

Guide to the Oral History Collection

Gallery Archives

**National Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.**

Revised February 2013

THE GUIDE

This guide provides descriptions to oral history interviews available for study in the Gallery Archives. Interviews that are in process or are not available for research use at this time are not included. Unless otherwise noted, the oral histories included here were conducted for the Gallery's oral history program.

Interviews described in the guide are divided into categories based on the interviewee's relationship to the National Gallery of Art: trustees and donors, executive officers, curatorial and administrative staff, architects and others engaged in East and West Building design and construction, and close observers and others associated with the National Gallery of Art. Interviews in each category are arranged alphabetically by interviewee name.

For more information on these oral histories or the National Gallery of Art oral history program, contact the Gallery Archives at (202) 842-6615 or by FAX (202) 842-6948 or e-mail gallery-archives@nga.gov.

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TRUSTEES AND DONORS

Burger, Warren

As Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, Warren Burger was a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art from 1969 to 1986. He was Chairman of the Board from 1969-1979.

Burger recalled visiting the newly-opened Gallery in 1941 when he was in Washington on business. He noted his love for art and avocation as a sculptor which contributed to his long-term interest in the museum. He recalled his interest in I.M. Pei's plans for the Gallery's new building and his attention to its progress. He assessed the Gallery and its standards relative to other cultural institutions.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on January 14, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

Irwin, John N., II

John N. Irwin II was a trustee of the National Gallery of Art from 1962 to 1965, when he resigned from the board to enter government service representing the United States in negotiations concerning the Panama Canal. Later he served as United States ambassador to France.

Irwin described his early years, the growth of his interest in art, his diplomatic service, and his acquaintance with John Walker, which led to his appointment to the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art. He described the activities and role of the Board of Trustees, and shared his observations concerning the development of museums and exhibitions and the period of his service on the board. He reflected on the role and contributions of trustees and art collectors he knew, including Paul Mellon, John Hay Whitney, and Walter Annenberg.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on May 12, 1993 in New York, New York.

Mellon, Paul

Paul Mellon, son of the National Gallery of Art founder, Andrew W. Mellon, and himself an important contributor to its collections, was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1938 to 1939 and from 1945 to 1985, serving as president from 1938 to 1939 and again from 1963 to 1978 and as chairman from 1979 to 1985.

Mellon described his father and recalled the museum's founding benefactors, dedication of the National Gallery of Art in 1941 and other significant events including selection of John Walker as second director and the conservation controversy of twenty years later. He reflected on the contributions of his sister, Ailsa Mellon Bruce, her tastes in collecting, and her interest in the Gallery. He described significant personalities including the Gallery's directors and discussed plans for the East Building, the selection of I.M. Pei as architect, and the work of the building committee.

The interview was conducted by Robert Bowen on July 26 and 27 and November 10, 1988 in Washington, D.C. Additional research was provided by A.C. Viebranz.

Murphy, Franklin

Franklin Murphy served as a trustee of the National Gallery of Art from 1964 to 1993 and as chairman from 1985 to 1993.

Murphy recalled his early experiences with the Kress Foundation, on whose board he served, and his association with the National Gallery, including his role in the selection of John Walker as David Finley's successor. He discussed the character and influence of various members of the Board of Trustees, directors John Walker and J. Carter Brown and notable staff members. He recalled significant events in the Gallery's history including the conservation controversy of the late 1970s and activities and decisions associated with planning and construction of the East Building. He reflected on Paul Mellon and his influence on the National Gallery and described other major donors and fund-raising efforts, including the Patrons' Permanent Fund, the Collectors Committee, and the Trustees' Council.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on January 24 and May 5, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Pinkus, Gerhard and Marianne

Gerhard and Marianne Pinkus collected a large number of Marc Chagall's early graphic works over more than four decades beginning in the 1940s. The Pinkuses donated portions of their collection to the National Gallery of Art in 1993. Curator Judith Brodie interviewed Mr. and Mrs. Pinkus in the exhibition *Marc Chagall's Early Prints and Drawings: From Gerhard and Marianne Pinkus and Other National Gallery Collections* [July 2-December 31, 1995].

Mr. Pinkus explained his interest in Chagall and why he began collecting the artist's early prints. He mentioned other Chagall collectors he encountered. He remembered beginning a long-term acquaintance with the artist in 1955 and gave insights into Chagall's family relationships. He discussed Chagall's commissions for book illustrations and his experimentation with different methods of printmaking. He also spoke in detail about the background and inspiration for works from his collection in the exhibition, including four series: *Mein Leben*, *La Fontaine's Fables*, *Dead Souls*, and *The Seven Deadly Sins*. Mrs. Pinkus added further observations concerning Chagall.

The interview was conducted by Judith Brodie on September 10, 1995 in Washington, D.C.

Stevenson, John R.

John R. Stevenson served as a trustee of the National Gallery of Art from 1975 to 1993 and as president from 1979 to 1993.

Stevenson described his background and how he became a trustee, the organization and work of the board and officers of the National Gallery and especially the role of president. He analyzed the Gallery's relationship to the Smithsonian Institution and Congress. He assessed the development and cost of the East Building, commented on the work of architect I.M. Pei and described Operation Breakthrough. He recalled the conservation controversy of the late 1970s and commented on various personalities associated with the Gallery, including Carlisle Humelsine. He reflected on the Gallery's program of special exhibitions and assessed

possibilities for the Gallery's future.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on June 24, 1992 in New York, New York.

Stevenson, Ruth Carter

Ruth Carter Stevenson was a trustee of the National Gallery of Art from 1979 to 1997 and served as president from 1993 to 1997.

Stevenson described her education and the sources of her interest in art. She recalled her father, Amon Carter, his interest in art collecting, and development of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. She explained the circumstances of being asked to serve as a trustee of the National Gallery and recalled the conservation controversy. She described the origins, development and work of the Collectors Committee, and the program for the Patrons' Permanent Fund. She assessed various National Gallery acquisitions and exhibitions, and reflected on the importance of art education and the role of museums in reaching children.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on November 10, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

Vogel, Dorothy and Herbert

Beginning in 1962, Dorothy and Herbert Vogel used their modest salaries as a librarian and postal clerk to build an impressive collection of nearly 4,000 works of art, mostly in the conceptual and minimalist style. In 1992, they transferred a portion of their collection to the National Gallery of Art through gift and purchase.

The six interviews with the Vogels took place over four sessions. Dorothy and Herbert Vogel were interviewed separately for the 2001 sessions and together in 2003 and 2005.

The Vogels discussed their background and education, the development of their interest in art, and the manner in which they began their collection. They described the art scene in New York City during the 1950s and 1960s, and recounted their first meetings with Sol LeWitt, Richard Tuttle, Robert Mangold, and Robert Barry. The Vogels also spoke of the evolution of their collection to include works by women artists, such as Edda Renouf, Ruth Vollmer, and Sylvia Plimack, and pieces by post-minimalists like Bruce Nauman and Pat Steir. They shared highlights of the many exhibitions in which their works were displayed and the circumstances that led to choosing the National Gallery of Art for the major gift of their collection.

