

There Are Few Boundaries To Her Paintings...Or Her Life

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

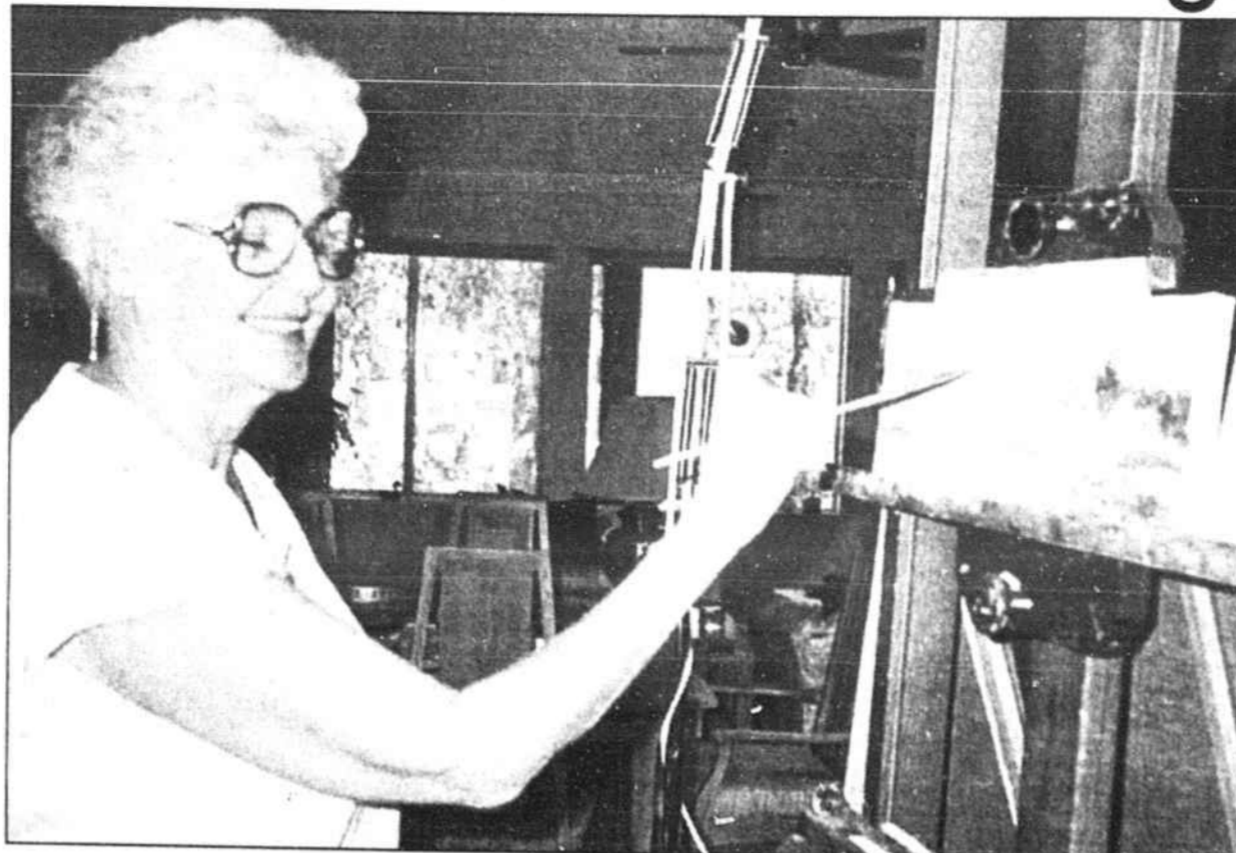
A dreamy Manhattan skyline, viewed across Central Park, hangs above the living room fireplace; in an adjoining room there are realistic red-coated gentry chasing a fox through an autumn countryside; elsewhere vivid balloons in a riot of colors float above the earth, alongside seascapes, complete with gulls and a family playing on the beach.

These are some of the varied expressions of Ramona Bendin's artistic mind and heart. Her skill, honed over a lifetime, has created paintings at once realistic and abstract. Working mostly in oils, this Carolina Shores woman has a wide range of works that appeal to one's sense of color, emotion or fun.

Her obvious success with all subjects has come in spite of physical barriers that cause many to retreat into invalidism. Bendin, however, downplays the osteoarthritis that has forced her to give up working in pastels but has never kept her down. After recent reconstructive surgery with silicone implants on one hand, she said, "I feel very fortunate. I just put some music on and sit down to paint. Please don't make me sound crippled."

Born in Winnipeg, Canada, this serene 70-year-old grew up on Long Island, N.Y., where she said she began drawing as a child. "I got a scholarship to Pratt Institute, but didn't graduate," she explained. "World War II came along and I went to work for an aircraft company, stenciling airplane parts. I took night courses in painting during that period."

After the war she found employment with an advertising agency and in 1946 married Richard Bendin, who owned a chain of sporting goods stores. Along with her work, domesticity and the parenting of two sons and two daughters, Bendin never quit learning,



RAMONA BENDIN works happily on her current project in oils, despite severe bouts with arthritis.

never quit painting.

