

THE LOOP

The Hunterdon County Rug Artisans Guild (HCRAAG) Newsletter

November 2008

From the President's Corner – November is the time when we traditionally pause to reflect and give thanks for all that we are so fortunate to have. As Guild members, we give thanks for being part of the rug hooking community.

Some of us were fortunate to be introduced to rug hooking early in life through family members such as mothers, grandparents, aunts or uncles. Others came to rug hooking later in life, perhaps after years of applying themselves to some other form of handwork. Some of us found our way to rug hooking after retiring from professional life and were in search of a creative outlet. Others were attracted by the historical aspects of traditional rug hooking. Whatever the route we came by, we are fortunate to be here now.

We are fortunate that rug hooking accommodates a wide range of creative interests and styles. Our craft/art allows self expression for those who are attracted to the primitive style and those who find challenge and satisfaction in the incredible results possible with fine cut and shading techniques. The growing interest in mixed media and multiple hooking techniques offers yet other opportunities for self expression within our rug hooking family.

Many rug hookers see themselves as traditionalists following in the footsteps of 19th Century women who found creative expression while producing functional rugs for their homes. Other members of our community see themselves primarily as fiber artists and feel strongly that it is important to find self expression through their hooking. Are we not fortunate to be involved with an activity that accommodates both ends of the spectrum?

We are fortunate to have available to us many local rug hooking resources. There are talented instructors who teach and motivate us. There are open studios, workshops and camps in which we can participate. There are numerous vendors offering beautifully dyed and/or new wool.

We are fortunate to have a vibrant and healthy Guild. We have officers who work hard and members who support the Guild in many ways. Of course, best of all is that we have each other. We learn from each other. We draw inspiration from each other and we enjoy each other.

Whatever our perspective or preferred style, the simple step of pulling loops ties us together and takes us back in time to when a woman in New England took a piece of charcoal from the fireplace and drew a simple pattern on a burlap bag. Yes, we have much for which to be thankful.

Happy Thanksgiving and keep on hooking! -- Weezie

November Meeting – November 14, 2008 – The November meeting will be held at our regular location, the Hunterdon County Complex on Rt. 12 outside of Flemington from 10:00 to 2:00.

Program – Author, instructor and Guild member Margaret Lutz will present a program on “How to Finish a Hooked Rug”. It will include a discussion of how to finish using 13 different techniques. The techniques include self binding, braided edging and corded and whipped edgings. A book signing for her popular book “The Secrets of Finishing Hooked Rugs” will follow the program. In addition to teaching rug hooking, Margaret is the exclusive provider of Lib Calloway patterns.

Show and Tell – Bring any Lib Calloway pattern rugs and rugs with your favorite finishing techniques. Of course, sharing current projects is always encouraged.

Hooking Time – Take advantage of the meeting to do some hooking. Bring your equipment and current project to work on. We have the room until 2:00, so stay and hook.

December Meeting – Advance Information -- Our eagerly anticipated holiday luncheon will take place at the December meeting. Members are encouraged to hook a holiday ornament that will be hung on small Christmas trees that will be raffled. The popular “Shoebox Surprise” will be another feature of the holiday meeting. Fill a shoebox with hooking or non-hooking related items that you think will be appreciated by rug hookers, wrap it as a gift and bring it to the meeting. Sharon Ballard always has fun ways to exchange the boxes. With a month and a half lead time, there is lots of time to hook an ornament and fill a shoebox. Join in on the fun!

Hospitality – We thank in advance Carol Kindt, Barbara Lugg, Kitty Platt and Bonnie Rusch for volunteering to provide the refreshments for the November meeting. Your efforts help make our meetings more enjoyable.

Membership – We are pleased to welcome Cynthia Covino, Lydia Lewis, Jamie Mirabito and Therese Shick to our Guild. Cynthia met Weezie while she was demonstrating at the 4-H Fair this past summer. Lydia is a long time friend of Margaret Brightbill and recently helped demonstrate at Colonial Market Day in Newtown, PA. Jamie attended our Beginners’ Workshop at camp.

