



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

Oral history interview with Lela Marshall  
Hine, 1982 May 14

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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Lela Marshall Hine on May 14, 1982. The interview took place in Norfolk, Virginia, and was conducted by Estill Curtis "Buck" Pennington for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Archives of American Art.

The Archives of American Art has reviewed the transcript and has made corrections and emendations. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

BUCK PENNINGTON: This is Buck Pennington with the Archives of American Art here in Norfolk today with the Hermitage Foundation Museum with Lela Marshall Hine, the registrar of this museum. And we're going to talk a little bit about the history of the arts in Norfolk and the evolution of this museum. Let's just begin with some of the basics. And if you'll reminisce for me about the um, the arts lessons and the china painting lessons that you were talking about at the library that preceded the founding of the Norfolk Arts Club.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: At the library, we would have lectures—I don't know how frequently, maybe once a month—sponsored by the Irene Leache Memorial Association. Irene Leache and Ms. Anna Wood were two women who established a ladies' school here. And from that the alumni formed and they would have uh, cultural lectures at the old library down on the first floor. And uh, Ms. Wood and Ms. Leache, they both, they went over to Italy to live. Miss Leache died and then Ms. Wood would send back colored prints. And she sent back the discus throw one time and other small things. And then she would come and visit and see how the girls were getting along, and she would give a lecture. Then, out of that group, eventually—seems to me they called it the Irene Leache Memorial Library Association.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And this would have been about what year?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: This was somewhere between 1900 and 1910.

BUCK PENNINGTON: All right. [00:02:00]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: I don't think any earlier than that. And then they began to call themselves the Irene Leache Memorial Association and Alumni for many, many years. But within the last 15 to 20 years, they had brought in daughters and granddaughters. And it consists mainly of the board. There were about 24 or five on the board. They inherited Ms. Wood's, you might call it fortune, principle in 1940 I guess it was, the same year Mrs. Sloane died. And since then, they have had a nice income, uh, able to put on the annual Irene Leache Memorial exhibition and competition of paintings.

BUCK PENNINGTON: That's in Norfolk.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And it was at the Norfolk Museum originally. And then now it is at the Chrysler Museum. In fact, it opens up this Friday night.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: This year's version of it. It was begun mainly to give artists who would not have a chance at a big exhibition an opportunity to share their work. And it has gradually—that began about—it was in the war, just about '42. Now it's gotten to the point where they're getting awful choosy, and it doesn't cover the wide range of artists. But then, many other exhibitions have sprung up in the meantime. [00:04:01] So they have an opportunity down the line.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So this was the real beginnings and interest in art in Norfolk in some ways. Had the museum been founded yet, the Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Well, the museum was not founded until um, the '20s, about the mid-'20s. And the—oh in the early part of this century and maybe the last 10 years of the last century there was a local resident, Florence Smith, who was a china painter. And she taught the ladies how to china paint. And she herself did exceedingly well. And they lived on Granby Street, which of course is now all commercial. But that was one place where they would go maybe once a week and paint on their pieces of China. And it was one way, if you were a stranger in town, of meeting other people. The museum foundations were laid about '28, '29 because um, with the Crash, some of the funds didn't come in, didn't have enough to go further than that. And then, when the Depression

turned up and Mr. Roosevelt created the CWAs and PWAs, we were able to put up—to cover one-third of the foundations, which was a very small piece actually. [00:05:57] But we did open up in uh, '33 and carried on with volunteers to a great extent. There was one paid worker and then the works project—what was it? Works, WPA—anyhow, furnished uh, three people for all the other jobs that we had. We had six people to be the two maids. We had uh, three people to do the receptionist. We had three people to be the janitor because they could only work so many hours. But it, it did very well for about a year. And then the city began to fund the museum at the large sum of a thousand dollars every three months. [Laughter.] There was a large volunteer group called the working unit, which Mrs. Sloane organized and kept going, ran it. And she was the acting director, volunteer. Mr. Sloane was the president, first president of the museum. And then other well-known businessmen were on the—board and Mr. Wiley Grandy, Mr. George [inaudible]. Mr. Rogers. John, I think his name was. Rabbi Mendoza, Mr. Robert Tunstall. I'm trying to think of the first board. Mr. Fergus Reid, Mr. James Mann. These were the people who were either lawyers, bankers, or well-known business people who were here. [00:08:05] And then, in '39, the city and the federal government gave us enough money to cover the rest of the foundations. But the city's portion was to come out of our future income from the city. So they would uh, appropriate, say about \$12,000, but we only saw that six. And then they eventually—I don't think they really completely paid themselves back because by '39, they gave us a much better um—let me see. That was '39. Oh, darn. Well, we began to have paid directors, so we must have had a much better income.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And you were with the museum from its very beginning.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes. Actually, before it opened, because we used to go over and watch the workmen. The garden was made first and they brought chain gang, prisoners, with the shackles and everything. And then, boy what they'd have to carry around, they'd tuck it up in their belt. And they would fill the garden. It had to be built up from the ground. The foundations were deep. So they had to have layers of discarded brick, and then layers of sand and brick. They would soak it down and then they'd come back and put some more on. [00:09:58] When they got it up high enough, they put topsoil. And that is the enclosed court at the museum I don't know whether or not you every noticed it or not.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, yes. Yes.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: They're still working all right. I think they have to put more soil in there every once in a while, something of the sort.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And that was the nucleus of the original museum.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BUCK PENNINGTON: Let's back up just a little bit and talk something about your interest in art and your background. You were born in this area. Is that right?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, I was born in the District of Columbia.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: [Extensive mic handling noise.] And father and mother [inaudible]. But um, I think it was really sort beginning with just general curiosity, the things that—like um, the way we got mixed up in the museum. In the early part of the Depression the fleet was on the west coast. So the young ladies didn't have much to occupy them. Civilian young gentlemen were making just about enough to feed themselves and that was all. And anyone with any gumption had gone somewhere else. So one of the—Margaret Bilisoly in whose memory one of the staircases at the museum—there's a little brown [ph] plaque on the side. And I decided that we would try to start a museum in Portsmouth. And we never got anywhere with it, of course. But we told Ms. Sloane about it at an exhibition one day and she immediately decided that we were good material for her museum.

