



First Cut
December 1991

Copyright

Guild of American Papercutters

Volume 4-4

First Cut

Paul D. Berl ©1991

Readers are invited to share experiences and opinions. Letters must be signed. Request for anonymity will be respected. Letters may be edited for space reasons. Please mail letters to Ellen Haberlein, 3504 Farm Hill Drive, Falls Church, VA 22044.

**RESPONSE TO SUSANNE R.
COOK-GREUTER'S LETTER
SEPTEMBER '91 FirstCut**

I am writing in response to Susanne R. Cook-Greuter's letter and questions. I have read her letter many times and it has continued to leave me with mixed emotions which range from irritation to sadness.

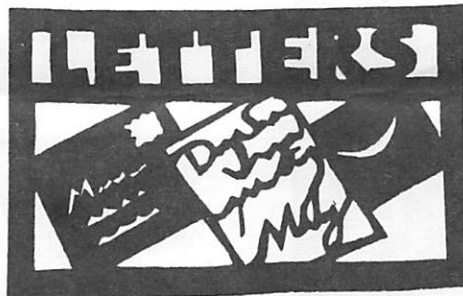
Let me begin with irritation since that was my initial reaction to the letter. When I express my opinions I am approaching this issue as a papercutter in general rather than from my specialty of painted papercutting. I have always been of the opinion that GAP is for all papercutters regardless of their approach toward the medium. The piece of paper comes to life only when the artist adds his/her vision to it. If one researches papercutting through the ages and from different cultures, one soon realizes that there are endless possibilities for expression. To claim that there can be only one approach and one acceptable form is setting limits on artistic expression. Saying only one method is acceptable is like telling a painter that only watercolor painting is acceptable or telling a potter that there is no place for nonfunctional pottery in that medium. Susanne is willing to make an exception for the work of Matisse. I wonder if those works had not borne his signature if she

would have been so accepting of his work. I also wonder where to place the work of Johann-Jakob Hauswirth (1808-1871) and Louis-David Saugy (1871-1953), both Swiss papercutters who worked with colored papers. Due to space limitations I feel I cannot address each style of papercutting mentioned in her letter. Suffice it to say that I am constantly impressed and filled with wonder when I see the various approaches we all take to papercutting.

The other emotion I experienced was sadness. I am saddened by the fact that Susanne finds it difficult and uncomfortable to experiment more often. I realize that we all want to excel and continue to experiment within our own style, but we must also allow ourselves the luxury of experimenting with new approaches. We may be surprised and pleased where that new path leads us.

In closing, Susanne tells us that she is torn by opposing sentiments and would like a more clear-cut definition so that she can retain her purist style and feel comfortable with her decision. What's wrong with trying to find a place and balance for the purist and the experimental in all of us? Only through imbalance and discomfort do we stretch ourselves and grow emotionally, intellectually, and artistically. And what then should GAP be but a place for all of us to find that place with our different approaches to the medium? Artistic expression needs to be free of restrictions so that we can be open in heart, mind, and vision.

-Sandra Gilpin
-Hanover, PA



I REMEMBER HIL BOTTEMA, DUTCH PAPER CUTTER

Dear Sukey and Dick:

Greetings to you and the Guild of American Papercutters in appreciation of all you are doing with and for this group. I am sorry I am too far away to participate in GAP activities. The FirstCut bulletins are interesting and helpful. Your mention of the idea of papercutting design for a postage stamp, and interest in a possible trip to Europe to study museum and private collections, has brought me many memories.



More pictures on page seven!

It was in 1950 that I participated in a Girl Guides/Girl Scouts International Arts and Crafts Conference in Holland (representing Girl Scouts of the USA) and met Hil Bottema, the person in charge. Hil was active in Guiding, a curator at the Open Air Museum in Arnhem, and her specialty was papercutting. We kept in touch until she passed away in 1968. I'm not exactly sure which year it was but she did some papercuttings which were used on a set of 5 postage stamps issued in The Netherlands. All were related to children and holidays. Papercuttings which are similar but not identical to those on the stamps...were printed on notecards for the benefit of children... [Eleanor also

sent a copy of an Dutch magazine article about Hil. Any volunteers to translate?]

