

Subj: **RICH BKGROUND AND URGENT BKGROUND ON WPA PAINTINGS**
Date: 3/16/01 1:59:26 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Mlfausold
To: gvca@wycol.com

Ellen: Some days ago I called a Dan Dorman in Albany whose name was on letterhead of 1972 letter dealing with the 1972 inventory of the WPA paintings. I got number from Whos Who. Through their voice mail I sought info on bkground to the history of the paintings. A LONG SHOT. WOULD YOU BELIEVE? Wife Lois Dorman called me this morning to say she did the 1972 inventory under Smithsonian direction and was thrilled to hear of our work. We talked for about a 1/2 hour. What a rich background on the whole WPA collection here. In the process of my making plans to go to her husband's Albany office with a tape recorder next Wed. (Mr. 24) I blurted out that rather than my getting this story and passing it on second hand to you and others would she like to come to Geneseo. WOULD YOU BELIEVE? She and her husband would be glad to come here, on Mr. 28, April 4 (least desirable), or April 18. I suggested that we would set up a meeting with interested parties, say, Kathryn, Mazza, Dahl and you and me (and/or anybody else you might suggest.) So, let's talk in a hurry so I can get back to her.
Martin

WPA
J.W. Connolly

Geneseo

State University of New York Oral History Project

May 7, 2001

Dear Jan & fors —

What a pleasure to have been with you on April 20 & 21. You are both invaluable resources; and we particularly appreciate your knowledge and enthusiasm.

I enclose our April 21 transcript and encourage you, as you choose, to make any changes (style, grammar substance) and especially to add any material to enrich this historic document. By addition I include new paragraphs and footnotes. Ellen and I will provide an introduction to put the whole piece in national and N.Y. context. We will return our editing for further changes by you. This will become a priceless document to accompany the whole project.

We are grateful to you.

Sincerely,

CC Ellen Herzman

Martin Fausold

R. Wayne Mahood, Distinguished Service Professor of Education Emeritus, Co-Project Director

Martin L. Fausold, Distinguished Service Professor of History Emeritus, Co-Project Director

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Jan S. Dorman

June 6, 2001

Dear Martin,

Please forgive us for not
having returned this to you sooner
but we have had a lot of activity
in our lives these past few weeks.
Our eldest daughter gave birth to
our first grandchild (a boy - Max)
three weeks ago and we have been
going back and forth to Boston to
be with them.

Lois and I appreciate all you have done
and we want to keep in touch as
this project unfolds. We hope the
corrections to the Transcripts are helpful.

Jan S. Dorman

keep in touch and have a
wonderful summer

Best wishes,

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature, likely reading 'Jan S. Dorman', written in black ink.

Conversation of April 21, 2001

Ellen Herzman, Martin Fausold, Lois and Jan Dorman

We are talking with Jan and Lois Dorman from Albany. They will describe their mission here today and what it had been seventy years ago. Also, Ellen Herzman, who is the Executive Director of the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts, and I am Martin L. Fausold, Professor of History Emeritus, here at SUNY Geneseo. We are much concerned about approximately 230 WPA paintings that are on the Mt. Morris campus of the Livingston County government, and we are interested in having them retrieved, so to speak, have them re-inventoried and have them possibly appraised and restored, and handled differently than they have been. I'll go directly to Mr. Dorman and ask Jan to talk about his experience, why he came here and what he did.

Jan: "I came here to question Emery, whom I had worked for in the state legislature and describe the problem . . ."

Martin: "Who did you work for?"

Jan: "I worked for the New York State Assembly before it was closed up."

Martin: "Did you say 'Jim Emery'?"

Jan: "Yeah, Jim Emery was the . . ."

Martin: "Oh, so that was your entrée into this?"

Jan: "Yes, it was."

Martin: "I didn't know that. Okay."

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Jan: "In fact, I had done work for Jim as doing research for the whole development of physicians' assistants in New York State. Jim sponsored that legislation. It was a need for physicians with medically insured areas in this part of the state. We had coremen coming back from Vietnam who were very well trained, and they could not get a job, they could not use their skills here in New York State, so Jim really was the "father," if you will, of the physicians' assistants legislation. I did all the research and wrote the bill for him, and that's how I developed a relationship with him. When I was leaving the legislature, he asked me to stop by. I stopped by to see him, and he told me that there was an issue developing in this district, which was the state was going to be turning over the Mt. Morris TB Hospital to the county for a dollar. It was quite controversial because the county legislature and the taxpayers in the community knew that it cost an awful lot of money to run that facility, and where were they going to get the money to keep the facility going, and what could they do with it? It was described in some of the local newspapers here. I remember seeing the headlines, the "white elephant" that Livingston County was going to inherit from the State of New York. Jim asked me if I would come out and see if I could think of some ways that the county could use the facility to meet the needs of the people here in the county. So I came out, took a look at the property, and went back and met with my partner in Health Planning Associates. We were a company that was formed to provide services to local governments in New York State. There was a lot of money coming out of Washington at the time for the building of nursing homes, health-related facilities, mental health/public health programs, and having worked in the legislature, I knew that counties didn't know how to access that money. They just didn't know what to do to get it, so we took that and the fact that money was flowing from

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Washington to the states. Livingston County needed to do something with the property up here, and we put together a plan (I do have a copy of the plan--I'll leave it with you) which we looked at to say, 'What could we do? What were needs if we did a needs assessment of the county? What were the county's plans? What was happening in terms of long-term care? What was happening with the relocation of some of the county government?' We developed a proposal which was presented to the county legislature to create, what I call the Livingston County Campus, to get away from the Mt. Morris TB Hospital and think of it in terms of, because it was a campus, it looked to me like a college campus."

Martin: "A beautiful campus."

Jan: "A beautiful campus! We approached it in that perspective in that it could be a multi-purpose campus to meet the health care needs. We proposed some manpower training programs. At that time there was money coming out of Washington for manpower training. We even felt it would be a multi-county facility. In the proposal, we talked about bringing in three other counties to participate in the use of the campus. We clearly were able to define that the hospital itself could be converted into what was called a "health-related facility," which is a step below skilled nursing care. The county was closing two of their facilities--they were out of code. A lot of code and regulation in New York State was forcing county nursing homes, the old county courthouse nursing homes, to go out of business. This was an opportunity to provide a level of care that was truly needed in Livingston County. The health-related facility portion of it was pretty straightforward--that was easy. We were hired to do an inventory, a complete inventory. The State of New York . . ."

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Martin: "What percentage of campus related to the health facilities?"

Approximately. Was this half of the campus?"

Jan: "Yeah, I would say that we envisioned half the campus to be health in nature. Clearly the health-related facility we were going to create, and we did create what was known as a daycare outpatient nursing program up there, designed for individuals who needed a certain level of care, maybe occupational therapy, physical therapy, recreational therapy, we needed to monitor their medications. But they didn't have to sleep up there. These were people who would be able to come in the morning, it was medicaid money back then for transportation to bring people up to the campus for all of their daily activities, and at night they would go home."

Martin: "Pardon me. No TB, though."

Jan: "No TB."

Martin: "When did the TB leave?"

