

Lynne Saunders



In our graduating year book it states that “Lynne plans to work for a year after grad.” What?! It was supposed to say that “Lynne plans to work for a year and then go to UVic”. I stuck to that plan, taking a year to apprenticeship in hairdressing at Maison Georges followed by four years in Visual Arts at UVic (BFA 1970). My education was paid for by working as a hairstylist at the Fort St. salon. It was fun, creative and hard work but very rewarding! During my last year at UVic I got married and for the next several years endeavoured to work in the visual arts field in an amazing number of low paying jobs while trying to figure out what to do with my own creativity. In that era, real skills were not being taught, just grab a brush and “express yourself”! OK! Apparently, that wasn’t my thing, neither was the marriage. What next? OMG!

Poverty can be quite tiresome! I had no clue before going into fine arts what was involved in being an “artist”. I decided to go back to university, studied math by correspondence, and did a year of science, probably what I should have done in the first place. The science year, although challenging, was quite successful, however, years more schooling (and continued poverty) didn’t seem practical. I was accepted the following year into the Internship Program in teaching at UVic and completed that while teaching at Stelly’s Secondary School in Saanich. Armed with a teaching certificate in 1981, I drove to Calgary (“streets paved in gold”) in a wreck of a car, not knowing one person there, hoping to land a job.

I was hired the night before school started to teach in the worst junior high in all of Canada! Fortunately, that was short term and I subsequently taught Art at Crescent Heights and Henry Wisewood High Schools in Calgary. I met my husband Marvin Damen while teaching at Crescent. He was a farmer and rancher. I moved out to the farm north east of Calgary, commuting to Calgary to teach. The farm period was a very exciting time! I loved farm life. No, I didn’t milk cows as they were beef cattle, 750 of them. A tremendously busy place with crops of wheat, barley, alfalfa and canola. I learned to ride a horse and do all kinds of things I’d never dreamed of! My “spare” time (ha) was spent skiing and golfing as well as returning to painting and sculpture. I took classes at the Alberta College of art, especially sculpture, and did bronze casting at Red Deer College.

One day Marv came in and announced that he was going to quit farming (too many 18 hour days!). We retired in the Comox Valley in 1994 and haven’t looked back. It’s been fantastic.... skiing on Mt. Washington, curling, golfing, hiking, biking, boating and travelling. I love my art studio in the winter and work long hours. Summers are spent out on the water cruising on our boat. I have four stepchildren and twin grandchildren that are so much fun! We have a

wonderful life!

I would love to come to the reunion but it's at the worst possible time. It would be tough to drag us off the boat to come to the city from the magical places that we find cruising in northern waters. However, I would love to hear from classmates and can be contacted through my art website at www.lynnesaundersart.com.

Thank you to the organizing committee for making if possible for us to share our life experiences on the website and for organizing the event, I know it will be awesome!

Left: Us in 60s Costumes at Laughing Oyster Restaurant, Okeover Inlet. May 2015. Right: Me painting most recent oil, "Autumn Rainforest". May 2015.

