Looks like we're sailing nicely into the new year with a fair wind. Rumours are rife of the economy turning and the words artists love to hear such as ‘discretionary spending’ are being tossed around. I certainly hope so as this will help the new gallery venture. With the first building stage complete and a good opening, it will still need a lot of hard work to make sure it continues successfully. It has been very encouraging to see the positive response from artists, local community and good visitor numbers.

This year has kicked off well for our members with Amanda’s recent workshop leaving attendees buzzing with her enthusiasm - thanks Amanda. You can look forward to more great workshops throughout the year, thanks to Sue Wild for organising this. Next up is the renowned Australian artist, Ross Paterson. Monthly Sunday painting groups (MPG’s) continue to be popular thanks to the wonderful artists who give their time to lead these. Hope you’re looking forward to the Nelson painting Safari weekend. It’s sure to be fun.

Have you been receiving our E newsletters? In between posting our quarterly hard copy newsletters, we are endeavoring to keep you more informed of events using our E newsletters. If you haven’t been receiving them, please ‘join’ by going to our website, www.watercolournewzealand.co.nz and click on Subscribe to E Letter at the bottom of the home page.

It was with sadness that we farewelled our much loved and respected treasurer, Michael Bain, at the start of 2014. Michael has been our fastidious treasurer for many years and has done a sterling job. I first met Michael when I roped him in to join me in a jazz combo for a hospice fundraiser. At the same time I cajoled him into being our treasurer - despite the fact that the only paint brush he ever used was a 4 inch wide one! Michael has been absolutely wonderful to work with and we have often counted on his wise and helpful counsel. As well as having done a superb job as treasurer, Michael’s band provided background music for many exhibition openings. We wish you well, Michael, and hope that although you’ve laid down the pen with Watercolour New Zealand, that you will now take up a smaller brush and try your hand at watercolours, perhaps a still life of a jar of beans!

We extend a warm welcome to Jill Hartstonge as our new treasurer, who takes Michael’s place. As well as being a superb artist, Jill brings a vibrancy and style that we are looking forward to sharing.

I really wish I could stay on as your president but with the increasing work load of running a new gallery, I hope you’ll understand that I need to stay focused on this project. A new president will be elected at the AGM on 16 March.

Wishing you all happy painting and hope you are outdoors making the most of the gorgeous Indian summer ahead of us.

Alfred
President, Watercolour New Zealand Inc.

Pavithra tells the story: “The painting was inspired by the violinist in the Shenanigans band at the Petone Fair. The fantastic music, the colours and the gentle shadows cast from the scrawny trees along Jackson Street were the raw material that I wanted to use in this painting. I tried to unite these elements with an organic pattern and a harmonised colour scheme.
SYLVIA MEEK
BY SUE WILD

“I want to have things bursting out of the page, to change forms and shapes. I want a flower to be not a flower, a house to be wonky or funky. I want to get the essence.”

Hutt Valley artist, Sylvia Meek, won Watercolour New Zealand’s award in 2007. Her paintings reflect her lively character and positive attitude to life. Our interview started with a vivid word picture of her parents, during her early life in Ohakune: “Mum was a wonderful crocheted artist in the continental fashion, learned from my German grandmother. Everything she did was absolutely original. She was a spunky, bossy little lady with six of us to bring up and a husband who was a WWI veteran. He was a lovely, clever man but he was destroyed by Gallipoli. Mum was a wonderful hostess – she didn’t give a hoot if the house was a mess. She was feisty and unreasonable and all those wonderful things.”

