

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Butler Art Institute

Personal Experience

O.H. 1825

JAMES G. BUTLER

Interviewed

by

Paul Bick

on

December 10, 1975

BI: This is an interview with Joseph G. Butler III, by Paul Bick, for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, at the Butler Institute of American Art, recorded on November 5, 1975, at approximately 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

Mr. Butler is the Director of the institute. I will let you say whatever you feel is necessary. I think you should enumerate on how the institute got started, your childhood, and things of that sort.

BU: In the first place, my family has always been in the iron and steel business. Our forbearers came from Dublin and Philadelphia in 1759 and they were in the iron business along with the Russell family and the brother of George Washington. In those days, iron ore was found here and there and limestone was found here and there, sometimes continuously. There was always wood for fuel.

Gradually, the Butler brothers moved toward the west, building furnaces where they found ore and limestone. When they exhausted the timber there for fuel, they moved on, eventually ending up very close to Mercer, Pennsylvania. It was at Mercer, Pennsylvania that my grandfather, Joseph G. Butler Jr. was born in 1840.

Incidentally, it was there that they first discovered that coal could be used instead of wood to make iron. The reason for this was that they had heat started wood and they ran out of wood, so the boss said, "Well, we have some coal here. Throw it in and see what happens." That was one of the results that made tremendous iron and steel industries here about. Here we have plenty of limestone, plenty of coal, and plenty of water. Of course, now we have access to the iron ore from the Great Lakes and various places.

My grandfather eventually moved to Niles where he worked for his uncle and where he was the classmate of William McKinley in a little red schoolhouse. He worked there for a number of years until he was in his low twenties. The Civil War came about. He stayed behind to make iron for the troops and he engaged in an expedition to try to capture Morgan when he raided this area. Mainly, he was making iron.

Later on, he was sent to Chicago and he had an ambition, somehow, to have his portrait painted. He found an artist in Chicago who would paint his portrait for one hundred dollars, so he had it done. Apparently, the man that did it was an enthusiast on art because it was after that that the founder of this museum really became interested in collecting.

He became very successful in the iron, and later, the steel business, ultimately becoming one of the founders of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. He made and lost several fortunes. He associated with a great many of the prominent people in the iron and steel business, such as Frick, Carnegie, and Schwab. All of those men were interested in art. Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, Frick Museum in New York, and Charlie Schwab had a big private collection. He started collecting a group of paintings of various sorts, various artists of various nationalities in his house, which then stood directly across the street on Wick Avenue from the present location of the museum.

I spoke of his going to school in Niles, his boyhood friendship with William

McKinley. It was in 1876 that he went to the centennial expedition in Philadelphia, where he saw Winslow Homer's painting of Snap the Whip, which pictures school boys playing that particular game with the background of this little red schoolhouse, very similar to the one which he attended with William McKinley. He wanted that picture very badly, but he could not afford it at that time. Later on, he saw the picture again in Paris, about 1900, and again he wanted to buy it, but the price had gone up and he still could not afford it.

Back in 1915, he had a fire in his house. A very serious one. It began from an overheated furnace. The fire ran up through the walls, and burned the entire top of the house, which contained his painting collection. Every item but one was lost. That was his little, by Joseph Jefferson, who at that time was a great actor in the country and also an artist painter. He immediately began to plan this institute. In fact, he was in touch with his architects, McKinley and White, who designed the original part of the building, the very next day. He had already purchased the ground on which this institute stands, planning to build a home here originally. Due to my grandmother's illness, that was never done, so he decided to build the art institute here, upon the land which he already owned. This started in 1915, and he sat across in his house and he looked out the window and watched it go up, stone by stone, brick by brick, and so on.

In the meantime, he had located Winslow Homer's Snap the Whip. William MacBeth in New York, was at that time, the only dealer who dealt exclusively in American painting. MacBeth found a picture which belonged to a doctor in New York. The doctor did not want to sell it. Mr. MacBeth said, "The doctor would be very happy to have you come up and see the painting anyway." He went up and saw the painting anyway. He wanted it so badly, but the doctor would not sell it. Later on, the doctor decided he wanted to give some money to a hospital, so he got in touch with MacBeth and finally, the picture became my grandfather's.

