

PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF HISTORIC ART
IN THE EVANSTON SCHOOLS

by

Margherita Andreotti, Ph.D.

with contributions by

Christine Bell, Ph.D., and Nancy Flannery

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SUMMARY

This document is meant to provide a factual basis for a community-wide effort to save the historic art in the Evanston schools. It is estimated that several hundred objects of historic and artistic value still survive in the Evanston schools (districts 65 and 202) from what was once a much larger collection (see 1950 inventory and other documents, listed below under “Sources”). The objects include: murals, freestanding sculptures, wood-relief carvings, easel paintings, rare-tile installations, stained glass, plaster casts, and an assortment of other objects, such as dioramas and ornamented fireplaces. Some of the objects date to the Works Progress Administration (WPA), that is, to the years 1935-43, and are thus of special interest to the growing group of aficionados of the art of this period. Many others, equally worthy, are of widely disparate origin, from 16th-century Persian tiles to a French mural of a Venetian scene dating to 1929. What seems clear from the preliminary survey that follows is that the needs of this collection are too great and multi-faceted to be shouldered by a single entity, whether it be the school districts or the city administration. Indeed, it will take a concerted effort on the part of many in Evanston to prevent this unique collection from diminishing further, and to recover and maximize its cultural value to the community.

To gain a concrete idea of the scope and needs of this collection, Margherita Andreotti, Christine Bell, and Nancy Flannery visited a representative number of schools (Oakton, Haven, Nichols, Lincoln, and ETHS) over a period extending from October 2006 to June 2007. In the text that follows, Margherita Andreotti has summarized the results of these visits, highlighting both the wonderful objects we found and the challenges these objects face in the absence of a clearly formulated policy and the

resources to handle their needs. Some readers will be interested in reading the detailed account that follows in its entirety. Others will only need to read the Introduction (p. 7), the Conclusion (p. 37), and several of the school descriptions. To this latter group of readers we especially recommend the descriptions of our visits to Nichols, Haven, and Lincoln. Nichols is still, despite many losses to its art collection, one of the richest schools architecturally and artistically in Evanston, and it embodies the ideals of Frederick Nichols, the visionary superintendent who was one of the driving forces behind the artistic enrichment of the Evanston schools in the early 20th century. Haven houses some of the most notable WPA-era art remaining in the Evanston schools: the murals by Carl Scheffler and Rainey Bennett, and the four sculptures by Mary Andersen Clark. Lincoln, while also rich in art from a wide variety of periods, illustrates especially well the urgent needs of the collection and the ongoing challenges the school staff faces when works deteriorate, fall apart, or are displaced in the wake of renovation or construction projects.

The Conclusion recommends that an advocacy group of interested and committed citizens, perhaps led by Evanston's mayor, be formed on behalf of this unique historic and artistic legacy. The group would include representatives of the school districts, the City, the larger community, and possibly Northwestern University. The group's goals would include:

- formulating a written policy for the short-term and long-term management of the collection;
- deciding the initial scope of the preservation effort (i.e., whether it should include all of the Evanston schools from the start);

- securing the physical preservation of the objects and raising the funds to do so;
- and developing the cultural potential of the collection on behalf of the schools and the larger Evanston community through a variety of educational programs.

INTRODUCTION

[Note to the Reader: Margherita Andreotti compiled and wrote this document, and it reflects her personal response to the historic art in the schools. She relied heavily, however, on information provided by Christine Bell and Nancy Flannery, based on their years of research on this art. Dr. Andreotti and Dr. Bell are both art historians, while Nancy Flannery is a videographer with a record of successful activism on behalf of public art (see the Oakton murals restoration). She is currently serving on the Board of the Midwest Chapter of the NNDPA (National New Deal Preservation Association) and maintains a web site (www.wpamurals.com) with information on New Deal art. All three are long-time Evanston residents, who have come together around their passion for public art. Over the last few years, they have volunteered their time and effort on this issue in the hope of raising community awareness about an endangered artistic legacy in the Evanston schools. This document is part of a larger report incorporating much supplementary material on the history of public art in Evanston (biographical profiles, archival and photographic documentation, etc.). The parenthetical sources provided in this document are cited in full at the end of this document. Nancy Flannery is the author of all of the photographs accompanying this document, unless otherwise specified.]

When I joined the Public Art Committee (PAC) in 2005, I volunteered to assist with an ongoing inventory of Evanston public art, which was being conducted by the City under the supervision of Doug Gaynor and his staff, and by art historian Christine Bell of Northwestern University, through the contributions of her students to an on-line site called ProjectPad (begun in 2004). As I learned more about the inventory, I became aware of a subcategory of public art in Evanston of irreplaceable historic value and with

particularly urgent needs: the collection of historic art in the Evanston schools. In order to gain a concrete idea of the scope of the collection and its needs, I arranged to visit a representative number of schools in Evanston (Oakton, Haven, Nichols, Lincoln, and ETHS). I was accompanied during these visits by Nancy Flannery and Chris Bell, both of whom had shown a previous interest in this art, especially in the works dating to the WPA era.

From the on-site surveys at five schools that Chris, Nancy, and I conducted in 2006-2007 (and which I will outline in greater detail below), it is obvious that much of the historic art that once existed in the schools (see the 1950 inventory of school art by the Hanzel Galleries and other documents, listed below under “Sources”) has disappeared and that the works that do remain, while of considerable interest, exist in a state of varying neglect, with no one able or willing to take responsibility for them. While the City of Evanston has taken some responsibility for Evanston’s historic art outside the schools, it has not demonstrated a similar interest in the historic art in the schools (partly, no doubt, because of confusion about who is responsible for this art). The school districts, for their part, are understandably too focused on other pressing educational and financial concerns to devote attention to this issue. As a result, the historic art in the schools exists in a kind of administrative vacuum. This means that when a work deteriorates, falls apart, or needs to be moved because of school renovation projects, the school staff has little idea who to turn to or how to proceed, resulting in a variety of less than optimal outcomes. In many cases, art has been permanently and anonymously removed from the premises, been discarded, or has seriously deteriorated.

The collection of historic art in the Evanston schools is too large to be preserved by focusing on one work at a time, the approach used in the case of the Oakton murals (an admirable endeavor that, however, took 9 years of citizen effort to accomplish). It is estimated that a complete inventory of historic art in the Evanston schools, which is urgently needed, would yield a list of several hundred objects, including murals, easel paintings, rare-tile installations (tables, benches, and wall displays), sculptures, wood reliefs, plaster casts, stained glass, and assorted other objects (dioramas, carved fireplaces, etc.). It thus seems obvious that there is an urgent need for a more comprehensive policy and approach, if this art is to be saved.

