

## **Interview with Sister Martin Joseph Jones**

### **SUNY Buffalo State Oral History Project, 1975-1995**

Interviewer: Unknown (Fran...)

Date of Interview: October 17, 1984

Audio Length: 35:27

Collection: SUNY Buffalo State Oral History Project, 1975-1995

### **Description**

Sr. Martin was born in Kansas City, Missouri, October 19, 1923. She grew up in Houston where she graduated from John H. Reagan High School in 1941. In 1943, she entered the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and professed perpetual vows in 1952. She earned a Bachelor of Arts at Our Lady of Victory College, and in 1956, she earned a Master's in Library Science from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Sr. Martin taught and was a librarian in the Dallas-Fort Worth area until appointment as head librarian at the University of Dallas came in 1956. Then, in 1961, she left the university to supervise the establishment of diocesan high school librarians and taught at Nolan High School at Fort Worth.

Sr. Martin came to New York in 1968 and taught social studies and religion at Mount St. Mary's Academy in Kenmore. In 1969, she came to the State University College at Buffalo as a reference librarian. She then worked as an assistant in the Periodical Department. In 1975, she became the college's first archivist. During her tenure, many of the special collections we have today came to the archives including: the Courier-Express Newspaper Collection, and the Tom Fontana Collection. Additionally, she conducted an oral history project where she interviewed former and current professors and presidents etc. Sister Martin retired in 1995. She passed away on April 29, 2013.

Citation: "Interview with Sister Martin Joseph Jones" (1984). *SUNY Buffalo State Oral Histories, 1975-1995*. Archives & Special Collections Department, E. H. Butler Library, SUNY Buffalo State.

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/37](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/37)

## Transcript

**Fran:** Thank you Diane. It is my pleasure to introduce first Sister Martin Joseph. Sister and I have been very good friends for a number of years because she was my boss! [Unintelligible words] the cause of that, but just the same, we got along just the same and still do even though I am retired. I'd like to read this about her. A native of Houston, Texas, Sister Martin Joseph received her college education at Our Lady of Victory, Fort Worth and Catholic University, Washington, D.C. where she earned a Master's degree in Library Science. She was a teacher's librarian in the Dallas/Fort Worth area until her appointment as Head Librarian at the University of Dallas in 1956.

In 1961, she was asked by her community to leave her position at the university to supervise the establishment of three diocese high school libraries and taught at Nolan High School in Fort Worth when she wasn't traveling from one library to the next. In 1968, she migrated to New York State where she taught Social Studies and Religion at Mount St. Mary's Academy in Kenmore. In 1969, she accepted a position as the Reverend's Librarian at Butler Library at the State College. In 1975, she was appointed by President Fretwell<sup>1</sup> to be the College Archivist which position she still holds. She says she wears two veils as she is also the Curator of all of the Special Collections at Butler Library where the archives are stored. She is an active member of several library and archival professional organizations.

Presently, she is a board member of both the local and national Catholic Library Association. She edits both of the local chapters library newsletter and the National Archives section newsletter. Two years ago, Sister established the Western New York Religious Archives Conference which has proven to be quite successful with about 20 very active members who meet five or six times a year. Let me introduce Sister Martin Joseph: [Clapping by audience]

**Sister Martin Joseph [02:17]:** I told Shonnie [Finnegan]<sup>2</sup> that if I put you to sleep it's her duty to wake you up and I also told Fran that I don't know any dirty archival jokes. But, I do that

---

<sup>1</sup> For image and bio as well as timeline and further information about President Fretwell see: oral history interview [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/18/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/18/) <http://sunny.buffalostate.edu/college-presidents> ; <http://sunny.buffalostate.edu/19601969>. "E. K. Fretwell, Jr. was appointed president on August 2, 1967, and was inaugurated as the fourth president on May 10, 1968. Previously he held the position of dean of academic development of the City University of New York. On September 8, 1978, President Fretwell resigned to accept a position as chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He served as chancellor from 1979 to 1989. Fretwell joined MDC, a private nonprofit research corporation in 1989."