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Claudia Casebolt has a new email address --- claudia67@gmail.com. Gail Schmidt has a new telephone number – 732-915-1269.

Please note that dues must be paid by the November meeting in order to receive the discounted member rate for camp. A membership renewal form is attached .

Let the Sun Shine – Our heartfelt condolences are sent to Ingrid Cosmen whose step-father passed away in Sweden. Connie Coleman had surgery to her wrist. We wish her a speedy recovery.

November Birthdays – Happy Birthday to Jamie Gartelman (11/5), Mary Henck (11/28), Carol Kindt (11/11), Marion Michel (11/28), Jamie Mirabito (11/13), Linda Reitz (11/16) and Kay Weeks (11/15). They are all celebrating a November birthday. Happiest of birthdays to you all!

Third Annual Rug Hooking Retreat – January 9-11 2009 – There are only six spots still available for the fun filled hooking retreat. If you want to be assured of attending, you are encouraged to register now. There will be an “early bird” drawing for a free massage session for those who have registered by the end of November.

The retreat is scheduled for January 9-11, 2009 at the Hampton Inn in Flemington. Participation will be limited to 25 HCRAAG members. A non-refundable registration fee of \$35 must be paid in advance. Give your check made payable to HCRAAG to Gail Ferdinando at the November meeting or send it to her at 4 Bonnell Rd., Pittstown, NJ 08867.

Participants can commute daily or stay overnight. A discounted rate of \$112 per night, plus tax, has been negotiated for all reservations made prior to December 9th. Please contact the Hampton Inn at (908) 284-9427 to reserve your room and mention HCRAAG to get the special rate.

Registrations Being Accepted for Rug Hooking Camp – It is not too early to sign up for our 13th annual rug hooking camp that will be held from August 10-14, 2009. Three excellent instructors – Sandra Brown, Judy Quintman and Abby Vakay -- are scheduled to be with us. Information on Judy Quintman and Abby Vakay is provided below to assist members in making their camp instructor decision. This augments the information on Sandra Brown that was provided last month.

Abby Vakay -- Painterly Possibilities -- Abby will be joining us from her home in West Hampton, NY where she teaches creative rug hooking and yoga. The information that follows was taken from her letter to her students at Cape May this fall.

“What is painterly? We will all have our own ideas around that question, and they are all right. To me, it is simply color, value and texture flow, less boundaries, free. We will share and try various alternative fiber techniques as we pull, poke and prod fibers into perfectly. I will bring many fibers, dyed in the painterly fashion to support your work painterly places. All patterns, works-in-progress, and your designs are potentially painterly. All week, we will flow fiber, dye, and meld many materials, for the painterly approach. I encourage students to bring and to share inspiration and insights throughout the week. Please bring any works, books, ideas that inspire the creative process. My hope is that this workshop will transform your approach to this and all your future fiber-artworks. I will offer movements to offset carpal tunnel, guided imagery to enhance creative unfolding. Prepare for painterly, and a different approach to fiber flow. For more information visit www.abbyvakay.com. On the website, click fiber, then Painterly Progression.”

Judy Quintman – Judy lives in Wilmington, NC and has been hooking for 11 years. Her favorite style is primitive although she enjoys working in other styles with smaller size cuts as well. In her session she will explore a wide variety of techniques including proddy (as seen on her Peonies rug on the cover of Rug Hooking Magazine, June 2008), and other ways to enhance your rugs.

She will cover any and all topics that are important to you – including dimensional techniques, backgrounds, mixing colors for backgrounds, finishing your rugs and labeling them as well. Judy participated in our 2008 Camp along with her step-daughters, Guild members Gail Ferdinando and Debbie Walsh. She “loves to teach rug hooking and to share the craft.”

Housing is needed for Abby Vakay and Sandra Brown. Any Guild member who provides housing (including breakfast and dinner) comes to camp free. Let Karl Gimber know if you have interest. You are not expected to entertain the instructors in the evenings. In fact, after “being on stage” all day the instructors need the evenings to relax, reflect and prepare for the next day.