The interviews were conducted by Ruth E. Fine on January 29 and June 20, 2001 in New York, New York and June 2, 2003 and April 27, 2005 in Washington, D.C.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Adams, E. James

E. James Adams served in executive positions at the National Gallery of Art from 1950 until his retirement in 1973, including assistant secretary and assistant general counsel (1950-1965), assistant treasurer (1962-1965), administrator (1965-1971), and secretary-general counsel (1971-1973).

Adams described his background and the circumstances of his transfer to the National Gallery of Art. He recalled Huntington Cairns and recounted Cairns's interests and working relationships. He explained circumstances surrounding the loan of the Gulbenkian Collection to the Gallery and John Walker's appointment as director in 1956. He commented on day-to-day activities and shared anecdotes relating to Gallery personalities and the *Mona Lisa* exhibition.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 5, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

Brown, J. Carter

J. Carter Brown joined the National Gallery of Art staff in 1961 to work as an assistant to director John Walker. Brown then became assistant director from 1964 to 1968 and deputy director from 1968 to 1969. He served as director of the Gallery for over two decades from 1969 to 1992.

Brown was interviewed to discuss the planning, design, and opening of the East Building in 1978. He explained the motivating factors behind the Gallery's expansion, in particular the need to accommodate a center for scholars and to create more usable exhibition space. He recalled the pivotal roles of Paul Mellon and Ailsa Mellon Bruce in securing support for the new building, as well as former director John Walker's influence on the Board of Trustees to move plans forward. Brown also described the screening process and the eventual selection of I.M. Pei as the architect for the new building. He spoke about the formation of the Collectors Committee for the commissioned works of the East Building and offered anecdotes about a few of the artists and their works, including Alexander Calder and his *Untitled* mobile. Lastly, he reflected on the opening of the East Building and how rewarding the experience was to see the plan and design fully realized.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on February 7, 1994 in Washington, D.C.

A second interview with J. Carter Brown focused on the history of the design and installation department (DID) at the National Gallery of Art. Brown recalled what Gallery exhibitions were like in the 1960s and how exhibition design changed dramatically with the founding of an in-house design and installation team. He spoke specifically of DID head Gaillard Ravenel and the many achievements made under Ravenel's leadership and vision. Brown also described exhibition planning and explained the "specialness" of temporary exhibitions by comparing them to theatre.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on July 17, 1998 in Washington, D.C.

English, Joseph Grew

Joseph English joined the staff of the National Gallery of Art as deputy administrator in 1970. He served as administrator from 1971 until his retirement in 1986.

English described the administrator's duties ranging from security to parking and recalled complex arrangements required for special exhibitions and visiting dignitaries. He spoke about his associates and commented on the personalities and situations he encountered as administrator. He recounted numerous anecdotes concerning the museum, the work of the administrator and events during his tenure.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on February 12, 14, and 27, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Hayes, Lloyd D.

Lloyd Hayes joined the National Gallery of Art's staff as a supply clerk in 1941, left the Gallery for military service during World War II, and returned to the Gallery after the war. He later served as assistant administrator and as treasurer from 1969 until his retirement in 1976.

Hayes recalled the Gallery's early days and provided details concerning the personalities responsible for its administration and budget and its various administrative activities, including publication sales, the horticulture program, and security. He described the Gallery's West Building, the gymnasium, important visitors, special events, and major personalities, including John Walker and David Finley.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 1 and 4, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Parkhurst, Charles

Charles Parkhurst joined the staff of the National Gallery of Art in 1941 as an assistant curator but left soon thereafter for military service in World War II, serving in Europe as an officer with the Army's Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section. He returned to the National Gallery in 1971 as assistant director, retiring from that position in 1983.

Parkhurst described his education and his work at the National Gallery before the war and recalled many of the early curatorial staff, and administrative officers. He recounted his experiences in Europe during World War II and the controversy surrounding the Berlin paintings and their shipment to the National Gallery. He noted the circumstances of his return to the National Gallery in 1971, the organization and functions of the office of the assistant director, and especially events surrounding the conservation controversy of the late 1970s. He discussed construction of the East Building and its impact on the National Gallery, development of some of the art commissions for the new building, and establishment of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on November 10, 1990 in Williamstown, Massachusetts and December 6, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Walker, John

John Walker served as the National Gallery of Art's first chief curator from 1939 to 1956 and as its director from 1956 until his retirement in 1969.

This interview was conducted by historian Eric Lindquist on behalf of Paul Mellon and was deposited with their permission in the Gallery Archives. Under terms of the deposit, the interview was opened for research upon Walker's death.

Walker discussed coming to the Gallery from his position at the American Academy in Rome and his impressions of executive officers David Finley, Harry McBride, Macgill James, and Huntington Cairns. He described major acquisitions, art dealer Joseph Duveen, and art dealership in general. He explained his role in the design of the interior of the West Building and the initial planning of the East Building. He outlined the Gallery's emergency plans that were in effect during World War II. He also spoke of his friendship with Paul Mellon and his impressions of Andrew Mellon.

The interview was conducted by Eric Lindquist on July 27, 1987 in Fishers Island, New York.

In a second interview with John Walker, he recalled his education and training, his friendship with Bernard Berenson, his relationship to the Gallery's first director, David Finley, and his association with Gallery trustees and donors. He described Gallery activities during World War II, and in particular his work with the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas ("Roberts Commission") and its impact on the work of the Army's Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section in Europe. He expressed his ideas about conservation and spoke of his work on the restoration of the White House.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on October 23, 1990 in Amberley, West Sussex, England.

CURATORIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Allen, John L.

John L. Allen joined the National Gallery of Art staff in January 1940 to help establish and organize an office filing system. He served in the Army during World War II and returned to the Gallery as an accountant, continuing to work in the treasurer's office until his retirement in February 1969.

Allen described the acquisition of the Widener Collection and his work assisting with its inventory. He recalled the atmosphere in the National Gallery of Art and mentioned many of the early staff members, including a number of the guards. He discussed the employee recreation association, as well as the Gallery's "LecTour" audio system.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 9, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Baird, Thomas

Thomas Baird was a curator at the National Gallery of Art from 1956 to 1960.

Baird described his education and training and the nature of his work at the National Gallery. He recalled the Gallery's relationship with the Kress Foundation and with Chester Dale and other donors. He recalled significant personalities including Perry Cott, David Finley, Lester Cooke, Fern Shapley, and John Walker and their working styles and relationships.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on August 15, 1989 in Hartford, Connecticut.

Bales, Richard

Richard Bales served as the National Gallery of Art's music director from 1943 until his retirement in 1985.