<sup>2</sup> Marchand "Shonnie" Finnegan was the first archivist of the University at Buffalo, North Campus, Amherst, NY. She was active at UB from 1967 to 1997. She received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librarianship in 1979. In 1976, Governor Cuomo appointed her to the New York State Historical Records Advisory Board, which she served on from 1976 to 1985. She held positions within the Society for American Archivists serving on the Committee on Status of Women in the Archival Profession and the Committee of College and University Archives. She was elected Fellow of the Society in 1975 and served as President from 1985-1986. From 1980 to 1984, she represented SAA on the National Archives Advisory Council. See an extended bio at [http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens\\_work/bios/finnegan.htm](http://library.buffalo.edu/archives/womens_work/bios/finnegan.htm)

I am able to answer some of your questions. Shonnie [Finnegan] and I didn't exactly know what you wanted but we are assuming that what we are going to state will be pleasing to you, and if it isn't, we expect you to say something.

So, the first thing that I would like to tell you in case you didn't know, what an archive is. Sometimes people do have trouble, one of the librarians at the college asked me to make a little blurb about archives and I said, the first thing we are going to do is going to establish how it is pronounced because students come in and say, "I want to use some ar-CH-ives." [Laughter] So I say, "Archives, A-R-K-I-V-E-S." That's the first thing you do, you learn how to pronounce it!

The second thing is, to get a definition. It's very difficult. Sometimes it's very difficult in the college for me to establish a difference between the Archives and the Special Collections, because as Franny said, I wear two veils. I'm the Special Collections Librarian and I'm also the archivist of the college and they are two distinct roles. The archives happen to be located in the library but it does not belong to the library, so we have to distinguish the difference.

An archive is a depository of records in a center or in a depository established by the institution for which it exists. All companies have archives. You have archives. Your association has archives. The archives at the State University at Buffalo is the center in which all of the historical documents of that institution are housed. Just as at the university all of the historical documents at the university are housed. Now archives are quite different from libraries. I happen to be a librarian, most people think you can make the adjustment just very easily and you can though there was sort of a fight between historians and librarians because the historians felt that you had to be an historian to be a good archivist, and a librarian said you could be a librarian and an archivist and frustrated historian at the same time. You do a lot of things! [Laughter] So, I think that has died down a little bit, we have convinced each other that we can do a good job. I find myself - I can't argue that to be a good archivist you have to be an historian because I happen to be a librarian. I think I'm okay. I have used what I have learned in the library field to advantage in the archives. But if I were an historian I would probably have just as much argument to say - you have to be an historian - you have to be a good librarian.

But the archives is different from the library collection because in library collections you have set numbers. Now, you know, all of you into libraries that you can go into any library in the city or in the country, and you usually find the same books with the same number on them. You use the Library of Congress classification, or what we use the Dewey Decimal system, all of the books that we collect they are one to nine, or in the Library Congress A-Z. But in archives it is quite different. No two archives are the same. My archives are not at all like Shonnie's, because our - my records - are different from the university. Now, I'm the little sister, or first cousins, whatever, because she is the University, and we are the college and there is a distinct difference. We are proud of each other, we cooperate and there is no sense of saying, "Well, I am as big as you are," because I'm not! I think the university is twice the enrollment of the college, but we

have to accept the records we have, just as in your own home, you accept the records that you have. And then you go on from there.

Each archive has a particular order and system in which the records are kept. It is a tremendous responsibility to start an archive, and I Shonnie you started it at the university?

**Shonnie:** More or less.

**Sister Martin Joseph [07:12]:** And I started the one here. Because, can you imagine, living with that pressure over you saying, “I’m not going to be here forever, somebody is going to take my place.” Oh boy, what policies am I establishing? What organizational chart am I establishing that will please, you know, the next person who is going to replace me? So, we have to watch that and every time I set up policy I have to think, “Okay, is that going to satisfy the next person?” The next archivist to come in –will [they] change the whole thing? But hopefully he or she will not do so. Now, the archives...the college existed over a hundred years before the archives center was established. The archives were around. They were in the Bell Tower. [Laughter] They were in every basement. They were in every maintenance closet. They were in desks, they were in filing cabinets, they were in corridors, they were in lockers. They were everywhere! I don’t think there’s been an inch, I could help Tom Becker [?] be a space manager opposite of those cabinets because I did every inch of this place, looking, smelling out [Laughter], the records.

You just have to do that. When Rockwell Hall was empty this past year because it is going to be renovated. Woo! I processed more collections this past year for that reason. It’s a domino effect. you know people go by Rockwell Hall, why do we want all of this stuff? Well, send it over to Sister. [Laughter] So I processed double the number this past year than I did before, simply because, all of a sudden people didn’t want these records, and all of a sudden, they didn’t think it was quite necessary to have in their back room, or in a closet. So, that sort of gives you an idea of the official records of the institution.

