

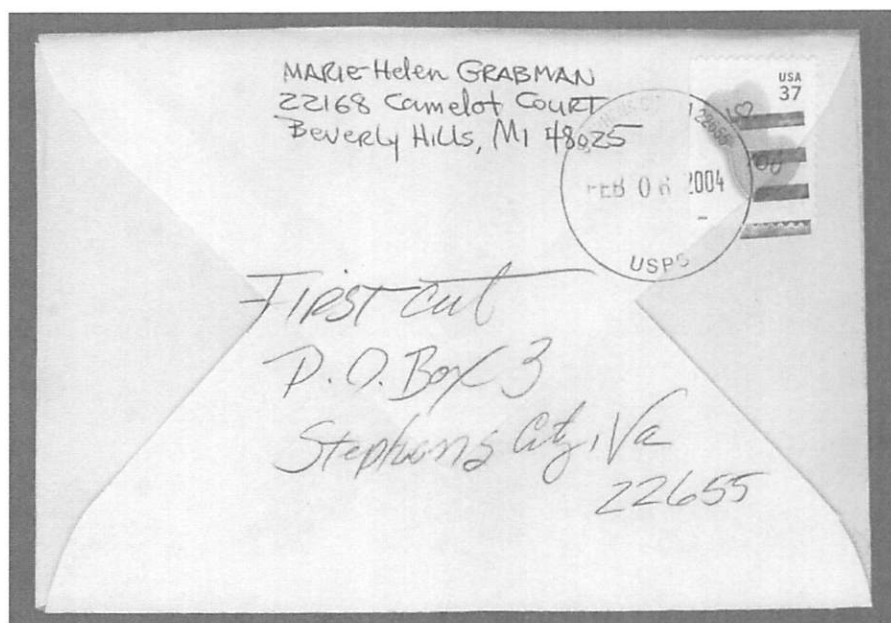
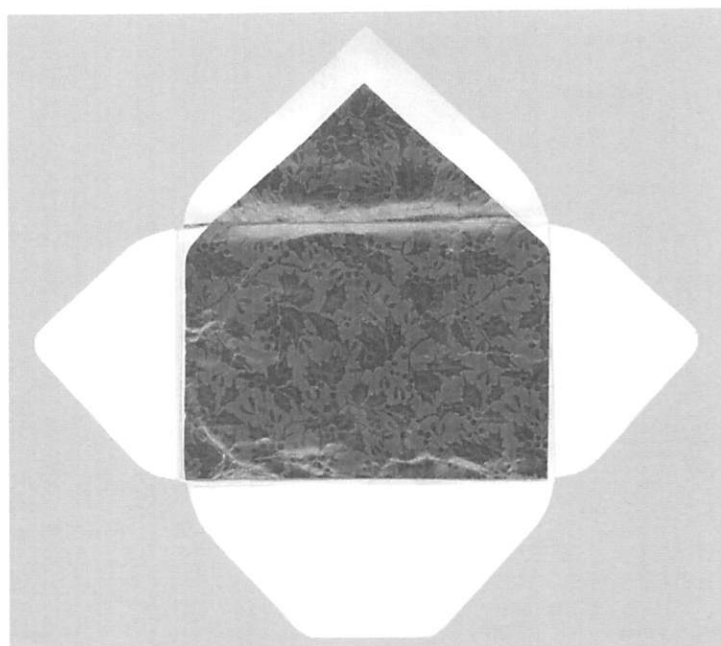
# FirstCut

A Publication of Communication for  
The Guild of American Papercutters  
**Volume 18 Number 2 Spring 2004**



*Hawa*

This envelope came from Marie-Helen Grabman. There are three views to show how she cut the white envelope outline, cut the heart-art from the front, and then glued red foil to the interior so it showed as background once the envelope was folded closed. It was mailed to FIRSTCUT (using the backside as the addressing side) as proof of its "heartiness."



The **Guild of American Papercutters** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to original papercutting as an artform in all its historical and contemporary styles. The Guild of American Papercutters exercises no artistic or business control over its members other than the encouragement of personal artistic growth and ethical business practices. Membership is welcomed – the Guild has no jury requirements and conducts no contests. For registration, contact Merren Booth and Andrew Meserole at GAP Membership, P.O. Box 651351, Sterling, VA 20165-1351. Dues are \$31US (\$41Foreign) for new members which includes the New Member Package; \$25US (\$35 Foreign) for renewals. We accept credit card payments for members through the secure on-line service PayPal indicated on the Guild's website for a small additional charge of \$2: [www.papercutters.org](http://www.papercutters.org).

**Current Guild officers** are: Kay-Marie Buchanan-President, Kathy Trexel Reed-Vice President, Janet Marcus-Secretary, Bette Wells-Reporter, David Shelly-Treasurer, Faye DuPlessis-VP Programs, Merren Booth & Andrew Meserole-VP's Membership, Don Cook-VP Exhibits, Marcia Egan-Exhibits Assistant, Angela Mohr-VP Publications, Pat Stuntz-Publications Assistant, Florine Strimel-Historian, Bea Coron-Webmistress. **Current Guild Board of Directors** are: Paul Beal, Marie Cook, Nancy Cook, Sandy Gilpin, Marie-Helene Grabman, Richard Harris, Trudy Kauffman, Britta Kling, Donna Little, Michael Marcus, Judith Meyers, Dorene Rhoads, Sharon Schaich, Karen Shain Schloss, Gerry Schouten, Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, and Paul Trattner.



## President's Corner

Hi everyone,

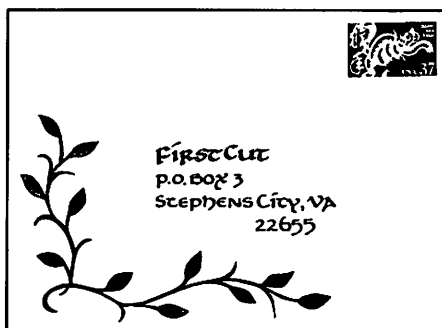
I don't know about you but sometimes I end up putting my papercutting on a backburner because I am so busy with work, family, and other obligations. It is a shame, though, because I really enjoy snipping and miss it when other things get in the way.

Julia Cameron in *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* recommends making an "artist date" with yourself. This is a designated time you set aside each week to explore your creative side – like spending time in your studio, designing a new piece, going to a museum or exhibit, or taking an art class. I have been trying to do this and find it really helps.

If you struggle to find time for creating, make a date with yourself. You could even use this time to create a piece for our Kentucky exhibit. We value your contribution.

Give it a try; don't let your scissors get rusty!

Kay-Marie Buchanan, *President, GAP*



Kay Buchanan's envelope: the leaves are cut out and backed with green paper.

## Editorial Comments

Often when I review GAP's roster, I am reminded of families of like-minded people who may be vastly different on the surface, but somewhere inside have the particle of common unity. My family is like that; it remarkable we came from the same gene pool and the same environment. But when we get together and start talking, it is obvious we are a family.

At no time has 'family-ness' been more apparent than when this issue of FIRSTCUT was coming together with Papercutter Profiles about whole families who cut paper. The same is apparent with the folks who post on the FIRSTCUT Yahoo site – all of us are different from different areas, but have the common particle of unity in our enjoyment of cutting paper.

I encourage you to find other papercutters in your area and come together from time to time. It is satisfying to meet others when you already have a connection.