It is our hope that the summary presented below of on-site visits to 5 Evanston schools will be a step in the direction of the following goal:

to develop and implement a policy (in conjunction with the relevant school authorities) to document, manage, and preserve the historic art in the Evanston schools.

The potential benefits of such a policy are considerable, as they tie together art, history, and education in ways that could benefit the community on many levels, from strengthening its sense of identity and pride in its own history to incorporating knowledge about this unique and irreplaceable art into the school curriculum. At present, school staff seems to be only minimally aware of the identity, origin, and history of the art (ranging from 16th-century Persian tiles to Progressive- and WPA-era murals) that they and their students, often literally, bump against every day. At the most basic level, an effort to maximize the value of this historic art should include, in addition to an inventory and preservation plan, the creation of informative labels to be affixed next to each piece.

An exhibition and catalogue with a digital component (perhaps developed in conjunction with the Evanston History Center and/or Northwestern University) has also been proposed. Many other initiatives centering on various aspects of this collection can be easily conceived that would enrich the community's awareness of its own history, the educational experience of its students, and the public profile of Evanston and its schools. Just to name a few examples, educational programs could focus on the following topics:

- 1) the Islamic culture that gave rise to the Persian tile designs attached to walls and tables in several schools;
- 2) the expanding role of women artists in the early 20th century, exemplified by WPA sculptors Louise Pain (1908-1981), Mary Andersen Clark (1910-1994), and Andrene Kauffman (1905-1993), whose work is represented in the schools;
- 3) the contributions of African-American artists, such as William E. Scott (1884-1964) and Archibald Motley (1891-1981), both of whom contributed murals to the Evanston schools, now apparently lost [Scott, a student of the renowned Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937), became known as the "dean of Chicago African-American artists," and Motley went on to become one of the most notable painters of the Harlem Renaissance];
- 4) the historical origins of the multi-racial group and other imagery depicted in Carl Scheffler's WPA-era mural at Haven; and
- 5) the distinguished career of painter and children's book illustrator Rainy Bennett (1907-1998), who has been recently identified as the author of another wonderful mural at Haven.

Even this brief sampling of ideas suggests a remarkable diversity of learning opportunities, crossing ethnic, cultural, media, and gender boundaries in ways that should appeal to adults and youngsters alike.

Finally, we hope that, by beginning to identify the scope and needs of this collection and by providing this record of our preliminary on-site survey, we will encourage other interested individuals in the Evanston community to build on our efforts, and thus avoid the necessity for each generation of interested volunteers to start again from scratch, as we know has repeatedly happened in the past.

OAKTON

(Principal Q.T. Carter/Mr. Carter has since been succeeded by Interim Principal Churchill Daniels; 2 visits: October 5, 2006; and April 16, 2007)

Oakton Elementary School was the first school we visited, where we were warmly welcomed by principal Q.T. Carter and assisted in our tour of the school by long-time janitor Damien Vega. Like a number of other Evanston schools (Haven, Nichols, ETHS, etc.), Oakton is housed in an architecturally distinguished building designed by renowned school architect and urban planner Dwight Perkins (1867-1941). The original building opened in 1914 and a later kindergarten wing was added in 1928. The architecture of the building is part of the aesthetic experience that makes a visit to Oakton so rewarding.

In accordance with Perkins's views that gymnasiums and large auditoriums, which could double as community gathering places, should always be key elements of his designs (see Arthur Zilversmit, "School Architecture," *Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*), the centerpiece of the Oakton school plan is the theater/gymnasium where the recently restored Oakton murals are located. With its fireplaces and wood paneling, this lofty space was clearly conceived to evoke the grand reception halls of medieval castles, and the original murals were probably conceived in the Progressive era (rather than in the considerably later WPA era, as has been commonly assumed) as part of this original architectural conception. Several scholars (Christine Bell and Sylvia Rohr) have noted that the subject matter of the murals (focusing on the exploits of European royalty, i.e., Charlemagne and his loyal vassal Roland) makes it unlikely that the murals were

conceived in the WPA era; the subject is far more appropriate for the previous Progressive era. In addition, we discovered, talking to mural conservator Margaret Nowosielska of the Chicago Conservation Center, who was then starting the restoration of the much damaged murals, that the most recent paint layer of the murals we were seeing was entirely in acrylic, presumably because of a complete repainting dating to the 1950s or later, when acrylic came into widespread use. The complete lack of any records regarding the history of these murals points to the need for future research to determine the precise history of this impressive mural program.

Other highlights of our visit included a number of rare-tile installations, including several tile benches and a large wall composition of 16th-century Persian tiles depicting a group of people in an outdoor setting (Fig. Oak. 1). These were donated by Frederick Nichols (1858-1948), the visionary superintendent of the Evanston schools (then Dist. 76) for over 40 years (1885-1888; 1893-1933) and secretary of the board of education for the following 13 years. He and his artistic wife Viola Wilson Nichols (1858-1937) were passionate collectors of rare tiles, traveling the world in search of items for their collection, many of which ended up in the Evanston schools.

We also admired a delightful sequence of early 20th-century American tiles, depicting animals, in the kindergarten wing. Dozens of these tiles are embedded in the ceramic brick walls lining the hallways and stairwells (Fig. Oak. 8); and decorative tiles are incorporated into the shallow pools/fountains that were part of the original kindergarten rooms and are now largely obscured by school equipment (Fig. Oak. 10). A wall installation of rare tiles depicting a rural scene with cows is also preserved in one of the school hallways (Fig. Oak. 9). Nancy and I revisited these tile installations at Oakton

on April 16, 2007, in the company of the president (Joseph A. Taylor) and director (Sheila A. Menzies) of the Tile Heritage Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to the research and preservation of historic ceramic surfaces (www.tileheritage.org). Mr. Taylor and Ms. Menzies, who were in Chicago for a conference, were both very impressed by the historic tile collection they discovered at Oakton and Nichols (the 2 schools they were able to include in their visit), took many photographs, and promised to get back to us with their research on the origins and identity of the tiles.

Particularly exciting was the discovery in the kindergarten wing of the existence of what may well be a Progressive- or WPA- era mural in one of the schoolrooms (a room once known as the Little Theater, because it includes a theatrical stage). It is currently hidden behind a temporary wall and blackboard, and we were lucky to obtain a photo from teacher Neidra Berry of what is likely the left half of this mural (Fig. Oak. 5), briefly exposed during construction in the summer of 2006. This charming mural of courtly musicians would seem to be a prime candidate for restoration and recovery before it is completely obscured and destroyed (it may possibly be the mural referred to as “Knights and Damsels” in Mavigliano and Lawson’s 1990 book, p. 156).

