



The S.C. State Museum opens its doors Oct. 29 after a lot of help from USC.

File photo

State Museum opens Oct. 29

By JOHN ROBERTS
Staff writer

It's been a long time in anticipation, but the S.C. State Museum will open its doors Oct. 29.

The museum is located at 301 Gervais St., housed in what was once the Mount Vernon cotton textile mill. The 87-year-old mill was closed in 1981, and the 370,000-square-foot facility was donated to the state to be the museum's home.

USC has played a major role in the opening of the museum, said Overton-Ganong, the museum's executive director.

"The university has been of immense benefit for administrative assistance and scholarly assistance," he said. Curators of the museum have been in contact with the USC faculty for years, he said.

"The USC faculty has advised us on what to do in various matters."

USC students have been active with the museum, Ganong said.

"We've had USC interns for years and have had the work study program here for the last three years," he said.

The museum has a particularly close affiliation with USC's applied history program, he said. Museum staff members have lectured at USC

through the program and plan to continue the lectures in the future, he said.

The museum offers displays from the fields of natural history, science and technology, cultural history and art.

Among the most prominent displays is a 40-foot replica of a great white shark and the Charles H. Townes Center in the science and technology section of the museum.

Townes, a Greenville native, was awarded the Nobel prize in 1964 for his work on the maser and laser.

Townes, who was a guest at the press preview of the museum Friday, has donated his medal to the museum. The medal will be on display in the center.

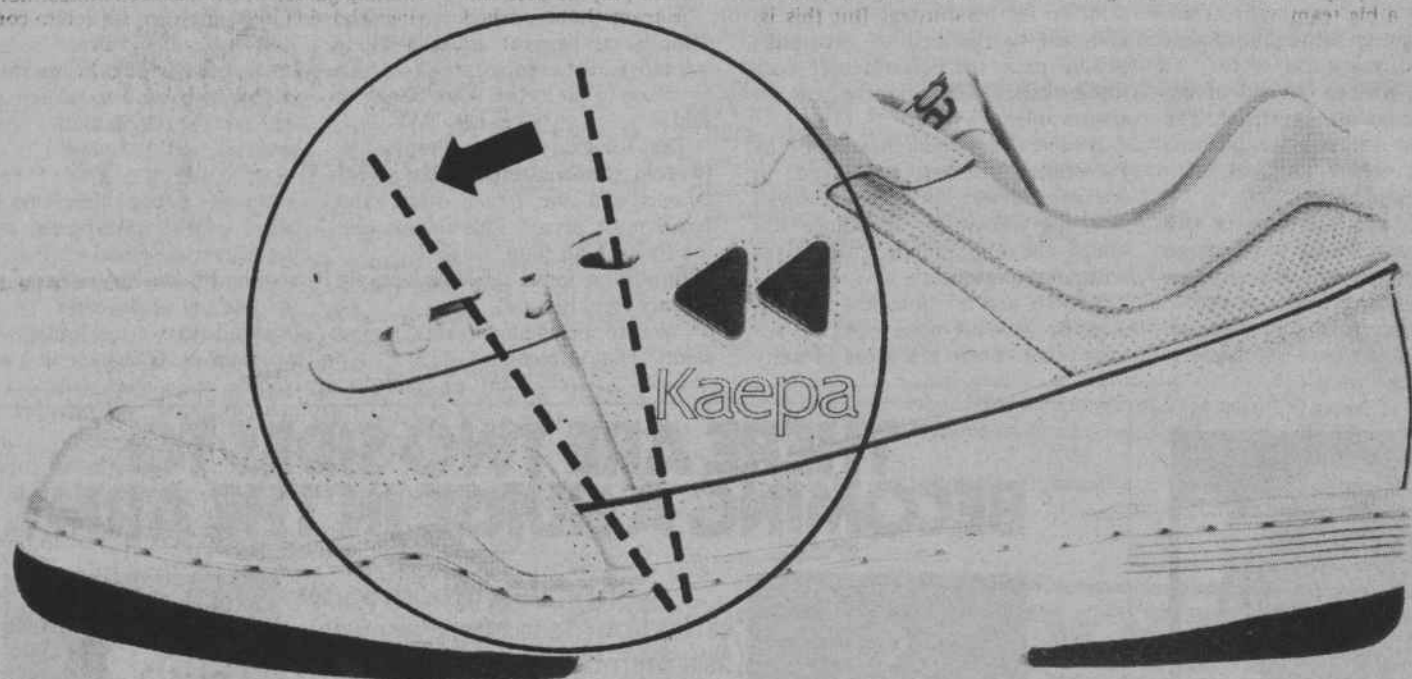
"I hope young people will get inspired and interested from this exhibit," Townes said.

