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Oral history interview with Andrew Chinn, 1965 May 24

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Andrew Chinn on May 24, 1964. The interview took place in Seattle, Washington, and was conducted by Dorothy K. Bestor for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project.

The original transcript was edited. In 2022 the Archives created a more verbatim transcript. Additional information from the original transcript that seemed relevant was added in brackets and given an -Ed. attribution. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

Interview

DOROTHY BESTOR: —recording. We'll just say a few things to see if we have the sound right. We can erase these at the beginning. So—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: We can erase anything as a matter of fact. So, why don't you just read something or say something for a few sentences. And I'll see if I have it set high enough to get your voice—

ANDREW CHINN: Okay.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —at its best.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, it's the advisory committee the following people have been appointed as a conservative committee to evaluate the progress of study and to advise our staff. That's it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, that sounds fine. I'll sit on the couch here and see if it picks up my questions. And I think if you'll say one more sentence after I get through, then we'll run it back and see how it sounds.

ANDREW CHINN: All right. As a doctor, so [ph] medicine, consultant in oral history. Brandeis University.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Fine, thank you very much, Mr. Chinn. [Recorder stops, restarts.] Now, we're recording again. We can erase that first part. This is a tape-recorded interview in the home of Andrew Chinn, Seattle watercolorist. And Mr. Chinn, first of all, what do you think of when you remember the Federal Art Projects? Do you think of it as something that was just a necessity, or something that had some positive merits to it?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, to me, there's definitely a positive merit. I remember that the—when we would belong to the Project, we use to do a lot of painting outdoors, mostly outdoors.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And the Project furnished the equipment. And we had a chance to do our thing, you might call, creatively. All we had to do was to turn in, oh, about two or three watercolors a week. And you were painting oil you turn in one in a week.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And a lot of people, of course, make fun of the WPA Project.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, they certainly do.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, they do. But then, the people that in it, they understand. But there's one thing that I would like to point out is sometimes that I wonder it's worthwhile, I remember my—

in 1941, we were making a model of Sand Point station.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And we had to go out to gather some of the small tree models. And, oh, a number of us going out. And then, we get all kind of trees. And what they did was they put them on the model and spray it with a coating of plaster [ph] to keep it from destroying. But then, we get so many paper bags of 'em, people leave it in the corner. And the next day, we would go out and gather another few more big shopping bags and they did the same thing. So, I get the feeling that it seems like providing some work for us at that time. Of course—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —the World War, the second, was still going on. And I remember one time Jacob Elshin, and I, and Fay Chong, we went out for a painting. Also, we were gathering little trees. And I had a pair of scissors in my hand. In one hand I was holding a paper bag. We were over at Ballard going through some of the state parks, looking for some special trees so we can cut. [Dorothy Bestor laughs.] And that caused a lot of alarm because the people in Ballard, they called the police department.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, really?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Before we knew it, the police was after us. I was the one that they were after because they—the people report this crazy Japanese [Dorothy Bestor laughs] are roaming the street with a pair of scissors in his hands and—[Cross talk.] That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: So, after that, we didn't go out anymore because just to save a lot of embarrassment and trouble.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. Well, your feeling was then that your skills as artists weren't really being used in projects like that. It was sort of busy work—

ANDREW CHINN: It's—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —that anyone could have done.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, it wasn't [ph] like this until the World War II—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —started. And also, too, I don't know how correct it is, but, at first, when the project is named Federal Art Project, and then, later on, they changed it to Washington State Art Project.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Statewide, yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. And I think it was then, you know, you hear a lot of comments, "Oh, it's the WPA, huh?" You know people talked like that.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: But you know as I know that a lot of well-known painters in this region—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —worked with the Art Project before.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, indeed. Almost every well-known painter—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —in this region had some connection with it—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —either on the Project itself or doing murals for the treasury section on

painting and design which was another branch of the—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —Federal Art Project. Well, to get back for just a little bit, when did you start in on the project? Do you remember?

[00:05:17]

ANDREW CHINN: I think roughly it's 1940, I think.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: 1940. It was probably 1940. I left there, I think, 1941 summer.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So, then you were never in on it when it was the Federal Art Project, because it became Washington statewide in September 1939.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, that's right. And we were over at Ballard. One of the schools, was it grade school? I can't recall the name of the school, the school building. Inverarity was the supervisor—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —in those days.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. Apparently, he was the supervisor throughout the whole thing from 1936 on until it—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —wound up—

ANDREW CHINN: I think it was—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —during World War II. Well, before you got on the project what had you done as—what had your training been or art experience?

ANDREW CHINN: I was—I spent 16 years in China learning the Chinese language and the Chinese way of handling the brush. And I have a pretty good background in Chinese art and culture.

DOROTHY BESTOR: You must have.

ANDREW CHINN: Yes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: You were born here in—

ANDREW CHINN: Born in Seattle.

DOROTHY BESTOR: In Seattle.

ANDREW CHINN: But was educated in China. Then, I came back to Seattle, and I got some western art training in University of Washington.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I see. Well, that's very interesting. You have a very thorough background in Chinese—

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —painting and calligraphy.

ANDREW CHINN: Yes. I have been—more or less couple years, I haven't been doing much teaching. But until two years ago—started in 1945, I've been teaching in, oh, quite a few

schools.

DOROTHY BESTOR: You've taught at Edison—

ANDREW CHINN: Edison.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —Technical School, have you not?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I have. And then, the YW, the YM, and my old studio downstairs. And also, at Richmond Highland [ph].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh. Well, how did you happen to get on the project? Did Mr. Chong or Mr. Elshin tell you about it, or—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, they—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —did you apply?