To register for camp, just send a \$25 check made payable to HCRAAG to Karl Gimber at P.O. Box 16, Carversville, PA 18913. The deposit is non-refundable.

Please note that dues must be paid by the November meeting in order to be eligible for the HCRAAG member rate of \$150. The non-member rate is \$225. You can register later, but dues need to be paid now.

Plans for Spring Fling Advance --The responses to the members’ survey confirmed sufficient interest in a weekend workshop in the spring. As a result, Weezie Huntington is moving forward developing plans for the Spring Fling to be held the weekend of March 20-22, 2009 at the Hampton Inn in Flemington, NJ. The proposed weekend would begin with a wine and cheese reception Friday night from 5-7 during which time the students and instructors would meet to discuss the projects. Instructors would teach from 9-4:30 on Saturday, and 8:30 – 3:30 on Sunday. Weezie is now exploring the availability of various instructors. The tentative fee for the weekend is \$150. A discounted room rate will be provided for those who stay over night.

Meet Our Member – Nina Seaman -- Nina Seaman spends the summer and early fall months on Bell’s Island, Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia where she is very actively involved with the local rug hooking community. We are fortunate that she is with us the balance of the year.

Nina came to rug hooking later in life starting in the 1990s when her friend, Fran Lewis, presented her with rug hooking lessons as a birthday gift. As Nina says: “It was the best present ever! It opened a new vista for me. I began to see things differently, such as now many different colors of grass are in a field. I also found out things I didn’t want to do – hook in a fine cut or do shaded flowers – and I focused on the things I wanted to hook such as crazy padulas, the sea, boats and wharves, the sky, pictures of the island and the people.” Her first rug, which was her own design, was of an image she saw every day – a Cape Island Boat.

She works in primitive folk art style, using #6 - #8 cuts of wool. Nina uses recycled wool as well as some Dorr wool. Recently she has begun using more spun wools, as well as fleece. Nina has also branched out to using metallic cloth and ribbon as well as other embellishments. According to her friend and past instructor, Deanne Fitzpatrick, “Nina’s style is to mull over a piece of work for a good long time as she looks at it. She waits to see what new materials she will find that will enhance the rug. She is patient in her approach to her work.”

Two Nova Scotia hookers -- Doris Eaton and Deanne Fitzpatrick – have had the most influence on Nina’s development as a rug hooker. She does not attend many workshops or camps, although she did attend one with Marion Ham in Maine and then several with Deanne Fitzpatrick in Nova Scotia. Nina also worked with Roslyn Logsdon at The Highlands.

While Nina does some dyeing, she prefers to work with “as is” wool, including lots of tweeds and plaids. When she first started, Nina used mostly commercial patterns with a few of her own. Today, she draws most of her patterns and rarely relies on a commercial one. Rug hooking is Nina’s major hobby. She finds it “so fulfilling and meaningful that it has crowded out other interests.” Travel and art museums are sources of inspiration for her that goes into making rugs. Nina likes to hook in the late morning and early afternoon. Mornings are used for gathering materials or working on designs. She claims to “do my best thinking while on my morning walk or in the shower.”

In 2005, Nina’s rugs were featured at an exhibit at the LaHave Islands Marine Museum. The theme was the island and its people. The rugs were a collection of stories about the government wharf, fish stories, Sunday church, the fisherman, the hard work and the boats. The exhibit had a great response from those who saw it.

Nina is a retired World History teacher. She taught for many years in the Edison, NJ school system. Nina and her husband, Bob, who is a retired Presbyterian minister, lived all their professional lives in NJ, mainly in Edison. They lived in Toms River for eight years before retiring and moving full time to Nova Scotia. They now split their time between their home on Bell’s Island and their new home in Plainsboro, NJ. The home in Nova Scotia was their summer place before renovations in 2000 made it a year round house. They spent many summers there with their two sons, John and David. Both sons are married and bring their families to Bell’s Island each summer. Nina has four grandchildren – Lydia, Ian, Kate and Will. She has made rugs celebrating the birth of each of them as well as others showing life on Bell’s Island. Nina is now thinking ahead to The Jersey Girls show in April, 2009 and to a mat that celebrates the friendship of a group of women who she taught with in Edison.

