

THE LOOP

The Hunterdon County Rug Artisans Guild (HCRAG) Newsletter

October 2007

From the Presidents' Corner – Much of the September meeting was devoted to discussing the proposed changes to our by-laws and camp fee policies. It is clear that the significant increase in Guild activities and growth in membership requires by-laws that reflect and support our current situation. After much thoughtful discussion, the original proposals were modified and agreed upon. Our new by-laws are reproduced following this issue of The Loop and are now effective. We encourage you to become familiar with them. Establishing several new elected positions and creating an understudy role are the most important changes. Moving forward our continued success depends on filling the new positions. We asked that each Guild member consider how she/he can best contribute. This is your Guild and we all have a stake in our success. We want to thank all who devoted much time to develop the proposed changes and to those at the September meeting who participated in a thoughtful discussion. Please note that we also need someone to work with Lydia Brenner on Hospitality right now. Thank you -- Heidi and Weezie

October Meeting – October 12, 2007 -- The meeting will be at our regular meeting place, the Hunterdon County Administration Building, on Rt. 12, outside of Flemington, NJ from 10:00-2:00.

Guild Program – Sharon Ballard will help us get started on a “Pot Luck” sign (22” x 10 ½”). A pattern will be provided to copy on netting. Bring your own backing or scrap pieces will be available for your use. A marker and straight pins will also be needed. After the pattern is transferred to the backing, we will each design our own border. The completed signs will be displayed at the December meeting, which gives us two months to complete the project. First, Second and Third prizes will be awarded.

Show & Tell – Bring a Halloween/fall hooked item or rug, your current project or one recently finished. Bring any rug you want, but bring something to show.

Hospitality – Our thanks to Janet Bosshard, Lydia Brenner, Joyce Combs, Mary Jo Gimber, Weezie Huntington and Lisa Mims for providing the refreshments for our September meeting. The treats and snacks help make our meetings special and provide a way to support the Guild.

Membership – Guild dues for the 2007/2008 program year are now payable. A membership renewal form is attached for those who have not yet renewed their membership. Please note that in order to receive the subsidized member rate for our August 2008 rug hooking camp, you must be a Guild member by the November, 2007 meeting. We welcome Helen McWeeny-Dowling as our newest Guild member. Please add Helen to your member list.

Helen McWeeny-Dowling
612 Rt. 579
Flemington, NJ 08822
908-782-3303

Let the Sun Shine – Our condolences go to Nancy Carman whose daughter passed away recently. We have also learned that Boletta Morris, a founding member of HCRAG, died in August at the age of 95. Virginia Sutton has been asked by Boletta's family to complete the last rug on which she was working.

October Birthdays – Birthday wishes go to Catherine Baisch (10/26), Phyllis Hamel (10/16) and Bernice Smith (10/10). Have a wonderful day!

New Positions Established – The amended by-laws established several new elected positions including a “freshman” (understudy/backup) role for the major offices. The “freshman” becomes the senior officer after one year. Officers currently serving will continue with their original two year terms, which will expire at the May meeting.

The elected positions are shown below. The current office holder is listed, and we are soliciting volunteers to fill the freshman role. The notation *** means one or more members have already volunteered to fill the freshman role. Feel free to throw your hat into the ring. It would be nice to actually have an election.

- 1) President – Heidi Blair and Weezie Huntington (term expires May 2008)
- 2) Vice President – new position, oversees the non-elected positions and assumes role of President in May 2008. Vacant.
- 3) Treasurer – Susan Atwater (term expires May 2008). Vacant.
- 4) Assistant Treasurer – “freshman” role and will become Treasurer in May 2008. Vacant.
- 5) Secretary -- Gail Schmidt (term expires May 2008)
- 6) Assistant Secretary – “freshman” role and will become Secretary in May 2008.***
- 7) Program Coordinator – Mary Jo Gimber (term expires May 2008)
- 8) Assistant Program Coordinator -- “freshman” role, responsible for monthly programs and will become Program Coordinator in May 2008 ***
- 9) Special Events Chair – new position - responsible for committee to handle retreat, hook-ins, demonstrations, fundraising and other special events. Vacant.
- 10) Summer Camp Director 2008 – Karl Gimber and Weezie Huntington (Karl's term expires May 2008)
- 11) Summer Camp Director 2009 – responsible for 2009 Camp ***

The following non-elected positions continue: 1) Historian, 2) Hospitality [currently open], 3) Librarian, 4) Newsletter Editor, 5) Publicity and 6) Sunshine.

