

Talented ancestor

Art teacher has a brush with fame

As a child, Muriel Linton used to watch her artist brother paint and envy his ease and talent. "If I could paint like that," she recalled telling him, "I'd do it all the time."

It took a college aptitude test to point out that she, too, had the fine artistic talent and consequently she's been putting it to good use for the past 33 years, 10 years of which have been as an instructor.

A Livonia resident, she teaches three classes in her home, two in Farmington Hills, one in Dearborn and one in De- troit.

One of the highlights of her career as an artist was the formation of the Spectrum Art Club and an annual student exhibi-

bition that is part of the club's frame-work.

The exhibit began on a modest scale 10 years ago, she said, and has slowly grown each year. This year's show is set for Saturday in Faith Covenant Church, Fourteen and Drake roads in Farmington Hills. More than 80 of her students will have works on display.

RECENTLY, Muriel Linton's feature in the article in Pallete Talk magazine in the "Teacher Feature" section.

But while she and her brother turned out to be artists, Linton said she has wondered for years if anyone else in the family ever had been one.

By coincidence, she learned recently that an English cousin of her grandmother's was an artist of some renown in the early 1800s. The discovery came

in a family diary passed onto Linton at her mother's death containing passages wherein the cousin wrote of sketching various scenes and personalities while traveling.

"One was a well-known sheik done while she was in Alexandria, Egypt," said Minton. "So I know then she wasn't just an ordinary artist. She had to be someone special to be able to get to important people like that. I also began to wonder what happened to all these sketches."

After several inquiries in the cousin's hometown of Cardiff, Wales, Minton learned that the cousin, Edith Tilley, was indeed an artist and that one of her paintings, a watercolor, was hanging in the National Gallery of Wales.

The picture was of an interior of a

church and holds historic value in that the particular part of the church she painted was destroyed by bombs during the war," Linton said.

IT'S ALSO ironical, Linton said, because in the beginning she was the one making all the inquiries. Now it's the gallery staff asking her for information and requesting a copy of the diary because they didn't have any information on file about the artist.

"All they know is that they acquired the painting in the 1800s but they didn't know too much about the artist," Minton said. She also hopes that more information — and possibly more of her paintings — will surface now that the cousin's identity has been established.

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