Angela Mohr, *Editor, FIRSTCUT*

## CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <i>President's Corner, Editorial Comments, Contents, Homework, and Deadlines</i> | <i>1</i>  |
| <i>Guild Business</i>  | <i>2</i>  |
| <i>Member Reminders</i>  | <i>4</i>  |
| <i>Member Commentary</i>   | <i>8</i>  |
| <i>Chapter Bits &amp; Pieces</i>   | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Recent Cuts</i>   | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/Dorfmueellers-A Family Portrait</i>                       | <i>16</i> |
| <i>The History of Envelopes</i>  | <i>20</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/William Oellers</i>                                       | <i>22</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/Urusla Kirchner</i>                                       | <i>23</i> |
| <i>Paper Meets Metal in Bandera, TX</i>  | <i>24</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/Patricia Turner</i>                                       | <i>26</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/The Housel Family of Cutters</i>                          | <i>27</i> |
| <i>Papercutter Profile/The Silhouettes of Jiangnan</i>                           | <i>30</i> |

**Front Cover:** The front cover wycinanki was submitted by Roma Starczewska-Murray of Alexandria, Virginia. Original Size: 13"x13".

**Back Cover:** The back cover is a photograph of a papercutting by Patricia Turner before it was mounted and framed.

## Member Homework

**Summer:** Trees, Landscaping, Swings

**Autumn:** Leaves, Busy Scissors, Gifts

**Winter:** Candles, Winter Warmth, Quilts

**Spring:** Seed Packets, Kites, Babies

## FIRSTCUT Deadlines

**SUMMER – May 15**

**AUTUMN – August 15**

**WINTER – November 25**

**SPRING – February 15**

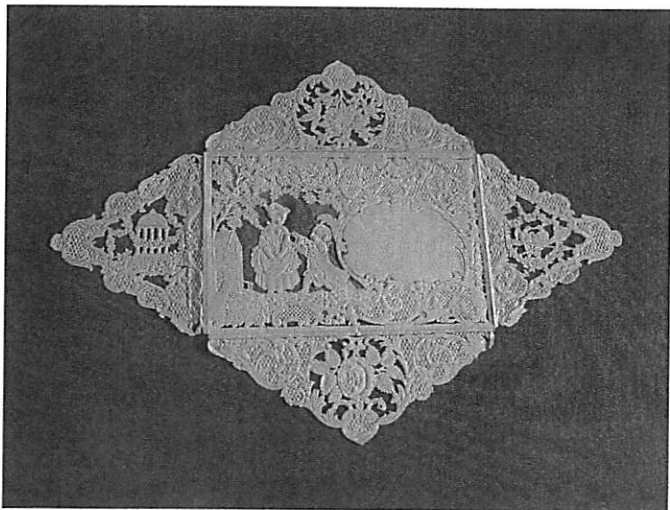
# Guild Business

## Guild of American Papercutters Board of Directors Meeting February 15, 2004 / Franklin Lakes, N.J.

The meeting was held at the home of Nancy Rosin, GAP member and collector of Valentines. Before our formal gathering we all had an opportunity to walk around the house and view Nancy's fabulous collection of Valentines. This was the second opportunity the group has had to view Nancy's collection. There was another meeting at her home in 1996.

We began the more formal part of the meeting with a talk by Nancy about Valentines in general and her collection in specific. She began by saying that she was a GAP member because of her collection and not because she was a papercutter. She started collecting some 30 years ago. She has published in Victorian Magazine and has made a video about Valentines. At first Valentines were people, then they became gifts. The first were from convents as gifts to honor saints.

A person can collect Valentines from all different periods depending upon the interest: i.e. Valentines from the Civil War. Although most of her Valentines are hand made she has a wide range of items that show the evolution of Valentines. Some of them are: gold love tokens (coins defaced on one side with letters on that side), enamel boxes, show valentines (sailors brought these home, usually from the Bahamas), books, one man's collection of all the valentines he ever received, plus copies of ones he had sent (he had been a lawyer), and machine-made cards embossed on lace paper. After her talk, Nancy brought out albums that held much more of her collection. These were passed around and admired.



*This is one of the envelopes from Nancy Rosin's collection. It is signed by the maker, Mansell (embossed into the paper), and is circa 1850.*

**The official Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 3:40p.m.** by the president, Kay-Marie Buchanan. Kay thanked Nancy for hosting the meeting, providing a delicious lunch for all, and sharing her wonderful collection with us. Kay passed around an attendance sheet and copies of the Treasurer's Report and the minutes of the last meeting. Many states were represented in the attendance: Kentucky, Michigan, Vermont, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York. Kay thanked them all for coming.

### **Minutes – Janet Marcus**

Michael Marcus moved to accept the minutes from the previous meeting and it was seconded. The motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report – David Shelly**

The reports covered for the 4th quarter of 2003 (the entire year), and everything so far for the current first quarter of 2004. Michael Marcus moved to accept the reports and Faye DuPlessis seconded. The motion carried.

## REPORTS

### **Membership – Merren Booth and Andrew Meserole**

New membership list was emailed. Almost 400 have renewed already.

### **FIRSTCUT – Assistant Editor Pat Stuntz**

Using the Guild's scanner, Pat scans the papercutting images and photographs received for each issue onto disks and then sends everything to Angela who makes selections for publication in FIRSTCUT.

Any "envelopes" for the next issue are to be sent to her for scanning at: Pat Stuntz, 1127 Country Road, Frenchtown, NJ 08825.

### **Traveling Shows/Exhibits – Don Cook**

There is an update in FIRSTCUT.

Exhibit pieces are needed for the Kentucky show. The deadline is May 18. Submit exhibit pieces to: Paper Works: the Multicultural Art of Papercutting, Lexington Living Arts & Science Center (LASC), 362 N. Martin Luther King Blvd., Lexington, KY 40508.

### **Shoebox Exhibit – Sharon Schaich**

It is at Susquehanna University. Next it is going to Peggy Gschaar in St. Louis, MO, then in July to Iowa. A venue is needed for June. Contact Sharon Schaich with suggestions. The Fiber Arts Center is looking for items to sell in their shop. If you have anything let Faye DuPlessis know.

### **Website – Bea Coron**

Our site gets 30-40 hits a day. The most visited pages are: gallery, links, and homepage.



If you want to add something, email Bea.

### **Upcoming Meetings – Faye DuPlessis**

The Northern Tour will be from April 30-May 1, 2004. On Friday April 30<sup>th</sup> we will visit the Connecticut Historical Museum in Hartford to see a cutting of a large train, plus others. On Friday night she hopes to arrange a meeting with a local GAP member.

On Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> we will travel to Amherst, MA with a short stop in Springfield, MA. In Amherst we will visit the Eric Carle Museum and in the evening go to the Fiber Arts Center for a presentation by Yehudit Shadur, an Israeli papercutter. The Fiber Arts Center is looking for items to sell in their shop. If you have anything let Faye DuPlessis know.

On Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> we will travel to Albany, NY and visit the daughter of Ugo Mochi.

Anyone interested in going is to let her know.

Kay thanked Faye for her hard work in putting the weekend together.

It was suggested to go by bus. Faye will look into this.

### **Birthday Calendar – Trudy Kauffman**

Cuttings for the new Birthday Calendar II are needed. The cut off date is April 1<sup>st</sup>. One thousand copies will be produced at a cost of \$1200.00. The selection committee is: Sharon Schaich, Suki Harris and Trudy. Send a copy of your cutting for the calendar to: Trudy Kauffman, 1451 Friedensburg Road, Ready, PA 19606.

### **Collection 2004 – Alice Helen Masek**

Collection 2004 is October 17 – 21, 2004 at Asilomar. There are 26 possible workshops. Descriptions will be sent to all requesting that participants pick their top 10 choices. Sunday evening Rick Marzullo and his wife will be speaking about Danish papercuts. Monday evening Alice Helen will show the group her work with huge prayerful papercuts. Tuesday Ursula and Otto Kirchner, from Stuttgart, will speak. Randall McGee will also perform as Hans C. Anderson. There is a trip to Yosemite planned for anyone wishing to go after Collection.

T-shirts will be available. Pricing was discussed. It was decided to let Alice Helen decide the most appropriate price to charge.

### **Collection 2006**

Kay hopes to announce the location at Collection 2004. Some suggestions were St. Louis, MO (a member is looking for a site there and will help coordinate) and Bandera, TX (Angela Mohr suggested it and offered to help coordinate).