Over the years Sylvia coped with illnesses in the family, along with earning an income. “I’ve always looked for distractions when things are pretty gloomy - gardening, painting, cooking, walking and socialising. ‘I love people.’ When the family settled in Lower Hutt, Sylvia joined the Hutt Art Society and found a group of inspiring people. About 1990, she had the chance to go to an international art workshop in Omaru. She experienced overseas tutors, many abstract artists, including Philip Trusstum and Patrick Heron from Cornwall. Sylvia then went on a trip with two other artists to San Francisco, New York and Paris. “We shared rooms in small hotels, walked everywhere and visited every gallery we could find.” She followed this with a workshop in Cornwall, where “lovely refined English ladies painted their dainty little watercolours just like the tutor’s. Here was this Ohakune girl … well, I couldn’t paint that way! After those experiences I felt I knew me better.”

Driving towards Impressionism
Sylvia Meek decided to do watercolour exclusively, as “it’s a lovely and very expressive medium.” She was a driving force in a surge towards impressionism among painters in the Wellington-Hutt area. “When you have a passion you attract like-minded people. She organised workshops in the style she wanted to paint, forming the ‘Creative Painters Group’ with Vivian Manthel, Betty McCauley, Jeannie Macaskill – lots of abstract painters. ‘I always enjoyed Shona MacFarlane and the work of Colin McCahon. I love Peter Coates. He lived in wonderful chaos and look at what he painted in his back garden. ‘We need to encourage these people.” Mary Archibald opened her art shop in Upper Hutt and on Fridays, engaged a model. “We had a whole day of painting! I loved it.” She wanted to join the Watercolour Society. “In those days you had to present about seven paintings to a committee to be judged. You had to wait outside, like going to the dentist. If you were lucky you might be let in.”

In the 1990s Wendy Masters organised an annual weekend in the Wairarapa. The format is the model for our current safaris: meet on Friday night for tea and talk, paint at various locations (try to avoid getting lost in rural roads), enjoy a dinner with music and wine, then on Sunday share our work and amble off home. Sylvia recalls, “What intelligent alert people, really good painters. Nobody was better than anyone else. It was just wonderful!” Sylvia served on the committee of Watercolour New Zealand for about seven years and her husband, Alan, was treasurer. She worked with Elizabeth Kay, Avis Higgs, Kit McKay, Wendy Masters, Vivian Manthel, Philip Markham, Ruth Gardner and Heather Francis.

Dunedin artist Ron Esplin, has painted from childhood and exhibits regularly. He explains his technique for creating watercolour skies.

Paper preparation is a matter of personal choice: most artists I know use 300gsm paper or heavier, taped to a board, or use ‘black’ paper that has the edges glued to hold the sheet firm. Some artists soak and stretch the paper. This method can affect the absorption properties. I like to be able to move the water and pigment freely over the surface. Use a big brush - a wash brush or a mop. I have a favourite - an Art Spectrum T300 White Taylor size 20 and often complete the whole painting using only this brush.

Colours. I prefer Cobalt Blue to Cerulean because in my view Cerulean blue is a little insipid. I mix a range of colours and am prepared to be adventurous.

The most successful skies are painted wet on wet, applied quickly with expansive strokes. Use plenty of water, goodies of pigment, dropping pure pigment onto the paper while the first was is still wet. Then pick up the board and tilt it so the pigment is able to flow and the sky will paint itself!

Be bold, take risks. As you are aware watercolour pigments tone down as they dry.

Pure white paper left for light effect or clouds can be stark and unrealistic so I often do a preparatory light wash of Raw Sienna, ensuring it is thoroughly dry before continuing, so I don’t end up with a green sky! Cumulus clouds can be dabbed out with a tissue while the first wash is still damp. Then, once dry, re-wet them and drop shadow into the bottoms of the clouds.

Rain can be conveyed by allowing the paint to flow on a wet underpainting, holding the board diagonally and almost perpendicular. For a looming sky you can use magenta and Cobalt blue, sometimes with a touch of earth colour to darken it. This is applied after the underpainting has been re-wetted. Hard lines in a sky sometimes work, but generally are best when softened with a damp brush.

