

In the Burlington area, an art seeker never has to go far. Art is often only steps away from wherever one is. Sometimes, though, a bus or car ride is involved. To get to the Shelburne Pond Studios, it involves driving down a dirt road, Pond Road to be exact. It will be worth the trip.

Kathy Stockman, who owns the buildings housing Shelburne Pond Studios, welcomed her first studio mates in May 2010. Nine artists were in studios and two were in Stockman's carving studio. By December 2011, the last of the 11 studios was completed in the barn. Today, there are 15 artists, including Stockman. As is often the case in Vermont, Stockman's decision to open the studios was a result of responding to a need from fellow artists. Stockman says, "A fellow artist had been looking for studio space and found only small, expensive spaces in Burlington. She asked if we had ever considered converting our unused first level of our dairy barn into affordable artist studio spaces. We began the conversion by taking out the metal stanchions for the cow stalls and measuring off 2 cow stalls wide per studio. Much of the building material we used was recycled--clean wood, OSB, windows and doors."

Shelburne Pond Studios' philosophy is "to provide affordable artist studio spaces in a peaceful, beautiful and inspirational location. In addition, [it is also] to provide to the public access to quality art." Stockman sees the studios as an art/arts education community.

Stockman and her husband view the studios as an artist collective, even though they own and manage the studios and the outdoor year-round sculpture exhibit. Events are planned in conjunction with the artists. Besides "barn/studio" events, Shelburne Pond Studios also offers bi-monthly forums for local dry stone wallers and they have hosted an event with music performers for custom guitar and amplifier makers.

Visit Shelburne Pond Studios' website, shelburnepondstudios.wordpress.com, to learn about the sculpture exhibit and the artists whose studios are there. If you see an artist you are interested in, make an appointment to stop by.

