

Painting houses with brush on paper

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perspective to my work, when he has time in the evenings or during the weekends."

Charles, her husband, is a good source of artistic input: he is a General Motors architectural engineer, currently working on the Saturn Plant.

SANDISON, WHO STUDIED art on a scholarship at Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Fla., once had her sights set on a career as a commercial artist. However, she was married shortly after finishing her art training, and her career, if not completely abandoned, was at least put on hold for several years. "I opted to stay home and have a family," she said.

Sandison's three sons — Steve, Charles and Ronald — are not without talent, either. Steve is attending the University of Michigan. Charles, an eighth grader, is involved in creating board games, and Ronald — a budding artist — won a trophy in 1986 from Detroit Edison for a safety poster he designed.

Once her sons were old enough to fend for themselves, Sandison decided she wanted to do something with her talent and training. She said she wasn't sure which course to pursue, although she had keylined for advertising agencies and once illustrated a book for adolescents made her debut on renderings for a career, she said, "I always enjoyed sketching historical buildings. I can imagine the stories behind the people who lived or worked in them. I am sure there is a

lot of sadness as well as joy behind those old walls."

She said she has recently become fascinated with red barns. To her, they seemed to be a trend setter. Her sisters, who are crafters, were embroiling and doing crewel work of red barns. They were selling almost faster than they could produce them. "But before I got too involved in trying to get commissions for red barns, I rendered a couple of barns to exhibit. I was accepted in a Michigan-Judged art show and was delighted when the renderings sold."

One of Sandison's earlier commissions was a rendering of historical Sunnybrook Farm, now owned by an Oakland Township family.

WITH NEW FOUND COURAGE, Sandison has decided to go into business on a full-time basis. Although her specialty is watercolor, she also works with pen and ink and creates menus for restaurants.

"But, I like rendering historical homes, churches and buildings best of all. I think I have finally found my niche in the art world," she said.

Her renderings are usually 15 by 24 inches or 30 by 35 inches, but she will do special sizes on request. Prices vary according to size and detail. All of the renderings are matted, but framing is left up to the client.

"I am amazed at the number of hundreds or wives who give a rendering of their home to their spouse for a birthday or anniversary gift. I also get calls for pen and ink sketches of churches and houses on Christmas cards," Sandison said.

To contact Sandison, call 651-6564.

Water gardens coming into favor

It's "dream time" in frigid Michigan. As I write, it is a cold windy day. Let's imagine sitting at the edge of a lovely, serene water garden in our own backyards.

The temperature now is a comfortable 80 degrees, a slight breeze is blowing and all's right with the world.

"Ponds and Water Gardens," a book by Bill Heritage of England, Blandford Press (Sterling Books in the U.S.) is a well-written account of the hows, whys and everything in between of ponds and water gardens. The author writes in a readable style and covers the subject thoroughly.

The information is presented in chronological order, from design, size and construction to maintenance. Plants can be chosen from the complete charts listing plant and pond requirements, color and size. Breathtaking photos (often taken by the author himself) show the subtle differences in the blossoms and make one appreciate nature in a new way.

WATERLILIES are functional as

well as beautiful. Their large leaves help shade the water, reduce evaporation and keep it clear. Information is given about oxygenating plants and the important role they play, along with lilies, in the water pond as well as other plant life.

We learn that a pond does not have to be an elaborate setup — the average depth, 18-24 inches, is sufficient for most plants and fish. A sunny area is the best location, because sun is necessary to keep the algae down.

A pond can contain several varieties of water plants and can be home for various kinds of fish, which are always fun to watch. We also learn that tadpoles are an important ingredient in a pond and that snails are not to be invited to reside there.

This is a good book on an intriguing subject — the next "coming thing" in home gardening.

"Ponds and Water Gardens" was first copyrighted in 1981 and has been reprinted each year since and revised in 1986. This suggests that it is one of the best. It can be ordered at local book stores or from Li-



down to earth

Marty Figley

lypends Water Gardens, 6800 Lypends Road, Lypends, Md. 21717-0010, softbound \$9.95.

I RECENTLY spoke with Sam DeFazio, evening horticultural teacher at Cranbrook Institute of Science, and he told me that waterlilies can be grown in containers such as half whiskey barrels for your patio, deck or balcony.

He said he knew of one person who used a very large clam shell for a miniature pond. What a focal point! Use your imagination. How about an

old claw-foot bathtub for a whimsical pond? Add a few fish and you're on your way to many pleasant hours of enjoyment. Of course in Michigan, these kinds of ponds need to be dismantled at the end of summer.

DeFazio, along with Patrick McKown, operates Oberon, PO Box 99186, Troy 48099. If you write to them, they will be happy to assist you with any questions pertaining to this subject.

Watch for upcoming classes at Cranbrook Institute of Science about water gardening and the culture of exotic water plants.

Organic gardeners meet

The Town & Country Organic Garden Club will host a slide program, "The Gardens and Gardeners of England" by Sandy Beal and Sally Elliott at 8 p.m. Monday at the Salvation Army Church, 3015 N. Main, Royal Oak.

Refreshments at 7:30 p.m. Fee for non-members is \$1. For information, call 589-9098, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The speakers attended a special tour hosted by The Herb Society of America, in early summer and late summer.

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