



ASMA

NEWS AND JOURNAL

Fall 2014

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MARINE ARTISTS

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF AMERICAN MARINE ART AND THE FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS BETWEEN ARTISTS



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ASMA JOURNAL

Notes From Brush Hill

by Charles Raskob Robinson
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THE EUREKA MOMENT

"And Archimedes, as he was washing, thought of a manner of computing the proportion of gold in King Hiero's crown by seeing the water flowing over the bathing-stool. He leaped up as one possessed or inspired, crying, 'I have found it! Eureka!'"

"Pleasure Not Attainable
According to Epicurus"

Plutarch (46-120 AD)¹

EUREKA IN SURPRISE, ARIZONA

And so it was for the brewery chemist, licensed real estate agent, CPA and tax accountant in the closing months of 2005 when she took an art class at the Sun City Grand community near Surprise, Arizona. Sheri Farabaugh had lived many lives but finally found the one she was looking for. It was her Eureka moment.

How did she know? She explains, "Life is definitely great and art is the reason, but I'd have a hard time saying why art changed my life nine years ago. I'll say that I have given up everything else that I used to do, paint six days a week and am excited to get to my studio and get busy on my latest project.



"Corbus Creek" - 24" x 24" - Oil on Hardboard

It's kind of rare that I ask myself 'why.' It's enough for me to know that as an artist I now have more focus than I've ever had in any of my previous professions. Said another way, I was never passionate about the other jobs I had. They were a way to make a living. And when not working I was involved in everything under the sun. I enjoyed a lot of different things. However when I started painting, I read every art magazine I could and took every art class I could. I couldn't get enough. I loved it and wanted to learn all I could possibly learn. I also gave up all of my extra curricular activities except maybe gardening, as those plants are still there and need attention, and the piano but that isn't as demanding. In short, I wasn't captivated by anything I did before painting. When people spoke of being passionate about something,

I couldn't imagine what they were talking about. And I really couldn't imagine finding it in accounting. Life was fine, but is much more rewarding now. I'm very lucky to have had this experience with painting/creating."

"JUST GET ON WITH IT"

Sheri's story is a "Heads Up" for readers who have enjoyed different careers and later in life take up a serious interest in art: It is never too late. She was fifty-two when her Eureka moment occurred and it reminds me of the story of another woman I knew, a British gardener, writer and lecturer, Rosemary Verey (1918-2001) who at sixty-two published her first book and went on to write *seventeen* more. Twenty some years ago my wife, Barbara, received a sabbatical from her law firm in New York and she used



"Beneath the Surface" - 36" x 24" - Oil on Hardboard

part of it to work for Rosemary as a gardener. Recently, Barbara wrote a biography about her that is now in its third printing: **Rosemary Verey: The Life and Lessons of a Legendary Gardener**.² Principal among the "lessons" was that one could open a whole new chapter later in life. And be very successful. When she died she was known around the world. The **Economist** – a journal not known for a botanical bent – gave her a full-page obituary and **Financial Times**, the **New York Times** and others followed. She was very

(Footnotes)

¹ From John Deyden's *Translation of Plutarch's Lives of Noble Greeks and Romans, Corrected and Revised by A.H. Clough*. Although John Deyden was rightly pleased by his rendering into English Plutarch's study of the character of ancient Greeks and Romans based on their writings, something clearly was lost in the translation of this passage. Put into an English we might understand, King Hiero II (308-215 BCE), the Greek king of Syracuse, Sicily asked his friend the Sicilian mathematician and scientist Archimedes (287-212 BCE) to determine if his newly made crown was, as ordered, solid gold or if the jeweler had substituted some silver and pocketed the difference in gold. The crown weighed what it should have weighed if made with pure gold and Archimedes knew that silver had a lower specific density than gold (the same weight occupied more volume than gold) but he puzzled for a long time on how to determine what metal

was used in the crown. While taking a bath, Archimedes noticed that as he got into the tub, a volume of water was displaced and that was his Eureka (Greek for "I have found it.") moment. If the crown displaced the same amount of water as the bar of gold from which it was to have been made, it was 100% gold. If it displaced more water (had a larger volume – a lower specific density), an alloy less than 100% gold had been used. Oddly, given the fame of this legend, I never have learned the Archimedes' answer to the King's question.