Technology is exceedingly important to the state; it is the key to economic success, he said.

In the past, he said, there wasn't a great deal of research in the state. But he said South Carolina is now making progress in the area, and he urged researchers and faculty at the state's colleges and universities to keep pushing and developing technology.

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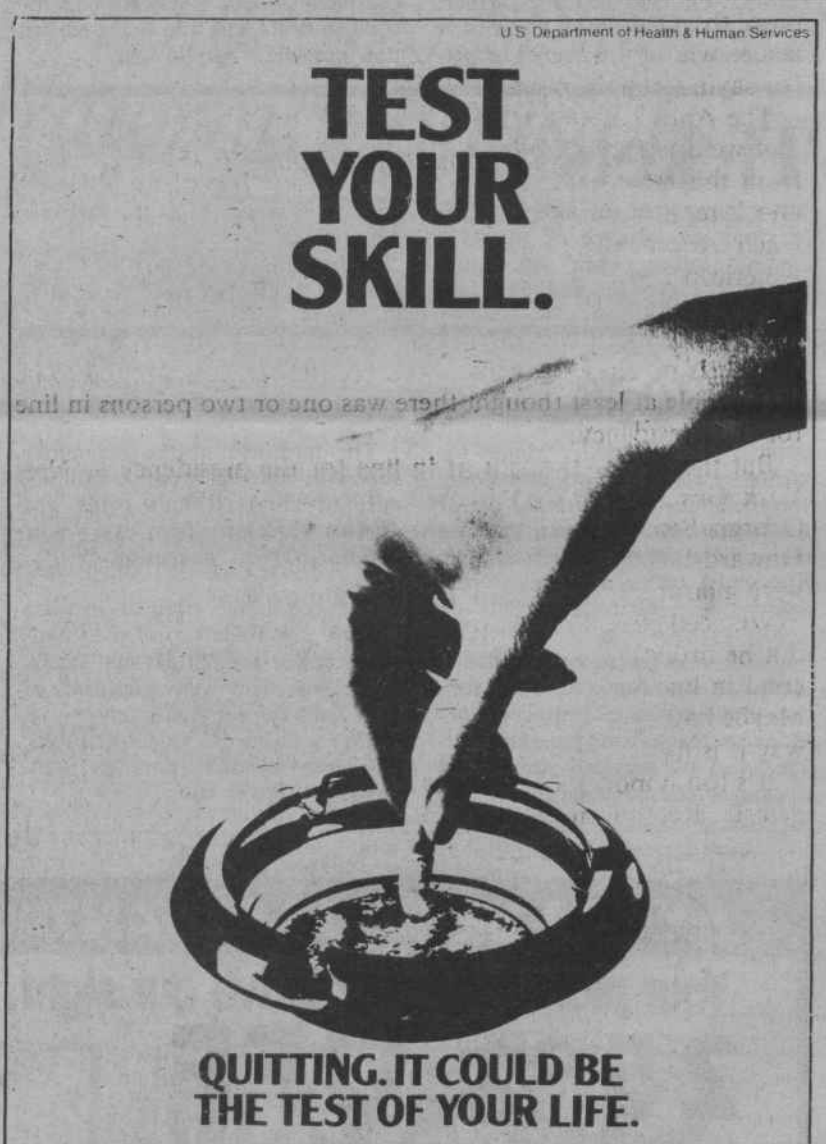
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