## **OLD BUSINESS**

We are ready to move ahead as per the Long Range Planning Committee.

**Regional Groups** – Can be established and meet.

**Tax Exempt Status** – This is needed to help us get grant money necessary for the museum and permanent collection.

**Update the By-Laws** - Anyone interested in helping Bernie DuPlessis? Michael and Janet Marcus said they would help. Dick Harris said that the lawyer who did the original By-Laws did so for no fee. He will ask him if he is willing to work on revising them. Dick Harris will also ask him about the tax-exempt status – 501(c)3

### **Museum Committee - Kathy Reed**

Kathy has done much groundwork on this project. Kay handed out a report from Kathy. We need to write a Museum Mission statement. Technical grants to help us set up the museum exhibit – saving documents, etc.- are available once we have tax-exempt status.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Harris Award Nominations**

Deadline for nominations is April 30<sup>th</sup>. This will allow time for the award piece to be cut. Send nominations to Kay.

**Guest – Bill Westerman** (Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission)

The Commission is putting out a booklet on New Jersey Papercutters. He sends greetings from Claire Archer and Ursula Hamann. He will send in a blurb for FIRSTCUT. There will also be a project for New York City artists, including papercutters. Apprentice grants are available in some states.

### **Miscellaneous**

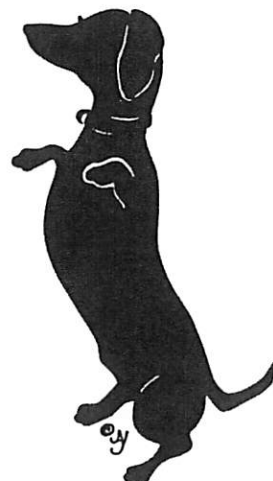
The following addresses were given:

Send photo, articles, etc. for GAP's History Book to: Florine Strimel, 58 Delia Drive, Broomall, PA 19008.

Send thank you/small cutting to the lawyer who was successful with the Chinese website cease and desist letter: John Hines, 1192 Westmoor Road, Winnetka, IL 60093.

Michael Marcus moved to adjourn the meeting. Faye DuPlessis seconded. Motion carried. The business meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Marcus,  
Recording Secretary*



© Joyce A. Yarbrough

## Member Reminders

### DATES AT A GLANCE

#### MIDWEST TRAVELING GAP EXHIBIT

MacMillan Public Library

Wisconsin Rapids, WI

June, 2004

*Requesting Venues*

Contact Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt SDS, ph. 414-453-1871

Or email [steinfeldt01@dsha.k12.wi.us](mailto:steinfeldt01@dsha.k12.wi.us)

#### UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE: THE ART OF PAPER CUTTING

Fiber Arts Center, Amherst, MA

April 1 – May 1, 2004

*(Member Volunteer, Faye DuPlessis)*

#### SHOEBOX EXHIBIT

Susquehanna University Library

Selinsgrove, PA – Until the end of March 2004

*(Available until July)*

Ames Public Library, Ames, Iowa – July 1-31, 2004

*(Member Volunteer, Lynn Askew)*

#### GAP MEETINGS

Spring Meeting – April 30, May 1 & 2, 2004

Massachusetts

#### COLLECTION 2004

October 17-21, 2004

Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA

**GAP Website** – [www.papercutters.org](http://www.papercutters.org)

### Planning Ahead for the Spring Meeting

Plans for the GAP trip to the North Country on April 30th, May 1st and 2nd, are taking shape even though there are still more details to be ironed out.

If you saw the article in the Autumn issue of FIRSTCUT about the giant cutting of the steam train, done by William H. Brown in 1831, you may have wondered, as I did, if it was still located at the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford. Well, it is! Not only that, but I am told by Nancy Finlay, Curator of Graphics, that they have a number of other silhouettes by W.H. Brown as well as a "strong collection of 19th century silhouettes". Yale also has a collection of

silhouettes and I am trying to find out more about them. At any rate, a stop in Connecticut, probably on Friday, seems to be on the schedule.

Saturday, May 1st, we'll drive about one hour to Amherst, Massachusetts, where we will visit the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art. Our traveling exhibit will be finishing up an April showing at The Fiber Art Center in Amherst and they are happy to have us use their facility on Saturday evening for a meeting and presentation by Yehudit Shadur from Israel, artist, author and expert in Judaic papercutting.

Sunday, May 2nd, we will drive about two hours to Delmar, New York (just outside of Albany) to the home of Jeanne Tartaglia. Jean is the daughter of Ugo Mochi and has graciously agreed to open her home to us. Mochi is the artist who cut the eight feet tall by two feet wide panels we saw at the New York Museum of Natural History when GAP had its weekend there. To learn more about Mochi go to [www.artzar.com/content/mochi](http://www.artzar.com/content/mochi). Though the panels are exquisite, they are just a small part of the total body of his work. Jeanne has many of his cuttings, books which he illustrated, and stories to tell about her remarkable parent.

Please let me know if you think you might go so that I can give you the details when they become available. You may need to make room reservations early. Contact me at: E-mail: [faye@duplessis.net](mailto:faye@duplessis.net); Phone: (302) 234 1733; Mail: 524 Beech Tree Lane, Hockessin, DE 19707

### Additional Spring Meeting Info...

This came in tonight from Faye DuPlessis "...let you know where to make reservations & urge you to do so ASAP as the hotel in MA will hold rooms for us only up until April 1st. There are other events taking place on that weekend. Mention GAP or my name when calling: Friday night, Apr. 30th in CT.... Howard Johnson Express 860-529-3341 (\$63+ tax, double); Saturday night, May 1st in MA.... Quality Inn, Hadley 413-584-9816 (\$85.50-\$94.50 + tax).

Our 1st meeting will be at the Historical Society in Hartford from 3-5PM.

### COLLECTION 2004

Among the various workshops and classes being offered in the categories of Technique, Many Cultures, Individual Projects, Master Cutters, and Doing It With Children, it appears we will enjoy:

interested...the phone number above, or email at  
GAP2004@juno.com.

### Member Dates at a Glance

#### Beatrice Coron

Feb. 29- March 28 / The Spelling Spider  
Azarian McCullough Art Gallery; Sparkhill, NY

#### HaeYong Kwon

March 20-May 5 / Frank L. Melega Art Museum  
69 Market Street, Brownsville, PA

#### Marie-Helen Grabman

May 8-9 / Art Festival; Birmingham, MI  
May 22-23 / Art Festival; East Lansing, MI  
Sept. 11-12 / Art in the Park; Birmingham, MI

#### Nancy Shelly

May 8-9 / Mercer Museum Folk Festival; Doylestown, PA  
May 21, 23, 24 / Danforth Museum Show  
MASSBAY Community College; Framingham, MA  
June 5-6 / L.W. Crossan, Cabinetmaker, presents  
*A Gathering of Traditional Artisans*; Lyndell, PA

#### Gene Mason Toutsis

April 15 - July 15 / The Science Museum of Virginia  
5200 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23220

#### Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS

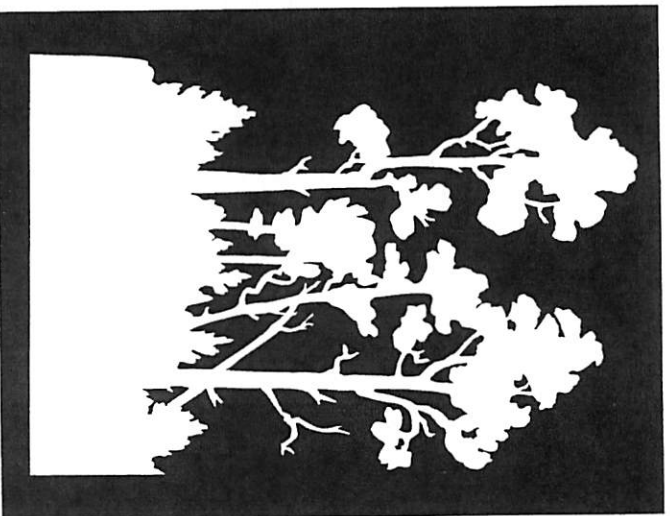
May 8 / Horicon Marsh; Mayville, WI  
Ongoing exhibits:

Jacksonport Craft Cottage, Jacksonport, WI  
Carriage Haus Shops, Mayville, WI

#### Tsirl Waletzky

Until May 2 / Asemblages  
Yeshiva University Museum, Center of Jewish History  
New York, NY

To submit your dates for an exhibit, or where you can be seen at a show, contact the editor to have the date included in the Member Dates at a Glance. FirstCut issues are usually mailed about 3 weeks after the deadline dates shown on the Contents page.



