



## Vivian Thomson – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #45

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Bill C

### January 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features artist Vivian Thomson. In July of 1968, she arrived from Ottawa, with her husband, hired by AECL. Recently married, they carried their possessions in a half ton truck. Thomson already had two years of teaching experience and she soon started at F.W. Gilbert School, instructing grade five students.

From childhood, Thomson drew, and played with clay from the creek at her aunt and uncle's farm. She says, "I attended Fisher Park High in Ottawa, where I studied and practiced art: painting, drawing, pottery."



Vivian Thomson

Self-taught until she completed her Master's Degree in Art Education at University of Victoria (1984-87), Thomson works mainly in oils but has training in water colour, acrylic, inks, pottery, fibre work, printmaking, and stained glass. She says, "Some phenomenal artists instructed me: Marion Small, Margaret Travers, Bill Zuk, printmaker Geoff Hodder, potter Walter Dexter. Their philosophies changed my art direction. I was a better teacher and artist because of their influences."

She developed her own art curriculum in Pinawa. In 1980, she became the district's art specialist, teaching grades one to twelve. She also wrote and piloted art curricula for the Manitoba Department of Education. Until 1998, she worked in Pinawa schools and then left due to illness.

In the 70's, she helped found Pinawa Art 211. This organization includes members from the whole region. Over the years, it has hosted exhibits, sales, and shows. Interest waned but was revived by the Green Water Exhibition and now this group boasts an active gallery and

teaching presence in Pinawa.

In 1986, she exhibited her work at University of Victoria. Her art has also been used to raise funds for “The Friends of Old Pinawa.” She has worked on three murals, two at F.W. Gilbert School (one with WRAC artist Annie Bergen), and the other at the Pinawa Mall. In honour of Pinawa’s fortieth anniversary, she created a commemorative painting.

Thomson says, “I was too busy teaching and raising four boys to compete for awards. But I always have a market for my work. I’ve done personal paintings for our home, family and friends.”

Now retired, her health has improved, and she continues to paint and teach. She says, “I realized how short life is. I urge people to find the time to follow their passion, whatever it is.”



## David Schellenberg – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #46

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Bill C

### February 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features pen and ink artist, David Schellenberg.

Born and raised in Winnipeg, he moved to Pointe Du Bois in 2012.

As a child, Schellenberg happily drew for hours, if someone handed him a crayon or pencil. When he was four years old, a college student, boarding with his family, asked him to draw a horse. Then she made a big fuss about the details and likeness of his depiction.



Artist David Schellenberg

After that, he was hooked – not only on making art, but also on the resulting attention and emotion. This gratification motivated him; he wanted everything he did to be “creative.” Although he is mostly self-taught, in high school, he took photography and graphic arts, which led to a twenty-eight-year career in graphic design and marketing.

During road trips throughout Manitoba, he photographed abandoned homesteads, churches, grain elevators, or even a fence post, all for possible future drawings. He says, “This is when I felt most committed to my art.”

As he got older, Schellenberg found little time for pen and ink. Mortgages, children in hockey, and a career filled with annual reports, trade shows, and meetings all took priority. Despite such pressures, his creative impulse remained. For example, he started a drawing for his son’s first birthday, with illustrations from the daily news. To make it interesting, he added a

woman, sitting in a full bathtub, wrapped in a towel, drinking coffee, and reading the newspaper spread on the floor. But he didn't finish that drawing until seventeen years later, in Pointe Du Bois (see photo).

He has given his drawings and limited edition prints to celebrities such as Queen Elizabeth, Princes Edward, Andrew, and Charles, Princesses Diana and Ann, Paul McCartney, Alice Cooper, and many others. His favourite was The Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson. He says, "Someone pointed out that she received a better drawing than her in-laws."

Schellenberg believes that artists are emotional creatures. He says, "I draw from my soul. I also see emotion in the art of others. Surround yourself with creative people. Then lay ink to paper or oil to canvas, or grab your camera. Then step back and say, there it is. Because it's your turn, it's in all of us."