ANDREW CHINN: —told me about it but they couldn't fit me in there. I talked to Inverarity, and then, at that time, he already knew about me—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —as a painter. So—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —finally with his approval—and I had to see someone else, I didn't know who the man was, and I got in.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: It wasn't so much of the pay they give the artists then. It was just the time they give him to do the creative work.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. How much time did you spend? Were you doing—

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —it full time for a while?

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, yeah, full time for a while. Yes, definitely. But I would say that we work about—regular, about eight-hour work to a—sometimes six and a half or eight hours. But—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —we'd get off about four o'clock or so.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Where were you? Over at the Bailey Gatzert School?

ANDREW CHINN: No. When I was there, there was over Ballard, across—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —the Ballard Bridge there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, I see.

ANDREW CHINN: It was also in the school. I can't recall the name of the school.

DOROTHY BESTOR: The Latona School? No, Ballard High?

ANDREW CHINN: You know, you crossed that bridge.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. I'll find out.

ANDREW CHINN: And then, I just turned to the right side, not far from the bridge.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah, mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: You know, it might be Latona School.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, it was in Latona after it left Bailey Gatzert.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, that must be the school.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And I don't have a record of another school over in Ballard. But the records are very spotty—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —and discontinuous. Though there's a great deal of correspondence about the Project in the university library. And some in the—well, some records in the public library.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, when you were doing this six and a half or eight-hour day, what were you mainly doing? Watercolors—

ANDREW CHINN: I was mainly doing—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —of local scenes?

ANDREW CHINN: Mainly doing local scenes. But I do have some that paint indoors.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I understand some of the paintings that we did turned out at the Vincent St. Paul or—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Vincent St. Paul, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: That was from the Project.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. And I hear there was a great hullabaloo about—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —the fact that some of it got there by mistake. No one knows how and it was sold for five dollars.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Two dollars.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And things like that.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Did any of yours get—

ANDREW CHINN: I had been—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —down there?

ANDREW CHINN: No, but I heard that there are some from Morris', you know—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —older painting is in it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yes, Mr. Elshin, I think, bought some of Morris Graves' older painting there and Mr. Chong did too.

[00:10:01]

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: He has one, as you probably know, in his living room that he got—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —then and there. What was—this is a hard thing to answer, I know. But one of the things that the people directing this project would like us to find out, if we can, is something about the—well, the general quality of experience. The kind of experience it was to work on our Project. Did you have a sense of really getting somewhere? Or did you have the sense that there were lots of confusions and, oh, that your time wasn't used very well. And that the—there were difficulties? I mean, you can be perfectly frank, and we'll erase anything you say that you don't want to. But some people look back upon that period, especially a little before you got on it, with absolute horror. They say the artist's time wasn't used well at all. And that you were just kept busy.

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: For no purpose.

ANDREW CHINN: —I do not have that experience. No, I don't. To me, somebody—some project support by the government, and you have all the artists and give a chance the artist to do some creative work himself. I don't know where the complaint comes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Unless from people that don't belong to the Project. The people that make fun of the WPA.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But regardless how they make fun of the WPA, there's a lot of work accomplished.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good.

ANDREW CHINN: Now, I played tennis, and—in Seattle, with Fay Chong all the time. Do you know that so many tennis courts were built by the WPA Project? There are many, many of them.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, that—that's interesting. I know that the WPA did all over the city. And it's very—ranges much more than people often do know, it planted most of the plants in the arboretum.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And did all sorts of road markers and—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —highway markers—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —in state parks, lodge decorations and furnishings—

ANDREW CHINN: Right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —and so on. And you think that the Art Project did as much in its way—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —proportionately, as some of the other phases of the Project.

ANDREW CHINN: What are the other phases you meant?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, the building program, for instance. And the part of the WPA in which

the university and the Art Project cooperated on some of the museum displays.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Things like that. They are tangible results.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Improvements to schools, too. And some people say that the Art Project didn't leave as many tangible results.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, no matter what you do there's always somebody go for the idea. Those that go for the idea, that's great.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Those that don't go for it, no matter how you do it, it's hard to please them.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, right.

ANDREW CHINN: The same way with a person. You cannot be liked by everybody. There's always somebody that don't like you.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: So, the Project is the same.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And as far as the work—the one that over their tunnel out there, that was made by the—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —WPA, it looks real beautiful.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, it does.

ANDREW CHINN: And it stays good.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. That was done by Fitzgerald.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And as far as I'm concerned, I think that Project is great.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good.

ANDREW CHINN: There should be more of it to give a creative expression.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, then, you'd be in symphony with some of the ideas that are being bandied about now about further government art projects, or renewed government art projects, perhaps.

ANDREW CHINN: I would—

DOROTHY BESTOR: I have a few clippings [inaudible].

ANDREW CHINN: —like to encourage the federal government project. If there's any way to do it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, of course, it's been suggested from time to time that there be a new art project in connection with Johnson's war on poverty—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —in connection with the Appalachia—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —Program.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: There has been a call for support for the performing arts.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And there's been renewed interest in the WPA.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, I would go for that, yes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And Governor Evans is pledging support for the arts.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And Mr. Guzzo in *the Times* thinks—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —support should be local and not federal. So, all in all there seems to be a good deal of discussion.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I think that great accomplishments, regardless of how the—people that criticize.

[00:15:00]

DOROTHY BESTOR: If there were to be something comparable to this again, how do you think it should be run? Can you suggest any improvements in it?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, regardless of whether the project should be controlled by the state or by the country, I think the personnel in it should be much as any average part of organizer, or any in that part, should be men that know how to paint and also know how to run.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Hard to find the two combined, perhaps.