VARIED AND COLORFUL EARLIER LIVES OF THE ARTIST

It is fascinating to wonder if Sheri's accomplishments in such different fields of endeavor as beer making and tax accounting and her experiences during her formative years influence what and how she paints. It brings to mind the witty observation of the famous American economist John Kenneth Galbraith: "I doubt if one ever fully recovers from a career in banking."³ What about careers as a brewer, a real estate agent or a CPA tax accountant?

When Sheri arrived at Madison, WI to attend the University of Wisconsin, she wanted to be a pharmacist but, upon further reflection, changed her major to biochemistry. The additional science prerequisites cost her an extra year but she got her degree in 1976 and went to work for the Miller Brewing Company in Milwaukee, WI where she was in the Quality Control Department. After a couple of years and "making a lot of money," she left Miller and took off to backpack and EuroRail through England and the Continent for three months.

Upon her return home to Wisconsin, she went west to Colorado where "the economy was booming and skiing was great." "The real estate market was hot so I decided to get into that business. However, by the time I completed my certification and got my license, the market tanked. So I got a job at the famous Colorado brewery,

Coors, just outside Denver in Golden. That was in 1980 and I worked in their R & D Department, focusing on filtration. Since Coors was somewhat unusual in that they did not pasteurize their beer, it was doubly important to have systems to filter out microbes and organic material. I also was a taster. There were two groups of tasters and I was in both. One sought to insure that the taste remained consistent as production variables might change from time to time and the other focused on the beer's 'drinkability.' This was important because it was that dimension of taste that, when one finished one's first beer, prompted one to have a second. And a third, etc. All of this occurred on the sixth floor of the brewery where there was a beautiful bar. However, it was not all it might seem to be for we took little sips so as not to fatigue our taste buds and it was often in the morning. It was the good life and the benefits were good – especially the Coors Ski Club. I have never had a job with so much free time and, frankly, so little productivity. I knew one person who kept a joke file so she could entertain everyone on breaks. And at that time there were beer taps in the lunchroom. Why did I leave that place for public accounting?"

After six years at Coors, Sheri left the brewing business for good. But before we leave that chapter in her life, it is interesting to note just how she and her family fit into the history of beer making in America. Sheri was born on June 12, 1953 in a hospital in Fort Atkinson, WI to Paul and Ruth Frohmader and grew up in the nearby town of Jefferson⁴. Both towns are about an hour west of Milwaukee⁵. Paul Frohmader was a brewery chemist for Ladish Malting Company of Jefferson, at the time one of the

² *Rosemary Verey: The Life and Lessons of a Legendary Gardener*, Barbara Paul Robinson, David R. Godine Publisher, Boston, First Printing 2012, ISBN 978-1-156792-450-3, Pages: 250. It has been favorably reviewed in this country (Michael Dirda in the *Washington Post*) and in the United Kingdom (in a cover story in *Gardens Illustrated*).

³ This Canadian-born American is as well known for his quotes as his significant writing and influence in American economics during his long life (1908–2006). His sharp tongue was not reserved for bankers for he said of his own profession: "Economics is extremely useful as a form of employment for economists."

⁴ Rosemary Kennedy (1918-2005), the mentally handicapped sister of President Kennedy and the two Senators, lived for most of her life in Jefferson at the St. Coletta School for Exception Children after her failed lobotomy and died at the hospital in Fort Atkinson.

