

Journey through the Archives  
1964-65 New York World's Fair  
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## 10 MINUTE VIDEO PLAYING AS CROWDS WALK IN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8F7sZGjZVSI> (0:00-10:09)

**JOURNEY THROUGH THE ARCHIVES SLIDE** Good afternoon and thanks for joining us! My name is Kelly Byquist, and I am the researcher and archivist here at Tenacre. I'm so looking forward to journeying through history together this afternoon. I'm a firm believer that history is primarily meant to inspire, help, and heal. Tenacre has a collection of photographs, documents, and memorabilia that make up its history, which I've only just begun to parse through, but what I hope to share this afternoon and in the coming months ahead is why this history matters and how it can help us today. So come with me, and journey through the archives.

**SLIDE** What you've seen up on the screen as you've walked in are clips and scenes from the 1964 and 1965 New York World's Fair. Some of you may be familiar with the Fair and others may know nothing about it, but we all have one thing in common – and it's that here on Tenacre's campus we have a literal piece of the Fair that we walk by every single day. Who knows what I'm talking about? **SLIDE** Yes; the four glass Discovery sculptures are those very items indeed. It's easy to walk past them without even knowing that they are a slice of history, a reminder, a symbol. This is what we will explore together today: Discover what these sculptures stand for.

**SLIDE** I want to begin by sharing the healing of a fifteen-year-old girl who attended the Fair. She writes, "During the summer of 1964 my family and I went to see the beautiful New York World's Fair. We had to take a subway train out to the fair, and it was quite crowded. **SLIDE** We finally arrived at the main gate and started walking down the avenue. After about half an hour I felt ill. We talked about God's protection and about how this was to be a perfect day for all of us. I kept praying so that I would feel better and the day wouldn't be wasted, but at this point it was almost impossible for me to walk, and I could hardly hold my head up.

**SLIDE** My grandmother proposed that we try to find the Christian Science Pavilion at once. Perhaps I might find a place to lie down quietly or just relax and read the lesson. My main goal was to find somewhere where I could read or think about God's Loving-kindness. Finally, **SLIDE** we reached the Pavilion. My feeling on my first glimpse of it was one of relief. The building looked peaceful and so welcoming. I felt reassured and certain that everything would work out right. A woman came forward and welcomed us with a kind smile. After we had explained the difficulty, she said she was a practitioner, and we asked her to help me.

**SLIDE** She gave me a *Sentinel* to read and went to a nearby chair to do some silent prayerful work for me. I read an article on obedience to God and our earthly parents. I got to thinking about obedience and soon forgot that I had felt ill. I counted all the ways I could obey God and all the ways I could obey my mother and father. **SLIDE** A little while later the practitioner came to me and asked me how I felt. "Perfect," I said, and it

was true. All the error had vanished. I felt like the perfect child, reflection, of God I actually am. We had a wonderful day, and I was so very grateful. **SLIDE** This was my first experience of such a quick healing. I can't think of a better place to have had it than at the Fair and in the Christian Science Pavilion.”

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Isn't that a wonderful healing?

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Now, we're going to come back to the New York Fair, **SLIDE** but I'd like to back-pedal a bit first and answer some of the basic questions, like: What is a World's Fair? Why have one and what did people do there?

World's Fairs, also known as Universal Exhibitions or Expos, have taken place throughout the modern world for almost two hundred years. The first international Fair that we might point to as the premier **SLIDE** took place in Hyde Park, London, in 1851. The Great Exhibition, as it is often called, was one of Prince Albert's ideas, and it showcased products from different nations. Since then, World's Fairs have focused on **SLIDE** technological advances and inventions, **SLIDE** showcased the achievements of nations and industries, **SLIDE** embraced cultural exchanges, **SLIDE** and included lively entertainment. In total, more than

100 World's Fairs have been held in more than 20 countries around the world.

Without realizing it, you may have walked by a surviving, and hopefully thriving, symbol from an earlier Fair. **SLIDE** The Eiffel Tower, for instance, was built for the 1889 Paris World's Fair; **SLIDE** the Atomium in Belgium for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair; **SLIDE** and the Space Needle for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. And if you were to visit Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens today, **SLIDE** you would spot the Unisphere, the centerpiece of the 1964-65 New York World's Fair.