ANDREW CHINN: Yes, but you still have to search for that type of people. And the same way with the people judging a show. If you run into judges, they all like the modern, why, the conservative painter wouldn't have a chance.

DOROTHY BESTOR: True.

ANDREW CHINN: You will have to find somebody, you know, that fair enough judge. Somebody that really like—know how to paint a conservative type. And some that really know how to paint the abstract.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And get the happy medium.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, now, Mr. Elshin was saying that if something like this were to be run again, he wanted a person with a background who was not a painter himself. He thought all painters were prejudiced. Do you feel that?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, painters are prejudiced because they think their style—they want theirs, you see. And they don't like the—well, not just the painter even the musician too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: You tell me what group—even the dentists, there's always a professional jealousy.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Somebody's always don't do as good as he can.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: So, how can you say that the artist is prejudiced? They all have that line.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But, like you said, that it's hard to get a hold of people—the artist that can run the business, that's very true. But we still have to look for those people. And, otherwise, the guy that run the business maybe run it smoothly, but cannot get along with the artist and still wouldn't be any good.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Whom did you especially come in contact with when you were working on the project besides—

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —Mr. Elshin and Mr. Chong?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, we seen Fay Chong—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —Elshin, Bill Cumming, these boys—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —you know, very often.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: I think at that time Morris had already left the Project at that time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But Elshin and Fay was definitely there. I think that Bill Cumming was there also.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. And Dale Goss was there while Morris was there. But he wasn't there when I was there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. Is Dale Goss still alive, do you know?

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: He is not the—his position was replaced by a guy by the name of Peterson. But he is promoted—he is not an art director for the state of Washington. He's a—in a higher position. He is more or less taking care of the—oh, the administration or some type—I can't tell you exactly what he—what he does now.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, I've been trying to track him down.

ANDREW CHINN: Yes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I'm supposed to interview him. And—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —I—so far, I haven't found out where he is. And the fact that his number had disappeared from the phone book in this last—

ANDREW CHINN: Oh—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —edition. And there's just a Mrs. Dale Goss at Ravenna Boulevard made me think that, perhaps, he—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —had recently died.

ANDREW CHINN: She probably—yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, I'll check.

ANDREW CHINN: I don't know, the newspaper never mentioned. You would think that if he had passed—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —[inaudible] but people would know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Sure. Well, I'll check. Perhaps there's some other explanation.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, let's see, I was on another train of thought a minute ago. Oh, we were talking about other people with whom you were in contact.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: You say Morris Graves had already left. But did you—

ANDREW CHINN: Yes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —know him?

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, yeah. I knew Morris since 1932.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: We usually have our Chinese art club on Jackson Street. Morris used to come down every Friday.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: And we used to go over to his place to visit him. And one thing that I remember most was—you see, he used to live in Edmonds.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And he had a—he built a studio himself. And we were out there painting. We spent all day out there painting.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And then, [inaudible] too in the evening and he wanted to go home to visit his mother. So, well, the fireplace was still burning. So, we were carefully putting the screen over and covering all the holes.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: So, I took him back to town to visit his mother. And then, the next day, nothing happened. He didn't tell me anything. But it was—it was two weeks later that I learned that the next day he went back to Edmonds, his studio burned to the ground. And everything in it burned.

[00:20:01]

DOROTHY BESTOR: I read that it had burned just after he—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —had opened it. How could it have caught fire when it was all covered?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that I do not know. Only I could think maybe the spark, you know, flew out from the screen. Somebody—

DOROTHY BESTOR: [Inaudible.]

ANDREW CHINN: —was saying that he—you know, he wrote something about himself in a little small booklet or something and—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —mentioned the incident.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Say that he had some Oriental friends with him that day. That was us.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Fay and I were—we were there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, that's too bad. Have you seen him recently?

ANDREW CHINN: Not recently. But he came back from Ireland recently.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Fay went to see him. And then, he came back mainly for—to see his mother. She's still living.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: I understand she's over 80, or 85, you know, [8]6 some—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Goodness.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's quite a long lifespan.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, it certainly is.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. You know Guy Anderson was in the [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, I know. I was—

ANDREW CHINN: [Inaudible.]

DOROTHY BESTOR: —hoping to see him—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —up at La Conner.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. I haven't seen that guy in many years.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, he had a show last month at Seligman Gallery.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He said he was here very briefly—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —for that. But just for a few hours, for the opening.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Did you see the show?

ANDREW CHINN: No, I didn't get around. You know, lately, I've been so busy with the Boeing Aircraft that I've been working day and night. So, that's the reason why I canceled all these teachings.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: I have them with—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Are you in industrial design there, or—

ANDREW CHINN: Not industrial design. We are classified as a commercial artist. We do a lot of, oh, chart work and transposing blueprints into isometric and—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —different things like that.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Quite a different kind of—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —work from your—

ANDREW CHINN: Well, I've been with Boeing going on 20 years and that's the kind of work that I've been doing. It's very difficult to make a living by selling paintings. I don't know how—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Indeed it is.

ANDREW CHINN: —many guys that could do that. Maybe perhaps Morris and Tobey probably could handle it. Or Paul Horiuchi. But not too many. Most of the people I know— the northwestern top-notch painters, but they too have done other things.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Like Fred Marshall, you know, he's—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —started work with the newspapers.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, I was just thinking of him.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I don't know why—maybe the people in general, it hasn't educated—come to the appreciation of art so much that they would rather buy a pair of \$50 shoes from—you know, imports, you know, different—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —things like that, than buy a painting.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, it's true. People think of—so many people think of buying a painting as a luxury and they feel a little guilty about it. [Laughs.]