## Steve Young – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #47

[winnipegriverarts.com/steve-young-focus-on-local-artists-issue-47/](http://winnipegriverarts.com/steve-young-focus-on-local-artists-issue-47/)

Bill C

### March 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features artist Steve Young, from Lac du Bonnet.

To create his acrylic landscape paintings, he uses photos or paints “en plein air.” This French term means working outdoors to reproduce conditions seen at the time. On his travels, he does five minute pen and ink drawings to augment the photos. He also makes strange furniture, odd looking bird houses, and copper art.



Steve Young

Born in London, educated in Surrey, Young attended Mining School in Cornwall. He came to Canada 27 years ago, hired by Tantalum Mining Corporation, bringing Cornish gravity concentration experience to Manitoba.

The great outdoors and friendships inspire his paintings; they represent shared memories and experiences. He usually gives them away. They hang in private houses, corporate offices, and the Legislature. He says, “My daughter Charlotte has a painting in her law office.”

Although he preferred roaming the countryside, he saw lots of art in London museums and galleries. From five to ten years old, he was taught by Cyril Spackman, a professional artist, sculptor, and architect. Young recalls going to his studio, filled with large easels and canvases, giant nude stone women, and an enormous carved wooden eagle, destined for a casting in an American Embassy.

At school, he learned about water colours, sketching, lino cutting, and other media. Young says, “I even gained an ‘O’ level Certificate for a water colour of a snow storm.”

In his teens, his mother took up oil painting. When she started making and hanging her art at home, the family finally believed in her talent. A colourful local artist, Leo Walmsley, often visited. Young remembers his work – sculptures, pen and inks, funky scenes.

In Manitoba, after retirement, Young attended Artist Emporium acrylic classes. He has entered local art shows: 2013 Eastman Judged Art Exhibition in Pinawa, 2014 Lac du Bonnet Art Wave, 2015 Eastman Judged Art Exhibition in Lac du Bonnet. Last summer, his acrylic painting won a first place in EJAE.

Young says, “I enjoy creativity, developing new ideas and goals. The Group of Seven is enough to make everyone want to put paint to canvas!”





## Jim Baxter – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #48

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Bill C

**April 2016**

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features Jim Baxter, from the small community of Leisure Falls, just two miles north of Great Falls. His primary art interest is acrylic painting, with his favourite subject being landscapes. He paints various scenes but he prefers scenes from winter or early spring.

His other interest is carving diamond willow walking sticks and canes. The way he creates these canes and walking sticks is different from most wood artists in that he likes to carve through the cane or stick leaving openings throughout the shaft.



Jim Baxter

Born and raised in Winnipeg, Baxter bought property in Leisure Falls and has spent his last nine summers in the area. He says, "I think that my artistic passion comes from a fifty-two year career as a professional taxidermist, which in itself is an art. I have created many natural settings and painted many backgrounds, to show the mounted specimen in its natural environment."

He has no formal training in art or taxidermy but he has taught both in evening courses at several Winnipeg schools. Although he had not previously competed in any art exhibitions, last fall he decided to try it. He displayed his work and sold his carved walking sticks and paintings at the 4P Festival in Powerview-Pine Falls.

Despite never having won any awards for his paintings or carvings, he got lots of compliments at his first display. He especially appreciated all the supportive comments from Charlie Niedermayer, another WRAC artist. Baxter says, "Charlie is a man he I have long



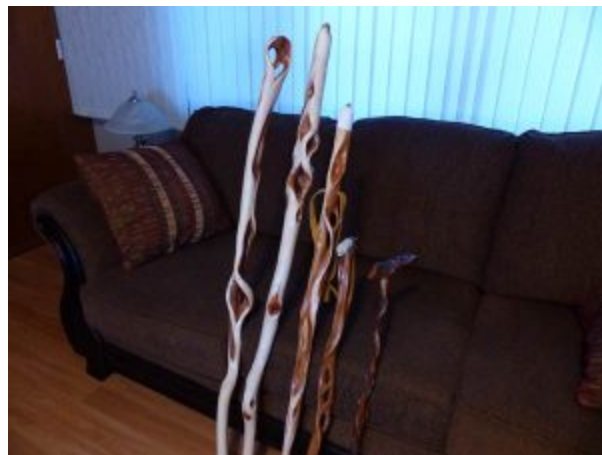
admired for his talent.”