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: So we were part of the volunteer force over there. And when we began to get some fair income, I was on the staff as a part-time worker. [00:12:00] And Margaret had died in the meantime. So she wasn't part of it at that point. But the Norfolk Society of Arts was, of course the, I don't know if you call it the godmother of the museum or not, but they had to sponsor the museum to the city. And for many years, the checks from the city were made out to the Norfolk Society of Arts, not to the Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And how did the Norfolk Society of Arts get started?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Uh, the Norfolk Society of Arts in a way was—what really wasn't an outgrowth of the

Irene Leache, but many of the women who were interested in the Irene Leache Memorial also took part in the Norfolk Society of Arts board and their committees. And it began when the um, there was—a Ms. Bell Irving [ph] here in town who was a miniature and china painter, and also the first head of the art department of the schools. If she'd lived, she would have been the first director of the museum. But she died before, well, several years before the museum was opened. And she and Mrs. Sloane, and Mr. Douglas Volk were sitting downstairs in the hall and talking about having a good-sized exhibition in Norfolk. And he said, "Well, you know, you can't get people to send a big exhibition unless there is an organization, an art organization to sponsor it." So they decided that they would have the Norfolk Society of Arts. And of course, it wasn't that quick, but pretty near. And they did. They brought down a quite fabulous exhibition from the Grand Central Arts Galleries. [00:14:00] The people at the Grand Central had on their list up there and they were—well, Mr. Volk was one of them. Mr. George Wharton Edwards, Harriet Frishmuth, Helen Turner, Louis Moore [ph]—now whether Wyman Adams [ph] was in that exhibition or not I don't know. Oh. Chauncey Ryder. And if you know any of the group, you sort of have an idea who all the rest of them were who were in it [inaudible]. And that I think really cinched the idea of having a museum, because there was a great deal of interest in it. And it was held at the Seaboard Air Line Building, by the Wainwright, on the second floor. And the elevator was so jammed that—the floor was so jammed with people the elevators couldn't stop and let the passengers off, they had to go up a couple floors and people had to walk down. So they decided—

BUCK PENNINGTON: There was a great deal [inaudible].

LELA MARSHALL HINE: [Inaudible.] They had a very large committee, and I think that they undoubtedly asked the members of every organization in town that they could think of, that they could write, to get as many people interested as possible.

BUCK PENNINGTON: When the museum opened, what sort of collection did they have at that point? Where had it come from?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Norfolk Society of Arts. They had purchased over the years paintings. And we had a Turner and a Schofield. We had a couple of Wymans [00:16:00] bronzes. Just like the two that we have outside of the staircase here. Then we had a Frishmuth. Um, and an Olinsky. I'm trying to think of some of the others. Maybe there were 10 paintings in all. And they had hung as they were acquired in the [inaudible] which was on the front of [inaudible]. They had acquired a piano and they had on display not only rare paintings but the Irene Leache Memorial Collection. Is this thing running?

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.] Yes, I just have to be checking it from time to time.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Oh. When that land was sold for a residence, the collections were given to take care of to different members of the board. And so they were boarded out, so to speak, until the museum opened and then they were brought in as individual [inaudible] collections. The Irene Leache had their collection, they eventually had a room. And to begin with they were in what we called the children's department, which was really a storage room, but we didn't have any place else to have anything of that sort. And then in '39 when we put the west and north wings on they had a room to themselves upstairs up at the corner. [00:18:00] And now there is still an Irene Leache Memorial Room in the Chrysler, but they've moved it downstairs. And through the years the memorial has acquired some really very nice things. Some tapestries and early sculptures. Some furniture. But they still have other things that they had originally, and Ms. Leache's bust and pictures of Ms. Wood. Medals that were given by the Leache-Wood School to some of their scholars, the gold medals. And then Ms. Wood amused herself by keeping scrapbooks. And she would buy—she lived in Italy—and she would buy the reproductions of paintings and by each one underneath or at the side she would write her thoughts on this area. And we thought when they were given to the museum library [inaudible] fine for art appreciation. But it didn't work that way because she would put the same painting in and she'd call it three different things at different times a month or so apart. She was advancing in years.

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And then sometimes her remarks were quite [laughs] appropriate to teach children. So we had to just keep those put away.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And they're still there?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: I guess so.

