

## TEN YEARS TOGETHER

It was a chilly, dark evening in Door County, as I remember. Rainy. The Petersons weren't particularly interested in meeting with me, but I had been persistent. After seeing a piece titled "Sleigh Ride", I was convinced that his unique "memories" paintings would quickly find a national audience in limited edition print form. Their reservations were abundant: Was it hypocritical for an artist who had such high regard for the quality of art to join an industry that obviously was more interested in the popularity of it? Would an artist who had spent a lifetime achieving national and international acclaim be risking his reputation by becoming involved with such commercialism? Could an artist who prided himself in variety and versatility be comfortable being known only as "the memories painter"? There was no need, monetary or otherwise, for Charles Peterson to offer his work anywhere other than the gallery attached to his home (as he had done for years). There was no good reason for him to believe my fledgling company could deliver on anything we talked about. There was nothing, really, except that, by the end of that evening, we all shared the strong feeling that this felt right. Trust (apparently) is not always logical.

That meeting in late 1988 began my association and friendship with one of the most extraordinary people I have ever known. Our first two prints, "The Stall" and "Sunday Hitch", were released in 1989, followed by an exceptional piece, "All Aboard!", in early 1990. The limited edition print industry took notice, people responded, and all three releases sold out. We were on our way! Within three years Charles Peterson became (and remains) one of the most popular artists in the country. This unique man, who didn't need the money and never sought the notoriety, landed at the top. Today his quest for perfection in art is stronger than ever, but the reservations regarding involvement in the print industry are gone. "It is a gratifying thing to know that my work may have touched someone in a special way." That may be the biggest understatement in . . . well, ten years!

To commemorate our first decade together (and to launch our second), we are devoting this entire issue of Open House to the art of Charles Peterson. All of the images featured are available currently, however, several are in low inventory and will be available only on the secondary market in the near future. On the back we briefly discuss the secondary market and provide approximate print values for serious collectors. Finally, to the right, we include some little known facts about Charles Peterson. Between his book, *Of Time And Place*, and the numerous magazine articles that have been written over the years, it is difficult to come up with anything that hasn't been said ten times over. But here, with the help of his wife, Sue, we give you a little "insider" information about "Chick" Peterson. I think you will enjoy it.

—Mark Quale, President  
The White Door  
Publishing Company

## You probably didn't know that Charles Peterson...



Boy Scout Camp, 1943.  
(Charles on left)



Navy buddies, 1946.  
(Charles on left)



"Chick" and "Mother", 1998.  
(Charles on right)

- keeps a strict painting schedule of 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM daily.
- got his first art related job at a publishing house that specialized in Sunday school publications, taking evening classes at the American Academy at the same time. "I'd draw Sunday school subjects by day and nude models by night. Quite an education!"
- was a high school wrestler, band member and Student Government President.
- has six grandchildren that he enjoys often because they all live within twenty five miles of Grandpa and Grandma.
- insists on using the very best, preferring Windsor Newton paints and brushes and watercolor papers from the D'Arches Company.
- was an accomplished Boy Scout, achieving Eagle Scout rank and attending the 1947 International Boy Scout Jamboree in Paris as an instructor of Indian Lore and Dance.
- loves sailing and has sailed the same boat from the same mooring since 1963!
- is primarily a studio painter ("I'm a control nut.") but may venture out for on-site sketching as required by the subject matter.
- was convinced of the value of a thorough annual physical exam last year when a stress test revealed a "symptomless" partial blockage near his heart. An angioplasty was 100% successful, with early detection being the key to avoiding any damage.
- has not shaved since the day he retired from college teaching in 1973 to pursue painting full time.
- still uses a brush (a #10 round sable) that was purchased on the GI Bill in 1947 while attending the American Academy Of Art!
- totally designed his own beautiful and comfortable home in 1967, as well as additions and renovations in 1968, 1973 and 1998.
- rises at 6:30 AM and is "dedicated to being seated at the table, eating a breakfast of cereal, juice and toast by 6:32!"
- and his wife, Sue, are active participants in Elder Hostel programs; in recent years enjoying trips to London, Switzerland, Italy and France.
- takes approximately a month to complete a complex "memories" style painting.
- served in the Navy during World War II and was enroute to Japan when surrender was announced. "When they heard I was coming, they just quit!"
- enjoys visiting his 103 year old Swedish mother who still lives on her own and does her own cooking (Meals On Wheels was just "too boring")!
- considers composition the most critical aspect of a painting. "If a composition is poor, the most dazzling use of paint can't save it."
- has a radio in his studio that never gets turned off and never gets changed from its setting on Wisconsin Public Radio. "When my previous radio died we were amused to discover that the tuner wouldn't budge!"
- walks from two to four miles daily ("which clears my mind as well as my circulatory system").
- has a very limited watercolor palette, primarily using just three colors: yellow ochre, cadmium red and Prussian blue. Three others are used seldom and sparingly.
- describes an "ideal evening" to include reading, classical music, wine and quiet conversation with friends.
- in 1998 was honored as the inaugural inductee into the Marietta College Alumni Faculty Hall Of Fame! At the ceremony it was proclaimed; "It is fitting that Charles L. Peterson be the first to be hung here"—to which he quipped, "I am assuming you mean the plaque!"
- credits his mother with giving him the nickname, "Chick". It's easy to spot the phony who claims to be a close friend of "Chuck"!



Charles Peterson's newest release "Country Fresh". See print details inside.