

## From Heart to Hand highlights work of local artists

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

The Fine Arts Society of Milton (FASM) is presenting its third annual *From Heart to Hand* art show and sale on Saturday, March 5 at the Milton Sports Centre.

The event, which begins at 9 am. and ends at 3 pm., will feature approximately 90 to 100 pieces of artwork including sculpture, paintings, pottery, wooden artifacts, blown glass pieces and stained glass.

Doug Elliott, chairperson of the art show and sale, says this is one of FASM's major events for the year, where both local and regional artists can showcase their work and get some much-needed exposure.

Between 35 and 40 artists, all of them members of FASM, have submitted pieces for the show. And FASM member Margaret Wilkes says most of the artists are either from Milton or the surrounding area. "It's surprising how many local artists there are."

Wilkes says the show's name was something that members arrived at as a group. Prior to the first show in 2003, members of FASM decided to select a name that would highlight the emotional connection between the artist and the process of creating art. "We came by the name in a kind of brainstorming way. The impulse to create comes from your heart. If you enjoy creation, it's a compulsion almost."

At the show, people can find out about the creative process by talking to the artists themselves. Wilkes says this will give people an opportunity to "be part of the day."

The Milton Sports Centre is located on Santa Maria Blvd. off Derry Road in Milton. There is no admission fee for the event.

To find out more about FASM, log onto the website [www.fasm.ca](http://www.fasm.ca) or visit the Arts Milton website at [www.artsmilton.ca](http://www.artsmilton.ca).