Jan: "The actual patients I think left sometime as residents probably in '69, '70. Just before that, the state was still running the regional TB, they had a regional center for ambulatory care, and the hospital was still providing that service. This was I think a four or five county regional facility. Therefore, the state was still putting a lot of money into Mt. Morris. There was the actual medical facilities, the surgical suites, the equipment was first-rate, even though we have a facility that physically goes back to the 30's and 40's in terms of the décor, if you will, the architecture, the actual medical technology was state-of-the-art in '71, '72. Part of what we did was to do an inventory, and it was during the inventory period we found some fascinating stuff. I was walking one day into the occupational therapy room of the hospital, and there on a table . . . the space, the room

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itself was just loaded from floor to ceiling. It was . . . I think they had accumulated everything that must have existed on the campus and just dumped it in this room. We walked in and here it was, these canvases were piled high, and our first impression was that this must be work done by patients. Lois was walking through, looking at this stuff . . .

Martin: "I want to get it again. All in one room?"

Jan: "One room."

Martin: "Stacked up."

Jan: "Stacked up on a table, and I mean from floor to ceiling. Piles of it!"

Lois: "As I recall, I think I had been gone. I think I was through. One room I had gone into without you because you were checking out all the medical equipment, and I happened to just be wandering through the hospital and walked into what was the OT room and found all of these canvases just scattered about, piled on top of one another, hundreds of them. It was like walking into wonderland for me."

Martin: "There were none on any walls at that time?"

Lois: "Nothing was on the walls. Nothing. The hospital had been deserted. It looked as though someone had turned the lights off one night, walked out, and abandoned it. Jan was really the one who was responsible for finding all the equipment of which you can describe in detail, and then I'll go into the paintings."

Jan: "What we did was, as I said the surgical suite was state-of-the-art, so we inventoried all the surgical equipment. They had a medical library that was as up-to-date and as complete as you would find at any medical school in the country, and we called in Strong Memorial, we did a catalog research on what the surgical equipment was worth,

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new, we came up a price for the county, and they actually sold the equipment, the whole surgical suite, to Strong Memorial. The medical library was sold to the University of Rochester Medical School, and that sort of recouped a good portion of our fees, because our proposal we had back in those days was a pretty ambitious amount of money for the county to come up with to hire us. What you'll see in the proposal here--we didn't do all of it--but the court pieces, the largest portions of it, they did retain us to do. So we were kind of glad that we were able to recoup this money quickly for the county. Our fee was controversial at the time. This was a lot of money for the county to lay out to a consulting firm to do this."

Martin: "Were you the only one?"

Jan: "No, my partner, who was a physician attorney, he was both an MD and an LLB, he and I were partners in this, and we had other people in New York City. By and large, most of the work fell on our shoulders."

Ellen: "What was your area of expertise?"

Jan: "Well, my area of expertise . . . I'm an ABD, actually through government public administration. I went through the doctoral program at the School of Public Affairs in SUNY Albany, and then when I got out, I went to work for the State Legislature and developed my expertise in health care by working for the Health Committee on the Legislature. I did a lot of work with hospitals and nursing homes while I was in the Legislature, so I had a good sense of what these things were about, what could be done, where do you go when you find something, what do you do with it. And you have a vision, and in this case we had a very good vision of what we thought the county could do with it."

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Martin: "And your vision in short was what?"

Jan: "The vision in short here was to try and provide a facility which would meet the needs of the residents of the county by not just having a single purpose use, but to come up with a lot of different uses that would provide opportunity and would make it worthwhile for the taxpayers in the county to continue to fund and run this facility. It had to appeal to a broader base than just the health community. The manpower development was a piece that it was clear that we had a higher unemployment rate out here, so how do we go about coming up with training money? The county was going to build a new office complex for social services. They had run out of space. I think the old facility, the old building, was down around here, maybe Geneseo, Lakeville Road . . ."

Martin: "Right on 20A."

Jan: "And this provided an opportunity for them. They were planning to spend a couple million dollars to build a new building, but here, retrofitting what we had, they were able to move the Social Services Department up. Public Health Nursing needed a headquarters. I believe a sheltered workshop was developed. The ARC needed to develop a resource for the mentally retarded/developmentally disabled citizens, so they took a look and said, 'Gee, the space up here would work for us to do a sheltered workshop,' and I believe they had a sheltered workshop for a number of years up there, which was providing work opportunity and revenue back into the ARC and through the citizens who were working there. I think we had proposed that it was controversial at that time that Motor Vehicles be located up here. That's another story that I leave to other people. It never happened, but at the time it was envisioned that the Motor

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Vehicles Department would be moving up to the campus as well. Politics may have somehow kept it where it was.”

Martin: “Well I’m glad.”

Jan: “We talked to a lot of legislators of what were your needs, and this was one of the needs that they had perceived. Again, I think that we presented a menu of choices, and they were able to pick and choose which ones they thought they would follow through on. And that was it. I used to get up in the morning and drive here, before 390, and it was a pretty long drive. It would take me 4 ½ hours to get here. I would meet with the County Legislature, we would talk about the project, I’d get in my car and go home and come home around 9 or 10:00 at night. How many times I did that! When we were retained, the decision was made for us to actually come out, to move the family, Lois and our oldest daughter, our only child at the time, and we moved out in July, August.

Lois: “I think we came in July and we stayed until September.”

Jan: “We stayed on the grounds, living in one of the houses. They had to provide us with telephone and housing. That was all part of the contract, the arrangements with the county.”

Martin: “Okay, anything else?”

Jan: “No, let’s turn to Lois.”

Martin: “Lois, why don’t you take over for a bit?”

Lois: “I think I would like to set the stage for this finding of the collection of art. When we decided to come to Mt. Morris for the summer, I had not been to this area before, and I really had no idea where we were going. As I recall, there had been the flood, which was Agnes, or was it Hurricane Agnes, and we were driving from Albany to

this area, and the farther we got into, I would say, Avon, Livonia, and the devastation of the flood was evident as we looked around. The fields, the farmland, had been completely covered with water, and the saddest sight to me was seeing the animals--I believe there were horse farms--that had been devastated, and they hadn't been able to rescue the horses. Some of them were still lying on the ground, so seeing this was just one of the saddest sights I can ever recall driving through. Of course I was quite despondent coming to this rather gloomy place, and you have to turn the clock back 30 years to really understand how devastating it was. And Ellen, you were here. And Martin, you were here, so I'm sure you recall what it looked like. And here we were, bringing our 2 ½ year old daughter, and I'm thinking, 'What are we going to do all summer with Allison in this godforsaken place?' and as we drove up the hill I'm thinking, 'Oh my goodness, where are we going?' The hospital loomed before us, and it was this huge edifice, the only thing that I recall was that it looked somewhat like the Ginney and Putnam in Saratoga Springs. I thought maybe we could do something with this place. We got settled into one of the little buildings and Jan and I were both trying to, as we look back on it, we really can't recall which of the houses we lived in. We know that it wasn't the single house, because we think that has been occupied by a family. We finally decided that it was probably the second attached house on the right.

Ellen: "Which is now Building 4. I think it's the Legal Services which is situated in that section of Building 4."

Lois: "As I recall, the house itself had been uninhabited for quite some time, and it took a little bit of elbow grease to get it cleaned up. It was gray and dingy as I recall. We quickly got ourselves settled in and proceeded to go over to the hospital to take a

look at what was there. Again, as I described before, it was turnkey. We walked in and everything had been left as it had been probably several years before, or may just a year before, we're really not quite sure about that. The exodus from the use of the hospital. As Jan went about his business, I wandered through the hospital, and as I said I walked into this occupational therapy room and found my summer project, which was the paintings piled to the ceiling. I had a wonderful summer tracing each painting and contacting various people to . . ."

Martin: "How did you do the tracing?"

Lois: "What I did was set up a little desk, went through each painting, one at a time. The first thing that we did after we established that they had not been painted by the patients of the hospital, and had in fact been part of the WPA period of art, we decided to contact the Smithsonian Institution."

