

# Arts and Ideas

## Art "Friends" are planning two very special exhibitions

The "Friends of the Halton Hills Libraries" have for many years sponsored art exhibitions at the Gallery of the Cultural Centre in Georgetown.

Artists of this and neighboring regions had splendid exhibitions in the beautiful gallery space that was once a church. Here are the names of the artists the "Friends" have honored in the past: Robert Bateman, Ken Danby, Jack Reid, Barbara Howard, John Hall, Frank Black, and Andreas Drenters.

This year the "Friends" are sponsoring two shorter exhibitions and sales, instead of one long one, lasting all summer. The first, opening on June 5, and continuing to July 6, is called "Harald J. Newman - Paintings from Six Decades," the second, opening on July 10, and continuing to August 10, has the title "Tony Meers - The Making of a Working Artist."

Frederic Harald John Battenberg Newman was born in Montreal, in 1899, the son of a stockbroker. At an early age he became interested in painting and writing. He studied at McGill University in Montreal and at Cambridge, as well as at the London Polytechnic School and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. In the late 20's he came to Toronto, where he befriended artists and became a feature of the old English establishment and Toronto society.

Later still, he did archeological and historical research in various parts of the world. Eventually he moved with his family to Ballinacorney and became a well-known personality in this region. In 1962 he was appointed director of the Halton County Museum at Kelso.

Hal Newman, as he was called by his friends, was a complex character with a host of talents. He was a cultured man with many and changing interests. Painting was almost the only constant in his life. Thanks to his



**Ideas and The Arts**  
by John Sommer

step-daughter, Mrs. Rosemary Campbell, we have a record of him, as a painter, that spans at least six decades. He always remained a member of the class he was born into.

There is no stress nor turmoil in his art, nor does he express avant-garde ideas in his paintings. There is, however, a refinement of touch and coloration in his best work, that is very attractive, and for these reasons alone, his art is memorable.

Tony Meers was born in Brampton in 1963 and grew up in Georgetown, where his parents still reside. After graduating from Georgetown and District High School he studied at York University and at the University of Toronto.

From 1977 to 1980 he worked as a commercial artist for Sears Advertising Department. In 1980 he set himself up as a free-lance commercial artist in Toronto. For two years he free-lanced for Sears mainly, but increasingly became known in the trade for the book covers he did for Harlequin, Penguin, Doubleday and General Publishing. He lives with his family in a pleasant house in Toronto, and is working in a large studio who's door opens into his garden.

I know Tony Meers from a long time ago, when he was an unusually talented 12-year-old boy.

He had an abiding interest in the observable world, in particular the human face and figure. This interest of his has never changed and over the years he has acquired the skills and the knowledge that is needed for his kind of talent. He has become a working artist, an artist who has to meet deadlines.

Quite often, a messenger boy comes to his studio and watches the artist making the last changes to his design, before it is rushed to the publisher. A working artist will very rarely paint something for himself. Instead, he, or she, will paint to the requirements of a client who hires him for a particular purpose.

We are surrounded by art of this nature, but we hardly ever look at it as art. We say "commercial art" with disdain in our voices, forgetting that once all art was commissioned by wealthy clients, who, because they held the purse strings, exercised control over the outcome. The "freedom" the modern artist has, to do whatever he likes, did not exist before the 19th century, and, of course, this freedom has as a result, that most artists today are ignored.

Hal Newman painted only when he felt like it. Tony Meers paints to order. Hal Newman was a man who, besides many other enterprises that engaged him during a long life, was also able to catch the mood of a landscape or the mood of a face, on paper or canvas.

Tony Meers belongs to the great army of working artists who give expression to even the most secret of our desires, and, by doing so, seduce us to keep on buying beyond the point of satiety.

Two exhibitions, two different definitions of art, two different artist personalities: both adding their work to the astonishing human fabric that covers the planet we call our home.

## Pioneer Village to feature samples of early travellers' food

At Black Creek Pioneer Village everyone becomes a traveller of the 19th century on the weekend of June 1-2. We'll Eat On The Way! is a program which focuses on the foods that were eaten by early Canadian travellers.

Lacking modern-day conveniences, these travellers would carry such portable and long-lasting foods as dried fruit, maple sugar, soup-in-a-pocket (dried soup), Nice Cookies That Will Keep Good Three Months and unleavened breads like bannock and hardtack. Visitors can enjoy samples of these foods during their tour of the Village.

Visitors can also play the Journey Game, which is based on the names of early communities in the Metro region. In the Village Grain Barn they can see a rare Conestoga wagon that was once a common means of transportation for freight and settlers.

Also, the annual Regatontide Service will take place on Sunday, June 2, at 2:30 p.m. This professional service will be led by the Rt. Rev. Allan Read, Bishop of Ontario for the Anglican Church of Canada. This centuries-old custom, one of supplication and asking, includes the blessing of seeds, animals, soil,

water and people in the hopes of a bountiful fall harvest.

Black Creek Pioneer Village is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on

weekends and holidays. The Village is located at Jane Street and Steeles Avenue in northwest Metro Toronto. For more information, call (416) 736-1733.

## Drenters exhibition open to the public

During the summer of 1990 Andreas Drenters of Rockwood, Ontario, exhibited 48 pieces of sculpture at the Gallery of the Halton Hills Cultural Centre in Georgetown. This exhibition won him many friends in our region. It was an artistic and financial success, and people have been waiting for another opportunity to see the work of this greatly talented artist.

Now there is another opportunity. Beginning Saturday, May 25th, Andreas Drenters will open the famous Rockwood Academy, where he lives and works, to the public, every weekend to October 31, for an exhibition of his latest work. In several rooms of the Old Academy, as well as in the courtyard and the garden, 187 pieces of sculpture will be displayed. Almost half of them are from the years 1990 and 1991. The hours to see the exhibition every Saturday and Sunday are from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

A good friend of the artist, the famous chef Herbert Biemann at the restaurant "La Vieille Auberge" in Rockwood, has adjusted his luncheon and dinner hours to the Andreas Drenters exhibition. If you desire to eat "haute cuisine" before or after you have experienced "fine art" you can do so at the "Auberge" from 11:30 a.m. on for the luncheon, or from 5:00 p.m. on for dinner. Between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. desert and coffee is served. Go to Rockwood and gratify your senses!

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