While I don't consider myself an accomplished papercutter I've been interested in doing some from time to time, encouraging others (especially children), learning about it in different countries, collecting some and displaying them. A list of books in my library is also enclosed. [FirstCut will publish from time to time parts of Eleanor's list in the book column.]

My best wishes to you and the Guild of American Papercutters.

-Eleanor Moninger
-Temple City, CA

TRAVELING EXHIBIT RESPONSES

I really like your idea of a traveling show of same size pieces for ease of crating and handling. I have good contacts with at least four galleries and two museums in South-Central-Western PA who I would be willing to work out a schedule with for just such a show. A good trial run before going "national." Life, galleries, shows, museums do exist west of Harrisburg even though some members seem to try to ignore it.

-Paul D. Beal
-Friedens, PA

I want to react to the next show. My feeling about restricting the pieces to the same size and identical framing is that it makes a boring show. The exciting thing about each of our shows so far has been the unbelievable variety of techniques, size, detail, framing, etc. I see the concept of a "patchwork" of all the pieces, but then the individual work(s) get lost. The idea of a traveling show with continuing catalog and corporate sponsor is terrific (if one can be found and places located), but the identical frame and same size picture is not a necessity for that. Only professional packing boxes that are well labeled for each piece. Anyway, that's my feeling

-Naomi Hordes-Silver Spring, MD

EXCERPTS FROM LETTER FROM TO (pronounced "Toe") van WANNING

Dear Kerch:

I was a papercutter since 1948. But I have been giving courses and lectures since 1963 and making papercuttings for special occasions. But now I stopped totally. Only make here and there an article in our newspaper the **KNIP-PERS**. (Translated "Cut-press" It's a word play. Because with a—in between it means cut-press and as one word it means "Papercutters.")

I am nearly 67 and I didn't want the stress of

these orders anymore, and the (always) evening lectures somewhere into the province, and coming late home from somewhere. So I stripped my name from the lists of speakers from different groups, and I retired!! Now I take drawing lessons again after a lot of years. And I am quite happy.

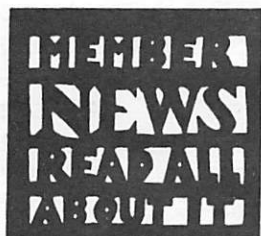
Our guild here in Holland has 940 members at the moment. (But there are much "beginners" within this number). Lately there has been a course for the better ones. Given for instance by Frouke Goudman. The one who wanted to get more modern style in the papercuttings. You saw that in the Knip-pers at Christmas for instance and in more other members. She is busy making a lesson book now.

Sukey sent me one year ago a Video about the show in the Hershey Museum. Up until now I couldn't see it, because we have in Holland different frequencies.

Nice to know that my visit started so much!...let everyone have my greetings.

-Yours,-To

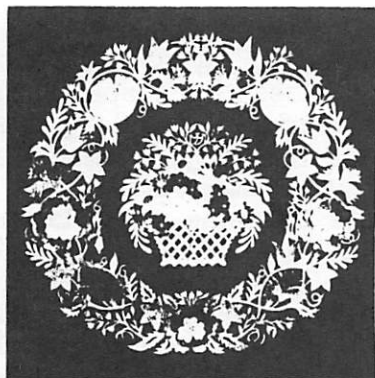
Request for how to order the Knippers newsletter of the Dutch Papercutters-usually about 35 pages with excellent illustrations. It is written in Dutch, so most of us cannot understand it, but the many pictures are teachers, and much can be learned from studying them. It is an interesting experience to purchase Dutch Guildars at the Meridian Bank, you will need 26 - about \$13.00 US, for a one year subscription. Send to Redakte KNIPPERS, Van Balverenweg 63, 6721 ZV Bennekom 08389-14181, Netherlands.



Dick Harris reported an increase of 30 new members to our group. This brings our current membership to 141. We reached our goal of doubling membership within the year.

Goals are attainable when set. Thanks, Dick, for

following through so carefully with all those requests for information.



S h a r o n
S c h a i c h ' s
multicolor metallic foil wreath, on the cover illustration of the December Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen newsletter, and is beautiful even in black and white.

