

## Art and Artisan Show coming to Hockley Village this week

By Constance Scrafield

“We wanted to commit for two times a year to have a show at the Seniors and Community Centre in Hockley Village ?

Thanksgiving and the May long weekend.”

So Catherine Howard remarked.

“It is really important to us to support that beautiful heritage building the antique Hockley Village,” she averred. “These historical buildings need to be cared for and Janice Mason, who rents it out, is doing a terrific job. She really worked with us and we have committed to the place.”

The commitment is to hold two art shows a year, as she said, and to encourage and invite the public to come and enjoy an open concept of art that includes much more than paintings. A painter herself, Howard believes in prints, cards and every kind of art that can sit on a shelf, hang on a wall or grace the neck of a lady.

This results are a thoroughly eclectic combination of pottery, photographs, jewellery (always hand made), textiles and paper products, like prints of originals. And pebble art.

“I remember being at a show where an artist had some prints of her work and someone objected to them,” she said. “Not everyone can afford to buy an original and would like to buy a print ? it’s good for the artist too. After all, who said artists shouldn’t be allowed to earn a living?”

A business woman, she ran her own shop, a retail business in Kingston for pretty well 40 years. Trouble with her husband’s health entailed her shutting it down. She also wanted to move closer to her daughter and family, who live in Bolton.

However, Howard and her husband preferred the historical town of Orangeville.

“We loved Orangeville ? such a hub of the arts ? wonderful,” she exclaimed.

Even though a busy life with children and her business held her back for many years from painting, which she had done when younger, once she was moved into their apartment in Orangeville, Howard was back to work on her painting and loving every second of it. It was, as well as a pleasure, a way of meeting like-minded people who were artists or appreciated art. Since her arrival a mere four years ago, she has met and developed warm relationships with many people in the art world.

By early last year, she was keen to hold an independent sort of show and went in search of a venue.

“Hockley is perfect for us ? the light is wonderful with the windows all around and we can set up the bigger pieces on the stage, so, as people walk into the hall, they see the art and the tone is set for them to enjoy themselves,” she spoke with considerable enthusiasm. “I first met Janice at the Strawberry Breakfast they have early in June to support the hall. And, then, when I went to talk to Janice and see the place, I booked it on the spot.”

The first show last Thanksgiving was her own initiative; it only remained for her to seek out and ask artists and artisans to join her for the long weekend. They were very glad they did, for the show was well received and the numbers of people who came were satisfyingly good. They were impressed with what they saw and bought.

The artists that participated in that first show have bonded into a loose sort of group but are united in the idea of providing a diversity of work for people to enjoy and own, if they wish. So easy ? and nice.

The Hockley Art and Artisans’ show is on at the Seniors and Community Centre in Hockley Village, across the road from the General Store. It is May 20, 21 and 22, as that is the Victoria Day weekend and will be open until 6 p.m. every day.

“The artists have been very supportive and so have the local merchants,” Howard said. “We put a prize basket together and they are very willing to contribute to it.”

“It’s so great to live here,” she remarked.