*Pine forest near Asilomar, Pacific Grove, CA. Original size 6"x8 1/4".  
© Jan Penney, February 2004*

Sunday evening, Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>. Rick and Linda Marzullo and Danish Papercutting, accompanied (if we can get permission) by a very unique Danish pastry cake.

Monday evening, Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>: Alice Helen Masek sharing images and experiences of 8 years of Prayerful Papercutting, with hands-on cutting at a couple tables.

Tuesday evening, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>: Ursula and Otto Kirchner from Stuttgart, Germany, speak about European papercutting with slides and brochures about cutters from many countries, a presentation offered at the Berlin Museum from their extensive collection.

Wednesday evening, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>: The last night of Collection, Randel McGee, of Handford, CA, will entertain us as Han Christian Anderson, telling fairy tales and cutting. There will also be a trip to the Monterey Aquarium (Tuesday) with a brief talk beforehand about the qualities to look for in the portrayal of sea creatures

### \*\*ATTENTION\*\* COLLECTION 2004

#### ASILOMAR FEES CLARIFICATION

The room rates for Asilomar Collection 2004 lodgings include three meals a day. Thus, rates **PER PERSON**:

**Single person in room:** (different part of campus)  
\$169.51/night, \$678.04 four nights,

**Two in room, each person:** \$102.07 per night,  
\$408.28 four nights (2 people=\$816.56)

**Three or four in a four-bed room, each person**  
\$80.74 per night, \$322.98 for four nights

**Children 3-17 years old, each:** \$57.24 per night,  
\$228.96 for four nights

It is not too late to join other papercutters at Asilomar.  
Contact Alice Helen Masek for information if you are

### *The Deadline is approaching...*

### **Paper Works: The Multicultural Art of Papercutting -- May 24 - July 2, 2004**

Lexington Living Arts & Science Center (LASC)  
362 N. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Lexington, Kentucky 40508

\* 1 work per artist

\* \$10.00 entry fee, **plus** return shipping

\* Each work must be clearly marked on the back with the title of the work, the artist's name, address, and phone



number and/or e-mail. If work is for sale, indicate price. (LASC will retain 30% commission on any sales.) If work is not for sale, it must be clearly marked NFS. Artwork is not juried, but the LASC board and staff reserve the right to exclude works because of space, quality, or content.

\*Work must be at the LASC on or before 4p.m., Tuesday, May 18, 2004, to be in the exhibit. All work must be framed/ready for display. While the LASC has no requirements for hanging (wire, D-ring, etc.), it is suggested that Plexiglass or other glass substitute be used rather than glass. The LASC will not be responsible for replacement of broken glass.

*\*This is GAP's first exhibit in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and a wonderful opportunity to expose the southeast to this wonderful art form. If you have questions, contact Debbie Cox at (502) 223-3279, or [dvaughtpaperart@yahoo.com](mailto:dvaughtpaperart@yahoo.com).*

## Cuttings for the New Calendar

*The new Guild calendar will be unveiled at Collection 2004. Get your cuttings in by the deadline, April 1, 2004.*

A birthday calendar is an approximate 5" x 7" GAP publication that, by month, lists the number dates of each month, but not the days so it never goes out of date. It can be used as a visual reminder of annual dates such as birthdays, anniversaries, and other special family dates that don't change from year to year. We use appropriate black and white papercuttings to illustrate each month and the cover page. To enter your favorite papercutting for consideration, follow these requirements:

1. Image must be black on white or white on dark and submitted as clear, printer-ready copies. Shop around for a copier in your area with new toner that produces sharp, dense images. Clean the copier glass so no smudges or dirt flecks ruin the image.

2. The image should be submitted to fit. Either the image is already 4 1/2" x 5", or reduced to fit into a 4 1/2" x 5" space. Make sure any reductions can still show details clearly, or choose another papercutting.

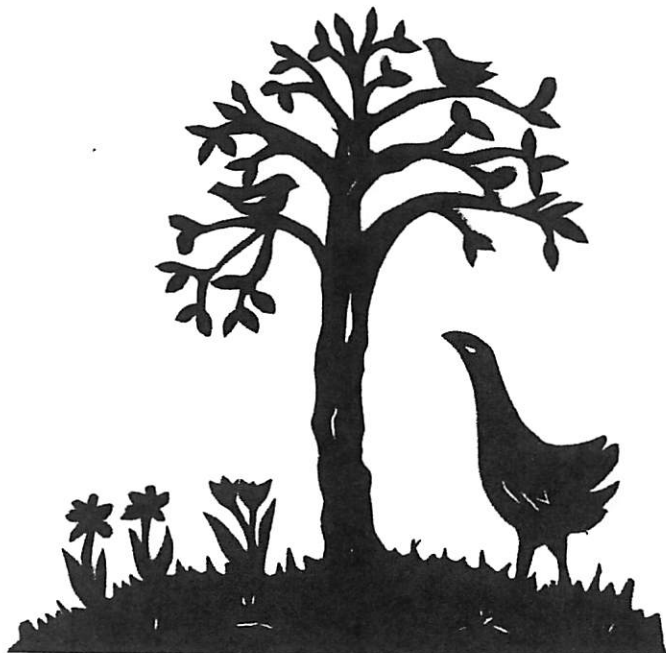
3. The cover is a horizontal 5" x 6" space. Cuttings that have already been used in FIRSTCUT will also be eligible with the artist's permission. Papercutters with chosen work will receive a free calendar.

**Deadline for submissions – April 1, 2004 And No Foolin'!**

Send a copy of cutting/s to Trudy Kauffman, 1451 Friedensburg Road, Reading, PA 19606. Call 610-779-8374 or e-mail for questions concerning the calendar [gpkuffman@earthlink.net](mailto:gpkuffman@earthlink.net)



© Gene Mason Tousi



EARLY MORNING STROLL © Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS, 2003



© William Oellers, 2002  
Original Size: 8"x11"

### Copyright Infringement Follow-Up

I just paid the legal bill for the Cease and Desist letter to the Chinese folks that were copying GAP members work. I think that we should have an article about this problem in FirstCut and note that GAP paid \$506 plus change to help correct the situation.

The legal fees were \$506.60 for professional services paid to WANG & WANG, A Limited Liability Company, in San Francisco. That firm was reached through Sachnoff & Weaver LTD of Chicago. – *Dave Shelly, GAP Treasurer*

### Sabuda Pop-Up Books

Our daughter gets a magazine called FAMILY FUN. In the March 2004 issue, there is a great 5 + page article about Robert Sabuda him and his pop-up books. Included are good graphic directions for making a bat pop-up card, which can remain in white paper or be painted. There are two pictures of an amazing 2-teir pop-up card from his ALICE IN WONDERLAND book and a centerfold of the Emerald City from his WIZARD OF OZ book. – *Sukey Harris, Pennsylvania*

### Papercutting As Art

My opinion is most papercutters are able to make the most intricate papercuts. This is something we expect from a good papercutter. A painter, however, would be insulted if we judged his work from his technique and if we asked which brush he used. I am always asked which scissors I use and people tell me how difficult my cutouts are. They want to know how long it takes to make a cutout. To this I say: 68 years. They know nothing about real works of art. For me a scissor cut is a work of art like any other work of art and all criteria that apply to oil paintings also apply to cutouts. – *Ursula Kirchner, Germany*

### About Envelopes

Stu Copans [from Vermont] was one of the papercutters who sent me envelopes for the decorated envelope article. This is some added information he sent:

“Just sent off a few envelopes to you today, and have a few I hope to get out tomorrow. You may want to include a small “tips for envelope cutters” section.