Winslow Homer's great painting, which of course we still have, is the basis for his American collection because he decided, being a great American himself, that American art was the thing to collect. He had already collected the Indians which we had, a big group of them, about six hundred painting and drawings all together. Fortunately, when the fire occurred, these were exhibitions at the Public Library, so they were safe. Now of course, they are on permanent exhibition here.

The building actually opened to the public in October of 1919. It was widely publicized and it was a beautiful, marble building. It was a copy of an existing Italian building actually, designed, as I said, by McKinley and White. It was very beautiful, but very far from being practical. I should not criticize the founder of anything, I suppose, but there are lots of things on which money was spent, which I consider unnecessary to the detriment of some very practical things which could have been done with that same amount of money.

At any rate, he started descending an American collection, and for the opening in 1919, he got eighty pictures. Most of these were oil. Winslow Homer's Snap the Whip is the big item, but there are a number of other things which are very good indeed. He seemed to lean a little bit toward early 20th century landscapes. It seems that he was not

as much interested as he might have been in 19th century paintings, although there are a number of good examples.

He passed away in 1927, at which time my father, whose name was Henry A. Butler, took over the museum. It was then run by a board of trustees, as it had been from the beginning. During the 1930's, when things were very bad, and the Depression was at its depth, he decided to add two wings to the building. These were done by borrowing money from collateral by the endowment fund, which the founder had left.

At that time, of course, these wings were put up very inexpensively because things were so bad that materials and labor were costly. My father added a few pictures to the collection during his lifetime, which was short. He did add the great sergeant we have of Cecilia Bowe and the wonderful ship collection. Those were my father's contribution. Unfortunately, he died of a heart attack in 1934. It was at that point that I was asked by the then, board of trustees to take over as Director, to succeed Margaret Evans. She had been Director who wished to go to the then, Youngstown College, as head of the art department.

BI: How old were you at this time?

BU: In 1934 I was 33. I had a business background of about twelve years, with no great knowledge of painting or art or anything of the sort. I had been a cartoonist in my college days and had a lot of things published. That is as far as it went.

I spent part-time in the museum and part-time at my job in the brokerage business. We managed to get along with the exception of about ten or twelve months, when we actually had to close the doors. Because of the depression, our income was almost nil and we could not afford to do any shows. We had the permanent collection to show and that was about it. There again, we had the problem of keeping the building warm enough so the collection would not deteriorate.

Things got better, of course. They always do. We started up having some shows, special shows. In 1936, we started out the mid-year show, which we still have. This next summer will be our fortieth. That has now become a national painting show. It is well recognized around the country if for no other reason than there are few national painting shows any longer. We also started later, with the assistance of the Junior League of Youngstown, the annual ceramic and sculpture show, which is now in its 28th year. With those special shows, and with encouragement to and from the art clubs which existed then, we got our attendance up to a point where it was at least respectable.

After the museum opened, I should say, it retrogressed slightly. Very few people came to the museum. A few Youngstown people, and a few out-of-towners who knew about it would come, but it was small at that point, with only the three front galleries which now exist. The collection was eighty pieces and you could see it all in two minutes and that was it. Nothing special happened. We did manage to improve our financial situation. We began getting a few gifts now and then, a painting here and there, money here and there, and the economic situation improved greatly, so that by the late 1940's, we were able to make some further changes in the museum.

In the first place, McKinley and White had built these forty foot round rooms on the ground floor, which had thirty foot ceilings. That is a lot of space to fix up. We figured out that if we put a floor across those galleries, we could double our space, which we did. We also made some more arrangements in the back of the buildings. We installed an elevator so we could get up at the top, and a few things like that.

In the meantime, we kept collecting, and it ran to practically all phases. The painting department continued to grow. We tried to buy contemporary things. We took the attitude that we were here, not only to please or amuse the spectators or furnish material for research or that sort of thing, but we also felt that we should be helping the young artists by giving exposure, and that is what we did with the two shows I mentioned.

In the 1950's, we did that addition which gave us a great deal more space. Then we began really growing as far as the collection was concerned. Times were much better in the 1950's and 1960's and it was then that we had more money for accessions and for improvements. We had one very generous donor who kept giving us money to buy prints. We now have a very large print collection which is a result of his donations. The Youngstown Photographic Society used to meet here and through them we obtained a small collection of photographs which we are continuing. From the ceramic and sculpture show we have bought considerable material, all of which is Ohio. We took a great interest in Ohio art, painters, ceramists, photographers, and what have you.

