



Genesee Valley Plein Air Painters, Inc., a not-for-profit artist association, promotes and inspires quality plein air painting while providing socially pleasant painting opportunities for its membership throughout the year.

January 15, 2011 E-LETTER

6th ANNUAL WINTER SHOW

One year ago I wrote, “The Barnes & Nobel show opened amid rather dire winter weather, which not only limited attendance but involved Brande Arno and her mother in a 29 car pileup on the Thruway.” It is passing strange that this year’s opening occurred with the same weather conditions: a blizzard which slowed traffic to a crawl and kept a number of our members and their friends from attending. Fortunately, the storm passed through quickly and was largely over by the time the closing hour arrived. Storm or no storm, the show speaks for itself. It came into being through the smooth, cooperative effort of many members and contains 83 stunning plein air paintings. We are grateful that Margaret Martin, prominent regional artist, consented to judge the show, then to return for a critique and to teach a one day workshop. For a full description and many more photos, here is a link to our web site: <http://www.gvpap.com/show2011.html>



Don Grieger Gil Jordan Kevin Feary Chris O’Hanley Teresa Barlis Barbara Jablonski Cathy Chin
 Missing: Steve BonDurant, Phil Bliss, Marilyn Feinberg, Jeffrey Swaluk

Best of Show

Steve BonDurant: *Golden Fields*

Judge's Award

Teresa Barlis:

Bittersweet, November 11

Marilyn Feinberg:

Backyard Splendor

Don Grieger: *Turbulent Creek*

Barbara Jablonski: *Boats In Genesee River II*

Gilbert Jordan: *Winter in Genesee*

Christopher O'Handley: *Finger Lakes Morning*

Jeffrey Swaluk: *Corner Store, Brockport*



Merit Award

Philip Bliss: *Evening Shadows*

Philip Bliss: *Fabius Hillside*

Cathy Chin: *Marina Boats*

Kevin Feary: *September Day*

Don Grieger: *Forest Morning*

Barbara Jablonski: *The Bait Shop*

Jeffrey Swaluk: *Backyard Bananas*

THE MEETING POINT

In a continuation of this series introducing you to officers and committee heads of GVPAP, Terry Brooks, our Secretary, presents a rich account of his past, his interests, his self-effacing quiet humor, and a secret possession. How many of you ever heard of a '74 Jensen Healey? Perhaps we can persuade Terry to arrive at the next annual meeting in this jewel and get him to tool around the marina lot with a few of his envious painter friends.



I left High School in 1955, then served an apprenticeship as a toolmaker and tool designer at AC Delco in England. Came to the USA from England in 1965 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and attended General Motors Institute in Flint Michigan for an associate degree in Industrial Engineering. The mid sixties was a very interesting period to be a "brit" in the US, with beatlemania, flowerpower, and civil rights riots all going on at the same time. During this time I met and married my wife Pat before returning to England in 1967.

I immigrated permanently to the USA in 1969 and started to work for Delco Products Rochester as a manufacturing engineer (and resident cartoonist). I retired from GM in 1992, and ran my own

business as a manufacturing consultant and trouble shooter for about 10 years.

Although I have always been able to draw fairly well, and took 3 semesters of figure drawing at R.I.T., I didn't get into painting until about 10 years ago when I started to take classes at Greece Continuing Ed. Over the past few years I have attended many classes and workshops in an effort to improve my meager skills. I am a member of the Rochester Suburban Art Group, and of course GVPAP. I like to paint and enjoy the company of my fellow artists. I still do not have a favorite medium, and have tried most of them so I jump around from oils to watercolors to pen and ink and wash. I don't think I could be considered a serious painter. I've sold a few but my basement is full of work that will never see the light of day.