For example, you can buy a small healing mat (3"x4") from MicroMart that fits inside an envelope so you can cut the envelope easily using a knife. I like symmetry, so for me it is easier to use an envelope template (3 different sets available from John Neal), cut the paper, then assemble it into an envelope. You can also use the

template to cut out two different colored envelopes, papercut one and use the other as a liner, or if one is translucent, use the papercut one as a liner so it is protected, but the cutting shows though the translucent paper.”

*[Editorial P.S. – Besides traditional paper envelopes, Stu Copans sent some incredible e-dimensional objects through the mail as envelopes. We'll be exploring those 'envelopes' in the summer issue.]*

### A Short Report on My Trip to Germany

Connie (my husband) went on the internet before my departure and found Deutscher Scherenschnittverein.de. He sent an email asking if they could provide any papercutter contacts in the Duesseldorf area where I would be staying. The next morning Karin Duet replied and offered several names and addresses. While I was there I made some appointments.

The first visit was with Annemarie Joneck. She looked forward to meeting me but was a bit uncertain about what I wanted from her. Since I spoke German, she quickly found out I was just interested in meeting kindred artists and seeing their work. I could not get over the beauty of her cuttings. There was tenderness, creativity, and an



© Annemarie Joneck



abundance of feeling for nature. There was also a lot of imagination. All her work reflects her experiences, playful thinking and peacefulness. In the midst of a big city where everything is rush and hurry, her apartment is an island of sanity and tranquility.

Annemarie does not sell her cuttings. She just makes them and proudly shows them to fellow artists and friends. I was happy to be accepted as one of them. She let me choose some of the many papercuttings she had made, of which I present to you now.

The next visit was to Herr Joachim Pfeifer who lives around the corner from Annemarie. When I entered his apartment, I was aware of the exciting life that surrounded me. It was like attending a big party of like-minded creative people. I do not need alcohol to get excited, just being in his apartment with all the pictures on the walls did it to me!

Herr Pfeifer was a librarian, then later a bookbinder. He showed me a box built of cardboard that had 50 compartments, each holding a decorated eggshell. Just the box, by itself, was a masterpiece of precision and artistry.



THE SURPRISED CHEF © Herr Joachim Pfeifer

His sense of humor shows in his cutting *The Surprised Chef*, and his love of nature is shown in his cutting of seed pods in late autumn. —Katharina Benneck, Connecticut

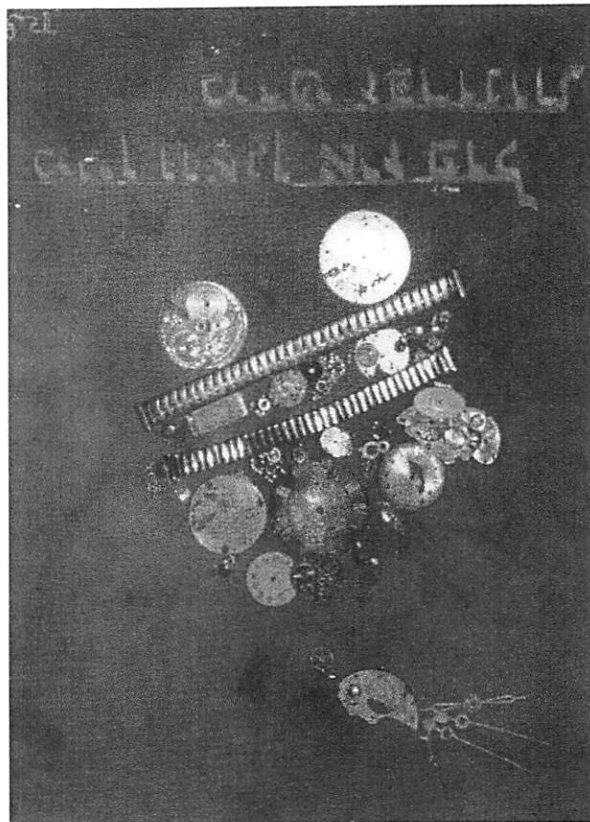
## Ella Sends Word from Denmark

A copy of a letter arrived from Ella Biltoft, Denmark. The chairman of the general meeting for Papirets Kunstnere, Lasse Rydberg, stated the members of the association, Papirets Kunstnere, had voted in favor of the abolition of the group. The remaining capital was used for administrative purposes related to the abolition. The Papirets Kunstnere archives will be handed over to the new Paper Museum in Silkeborg.

## Assemblages

Tsirl Waletzky, one of our founding members, used to demonstrate Judaic Papercutting at the Smithsonian for their holiday celebrations in December. Tsirl's eyesight

has deteriorated with age, but she continues to explore creative uses of cut paper with inherited watch parts into creative combinations she calls *assemblages*. Yehudit Shadur saw the very first one almost four years ago – now there is an exhibit of assemblages at the Yeshiva University Museum, Center of Jewish History, NYC, NY until May 2, 2004.



The Assemblage by Tsirl Waletzky on the front of the gallery postcard.

## Notice to West Coast Cutters

Ursula and Otto Kirchner will be attending Collection 2004 at Asilomar and will be able to enjoy a 3-4 week visit in the United States. They are interested in seeing and experiencing some of the joys of our country. Contact Alice Helen Masek for information regarding hosting them for part of the visit, [alicehelen@juno.com](mailto:alicehelen@juno.com) or 510-538-7617.

## Comments to GAP Board Members

Some time ago, I suggested GAP have attractive brochures printed so members could give them to people who attend workshops and/or put them on tables in galleries. (Still being considered?) Every county here seems to have an art organization...good opportunities for promotion! — Ben Barker, New York

## Snip Tips

Welcome to *Snip Tips*, FIRSTCUT's newest column containing helpful hints and tips covering all aspects of

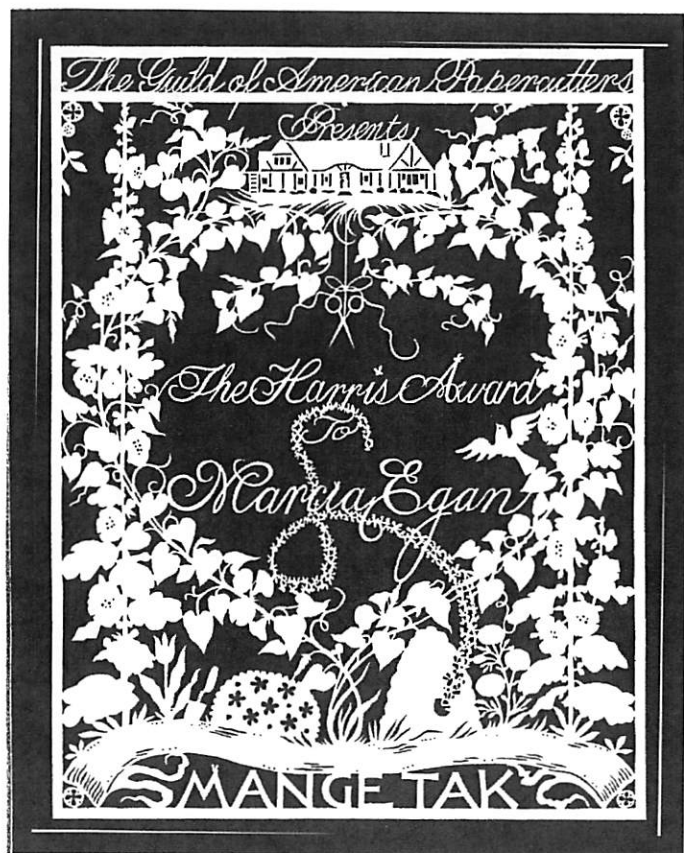
papercutting. It is my purpose for more experienced papercutters to encourage and mentor newer, less experienced papercutters by sharing those tips that can enhance technical papercutting and designing skills. This will be a forum for questions, advice, and papercutting contributions that will inspire GAP members to improve skills.