Every year, Baxter donates a painting to Cancer Care for a silent auction and donates walking sticks to wildlife associations for fund raisers.

He feels gets inspired by the compliments he receives from the pieces of art he has completed. It gives him a lot of personal satisfaction. He says, “Anyone who enjoys any form of art should always enter contests or displays. You might find just out that others often see more in your art than you do.”



Jim Baxter Art



Jim Baxter Carved Canes





## Susan Sullivan – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #49

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Bill C

### May 2015

Winnipeg River Arts Council features visual artist Susan Sullivan, from Lester Beach. Born in Calgary, she has lived in Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Roland. Five years ago, she left Winnipeg to live full time at Lester Beach.

Lately, with more time and opportunity, Sullivan has revisited her creativity. She works with ink, watercolors, and acrylics, and has recently added pan pastels and oils to her repertoire. She loves colour and shapes, and also loves trying out and mixing different artistic media. Presently, artist Nancy Lou Ateah mentors her.

Sullivan attributes her creativity to her family. As a child, she learned from her artist mother, and her brother, Michael Guindon, an Emily Carr graduate. She says, "Every Saturday, the three of us sat around the kitchen table and painted the day away. I grew up in a household that was always playing music, singing, dancing and creating art, sculpture, painting, drawings."



Susan Sullivan

As a teenager, she focused on fashion, making her own clothes. Later, she pursued Creative Writing at the University of Winnipeg. In her early fifties, she studied Apparel Design at University of Manitoba, immersing herself in drafting, draping and illustration.

She has exhibited and sold her art, most recently at Lac du Bonnet's 2014 ArtWave Show and 2015 Eastman Judged Art Exhibition, and at Winnipeg's Cre8ery gallery, in 2016. She says, "Critiques at the judged show in Lac du Bonnet were more than encouraging."

Sullivan loves that people say her art evokes emotions, and those who buy it say it continues to work its magic. She gets inspiration from the lake near her home, and the rising and setting of the sun, with various aspects of beach life finding vivid expression in her work.

When painting, she tries to capture what she sees with utter simplicity. She says, “Whether it’s acrylics or water color, I’m carried away to a Zen place, whenever I have a brush in hand, pushing paint around. Hours slip away; it seems like minutes.”





## Whitemouth Library – Focus on Arts Organization – Issue #50

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[winnipegriverarts.com/whitemouth-library-focus-on-arts-organization-issue-50/](http://winnipegriverarts.com/whitemouth-library-focus-on-arts-organization-issue-50/)

Bill C

**June 2016**



For this month, WRAC features Whitemouth Library, located on Railway Avenue in the town of Whitemouth. The RM provides the space and the library offers free services to all residents of the municipality. Membership has also been extended to the RM of Reynolds.

In 1985, a group of residents, recognizing the need for access to books and the importance of literacy, founded the library. Since then, it has worked to keep up with the times, adjusting to the demand for recreational reading, with popular best sellers purchased on a regular basis, to the delight of their patrons.

It is not a public library, but is run by around thirty dedicated volunteers and supported by the community with donations of cash and books. Of the thirty volunteers, nine are board members. Many of the board members chair committees such as fundraising, children's programs, and special events. Special events include author readings, crafts, and informational presentations. In June, they hold a major fundraising event.



Two recent presentations were “Square Foot Gardening” and “Birds of Manitoba.” Volunteers are now working on a program called “Art in the Library” where local artists and artisans can display a selection of their work.

The library stocks specialty books that deal with lifestyle topics such as health, nutrition, and exercise. It also owns a collection of school yearbooks and history books on the early settlers of Whitemouth and the nearby Whiteshell Provincial Park.

Along with the regular services, Whitemouth Library focuses on promoting literacy for children. To instill a love of reading, they feature a large children’s book section, interactive CD read-along program, Kids’ Day at the Library with storytelling, crafts, and an outreach program that includes reading to students at the elementary school.

For more than thirty years, this small, but mighty, library has shown a great deal of foresight and determination, and nurtured a whole lot of volunteerism and literacy.