BUCK PENNINGTON: That would be interesting.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: They're in the—if they're there they're in with the books. Now what they've done with the Norfolk Museum books I don't know. The Chrysler Library books. I think they're down there at the juvenile court building and they've given them the top floor to use as a library and to be able to work on. [00:20:02] They

do have a librarian, which is good. Mrs. Chrysler did a lot of that. Many years. When they were up in Provincetown [inaudible]. But they um—

BUCK PENNINGTON: So then you stayed with the museum from the time it started until—

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. Until '71, I guess.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Until 1971.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. I finally was put on full-time [inaudible] put on payroll full-time. The um—the Society of Arts also had the weekly lecture. Ms. Irene Leache put the literary lectures on and the Norfolk Society of Art once a month had an art lecture, and that was in the season, which was November through March. They found that nobody was going to come in April, because that was when they went out and started the garden all over again [inaudible] outdoors so they didn't have an audience, because many of the people who were interested in the Norfolk Society of Arts were also ardent garden clubbers. And many of those who founded the society also started up the different garden clubs all over. The Garden Club of Norfolk is the oldest one and the most prestigious I guess you'd say. But it was curious. During the Depression years the garden clubs mushroomed. [00:22:01] Seems to me every little community around here decided to have a garden club. And then they had the federation of garden clubs, city federation. And then there was a state federation of garden clubs. And that kept going until the Second World War. And far as I can make out, many of the garden clubs just organized themselves to do war work. Mostly Red Cross or hospital visiting, or something of that sort. And the garden clubs just went kaput for a while and then after the war they started up again. The Norfolk Society of Arts also had a very fine music committee. And during the season once a month they would have a very good concert. The chairmen fortunately were people who knew pianists, violinists, singers from out of town. They had contacts. And they would bring them in. I don't know whether they were paid very much. But they were entertained beautifully. And they had a good time. And they gave exceedingly nice programs. And that still goes on. Norfolk Society still gives that. The Irene Leache sponsors lectures still at the museum. The Norfolk Society of Arts sponsors an art lecture once a month. Then they have what they call the Mabel Brown Memorial Lecture, which I don't think is confined to any particular type of subject. Anything that's interesting the chairman thinks would be nice to have, why, they would bring one or two Mabel Brown, depending upon the income for the year. [00:24:00] Mabel Brown was a local woman who after the First World War when—oh, what did they call them? There were lectures on what was going on in the world. What did they call those darn things? But they were very popular. And many women took this up. And they would not only read the newspapers but they would travel in Europe in the summer and they would meet all of these prominent political figures. And we used to sort of kid the woman here because she was very apt to get up and say something about Mussolini and I. [Laughs.] [Inaudible] had a talk. Oh, I almost got the—what'd they call those things? Oh, dear [inaudible] so there was a great deal going on. And even when the Leache-Wood School was in existence they had what they called the fireside society. And it was only made up of a few people. And evidently they would meet in the Leache-Wood Parlor, which was actually a home on Granby Street. And then they had on Freemason Street back of it their classrooms. And they would either read good books or they would discuss some deep subject or something of the sort. So there was a cultural beginning long before the museum, you see, was settled. And very likely in the 19th century there was something of the sort, but I've never heard it. [00:26:00] Mr.—the Norfolk Society of Arts I don't think held the exhibitions on Granby Street. But it might have been—it was more like just a group of interested women, maybe some of Ms. Smith's pupils. And they would hire a third story and put a sign down, a sandwich sign on the street, which said, "Tea and art exhibition upstairs." So they worked at having a museum for many years before it actually came to fruition and possibly if it hadn't been for the Depression we wouldn't have had it as soon as we did. So a lot of good came out of the Depression. They had the—

BUCK PENNINGTON: Wasn't there an artists' project here in Norfolk?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: There was an artists' project here in Norfolk. There was a writers' project here in Norfolk. And our botanical gardens grew out of it. The um—they had, Mr. Hewitt had the government people, on the government payroll work out there, and he started it actually. Mr. Frederick Hewitt. It was his idea. And he planned it, and he got these people on the government payroll and taught them horticulture, and taught—laid out the land and had them work it and plant all the shrubs, and propagate the shrubs. And now it's a really very beautiful garden. [00:28:01] It's large, and they also have branched out and had a botanical school out there now. The azalea festival is—descends from what was for a couple of years the crepe myrtle festival.

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Because our crepe myrtles are very lovely here. And they've planted many of them, hundreds of them. But the summertime is not as conducive to having tourists come as the spring. So they decided to have an azalea festival and have it in honor of the NATO countries. And that was after NATO was established, which was about '52—no, '51 or '52. So they've been holding it ever since in honor of one of the NATO countries each year. This year it was Greece. And for the first time the queen was not brought to this

country from the country being honored. She's a Greek young woman, Norfolk resident of Greek descent. And also first time they haven't held it at the azalea gardens, they held it downtown on the Scope Plaza and had quite a Greek festival down there.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Let's—you've mentioned Mrs. Sloane several times. So let's back up a little bit and fill in some information there. Who were the Sloanes?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: They were originally from New York City.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And his name was? [00:30:00]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: William.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And her name was?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Florence Knapp. And the Sloanes, I don't know how many generations had been in New York at that time. I don't think too many. But the Knapps had been in that area since, oh, 17th century, I guess. They um—they were in business. And Mr. Sloane's uncle, Mr. Black, had come down to Berkley, Virginia, which is now a suburb of Norfolk, and started a knitting mill. Cotton. And they made undergarments. And then I don't know whether originally or whether it evolved, but they would be knit and then they would be brushed up so that it looked like sort of woolly on top. And that was a thriving business for many years until the Depression and that hit that, because by that time the Japanese had come in the market and they could undersell without any trouble at all American manufacturers. So Mr. Sloane came down here to work with his uncle. And they lived in Berkley originally and came—bought the land that the foundation is on.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Here.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes. In 1908. And built that year what they considered a summer place. And it had only fireplaces for heat. Otherwise it was a complete house. But they did in the plans put in the radiators. [00:32:00] Now whether they actually placed the radiators in the house originally or just had them on the plans, had the piping in the foundation, I don't know. But they used it as a summer place for about four or five years. And then they decided to move over and have it as a permanent residence. Of course it was dead country then. And the area around it called Lochhaven, the suburb, had been plotted by a development company and gradually sold off. But I think that really—it um—well don't think during the Second—First World War there was much building here. But after that in the early '20s, in the mid '20s, great many of the houses were built out here.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So the nucleus of the house that we're in now, which is really in the English country house Jacobean tradition, a brick and clapboard house with carved, applied decoration, the core of that are the rooms downstairs.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No. The original portions of the house were the hall and the dining room, and then there was a pantry and kitchen which have been torn down. But the—and then the other side of the hall there were two bedrooms and a bath. And then up over the hall there were bedrooms and baths. There were, on the first floor off the hall between say the hall and the dining room in a way, was a nursery. [00:34:05] And the room for the nurse in the back. And the dining room was down a hall and overlooked what is now the courtyard. But in '37, Mrs. Sloane decided to make the house shorter. So they moved the dining room out on the lawn. The ground room which faced the water and had originally been a porch and then a room—that had a lot of plants in them. What in the world?