⁵ She has a younger sister, Barbara, ("Barb") who is a medical transcription nurse and brother, Douglas, who is the Creative Director at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Marquette graduated its first students in 1887 and a year later Frederick Miller, founder of Miller Brewing Company, died and left some

largest malt operations in the country and supplier to the big breweries in Milwaukee, including Miller Brewing Company⁶. When the town of Jefferson was being settled in the mid-Nineteenth Century, two German brewers made their way to the United States. Frederick Miller settled in Milwaukee in 1855 and acquired a brewery he named Miller Brewing Company and Adolph Coors established the Coors Brewing Company in Colorado in 1873. In 1886 Miller became one of the first breweries in the world to pasteurize its beer, then a new technology introduced by Louis Pasteur and decades later, in 1959, Coors introduced another first: the all aluminum beer can. While Sheri was the common thread in our story between the two breweries (Miller and Coors), that bond became much more significant long after she left beer making. In 2002 South African Breweries (SAB) bought Miller Brewing⁷ and became one of the largest breweries in the world. That same year Coors bought most of the assets of Bass Breweries in the United Kingdom and then merged with Molson to form the Molson Coors Brewing Company, the world's fifth largest brewery. Then SABMiller and Molson Coors entered a U.S. joint venture to create MillerCoors. In 2009 they moved their headquarters to Chicago.⁸

While she enjoyed working at Coors, Sheri wanted the freedom of being self-employed so she began to take accounting courses at Metro Community College in Denver while still at the brewery. The process took three years but she took the CPA exam and passed. She left Coors to join a small accounting firm where she was greeted by a boss who said, "If you

(Footnotes)

of his estate to the school. James Foley, the journalist and reporter kidnapped and eventually beheaded by ISIS in August of this year, was from Marquette Class of 1996.

⁶ Malt is one of the primary ingredients in beer. The giant commodities company, Cargill, now owns Ladish.

⁷ From Phillip Morris that had purchased it in 1970.

⁸ Breweries are often inter-owned so it is difficult to state just which produces the most beer but among the largest would be: Anheuser Busch/In-Bev; SAB Miller; Heineken; Carlsberg; three Chinese beers: Tsingtao, CR Snow and Beijing Yanjing; the Mexican Modelo; Molson Coors; and the Japanese Kirin. The MillerCoors joint venture is part of the SAB Miller and the Molson Coors companies.

⁹ Dave has two grown daughters from a previous marriage, Amy and Michelle.



"Whitewater - Running the Rapids" - 24" x 30" - Oil on Canvas

ever do this, you're fired and if you ever do that, you're fired!" That lasted only so long. In 1988 she joined the Denver office of McGladrey and Pullen, a much larger accounting firm (7,000 employees at present) headquartered in Chicago. Life as a tax accountant got more interesting when she met David Farabaugh on an outdoor horseback riding event. David, originally from Indiana, had moved to Colorado where he became a partner in W. J. Whatley, a firm that produced fiberglass light poles that were sold throughout the country. He is an avid golfer with a zero handicap and has won multiple state and club championships. They married on December 1, 1990⁹ and Sheri left McGladrey & Pullen to fulfill her long held aspiration to practice on her own.

Sheri worked as an independent contractor keeping books and doing accounting work until 2005 when David sold his company and retired. This meant he could realize his dream of playing golf twelve months of the year: Summers in Colorado and winters in Arizona. They bought a place in Sun City Grand near Surprise and not far from Phoenix¹⁰ and since her husband was

heading south, Sheri figured it was a good a time to sever all ties and commitments so she too retired and went to spend the winter in Arizona.

POST EUREKA: STEPPING STONES TO A NEW CAREER

Art Students League of Denver

So that was Sheri's situation in the fall of 2005 when she signed up for classes at Sun City Grand and art took her by surprise. She took to it from the beginning and her success fired her enthusiasm. "There was a wonderful studio and classroom with very friendly and helpful people who made it easy to dive in head-first. The art club had its own gallery, so at this very early stage (I'd been painting a couple of months) I was able to hang my work to be viewed by others. In addition they had a spring art sale in March. So having only painted for three months, I was encouraged to pull together six pieces, get them properly framed, and ready for sale. I sold four out of six and, shockingly at the time, someone actually paid \$150 for the largest. I was hooked. So many times, back in Denver, I'd hear people say, 'I'm

Notes From Brush Hill



"Kayaker" - 18" x 36" - Oil on Canvas

not ready to exhibit or sell my work. I need to learn more before I can do that! I really had a lucky experience being encouraged to immediately exhibit and participate in the art fair. I guess that was more life changing than I thought. I really believe that anyone who is painting seriously should enter shows, display wherever they can, and join clubs that give them the opportunity as soon as possible to put their art in front of others."