When Nina moved to Plainsboro, NJ in January 2008, she was soon reunited with her long time friend Roberta Smith. It was through Roberta that Nina was introduced to our Guild. We are indebted to Roberta!

(Some of the information in this article is from Deanne Fitzpatrick’s article “Great Beginnings Start Somewhere in the Middle – The Art of Nina Seaman” that appeared in the June/July/August 2006 issue of Rug Hooking Magazine.)

Tips from Heloise (a.k.a. Barbara Lugg) – The most commonly suggested way to block a hooked rug is to place the rug face down on a flat surface, straighten it, and then place a damp cloth on the back of the rug. A hot iron is then used to produce steam and to apply pressure. Another way that many of our Guild’s veteran hookers believe produces better results is to roll the rug in a damp cloth and leave it over night. The backing absorbs moisture and becomes more pliable. This makes it easier to straighten and shape the rug before applying the iron in the normal manner.

Guild Exhibit a Success – The Guild’s exhibit at the Lebanon Township Museum was a big success according to Guild members Deanna Kinney and Joan Lucas who oversee the museum. Over 70 hooked rugs, mats, holiday ornaments, pillows, stools and other three dimensional items were creatively displayed. The opening reception on October 4, 2008 kept the staff busy all day and attracted many local residents. The volume of visitors continued throughout the month with visitors every day. Most had not hooked before and had interest in learning more. There were a lot of new rug hookers and some who wanted to start. Information on the Guild was available for the visitors. The staff enjoyed “living with all the wonderful rugs all month.” Our thanks to members who provided rugs for the exhibit and those who helped install and remove the exhibit.

A special note of gratitude goes to Deanna Kinney and Joan Lucas for inviting the Guild to their special museum.

Rugs exhibited can be picked up at the museum on November 1. Otherwise, Kay Weeks will bring them to our November meeting.

Guild Demonstrates Rug Hooking -- Last month was our busiest with respect to demonstrating rug hooking at community events. HCRAG was represented at **seven events** in October -- the Apple Butter Frolic (Harleysville, PA), Fall Festival (Hilltown, PA), "Larenswaert" Festival (Peter Wentz Farmstead, Worcester, PA), Millbrook Days (Millbrook Village, NJ), Quakertown House Tour (Quakertown, NJ), the Sheep & Fiber Festival (Ringoes, NJ) and the Worcester Historical Society Tour Day.

We thank the following Guild members who participated – Sharon and Cliff Ballard, Janet Bosshard, Cindy Boults, Margaret Brightbill, Joyce Combs, Gail Ferdinando, Karl Gimber, Weezie Huntington, Joan Lucas, Barbara Lugg, Deanna Kinney, Pat McDonnell, Joanne McIlmurray, Gisele Meader, Irene Pasternak, Dee Rosebrock, Debbie Walsh and Janet Williams.

Guild participation not only supports community organizations, but is an excellent way to introduce the public at all ages to the wonderful world of rug hooking. The exposure is good for the Guild and enjoyable for those who demonstrate.

Dee Rosebrock working with Weezie Huntington and others has developed a Beginners' Kit that includes backing with a star design, cut wool strips, hook, hoop and instructions. The kits have been popular with those attending the events at which we demonstrate. These fund raising kits were sold at most of last month's events. We are grateful to all who contributed wool and who helped put the kits together.

The last event scheduled for 2008 is Thanksgiving in the Country on November 1 and 2 at the historic Prallsville Mill in Stockton, NJ. Proceeds from the house tours and vendor sales support the Facial Reconstruction Department of Children's Hospital, Philadelphia, PA. This is a fun weekend with many visitors and people interested in rug hooking. Contact Joyce Combs at 609 737-9281 or fjcombs@verizon.net if you are interested in participating.