I aim to paint a sky in one hit, but if I’m dissatisfied with the result, I’m quite happy to go in again once it is dry. If you do this be sure to rewet the whole sky before adding paint or you risk making unwanted balloons and cauliflowers.

Some aberrations can be fixed. A speck or a ‘leak’ from under masking tape can be removed once dry using a slightly damp brush in one hand and tissue in the other, with a ‘dab and dry’ movement. A mark might be turned into a bird, with a couple more added to make them believable.

Rather than slothfully reproducing a photograph, try manufacturing your own sky. I like to contrast the dark elements of the painting against the light parts of the sky, and the light elements against darker sky to provide drama. Skies can play a major role in composition and be part of the story that you want to convey. Actually it is amazing what a range of colours you can incorporate - a sky reds, oranges, greys, even greens!

I collect photographs of skies in a folder on my computer. Examining photos and real skies will teach you that clouds are bigger and rounder close at hand and are smaller, binner and closer together into the distance, and that clouds often have a honeycomb shape on the underside. Try painting a series of skies to develop your technique. Divide your paper into four with masking tape and experiment freely.

I enjoy painting imaginative skies, but I prefer to leave sunsets alone, as no matter how accurately you emulate a spectacular sunset, people seldom believe it, and your paintings do have to be believable.

Why compete with nature? I believe it is up to the artist to portray the ordinary things in nature, and to point out to the viewer how extraordinary they are.
California Style Watercolour Painting

BY JOHN TOFT

California Style watercolour painting had its heyday from the mid 1920s to the mid 1950s. Its hallmark works were of large format paintings (full or half sheets), broad brushwork and strong vibrant colour. Artists depicted the Californian landscape and scenes drawn from everyday life. “It was through painting that we discovered California”, one of them later recalled.

In an interview shortly before his death in 1989, Millard Sheets, widely regarded as the leader of the group, recalled his introduction to the medium. One of his tutors at the Chouinard School of Art, Frank Tolles Chamberlin, saw Sheets returning from a painting trip laden down with his oil painting paraphernalia.

“What do you carry all that stuff for?” he asked. “Why don’t you paint watercolour! You don’t have to carry all that stuff.”

“You get the watercolour brush and watercolour paints and a piece of paper and you paint,” Chamberlin replied.

Sheets took up watercolour and loved it. He was joined by fellow Chouinard students Phil Duke and Phil Paradise. New to watercolour, they developed their own distinctive style. “We began to make watercolours that had the weight and stature of an oil.” Paradise recalled.

A group of young artists including Sheets, Dike, Paradise, Barse Miller, Paul Sample, Charles Payzant and Hardie Gramatky began painting watercolours depicting everyday life in California. This was in contrast to the popular style of the time, California Impressionism, which favoured small landscapes with eucalyptus trees, fields and flowers. The younger painters, influenced by the so-called Ashcan School, believed art should reflect everyday life and that their subjects should be drawn from the world around them.

This group of artists, led by Millard Sheets, Hardie Gramatky and Barse Miller joined the conservative California Water Color Society in the late 1920s and quickly took it over, upsetting a number of long-standing members many of whom resigned in protest. Nevertheless the society’s membership increased dramatically. Lee and Mary Blair, Rex and Joan Irving Brandt, Millford Zornes, Tom Craig, Emil Kosa Jr and Phil Paradise joined from Southern California while members from San Francisco included George Post, Dong Kingman, Maurice Logan and Stanley Wood. All these artists became well known exponents of the California Style.

Their work was championed by Arthur Millier, art critic of the Los Angeles Times. Reviewing a watercolour exhibition he wrote “The watercolors in this exhibit indicate the presence of a rapidly growing school that requires only the encouragement of a moderate money injection.” The watercolour California scene painters became admired throughout America.

Unfortunately the money shower was not sufficient for the artists to be able to live of the sales of their paintings. Most of them found work in the motion picture industry; others worked as commercial illustrators or as art instructors.

