



HANDI-NOTES



December 2013 Volume 5, Issue 2

(401)831-8339 www.handicraftclub.org

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NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to share some exciting news that has happened at the last two Club Board meetings.

At the October meeting a board member suggested that we might look for a Tynietoy dollhouse as the houses had been made at the Club in the 1930s. They were designed and built in the upstairs studios by Marion Perkins and Amey Vernon (more info on Page 20 of our history). The dollhouses are now highly sought after by miniaturists.

The Board agreed to look for one as it felt it would be historically significant for the Club to have a Tynietoy dollhouse. The search was on!

Amazingly, by the November meeting a Tynietoy dollhouse had been found on eBay-offered for sale by the current expert on Tynietoy. Once Susan Grimshaw, the expert, knew we were interested in the dollhouse, she immediately took the house off the market as she felt it should come back to us. It is a "mansion" Tynietoy dollhouse of which few were made.

Izzy Goff, Alice Beckwith and Chris Pratt drove to New Jersey to see the house and, with Board permission, to purchase the Mansion. It is three stories high and a real investment to collectors. We purchased the dollhouse without furniture, so we will have fundraising to do. We realize that this acquisition will provide the Club with a new opportunity for involving members and we will be developing a committee to look into fund raising for Tynietoy furniture, learning more about the Club's part in the company's history and planning how to showcase the project in our 110th year, 2014.

I would love for you to contact me if you are interested in this project. And of course, if you know of anyone who has any Tynietoy doll house furniture or anything else Tynietoy, please let me know.

The house will be at the Club soon and available for all to see. Do look for it.

Have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Margie Edwards

TYNIETOY MANSION ACQUIRED BY CLUB



Susan Grimshaw, Alice Beckwith and Chris Pratt with Tynietoy house



Close-up of interior rooms

Editor, Susan Tash

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HOLIDAY PARTY AND AUCTION: DAMP WEATHER DID NOTHING TO DIM THE SPARKLE OF THE NIGHT

The annual Holiday Party and Auction was a big success on December 9, despite forbidding weather. One hundred twenty-eight guests enjoyed the catered food from Tom's Market, and bartender Dennis Brown kept glasses full. Club staff helped, as well, as Henry Leite and Alyssa Holland Short greeted guests. The approximate gross income from ticket sales was \$4,640.

The \$3,295 we earned in the silent auction will buy new carpeting for the front hall stairs. There were 50 items this year in a wide range of prices. Perhaps the most unusual were Janet Jagger's rattan cat bed with a colorful cushion made by Sally Whitin, and Tinka Dewey's bamboo dog bed complete with another cushion by Sally. The dog bed is more of a dog house and there was heavy bidding for it.

There were a number of wooden boxes painted by Izzy Goff. The Noah's Ark toy box appealed to many grannies. Kit Barnum contributed an antique hat box painted with a colonial scene. Ginny Walsh donated one of her woven rugs. There were a number of shawls, throws, scarves, hats and mittens which will be welcome presents in the months ahead. The decoupage class was well-represented with some beautiful pieces by Melissa Powers, Virginia Mead and Nancy Moger. Several pieces of handmade jewelry sold. Margaret Lederer contributed four special desserts to be claimed between December and March.

New this year was the ornament tree made by Sally Whitin. Various members contributed handmade ornaments representing classes at the Club. For the little gift these were perfect. There was also a stack of quilted pot holders for a seasonal hostess gift. People are beginning to think "outside the box" when it comes to auction donations, which contributed to the success of the night.



Caroline Considine with Keith and Kathy Lang

Jen Auber's decoration committee included Jozy Mainelli and Rhea Brooks, who decorated the exterior and the mantels, making for a most festive greeting. Ria Nagtegaal was the official bow-wrangler and also gave decorating advice, Rhea Brooks used ornaments to decorate the wreath in the dining room, Nancy Moger hung wreaths and decorated the fireplace in the entry hall, Sally Whitin did the ornament tree and made many patchwork potholders. Some of the decorations had been used in the past, others came from Natural Brands in Warren, RI

Members of the auction committee are Sallie Barker, Annie Flather, Izzy Goff, Raya Goff, (chair) Shirley Hardison, Janet Jagger, Trish Sylvester, and Sally Whitin. Clearly the coordinated efforts by many made for a most special evening.

The red aprons and tote bags which were used during the party will be available for sale from Jackie Hicks upon her return. Members may want one as a happy memory of the festive evening.



Dotty Berube, Margie Edwards, Peggy Rodgers



The holiday party committee and helpers: Sallie Barker, Trish Sylvester, Perry Buroker, Izzy Goff, Janet Jagger, Jen Auber, Sally Whitin, Alyssa Short, and Margie Edwards.