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: But—

ANDREW CHINN: But a shoe is not.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. They think well, I'll wear them. I'll get to wear out it. But that brings up another thing I was going to ask you about. Do you think that the government Art Projects helped make Seattle more aware of art? Do you think the average person who didn't know much about it before paid more attention to it afterwards?

ANDREW CHINN: I think so. It sure helped. I think any promotion in the art is [inaudible], letting people know more about art.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Anything like that. The same way with the Puget Sound Group artists.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: You know we have that group for many, many years.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: I think since 1923. See, I happen to be the board member now.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But we talk about getting prizes for different art festivals, like Renton. They're going to have an art festival.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: And we figured that it's good for the community. So, we furnish \$100 prize every year for the Renton—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good.

ANDREW CHINN: —Art Center. And, of course, we give prize to the Puget Sound and also the Burnley, and also this other—what's this other—

DOROTHY BESTOR: You sponsor that Seattle show, *Seattle Past and Present* show, at the Museum of—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. [Cross talk.]

DOROTHY BESTOR: —History and Industry.

ANDREW CHINN: The MOHAI?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, we sponsor that. We give prizes in that. Yeah. That—the Puget Sound Group is about the main group that—it's really—with enough money to give prizes for these shows.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. I imagine there must be quite a few members of the Puget Sound Group of painters who had something to do with the Federal Art Projects.

ANDREW CHINN: I think so.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Because you and Harry Bonath.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Fay Chong.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Ernest Norling.

ANDREW CHINN: Right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: May Marshall told me that Fred Marshall did not have anything to do with—

ANDREW CHINN: I don't remember he had.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —with the Project.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. May—I hadn't seen May in I don't know how long.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, I see her all the time.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, she's pretty healthy, huh?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, yes, fine.

ANDREW CHINN: That's nice.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

[00:25:00]

Well, let's see, what else is important for you to get on the record about this. Fay Chong says that you have a better memory than he. And, really, probably remember more about it than he does. He did quite an interesting interview a while ago, but he said I must, by all means, see you. [Andrew Chinn laughs.] Do you have any—anything, no matter how informal or off the cuff, about, either things you remember about working on it, or people, or suggestions for doing it better in the future?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, you know, you hear people say so much about good artists—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —cannot operate a business administration. I believe in that myself. But still, just because people say it that way, that doesn't mean that we just stop there from finding people to do the work.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: To me, it's even so if they are not artists, but they still have to know something about a painter.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And the art background, or the art history.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: You should get anybody in there because they can operate the administration, then get him that [inaudible] in a hand, it's so loosely can—you know, it cannot hold together.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And, you know, in old China and the emperors—you hear about the court, the painter. The emperors hire these painters to do the work—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —because the reason is they hire them, then they don't have any other financial worries.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: You know? So, they paint, and they paint for the emperor, however. In other words, if anybody that want him to paint him a picture he cannot, because the emperor got a [inaudible] on the artist that whatever he paints is for the use in the court or for the emperor, you see?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: But then, at the time that he's in the court working for the emperor, he does his darndest, the best work created during that period.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: And this is what we want.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: You see. But if a man that has to go around and then look for work to make a living, he would neglect his painting ability even if he had it in him.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: You see? So, you have to have an organization that backs him up, that he didn't have to starve, and still doing a good job. Now, that's what we should have.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. In other words, we should have a continuing thing—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh[affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —for art—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —you say. Sort of like the Guggenheim Foundation only—

ANDREW CHINN: Right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —more widespread.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. Now, I would go for that 100 percent. What—like in Spain you hear about the court painters, too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: These paintings are, you know, government made. I don't know now, but they had Velasquez [ph], now he's one of the—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —court painters.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Somebody got to be there to promote.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. I think it—

ANDREW CHINN: To promote it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —would be a very good idea.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: If the need were just seen—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —surely money could be spent for that. We spend it for so many other things.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. Well, you know, you figure this way. There's always somebody opposed regardless how good the idea is. There's always—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —somebody oppose it. Well, take a look at the airplane. 50 years ago, you mention they would fly in the air, and they run 2,000 miles an hour, they said, Ridiculous. But

50 years later, what happened? You see it in your own eye.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: You see? So, if we have our determination to do the job, do it right. And then we can do something that we're not ashamed of ourselves. That's good enough in itself.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: What they say later on, [that they would see the light (ph)]. See? But the thing is that we do it the way we think it's right. That's most important.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. Well, the few criticisms I have heard of the Project in Seattle were not from people outside, but from some people on the Project who said the conditions were such that they couldn't do it the way they thought it was right themselves. That people would stand over them with a time clock and say, How many minutes are you taking out for lunch? How many minutes are you taking going to the bathroom?

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: "Do it this way." And they—they'd send a statement around sometimes, according to Mr. Elshin, that the—that everyone would have to sign, saying that they had or had not done enough work on the Project—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —and they were being underpaid. They were being overpaid.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: That and so on. That there was some of this internal—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —feeling that the artists weren't really being artists. They were just being treated like children. But you didn't feel that?

[00:30:03]

ANDREW CHINN: No, I didn't feel that way. But to pinpoint an artist that—how much time you spend in the toilet, how many times you had to smoke, that's ridiculous.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, it is.

ANDREW CHINN: That's ridiculous.

DOROTHY BESTOR: It really is.

ANDREW CHINN: You know, Boeing hire a company, what they call a pace company.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Time?

ANDREW CHINN: Pace for the time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: They hire people to watch how people work and where they go, how much time they spend in toilet. You know it's—everybody resents that, especially the artists.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Creative work is not done sitting down there how many hours.

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, it certainly isn't.

ANDREW CHINN: You see? You cannot nail an artist like that.

DOROTHY BESTOR: No.

