

Laura Kingsbury's consuming passion

Terra Cotta's naturalist-artist



Terra Cotta wildlife artist Laura Kingsbury works on her latest painting, Saturday during her exhibit at the Terra Cotta Conservation Authority. (Herald photo)

By GERRY TIMBERS
Herald Staff Writer
Laura Kingsbury has a consuming passion for nature and the world out-of-doors.

As the naturalist at Terra Cotta Conservation Area, she is devoting her professional life to the animal kingdom. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Guelph in wildlife biology.

But the 26-year-old Brampton resident doesn't leave her job behind when she leaves the conservation area. When she arrives home, she retreats to her spare room, where she begins sketching and painting a rabbit or duck or squirrel she photographed earlier in the week.

"Part of my job here is to build up a photo collection of the wildlife in the

area, and I work from those photos and my own observations," she said.

Ms. Kingsbury, whose latest works were on display Saturday at Terra Cotta, told The Herald, "I thought it might be interesting to put on a show here of some of my works, and since I had these ready for an exhibit next week in Peterborough, I thought today would be a good day."

Ms. Kingsbury has always been an outdoors person. "I did a lot of camping as a kid, and I still get up to Algonquin Park every year," she said.

"I love the outdoors and nature, and I'm fascinated with animals."

However, she has had little formal art training, and in fact, she began painting seriously just two years ago.

"Instruction just frustrates me more than anything else," she says. "I find it useful only for improving the technical aspects, such as working with lighting and shading."

To that end, Ms. Kingsbury recently attended a weekend workshop with one of her heroes, Canadian wildlife artist Michael Dumas.

It currently takes Ms. Kingsbury six months or more to prepare 10 works for a show, such as the upcoming Buckham Wildlife Art Festival outside of Peterborough. There she will more than likely sell each of her pieces for between \$200 and \$400.

However, her career and husband leave her with limited time in which to paint. Eventually, she would like to become a professional artist, but she feels she still has much to learn about

painting.

"Right now, all I have time for besides painting is eating and sleeping," Ms. Kingsbury said.

"I'd like to take up painting professionally, if things go well and my paintings sell. There's certainly not enough money in it for me to turn pro right now."

The important thing for Ms. Kingsbury right now is to keep sketching and learning.

"I find it frustrating," she says, "when things don't turn out exactly the way I've pictured them. I don't think any artist is ever totally satisfied with his work, however."

"It's hard to describe, but painting is a compulsion with me. It's definitely not a relaxing pastime," she said.

"If I don't paint for a couple of weeks...well, I just have to."

Floral water color exhibit at Cultural Centre gallery

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Things may have slowed for summer at the cultural centre's art gallery, but it shouldn't be entirely overlooked, especially with a new exhibition of floral water colors by local artist Pauline Martland.

Flowers have been a favorite subject for years, she told The Herald recently. Mrs. Martland recalled that, as a child, she earnestly wanted to decorate china and regretted not living next door - in her native England - to a porcelain factory.

Now, her medium has

changed to watercolors, best for capturing the delicacy of her subjects, she said.

"Some people have success painting flowers with oil paints," she commented, "but sometimes it can look a bit heavy."

Mrs. Martland, whose exhibition runs to the end of the month, doesn't have to look far for subject material. She and her husband, Bill, live in the town's rural area where they view an abundance of domestic and wild flora.

"I paint everything from the common dandelion to the intricate hibiscus,"

she said. "I paint other forms but I much prefer flowers."

Painting "off and on" since the later forties-early fifties, Mrs. Martland has studied at the Rochester and Bromley Colleges of Art in Kent,

England. While she has lived in Canada for a number of years, the interest in painting flowers was re-kindled when she moved from the city to the rural area several years ago.

As much as possible she

likes to paint her subjects from real life; but when winter sets in she'll turn to magazine pictures and samples from friends.

Mrs. Martland joked about the fact that her fridge is full of stored flowers, something her husband has to contend with every time he opens the door. As a printer he helps with cards and setting up for shows, taking an active interest in his wife's active pastime.

In addition to capturing the beauty of flowers in

land said, she'd like to exhibit flower arrangements with her pictures.

Her painting of an iris at the Georgetown Fall Fair two years ago won her a prize.

Some day, Mrs. Mart-



Pauline Martland has been painting "on and off" since the later forties and early fifties. She has studied at the Rochester and Bromley Colleges of Art in Kent, England. (Photo by Gerry Timbers)

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