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SYLVIA THORP



Sylvia Thorp

Sylvia Thorp was a new person in town when neighbors and Club members Muriel Thom and Anne Ott admired the beautiful hand-knit sweater she was wearing. They figured that anyone who could knit like that would surely be an asset to the Club.

It wasn't long before Sylvia was volunteering on Club committees, then was secretary for four years, vice president for two, and finally president in 2003-2005.

Sylvia had been knitting since she was 10 years old, having been taught by an aunt in her small hometown outside of Montgomery, AL. She graduated from Auburn (it's about here in the narrative that you can hear Sylvia shout "Go Auburn!"), then attended graduate school at Iowa State. That's where she met husband Jim, who was there as a teaching assistant.

She got her master's (she was a biochemistry/nutrition major) and he had a couple of PhDs when, during the Vietnam War, he was stationed at Bethesda Naval Hospital. He continued his career there as a neonatologist after earning an MD degree at Georgetown University. They lived in Maryland for nearly 30 years, raising their children there. Sylvia worked at National Institutes of Health and enrolled their children at the daycare center there, which Sylvia was instrumental in establishing. Very quickly Sylvia figured that she could run a daycare center out of a separate entrance to her home, got licensed by the state, and Sylvia's Place Daycare Center became a Bethesda business for 17 years.

Sylvia says there weren't a lot of Navy neonatologists who wanted to live in Bethesda, which was a costly place to live, so Jim became irreplaceable. It wasn't until he retired from the Navy and began working as a neonatologist at

Women and Infants in Providence that Sylvia discovered weaving at the Handicraft Club and "it was heaven."

She's not taken weaving anywhere else but the Handicraft Club. Sylvia says the Club is "so unique, so wonderful, that the thought of going to another place to take a class in something is just not appealing." She adds, "At the Handicraft Club you have a community, you have people who think alike, who want to be creative in many different ways."

A few years ago Jim decided he no longer wanted to go to work in ice and snow. They moved to Rock Hill, SC, just outside of Charlotte, NC, where he continued to work in his field until 18 months ago, when he retired. But Sylvia couldn't sever ties with the Club. Only this past fall she spent the entire season living at the Hope Club so she could continue taking classes at the Handicraft Club. You may have met her, distinguished by her lovely hand-knitted sweaters and a touch of the Alabama drawl. While she was here, Jim had a date with a lathe, pursuing an interest in woodworking in Cincinnati.



Sylvia with the family cradle she wove at the Handicraft Club.

Sylvia says her time here this past fall was wonderful. No leaves to rake, no mail to sort, no responsibilities. However she did miss her canning season. Making pear jam, pear relish, pear jelly, and fig preserves, among other things, gives her great pleasure back in Rock Hill.

But to hear her talk about the Club makes one realize that it was a good trade. "It's the camaraderie, the ability to not only pursue a craft but to talk about our day to day lives as we do it that gives me joy," says Sylvia. "I was in one of the weaving classes and I said I really need a tape recorder in here so that I can tape the chatter. A lot of it was laughter coming from basket weaving. Then I could play it at home while I'm weaving and it would be like being back at the Handicraft Club." *Continued on next page.*

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Sylvia Thorp - continued from page 3.

“This is a fabulous, unique place we have there. There’s no place like it that I know of in the country. The community of people is just absolutely lovely. We are very fortunate to have the people, the place, the classes and the teachers that we have. That’s why I came back,” says Sylvia.

Asked about changes at the Club since she was president, Sylvia says that the addition of Alyssa Holland Short and her position as Office Manager was a great asset to the Club. Even when she was president there’d be talk about the need for such a position, and she’s glad that we finally have a capable person handling that work. She also thinks the idea of reaching out to Laurelmead is a good one.

Sylvia won’t boast about her own accomplishments, but when asked she’ll tell you about the family cradle. Years ago, when her daughter was pregnant, she decided to weave a cradle on a stand. She worked on it at the Club with teacher Linda Brown and ultimately that cradle was used by all six of her grandchildren. They each have their names engraved in scrimshaw attached to the basket. Sylvia recently entered the cradle in the DAR’s American Heritage annual competition which invites members’ creations in fiber arts, sculpture, drama, music and photography, among other fields. Sylvia entered the cradle in the basketry competition and won the national prize for the craft division. It pays to not only be talented but to have great teachers, as well.

Sylvia says she misses Providence immensely. She loves the city, the people, the activities, the entire community environment of college students. She’s glad she spent the fall of 2013 here, and it looks like she won’t be canning pears again next year either. She plans to be back staying at the Hope Club and taking classes at the Handicraft Club once again in the fall. We welcome her with open arms.

