

A Notable Woman - Edna Carlsten



A "grand" teacher who made art classes "fun," according to her former students, was honored by the university in 1969 when her name was chosen to be affixed to the gallery in the Fine Arts Center.

Edna Carlsten, a native of Paxton, Ill., came to Stevens Point Normal School in 1923 to serve for two semesters and ended up staying on campus until her retirement in 1961. As Stevens Point's only art professor for more than 30 years, her duties

included preparing future art teachers and conducting classes in the old Campus Laboratory School.

She had studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago, taught in rural schools of Illinois and supervised art for the schools of East Chicago, Ind., before establishing her home in Wisconsin.

Carlsten and her faculty colleague Peter J. Michelsen collaborated every holiday season on gala music productions. The artist worked diligently to create festive sets for the musician who directed the performances.

Other high points of Carlsten's career occurred in 1932 when she and about 100 teachers from throughout the country embarked upon an "art pilgrimage" to six European countries and in 1937 when one of her paintings, "Gladiolas," was selected for inclusion in the 18th annual Swedish-American Art Exhibition in Chicago.

She was a longtime Girl Scout volunteer who led numerous craft workshops, a charter member of the local chapter of the Business and Professional Women's Club, and one of the founders of the Wisconsin Art Education Association.

She died in 1977 at her home in Stevens Point.