

Spradley honored as Citizen of the Year



Citizen of the Year

Pell City artist Wayne Spradley was honored last week as Citizen of the Year at the annual banquet held at the Pell City Civic Center. Spradley, who was nominated by the Lions Club, was one of 15 nominees for the award.

Watercolor Society, and his awards and honors are innumerable.

Spradley was commissioned to paint the Alabama State Duck Stamp for 1980-81, which was honored by the Alabama House of Representatives. At the Third Annual Wildlife Federation, his pain-

ting, "Morning Doves," was chosen as print of the year.

This year marks the 14th year he has been invited to exhibit his works in the prestigious Waterfowl Festival in Easton, Md.

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Spradley

(Continued from page 1)

He was given the Golden Shield Award by Ducks Unlimited for his painting, "Broken Arrow Mud Flats," which was print of the year for that organization.

His paintings are in private, corporate and museum collections across the country and abroad and are in the collections of former President Jimmy Carter and President George Bush.

He has brought national recognition and acclaim to Pell City by presenting wildlife paintings to the winners of the previous Talladega Richard 500 and Winston 500 each July at Pell City's Banquet of Champions.

"He has become a one-man Chamber of Commerce and has made the name of Pell City known throughout the art world," stated his nomination. "Wayne is proud of his hometown and wants everyone to know it. We are proud of Wayne and we want the whole world to know it."



City buys painting

A historic landscape view of fish traps on the Coosa River, before Logan Martin Lake was flooded, has been purchased by the City of Pell City from noted local artist Wayne Spradley. The painting portrays the well-known McLee fish camp and two of the three fish traps that were constructed on the river at that point. Spradley painted the scene from memory, telling how he once almost drowned at the same site while fishing there. From left to right are Mayor Lawrence Fields of Pell City, Pat and Wayne Spradley, holding the painting. (Photo by Ron Barthe)

Painter's work now on display at Smithsonian

By Phil Pierce
News correspondent

PELL CITY — When somebody asked artist Wayne Spradley to use his time and talent painting Easter eggs, he politely said no.

When he found out where the eggs were going, he changed his tune.

"I said, 'I'm not going to paint an egg,'" Spradley said. "Then they told me they wanted it for the Smithsonian."

Now two of Spradley's eggs, covered with intricate pictures of cotton fields and farms, have their own place in the famous museum.

Spradley, 49, is Pell City's most famous painter. His work, usually depicting wildlife, Indians or nostalgic scenes from Alabama's past, adorns walls across the country, including a spot in the collection of President Ronald Reagan.

The artist, who has more than 175 art awards to his credit, was commissioned to paint the Alabama duck stamp for 1990-91 and is commissioned every year to paint the winners of the Winston 500 and the Talladega 500.

His work is displayed in businesses, homes and civic buildings throughout Pell City, including a watercolor painting that hangs on a wall of the Iola Roberts Grammar School, depicting an old Pell City house. Spradley painted it when he was in grammar school.

He began painting when most children do in kindergarten, but it wasn't long before his teachers and family realized that young Spradley's work was unusually good.

The child's painting reflected his surroundings of cotton fields and forests teeming with wildlife. "My paintings then were about the same (subjects) I'm painting now," he said.

When he was a teenager, Spradley

said, he had three goals: to play football, join the Navy and become an artist.

With Spradley as captain, the Pell City football team lost only one game in three years, 1953-55, and he later spent four years in the Navy.

As for the art, one of his paintings sold recently for \$7,000.

That last ambition would never have been realized, Spradley said, without his wife Pat.

"We were going to an Alabama-Florida State football game, and we stopped by Eastwood Mall," said Mrs. Spradley. "They were having an art show. I looked at the paintings and said, 'Wayne, you can do better than this.'"

Spradley went to art school but was on the verge of quitting when his wife talked him into sticking with it, he said.

"Art school fine-tuned me," he said. "I think basically you're born with the talent, but you've got to educate it."

You've either got to go study someone else's work, techniques, short cuts."

Though he had sold paintings, Spradley became a professional artist in 1969. He worked at a steel mill for a while before quitting to concentrate on his art.