Now, what is in this institution? And how are you going to arrange all of this material? And where is it going to be stored? Well, first I think we have to go back to when it was established. It was established in 1975. That does tell you something. 1975 that was towards the bicentennial celebration, wasn’t it? All of a sudden everybody heard the word archive. Where is our archive? What about this? We didn’t have it. Also, there were two things that happened. The bicentennial was coming up and Professor Bunzel [?] died quite suddenly, and he had a lot of manuscripts, books, articles he had written, and his wife offered the archives to the college. Headlines in the paper: No archives and you’re over 100 years old? So, Dr. Fretwell called Dr. Walsh the Director of the Library, and actually he couldn’t afford to hire an archivist - it would be a lot to do so, the budget was cut - guess who would be cut? “The luxury of an archivist!” So, Dr. Fretwell called Dr. Walsh and asked, “Do you have a librarian that you could release to establish the archives of the institution?” Well, archivists just don’t grow on trees and you don’t just all of a sudden learn

this, how to be an archivist overnight! [Laughter]. But, Dr. Walsh said, “Yes, we have just reorganized the periodicals department, and I have a very fine person that I think would be excellent: Mr. Underhill. He was very quiet, very studious, he is just a real nice guy and I’m glad of this opportunity.” So, he goes to Mr. Underhill, and he says, “Mr. Underhill, Dr. Fretwell ask that the archives be established, I wondered if you would be an archivist?” And he said, “No way.” [Laughter] He would not be an archivist, but he knew somebody that would like to be. And Dr. Walsh said, “Who? Is it a librarian?” “Yes! Sister Martin Joseph would like to be.” “Sister Martin Joseph? But she talks so much! How can she be an archivist?” [Laughter] Now that is a true story. And he came to me and warned me, isn’t that right Fran?

**Fran:** Mr. Fretwell said Dr. Walsh said, he didn’t believe you were an archivist because you were too lively and you talked too much! [Laughter].

**Sister Martin Joseph [11:52]:** True story! That says something about you doesn’t it Mr. Underhill. [Laughter] So, I was ready for Dr. Walsh. But you see, when I came to Texas, the first thing I did was ask, “Why was there Buffalo in this session?” [Unintelligible word] we were still using the train. And I asked so many questions. We passed this place, I asked Sister Mary B. was her name and I said, “What is this?” The Art Gallery, the Historical Society and I asked all kinds of questions. When we went home she took me to my room and she went to her library, she was a librarian, and she came back with a Buffalo News information, you know the old records thing, it had everything about Buffalo, they used to publish. Here was all of the information about Buffalo so I don’t ask any more questions. [Laughter]

So, I didn’t, but I went to the Historical Society, I went to Albright-Knox, I read the history of everything that I could put my hand on. Then when I came to the college, you ask how did I get there? Well, I applied for a job and got it and it is as simple as that. My superiors had applied and they won’t take you because you weren’t a veil, and they did take me. When I came here to the college, the first thing I did was to read the history and I just resented the fact that Gertrude Bacon and Chase [?] and all of these people, Kerry Cassidy [?], we didn’t know anything about them. Who is Gertrude Bacon? So, I began to write biographies. I would gather all of the information about the names of the people. Oh no, this is as a librarian. And then when I was appointed archivist, God Bless, Shonnie Finnegan, I went right over to her place when you were on Bidwell Parkway and I spent several days and learned all I could and I made a lot of trips around the state and visited archives and witnessed the workshops. All of a sudden, I became full blown archivist.

There was one day though when I had to sit there, I collected like mad. I collected all the records, all the records, all the records, but one day I had to sit down and say, “Okay Martin, it’s time, you’ve got to put this in order. You’ve got to fix a schedule.” So, after praying to every saint [Laughter] I didn’t have some kind of assistant and I have been working out ever since. The

wonderful thing about this is, that when other people come from different institutions to study your archives, you have to answer their questions and then you can make changes because you can see the weaknesses, in your own organization.

Now, where are they located? Everywhere! I get plenty of exercise. I don't mind in the weather like this, but I do not like to over to the annex when it's fifteen degrees or it's snowing like mad. The most used collections are in my office in the library. They are sandwiched in between the collections, the special collections on each side of the room. They are the most used. Then, in the basement...oh the room is 50x30, if you can figure the size, you know. There is a basement area, 110ftx50 and I have half of that almost half of it is filled. I have a space over at Cordell Hall, it is 150ftx60 and that's half filled. Then I have the bomb shelter [Laughter] with twenty-two toilet lids and archives...this is a special collection but it's been my work for the past two weeks. The Buffalo Evening News, the bound volume 1980. And I took Dr. Newman down there today, I'm wearing the special collections veil right now...I took him down there and you know we had to have a flashlight because there were so many of these little volumes, they had to put them up against the light. And all of these toilet lids! [Laughter]. I said, "You would think that they would put those volumes in a neat system," it takes a little while for me to get that in order. 1910 with 1880, 1870, 1940, you know all mixed up, so I had to make a diagram of that.

