

## Art meets industry: Pomerene Center donates two paintings to Clow

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Art meets industry: Pomerene Center for the Arts Director Anne Cornell and others from the center present Tom Crawford, Clow Waters Systems General Manager, and other Clow workers with two pieces from the center's collection.

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**COSHOCTON** — Industry and art were blended during a presentation Tuesday at Clow Water Systems Co.

The Pomerene Center for the Arts presented two paintings to the pipe-making company that had been part of its collection for more than 40 years.

One is a watercolor painting depicting the outside of the Clow offices and factory. The other is an acrylic work of two Clow pipe fitters hard at work. Clow General Manager Tom Crawford said the pipe fitters piece will hang in the main conference room. The exterior portrait will be the centerpiece of his new office.

Crawford said the works display how ingrained Clow has been in the county for more than 100 years. Strong community ties in part led to Clow's sister company, McWane Poles, opening a ductile iron pole factory in the former Pretty Products warehouse near the Clow campus. Crawford said renovations are under way, including expanding the main office building.



Gerard Bordenkircher and co-worker Rod McInerney transport a painting from the parking lot at Clow Water Systems into the office building Tuesday. The Pomerene Center for the Arts donated two pieces - inspired by pipe workers and of the plant - from its permanent collection.



Anne Cornell, director of the Pomerene Center for the Arts, talks to 46-year Clow employee Rod McInerney about two pieces of artwork donated to the company Tuesday, while co-workers Gerard Bordenkircher, Sam Fecuch and operation manager Joe Carter admire one of the pieces. / Valerie Boateng/Tribune

Crawford said the company would be hosting a retirement party for two employees who have been with the firm for 40 years Thursday. The event will make a good time to share the work with all employees, he said.

"This signifies the hard work and sweat those employees and others have put in to make Clow what it is today," Crawford said. "It's just neat to look at these paintings and see how we've changed. It's awesome to look at something 40 or 50 years old and have that history here."

Pomerene Director Anne Cornell said not much is known about the works. They were in storage at the art center for many years, she said. The pipe fitters piece was done by a Millet, with no first name on the card that was with the painting in storage, and was a gift to the art center from Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Lanese.

The exterior of Clow was painted by Annette Salrin and was donated to the art center by J. Edgar Haller. Haller was a plant manager at Clow from 1965 to 1971.

Salrin was an artist for the advertising firm Shaw Barton, Cornell said, and was part of the advertising art movement that once was as important to Coshocton as its many smokestack industries. A similar work by Salrin already was hanging in the Clow offices.

"One of the strengths of art is that it brings people together in new ways. You have something you can look at as an expression of an idea," Cornell said. "It's an easy way to connect people and here it connects two histories."

A few workers helped to bring in the paintings from Cornell's car. It was discovered that one of the workers, Gerard Bordenkircher, was an oil painter at one time.

"I think it's pretty neat (the Pomerene) had them for so many years and are donating them now to Clow's," Bordenkircher said of the artwork.

Another person with a foot in both worlds is Coshocton Port Authority Director Dorothy Skowrunski. She's a former member of the Pomerene board and, as port authority head, she's concerned with bringing in business and keeping the ones still here.

"In Coshocton the history of arts as well as industry is very rich in our community. Bringing the two together is just a celebration of that," she said.

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