

January 26, 2025

Welcome to our **January** newsletter!



In this edition:

- Get involved in 2025 with volunteer opportunities, studio group, workshops, and more!
- 2024 Recap: Artist Stories
- Group of Seven article by Mary Lou Whitehorne

DVAS Executive Members

President, Sandra Grebeldinger
Treasurer, Beatrice Milner
Secretary, Judy Hammond

DVAS Chairpersons

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Studio Group, Joel Fraser
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Scholarships/Donations, Joe Murphy

Newsletter Editor, Ashley Ritter
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Winter Studio Groups

Group 1: Thursdays from 9:00 to 12:30
Jan. 9 – March 20

Group 2: Saturdays from 9:00 to 12:00
Jan 11 – March 29

Workshop Schedule

Workshop details are on our website and will be emailed as they become available.

- Jan. 25, 12:30 to 5:30 pm: Janet Warnes
Watercolor Workshop: "Splash and Scribble"
- Feb. 22, 12:30 to 5:30 pm: Acrylic palette knife
workshop with J'Anna Jacquelyn
- March 29: Carol Smeraldo, Pastel Workshop
- April 12: Portrait workshop with Joe Murphy
- May 24: Acrylic workshop with Greg Dickie

A Letter from the Editor

Dear Fellow Artists,

Happy New Year!

There are several volunteer opportunities available with DVAS this year, and I hope some of you will consider taking a turn to fill one of these positions. Volunteering is a great way to share some of your talents and skills, and it helps keep the art society going.

We are currently looking for volunteers to take over the following positions in 2025: Webmaster, Membership Coordinator, and Newsletter Editor. If you would like to volunteer for one of these positions, please reach out to Sandra Grebeldinger sandragreb@eastlink.ca

For many of us, January is a perfect time to embrace new opportunities, creative challenges, and artistic pursuits. I wish you all a year filled with hope, happiness, and art!

Cheers!
Ashley

DVAS Winter Workshops

All workshops are taking place at the Findlay Centre. The cost of each workshop is \$50 for members, \$70 for non-members. Payment may be made by cheque or money order to:

DVAS, 65 Driftwood Cres, Dartmouth, NS, B2V 1S6
Alternatively, you can drop off payments at Studio Group or send an e-transfer to

treasurer@dartmouthvisualarts.ca

Please make sure your workshop registration is confirmed before payment is sent. For more information, please contact Violet:

workshopregis@dartmouthvisualarts.ca



Rose painting in soft pastel by Ashley Ritter.

Renew Your DVAS Membership

The membership year is January 1 to December 31. Membership dues are \$30 (\$40 after February 28, 2025) and may be paid by:

- Cash or cheque: drop off at studio group or mail to Dartmouth Visual Arts, 130 Regal Road, Dartmouth, NS B2W 4H8
- e-Transfer: treasurer@dartmouthvisualarts.ca

Please include your full mailing address, phone number and email address. Receipts will be issued upon request only. Membership fees must be paid before attending studio groups and workshops. New members must have started their membership at least 30 days prior to an exhibit start date to be able to participate in that exhibit.

Featured Artist: Joe Murphy

Joe Murphy is an amazing artist who is particularly talented at painting portraits. Joe won The People's Choice award at our DVAS spring gallery show in 2024 for his painting "Lean into It." Joe is also an active DVAS volunteer board member, coordinating scholarships and donations.



Painting by Joe Murphy.

This winter, Joe has an art exhibition in the Cole Harbour Place library until the end of February. In the spring he will be teaching a portrait workshop on April 12, 2025 at the Findlay Centre.

You can view more of Joe's art on his blog: <https://joemurphyart.blogspot.com/>

2024 Recap: Artist Stories

Artist Success Story: Paul Edmond

In September, DVAS member Paul Edmond's work was featured on Gallery 902, which is a show featured by Eastlink. He was also invited to Artworks East in Guysborough to be their guest artist for August and September as well as having paintings shown in Artist Alley at the Dartmouth Sportsplex. In May of 2024, Paul placed 17th out of 520 artists from 29 countries in an international online art competition.

Artist Success Story: Judy Hammond

Judy was involved in a group art project called The Magpie's Nest, a large interactive art installation which was displayed on the Halifax waterfront as part of the Nocturne Art at Night Festival in October 2024.