ANDREW CHINN: So, what happens?

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, absolutely not.

ANDREW CHINN: Right now, [they're dealing (ph)] with all these painters. They don't bother with artists.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good.

ANDREW CHINN: See?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good.

ANDREW CHINN: It's the accomplishment in the—in the work group like Boeing, why, as long as when the work piles up, got to get it done, the artists all swung together and finished off. Now, that is a thing.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: It is not how many times that guy's sitting on the desk. He could diddle-daddle for eight hours doing nothing.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: You see?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Right.

ANDREW CHINN: You don't get a cooperation that way.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Exactly.

ANDREW CHINN: To punch a clock, that's nonsense.

DOROTHY BESTOR: It's terrible.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: When you were working on the Project, was Wellington Groves the foreman?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, I remember him.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I just interviewed him.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He seems very—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —interesting and very objective and—

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —impartial.

ANDREW CHINN: He was there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, he was there. He was the right-hand man of Inverarity at that time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And he's still active too. I think he's still teaching over there—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —at Burnley.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I—yes, he's—well, he's teaching at Edison now.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, Edison now?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Advertising art mainly.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And he—I interviewed him about two weeks ago.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: He was very objective about the Project.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Saw that there were some difficulties because it was such a big Project.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: But that he felt it, on the whole, people gave of their best.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah, I agree with that 100 percent. And, as I told you before, there's always somebody who are opposed to it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: You see? And let our conscience be our guide. We do our best and get the job done. Later on, people say that object art would come to see the light.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: [Never come to it (ph).]

DOROTHY BESTOR: Did you have a feeling that there was, then, a sort of group spirit among the artists? Or just among those small—

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —cliques of them?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, the group we had there, the painters, we had—at that time, I would say about, what? About less a dozen guys out there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But we had the—a number of administrative people out there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I say it was about probably 10, or about 10.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Right after I left, not long after I left, this one guy, I can't remember his name now even. Do I know any of these people? [Referring to photograph -Ed.]

DOROTHY BESTOR: Now, I—I don't know, but you may. [Sneezes] Of course, you know Fay Chong and Jacob Elshin—[Cross talk.]

ANDREW CHINN: Alf Bruseth [ph], is he still living?

DOROTHY BESTOR: That I don't know. I haven't been able to find him.

ANDREW CHINN: He was in Portland, you know, for a while, you know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, Alf Bruseth [ph].

DOROTHY BESTOR: I haven't found anything about him yet.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I don't know if he's still living. He's a little bit crippled, you know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh? No, I didn't know that.

ANDREW CHINN: He was over Bailey Gatzert then.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And—

DOROTHY BESTOR: This was taken in 1939.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Oh, I do—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Fay Chong lent it to me.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Well, Elshin is here.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And yeah, Fay is there, Esther Olson, I met her.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, is she still around?

ANDREW CHINN: I—

DOROTHY BESTOR: They wanted me to check up and—

ANDREW CHINN: She—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —see if—

ANDREW CHINN: She still around?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Is she? I don't know.

ANDREW CHINN: You got me. I haven't seen her since that time. Oh, Ransom Patrick is there too, in—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: The boy finally [ph], he really—you know, at that time that we in the Project—after we got out on Project, he is a with the liquor all the time, you know? And then, finally, I think Inverarity pulled him out. Put him in some, you know, in some place and have him cut out drinking. And then, the minute he married a nurse, boy, they make you snap out like that. Wonderful. You know he is a professor of—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —art or something teaching in the university.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, he's the head of the art department at Duke University, I heard.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, boy.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He got a PhD in history of art, I believe.

ANDREW CHINN: It takes will to do that, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: A lot of people just pretty soon they drift back to it. You know something disappointing come up they just drift back to it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: But that boy, I remember Ransom. We used to go out and paint a lot. And he's

a good letterman.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Speedball [ph] wonderful, and brush too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And let's see, who else we got here that I remember. 1929, he lived earlier than my time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: 1939, I believe.

ANDREW CHINN: '39. Oh, that wouldn't be too far. Bill Cumming, yeah, he is there.

[00:35:13]

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Bill Cumming had an article at the Puget Sound [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah. Yes, I read it.

ANDREW CHINN: What happened—what happened to Twohy? He went to San Francisco. I haven't seen him since.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, I had heard that he has died.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, he died?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, gee. Yeah, Twohy and—we used to go over and sketch him all the time. Ransom Patrick is still active. I think he is painting contractor. You know, he paints, I think, on the side. Now and then you still see him. I've got a picture hanging on the, you know—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Now, who is this?

ANDREW CHINN: Ransom—not—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Lubin Petric.

ANDREW CHINN: Lubin Petric, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: That—he married Morris' sister, and then they had a divorce. I don't know but he's married again.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, I think he's not married.

ANDREW CHINN: He's not married?

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, I've seen him several times lately.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And I'm going to interview him—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —soon if he will let me.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He's being very nice and cooperative, but he doesn't really want to be interviewed.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, I see. Well, Hannes Bok—Hannes Bok, I know of him. I met him couple of

times. He was in New York somewhere.

DOROTHY BESTOR: That's what I heard.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. But—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Doing covers for science fiction.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And fantasy stories.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. And I think the other ladies in here, I don't think I know them. That's all the people I know. How about Carl Morris? He was in this in the—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, he's in Portland. I am hoping to interview him any day now.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, Carl Morris and and [Hilda] Deutsch, they all—

DOROTHY BESTOR: [Inaudible.] [Cross talk.]

ANDREW CHINN: —belong—yeah, do it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I have some of the records from the public library.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: If it—you don't have to look at them in detail, but they might—

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —remind you of some things. Those are the copies of them. Somethings done by the Project here, and some of the people on it.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, Corwin Shea [ph], is he still living?

