



## 2022 Nomination Form

Application deadline: Friday, February 25 by 5 p.m.

DELIVER TO: City Hall, 101 N. Main St., Winston-Salem,  
Marketing & Communications Department, Suite 336

OR MAIL TO: City of Winston-Salem,  
Marketing & Communications  
Department  
P.O. Box 2511  
Winston-Salem, NC 27102

Nominee's Stage Name: Samuel & Lillian Fort Given Name: Samuel & Lillian Fort

Address at Time of Death: 3406 Konnoak Drive, Winston-Salem State: NC

Dates of Residency: 1926 to: 2020 (ex: 2000-2010)

Category:  Music  Visual Arts  Dance  Motion Pictures  
 Theater  Television  Writing  Radio

### Criteria:

- The nominee(s) exhibited sustained excellence in his or her field for at least five years.
- The nominee(s) made distinguished contributions to the community and civic-oriented participation.
- The nominee(s) is deceased (must provide copy of death certificate or obituary).
- The nominee(s) was a resident of Winston-Salem for at least five years.
- The nominee(s) made a significant contribution to the arts or entertainment industry in one or more of the following areas: music, dance, theater, writing, visual arts, motion pictures, television, or radio. A "significant" contribution would be iconic in terms of renown and the impact on the artistic disciplines or popular culture.

### Application to Include:

- Attach nominee's performance/accomplishment biography which must include at least 5 years of accomplishments in the arts, culture, or entertainment field.
- Attach a list of nominee's civic/community involvement.
- Attach a copy of nominee's death certificate or obituary.

Sponsor Name: Donna Rothrock

Address: 2621 South Main Street

City: Winston-Salem State: NC Zip Code: 27127

Email: donna.rothrock@salem.edu

Phone: Home: (336) 771-5597 Cell: (336) 705-9011

Signature: *Donna Rothrock* Date: 2/24/22

*John Foltz 336-682-9180*

**Arts, Cultural, and Entertainment Memorial Walk of Fame  
Nomination of Samuel E. Fort, Jr. (1926-2020) and Lillian Fishel Fort (1927-2013)**

Samuel E. Fort, Jr., and Lillian Fishel Fort were deeply and completely involved in the music of the Moravian Church and community in Winston-Salem throughout their long lives. Both natives of Winston-Salem, they each began their musical activities in the church in their youth. While neither considered themselves professional musicians, both were quite accomplished, and their contributions far surpass merely involvement in church bands and choirs. We realize that this recognition is normally for a single individual, but they were a team, rarely seen apart. People referred to them almost as a singular: “Sam and Lillian Fort.”

“Sam” began playing cornet in high school, and following his military service in World War II, married Lillian, also a brass player who grew up in the same neighborhood. He received no formal musical training, but he was an educated man, and throughout his leadership roles he studied conducting, music theory, composition, and acoustics, continuing to learn throughout his life. The results showed themselves in the improved musicianship of every group.

Following college, while employed as an electrical engineer, he participated in the band and choir at Trinity Moravian Church and joined the Salem Band, the oldest continuing wind ensemble in the United States (established 1771). Becoming at first unofficial assistant conductor of both the Salem Band and the Moravian Easter Band in the 1960s, he assumed the directorship of both groups, the Salem Band in 1972 and the Moravian Easter Band in 1975 (both were unpaid positions).

Sam and Lillian were both champions of all players in Moravian bands regardless of sex, race, age, or level of experience. Lillian was the first woman to play in the band of the Easter Sunrise Service of Salem Congregation; and in 1961-62, they fought for permission to include members of St. Philips Moravian Church, the oldest African-American congregation in the state, to play in the previously all-white Easter Band as well.

During his tenure as leader, the Salem Band and Moravian Church Band were active participants in community events, including the dedication of the restored 1771 Single Brothers Workshop in Old Salem (three different events November 9-14, 1979); the celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic tavern in Old Salem (1984); conventions of the Associated Council of the Arts; Old Salem’s Annual Friends Day and community day celebrations in the 1970s and 1980s; and observances of the centennial of the American Civil War in North Carolina and Pennsylvania. To quote Dick Barron, former president of Old Salem Museums and Gardens, “Whenever we asked, you never turned us down.”