## Deborah Goodfellow – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #51

[winnipegriverarts.com/deborah-goodfellow-focus-on-local-artists-issue-51/](http://winnipegriverarts.com/deborah-goodfellow-focus-on-local-artists-issue-51/)

Bill C

### July 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features writer Deborah Goodfellow.

Originally from Winnipeg, she has been visiting her family's cottage in the Lac du Bonnet area for twenty-two years. Twelve years ago, she decided, along with daughter and husband, to make it their permanent home.



Deborah Goodfellow, Author

Goodfellow quotes from Webster's Dictionary – "Art is the activity of using imagination and skill to create beautiful things," and states "I apply this definition in all parts of my life, whether starting a foundation, serving on a board, or working at a homeless shelter."

In her real estate business, she applies her natural flair for design work and home staging. She says, "However, my true art form is creating pictures in readers' mind. I use words to drive home a message, educate, entertain, or simply provide enjoyment."

She has written short stories, and newspaper and magazine articles. She prefers nonfiction, but plans to explore fiction. As a child, she felt safest and most comfortable when reading and writing, and her grade four teacher even submitted her Armistice Day poem to a magazine. In university, she took English courses and has since enrolled in various writing courses.

She belongs to Manitoba Writers' Guild and took their master class with Charles Wilkins. She also hired Jack Canfield as her writing coach, and has participated in programs associated with his work. Canfield is best known for Chicken Soup for the Soul books and contribution to The Secret.

Early in 2015, she launched her first book, Love, Compassion & Power – Healing the Hurt & Transforming Lives, at McNally Robinson Booksellers in Winnipeg, where it remained on their bestseller list for a few weeks. After the launch, she presented at various venues about her book. At this time, she is working on manuscripts about aging and humanity.

Her editor also invited her to join a writing group led by Manitoba writer Jake MacDonald. She has met with them for two years and recently MacDonald asked her to contribute to an anthology of stories. She says. “I see art in everything, both light and dark, and translate it through words. For example, I saw a picture of my niece’s baby, looking as if he was reaching up for a hug. Beautiful! I felt compelled to write about it.”

Deborah’s Website: <http://www.dhgoodfellow.com>



Deborah & Jack Canfield



Deborah Goodfellow



Book at McNally's





## Gary Holden – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #52

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Bill C

### August 2016

For this month, WRAC features visual artist Gary Holden, who grew up in St. Boniface. He lived in St. Albert, Alberta for eighteen years but returned to Steinbach after retirement. For almost nine years, he has lived in the Eastman area.

Holden's love of art started early. Right from the beginning, the classical realists and the impressionists inspired him. He was determined to learn from them and read extensively about oil painting. As often happens, his keen interest got side-tracked in his late teens. However, in 2002, when approaching retirement, he found his way back, but felt he could not quite capture what he wanted to express.



Gary Holden

Fortunately, he connected with an internationally known classical artist, based in Edmonton, and learned the principles of the old masters and use of monochromatic underpainting. Although he learned these established skills about fourteen years ago, he still considers himself a developing artist. Holden says, "With these techniques, my work instantly transformed and the results were what I wanted as an artist"

Since moving to the region, he has become involved with Norman and St. Vital artist groups, Winnipeg River Arts Council and Manitoba Society of Artists. He's also founding chair of the Southeast artist group and a former board member of Steinbach Arts Council, and has served on their visual arts and exhibit committees. He has presented his work in numerous shows and sales, including Artarama, Red River Exhibition, and Eastman Judged Art



Exhibition. In 2010, he had his first solo show at Steinbach Arts Centre Gallery. His work has garnered various prestigious awards from judged arts exhibitions in St. James, Norman, Beausejour, Steinbach, Pinawa, and Fire & Water Show in Lac du Bonnet.

He focuses on realism, with a special interest in portraits, florals and naturalistic landscapes. Starting with a strong composition and accurate sketching, he uses burnt sienna to coax out the warm rich values and shapes, and then adds layers of softly applied colour. He says, “It takes time, patience and dedication to become an accomplished artist. Sharing this journey with fellow artists is both rewarding and inspirational.”



