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Gross's Terminal Keyboard to Be Displayed at Smithsonian
By Mary Childs

(Bloomberg) -- The keyboard of bond legend Bill Gross's Bloomberg terminal will soon be a piece of history.

The keyboard will be on display as part of the Smithsonian's "American Enterprise" exhibition and become part of the permanent collection, according to Peter Liebhold, chair and curator of the division of work and industry at the Washington-based National Museum of American History. Accompanying the keyboard are two Beanie Babies -- a bull and a bear that were draped over Gross's monitors at Pimco -- and a pair of fuzzy dice representing "his beginnings as a professional blackjack player," Liebhold said.

"My favorite thing is the password," Liebhold said in a telephone interview Friday. "If you look at the keyboard you can see that Bill Gross, who's controlling maybe the biggest bond fund in the world, on a piece of paper Scotch taped to the top of his keyboard has written his ID and his password. So he's just like everybody else."

Gross, 71, co-founded Newport Beach, California-based Pacific Investment Management Co. in 1971, and helped build it into a \$2 trillion money manager as investors flocked to his Pimco Total Return Fund. He left in September to join Janus Capital Group Inc., where he now runs the \$1.52 billion Janus Global Unconstrained Bond Fund.

The museum collected the keyboard and other materials on Dec. 26, 2013, Liebhold said, a few months before the firm moved offices and “threw away all their equipment -- so we got there in the nick of time.” The exhibit, opening July 1, features more than 600 objects.

Stamp Gallery

The billionaire, known for his stamp collection, has a previous association with museums. The National Postal Museum’s William H. Gross Stamp Gallery, featuring rare collections and postal artifacts, opened in September 2013. At 12,000 square feet, it’s the world’s biggest of its kind. The Smithsonian show includes George Washington’s tea chest, former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson’s mobile phone, Milton Friedman’s briefcase and the napkin on which economist Arthur Laffer sketched his iconic curve.

There’s also another Bloomberg terminal keyboard in the exhibit, courtesy of Bloomberg LP founder and majority owner Michael Bloomberg, which Liebhold called one of the old-school “chiclet keyboards,” nicknamed for keys in the style of Chiclets gum. Bloomberg LP is the parent of Bloomberg News.

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