



**Kentucky Craft History
& Education Association**
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MEDIA RELEASE

June 22, 2015

For Immediate Release

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Kentucky Guild Founder, Artist, and Educator Passes

Kentucky has lost a treasured artist and tireless promoter of the arts. Months short of 100 years old, Emily Wilson Wolfson died on Thursday, June 18 in Murray, Kentucky. She was the Governor's Awards in the Arts Community Arts Award recipient in 1987 and received the Rude Osolnik Award for craft work in Kentucky in 1997. Working into her mid nineties, she created paintings and weavings that have been widely exhibited and have won numerous awards.

Emily Wolfson had art degrees from Newcomb College (now Tulane University) and Louisiana State University. She studied painting under the noted Cubist, Fernand Léger, in Paris just before World War II and weaving in Helsinki, Finland in the 1950's.

She helped to found the Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, organizing the Guild's Art Train schedule, and serving as its fourth president in 1967 and '68. During the sixties, she assisted her friend Naoma Powell to establish the Quicksand Craft Center in Vest, where residents of this eastern Kentucky mountain community produced high quality textiles. In 1976 she joined the Murray Art Guild, where she did much of her watercolor painting and which she actively supported.

Born on September 2, 1915, Emily Wolfson grew up rural Henderson County. After college, she guided art projects for the WPA in Louisville. She taught art at Murray State Teachers College, from 1941 until moving to Evansville in 1944 and working at the Evansville Art Museum and Evansville College. She took a teaching position at the University of Indiana in Bloomington in 1948. Returning to Murray in 1958, she taught art, weaving, and art history until she retired in 1969.

In 1958 Emily Wilson married Alfred M. Wolfson, a widower and Professor of Biology at Murray State. She and Professor Wolfson were happily married until his death in 1990. They were stalwarts of the monthly Great Books Club and particularly enjoyed sailing on Kentucky Lake in their boat, the Si Bon. She was active in many civic causes and with her husband shared a concern for the environment.

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The Kentucky Craft History and Education Association gathers, conserves and presents the history and on-going impact of crafts in Kentucky.