GIVING SOCIETIES NOW ON CLUB WEBSITE

If you are interested in making a year-end pledge to the Handicraft Club, information and applications to our Giving Societies are now available on our website at:

www.handicraftclub.org/giving-societies-information
(password: college42).

DOLLHOUSE TO RELY ON SKILLS OF MEMBERS FOR REHAB AND DECORATION

Found object: a large wooden two-room dollhouse.

Archaeologist: Izzy Goff

Project: Use all of Club members’ considerable skills to refurbish the dollhouse, make it representative of the Club’s studios.

Goal: To sell the dollhouse at a Club function, raise money for the Club.



If you haven’t had a chance to look at the large wooden dollhouse Izzy Goff found, try to stop by the Decorative Arts studio where the dollhouse currently resides. Izzy is the brains behind the project, her creative mind going a mile a minute. Now she’s relying on many of us to make this happen.

If you find yourself asked this spring to contribute your artistic skills to create something for the dollhouse, remember it shouldn’t take long. After all, it’s on a 1-inch scale. So the needlepoint rug won’t be many feet long, but inches long. Talk to Izzy or Chris Pratt if your eyesight and fine motor skills are good. You’re going to need both.

PHOTOGRAPHY TEACHER HEADS TO HARVARD

Handicraft Club photography teacher Natalja Kent has been hired by Harvard Art Museum to be their archival photographer. We’re proud of her and her new position, but sorry to see her go. That’s what happens when you hire nothing but the best to teach. Good luck Natalja.

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LONG DARK DANISH WINTERS SPURRED INGRID LAVOIE TO REFINE ARTISTIC PURSUITS



Ingrid Lavoie in her home with a papercut ornament.

Teacher Ingrid Lavoie, who teaches papercutting (six weeks Monday afternoons starting Jan. 13) was first inspired to try papercutting when she visited relatives in Denmark as a teenager. The winters are long and dark there, she says, and the tradition of making homes as bright and cozy as possible included decorating windows with papercuttings. She is completely self-taught, but she always had an artistic flair.

Ingrid makes her own Christmas cards using different media. She says she loves the idea of making things and sharing them with friends. Check out her website (www.ingridlavoie.com) to see a portfolio of her style. She likes the freedom of making a card extremely personal for someone or for a holiday card. Club members might want to remember this when they're looking for that special card that no one else has.

This year, says Ingrid, the card she designed includes a paper ornament you can remove from the card and hang on the tree. "It's a keepsake," she said, "and I like the idea of my friends keeping something I've sent."

Ingrid's mother is Danish, and her dad is first generation from Germany. He was a civil engineer working in Greenland, but on a vacation to Copenhagen he met Ingrid's mother. Ingrid was born in Kuwait and her siblings were born in Holland, but she says they moved to the States when she was one year old and she grew up in Connecticut.

She attended RISD and met her husband, a Tiverton native, in her senior year in college. She, husband and two children now reside in Wakefield, RI – a long distance from Kuwait and Denmark.

Ingrid worked for years as a graphic designer, and among others, worked for RI Magazine. When children came along, she started working for herself while staying at home. A few years ago she wanted to get back to work but found that finding a job wasn't that easy. So she started marketing her work online on etsy.com and at different galleries.

That's when Bobbie Binder found her and suggested she teach at the Club. Bobbie had bought one of her papercuttings at Studio Hop on Hope Street, and, always looking for new teachers, she brought Ingrid onboard. That was five years ago and Ingrid's been at the Club ever since. She says she loves teaching because it's nice to share ideas with students. "I love bringing student ideas to the mix," she says. "Their enthusiasm pumps me up."

She says that students bring something unique to the table. "I learn something new from each student," commented Ingrid. "Even if it doesn't have to do with art, they share what they have in common."

Ingrid says she still hasn't figured out how to market her work to a wider group of people. She has had some press in a variety of publications, and has gotten some commissions through that, including designing papercuttings for weddings. And she's thinking of doing a class in her home in Wakefield.

When Ingrid's not papercutting, teaching, or painting, she says she loves to salvage things. She'll find things in the street or at flea markets, paint and fix furniture to give them a new life. It's that artistic instinct that blossomed long ago on dark Danish winter days.



A nature-inspired papercut artwork by Ingrid Lavoie.

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WORKSHOPS, MINI-CLASSES A FORMAT FOR MEMBERS WHO TRAVEL IN JAN. – FEB.

Many Handicraft Club members who travel out of state during the winter months can still keep busy with Club classes. There are a number of short term workshops and mini-classes available that enable members to stay artistic and still travel.

Kathy Weber will teach **Painting Basics—Color** on Tuesdays from Jan.7 through Feb. 4. Note that class times will be 10 a.m.-noon. Kathy will also teach **Portrait Drawing** Tuesday mornings (10 am-noon) Feb. 11-25.