DOROTHY BESTOR: I haven't found any trace.

ANDREW CHINN: There are two brothers, you know? They used to live in Juanita, over the other side. I haven't seen him for years. He's done lots of nice color block.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And this is Vera Engel.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, how—

DOROTHY BESTOR: No trace of her either.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. There is another one, Vera Grube [ph]. She was with the Project. I don't know whether she's still living. Well, Edgar Forner [ph], long dead.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, I thought so.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, long dead, 1932 around there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, he used to come down to the Chinese studio and we'd have a chat.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He was—he was a very conventional painter, wasn't he?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. He—you know, he sat with us for pottery painting, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, really?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. He paints a lot of pottery, you know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: He had a studio, a white building, at one time. Yeah, Ernest Norling, still very active.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. I've interviewed him. He was—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I saw him—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —very [inaudible].

ANDREW CHINN: —only, oh, a couple, two three weeks ago.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: He belonged to our artist group, too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And well, Ziegler is not so active anymore. Ziegler—

DOROTHY BESTOR: I've interviewed him, but he wouldn't let me—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —turn on my devil machine, as Mr. Elshin calls it. [They laugh.]

ANDREW CHINN: I see. Well, he's—gee, he's a charter member of our artists' Puget Sound Group.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: But lately, you know, he lately don't care so much.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: He doesn't go move around anymore.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, when I saw him in December, he said he got down every day to his studio—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —from nine to one, to paint.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh[affirmative]. He's still over the—what's the name of that building? Portland [ph]? No, what's the name? I can't recall that name.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I can't either. It's not a large office building.

ANDREW CHINN: It's the big [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: That's it, yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: [Inaudible] next to Horton [ph].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, you have a—

DOROTHY BESTOR: And that goes into lots of detail about—

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, yeah. They have a—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —people who work down at—many of them have moved or died long since.

ANDREW CHINN: Earl Fields still active?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Who?

ANDREW CHINN: Earl Fields.

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, I don't think so. I can't find anything about him.

ANDREW CHINN: He's—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Do you remember anything about him?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, he used to work for the Seattle Art Museum with Kenneth Callahan [ph]. Say, by the way, Callahan used to belong to it too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, I've interviewed him.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: He was very—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —helpful. He said he wasn't directly connected with it.

[00:40:12]

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: But he painted a number of murals—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —for the Treasury Section of Painting and Design.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And he knew all—most of the people who worked on it.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: So, he had some interesting things to say.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Yeah, he's a—well, at that time, you know, Morris Graves, Guy Anderson, and Ken Callahan, and Earl Fields they all worked in the museum, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I remember we had [laughs] some kind of argument, you know, about joining the World War, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: I think Anderson opposed it, the conscription.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

ANDREW CHINN: And Earl and Callahan for it, you see?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: So, the argument was, If the government draft me, I would go. If they—the government force me to carry a gun, I carry a gun. If the government force me to go in the battlefield, I will go in the battlefield with a gun, but I won't shoot, you see? That's what—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —Anderson said.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: So, Callahan, and Earl too, says, Well, then what you going into—in the battlefield for? Guy said that. If I start shooting, how do I know if I kill a genius? See?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And then, Callahan said that, Well, boy, up there you or me. [They laugh.] So, who is right? I don't know. But that's the remark.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: They were arguing back and forth—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —yeah. Yeah, Guy Anderson's here. Edmond Fitzgerald's here.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: How about Edmond Fitzgerald's girlfriend? Mary Lou? Has she ever been—

DOROTHY BESTOR: I haven't found anything about her.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh. Yeah, I think that brought back a lot of, you know, good memory. There's an E. Claussen. What's the *E* stand for?

DOROTHY BESTOR: I don't know.

ANDREW CHINN: I know of a Claussen, but I don't know if that's the same one. Ardis Mottner [ph] belonged to the group before? I'll be darned.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Who?

ANDREW CHINN: Ardis Mottner [ph]. She been in the group before? I didn't know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Apparently. Apparently.

ANDREW CHINN: I'll be darned. She recently retired from Boeing, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, no I didn't.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, retired from Boeing.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, she's about 65 now, I think. I'll be darned. I didn't know she belonged to it. Jim Heuston [ph] is still active.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I think he has an office down for the—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —for the [inaudible] building, I think [inaudible] Heuston [ph].

DOROTHY BESTOR: I'm glad to know he's still active. I haven't—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —gotten in touch with him yet. Good.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. He's still active.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Now, his office is where?

ANDREW CHINN: Upstairs on the fourth, in the Union Building, I think.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, fine.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Then—well, I guess—you know this girl, Vera Engel, I bet you that same girl, Vera Grube [ph], I think, she marry a man by the name of Grube [ph]—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: — I think, yeah. Morris is—he's not—is he in town at the moment?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Morris Graves?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, he's down in California. Lubin gave me his address.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, I see.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And I'm hoping, somehow, to get a chance to interview him.

ANDREW CHINN: I see. How about Ebba Rapp? Or—

DOROTHY BESTOR: I have talked with her.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And she says she doesn't remember anything about it. That she was practically a child at the time.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And [laughs] that she did do one painting, it was hung in some school.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: And she—people said, Do you want to come on down and see Callahan and the others at work? So, she went down once and watched them and that's it.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, I see.

DOROTHY BESTOR: But just possibly she will remember more if I—

ANDREW CHINN: I see.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —try again. I do hope so.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Because we don't have very many women represented.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. Did you talk to Ed Burnley? He's not in town, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, he's in Vancouver.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: So, I can't—

ANDREW CHINN: [Inaudible] yeah, Vancouver. Oh, yeah. He's a—I don't know how active he is. I haven't seen him in years. He's one of our members too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: And—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Is James Hueston [ph] one of your members, by the way?