"Immediately after I returned from Arizona in the spring of 2006, I signed up for classes at the Art Students League of Denver." Modeled on the famous Art Students League of New York that was founded in 1875, the Art Students League of Denver first opened its doors in 1987. Today it is located in the historic and beautiful Sherman School in the West Washington Park area at 200 Grant Street. Designed by Henry Dozier to symbolize the pride and grandeur that once was part of the public school image, it is a striking building and one of the few

(Footnotes)

¹⁰ This large retirement community for active adults began in 1996 and, coincidentally, was completed in 2005 – the year the Farabaughs bought their home.

¹¹ One can actually take a slow flyover the whitewater rapids of Confluence Park by putting yourself in the pilot seat of a drone. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-6qTnt1f8>

¹² This is the mountain painter's argot for what ASMA coastal painter and Fellow Don Stone calls "skimmers" (pronounced "skim-aars" with a good Downeast accent). Both refer to a failed painting on canvas board that is launched like a Frisbee on a no-return flight. In Don's case, the flight begins at the edge of the sea and "skims" over the water before disappearing.

¹³ Sheri reports that, "We sold the cottage July 31, but have good memories (and photos) to last a long time."

of his structures remaining. "I took classes regularly with quite a range of instructors for about five or six years and it was a huge influence on me. Composition philosophy, value, and my art vocabulary - it all comes from the Art Students League of Denver. The instructors are great and the ASLD was a huge influence. I also enjoyed being around other artists who were entering exhibits, competitions, and actively selling their art. So I found it important to spend more time in Denver." Unfortunately for her husband, Dave, it meant that she no longer spends all the winter months in Arizona but she does systematically visit for a week every month, and, when she does, she uses the "casita" – a detached guest room with bath – as her studio.

"I absolutely loved painting from the first class I took in Arizona. However, positive reinforcement goes a long way toward strengthening one's interest. The first award I received was a "Best of Show" in an exhibit in Glendale, Arizona. It was an exhibit that I had attended the previous year and it impressed me so I decided to give them my best work. I was shocked to receive that kind of award so early on, and as a bonus the painting sold - for a price I never imagined I would get for one of my paintings. I was sure my Arizona friends would think I was crazy in setting that price but an instructor helped me determine it. It's my theory that you have a better chance of getting an award with a subject that is a little

out of the ordinary and this one was. In any case, it did provide a great deal of positive reinforcement in my new career."

MARINE ARTIST TAKES TO WATER

"I started painting water when the Art Students League of Denver had a contest sponsored by the Greenway Foundation. Since 1974 this Foundation has cleaned up a number of Denver's waterways, transforming them from virtual cesspools to places of environmental and recreational pride and, to heighten public awareness of their mission, the Foundation had a 'Paint the River' contest. The location specified was Confluence Park." This is an urban park encompassing the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River in lower downtown Denver, a bustling district of 19th-century brick warehouses and storefronts that has been redeveloped since the late 1980s and the waterways made safe for kayaking and tubing.¹¹ "I took a lot of photos of the Park including a few of the falls and the more I looked at the falls, the more I thought it had a lot of interest. I have painted that falls many times now along with other areas in the Park. Painting the transparency and reflectivity of a moving subject like water and having it look real is exciting. The kayaker was a lucky find when I was on the bridge over the river. (See *The Kayaker*.) Elsewhere in the Park I spotted a little girl, walking across the river in her dress while playing with her brothers." (See *Beside the Still Waters*, which won the Honorable Mention in Realism award in the Oil Painters of America 2014 National Exhibit)

SHANGHAI

"In April, 2007 I had only been painting a year when this incredible opportunity came up through a local club I belonged to: Sixteen artists and three spouses went to China for ten days on a trip hosted by a Chinese artist who knew someone in our club and the Chinese government funded part of the trip. We each brought two paintings and our hosts had a show for us at Shanghai University, attended by students and teachers. It was our 'fifteen minutes of fame' and one of the nicest trips I've been on. We did a day of plein air painting and saw sights the rest of the time in the

Shanghai region. China and the Chinese in general take art and art instruction seriously. Some instruction was still about traditional Chinese art, but there were some fantastic contemporary artists."