After Sam Fort retired from his band leadership positions in 1991, he continued to play with both the Salem Band and the Moravian Church Band, attending the Moravian Easter Band rehearsals as late as 2019 – the last time the band met and played during his lifetime, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Sam also played with the Salem Trombone Choir, beginning not long

after it was founded in 1984, and played in the Salem Community Orchestra.

Beyond his work with the bands, he served on Moravian Music Festival planning committees. In addition, in 1989 he agreed to become “interim” choir director at Trinity Moravian – a position that lasted over ten years. As with the bands, he continued to participate in the choir long after he relinquished his position as director.

While these appear to be purely local accomplishments, Fort’s influence spread far and wide beyond the Moravian Church and beyond Winston-Salem. He constantly sought out young musicians to offer encouragement and practical assistance; many now-accomplished and well-regarded musicians benefited greatly from his leadership, developing in their musicianship and in their personal character. As director of the Salem Band and the Moravian Easter Band, his leadership – musical, ethical, and spiritual – was truly inspirational, and in continuing to participate after leaving the leadership positions, he demonstrated a deep personal commitment to, and unqualifiedly-positive impact on, the welfare of both organizations.

An accurate history of the Salem Band and Moravian Church Band during Sam Fort’s seventy years of participation and thirty years of leadership must include a report of the active support of his wife Lillian Fishel Fort. Lillian Fishel Fort was born into a musical family, with first her father and later her brother directing the band at Trinity Moravian Church for many years. She played cornet in the band at Trinity for most of her life, and was the first woman to play in the Moravian Easter Band, beginning in 1943. She had played in the band in public school and in college, and played for two years with the Darlinettes, an all-women’s dance band who played across the state for various dances and events.

Lillian worked tirelessly behind the scenes, serving the Salem Band as librarian, preparing parts and folders. She recruited and rehearsed brass groups to play with the church choir, and also for special events at Salem College and Old Salem Museums and Gardens. The Salem Band could not have functioned nearly as smoothly during Sam’s directorship without her meticulous and time-consuming work. Beyond her work with the bands, she also served on the Moravian Church’s Interprovincial Music Festival Committee, assisting with the planning of Moravian Music Festivals around the country.

As with her husband, her contributions appear to be local rather than national or indeed global. The broadest impact of her work is far from local, in that she personally typeset the Moravian band partbooks for the Moravian bands, published in 1974 and now used throughout the world. It is important to note that these are used far beyond the Moravian Church, being useful for warmups and instruction for bands of all ages and locations. Each partbook contains the single-line part for 178 different hymn tunes/chorales. Unlike today, Lillian used not a computer but a music typewriter, pressing an individual key for each note on pre-printed music paper, having to adjust the carriage for each note. Also unlike today, she had to enter each partbook separately. There are ten different partbooks, meaning that she personally entered all of the notes for 1,780 hymn tunes. She also typed the indexes and proofread the entire collection –

all for no compensation. These books are easy to read and flawlessly done, and remain in use nearly fifty years later in the United States and Canada as well as international locations including South Africa, the Caribbean, Labrador, and Peru.

Both Sam and Lillian were tireless in their devotion to music and to the church bands. Both were unfailingly encouraging to players of all ages and all skill levels, modeling what the arts should be. They are richly deserving of recognition for their contributions to the musical and cultural life of Winston-Salem and far beyond, as well as for their contributions to the rich quality of community and respect which they demonstrated.

