

RUSTENBURG LOSES A LEGEND

Rustenburg – It is with great sadness that we announce the passing away of legendary artist Bill McGill on Sunday 17 May.

McGill was born in Greytown in 1934 and arrived in Rustenburg in January 1944 when he was just 10 years old. While at school at King Edward VII High School in Johannesburg he was tutored by art teacher Tommy Mills, who instilled in him his love of watercolours.

McGill painted in watercolours for more than 65 years and taught art for forty-five years, first at Rustenburg Technical College and later at his studio. From 1978 until 1995 he was the owner of the well-known Studio 5 art gallery in Rustenburg. A portion of the world-famous Madikwe Game Reserve once belonged to the McGill family. Bill's closeness and love of nature and animals is reflected in his wildlife paintings and drawings. During the period 1990 to 1992, Bill was a procurement agent for many of the artworks for the Lost City and Entertainment Centre at the Sun City resort

and sixteen of his paintings grace the bedrooms of the resort's hotels. Several of the illustrations of the book Rustenburg Romance were done by Bill and, inspired by the stories of Herman Charles Bosman, he sketched and painted the people and old buildings of Groot Marico. As a painter, he was very dedicated to his work and spent between six to eight hours everyday, painting.

His yearly art exhibition was a highlight on many calendars and attendees will look back and remember his well-known guineafowl dish fondly. He was a generous man who often offered paintings to raise money for organisations. A man of many passions, you would be surprised to know that he was also a boxer in his younger days. He had incredible knowledge about various subjects like birds, trees and animals. He loved to cook and was a very good host with a great sense of humour. Each one of his paintings had a story behind it as he aimed to not only create art, but also to preserve a part of history. He also published various books on

the history of Rustenburg and some of its families and carried vast knowledge on the topic.

As a journalist for Platinum Weekly, it was such an honour to meet Bill McGill. While he was helping me with information on an article about Rustenburg's history, I realised that this man was about adding value to everyone he met. He took me on a tour of his studio where he was preparing for his yearly exhibition and shared his memories and the stories behind his paintings. He told me about his journey to Groot Marico and spoke passionately about the paintings it inspired. We were sitting at his kitchen table eating cookies and talking about history. It truly was a memorable day for me, and I am in awe of this great man who shared so much of his knowledge and talent with others.

He will be remembered by everyone who ever got to know him as a magnificent, smart, passionate and dedicated man and Rustenburg mourns the death of this legend.

Platinum Weekly journalist Danika Pretorius



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