Flight to Flesherton

The artists at the installation of their gallery sign. FLASHTOWN.

(Left to right) Kate Wilson, Ovis Tassassemakis, Barb Shaw, the Howes, Harold Klander, Catherine Carmichael, Clarke Rogers and Rae Johnson.

The whitewashed, wooden façade from the outside of the modest buildings that used to stand is unmistakable place for a commercial art gallery. The stores are dim and dusty and the walls could use another coat of paint. Salary. oil paintings of representations that once adorned the entrance and the and almost-but not completely-modernized sign proclaim: Welcome to Flesherton.

FLASHTOWN, a gallery run by a group of expatriates from Toronto, opened its doors in March with the annual round of a sign designed by nine local artists. The event was followed by a private gathering of artists and friends to raise funds for the purchase of a proper neon sign. A substantial crowd — by Flesherton standards, anyway — gathered to watch the proceedings. Flashtown may not yet rival the local Legion as a community hangout, but it is causing quite an interest stir in this village of 600.

Over the last seven years, 14 Toronto artists fleeing soaring studio rents have taken up residence in Flesherton, located about 100 kilometres northwest of Toronto, near the Ontario-Niagara River.

"The artists," as they are known by the locals, have been working at Flesherton, creating their art in a small town known for its art and culture scene. The town is home to a number of artists and galleries, and is known for its art and cultural scene.

It's an overcast May afternoon and gallery director Clarrie Rogers is talking to a local resident about the gallery. She describes the building as being an old, isolated building on the outskirts of town, which is now a gallery.

"It has a lot of history," she says. "The building used to be a schoolhouse, and then it was used as a community centre. It's been around for a long time."

Rogers says the gallery is open to the public and welcomes visitors to come and see the exhibits and meet the artists.

"We have a lot of visitors," she says. "People come from all over the region to see the art and meet the artists."

Rogers says the gallery is open year-round and offers a variety of events and workshops for visitors and artists alike.

"We have a lot of events scheduled for the upcoming months," she says. "We're having a big art sale in June, and then we have a festival in September. It's going to be a busy summer!"

Rogers says the gallery is open from 10am to 6pm on weekdays and from 11am to 5pm on weekends. She encourages visitors to come and see the art and meet the artists.

"We're here to share the art and the artists," she says. "Come and visit us and see what we have to offer.

ISABEL VINCENT The Globe and Mail

FLASHTOWN's vibrant scene is attracting artists from all over the region. A group of artists fled the high rents in Toronto and found plenty of space and creative energy in the small town of Flesherton.

BY ISABEL VINCENT

The Globe and Mail

meet with the art dealer, Carmen Lamantia, and calls Flesherton home.

"It's Tom Thomson country," she says. "A beautiful spot with a lot of water. For the arts, it's a logical place. The Canadian landscape painters, David Milne, also worked in the area."

Perhaps this is one reason Flesherton has become an impromptu arts colony. Barb Shaw, a local astrologer and one of the original Toronto artists to move to Flesherton, said it was "a great place to work and live." Rogers, who moved to Flesherton almost two years ago to escape the ''bustle'' of Toronto, has been impressed with the community's support for the arts. "It's a really special place," she said.

Rogers also notes the town's proximity to the airport and the city, making it an ideal location for artists who want to be close to the city but still have access to a quiet, artistic environment.

"It's a great place to raise a family," she said. "You can have a quiet life but still be close to the city." Rogers says the town is also a great place to work on art projects and to attend art shows and events.

In June, Rogers is planning to host a successful art event for the local artists and gallery owners. She is also looking to make Flesherton a destination for art enthusiasts and tourists.

"We're really excited about the future," she said. "We have a lot of plans and ideas for the town." Rogers says the town is growing rapidly and is becoming a popular destination for artists and art lovers alike.

"We're really hopeful that Flesherton will continue to grow and flourish," she said. "We want to see the town thrive and continue to be a place where artists can create and thrive.
Flesherton draws artists

From Page C1

accessible,” says Rogers. “Artists are no different perceived as artists, but we have such a unique gathering of artists here, who simply want to be a part of the community.”

Rogers wants to run for local council to help solve some regional problems, such as the lack of sewers.

Also, a recent proposal to cut down a few centuries-old trees to widen a patch of highway has Rogers worried that the village may soon be overrun with housing developments. “It’s boring,” he says, noting that the village has three real estate offices.

They (the artists) love the place and want to be a part of it, but they have no control. I love the village the way it is,” said Geraldine Robinson, secretary of the Flesherton and District Chamber of Commerce.

Robinson said she likes the artists because they’re not “pushy” and have tried to participate in community life.

We decided to have them here because it makes us feel more like a neighborly community,” said Robinson.

When Carmichael’s daughter, Elizabeth, was born last April, Robinson told some of the other women to knit clothes and bake cookies.

But community spirit is one thing and selling art is another, says the colony’s curator. While Rogers Flesherton was hailed by the local chamber of commerce as “a thriving business venture in the village,” Toronto art dealers are skeptical.

“It’s a great idea, but to look at it from a major source of income, I think it’s going to be a little difficult,” says Avrom Spear, a dealer for Flesherton artist Lorre Wagman and owner of the chamber of commerce in Toronto.

Rogers seems concerned and says he isn’t looking for big payoffs, although he admits he would like to see the Toronto art community taking more interest in the village.

“If you have to do it yourself,” he says on the subject, “you’re probably not going to get too much notice. If the artists are not going to be noticed, then it’s not going to be a message of art.”

The Mayes brothers, from left: David and Albert, capture Paul Brennan’s pitch in Salesman.

TELEVISION REVIEW / Feature-length documentary is 21 years old but it’s as engrossing and affecting as ever.

No death of a Salesman here

By John Haslet Cuff

The Mayes family, the smallest feature-length documentary in the Saleman feature, continues to be as engrossing and affecting as ever.

The wonder is that the drama and the insights contained in the film are still relevant today, captured more by patience and hard work than by the sort of artificial emotional cooing that too often makes "news" shows such as 48 Hours.

Salesman is justly considered a classic, although this is apparently the first time it has been shown on television. Shot over six weeks, it chronicles the activities of four British salesmen who are making their way to the door-to-door pitches first in Boston and then in Florida. The salesmen (and Zwei) are directed by Paul Brennan, a 20-year veteran of the trade, who is the most experienced salesman in the show.

Without offering a single word of advice, the film simply shows the salesman’s day-to-day work, but it is not only informative but also touching.

The film’s most powerful scene is the one in which the salesman is seen looking into a mirror, reflecting on his life and career. The salesman’s reflections are powerful and moving, and it is clear that the salesman is a man who has lived a full and meaningful life.

The film is a powerful reminder that life is not just about making money or achieving success, but also about finding meaning and purpose in our lives.