Our Guild has enjoyed considerable success based on the support of our members. Maintaining that support is vital as we move forward. We ask each member to give serious consideration on how you can help your Guild by serving in one of the positions and committees that will be established. Please let Weezie or Heidi know how you can help.

Guild Invited to Demonstrate at Peter Wentz Farmstead – We have been invited to participate in the Laerenswaert Festival sponsored by the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society on October 20, 2007. (“Laerenswart” is a Pennsylvania German phrase meaning “worth learning”.) The Farmstead is located in Worcester, PA (Montgomery County) near the intersection of Rt. 73 and Rt. 363. The Peter Wentz museum is an 18th Century farmstead with a history of George Washington using it as his headquarters during the fall of 1777 when the Continental Army was encamped in and around Worcester. You may not recognize the name, but may have seen pictures of it in books featuring colonial and Revolutionary War era buildings. One often

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reproduced photo is of the winter kitchen with large (baseball size) black polka dots painted on its yellow/white walls. It is a stunning image. The festival will include colonial craft demonstrations, entertainment and food. For more information call the Farmstead at 610- 584-5104 or go to their website at peterwenzfarmsteadsociety.org. Contact Karl Gimber if you have interest in helping to demonstrate rug hooking at this event.

We Are Invited to Thanksgiving in the Country – The Guild has once again been invited to participate in Thanksgiving in the Country on November 3 and 4, 2007. Thanksgiving in the Country is a non-profit organization which sponsors house tours in the Stockton/Sergeantsville, NJ area the first weekend in November. All proceeds go to Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia – Facial Reconstruction Unit, where no child in need is turned away. Guild members will be demonstrating rug hooking in one of the historic houses. Joyce Combs is coordinating the Guild’s participation. Please let her know if you can help with this worthwhile event.

Rug Hooking Retreat – January 11-13, 2008 – As previously reported, plans are well underway for our second annual rug hooking retreat at the Flemington Hampton Inn. The event was sold out last year and with a limit of 25 participants, Guild members are encouraged to register early. See last month’s issue of The Loop for the details.

2008 HCRA Rug Hooking Camp – Another fantastic rug hooking camp is scheduled for August 11-15, 2008 with instructors Elizabeth Black, Gail Dufresne and Jayne Hester. The fee for attendance is \$150 for members and \$225 for non members. You must be a member by our meeting in November to qualify for the subsidized member rate. A nonrefundable \$25 deposit is required with the balance due by the April Guild meeting. Cancellations will be accepted until June 1, 2008. Registration will be limited to HCRA members until December 31, 2007 after which non-members can register. Deposits will be accepted beginning at the October meeting. Any member who provides housing, breakfast and dinner for one of the instructors for the week attends camp free. Two instructors (Elizabeth Black and Jayne Hester) will need housing. You are not expected to entertain the instructors at night. In fact, they normally prefer to have some quiet time after a full day teaching. Contact camp co-coordinators Karl Gimber or Weezie Huntington if you have interest. Rug Hooking Magazine is currently planning on featuring our 2008 camp in the “Camps & Workshops” segment of the January/February 2008 issue.

Meet Our Member – Janet Williams – Janet Williams remembers hearing Patsy Becker speak at a craft fair sponsored by Hunterdon County at the old Flemington Fairgrounds. That was 25 years ago. Janet bought a beginner’s kit and her adventure into rug hooking began. She recalls the kit included #3 cut wool. She was a “packer” in those days and was soon out of wool, so she had to contact Patsy to obtain more wool. Janet wanted lessons, but found that difficult because classes were during the day and she was working full time. Fortunately, she learned of an ATHA sponsored weekend workshop at Miss Porter’s School in Connecticut. It was a wonderful weekend and opened up a new world to her. However, after the weekend, the problem of connecting with the rug hooking community continued. Janet turned to tole painting where she found multiple opportunities that worked with her schedule. Many years went by with little rug hooking.

