

Presented by The Reading-Berks Guild of Craftsmen

THE STANLEY G. SELTZ STUDENT AWARDS PROGRAM

in honor of Wib Lauter, 1922-1984

THE WIB LAUTER MEMORIAL AWARD FOR BEST TRADITIONAL WORK

Wib Lauter was always animated and outgoing. He loved people and people loved him.

Born and educated in East Reading, Wib served as an aircraft technician in the Army Air Corps during World War II, stationed in the Philippines and North Korea. When the war ended, Wib worked at Merritt Lumber as a kitchen designer and salesman. He soon entered into partnership making fine wood cabinets, working from a showroom in Shillington, PA.

Wib's genius lay in his ability to see an object, sketch it, make his own pattern, and build it from scratch. A punched-tin lantern spotted during a visit to the Landis Valley Farm Museum so intrigued Wib, he was determined to make one exactly like it. Unfortunately, the solder failed under the heat of the candle, and the lantern fell apart. Never discouraged, Wib rebuilt his lantern, and experimented constantly to perfect every item he made. Eventually making over 50 different types of quality lights, Wib's workmanship was so admired that he was frequently called upon to give lectures on lighting and its history.

A member of both the Reading-Berks and Pennsylvania Guilds of Craftsmen, Wib was selected, along with a group of Lancaster craftsmen, to represent the United States in the enormous Paris Trade Fair. Wib was thrilled when his group won the coveted medal for Originality.

Wib's sense of humor charmed visitors time and time again at the Reading-Berks Guild of Craftsmen shows as well as PA Guild of Craftsmen events. Wib, accompanied by his wife and helpmate Elaine, is especially remembered for many years of participation in the Kutztown Folk Festival, Kutztown, PA.



*Above: Wib discussing his craft.
Below: With his collection in 1976.*

