Eleanor Greenhill Biography

Dr. Eleanor Simmons Greenhill is a distinguished Medievalist and one of the formative forces behind the development of the graduate art history program at The University of Texas at Austin.

Eleanor Simmons Greenhill grew up in Lubbock, Texas and she discovered a passion for Latin in high school. She received her undergraduate degree from Texas Tech University in 1934 and her MA in Comparative Medieval Literature in 1945 from Columbia University, New York. While at Columbia, she studied with Roger Sherman Loomis, one of the foremost authorities on medieval and Arthurian literature.

In 1947 she moved to Germany with her husband, an attorney representing the United States at the Nuremberg Trials. During her 13-year residence, she pursued her doctorate in the History of Art at the University of Munich, receiving her degree in 1959. Dr. Greenhill taught at the University of Chicago until she arrived at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1960s, where she continued teaching and held the Ashbel Smith Professorship at the time of her retirement in 1985.

Dr. Greenhill is a noted scholar of French Gothic manuscripts. Her publications include Die geistigen Voraussetzungen der Bilderreihe des Speculum virginum; Versuch einer Deutung. /Munster, Westf /1962. She also authored the Dictionary of Art, New York, 1974, as well as many articles.

In 1988 the art history faculty at the University of Texas at Austin voted to honor Eleanor Greenhill’s longstanding support of the graduate program in art history by dedicating the annual graduate student symposium to her. Henceforth, the symposium was called the Eleanor Greenhill Art History Symposium.

Eleanor Greenhill passed away in 2009.