## **Samuel Emerson Fort, Jr. 1926-2020**

Samuel Emerson Fort, Jr. passed away on December 5, 2020 at Forsyth Medical Center at the age of 93. Samuel was born on December 7, 1926 to Samuel Emerson Fort and Nannie Andrews Fort in Winston-Salem. He served in the Signal Corps during WWII as a part of the Army of Occupation. He then attended NC State College on the GI Bill and went on to become a Plant Engineer for Western Electric in Winston-Salem. His musical talents led him to serve as a member and then director of the Salem Band. In the Moravian Church he served as director of several church bands, and for many years as the director of the Easter Band for the Sunrise Service in Old Salem. He went by the name of Sam or S.E., and he had many interests including working on automobiles, electrical engineering, music composition, and fixing most anything around the house.

Sam was preceded in death by his wife, Lillian Fishel Fort and sisters Marguerite Craven, Ann Southern, Nancy Fitts, and Kate Baity. Surviving are his sons, Dennis Fort (Barbara) and Hubert Fort (Marty); grandchildren, Heather Nassaur, Christopher Fort, Melanie Horton and Harrison Fort, Jessica Klingerman; and many nieces, nephews, and great grandchildren. Due to concerns about Covid-19, a graveside service will be held for immediate family members only at Salem Moravian Graveyard with Rev. John Jackman, Bishop Graham Rights, and Rev. Bill McElveen officiating. A memorial service to celebrate his life will be held at a later date when large gatherings are permitted. The family respectfully requests no flowers, but memorials may be made to the Moravian Music Foundation, 457 S. Church St., Winston-Salem, NC 27101 or Trinity Moravian Church, 220 E Sprague St, Winston-Salem, NC 27127.



*Sam Fort and son Hubert Fort at New Philadelphia Moravian Church*

## FORT, Lillian Marie Fishel

Posted: Friday, October 18, 2013 1:50 pm

FORT WINSTON-SALEM Lillian Marie Fishel Fort Jan. 12, 1927 - May 17, 2013 Mrs. Lillian Marie Fishel Fort, 86, passed away Friday May 17, 2013 at Forsyth Medical Center. She was born January 12, 1927 in Forsyth County to W.D. Fishel and Cleo Hartman Fishel. Lillian was a member of Trinity Moravian Church where she enjoyed playing cornet in the band. She was the librarian for the Salem Band for many years and was one of the first women to play in the Moravian Easter Sunrise Service in the 1940s. She was also on the Chorale Book Committee (green book) and typed all ten instrumental parts on a music typewriter. She was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters, Elizabeth Fishel and Katherine H. Fishel; two brothers, William E. Fishel and James D. Fishel. Surviving are her husband of 65 years, Samuel E. Fort, Jr.; two sons, Dennis Fort and wife Barbara of Winston-Salem, Hubert Fort and wife Martha of Raleigh; five grandchildren and five great grandchildren. A funeral service will be conducted 11:00 a.m. Monday, May 20, 2013 at Trinity Moravian Church with Rev. William McElveen officiating. Interment will follow at God's Acre in Salem. The family will receive friends from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m. Sunday at Hayworth-Miller Silas Creek Chapel. Memorials may be made to Trinity Moravian Church, 220 E. Sprague St., Winston-Salem, NC 27127, to Unity Moravian Church, 8300 Concord Church Rd, Lewisville, NC 27023, or to Raleigh Moravian Church, 1816 Ridge Road, Raleigh, NC 27607. Online condolences can be made at [www.hayworth-Miller.com](http://www.hayworth-Miller.com)



## **The Memoir of Lillian Marie Fishel Fort 1927-2013**

Sister Lillian Marie Fishel Fort was born on January 12, 1927 to William D. Fishel and his wife, Cleo Hartman, in Winston-Salem, NC. She was baptized on April 4, 1927 at Trinity Moravian Church of which her mother had been a charter member. She was confirmed in her faith, becoming a member of Trinity, when she was 13 years old, on March 17, 1940 and her Confirmation Text was Matthew 10: 32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven"(KJV). Her father had built the family home on Sunnyside Avenue so they could be near the church and her church was always centrally important-she was completely dedicated to it and its mission.

Lillian was the sixth child born to her parents. They were William E., Elizabeth, James, Katherine, Cleo May (who died at birth), and finally, Lillian. And to Sam and Lillian's marriage of almost 66 years, which took place on August 23, 1947, were born Dennis and Hubert.