What are your favorite tools to use, and why? What paper do you prefer? What are some of your favorite sources for materials? Can you give tips on mounting work for display and/or exhibit? I will be accepting your contributions and compiling the information for each issue of FIRSTCUT. There is only one tip in this first article and that is: *Practice Makes Perfect*.

Keep on cutting and send questions and/or tips to: Peggy Gschaar 5679 Potomac St Louis, MO 63139 or [peggy.gschaar@mosaic-infoforce.com](mailto:peggy.gschaar@mosaic-infoforce.com).

## The Harris Award

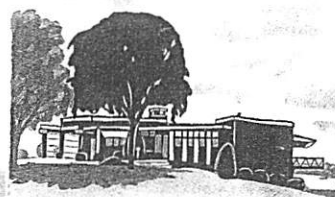
Marcia Egan was the recipient of the last year's Harris Award, an award given to Guild members contributing energy to the Guild of American Papercutters. The award was designed and cut by Rick Marzullo. Nomination deadline for the next Harris Award is April 30<sup>th</sup>. This will allow time for the award piece to be cut. Send nominations to Kay-Marie Buchanan.



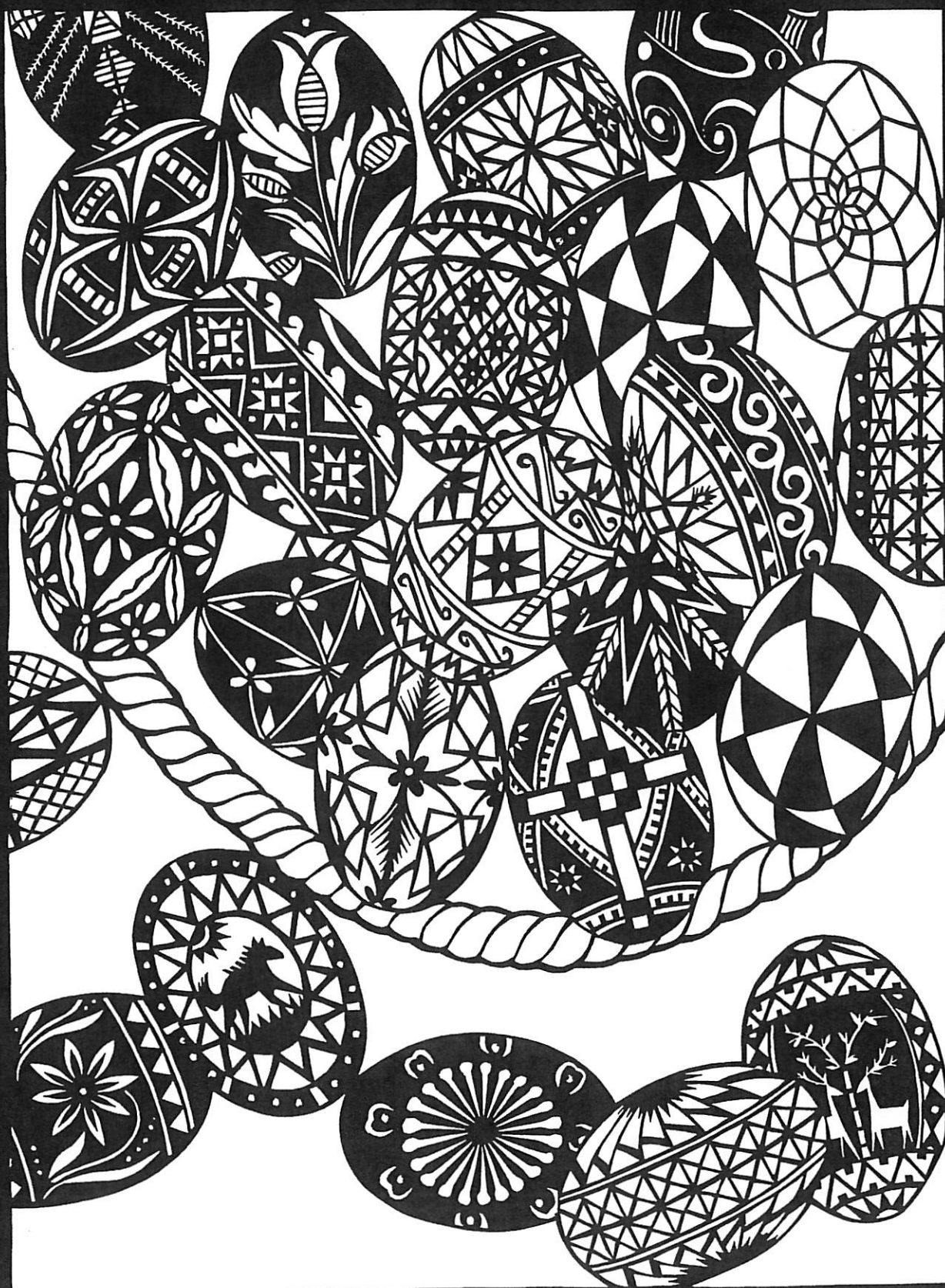
## Tour of Homes Silhouettes

Last July I cut silhouettes of the six homes that were in the Tour of Homes in Cedar Falls in August 2003. I saw the homes, took pictures and made sketches of the homes. After copying the images onto paper, I pinned each copy to two pieces of black silhouette paper.

I cut all the straight lines with a cutter and finished with a scissors. Any trees in front of the house were cut, but other landscaping and window details were done in India Ink or diluted Ink and a brush. I completed them in two weeks. The hosts and hostesses were very receptive. Though the tour day turned out to be a very rainy, the event was successful. We had booties to wear over our shoes so we would not track in the houses. – Marie Cook, Iowa



These are the six house images Marie Cook cut for the Tour of Homes.



PISANKI © Susan Throckmorton, Poland, 2004



## Chapter Bits & Pieces

---

Want to get together occasionally with other papercutters in your area? Get a roster of members in your state by contacting our Membership Directors Andrew Meserole and Merren Booth at [GAPmembership@meserole.net](mailto:GAPmembership@meserole.net) or write to them at P.O. Box 651351, Sterling, VA 20165-1351. So far, there are some groups that meet from time to time:

### **Kentucky Kutups**

Contacts: Debbie Cox, Debbie "Tilly" Baird

### **Northern California**

Contact: Alice Helen Masek

### **Virginia's Meet & Greet**

Contacts: Angela Mohr, Merren Booth and Andrew Meserole

### **Wisconsin Cut-Ups**

Contact: Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt

### **Nutmeg Papercutters (Connecticut)**

Contact: Katrina Benneck

### **Great Lakes Clippers (MI, OH, IN, IL, Ontario)**

Contacts: Marie-Helene Grabman

---

### ***Wisconsin Cut-Ups***

Wisconsin met on Saturday, October 28th with four members present. Five members were excused for various reasons. A new member present June Gengler came from Madison, WI. We shared some of our recent work and offered some suggestions to June on how she could represent ocean waves in a cutting of three children at the ocean. After a short respite for some goodies, Scott Conklin, master snowflake cutter (he's been cutting since he was 13) demonstrated the technique of correct six-pointed snowflakes which we all had time to practice. Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. in the Art Studio in Milwaukee where Sister Clarice Steinfeldt works and displays her work along with two other Sisters' artwork.

