

1-1-2009

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### Recommended Citation

Grills, Pat '72 (2009) "Howerton's 'old school' style delivered lessons beyond the classroom," *Furman Magazine*: Vol. 51 : Iss. 3 , Article 17.

Available at: <https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/furman-magazine/vol51/iss3/17>

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## Howerton's 'old school' style delivered lessons beyond the classroom

I think it might have been the first time I'd ever seen a person throw on the wheel. Glen Howerton made it look so effortless.

Whether he intended the centering of a lump of clay to be a lesson about centering one's life or not, that was indeed the lesson he delivered. He was a strong, silent, private type of man, definitely "old school." He didn't say much, but when he did, he commanded your respect and attention. His face spoke volumes.

Glen Eugene Howerton, professor of art at Furman from 1967 to 1988, died October 13 at the age of 84. He was a native of Galena, Kan., who, after distinguished service in World War II, returned to the States and earned a bachelor's degree from Pittsburg State University and a master's from Fort Hays State. He later studied at the University of Iowa and the University of Georgia.

Before coming to Furman he taught art in the Kansas public schools and was a member of the faculties at Southern Illinois University and the State University of New York at Geneseo.

Howerton taught a range of courses, from ceramics and sculpture to watercolor and three-dimensional design. He also exhibited widely, both in the United States and abroad. His work was shown at the Concorso Internazionale Della Cermica in Faenza, Italy, the National Watercolor Show in Peoria, Ill., and the Ceramic National Exhibit in Syracuse, N.Y.

Tom Flowers, his longtime departmental colleague, has said, "Glen affected a large number of students in his career at Furman, many of whom work and teach all over the country." I am one of those students.

My father had died when I was a teen-ager, and Glen didn't know that I looked to him as my mentor and role model. But out of all my



professors at Furman, he was The Man. I finally wrote to him a few years back to express what he meant to me and to so many other art majors.

Glen was the first adult at Furman to tell me that I was good at anything and that, in fact, I did belong there — despite my inability to avoid academic probation. Every time I faced a major decision, he encouraged me to take risks. He was the first person to tell me that making a mistake was OK, because you learned from making mistakes.

Looking back at my undergraduate years, the things I'm most proud of as an artist — and the things that have shaped me as a teacher — came from Glen. He was an advocate of

experimentation, hard work, individuality and humility, and he encouraged us not to be afraid to be ourselves. He always looked for the good, and he always seemed to understand his students.

Glen was especially supportive when he observed me during my student teaching, and he was my friend and advisor when I worked on my master's degree. I paint watercolors today exactly the way Glen encouraged me to, and I strive to teach my students at Greenville's Riverside High School with the same gentleness and gleam in the eye that he had.

It was while pursuing my master's that I got a glimpse of Glen's life beyond Furman. He talked about his children, Dev and Curtis, with great pride, and he and Hilda, his wife, were obviously best friends. Hilda was charming, always asking when my next visit would be, and I never left their home without a bag full of vegetables from their garden.

It took me awhile to realize that Glen loved a good laugh and, in fact, that he was a bit of a rascal. He would grin and chuckle when he said something clever. And it wasn't until an article came out in *The Greenville News* a few years ago that I found out he was a war hero and had survived D-Day on Omaha Beach.

Glen Howerton was a quiet man, but to those of us that knew him, his passing was like the crash of a giant oak.

— PAT GRILLS '72

*Memorials: Glen Howerton Art Scholarship Fund, Furman University, Greenville, S.C. 29613.*