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Article Covering the Fire that destroyed the Art Annex

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Fire Destroys Art Annex

Fire of unknown origin destroyed the art annex at Fort Hays State College March 5 and forced more than 400 students to work and study in improvised quarters.

The annex housed facilities for 15 art classes in sculpture, painting, drawing and creative photography, and included some faculty office space and a storage area for several art pieces belonging to faculty and student artists. Equipment used for the classes was also destroyed.

The annex, located on the northwest corner of the campus along Highway 40, had been used by the art department since 1963.

The frame and stucco building was built in 1936 as a National Youth Administration work project and was used as a maintenance shop until the art department began using the structure to meet overflow enrollment in art classes.

President M. C. Cunningham has reported an estimated \$51,075 in building and equipment losses caused by the fire. He emphasized that this is the actual equipment and building loss and not the replacement costs, which would be considerably higher.

He also said that the estimate does not include any loss of materials and supplies of faculty members and students.

Dr. Joel Moss, head of the art department, said that the estimated loss of student and faculty materials and supplies is more than \$14,000.

This figure includes losses of more than 50 paintings, sculpture and other

art examples from personal faculty collections which were used by the art faculty members as teaching aids.

Other creative losses included a permanent graduate student collection, graduate thesis work, examples by more than 400 students who worked and studied in the annex and art pieces for use in exhibitions.

Some of the equipment and material losses included easels, drawing stands, tables, chemicals, paints, canvas, modeling wax, visual aids, books, projectors, small tools, kilns and a variety of other art objects and materials.

Also lost were materials prepared for two important departmental research projects. One of these was called the "Lucas Film Project," in which faculty members were preparing educational and historical films and commentary on the "Garden of Eden" in Lucas. The garden, according to Dr. Moss, is "the only example of primitive art of its kind in existence."

The other project was a research program in which art faculty members were developing new techniques of teaching art.

Four apartments at Lewis Field are being used as temporary classrooms. Art exhibits for the rest of the spring have been canceled and classes will be held in the lounge-gallery at Davis Hall.

Offers of help have been received from local persons and organizations as well as from colleges and individuals in Hastings, Neb., Kansas City, El Dorado, Garden City and elsewhere.