When we came up into the 1960's, we began to realize that 1960 was going to be our 50th anniversary. All this time we had been putting aside a certain amount of our income toward a building fund, which we had always done. With a little extra help from individuals, we were able to build galleries on top of the wings, which just about doubled our exhibition space. Those were open in the fall of 1969. We had a large party. We had distinguished guests and speakers and dancing and music and champagne and what have you. It was a very joyous occasion. We had some new pictures that year and we really felt quite proud of the whole situation. Since that point, we have managed to create rather than run.

One thing, the collection had grown so large, we had now almost 4,000 items in it, compared to starting with eighty, that storage became a problem and space to exhibit became a problem. The more space you have, the more maintenance you have. The more space you have, the more help you need, and so on. So we felt, at that time, and we still feel, that probably our plant is sufficient for the time. We do, however, have a very bad storage problem. We need more space for that and we are hoping to be able to raise some money to build a sort of storage annex to the building. I should say, in connection with the building, that it is half completed.

Right now we have sixteen exhibition galleries and we would like to have double that number, plus about triple the storage space we have, plus shops, and so on and so forth. I speak of shops because you not only make biddings for exhibitions, you repair things, and build things, and so on. The conservation part of it is one of the basics. Basic to paintings, particularly oil paintings.

When we put the new galleries on top of the old wings, we had them completely

air conditioned, which is fine, but it does not serve the purpose because the main part of the building. The lower floor, which is not air conditioned, is where the permanent collection is. It is stabilized as the temperature should be. In other words, in the summertime, it gets too hot.

In the wintertime, it does not get too cold. We have to spend an awful lot of money on heat to keep it up. What are we going to do this winter because we heat by gas? They are going to cut down on the gas supply, so we may be faced with something very difficult there. Our greatest trouble, I would say, is the fact that we had no funds, no money to fill in the gaps in the historical part of the collection. Let us go back to the 18th century, we are a little bit weak there, but where are you going to find that kind of picture nowadays. If you do find it, what are you going to have to pay for it? It is fabulous.

BI: If it is George Washington, I am sure you would have to go for a big bundle.

BU: We have a Gilbert-Stewart, but it is not a Washington.

BI: All right, but there are lots of others.

BU: There are lots that I could name that should be in an American collection, which we have not got. We were lucky to get a painting of the Russell's in Philadelphia, with which my family was associated way back in 1800 or some such time. They cost a bundle. It took us three years to pay for them. That is the way it goes, and still goes.

It has always been a family museum. We have never had a nickel of tax money. Really, we prefer it the way it is. We do get gifts from people, both money and paintings. We have just received a very important painting, which will be announced later.

We do get grants occasionally. We got one conservation grant from the NEA (National Education Association). We got a couple grants from the Ohio Arts Council, but nothing tremendous. We are hoping, of course, that the economic situation will pick up and that our income will pick up. Our income, incidentally, is in trust funds with one of the leading banks in town who handle it entirely. We had nothing to do with it. This is our entire source of revenue.

BI: You mentioned that there was an original endowment?

BU: That is it.

BI: That is it?

BU: That endowment is now in the hands of the bank, the trust department.

BI: Other finance may come from specific gifts or donations?

BU: That is right.

BI: That is the basis of the whole thing.

BU: Yes. On the present basis, we just reviewed our fiscal year a couple months ago, we came out a little bit ahead on operations. Operations include buying a few pictures from the mid-year show, contemporary pictures, I am still interested in buying and helping contemporary artists. When it comes to filling in these gaps I spoke about in the background, in the 19th century, 18th century, it cannot be done unless somebody comes along and gives us a bundle.

BI: I realize it is true that there is a lot of competition for these materials, but as I understand it, there are not that many other art institutes that are strictly limited to American art.

BU: This was the first building to be built to house American art. The New Britain Museum was founded in 1903, I think, but it is in an old house or something. This was specifically built to house an American collection. The other American collections in the country are terrific. There are two other museums entirely American, the Whitney Museum in New York and the Addison Gallery in Phillips Academy in Massachusetts. Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia was the original art school in the country, founded back around 1800, somewhere around there. It has a terrific American collection. In fact, it is practically all American. The Whitney is all American, the Addison is all American, comparable collections except that the Whitney starts at the turn of this century.

BI: How does the public collection compare in the pre-20th century to these others?