Bales recalled joining the Gallery's staff, noting that it was "one of those things that fell out of the sky". He described the development of the music program, including his work planning concerts and performances at the White House and Kennedy Center. He discussed his work as a composer, and especially his orchestral suites *The Union* and *The Confederacy* and his patriotic cantata, *The Republic*. Bales described the Gallery's first three directors and their personalities, working styles, and influence on the museum and its music program. He recalled other aspects of the Gallery activities, including important visitors.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on January 11, 1989 in Alexandria, Virginia.

Barry, Mabel

Mabel Barry worked as an attorney in the office of the secretary, treasurer, general counsel--later the office of the secretary-general counsel--from 1943 until her retirement in 1973 at the National Gallery of Art.

Barry recalled her background, her arrival in Washington and the circumstances in which she attended law school. She described her legal work for the National Gallery and the

development of the law library. She reflected on working for Huntington Cairns and remembered Richard Bales, Macgill James, Thelma Thomas, and other Gallery staff members.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on October 6, 1992 in Arlington, Virginia.

Benson, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Benson joined the staff of the National Gallery of Art's information room in 1945. She later served as a research assistant, worked with Erwin Christensen, and in 1954 became assistant registrar, a position she held until she left the Gallery in early 1961.

Benson described her experiences in the information room, her work with Erwin Christensen on the Index of American Design project, the activities of the registrar and her observations of significant Gallery personalities. She noted her meeting with Robert Woods Bliss and her growing interest in the Bliss Collection, which eventually led to her departure from the Gallery for Dumbarton Oaks.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on February 19, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Beville, Henry

Henry Beville joined the staff of the National Gallery of Art as a photographer before its opening in 1941 and remained in this position until his 1975 retirement.

Beville recalled his photographic training in the Navy and his experiences photographing the Gallery's art works and loans for special exhibitions. He described travel to Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, where important Gallery paintings were stored during World War II, and conditions there. He recalled experiences photographing the Kress Collection in New York and the challenges of documenting art conservation activities.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on July 24, 1990 in Oceanside, California.

Bingham, Lois

Lois Bingham joined the education department in 1943, remaining with the National Gallery of Art until 1954, when she left for a position with the United States Information Agency.

Bingham described wartime circumstances at the National Gallery when positions became available as male staff members joined the military. She recalled developing early public programs with the small education staff and noted that David Finley "wanted a lecture every hour on the hour, like a railroad." She commented on the education department's pioneering role in developing and producing a television program in the late 1940s and her experience writing the pamphlet *How to Look at Works of Art: The Search for Line*.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on March 1, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Bonner, Catharine

Catharine Bonner was on the staff of the National Gallery of Art as secretary to Donald Shepard from 1940 to 1942. After an absence from 1942 to 1944, she returned to work for David Finley and later for Huntington Cairns. She retired in 1969.

Bonner recalled activities in the Gallery offices on Jackson Place, N.W., and events associated with finishing the National Gallery of Art's original building and establishing the new staff, the Gallery dedication, and early personalities, including David Finley, Donald Shepard, Alexander Reed, and others. She described the Gallery environment after the war, influential executive officers and other significant staff members, special events, visitors, donors, and trustees.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on June 2, 1989 in Essex, Connecticut.

Bouton, Margaret

Margaret Bouton joined the National Gallery of Art staff of the education department in 1948 and served as curator in charge of education from 1956 until her retirement in 1984.

Bouton described the small education staff under Raymond Stites in 1948. She explained early public educational offerings, including Painting of the Week and Tour of the Week programming, the extension service, and later the inclusion of audio tour programs. She outlined the establishment of the volunteer docent system and noted the different responsibilities among docents, lecturers, and other education staff. Bouton rounded out her interview with a reflection on the idea of a national gallery and its importance to the wider public.

The interview was conducted by Diane A. Santiago on October 31 and November 1 and 2, 1983 in Washington, D.C.

In Bouton's second interview, she discussed her education and the circumstances that brought her to the Gallery. She described the staff and operations of the Gallery when she first arrived in 1948. She recounted various experiences, her perceptions of changes at the museum over time, and her views and philosophy on art education for children and the public in general. She recalled the growth of the education department, and assessed its impact on art education and the importance of such programs as Picture of the Week tours and Sunday lectures.

The interview was conducted by Lynn Russell on December 1, 1988 in Bedford, Massachusetts.

Burnet, Mary Elizabeth

Mary Elizabeth Burnet joined the National Gallery of Art's staff in 1941, working first in the information room and soon thereafter as secretary to chief curator John Walker. During World War II she left the Gallery to work for the Office of Strategic Services, returning to become a research assistant for Walker. Several years later she left to raise a family returning again to work as a research assistant for William Campbell, curator of American art.

Burnet recalled her experiences taking the Civil Service Examination and joining the Gallery's staff. She described her career at the National Gallery, and the offices she worked with, especially the Chief Curator's Office and the office of the Curator of American Art.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on July 12, 1990 in Vienna, Virginia.

Chramiec, Alexandra (Wanda)

Wanda Chramiec worked at the National Gallery of Art during World War II as assistant to René Batigné, curator of French government paintings placed in Gallery custody for safekeeping.

Chramiec described Batigné, activities relating to custodianship of the paintings, her administrative work and the eventual return of the paintings to France after the war. She supplemented her remarks by reference to various documents, copies of which are included with the interview.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on September 18, 1990 in Arlington, Virginia.

Ferber, Elise Van Hook

Elise Ferber joined the staff of the National Gallery of Art in 1956 and worked in a number of capacities, especially as assistant to chief curator Perry Cott. She left the Gallery in 1970 to serve as assistant to the director at Dumbarton Oaks, returning in 1972 as curator in charge of the art information service, a position in which she remained until 1987. From 1987 to 1989 she compiled a historical list of Gallery exhibitions in the Gallery Archives.

Ferber noted many facets of the development of the Gallery and changes that occurred through the years, as well as personalities she worked with, especially Perry Cott. She discussed a number of the Gallery's exhibitions and other noteworthy events, especially observing that the small size of the staff when she began her work offered her the opportunity to work "across the board as one does in a small museum."

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on November 18, 1991 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Fox, Carol

Carol Fox came to the National Gallery of Art first in 1974 to serve as translator for Chinese curators in the United States for the exhibition *Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China*. She returned in February 1978 to work in special events.

Fox described her education and introduction to the National Gallery of Art. She explained her interest in the Chinese language, the circumstances that led her to join the staff of the National Gallery, and her experiences with the Chinese curators. She recounted her activities at the time of the opening of the East Building, and shared anecdotes about the events, including Benny Goodman's surprise performance. She reflected on the development of the Patrons' Permanent Fund and the Collectors Committee, and on the beginning of the Gallery's corporate fund-raising program. She recalled early experiments with a pass system for exhibitions, and reflected on the personalities and interests of key Gallery staff members.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on May 12, 1993 in New York, New York.