Spradley experimented with different styles and types of an abstract modern art, collage, expressionistic painting and sculpture, but he settled on doing what he does best, watercolor scenes.

He is probably best known for his paintings of ducks. Conservatively, he frequently uses the painting technique, and in 1985 one of his works was named the Wildcat Print of the Year.

"When you're painting a picture of any wildlife, if you don't mean other artists, I mean hunters," he said.

Spradley said he studies carefully, doing enough research to make his paintings accurate. He never, for example, paints ducks in with the wind, he said.

Among artists Spradley is famous for developing a technique he said "just happened" one day while painting.

He was doing a picture of a field, trying to make the cotton look as good as possible. An interesting idea struck him: instead of painting the cotton paper with white paint, he picked up the surface of the paper with a knife.

The technique, called "sculpture," gave the cotton a fluffy look. Spradley has used it many times since and other artists have imitated it.

Spradley said every painting is a special gift, so he doesn't keep any of his paintings himself, he said. "I've never completely liked."

"Wayne doesn't realize how his work is," said local art dealer Kilgroe, whose family business features Spradley's work in a "house" exhibition this weekend.

When he finishes a painting, he talks about it with his wife. She arrives at a price, depending on the amount of work spent on it, well they like the result.

While he's painting, though, he consults no one. "That's a thing," he said. "If you talk about that, that kills it."

Spradley said he feels the modern artists are all talk and



Wayne Spradley with an egg he painted

News Staff Photo by Hayward Parsonson

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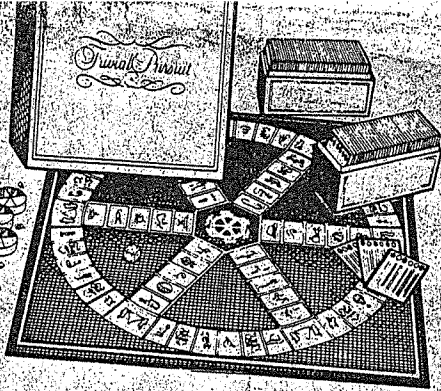
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...the modern art if it's well done, but I hate to see people pretend they're artists if they're not," he says. "A lot of people try to talk their way into being an artist. That'll only get you so far, though."

Spradley does his painting in his house in Pell City, less than a mile from where he was born. He owns the woodland in front of his house and behind it and plans to leave the trees on it.

"I used to play in these woods when I was a child," he said. "They're going to stay here. I'd say 75 percent of the places I've painted are gone now."

Spradley said he believes a person has to experience things firsthand to be able to paint convincing nostalgic pictures. The little Etowah County country store in one of his latest paintings is long gone, but the artist's mind reaches back to the memory and his hand preserves it.

"I grew up around it," Spradley said. "It's been with me all the time."

Donnelly House ruling due Monday

The Birmingham Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold a special meeting Monday morning to determine whether the Donnelly House on Highland Avenue can continue to operate under its present zoning.

Doug Blank, the Donnelly House's owner, renovated the historic home and has been using it for weddings, receptions and private parties since October. The house, at 2838 Highland Ave. is zoned R-7, a residential zoning which doesn't allow commercial use.

Blank asked the Zoning Board of Adjustment to allow the Donnelly House to operate as a non-conforming use of the property. The previous owner, Mildred Brannon, used the house for similar functions, but didn't charge for them, according to neighbors.

The task of the zoning department is to find out if it makes any difference that Blank's business is operating for profit, said Bill Snowden, a zoning staff member.

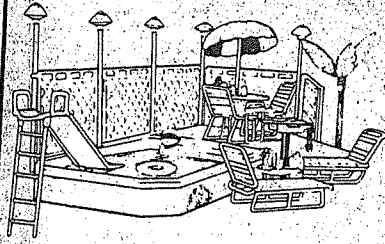
Blank, who said he had originally bought the house to turn it into apartments, said he would take the case to court if the board turned down his request. He said he has spent \$100,000 on renovations, and wants to use the house as it has been used traditionally.

The Highland Park Neighborhood Association voted last Monday night not to oppose Blank's use of the home as long as he promised never to apply for a liquor license.