A striking pair of WPA wood-relief carvings (one of wild animals, the other of farm animals; Figs. Oak. 2-4) by Alfred Lenzi (1906-1986) are hung on the wall in one of the school hallways and still retain their original Federal Art Project labels (see WPA/FAP loan forms dated Sep. 10 and Oct. 1, 1937, and Dec. 8, 1938). The panels were installed in 1939, when they were described as depicting “the relation of domestic and wild animals of America to man” (“WPA Panels Installed at Oakton,” clipping dated 3/13/39). Full-size plaster models of the 2 panels were exhibited at the San Francisco

World's Fair and were singled out by the Sculpture Jury of the Fair "as among the most outstanding creations of the year." As we shall see at other schools, there is a remarkable group of WPA-era works in wood in the Evanston schools, presumably connected with the woodworking skills of Peterpaul Ott (1895-1992), an Evanston resident and sculptor, who headed the Illinois FAP Sculpture Division from 1936 to 1939.

Mr. Vega, the janitor, took us to the basement to see a damaged tile bench, which had to be removed from circulation. Mr. Vega was unsure what to do with it, but reluctant to throw it out, given the evident beauty of the tiles of which it was made. He also mentioned the damage, probably caused by vandalism, to another WPA work (Fig. Oak. 6), a sundial with ceramic tile top by Louise Pain (WPA/FAP loan request form dated 1936; the ceramic element of the sundial appears to have been stolen). The carved stone base of the sundial, bearing the Latin inscription "Sine Sole Nihil" (Without sun, nothing), is still visible outdoors. We also saw a WPA diorama entitled *First Chicago Railroad (Galena & Chicago Union R.R.)*, and Mr. Vega showed us one of the many easel paintings that once graced the school: H. H. Betts's *Pueblo de Taos* (this title is based on an inscription on the back of the canvas; the picture can probably be identified with the work by H. H. Betts recorded as *Zuni Pueblos* in the 1950 appraisal; Fig. Oak. 7). Based on the 1950 appraisal, the school once housed as many as 32 oil paintings and 12 watercolors. The fate of these is currently unknown, but can be imagined on the basis of what has been rumored about a similar group of works at Nichols (see below).

HAVEN

(Principal Kathleen Roberson; October 19, 2006)

Our second visit was to another architecturally impressive building, Haven Middle School, where we were greeted and guided on a tour of the school by principal Kathleen Roberson, assisted at times by janitor Tony Simson and secretary Jackie Gentles. Metal plaques in the school's main entrance state that the school was erected in 1927, designed by the firm of Childs and Smith Architects, and received an award for Architectural Excellence from the Art Commission of the City of Evanston in 1928. This versatile local firm also designed Nichols School in a completely different style (see below).

In front of the school's main entrance are four WPA-commissioned limestone sculptures (see WPA/FAP loan form of April 11, 1938) by Mary Andersen Clark. Both massive and graceful, the four figures (2 boys and 2 girls) are rendered in the curving, rounded style that was in vogue in the 1930s (Fig. H. 1). Each child is shown standing in an introspective pose, communing with a companion animal. Inside, the school houses nine circular wood-relief carvings (Fig. H. 2) by another female sculptor active in the Federal Art Project, Louise Pain, an artist who is also encountered at Oakton and at Lincoln. The 9 carvings seem to have been specifically commissioned to adorn the 9 lunettes in the elegant second-floor lobby, which is also graced by a handsome fireplace and by marble Corinthian columns. Each of the 9 carvings features the face of a child with a variety of attributes (objects or animals), suggesting children of different ethnicities, perhaps inspired by America's immigrant experience.

The highlights of the Haven art collection are, however, to be found in the somewhat remote third-floor music and drama rooms. These two spacious rooms were added in 1931 (see photo and caption, “Build Music Bungalow Atop Haven School,” *Evanston Review*, Aug. 6, 1931) and were each adorned with a large mural on canvas covering most of the length of each room. The music room houses a dramatic mural (Figs. H. 4-5) signed by Carl Scheffler and dated 1936. Carl Scheffler (1883-1962) was, like Frederick Nichols, a major figure in the Evanston schools of the early part of the 20th century, serving in a variety of influential capacities. He established and operated the Evanston Academy of Fine Arts for 18 years, prior to serving as art director of the Evanston public schools for over 15 years until his retirement in 1948. Although this mural may have been privately funded, it exemplifies the uplifting allegorical imagery of the art commissioned by the WPA. The climax of this appropriately symphonic composition is a mythic male figure (perhaps embodying the spirit of progress, freedom, or democracy) placed at the very center of the picture. A variety of other figures advance toward this symbolic apparition against a dynamic backdrop of billowing clouds and diagonal shafts of light, rendered in the faceted Precisionist style that was in vogue among progressive American artists in the 1920s and 1930s. A multitude of images overlap and compete with each other: at right, a multi-racial group of citizens (Asian, African-American, Native-American, and European) and an international cluster of flags (US, British, French, Mexican, etc.); at left, a ship resembling the Mayflower and an advancing army. The composition also includes scenes of agriculture and industry.

Equally astonishing, but in a radically different way, is the mural (Figs. H. 6-7) of comparable size found in the drama room. This consists of a lush landscape populated by

delightful, whimsical vignettes of figures, animals, houses, bridges, etc. Forgotten until recently, the author of this imaginary landscape has been recently identified by Christine Bell as Rainey Bennett (1907-1998), a Chicago artist with a long and illustrious career as a muralist, watercolorist, and children's book illustrator. (Dr. Bell was able to decipher an almost illegible signature scrawled in pencil in the lower right corner of the canvas as that of Rainey Bennett.)

Both of these murals show noticeable signs of wear and tear, especially along the bottom of the murals, which are insufficiently protected from physical contact with students, instruments, and the bustle of daily school activities. Both of these murals should be a priority for conservation assessment and restoration. We heard that in earlier years, any damage to this kind of work had to rely for repairs on the ingenuity of the janitorial staff. With the passage of years and their increasing historic and aesthetic worth to the community, these works seem now deserving of the attention of professionals trained in art restoration (in a manner comparable to the Oakton murals). Other murals by Carl Scheffler, a series of scenes from children's fairytales, originally located in a ground floor hallway were indeed lost because of the absence of any provision for saving them. We were able to obtain a photograph of these lost murals from the very helpful secretary Jackie Gentles (at Haven for 22 years). One Haven parent remembers that years ago these damaged murals, which were on canvas, remained for a while rolled up in a corner and then disappeared.