Foy, Elizabeth

Betty Foy joined the personnel department at the National Gallery of Art in 1948. Later she worked for assistant director Macgill James and directors John Walker and J. Carter Brown. She retired from the museum in 1981.

Foy described key personalities she worked with, including Macgill James, John Walker, Huntington Cairns, and J. Carter Brown, and their interests, approaches to their work and accomplishments. She described the Gallery's organization and functions and recounted anecdotes relating to significant events. She assessed the Gallery's environment and changes through the years.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on May 15 and 16, 1989 in Washington, D.C.

Leason, Max

Max Leason came to the National Gallery of Art as head of publication sales in 1968 and remained in that position until his retirement in 1986.

Leason described the operations and philosophy of the publication sales department, including sales management, production of color reproductions and other sales merchandise, and changes in the Gallery's sales shop, particularly the introduction of self service. He noted sales concerns relating to special exhibitions, and recalled the Gallery's rapid growth and changes in staff operations.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 23, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Levenson, Jay

New York University graduate student Jay Levenson was a contributor to *Dürer in America: His Graphic Work* in 1971 and *Prints of the Italian Renaissance* in 1973 at the National Gallery of Art. Upon finishing his Ph.D. in art history, he became a lawyer, practicing law for six years. Levenson returned to the art world to curate the 1991-1992 exhibition *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration* and *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal* in 1993-1994. He left the Gallery to pursue other curatorial opportunities, ultimately becoming the director of the International Program at the Museum of Modern Art.

Levenson discussed the development of his interest in art and his early experiences working as a collaborator with Gaillard Ravenel on the *Dürer* and *Prints* shows. He explained Ravenel's role in his return to museum work from law practice and how his law background was an asset to the complex coordination of international loans of art objects for *Circa 1492*. As a close friend, Levenson recounted his experiences with Ravenel, in particular addressing Ravenel's work methodology, character, and reputation as an exhibition designer and head of design and installation at the Gallery.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 17, 1997 in New York, New York.

Looney, Kay (with Joan Silverman)

Volunteers Kay Looney and Joan Silverman came to the National Gallery of Art in the early 1960s to join the nascent docent program. They worked primarily with the school program, remaining active through the 1990s.

Looney and Silverman drew many parallels when recounting their education and the circumstances that led to their participation in the docent program. They discussed the founding of the program by the Junior League of Washington and its evolution from Margaret Bouton's time to the date of the interview. Looney and Silverman also describe their tour experiences and the challenge to make art seem "real" and personal for schoolchildren. They shared their observations about David Finley, John Walker, and J. Carter Brown and their attitudes towards the docent program and offered anecdotes about some of the blockbuster exhibitions.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on September 9, 1998 in Washington, D.C.

Mallus, Maria

Maria Mallus was secretary to Alexander Reed of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust from 1938 to 1941. She joined the National Gallery of Art staff in 1941 as secretary to Sterling Eagleton and later to Donald Shepard, returning with him to the Trust in 1943 and remaining there until 1948, when she retired to raise a family. She rejoined the Gallery's staff in 1967, retiring in 1992.

Mallus described her background and experiences at the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, noting many of its prominent personalities and its working environment. She recalled many of the Gallery's early employees, especially Donald Shepard who was intimately involved in the Gallery's establishment. She contrasted her early experiences with those she encountered when she rejoined the staff in 1967.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on January 31 and February 1, 1989 in Washington, D.C.

McGill, Thomas, Jr.

Tom McGill joined the National Gallery of Art's guard force in 1955 and transferred to the library staff in 1966 to work as the interlibrary loan assistant.

McGill recalled staff members from his early years, noting the Gallery's growth and change over time. He described prominent visitors he observed while on the guard force and recalled anecdotes about their visits. He recalled his experiences on a special detail guarding the *Mona Lisa*. He described the library and its leadership, especially the transition from Anna Link to Mel Edelstein, and the library's subsequent expansion.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on February 6, 1989 in Washington, D.C.

Mongan, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Mongan became in 1937 the first curator of the print collection of collector Lessing Rosenwald. When Rosenwald gave his collection to the National Gallery of Art and the Library of Congress in 1943, she was appointed the Gallery's curator of prints, working both in Washington and with Rosenwald in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, for the next twenty years.

Mongan described her early training with Paul Sachs and travels in Europe, including a meeting with Bernard Berenson. She recalled Rosenwald and the dealers he worked with and bought from and noted her activities preparing the collection for Rosenwald's Alverthorpe Gallery and for transfer to the National Gallery and Library of Congress. She remembered prominent Gallery staff members and shared recollections of work there.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on June 22 and 23, 1989 in Rockport, Massachusetts.

Moore, Lamont

Lamont Moore joined the National Gallery of Art's staff as curator of education before the Gallery's opening in 1941. Soon thereafter he joined the United States Army and served with the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section during World War II, returning to the Gallery briefly before leaving for a position at the American Academy in Rome.

Moore described his early experiences at the Newark Museum and the initial organization of the National Gallery of Art. He recalled setting up educational programs at the Gallery, including tours of the permanent collection and educational lectures. He noted experiences during World War II and discussed circumstances associated with shipment of paintings of Berlin museums to the Gallery immediately after the war.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on November 7, 1990 in Needham, Massachusetts.

Parker, Fred

Prior to coming to the National Gallery of Art, Fred Parker worked for Design and Production (D&P), a company which provided contract work on Gallery exhibitions. In 1978, Gaillard Ravenel, head of the nascent design and installation department (DID), enlisted Parker to help establish the silkscreen and graphics unit of DID. Parker eventually left his position in 1983 to open up the Hard Times Cafe, a restaurant in Alexandria, Virginia.

Parker described his first encounter with the Gallery as an employee of D&P, explaining the importance of contract work on Gallery exhibitions prior to the founding of DID. He recalled starting at the Gallery around the opening of the East Building and the tight deadlines surrounding the multiple exhibitions opening on June 1, 1978. Parker also discussed his working relationship with Ravenel and the creative process among DID staff to put together exhibition-related materials, including banners, wall text, labels, and directional signage.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on April 2, 1997 in Alexandria, Virginia.

Pell, Robert Livingston (Robin)

Robin Pell came to the National Gallery of Art at the invitation of J. Carter Brown in 1971 to serve as the director of the special events program. During his tenure, Pell orchestrated numerous exhibition previews and dinners, V.I.P. visits, and most notably, the premieres of Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation* films. He left the Gallery in 1978 to work for the Central Park Conservancy in New York City.