I said, "do you think we could a cabinet or something [unintelligible word] filing cabinet?" Yeah, maybe we can, but we won't ask for it today. We just got funds. So that's going to be our next thing. I'm not going to ask them to put a rug on the floor and hanging plants from the ceiling, so it might be a good idea. It would improve the looks of it though, but it won't change the smell. Old newspaper smell, that's what it is.

But, I find it difficult to explain to people, the difference between a Special Collection and an archive in the college because I work with both.

Now, the archives of the Jewish Federation is in our library, and I am the curator of that but that is not an archive collection of the college, it's a library collection, but it's the archives of the Jewish community.<sup>3</sup> We have the archives of the Courier Express, a million clips and 100,000 photographs. How do you like that?! That is not an archives of State University college, because it has nothing to do with the history of the college. So that is a Special Collection, but it is still called an archive of the Courier Express. We have the papers...there was something else I was going to tell you...of E.H. Butler, that is an archive. He was the founder of the Buffalo Evening News. He was also a tremendous director of the college senate here at the college. So, his is an archive.

Now, the conversation piece that I was talking to Shonnie about, what's a unique thing that I've got in the library? There is no doubt about it! I stop everybody. I said, "Would you like to see something unique I have in the archives?" You don't have anything unique in here, just papers. I said, "Come here," and he said, "What is that?" It was a death mask. It was the death mask of E.H. Butler, Senior. He died in 1914. And we have that. It is kind of scary, you go around the

---

<sup>3</sup> In 2006, these archives transferred to the University at Buffalo. It has since been significantly expanded through the work of the Jewish Buffalo Archives Project.

corner and there it is this death mask is flopping, I've put it in the corner so it won't scare people, but we are getting a new cover for it and then [Laughter], we're having the Butler room upstairs, so that's the sort of thing that we get. That gives you an idea of what we keep [and] where we keep the material.

Most of my work is done in the library because as I said I'm the special collections librarian as well as the archivist. Usually, the librarian is pretty good to me. He knows how far I can go. There are just some weeks where I am constantly working on the special collections and the archives not too much. Other times I am constantly with the archives, with the collections that come in.

You said: What are the records? They are records from...I do not look for the record of SUNY, but they come in and people ask for them. The budget information with the board of policies, anything that is published by SUNY and it comes, the research material that comes, and I keep that in a special place. Then the historical documentation - the cornerstone materials, the memorabilia, the scrapbooks, the commencement programs - all of the programs that the students went through. And then of course, the president's papers and the vice president's papers, and you see they are all outlined. Number 1; that's SUNY. That's the daddy! Number 2 is historical documents and 3 is the college council and 4 is president and then under the president is the vice president (and there are three vice presidents at the present time), and then under each vice president there are departments and each department has a number. And Shonnie will tell you what fun it is when there is an organization in the university college reorganizes and the whole system is wrong, and I just pray that I am out of the picture by that time! But you try to keep it big enough, and I have everything, every record of my collection is 1-7. If you can't find anything in 1-7, you'll don't keep it! Then, after the departments you have the activities of the faculty, unions, committees, and all that jazz. Then the activities of the students: Publications of the students and [their] activities.

Now, the question may come up: What are the most important records that you have got in the archives? Well, I said this. You cannot say that there is just one most important record. You have got to divide it into two areas. There are two areas in the college and at the university that can't get along without the other one. You cannot get along without the administration and you cannot get along without the students. We both need each other, right? The students - there would be no reason for them to be here if we didn't have administration and the faculty. And the administration and faculty wouldn't be doing a thing if we didn't have students. So, we both need each other.