The idea for this World's Fair began when a group of businessmen banded together in the late 1950s to search for a way to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of New York City. Host a World's Fair, they thought, and hold it at the same location as the earlier 1939 and 1940 World's Fair at Flushing Meadows. This time, however, they wanted to make the Fair bigger, better, and more breathtaking.

Let's take a brief pause and quickly peek at the World's Fair held on the same premises twenty-five years earlier. **SLIDE** The theme of that Fair was "Building the World of Tomorrow," and although little remains from the Fair as far as monuments go, we can thank photographs and mementos to help us paint a picture. **SLIDE** The Fair included exhibitions, activities, performances, art and food presented by 62 nations, 35 US

states, and over a thousand organizations and companies. SLIDE Slightly more than 45 million people attended over the two seasons.

But let's just zero in on one exhibit at the Fair – SLIDE the Christian Science Building. It was simple in design, reflective of the times. SLIDE It housed a main exhibit and two Reading Rooms, where visitors could read and buy the textbook of Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*; SLIDE learn about its author, Mary Baker Eddy; SLIDE and explore how Christian Science is helping to build the world of tomorrow. SLIDE Here are a few items in Tenacre's collection from the 1939 and 1940 New York World's Fair: a bookstand and what looks to me to be paperweights.

You might find it interesting to know that after the Fair, SLIDE the Christian Science Building was moved to Freeport, New York, placed on new foundations, and enlarged to accommodate a Sunday School and Reading Room SLIDE where it became First Church of Christ, Scientist, Freeport.<sup>1</sup>

One more interesting tidbit to mention about the Fair is that someone we are familiar with, SLIDE Burwell Harrison, who was running a hotel in East Orange, New Jersey, at the time, took some of the permanent residents to visit the spectacle.<sup>2</sup> That's all we'll say of Burwell for now, but keep listening, as he plays an important role later on.

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**SLIDE** But now let's jump forward twenty-five years to that second World's Fair at Flushing Meadows during the summer and fall of 1964 and 1965. The same Fair where that fifteen-year-old girl had her healing. With national flags flapping during the day and **SLIDE** shimmering lights illuminating the night, the 646-acre fairground was filled to the brim by nations, industries, and religions proclaiming the Fair's theme: **SLIDE** "Peace Through Understanding: Man's Achievements on a Shrinking Globe in an Expanding Universe." It was a rather important theme, given the political and racial challenges of the day.

The world, and this nation, was in great need of peace. **SLIDE** President John F. Kennedy, who broke ground for the New York World's Fair in December of 1962, didn't live to see the Fair himself when it opened.

**SLIDE** A North Vietnamese attack on a United States' Navy Destroyer in August 1964 marked the beginning of major American involvement in Vietnam. Meanwhile, **SLIDE** the heat of the Cold War raged on as the competition for the space race grew fierce.

**SLIDE** Martha Harrison shared this idea about the Fair's theme: "Each time I have seen or heard the phrase – 'Peace Through Understanding' – I have paused and asked myself, 'Peace through understanding – what?' I found the answer for me in the Lesson on 'God' which we had two weeks

ago. The Lesson ended with the citation on page 467 in 'Science and Health' where Mrs. Eddy says, – 'It should be thoroughly understood that all men have one Mind, one God and Father, one Life, Truth, and Love. Mankind will become perfect in proportion as this fact becomes apparent, war will cease and the true brotherhood of man will be established.' I have pondered the phrase, 'in proportion as this fact becomes apparent,' and have asked myself: where does this fact first become apparent, and, of course, the answer is in the consciousness of the individual. When we awake to the relationship of man with His Maker – in perfect unity – we perceive what Jesus meant when he affirmed concerning himself, 'I and my Father are one,' and when one understands and reflects God in the qualities of His being, he becomes a peace-maker."<sup>3</sup>

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**SLIDE** This was a momentous moment in history. Just think about it – in a relatively brief span of time, 55 years to be exact – mankind had advanced from the Wright brothers' first flight to the very threshold **SLIDE** of space when Sputnik orbited the earth. These years were an exciting time – space was an exciting place! – and the Fair didn't hold back from **SLIDE** futuristic exhibits and **SLIDE** Space Age style designs.