Old to New Jewelry will be taught by Linda Homonoff four Wednesday afternoons in January or you can enroll for four Wednesday afternoons in February. Learn to use your existing jewelry to redesign it into something more interesting, contemporary and more wearable.

Chef Mary Hughes will teach Comfort Foods with a French Twist on Friday, Jan. 17, 9 a.m.-noon. And on Friday, Feb. 7, also in the morning, she'll teach **More Seriously Simple Meals**. Remember, students not only learn new recipes, they get to eat what they make.

Caryl Freedman will be doing a series of one-time needlepoint classes on Wednesday afternoons: Jan. 15-**Needlepoint Shading and Blending**; Jan. 22 – **8 Best Background Stitches**; Feb. 5—**The Versatile Scotch Stitch**; Feb. 19 – **It's Knot What You Think**; Feb. 26 – **Needlepoint ER**. Sign up for one or two or all classes.

Friday morning, Jan. 17, take a **Night Light Workshop** taught by Deanna VanSchagen. Make a night light in three hours suitable for a powder room or a baby's room.

Alyssa Holland Short is teaching **The Art of Relaxation** three Wednesdays in a row (mornings Jan. 29, Feb. 4 & 11). Take a break for your hectic lives and reclaim your energy, rejuvenate your creative spirit through art.

On Friday, Jan. 31, in the morning Elizabeth Vandeputte from The Mermaid's Purl in Wickford will teach needle felting, a way to sculpt fiber using small specialized needles, in a class titled **Felt a Gnome**.

If your schedule is too booked during the days, try an evening class on Tuesday, Feb. 4, 6-9 p.m., when Linda Weinbaum will teach **Hand-Decorated Papers**. Your product can be used as a book cover or a greeting card or even framed for display.

Weave a **Nantucket Bracelet** in one morning class on Friday, Feb. 7, when Donele Monte. Beginners should be able to weave one bracelet, more experienced weavers will probably complete two in this class.

Check class listings for more details on these classes, which have been tailored for those of you with limited time in January and February.

Go to www.handicraftclub.org/classlisting to read more about these or any of the other classes you class chairs have lined up for your enjoyment.

SECOND ANNUAL HANDICRAFT IN BLOOM SET TO OPEN APRIL 2; SEEKING PIECES TO ACCOMPANY ARRANGEMENTS

On the evening of Wednesday, April 2 the Handicraft Club will host its second annual Handicraft in Bloom Flower Show, in which five handicrafts and art created by Club members will be interpreted with floral arrangements made by members of the Perennial Planters Garden Club. The show will open and be celebrated with a cocktail party for members of both the Handicraft and Perennial Planters Garden clubs. The displays will continue through the next day in the event members can't make the opening party.

Handicraft in Bloom is modeled on a similar show held each spring at the MFA in Boston.

Organizers have put a call out to teachers for pieces recently done in their classes which would lend themselves to floral interpretation. The floral arrangers will use the piece to do an arrangement interpreting the handicraft or art.

Club members, too, are encouraged to submit their work. Send a digital photo of the piece along with your name to Fraser Gilbane (FBGilbane@GilbaneCo.com). Her committee will select the five pieces for the show in late January.

Fraser Gilbane and Janice Panoff, co-chairs for the event representing the Club are looking for volunteers to help with the show, as well.

In the 2012 show, a painting, needlepoint, Nantucket basket, weaving and a bowl were selected for the show. It is anticipated that an equally diverse range of handicrafts will be on display for spring 2014 show.

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LECTURE ON GREAT WOMEN OF NEWPORT AND BREAKERS TOUR WAS FALL HIGHLIGHT

One of the most popular events of the season occurred in late October when the Club sponsored a luncheon and lecture about the Great Women of Newport. Trudy Cox, CEO and Executive Director of the Preservation Society of Newport County, spoke eloquently about the subject and captivated the audience of about 50 Club members. A tour of The Breakers followed the luncheon which was held at Marble House's Chinese Tea House. Pictures tell the story.



A view of the interior of the Chinese Tea House



Jen Auber (right) and her mother, Joan Hurd



Sally Barker and her mother, Carol Lundin

PASSERSBY CAN READ WHAT THE CLUB IS ALL ABOUT WITH WINDOW DISPLAY

Club librarian and historian Alice Beckwith has arranged a display and placed an introduction to the Club in the Library bay window on the east side of the Club facing College Street. It reads: *Founded in 1904, the Providence Handicraft Club, an educational organization, teaches handicrafts, fosters conviviality, and displays the work of members and several historic collections in an architecturally significant setting, the Truman Beckwith house of 1825. For further information go to www.handicraftclub.org.*

Check out the display in the windows.

