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Local scenes inspire artist

The Kirksville Arts Association will exhibit paintings by Clara Straight.

BY MICHELLE MARTIN

Assistant Features Editor

The walls of the Kirksville Arts Association gallery are graced with paintings of Clara Straight cover the walls.

For the past six years, 50 to 60 original nature paintings by artist Clara Straight will grace the Kirksville arts world with their presence. Straight’s paintings are exhibited from one to three months each year and are proudly displayed from Canada to the Philippines to Australia.

After graduating from Kirksville High School in 1944, Straight worked in New York City for 36 years before returning to Yarrow, N.Y., to raise her five children in the beautiful Corning countryside. When she discovered she had been diagnosed with cancer, she turned to art to cope, and in 1994, the Kirksville Arts Association was founded.

“I was just one of those people who had to do art,” Straight said. “I just found that I really enjoyed it.”

Straight’s work is sure to attract attention. She has been a member of the artists association for 16 years and, in that time, has displayed her work in 200 exhibits, from Canada to the Philippines.

“People are always coming out to look at her work,” said Jayna Colton, Straight’s niece. “Just because it’s a nature painting, that’s more special to me than someone who’s trained in art, “ she said. “Actually it’s even more interesting to me if it’s just an ordinary working layman that is interested in it. That’s more special to me than someone whose trained.”

As secretary of the board at the Kirksville Arts Association, the 90-year-oldStraight is on the exhibit committee. The association has displayed Straight’s art in 200 exhibits in 16 years.

Paintings by Clara Straight are now exhibited in the Kirksville Arts Association building. The exhibit will be there until Oct. 9.

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