So, let's put on our imagination hats for a moment and spend a day at the Fair. After paying your two-dollar entrance fee, here are some things you might have seen and done:

- **SLIDE** You might have stopped by the Disney exhibit and heard "It's a Small World After All" for the very first time;
- **SLIDE** Or gasped at the humungous Sinclair dinosaurs;
- **SLIDE** Or taken a gentle, scenic ride over the fairgrounds in a cable car...
- **SLIDE** You may have spotted the "spaceman" carried aloft by a jetpack;
- **SLIDE** Or eyed Michelangelo's *Pieta*;
- **SLIDE** Or tasted a Belgium waffle for the first time...
- **SLIDE** You might have sat in the backseat of a futuristic car;
- **SLIDE** Watched Kodak's picture show;
- **SLIDE** Or explored NASA's Space Park...
- **SLIDE** You may have visited the Philippine Pavilion;
- **SLIDE** Watched Zulu dancers and drummers perform in the African Pavilions;
- **SLIDE** Or stopped by the Republic of China Pavilion...
- **SLIDE** You likely would have visited the Christian Science Pavilion;
- **SLIDE** And if you happened to visit on a particular afternoon, you would have heard Herbert Rieke (Ree-ka), a Christian Science teacher, lecture to an audience of over 12,000 in the Singer Bowl.<sup>4</sup>

**SLIDE** Nestled in the popular International sector, not far from the Unisphere and entrance to the Swiss Cable Cars, was none other than the landmark Christian Science Pavilion. Designed by architect Edward Durrell Stone, whose noteworthy reputation included the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, **SLIDE** the Christian Science Pavilion was built in the unique shape of a seven-pointed star, with a diamond translucent sky-dome at the center to let in light. **SLIDE** There was a Reading Room at the back and tons of greenspace outside to give fairgoers a restful, peaceful spot.

**SLIDE** Inside the Pavilion, state-of-the-art audio and visual displays invited fairgoers to listen to answers to questions like: **SLIDE** What is God? And what is man? **SLIDE** What is the Christian Science viewpoint of time... space... freedom... the universe?<sup>5</sup> **SLIDE** “We want to create a feeling of quietness, seriousness, thoughtfulness,” one of the designers shared, “a certain sense of awe before eternal questions; **SLIDE** inviting but not pushing, persuasive but without any hint of forcing conclusions.”<sup>6</sup>

**SLIDE** De Witt John, Manager of Committees on Publication in Boston, who helped develop the exhibit, expressed it this way: “The display seeks to communicate vividly some of mankind’s deepest glimpses into the realm of Spirit – into a divine reality that lies deeper than the secrets of matter. It speaks of an exact and thrilling Science more profound than chemistry or microbiology or nuclear physics. It employs art forms,

concepts, and symbols, which are the language of a highly sophisticated technological age, to convey a frankly spiritual message.”<sup>7</sup>

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Perhaps the most memorable display that fairgoers recall is one that questioned whether we can really trust our material senses. **SLIDE** The exhibit displayed what looked to be a rock, inviting visitors to reach out and grab it. When a visitor tried, what they would find is that they couldn’t grab hold of it – that they would just swat at air – because the rock wasn’t really there! It was a hologram, an illusion, reflecting through mirrors the image of a real rock that was hidden unseen from view.

**SLIDE** Displays like this got fairgoers to think, question, and discover.

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**SLIDE** A year earlier, at the groundbreaking ceremony held underneath candy-striped tents, President of The Mother Church, Ralph Wagers, shared this with the crowd: “It is fitting that Christian Science should take its place with other Christian churches in pointing to the fact that this nation has attained, and will maintain, its greatness as it recognizes ever more clearly that a society can endure only as it is based upon an acknowledgement of the supremacy of God, Spirit, and His ever-unfolding purpose for man.”<sup>8</sup>

**SLIDE** Hobson Miller, chairman of the Committee for Christian Science Activities at the Fair, spoke about the important place that Christian Science would bring to fairgoers. He shared: “Today, the harmony between religion and science becomes more and more apparent. The great advances in space exploration hint the infinite nature of God’s universe. Christian Science is indeed opening men’s minds to the real harmony between religion and science, and is giving to the world the highest sense of science – spiritual Science, or Christ Science.”<sup>9</sup>

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**SLIDE** After the first six months, the Committee on Publication for New York reported that over 500,00 people had visited the Christian Science Pavilion.

