NOTES for QUERIES

We don't know if the term "ethnocuisine" ever caught on with folklorists, but we recently did learn of another new "ethnoscience" of which folklorists ought to be apprised, etnomycology, which according to a recent newspaper article "examines the role of fungi, particularly mushrooms, in the folk customs and religious practices of man." The Baton Rouge, La., Sunday Advocate (October 11, 1970, p. 1-F) recently reported on the work of one etnomycologist, Louisiana State University botany professor Bernard Lowy. Lowy is interested in Central American "mushroom stones," carvings which have been found in Guatemala and elsewhere and which depict mushrooms, often in conjunction with human and animal figures. He theorizes that these are the remains of a Mayan hallucinogenic mushroom cult, similar to that found in Mexico today. Lowy spent the past summer doing fieldwork in Guatemala attempting to find traces of such a cult. He found no traces, "not even folklore," that such a cult existed, though he found that the residents of the area in question had a considerable knowledge of mushrooms and many words to describe mushrooms in their language.

Folklife-interested readers may be delighted to know that a museum devoted to the art of moonshine manufacture exists in Dawsonville, Georgia. It is located next to the local jail.

Is a folklore Ph.D. a glut on the market? (For that matter, will academic hard-luck stories become a genre? A friend of the FORUM recently heard one about an incident at the December, 1970, MLA meeting in New York /yes, the FORUM is still running behind schedule/. A group of participants are in an elevator at the Hilton when a bell suddenly rings. A graduate student standing in the back remarks: "They only ring it when somebody gets a job.")

The May, 1970, issue of Stereo Review contains (pp. 63-68) an excellent article on how records are produced ("From Master to Disc: How Records are Made," by David Stevens). This is part one of what is apparently to be a series and discusses "lacquer to metal master to mother to stamper."

Collectors of field experience stories will find a short, informal and interesting one in a recent issue of Johns Hopkins Magazine (the exact date of which escapes us for the moment, pp. 28-31), "'I am a Mountain' 'Why are you a Mountain?' 'Because my Father was a Zebra,'" by Rada Dyson-Hudson. She, an ecologist, and her husband, an anthropologist, spent several years wandering with the Karimojong, a group of Uganda herders.

One Lee Quinn, a Californian recently set out on a voyage from Japan to San Francisco aboard his 48 foot sailboat with an all female crew of three in an attempt to disprove the old superstition about women bringing bad luck to a vessel. The boat is long overdue and has apparently disappeared.