

Water from Another Time

Dan Hardison

We encounter many things as we make our way through life that help steer us along our path, or perhaps set us upon another path entirely. There are people who influence our thoughts and beliefs. There are events that remain with us always. But we also encounter little things that can impact our lives – sometimes without realizing it at the time.

Often times we may hear a song that will take us back to another place in time. I remember my first awareness of music when I listened to Chet Atkins' album "Mister Guitar" in the early 1960's. The album turned me onto music and would lead to my own guitar lessons and a love of music that today includes many varied styles. My every day is filled with music (most of it instrumental), but when I pull out "Mister Guitar," I am transported back to where it all began.

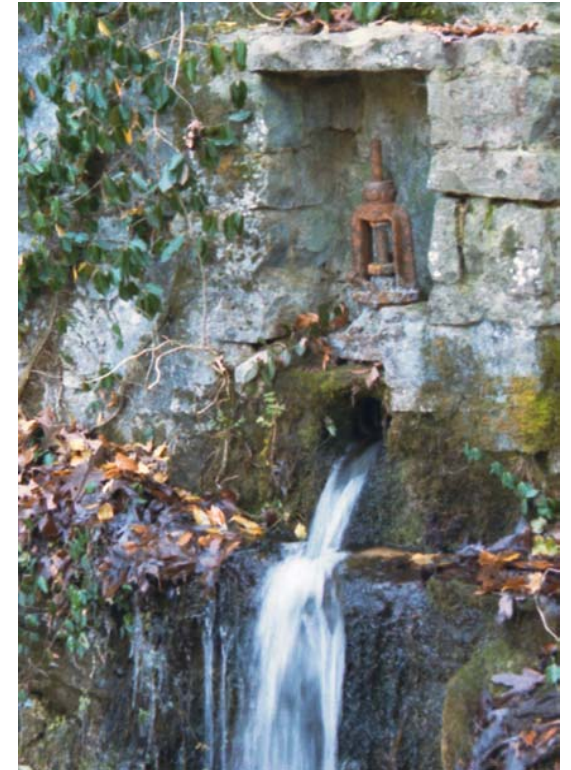
During my school years, literature was not to my liking. If our grades ranked school subjects from favorite to least favorite, literature was definitely at the bottom. It did not matter what form or style of literature – if it had words, it was disliked. Everything changed in the mid 1970's when I picked up Jim Metcalf's small book of poetry "In Some Quiet Place." That one book created a love for words that literature classes could not. Although today I read many different forms of writing, I still occasionally pull out one of Metcalf's books and discover again that first thrill of the printed word.

I have long had a passion for visual art. I owe most of my knowledge and appreciation of art to my uncle, but a turning point came when I purchased a book, "The Art of Andrew Wyeth." Wyeth's work fascinated me. His art was realistic in that the scenes and subjects were immediately recognizable, yet they also told a deeper story and created a mood that drew you in and captured you. Most art critics dismissed Wyeth, yet the general public adored him.

A high point for me came in 1980 when I visited the Greenville County Museum of Art in Greenville, South Carolina. At the time, the museum held the Magill collection of Andrew Wyeth art. Here for one's viewing were most of the important works by Wyeth – primarily from the Olson and Kuerner periods. This was an event I would not forget. My love of art today embraces many different styles that include the world of craft as well. But for me the soft tones and quiet melancholy of Andrew Wyeth's world will forever remain a fascination.

Andrew Wyeth passed away in January 2009. Chet Atkins died in 2001, and Jim Metcalf died in 1977. So excuse me while I get a cup of tea, put on Chet Atkins' "Mister Guitar," grab my tattered copy of Jim Metcalf's "In Some Quiet Place" and "The Art of Andrew Wyeth," and settle down for awhile. I need to revisit some old friends, drift back to where things began, and dip once again in water from another time.

*Their stories quench my soul and mind
Like water from another time
– John McCutcheon*



Water from Another Time
Rock Island State Park, East Tennessee
Photo by Dan Hardison