Martin: "Nobody knew that these were WPA paintings?"

Lois: "Apparently not."

Martin: "How's that possible?"

Lois: "I think that there had been very little interest outside of certain academic areas for those paintings. That's the only thing that I can imagine."

Martin: "How did you find out that they were WPA's?:

Lois: "As I was picking each painting up and saw that they all had the same tag on the back that either said "Works Project," some of them were dated with the artist's name on the back, many of them had come from New York City, and the little that I knew about it, I started thinking this is really something, this is not just a minor little art

project for the patients. So somehow we decided that we would call the Smithsonian Institute, which we did. They sent me a guideline of how we should proceed.

Ellen: "Do you have a copy of that guideline?"

Lois: "I'm glad you asked that question, Ellen. We tried to find our files from our complete file which we kept. I know that some point it will turn up, but we couldn't quite pinpoint it. I went through all of the files in my house, and Jan went through them in the office. What did you come up with other than the proposal?"

Jan: "The proposal. We know that there are lots of papers. And Martin, just to go back, the reason I don't think people knew it because we have to keep in mind that that was a self-contained community. The public really did not visit the campus."

Martin: "Rather isolated."

Jan: "Right. It was quite designed to be isolated. The employees who came and went on a daily basis--remember, these paintings were hanging for them--they would never turn the paintings over."

Lois: "That's right. There was no reason for them to do it, and they weren't labeled on the front."

Ellen: "Actually, some of the frames do have the WPA metal tag on it that says 'federal art project. None many of them.'"

Lois: "Not too many people would know what that was."

Jan: "Nor were there a lot of people going up from the county."

Lois: "You had the patients, you had the physicians and the nurses who lived on campus. You had probably some of the therapists who came up to help, but other than that . . . you may have had visitors visiting the patients, but it was considered a fiefdom of

just this little enclave of medical personnel, who by the way had some very notable credentials. They were affiliated with Hornell, University of Rochester . . . so it was an isolated area.”

Martin: “Where did you hear the story that patients said, “Oh, somebody gave me permission to take the painting,”?”

Lois: “It was an employee. It was an employee. There was a woman that we interviewed last summer. We had a folklore intern with us and she interviewed a lot of people who had been at the Mt. Morris TB Hospital, either as patients or as employees, and her story was that when, and she was there from the time the hospital started in 1936 until it closed. And when it closed she said that the Director said, ‘Take what you want.’ So we have no idea, I don’t know if anyone has any idea, how many people he said that to and how many people took the invitation to take what you want. So we have no idea, or at least I don’t know . . .”

Martin: “So we don’t know how many paintings were originally here!”

Lois: “That’s right.”

Jan: “Two thirty-nine. You found 239 I think.”

Lois: “Approximately. And there may have been some, as we understood it later, there may have been some hanging in the private residences. They had been allocated for the entire campus, so they may have been hanging in the residences which are now the Social Services.”

Ellen: “Yeah, for all I know, Mrs. Learn, who is the widow of one of the last associate directors, I believe, still lives in, I think it’s Building 5. For all I know, she may have some paintings adorning her wall.”

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Martin: "Wait a minute. She still lives there?"

Ellen: "She lives here."

Martin: "And she was here?"

Ellen: "She was here."

Martin: "From when?"

Ellen: "From 19--, I don't know when Dr. Learn came here, but . . ."

Martin: "She's a resource."

Ellen: "She's in failing health."

Lois: "And it's interesting because we never saw hide nor hair of them. They may not have been here that summer, because there was not another soul on the campus. They may have gone away for the summer, that's the only thing that I would imagine, because certainly having been here the entire summer, somebody . . ."

Ellen: "You would've known, because I think they had 6 or 7 children."

Lois: "There was nobody."

Ellen: "Yeah, they may have been grown children by then."

Martin: "Before you continue your talk, I want to find out from you, how can we find out how many paintings there really were originally and why they came here? I've tried to research this in the General Services Administration and in the records at the university, and there's no help at the federal level, but somebody, some source . . . It's important to know."

Lois: "I think it would be."

Jan: "It's kind of hard. We can make some assumptions. Clearly, Roosevelt put a lot of resources from the . . . back into New York State. We know that."

Lois: "He was still governor when the original project was propositioned."

Jan: "For Mt. Morris. For the whole development of tuberculosis site/sanitorium in New York State, I think he was the governor. He may have sighted Homeward Folks, which was in Oneonta. I think Oxford was a state hospital. Clearly, he had seen the property back in the early 30's for the site here."

Martin: "That's documented isn't it? Ellen made a favorable comment."

Lois: "Yes, the plan was beautiful."

Jan: "My assumption is that why did we wind up . . . I wouldn't be surprised if you have most of the paintings."

Martin: "Why do you say that?"

Jan: "Because there are too many that I think others, if people were grabbing them, they would've grabbed more. To us, it was a sense of, nobody knew so why are we left with 230, 240 paintings? If you told me we'd found 15 or 20, I can't imagine that many more were taken. I would assume that if people took one, they would've taken five. I don't know, the way that it was stacked there, the way that we found it, I'm assuming that most of the work that was on this campus is accounted for."

Lois: "It was basically unknown because of the way it had been tossed to . . . I think there would have been more reverence for them had people known what they actually were. But the way they were just tossed aside, you had to, when we had just saw them yesterday, they were all lined up. They were cleaned up, they had been cleaned considerably."

Ellen: "Many of them have because they've been hanging in offices."

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Lois: "And when we found them, imagine going into an attic or going into a basement or going into a room filled with all of those works of art, just piled on top of one another, filled with dust. I think that there had been, actually I think there was a covering over them. But they had over some of them, like a sheet, like a dirty, old sheet. By and large, they were just cast aside, and I'm surprised that they actually had not been thrown out or destroyed.

Ellen: "Martin said that the federal government had no record of this allocation. When you came to the campus, were there records of any kind? Were there patient records or administrative records?"

Jan: "No."

Lois: "That's a good question."

Jan: "I think the state had taken all the patient records. I think those are confidential and owned by the state, so I don't think there are any patient records. There was no inventory. There was an inventory, I think maybe of furniture. I don't think they had inventoried the surgical. The stuff that we found was never inventoried. There was no record kept, I mean there was nothing."

Lois: "There was no receipt of purchase."

Jan: "Nothing along those lines. I think, again, as we walked through the county legislature, they have no clue, nobody had a clue. I talked to the folks in Albany, the Health Department. I knew the people there when we started on this project, and nobody gave us any indication that there was anything of value, perceived value, up there. I really believe that the paintings were considered a way to brighten up the environment up there."

Lois: "That was my understanding, as I did some research. That they were sent to the . . . The artists were commissioned, or they would go to the federal works offices wherever they happened to live, and they were told, "You can paint. We need a still-life, we need a landscape, we need a cityscape." They were actually told what to do and they were given a stipend to do the work, and then the question would have been, how did they accumulate all of those paintings and designate them for one particular area or one particular hospital. I don't know whether they were told, "Okay, we're going to need this by such-and-such a date and then they shipped all the paintings at once . . . I'm really not sure how that came about."

Ellen: "What I find interesting is that the tags on those paintings, I think the span is something like paintings that were made in 1935 up to maybe 1939."

Lois: "The mural of 1939."

Ellen: "And the easel paintings too. I think the earliest is '35, if I'm not mistaken, and up to '39. I don't know whether they had a backlog, a warehouse somewhere full of paintings that had been painted by artists on relief."

