William McCracken To Begin Sixth Year As Art Instructor Took Over Formation of Art Classes When No Instruction Was Provided

William W.M. McCracken will shortly begin his sixth year of art classes at Sterling House. In 1932, Mr. McCracken assisted Mrs. Austin Cook with a few children in the old barn at Sterling Park until a suitable room in the House was chosen and equipped for a studio.

At the time the class was first organized, there was little art instruction for adults, even in Bridgeport. There was, therefore, quite a bit of response to the forming of the Sterling House Art Class. This group consisted of students who had no previous art training and who wished to draw and paint as a pastime. Others who had a desire for a more technical approach to the professional aspects of art, but were unable to go away to an art school at the time, were invited to attend.

- September 2, 1938, The Stratford News

New Dance Teacher at Sterling House

“The purpose of the dance is to train the whole body to be as resilient as a cat while the mind is developing habits of precision and orderly thinking to guide and direct its every movement.”

- Miss Lena Simpson
Dancing Instructor
Started in 1941 and taught for decades

“It all went off swell Saturday night and I can say I’m glad it’s over - even though I’m glad I did it.”

- June 18, 1946
Note from youth performer to teacher after dance recital

LENA SIMPSON
“Drawing and painting began at Sterling House in the winter of 1932-1933. The classes furnished an outlet for the energies of a number of men and women during the Great Depression, and have continued without interruption.”
The fourth annual Community Concert, under the auspices of the Sterling House Dance department, in cooperation with the PTA Council, will take place March 20, 1948, at 8 p.m. in Red Men’s hall.

As in past years, this will be exclusively a children’s concert including boys and girls of all ages up through the second year of high school, with its purpose to encourage youngsters in the study of the arts by providing them with a wider outlet through which to display their accomplishments, in addition to giving children and parents from all sections of town a chance to see what others are doing along artistic lines.

- March 12, 1948, Bridgeport Post

Stratford Players Celebrate Eighth Anniversary Monday

The Stratford Players, one of the town’s most consistently active organizations, will celebrate its eighth anniversary on Sept. 5, 1938.

A busy season is planned by the unit and instead of confining its efforts to entertaining local audiences the Players plan this year to go “on the road” with its productions, playing in small towns and sponsored by prominent organizations in each town.

The first meeting of the season will be held tonight in Sterling House when plans made during the summer months by the board, play reading and scenery committees will be announced and explained to members.

Guiding the destinies of the group during the coming season will be Raymond Flynn, president; Tom Toulson, vice president; Mary Reyes, secretary; Emily Flynn, treasurer, and, Martha Burns and Stuart Hunt, representatives to the executive board.

- September 2, 1938, The Stratford News