



Blue Heron Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of  
America

# Blue Heron News

*September 2021*

## Announcements\*

- **October 2 -- Virginia Children's Festival**
- **Reminder to bring paintings to September meeting 09/26 for Bayside Library show (see article in this newsletter).**

## Fall 2021 Chapter Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Program
Sep. 26, 2021	2-4 PM	Mary Ann's home <sup>†</sup>	Rose Burroughs, Painting on Black Paper
Oct. 17, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Ting Mei, Brushes
Nov. 21, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Mike Lane, Waterfowl

\* Blue Heron image is from <http://www.wetcanvas.com/Community/images/03-May-2005/21167-HeronWC500.jpg>

<sup>†</sup> *Mary Ann's Home: Mary Ann Matika, 5217 Lowery Downs, Virginia Beach*

## Message from the Chapter President

*Dear Blue Heron Chapter Friends,*

As I look back over the past 12 months, my own heart tells me our art community has a lot to be thankful for. There are the tangibles like use of Zoom and Marco Polo technologies where opportunities to connect and to communicate continued throughout the covid crisis. Our meetings had excellent demonstrations that were available in real time and through recordings. We continued in a normal fashion where we could; for example, the newsletter and the website were awesome platforms that increased our unity as an organization. Some of us were able to experience the joy of seeing each other face to face at the annual luncheon on July 11. We also enjoyed many excellent learning opportunities online and discovered rich resources that kept us growing in our painting skills. One evidence of this was that more of our folks were accepted into the National SSA Exhibition for 2021! In addition, our calendar was spectacular evidence of our chapter's vitality. These treasures were the accomplishments of our Blue Heron Chapter Board. Many thanks to each of you for expending the energy and time so that that our community could flourish!

In my mind, I am also grateful for the intangibles that, in the end, provided the root system for our past 12 months as well as the network for the future flourishing. I will list a few here:

- Selfless Service
- A Willingness to Strive for Unity
- A Caring Desire to Include People
- A Capacity to Work with All Different Kinds of People
- Joy in the Adventure of Creativity
- Humility in Willingness to Learn New Things.

The list could go on, but I will stop here to say—such things cannot be bought with money. Again, many thanks to the board and all the other members of our Blue Heron group.

Oh, and thanks to the many folks who came alongside me with encouragement, support, and suggestions when I was trying to execute my duties as well.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Mike Lane*

## Message from the Chapter Treasurer

At the recent board meeting, the board members and I decided to make a couple of adjustments to the due date for membership dues for the upcoming year. With all the changes we had to make with our group to accommodate Covid-19 restrictions this past

year and understanding that not everyone was able to participate as they have in the past because of those changes, we decided to extend everyone's membership until the end of 2021. **This means, members do not pay dues until January 1, 2022.** We also decided, going forward, that we will continue to collect dues in January, instead of September. This will allow our group's membership to align with the National Sumi-e Society, facilitating things like the Treasurer's report and membership count.

We plan to continue to have meetings from January until May, with a meeting hiatus in the summer, and with meetings recommencing from September to December. The only difference you should notice as a member is that I will be bothering you in December and January for your membership dues instead of in September.

If you have already sent me your membership dues, first, way to be on top of things! Second, I plan to deposit them into our account now and count them towards your membership for next year. If you would rather, I wait, please contact me, and tell me so. If I do not hear from you, I will assume you are ok with me depositing the money now.

In December/January, when you are ready to rejoin for next year, please send a check, money order, or cash to:

Erin Smyth  
1519 McLean Ave  
Norfolk, VA 23508

Also, if any of your contact information has changed, please fill out a new membership application and send that to me (or email me the information). If everything remains the same, I will just copy your information from last year's contact list.

*Erin Smyth*

## Message from the Exhibits Chair

*Dear Blue Heron Membership,*

The Bayside Library Director and I have worked together to hold an exhibition of paintings by Blue Heron Artists. I am so happy to announce that during the month of October our paintings will be displayed at the library. This is a wonderful opportunity to put the pandemic behind us and let us introduce the community to Asian Brush Painting. As soon as possible, please email me, [dwynner@cox.net](mailto:dwynner@cox.net), the following information about your painting:

- title
- size of the painting
- sale price or not for sale.

