

## Memorial for philanthropist Harry T. Wilks open to public

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**Erin Caproni**, Digital Producer

A memorial service for Hamilton philanthropist and businessman [Harry T. Wilks](#) will be open to the public on Saturday, [the Hamilton Journal News reports](#).

Wilks died at his home on March 11, his 89th birthday.

The memorial will be held at 4 p.m. Saturday in Parrish Auditorium on [Miami University's](#) Hamilton campus. A reception will be held following the ceremony in the [Harry T. Wilks Conference Center](#), which the 1948 alumnus helped create.

Speakers at the event will include Miami University president [David Hodge](#) and sculptor [John Henry](#), whose work is featured at Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park, which Wilks created. Pianist [Connor Chee](#) and members of the [Cincinnati Opera](#) also will perform.

Wilks, a retired attorney, was best known for his giving. He provided scholarships for Hamilton students, contributed to area arts and educational foundations, and served in a variety of board positions in the city of Hamilton.

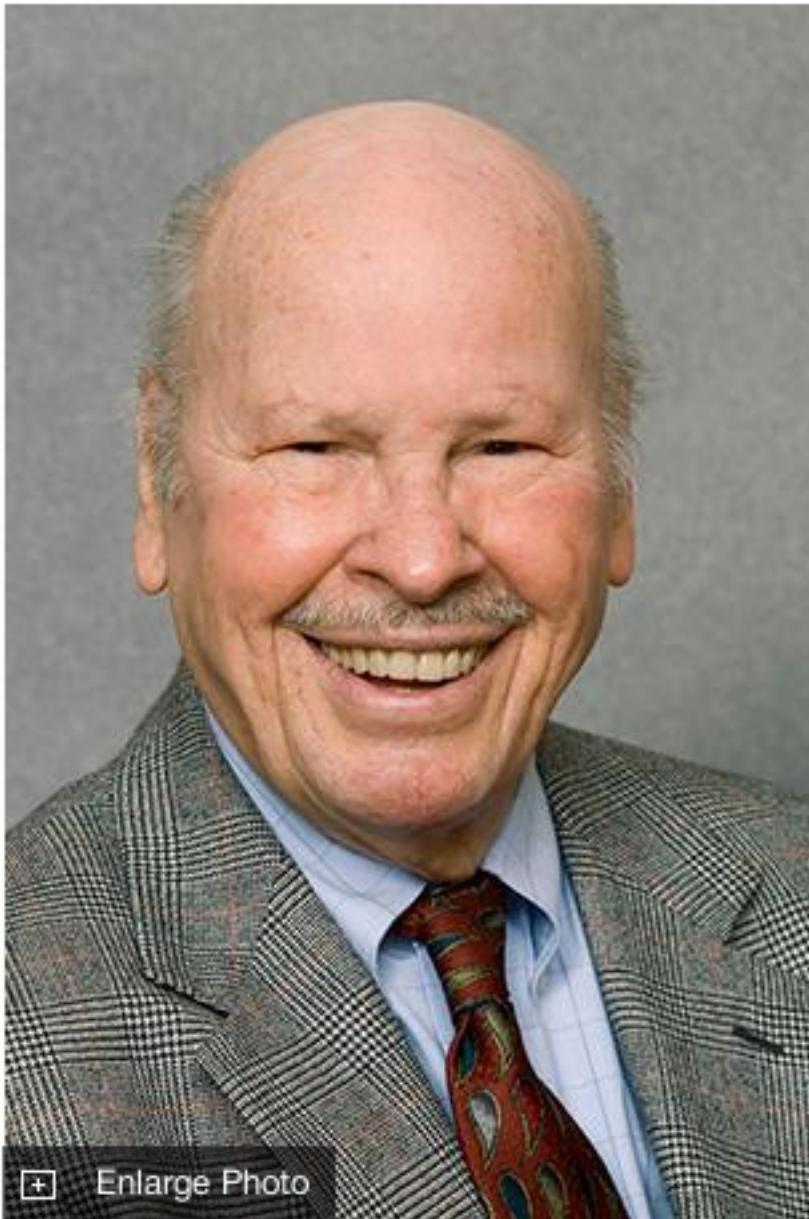
"Young people are the future of our country," Wilks said. "More than ever, we need to develop in them those qualities and opportunities which will strengthen our country and our lives."

Wilks joined Miami University's board of trustees in 2008, and he has given more than \$9 million in gifts to the university. As a result, the university has the [Harry T. Wilks Leadership Institute](#) in Oxford, as well as the [Harry T. Wilks Conference Center](#), Scholarship Program and Lecture Series at its Hamilton campus. A new theater in the newly constructed Armstrong Student Center has also been named in his honor.

"Harry leaves an enormous legacy at Miami and in the Hamilton community," Hodge said. "He was one of the most creative and imaginative people I have ever met, and he lived life with an irrepressible joy that inspired everyone around him. He will be greatly missed and long remembered."

Wilks was a longtime member of the board of directors of the [Cincinnati Opera](#) and received the Ambassador Award for the Arts from the Fitton Center for Creative Arts.

Those who wish to express their condolences are asked to make a gift to Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park, 1763 Hamilton Cleves Road, for the forest restoration fund.



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