Pell recalled the early days of entertaining when Brown broke with tradition and hosted social events on-site at the Gallery for the first time. He discussed his working relationship with Bunny Mellon, who was very involved in the planning of special dinners. He remembered significant events, including the unveiling of the *Mona Lisa* and the controversy concerning the conservation of Rembrandt's *The Mill*, and shared his view on J. Carter Brown's contributions to the Gallery. Pell also described the establishment of the Collectors Committee and his later travels seeking out new members for the committee in Chicago and Houston.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on October 7, 1998 in New York, New York.

Silberfeld, Kay

Kay Silberfeld was a painting conservator at the National Gallery of Art from 1972 to 1980.

Silberfeld described the development of the painting conservation department, the organization of the conservation laboratory, equipment used there, and her work with Victor Covey, William Leisher and others. She recalled Mario Modestini, Robert Feller, and conservation of various paintings, and described conservation techniques and philosophies. She explained the development of the controversy surrounding conservation of Rembrandt's *The Mill* and recalled the various personalities and actions involved and the impact of the controversy on the National Gallery of Art and on the conservation community.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on May 27, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

Silverman, Joan (with Kay Looney)

Volunteers Kay Looney and Joan Silverman came to the National Gallery of Art in the early 1960s to join the nascent docent program. They worked primarily with the school program, remaining active through the 1990s.

Looney and Silverman drew many parallels when recounting their education and the circumstances that led to their participation in the docent program. They discussed the founding of the program by the Junior League of Washington and its evolution from Margaret Bouton's time to the date of the interview. Looney and Silverman also describe their tour experiences and the challenge to make art seem "real" and personal for schoolchildren. They shared their observations about David Finley, John Walker, and J. Carter Brown and their attitudes towards the docent program and offered anecdotes about some of the blockbuster exhibitions.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on September 9, 1998 in Washington, D.C.

Smith, Noel

Noel Smith served as the National Gallery of Art horticulturist from shortly before the Gallery's dedication in March 1941 until his retirement in 1973.

Smith recalled the loan of Joseph Widener's acacias for the dedication and their temporary storage in the United States Botanic Garden. He described his work cultivating greenhouse plants and maintaining the Garden Courts and noted that his duties later expanded to include caring for the Gallery's grounds. He particularly remembered his on-going struggle with the discourtesies of Park Police horses. Smith described his particular interest in the readings he performed with the National Gallery orchestra.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on August 23, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Smyth, Craig Hugh

Craig Hugh Smyth joined the National Gallery of Art's curatorial department in 1941. He left to join the Navy in 1942 and was assigned to the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section in 1945. He returned in 1987 as Kress professor in residence at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts.

Smyth described his education, first as a classics major and later in the history of art and the development of his interest in the Renaissance in Italy. He recalled his initial interview with John Walker at the offices of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust before the Gallery was opened, and the work he performed as a young curator at the National Gallery. He commented on the curators, administrators, and staff with which he worked, especially John Walker, Macgill James, Charles Parkhurst and Fred Rieth, and remembered his experiences at Biltmore supervising paintings evacuated from the National Gallery. He also recalled the work of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section, and his involvement in the controversy relating to transfer of paintings from Berlin museums to the National Gallery for safekeeping.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on March 1, 1993 in Cresskill, New Jersey.

Smyth-Ravenel, Frances (Franny)

Franny Smyth started her career under Annemarie Pope as the registrar of Smithsonian's Traveling Exhibition Service. After hearing from her then acquaintance Gaillard (Gil) Ravenel that the National Gallery of Art was seeking publications staff, Smyth transferred to the newly established department in 1970. She served as Editor-in-Chief from 1981 until her death in 1999.

Smyth discussed her career at the Gallery and the work of Gil Ravenel, head of design and installation (DID). She recalled the early origins of DID and the impact of having an in-house team to put together exhibitions. She reflected on Ravenel's perfectionism, his creative process for exhibition design, and his reputation within the museum world. Smyth spoke candidly about her husband's personality and his relationships with staff, including J. Carter Brown and Howard Adams.

In terms of her own career, Smyth discussed how her department operated, collaborations

on catalogues with museums and outside publishers, and the marketing strategies used to increase visibility for Gallery publications. She mentioned the Gallery cookbook and how Julia Child became the first recipe contributor. Smyth also recounted her perspective on the East Building opening and blockbuster exhibitions. She remarked on J. Carter Brown's legacy and the changes that occurred after his departure in 1992.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on December 7, 1998 in Washington, D.C.

Steele, Lina

Lina Steele joined the National Gallery of Art staff in 1961 as a museum aide. She worked briefly in the sales shop and the education department before moving to the department responsible for the Index of American Design where she served until her retirement in 1984.

Steele explained the work of the Index office, in particular the circulating exhibitions that were available for loan and her interest in developing additional exhibitions for this purpose. She recalled organizing and mounting exhibitions of Index renderings and working with researchers who used the Index. She described two special projects that relied heavily on Index resources--a two-volume publication on American design and a microfiche catalog to the Index collection.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on November 20, 1996 in Washington, D.C.

Taylor, Katrina Van Hook

Katrina Van Hook Taylor joined the National Gallery of Art staff in 1940, working first in the chief curator's office and later assisting Lamont Moore in the education department. She was acting curator of education during Moore's wartime absence and retired from the Gallery in 1945.

Taylor described her education, including Paul Sachs's museum administration course at the Fogg Museum, and other experiences before coming to the Gallery. She explained her early curatorial work with the Gallery's collections and recalled various personalities including Macgill James, Perry Cott, and John Walker. She recalled her experiences giving gallery tours, presenting lectures and writing public information materials.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on June 16, 1989 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Thomas, Thelma

Thelma Thomas became a telephone operator at the National Gallery of Art in 1940 and retired in 1973 as chief telephone operator.

Thomas described the operation of the central switchboard, through which all incoming and outgoing calls were channeled and other aspects of Gallery activities. She discussed personalities that she observed, the ebb and flow of Gallery activities, her role in the Gallery, and staff recreational activities. She described memorabilia that she collected, especially at the Gallery's dedication.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on June 13, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Viebranz, Alfred C.

Al Viebranz acted as the liaison to the National Gallery of Art when his company GTE Corporation signed on as the underwriter of *Post-Impressionism: Cross-Currents in European and American Painting, 1880-1905*. In 1982, he left the business world to become J. Carter Brown's assistant for corporate relations. Despite retiring in 1987, Viebranz was lured back to the Gallery to help start up the 50th Anniversary oral history program.

Viebranz discussed his role as a museum corporate relations officer, describing the business end of exhibition planning. He offered highlights of his work on 32 exhibitions, noting the successes and failures. He remembered the complexity of putting together *Treasure Houses of Britain* and recounted the visit of Prince Charles and Princess Diana. Viebranz also commented on his working relationships with key figures, including Paul Mellon and J. Carter Brown. He closed out with a discussion of the oral history program and reflected on his long and varied career at the Gallery.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on September 13, 1994 in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Walstrom, Charles

Charles Walstrom joined the National Gallery of Art's staff in 1939 as chief clerk. He was appointed personnel officer in 1941, left for military service during World War II, and returned afterward, remaining as Personnel Officer until 1970. He served as assistant administrator from 1970 until his retirement.