I will collect the paintings at the Blue Heron Chapter September Meeting at Mary Ann Matika's home. Contact me, 757-434-2912, if you cannot attend the meeting, and we can make other plans. The paintings will be hung early morning October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**I need lots of entries to fill the library walls! Please give me one of your masterpieces.** Keep creating and thinking about what you will submit for other shows sometime down the road. I am working on other future exhibits for our group but taking it a month at a time.

Wishing you the best in this new year.

Sincerely,  
*Donna Wynn*

## Message from the Virginia Children's Festival Chair

### ***Help Needed for the Virginia Children's Festival***

The Autumn Moon Festival is now called The Virginia Children's Festival. It takes place at Town Point Park in Norfolk on October 2nd from ten am until three pm. Blue Heron will be hosting an exhibit where children and their parents can learn and practice the joys of sumi-e.

We need volunteers to people the booth and help the children and their parents with getting started with their paintings.

Please contact me, Bill Larkin, at 757-407-3491 or [wlarkin07@yahoo.com](mailto:wlarkin07@yahoo.com) to help.

*Bill Larkin*

## Message from the Calendars Chair

The beautiful calendar will be available to buy for \$10.00. It will be a wonderful gift for Christmas, birthdays or to keep it for yourself. It is always nice to have your calendar on display in your home. If you do not feel comfortable coming to our Blue Heron meetings in person, let me know and I will make arrangements for you to have a calendar.

Thank you,  
*Betty Oliver*

# Inspirations and Acknowledgements

“It took me a long time to gauge just the right amount of water, ink and paint on the brush, and to move with the necessary pressure and speed. It’s not an easy balance to master, but when you do, it frees you to just paint. The brush becomes an extension of your thoughts and feelings and . . . allows you to express your inner spirit-qi or vital energy,” Sungsook Setton

## ***Thank you, Cathy***

- For organizing an annual luncheon. *Twenty-seven Blue Heron members and guests had a joyful experience getting together at Geisha Japanese Steakhouse. This was the first time we had celebrated as a group since the pandemic.*
- For organizing two virtual presentations by Carole Yee from the Smithsonian.



## ***Thank you, Gail***

- For organizing a virtual two-part Guest Artist workshop with Sungsook Setton. Members gained insight about how to paint landscapes and study masters from many painting styles.

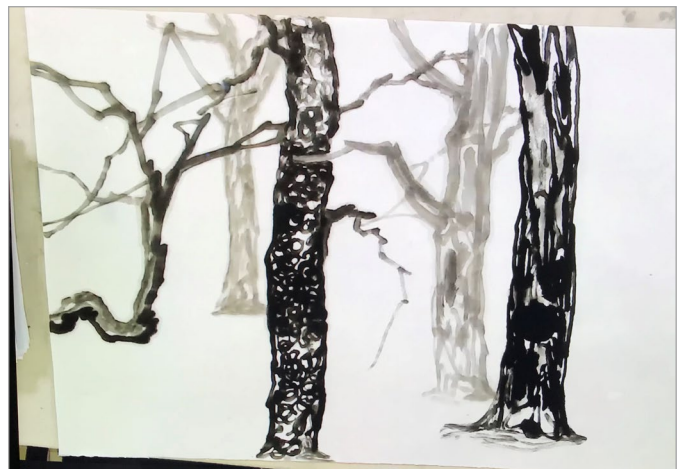
# Excerpts from the Sungsook Setton Workshop for the National Sumi-e Members

## **Gail Goodman, Chair of Guest-Artist Workshops**

Recently Sungsook Setton gave a zoom workshop to Members of the National Sumi-e Society and here are a few of her tips and tricks on painting the Plum Blossom, which Sungsook says is the foundation of painting the cousin family of trees for all landscape painting.

- Paint the plum blossom in 3 steps:
  1. Do a “structure study” of the image.
  2. Interpret with paint, a freestyle painting of the image.
  3. Add a lively creature, such as a butterfly, bug, or bird.