Wisconsin met again January 24th. Due to snow there were cancellations, but I went to the studio just in case someone from the Milwaukee area might show up. And right I was; Ann LeBaron arrived by 1:30. We both shared some of our works. Ann brought along some Valentines and snowflakes. One Valentine card she had cut using wrapping paper to accent the design. On another, she opened a heart-shape on the front part of the card that allowed a view of the design in the center. Since Ann hadn't been at any previous meeting, she missed Scott Conklin's presentation on snowflakes, so I shared that with Ann and we cut snowflakes from coffee filters.

Then we worked on a design to glue on a blown-egg, but neither of us completed the project. We adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Other news: The GAP MidWest Traveling Exhibit, Bethany Lutheran Church, Crystal Lake, IL, Oct. 5 - November 5, 2003. The Arts Exhibit opened in conjunction with an Organ Recital on the church's new organ by Craig Cramer, a professor of organ at Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, IN. A lovely reception followed in the Gathering Space where the papercutting was displayed. GAP's thirty-two piece show plus many of Sister Clarice Steinfeldt's cuts were shown. The exhibit was put together by Dudy Hollister, coordinator of the Arts' Program. This was a wonderful experience for all. Darcy Walker happened to drop in to view the show as well as another unknown cutter. Nine GAP members sold a total of 14 pieces receiving \$1,332; Sister Clarice's take was \$3,318 and the congregation received 20% of sales or approximately \$1,000.

Thanks to Judy, the congregational members and visitors proved to be very interested in this art form as expressed through the great amount of sales. Thanks also to Lynn Askew who placed an announcement of the availability of the Guild of Amercian Papercutters' Midwest Travelling Exhibit in their Lutheran magazine.

The GAP-Midwest show rests now a bit until its next showing in June at the McMillan Public Library in Wisconsin Rapids, WI. – *Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS*

### ***Kentucky Kut Ups***

The Kentucky Kut Ups is moving right along with the upcoming exhibit at the Lexington Living Arts & Science Center in Lexington, Kentucky. **Checks for the entry fee and shipping should be made out to the GAP**, not the Lexington Living Arts & Science Center. We've already received some publicity in the quarterly newsletter published by the Living Arts & Science Center of the upcoming exhibit. I hope everyone is working hard to submit a piece for this exciting opportunity.

In addition to the exhibit, Debbie "Tilly" Baird will be conducting a one-day workshop (title yet to be decided) during the exhibit, and I will be doing a children's workshop. There will be an artists' reception the opening night that will coincide with a local gallery hop of several art galleries in the downtown area. This is a well-attended event in Lexington so we expect a good crowd. We're still putting the show together and we'll keep everyone posted.

Tilly and I correspond frequently by e-mail but have not gathered for a meeting in sometime because of our schedules and the weather. That should change soon

when the weather breaks and we get down to finalizing the exhibit. Best wishes to all from the Kentucky Kut Ups! –Debbie Vaught Cox

## Northern California News

In the Jan 31st cutting session in Vacaville, GAP member Barbara Pauly, who lives in Vacaville, joined to help out with the cuttings, which are more detailed than I usually do in my Prayerful Papercutting Ministry. Her skilled hands were appreciated, and after many e-mail exchanges, we were finally able to meet in person. Barbara plans to help the Vacaville folks in subsequent cutting sessions. After Barbara had to leave, lapsed GAP member Marie Brown (who also lives in Vacaville) came by to say hello and assure me that she will rejoin. I suppose if they had both been there at the same time, we could claim we had an official "Meeting" of our Northern California group! Both plan to come to Collection 2004, where I hope several others from Northern CA will get acquainted and we will have enough interested to continue area meetings in the various homes. At Collection 2004, one meal will be enjoyed at *area tables*, where folks can gather with others from their parts of the country to encourage regional organizations. – Alice Helen Masek

## Great Lakes Clippers

Marie-Helen Grabman has nothing to report at this time. Some of us do see each other at a show here or there, but we haven't met officially in a couple of years. I'm hoping our chapter activities can improve. [GAP members, this is the perfect time to get a roster from Andrew and Merren – get to know who is in your area!]

## Virginia's Meet & Greet

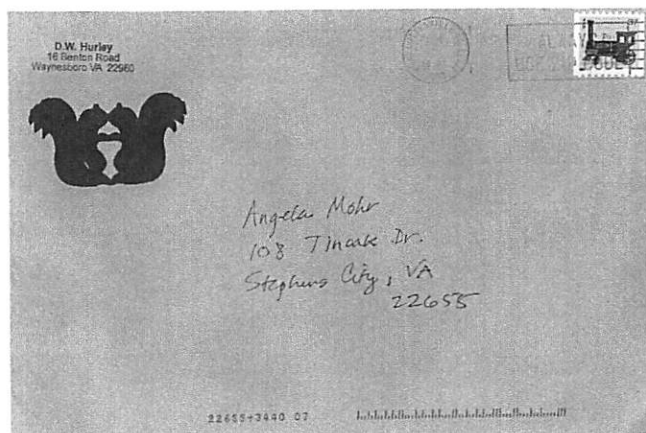
The Fall Meeting of GAP was held at HaeYong Kwon's home in Haymarket, VA, and since then all has been quiet. As spring evolves, we hope to get together again and do a little cutting! – Angela Mohr

## Nutmeg Papercutters

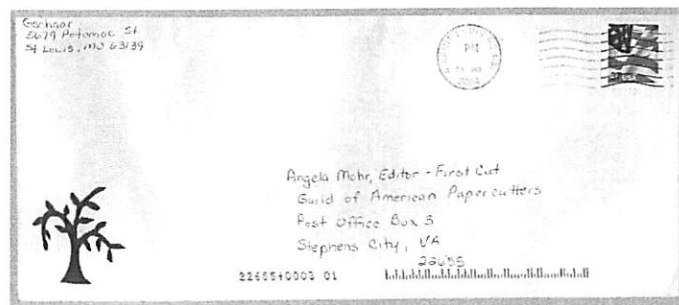
Katharina Benneck went to Germany last fall – her report is listed in the Member Commentary. William (Bill) Oellers is featured in this issue as one of the Papercutter Profiles. When Angela Mohr, FIRSTCUT Editor, goes to Connecticut June 21-25, she hopes to get together with the Nutmeggers if the timing suits everyone.



Decorated Envelope by Katharina Benneck, Connecticut.

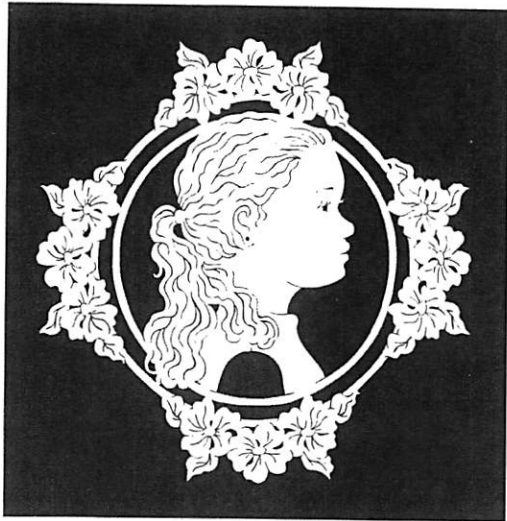


Decorated Envelope by Paula Hurley, Virginia

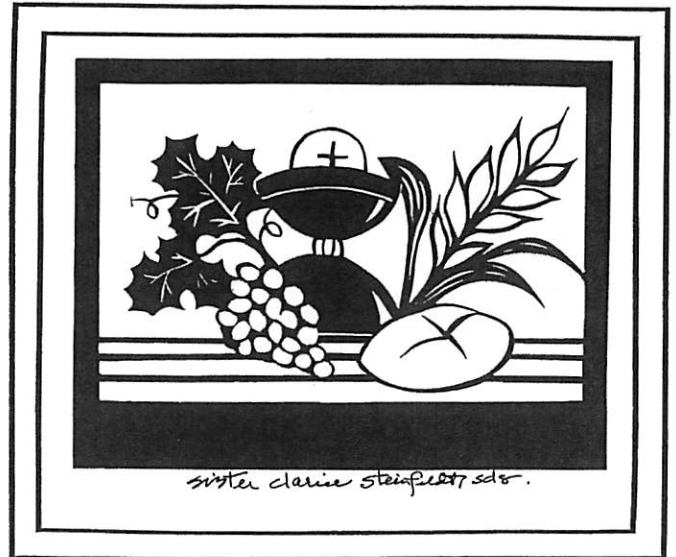


Decorated Envelope by Peggy Gschaar, Missouri.