Meanwhile the California Water Color Society worked tirelessly to promote Californian watercolour painting through travelling shows and by encouraging members to enter competitions and exhibitions throughout the country. The Riverside Museum in New York began to hold biennial exhibitions of the California Water Color Society. This led to the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum and other major institutions purchasing California watercolours for their permanent collections. Thanks to their bold, expressive use of watercolour California scene painters became admired throughout America.

Many of the artists formed close friendships and often worked together. Millford Zornes wrote, “This was a period [1932-1940] when we had something touching upon the kind of thing the French artists had. We were painting with such competition and comradeship going on — very, very alive. We were young and strong and anything that anyone did we showed. We watched the shows and when one of us came up with a strong picture, we admired and hated him at the same time.” According to Phil Dike, the camaraderie within the group was a major factor in their development as artists.

Throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s Millard Sheets, Phil Dike and Rex Brandt continued as leaders of California Style watercolour painting. They conducted highly successful workshops and Brandt wrote a series of popular books on watercolour painting.

However, watercolour paintings in West Coast shows came to be dominated by abstract expressionism, ushering in a new era of watercolour painting in California.

The legacy of California Style watercolour painting can be seen in the paintings of American Frank Webb and in New Zealand, Ted Sherwen, who attended Rex Brandt’s workshops for many years.

Recently there has been a renewal of interest in American Scene or Regionalist art of the 1930s. Website www.caliowatercolor.com specialises in originals and prints by California Style watercolour painters and books on their art. Two of the best are American Scene Painting: California 1930s & 1940s by Ruth Westphal and Janet Blake Dominik and California Watercolors 1830-1970 by Gordon T McClelland and Jay T Last.

Subscription details available on Page 68.

The next winner will be drawn on 29th March 2014 and notified via email as well as announced on our facebook page. Judges’ draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Welcome to our new members...

Alan and Maureen Davis (Wellington) • Lyndsay McCooker (Ashburton) • Alan and Maureen Davis (Wellington) • Lyndsay McCooker (Ashburton)

New Members welcome! We are the national society for watercolour artists and welcome new members from home and abroad. Membership includes our quarterly newsletter, workshops, social activities, exhibitions and discounts at art stores. Annual subscription: Member – $40 Couple – $50 Student (enrolled) – $20

Please post with subscription to:
President: Alfred Memelink +64 4 5685869 alfred@memelink.co.nz
Vice President: John Toft 027 4897699 johnoft@paradise.net.nz
Treasurer: Claire Clark +64 4 2367928 tandc.clark@clear.net.nz

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WIN Creating Textured Landscapes with Pen, Ink and Watercolour by Claudia Nice.

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News and views...

To book a workshop or request further information:
Email bookings@watercolournewzealand.co.nz or, if you don’t use email, phone Sue Wild (04) 5267304

Workshops March – June 2014

Amanda Brett’s “I See Red” workshop

Christina Chappel reports

Amanda is a great tutor who made the workshop fun, teaching us how to be loose and adventurous, as it is ‘only a piece of paper’. On day one we experimented with various toys – wax candles, crayons, sanding watercolour pencils etc., opening up a new way of using colour with exciting results. We learned the importance of leaving white paper to balance the design and take a viewer’s eye through the painting. Amanda used stencils when the white was lost, with wet on wet paint flowing into objects so there was no hard outline. Watching her demonstrate was informative and exciting. Day two, Amanda showed how to contrast dark against light with a second wash to create darker tones. Finally a few marks were added with strong colours, the motto being ‘Don’t finish too much’. Thank you Amanda for generous sharing of knowledge and encouragement, introducing us to new tools and an exciting world of colour and design.

Weekend Workshop

SHADOWS AND LIGHT

Class: 2014/3

Tutor: Jacky Pearson

Popular artist, Jacky, tutors around New Zealand and internationally, is frequently asked to judge art competitions and is the recipient of numerous awards. Jacky, is passionate about the beautiful light effects that can be achieved only through watercolours.

