



Marilyn Hughey Phillis - *Music and Fine Arts*

Marilyn Hughey Phillis is unique among the 80 people enshrined in the Wheeling Hall of Fame.

Many spent their early years in Wheeling and then moved on to achieve national fame. Most, both Wheeling natives and imports to the city, spent their young adulthoods, middle years and senior years in Wheeling achieving their personal form of greatness.

Phillis already had raised a family and completed at least one career before moving to Wheeling in 1984 at an age when some retirement organizations would have granted her membership.

Considered one of the most important watercolor artists in the country, Phillis is an elected member of several state and national art organizations, including the prestigious American Watercolor Society and the National Watercolor Society. She served on the AWS Board of Directors from 1991 to 1993 and has served as the AWS newsletter editor from 1992 to the present.

She worked four years on what would become her best-selling book, "Watermedia Techniques for Releasing the Creative Spirit," published in 1992.

A resident of Stamm Circle since moving to Wheeling in 1984 when her late husband, Richard Phillis, accepted a position as trust officer at WesBanco, she is well-known and in great demand nationally as a teacher, exhibit juror and seminar and workshop leader. Although her career takes her around the country, her teaching has benefited students at Oglebay Institute and Wheeling Jesuit University.

Art has been part of her life since her childhood, but her college training was in science and she was initially employed as an analytical chemist. However, painting continued to intrigue her and soon became her principal avocation. Interestingly, her background in science is fundamental to her work. Creativity is another core value in her process and one that she tries to instill in her students. She has presented a number of workshops, articles and lectures on the subject. Another area of interest is the connection between art and healing.

As a young woman, Phillis earned her bachelor of science degree in bacteriology and chemistry from The Ohio State University after spending her first year of college at Kent State University in her hometown of Kent, Ohio. She had private art lessons throughout grade school and high school and

every elective hour in college was taken in art. When she and her husband moved to Toledo, she went back to school at the Toledo Museum of Art School of Design. She also worked 14 years as curator of the Little Gallery at Greene Street United Methodist Church in Piqua, Ohio.

Phillis was national vice president of the Society of Layerists in Multi-Media from 1990 to 1993 and is a past president of both the Ohio Watercolor Society and Southern Watercolor Society. While serving as president of the Ohio Watercolor Society from 1990 to 1996, she was founder and organizer of national biennial creativity seminars, which continue as a highlight of her teaching career and are routinely attended by over 200 people from 25 states, Canada and Mexico.

She was designated as Master Artist, Mixed Media, by American Artist Magazine in 1996, in its special publication, "Learning from Today's Art Masters." She has won numerous art awards and her work is in museum, corporate and private collections nationally and worldwide. She also is in the Class of 2000 for the Kent City Schools Hall of Fame in her hometown.

Phillis was born in 1927 at Kent. Her family includes a daughter in Chicago, two sons in New England, eight grandchildren and a brother who lives in South Carolina.

In Wheeling, Phillis is a member of Vance Memorial Presbyterian Church, Leaf Twig at Ohio Valley Medical Center and the Artworks in Old-Town cooperative. An avid reader, she tries to get a set amount of walking for exercise done each day.

Phillis works a minimum of eight hours a day, often seven days a week, on her art doing most of her painting - and the paperwork involved in her career - in her studio in her Wheeling home. From there, Marilyn Hughey Phillis has had an extraordinary influence nationally in the field of visual arts, not only as a renowned watercolor artist, but also as a gifted teacher and noted author.