Lois: "These are all such good questions, and there are a few resources that we might be able to turn to. I did try to get in touch with a woman named Carol Anne Marling.

Martin: "Who is she?"

Lois: "She was at the time one of the foremost authorities on the WA period."

Martin: "Of the WPA period."

Lois: "The WPA period."

Jan: "For Francis O'Connor, right? Was she working with him?"

Lois: "She was not working with him, no. Let me backtrack a little bit. When we contacted the Smithsonian, there was a gentleman working there who was specifically looking for WPA period paintings."

Ellen: "And his name was?"

Lois: "His name was Francis O'Connor."

Martin: "He was at the Smithsonian?"

Lois: "He was then the Smithsonian fine arts, which is no longer in existence, that has become the general services administration. He was specifically looking for Jackson Pollock paintings. As I recall, he did come to Mt. Morris to look at the collection."

Martin: "That's a news item. Came here to look for Jackson Pollock."

Lois: "He was looking because some of the original paintings of some of the very famous artists were not done under the names that they were using."

Ellen: "Oh, is that right?"

Lois: "Yes."

Jan: "I think he also told us that they knew there were some that they had paid for, there were several artists who were very famous at the time, that the government had paid for, but they could not account for where the paintings were. They were still looking for this, where was the hidden Jackson Pollock, where was the hidden . . ."

Lois: "There were four paintings that he was looking for specifically. I don't remember how we got to Carol Anne Marling, it may have been through Francis O'Connor, but she was and still is one of the foremost authorities on the WPA period."

Martin: "Where is she right now?"

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Lois: "She was at Case Western Reserve. Let me just check."

Martin: "That's important."

Lois: "Yes, it is. There is another person who's out at Stanford. No, Carol Anne Marling is now at the University of Minnesota. And there is a Wanda Korn, who is at Stanford. I did call her and she was not in her office."

Martin: "When did you call her?"

Lois: "I called her on April 3rd."

Martin: "For the record, what's her name again?"

Lois: "Wanda Korn."

Ellen: "Is that with a 'K'?"

Lois: "I believe it may be Corn or Korn."

Martin: "Now she is at Stanford, Arts Department I presume?"

Lois: "She is at Stanford, yes."

Jan: "Carol Anne Marling was contemporaneous to the period. That was back in '72, right?"

Lois: "That was back in '72. There are many people who are now studying and have become students of the WPA. Carol Anne Marling was one of the original people who became extraordinarily involved with it. She has subsequently written books on it." A little aside, the new art historian that the art department hired has his master's from Case Western Reserve."

Martin: "Oh. Now, who's this person at Case Western you referred to?"

Lois: "He's a contemporary American artist, so this was a major focus at Cast Western. Maybe he has a lot of knowledge."

Martin: "I want to make sure . . . it's important to . . . this contact with Case Western."

Lois: "I have Carolyn Marling's telephone number, so if you want to get in touch with her, and I have Wanda Korn's e-mail address, so I can share those with you."

Ellen: "And Francis O'Connor you said is obviously still . . ."

Jan: "Well, he was alive until at least the motion picture *Pollock* was made. I was shocked to see the credits."

Lois: "We just happened to see the movie *Pollock* about three or four weeks ago, and we generally stay for the credits. Having looked down the credits, I saw art historian/consultant for the movie was Francis V. O'Connor."

Martin: "Where is he?"

Lois: "He was and still is somehow involved with the general services administration, although Alicia Webber didn't know exactly where he was."

Martin: "Did you talk to her?"

Lois: "I did speak to her, yes. My curiosity, after you called me again, I was very, very worked up about this again, so I thought, oh, I better do some more research on this and try to locate him to see if he had any recollection of having come to Mt. Morris. So we proceeded with cataloging the paintings according to the specifications of the Smithsonian and came up with a catalog which is how you called me."

Martin: "I saw your name on a letterhead. I have correspondence from you. At one point I keep saying where you said it was obscure."

Lois: "Well, it was only, it was obscure to the extend that 32 years ago there wasn't that much information about it at the time, and we didn't think we had any

masterpieces, but we knew that we had a collection of period paintings. That much we did know. Looking for some of the famous artists, the ashcan artists, or the woodstock artists who became famous, later became famous, was kind of a challenge, but we didn't really find anybody of that caliber. So that's what I think I must have done. I can't quite recall."

Jan: "There wasn't the Milton Avery, and there wasn't the Jackson Pollack, there wasn't the Joseph Scellen, you know, the names of people we would be recognizing as master artists."

Martin: "I want you to tell me about the Woodstock School sometime."

Lois: "Well, the little that I know about the Woodstock School was that they had been painting in Woodstock, New York, and many of the scenes of their work had been of farms and probably still-lives."

Ellen: "And some nearby scenes, like Fishkill, New York and Beacon, New York."

Lois: "You probably have researched this a lot more recently."

Ellen: "Very superficially, very superficially."

Jan: "I think you have to put in context that neither one of us, and certainly Lois' background is not in art. This was not what we expected. The medical stuff and all of the other things I think was something we had some feel for, but this was really coming in relatively . . ."

Lois: "The only thing that I had was an appreciation of art, but as a student of art, I certainly was not a student of art history. Having taken a number of art history classes

in college, but not really having been a student of fine arts, but I just had a sense that there was something there that went beyond just what we were seeing.”

Martin: “I think it’s remarkable that you just did not ignore it, that you addressed it, and you proceeded to pull these things off the pile and inventory them, with instructions from Smithsonian.”

Lois: “Somehow we had the good sense to go beyond where we were, and it was definitely a well worthwhile project from my perspective, because I do have an abiding interest thereafter, certainly in this period of art and future.

Ellen: “You did this entirely by yourself. How long did it take you to put the inventory together?”

Lois: “As I remember, I tried to really respect each painting and I dusted them all off as I went along, and each painting, I tried to just carefully dust them because some of them were very brittle. There were a number of them as I remember that were torn and were chipping, the paint was peeling. So I tried to do the job as well as I could possibly do it in terms of just caring for the paintings. Some of the frames were damaged, so I remember just cleaning them up and then each one had to be measured, which I did. I think I must have had a measuring tape or a yardstick. I recorded each one, and if I found the date or the title of the painting, I think I wrote that down according to the inventory list. Then after that, once I had them all cataloged, we sent the list back to the Smithsonian and I believe we had contacted the legislators or some of the county officials to come and take a look at the collection. We tried to put them . . . Where did we put them after we had them all cataloged? I know we tried, I don’t remember whether we lined them up, or how we were able to view them as a whole collection rather than

putting them back on top of one another, and that escapes me, quite honestly. I don't remember, but I do remember the legislators coming up to take a look at them, and they sent somebody from a couple of the newspapers to look at them. Then basically we came up with a proposal to say this is what we thought should be done with them. Because, as I mentioned initially, that the county was in such disrepair from a hurricane, the farthest thing I believe from the minds of the legislators was to find a permanent house for these paintings."

Ellen: "Did you provide the county supervisors with a written proposal of what you thought it ought to be?"

Lois: "I think we had just made suggestions to them, maybe they were verbal. I definitely gave them the inventory and made suggestions that they hang them in some significant place because they really had a worthwhile collection. At the time, I don't think we knew anything about appraisals or anything about insuring them or anything of that nature. I think that, as I said, they really were interested on a very peripheral basis. They weren't going to say, 'Wow, we really have something of note here, of value, and we need to preserve them carefully and really protect them because they're part of the history of the county now.' Or the history of the country, really. So now I think you have an opportunity and hopefully, maybe we'll be able to come up with the resources to have them appraised, have them properly restored, if it's worthwhile, and certainly find a home for them. I would definitely think that having looked at them thirty years later, I am so impressed. I think that some of them are just beautiful! So you really have quite a little cash here.