In preparation for the second season of the Fair in 1965, the Pavilion underwent extensive changes, which was a very common thing to do. One change that was made was the addition of the theme “Discovery.”

**SLIDE** Gilbert Robinson, General Manager of the Christian Science Pavilion, explained: “Penetration into space is only the latest testament to mankind’s need to discover. Since the beginning of time the breakdown of barriers in one form or another has characterized every age... in the Renaissance, new forms of painting and art; in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, new continents; in our time, perhaps new worlds. But discovery has many

dimensions. Christian Scientists, who often use the word *discovery* in describing the origin of their religion, have built an entire exhibit at the World's Fair around this impelling idea. The starting point of discovery is always the same – the stirring of thought in the minds of men. This is the opening theme of the Christian Science Pavilion.”<sup>10</sup>

It is my theory that this is when our Discovery sculptures were built and added to the Pavilion. Let me walk you through my reasoning and detective work: I was struck that in this image of the Pavilion from a 1965 postcard, **SLIDE** we can clearly see our Discovery sculptures just to the right of the entranceway, but that in many **SLIDE** other photographs taken from similar vantage points, we cannot. I kept asking myself: Is it possible that our Discovery sculptures weren't displayed at the beginning of the Fair, but were added later? **SLIDE** Next, I found a blurb in a *Christian Science Sentinel* talking about the second season of the Fair. The article stated: “Although the exhibit remains basically the same, several interesting improvements are being made to sharpen its message. A few sections will be extensively redesigned, and an outdoor ‘welcome’ feature will be added alongside the entranceway to the Pavilion.”<sup>11</sup> After reading that, I was intrigued! ...Then, when visiting the Mary Baker Eddy Library in Boston, I looked through their files and stumbled upon **SLIDE** this sketch, an obvious hint of this new theme of discovery. Next, I spotted **SLIDE** this drawing! My heart jumped at this early sketch depicting our Discovery sculptures clearly welcoming visitors and aptly matching the

*Sentinel's* description of a newly added outdoor feature! Right then and there, it became my best guess that our sculptures were made for the second season of the Fair in 1965 as a welcome to the newly added theme of *Spiritual Discovery*.

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**SLIDE** By now you might be asking, how was such a large undertaking like the Christian Science Pavilion organized, paid for, and who organized it? In short, it was organized by selfless, dedicated Christian Scientists throughout the field. **SLIDE** Yes, The Mother Church did contribute funds, and the Committee Office and Christian Science Monitor supported exhibits, but it was substantially spearheaded by a committee made up of members from branch churches in the New York City area, and funded by contributions sent from the entire field.

**SLIDE** Characteristic to his nature, our friend Burwell Harrison was Chairman of the Finance Committee for the Activities of the Fair before becoming a member of its Executive Board.<sup>12</sup> And as you can imagine, raising funds was no small feat! The final budget of the Christian Science Pavilion for both seasons totaled over one million dollars, which equates to nearly 11 million today.<sup>13</sup> In typical Burwell fashion, supply and finances were nothing short of a spiritual demonstration.

In a Report to the Field, Burwell shared this idea with its readers: “The building of the Original Mother Church was the first movement-wide project to which Christian Scientists put their unified and collective shoulder. In the ‘Dedicatory Sermon’ Mary Baker Eddy said, ‘There was no urging, begging or borrowing; only the need made known, and forth came the money, or diamonds, which served to erect this ‘miracle in stone.’” That’s from page eight of *Pulpit and Press*.