Walstrom described his work when the Gallery's offices were located at 712 Jackson Place, next door to those of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, and his experiences as chief clerk preparing for the Gallery's opening. He discussed Gallery operations, hiring practices, the Civil Service Commission, and the various administrators that he worked with. He recalled an unexpected early morning visit by President Harry Truman.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 17, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

Watson, Ross

In January 1966, Paul Mellon enlisted Ross Watson to work with his British art collection at the Mellon estate in Virginia. Later that year, through Mellon's recommendation, National Gallery of Art director John Walker hired Watson to become the curator of eighteenth-century British art, a position he held until 1977.

Watson reflected on his relationship with Paul Mellon and commented on Mellon's collection and his acquisition style. He also recounted his experiences at the Gallery and his work producing shows on Turner, Constable, Wright, and Hogarth. Watson described the magnitude and ambition of *The Eye of Thomas Jefferson* exhibition, Howard Adams' vision in putting it together, and related special events, including the fireworks display and Queen Elizabeth's visit. He commented on key people, including Francis Watson, Gil Ravenel, Lester Cooke, and Elise Ferber, and spoke about the transition in leadership from John Walker to J. Carter Brown.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on November 18, 1998 in Washington, D.C.

Wells, Carolyn

Carolyn Wells came to the National Gallery of Art in 1945 to work for restorer Stephen Pichetto, later becoming research assistant to Fern Shapley and John Walker before retiring in 1951 to raise a family. She resumed her career in 1969 to assist Walker in his research and publications after he retired from the National Gallery.

Wells recounted her experiences working with Pichetto to inventory the Berlin paintings and later her activities developing addressograph cards for the Gallery's collections as well as other research work. She described Harry McBride, John Walker, Anna Voris and other personalities and their contributions to the National Gallery and described her activities with Walker after his retirement.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 31, 1991 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Bates, Robert

Architect Robert Bates was hired by I.M. Pei's New York office to consult on the construction of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art. As a representative of Pei's office, he worked on-site to monitor the concrete components of the construction.

Bates discussed his technical background with concrete materials and how that expertise led to an early commission from Pei's office to work on a State University of New York campus. As an East Building consultant, he described the complexities of the concrete pour process used in the construction, particularly in the foundation and coffered ceilings, and recounted color, weight, and temperature issues with the concrete. Bates also recalled the interrelationships among Pei's office, Gallery administration, the construction company, and the National Gallery of Art planning office.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on June 16, 1997 in Washington, D.C.

Craig, John (with John Jones and Malcolm Rice)

John Craig and John Jones were associated with Candoro and Gray Knox Marble Companies, respectively, firms which were part of the joint venture that quarried marble for the West Building. Malcolm Rice worked first for the Office of John Russell Pope and later served as marble consultant to I.M. Pei & Partners during construction of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Craig, Jones, and Rice discussed the history of the marble industry in Tennessee and noted that the West Building provided an important economic support for the Tennessee marble industry during the depression. They described selection and grading of marble for the building using a "sample wall" as a key, and explained how each piece was marked. They discussed methods used to fabricate the building's exterior columns and fountains. They analyzed differences in marble treatment of the East Building and the West Building, and discussed major challenges in preparing East Building marble, particularly exterior angles and interior stair treads.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on September 6, 1988 in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Eastman, Franklin

Franklin Eastman was a craftsman employed on construction of the West Building of the National Gallery of Art from 1938 to 1940.

Eastman recalled beginning his career as a lather in Florida in 1925 and circumstances that led to his work as a shop steward during construction of the National Gallery. He explained metal lathing techniques used in the walls, ceilings, and Rotunda and the work environment of the construction project. He recalled other workers and described their feelings about the project. The interview is supplemented by Eastman's detailed explanation and diagram of lathing techniques.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 22, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Eggers, David L.

Architect David Eggers, son of John Russell Pope's partner Otto Eggers, was a close observer of the National Gallery of Art's architectural development and was himself the architect for several West Building projects in the 1950s and 1960s.

Eggers described his father and his career and relationship to architect John Russell Pope. He explained Pope's working method, the organization of his architectural office, and others who worked in the office, especially partner and business manager Daniel Higgins. He reviewed architectural development of the West Building after its initial construction and personalities with whom he worked.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie and A.C. Viebranz on July 25, 1991 in Mamaroneck, New York.

Jones, John (with John Craig and Malcolm Rice)

John Craig and John Jones were associated with Candoro and Gray Knox Marble Companies, respectively, firms which were part of the joint venture that quarried marble for the West Building. Malcolm Rice worked first for the Office of John Russell Pope and later served as marble consultant to I.M. Pei & Partners during construction of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

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The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on September 6, 1988 in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Karras, Chris

Chris Karras served on the staff of the Planning Office as a designer and planner for the National Gallery of Art from 1970 until his retirement in 1983.

He described the office's involvement with the planning and development of the East Building as well as with other Gallery construction projects. He recalled collaborating with I.M. Pei's office to refine East Building design details and explained the process of completing designs for interior spaces to reflect the building's geometry. He explained his activities relating to works of art commissioned for the East Building and described the role of the planning office in East Building opening exhibitions.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on January 27, 1997 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Mann, J. William

Bill Mann was Chas. H. Tompkins Co. project manager for East Building construction of the National Gallery of Art.

Mann explained the design of the building and the impact of various features on problems faced during construction. He described in detail construction processes, techniques, and innovations applied in the building from excavation through finishing, mentioning craftsmen involved in the process, assessing their work and relationships, problems they encountered, and technical innovations. He outlined the work of the Building Committee, and recalled anecdotes concerning building construction, especially the challenges, personalities, and problem-solving approaches.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on March 26 and April 14, 1992 in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Matisse, Paul

The artist and inventor Paul Matisse, grandson of French painter Henri Matisse, was chosen by J. Carter Brown and Alexander Calder to oversee fabrication of Calder's large-scale *Untitled* mobile for the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Matisse described his family background and education, with comments on his friendship with J. Carter Brown at Harvard. He discussed the circumstances that compelled Calder to abandon his fabricator in France and to ask Matisse to build the mobile, as well as the numerous technical difficulties in the construction. He reflected on his relationship with Calder and his efforts to understand the artist's intentions with the mobile. Matisse also noted his observations about other artists, including Henry Moore, who were commissioned to do pieces for the East Building.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on July 23 and November 13, 1998 in Groton, Massachusetts.

Offenbacher, Hurley

Hurley Offenbacher was construction manager for the National Gallery of Art from 1974 to 1985.