“Light is usually the inspiring factor that drives us to paint a subject. This workshop is designed to look closely at the subtle components of light falling on a subject that ultimately creates energy in a painting. Without light and shadow we see no form. Through some fun exercises we will spend Saturday examining the 7 key components of shadows and light on a variety of shapes and surfaces. Watercolour possibly does reflected light, half light corners and crevice shadows better than any other medium. Well, I am biased or course! Other aspects such as brush mark edges, counter change and colour mixing will also be covered.

On Sunday we will apply this to a full painting of a scene where shadows and light play a key role. We will look at how to extend the use of watercolour paint to create energetic and form-dense paintings. Handouts and reference photos will all be provided.”

Dates: 7 – 8 June 2014

Venue: Karori Arts Centre, Karori, Wellington.
Level: Beginner to experienced
Fee: $190

Autumn Safari 2014

Watercolour New Zealand safaris offer you an opportunity to spend a weekend with fellow-artists, painting outdoors and socialising over a drink and meal. You make new friends as you enjoy exploring the location together. Our safari plan goes like this:

Members arrive at the venue at any time during Friday and share a casual evening meal. On Saturday we head off in groups to paint, choosing a different subject for morning and afternoon. We enjoy a more formal dinner on Saturday evening. Sunday comprises another painting session, lunch and a ‘show & tell’ of our watercolours, before heading home.

Of course, members often arrange their own longer holiday while in the locality. Partners are welcome. Richmond, just south of Nelson is the location, with superb painting subjects in Tasman Bay and the Waimea Plains. We have plans for shared transport.

If you would like further information on the Safari weekend please email bookings@watercolournewzealand.co.nz

Date: Friday 2 May to Sunday 4 May 2014

Venue: Garin College, located in Richmond, with accommodation in the college hostel.

Watercolours at Pataka Art + Museum

Season: 29 May – 15 June 2014

We have the opportunity to hold a Watercolour New Zealand exhibition at Pataka Art + Museum’s Bottle Creek Gallery from 29 May to 15 June. This will be in addition to our Splash exhibition later in the year. Bottle Creek Gallery is a small gallery so it will only be possible to hang approximately 60 paintings.

All members are invited to enter up to 2 paintings, by emailing digital images. Only artists whose paintings are selected for the exhibition will pay an entry fee. You may enter the same painting for both the Gordon Harris Online Competition and the Pataka exhibition.

Garin College, located in Richmond, with accommodation in the college hostel.

Level: Intermediate – Advanced
Fee: $390

Four day workshop with Australian Tutor

WONDERFUL WATERCOLOUR

Class: 2014/2

Tutor: Ross Paterson

Increase your knowledge of this great medium, step up and be challenged by an international artist renowned for his brilliant watercolours. Ross has won a multitude of awards and has been guest artist in the prestigious Shanghai Zhujiajiao International Watercolour Exhibition.

The focus will be on transparent, wet-in-wet watercolour technique and how to utilize the elements of shape, tone and colour. Ross’s “big picture - big wash” approach will teach you how to underpaint to achieve luminosity and vitality. Each day will take a new focus – landscape, both natural and man-made, figurative work - people and animals in the environment. The emphasis will be on achieving unity and atmosphere in your work.

Dates: Saturday 5 to Tuesday 8 April 2014

Venue: Karori Arts Centre, Karori, Wellington.
Level: Advanced
Fee: $600

To book a workshop or request further information:
Email bookings@watercolournewzealand.co.nz or, if you don’t use email, phone Sue Wild (04) 5267304

When Alfred saw an old dairy on the Petone waterfront for sale, his head filled with a vision of a glorious art venue with apartment above, sculpture garden, gallery, teaching space and an ice-cream parlour. He battled through the building permit, confronted the refurbishment versus demolition and rebuild trauma, struggled with the holdups in the building process and finally emerged like a monarch butterfly for the Grand Opening on 24th January 2014. The result is an impressive structure with magnificent views across the beach and harbour and a space within that has beauty and welcoming fascination. The first exhibition celebrated Petone and is followed by a salute to Wellington. We, the Committee and members offer our congratulations to Alfred and will be supporting his future success. About now, Alfred will be taking a break and having some fun!