Ellen: "Does either of you have any sense of any other facility in New York State, not in any other state, but in New York State that might have a large, comparable collection?"

Lois: "I think that this is it."

Martin: "Well, certainly, in the GSA catalog, the metropolitan is the only one that's mentioned, and they've got 5 or 6 of them."

Lois: "Four, I believe."

Ellen: "Four, and I think they're prints, and they maybe different editions."

Martin: "Well, those are the only ones I saw in New York State, metropolitan."

Jan: "I don't think the other TB hospitals--I've visited 2 of them subsequent to Mt. Morris--and none of them had, at least where I could see, any of the WPA art. For whatever reason, I think we've probably got the largest collection of them in the state. I wouldn't be surprised. I would hope you could make the case and maybe you could research this, probably one of the largest collections in the country."

Martin: "Well, no, because that catalog points out that these other states and their state museums have them by the hundreds, thousands."

Ellen: "Philadelphia Museum of Art has 1,217."

Jan: "Wow, that's amazing."

Lois: "So it wouldn't be the largest, but it is a substantial collection."

Ellen: "After that, the Newark Museum in Newark, New Jersey."

Martin: "As Ellen brought to my attention, there was 100,000 of these done across the nation in the 1930's, of which only 11,000 are now inventoried. So if you look at it in that context, 250 is no small amount. So that's one significant aspect of this."

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Jan: "Also, we just found out yesterday some of the sculpture on one of the books that I don't think we knew the background . . ."

Lois: "No, I didn't know the background, that's for sure. The sculptures that are on campus are cast stone and there are pictures of similar statues, exactly the same, that were located on the Tompkins County Hospital, which had been Biggs Memorial Hospital. The photographs and the descriptions of those cast stone figures are exactly the same as the cast stone figures that we have on our campus. The artists' names are given, and they're made by different artists. I had thought that they were all the same person, but they're not."

Martin: "I haven't even thought about that. Two of them are missing a part."

Lois: "Yes, 2 of them, first of all, I think there were 8, and they were inventoried by a volunteer in 1994 for a Smithsonian project called 'Saving Outdoor Sculpture.' So they were photographed, they were described, and those records are at the Smithsonian. We also have a copy at the Arts Council, and the buildings and grounds people at the county have that too. But I believe in 1996, 2 of them disappeared. Actually, before that the monkey was found at the bottom of the gorge. Some vandals had just kind of broke . . ."

Ellen: "Do you think it was some kids?"

Lois: "Yeah, I don't think any art lover stole them. I don't think anyone realizes what was took. Then the monkey disappeared again. See, the monkey and the elephant were in a low, remote part of the campus, and the part of the campus that's closest to the ravines. So it could be easier to throw them into the gorge from that location."

Ellen: "What a shame."

Lois: "It is a shame. The hippo was the one that Allison used to play on."

Ellen: "And you said it was smooth. And the book describes it as smooth."

Lois: "I think that maybe the elements have worn them away."

Jan: "We have photographs of her sitting on the hippo. It was right in the backyard."

Lois: "I thought it was more of a polished stone."

Ellen: "There's a picture of the monkey. The book that we're referring to is 'New Deal for Art,' a 1997 Marling Parks."

Lois: "Marling Park and Gerald Markowitz, the Gallery Association of New York State."

Ellen: "There is a photograph of the monkey in a housing project in Queens. It's very smooth, so . . ."

Lois: "I think my recollection was correct on this. I think the elements have weathered . . ."

Ellen: "Or deteriorated."

Lois: "I wonder if there is a stonecutter who would be able to refinish it or recast it. We had thought that perhaps they had been sculpted, but they're case. Interestingly enough, Gerald Alonzo, who's our county judge, has an MFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology School for American Craftsmen in woodworking. He was one of the tour guides, and when he saw the sculptures, he said, 'Oh, no, these look to me not like sandstone sculptures that have been sculpted, but they look like cement.' They looked like they had been poured into a mold, and they must have been covered with a

smooth surface, almost like a foam marble. I'm not really sure what the substance they used would have been to create the smooth speckle. That's the only way to describe it.

Ellen: "Were they pink?"

Lois: "No, they weren't. They were gray with a smooth, very smooth finish."

Ellen: "Well, now they're pink. They're all pink."

Jan: "I think we have the photographs. I know we've got the pictures of Allison somewhere sitting on it."

Lois: "And that was the purpose, according to that book. They were supposed to be for the playground, and they were perfect for that, because she was a little, two-and-a-half year old who spent hours on that hippo. She loved that hippo!"

Ellen: "And you said they were all located behind the house that you lived in?"

Lois: "The hippo was. I can't remember if the seal was there. I think the seal was there, too.

Jan: "There was no parking, you know the parking strips."

Lois: "That was all wood. It was just . . . it was gorgeous. It was a park."

Martin: "What could we talk about in the last 3 sculptures?"

Jan: "What condition they were in. I just hope that they're not corroded by the weather."

Ellen: "I think they are."

Jan: "I'm not sure how much longer they can stay outdoors before they start to crumble."

Martin: "Are you talking about the sculptures?"

Lois: "The sculptures. I just wanted to say I had contacted after I spoke with you, Ellen, about our conversation on April 3rd when you said you need an assessment of the WPA works, and I had contacted . . . and then we have a friend, Paul Bray, who is with the historic sites in Albany. He gave me the name of this fellow, Jim Gulch, who is the head of the Historic Sites Parks and Recreation Department, who then gave me the name of Anne Kennedy. She was the one who gave us the list of the appraisers."

Ellen: "Not only the list, but the . . ."

Lois: "That is really your best source, because that's even better than Christies and Sethebies."

Ellen: "What did they have to say?"

Lois: "They weren't enthused at all. They just kind of said, well, you know, we'll have somebody contact you from our office, and I really haven't heard back from either one of them. I spoke to a Jill and a Danielle, respectively, at Sethebies and Christies. There was one other person: I spoke to a Tom Wolff, at Bark College, and he was somewhat helpful. I believe he gave me the name of a Robert Rosenbloom, who's at NYU, who may do some appraisal work. And I did speak with him. I think that the best resources are the ones that I gave you."

Martin: "Well, one of them we have contacted."

Ellen: "Not the one that was recommended by the Historic Preservation people. I contacted Roslyn Goldman, who had appraised the college's collection."

Lois: "I know that it was suggested by Anne that you have more than one appraiser, that you contact more than one appraiser. There were specific reasons that she gave for having the collection appraised."

Martin: "What are those reasons?"

Lois: "There were several. One was that the appraisal be done so that if you decide to hang the collection here, if there is any further, if anybody else absconds with any of the paintings, that you'll know what the worth of that painting was for replacement value. If the paintings are lent to another institution, then they should be carefully . . . each of their conditions should be documented so that the people that you're going to be lending them to are responsible for the insurance for any damage that may occur in the transportation of the paintings. So there are a number of reasons for the appraisal, those just being a couple of them. I think that knowing what we know now, it would be really foolhardy to re-hang them without having that done."

Ellen: "Even at the offices on campus?"

Lois: "I would think so. I think that this is something that, while it isn't part of the social realism, the Boxers I think are. Most of them are really from a landscaping, still-life school, so it's not really the reflection of the socialism that was taking place at the time. I think that these still have the collection, and I think that they should be contained as a whole unit."