About 10 years ago, Janet participated in the workshop sponsored by Guild member, Margaret Lutz and featuring Patsy Becker, and soon realized that she liked rug hooking more than tole painting. Through Margaret, she learned of the local McGown Guild that met on Saturdays. The Guild provided Janet with the rug hooking community she was seeking. She continues to be active in the Guild and a year ago became a certified McGown instructor. Janet does not have

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time with her job to teach many classes, but has taught several beginners' classes. Janet gets her rug hooking in when she can. "Something is missing when I do not hook.", she says.

We often tend to describe a rug hooker as a fine hooker or a primitive hooker. Those labels do not apply to Janet. She describes her style as somewhat eclectic. She hooks in anything from a #3 to #8 cut with the project determining the cut. Janet enjoys dyeing wool and "playing with color", but does not try to get an exact match. When starting a rug, Janet uses what wool she has and then either dyes or buys what is needed to complete the project. She does not color plan the entire rug at the outset. Janet learned the basics on dyeing wool from a one day class offered by Pro Chem. Subsequent classes with Gail Dufresne helped advance her knowledge and technique.

Janet's professional career started with the Los Angeles Herald as a writer for the food section of the newspaper. She then took a position with California Federal Savings and Loan in the library and completed her Master's Degree in Library Science. For the next 30 years she worked as a librarian at Educational Testing Services (ETS). After serving as a corporate librarian for so many years, she had an opportunity to become a school librarian. For the past two years Janet has been the librarian at the Village Charter School in Trenton, NJ working with children in grades K-8.

Janet and her husband Ted live in Hillsborough, NJ. They have two children – Peter a graphic web designer and Emily a fund raiser for the American Diabetic Association, a non-profit organization. Janet took her mother and Emily to a rug hooking class and both took it up. Emily who lives in Portland, Maine is now the third generation rug hooker in the family. Ted is an astronomer at Rutgers University where he teaches and does research. He is a member of a telescope consortium which meets in interesting cities around the world. Over the years, this provided Janet with the opportunity to travel with Ted to South Africa, New Zealand, Germany, Tonga and Hawaii. In addition to her professional work and rug hooking, Janet is an active participant in the "Paws to Read" Program. Winston, her Corgi, is a certified therapy dog. Janet and Winston visit schools, nursing homes and libraries. At the schools and libraries, children with reading disabilities read to Winston who is always an eager listener. Ted shares an interest in dogs. He trains their Australian Cattle dogs for agility competitions at the Princeton Dog Training Club.

Janet sees the Guild as a source of inspiration and a "great group of people and wonderful rug hookers". While her day job prevents her from attending most meetings, she still finds ways to support the Guild. During our last camp, Janet led our Beginners' Workshop that was very well received.

Members Awarded 4-H Fair Ribbons – Congratulations to the Guild members who were awarded ribbons for their rugs displayed at the Hunterdon County 4-H Fair. The ribbons were presented at the September meeting. Kudos to the winners. You make us proud!

Traditional/Fine Hooking	1 st Place – Gisele Meader for "PoPo" (Manatee) 2 nd Place – Barbara Lugg for "Street Where You Live"
Primitive	1 st Place – Mary Jo Gimber for "Primitive Flower" 2 nd Place – Sharon Ballard for "Love Among the Chickens"
Wearables	1 st Place – Barbara Lugg for her handbag
Mixed Media	1 st Place – Kathy Donovan for "Witchy Poo"
Miniature Punch Needle	no submissions
Best of Show	Mary Jo Gimber for "Primitive Flower"

Viewers' Choice

Barbara Lugg for "Street Where You Live"

* Last year Gisele won "Best of Show" for one of her quilts. What a talent!

A Memory of Grandmother's Mats -- The June 1925 issue of Antiques Magazine includes an article entitled "A Memory of Grandmother's Mats" by Gertrude DeWagner. That article is being reproduced in its entirety in The Loop. The final segment follows.

