

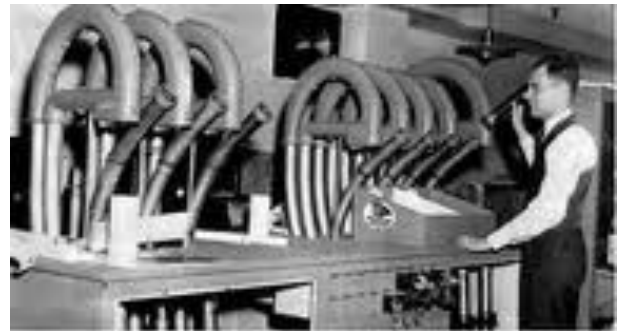
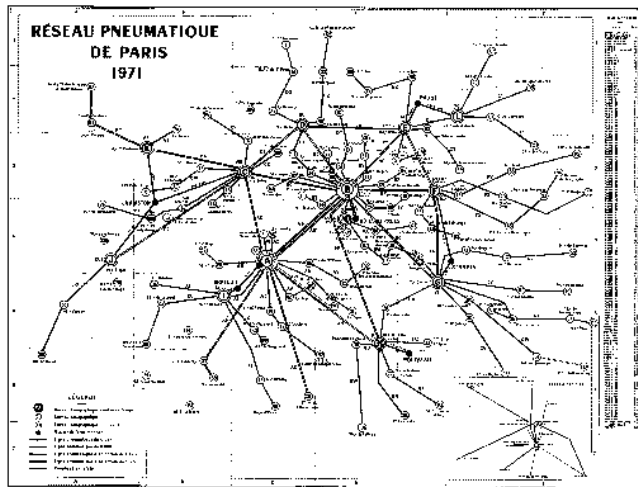
**October 21. Visit to**

- **Postal Museum, 34 Blvd Vaugirard**
- **Bourdelle Museum, 18 rue Antoine Bourdelle,**
- **both in the 15<sup>th</sup> arr. near the Gare du Montparnasse, a short walk from our apartment.**

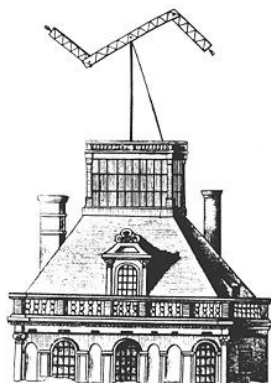
**Postal Museum** This was worth the visit. As in all French museums the presentation is first class. There are old historic objects as well as some intriguing AV displays and even a few interactives. One begins on the 5th floor and then gradually works ones way down through room by room to the exit. There is even a display showing how the French postal system has a research center looking at innovative new methods. There is lots on airmail and the first flights across the Atlantic ocean. There is lots on cable laying. On display is a cute interactive display where one takes an object on a table and using a mouse and screen one can find the right size “collissimo” (box) to ship it in. Since the French postal system also includes phone, telegraph, and banking there are displays on those also.

Two that particularly interested me:

**Room 6. The pneumatic system.** It began in 1866 and was a series of tubes through boxes called sliders and transported by air displacement. The network, located in the sewers connected telegraph offices. By 1957 it totaled 400 km in length. The containers traveled at an average speed of 600 to 700 meters per minute, and could contain 35 letters. The system stopped working in 1984.



**Room 4. The optical telegraph.** This began in the 18th century and was invented by the Chappe brothers in France. It consisted of semaphore towers in line of site with each other; spaced about 10 km apart; each station could view the others through binoculars. So a message was passed from station to station. In clear weather it took about 75 minutes for news to go from Calais to Paris. But the system was discontinued when Morse invented to telegraph in 1844 which was adopted in France in 1856.



Semaphore on the Louvre



**Bourdelle Museum**. In the Montparnasse district, the Bourdelle Museum offers a rare example of the artist studios that flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, like the ones along rue de la Grand Chaumière.. Bourdelle settled there in 1885 and remained until his death in 1929. For over 40 years he produced most of his work. Like Rodin with whom he was practicing, he thought of his "museum". Over 500 works of sculpture in marble, plaster, bronze, polychrome materials, paints, pastels, fresco cartoons for the Theatre des Champs Elysees and the personal collection of Bourdelle fill the halls and gardens of the museum.