- The flowers stand as a group, can be simple or detailed. Place 3 or 4 blossoms together as a group. Each blossom is no more than 5 petals. Blossoms are circles, hide the tip, Consult the Mustard Seed Book for shapes. Place a few simple individual blooms randomly throughout the painting. Stamens painted outside to inside.
- Branches: It is important to show variation in branches, tone of ink, thickness of branches, spaces between branches- some areas can be dense and some areas not so much, utilizing more white space. Avoid parallel lines in branches. No rectangles, no ovals, etc. Thickness of branches is achieved by changing the pressure. Branches must have angles - lift the brush and change direction slightly. Employ front, back and overlapping branches to give depth to the painting. Newer branches should not be too thin, because a thin branch is a weak stroke.
- Technical Information: For structure study, use a small mountain horse brush or happy dot. Use a combination, orchid/ bamboo, or Mt horse brush later when you paint freestyle, holding the brush in a vertical position. When painting freestyle, she stands up. To start with the trunk, plan a bonsai look, then start with a **center** brush, then side brush (after perfect loading), then back to center. This will achieve "tonal interest". She uses single shuen paper.



## Day 2: Exercises - Get to Know Your Brush

- The purpose of this exercise is to discover what your brush can do, and how to create different kinds of stuff. You will mostly be learning how to use the “center stroke brush”, and changing pressure to thicken the line. You are learning to experiment with perspective (birds eye view, butterfly view, cat view). Start crossing branches (relationship), create accidental marks, so your work is not boring to you.
- Sungsook uses an orchid/bamboo brush with 3 inch long hair bristles when she stands. Her paper measured 18 x 27, single shuen.
- She generously loads the brush, in the well, and the tip, then take off. This exercise is ONE LOAD, so the larger brush is recommended because it holds more ink. but you can also use a small brush, and smaller paper. She starts at the tree knot hole. Paint the lines all the way up to the top of the paper and go off the paper to turn around and come back down, never taking the brush off the surface, creating one continuous line. Eventually the brush will run out of ink, creating a lighter color line.
- You can also do this exercise for branch work. Some examples will be very busy, some more spare. Always be aware of the white space (the breathing space).
- White space should be balanced, and differently sized around the paper, having a variety of empty space. Trees (subject/host) need to be harmonious, and have a relationship, hence the overlapping branches.
- Study the Western Modern Masters (Van Gogh, Kandinsky, Cezanne) to develop a new style influenced by them.

Cat View Painted with “stick”. The “stick” was a stalk from an ornamental grass plant. She used the stick with a center stroke and a side stroke.



# Interactive virtual tour of “Chinese Brush Painting”

**Cathy Peyton**

Have you ever been around someone who genuinely loves what they are doing and shares that joy with you? Blue Heron members were immersed in art with Carole Yee, museum docent at the Freer Gallery of Art. She gave an interactive virtual tour of “Chinese Brush Painting”. As a brush painter herself, she was delighted to be with other like-minded painters. We were encouraged to ask questions along the way, which made the tour interactive.

## Peach Blossom Spring (桃花源圖)

[Shitao \(石濤, ca. 1642–1707\)](#), Qing Dynasty

Handscroll, ink and color on paper, 25 x 157.8 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.



Carole began the tour with the landscape silk painting “Listening to the Pines” attributed to Xu Daoing to delve into the topic: How do we view a painting?

- Chi
- Use of all tones of ink
- Wet and dry strokes
- Use of space (unpainted areas)
- Design elements (S to Z shape to carry our eye through the painting)
- Asymmetry
- Balance
- Painted areas and unpainted areas

- Light, dark
- Loose, dense

We looked at several paintings from multiple perspectives, focal point, use of space, and whether they had Chi or No Chi. Then Carole shared another slide to encourage us to focus more closely: What do we look for in a good brush painting?

- Chi: an expression of the essence of the subject
- The expression of the painter's inner feelings
- Technical: Stroke, tones of ink, use of space and balance
- "The Three Perfections" poetry, calligraphy, and painting

We discussed many paintings including "Peach Blossom Spring" by Shitao (ca. 1642-1707), "Chrysanthemums" by Qi Baishi, "Plum Blossoms" by Yansou, "Twelve Flowers and Poems" by Xu Wei, "Kingfisher and Late Summer Lotus" by Au Ho-nien, "Bamboo" by Wang Fu, "Lotus and Ducks" by Bada Shanren, "Breath of Spring" by Zou Falei, and "Dwelling in the Fuchan Mountains after Huang Gongwang" by Wang Hui (1632-1717) A small portion of the scroll with the scene of Wang Xishi admiring the geese.