ANDREW CHINN: He was one of the charter members. He belonged to—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —about 1923—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —or '24. Well, I think that's about all the people I look at here that I know at that time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I have a surprise for you there, more lists. You don't have to look at them all. But—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —something might just come to mind from glancing over the pages.

[00:45:00]

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Yeah. Well, Kenjiro Nomura died, oh, it must be five, six years ago.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I know he died some time ago. I didn't know—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —just when.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. He died, yeah, about five—I say five years ago, let's say that. Yeah, he worked for the picture framing—Pacific Picture Framing Company for many a year.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Some of these names they don't hit any more. They don't show—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —their things anymore. Like Earl Fields, I haven't seen any of his things in exhibit anymore. There used to be another one, Walter Frolic, you know him?

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, I don't at all.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, he's teaching in the high schools, some high school.

DOROTHY BESTOR: How do you spell Frolic?

ANDREW CHINN: F-R-O-L-I-C.

DOROTHY BESTOR: F-R-O-L—

ANDREW CHINN: I-C.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —I-C.

ANDREW CHINN: I think he was one of our boys that belonged to the Project. I am not definitely sure about it. But, you know, usually they are the one that worked to get into the museum they once belonged to it.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And he was in the museum—worked in the museum for a while, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: And these are Tokita—Kamekichi Tokita. I don't see much of his thing neither, so I don't know. I don't know whether he's still living or still in town. Or the Claussen was Esther [ph] Claussen? [Inaudible.]

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: The woman—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Is she the one you knew?

ANDREW CHINN: No. I know a man.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Lloyd Claussen but not—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh. Now, this Edmond Fitzgerald is the same as James Fitzgerald is—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —it not? He's dropped the Edmond.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, the same.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: There's three Fitzgerald in town.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: It was—there were three. I don't know whether there's still three in town.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I know there's one that writes for *the P.I.*

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And there's one that—one that was married to a Margaret Tompkins. There was another one paint with watercolor with an English style. That's the one that marry a Mary Lou.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: He was the one that usually come down to the studio. We had life sketch class. And, you know, he was coming down every week, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: On Friday night.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh. Well, now one of these is the same who became a sculptor and was just in this great lawsuit.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, that's the one that married Margaret Tompkins.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: They have a studio over—well, how would I tell you? I couldn't tell you. It's not too far from Volunteer Park. You probably look at the phone book—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —you find, yeah. As for Ross Gill, I think he's still living.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, he is.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Now, these are Salvador Gonzalez. I think I met him at one time, but I cannot recall. The name rings a bell, but I cannot recall him much. You know you do business with the people, see them a lot, you remember.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: But otherwise, you can't remember the name. Now, Peggy Strong is still active?

DOROTHY BESTOR: I don't think so.

ANDREW CHINN: They used to live in Tacoma.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I can't find out anything.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. So, Julie Dalman [ph] died a long time ago thought.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: And Ransom Patrick is still living. We talk about him a while ago.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Now, this is Theodora Harrison. She went back to Ireland. I don't know whether she's still living. If she—if she's still living, she's a—she's a—must be in her 80 or 85 now.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. She was in charge of the Frederick Nelson, the small gallery for—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —a long time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Now, I understand she's a very good with the lettering, you know, English lettering.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Now, this Lloyd Jenson, Lloyd E. Jenson, he left Seattle, oh, geez, 1939 or around there. Went to work for Raymond Loewy, you know, the national, famous designer.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Raymond Loewy, is that how you pronounce it?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, I think so.

[00:50:00]

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, he's working for that guy. His father is owner of Jenson Boat House builders in town, you know?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. But I haven't seen him since 1939. This Elizabeth Curtis, could she be teaching—the one that's teaching art in university department for some time? I got a hunch she works—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, I don't know. I'll check up on that.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. And what Peter Camfferman died quite a number of years back.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: And she died too, very recently.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Margaret Camfferman.

ANDREW CHINN: She died recently.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, she died last spring.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I understand that the last few years after Peter's gone and she more or less lost her memory.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Lots of old friends, they went to see her, she just didn't [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, how sad.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. There's a student of a Peter's went over there, oh, make two or three trips a year over to [inaudible] to see Peter, and they were pretty good friends. And after Peter died, and he requested they have two sets of color, you know, 35 millimeter—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —color make of Peter's work.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And Margaret didn't remember him whatsoever.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Good heavens.

ANDREW CHINN: And then, she asked people, Now, who is that man? She just didn't remember. Lost her memory completely.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Hm, tragic.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. Well, I don't know these people so much. Yeah, those were the days. I have a—lot of people—these people is already gone.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, indeed.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, a lot of these people are gone.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And Ernest Norling said he, wishes the Ford Foundation had thought of this project 10 years ago.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, I—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Then—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Then more people would have remembered—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —more and been alive to tell about it.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. Yeah. You got all these images from the library, is it?

DOROTHY BESTOR: In the public library, yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, they sure have a—quite a complete list of people.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, they do.

ANDREW CHINN: Eddie Cookson [ph], I didn't know Cookson [ph] belonged to the WPA Project.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, tell me about him. I don't know anything about him.

ANDREW CHINN: Cookson once had worked for the Boeing Aircraft Company—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —a short while. He's famous with folk painting.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, Cookson.

DOROTHY BESTOR: And he's still alive and flourishing?