Haven, unlike all the other schools we visited, does not house examples of Frederick Nichols's rare tile installations. [This may perhaps be explained by the fact that Haven was not in Mr. Nichols's school district. In 1927, the superintendent of

Haven was James R. Skiles, as noted on a metal plaque in the school entrance.] It does, however, have the largest collection of plaster casts of classical subjects (Fig. H. 3) of any of the schools we visited, including 6 sculptured reliefs (hung in a first-floor hallway near the art classroom), cast from the famous Parthenon frieze and Temple of Athena Nike (Acropolis, Athens). These casts are in need of repair and restoration, as they are cracked, chipped, and have been coarsely repainted, obscuring the fine sculptural details of these famous works. There are also several smaller plaster casts from antiquity hanging over doors on the main floor. Highly valued for educational purposes in the 19th century, but then devalued in the 20th century, vintage plaster casts of classical subjects are now the object of careful restoration and coveted parts of museum collections nationwide (see, for example, the Spurlock Museum at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).

As at Oakton, we encountered instances of objects that were so damaged that they had been taken, or were about to be taken, out of circulation, raising unanswered question for the janitorial staff and the principal about how to store, care for, or dispose of these objects. Janitor Tony Simson and principal Roberson took us to a crowded basement storage space, where they had placed 2 large, framed, heavily damaged pictures (probably vintage reproductions) of knightly subjects (possibly from the Legend of King Arthur). Ms. Roberson also discussed with us the problem of what to do with a carved stone bench (one of a pair, featuring lions, placed outdoors in front of the entrance) that had become too unstable to be safe. These situations point to the urgent need for a designated storage area in the District to house objects of potential aesthetic value that may need to be taken out of circulation and for a policy

on how to treat and handle these objects. Finally, we noted several easel paintings in the school offices, including one signed J. Walter and dated 1922. Haven, unlike the other schools we surveyed, was not included in the 1950 appraisal, so we don't have a listing of the easel paintings that once belonged to it, as we do for the other schools.

NICHOLS

(Principal Gordon Hood; 2 visits: Nov. 2, 2006, and April 16, 2007)

Nichols Middle School is named for the influential superintendent of the Evanston schools, Frederick W. Nichols, whose portrait graces the entrance (the picture is signed and dated Edwin Child, 1930; and is recorded in 1950 appraisal). During our first visit to this school, we were welcomed by principal Gordon Hood and long-time art teacher Carla Kenney-Phillips (now retired). The school is a striking building inspired by the Doge's Palace in Venice, an architectural association that is reinforced by the large (12 x 14 foot) landscape of Venice in the school library: this mural (Figs. N. 1-2) is painted on canvas and depicts *The Grand Canal with Santa Maria della Salute*; it is signed and dated at lower left, "J. [Jacques-Marie-Omer] Camoreyt, Paris 1929"; it was apparently "painted in Paris for the Evanston school" (see typescript by Sanna Hans Longden; and Nichols School Opening pamphlet). The school was dedicated in March 1929 and was designed, like Haven Middle School, by architects Childs and Smith in close consultation with the school's namesake, Mr. Nichols, whose views about the close relation between art and education it apparently reflects very closely. The architect Frank A. Childs (1875-1965), who was a native Evanstonian, apparently devoted 2 years of study to the details of the building, taking a "special trip to France and Spain for Gothic suggestions" (Nichols Opening pamphlet). Indeed, the entire school is unusually rich in architectural and artistic details, and it is not difficult to imagine it in its former glory by looking at a vintage photo of the library (Fig. N. 3), despite the "modern" modifications it has

experienced (dropped ceilings that obscure the timbered ceiling; wall-to-wall carpets that cover the library's patterned tile floor; book stacks that obstruct a view of the library's elegant carved fireplace, etc.). Another large mural (on canvas, unsigned and undated), this one possibly dating to the WPA era, is located in what is now the school office (Fig. N. 4). It is listed as "Town Meeting" in the 1950 appraisal and depicts a large outdoor gathering of people in colonial attire engaged in civic discussion. In remodeling this area (a space that in 1950 was described appropriately, given the mural's subject, as a "meeting room"), a corner of the mural was removed (where signature and date might have once been recorded) to create a doorway.

The school offices are also adorned by several easel paintings, including a Venetian scene signed by Teodoro Wolf Ferrari (Fig. N. 7; included in 1950 appraisal). The paintings are remnants of a much larger collection of framed art that once graced the school's classrooms, halls, and cafeteria (see 1950 appraisal). Metal hooks for what were once 3 large and 4 small framed murals are indeed still visible embedded in the walls of the cafeteria. The 1950 inventory and appraisal by the Hanzel Galleries (see "Sources" below) establishes that Nichols school then housed 24 oil paintings, 13 watercolors, 7 prints, 3 tapestries, 1 rug, and 5 panels in oil (the latter outside the second-floor auditorium), in addition to the 7 framed murals in the cafeteria mentioned above. Very little of this group of over 50 works seems to have survived, and rumor has it that, during major asbestos removal projects, these paintings "walked out the door" because of the lack of any provision for their proper storage and care. It is this kind of fate that we hope the Evanston community will see fit to prevent in the future through the adoption of a recognized policy for preserving

the art that does remain. One of Mr. Nichols's many tile benches (Figs. N. 5-6) is also located in the office area, as is a window inset with a lovely stained-glass detail (Fig. N. 9). There are many such fragments of antique stained glass, probably collected by Mr. Nichols in Europe, inset into the windows along the two stairwells leading to the second floor (Fig. N. 8).

Another major loss to the Nichols art collection includes two valuable and beautiful ornamental tile installations that Mr. Nichols had installed in 1944 (see *Chicago Sunday Tribune* article of May 21, 1944) in the "industrial arts room" of the school, one by William Morris (1834-1896), the founder of the Arts and Craft movement in Britain, and the other by his renowned Arts and Crafts associate, Walter Crane (1845-1915). Both these tile panels were made for the 1889 Paris exposition, then exhibited in the 1893 Chicago Columbian exposition, and stored for 50 years in the warehouse of a Chicago contracting firm, before being acquired by Mr. Nichols for Nichols school. A thorough physical investigation should be conducted in the former location of these tile panels to make sure that they are not in fact still at Nichols behind obscuring walls that could be removed. This type of retrieval of art that has been covered or painted over is not uncommon these days. Ideally, archival research should also be undertaken to see if any trace of them can be found in school renovation/remodeling records, minutes of school board meetings, and local news articles.