**SLIDE** Burwell continues: “Gratitude for Christian Science is as great today as when movement-wide support built and paid for the Original Mother Church, the Extension, and the Publishing House. We conclude therefore, that in the proven method by which all things important to the mission of our movement have been provided, the Christian Science Pavilion and its Exhibit will be paid for through adequately making the need known to the members and attendants of our churches. To achieve its mission, the presentation of Christian Science at the New York World’s Fair must rise above mere human activity to the level of scientific demonstration. To be demonstration, this project must be accomplished from additional giving which deprives no other essential activity of rightful support. Christian Science at the World’s Fair is an activity related to spreading the Gospel. However, for donors to divert funds from their regular contributions to churches, from other authorized activities, or from proven worthwhile services for Christian Scientists, would constitute a transfer of funds rather than a demonstration of supply.”<sup>14</sup>

**SLIDE** Another idea shared by the Finance Committee was the “Expected Good From Unexpected Sources Fund.” We might think of this today as “pay it forward.” The idea for this fund was for donations to stem from money received unexpectedly, for example, taxi fare saved when a friend offers a ride.<sup>15</sup> From churches to individuals, adults to children, the scientific demonstration of supply overflowed, with unexpected blessings in its wake. Here are just a few of the rich blessings from extraordinary acts of benevolence: **SLIDE**

- An eight-year-old Sunday School boy, upon discovering the Fair contribution envelopes, took a penny from his pocket and sent in his donation.
- The Point Pleasant, West Virginia, informal group decided to support the Christian Science Pavilion even though their membership numbered only three. One of the church members later wrote: “This sparked a chapter of progress, which is a rebuttal to the complaint, ‘What can we do? We are so few in number.’ When we decided in 1963 to financially support the Fair, our meeting room was in desperate need of comfortable chairs, Readers’ desks, lamps, and so on. In the face of our own need, we decided to contribute to the Fair rather than purchase the chairs we had been planning to install. The members decided that supporting the Pavilion was ‘keeping abreast of the times.’ Although this was Mrs. Eddy’s provision for the Christian Science periodicals, they took it



as their inspired motto for rejuvenating their entire activities. As each phase of their work was measured against this yardstick, and against this question, supply began to be manifested from totally unexpected quarters. Within nine months after our regular contributions were begun for the Fair, we had received gifts of 35 handsome seats, a Readers' desk, lamps, 11 new Hymnals, books for the library, a bookcase, and other furnishings. This shower of love exceeded by many hundreds of dollars what we had contributed. Our meeting room now has the desk and 16 of the seats installed, giving comfort, beauty, quality, and dignity to our blessed little meeting room. Local people report reading the literature in our window. Inquiries are being made about Christian Science. Our library has loaned 47 books in the last seven months, more than had been borrowed in the seven years previous to our support of the Fair. Membership is now six. Sunday attendance is ten or more. The study room is open two days a week instead of one. The textbook is going off the shelves at a gratifying rate."

- From the Brunswick, Georgia, Society, which had voted unanimously to increase its World's Fair Activities Fund, came this happy fruitage: "I would like to add that since this increase was voted, our Sunday School attendance has nearly doubled."
- A gentleman in Cincinnati accompanied a check with this explanation: "There's a story behind this donation. It started last September when I began walking each day to the office where I

work – a distance of four miles. Not more than a week had passed when I noticed the item, New Fund idea. I decided I would contribute the quarter a day saved in bus fares to the Christian Science exhibit. This would be my ‘expected good from unexpected sources fund.’ I have now walked to work 160 days. I have covered 640 miles in all, which would be about the equivalent of walking from Cincinnati to the exhibit site. It has indeed been a worthwhile goal to work toward.”

- This heartening message accompanied a contribution of \$1.84: “Years ago I was an angel for a beautiful Broadway production. I was just one of the littlest angels but my investment paid off and still trickles in. Every time an amateur theater does the show, we get a dividend. Here is the latest one!”
- “Twenty dollars of the enclosed contribution,” wrote a woman in Boston, “came to me as a reward for the finding of a handbag. The owner was so grateful to find everything intact. I told her that I was going to turn in the reward as a contribution for the Christian Science Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair. She remarked as we parted, ‘You will make me a Christian Scientist yet!’”
- Another contributor wrote: “This \$5.51 is a refund on Maryland income tax.”
- And another: “This small amount is from an unexpected discount on a repair part I ordered. I feel it is the result of the law of God, good, in operation, and should be used in support of that law.”