Alfred Memelink

Alfred Memelink Artspace

Watercolour New Zealand President, Alfred Memelink is always busy, but in the last six months he has been running in his sleep!

Amanda spattering

Amanda Brett’s "I See Red" workshop

'Wanaka Autumn' by Jacky Pearson

'Wanaka Autumn' by Jacky Pearson

Is this the lunch venue for the cycle touring artists?
Monthly Painting Group – ‘MPG’

The outdoor painting sessions have a co-ordinator for each group - Wellington and Kapiti, as below. To be on the list to receive email confirmation a few days prior to each session, please give your email address to the co-ordinator. She will be the ‘go-to’ person in case of doubtful weather.

Full details of location (directions), painting subject and café are listed on the Watercolour New Zealand website.

WELLINGTON GROUP    9:45am – 12:30pm    Coordinator: Judy Langham (04) 9343046

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day Coordinator</th>
<th>Painting location</th>
<th>Cafe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 Mar</td>
<td>Helen Wilson</td>
<td>Meet at Ngaio Town Hall, Ottawa Road</td>
<td>Café Villa, Ngaio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Apr</td>
<td>Alfred Memelink</td>
<td>Hikoikoi Reserve, mouth of Hutt River</td>
<td>Alfred Memelink Gallery café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Phil Dickson</td>
<td>Princess Bay (airport end of Houghton Bay)</td>
<td>The Spruce Goose, Lyall Bay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KAPITI GROUP    9:45am – 12:30pm    Coordinator: Eppie Murton (04) 2931936

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day Coordinator</th>
<th>Painting location</th>
<th>Cafe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Mar</td>
<td>Judy McMillan</td>
<td>River end, Tutere Street, Waikanae</td>
<td>Front Room Café</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Apr</td>
<td>Robin Rogerson</td>
<td>397 Ngatiawa Road, Reikorangi</td>
<td>Bring your lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>- cancelled as it is Safari day -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 June</td>
<td>Anne Webster</td>
<td>245 Ngatiawa Road, Reikorangi</td>
<td>Bring your lunch</td>
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OTHER DATES for your Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 Mar</td>
<td>Watercolour New Zealand AGM: 2pm at Karori Art Centre, 9 Beauchamp St, Karori, Wellington. Afternoon tea served.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8 Apr</td>
<td>Four day workshop with Australian tutor, Ross Paterson: Wonderful Watercolour (details on page 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 May</td>
<td>Autumn Safari (details on page 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 June</td>
<td>Workshop with Jacky Pearson: Shadows and Light (details on page 7)</td>
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The Gordon Harris Online Watercolour Competition

We invite members to enter our 2014 Online Watercolour Competition. Photos of paintings are to be emailed in, then the entries will be forwarded to a team of judges.

**Competition Closes on 15 April 2014 at midnight**

**Prizes:** Gift Cards for Gordon Harris Stores:

1st - $200  2nd - $100  3rd - $50

- One entry per member
- The topic is open - your choice of subject.
- Entries must be the original work of the member; must not be copied from another person’s painting or photograph; must have been completed within the last 12 months.
- Photos must be of publishable quality; approx. size 500kB.
- Photo file name to be in this format: "Southern Alps by Kim Black"
- Email the digital photo of the painting to the Editor: sue.wildnz@gmail.com
- Subject line: "WNZ Online Competition"
- The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Entries may be used for promotion of Watercolour New Zealand.

The competition is managed by Watercolour New Zealand. We wish to thank Gordon Harris Ltd for their sponsorship.