

## SC Space Lab Gets Overhaul

The University of Southern California's human centrifuge will be modernized and its laboratory and office areas enlarged with the construction of a new two-story building which will accommodate USC's on-going biomedical and aerospace research programs.

The total cost of the project, which will add 4,000 square feet to the present facility, will approximate \$280,000. The modernization and enlargement will be made possible by two grants to USC from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, according to Dr. John P. Meehan, USC physiologist and chairman of the USC committee which operates the centrifuge.

Work on the centrifuge itself will include replacement of the 20-year-old gas-operated engine with an all-new electrical drive system. The modernization will include various structural modifications on the centrifuge's whirling beam, which accommodated Astronaut Walter Schirra Jr. and Astrochimp Enos.

**THE NEW** building, which will be erected at the south side of the present facility, will permit movement of all present laboratory facilities into that area.

Centrifuge space presently used for laboratories will accommodate the shop which has built various biomedical instruments including the one which recorded Enos' blood pressure during his trip into Outer Space. The shop is now situated in the basement of USC's Hancock Foundation.

Enlargement of the centrifuge will also allow for the movement of Dr. Meehan's principal USC campus office and biomedical laboratories from Kerchoff House on West Adams Boulevard to the centrifuge site. Movement of the shop and laboratory facilities from the Hancock Foundation and Kerchoff House will permit centrifuge-related activities to be under the same roof for the first time.

**IRONICALLY**, the human centrifuge—which has become such a scientific tool in the Space Age—had its beginnings in the middle of the last century when it was suggested as a possible means for treating mental illness.

Its true worth as a test tool for aeronautics came in the 1930s when the Germans, then busy building what was to become their famed World War II Luftwaffe, used the human centrifuge to train and test their dive-bomber pilots.

The United States built its first centrifuge for whirling humans in the early 1940s and the one at USC was constructed in 1943 under the auspices of the U.S. Navy. It remains today the only human centrifuge on a college or university campus in America.

Used from 1943 through the duration of the war, the USC human centrifuge was involved in its earliest days with testing some of the early models of the first anti-G suit.

**AT THE** conclusion of World War II, interest in the G-forces temporarily lagged and for nearly five years the USC centrifuge was rarely used.

In the late Fifties, as interest developed in high-performance aircraft and Space travel problems, the contributions which the human centrifuge can make to research in these areas again became evident and USC's Big Boom began rotating again.

In addition to the hundreds of student-subjects who "rode the wheel" for various aeromedical studies, more than 3,000 U.S. and foreign pilots—at USC to attend the Aerospace Safety Division classes—have also been passengers on the centrifuge.

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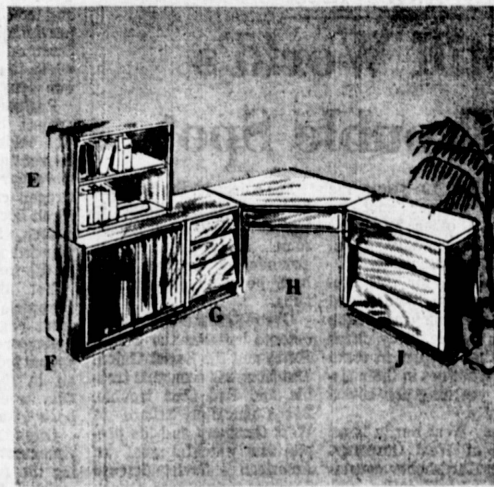
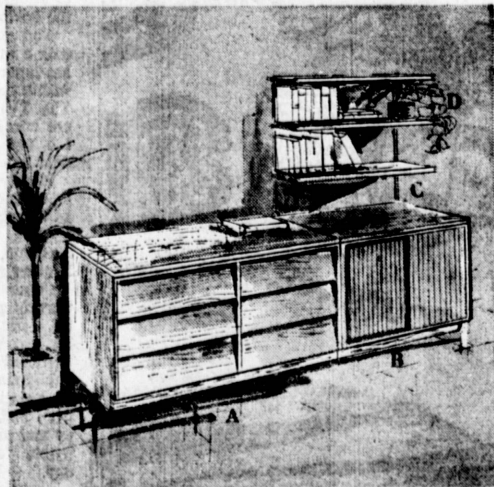
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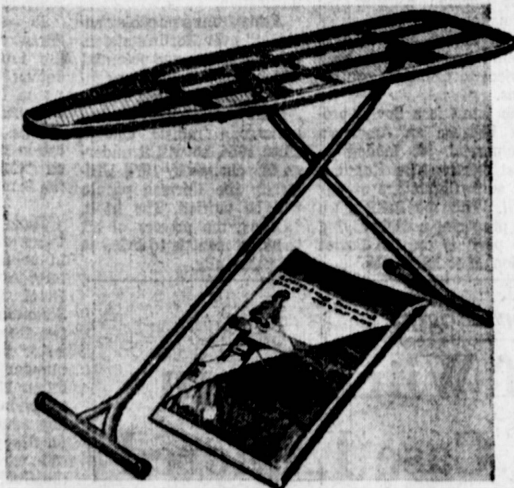


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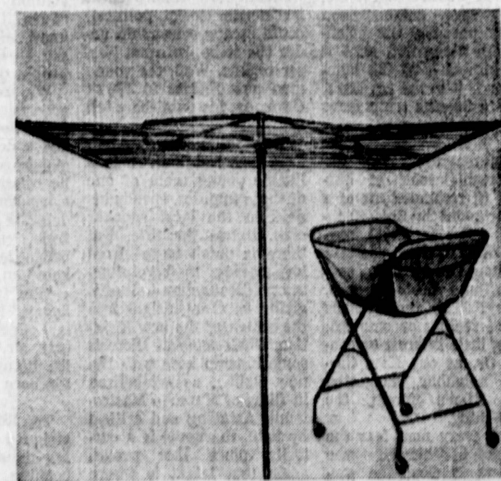
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