



Mary Cecilia Young

April 14, 1928 - October 3, 2024

Mary was born April 14, 1928 in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She was the daughter of Herman and Lillie (Willis) Bresser and the granddaughter of the late Henry and Cecilia Bresser, Sr. of Muskogee, Oklahoma and John and Nancy Willis of Kiowa, Oklahoma.

Mary attended Sacred Heart Elementary School, Muskogee Central High School, and Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana where she majored in art.

In 1950, Mary married Revere A. Young and shared his nearly 40 years of military service. The couple were blessed with two children, Lillian Diane Young who was born while they were based in Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii and Robert Mark Young, who was born while they were based at Travis AFB, California.

In 1955, Mary, Revere and children moved back to Muskogee, Oklahoma. Mary's mother, Lillie, was a full-blood Mississippi Choctaw and this spurred Mary's great interest in traditional Native American art. Under the guidance of Dr. Richard West Sr. of Bacone College, Mary's talents flourished and grew. During the ensuing years, Mary's work won many awards and was shown in galleries across the United States, including but not limited to, Anadarko, OK., Scottsdale, AZ., Sheridan, WY., Santa Fe, NM., Washington, DC., and

Gilcrease and Philbrook Museums in Tulsa, OK.

Mary is listed in "American Indian Painters" compiled by Jeanne O. Snodgrass, "The Biographical Directory of Native American Painters" By Patrick D. Lester, and "Earth Songs, Moon Dreams; Paintings by American Indian Women" by Patricia Janis Broder. Many of Mary's original paintings are in private collections around the world.

In 1966, the family moved from Muskogee, Oklahoma to Riverside, California, and in 1967, they moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. It was then that Mary was introduced to the world of porcelain art. She began taking classes and soon excelled in this area. Recognized in the field of porcelain art, Mary won numerous awards, was featured in numerous magazine articles, and a television special. She also served as both a member and president of several China painting organizations. In 1971, Mary was selected by the State Fair of Oklahoma to present visiting Mrs. Richard Nixon with a piece of her artwork. The vase she chose to present to Mrs. Nixon had been judged "Best of Show" in a statewide competition that year.

While touring China in 1980, Mary became interested in Oriental Brushwork, and she soon began formal studies under Dr. Ming-fai Yu. In 1985, Mary returned to China with other members of the Oriental Brushwork Society of America, Inc. The group was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for participation in the tour which was "To promote cultural exchange and to support artistic activities between China and the United States."

In 1989, Mary was appointed by then Governor Henry Bellmon to a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society. In 1990, she was granted life membership in the First Families of the Twin Territories. Membership is limited to those Oklahomans who can trace their family history to ancestors who settled in Oklahoma or Indian Territory prior to statehood.

Mary was extremely involved in local and state organizations, some of which were, The Trail of Tears Association, The World Organization of China Painters, The Five Civilized Tribes Museum, The Chisholm Trail Corral of Westerners International, The Three Rivers Museum, and the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame.

Mary and Revere loved to travel and travel they did. Some of the countries they visited together were Canada, Mexico, Spain, China, Korea, Russia, Portugal, and Morocco.

In 2013, following the death of her husband, Revere in 2012, Mary moved from Oklahoma City to Tahlequah to be near her daughter and son-in-law. In Tahlequah, Mary took Native American beadwork classes under the direction of Lisa Rutherford and Cherokee National Treasurer, Martha Berry.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents, Herman and Lillie Willis Bresser; her step-mother, Evalyn Tinch English Bresser; her step-sister, Dorothy Evalyn English Swanson; her son, Robert Mark; and her husband of 62+ years, Brig. Gen. Revere A. Young, USAF (Retired).

She is survived by her daughter, Dr. Lillian Diane Young and husband, Gene Pittman of Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Funeral services for Mary will be at 11AM, Thursday, October 10, 2024 at Memorial Park Cemetery Mausoleum.

Cemetery Details

Memorial Park Cemetery

7600 Old Taft Rd.
Muskogee, OK 74401

Previous Events

Service

OCT **10**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Memorial Park Cemetery
7600 Old Taft Rd.
Muskogee, OK 74401

Tribute Wall

MH

“ Dear Lillie,

You and your family will be in my prayers. I just learned about your mother's passing today, and I extend my deepest sympathy. John and I loved and admired her so much.

I had the pleasure of working with Mary during her service on the Oklahoma Historical Society's Board of Directors. She was so dedicated to the agency's mission, and she was so supportive as a member of my division's board committee.

John and I enjoyed our time with both your parents as members of our Chisholm Trail Corral Western history group, and we missed them so much when they could no longer attend.

I treasure the beautiful Santa Claus pine Mary made and gave to me. Also, she and Revere were the first visitors to my home after my hospital stay as a result of the Oklahoma City bombing. Mary brought me the loveliest flowers. Just a couple of examples of what a kind and thoughtful person she was.

Melvena

*John and Melvena Heisch
Oklahoma City*

Melvena Heisch - October 14, 2024 at 11:05 AM

LY

Dear Melvena, thank you so much for your kind words. Both of my parents thought the world of you and spoke of you and John often. Your kind thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated. I miss Mom very much. She was an amazing mother.

Lillian Young - October 26, 2024 at 04:19 PM