For more info on the project, check out Nocturne's website:

<https://nocturnehalifax.ca/projects/2024/the-magpies-nest/>

The image on the next page shows one of Judy Hammond's interactive art pieces featuring four unrelated painted figures mounted on spinning blocks, which can be turned to make numerous mythical figures.



Interactive art by Judy Hammond.

Summer Fun: Painting En Plein Air

Many of our members enjoy plein air painting. Here are a couple of highlights from 2024:

“This is a photo of me enjoying the pleasure of painting out in the open air!” - Janet Warnes



Janet Warnes plein air painting at Sullivan's Pond.



Taylor's Head Beach painting by Mary Lou Whitehorne.

“Here's a 9 X 12 plein air watercolour of Taylor's Head Beach from August 25. Icy cold water (12°C!) but perfect swimming none the less.”

- Mary Lou Whitehorne



Halifax Public Gardens photo by Ashley Ritter.

“Halifax Public Gardens invites artists to paint the Gardens anytime [during July through October]. If you are interested in doing this on your own or with others, please check in at the desk in Horticultural Hall and then enjoy the Gardens as your subject. There are washrooms and a coffee shop on the property. The only requirement is that you not block the pathways and that you clean up afterwards. It's always a nice experience and I hope some of you are able to enjoy.”

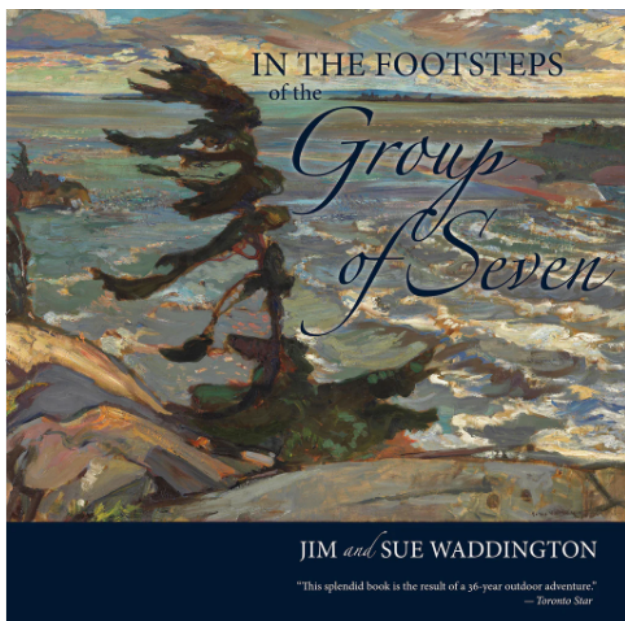
- Suzanne James

<https://www.halifaxpublicgardens.ca/calendar/2024/7/1/paint-the-gardens>

Article by Mary Lou Whitehorne:

In the Footsteps of the Group of Seven

Jim and Sue Waddington, 2013 Goose Lane Editions. Available from Halifax Public Libraries.



What a jolly good book about paintings! It's a joy to read. The book is about Jim and Sue Waddington's initially serendipitous discoveries of a few painting locations used by members of Canada's famed Group of Seven artists. It ultimately led to their 34-year quest across Canada, with lots of hiking, camping, and canoeing to locate, identify, and photograph hundreds of other painting locations that appear in the Group's work.

I can identify with the authors because, quite by accident, I had my own similar Group of Seven discovery experience. In 2015, arriving for the second time on the spectacular shores of Lake O'Hara, I realized I was looking at scenes painted by J. E. H. MacDonald and Lauren Harris.

MacDonald spent several summers in the Lake O'Hara area, hiking up into the mountains, and painting whatever was in front of him. Subject matter was chosen by first finding a comfortable rock upon which to perch, and then by painting whatever nature put in his line of sight. He made a habit of stashing his turpentine jar (and tea "billy" too) safely under rocks so he didn't have to lug it up and down the slopes, but simply pick it up the next time he was there.

It's fascinating to see how these painters treated the same landscapes so differently. Equally amazing is to see that the modern photographs often capture the same colours and moods that appear in the paintings from a hundred years ago. The more I studied the photos and images of the paintings, the more I also understood that the Group of Seven painters also frequently altered their perspectives, compressing and simplifying visual elements to make a better composition. They introduced visual rhythm into their work, repeating shapes in the foreground and background, which draws the viewer in and engages them in the painting. In many instances, the vertical elements of the works have been exaggerated, increasing the visual drama, further drawing the eye, and demanding attention. Their work is highly compelling and very hard to ignore! According to Group member AY Jackson, "...what you always strive for is an intensification of nature ... just imitating nature was never the artist's intention."