Martin: "Ellen, where are you in this process? You had some contact with the appraiser who suggested . . ."

Ellen: "I merely got from her an estimate of what it would cost to appraise it, if we already had an inventory that was done to her specifications. And pictures. She recommended photographing each one of them and she sent a form that she would use if she were doing the inventory. I put together a form that has her specifications, plus some of the specifications that were listed in the paragraph in the letter that the GSA sent to the

county in 1998 asking for an update of the inventory. So if we're going to do the inventory, we should take that information while we have the chance to . . ."

Martin: "You've already laid it out, so I'll give it to the girls when they go through this process of . . ."

Ellen: "Yes, right, and I'll write a little guideline sheet so that they'll understand what information they're supposed to put next to each."

Martin: "And \$6,000 was the price."

Ellen: "She estimated if we could provide her an inventory on disk, using the kind of software that she uses, that she could do this inventory, she suggests between six and seven thousand dollars. She said that's if you want every painting in the collection to be appraised."

Martin: "Does that sound reasonable to you?"

Lois: "I have no idea."

Jan: "I haven't got a clue. I would say that it would be money well spent. It would seem to me that you really do want to keep that collection intact right now, putting it in a secure and a good environment, so that there is no more room for deterioration. Where that site would be I don't know. This may have been a hidden gem for 30 years, but I think that . . ."

Martin: "Well, and I want to add that a hundred years from now will be even more important."

Jan: "Absolutely."

Lois: "Keeping it in the historical perspective, I think that's absolutely correct."

Jan: "The individual values, from my perspective, and I think again the individual value of any one painting may or may not be substantial, you don't know. Having the collection together in terms of the history and the time period, given the fact that this may be the largest single collection in upstate New York or maybe in the whole state of New York, and if it were, the transcending value of that is far greater than maybe even the individual price of the paintings. Then you start getting into the futurism of what can you do with it and what would you do with it. I would not want to see, even I do know that back in the early 70's this art was dispersed throughout the campus and just hanging in everybody's office building, I just don't think . . ."

Lois: "That's exactly where it has been until about a month ago when it was pulled off the walls."

Martin: "Well, there are so many things that need to be talked about . . . when we're through with this process in three or four months or whatever."

Jan: "Where do they go? Do they go back on the walls?"

Lois: "I don't know."

Martin: "Well that's what Nick probably would do."

Lois: "That was what we talked about, and indeed, where they are right now, while it's secure and while it's dry, it is so hot down there, I can't imagine . . ."

Jan: "And I'm afraid what will happen in the summertime because I remember you get a reversal down there. You're gonna get the humidity and the dampness."

Ellen: "So we'd better get them inventoried and out of there."

Jan: "Yeah, that's going to get damp down there very quickly, as soon as you get into the hotter months. They will deteriorate. Right now some of them are looking like

they're . . . they're just sitting on the floor right now. If we get a flood down there, I can imagine . . . there's a storm's cover . . ."

Martin: "It is scary, but could you hypothesize? What could we do with these? What sensible thing could we suggest?"

Jan: "I think there's some interesting concepts."

Ellen: "Like what?"

Jan: "I think the first thing I would do is try to get some state money. I'd go through a legislative grant, a member's item to come up with the money to do the cataloging inventory, the appraisal. I also would want to have that money to relocate the art to a facility somewhere in the county, someplace in the county where they will be secure."

Lois: "Martin, didn't you talk about a little museum?"

Martin: "He's coming to it."

Jan: "I'm going for that one. I then would play off the . . . using the collection, making sure that we do the research. You folks make the determinations if indeed this is the largest collection of WPA artwork, either regionally in upstate New York in the state of New York. I'd go for as broad a concept as possible. Try to find an institution or organization in the state that under . . . the paintings would fit. I think the State University. I think that it's got, between the history and the art that's wrapped up in it, you want some institution in the state that has resources. We know that the State University has resources. Maybe it becomes a center in the county, maybe it gets relocated to the College, maybe the College has a relationship with Mt. Morris, maybe we set up some kind of an art museum, some kind of a place where people can come and

study the work, see the work that's hung properly, maybe on a rotating basis, someplace where it becomes a major tourist attraction for the county. I can see that this can draw people. You've got the natural resources of which we're a part. Let people come and see a period of artwork, and maybe you can get different sources of funding out of the state for it."

Lois: "Representative of what took place during the WPA."

Jan: "Right, it's a significant resource, rich resource, for the county and for the state. That's what I would do. I certainly would not turn the clock back, and say okay, this is what used to hang in the buildings. I would now try to get it together as a collection and use it to provide some kind of . . ."

Lois: "Economic resource for the county. I think it would be a tremendous draw."

Ellen: "And the economic benefit would come from tourism, having it be an attraction."

Jan: "And you'd have students come, you could have conferences. We heard some conversation last night about . . ."

Lois: "Your group from Sienna coming to see a period of art, granted it isn't thousands of years old or hundreds of years old, but . . ."

Jan: "It's not the . . . but it's a significant period in American history and in art."

Lois: "What it did was really provide artists with food on that table, and during the Depression, that was a remarkable feat."

Jan: "And I think some of the artwork depicts, as Lois pointed out, some of the views, you know you really do get a flavor of what some of it was like, in terms of the

Depression. There are some of the artists there who are depicting that period. I do think the very first thing I would try to do is try and get a legislative grant from a member's item. I would approach the legislators from this area, both members of the assembly, and the senators, and say, 'Hey, look.'"

Ellen: "We have five representatives in Albany, two senators and three assemblymen, representing Livingston County."

Martin: "I thought we only had one assemblymen representing us in Livingston County."

Jan: "No, three. But I would have them come and would say, 'You know, we have something we'd like you to see.' I'd give them the background history and I'd go to our U.S. senators, I really would. That's the other thing. I would go to Hillary--I would say you wanta do upstate economic development, here's some. Transfer the ownership from the federal government to the state government. Get some funding for that. You're being held in trust, you're holding them in trust. Sixty-five years ago they were on loan. They're still technically on loan. But why? If you're going to find a home for them, if you're going to make them available, why not get them transferred? I think you can do that congressionally. I think you can get some money for that economic development. I'm still back to my old proposal."

Martin: "I asked Alicia for money and she said no."

Lois: "You asked who for money?"

Martin: "Alicia Webber."

Lois: "I can't believe they don't have any funds for appraisal, restoration, nothing. It's up to you to do it, but I think that in doing that you have to be very careful

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to make sure that there can be no reclaim by the GSA and that you need to make that very clear, that you're doing it for the benefit of the county."

Jan: "I would say for the citizens of New York State. If you're going to spend the money to restore, it's sort of to me, you're restoring and why aren't the feds chipping in to do that? It's their property. I'd rather see them transfer it over to . . ."

Lois: "On the other hand, did the state take title of those paintings?"

Ellen: "As far as we know, they could not."

Martin: "They cannot. You're right."

Lois: "They are still owned by the government. The material that accompanied that letter from the GSA in 1998 made it pretty clear that they were still the property of the federal government."

Martin: "I think they always are, under any circumstances."

Lois: "Although there are paintings in private collections. We were talking about that, and I said they were probably gotten illegally. I was talking to Roslyn and Goldman actually, about . . . she's appraised some WPA paintings and I asked under what circumstances. She said in private collection. They probably are there illegally. She said maybe not because there were auctions when the WPA federal art project shut down after the war started. There was a backlog of paintings."

