

Arts & Culture Wall of Fame 2007

HILDA CORKUM

Hilda was born in Nova Scotia and moved to Boston, Massachusetts where she graduated from the Vesper George School of Art & Design. After completing her schooling, she accepted a position in New York City with a large American photograph company.

After leaving New York City, Hilda returned to her native province and taught for four years at the Nova Scotia College of Art, teaching adults and children alike. In 1967, along with her husband and three children, Hilda moved to the City of Niagara Falls, where she continues to reside.

Over the past 40 years, Hilda has been an active member of the Niagara District Art Association, holding numerous executive positions within the organization. She has spent a tremendous amount of time promoting art and culture in the City of Niagara Falls.

Hilda is a very enthusiastic painter and has traveled the world finding inspiration for her art. She has participated in numerous art exhibitions throughout Canada, the United States and Europe and her paintings have won many awards and honorable mentions.

In 1996, Hilda was recognized for her volunteerism and arts advocacy by being awarded the Stamford Collegiate Alumni Association Award – in Memory of Barbara Frum. This award is presented to an individual or organization that has enhanced the quality of life in the City of Niagara Falls, by virtue of their outstanding contribution to fostering and developing the arts and cultural opportunities within the City.

LUCILLE HILSTON

Lucille Hilston was a long time, dedicated citizen of Niagara Falls, and expressed her love of both the Falls and this City through her music.

A self-taught composer, Lucille Hilston was under-recognized as a notable Canadian composer. Her most familiar arrangements are “Boost Niagara” - the City of Niagara Falls’ official song, “Our Niagara Honeymoon” and “Onghiara” - a full orchestral poem of romance describing the Niagara River. In addition, her song “Happy Birthday, Canada” has been played by various ensembles during patriotic celebrations.

For over thirty seven years, Lucille’s hymns, ballads and marches brought her international recognition. In 1980, during the United Nations International Year of the Disabled Person (I.Y.D.P.), Lucille’s song “Hand In Hand” was recognized as the official song of Operation Horseshoe, and was used in the United Nations’ I.Y.D.P. Secretariat promotions.

Later, in 1988, the Olympic Torch Committee recognized Lucille for her outstanding dedication to Niagara Falls and her unselfish contributions to this community by presenting her with a Certificate of Merit from the Government of Canada.

Lucille Hilston was an active member of the City of Niagara Falls, founding many clubs and organizations for the young and old alike. However she will be remembered mostly for her love of this city, which she genuinely expressed through her music.

STEPHAN MOCCIO

Stephan's musical life began with piano lessons at the age of four. After an award-winning career through adolescence, he went on to complete an honours degree in composition and piano performance at the University of Western Ontario. Subsequent to his degree, he was granted a scholarship to the famed Berklee College of Music in Boston, but instead chose to focus on developing his professional career and signed a publishing contract with Sony/ATV Music at the age of twenty two. Throughout his eight year tenure at Sony/ATV, he matured as a songwriter, producer, arranger and performer, leaving in 2003 to form his own publishing company, Sing Little Penquin Inc.

Stephan has composed numerous songs for several award-winning Canadian and International artists including: Celine Dion, Sarah Brightman, Josh Groban, Randy Bachman, Olivia Newton-John, and too many others to mention. In addition, he can often be heard on most of the recordings he has penned. Stephan is a talented orchestral arranger, and has worked on several occasions with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra as both conductor and composer.

Stephan's gift both as a performer and an entertainer has taken him across Canada and the United States several times, touring with many notable artists from the Sony Music roster.

In 2006, Stephan released his debut album of solo piano music, entitled "Exposure" on Bijou Records/Universal Music. In his performances to support the CD, Stephan infuses his moving renditions of album tracks with stories that draw from the experiences of his relatively short but expansive career, shattering audience preconceptions about piano players, to reveal a charming, accessible and grounded performer whose youthful exuberance captivates even the most fickle fans.

WILMA L. MORRISON

For many years this Niagara Falls citizen of black ancestry has given extensively of her time, energy and talents to create awareness and appreciation of the contributions made by the many black pioneers and residents of Niagara's history.

In particular, Wilma was instrumental in establishing a local collection of historical documents and memorabilia in the Norval F. Johnson Memorial Library (N.F.J. Library), located next to the British Methodist Episcopal Church (circa 1836), on Peer Street. In addition, she worked diligently to organize the Freedom Trail Tours of the Niagara Region, regularly assuming the role of hostess to give tours of the BME church and the NFJ Library.

When the B.M.E. Church was in desperate need of repairs, Wilma, along with several other church members, was influential in raising funds for its restoration.

Wilma continues to be an active member of many local heritage, culture and community affairs organizations. She has worked tirelessly with the Niagara Catholic & District School Boards to help educate young people in our local black history. In addition, her extensive knowledge has been invaluable in the development of the exhibits and programming for the Niagara Falls Board of Museums.

Wilma L. Morrison has been recognized extensively on both sides of the border, as well as provincially, for her volunteerism, and her diligence in preserving the black heritage in the Niagara Region.

MYRON “MYNIE” SUTTON

Myron “Mynie” Sutton was born October 9, 1903 and lived on Peer Street in Niagara Falls. He began studying the piano as a young child and later in his career established one of the first black jazz bands in Ontario, known as the “Canadian Ambassadors”.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Myron was an instrumental part of the Montreal jazz scene and a member of the Canadian Clef Club, a select musicians’ organization that was established primarily for black jazz artists.

A dynamic musician, Myron could play a variety of instruments. For this reason, he had a very successful career and was frequently asked to join many well known bands, including a quartet called The Casuals. He declined various offers to travel to New York City, choosing to stay close to the Niagara border. Myron wrote numerous arrangements and some original pieces for the Canadian Ambassadors and several of his songs have been registered for copyright in the United States.

Myron served more than 30 years on the executive board of the Region Musicians’ Association, and founded the Canadian Brotherhood Club of Niagara Falls in 1945, where he acted as president until his death in 1982.

In May 1977, the Niagara Promotions Association recognized Myron’s outstanding community service and honoured his work as a musician. Myron continued performing until June 17, 1982, two weeks before his death.

SHERMAN ZAVITZ

Sherman Zavitz was born in Welland, but has lived in Niagara Falls for over forty seven years. After graduating from teachers’ college, he taught elementary school in the City for thirty-five years.

Sherman, has always been interested in Canadian history, in particular the history of Niagara Falls and area, and is the official Historian for both the City of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Parks Commission. He has been actively involved in many heritage organizations for the past thirty years, holding various positions including: past president of the Lundy’s Lane Historical Society and past chair of the city of Niagara Falls Board of Museums. In addition, Sherman has served on both LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Authority Committee) and on the Board for the Canadian Canal Society.

Being a local heritage expert, Sherman has written several illustrated books about Niagara Falls, as well as contributing two weekly history columns for the Niagara Falls Review, and presenting a series of historical vignettes on the radio station CJRN. Sherman is an accomplished and popular local history tour guide and is frequently in demand as a speaker on the history of this great City.

Sherman’s contributions to the City of Niagara Falls have been recognized both provincially and city-wide, with volunteer service awards for his commitment to furthering our knowledge and appreciation of both this city and our region’s fascinating history.