

Future a blank canvas

JILL PENGELLEY

TREVOR Whittaker is painting his own picture of retirement.

In just over a year, he has unleashed his inner artist.

Mr Whittaker, 77, started taking art classes at Stockland's Hillsview Retirement Village, at Happy Valley, in September, 2017.

Run by fellow resident and long-time painting enthusiast Ian Finlay, the free classes in the village's arts-and-crafts centre attract more than 12 residents each week.

Mr Whittaker, who left school at 14 and never studied art, says he was not surprised to find that he could paint.

"I'd always wanted to learn how to paint but never had the opportunity until I retired," Mr Whittaker says.

"With my new skills, I can spend many hours painting in my home studio."

Mr Whittaker has turned a room of his home into a gallery and paints for an average of eight hours a week.

He has begun to sell paintings, he has had people commission artworks and, throughout January, 15 of his works are featured in an exhibition in the Kapunda art gallery.

In March, he will be



AT WORK: Trevor Whittaker, 77, of Stockland's Hillsview Retirement Village, at Happy Valley, finishes a painting in his home-based gallery and, top right, one of his works.

featured in a Kadina gallery.

"My paintings prove that age is no barrier to learning," he says. "It's never too late to learn a new skill or pick up a hobby. Painting is challenging

but relaxing and a great way to make new friends."

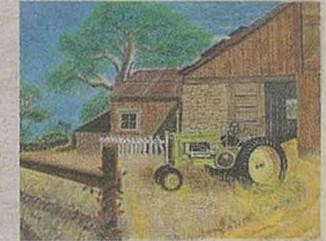
Mr Whittaker says he draws inspiration from his own experiences.

"My paintings are re-

creations of my own memories such as sights I've seen or places I've travelled," he says.

"My favourite painting is of a tractor in front of a barn, which reminds me of places

I've seen in the countryside when travelling. I also enjoy painting sunsets because no two look the same.



"I'm no Pablo Picasso or Vincent van Gogh, but I'm very proud of my artworks."

He believes he has improved over the past 16 months and last year was awarded a certificate of merit at an art show for a painting of an eagle.

Hillsview Retirement Village manager Darren Ward says Stockland encourages residents to challenge retirement stereotypes.

"The painting classes have brought many of our residents together, started new friendships, and helped

maintain and improve their artistic and cognitive skills," he says.

"It's fantastic to see residents choosing how they want their retirement to be and we are very supportive of any activities that keep our residents physically and mentally active."

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