



# Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission July 2009 Chronicle

## Barn Studio of Art continues to grow

The Barn Studio of Art is closing in on its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday but shows no sign of slowing down, even though its founder and director, Millville's "artist laureate" Pat Witt, recently turned 82.

In fact the 47-year-old institution, nestled in a nature-friendly environment at 814 Whitaker Ave. in Millville where birds, trees and goldfish are the artists' companions, transitioned to a New Jersey non-profit corporation in 2007. "It was time for the facility to take an important step to keep it open for many years to come," the founder said, acknowledging that even her boundless energy ultimately has its limits. She has kept the corporation mainly in the family, naming daughters Nancy Witt Mulick and

Carole Witt Mankin as Managing Directors. Kelly Alice Andrews, Mankin's daughter, is Director of Education.

There is also a volunteer Advisory Board of about 20 members, all former students.

Witt established the Studio in 1962 after a distinguished career as an artist. She studied at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and

Glassboro State College. She has had many one-woman shows and been part of group shows at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia Art Alliance, the Noyes

Museum, Brian Parent Center, and the American Painters in Paris Bicentennial in 1976. She is known as the "Wetlands Painter," specializing in opaque watercolor and oils.

She said her dream regarding The Barn was "to establish an art studio where people could study drawing and painting in a non-competitive environment. I began with three students and now, through the decades, thousands have studied at The Barn." Local

artists such as Glenn Rudderow, who specializes in nature and landscape, have commented on the non-stressful, relaxing atmosphere at the Studio, saying it contributed to their successful careers in the art world.

That effect is no accident but a carefully prescribed method. The Studio does not teach by having the student copy or trace, nor does it ask for a quantity of productions, according to the directors. The Studio brochure explains, "Each

*(Continued on next page)*



*Pat Witt, Director and founder, works with a student at the Barn Studio of Art.*

### Upcoming Events

#### Fourth of July Celebrations:

##### Bridgeton

Alden Field, beginning at noon with horseshoe tournament. Traditional games and children's activities at 7 p.m., ending with fireworks at 9 p.m.

##### Vineland

Red, White & Blue Band concert, 7 p.m., Giampietro Park; fireworks immediately following at Vineland High School

#### Cumberland Players:

"Nonsense," musical comedy July 17 through 19; Vineland Little Theatre (856-692-5626)



## Events...in Brief

**Glass Weekend**, an International symposium and exhibition of contemporary glass, will be the featured event at the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center from July 17 through 19.

Since 1985, Glass Weekend, a biennial event, has brought together the world's leading glass artists, collectors, galleries, and museum curators for a three-day weekend of exhibitions, lectures, hands-on glassmaking, artists, demonstrations and social events. (July 17 is for registrants only; see [www.wheatonarts.com](http://www.wheatonarts.com).)

Demonstrations will take place over the weekend on a rotating schedule in the Glass Studio, and internationally respected art galleries will show the most current work of 200 professional artists working in glass. For information, call 800-998-4552.



Millville's "**Summer Fest**" on July 11 will offer a varied package of attractions, including a chili cook-off and tasting, Caribbean music, a riverside food court and beer garden, Maurice River cruises, kayak and canoe regatta, and children's activities.

The chili cook-off will offer more than \$4,000 in prizes, and winners will advance to the world championship. Chili categories are red, verde, salsa, and "people's choice." Call 800-887-4957 for more information.

Funding for this newsletter has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/ Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders.



## Barn Studio prepares future artists for careers

*(Continued from previous page)*

student is accepted as an individual. Creativity and originality are encouraged. Each student progresses at his or her own pace. Concepts are introduced only when the individual is ready."

In addition, guest artists frequently visit the Studio to present lectures and demonstrations. The theory is that the student should be exposed to many

The lead instructor, Emily Luertz-ing, is a local resident who is herself visually impaired. She has a B.A. of Fine Arts and is a practicing artist. She formerly served as a home instructor for the Commission of the Blind and Visually Impaired. A prerequisite for the class is that the student be able to read enlarged print on a computer screen.



*Children take a nature walk at last year's Outdoor Art Festival at the Barn Studio of Art.*

Another special program is the week-long Maurice

different theories and approaches. The method seems to be working, given the Studio's long history. And age is no restriction. Students range from 3 to 100. The Studio is conducting its summer schedule of classes, which began June 22 and will run through Aug. 1. "Painting, Drawing, Pottery and Nature" is being offered for children 4 to 7, and "Master Drawing" for age 13 through adult. Other adult programs are "Landscape, Oil, Pastels, Watercolor & All Media" and "Landscape." The classes run once a week for six weeks.

Two special programs are also being offered. One is for the visually impaired child and teenager. Instruction will center on the Windows Paint Program, and students will learn how to access the Windows Magnifier and create and print his or her own work.

River Landscape Workshop from July 12 through 18. Bill Ternay will lead a team of five other instructors, including Pat Witt. Nancy Witt Mulick is Director of Special Programs. Participants will meet at the Barn Studio and then depart for a specific location each day for the nature-oriented inspiration of the Southern New Jersey region. An evening cruise along the Maurice River and visits to the Burcham farm along the Maurice River and the East Point lighthouse are part of the itinerary. The week will culminate in an exhibition of works created during the workshop. A final critiquing session will take place on Saturday, the last day.

The Studio held its annual Outdoor Art Festival on June 7. After 47 years it's clear this institution is firmly entrenched in the minds and hearts of the South Jersey artistic community.