

## Public Display of Your Collection

Clay Castleberry

Its time again for me to remind all of our fellow collectors that we can so easily share the heritage of calculators and slide rules, with just a little effort. For me, this has been an enjoyable part of collecting these valuable tools of the past, as I have repeatedly told anyone who would listen. I have displayed parts of my collection at community libraries, public offices, museums, city halls, and as programs for engineering societies, local government workshops, service clubs and historical societies.

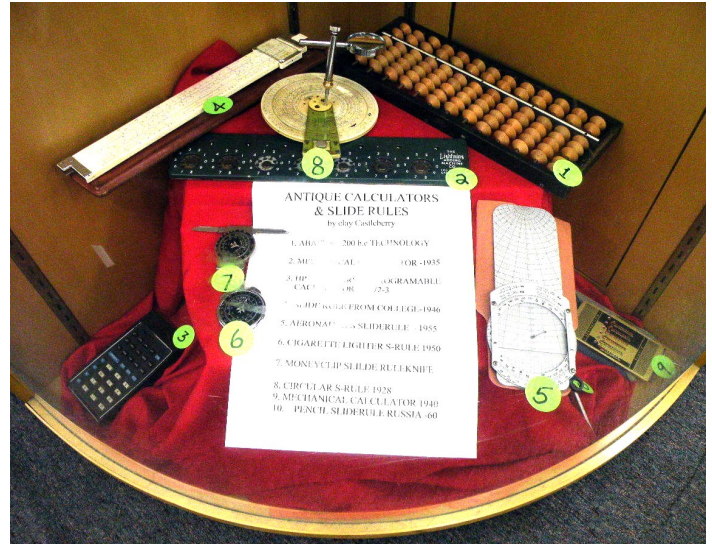
This reminder arises, as I shared what might be my simple record of concurrent displays, with Oughtred Society members Tom Wyman and Ted Hume, both workhorses for the Society. At the writing of this note, I have slide rules and calculators on public display at three prominent locations at the same time. Both Tom and Ted suggested that I write such a reminder.

My first display (Fig. 1) is located in the lobby of the City Council Chambers at the City of Nevada City, California. It has been there on display for almost a year.



**FIGURE 1.**  
Display at City Council Chambers lobby,  
Nevada City, California

My second display (Fig. 2) is at the main branch of the Butte County Library, and my third (Fig. 3) is at the main branch of the library of Colusa County, where I am now serving as the Interim Public Works Director. Yes, I have my K&E 4081-3, from my college years, in one of the displays.



**FIGURE 2.**  
Display at Butte County Library, California

Most often displays are in place for limited amounts of time. Most of mine have been promised for periods up to two to three months, and all of them have been held over at the request of librarians. Eventually, however, it will be necessary for you to take your collection home, sometimes with regret. Such was the case, when my calculators and slide rules were replaced by a collection of flat irons.



**FIGURE 3.**  
Display at Colusa County Library, California

My displays always include an abacus, a large slide rule, a pencil slide rule, a watch pocket slide rule, a sector or gunters

rule, a mechanical calculator, an electronic calculator, often a curta, and some other rules I feel would be of interest. My latest has a horse racing handicapping calculator and the fabled spoof Zlotnian Calculator, and I include my original Commodore 64 computer in at least one of the displays.

It may come as a surprise to the readers of the Journal, but feedback tells me that we should include calculators other than slide rules, for not everyone is quite as interested in slide rules as we are. Therefore, we need to include abaci as well as mechanical and electronic devices.

I always provide an information sheet listing all displayed items and their date of manufacture or the date of the technology. The sheet gives my name and how to contact me. I actually do get questions from interested people, on occasion. I also try to leave an Oughtred Society card in the display case as well.

I suppose I have been very lucky, for in perhaps 15 displays and five public gathering programs, I have not lost a single instrument, nor have any been damaged.

Thus, we have a simple way of sharing our message and a chance to feel good about it. One must realize that librarians have no time to be out on the street looking for displays for their libraries. That said, almost all librarians appreciate the offers to display interesting collectibles. Just ask; it is very easy.

For these reasons, I will continue to look for venues to share my collection and I hope that you do, also.

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Clay Castleberry, slide rule collector, is a retired county engineer and has been County Engineer of more counties in the USA than anyone.