I divide with two areas. Now, I'm going to take the students first. What are the most important records dealing with students? Well, obviously, I suppose really the most sacred records on any campus are the student files. Now my archives are a little bit different from Shonnie's. She does not have student files, I did. I did it really out of pity and there was no room for them at the Registrar's Office and they were really up against a tree. So, I took them and we put them in ours. They are 60,000 files of students from the 1960s on. We had records of all of the students from 1871 until present time. They were in books, and if I have time I will tell you about those books it's incredible. In the beginning of the sixties when the college really blossomed, they

began to be in files. But I have two types of student files, I have the undergraduate and I have the masters. So, in order to keep them separate I keep all of the undergraduates in Cordell Hall basement. The Registrar's Office goes after them. They don't bother me at all. They just let me know so I can keep statistics, I have to justify my existence! Then, the masters people, I keep in my office because they are used all of the time. And it's very simple, and I have students working for me, and an assistant, so they get it and it isn't too much. So, they student files are most important.

The [newspaper] *The Record* is of a vital importance. That is an *absolute* social history. The journalism students come over, and they just giggle themselves silly, at how different they [the articles] were and I said, "They are going to giggle at yours twenty years from now!" I have indexed. I am a great indexer. I have indexed the record from 1950, it existed in 1910 until the present, but I started at 1950 and I've indexed everything, and a kid will come in and will say, I want to look at *The Record*, and I say, what about it? Well I want to look up something, and I say, what do you want to look up? "Well, I want to know the history of campus radio... I think it started in about the 1960s, later 1960s. And I said, "Alright just go." So, while he was getting the bound volumes off the shelf, I go in my index and look under Campus or WCEB or whatever it is. And I said, "Here are all of the cards for the record, the record will show it." That is part of the archives. Index as much as you can.

Then *The Elms*. They are very important. And then the theses of course are the students. *The Record* and *The Elms* are the most used records in the archives. The student files, *The Record* you know the newspaper, *The Elms*, and then the student publications. They really are the most used.

Now on the other side, the administration and the faculty, the most important record that I have found is the college catalogue. It gives everything. It gives the philosophy. It gives the historical development of the curriculum. It gives a list of the faculty and where they got their degree and what year and it give a synopsis of the courses. So, it is a most valuable record and I have three copies, complete copies of that. No, I do not have them all together. I've got them in three separate places because you know if a bomb, or a fire, or explosion took place we will hopefully have one record of it somewhere else.

The next thing that is important are the annual reports. That's very important. Say, what would you do if, you try to figure out, I'm sure Shonnie knows this too, what records am I going to keep that a historian will love to kiss me a few years from now? [Laughter] What record am I going to keep that will help somebody find some information? That's the thing, you have to project yourself in the future and say, "What are the important records?" Not all records are important. Alright, the staff bulletin, that comes out once a week that tells you things that are going on and that gives you record and course of the department annual reports are very important. But, you see when you're saying, what is the unique? Everything is unique and everything is important, but there's a priority there and if you had to put everything down to one room, tiny room, those are the things that I would choose, you know and decide because you can write a history based off of just that material, just on the administration side.



Let me look at my notes and see what I have left out so far. I also told you about the unique items that, we all think everything is unique, but there are some things that are more unique than others. Our photograph collection, our huge photographs are marvelous. When they were moving out of Rockwell Hall lately, Dr [Edna] Linderman found a huge frame, filthy because it's been there since 1946, written in beautiful script of all the veterans that had fought in World War II.<sup>4</sup> It took the student I think about four days to clean the frame, golden frame, huge, even I couldn't pick it up, it took three of us to lift the thing. Then, the paper that it was on, we had to clean it, and it was just about an inch of dirt. Well, we took and erased it, rubber gum, we just rubbed it and the dirt came off. It's beautiful and I don't know where I am going to put it. I might not put it my bedroom I don't think I will do that. But it's huge and that's part of the archives.

I think if I had to say, what is the most unique thing that I have in the archives it is the oral history project. I have eighty tapes of interviews of the administration and professors. I was very happy to have Dr. Peterson's and Lucille was planning to be here tonight, and I wanted to mention that. Her husband did a magnificent job. He gave two hours,<sup>5</sup> and Dr. Czurler<sup>6</sup> gave eight hours. He is the one who really got me started on it. But I have eighty hours of tapes. Now, I'm not going to spend any time talking about it but that is a lot of work that hasn't been transcribed yet. It is there. But, when it is transcribed it is going to be an incredible history of the professors. Dr. Sengbusch two hours of his.<sup>7</sup> I have many. I have tried to get them. There are a lot, a lot. But I don't have and I think, "Okay it's your loss. If you don't want your voice to go down in history." This is Dr. Lou Callan.<sup>8</sup> It's not only wonderful for the college, but it's also wonderful for the family. I think of all of the things that I have gathered at the college, if I had to say what am I most proud, it is the oral histories and I'm not finished. I'm still there. Although I signed up Swan song would probably be *The Courier Express* because when I fix that I think I will be ready. I just have a little while more.