Offenbacher described his background and experience as building project manager for the National Air and Space Museum. He explained the circumstance in which he came to work for the National Gallery and the roles of the various people involved in the building projects. He recalled significant aspects of the Connecting Link and East Building projects, especially the effect of strikes, the use of marble and architectural concrete, and installation of the Calder mobile and Caro sculpture. He outlined key aspects of work on the West Building in Operation Breakthrough, especially replacing and loading columns without damage to marble floors above, and construction of the oculus. He discussed the Critical Path Method which he used for the project and its impact on the construction.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 25, 1993 in Ocean City, Maryland.

Oles, Paul Stevenson

Steve Oles is an architectural perspectivist who was employed by I.M. Pei for the East Building project of the National Gallery of Art.

Oles described how he learned of the East Building project and the effect that his work on this project and association with Pei had on his career. He explained the role of the perspectivist in representing architectural concepts, the process of transferring information between the architect/designer and perspectivist/illustrator, and the impact on the design process of such trial images that can be corrected and modified. He discussed later verification of the accuracy of East Building perspectives with on-site photographs, and publications of his architectural perspectives.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on February 1, 1994 in Washington, D.C.

Olsen, Edwin B.

Edwin B. Olsen was an architect in the office of John Russell Pope during design and construction of the West Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Olsen discussed his work on the National Archives building, followed by his assignments relating to the National Gallery building. He outlined the stages in design of the building and explained the importance of model-making as part of the process. He recalled the meeting at which the Gallery's skylights and laylights were approved, and described the controversy relating to the design of the Rotunda dome. He explained the work of the Vermont Marble Company in forming the Rotunda columns from blocks of Italian marble. He described Alexander Reed's role in building construction. Olsen also recounted Jacqueline Kennedy's efforts to reinstall a fireplace in the White House State Dining Room, and his own visit to former President Truman in Independence, Missouri, as part of this effort.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on September 24, 1993 in Suffern, New York.

Pei, I.M.

I.M. Pei was the architect of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Pei described how he became involved in the East Building project and the early steps in planning for the building, including a trip with J. Carter Brown to visit European museums. He explained the evolution of the building design, the challenges faced in meeting site and regulatory requirements, and the role of government agencies in reviewing and approving the plan. He reflected on the relationship between the East Building and the West Building and described important features of the materials and technology used in the building. He commented on his relationship to the building committee and described the evolution of plans to commission works of art for the new building.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on February 22, 1993 in New York, New York.

Rice, Malcolm (with John Craig and John Jones)

John Craig and John Jones were associated with Candoro and Gray Knox Marble Companies, respectively, firms which were part of the joint venture that quarried marble for the West Building. Malcolm Rice worked first for the Office of John Russell Pope and later served as marble consultant to I.M. Pei & Partners during construction of the East Building of the National Gallery of Art.

Craig, Jones, and Rice discussed the history of the marble industry in Tennessee and noted that the West Building provided an important economic support for the Tennessee marble industry during the depression. They described selection and grading of marble for the building using a “sample wall” as a key, and explained how each piece was marked. They discussed methods used to fabricate the building’s exterior columns and fountains. They analyzed differences in marble treatment of the East Building and the West Building, and discussed major challenges in preparing East Building marble, particularly exterior angles and interior stair treads.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on September 6, 1988 in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Ridgway, Jane Pope

John Russell Pope’s daughter, Jane Pope Ridgway, was a young girl at home when her father worked on the National Gallery of Art’s West Building and was a close observer of his work.

She recalled travels with her mother and father and incidents relating to her father’s interest and appreciation for architecture. She described his intense concern for details of the Gallery’s design and remembered his careful study of marble and its appearance when wet. She commented on the Gallery’s dedication, which she attended with her mother.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on June 18, 1990 in New York, New York.

Scott, David W.

David Scott served as an executive officer with the title Planning Consultant at the National Gallery of Art from 1969 to 1984.

Scott recounted his background and the growth of his interest in painting and art history. He explained his work at the National Collection of Fine Arts (now the National Museum of American Art) and the circumstances that led to his work on the East Building project for the National Gallery. He described his responsibilities during the development of the East Building and other National Gallery building projects. He outlined the system for developing the building program and physical plans for the building, and related numerous incidents and decisions that were made, including factors relating to the underground connection between the buildings and the design of the plaza. He described Operation Breakthrough and the design of the Oculus and remembered his work with the artists creating commissions for the new East Building.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on August 26, 1993 in Washington, D.C.

Young, Theodore

Ted Young was principal-in-charge for the John Russell Pope architectural firm during the construction of the West Building of the National Gallery of Art, serving as liaison between the Pope office and the trustees of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, who were responsible for the completion of the building.

Young described John Russell Pope, the organization of his architectural firm, and the role of the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, including prominent personalities associated with the Trust. He explained the design of the building and its construction, including selection of the exterior marble and construction of a sample wall on-site in Washington. He noted Andrew Mellon's interest in architecture and described the circumstances of the selection of John Russell Pope as architect for the West Building. He reflected on the building's architectural importance and influence.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on September 24 and 29 and October 6, 1987 in Greenwich, Connecticut.

OBSERVERS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Bjurström, Per

Per Bjurström was Kress Professor in residence at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA) in 1990-1991 and a long-time observer and colleague of the National Gallery of Art.

Bjurström recounted experiences during his years as curator and director of the Swedish Nationalmuseum and noted the common concerns and problems that face national or government-sponsored museums. He reflected on the role of museums in the life of a country and its people. He described his experience at CASVA and shared observations about his year in Washington.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 7, 1991 in Washington, D.C.

Conger, Clement E.

Clement Conger, curator of the diplomatic reception rooms at the Department of State, was a reporter at the 1941 opening of the National Gallery of Art and has been a long-time associate and observer of its activities.

Conger described the opening of the Gallery and his reaction, as a member of the press, to seeing the installation of paintings in the new building. He described President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the opening and on other occasions. He recalled the Mellon Fountain and visits to the National Gallery of Art by foreign dignitaries. He reflected on collections of American art in the United States, and on the contributions of Andrew Mellon, David Finley, and John Walker to the development of the Gallery. He described the diplomatic reception rooms at the Department of State and his experiences at the White House and gave his views concerning the architecture of the East Building.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on July 14, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

DeAtley, Thelma with Virginia Brown

Thelma DeAtley was a copyist at the National Gallery of Art from a time shortly after the Gallery opened. She was interviewed with her daughter, Virginia Brown.

DeAtley described how she learned of the National Gallery of Art and became a copyist. She explained the painting techniques used by copyists and their ways of helping one another. She recalled her experiences at the Gallery, including reactions of visitors to the copyists' work. She described the copyists' room and the special table in the cafeteria reserved for them. She remembered people she had known through her work as a copyist, especially Richard Bales and Gregory Stapko.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on April 11, 1994 in Washington, D.C.