Martin: "Any reading that I have done, and I've done a good bit of reading, I never saw reference to an auction."

Jan: "I think they were selling the canvases. I think we read that. They were selling the wall canvas it was painted on for . . . I think you have that."

Lois: "The painting was on there."

Martin: "They sold it for the value of the canvas."

Lois: "They sold it for the value of the canvas, but the artists would also sell their work privately, but it wasn't labeled WPA. You would have twenty Joseph Stillas or you would have other artists whose work would be out there in the field, not necessarily been bought by the government."

Martin: "I can research that."

Lois: "They wouldn't have been tagged WPA."

Martin: "But the process sounds illegal, but I don't know that much about it."

Lois: "The process of them doing what?"

Martin: "Of having possession."

Lois: "If an artist was commissioned by a private citizen, but it wouldn't have had a WPA label on it."

Martin: "Well he didn't do it for WPA then."

Lois: "That's right, but it would have been one of their works."

Ellen: "So we need to find a champion for this."

Jan: "I think politically, again, . . ."

Ellen: "A local champion. I would love to be on the team and will be when I come back in a year."

Lois: "Ellen, who is taking your place?"

Ellen: "The woman that's taking my place is our program coordinator, who has been there for five years. The thing about this particular project is it really is outside the mission of the Arts Council. The Arts Council's mission is artistic development, and this is a little frill, because of my personal interest in it. Also because the county has

demonstrated some interest in this project. It's not a great deal, it's still a peripheral issue with the county. So Martin and I have been carrying the ball over the last several months with this, and I'm going to have to drop the ball because I'm going to Italy for over a year. So I don't know what's going to happen."

Lois: "Do you have funding to have an appraisal done? To contact these people on the list, to have an appraisal done so that somebody outside with authority can say, 'This is a noteworthy collection.;"

Ellen: "That really is the next step, isn't it?"

Lois: "I see that as the next step. I see that as probably the most important step, and then proceeding with the legislators by saying, 'We have something that is really of value, we have to take care of it, we have to guard it, protect it.'

Ellen: "And we can turn it into something that would be a benefit to Western New York."

Jan: "I hate to take art and put it into the marketplace, but the truth of the matter is, it can turn out to be, it isn't economic going for the money, looking for the money to do this. I think it has to be framed in terms of economic development."

Ellen: "Yes, I agree. I don't know if you saw the D & C today, but there were some pages about the museums in Rochester expanding. So there's a lot of activity in the museums in the Rochester area who are coming up with all sorts of plans for expansion and development and working collegially on promotion and packaging, and so forth. It seems like this is the time."

Jan: "You know, again, the politics locally, and we're outsiders, what role if any does the State University play, if in fact there's going to be a role to bring the University into the picture. There hasn't been at this point in terms of the art collection."

Lois: "Ellen, who is the person that you mentioned who is a background in American art?"

Ellen: "The new art historian. He is going to be coming on board in September as a faculty member, and his name escapes me at the moment, but I can certainly let you know. I'll be meeting him, actually, in May. And we'll certainly be filling him in on this project."

Martin: "Let me get this, because it may be very helpful. I've been talking to Chris Dahl, President here of SUNY Geneseo, just in the last few days."

Ellen: "Who's going to Sienna this summer?"

Jan: "We heard. Didn't you tell us that you're bringing everybody, the Provost, the President, . . ."

Lois: "You're cleaning out the town, so who's going to be left to do this project?"

Martin: "He has initiated a college university relationship with the surrounding community with F & M, . . . There are four institutions that are involved with this thing, F & M, Washington, Michigan State, and SUNY Geneseo."

Ellen: "And what is the project?"

Martin: "The project is to see how these institutions can relate more productively with the surrounding community. This whole thing is Chris Dahl's idea. I'll show you the piece on F & M and what they say about it. They're concerned about losing the

Amish contacts and all that. But here's the handle: this may be a handle with Chris Dahl in terms of the larger community, this isn't just a little rinky-dink Mt. Morris-Geneseo thing, this is a national product and it relates to the, if it's exclusive to New York State or something like that. Would it be worthwhile, we'd have to think this thing through. Bring it together as a team. The county administrator is on track."

Ellen: "Yes, he's very enthusiastic."

Martin: "He's on track. It took a while, but he's on track. As in Dahl and our congressmen, Reynolds, off the top of my head . . . the governor's office, our assemblymen."

Ellen: "Our assemblyman, Joseph Orrigo, is very interested in art. I just did a service for his office."

Martin: "And Wes Kennison."

Jan: "Bob Kane, because Bob's from the region, he's from Rochester originally. The Chancellor for the University, Bob Kane. He is relatively local I know. He has a very strong feel for this area."

Ellen: "I'd also include somebody from the Tourism Board."

Jan: "Good suggestion."

Martin: "Of course we don't want to get twelve people together but . . . how do we proceed to establish this conclave of people to address these issues? How do we begin to handle this?"

Lois: "You write a note, write a letter. Either you do it collectively from the History Department and from the Arts Council, even though you say that's a peripheral issue. Jan, how are you thinking?"

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Jan: "The first thing I think you have to do is get your county legislature . . . again, a facility and the artwork are on a county-owned property, and it would seem to me that you want to check your signals first with the county legislature. You need to talk about what can we do with this, and I think you sort of have the answers before you ask them. I do think it's important that the county legislature is on board with the concept that you may be agreeing in other elements like the State University. I don't know the relationship with the State University and the county legislature. This may be a good thing, it may be a bad thing, I don't know. If in fact the collection were to be relocated off the campus, which is one process, or if on the campus a museum setting was created which had an academic affiliation--I do think you need to have that affiliation."

Martin: "The new museum, if it's large enough."

Jan: "Wherever it is, but you're going to get into my backyard, take my resource for Mt. Morris and move it to Geneseo, you don't want to get into that unless . . ."

Martin: "The solution we talked about--we'd have one in both places, you know, have a rotation, over here and over there, so as not to divorce it from."

Ellen: "That's also assuming that the Main Street Art Gallery, which is the college's, actually the Geneseo Foundation's project, is interested in having this. They don't have an awful lot of gallery space."

Lois: "And they're going to want that gallery space probably for new art that's being created, that would be my guess."

Ellen: "Or something that is very specific to the needs of the Art Department, as well, because it's looked upon as a resource for the Art Department and the students to

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see art that they ordinarily wouldn't get a chance to see. They anticipate that people would lend collections that they have."

Jan: "I think the argument can be very strong that the collection should be relocated to colleges. I can make lots of positive arguments. I think the argument of keeping it where it is more emotional than anything else, because it is not the place that you would normally think people would go to . . ."

Lois: "Although, I was interested in what Ellen had told me about the millennium celebration that took place there, where you drew people up there, up to the county campus."

Martin: "But you didn't draw them up just for the WPA art."

Lois: "No. Do you see something happening up there?"

Ellen: "What I was going to say is that it would make sense to move them unless there were developed a portion of that campus that a gallery could be . . ."

Jan: "You may be right. It could become a campus for artisans and a gallery and other kinds of art . . ."

Ellen: "Yes, that whether or not it's an arts incubator or a conference center or . . ."

Lois: "That's what I was thinking exactly. When I saw the Arts Council office up there, I started thinking what a wonderful place for an artists' community. It's a quiet, ideal spot for art people, for artists to go there."

Jan: "I'm just trying to think again that it does make sense to have an academic affiliation because of the dollar resources to keep something of this nature funded year after year. It has to fit within a structure. I don't think it's going to work well if it's on

the general taxpayers. The county doesn't have the resources. On the other hand, the county can be a participant, the State University can be a participant."