Trish Becker Hosts Winter Workshops at The Woolery -- Join Guild member Trish Becker at her rug hooking art studio on January 15, 16 and 17, 2009. Fee of \$275 includes instruction, country gourmet lunches, snacks and treats all in an historic stone barn setting. Come meet Judy Long, Editor of the ATHA Newsletter! Contact Trish at thewoolery@earthlink.net or 908 268 3949 for details and to reserve your place.

ATHA to Hold 2011 Biennial Conference in Lancaster, PA -- Lancaster has been selected as the site for the next Biennial Conference for The Association of Traditional Hooking Artists in 2011. With the location in close proximity to us, it will be convenient for Guild members to participate.

Visit the Guild Website at www.hcrag.com to find out what is happening with the Guild. Use it to check on membership information, the schedule of programs and to connect with other rug hooking links. Laurie Rubinetti updates the site monthly. Take a look!

Rug Hooking Events and Related Activities

Rags to Rugs: Pennsylvania Hooked and Handsewn Rugs Exhibition – Through December 31, 2008 at the Lancaster Quilt and Textile Museum. For more information contact Kim Fortney, VP, Heritage Center of Lancaster County at 717-299-6440 or kfortney@lancasterheritage.com.

Hooked in the Mountains XIII –November 8-16, 2008. The annual show and workshops sponsored by the Green Mountain Rug Hooking Guild will be at the Shelburne Museum. For more information go to the guild's website – www.greenmountainrughookingguild.org.

Jersey Girls Hooked Rug Exhibit – April 24 & 25, 2009 at the Firehouse in Oldwick, NJ.

16th Annual Maryland Shores Rug Hooking School – This McGown School will be held in Ocean City, Maryland on April 19-24, 2009. The teachers are Nancy Blood, Vicki Calu, Gail Dufresne, Sarah Guiliani, Betty McCentic, Eric Sandberg and Cynthia Norwood. For more information contact Janice Russell at 410-289-4110 or ocrug@aol.com.

The Mercer Hookers meet on the first Thursday of every month from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Mercer County Library in Pennington, NJ. It would be a good idea to contact Weezie Huntington (weezie711@gmail.com) if you are coming for the first time. The hook-in is open to anyone sharing an interest in rug hooking. Bring your lunch.

A “Gathering” of rug hookers meet at Historic Longstreet Farm, Holmdel, NJ every Tuesday from 10-3. The hook-in is open to rug hookers of all levels. For more information, call the Farm at 732-946-3758.

HCRAAG Calendar of Events

November 14, 2008 – Monthly Meeting – Finishing Rugs (Margaret Lutz) *.

December 12, 2008 – Holiday Luncheon *

January 9, 2009 – Monthly meeting – Auction and White Elephant Sale *

January 9-11, 2009 – 3rd Annual Rug Hooking Retreat – Hampton Inn, Flemington, NJ

February 13 2009 – Monthly Meeting – Program TBD*

March 13, 2009 – Hooking Animal Eyes – Gail Dufresne*

March 20-22, 2009 Spring Fling - Flemington Hampton Inn (tentative)

April 10, 2009 – Monthly Meeting – Program TBD*

May 8, 2009 – Monthly Meeting – Program TBD*

June 12, 2009 – Monthly meeting – Annual Picnic*

August 10-14, 2009 – HCRAAG Rug Hooking Camp – Educational Services Commission School

* Unless otherwise noted, our meetings run from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building, which is part of the Hunterdon County Complex on Route 12, Flemington, NJ. As you turn off Route 12 onto the road leading into the Complex, it is the first building on the right.

Guild Officers -- Our officers are anxious to hear from you on ideas and suggestions on how we can make the Guild responsive to your needs. Feel free to contact them with your thoughts.