LOVE THE PROCESS OF CREATING ART

"Kind remarks and awards for paintings are very gratifying but, if you don't love the process of creating a painting, they won't keep you going through all of the trials and 'Frisbees.' On another level, the process of painting, not necessarily the result, takes you to another place that is difficult to explain to non-artists." It is this higher level that was her Eureka. And the "process" is an A to Z undertaking: From determining the subject to be painted, composing it to executing it.

FINDING THE SUBJECT

"As to choosing the subject matter itself – subjects that I am interested in and am likely to photograph for paintings, I suspect some childhood experiences have subconsciously influenced me. Art was not an important part of my early education and my father was hoping that I would be a scientist but I clearly remember an art teacher at Jefferson High School, Vincent Lia. He was a good figurative artist and did life-size works. He brought some of his paintings into class and I realized that one could really achieve something with art." Sheri was not alone in being touched by the influence of Vince Lia for he is still alive and very much a legend in the artistic community of Jefferson County. In fact, there is an art club made up of his former students that is still active and enjoys his presence when they periodically meet at the Fort Atkinson Senior Center.

Another important dimension in her growing up was Wind Lake. "My grandfather built a cottage on Wind Lake just west of Milwaukee in 1926 with the intent of making a place where family could spend good times together. We spent summers there, boating, water-skiing, rowing, swimming, fishing, and all the good stuff. We got to know our cousins better than a most people do, and regularly got together with them for reunions at the Lake until a year or so ago."¹³ Listening to Sheri describe potential subject matter in nature, one senses that she developed a keen eye for such early in life,



"Beside the Still Waters" - 20" x 30" - Oil on Canvas

no doubt on Wind Lake.

"I take photos of potential subjects wherever I am, download and save them. I have a lot of photos but I should mention that, in addition to being an excellent golfer, my husband Dave is a photographer with a good eye. Several of my paintings were done from photos that he took. He doesn't enter shows or belong to clubs, but does a great job with the camera. I generally paint from photos displayed on a computer monitor next to my easel, but I am starting to paint more often from life. These plein air studies help me see the color or value better when I paint a more finished painting from the photo in the studio."

COMPOSING THE SUBJECT

"When I'm looking for something to paint, I focus on the abstract value pattern that I see in the thumbnail photos on my screen. Some photos automatically rise to the top of the painting order and are done almost immediately. If I have a strong composition from the start I have much better odds of a successful painting. So, I'd like to say that the subject of the painting is unimportant but it's probably closer to the truth that I choose a subject and then look for a strong representative of it. If I can't find

a good abstract value pattern, and it doesn't look like it'll be easy to adjust, I move on.

I love an accurate drawing that not only, for instance, defines the shape of an arm, but also tells you a lot about the action or the attitude of person it belongs to. Creating an interesting dark/light pattern and then finding the light in a scene that makes the subject pop is exciting."

EXECUTING THE SUBJECT

"I thought about how the detail work in my years as an accountant might have influenced the way I approach a painting. However, I think I had a bent toward detail a long time before my tax career. Probably it is more my curiosity and interest in discovering how things work and why. And this goes back to grade school. My father, the chemist, would take me on Saturday afternoons to his lab for a half hour or an hour to check on tests he was running. It wasn't frequent but was kind of our thing and I loved visiting the lab. Instead of dolls I had chemistry sets, ant farms, and a lot of crafty activities. One friend, Susie, who was quite the instigator but is no longer with us, and I loved to whip up toxic ant killers, set things on fire, and such. That grew into the degree in biochemistry. The "Krebs Cycle"

Notes From Brush Hill



"Force and the Flow IX" - 36" x 48" - Oil on Canvas

was to me fascinating.¹⁴ To understand on a molecular level how our bodies produce energy was magic. The tax career was more about following rules, and so not as interesting. My favorite part of accounting was really to unravel accounting disasters - taking poor records, nonexistent records, and organizing them into an acceptable format. (However, you wouldn't know that looking at my desk.)