Who knew? Not me! I was amazed and delighted, because I try to do this sort of thing when I paint. I try to use colours and shapes to communicate not just what a place looks like, but what it *feels like* to be there.

Hiking up from Lake O'Hara, toward the hanging valley and glacial cirque that cradles Lake McArthur, I found myself on the exposed slope of Mt. Schaffer, gazing at Mt. Owen. I've hiked

up there and photographed the views several times. Later, looking at my photos and MacDonald's painting of Mt. Owen (fig. 1), I realized I could identify the very spot he sat to paint his view. See figure 2.



Figure 1: JEH MacDonald's *Mt Owen, Afternoon Light*, painted from a rocky shoulder jutting out from the flank of Park Mountain.



Figure 2: Whitehorne's *Mt. Owen*, which shows the Park Mountain rocky outcrop on the left (red arrow) from which MacDonald painted *Mt. Owen*.

MacDonald did, of course, also paint Lake McArthur (fig. 3) as have I (fig. 4). And painted it more than once, in both our cases.



Figure 3: MacDonald's *Lake McArthur*. From his painting position on the rocky outcrop seen in Figure 2, JEH had only to look behind him to see Lake McArthur.



Figure 4: Whitehorne's *Lake McArthur*.

This year, 2024, I have the great good fortune to be making a ninth visit to the O'Hara region. In the backcountry of Yoho National Park, in British Columbia, and on the west side of the continental divide, the place is endlessly magnificent. Ever changing weather and light ensure the views are different every hour of every day, and on every visit. It's no wonder JEH MacDonald kept coming back here. It has provided inspiration for countless artists over the last century. Even John Singer Sargent stood at the now-named Sargent's Point to create his own 38 X 46-inch masterpiece in oil of Lake O'Hara in 1916.

Lake O'Hara is considered by many to be the most beautiful lake in the Canadian Rockies. I can see why. The lake sits at an elevation of almost 7000 feet, and is surrounded by the rugged and soaring peaks of the continental divide. The views all around are literally breathtaking. See figures 5 and 6.

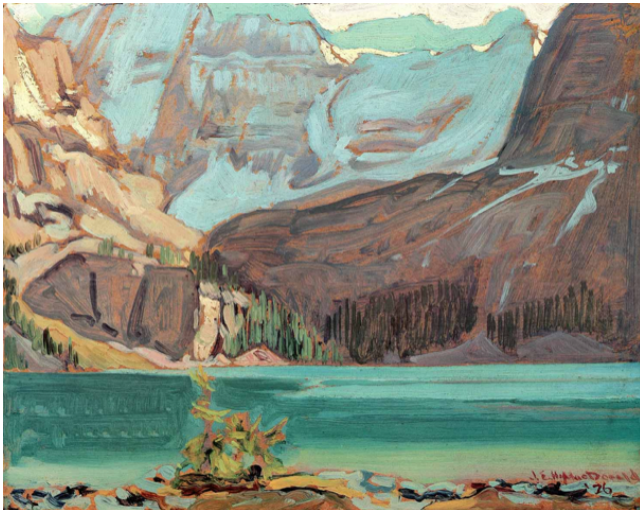


Figure 5: MacDonald's painting of Lake O'Hara, as seen from Sargent's Point on the lake's shoreline.



Figure 6: Whitehorne's watercolour of Lake O'Hara from the same vantage point.

This summer and fall, Banff's highly regarded Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies is hosting an exhibit of JEH MacDonald's paintings, entitled *The O'Hara Era*. It will showcase MacDonald's works of the O'Hara region, painted during the several summers he spent there. Lucky for me, the exhibit will be running while I am in the Banff and Lake Louise area, just prior to my several days at Lake O'Hara. I will enjoy spending an afternoon in the company of MacDonald's work.

Mary Lou Whitehorne
DVAS Webmaster

Links:

Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies:
<https://www.whyte.org/exhibitions>

Sargent's Lake O'Hara - Harvard Art Museum:
<https://harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/231994>