

Art of the BLUE VIEW



*Blue View Sunbreak
Barn Quilt by
Johnny McNamara*

Guests sometimes ask about the art decorating the Blue View. The Blue View is a place for family and friends and the art here includes treasures from some of mine.

Catherine Phillips Watercolors



Most of the artwork is by Catherine Phillips who was among my closest friends. Her art is almost everywhere in the Blue View, and bears her mark, the "CP" initials.

I knew Catherine had dabbled in watercolor painting, but it wasn't until after Catherine's husband Rex passed away in 2013 that I learned the full gamut of her private stash of paintings. Finding herself at loose ends after years of devotion to caretaking of Rex, Catherine and I partnered up to focus on opening her hidden art cache to the world.

It was challenging for her to open her secret world, and it was also a big new hobby for me as I learned to scan, print and frame art and all about

street fairs.

Sadly, Catherine died in 2020, but her art remains full of life, joy, color and mystery. When the Blue View came to me as a new chapter in 2022, I knew right away I wanted to use the Blue View as a remembrance of her.

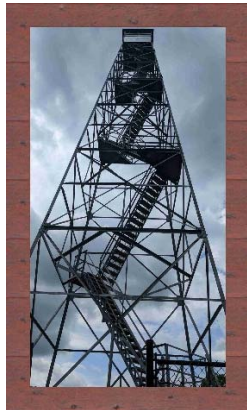
Now, I can even offer her artwork to guests of the Blue View. All of the art here was printed and framed by me personally, using skills I learned when working with her. On the shelf in the Sun Room are the original catalogs I put together for our project, which included about 200 paintings. All her pictures that are in the Blue View are in the catalog. Her work is still available – all of it as prints, and quite a few originals as well. Contact me for more information.

Catherine's daughter, my friend Marise, was among my first guests at the Blue View, and is herself a promising artist and author. You can review a powerful and touching essay she wrote about Catherine which was displayed at a recent art show, linked to this code.



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The Fire Tower



The month we bought the Blue View, I took the photos of the Sounding Knob Fire

Tower now in the stairwell, and the triptych of the view from the fire tower in the living room.

The fire tower represents a very special link to my childhood. My family spent many summers camping on Jack Mountain overlooked by the tower. My father, Judge Tommy McNamara, who retired to Highland County in the 1990s, died in 2005. By that time the Fire Tower had been removed, and it was not yet rebuilt in its new location overlooking the

Blue View. Its absence felt like a profound vacuum, and I reflected on it as a metaphor for my dad's passing in my remarks at his memorial. A link to that talk is here:



Hagan Family Art

Original art pieces by three artists who are my "Hagan Cousins" compliment the art here.

Marguerita Hagan's deep blue ceramic trout platter in the kitchen was shaped by actually pressing trout into the clay. Marguerita is an accomplished artist, lecturer and ecological scholar based in Philadelphia. Her artwork has long focused on natural subjects, recently on fascinating renditions of micro-organisms. In addition to her most delicate and sophisticated fine art pieces, she also offers a line of tableware incorporating her themes. You can see more here:



Pauli Hagan's painting of birch trees on the living room wall under the staircase is entitled "Into the Woods." It's an original acrylic. Pauli is a wondrous artist with her paintings permanently featured and at the Crossroads Art Center in Richmond. You can see more here:



Virginia Hagan. The largest rooster painting in the kitchen is an original work by Norfolk artist Virginia Hagan. A commissioned piece, its formality is a departure from much of Virginia's style, but it certainly suits the rooster theme of the Blue View kitchen. It is a much-appreciated gift to the Blue View from Virginia's brother Ad and his daughter Ann Caitlin Hagan.



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