So taking a complicated painting subject that on its surface looks impossible and distilling the difficult sections into doable pieces and then putting it together in a form that captures the scene is I think where I find a lot of my enjoyment in the 'process.' Watching something come to life is real

(Footnotes)

¹⁴ Also known as the tricarboxylic acid cycle, the Krebs cycle, is a "series of chemical reactions used by all aerobic organisms to generate energy thru the oxidation of acetate derived from carbohydrates, fats and proteins into carbon dioxide and chemical energy in the form of adenosine triphosphate (ATP)." Sheri put all of that into simple English with her description: "How our bodies produce energy on a molecular level." Hans Adolf Krebs discovered this process while working at the University of Sheffield in England in 1937 and won a Nobel Prize for it in 1953.

magic."

"My painting method varies depending on what is needed. Small paintings I block in without a sketch, larger paintings I sometimes use a grid method to make sure everything is close to the right place. Some paintings are done in very thin layers, and often in transparent pigments. Others have a lot more impasto and I am consciously trying to use more paint." Part of this attempt to use more paint comes from advice she has received to "loosen up." She notes, "One thing about the ASLD, or maybe it's a bias in all art communities: I felt some pressure to paint in a looser style. And I love loose paintings. Russian artists are among my favorites. Daniil Volkov (born in 1974 in Yalta and son of a renowned Ukrainian artist) and Ivan Vityuk (born in 1970 in a small village in western Ukraine and attended an art school where his father taught) are among my favorites. Vityuk does portraits of his daughter in floral head wreaths that are amazing. I almost bought one for my collection. I collect as well as paint. Essentially everything hanging in my

house is by an artist I admire, mainly from instructors. Collecting is an important part of my love of art."

"I have tried to paint looser, but kept coming back to detail, and thin layers applied to achieve realism. Artists who helped me to realize that painting detail is OK are: Andrew Newell Wyeth (1917-2009); the Canadian naturalist painter Robert Bateman, OC, OBE (b.1930); the classically trained Minnesota painter Jeffrey T. Larson (b.1962); and the contemporary realist from Colorado, Daniel Sprick (b. 1953 who attended the National Academy of Art in New York before getting his BA at the University of Northern Colorado). From them I have learned the importance of composition and detail.

EXAMPLE OF A PAINTING IN PROCESS (SEE THE PHOTOS OF PROGRESSIVE STEPS.)

Sheri starts out with a sketch and then paints warm undertones on the top and the estimated color of the rocks as if they were wet but the water was not there. "Then I start to lay the blue reflections on top of the warm underpainting and add detail to some of the waves. To paint water going over the rocks, I glaze semi-transparent color over the rock color once it had dried. The center area is close to finished and I'll start to bring the value and color of the top into agreement with the middle area. For this painting I paint wet on wet for areas that need to have soft edges, but for the detail the bottom layer needs to be dry. The final, and most difficult step is the whitewater at the bottom. It's more random than the other areas, which makes it harder to paint. There is also a lot more detail, so I am forced to approximate and adjust."

"The initial stages of this painting don't look at all like what I hope my finished painting will be. The paint is thin and blotchy, the colors are weak, and in some cases the colors are actually incorrect. In this case, I did some underpainting that I hoped would serve a purpose in the finished piece. Some of them were too strong, and really didn't help. Some added the warmth they were supposed to and did serve a purpose." Sheri points out that she learned something from the series of paintings she had done of the falls – over a dozen now – that she is



Painting in progress - 1



Painting in progress - 3



Painting in progress - 2



Painting in progress - 4

able to apply to her non-water paintings: "The first stages can be very disappointing and discouraging, but if I keep on track with my original vision, continue to bring the color closer, continue to work on the drawing and the detail, I will eventually get there."