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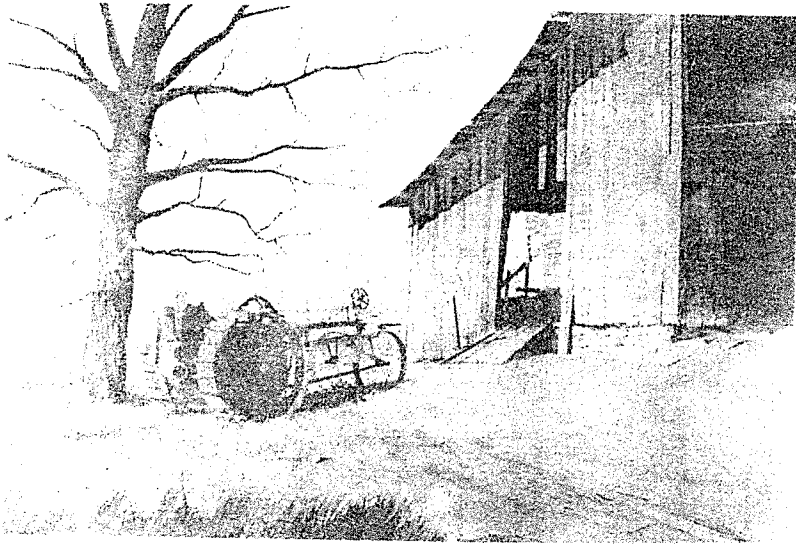
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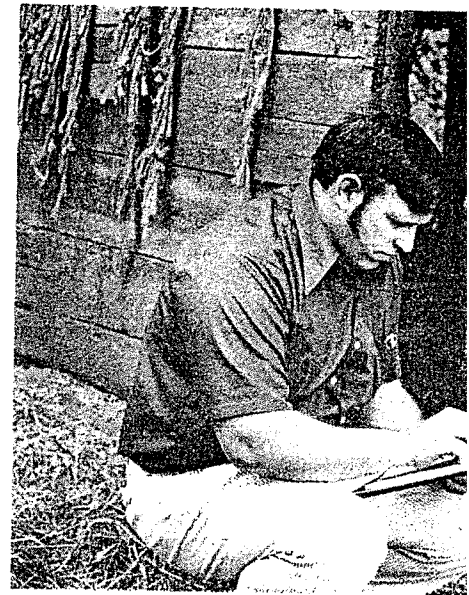


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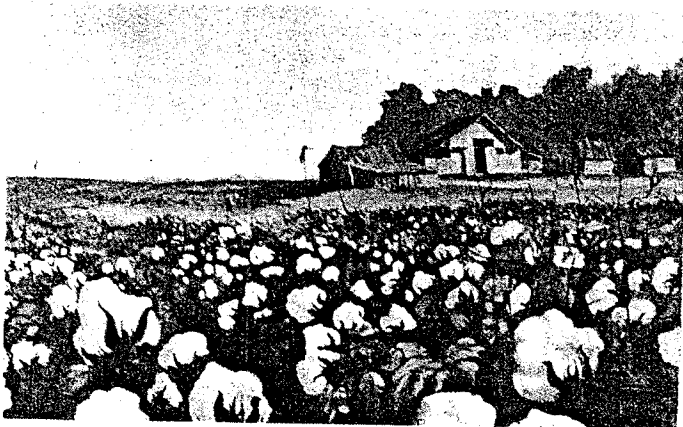
In our Store for Homes Preprint in most of today's newspapers on page 16A: The Farberware Rotisserie is not available at all-Rich's. Page 16D: the Krups 12 Cup Coffee Aroma advertised for 64.95 does not have the clock- & programming features. The Krups Coffee Maker that has the clock- & 24-hour advanced programming is available for 99.99. We regret any inconvenience to our customers.



In the private collection of Mrs. Wayne Spradley



WAYNE SPR
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In the private collection of Mrs. Karl Hofmann Jr. B'ham, Ala.