Susanne Cooke-Greuter's cutting in the Swiss Style graced the cover of "The Clarion" magazine published by the Museum of American Folk Art in N.Y.C. It features a heart detail from a large intricately bordered picture containing a large stylized tree of life with hearts, flowers and dancers to the tunes of musicians with accordion and fiddles. It is the title picture for the articles featuring "Swiss Folk Art, Celebrating America's Roots."

On black, dazzling overlays of colored papers make a spectacular showing. Congratulations Suzanne! You can purchase this Fall 1991, Vol. 16, No. 3, issue for \$5.00 from the Museum of American Folk Art, 61 West 62nd Street., New York, NY 10023.

Pamela Dalton in the same issue of "The Clarion" has a beautiful color ad on page 32 titled "Anniversary". Her watercolored 26" x 32" whimsical papercutting is filled with clover, sunflowers, tiger lilies and hollyhocks, pigs, rabbits, cows, chickens and geese, and a thatched roof house.

WORKSHOP FOR 1993

In an effort to dovetail into the international Year of Crafts 1993, it was suggested that GAP sponsor a major workshop open to anyone interested in papercutting. Brainstorming was conducted to provide the following list of suggested topics: One color papercutting; mounting and displaying of cuttings; creative applications for papercutting, such as architectural application; varieties of paper available; papermaking; ethnic papercutting; beginner level workshop; practical applications of papercutting as in quilts; sources for supplies; display of papercuttings by those attending the workshop. Volunteers are needed to start this project. Please contact Kerch McConlogue (301) 945-7441.

EXHIBITS

The Goldman Art Gallery is presenting "Artsites" the annual show and sale by Washington, DC's only Jewish artists' cooperative. This show will feature one-of-a-kind Judaica, crafts, including some papercuts. The dates of the show are November 2 - December 8, 1991 at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington, 6125 Montrose Road, Rockville, MD, (301) 881-0100, ext. 6739.



Thanks to Steven Woodbury for continuing his comprehensive book reviews.

Creating With Paper by Pauline Johnson has long been out of print. Originally published in 1958, it addresses cutting, surface treatment, curling, bending, folding, with a variety of projects and application. The book focusses on three-dimensional paper sculpture, but also has illustrations of traditional Mexican and Chinese cuttings and Japanese stencils, as well as contemporary papercut designs. A reprint of the 1975 edition is now available for \$8.95 from Dover (ISBN 0-486-26837-3) —SRW

2.286 Traditional Stencil Designs reprints two catalogs of stencils from around 1920. These catalogs include a staggering variety of border and floral motifs, as well as numerous pictorial stencils (Dover, 1991, 128 pp., \$6.95, ISBN 0-486-26845-4.)—SRW

Pictorial Archive of Lace Designs offers a source of inspiration for the papercutter. (This is apt, since historically these crafts have undoubtedly influenced each other. Consider, for example, the 18th century Swill Catholic religious cuttings, or the Portuguese "rendos do papel," literally "paper lace.") Over 300 examples include floral patterns, borders, fans, and much more. (Edited by Carol Belanger Grafton, Dover, 1989, 96 pp., \$6.95, ISBN 0-486-26112-3.)—SRW

The Spirit of Folk Art Calendar for 1992 features several papercuts/ One full-page illustration presents shadow puppets from India and Java; a second features two Polish cut-out scenes. Smaller illustrations include 7 cuttings from China and Poland, and 2 shadow puppets from China. In addition to the cutouts, the calendar features a great diversity of carvings, embroidery, metalwork and other folk art from around the world, all from the Girard Collection at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe. (Published by Harry N. Abrams Inc., \$9.95, ISBN 0-8109-7926-8.) —SRW

To van Wanning mentioned in her letter that the previously out of print book about the late Julia Feiner, Lebenshild der Julia Feiner, Wiederkehr is available again from Firma Blohher, Bronsteewg 4/4A, Heernstede (Holland) telephone 023/282472. To also had an article in the June 1991, no.2 issue of Knippers about her friend.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 2 - Dec 8, 1991

"Artsites", Jewish Community Center,
6125 Montrose Rd., Rockville, MD
301/881-0100, ext. 6739

