

WOMEN FROM OUR PAST

Kansas native Clara Anna Hatton's greatest legacy can be found right here in Fort Collins – in the many opportunities available to art majors at Colorado State University.

Although she was born in Kansas and returned there after her retirement, Hatton's remarkable 40-year career was spent in Colorado. Records and local histories list her vast accomplishments as painter, etcher, bookbinder, weaver, calligrapher, ceramist, potter and teacher, but her most important activity may have been to advocate for the development of CSU's Art Department.

Hatton studied at colleges in Kansas and Chicago, as well as the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield, Mich., where she earned her master's degree. Pursuit of her

craft took her to London, where she studied at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and the Royal College of Art.

Hatton hired on as the only art teacher at Colorado State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in 1936. Led by her intent sense of purpose, the Art Department eventually organized as a separate entity and by 1957, a major in art became possible. Currently known as the School of the Arts, it is a vibrant resource for students and the community alike.

Former colleague Emeritus Professor Jack Curfman, who taught design at CSU, remembers Hatton as being an absolutely determined and straightforward person.

"I always thought of her as a renaissance woman, a wonderful



since well-behaved women rarely make history...

person who just kept pushing," he said.

Hatton pushed, figuratively and literally, to expand her department.

Whenever an area would open up, be it an old storage room or basement, near or far, Hatton would attempt to snag it for her students.

Curfman feels fortunate to have been there when so much growth was taking place.

"If not for people like Clara [Hatton and others] who kept pushing and pushing...well, they got us where we are," he said

Hatton's namesake gallery offers a huge variety of art – just as Clara would have! For more information, call the gallery at 491-1989 or 491-7634 or visit its Web site: www.CSUSchooloftheArts.com. ❖

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