A similar approach should also be taken to retrieving the physical history and whereabouts of a mural (or murals), now lost, by Archibald John Motley, Jr. (1891-

1981), an African-American artist whose works are now highly coveted by the best art museums in the country (see the Art Institute's holdings, for example). There is a WPA/FAP loan form (undated, but presumably from the 1930s) documenting that Motley painted a mural in oil entitled "Negro Children" for what was then known as "Nichols Intermediate School"; the mural is recorded as over 2 feet tall and 19 feet long, its shape corresponding to a kind of mural seen elsewhere (see the WPA murals by Roberta Elvis at the Nettelhorst School, Chicago) that would have stretched along the side or sides of a room, possibly at below-ceiling height. Another source indicates that this mural was installed on the south wall of the music room and that it was accompanied by other murals by Motley entitled "Band Playing" and "Dance Scene," installed on the east and north walls of the music room, respectively (Jontyle Theresa Robinson, *The Art of Archibald J. Motley, Jr.* [Chicago Historical Society, 1991], p. 147, nos. 50-52). All of these murals, according to this source, date to 1936. The presence of a mural such as "Negro Children" at Nichols seems to reflect a number of factors that deserve further research, including the fact that black students attended Nichols because of the mix of black and white residents in the adjacent community. As local historian Dino Robinson has put it, Nichols "middle school would have liked to be segregated, however geography couldn't justify it" (e-mail to M. Andreotti of 11/14/07). The choice of artist and subject may also reflect the progressive views of Frederick Nichols, who may have influenced the commission of the piece as a member of the regional Board of the WPA in the 1930s.

The multi-cultural interests of Mr. Nichols seem further born out by the murals with Cambodian and Spanish themes, respectively, which he commissioned from Carl

Scheffler in 1936 (“Panels by Scheffler Hang in School,” *Evanston Review*, Sept. 21, 1936). The 2 murals (9 ½ by 6 ft. each) were hung on either side of the auditorium entrance and were described as “vivid, highly modeled bronzed dancing figures against a background of blue and gold,” inspired by Mr. Nichols’s “many photographs of Cambodian dancers in action.” A similar taste for the exotic was exemplified by a diorama, one of 3 now lost (see WPA/FAP loan form, undated, executed by artists and craftsmen under the supervision of Ralph Power), entitled “Balinese Ceremonial Dance.” The glassed-in wall cases for some of these dioramas are still visible on the ground floor of Nichols School, though they now house trophies.

Despite the losses of the Morris and Crane tile panels mentioned above, Nichols is still richly decorated with an astonishing variety of rare tiles (Figs. N. 10-14), which reflect Nichols’s belief in the value of a culturally and aesthetically diverse environment. The floor of the entrance hall, which is still original, is covered with patterned tiles, supposedly “imported from Italy especially for Nichols school” (see typescript by Sanna Hans Logden) and wall tiles of the zodiac; tile scenes of Spanish and Dutch subjects (Fig. N. 14) are still visible above each of the water fountains (at least 2 per floor) on each floor; and a row of blue Delft tiles (Fig. N. 10) runs around the walls of the cafeteria (which are, however, missing their murals, as noted above). Particularly remarkable are the 50 brightly colored tiles depicting scenes from the life of Don Quixote that line the stairways (Figs. N. 11-12). The second-floor lobby is paved with tiles like the ones in the entrance, and houses several benches inlaid with tiles from Mr. Nichols’s vast collection, as well as a table featuring Persian tiles (similar to the wall installation found at Oakton). All of these tiles were much

admired by Mr. Taylor and Ms. Menzies of the Tile Heritage Foundation (see Oakton visit, above) when Nancy and I made a second visit to Nichols on April 16, 2007. The second-floor lobby also showcases a plaster cast of a sculpture of a classical robed standing figure, and an oil painting of a Child with Rabbits signed by Sir John Peele (included in 1950 appraisal).

[An interesting footnote to the history of the art at Nichols is the existence of a 1997 appraisal for the 3 oil paintings mentioned above by Peele, Ferrari, and Child, respectively, as well as for the 2 extant Nichols murals. The appraisal of these 5 works was requested for insurance purposes by Polly Hawkins of the Nichols Middle School PTA, but no action was apparently taken by the District upon obtaining the appraisal. When we discussed the issue with Carla Kenney-Phillips, we were told that none of the works had ever been insured because the District considered it too costly. It is interesting to note the substantial but uneven rate at which the works have appreciated: the work by Peele was appraised at \$500 in 1950 and at \$8500 in 1997; the work by Ferrari was listed at \$150 in 1950 and at \$10,000 in 1997; the portrait by Child at \$400 in 1950 and at \$5,000 in 1997; the mural by Camoreyt in the library was valued at \$500 in 1950 and \$75,000 in 1997; and the anonymous mural in the current school office at \$300 in 1950 and at \$25,000 in 1997. It is notable that the 2 pictures with Venetian subject were judged to have appreciated the most, and the portrait the least. Presumably all of these works are now worth more.]

LINCOLN

(Principal Chris McDermott; December 7, 2006)

Unlike the other schools we visited, Lincoln Elementary School is housed in a modernist building that replaced the original Lincoln School when it was demolished in 1968. The previous structure was a picturesque Richardsonian building designed by John T. Wilson Jennings (1856-1944) in 1896 (Margery Blair Perkins, *Evanstoniana: An Informal History of Evanston and Its Architecture*, pp. 66, 73, 160-61; and *Chicago Tribune* obituary, July 23, 1944). The current building follows the starkly rectilinear, unadorned style popular at the time of its construction. Indeed it seems to have been designed in aggressive opposition to the earlier building, which was enlivened by a profusion of arcades, archways, turrets, and gables. A plaque from the old school is currently in the school's entrance. There are other echoes of the old building in the stained-glass window fragments that are currently installed in a hallway and stairwell (these recall the antique stained glass still in place at Nichols) and in the various other historic art objects that were transferred from the original structure and are now scattered throughout the school.

At Lincoln we were welcomed by Principal McDermott, Mr. Askew (Lincoln's very helpful janitor), and by Angie Baila, who at the time of our visit was the PTA co-president at the school and happened to be on the premises that day. Ms. Baila accompanied us on our tour of the building, providing much useful information on the challenges of preserving the historic art in the school. The first of these challenging

situations was encountered immediately upon entering the school, where Nancy Flannery noted that a large engraving of Lincoln, once installed over the entrance radiator, was gone.

Upon inquiring, we were told that the engraving had suffered much damage because of its unfortunate installation over the radiator, where it was subjected for many years to extreme and very damaging fluctuations in temperature. In the absence of any policy to handle such a damaged art object, Ms. Baila, with the approval of the principal, volunteered to have the piece restored at her own expense through Good's in Evanston. After the engraving was restored, she was told that the engraving was too valuable to be returned to the school. It remains in storage at Good's and the coupon to retrieve the engraving is in the possession of the current PTA presidents (Pam Daniels and Regina Wootton). Ms. Baila has since moved to Louisville.