Sept. 26 - Jan. 1, 1992

"Swiss Folk Art" Celebrating America's Roots,
Museum of American Folk Art.
Eva & Morris Feld Gallery at Lincoln Square,
New York, NY
212/595-9533

February 15, 1992

Next GAP Meeting.
Sukey and Dick Harris' house
Annville, PA

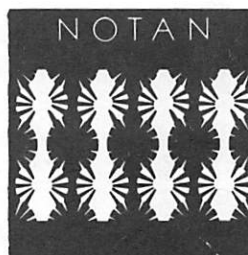
March 7 & 8, 1992

Paul Beal Workshop at Bedford Arts Ctr.
Bedford, PA.
215/860-0731

March 10 - April 4, 1992

Clarion Shadow Theatre at
Smithsonian Discovery Theater,
presenting David Wisniewski's "Elfwyn's Saga."
For information call 202/357-1500.

DESIGN INSPIRATION



"Notan" is a Japanese word meaning "dark-light." More than this, it represents a design principle relating positive and negative space—a recognition of the importance of both a shape int its background. In my view, this is at the heart of good papercut design. So I was excited to discover the book Notan: The Dark-Light Principle of Design, by Dorr Bothwell and Marls Mayfield.

Notan takes the reader through a series of cut-paper design exercises such as "symmetrical and asymmetrical balance," "negative shapes with positive reversal," "control of positive and negative space," and "compartmented design." These are illustrated with student works, which are critiqued. Other figures illustrate the same principles in modern sculpture, American cast iron, Nigerian mud walls, and traditional folk papercutting from China and Poland. I strongly recommend this book for every papercutter's library. (Originally published 1986; Dover reprint 1991, 80 pp. \$5.95, ISBN 0-486-26856-X.)—SRW

IT'S TIME FOR DUES

While most of us are preparing to write our check for \$15 for our 1992 dues, those persons who joined the guild after July 1, 1991 are getting a break. It was decided that those who joined in the last half of the year needed to pay only \$7.50 for 1991. So, you new Guild members, get out your checkbook and look at the date of your check when you joined. If it is after July 1, 1991, and your check was for \$15, you have a \$7.50 credit coming toward your 1992 dues. If you have any questions, call or write to **Dick Harris**. In his computer is the amount and date of your check and he will let you know how much is needed for your 1992 membership.



Many new members have joined the Guild through Gerlachs of Lecha and Allison. We thank them for including Guild information in their catalogs. We hope you all find membership in the Guild worthwhile, and we welcome any information

letters, news, show times and places, etc., that is pertinent to papercutting. Please send all TIDBITS, especially shows, to **Ellen Haberlein** as soon as you have set dates.



Doreen Rhoads reported that as of this meeting, about 300 calendars have been sold. The GAP ordered 1000 calendars, so order now for the holidays.

The Guild birthday calendar makes a wonderful and inexpensive gift for Christmas, Hanukkah, Valentines Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Birthday - whenever. And what's more, it will NEVER get out of date. It includes spaces large enough to keep track of a bunch of birthdays! It is a handy (5" x 8-1/2" folded, 5" x 17" opened) size. It features 14 appropriate papercuttings in black and white done by Guild members. Cost is \$4.00 per calendar (\$5.00 for non-members), checks payable to the Guild of American Papercutters. Get one for yourself, your kids and your friends. Send to **Dorene Rhoads**, 315 Ridge Road, Annville, PA 17003.

IDEAS

The Guild mug is a high quality white cup with sturdy handle and the Guild logo emblazoned on both sides. It somehow makes the morning coffee or tea taste special - and doubles nicely for flowers, greens, pencils or pens, etc. Send \$6.00 for your Guild mug today to **Harris**, 514 East Main Street, Annville, PA 17003. this includes postage and handling. PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

Exhibit catalogs from the Hershey 1989 Hearts and Flowers show and the 1991 Washington County Museum show are still available for \$3.75, which includes postage and handling. Pa. residents add 6% sales tax. Send to **Harris**, 514 East Main Street, Annville, PA 17003-1511.