WAYNE SPRADLEY

April 16, 1973

Wayne Spradley's work has caused a stir in the Art Circles. First in the Birmingham area then very quickly all over Alabama and the Southeast. Winning every award or competition he entered. The Shows he exhibited in were complete sell out almost before they were hung. In his first show in Birmingham at Eastwood Mall all 25 paintings were sold the first day. His success and critics acclaim has probably come faster than any other artist in the Southeast. Art Collectors are finding their way to Pell City where his watercolors can only be found at Kilgroe's Antiques. Although he has been painting since he was six, began winning awards in high school. His prize-winning paintings are in a collection in Virginia Beach, Va. and at the Duran Jr. High in Pell City. He played 3 years of high school football, being captain of the team his senior year. To finance a class trip to New Orleans he sold 5 paintings to Pell City High School, still not taking art very seriously. He went on into four years of Navy. After the tour of duty he still painted, doing commissioned work only, working at his full time job at a Steel Mill in Birmingham. On September 1967 he began 3 years of study in watercolor. Being self taught and developed his own style, he wanted to know more about watercolor, having painted in oil in high school. Art became more prominent in his mind. His first exhibit (February 1970) was a sell out the first day of a three day show. Spradley was on his way. Since that time he has won over 65 Major Art Awards, Best of the Show, Purchase Awards all over the Southeast. He has exhibited in Invitational and Prestigious Shows, such as the South Central Exhibition at the Parthenon at Nashville, Tenn. and the very prestigious Realist Invitational at the Gallery of Contemporary Art at Winston-Salem, N.C. He and Jean Lake of Troy, Alabama were the only two artist from Alabama invited to this show. They exhibited with Donald McAdoo, Bob Timberlake, Jim Grey, Herb Jones, Ken Davies, Darrell Koons, Xavier Ironside, Robert Burell, Arthur Biehl, Robert Mills, Jr. Past exhibitors Robert Vickery, Andrew Wyeth, John Chumley, Donald McAdoo comments on Wayne's work: "Finest Purist Watercolorist in the Southeast. I have followed his work since I first saw it in early 1970 and he has consistency in his quality that is not found often enough in other artist". His paintings are in many private and public collections. To name a few of the most recent collectors and awards 1972. Collection of Eufaula Chamber of Commerce historic Shepard House, Eufaula Art and Cultural Center, William J. Hearin Purchase Award-Publisher of Mobile Press-Register-Mobile Art Gallery, Alabama Watercolor WAPI Purchase Award, Birmingham Trust National Bank, Spain Rehabilitation Center, Baptist Medical Center, (Montclair) Birmingham.

1972 Major Art Awards: Highlights

1972 Birmingham Festival of Arts - Birmingham Museum of Art Centennial Painting Exhibition Honoring Harriet Murray. "Morrison's Dairy Barn" winner of the Mountain Brook Music and Art Club Award - International Fair - Birmingham Civic Center - 2nd place "House near "Wattsville".

April 1972 - 7th Annual Juried Art Exhibition - The Mobile Art Gallery - "KYLmulga Grist-Mill" winner of William J. Hearin Purchase Award.

April 1972 - Birmingham Museum of Art - Birmingham Art Association 64th Annual Jury Exhibition - "On Bukaceks Place" was the only realist painting selected for exhibition.

April 1972 - May 1972 - Alabama Watercolor Society Exhibition Competition - "Old Well" one of two realist paintings selected for this exhibition.

August 1972 - 9th Annual Lake Eufaula Festival Sidewalk Art Show - Winner of the Best of the Show \$500 Purchase Award.

Oct. 1972 Annual Bluff Park Art Show - \$300 Purchase Award "Tims Corn Stalk Association.

Oct. 8, 1972 Fall Collection of Watercolor showing.

November 1972 Annual Columbus Square \$300 Purchase Award - Collection of Col.

December 1972 Winter Collection of Watercolor showing of two days.

Wayne's paintings are shown at: Kilgroe's Antiques
2212 3rd
Pell City,
Alabama
Telephone

Address inquiries concerning commissions at:
Telephone
Wayne Spradley
Box 472
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In the private collection of Mr. & Mrs. J. M. ...