Preliminary research indicates that the Lincoln engraving, which is apparently dated 1869, is by Henry Gugler after a painting by John Harrison Littlefield. It was apparently donated to Lincoln school in the 1970s by a parent, and had previously hung for many years in a judge's office. Ms. Baila was told, presumably through her connections at Good's, that the engraving might be worth up to \$150,000 because of its unusually large size. Based on discussions I've had with colleagues who are experts in prints and drawings, this figure seems extremely high for a print. Whatever its actual value, it is evident that the print is in urgent need of a truly professional evaluation, leading to a sensible plan for its return to the school or placement in an alternative location. Clearly, the decisions about how to handle, treat, and evaluate the piece should not rely on the initiative and generosity, however laudable, of a single school parent.

This incident thus highlights the pressing need both for a district-wide policy on how to manage historic art objects and for a systematic, professional inventory and appraisal of all similar objects in the Evanston schools.

Although we did not notice any framed easel paintings (other than the missing engraving) at Lincoln, it is important to note that, according to the 1950 appraisal, the school once housed numerous works (26 oil paintings and 2 watercolors) in addition to 3 framed murals (46 x 131 in.) on canvas depicting scenes of early Chicago life by the noted African-American painter William E. Scott (see introduction above). Five WPA murals by Otto Hake (1876-1965) are also documented (WPA/FAP loan form, undated, assigned to “Lincoln Intermediate School”). Dubbed “Lincolnmania” because of their depiction of scenes from Lincoln’s life, these murals once decorated a room devoted to Lincoln in the old school building (an old photo of this room has survived, according to Nancy Flannery). Damaged and homeless after the old building was demolished, these murals are rumored to have been salvaged by someone associated with Lincoln school in the late 1970s, who may know their current location. We were also told that Esther Porto, an elderly former teacher living on Greenwood, may know the whereabouts of other art “salvaged” from Lincoln school over the years, and apparently may know the surviving descendants of Frederick Nichols because her father was once a good friend of Mr. Nichols. Ms. Judith Bamshad, the art specialist at Lincoln, may have additional information. (Ms. Bamshad was apparently unavailable when we visited Lincoln.)

Indeed, it is possible that many of the works that are now missing from the schools may still be in the Evanston area, in the homes of the people who “took them in” when the schools no longer seemed to have an interest in them. A proposal has in fact

been made that an “amnesty” be extended to anyone willing to return the works to the school district, although the practicality of such an initiative would need to be investigated. It is probable that the people who “gave a home” to these works were not aware that WPA-commissioned works, like the “Lincolnmania” murals, are strictly speaking owned by the Federal Government and are supposed to be returned to the GSA (General Services Administration) if the sites for which they were intended no longer wish to keep them.

Ms. Baila also showed us 4 stained-glass fragments that she had sought to protect by giving them make-shift frames (Fig. L. 12); they are currently visibly damaged (i.e., cracked) and in danger of further damage by being inadvertently bumped. When we saw them they were hanging in the hallway outside Ms. Bamshad’s room. Three more stained-glass fragments were hanging in a stairwell. All of these seem in urgent need of conservation and of a more suitable installation that would protect them and allow the viewer to appreciate their beauty.

In the entryway to the school, we also noted a cardboard box containing rare tile pieces (Fig. L. 3) from a dismembered tile bench donated by Frederick Nichols. It was obvious that the school staff had no idea what to do with this broken object. Also in the entryway is a tile table, still intact (Fig. L. 2), featuring Persian tiles, and a large tile wall-installation, depicting a rural scene with cows, similar, but not identical to, the one found at Oakton (see Fig. Oak. 9). In a corner of the same space, we saw a freestanding wood sculpture of a seated man in a worker’s smock, still bearing its original Federal Art Project label (Fig. L. 1). This may be the sculpture listed as “Industrial Trophy” by Sidney Loeb (1904-1972) in a WPA/FAP form with an unreadable date. Not far from

this area, we also saw a WPA-commissioned diorama of Fort Dearborn (see WPA/FAP form dated February 14 or 24, 1938, which lists the work as created by artists and craftsmen, supervised by Ralph Power). And in another hallway, we saw a second table inlaid with Persian tiles, which was visibly damaged (Figs. L. 4-5).

An undated WPA/FAP form also lists a number of carved wood relief panels, some of which are still on the premises. These are some of the most interesting works at Lincoln. They include the charming Organ Grinder (Fig. L. 10) by Louise Pain, a sculptor we have already encountered at Oakton and at Haven. According to research conducted by Dr. Bell (she found a letter of reminiscences in the Evanston History Center), the subject portrays a local organ grinder who performed in downtown Evanston. Louise Pain's relief is carved in a flat, rhythmic, linear manner, reminiscent of woodcut prints, providing an intriguing counterpoint to the woodworking style of 2 relief panels by another woman artist working for the WPA, Andrene Kauffman. Kauffman's reliefs are titled, respectively, Children in Fruit Tree and Monkeys (Figs. L. 8-9), and are conceived in a far more intricate and three-dimensional style. Kauffman was a prominent Chicago artist and teacher, who taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago from 1927 to 1967. Three other works carved in wood by Curt Drewes, mentioned on the same WPA/FAP form, are no longer at Lincoln. These may be now located at Washington School, an Evanston school we did not have the time to visit, but which is known to contain a significant number of pieces of historic art. The 3 reliefs that do remain at Lincoln are vulnerable to repeated physical contact by students moving along the hallways, and indeed show signs of this wear and tear in the dents and scratches that

mar the lower portions of the panels; clearly, they should be reinstalled in a manner that ensures their physical safety.

In another part of the building we encountered the painted plaster cast of a sculpture of a standing Abraham Lincoln that once formed the centerpiece of the room containing the “Lincolnmania” murals. This plaster cast appears closely related to the famous sculpture of the standing Lincoln by Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1843-1907), erected in 1887 in Chicago’s Lincoln Park. We also noted 2 plaster heads of Lincoln, several tile benches and an ornamental tile wall panel donated by Frederick Nichols, as well as an unusual stained-glass butterfly, suspended from the ceiling, which we were told came from the old building. A number of these objects were of great concern to Ms. Baila and the school staff because of the anticipated renovation of a portion of the school building (possibly including demolition of existing structures) in which the art was located/installed. We were told that there was no plan or provision for the careful, professional removal and storage of these art objects during the proposed work on the building. Again, this highlighted the critical importance of a district-wide policy for the management and handling of such objects, which will otherwise continue to suffer injury or disappear (i.e., inadvertently discarded or “salvaged” by well-meaning bystanders).