BUCK PENNINGTON: Conservatory.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Conservatory. Was turned into a conservatory with glass doors and windows. And therefore it's sort of a family sitting room. And then about '23 Mrs. Sloane decided she wanted a drawing room so that was turned into a drawing room and the Philadelphia Company came down, measured, and put in the woodwork, the carving, and all of the walls. The mantelpiece came from England. And the first one was broken so the second one had to come over, and that's the one that's in there. The morning room was added many years before that, just before First World War. Before we went into it, about '16. And so that end of the house, which was originally the two bedrooms and a bath, was changed into a library and a master bedroom, a sleeping porch, and a large morning room with dressing room for Mrs. Sloane and bath, a dressing room for Mr. Sloane and bath. [00:36:07] And then above were the boys' bedrooms and a study hall and bath. When the house was sort of pulled apart in '37, that remained intact, that wasn't changed. But the hall, which used to run—might say east and west—was turned so it ran north and south. Which shortened the house by a great many feet. Then the dining room was pushed back to where it is now. And rooms filled in. The drawing room had—was moved from the waterside around to the drive. And the dining room was put in. And then they filled in rooms to make a complete enclosed building. And it wasn't really finished. It was made weatherproof and livable but it wasn't completely finished, I don't think, until after the Second World War actually.

BUCK PENNINGTON: But the Sloanes always lived here.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. They lived here right along. Mr. Sloane lived part of the time or stayed, I guess you'd call it, in New York, because his main office was up there for his business. And that's where they had the customers. They wouldn't be coming down here to the mill, they'd have someplace to display their wares and get the customers. [00:38:00] And he was up there quite a bit of time. And Mrs. Sloane would go up and join him and come back, and keep things going down here.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Was there one architect for the house? Or was it just a series of plans?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: There was one architect, a Mr. Woodsend, Charles Woodsend, who—I've gone through the old papers in Norfolk. And sometimes he would advertise himself as a builder. Then sometimes as an architect builder. And he did the plans. But they were what Mrs. Sloane asked him to do, actually. He also was a very good carver. He was a Scotsman. And he came over with his parents, I'd say maybe in the late '70s, early '80s of the last century. His father worked at the navy yard as a patternmaker. And I wouldn't be surprised if Mr. Woodsend worked there sometimes. But he built houses around here, quite a few, and also did the wood paneling if they needed anything of that sort. He did the dining room here. And I think he did the paneling that we have in the hall here, which wasn't there, it was somewhere else originally. In the Wainwright Building, which was Mr. Sloane's building, they had an office they called Room A. And one—there were two big—sort of a suite of offices. One office was utilitarian and then the other one was—Mrs. Sloane called her office. [00:40:00] And that was paneled. And she'd come back from Europe and bring something else in the way of furniture and put that in. Beautiful heavy silk damask Spanish curtains. And when after the Society of Arts clubhouse was torn down, they would hold exhibitions almost anywhere they could have them. And often if they were small enough she'd have them at Room A. They'd hold their lectures at the [inaudible] auditorium or the Sunday school probably.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So the carving in this house that was not bought and brought from England was largely done by this Mr. Charles Woodsend then you would say.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mr. Woodsend did the dining room. He did some. And he did the paneling, great deal of the paneling. The furniture in the dining room was by Karl von Rydingsvard, who, before the First World War had several schools to train carvers. One in San Francisco, one in New York, and another one up in Maine in the summertime, big camp and school. And he did quite a few other things in the house. And he did the original bargeboards that we have outside on the eaves.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh yes, under—the carving [inaudible] under the eaves.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: He did the little shrine and—

BUCK PENNINGTON: And his name was Karl van?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Von V-O-N.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Von.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Rydingsvard. [00:42:00]

BUCK PENNINGTON: Rydingsvard.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And I don't think he ever came to Norfolk. He had a brother in Norfolk who was the head of the manual training department in the school system. But I don't think that he ever came. They were of Swedish nobility, actually. But they all had to earn their livings. And they chose craft. And I think you hear of the Arts and Craft movement. Apparently it was before the First World War. When did it begin?

BUCK PENNINGTON: In the 1890s in England.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: In the 1890s in England. And Mrs. Sloane was very much interested in that.

BUCK PENNINGTON: In the Arts and Crafts movement.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes, very much.

BUCK PENNINGTON: What had been her background? She had been in New York. And is that when she developed her collecting interest?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Well, I don't know. She was pretty young when she was married. But she was quite short. And I think the family was a little worried about it. So the doctor said, "Well, get her to walk a lot." So they very carefully sent her to the school the furthest from their house. They'd take her there, but she had to walk home.

[Laughs.] And the Metropolitan, the old Metropolitan, was on the way.