- And lastly, in her eagerness to contribute to the Pavilion, one woman decided to see what she had in her own home that could be turned into cash. She found a few old coins and some junk jewelry, all of which were collecting dust in the back of a closet. She took these to a collector, sold them for \$35, and sent the money to the Fair office.<sup>16</sup>

**SLIDE** And then there were individuals who donated their time. The Christian Science Pavilion was open 12 hours a day, seven days a week, requiring up to 50 persons every day for 6 months during both 1964 and 1965. At least one practitioner was always on duty. All served without pay.<sup>17</sup>

**SLIDE** This was Church in action. And these are just a handful of the hundreds of examples of pure benevolence. Supply for the Christian Science Pavilion, which includes our Discovery sculptures, was achieved through scientific demonstration from the entire Field. And it all started, from “the need made known.”

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To quickly touch upon what happened next, our story continues.... After the Fair, the Christian Science Pavilion **SLIDE** was taken apart piece by piece, trailered onto a boat, shipped through the Panama Canal, loaded

onto a train, reloaded back onto trucks, and taken **SLIDE** to the middle of a cow field in Poway, California for reassembly. After reinforcement and reconstruction, **SLIDE** the Christian Science Pavilion stood for the next 39 years as First Church of Christ, Scientist, Poway/Rancho Bernardo.

**SLIDE** We know what happened to the Discovery sculptures... well... we actually know very little. There are still some unanswered questions. We know that they were brought to Tenacre. And I think it's safe to assume that they came on account of Burwell's tireless work in connection to the Fair. However, we do not know for certain. At least not yet! I have not discovered any clues in our archives, nor have heard any first-hand accounts. But, the search is not over, and the promises of discovery have only just begun.

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Now, before we conclude, I happen to know that we have some folks in the audience who attended the 1964-65 New York World's Fair. Is there anyone willing to share a fun moment, anecdote, or recollection from your visit?

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You all have been wonderful. Thank you. Thank you for coming and if you would like, you're invited to come outside to take a closer look at our beautiful Discovery sculptures.

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- <sup>1</sup> See "Church Dedications," August 19, 1967, *Christian Science Sentinel*.
- <sup>2</sup> See "Tenacre: A Chronicle of Prayer and Listening: An Account of its Demonstration Between 1912 and 1968," Tenacre Foundation, Page 25, Footnote 4.
- <sup>3</sup> Martha Harrison, "Peace Through Understanding," Tenacre Foundation.
- <sup>4</sup> See <https://cslectures.org/rieke/discovering-peaceful-relationships-rieke.htm> for Mr. Rieke's lecture "Discovering Peaceful Relationships." Mr. Rieke lectured on July 26, 1964. Arnold Exo, C.S.B. of Chicago, gave a lecture in the Singer Bowl the following season on July 25, 1965.
- <sup>5</sup> Progress Report #4, March 1964.
- <sup>6</sup> Progress Report #3, September 1963.
- <sup>7</sup> Remarks of De Witt John, Manager of Committees on Publication for The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Massachusetts.
- <sup>8</sup> Christian Science Pavilion: Groundbreaking at the New York World's Fair 1964-1965, April 21, 1963.
- <sup>9</sup> Christian Science Pavilion: Groundbreaking at the New York World's Fair 1964-1965, April 21, 1963.
- <sup>10</sup> Gilbert A. Robinson note, published as "It's the Spirit that Counts" in a World's Fair Scrapbook, The Mary Baker Eddy Library.
- <sup>11</sup> "A Report from the New York World's Fair," January 30, 1965, *Christian Science Sentinel*.
- <sup>12</sup> See Progress Reports #1, #2, and #3.
- <sup>13</sup> "Important Information Concerning the Christian Science Pavilion at the New York World's Fair 1965 Season," MBEL.
- <sup>14</sup> Progress Report #1, March 1963.
- <sup>15</sup> Progress Report #3, September 1963.
- <sup>16</sup> "When the Heart Speaks..." compiled by Jean Elsie Sanders, Committee for Christian Science Activities World's Fair 1964-1965, Inc.
- <sup>17</sup> Progress Report #3, September 1963.