Wedding



Eskimo



## Nancy~Lou Ateah – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #53

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Bill C

### September 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features well-known visual artist Nancy-Lou Ateah. Originally from Winnipeg, she has lived in Victoria Beach area for forty years. When she was six years old, an aunt gave her an easel, paper and poster paints, implanting a love of painting. Ateah says, “I was fortunate to be enrolled in the children’s Saturday art classes, at the University of Manitoba.”



Nancy-Lou Ateah



As an adult, she studied at this same university's School of Art, learning about watercolour and oils, and the newest product – acrylics. She also studied music, specializing in piano. At sixteen, she obtained her teaching diploma, and ever since, has taught piano lessons.

Over the years, she has enrolled in art courses with various teachers and arts councils and galleries, throughout Manitoba, have hired her to instruct. She often organizes her own art workshops in Winnipeg, renting venues such as hotel banquet rooms. Currently, she is teaching watercolour classes at Victoria Beach. She says, "I love teaching art and music. I feel blessed to be able to work at something I love!"



Although she uses oils, acrylics, and pastels, watercolour remains her first love, given the immediacy and glowing colours she can achieve with this medium. The subject matter varies; she constantly searches for new ideas, such as incorporating gold leaf into her paintings. Her work has been exhibited in various galleries and the Birchwood Hotel, south of Victoria Beach, regularly displays her art. This past June, Library Allard partnered with Winnipeg River Historical Society to showcase a retrospective of her paintings. Right now, she is working on a series of Lake Winnipeg paintings for Winnipeg's Birchwood Art Gallery.

Ateah likes to portray local history in her art, painting from photographs or from old timers' stories. For example, she created a scene of a log house with northern lights dancing in the winter sky, inspired by accounts about the McQueen family, who homesteaded on Catfish Creek in the 1930's and 40's. Her husband and his Victoria Beach family often packed picnic lunches and took the long trek to this cabin, where they spent the day visiting, singing, and playing music.

She says, "My inspiration comes from nature and from history. If it is too beautiful for words – it has to be painted!"



## Andreas Oertel – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #54

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Bill C

### October 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features Andreas Oertel, a writer from Lac du Bonnet. He was born in Germany, but has lived most of his life in Manitoba. Fifteen years ago, he moved to Lac du Bonnet with his wife. They both enjoy living in the area and look forward to retiring here.

His books of fiction are very popular with middle grade readers. Five of them have been published – ***History in the Faking, Stones of Time, Trouble at Impact Lake, Panama Pursuit, and Prisoner of Warren.*** His first book, *History in the Faking*, was nominated for a Silver Birch Award and a Manitoba Young Readers Choice Award.



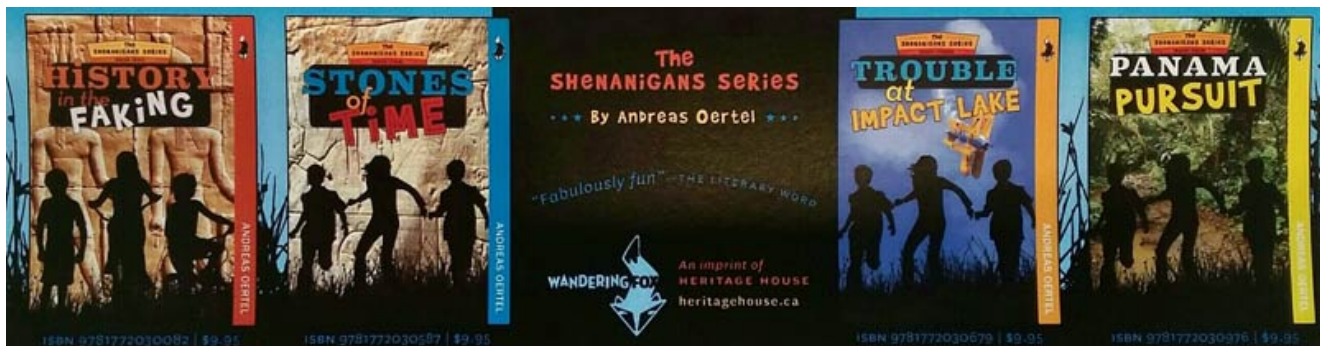
Andreas Oertel

Oertel always wanted to be a writer. His interest began in his late teens and this passion has never left him. Although he is basically self-taught, over the years, he has read dozens of books on the craft of writing. And he is constantly writing and re-writing. He admits his early attempts at fiction were pretty bad and he accumulated dozens of rejection letters. But he didn't let that stop him. He says, "I was determined, so I kept at it — reading, studying, writing, and submitting my work to publishers."