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BUCK PENNINGTON: So Mrs. Sloane would walk home from school.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: So she walked home from school. And to sort of relieve the ball and the feet, I guess both, she'd stop in at the Metropolitan. And she worked up a very large interest in museums as a youngster. And it was always her idea after they moved down here that the—we should have a museum. So we finally had a museum.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And they moved in here about 19—?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: They didn't—oh, they moved down around '95.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, around 1895.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. But they didn't move over to Norfolk until '08. And they were across the road. And that was when we had ferries between the town. The first Berkley bridge was put up by local citizens. And I think Mr. Sloane owned quite a bit of it, the bridge. And the—he was one of the people who never had to pay any toll to go across the bridge [laughs].

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.] So Mrs. Sloane could ride across to Norfolk for free.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Could ride for—no. Drive across the bridge.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Drive.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Because there was still a Berkley ferry until—we had ferries around here until '52 between Portsmouth and Norfolk, Norfolk and Berkley and Portsmouth. It sort of made a triangular trip. It was a small ferry. And then we had ferries between the naval base area, Piney Point, and Newport News. [00:02:05] Or Old Point [inaudible]. They were good size ferries, I think, and they ran a very good schedule. Then when they put the bridge—tunnel in, they didn't need the ferries any longer. And they put a tunnel through to Portsmouth, the downtown tunnel, and that opened about '52, and then the ferries to Norfolk and—between Norfolk and Portsmouth were set aside. It was a nice ride across there. A great many people from Portsmouth would come to Norfolk. And at the head of Commercial Place at Main Street was a large department store, W. T. Schwartz and Company. And some of the Portsmouth people just didn't go any further. They'd go to Schwartz, buy what they needed, turn around, go home [laughs].

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.] So Mrs. Sloane had developed this great interest in art. And so when she came here she was all raring to go.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: She was interested in it. And I think that was one of the things that brought her to Miss Florence Smith's class. And being a new person, it was her way of meeting a lot of the younger people. And they did that. They—

BUCK PENNINGTON: Tell me something about the collecting here. [00:03:57] After they moved to this house and she had apparently been regularly going to Europe, is that when she began the nucleus for the collections that we see here after they moved here?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No, I think she had quite a few things when she was in Berkley. Because there are two stone Japanese figures, [inaudible] figures, which she had over there. And then there are things in the collections which date back before they moved over here. When she started accessioning, instead of accessioning it the year when she gave it—but she didn't give everything all at once to the foundation. She gave it in groups. But she would give it the year she acquired it.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Wow.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: She had saved many, many of her bills. I imagine originally for insurance purposes as much as anything. And they have been a great help in accessioning.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So you still have those.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Great many bills, yes. And we—she bought silver from Tiffany. And, well the Tiffany lamps. And some of those she had when she was in Berkley. I think she had the balancing lamp and I think she had the table lamp at that point. And I was trying to trace the maker of the niello silver service that we have here, which was purchased from Tiffany before the First World War. And I wrote up there, and they said that



they had no trace of where they got it. [00:06:07] It has a Russian mark on it. But they did have Mrs. Sloane's record of purchases, which very nicely they copied and sent the whole kit and boodle down. And it filled in some of the gaps with the bills had been mislaid or—so that was a help. But I'm still trying to find out who it was who made that Russian silver.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Hmm.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: One story is that the Tiffany factory had Russian silversmiths. But why they'd put a Russian mark on it and make it in this country, I have no—I couldn't figure out.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Tiffany didn't import it?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: I think they did. But maybe—I don't know whether they don't keep their business records beyond a certain time or what.

BUCK PENNINGTON: When did um—I've got two other directed questions. One, tell me something about the history of Mrs. Sloane's association with Douglas Volk and Helen Turner. Because they were both artists that she valued a great deal.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And had Mr. Volk been working in this area?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No. I think she met them up in the Maine woods. Mr. Volk had what they called a camp, and as far as I can make out it was, you know, not pup tent, tent kind of a camp, but cabins. Well-equipped cabins throughout the woods. And she would go up there in the summer with the boys. [00:08:00] And I think that's where she met Mr. Volk. And then her sister seemed to know quite a few of the artists. She was quite a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Blasgood [ph].

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh [inaudible]?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, and maybe it was through them that they met the Volks originally. Mrs. Sloane never talked much about it. I don't remember her speaking of how she ran into them. It never occurred to me to ask her. You know, they're just part of the background of the whole thing.

BUCK PENNINGTON: The woodwork.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Then she belonged to the National Arts Club up in New York City. And they had an apartment just oh, half a block from it I guess. East 19th across from what was the—was it Irving Hotel?

BUCK PENNINGTON: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And instead of—their apartment kitchen was very small. Mrs. Stiles had the kitchen in her apartment and then there was a door through to Mrs. Sloane's apartment, which was bed, bath, and sitting room. And Mrs. Stiles was a bedroom, sitting room, and this little kitchen you could hardly turn around in.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And that was Mrs. Sloane's sister.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, Mrs. Stiles. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And they—so when they wanted to go to New York, when Mr. Sloane went up he had some definite place to stay. And they—and I think Mrs. Stiles knew a great many of the artists. She was connected with—was it Eleanor Collett [ph] Quatice [ph].

