



### “Memories: Old Barns”

I have many paintings in my home: most are acrylics and watercolors I've painted myself along with a few sketches and photographs. Some intricate ink and graphite drawings of deer and other wildlife in the area, but one painting I find very soothing – this of a barn, in a field close to the foot of the North Georgia Mountains.

I have always been enchanted by barns, and not just paintings of them. One sad aspect of traveling the interstate highways is the scenery of the local areas that is missed, especially just out of the small towns. So many family farms skirted the small towns of highways of old, all with a barn not far from the house.

I remember thinking many of the barns were in better shape than the houses! But, of course – that's where the livestock, their feed, and farm equipment were housed.

Most of those farms also had orchards, and what a delight for us to stop at the roadside and reap the fortunes of those orchards: Apple Cider. Nothing quenches the thirst of a traveler than some good apple cider from the apple trees, apples having been stored and mashed in the barns.

In the late 60's and early 70's I was fortunate to have traveled to Canada, first to Ontario, then traveling via the highway parallel to the St. Lawrence River/Seaway up to Quebec. What beautiful scenery! But the scenes that stay in my mind to this day are the rooftops of the barns. No

matter what color the barn is painted (if painted), the roofs were all a turquoise color. The farther we drove, the more this became a confirmed reality, all barn rooftops were turquoise! Even a few of the house rooftops were this color.

Driving into Quebec, the reason for the turquoise roofs became apparent:

all the old buildings in Quebec had roofs made of copper, which eventually weathered and oxidized to a turquoise patina. What better color to carry out into the countryside than this same effect. Although most of the farmers could not afford a copper roof, they could use paint to give the same effect.

Back to my painting of the barn – did I get sidetracked?

It takes little imagination to put myself in this painting, as I grew up visiting with family friends and relatives on their farmland...and the barn.

I often credit to my times spent in the barn as my “imagination-growth-period.” I mean, where else can you safely jump from a mountain-top (the second bale of hay) down into to a rushing river below (the first bale of hay)?

How else would you

learn to milk a cow at a young age? How else could you safely climb upon the back of a magnificent white stallion, than in the barn-stall? Many a battle you fought in the forests of Ancient Times, and then you were able to retreat to the safety of the Fortress (the barn)!

Where else could you safely live-out your fantasies of training a wild elephant and learn to ride one (the cow), than in the barn? Driving along the highways, and old dirt roads of North Georgia, one can view many beautiful old barns; most of them with the wonderful weathered gray siding, some with red and patina roofs. The character that these old barns possess is amazing.

When the rains would come, there was no better place to be than in the barn with the tin roof...the rain coming in pitter-patter or pop-pop, depending on the size of the raindrops. What marvelous adventures I had, and memories I have of the Ferris' barn in Upstate New York, with their rooster weathered weather vane prominently displayed on the roof.

If you'll now excuse me, I think I'll go look at the painting, close my eyes and have one more adventure...



“Trackrock Barn” Watercolor Painting by Scott M. Anna