have to do is sit back and relax," he said. His tongue seemed to be in his cheek and it appeared he had no intention of either sitting back or relaxing.

"I don't fish, golf or hunt. I just read, collect cameras and waste my life," he said wryly.

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— Paul Fitzpatrick

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