

When all is said...



by  
Corinne  
Abatt

## Bankers give art a boost

There's something exciting about finding a friend you didn't know existed — someone who's quietly championing your cause without waiting for applause.

That's how it is with First Federal Savings of Detroit and artists.

Last February we did a Creative Living show on the new First Federal branch, in Birmingham and the use of paintings and sculpture by local people to bring the interior alive. But, that's only part of the story.

Last week Ken Gross director of the Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Association (BBAA), Rosemary Squires, volunteer public relations person for the BBAA, and I made a tour of First Federal's main office in downtown Detroit. With us was Mary (Peg) McCarthy of Birmingham, art buyer and administrative services officer for the corporation.

From the exhibit window on the main floor up through all the floors of the building, there's Michigan art — in every office and on every wall.

MS. MCCARTHY WORKS with a modest budget which hasn't been increased since 1974. But, she's an astute art buyer with a mission: to work with psychology and appreciation for aesthetics and what pleasant surroundings can do for people who work.

The person who occupies the office is always in on the decision about what painting will be hung there. The outdoorman is given a choice of landscapes. The woman in the small office with no windows is encouraged to choose something with broad sweeps of open land and Ms. McCarthy offers appropriate choices.

When the budget is thin, she may go shopping for posters or ask the galleries what they have that will fit into her price range.

Whenever possible she likes to rotate her collection — except that it doesn't always work. In one office the women refuse to part with a watercolor by Johanna Haas. It belongs there, they feel. It's their symbol of how they feel on Mondays.

Bank officials weren't convinced the

Charles Hinman geometries (there's a show of his work at Donald Morris Gallery through Nov. 17) would look well on the gallery wall of one of the upper floors. But, that was only until they were in place. Hinman is one of a very few outstate artists in the collection.

Facing the bank of elevators on the eighth floor, there's a Michigan-made antique quilt behind a plastic screen. The Birmingham Bicentennial quilt was displayed there as well as other local textile art.

There are several walls where employees can show work they've done themselves. All they have to do is put it up. Last week it was a series of black and white photographs of Michigan by Charles Canvasser.

During October there were selections of work from the Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Association faculty show in the main floor exhibit area.

Mrs. McCarthy sees that there is printed information about what's on the walls. When she hangs three posters, as she did recently, on the seventh floor gallery wall, she prepares a sheet describing them. It explains where they are available, how much they cost and how they were framed.

IN THIS INSTANCE she was showing the poster for the John Singer Sargent show at the Detroit Institute of Arts (through Dec. 9), the Dodge Foundation poster and the "Transformations in Modern Architecture" poster of the Renaissance Center by Bathuzar Korab of Troy.

So, not only do First Federal employees know somebody cares about the environment in which they work, but Michigan artists know they have a booster right in their own backyard.

Ms. McCarthy spreads her limited art wealth as appropriately as she can. She buys from a variety of different galleries and artists. If she could complement herself, which isn't her style, it would be by buying artists like Richard Kozlow, Frederick Simper, George Culver and Bill House when they were within her budget.

## It's time for holiday tea and tables

A holiday decor sneak preview can be seen at Holiday Tables and Tea, sponsored by Cranbrook House and Gardens Auxiliary, Nov. 17, 18 and 19.

More than 20 tables will be set by area garden clubs for Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations and other festive occasions.

Hours for this year's event, which is the largest in its four-year history, are Saturday and Sunday from 1-5 p.m. and Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$3, payable at the door, 380 Lone Pine.

Highlights are table arrangements to celebrate sleighing and after-theater parties and an old fashioned

Thanksgiving dinner, in addition to around-the-clock Christmas settings.

Each table represents the creativity of an individual garden club. Settings vary from modern with simple-lined crystal appointments to red-green traditional with holly, greens and poinsettias.

The Vernon Garden Club will set a Thanksgiving table reminiscent of halcyon harvest days, complete with a silver epergne spilling over with peasant feathers.

Red velvet combined with pewter will form a rich but casual alliance in the snack sleigh party table designed by the Hickory Grove Garden Club. De-

parting from tradition, the Cranbrook House Auxiliary uses only black and white to create a dramatic after-theater party table that features crafted Angelus Garden Club.

Those who prefer color can back in rainbow combinations such as lime-pink for breakfast, done by the Lakeater party table that features crafted Angelus Garden Club.

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