NEXT MEETING

Will be on February 15, 1992 (1:00 P.M.) at the home of **Dick and Sukey Harris**, 514 East Main Street, Annville, PA (717)867-2554. Bring your latest efforts and papercutting books, articles of interest - show and tell. We always have so much to talk about and it's great fun to get together. Remember when we all met for the first time in February 1988 at the Hershey Museum of American Life? It has been real exciting to see the Guild grow these past 3 years. We wish all you in far corners could come too. Papercutters are very interesting and interested people - we want to meet you all, so please come.



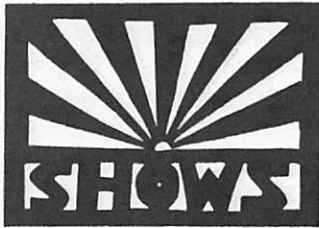
Is anyone out there interested in the 5th anniversary, 1993 Spring Trip to Europe? It would be planned to coincide with at least one Papercutting exhibition (perhaps during the "Contact Day" held in the Netherlands in April or May). If you want to see this happen, please respond. If there is enough interest we will go ahead with plans!!! Send a postcard to **Donna Little**, 273 Kings Highway, Clarksboro, NJ, 08020, or call (609)423-4699, and tell her that you would plan to go traveling with the Guild in 1993, if the tour could be set up.



Kate's Paperie at West 13th Street just off 5th Avenue in NYC, behind Parson's School of Design. A store filled with a large variety of textured and patterned papers from all over the world.

MORE SOURCES FOUND

The Cut-Outs of Henri Matisse. A brightly colored 1992 calendar about \$14.00. Approximately 12" x 24" opened. Available now in good bookstores or write to News Publishing Company, 15 East 76th Street, New York, NY 10021.



Dan Paulos' show in Washington DC was a huge success, and many beautiful papercuttings were represented.

FUTURE SHOWS

Let Ellen Haberlein know in plenty of time to catch your next show so that First Cut News can make the announcement.



Changes occur as we age that may affect the ability to do papercutting at the level to which we were once accustomed. Shaky hands or dim eyes, it doesn't have to mean quitting time. Take a look at the great artist Henri Matisse. His bold colorful, vigorous exuberant papercuttings were a superb outlet for creativity in his later years. Matisse found that "scissors can acquire more feeling for line than pencil or charcoal." Who says cuttings have to be tiny and intricate? Use a bigger scissors, loosen up, take a different approach - Keep Cutting - Keep Happy!

SCISSORS

If you like the curve tip manicure scissors, Hoffritz has an excellent model with large finger holes which cuts very finely. Brushed stainless. Actual size:



KNIFE

X-Acto has an excellent fine (1/8") blade Z209 which fits the 9RX knife with retractable blades.

KNIFE CUTTERS!

Have you seen the orange plastic, multiple disposable blade knife available at stationary, craft supply and art stores? When blade dulls, a pliers will snap it off and, Voila! A fresh sharp cutting edge. Excellent for matboard too!



Rose Weidner, with eagle eyes, spotted the black and white beauty captured in this photo she sent of the wrought iron sign marking the Bronte Parsonage Museum in England. Inspiration for papercuttings can be found most every where! Thanks for sending it, Rose.

SHADOW THEATER



Many thanks from the Guild to **David and Donna Wisniewski** for the superb shadow puppet theater presentation of the Warrior and the Wise Man. It captured the attention of at least 150 children, chaperones and Guild members during the October 12, 1991 meeting at the Montpelier Art Center, Laurel, MD. Concentration was keen as eyes and ears riveted to the magic of the unfolding story, narrated by David. Movies and TV have no monopoly on SPECIAL EFFECTS! You would have had to be there to really appreciate the subtleties of light, color, form, motion and sound. Scurrying around on wheeled stools behind the room-sized screen, David and Donna masterfully worked the jointed shadow puppet horses that galloped across the screen, manes tossing in the wind. Water, cascading and shimmering down the screen appeared so real. The impression was achieved by the bright light of an overhead projector shining onto water being shaken in a see-through container. Changing scenery affected "the passage of time" from break of day to daylight, dusk, darkness to dawn. This combining with a silhouetted hand, amazingly captured the tenderness of a healing touch to a wounded bird. Music rippled and rumbled through the water and fire scenes and was appropriately tuned for all the narrative. It thundered an awesome terror when the armed warriors on the horizon of every distant hill raised their spears. To present a program of this high caliber takes hundreds of hours of work and preparation in coordinating story line and narration with music and scenery and puppets. It also takes an abundant amount of talent and perseverance to write and illustrate a story in the firstplace! Our hats are off to you David and Donna, and we wish you both continued success in your books and shadow theater presentations!