She attended night classes at the School of Visual Arts and the Arts Student League and persevered. "All I ever was interested in was learning," she declared.

Her next job was doing graphic design for closed-circuit educational television. "We serviced five high schools in New York," she said, "providing educational tapes, and I did all the graphic work for the school system for about 11 years."

Meanwhile, she taught private adult education classes in painting at the Brooklyn

Botanical Gardens. "It was in 1957 that I began seriously working in oils," she recalled. "I did lots of portraits, landscapes and seascapes after that."

Golfing was something she enjoyed sharing with her husband, and in 1980 the Bendins came to this area on a golfing package and played at Carolina Shores, where friends owned property. "It seemed nice," Bendin said with a quiet understatement that seems characteristic. "We liked the area, so we decided to move here when we retired."

She laughed, remembering the circumstances. "I had committed to five shows in Florida when we put our house on the mar-

ket, thinking it would sell in a few weeks or months, but it sold over that weekend and we had to move. You don't cancel out of big art shows like those, so, somehow, I did both."

The couple has settled into a lovely home overlooking the Carolina Shores golf course, but, along with pastels, Bendin has had to give up golf. Ten years ago when she had joint replacement surgery, she stayed with the game, but as the disease progressed, she could no longer play.

In midsummer of this year the reconstructive surgery led to a rare and severe reaction to medication. After weeks in a Charleston hospital, she returned home in early July and agreed to this interview shortly after.

A look around her house gives a distinct impression of an artist who has mastered many styles. The impressionistic skyline is no less perfect than lifelike portrayals of horses, dogs and people and no more beautiful than the colorful balloons or an eagle in flight. The only apparent constant is the light that floods or filters through every painting.

As she explains in her brochure, "If there's one thing I'm fascinated with, it's the effects of light. I want every painting to be both bold and sensitive, so you have a sense of being there when you look at it."

This artist continues to share her talent, teaching an occasional class in the Property Owners Association clubhouse at Carolina Shores and showing her paintings with the Waterway Art Association. She has works on exhibit, too, at Boone Cove in Shallotte, The Cockle Shell in Holden Beach and Art Plus in Calabash.

However, she and her husband are both community-minded. They took literacy training and do after-school tutoring. She also works with Head Start, and is active, along with her husband, in the Little River United Methodist Church.

Country Fair Highlights Weekend At Seaside UMC

Labor Day weekend will bring a two-day country fair to the Seaside area.

Seaside United Methodist Church is planning the event, which will occur Friday, Sept. 2, from 3 until 8 p.m., and Saturday, Sept. 3, from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Crafts, next-to-new clothing, plants, produce, household items and baked goods will be for sale. Activities for children will be provided in Gamesville. Hot dogs, popcorn, crullers, peanuts and soft drinks will be

available throughout the fair.

A spaghetti dinner will be served Friday from 5 until 7 p.m. Tickets will be \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. Chicken shishkebobs will be available at noon on Saturday.

An auction of household goods and yard sale items will begin at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

Proceeds of the fair will be applied to the Seaside United Methodist Church capital improvement fund.

The public is invited.

Renew Boat Registration By Phone

It's official. Boaters renewing their registrations for three-year periods may now obtain instantaneous renewal with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission by use of credit card and a touchtone telephone.

A recent test program proved so successful that the commission is implementing the credit card-telephone system as a convenience and time-saver.

Renewal cards were sent out to boaters whose renewals were expiring beginning in June. Owners wishing to renew for the three-year period may do so by suing the telephone with a Mastercard or VISA credit card rather than mailing renewal cards and checks to the Raleigh office.

The more efficient and faster renewal program was made possible by the installation of computer equipment to handle the applications and to eliminate much of the hand work in mailing valid decals and registration

cards.

Once applications are received by telephone and credit card billing is approved, the transaction is entered into the commission's computer system, making the renewal valid immediately. The valid decal and registration card will be mailed on the next working day. Officers in the field will be able to verify renewal by radio if needed.

The telephone renewal requires three to four minutes. The applicant must only follow the instructions. When the information is completed and the credit card company accepts the transaction, the renewal is in effect.

The system may be used only for three-year renewals. Those buying boats must process registrations through the Raleigh office, 512 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh NC 27604.

For more information on boating registrations or boat titling, call (919)662-4373 or 662-4375.

Service That Really Measures Up



ASE Master Auto Technician & ASE Certified Mechanics On Premises
Genuine GM Parts & Service



Mr. Goodwrench Oil-Lube-Filter \$21⁹⁵ everyday
In 29 minutes or less, or your next one's free!

- Oil change (up to 5 quarts of GM Goodwrench* quality oil)
- AC Duraguard* oil filter
- Inspect belts & hoses
- Chassis lube
- Fluid-level checks

No appointment necessary

See the pros at

Ocean City

Your Full Service Chevrolet-Geo Dealer

Senior Citizens Get 10% Discount on Regular Vehicle Maintenance Service & Parts Dept. Hours Mon.-Fri. 7:30-5:00



Full Line Up New & Used Cars & Trucks • Hwy. 17 N., Shallotte
754-7117 • 1-800-242-0373