Finished demonstration Painting

he taught for many years and was, in fact, a member of the founding board. He works in pastels and watercolors and is a member of and has received awards from

prestigious organizations in those fields, such as the Pastel Society of America, the International Association of Pastel Artists, the American Watercolor Society, etc. Kim English was raised in Colorado and is a product of the Rocky Mountain School of Art in Denver. Given Sheri's interest in applying more paint in a looser manner, her attraction to him is understandable for he is noted for his ability to manipulate the medium using the *alla prima* method of painting in one application ("at once" in Italian.) The Pianist Sheri no doubt also appreciates his ability to see the interrelationship of two art forms, music and painting, for he is an accomplished composer and performer. His work has been exhibited widely – in the East at the National Academy and the Salmagundi Club in New York and in the West at the Loveland Museum and the Mitchell Memorial Museum of Western Art.

It does not take much to see the organized mind of a biochemist and the procedural certainty of an accountant at work here. And, to use the etymology of another Greek word, *didactic*, she is skillful in teaching. Others have recognized this for she has been invited to teach a course in Arizona this winter. She nonetheless continues her search to refine her own voice as she studies under others and teaches herself. "I am signed up for a figurative sculpture class this November. For a long time I thought I should limit myself to oil so I could concentrate on one subject. I think it might be time to add other disciplines to expand my creativity. I've heard that a little diversity can help you be a better oil painter."

HER INSTRUCTORS

In addition to her high school art teacher, Vince Lia, instructors Sheri has valued include Doug Dawson (b.1944), Kim English (b.1957), Mark Daily (b.1944), and Kevin Wechback (b.1970). She met Dawson at the Art Students League of Denver where

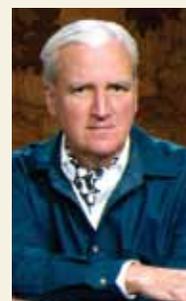
The bold, impressionistic and colorful style of Mark Daily attracted Sheri to study under him. His life story is itself colorful. Born in Chicago, he headed west at a young age after spending some time at two of that city's premier art organizations, the Art Institute through a junior program and the American Academy of Art. When he

arrived at Taos, New Mexico the light and the thriving artist community prompted him to stay and build a reputation there. Being young and full of energy, he joined up with other Western artists that painted, traveled and sold together in Taos and Denver and they became known as the "Denver School" of art. That group is no longer active but Daily continues to paint and teach and lives with his family in Colorado. Interested in drawing, Sheri also studied under Denver-born Kevin Wechback who earned a degree in Illustration at the Rocky Mountain School of Art and studied at the Art Students League of Denver.

RECOGNITION AND REFLECTION

Sheri's philosophy of actively seeking opportunities to show her work and compete wherever she can has laid the foundation for developing a national reputation. In the last few months alone, she won an Honorable Mention at the Oil Painters of America National Exhibition, was selected by **Southwest Art** as an "Artist to Watch" and, closer to home, was elected Signature Member of our Society and had her work **The Force and the Flow** juried into the Society's **16th National Exhibition** that opens on line this fall. She first exhibited in Arizona and then Shanghai but has gone on to add Colorado, Wyoming, Texas, Kansas and even Vermont and Tennessee to the list. As she said about her Eureka experience in art, "I have never been more focused." And, indeed, the results are increasingly evident.

However, Sheri also left me with an observation that, upon continued reflection prompts me to believe we should stay tuned and that there is more to come: "Washing brushes is a good place to think. I should do it more often."



Charles Raskob Robinson is a Fellow of the Society. He paints at Brush Hill, a studio built in 1752, located in Washington, CT and formerly owned by Connecticut and New Mexico artist Eric Sloane. Some of Charlie's work may be seen on his website at: www.brushhillstudios.com.