President – Weezie Huntington -- 609-466-1882 or weezie711@gmail.com
Vice President – Open
Historian – Marion Michel – 609-397-3425 or marionmichel@earthlink.net
Hospitality – Helen Buchanan – 908-284-0749 & Barbara Lugg – 908-996-2562
Librarian – Kathy Donovan – 908-755-1670 or freyja@optonline.net
Programs – Sharon Ballard – 908-236-7410 or cliffballard2@comcast.net
Public Relations/Newsletter -- Karl Gimber -- 215-297-0803 or karlg@nni.com
Secretary – Joyce Combs -- 609-737-9281 or fjcombs@verizon.net
Special Events -- Kitty Platt – 908-782-8985 or kitty_platt@hotmail.com
 Gail Ferdinando – 908-735-6720 or thebrownieexpress@att.net
 Debbie Walsh – 908-272-7012 or debywalsh@yahoo.com
Sunshine – Lib Ryman -- 908-604-9459 or libr21226@aol.com
Treasurer – Gisele Meader -- 609-737-3123 or g.meader@att.net
 Margaret Brightbill (Asst. Treasurer) – 215-968-2711 or katie4rose@aol.com
Webmaster – Laurie Rubinetti -- 908-995-4030 or Lrubinet@ptdprolog.net

Guild’s Email List Policy - The HCRAG Email list is not for commercial purposes, internally, or externally. The Guild does not make the list available to vendors outside the Guild, and asks that vendors within the group not solicit the membership as a whole.

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The Loop is the newsletter of the Hunterdon County Rug Artisans Guild (HCRAG). It is published monthly (September through June). Articles, suggestions or ideas for the newsletter can be submitted to Karl Gimber at P. O. Box 16, Carversville, PA 18913 or by email to karlg@nni.com. by the 20th of the month.

Hunterdon County Rug Artisans Guild
 Minutes – October 10, 2008

Meeting was called to order by President Weezie Huntington at 10:10AM

Old Business:

- . Rug delivery and pick up for the Hooked in the Mountains Rug Show in November was discussed.
- . The following Junior Guild Offices are vacant and need members to volunteer: Vice President and Secretary.
- . We discussed the new displays that we are using when demonstrating at various fairs and shows. The displays attracted much attention at the recent demonstrations.
- . A way to carry and protect the display boards was discussed; Connie Coleman will look into using art portfolios.
- . The Lebanon Township Museum rug show is ongoing until October 31, members were encouraged to visit.
- . We are receiving many requests for Guild member to demonstrate, teach, or display rugs. Irene Pasternak volunteered to coordinate new events and demonstrations. . Requests for guild members to participate in events should be sent to Irene.
- . Jo Knoblock sent a thank you for her invitation to visit our summer camp.

- . Next year's camp was discussed and the comments from participating members were being incorporated into next year's camp.
- . Registration for the Winter Retreat at the Hampton is ongoing and anyone wishing to attend should pay \$35. The retreat is half full as of our October meeting.
- . HCRAg rug hooking kits have been a success at the recent demonstrations. Dee Rosebrock continues to coordinate the assembly of our kits. Members are encouraged to help.
- . Kitty Platt said our bus trip to Winterthur is estimated to cost \$19 per member, this will include entrance to the Museum. Wednesday was picked for the day of the week. Trip will be in Feb or March.

New Business;

Sharon Ballard discussed future programs:

- . December Meeting program and lunch was discussed.
 - . January Auction will have hooking related items only.
 - . February: Gail Dufresne will teach how to hook animal eyes.
 - . Our Winter Workshop was discussed, Weezie Huntington will send out an e-mail with teacher choices and an estimate of cost for a Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday workshop in March or April.
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- . Guests were introduced.
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- . Show and Tell
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- . Cliff Ballard's Punch needle program

Hunterdon County Rug Artisans Guild (HCRAAG)
2008/2009 Membership Dues

The Guild's program year begins on September 1, 2008 at which time membership dues are payable. To continue membership or to become a member, please send a check for \$20 made payable to HCRAAG to our Treasurer, Gisele Meader, 74 Barry Road, Lambertville, NJ 08530.

Name

Address

Phone Number

Email Address

Birthday (month and day only)