



Golden Landmarks Association
Preserving Our Past, Protecting Our Future

Living Landmark Award 2005

❧ Carol Dickinson ❧

Carol Dickinson was born in Iowa on a farm her family had homesteaded along the Des Moines River ten miles north of that city. She received a BA in English and Literature from Drake University in Des Moines and an MA in Asian Art History from the University of Hawaii. Carol, her husband Don, and infant daughter Lauren left Saudi Arabia, where Carol was one of the country's first female college instructors, and arrived in Golden in 1970. Don headed the English as a Second Language Program at the School of Mines. Carol also taught ESL at the campus in the late 1970s.

In 1992, when she became executive director of the Foothills Art Center, Carol drew upon connections she made as a freelancer with local news publications, her ties to the School of Mines, and a network created during her years in art museum administration in order to create what she calls "expansive theme shows" which attracted as many as 10,000 visitors to Foothills Art Center within five weeks.

Thanks to Carol and the dedicated Foothills community, Foothills Art Center has gained national attention in the art world. Under her directorship, Foothills has received wonderful reviews in the press and earned such awards as the Best Gallery in the State Award from the Denver Post two years in a row. National and international exhibits have come to the center, but the center also exhibits hundreds of Colorado and Southwestern artists annually.

Carol served as executive director of Foothills Art Center from 1992 to 2003. During that time she designed major annual theme exhibitions centered on mountains, canyons and rivers. Guest curators from CSM and the Geology Museum loaned geologic specimens and created mini-exhibitions exploring scientific aspects of the exhibition scenes. Foothills also featured several multi-cultural exhibits during this time, including the premier of a Vietnamese Lacquer Painting exhibit that toured internationally which Carol promoted as being "Direct from Hanoi to Golden." In 1994 Carol coordinated an exhibit with the Colorado Mountain Club and the American Alpine Club, the two organizations having recently moved into the American Mountaineering Center on 10th Street. In the 2002 hit show "Taos Art Today," she invited all Golden art galleries to create displays promoting their artists.

Carol knows from personal experience what happens without planned building preservation. The farm on which Carol had been born was developed by the family to include a beautiful park and a family cemetery dating back to 1840. When Carol went back to visit the family farm not long ago, it had been sold, leveled and developed into an upscale neighborhood and eleven soccer practice fields. Only the house in which she was born, and five acres including the family cemetery was left.

During Carol's tenure, the art center raised funds to help preserve the buildings in which it is housed. She praises her predecessor, Marian Metsopoulos, as a particularly effective steward and preservationist of the center's two National Historic Registered buildings.

Carol has received numerous honors and awards during her lifetime, but she's especially proud of the Denver Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, the Jefferson Symphony Orchestra Cultural Award, the Colorado School of Mines Medal for distinguished service to the school and to the community, her ongoing listing in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who of American Women*, and becoming one of Golden's Living Landmarks.