The fact that Lillian was so completely involved and dedicated to her church meant that the church's liturgies, music-especially the band-and Trinity's long time pastor, The Rev. Douglas Rights were of great influence in her life. She was aware of the fact that the liturgies were the main vehicle of worshipping God, even if other aspects of the services might fall short.

Her earliest education was at South Park Elementary School and from there to South High School, which became Gray High. From there she went to Women's College, now UNC Greensboro, where her early abilities in band music allowed her to play in a jazz band called "The Darlinettes", even as a soloist, and, also, with the Greensboro Orchestra. After two years, however, she was married and helped support her husband Sam while he completed his degree in Electrical Engineering at NC State College in Raleigh. It was while living there with modest income, living in a trailer, that she and Sam became a strong team for their life ahead. Their relationship was easily recognized and served as a model to others. "Papa Fort" readily says, however, that "Mama Fort" ran the show. Her leadership and organizational strengths were spoken of heartily. (In fact, sons Dennis and Hubert handed me three type written pages about their mother which they had jotted down, the night before our meeting on Saturday afternoon. Hubert said that "this morning I heard my mother say, "Go down stairs and organize those notes." I have certainly profited from that in my writing of this memoir.

Her passion for instrumental music deserves a prominent place in this memoir of Lillian's life. She and Sam had leaned to play at the same time and could be heard in Sunnyside practicing from their separate homes. She learned to play the cornet and taught herself to play the soprano trombone, a hard instrument to play, so that she could play in the Salem Trombone Choir. She loved to dress up as what she called "a little man" in her Moravian costume and play in the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebrations in Salem.

Her real passion was band music and no doubt influenced her father, W.D. Fishel, who had taught himself to play the tuba, to make the wooden band stands some Trinity members will remember. Sam remembers that there were times, when they were still students, that a Trinity funeral band consisted of only Lillian, Sam and daddy, W.D. Fishel. Lillian started playing in the Salem Band under long time band leader, Mr. B.J. Pfohl. She remembered with pride that she was among the first females ever to play in the Sunrise Service on Easter Mornings. She served as Salem Band Librarian for Austin Burke from the early 1940's till 1975 and then for her husband, Sam, from 1975 to 1992. As band librarian she had a great deal of work to do and a great deal of influence. There was rarely a day that went by when she was not giving her time to making it all happen. She organized folders of music, she setup the Band Hall with stands, folders, and chairs

for the practices of the Salem Band that gave summer concerts and even made lemonade for the bands people who practiced on the un-air-conditioned second floor of the Band Building.

Among the great contributions to band music in Moravian Churches of both the Southern and Northern Provinces of our church was preparing the green "Chorale Book" based on the newly published 1965 Book of Worship of our Church. She and Sam were on a committee charged with this. The magnitude of the task she undertook was to provide the print ready copies for the chorale book consisting of 147 hymns prepared for ten different instruments, many of which had to be transcribed for the key in which it would be played by the instruments. She actually typed in every note, using a broken, manual music typewriter which required note by note typing while constantly adjusting the alignment of the old typewriter. It took her four years to get that ready for the printer. To Lillian, all of us who love our Moravian band music, owe a huge debt of gratitude.

Her passion for band music extended to her sincere desire to see young musicians take up an instrument for her beloved band. And that included her own children. She in good humor would say that when one's children learned to crawl, one should lay a brass instrument in front of them and if they crawled toward it one should keep them, if not, one should throw them into Salem Creek. Dennis and Hubert were fortunate and survived as devoted bandsmen. My son Greg told me, just last night upon hearing of Lillian's death, that she had heard him play the trumpet and realizing that he had become somewhat accomplished, brought him a beautiful descant for him to play with the Messiah band. He considered it a real encouragement for him as a young bandsman and he now leads the band at Christ the King congregation in Durham-I trust that Lillian rejoices in her influence on many, many bands-people.

