

Any discussion of the age distribution of buildings housing museum institutions must take into account the fact that for 30 percent of these buildings, historic houses and preservation projects, a part of their value exists because they are old. Of the remaining 70 percent, four-fifths, or 57 percent of the total number of museum institutions, are currently housed in buildings not originally planned for museum use, or share quarters with another institution which owns the physical plant. Of the museum institutions housed in physical plants designed specifically for their use, 49 have buildings constructed before 1900; 75 are in buildings completed during the period 1901-20; 223 institutional plants date from 1921 to 1940; 174 from 1941 to 1960; and 68 have been built since 1961.

Private, nonprofit organizations own the majority of all museum operations, 57 percent; followed by local public bodies with 19 percent; State governments, 12 percent; the Federal Government, 7 percent; and proprietary organizations, 5 percent.

The estimated value of the physical plant facilities of museum institutions as of the end of 1965 is in excess of \$490 million.

B. COSTS AND USER CHARGES

1. CAPITAL AND OPERATING COSTS

The average cost of construction for museums in 1965 was \$1.41 per cubic foot, including electrical, heating, plumbing, air-conditioning, and elevator installations, but excluding the cost of the land, specific museum installations such as exhibit cases, and interior decoration. This average figure was found to hold true for both small museums such as park museums, specialized museums, and local historical museums, and for larger museum of all types in small cities. Only in the very large museums, with total construction costs over \$750,000, was there found to be a variation in this pattern, with the average cost rising to \$1.89 per cubic foot.

Operational costs (guards, maintenance, repairs, and utilities) can be broken down as follows:

Small museum: \$4,700 to \$35,727.

Intermediate: \$45,000 to \$127,000.

Large: \$165,000 to \$1,500,000.

The great variation in cost within the size groupings can largely be assigned to the cost of guards in art museums. History and science museums of all sizes have operating costs ranging from a low of \$4,700 to a high of \$230,000, but in art museums the figure changes radically with several of them paying out over \$1 million a year for maintenance and guards.

2. USER CHARGES

Approximately 19 percent of museum institutions (other than proprietary, which form 5 percent of the total 4,595) charge admissions, but only 3 percent have admissions which account for more than half of their operating income, and which might cover the cost of operating the institution. Specific museum taxes to cover the cost of operating a municipal or county museum are fairly rare, and an outside estimate