BU: I would say that in the 20th century we are in good shape. We are missing two or three very obvious things in the 19th century. Otherwise, we are in pretty good shape. As I said before, the colonials, we need a few good colonials to round it out. I would say it is far from a complete collection, but quality wise, I think it is first rate.

BI: You mentioned the Indian portrait collection. Could you talk a little more about the history of that? Was it just there, or was it specifically made for the Butler Institute?

BU: There are two painters specifically, Joseph H. Sharp, who is an Ohio painter, and B. A. Burbank. Both of them were friends and both of them went to the southwest part of the states to live with the Indians and paint with them. They both just happened to be interested in Indians.

The pictures we have are all actual portraits of Indians. They are not just pictures of Indians, they are portraits. Each individual. Some of the larger pictures are group pictures and so on, like Burbank's Snake Dance, and so on and so forth. It was not specifically painted for the founder. He discovered the collection. There are a couple of other collections of Sharp's and Burbank's also in the country, but not as large as this

one. They were quite prolific painters.

BI: Is there any connection with those and the Indian statue that is in front of the building?

BU: Not particularly with those paintings, but the American Indian, in my grandfather's mind was a symbol of America. We had that sculpture made especially for this museum to symbolize the fact that this is an American museum.

BI: The name Audubon is associated with your family in some way, is it not?

BU: That is an interesting story and kind of a funny one. My grandfather was a great admirer of Audubon and when Audubon was really going hot, a book was written about him. My grandfather happened to be reading it when my father was born, so he named him Henry after an uncle, and Audubon after John James Audubon. There is no actual relationship. It is just a coincidence.

BI: You do have some Audubon's in the collection, though, do you not?

BU: We do have some Audubon prints and one painting. Far from anything complete about Audubon. Audubon did some things. I think the only complete collection is in the New York Historical Society. It is the only one I know of. They not only have many of his original watercolors and paintings, but they also have a complete collection of the prints, both American and English. A lot of people do not realize that most of his prints were made in England with the Hathow Brothers. They printed from plates from his drawings in all hand color, where as the American prints are done in Philadelphia. They are lithographs. It is an entirely different process.

BI: In the newspaper articles I was given to research this, I read that there is one Joseph Butler III painting or somewhat in the collection. Is there? Can you talk about that a little bit?

BU: Sure. I think I said earlier that I have done cartoons in college. Early in the game, an art paint salesman came in. He was a very friendly fellow and we talked for a bit. He wanted to sell paints to our school, but we did not have any school at that point, so we had to talk about something else. He wondered if I had ever done any painting. I said, "No. I never have." He said, "Look, I am going to give you some paints and some brushes and a palette, and you can have some fun with it."

At that time, there were about three art clubs in town, and one of which was called the Buckeye Art Club, and that was exclusively a men's club. One of the trustees, two of our trustees, were members of this and they urged me to come to a meeting. These meetings were held at the house of J. Harvey Leady, who was a fireman. He worked in the Falls Avenue art department, and of course, as you know, firemen only work certain hours and then they have quite a bit of leisure. He had been a painter all his life.



He had a studio further up on Phelps Avenue and we used to meet there every couple of weeks or so and everybody would bring in a painting and the boys would look at it and criticize it. Sometimes there would be an awful pause, a picture would be put up and nobody would say anything, and finally somebody would say, "Gee, that is a nice frame." After looking at some of the pictures those gentlemen were doing, I thought, "Well, here I have this set of paints that has been given to me, I think I will have a go at it." So I did. The first picture I brought in, nobody said it was a nice frame. They talked about the picture and gave me a very slight commendation on the good. I did not know anything about perspective or values or much of anything. I kept at it and Clyde Singer came over here in 1940. He came over here to teach a class and I used to work with him. He is a very interesting person. I hope you will be able to talk to him about the museum, also.

BI: I plan to.

BU: He showed me a good deal about painting, how to mix colors and this and that and the other thing. I got very interested and excited about it and in a year or so, I started trying to exhibit. I exhibited under my first two names, Joseph Green, because I did not want the Butler name associated with it for fear somebody would think I was trying to get in on my name because I am the director of the institute. I had a fair amount of success with it. I have exhibited from coast to coast. I have been in more than a hundred national shows and I am in nine permanent collections, museum collections. That was a long time ago. I am not painting much now.

BI: Is there one in Butler Institute?

BU: Yes. The trustees insisted on having one, so they got one. They did not buy it either.