Throughout the year, he does many school visits and readings, but hasn't done any formal instructing. His advice to aspiring writers: read fiction, read books on writing, and practice, practice, practice.

He says, "When you sit down to write your first story, don't become obsessed with perfecting the first draft. In other words, don't stress about grammar, typos, and sentence structure. If you try to make every sentence and every paragraph and every page perfect, you'll get

bogged down and discouraged. So spill your guts and complete that first draft. It's satisfying to edit and fine-tune a story, but you have to finish the story first."







## Jan Claude – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #55

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Bill C

### November 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features visual artist Jan Claude.

Before she moved to Bird River, she lived in Winnipeg for most of her life. In 2010, her family's cottage became their primary residence. Settling in the beautiful boreal wilderness of eastern Manitoba helped her develop as an artist.

She said, "I am a self-taught watercolour artist who painted part-time but this is where I am now able to explore the medium in a concentrated way."

Claude loves watercolour as a medium and uses a variety of techniques in her work – from loose washes to detailed crispness – trying to evoke a feeling or capture a moment. She believes that much of the creative process in watercolour is directed by the paint and water and paper – the artist really just guides it.



Jan Claude

Every time she paints she views it as an exciting new experience. She never quite knows how it will turn out and finds painting to be incredibly rewarding. She always hopes that she will have captured a moment and evoked a feeling in the finished painting.

In 2015, Claude entered her first juried art show, winning first and third place in the watercolour category. She was also accepted into the Manitoba Arts Network Rural and Northern Juried Art Exhibit in 2016 at the Pavilion Gallery in Assiniboine Park. She belongs to both the Pinawa and Gwen Fox Art Galleries, and the Boreal Shores Art Tour. She hopes to have her website open in the near future: [janclaude.ca](http://janclaude.ca)



Regarding her abiding love of watercolour painting, she said, “I find great inspiration in the beauty and diversity of the land and people that surround us in this great country, and by the hand of God behind it all.”





## Tammy Holland – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #56

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Bill C

### December 2016

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features **Tammy Holland**, a visual artist from Molson, near Seddon's Corner. She began drawing after spending a night out with teenage pals, experimenting with her mother's homemade chokecherry wine. She got grounded for two weeks with no phone, no friends, and no television.

She said, "Once the hangover passed and boredom set in, I started drawing house plants and then the cat. I'm sure that cat was posing for me. Before long, I was no longer bored and I didn't mind the solitude."



Tammy Holland

Being shy and her own worse critic, she kept her art to herself. However, friends and family soon noticed her talent. In her twenties, she took a drawing class at Winnipeg Art Gallery, to balance the demands of university and nursing school. In art, she found her life passion. However, people told her that artists starve and only become famous after they die. Her family encouraged her to find a profession that paid the bills.

Holland's second passion involves helping others, as a nurse. She has worked in several northern stations, in Churchill, Manitoba, as a flight nurse serving Arctic communities, and in Dauphin as an emergency nurse. She is now a home care nurse with IERHA.

Holland learned more about art from books, videos, workshops, and the late Bob Ross. She enjoys acrylics and water colours. Recently, she studied clay sculpture again, at Winnipeg Art Gallery. She loves clay but gets impatient waiting for the pieces to dry and gets discouraged when they don't survive the firing process.

Surrounded by nature's beauty, she finds inspiration in everything and everybody. She loves observing her pets' antics; they often end up as subjects. In the past few years, she has found the courage to enter local shows. The first time, judges awarded her two honorable mentions. These prizes jumped-started her inspiration; she won third and second place in following competitions. In February, she will stage her first solo show at Lazy Tuesdays Restaurant, Seddon's Corner. She has also done some commissioned pieces.

Holland said, "I consider myself an out-of-the-closet artist. A fledgling in the great big world of art."