ANDREW CHINN: Gee, last time I saw him was 10 years ago. So, I don't know whether he's still living.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: Well, Ardis Mottner [ph] is—I already mentioned to you. Leon Marsh, I would—

DOROTHY BESTOR: I'm trying to find out about him. Some people say he's still around, but I can't find at all.

ANDREW CHINN: I don't think he is in Seattle, unless I'm mistaken. Somebody was saying that he's down to Portland.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Also, too, unless I'm mistaken but the man not just paint. He manufactured oil paint too.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah. I know I bought some oil paint from him for, you know, some time ago. Gee, that's a long time ago, 1935, '34. You know, that's a long time ago.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And [inaudible]. This man, William Bakke, B-A-K-K-E.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: He's still living, I think.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, he's still living.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I'm very glad to know that.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, he's still living. I don't know him very well, but I've seen some of his paintings down there in the museum.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Here in Seattle?

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, in Seattle. It's the same group of people that—right here. There's no new—there's a Myra Wiggins died many, many years ago. She's the one that did these watercolors on pottery, you know, copper pottery and different things.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: Real—look real like copper, you know, finish.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:55:08]

ANDREW CHINN: No, still the same group of people.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: I—Pieter van Dalen. Pieter van Dalen is still living. He is down in San Francisco.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: He's working for some agency. I do not remember the name. One of our boys went down there to visit—call him up, and knowing that he's doing well, and still living there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: It's for a commercial art agency, is it?

ANDREW CHINN: Commercial art agency. And he's our life member.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: One of the charter members.

DOROTHY BESTOR: I think he's supposed to be the person who appointed Inverarity for the job of supervisor originally.

ANDREW CHINN: You mean van Dalen [ph]?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, I didn't know that. Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: No, I'm wrong. I guess it's Joe Danysh [ph].

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, there's no new name here. Okay. There is another girl there that I [inaudible] her name, Helmi Juvonen.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah. She is the one who, according to Mr. Chong and Mr. Cumming both—

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: —lost her mind. And was in a state institution, or several types of institutions—

ANDREW CHINN: Right now?

DOROTHY BESTOR: —over on the coast for quite a while. They don't know whether she's still alive or not.

ANDREW CHINN: The last time I heard that she was in Sedro-Woolley for a while.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: And then, they moved her over Faulkner [ph], you know, the small place out here, over by the ocean out here. And she was in one of those houses.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: And a friend of mine by the name of Claussen—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —Lloyd Claussen, stopped by and saw her out there.

DOROTHY BESTOR: How was she?

ANDREW CHINN: They were talking. And then, she complained to Lloyd Claussen that they just kept her there and asked Lloyd anyway to get her out of the place. [Inaudible] not happy in there. And she said people that in there, one day you see somebody die, you know. Quietly, they take the body away and next day there's another one. So, she didn't want to be in the [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: What did she do on the Project?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, she was the one that made these [inaudible] Indian costumes and their custom—their costumes and—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: —how they—you know, their arts mostly.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. Well, then she was probably on Erna Gunther's part of the Project. Professor Gunther of the—

ANDREW CHINN: It was—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —anthropology department at the university.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, he still living?

DOROTHY BESTOR: She, yes.

ANDREW CHINN: She? Oh, she's—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes.

ANDREW CHINN: —still living?

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah. She's still living. I interviewed her a few weeks ago.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. She's been in there on their staff for many, many years.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes, she has.

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, Hilme was pretty good friend of Twohy. At one time, we thought that they get married, you see, but that never did materialize. Well, you people here are still with the same group. I haven't seen any new name that I know—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —or run across. Yeah, Lubin Petric name finally came up this way [ph].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: 1939. Yeah. You know Ransom Patrick was a business partner of Harry Bonath for many a year, you know.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh, I didn't know that.

ANDREW CHINN: Oh, yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Oh.

ANDREW CHINN: They both like to drink, see. But Harry [laughs] wasn't hitting the bottle that heavy at that time.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[01:00:02]

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah, but Lubin snapped out of it, that's really something.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, I hear that Lubin Petric is probably going to have a show with Bill Cumming next fall.

ANDREW CHINN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Over—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Bill Cumming hopes he will. I don't know just where.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh[affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: That that will help bring him back in—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —public notice somewhat.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. Yeah, now and then I see his work but not very often.

DOROTHY BESTOR: What kind of work does he do? I've never seen it.

ANDREW CHINN: Well, he's a contract—painting contractor—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yeah.

ANDREW CHINN: —house painting [inaudible].

DOROTHY BESTOR: Yes. But I mean his painting.

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: What is it like?

ANDREW CHINN: It's not—you might call it abstract. It's conventional enough. More or less distorting it somewhat, you see.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: You know like a figure, you know, you still make a big head and short body or, you know, something in that order—

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: —you see.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

ANDREW CHINN: I can't recall anybody in the Project when I was there that I could tell you, that's about all I could tell you.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Well, it's been awfully interesting. And it's been very helpful to have more background on some of these names, too.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: These lists just came into my hands fairly recently.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: So, I've had other lists from Detroit, but they weren't as complete as this.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DOROTHY BESTOR: So, I haven't followed up some of these names. And some, I followed and come to a dead end.

ANDREW CHINN: Uh-huh [affirmative]. That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: So, this has been great to—

ANDREW CHINN: Well—

DOROTHY BESTOR: —hear your impressions and to get some more leads—

ANDREW CHINN: Yeah.

DOROTHY BESTOR: —about other people.

ANDREW CHINN: That's right. That's right.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Any last thoughts?

ANDREW CHINN: Well, there's not—but I still think the Project is a great thing. I still think it is.

DOROTHY BESTOR: Fine. Well, thank you very much.

ANDREW CHINN: You're welcome. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]