BI: Was it donated, a gift?

BU: No, indeed. I got a dollar for it.

BI: Oh, well.

BU: I will not give anything away, you know. I do not think any artist should.

BI: I am sort of changing the subject a little bit. What sort of educational class opportunities does Butler present to the community? I believe that there are some things which are ongoing.

BU: At the present time, not very much, except in the way of children's classes, which

we have on Saturday, and also in the summer. We used to have a school over here, Singer was the teacher, as I have said, and we also had a class in ceramics, which one of the men from the university taught. That is about it.

In recent years, we had to give up any classes in the basement because the insurance people would not allow it. They did not think there were sufficient exits in case of a fire or some trouble. We had to give up doing anything down there and obviously, there is no place left except up in one of the galleries.

In summertime, we had the classes outside. Wintertime, we have to have them in one of the galleries. You come to see the paintings in some gallery and you want to see some particular picture and there are a bunch of kids scattered around and you cannot see it. That is one reason I talked about this additional structure, which is purely practical, not only for storage, but for a classroom, for the kids, if nothing else.

The Friends of American Art, which I have not mentioned, which I should have because they have been such a tremendous help to us, raising money and doing openings for us, and buying pictures, giving prizes, and all that sort of thing. The Friends of American Art have held classes here in painting. They have been well attended. They are weekly classes, and they get some outside instructor, or somebody locally, to teach the class, and that is about the extent of the practical, actual school that we run.

BI: You did mention, though, that you have a regularly scheduled mid-year exhibit which is nationwide. Is that not also a more or less local exhibit?

BU: Yes. I mentioned these art clubs. In the old days, we used to give a show to each of the art clubs and we found out after the first series that they are all the same. I mean, everybody belonged to all three art clubs. We decided that that was too local, so we made it into an area show. Now it takes in a forty mile radius of Youngstown, in which there are quite a number of exceptionally good painters, particularly in the last few years, the quality has gotten so much better.

We kept it a forty mile radius to keep out Akron, Canton, and Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and so on. We wanted this to stay as much local as we could because the mid-year show is pretty tough and not too many locals can make it. This particular area show we have now, I think, is a pretty good one. It is one of the best we have ever had.

BI: Have any of the local artists gained any national prominence or a larger recognition?

BU: There are two or three, yes. There is a man named Jack Zajac, who went to Woodrow Wilson High School some good many years ago, and he has become very prominent, first as a painter, and later as a sculptor. He was developed over there, and there have been two or three others.

Zajac is perhaps the biggest name who has come out of Youngstown. He is still a sculptor. We have a piece of his on exhibition on the second floor. He is living largely in Italy, where you can cast things without losing your shirt. Casting and bronze is a very

expensive proposition in the states, but in Italy you can do it relatively cheaply.

BI: Do you understand the reasoning for that?

BU: Labor, mostly. Italy obviously has more skilled artisans than we have in that type of work. They can cast sculpture. They can do all kinds of ornamental work, and so on. I mean fancy stuff. Americans can do them, but not as cheaply as the Italians can do it.

BI: Were there any other local people that you had mentioned?

BU: Ralph Humphrey has been very successful. He is now on the west coast. I am not sure which high school he went to, but he did come here before going up to Cleveland with the American Greetings Card Company, where he got a lot of good background. He went off by himself and he has become quite a successful painter, although he has become extremely left-wing.

BI: By left-wing, you mean left-wing politically, or left-wing artistically?

BU: Left-wing artistically. So has Zajac, for that matter. There are two or three others, but they have not gained the national prominence that those two have. Paul Jenkins must not be forgotten. Paul Jenkins was actually born in Kansas City, and his mother moved to Struthers and ran the Struthers Journal. He lived here for some time. His mother, who died a couple of years ago, lived here a great many years and Paul went to high school here. I think we can almost claim him as a Youngstowner. He has an international reputation. He lives in New York and Paris, but he has done a marvelous job and he is a great guy, a great painter, I think.

I would like to say something about the staff, particularly Clyde Singer, who has been with us since 1940, except for the years he was in the Army and the south Pacific, Japan, et cetera. We have always had a nice staff. We try to make it a pleasant place to come in to and we have always tried to have people who have artistic interests work here. I do not care whether they are Director, Assistant Director, or whether they are sweeping the floor. We have a loyal staff and even with plenty of changes over the years, it seems to me we have always had such a nice bunch of people. I would say that they are the lowest paid museum crew in the country, aside from that. Really, they have done a wonderful job with the small staff. We cannot afford a large staff.