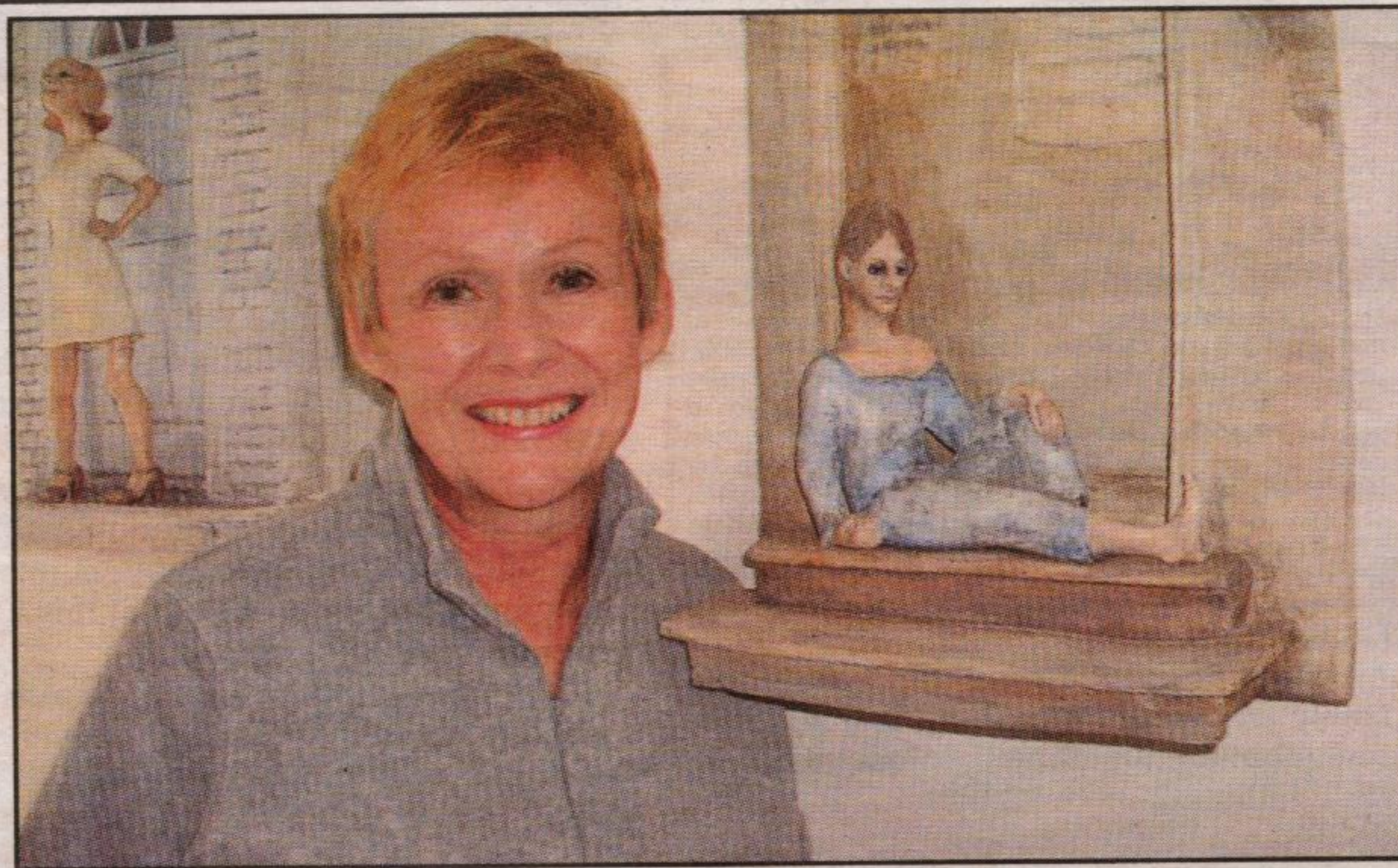


PHOTO BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

FASM member Nancy Cuttle displays a sculpture entitled *The Seventies: Disillusioned*. The work, which is part of a series on women in the 20th century, will be featured at FASM's third annual art show and sale *From Heart to Hand*. Cuttle says she will be giving a talk about the series on March 3 at a meeting of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), Milton branch. The presentation at Hugh Foster Hall begins at 8 pm.

## Purrfectly Manipulated

By BREN CHISHOLM

I've always liked cats. Honestly, I do. I like dogs, as well.

When I moved out on my own and got married, I acquired kittens - a brother and sister team - which stayed with us for a few years in our apartment until I had my first child. At that time, I felt so overwhelmed with my new responsibilities that my husband and I agreed it would be best to pass on our now fully grown cats to my sister.

Once we moved to our first home, having a pet was definitely not on my list of things to do. I was very house-proud and determined to keep everything spotless and neat, even with two children.

But then, once the kids were in school, they started asking for a pet because all their friends had at least one furry creature to take care of. Dogs, as far as I was concerned, were out of the question because they required walking and supervision during the day when the family was at school and work. The requests for a cat, however, became louder and more fervent but I was proud how firmly I held my "no pets" position.

My family and I visit my in-laws farm frequently and across the road is my husband's aunt's farm with an ever-changing entourage of animals, large and small. A stray cat or kitten is fairly standard but this time was different. It started mid-summer break when the children went to visit while I was at work.

I received an excited phone call from my eldest daughter, Kendra, one evening. "Mommy! You should see this little kitten at Aunt Marnie's!!! It's so tiny and it's black and white and it purrs so loud and, oh, the poor baby has to sleep outside under the barbecue on the porch! They call him 'Domino'! It has no mother...." And on it went.

But because it was over the phone, I could say "no" and that would be it. Or so I thought.

Two weeks later, we all went to the farm to visit. The children asked if we could mosey on over across the road to check out the animals and I thought nothing of it, having forgotten the telephone conversation from two weeks previous.

I'm not sure we even made it up to the front of the house when I saw something very small bounding towards us which fit the description of the kitten in question. It would seem we were being officially welcomed.

I got down on the grass and this little "thing" seemed to know exactly who the hard-sell of the family was. He crawled across my lap and purred as if his very life depended on it.

Okay, okay, I'll admit I was charmed by this unprecedented display of attention. In fact, I was smiling at this almost zero weight creature who seemed to think I was the greatest thing since... mother?!?

Then I gazed up and saw three sets of eyes looking at me expectantly. Once I realized I was being hoodwinked, I quickly removed the scheming little fur ball from my lap, slapped the grass off my knees and sug-

gested we walk back.

That's when the pleading began. The worst came from my husband who surprised me because his preference had always been a dog. He actually did it in front of his mother who could only look at me in sympathy. She of all people knew I was done for.

