

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

February 1993

Local Artist Rita Hoovler

Our February program initiated what we hope is an annual program on a local artist. Our 1993 artist was Rita Hoovler, resident of South Cairo and owner of Rita's Gallery at the Freehold Airport.

Rita brought a dozen pieces of her work as well as a 70-slide slide show. Through her slide show, Rita explained her early influences, examples of her early art, changes in medium and style, and her personal preferences of topic.

The first few slides reflected the international travels Rita has taken, demonstrated by the classical look. Most of the work shown was from this past decade although Rita said she's always been an artist, sketching and drawing as a child.

The early paintings are oil paintings. Later, water color became part of Rita's repertoire. According to Rita, water color is much less forgiving than oils. Strokes placed can't be taken back or covered as easily as in oil. Lightness and transparency, advantages of watercolor, can be given to the appropriate subjects.

Of local history significance is the topic of Rita's paintings. At least half of her paintings are portrayals of barns, houses, vistas, and communities - from South Cairo to Freehold to South Westerlo to Windham, from the Catskill Creek to the Catskill Mountains. An overview of these paintings would lead one to predict that Rita will become known as one of the Catskill Valley area artists.

The other dominant topic of Rita's paintings is still life. Vegetables, especially onions and eggplants, and flowers, especially those in her daughter's garden, appeared several times in the slides.

While paper and canvas are the usual painting surfaces, Rita has used wine bottles and

saws. The wine bottles are painted in oil and preserved in a finish; the obvious danger to these works are an accidental meeting with the ground. The saws produced another type of challenge. Since Rita uses the whole blade, her painting is often a couple feet longer, four to eight inches tall, producing a panoramic feeling. The airport was the topic of a few of these. In addition, Rita has painted a two foot diameter buzz saw, the kind that has a two inch hole in the middle. In this case, the hole was the barn door.

Other topics covered or questions asked were about her signature, selling prices, influence of the Greenville Arms artists' series, work schedule, etc. Of the works brought in, the painting of the round hay bales easily dominated the others, partially as a result of its being the largest painting. Pictures of the gallery and other paintings were gathered in four "brag books" that Rita brought with her.

This program was videotaped, thanks to Rita's daughter, Debra Teator ("Ah", you're saying. Connections! This is the danger of being the program director's mother-in-law!).

A thank you goes to Rita for sharing her work with the GLHG. Too often our artists are taken for granted. The recording of our artists' works and processes is one way to recognize one form of our local history.

Preceding Rita, for ten minutes, John Earl showed several pieces of hand wrought metal - barn door hinges, decorative pieces, etc. John also brought pictures of other pieces of metal, especially of fancy, heavy gate and gate door work.

Notes:

1. The March meeting has been cancelled.

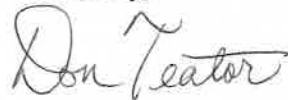
Thus, our next meeting, the April 12th meeting, will be a share session, and our May 10th meeting will be a look at (or the selection of) prints for the 1994 calendar.

2. Who are the artists of our town/area? I'd like to scout ahead for a program next year. Names that come to mind are Rudy Weinlich and Claudia Anderson. Who else is out there? Please add to my list.

3. Because of the cancelled March meeting, and a resulting absence of a March letter, your newsletter expiration date has been extended a month.

4. Genealogy request: Arnold Mantle, 409 Mesa Ave, Jefferson City, Missouri, 65101 is seeking information about a James W. Palmer (possibly Donald Palmer) who died in Greene County in 1938-39, probably from falling off a roof of a building he was working on. Any help?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Teator". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".