

## The Artist's Almanac September 2009

*The day becomes more solemn and serene  
When noon is past – there is a harmony  
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,  
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,  
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!*

- Shelley

These are the days we will remember in the dark afternoons of December, inching our way home to the beat of windshield wipers.

This is the best of summer, light without humidity. Pears and figs ripen to sweetness and the opaque blooms of dahlias morph into translucent jewels. Morning dews and mists prelude glorious sunlit days - days favored by golfers, travelers and artists. Roses, which in spring vied for our notice with their profligate abundance, now lift their award-winning specimens up to us on strong single stems. They have saved their best for now.

So has our sun. All white heat in summer, the overhead sun washes out color. Often shrouded in winter, in spring, sol is fickle, dodging between clouds and finding color isolated in flowers and shrubs. Now he comes at a rakish angle to flood the harmony of warm colors which nature wears. Autumn begins this month.



Sideview – Plein air sketch made in late August from Shiloh Churchyard

Autumn is the generous, the reliable, season. Its noble light invites the artist to explore the splendor of the world it illuminates. Claude Monet is reputed to have put away his paintbox when clouds obscured the sun, and Renoir did not paint winter landscapes. Any light makes interesting any surface, glorifying the meanest bucket, barn, or brick wall.

Yet even in autumn light changes and changes fast. How often has it happened to you? You are driving along the highway, and there it is – cattle in a field, distant hills, suffused with warm oblique light, defining shadows, multicolored grasses, dramatic clouds- ordinary things in extraordinary light, but no place to pull off and a diesel on your tail. Turner could remember such things in every detail, but you have left your camera home.

Autumn is change. Those distant blue hills that we see as icons of eternity are but waves of the earth, no more permanent than the waves of the sea - the one is sculpted by water; the other of water. Both of them toss the structures riding them and bury their inhabitants. All changes. Where once we raised horses and corn we now raise houses and cities.



Time Spent in the Creek – Bill Puryear, Artist

The waves of pure autumn light that wash over us are the artist's medium in which he seeks to capture a moment in time. We can never step twice in the same river, but we can stop, bend down and capture a bottle full of the whirling, sunlit water as it flows past us to we know not where.

Bill Puryear

*The Artist is on vacation. This month's Almanac first appeared in September, 2005.*

## Upcoming Events

- **Fall Into Art** – Third Annual Art Show benefiting Hendersonville High School’s Academic and Arts Program, October 2-4, 2009
- **Book Launch and Signing Parties, *Founding of the Cumberland Settlements—The First Atlas - 1779-1804***, at Gallatin Public Library on the Square, Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 4-6:30 PM and Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 12 Noon -2:30 PM. Hosted by **Sumner County Historical Society**, with authors Doug Drake, Jack Masters, Bill Puryear and artist David Wright signing books and art. Prints and Giclees of nationally-acclaimed pioneer artist David Wright will also be displayed and available. For further information see [www.cumberlandpioneers.com](http://www.cumberlandpioneers.com)

**Founding of the  
Cumberland Settlements**

*The First Atlas  
1779-1804*

SHOWING WHO CAME, HOW THEY CAME, AND WHERE THEY PUT DOWN ROOTS

DOUG DRAKE, JACK MASTERS & BILL PURYEAR

**Signers of the Cumberland Compact**

*Features include:*

- 100 color pages placing 1,000 land grants, locating your ancestor's land on a modern map.
- A compact disk with music, ringtones and original survey maps of all 1,000 deeds. Custom print-on-demand books of this data entered and searchable disk will be available for those who want a complete library of these original source documents.
- A five-page listing of what became of each of the 364 signers of The Cumberland Compact.
- Short biographies of early families and citizens.
- Charts and graphs of population, immigration, and demographics, with time lines showing historic context.
- Twenty-eight pages of pioneer road maps, showing buffalo traces and settlements, before wagons, and pioneer forts and stations.
- Twenty-five fully illustrated pages of color photos of ghost roads remaining today as well as historic art of David Wright and other regional artists.
- Barter techniques and tools used to parcel out the land.
- Charts and maps showing dates and location of 44 known settler deaths.
- Table of contents, full index, foreword, and extensive bibliography, with historical context of the times, 1779-1804.

[www.cumberlandpioneers.com](http://www.cumberlandpioneers.com)

*This is a tale told by survivors — an epic related by those who explored and hacked out a way through a howling wilderness, built cabins, cleared land, planted crops, and fought for survival against European armies and five tribal nations. They formed their own government, meted out justice and mercy, and, ultimately survived. We, their children, and those who came after, live today to enjoy this rich and verdant land where all are free.*

*This is how they did it.*

*This is a big, 814 page book of 200 glossy full-color pages that describes every aspect of the spread of the settlers over an eleven county area of today's Middle Tennessee, including all or parts of Davidson, Sumner, Robertson, Wilkes, Montgomery, Smith, Christian, Trousdale, Smith, Macon, and Jackson Counties.*