

IMAGES

. . . *then and now*

From The Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

Village Creativity: The Indian Hill Artists, 1957-76

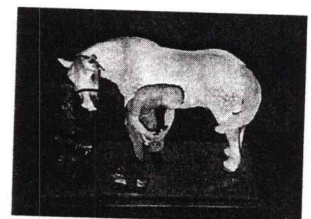
In the mid-1950's a small group of artistically gifted men and women banded together as the Indian Hill Artists. Every autumn for twenty years they held a local show. Several art classes formed the genesis of the group. Thursday classes at the Loveland studio of renowned painter Carl Zimmerman were attended by Ede Schmidt, Betty Ware, Joyce Attee and Kendall and Lois Wyman. Often they painted fresh flowers from Mrs. Zimmerman's gardens. Four ladies made up a weekly sculpture class, organized by Marjorie Applegate, and nationally prominent Charles Cutler was their instructor. That class met at the Applegate studio, in the basement of CCDS, and also at Camp Stepping Stones. As the people in these classes became friends, and recognized the talent in their midst, they decided to hold a show.



E. Vance Clark, 1997

A core of artists and their spouses enthusiastically planned, set up committees, produced artwork, publicized the show, and invited other Village residents. Their planning meetings, held at dinner parties at each others' homes, included the charter members: the Armses, Arnolds, Applegates, Bauer-Nilsens, Clarks, Doziers, Eustises, Ewells, Gibsons, Schmidts, Wares, and Wymans. A sampling of the minutes of their meetings reflects the sense of gaiety and friendship underlying the group: "Vance Clark proposed a toast to Henry Arnold on behalf of his labors in preparing postcards which were distributed for mailing", and, "The Chairman of the Punch Committee reported everything under control." It is recalled that one of the artists had therapeutic talent, and *walked on member's backs* after meetings to relieve tension. These couples combined the ability to organize an annual exhibition, promotion of each other's creative endeavors, and enjoyment of mutual camaraderie.

Some of the artists were self-taught, but most had some instruction or background in art. There was never any formal training for the entire group, but for several years there were weekly impromptu painting sessions at the Little Red Schoolhouse between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Painters brought 25 cents and spent the day depicting such objects as a box of strawberries, a fresh bouquet, or a local volunteer model. Each artist worked on his own particular stylistic interpretation, without competition or criticism—bolstering each other's growth. Bulletin articles encouraged Village residents to attend these casual work sessions, with prospective artists invited to bring their "own materials, easel, something to protect the floor, and lunch."



Horse by
Francis Eustis

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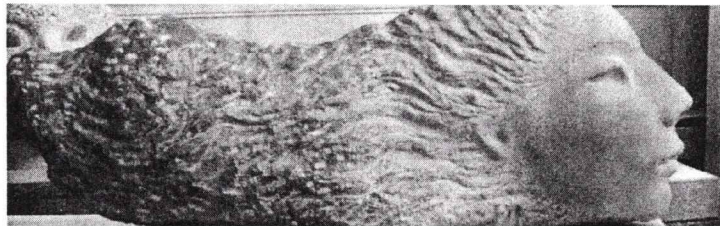
The Indian Hill Artists - continued



Ede Schmidt at a
Show, c. 1960

The Indian Hill Artists (all Village residents) held their annual shows at the Little Red Schoolhouse on a weekend afternoon in November. Each artist was limited to three entries and paid a \$2.00 entry fee. Hosts, chosen by committee, officiated at the punch bowl, serving "Witch's Brew" or apple cider to prospective purchasers. All artists delivered their framed work on the morning of the event, and non-artistic spouses assisted Carl Zimmerman or Herman Wessel in the assembly of peg boards and the hanging of the individual pieces. By late afternoon much of the art was sold to the crowds of Villagers who attended. In 1962 increased participation caused the show to be moved to CCDS, and then to Livingston Lodge in 1972.

In 1963 the group created an Award of Art for a local student, an attempt to recognize artistic achievement at the high school level. A \$25 cash prize was donated to the winner's school, and many of the best artworks by students were exhibited at the annual autumn show.



Sculpture by Marjorie Applegate



Wildflowers by
Joyce Attee

As new artists joined the founding group over two decades the Indian Hill artists expanded and gained acclaim. A wide range of specialties was evident at each show—oil and watercolor paintings, ceramic impressions, three dimensional collages, botanical illustrations, and photographs. The artists were working mostly for their own satisfaction, but several of the Indian Hill Artists became renowned in their fields, successfully exhibiting beyond Village limits and featured at prominent galleries.

Though there no longer is an annual Indian Hill Artists Show, many artists who were associated with it have kept up their artistic pursuits. Members of the original group, such as Ede Schmidt and Marge Applegate, fondly recall the great fun they had together, and the wonderful level of community support they received. The cooperation of the Village and the support of neighbors helped make every show a success, enriching the community with a celebration of local culture and individual achievement.