Paper Cutting

with Paul Beal

**Bedford Arts Center
342 South Richard Street
Bedford, PA
(814) 623-1538**

**March 7 - 8, 1992
Friday (7:30 pm - 9 pm)
Saturday (10 am - 5 pm)
Sunday (9 am - 4 pm)**

*co-sponsored with the
Bedford County Arts Council*



The workshop will begin with an over-view of what paper cutting is, where it comes from, its history, development through variations, practical applications and uses. All to be covered in more detail as related to the actual cuttings being done.

As time and class interest permit we will build from simple to more decorative and/or complex, from traditional to contemporary. We will use different tools, paper and cutting surfaces as they are related to ethnic variations touching on some of the historical background of each type of cutting as that method is being tried.

Composition and design will be stressed throughout the course. The use of negative and positive spaces, line, shape and, where applicable - color. We will look at some of the sources of design ideas such as cultural, historical, other media, imagination and how to adapt them to paper cutting. Also mounting, display and some suggested applications where the cutting is not the end product.

fee: \$75.00

Participants should bring the following:

CUTTING TOOLS:

Iris Scissors,
X-acto knife, No. 11 blades
(stainless steel are best -
several packs),
"regular scissors"

CUTTING SURFACE:

Self healing cutting board
recommended or scrap pieces of
colored mat board
'Rotary Mat' fabric cutting mat
is OK.

PAPER:

A variety of papers should be
available. Should be fade proof or
resistant.

Silhouette paper
Origami paper
Gift wrapping
Typing papers
Stationary
Paper backed foils

**SOBO GLUE or
DOUBLE STICK TAPE**

BACKING:

Mat board
(in colors that match your sofa)
Fabric - in plain or small print
Wood - depending on end use

**PENCILS, SKETCH PAD,
STRAIGHT EDGE, ERASERS,
MASKING TAPE.**

KENT BEDIENT



KENT BEDIENT first began doing cut paper some 3 decades ago in New York City, and is one of the few American artists working in this medium today. His work in cut paper grew out of his love of shape and form, and the beauty, simplicity, immediacy and vitality of the hard edge, and the optimum role it intrinsically plays in the cut paper medium. It is from this viewpoint that he has developed a distinctively bold, crisp, contemporary style of his own, capsulizing the simple elegance of natural forms.

Mr. Bedient frequently had his cut paper work featured in Tiffany's, The Delman Shoe Salon, I. Miller, The Russian Tea Room and The Hallmark Gallery. He was also co-founder of Blue River Handprints Inc. where his work was adapted into hand silk screened fabrics and wallcoverings. This work achieved an international influence in the home-furnishings market, and was selected 4 times "for Excellence of Design" in Industrial Design Magazine's prestigious Annual Design Review. It has been shown in Museums here and abroad, including The Smithsonian, The Louvre, The Brooklyn Museum, The Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, and at The Parsons School of Design in New York City.

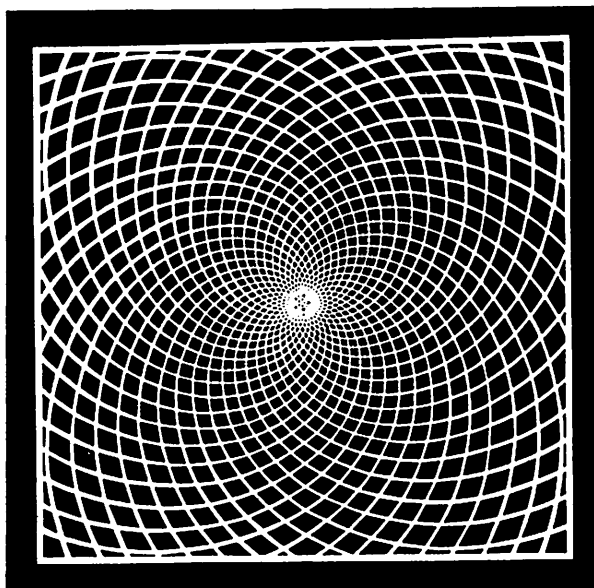
His work was included in a major historical show on "Cut Paper" at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York City in 1985, and he was subsequently selected as one of the American paper cutters to be featured in a forthcoming book, "The Art of Paper Cutting, Its History and Technique".