"A great many hooked mats, and among them a large proportion of those which are the most complicated in design and represent the most lavish and painstaking workmanship, were carried out on commercially stamped burlap. The elaborateness of the patterns – often clearly imitative of the factory carpetings of the period – indicates a commercial origin; so does the fact that precisely the same designs are met with over and over again in many different places.

In these commercially designed mats, quality will depend upon condition, excellence of color, and, above all, exquisiteness of looping. Some very stiff and, thoroughly mechanical specimens are highly cherished on the strength of these attributes, though, in the last analysis, they are not deserving of very high praise. After all, a hooked mat should be a hooked mat, and not a feeble edition of an original rug or a Wilton carpet. To be worth anything at all, its workmanship must, of course, be sturdy and competent. But workmanship is not the whole story. In this example, some country woman wrought her vision of a flower garden; in this, another woman fixed her reminiscences of some old embroidery; in this, yet another immortalized her dwelling and the trees beside it, and the white fence that stood as barrier between home and highway.

Such pieces express – however humbly and in howsoever primitive a vein – the response of creative instinct to its environment; and – in so far – they are true works of art. And it has happened now and again that some unknown genius of the hills has torn a beauty-haunted soul to shreds and pieced it together once more on coarse burlap with bright hued fragments of discarded clothing. When she had done the work, she had no other name for it than that of 'hooked' mat. But it was, and is, a thousand things besides. The encountering of such a piece is the experience of a life time – and one reserved exclusively for the elect. No doubt this is well, for in the nature of their making these few extraordinary mats are inevitably haunted; and a true appreciation of ghosts now-a-days is even more limited than is that of hooked patterns."

The magazine from which this article came will be available at our October meeting for those who may wish to see pictures of the rugs mentioned in the second paragraph above.

The Wool Street Journal features Trish Becker's work on the cover and an article in the October issue. Guild members Helen Buchanan, Marian Michel and Lisa Mims are shown participating in a Sherri Hieber Day Workshop.

Rug Hooking Demonstrations – The weather was ideal and the crowds turned out last month to enjoy the festivities at the Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Celebration of Farming (Lambertville) and Market Day (Newtown, PA). There was much interest in rug hooking by visitors of all ages and by a surprising number of men. Visitors had questions on how rugs are hooked, where the patterns come from and "how did you learn". There were many compliments on the beautiful rugs displayed. A number of individuals expressed interest in learning rug hooking and wanted to know more about the Guild. These were excellent activities for HCRA. We helped spread the word about rug hooking and received considerable publicity thanks to Janet

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Bosshard, Claudia Casebolt, Karl Gimber, Gisele Meader, Kitty Platt, Dee Rosebrock and Roberta Smith who demonstrated at these popular local festivals.

Guild Library Exhibits Well Received – The Guild exhibits at the Clinton and Flemington Libraries during September were very well received by the public according to the staff at both libraries. The display cases were beautifully and creatively organized. We thank Ingrid Cosmen, Kay Weeks, Kitty Platt and Mary Jo Gimber for organizing and installing the exhibits and to all of our members who contributed works for them. The rugs displayed will be returned at the October meeting.

Rug Hooking Events and Related Activities

6th Annual Newtown Hooked Rug Show, Newtown, CT, October 13, 2007, 9:30AM to 3PM, 35 vendors, speaker (Meg Little), workshop (Susan Feller) and book signings (Linda Rae Coughlin, Jacqueline Hansen, Amy Oxford and Jessie Turbayne). For more information call 203-270-8293 or email nmh1792@hotmail.com.

Outer Banks Rug Hooking Retreat, Corolla, NC. October 21- 26, 2007. Join us for our 5th year with teacher Diane Stoffel. Contact: Mary Henck, hookrug@comcast.net or 804-740-6511.

The Third Annual Brandywine Guild Hook-in – October 27, 2007 from 9:30 to 4:00 at the Harrisburg Area Community College, Lebanon Campus, Lebanon, PA. For more information call 610-273-1213 or marylynnelan@aol.com.