And that's how it happened. Before you could say, "should I get clumping or non-clumping?" I was rearranging the way I took in my groceries to ensure the cat didn't get out. I was looking at "spitty toys" in the pet food store wondering which one had the most catnip, thus, more amusement for the little guy.

They grow on you. We all know that.

You bond, you schmooze, and all of a sudden you have a companion that depends on, and seemingly loves you.

And with that comes responsibility like making sure the animal is in good health. I don't need to mention that veterinarian bills can be high. We had to look into the business of neutering and de-clawing, both of which we agreed should be done at the same time so he wouldn't have to be subjected to two rounds of anaesthetic.

After the operation, we brought home a very stoned, loose-limbed kitten and opened his cage door to allow him his first step. It took every bit of energy for him to even make it across the living room carpet.

A day or so passed when it became apparent he wasn't doing very well. The vet said he should be perking up somewhat a couple of days after the actual operation but that didn't look like any time soon.

I became concerned and brought him to bed with me that night which worked out well because my husband was on an overnight fishing trip. Because I didn't want to squish him, I placed him in the crook of my arm as I slept on my side (I usually sleep on my stomach) and made sure to check him every so often which meant I didn't sleep at all. I just wanted to make sure he was breathing.

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## from the bookshelf

By DIANE DINEEN ~MILTON LIBRARY'S TUESDAY EVENING BOOK CLUB

### Empire Falls

RICHARD RUSSO, VINTAGE BOOKS, 2001

They're everywhere, the small cities and the towns, falling into decay because the major industry, whether fishing or manufacturing or agriculture, has ceased to be profitable. The shops and offices are closed or have dust stained windows, the houses are faded and unkempt, the people are struggling to make ends meet. There is despair but there is also hope that a new venture, another business, a tourist attraction or time will revive what once was a shiny, bright and happy place.

Empire Falls is one of those towns, this time in Maine. The textile mills, once busy and profitable have closed. Few other employment options are available. The Whiting family which ran those mills for generations has been reduced to one controlling old woman, Francine Whiting and her disabled daughter.

The hero of this story, if there is a hero, is Miles Roby. Miles was once a bright young man showing lots of promise, away at university but called home just short of graduation when his mother became ill. Miles now runs the not very profitable Empire Grill, one of Mrs. Whiting's many properties. His wife has filed for divorce mostly because of terminal boredom, his teenage daughter is having a miserable time at the local high school and Miles' reprobate father is stealing money from Miles' shirt pocket.

Could a town with dismal prospects and a man living a life of quiet desperation

form the basis for an interesting, challenging and complicated novel? In this case the answer is yes. Richard Russo won the Pulitzer Prize for this book and justly so. The Milton Public Library Tuesday Evening Book Club rated it a 9-9.5 out of 10.

Russo fills the town with believable characters, people you would expect to see in any small community. The local police officer, the high school principal, the unhappy teen who may be a victim of abuse, the divorcee whose new relationship isn't working out; all these characters are described and developed so well that they are not stereotypes but real people, possibly your neighbours. There is the complex web of relationships and interrelationships that one finds in a town where every family has been in place for some time. Russo paints the scene with clarity and with humanity, even the villains are shown as deserving compassion.

Russo's portrayal of high school life and of teen bullying is so vivid as to be painful. The taunts, the jabs, the pushing, the name-calling; all these call up the worst of high school experiences. One soon understands how such torment can lead to further violence.

Richard Russo has done a masterful job in his portrayal of a town with diminished hopes and real life problems. You will remember scenes and characters from this book long after you have set it down.



## March is Kids Month at the Library

### March Break Kits

March Break Kits available beginning Thursday, March 10 (while supplies last). Each kit includes games, crafts, bookmarks and more.

For children 6 and up

### Colouring Contest

Drop by the Library and enter our colouring contest. For children 3 - 8 (3 age groups) The contest runs for all of March.

### The 60's Rock

What was it like in the 1960's?

Come and find out

Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> 2 pm.

Children 6 and up - \$2.00

Please pre-register

905-875-2665

[www.mpl.on.ca](http://www.mpl.on.ca)