

We are proud to present profiles of individuals who have been influential in promoting WDCC, Fine Craft, and the artists who produce it.

Here is one....

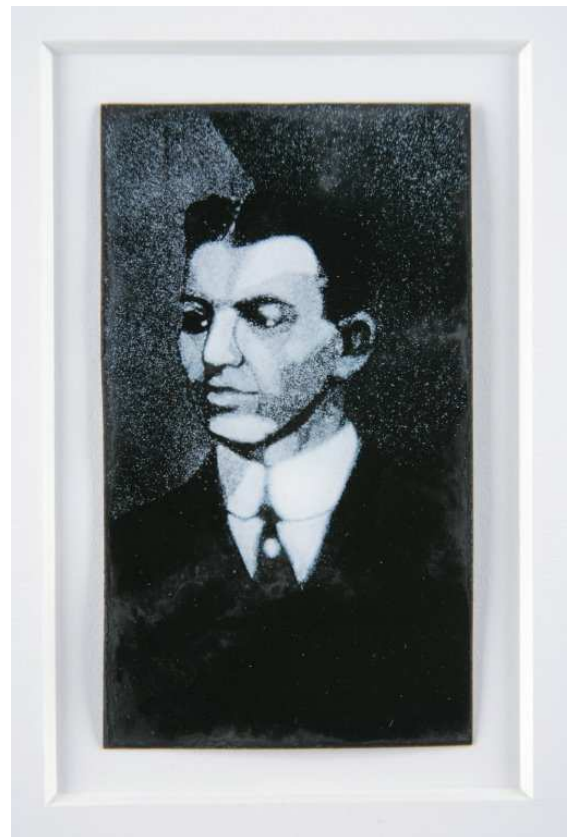
Sherry Wank is a LIFETIME MEMBER of WDCC. She has been a friend and mentor to many, an educator, and another of those whose involvement has propelled WDCC to its 100th year! We asked Sherry to share here story. Read on!

“ I am Sherry Wank and this is the story of how I came to be a jewelry teacher.

My mom, the talented watercolorist Eunice Reep, and I formed a partnership to hand-paint wearable art in the 1980s. We enjoyed our years of exhibiting one-of-a-kind coats, vest, and handbags at art fairs and in galleries in Wisconsin.

As time went on, I found myself drawn to the jewelry branch of wearable art, so after long days at my dull day job, I took classes from Melissa Levenhagen at the Milwaukee Art Museum’s War Memorial. Inspired by the possible directions that jewelry could take, I knew the next thing I wanted was to have a torch in my hand.

After careful consideration, I found what I needed at Milwaukee Area Technical College, squeaking in 2 weeks after the start of the fall semester in John Strachota’s Jewelry Repair and Fabrication program. Mary Anna Petrick was my inspiring GIA-trained Gemology instructor, and I graduated with a great jewelry education and a program certificate. Mine was the last class to graduate before the Jewelry Repair and Fabrication program closed.



Ladies’ Man by Sherry Wank

It would take pages and pages to list all the fine and inspiring teachers whose knowledge I have benefitted from over the years. Notable among my fine teachers is Terry McCarthy (a fellow WDCC member) who still teaches me to this day at her studio in Grafton.

Wisconsin Designer Crafts Council

1916 - 2016

I put my skills to use by creating and selling jewelry over the years while attending classes in many venues, including WDCC sponsored workshops, the Bead and Button Show, Great Lakes Enameling Guild and yes, continuing education classes at MATC.

MATC hired me to teach Metal Techniques, Jewelry Construction Techniques, and Jewelry Casting, which I have been doing for the past decade. I love teaching as much as making jewelry, and it is true that I learn as much from my students as I teach them. The energy, sharing of techniques, and development of design ideas that occur in the classroom make teaching a true delight. I love bringing in a freshly learned technique and watching it take off in all directions in the hands of my students. I am so inspired by them and their creativity; it just never gets old.

I've always been fascinated by the story behind each piece of someone's jewelry; the occasion that prompted the gift, the inheritance of a cherished piece of jewelry and who it came from, which travels brought the owner into contact with the jewelry and the charming man who made it, which baby it commemorates, what a great find it was at a flea market, how hard it was to make and how many technical problems had to be overcome, and on and on. For me, it's always the story. The story adds immeasurably to the jewelry's value.

All of these things have gone into making me the teacher I am—it's my calling and I'm glad I found out. My teachers and my students have enriched my life, immeasurably."