Each piece is hand-cut by Mr. Bedient, with a utility knife, producing a unique and outstanding example of contemporary knife-cut paper. He also produces a wide variety of product and craft-related projects utilizing scissor cutting.

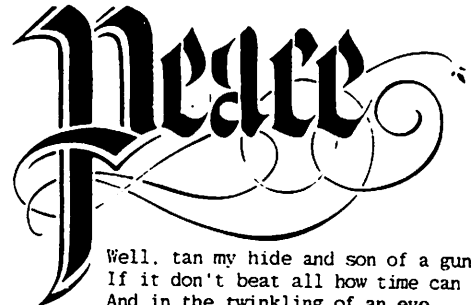
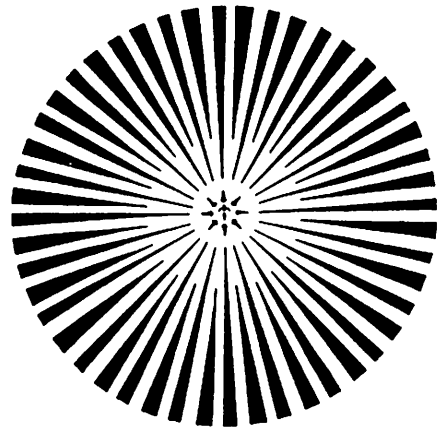
Mr. Bedient was a design consultant for many of the Fortune 500 Corporations, as well as a designer and builder of specialized fantasy sets and props for commercial photography. He has received several Gold medals and other Citations in International Display and related competitions, and a bridal photograph which he designed and executed was chosen for an internationally-distributed promotional brochure by Kodak.

Semi-retired, Mr. Bedient now divides his time between New York City and York, Nebraska, his boyhood home.

December



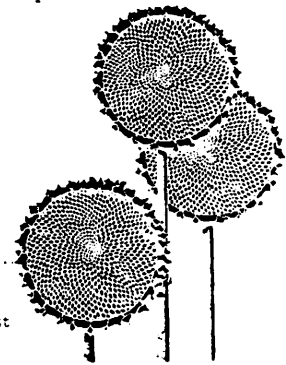
(C) Kent Bedient



Well, tan my hide and son of a gun,
If it don't beat all how time can run
And in the twinkling of an eye
A bunch of things have all gone by,
And it's time to look
In this year's Book
- and hope there's really little doubt
there's something there to brag about -
To tell you of in a review
Before we start on '92!
But, first of all, I wish you Merry,
And, if perchance that ain't enough,
I'd also like to wish you very
Good New Days in a Great New Year
With loads of fun and endless cheer,
And all your wishes multiplied
By ten times ten and ten times twenty
Plus extra frosting on the cake,
Well, you deserve it, Heaven's sake!

I still can see enough to be
A papercutter, and with glee
I joined a group, a Guild, a band
Of others who take knife in hand
Or scissors, or just anything
To cut, to snip, to slice, to bring
A life to paper, let it sing.
Americ'n Papercutters Guild,
(or GAP, the other way around),
Has membership in lots of States,
Enthusiasm does abound!
They made a Calendar, and I
Confess it almost made me high
To be among such members sage,
My "Star" is on December's page!

My added Blessings come to you
For extra special '92!



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CUSTOM DESIGNED for anniversaries...special events...
special people...
CUT BY HAND in white 2-ply bristol paper, 11"x14",
unframed. From \$150.00 to \$500.00. Deposit is
required. Special order from KENT BEDIENT, 423 East
5th, York NE 68467, (402) 362-2054.



FOR INFORMATION WRITE TO:

**GUILD OF AMERICAN PAPERCUTTERS
Richard Harris
514 East Main Street
Annville, PA 17003-1511**



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