Carole was warm and welcoming throughout the tour, and we felt like we had always known her. She weaved the story behind each painting as she pointed out key areas to focus our attention. The hour went by so fast. Carole left us wanting for more. You can visit the Freer Gallery of Art for online exhibitions.

## Catching Up with Chapter Members

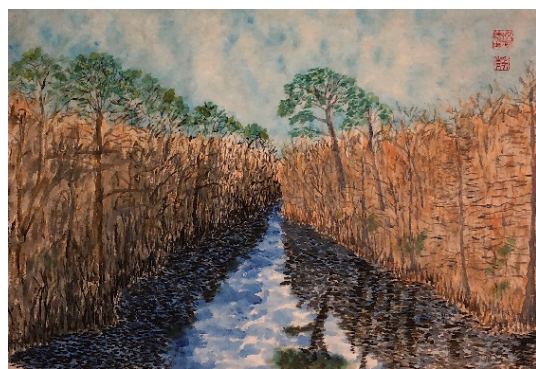
### Mary Ann Matika

The Catching Up article began when I made a list of all the members who over the past two years I had not seen on Zoom. Then I phoned everyone on my list and enjoyed many conversations. Three of our members do not use the computer, and so it was especially nice to reconnect with them. **Heide Schwartz** just returned from taking her youngest grandson to the University of Charleston. Even though they are two generations apart Heidi and her grandson "get each other" and love being in each other's company.

**Jean Turmel** is in her nineties and although she does not paint much anymore, she still has a passion for Sumi-e and fond memories of Blue Heron Chapter.

**Loretta Salazar** has been a member for over twenty years. She started Sumi-e with Joan Grosch and successfully has exhibited, sold, and given her paintings to friends. Arthritis in her hands has limited her ability to paint. She sends her wishes for a great chapter meeting with pleasant weather and her hope that we can continue to meet in person.

**Allen Waters:** I've been teleworking since the pandemic. I had a bad fall in March and spent nearly all of May in the hospital- the bad news. The good news is I'm a good way along in the recovery process. I've attached a brush painting I did on the Meherrin River as seen during a one-day road trip just a couple of days before New Year's Day (at the boundary of Southampton/Greenville Counties, VA). The mood says "Tranquility" but the river was raging at flood stage at that time, and I nearly didn't get through. I've attached another picture of Mill Creek in Southampton County and another at the same location of the Millpond.



**Manon Masse-McCann:** Like everybody, I have dearly missed seeing people in person and I tried to make the best of these times. Between online workshops and painting instruction on You-Tube my goal has been to learn something, draw something or paint something (almost) every day! Sumi-e brings me inspiration and a sense of peace, and I believe that some of that translates into my oil and watercolor paintings. My converted garage/atelier is running out of space! :-) COVID also brought new opportunities. I have been helping with homeschooling via Skype, which has been a fantastic new way to spend time with my oldest granddaughters since we live so far away. We also started a new tradition with our Sunday morning online "meet-ups" where we chat, paint and cook together. We take turns deciding the next recipe or painting 'project of the day'. It has been a blessing to be part of their lives and see them grow. Catherine (4<sup>th</sup> grandchild) was born on August 24<sup>th</sup>, and we hope to spend a few days with them soon. Stay safe and healthy!



**Mary Curro:** My summer has been full of ups and downs, like most of us these days...I was able to make a trip to family and friends in NC, Chapel Hill, Charlotte and Asheville. It was a pure joy. I lived in Chapel Hill for 20 years, and really miss the frequent trips I used to make. I haven't done very much painting this summer. My creative urge took the form of poetry...I guess because of the difficult time we and the rest of the world were having, and are still struggling with. Most of my art work took the form of greeting cards for friends and family. However, I did one watercolor of the Blue Ridge, so I'll include that as well as my funny face picture that I use for facebook.

