

IMAGES

... then and now

From The Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

Remembering Sanford Brooks

Former resident Sanford Mitchell Brooks was noted for many accomplishments in the business world, civic commitment, and artistic talent. Notwithstanding his noteworthy achievements, he was a humble man with a perpetual smile, whose personal credo was *Do the Kind Thing*.

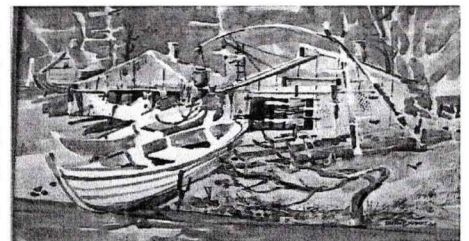
While growing up in Wyoming, OH, he acquired his lifelong nickname: Samp. He graduated from Yale (studying architecture), then returned to Cincinnati in 1936 to work at the family business: Tool Steel Gear and Pinion Company in Elmwood. The company produced custom made gears for heavy industry, using a unique method of hardening steel. Their durable strong gears were used locally on some of Cincinnati's inclines and on San Francisco cable cars. Sanford rose to become President and Chairman of the Board.

The Brooks family had summered in Kennebunk Beach, Maine for decades. Sanford had always admired the watercolor landscapes of Eliot O'Hara, who had a gallery nearby. As a young adult, Samp began watercolor lessons with Edgar Whitney, who escorted and taught groups of aspiring watercolorists as they painted Maine scenes. He once stated, "I fell in love with the luminosity and effects I could achieve with watercolor." His gift of understanding color values and their interactions resulted in watercolors of force, energy, and emotion.



Samp and Ginny Brooks took painting expeditions to far away places and also honed their skills at home. His favorite subjects were boatyards, outdoor markets, and any Maine related topic. Together they took their brushes and paints on vacations around the world. Over time their styles evolved, with both husband and wife beginning as realists and transitioning into a slightly abstract style – also described as imaginative. So the signature swordfish that appeared realistically in Sanford's Maine landscapes got transported to locations oceans away. Both Brookses were selected as members of the prestigious American Watercolor Society, entitling them to put the letters AWS after their names. To earn this, each exhibited at least three times in juried AWS Shows in New York City.

Locally Brooks exhibited at Closson's (downtown and Kenwood), the Harriet Crane Gallery, the Cincinnati Art Academy, and the Art Club in Mt. Adams. He also stored hundreds of watercolors at home. He taught, offering evening instruction at Norwood and Wyoming High Schools and gave classes at Wilmington College, Cincinnati Art Academy, and the Men's Art Club. Edgar Whitney asked Sanford to demonstrate certain techniques to his traveling student groups, and both Sanford and Ginny were featured in *Learn Watercolor the Edgar Whitney Way*. A strong supporter of the community, Brooks volunteered his expertise for many local and national organizations; and in 1991, he received the Great Living Cincinnati Award from the Chamber of Commerce, recognizing his multiple accomplishments.



In addition, Brooks was an outdoorsman, animal lover, and athlete. As a youth, he learned to sail in Maine and loved being on the water ever after. A serious Bengals fan and a low handicap golfer, he made golf the subject of many of his watercolors as well. Nestled in the woods, the Brooks' home reflects their love of art, Americana, and nature. Purchasing an historic barn and stable in New York State, they brought them to Indian Hill, where, with an architect's help, they built what Sanford envisioned – an innovative interpretation of a barn, with a stylized octagonal silo for their joint painting studio. A Renaissance man, Sanford Brooks shared his many talents. Intelligent, artistic, athletic, loyal, and community minded, he truly was, as Ginny describes him, "a wonderful, wonderful man."

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