

A lifetime of dedication and creativity

Continued from page A5 School as well as Toronto art lovers, Mr. Black and Mr. Sommer collaborated on brief commentaries for each work, the artist providing anecdotes and recollections about their origins and inspirations. The commentaries will be displayed adjacent to the works in the gallery.

ON DISPLAY
In addition, a small souvenir catalogue has been printed at the artist's expense in an edition of 300.

Again with the artist's help, Mr. Sommer has compiled a series of photographs (some of which are reproduced here), commercial designs, newspaper clippings, sketches and other memorabilia to complement the show.

Visitors to downtown Georgetown will have recently noticed Mr. Black's paintings on display in some store windows. Mr. Sommer considers the displays an extension of the show itself and invites

gallery visitors to stroll down Main Street during the six-week exhibition to take in an additional dozen works by the artist.

Mr. Black himself, health permitting, plans to greet gallery visitors at the opening tomorrow night as well as each Saturday during the show between 10:30 a.m. and noon. His willingness to meet interested members of the public and discuss his work is indicative of his unyielding devotion to

the community, in which he had coached members of the Palette and Pencil Club, instructed local high school students and taken a fervent interest in Georgetown's arts events and achievements.

Born to an English boat-building family Dec. 18, 1894, Frank Charles Black spent an important part of his youth in Bermuda, where his naval engineer father was transferred when Frank was seven years old. The boy took an early interest in drawing, and a favorite subject was the sea that surrounded him. To this day, he loves to paint seascapes, and there is still evidence in his Guelph Street home studio of his childhood penchant for his own form of boatbuilding - creating models rather than the real ships his forebears constructed.

TO TORONTO
In 1911, his mother brought her children to Toronto and young Frank became an apprentice with the Hough Litho Company, soon moving on to the art department at McLean's publishing.

By the fall of 1916, he was in the trenches of war-torn France, fighting alongside fellow members of the 48th Highlanders until a serious wound at Vimy Ridge hospitalized him early in 1918, the final year of the First World War. For Mr. Black spent

the next two years in hospitals in England and Toronto, finally returning to his old job at McLean's, where he continued to work for the next ten years.

Studies at the Ontario College of Art and with New York City's Art Students League and a teaching job at Danforth Technical School preceded Mr. Black's marriage to Lillian Spears in 1930, the same year he became a commercial artist with the engraving house Batten Ltd.

Having renewed acquaintances with his childhood home of Bermuda on his honeymoon, Mr. Black returned there with Lillian in 1934 and stayed a full year. Their return to Toronto saw him freelance in commercial art, submitting work to the Toronto Star among other clients.

In 1936, Mr. Black spent the summer on the Massachusetts coastline studying under Emiel Gruppe, at that time the foremost painter of harbor scenes and ships. Renowned marine painter Stanley Woodward helped him continue to develop his combined love for the sea and for painting, and in 1938, Mr. Black accepted a design job with a Bermuda newspaper, work which kept him and Lillian on the island another four years.

From his return to Toronto until his retirement in

1955, Mr. Black freelanced some more, mostly with Bryant Press. It was in 1952 when the Blacks moved

to Georgetown, the artist commuting by train to his job. Upon his retirement, Mr. Black teaching

evening art classes in Acton, Georgetown and Brampton and, with several students, founded the

Palette and Pencil Club. He continues to paint and instruct club members to this day.



It was the spring of 1916, and Frank Black (second from left in the back row), an illustrator for McLean's publishing in Toronto, was ready for battle alongside fellow members of the 48th Highlanders, shown here awaiting their shipping orders at Niagara. Mr. Black was wounded twice during the First World War, the

second time severely enough to keep him hospitalized for two years. Almost 40 years later, Mr. Black and his wife Lillian would move from Toronto to Georgetown (the local scenery caught his painter's eye), where he would soon become the community's most respected artist.



A remarkable sequence of photographs taken this year tells a great deal about painter Frank Black, seen here in the front room studio of his Guelph Street home his wife Lillian purchased for them in 1932. In the photo at far left, the "organized clutter" typical of still-active studios surrounds a finished portrait of the artist as a young man,



painted by a friend of Mr. Black's in 1920. Mr. Black himself is at work here on a classic landscape, using the palette knife, a favorite utensil, to spread thick layers of paint and create a separate texture within the canvas. It's a method he's popularized among members of Georgetown's Palette and Pencil Club, which he frequently coaches.

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