Thank you for all you do. I look forward to the day when we can all gather again, maskless!  
Love, Mary



**Joe Nicholas:** I am downsizing/moving to a condo at Cypress Point (2.4 miles away)

**Sharon Crosby:** Right now, my husband and I reside most of the time in Sarasota, Florida. He is still working. We have one daughter who is married, and they have one little boy. They live in Chesapeake. We own a second home in Chesapeake, and I do stay there a few weeks at a time. (We are right down the street from our daughter).

I entered paintings into two juried shows in Sarasota this past summer. I had one painting accepted into one show, and two paintings into another show. I belong to the Sumi-e Society of America and have two paintings that were accepted in the 2021 show.

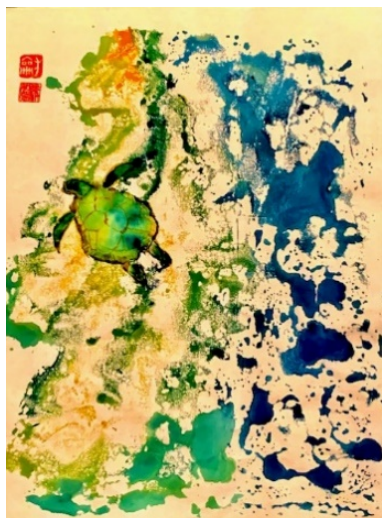
**Flo Whalen:** It is so good to begin to reconnect and be in touch again! I have spent most of my time at home, in my back yard by the river and in the pool (See photo my son took of our creek.). I have done some work in my sketch book and a few paintings and cards. I would welcome any of you to join me by the pool, by the creek, my little slice of Heaven!



**Ann Kirk:** Hopefully, I will be able to attend some of the chapter's meetings in the future, as I have only been able to attend one. Over the past months, I have been taking painting classes and closing my law office. These are a few of the paintings I have done during the pandemic.



**Pearl Windle-Drumwright:** Yes, unusual times however, I am a bird watcher and have enjoyed watching the many varieties from my sunroom as well as from my deck. My husband is a diligent provider of feed for them, their payment for the many hours of pleasure they provide. Even with the restrictions we have been blessed with monthly visits from my niece from Richmond. We visit in the outdoors at a picnic table and work on various craft projects as the weather permits. We had a wonderful Easter visit in a park in New Kent County. Easter attire, hats cake and candies. We even took my sweet dog Belle for our celebration. I hope everyone is safe from this virus and finds the positive in these challenging times. God Bless.



**Jerry Singer:** Life is not quite back to normal, but until vaccination is widely accepted it won't be. I miss the good ol' days of being in class and gathering, and not worrying about COVID-19. Fortunately, we have been out in the wilderness on some multi day river kayak trips again, my gateway to sanity and painting inspiration. In the meantime, studying nature through Sumi-e is always a wonderful escape!

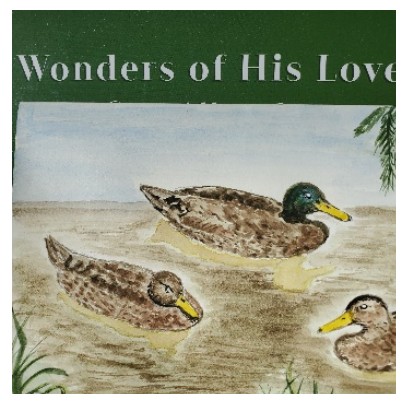
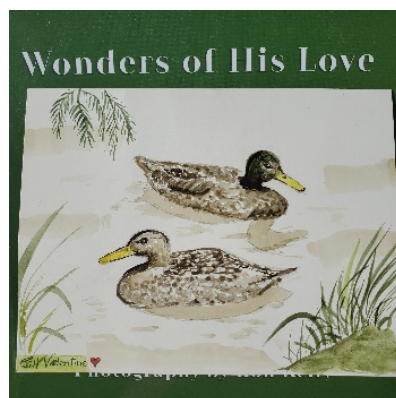
**Sharon Weinstein:** I had a stroke on March 3, 2020, so my personal recovery coincided completely with the COVID year. Not fun. When I go back home from the hospital, I almost immediately started to write a poem: to see if I was the same me that I had been. The answer was yes.