Feller, Robert

Physical chemist Robert Feller was chief investigator for the National Gallery of Art research project into artists' materials at Pittsburgh's Mellon Institute--later Carnegie Mellon University--publishing extensively in the fields of synthetic and natural picture varnishes, pigment analysis and the effects of light.

Feller described his education and circumstances of his early work at the Carnegie Institute. He recalled the relationship between the National Gallery of Art and the Institute and many of the personalities involved. He outlined the various directions and concerns of his research, his methodology and his findings. He noted the interest and contributions of various Gallery staff members, the reactions to his findings, and the long-term impact of his work. He reflected on colleagues and noted development of the field of art conservation over time.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on March 30, 1989 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

MacEwen, Edward C.

Ed MacEwen, an advertising executive with GTE Corporation, initiated GTE's first support for a National Gallery of Art exhibition in 1979 and continued to coordinate GTE's role at role in funding Gallery exhibitions until he retired from GTE in 1996.

MacEwen described his role as liaison between the Gallery and GTE and remembered his colleagues in both institutions. He recalled the exhibitions supported by GTE, noting the reasons for selecting each one, the special events and programs that accompanied exhibitions and how these benefitted the company.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on July 18, 1996 in Washington, D.C.

Modestini, Mario

Mario Modestini became art conservator for the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in 1949 and later was conservation consultant to the National Gallery of Art.

Modestini described his early life and the circumstances of his invitation to work for the Kress Foundation. He remembered Rush Kress, Francis Sullivan, Mary Davis, Franklin Murphy, and others associated with the Foundation. He described the paintings acquired by the Kress Foundation, the involvement of John Walker in the acquisitions, conservation of the collection in New York, at Huckleberry Hill and elsewhere, and the distribution of the collection to regional art galleries. He outlined Robert Feller's contributions to conservation and recalled his experiences with the controversial varnish "27H." He recounted the acquisition and framing of *Ginevra de' Benci* and controversies concerning conservation of various works, especially Rembrandt's *The Mill*. He shared anecdotes relating to various other works of art.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on November 5, 1993 in New York, New York.

Mongan, Agnes

Agnes Mongan, sister of National Gallery of Art staff member Elizabeth Mongan and herself a Kress professor at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, was a long-time observer and associate of the National Gallery.

Mongan described her education in Paul Sachs's museum course and recalled seeing Andrew Mellon's collection in his Washington apartment and the Widener collection at Lynnewood Hall. She spoke of her friendships with John Walker and Kenneth Clark and recalled their intellectual and cultural interests and friendships. She especially noted her association with American Defense/Harvard Group, and the impact of the Army's Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section during World War II. She commented on various Gallery personalities and her experiences as a Kress professor.

The interview was conducted by John J. Harter on June 21, 1989 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Pearson, Nathan

Nathan Pearson began work in Paul Mellon's Pittsburgh office in 1947 and continued to work there through the time of the interview.

Pearson recounted his early employment at the Carborundum Company and the circumstances of his work for Paul Mellon and Ailsa Mellon Bruce. He explained his association with the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust and other foundations. He described his impressions of the National Gallery of Art and of people with whom he worked, especially John Walker and Ernest Feidler.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on October 15, 1993 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Perry, Marilyn

Marilyn Perry joined the Samuel H. Kress Foundation as executive vice president in 1981. In 1984 she was elected president of the Foundation.

Perry described her educational background, how she was urged by Kress board member Franklin Murphy to join the Kress Foundation, and her experience there. She mentioned a fund which the Kress Foundation is establishing in memory of Mr. Murphy which will enable the National Gallery of Art to host international symposia on various aspects of the illustrated book. She described the Foundation's ties with the Gallery including the initial Kress gift, the photographic archives, and the Kress fellowships and professorships established in the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA). Perry discussed the possibility of a future conservation center for the Gallery which would be funded by the Kress Foundation. She recalled how the Foundation commissioned and published the systematic catalogue of the Kress collection and sponsored other publication projects. She expressed her opinions on the purpose of the National Gallery of Art and her philosophy on the relative merits of small and large exhibitions.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on March 6, 1995 in New York, New York.

Schmidt, Adolph William

Adolph Schmidt began work for the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust in 1937 and later became its treasurer, executive vice president and president.

Schmidt recalled his associates at the Trust including David Bruce, Paul Mellon, and Donald Shepard and described the West Building project for the National Gallery of Art, noting especially the importance of the marble and the problems presented in selecting it and obtaining sufficiently large quantities for the building. He recounted his concern that Andrew Mellon had not wanted the Gallery named for him and the movement that he led for the Andrew W. Mellon Memorial Fountain on Pennsylvania Avenue.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on May 14, 1992 in Washington, D.C.

Standen, Edith

Edith Standen was secretary to the Widener Collection from 1929 to 1942. She joined the Women's Army Corps in 1943 and became a Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section officer in Europe. She served as a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York until her retirement in 1970.

Standen described Paul Sachs's museum course at the Fogg Museum and explained how she was hired by Joseph Widener. She recalled Widener's approach to his art collection, dealers he worked with, and the transfer of the collection to the National Gallery of Art. She explained her work in Europe for the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section and assessed the impact of the transfer of Berlin paintings to the National Gallery.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on December 1, 1989 in New York, New York.

Stoner, Joyce Hill

Joyce Hill Stoner is a conservator who teaches in the painting conservation department of the University of Delaware-Winterthur.

Stoner described her educational background in art and conservation. She outlined the development of the field and explained the differences in theory and approach of the major figures in painting conservation. She discussed many conservators and their varying philosophies, including Rutherford John Gettens, George Stout, Sheldon and Caroline Keck, Hubert von Sonnenberg, Diane Dwyer Modestini, Mario Modestini, William Suhr, Richard Buck, Helmut Ruhemann, Umberto Baldini, Johannes Hell, Norman Brommelle, Thomas Brachert, Kay Silberfeld, and Victor Covey. She remembered John Brealey and reflected on his personality, professional philosophy, and the perspective he had on his role in the National Gallery of Art's conservation controversy.

The interview was conducted by A.C. Viebranz on July 7, 1995 in Wilmington, Delaware.

Williams, Joan

After her parents died, Joan Williams was raised by David Finley and his wife Margaret. As a family member, she was a close observer of the Finleys and of the National Gallery of Art's early years.

Williams described their family life and especially David Finley's deep involvement in the National Gallery of Art and activities relating to design of the West Building interior. She remembered other personalities with which they were closely associated and recalled childhood experiences at the National Gallery including wheelchair races in its corridors. She described watching Roosevelt's third inaugural parade from the Constitution Avenue balcony. She noted other significant incidents in the Gallery's development.

The interview was conducted by Anne G. Ritchie on March 1, 1991 in Leesburg, Virginia.