Who uses the archives? That's a good question. Everybody. If you need things in the archives, I mean the administration uses it a lot and I never know what will be on the other side of that folder when I pick it up. Right now I'm answering more questions from the Courier Express archives, but not the college archives. But every once in a while I get a good question and I am just adamant until I find it. I must say this, I have a terrible...one of my faults is I am too neat. I am absolutely the world's worst. I'm just terrible. And when the student comes in, first of all there are two questions I ask them: Do you mind working for a nun? (They might have bad memories. They might be scared). Are you willing to be neat? And of course, in the archives acid free...! It will be written on my tombstone, "Sister Martin Acid Free Jones" [Laughter] She is

---

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Lindeman: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/39/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/39/)

<sup>5</sup> Dr: Peterson: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/44/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/44/)

<sup>6</sup> See oral histories for Dr. Czurler: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/15/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/15/);

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/13/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/13/)

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/12/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/12/);

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/11/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/11/)

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/10/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/10/) ;

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/9/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/9/);

[http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/8/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/8/);

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Sengbusch: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/50/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/50/)

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Callan: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/1/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/1/)

going to be buried downstairs in that new room you got down there, and she's going to come out every night and pick up all of the paper [Laughter].

Dr. Adler, wonderful, the distinguished professor, you know retired professor, he would be pounding away at his typewriter, not missing a cite,<sup>9</sup> and then of course, oh here, I said well you know...they say if Sister Martin Joseph finds a paperclip out of order, she can't work! [Laughter] She has just got to put things in order. So, the other day, Jim Wexler, whose father worked at UB, he works for me and I said, "Alright now, Jim I will leave you up here. So, what are the two things you are going to do?" "Acid-free and neat" and I said, "No, not acid-free, it was something else," He remembered that. Acid-free and be neat. But it is a problem if you are too neat, that will drive people crazy. It's a good thing I am working by myself because I probably would drive people crazy. But it is important and at an archives meeting lately earlier, somebody did say, if you don't have a neat archives you're not be able to find as much. But I have been in archives, where it's been a big mess and the person goes, oh it's right in here! [Laughter]. I would go bananas. I just say it, if you ever come into the archives and you find things messy and they are just taking cross next door, because that wouldn't be myself.

Just one more thing, before I give Shonnie...you have an archive you know, you have an archive, all of you. Where are they? I don't know about you all, maybe, but when I was a little girl, when mommy and daddy had something important, we got it out of a tin foil box - a black tin box - it had a gold thing around it and in that box there were marriage certificates, death certificates and birth certificates, whatever, important papers. I visited a man on Niagara Street and he got out his box, and I thought, hey I haven't seen that in years. And he showed me the deed of the house, and it was going back all the way to Red Jacket, and he gave it to a man named Jones, Red Jacket gave it to a man by the name of Jones, he said, that's my name that's how I remember it. And part of that house is still there, the stone part of the house. So, he had his treasures in the tin box, that's an archive.

Your photograph books are archives, the history of your family, your letters, all the letters in drawers: Those are archives. Diaries are archives, memorabilia, gifts that you have received - those are archives. What condition are they in? I'm sure they aren't in acid-free covers, but that's the idea. Treasure your archives and you know what, I was talking about this in the staff room today, and somebody else said, so they're not going to be any letters, people don't write letters, oh but they phone, they had the video, the videotape and the movies. That is archives. But the danger is, that they aren't going to have a machine ready to run that.

Now, one last thing, what is the future of the archives? I am putting it on a computer. We had four huge books of the records of the membership of the college from 1871-1914, no order whatsoever, they just put them in as the came and I have had three requests in just this last year, my grandmother and my aunt went to school here and I would like to see their records. So, my assistant put that onto a computer and then we have, just like that, an alphabetical list of every student from every year, from 1871-1914. It's there and now we can throw away the books, but we are not going to do that anyway. So, I was able to tell this woman, yes, I found her on page

---

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Selig Adler: [http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc\\_oral\\_history/25/](http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bsc_oral_history/25/)

twenty-four, book four, you can come and you can see. And she was excited. So, that's what the computer can do putting the index of the record on the computer, putting my catalogue on the computer so that students can come in...we have the annual report of 1942, or you can put down, yes we do or don't. That's the future. Believe me, you're looking at [unintelligible words] computer, but it is a great thing. Now, if you have any questions we will wait after Shonnie, thank you.