I was told that playing the piano was the best thing I could do for myself. I played the piano every day of that year – getting my hands back into synchronization, healing. Starting over with scales, and then moving to the company of great composers. Painting came a little later, and now as my fingers are suffering from arthritis, I'm turning more and more to the sweetness of painting.

The trick for not stopping painting is to accept whatever comes out. Using color, joy and shapes as my center. And constantly trying new media. A bad painting is just something new that didn't work out and then: on to the next experiment!



**Jill Valentine:** Here are 2 duck birthday cards I just painted. They are for 2 of my favorite men! I know they're more watercolor than Sumi-e, but at least I am painting! The Wonders of His Love is a book title.... thought it was appropriate!

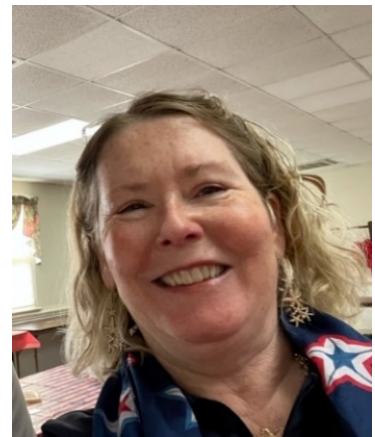


**Rose Burroughs:** My art room faces North, which brings with it natural light. It's great for painting. I enjoy painting flowers brought to me by my friends.

**Cathy Peyton:** Every morning during the pandemic, I sat in my art chair at a table where paper, brushes, ink, and colors were waiting for me. In preparation for painting, I read countless books, journals, and articles; watched videos, as well as took online workshops. As I've improved with my brush painting, so has my confidence.



**Dottie McKenzie:** I'm a new member. Staying busy with Norfolk Master Gardeners, cemetery conservation, & verifying supplemental ancestors for Daughters of the American Revolution. Now that the 4 grandkids are back home, I have a bit more free time. I am a beginner, just starting sumi-e. Looking forward to learning something new.



**Bonnie Campbell-Kuhn:** Greetings Blue Heron friends, Catching up has been the theme of my life most of the past year! And still not “caught up”, I welcome autumn’s chill in the air, soup on the stove and spending time in my studio. I’ve been an observer rather than a “doer” much of the time and I am posting this beautiful spider who we watched for 2 weeks. Spinning a delicate, lacy web, waiting to trap an insect then wrap it in silk, then making dinner of his victim. A study in a “little soul”.

Highlights for me were Mike's beautiful exhibition at Gallery 21 and celebrating his work with many BH friends. Another has been the online and ZOOM workshops. Especially those with Sungsook Seton. Learning about the fascinating Zentangle art from Donna Wynn. And best of all finally taking classes with our own Joe Nicholas. Being COVID isolated has been an opportunity to tap into YouTube classes as well as ZOOM and being inspired by our chapter talents on Marco Polo.

Wishing each of you good health and I hope your brushes are dancing across your rice paper.



**Betty Oliver:** I have enjoyed learning different techniques painting flowers in Mike's class. The outlining is my favorite. I love making cards with my flowers.



**Donna Wynn:** It has been quite a summer for me, as many of you know I received a Pacemaker in August! I was not having a good spring and early summer so after much care from my Cardiology team the decision to have Pacemaker surgery was done! I am grateful for modern technology and the chance to truly feel good again. I am healing nicely, taking it slowly, getting stronger each day and have even begun to paint again. I created a painting for our October Exhibit, so if I can paint something, so can you! I have been busy painting, drawing some Zentangles, writing some poetry and keeping up with my four grandchildren! I have been a little obsessed with painting crabs, so I am sharing my latest "Cactus Crab" with you!



Life is a gift each and every day, and I do not want to miss a moment of it!

**Mary Ann Matika:** Zooming became a way of life for me. I am not a fan of Zoom meetings, but I **LOVE** Zoom classes. The camera angles from overhead and the side, show exactly how the brush moves and the composition develops. Plus, I developed relationships with the master artists who became teachers always ready to advise and help. Thank you to Mike Lane, Joan Lok, His-Mei Yates, Susan Frame, Sungsook Setton and Lorean Wang for making me a better painter! I hope you will try such very reasonably priced Zoom Classes. See you on Zoom!

