

Campus News:

Transylvania County Invitational Features  
Local Ceramics Artist  
Mary Murray

by Katherine Lobdell, staff writer

Mary Murray has a strong respect, and love for the art of pottery making. Mary derives a lot of her inspiration from the well-known potter Jane Piser. When looking around her studio you can see postcard prints of other artist's works, and it's plain to tell that this is a workspace for someone who loves to experiment with their art and who has respect for the art community.

Taped and pinned to the wall, these postcard pictures illustrate her working studio which is perched next to a little mountain brook. Long windows overlook the forest dwelling behind the building, and it's easy to forget that there is a shop surrounding Murray's working studio. All of these factors and more help to fuel her imagination and dreams for new projects.

As a Brevard College graduate, she didn't truly get into pottery while attending school, but rather later in life. She now owns her own studio along with her husband Professor Tim Murray of Brevard College. The shop, Mountain Forest Studios, is located on the Greenville highway just a few minutes drive from downtown Brevard. The majority of her work consists of kitchen-related ware like plates, mugs, serving containers, vases and much more. The shop offers other artists a venue to sell their work as well.

Now on view in the Simms art building, until February 13<sup>th</sup> is The Transylvania County Invitational Art Exhibition, that features local artists Werner Haker, Jan Lee, Sue Byrne Russell, and Mary Murray's sculptured garden women. Murray's figures stand about a foot high and are a display of the imaginative uses of her eclectic tool collection, which she uses to create unique designs on her ceramic women's clothing, and ornate bodies.

She shapes and mixes different colored clays for their faces, and the bird's nests, which the figures cradle in their arms. Murray makes the body of the women first, then the head and hands. It is only after these vital parts are in place that she starts to really have a good time embellishing her women. Hats are made, birds in nests, scarves, jewels and a unique face emerges making each of these ladies one of a kind.

Simms Gallery hours are 8:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday. Special viewings may be arranged by calling 884-8188.