BUCK PENNINGTON: Yes. [00:10:00]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And she was the original owner of the apartment next to Mrs. Stiles. And I think they probably moved in maybe the same time. And so when she died Mrs. Sloane bought Mrs. Collett's apartment. I think possibly it was through her friendship with Mrs. Collett that they began to know the artists that were people up in that part of the country.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And so Mr. Volk came down to Norfolk and did some work.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: He would come to visit. And he did—when they brought the mace out, the city in recognition of Mrs. Sloane's work toward the development of the museum, they sent the city mace out and had

a big reception. And Mr. Volk was here at the time. So he sketched it, and then he painted it. There's a small sketch of the painting that he worked from. And he'd come visit every once in a while. One time they went up, before the First World War, on the *Caprice*. The James River, took the ride, and then got off at Brandon. And he spent most of the time painting a little picture of Brandon which is in the morning room.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Hmm. And he painted both of the Sloane children.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: He painted everybody. Both boys. Mr. Sloane and Mrs. Sloane. His portrait of Mrs. Sloane is in the dining room. William is here. Edwin used to hang in Gallery X where we were looking at the [inaudible] exhibit, and that's in storage now, and his father's painting's storage. But he did them all at different times. They weren't all done the same year. I think Mrs. Sloane's was '26, Mr. Sloane's was '22 or ['2]3. [00:12:03] Boys were done before the First World War. Maybe in '15 and '17, or '16, something like that.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Let's think something about and say something about Mrs. Sloane's collecting taste, because she collected a lot of Gothic art and religious art, and Oriental art, and late 19th-early 20th-century American painting. And European furnishings. And English woodwork, and English decorative arts. So she had a very Catholic eclectic taste.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: But did she have one favorite period?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: I don't think so. If you think about the trends in decorative arts, and get the accessions numbers of these things, you'll find that they follow trends. And there's a great deal of Spanish acquired in the mid to late '20s when that was very popular. And she toured Spain. She took the car and the chauffeur, and they toured around Spain. And she ran into Mr. Byne B-Y-N-E, Arthur Byne, who evidently was a well-known dealer in Spanish antiquities. It was also much of the period where the churches were having to divest themselves of vestments, furniture, and whatever they thought they could spare to get enough money to survive. [00:14:00] And I think he invested in a great deal of that material. And that is where Mrs. Sloane acquired the last piece she got, around '37. And that's actually when the furnishings quit. Just stopped developing. And there are very few original chairs. They're reproductions for the most part. Because they're far sturdier than an antique. And if you're going to sit in a chair you want [laughs] something that is going to hold up. That's it, that's a reproduction.

BUCK PENNINGTON: It is.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BUCK PENNINGTON: Very Arts and Crafts.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Tell me this. Where had she been collecting the Oriental things? The Tang Dynasty figures? And the jades and—

LELA MARSHALL HINE: For the most part when Yamanaka alienation sale was held.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh. Tell me about that. You told me about that last summer.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: That was what, I think it began in '43, when the alienation people sold from the stores.

BUCK PENNINGTON: They seized the stores of—

LELA MARSHALL HINE: The merchandise and the stores.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Of the Yamanaka firm.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Of the Yamanaka firm when—I guess Pearl—since Pearl Harbor happened by then the claps [ph] were put on those. And you had to hold them a certain number of years—although Pearl Harbor was '41 and the sales began about '43. So evidently you don't have to hold them too long. But you liquid—the company liquidates these. But puts the sums aside. The funds. So that when there's a peace treaty the people whose material you have sold have claim to something, they get something out of it. [00:16:00] But as I say first they sold from the shops. And then they gathered from all the shops to New York and Park Bene [ph] sold it off.

I don't know if it was a two-week sale or a one, but it was a very, very long and large sale. Mrs. Sloane had begun to be more interested at that point in the Oriental. And purchasing things I think from Mr. Loo. And he advised her on practically everything that she purchased from Yamanaka. And sometimes he would go with her.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Who was this?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mr. C. T. Loo.

BUCK PENNINGTON: L-O-O.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BUCK PENNINGTON: An Oriental specialist.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Well, an Oriental.

BUCK PENNINGTON: An Oriental. [Laughs.]

LELA MARSHALL HINE: [Inaudible] gentleman. He really was. And he had a place in Paris. And he had a place in New York. And it was, I guess you call it rooms really more than the store, because it was up two, three stories in an office building. And he always had very good things. And you could depend upon if he said it was so-and-so, it was. And I think his son ran the Paris shop mostly. And Mr. Loo ran the New York shop to a great extent. And he had an assistant called Mr. Caro. Maybe you've heard of Frank Caro.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Yes.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Well, he was the successor to C. T. Loo. And when Mr. Loo decided to retire from the States and go back to Paris to live they sold off a great deal of the merchandise stock. [00:18:08] Down to a point where Mr. Caro could purchase. So Mr. Caro purchased what was left and it became Frank Caro, successor to C. T. Loo. And I think his son is still carrying on up there.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And so he advised her in the purchases that she made in the Yamanaka sale.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BUCK PENNINGTON: And that's when she added a lot of the Orientalia to the collection.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, that's when we acquired the lead garmeture, the bronze [inaudible] some of the pottery figures. I think we got—not sure we got the horse from that sale. The big horse. But we got it either from or through Mr. Loo. And some of the things we got from Mr. Knott [ph] in London. One of the camels and the prehistoric [inaudible] cones [ph] down the backs. But she had already quite a few Oriental things, particularly the cloisonnes, the big cloisonne.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Big cloisonne vases.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. She acquired that from the army-navy stores over in London. And they had an apartment in London for three, four years in the mid '20s, and it had to be furnished. [00:20:02] So she'd go out and acquire bits and pieces [laughs] here and there for—

BUCK PENNINGTON: From the British army-navy stores?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: That were seized merchandise or—

