

Each Tuesday morning Ken and three or four volunteers don white gloves and start work. Another crew of three comes in for the afternoon shift.

Sand and salty air that infiltrated the original folders while they were stored at Mr. Aplin's beach house has to be blown off by compressed air. Then the slides are sorted and transferred to polypropylene holders. Black and white photographs will be stored in acid-free envelopes.

"The old plastic pages often stuck to the slides," Ken says. "These new archival holders are as safe as you can make them for storage." All the color slides have now been indexed and the index entered into a computer program established by Dr. Daryl Koutnik, a staff biologist.

Volunteers working on the index must also decipher Mr. Aplin's sometimes cryptic handwriting and verify botanical names. With imagination, perseverance and the help of the research staff, his notes about the photos have been recorded.

The stunning quality of the photos has inspired dedication that borders on obsession among the volunteers.

"These people never take a break," Ken says. "Then I have to remind them to go home to make room for the next group." But they don't have to worry about running out of work soon. Scores of boxes filled with unsorted material are still stacked almost to the ceiling and will take at least another four years to process.

Robinson Gardens hosts party for special children

The Friends of Robinson Gardens arranged an early visit from Santa Claus to the delight of 45 children from the ERAS Center for Special Education. On Dec. 5 the children, ranging in age from 5 to 15 years, enjoyed a party complete with lunch, a singing clown and his guitar-playing accompanist, a mime and a puppet show.

Star of the show, of course, was Santa, who arrived with bags of presents. When each child sat on Santa's lap, he or she received toys from Disneyland, a photograph from television personality Fred Savage, and sox from the Los Angeles Dodgers. Topping everything off were more toys and sweatshirts contributed by the Friends.

The party, arranged by co-chairman Susan Genter and Jan Billings, continues a tradition established by Virginia Robinson. This year



Banners flutter as clown leads children in a sing-along.

the guests were from the ERAS Center, a school that teaches ordinary living skills to mentally disabled children.



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