

Saving and Preserving Arts and Cultural Environments
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April 19, 1989

Ms. Jane Gilmor
Chair, Art Department
Mount Mercy College
1330 Elmhurst Drive N. E.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Dear Ms. Gilmor:

It's been awhile since SPACES has corresponded with you, but we're still alive and kicking, and forging on with--hastening, even--our efforts to identify and document folk art environments. How is your work with the grotto on campus progressing?


We're hastening our efforts because we're facing a particularly unfortunate problem: Many of the visionaries responsible for folk art environments are getting older, and some have recently died. This makes our job a lot harder, as the creators are the primary sources of information and documentation about the environments. Also, as a result of their advanced ages and deaths, the sites are disappearing or are being destroyed.

Thus, it's crucial that we intensify our efforts to identify and document environments across the nation. Do you know of any sites, either in Iowa or across the country? Would you be willing to go to a site and document it? We would supply a documentation form; basically, documentation involves writing a description (including the site's current condition and an interview with the owner, if possible) and taking photographs. The information will be put in the SPACES archives listing you as the researcher, with a record of any restrictions that you wish to put on the use of the material. Any calls for your photographs will be referred to you.

All of this is a lot to ask, but any help you could give us would sincerely be appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you, and learning how your work is going.

Sincerely,

Seymour Rosen
Director


Terri Hartman
Researcher