Lois: "And they have the resources."

Ellen: "Not only that, but as a separate, I've been researching funding for preservation conversation restoration. For the most part, you have to have a facility, you can't just ask for funds to restore something if it's not a museum, if it's not a gallery. I'm sure the county would be available for such funds, or certainly the Arts Council would be, since we're an independent, non-profit organization for those kinds of funds, if there were a gallery, if there were a repository for them that meets the standards of a museum or gallery."

Jan: "I think you're absolutely right. I can envision the History Department taking its students up to the campus for some courses, the Art Department at the College taking students up for courses."

Ellen: "The campus itself is in that respect a resource. That is the campus itself is such a piece of New York State history and United States history and the whole health history. Thank God, tuberculosis is pretty much history. It's making a resurgence, but that kind of treatment is a thing of the past. The fresh air and good health . . ."

Martin: These are long-term suggestions. What should we address immediately in the next six months, or the next month or two?"

Jan: "Appraisal and conservation have to be number one. Have it appraised, conserved and kept and make a decision quickly where to put this collection while we do this. At this point it should not be dispersed again."

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Lois: "It should not remain in the basement. Get it out of there, as soon as possible."

Martin: "In other words, you're suggesting before we go through this process of re-inventory, appraisal, restoration, whatever that may entail, we should find a place to do this, and not down there in the basement."

Jan: "Absolutely not, absolutely not."

Martin: "That's a priority."

Lois: "Where can you put them? There's so much space down in the basement, as you well know. There's even a bomb shelter."

Ellen: "I remember that. Did you know that, Martin, there's a bomb shelter down there?"

Martin: "I'm not surprised. I became very nervous when Mayor Simon said we'll put them down in the tunnel. This is where they are. It's down where it is dry, you know."

Lois: "But if any of those pipes burst, or if there's another flood, or whatever . . . it is very humid down there in the summer."

Martin: "What suggestion could we make to Mr. Mazza, the county administrator, and the more I think about this, we're not gonna wrap this up before you leave, Ellen, I suspect. This is gonna take six months, so where do we go?"

Jan: "I don't know what space is still available on the campus, but there must be . . ."

Martin: "You mean that campus there?"

Jan: "Whether it stays at the Livingston County Campus right now or it's moved to another location, that would be a decision somebody's going to make, but I'm assuming there's gotta be some physical space up there that's more . . ."

Lois: "But in the moving, there again, without having them appraised first, and moving them, they're endangering them if they aren't short on space."

Jan: "Where would you move them?"

Lois: "I don't know. It doesn't sound like there's any room."

Martin: "Are there any buildings up there that are rather vacant?"

Lois: "No room that could temporarily have them."

Jan: "I don't know what they did for example, surgery was up on the top floor, for example, the surgical suite. The rooms up there were big, they were air conditioned. I don't know who's taken them over. I remember that that was the only air conditioned space in the hospital. They were big operating suites."

Martin: "I think we have to put together a statement, a request of Mr. Mazza, that we look over the campus and find a place where we can, for the next six months, store these, or the next year, and work on them."

Ellen: "So it's an environment where they're protected from the sun, protected from water, and . . ."

Martin: "I can't believe that at Mt. Morris campus they don't have . . . if Wes Kennison is the one to bring on this, there must be . . . they can make . . ."

Jan: "Again, I don't know that anybody has occupied that space, for whatever reason that was. All open space, if I remember. I forget where the old medical library was. I remember that was big space."

Lois: "That's on the first floor, down that corridor that we didn't go down."

Jan: "That was all shelving, conference tables, . . . I remember there was some very nice space in some of this."

Lois: "That's not a very large room."

Jan: "It's not?"

Lois: "No."

Jan: "Well, take it back to smaller than this space?"

Lois: "Yes, I would say it's shaped differently, but it is smaller. When I think of the length of that tunnel and how the paintings spanned the whole tunnel and then some, they'd take up both sides of the wall. You'd really need a room with a lot of space."

Martin: "Should we request this space before we go to work on re-inventorying and that kind of thing?"

Ellen: "How long do you think the inventorying will take? If it were to take a week or two . . ."

Martin: "I sent out 20 letters to people."

Ellen: "Have you heard from anybody?"

Martin: "I didn't ask for . . . I just said I may call on you, perhaps you can help me, and two or three did call and express interest, so I can put my hands on people and go to work in the next week or two."

Ellen: "My own inclination is to get those paintings inventoried and photographed as quickly as possible, because the more we shuffle them around, the more of them we're going to misplace."

Martin: "So I should proceed with that."

Ellen: "It really is a back burner issue, and if we ask them for more space, they'll get around to it, perhaps or not, but they won't do it in the next two days. I think that we need to get those photographed and know what we have and get them accounted for."

Martin: "Do that and then go through this process of trying to find some permanent location?"

Ellen: "Yeah, I think we need to write, probably it should be my job, to write up a report since I'm terminating on May 15th, I should probably write up a report with recommendations. I'll describe what we have been through, inviting the Dormans to come here and recollect their experience with the collection and their recommendations and so forth."

Martin: "Will that report make recommendations for future?"

Ellen: "I won't send it to the county administrator until you look at it."

Martin: "Okay, why don't you have me look at it, and I'm sure the Dormans would be happy to look at it."

Ellen: "Are you willing to do that?"

Jan: "Sure."

Lois: "Definitely."

Jan: "I think you've hooked Lois so hard on this one."

Lois: "Oh, yes!"

Martin: "Okay, and that will tell us how we propose to proceed next in terms of exhibition . . ."

Ellen: "I wonder how hard it will be to sell the county on coming up with the money to appraise a collection that it doesn't own?"

Martin: "My guess would be we won't get it. Wes Kennison is the one to talk to. He's our supervisor. This is his constituency here."

Jan: "I think if you keep framing this project in terms of economic development, even to the county legislature, whatever money you put out to appraise it, however we do this, think beyond that it's going to eventually attract tourism and attract businesses to come to this county. I think they will come up."

Lois: "And from what I was hearing from the owner of the Legion, there seems to be an indication, he moved here from California, there has to be a reason why he would pick Mt. Morris, New York, to come from California. To spend the amount of money, his little place is a little gem amongst the ruins, so to speak."

Martin: "The ruins of Mt. Morris."

Jan: "Don't say it that way. It certainly doesn't . . ."

Lois: "I'd say that there is economic hope for a brighter future here."

Ellen: "There's a great deal of vitality in Mt. Morris. It's not as apparent as we would all like it to be, but there are a group of people in Mt. Morris who are very, very interested and committed."

Lois: "And committed. I could sense that. So, it would seem to me that, posed that way to, certainly to Wes, who seems to have a very keen interest in the arts, I would start there. Steve Luik, by the way, is on the tourism committee. Steve Luik is the B & B owner."

Jan: "You said he was on your council. Did he join your Arts Council, or did he want to join your Arts Council, or he was going to do something."

Ellen: "I hope he joins the Art Council."

Jan: "I think he said something about that."

Lois: "Ellen, how are you going to leave?"

Ellen: "Very hard, very hard."

Lois: "It seems like you've got a really good handle . . ."

Ellen: "The job just keeps morphing, just when I think I've done that and I don't want to do it one more year, then something like this comes along and I can hand off the other package."

Jan: "When did you become aware of the collection? When was the first time you were aware of it?"

Ellen: "That's a very good question. It was certainly after I was at the campus in the Arts Council."