Workshops at The Woolery will be hosting Sherri Hieber Day for a 3 day workshop entitled "Folk Art for the Floor" on November 1 - 3, 2007. Contact Trish Becker for details at 908-268-3949.

Hooked in the Mountains XII, at Round Barn, Shelburne Museum. Exhibit November 10 to November 17, 2007, 10 AM-5PM. Sunday, November 18, 10 AM to 4 PM.

Rags to Rugs: Pennsylvania Hooked and Handsewn Rugs Exhibition – November 17, 2007 to 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.

The Highland School of Rug Hooking Workshop features Norma Batastini, Susan Feller and Marie Sugar on November 2-4, 2007. For details contact Vicki Calu at 215-249-0790 or vcalu@verizon.net.

Virginia Rugfest will celebrate its 6th year! April 5, 2008, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, VA from 9am- 3:30pm. Guest Speaker: Ginny Stimmel, Editor, Rug Hooking magazine. Featured Artist is Sarah Province plus Hook-in, Rug show, Vendors, and Beginners' class. Loads of door prizes and a hooked rug will be raffled off! Contact: Mary Henck, hookrug@comcast.net, 804-740-6511 or www.geocities.com/varugfest/

FIBERFEST 2008 -- August 9, 2008 in Yellow Spring, WV, sponsored by the Mountain State Fiber Artists. Contact Susan Feller for pre-registration and program information at rugs2w@yahoo.com. Lunch included with registration fee. There will be vendors as well as hooking and fiber artists.

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The Mercer Hookers meet on the first Thursday of every month from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Mercer County Library in Pennington, NJ. It would be a good idea to contact Weezie Huntington (weezie.huntington@verizon.net) if you are coming for the first time. The hook-in is open to anyone sharing an interest in rug hooking. Bring your lunch.

HCRAG Calendar of Events

- October 12** – Monthly Meeting – “Potluck, Borders and a Prize” (Sharon Ballard and Cindy Boults)*
- November 2** – Monthly Meeting – Assembling Hooked Brick Doorstop (Kim Kagan)* – note meeting is a week earlier just in case you are planning to attend the Green Mountain Rug Hooking Guild show.
- December** – HCRAG Exhibit – Doylestown Library
- December 14** – Holiday Luncheon/ Shoe Box Trade
- January 11, 2008** – Monthly meeting – Auction and White Elephant Sale *
- January 11-13, 2008** – Rug Hooking Retreat – Hampton Inn, Flemington, NJ
- February 8, 2008** – Monthly Meeting – Valentines’ Day Hook-in/ Trade hooked Valentines/ Show rugs or hooked items with hearts, angels, candy, bow & arrows, flowers, diamonds, red ribbons, etc.*
- March 14, 2008** – Monthly Meeting -- How Do You Design Your Own Rug? (Panel) *
- April 11, 2008** – Monthly Meeting -- What Do Judges Look For? / Rug Critique*
- May 9, 2008** – Monthly Meeting -- Featured Rug Hookers*
- June 13, 2008** – Monthly meeting – Annual Picnic

* 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.

Co-Presidents – Heidi Blair -- 732-942-3743 or jenyjump@optonline.net
Weezie Huntington -- 609-466-1882 or weezie.huntington@verizon.net

Fund Raising – Sharon Ballard – 908-236-7410

Historian – Marion Michel – 609-397-3425 or marionmichel@earthlink.net

Hospitality – (Open)
Lydia Brenner -- 732-741-9313 or lbrenuva@comcast.net

Librarian – Kathy Donovan – 908-755-1670 or frejja@optonline.net

Programs – Mary Jo Gimber -- 215-297-0803 or mjg12@nni.com

Public Relations -- Karl Gimber -- 215-297-0803 or karlg@nni.com

Secretary – Gail Schmidt – 732-741-6620 or gks001@aol.com

Sunshine – Dee Rosebrock – 609-771-0596 or uncoolfred@aol.com

Treasurer – Susan Atwater – 908-439-3473 or susanatwater@earthlink.com

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 (HCRAAG). 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 than the 20th of the month.

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