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No, I don't know too much about them. But just—I concluded that they were sort of commission stores. In some part.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh yes. Consignment.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. Consignment. And the objects were brought in by service people who had acquired them in the Near East or fronts in England or Africa, wherever they were. And they would be sold from there. Liberty [ph] used to have quite a department of such things. And I don't know whether they still do or not. But they—

BUCK PENNINGTON: Let's talk now something about the plans to open the house as a museum. When do you think Mrs. Sloane started considering that possibility?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: When [inaudible] but it was put into effect when the foundation was established in '37.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, 1937 a foundation was established called the Hermitage Museum Foundation.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: The Hermitage Foundation.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Had the house been called Hermitage?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes. That was the name I guess from the minute they built it or thought about it. Because it's quite isolated, and this is on land which has never been plotted. It's just one piece of land. And it was purchased from a development company. [00:22:03] But before they had plotted the rest of the land. So this just came without any divisions in any way, shape, or form. And a lot of people have wanted to buy pieces along North Shore Road, but there's never been any need to sell it. Not that we're rolling in wealth, but we have ample for our needs.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So she formed a foundation board in 1937.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. She and Mr. Sloane. He was as instrumental in it as she. And they didn't open up as a museum until—just as the war was ending, I guess in '45, spring of '45 or whatever, it was open on a regular schedule then. Not a very large schedule, but there were several half days a week. And she brought down a Mrs. Bertha Fanning Taylor who was an artist and had lived in Paris a great many years, raised her family in Europe, and in '39 decided she'd better come home. So she left Paris, left everything she possessed, and came on back to the States. And she was in New York, and running the pen and brush club. Does that still exist?

BUCK PENNINGTON: Mm-hmm [affirmative], I believe it does.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And Mrs. Sloane met her and asked her to come down here and be the curator. And she did, and she also would take the people through the gardens on particular days. [00:24:05] She taught classes. And then at that time Mrs. Sloane started a series of lectures called "The Art of Living" and they were based originally on the collections. The background of the art of a particular country, and then brought in something that was in the collection. Mrs. Taylor would give the lectures. And that was the beginning of the membership for the Hermitage Foundation. And anyone who purchased a season ticket for the lectures was a member of the Hermitage Foundation, is in. The first years there were not too many members. But there was always a nice audience because Mrs. Sloane would see to it. She would invite her friends to come. And after the lectures they would have a coffee hour. People would mill around and meet each other. And it developed over the years into a very good series and then she got together a group of the married women who were interested in art and other cultural things whose children had grown up, and they were a little bit at a loss, what in the world am I going to do with myself? She, smart enough to sense that, she gave them something to do. She made them part of the lecture series, and it was called the auxiliary to the Hermitage Foundation. And that is still going. The lecture series is going. They had [inaudible] I think she masterminded it. [00:26:03] But they did the work.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So there's still a lecture series.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Oh yes, it's a very good one. And in fact if you want to keep up your membership, as soon as the lectures are over they send out the cards of what they're going to do next year. And if you don't join up, you're out. They usually, everybody sends in the check by the first of May. And there is a waiting list of 15 to 20, 30 people all the time. They can't take more than 300 because the museum auditorium won't hold more than 300.

BUCK PENNINGTON: [inaudible] where is that [ph]?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Down at the Chrysler.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, down at the Chrysler.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: We had them here at the house originally in the east gallery. And then they became so big we had to have them morning and afternoon. That became unwieldy and they went down to the museum and held it in one of the big galleries, until they put on the Houston Wing, which had the auditorium. And they've been down there ever since on Mondays. Originally they were on Thursdays. So for a long time the lecturers were culled from local people. The professors at the university, local art teachers, and people who were interested in art. And they would give the lectures. Usually free gratis for nothing. And as the interest built up, the memberships grew, we were able to pay the lecturer, and they get their expenses and a fee for the lecture. [00:28:03]

BUCK PENNINGTON: [Laughs.] Well, tell me this—but it had always been the Sloanes' plan that after '37—for the house to open as a museum.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes, yes, and it didn't open as I say until after the First World War—Second World War. In fact the north gallery wasn't even finished until after the Second World War. And during the war, beginning of it,

Mrs. Sloane moved upstairs here, and made the sleeping porch, she used as her bedroom into the small [inaudible] gallery, which is off of the master bedroom. There's a window between. And during the war she allowed young naval officers who were here temporarily to live in the boys' part of the house. And also we used to have a cabin on the place which was sort of an adult playhouse, although it was fully equipped: kitchen, bath, two bedrooms, a large living room, a porch, screened. And young navy—a sailor and his wife, two, three of them at different times, would live down there [inaudible] only heat they had was the electric stove [inaudible]. And then unfortunately after the war some of the neighborhood kids used to break in and make fires on the kitchen floor, a campfire, yes, on the floor. And one of them got out of hand, and up went the cabin.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, dear.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: That was a very frightening experience.

BUCK PENNINGTON: I guess that was. So close to the house.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. [00:30:00]

BUCK PENNINGTON: Could have burnt the house down, the collection too.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

BUCK PENNINGTON: What is the cabin now, on the point that I saw out at that end of the house that has like a tower in the center? Was that an old studio? As I came down the drive.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No, no, that's the carpentry shop. And the tower enclosed the water tank. See, originally they had a well. They did have electricity and cooked I think for many years on a woodstove. And then they had gas. And they didn't have heat for the house until the annex was built about 1912, '13. That's when they moved over from South Norfolk for year-round living and they—no, that was the carpentry shop. Not the original carpentry shop. There's a sunken garden. You probably didn't notice it. Right beside the water tower. And that was made in the foundations of the original carpentry shop.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: And then they built the other carpentry shop, which is still used. The water tank has been taken out long time ago. And that's just a storage building now. The—down in the back drive is the garage, which is now a studio. And then the two-story house called the cottage, where the person who takes care of the grounds lives. And for many years the chauffeur lived down there too. He came—Robert Trussell [ph] came shortly before the First World War. [00:32:01] And instead of going back to England he stayed in this country. He had a brother who was the head gardener for the state, up in Long Island. And Robert stayed on for about a year after Mrs. Sloane died. But he was getting on. His hair was white by that time.