Other than painting I have many interests, including two grandchildren, growing roses, gardening, woodworking (making mechanical toys), fly fishing, and trying to keep a '74 Jensen Healey in shape for summertime driving. Although I can't play a note I do enjoy music, especially old time jazz, big bands, blues and rock and roll. After all, I was a child of the sixties. I love the USA and have been a citizen for about 20 years. I live in the town of Greece and I like it here in spite of the winters. I enjoy travelling especially to the southwest, and have walked down into the Grand Canyon (a truly spiritual place) three times. I have two sisters in England and try to visit them about every 3 years.

Meet Edward Seago: Part 2 by Don Grieger



As previously noted, Seago experienced health problems his entire life. Before the age of five he began to have episodes of very rapid heartbeat for hours on end before returning to normal. The "heart turns," as they were called, were never diagnosed and continued his entire life. Initially his doctor suggested to his parents that he had "outgrown his strength." It was during these periods, confined to bed, that he began to take great interest in his mother's watercolor painting. Medical

specialists in America and Switzerland recommended rest and no vigorous exercise. Painting seemed the perfect answer. Who knows; if Seago had been born healthy, he might have gotten a real job.

Though Seago enjoyed boarding at prep school, he was continually forced to return home because of his heart condition. By age ten, Seago knew he would never be anything but a painter. Two years later he saw his first "real artist" outdoors, painting on a canvas. Seago questioned the man endlessly. The artist, Ernest Chance, lent the young lad a book on landscape painting by Sir Alfred East R. A. It was the first book on art he had ever seen. Seago read and absorbed every word.

When Seago learned that Bertram Priestman R.A. had just moved to Walberswick, 30 miles away, he wrote a letter, unknown to his parents, expressing his interest in art. He received an invitation to the artist's home. He made a favorable impression and was invited back many times. Priestman taught Seago not to be influenced by fashion in art and that great art outlived fashion. Seago would often visit, unannounced, with a batch of his latest paintings to be discussed and criticized in the studio. The boy was shown how to select and compose his subjects, and above all how to paint quickly.



As the years wore on, Seago enjoyed a serendipitous career. His painting encounters and interests led him from a gypsy encampment to “society” and the horsey set, the circus and the ballet, with their exciting world of all-night parties and “sophisticated” company. All of this going on while still plagued with the intermittent “heart turns.” He was a wild and crazy guy until that event called World War II.

Seago volunteered and was accepted into the Officers Emergency Reserve. Because his heart condition had no medical signs of abnormality between attacks he was considered fit to serve and was eventually commissioned as a Camouflage Officer. Through a common interest in painting, Seago developed close personal friendships with several senior officers. His heart problem was ultimately discovered, however, and he was discharged from the service. He immediately wrote to his friend General Alexander, now Commander-In-Chief in Italy and was brought in as a member of his staff to paint the Italian Campaign. He remained on the General's staff until the end of the war.



In 1962 Seago accepted a corporate invitation for an all expense paid trip to Hong Kong in return for six paintings for the corporate board room. The three-month trip, which included visits to Thailand and Burma, resulted in eighty oils and watercolors. The trip also changed Seago's method of painting for the rest of his life. After a career as a plein air painter, he began to work up his paintings in the studio, based on pencil sketches and color notes done on site. He explained later that he changed his approach because he did not want to be thought of as just a “topographer.” As a result, he became much more interested in the placement, organization and overall pattern of the elements in his pictures. The change in his approach to painting, fortunately, had no impact on his style.

In June 1973, Seago began to suffer from head pain and lack of co-ordination. Seago's self diagnosis was “ear trouble” and refused his doctor's advice in favor of Sardinian sunshine. One day he showed his secretary, Peter, a painting in which the left half was

completely blank, though he did not realize it. He died of a brain tumor on 19 January, 1974.

Information for this article came from the books Edward Seago and Edward Seago, The Vintage Years 1987 and 1992, both by Ron Ranson.

MEMBER NEWS

Fran Bliet received a Juror's Award at the recently concluded Fall Webster Art Club Show judged by Christine Waara.