ETHS

(Kathy Miehls, Public Relations Director; June 21, 2007; Christine Bell was unable to join Nancy Flannery and Margherita Andreotti on this visit)

Evanston Township High School shares the architectural distinction of many of the Evanston schools. The original building was designed, like Oakton before it, by Dwight Perkins (1867-1941) and opened in 1924. Subsequent additions to the building, through 1974, were designed by Dwight's son, Lawrence Perkins (1907-1997). The original building, dominated by two massive Gothic towers, rewards close attention. For example, one striking detail are the turquoise tile inserts along the top of the towers that draw the eye upwards and contribute to the viewer's appreciation of the towers' height and graceful strength. Portions of these tile inserts appear to have been damaged and replaced by painted inserts, now visibly tarnished, in a shade of green that does not match the original. (It is hoped that this aesthetic feature of the towers will one day be properly restored.)

The later additions to the building, although conceived in the spare, unadorned style of the mid- to late-twentieth century, are sensitively integrated into the previous design. They echo its elegant proportions and afford great views of the ornamental detail of the old building by means of walkways sheathed in plate glass connecting the upper floors. The decorative stone panels that adorn the original building's exterior, easily visible from these walkways, are carved (or perhaps cast) in a rich variety of designs. Some of these are in an intricately linear style reminiscent of the ornamental genius of Louis Sullivan, whom Dwight Perkins much admired. A walk along the generously proportioned hallways inside the building leads to a spacious "welcome hall," which, for

the most part, has been preserved as it was originally conceived (Fig. ETHS 2), with wrought iron chandeliers, red-tile floors, and two beautifully ornamented stone fireplaces (Fig. ETHS 5).

The only major feature of the original space that has not been preserved, but which is visible in an old photograph (Figs. ETHS 3-4), is the stunning design of the original leaded windows on either side of the hall. These once displayed elaborate designs, seemingly fashioned from the dark outlines of the leading strips connecting the pieces of glass. The set of indoor windows on the north side of the hall, leading into adjacent office space, displayed an especially beautiful figurative design, evoking a cluster of angelic figures, surrounded by stylized floral motifs (Fig. ETHS 4). The outside windows on the opposite, south side of the hall featured a simpler, more purely ornamental design. Regrettably, this artfully designed leaded glass has since been replaced by plain rectangular windowpanes.

On either side of the hall, where the hallways extend north and south, there are two colorful ceramic tile wall panels representing the ancient gods Mercury and Diana, respectively (Fig. ETHS 1). These are very hard to see, because doors were later added leading to the north and south hallways without considering that the portion of the west wall on which the tile panels are installed would be covered when these doors are open, as they are most of the time. Presumably, these tile panels were donated by Frederick Nichols, as so many others were throughout the Evanston schools. Thought should be given to redesigning the doors so that they will allow people to notice and enjoy these lovely tile designs, or, if that's not possible, to moving the tile panels nearby to a more visible spot.

Although there is evidence that ETHS once housed a number of WPA-era murals, none of these apparently survive today, nor do several oil paintings documented in a WPA/FAP loan form (the undated form records Walter Burt Adams's oil painting The Park and Norman McLeish's oil painting February Thaw). There is evidence that 2 large WPA murals were once located in what is now the Upstairs Theater; these were either covered or destroyed during reconstruction around 1960 (see memo of 9/29/97 from Richard Bowers to Kim Engel, recording the recollections of Royce Lewis, art teacher and chair from 1946 to 1978). Unfortunately, we did not get a chance to visit this Upstairs Theater to verify if there is any possibility that these murals may still be recoverable underneath the remodeling. Ideally, the authorship and any surviving photographs of these murals should be researched and a thorough physical examination of their original location undertaken. There is further evidence in old issues of the Evanstonian that murals by the artist Nicholas Kaissaroff existed by 1939 in the school's library. (This is also an area that was not included in our visit.) According to this same 1939 issue of the Evanstonian (Ref. 379.773; copy provided by N. Flannery), Kaissaroff also signed a contract to complete a mural decoration for the so-called "Roman Room" (room 104) at ETHS. These murals were supposed to feature "a Roman procession and group bringing offerings to the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill." Another set of murals by the same artist, depicting the "Canterbury Pilgrims," and located in room 164, are mentioned in a 1943 issue of the Evanstonian. All of the above murals by Kaissaroff may well have been funded by the WPA/FAP, since Kaissaroff is one of the artists listed in Illinois as funded by the New Deal (see New Deal website listed below).

Ms. Miehl also told us that there is in storage a very large (5 x 4 ft.) needlepoint of George Washington in an elaborate gilt frame. Based on the reproduction that Ms. Miehl showed us (a photocopy of a photo included in a brochure or newsletter), the needlepoint image echoes paintings of George Washington by Charles Willson Peale (see Peale's well-known portraits of Washington at Princeton, 1779-81). This unusual work is crated and thus not available for viewing. Research on this piece is needed to verify its origins and determine if it has significant historic or artistic value. (The textile department at the Art Institute of Chicago would seem an obvious resource for such information.) Ms. Miehl told us that this was a piece she salvaged when Evanston fire marshals ordered that the ETHS storage areas be cleaned out. There is also a large oil portrait of Mr. Cunningham, an ETHS alumnus killed in WW I, on the second floor.

A rich variety of more recent art is on display at ETHS, including a painting by Walter Burt Adams, of more recent date than the one mentioned above, currently hanging in the main hall, and an impressive collection of alumni art in the lobby of the auditorium. It would seem that the pride ETHS takes in the artistic achievements of its alumni would be enhanced by being linked to the school's earlier architectural and artistic tradition. It would thus seem desirable that the lost murals be thoroughly investigated through archival research and a physical examination of the locations of these murals, to verify if any of these can be retrieved. Similar efforts are being made at many WPA art sites across the country. For example, a very successful effort has been undertaken to restore Progressive- and WPA-era murals in public schools in Chicago, spearheaded by Heather Becker of the Chicago Conservation Center (see *Art for the People*, San Francisco, 2002).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, if this unique historic and artistic legacy is to be preserved for the enjoyment and education of current and future Evanston citizens, the following basic steps seem to be in order:

1) An **advocacy group of interested and committed citizens**, perhaps led by Evanston's mayor, should be formed. Ideally, this group should include representatives of the School Districts (65 and 202), the City, the larger community, and possibly Northwestern University. The need for this group to spearhead and oversee the effort to preserve this art seems essential, since the task is too great and complex for any single entity, whether the school districts or the city administration, to shoulder alone. District 65 currently includes 14 schools, in addition to other office and program locations. This means that the historic art collection is physically very scattered, presenting a correspondingly daunting challenge to anyone devising a strategy for its documentation, management, and preservation.

One of the group's first tasks should be **to formulate a written policy** specifying guidelines for the short-term management of the objects in the collection, which can then be distributed to school staff. This should serve as a stopgap while a more long-term policy is being devised and implemented.

