

## Images Murals

### Lessons in art, lessons in life

In his basement studio filled with prints of everything from ships to scenery to locomotives, artist Harry Ahysen diligently attends to one of his works in progress. It is a picture of a stream in the wintertime. "There's all this warmth in there," he says. "There's snow, but it's not white snow. White reflects all the color. You're looking at soft violets, soft blues, off-white, soft yellows. We fool the eye. It's a little lie that tells the truth."

In his left sits a small-scale painting of three murals that will soon hang at the Fayette County Fairgrounds. More than a dozen of Ahysen's murals can be seen throughout the county—each holds special meaning to him. The mural in the American Legion Post #25 in Washington Court House is called "The Observers." According to Ahysen, "That represents all the armed forces. There's no faces, so when any veteran comes in there he becomes a part of the total group—of all the men who fought, the nurses—even the dead."

A Texas graduate in fine arts, Ahysen moved to Washington Court House in 1990 and now considers it his home. He says he loves the city. "This is a beehive of operation. It doesn't look like it, but an awful lot goes on here. Someone is forever doing something—getting crops in or out, watching the weather. I'm very impressed with what's going on." And anyone who meets the artist will be impressed with what he offers Fayette County.

Ahysen's lifetime of experience con-

tributes to his paintings. When you speak with him he tells of his navy experiences in World War II, his time as a dancer, and his days of paying bills by playing trumpet. "A lot of people are skilled in rudimentary work, but they don't put their heart into it. In music, my teacher always told us don't play a note unless it's the most beautiful note you've ever played. Anyone can play a lot of notes, but few can play music."

In addition to creating murals, Ahysen also spends time relaying his experience to future artists. "Talent is guts, determination, and rehearsal. You must keep going, you've got to keep trying, you must want to be able to do it. If that's what talent is, there's nobody here in this whole world who doesn't have a talent for something. Keep your eyes set on that future thing, and it will come to pass."

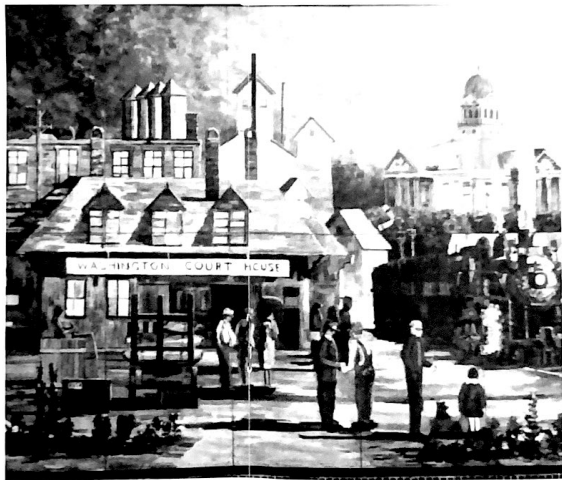
Ahysen also talks to the aspiring young artists about the process of his paintings and murals. "The children really love it. They are very proud of the fact that there are murals here. That's what it's for—it's for the young." His mural, "Come and See," is located in the nursery of the St. Andrew Episcopal Church on Highland Avenue in Washington Court House. The colorful mural depicts the teachings of Jesus while seeing the beauty of the morning. Surrounding the mural are pictures drawn by the children.

In addition to the ones pictured here, there are several others to see—when more coming soon. In fact, when asked which mural was his favorite, Ahysen replied, "The next one." Sitting and talking with Harry Ahysen offers much more than a lesson in art. **ES**

Below, Ahysen shows one of his murals in his studio. A detail from "Fire," right, is located at the Washington Court House Fire Station, "Serenity Reigns," bottom right, can be seen at Garner's Truck Stop on U.S. 35 and Interstate 71.



"Many Things Are Centered Here," below, is featured at Towne Center Park in Washington Court House.



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