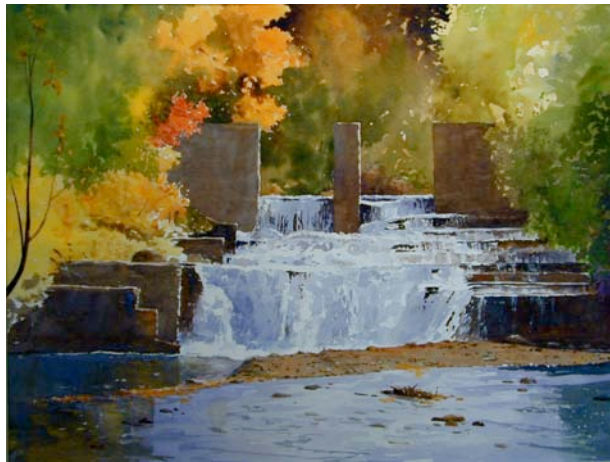
"Afternoon on Williams Pond"



Kevin Feary was awarded Best of Show at the Batavia Society of Artists' December exhibition judged by Colette Savage.

"The Pumpkin Carver"

At the same show **Gil Jordan** received First Prize for his watercolor painting.



"Stony Brook Falls"

As many of you know, GVPAP organized a trip to the Fenimore Museum exhibition of John Singer Sargent portraits last November. **Nina Rupp** reports that she and **Judy Soprano, Carolyn Parker, Laretta Kirk, Peggy Piscitello, Hiroko Battey, Kathleen Hanney, Fran Carducci, Jane O'Donnell** car pooled to Cooperstown for this special event. According to Nina, "Most (of the portraits) were of society women but three were of ordinary women in Italy that he painted on his travels. To see the direct application of his brush work up close, and his use of light and shadow shows his abilities much better than in reproductions. Critics in Sargent's time stated that his brush work was "all bravado" and not at all polished. But his ability to indicate lush fabric with single strokes, some thick and some thin, attests to his skills."



On November 17th the Arts & Cultural Council for Greater Rochester held their Annual Awards ceremony at the Hyatt Regency. One of the recipients was Steve Carpenter, an eminent local artist and teacher. Representing GVPAP were our two top officers, Barbara Jablonski and Kevin Feary.

Huh??

A couple of years ago during the Whitney Museum's Biennial exhibition, a number of art critics railed against the level of writing by curators and outside contributors. The writing, which supposedly illuminated the art works presented, was attacked as "unalloyed gibberish," "an embarrassment," "impenetrable prose," and the equivalent of "being smacked in the face with a spitball." Every field, including English studies, is infected with inscrutable writing, and the cause is usually someone trying to give the illusion of profound intelligence, or someone lacking even the nugget of an idea in the first place. What can anyone make out of the following passages?

"...invents puzzles out of non sequiturs to seek congruence in seemingly incongruous situations, whether visual or spatial...inhabits those interstitial spaces between understanding and confusion."

"Bove's 'settings' draw on the style, and substance, of certain time-specific materials to resuscitate their referential possibilities, to pull them out of historical stasis and return them to active symbolic duty, where new adjacencies might reactivate latent meanings."

Egad! And some of the artists themselves fall into the same trap when they attempt to provide a philosophical underpinning for their work. An artist from London either had no clear idea of what idea she wanted to present or thought that by laying down a verbal fog she would surely impress potential buyers:

"My work demystifies itself by structural and material means. I expose the process of making and presenting work. My works are often semi-performative, featuring reflective supports within the natural environment, both framing and dramatically contrasting their setting. Studio activities are juxtaposed with real life events, exploring and blurring points of separation and overlap."

It comes down to this: artists, musicians, choreographers, poets should let their work speak for itself. It is rarely enhanced by pretentious explanations which often come off as bad jokes rather than an educational tool. And all of this brings us to the quote of the month:

If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint.

-Edward Hopper