2) The **physical preservation** of the art objects is a primary priority, since it is clear that the collection will rapidly diminish further if no action is taken. This will require raising

funds and hiring professional staff, such as a curator, to create a self-sustaining system to document, manage, assess, and utilize the collection. Decisions will need to be made about the extent of the effort: whether it should be initially limited only to certain schools, for practical reasons, or whether it should be extended to all the Evanston schools. It will also be important to decide if the collection needs to be appraised and insured and how to address its maintenance needs. Finally, it would seem highly desirable to create a central storage location—again, under the direction of a curator or other trained professional—where art objects could be safely and securely maintained as they await repair or re-installation.

3) The citizen group pursuing this effort will also need to make plans to **maximize the cultural value of the collection**. This will require research and the creation of a variety of educational materials and programs to make these art objects better known to school staff and students, as well as to the larger community. Many of these materials could have a digital component to facilitate access to information. Informational labels for each work should be developed, as well as exhibitions, tours, guides, and other outreach programs/materials.

Clearly, this is an effort that will depend on a coalition of many interested and committed people, if it is to succeed. We hope we have laid the foundation for a first step.

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AUTHOR PROFILES

Margherita Andreotti has been a resident of Evanston for 22 years and is completing her third year as a member of the Public Art Committee (PAC) of the City of Evanston. She earned her Ph.D. in art history at Stanford University in 1987 with a specialization in modern art and, specifically, modern sculpture. She is the author of numerous publications in her field of specialization, and has edited and contributed to a wide range of publications in the field of Western art (from Italian Renaissance painting to contemporary photography). She taught art history at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana and was Editor for Scholarly Publications at The Art Institute of Chicago for 14 years before setting up her own freelance business as art-book editor and art historian in 2000.

Dr. Andreotti's interest in the art collection in the Evanston schools is an outgrowth of her involvement with the PAC, where she was initially focused on developing a professional inventory of public art in Evanston. Her work at The Art Institute of Chicago involved her in numerous scholarly catalogues of the permanent collection, a type of publication that is essentially a highly elaborate kind of art inventory. It was this experience that prompted her to think she might be of help in promoting an inventory of public art in Evanston, an interest that has increasingly focused on the art collection in the schools. This collection was impressively rich before 1950, as outlined in this document, but has since been greatly diminished by decades of neglect. It is her hope that the fascinating group of works that still survives in the schools will arouse sufficient interest in the Evanston community to lead to its documentation and preservation for current and future generations of Evanston students and citizens.

Christine Bell earned her Ph.D. in Art History from Northwestern University in 1996, with a specialization in American art. Her primary areas of research are public art in the US, and the art and photography of the Civil War—in particular, the role that images of family played in the military conflict and in the ideological war for and against slavery. Her research on art and war has been funded by grants from the Smithsonian Institution, the Henry Luce Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Andrew Mellon Foundation; and she has presented papers on this topic at the College Art Association and the American Studies Association, as well as in smaller venues. Dr. Bell has taught at Lake Forest College; at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; and at Northwestern University. Currently Dr. Bell serves as a College Adviser for Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern University, where she also teaches American Art, the history of photography, and courses on public art.

Prior to her academic career, Dr. Bell worked as a photographer's stylist, as a costumier for theatre and film, and in the Textile Department at the Art Institute of Chicago. Her background in textile conservation partly inspired a course on the preservation of public art that Dr. Bell taught at Northwestern in the spring of 2004. Undergraduates enrolled in this course created an online catalog of digital images documenting Evanston public art and its physical condition, a first step toward maintaining Evanston's public art legacy. Then in winter 2007 Dr. Bell supervised

another group of Northwestern undergraduates as they photographed and researched extant Evanston public art from the New Deal-era, expanding the City's public art inventory to include endangered art from the 1920s and 1930s in local elementary schools. Dr. Bell's interest in public art and its preservation has grown organically from her core scholarly concern: the enlistment of visual art in struggles over power, space, and identity. Because public art is often intended for an audience that does not routinely frequent museums, it has the potential to connect with more grass roots concerns, and to articulate the values, histories, and memories of communities that may not see themselves reflected in the creative products of the dominant culture. Bell believes that the preservation of objects that recount alternative or contested narratives of the past has an important role to play in creating more inclusive communities for the future.

Nancy Flannery. Following an eclectic career (MSW in social work, Air Traffic Controller at Midway Airport, and other diverse jobs), for the past 6 years Nancy Flannery has maintained a domain www.wpamurals.com devoted to publishing information and photographs regarding New Deal art and artists. She has written most of the information on the site although she does give free web page space to individuals who wish to post articles about specific artists or artwork. She receives numerous e-mails from relatives of WPA/New Deal artists, many of whom are children or grandchildren of an artist. By giving them a place to post their stories, they are able to disseminate memories and information about artists, which would otherwise be lost. She also hosts pages devoted to restoration efforts/organizations trying to rescue New Deal art that is in danger of being destroyed. Flannery is currently on the Board of the Midwest Chapter of the National New Deal Art Preservation Association. The NNDPA is active in rescuing and preserving WPA art in the Midwest area. Some of the projects include saving the Edgar Miller sculptures from "Animal Court" located in the Jane Addams Public Housing Project as well as the WPA art in Cook County hospital. She has presented in a discussion group at the National Park Service "Preserve and Play" conference held in Chicago May 2005 on the topic of New Deal murals in the Chicagoland area. Flannery also presented a paper at the 8th Annual Illinois History Conference, Springfield, IL. Held October 12-13, 2006, on New Deal Art in Illinois. She has been a videographer for 20 years and has produced various video documentaries on New Deal subjects, such as "The Oakton School WPA Murals," "Henry Simon, Illinois Artist," and "Evanston Public Art" among others. Finally, Flannery is a zealous "collector" of photographs of New Deal murals, especially Post Office murals. She and her husband, John, have taken several vacations during which they go "muraling" in the Illinois countryside (and John, of course, gets to fish as much as he wants!).

ILLUSTRATIONS

The following illustrations are meant to provide a visual sampling of the historic art in the Evanston schools. They are mostly snapshots taken by Nancy Flannery under less than ideal conditions during our visits to the schools. I am grateful to her for generously making these available for this document. But they are clearly neither comprehensive nor, for obvious reasons, always of the best possible quality. They are certainly not meant to take the place of the professional photographic documentation of this collection that is sorely needed and that would show the works to better advantage than is possible here.

Whenever possible, approximate dimensions, based either on previous documents or on a visual estimate, have been provided to give the reader unfamiliar with this art a general sense of the work's size. In giving these measurements, height precedes width. The figure numbers are coded with the following abbreviations referring to the school in question:

H. = Haven

L. = Lincoln

N. = Nichols

Oak. = Oakton

ETHS = Evanston Township High School

[M. Andreotti]