There is more that could be said about her devotion to band music if time permitted. But let's press on. The family remembers how, knowing little about cooking when she got married, she followed training in chemistry and carefully measured to the minutest degree all ingredients of her cooking. But most of what was shared with me in preparation for this was about her good sense of humor-something she had grown up with among her siblings. The family reported on how when those siblings got to gather they would be laughing even before anybody said anything. She promoted humor but was not the joke teller-she would tell Sam to tell the appropriate joke, but he, often being caught "flat footed" needed help with the punch line so she would have to finish. She kept her son's families who lived in Maryland and in Raleigh, NC, well informed and carefully knitted together with long telephone calls laced with that good humor. It has resulted in what was and is, obviously, a family with happy and deep relationships-where patterns of teasing and picking persist.

In her later band years she took up the bass drum, because she always lamented how the drummers would not count or stay with the director. She played with a community band under the direction of Bob Clark. Once they performed a number in which, just at the conclusion when all instruments were silent, she vigorously hit her drum. Mr. Clark looked down at his score, and sure enough, there it was. He said to the audience, "You thought that was a mistake. It was not!" He declared that Lillian was the best bass drummer in the world.

Lillian sadly experienced some dementia in her last years, though she kept her humor. Just two weeks ago as her daughter-law-law, "Bari," tried to feed her and she was holding her food and not swallowing, Sam, picking at her said, "just whop her on the head." Lillian responded, "I'll slap him." It got the intended laughter.

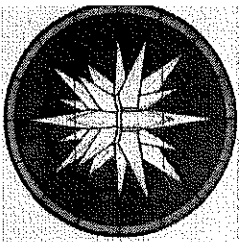
Sister Lillian entered the more immediate presence of her Savior early Friday morning, May 17, 2013. She lived a beautiful, richly fulfilling life, graced with a happy, loving family and a host of admiring friends-especially in Trinity Moravian Church, which she considered her extended family.



She was preceded in death by her parents; by sisters, Elizabeth Walser, Katherine and Cleo Fishel; two brothers, William E. Fishel and James D. Fishel. Surviving are her husband of 65 years, Samuel E. Fort, Jr.; two sons, Dennis Fort and wife Barbara of Winston-Salem. Hubert Fort and wife Martha of Raleigh; five grand-children and five great grand-children.

I remind you of her Confirmation Text from Matthew 10, "Whosoever .....shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven"? Texts are chosen for confirmands by our Moravian pastors to speak to the young confirmand and even to challenge him or her for the Christian life to follow. It is obvious that Lillian witnessed to her faith in Jesus, our Savior, in her dedicated life of service and especially in her performing her music and enabling many others to share their witness with the music which continues to bring the Good News of Christ Jesus to thousands who hear our Moravian band music. Surely that fits with what our Sister, Joyce Carter, said upon learning of Lillian's death, namely, "Gabriel is now able to take a vacation, a magnificent horn player has arrived."

Respectively,  
The Rev. Dr. William H. McElveen



*Service in Celebration of the Life of*

**Lillian Marie Fort**

*May 20, 2013*

Prelude

Liturgy for the Burial of the Dead

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Scripture

Psalm 150

*Psalm 150*  
*Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary:*

*praise him in the firmament of his power.*

*Praise him for his mighty acts:*

*praise him according to his excellent greatness.*

*Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:*

*praise him with the psaltery and harp.*

*Praise him with the timbrel and dance:*

*praise him with stringed instruments and organs.*

*Praise him upon the loud cymbals:*

*praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.*

*Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.*

*Praise ye the LORD.*

Hymn #662

*Jesus Makes My Heart Rejoice*

Scripture

Psalm 100

Hymn #394

*Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand*

Scripture

Psalm 23

Psalm 150

Memor

The Rev. Dr. Bill McElveen

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn# 543

*Sing Hallelujah, Praise the Lord*

Recessional

*Toccata*

Widor

*The service will be completed  
at graveside at God's Acre.*

Rev. John Jackman, Pastor

The Rev. Dr. William McElveen, Visitation Pastor

Mr. Jonathan Sidden, Music Director