We tried to get into various things. We have a library, an educational department, which Mrs. Goldcamp operates, and we have facilities for research. We have done a great deal of research in magazine form, the old Harpers Weekly's and various older magazines. We have acquired, by that means, a very extensive, almost complete collection of Winslow Homer wood engravings over the years. It is very valuable property. In this little room you are sitting in, you are looking at Winslow Homer's wood

engraving from Harpers Weekly of 1872. That was the year the painting was made, also. Apparently, he did that block at the same time, or right after, because it is almost an exact copy of the painting.

BI: Yes.

BU: Interestingly enough, about those wood blocks, they were actually wood blocks and the artist would sometimes make his drawing right on the block or he would make his drawing and it would be transferred to the wood block. The engraver, who was also a great artist, got in there with his little knives and things and cut the thing out so it would print. These Homer engravings, plus a great many other wood engravings by other good artists who have done them, are becoming quite valuable. You stop to think of those beautiful pieces of hard maple on which these were carved. There are not any. Why? Because as soon as the magazine was printed, they threw them in the furnace to keep the room warm. Imagine what value that particular wood block would have if it were in existence. Too bad.

The Friends of American Art deserve a lot of credit. They have helped keep up the appearance of the building, planting shrubbery, planting ground cover, building sidewalks which we have needed. All sorts of outdoor things which we have not quite been able to afford. Fortunately, they have always had somebody in the officers of the Friends of American Art who is interested in that sort of thing, which is great, because possibly it would otherwise be neglected. This is a handsome building. It has got to be clean, and it has to be good. As a matter of fact, the building has been sandblasted twice since 1934.

BI: Outside. Not inside, but outside.

BU: No, on the outside. That is \$17,000 a crack. You have maintenance problems that people do not realize. I think there are very few people who realize that everything is from our own endowment plus what I mentioned before, a few gifts, here and there. Actually, it is the only family museum in the country. We are proud of the fact that both of my children are working here now, and I believe in my heart that they are going to keep on.

BI: Can I ask you one question of that relationship and then maybe we can tie this up? You say it is a family museum?

BU: Yes.

BI: Does that mean that the Butler's still own the physical building itself?

BU: I am very glad you asked that question, because that has been a stumbling block for this museum for many years. People do think the Butler family owns it. They

say it must be some kind of private place and we are not welcome there. That is far from the truth. This building is owned and operated by a self-perpetuating board of trustees of which there can be no less than five or more than fifteen. Each of these trustees serves a four-year term and may be re-elected after one year of interim.

These are people who are interested in the work we are doing. They are interested in the arts generally, not only paintings, but symphony, ballet, theater, what have you. They are very generous in their time. Not one of them is paid and they are the owners, in name. Actually, this is a public institution. It was given to the people of the Mahoning Valley for their art institute. It was hoped by my grandfather that it would promote a greater interest in the arts. Admission is always free. Like all museums, we are faced with economic problems. Some museums now are closing two days a week, Monday and Tuesday. We are closed on Mondays only. We are closed, and do not ask people to work on Monday. We hope we will not have to close on Tuesdays, also. We hope the fuel situation will resolve itself so that we will not have to close.

BI: Maybe you can go on to a solar heating unit on the roof?

BU: Something like that, yes. Something will have to be done. What I suppose will have to be done in order to concentrate all our good paintings in one place and heat it electrically, heat that one place electrically, and close the rest of it. We do not know if that is going to happen, we hope it will not.

BI: I thank you very much. Is there anything you would like to add at the end?

BU: I would like to add that I became a trustee of the museum in 1927 and in 1977, that will be fifty years, will it not?

BI: Almost.

BU: I am not far from being associated with the museum for fifty years, except for three years in the Air Corps during World War II. Then I was constantly writing letters and asking what to do so I did not feel I was completely out of it. I have had a good association with the museum and I hope that I helped. I know I have in some ways. I know it has built up, not only in its collections, but has built up in interest and attendance and just about everywhere you can think of. People are much more aware of it and I hope they are aware of the fact that when they walk in these doors and look at the pictures for free, that they are not spending any tax dollars to do it. It is a gift to the public.

BI: Thank you very much.

End of Interview