

Sarah Craig Vaughan

FRANKLIN ARTIST
PAINTS SCENES OF
HER CHILDHOOD



BY RICK WARWICK

The day the Franklin Theatre reopened, I happened to be in the Heritage Foundation office when the telephone rang. Normally, I don't answer the office phone, but something told me this may be important. To my surprise, it was Nelson Vaughan on the other end, who identified himself as the mayor of Chatham, New Jersey. He was inquiring about the reopening of the Franklin Theatre, which he had discovered online. He stated that he thought his grandfather built the theatre. I remarked that if Frank Craig was his grandfather, then he was correct. The Franklin Theatre was completed in July 1937, and Mr. Craig died in August 1937. As the conversation continued, I asked Nelson if he knew Sallie Craig, and he enthusiastically shared that she was his mother. Sensing a God-send, I asked if he happened to have any of her paintings, and he boastfully affirmed that not only did he have some, but his attic was full of them.

In short, he agreed to bring some of his mother's paintings to Franklin on his next visit to his first cousin, Federal Judge Martha Daughtrey of Nashville. True to his word, Nelson brought a trunk full of paintings, and kindly allowed me to select some to hang in the Old Post Office. The ones I selected were part of a 1976 series entitled "Far Away and Up Close," which featured Sally's childhood memories of Franklin.

Now, you may ask, how did I know about the artist Sarah Craig Vaughan? On a visit with Dee Ewin Welch several years ago, she showed me a watercolor of Beasleytown, a 1937 wedding gift to her parents, John and Elise King Ewin, from Sarah. With this



taste of her talent, I needed to know more, so I interviewed Mary Walker and Anna Dean Cotton, who told me they had taken art lessons from "Sally" in the summer of 1931 while she was a student at Ward-Belmont School for Girls.



For those interested in her biographical information: Sarah Brandon Craig Vaughan was born February 2, 1914, the daughter of J.F. and Della Billington Craig of 119 Lewisburg Avenue. Sarah attended Franklin's public schools, Ward-Belmont in Nashville, William and Mary College in Virginia and The Art Students League of New York, where she studied under John Sloan and Morris Kantor. She married a Virginia banker, had two sons, and spent her married life in Chatham, N.J. She died in 1991 having lived a well-rounded, culturally rich life.

For those wanting to see firsthand the paintings of Sarah Craig Vaughan, you are invited to visit them at 112 Bridge Street, the office of The Heritage Foundation of Williamson County, during regular business hours.



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