BUCK PENNINGTON: When did Mrs. Sloane die?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Fifty-three.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Nineteen fifty-three. So she'd been living here for quite a while after it opened as a museum, hadn't she?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Oh, yeah. It was a—only the first floor was shown when she lived here. Because of course she lived up here. She used this as a sitting room, she [inaudible] the gallery on the water as a sitting room. These rooms were designed for her sisters. She had two sisters she was very fond of. And they visited at least once per winter. All three got together then. And she had designed this particular room, this west gallery, as a guest room [inaudible] here was a bath. And the other two rooms were to be the bedrooms. The gallery that we were in and the waterside gallery were to be bedrooms for her two sisters. And in the plans she's got Emma's bedroom and Grace's bedroom. And then the corridor out there which is now [inaudible] gallery, and the Oriental gallery. I think she just wanted the gallery, I don't believe she had thought of it particularly Oriental. But then when the Yamanaka sale came along and she was able to get all those vitrines, and all the Oriental material it developed into an Oriental gallery. But that was unfinished all through the war. [00:34:00] And she had—soon as she had the buildings enclosed and weatherproofed then she went more slowly in doing the wood, the woodwork and the finishing inside.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Oh, I see, so she'd build a pavilion and then she'd wait to finish it off on the inside. She [inaudible].

LELA MARSHALL HINE: It wasn't really a pavilion because the wings were all here. But the woodwork wasn't installed. And I think that she liked to plan it, she liked to sketch the moldings, and she had a man named McCarthy here. And Mack [ph] had worked with Mr. Woodsend. Mr. Woodsend was here till he died in '26. I

would say more or less the last four, five years of his life he had the privilege of using the workshop and then he would help her supervise any building around here. And then Mr. McCarthy came and he lived in the cottage until oh, I guess four, five years after Mrs. Sloane died, then he retired to the carpenters, old gentlemen's home in Florida. And then Mr. Dudley [ph] came and he's been here ever since.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Let's talk now something about the Hermitage as it functions today. It is a foundation.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: That's right.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And administered by a foundation that has a board.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Administered by the board.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And is the youngest Mr. Sloane on the board?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: No. He removed himself from the board about 10 years ago I guess. He used to live here in the east wing, second floor. And then he decided to have a director. [00:36:04] And he decided the best thing for him to do was have his own house so he bought a house where he's living now.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So you're run by and administered by a board.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yes. We have a director, we have a board, 13 members.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Is your director in residence full-time?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: He is here to work full-time. No one's in residence since the maid has gone to the hospital. We have quite an alarm system. And then also the Lochhaven city police hires a patrolman. One patrolman in a car, and he comes through here several times a night.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And at this point in time though you, like you were saying, you're administered by the board. You do have an endowment.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah.

BUCK PENNINGTON: But are you making acquisitions at this time? Or is the collection pretty much frozen?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: The collection is only frozen because of lack of funds to purchase. And prices are terrifically high now. Gifts we accept if they're considered suitable. And we haven't acquired very much. We've actually purchased, I think, one item for the collection since Mrs. Sloane died and that was a turquoise snuff bottle. I can't think of any other—I take that—we have been given several things.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Had you been associated with the Hermitage even before you came here as registrar as you said in '71?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: I volunteered with Mrs. Sloane for years. [00:38:00] And would help her with the vitrines and listen to what she wanted to do. [Laughter.]

BUCK PENNINGTON: How would you describe your duties here now, your functioning as a registrar?

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Registrar, curator. Oh, I don't know.

BUCK PENNINGTON: General hand.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Anything that has to be done I can do.

BUCK PENNINGTON: And you're still having programs. I noticed for example the Hermitage studio out there.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: That's right. That is doing very well. There's a photography—I guess you call it studio down there.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Or workshop.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah. And they have classes in connection with ODU. We have—

BUCK PENNINGTON: Old Dominion University.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, Old Dominion University. And we have Moira Dry [ph] who teaches printmaking. And we have Rita Mallier [ph] who does the sculpture, clay mostly and soft sculpture. They have classes. And our

director is a very good photographer and likes to teach photography. And he has charged for [ph] his photography classes. He also teaches for ODU directly. And I think he teaches out at the Catholic high school. And they have an exhibition every year of student work here at the foundation. We had for many years what they called the Hermitage Art Club. [00:40:01] It was a group of local women who liked to paint, and they would get one of the local artists who taught to come out and do the criticizing for them. And sometimes the artist would teach. I don't believe they're meeting here anymore. But that went on for 10 or 15 years, or maybe more.

BUCK PENNINGTON: So it's been very much an ongoing project and still is [inaudible].

LELA MARSHALL HINE: Yeah, it was something Mrs. Sloane wanted to develop very much. And when she was alive there were classes for children and classes for adults, and usually an exhibition at the end of the year, were all held down there.

BUCK PENNINGTON: Well, thank you for your comments today. I think we'll stop here with the information that we've gotten on the arts in Norfolk and the information that we've gotten on the development of the Hermitage, and of the Sloane family themselves, and we thank you a great deal.

LELA MARSHALL HINE: You're very welcome.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]