## Recent Cuts



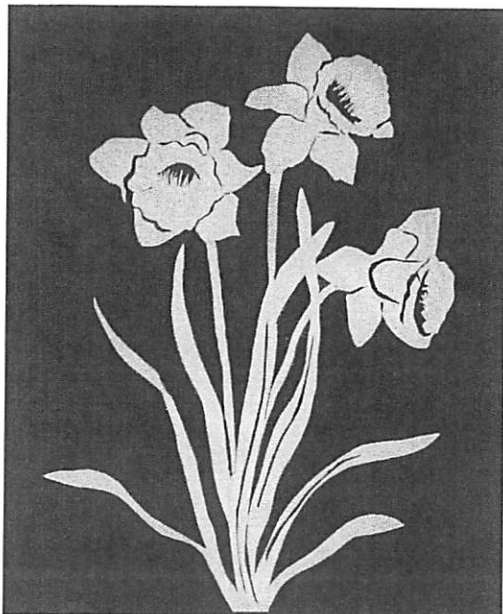
© Judith Erdmann  
Original Size:  
7 1/2" x 7 1/2"



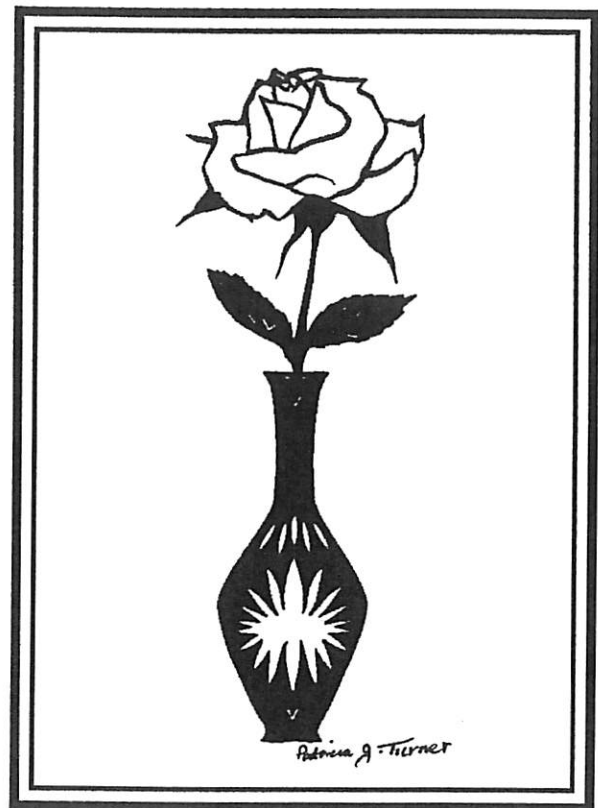
EUCHARIST © Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS, Wisconsin 2004  
Original Size: 8"x9"



CHOIR © Ben Barker, New York 2003



© Peggy Gschaar, Missouri 2004



© Patricia Turner, New York 2004





A BASKET OF SPRING ©Susan Throckmorton, Poland, 2004

## Papercutter Profile

### *The Dorfmuellers—A Family Portrait*

*[Editorial Note – When I was going through the roster, two names caught my eye: Mark Dorfmueller and David Dorfmueller. Those guys might know each other, although David lives in Alabama and Mark lives in Ohio. Upon contacting them, I found out not only do they know each other, they are brothers and come from a family of papercutters. It now turns out all the Dorfmuellers are members of the Guild! This is a portrait of the family.]*

Patricia Ramos Dorfmueller, of Metamora, Indiana, has been an artist for some 72 years. Although she has worked in many media and in numerous settings, her major artistic production may prove to be her four children who have developed their own artistic talents, three of them as silhouette artists.

Pat (b. Granite City, Illinois) began experimenting with art when she was six years old. By age 12, she was an accomplished oil painter and woodcarver. Pat enrolled in the St. Louis School of Fine Arts at 16, and won her first art award shortly thereafter in a city-wide competition. In 1963 she entered the Cleveland Institute of Art, where she was able to refine her talent. Since then, Pat has won numerous awards in fine art exhibits and a special award from the Graphic Department of the Cleveland Institute of Art.

In 1947, Pat's commercial career began in St. Louis with the May Company in retail advertising. During 20



© Patricia Ramos Dorfmueller, Indiana

years in Cincinnati, she continued doing drawings for Lazarus, Elder Bearman, and Mabley and Carew. Designs reflecting Pat's unique style appeared in fashion sections of nationally known papers and magazines. Greeting cards provided a second commercial outlet for her creativity. Her beautiful illustrations appeared on cards produced by Gibson Greeting Card Co. and by other companies, both in the U.S. and overseas. While living in Cincinnati, she taught at Gebharts Ohio Graphics, Southern Ohio College, and Vogue Fashion College for Women.

But of all these pursuits, probably of more interest to the FIRSTCUT reader is that Pat has devoted most of the past 30 years to cutting silhouettes and eventually handing this knowledge to her children. She credits her silhouette career to silhouette artist Henry Niles. Years ago, Pat was selling her pastels at a show when Niles stopped by her booth. He told her if she could spend five minutes with him, he would change her life. He stood in front of her, cut her silhouette, handed her his scissors, and said, *Cut*. She did, and her life was changed. She now cuts over 10,000 silhouette portraits per year, each done in a few seconds simply with a pair of common



Patricia Ramos Dorfmueller, Indiana

scissors. She works with schools, professional organizations, civic and social clubs, and, of course, individuals.



© Rita Dorfmueller Bishop, Alaska

Rita Dorfmueller Bishop (Fairbanks, Alaska) began cutting silhouettes when she was 14 years old. The youngest child, Rita helped with her mother during holidays and summers and became proficient over the year until, at age 19, she had her own agent. In fact, her cutting skills help pay her tuition through a design degree. After school, Rita started designing and producing jewelry in Alaska. Although she and her husband Bill have worked together as jewelers for their own company, *Fishing for Gold*, for the past 19 years, Rita has not forgotten her mother's legacy and continues to cut silhouettes in many Alaskan cities.

Unlike his sister, David Dorfmueller (Huntsville, Alabama) holds an engineering degree. He began

experimenting with papercutting about ten years ago as a hobby, taking a break from his career in software development and consulting. At first, David copied other artists' work to learn the art form and for its therapeutic value. After a few years, he started to do variations on others' work and then his own unique creations. Most of David's cuttings render architecture, children, or abstract designs. Over the years, like his mother and siblings, David has developed a love for papercutting. While his current job takes him all over the U.S., he continues to do new papercuttings in his spare time.

Pat's second son, Mark Dorfmueller, (Mason, Ohio) holds two psychology degrees and has had a very successful career in information technology. He has always loved art and has dabbled in different media since he was a child. As Mark explained, "We were always surrounded by artistic creativity at home." Several years ago when his younger daughter began ballet, he decided the ballet art form would really fit very nicely as a subject for silhouettes. "Knowing Mom and Rita were silhouette

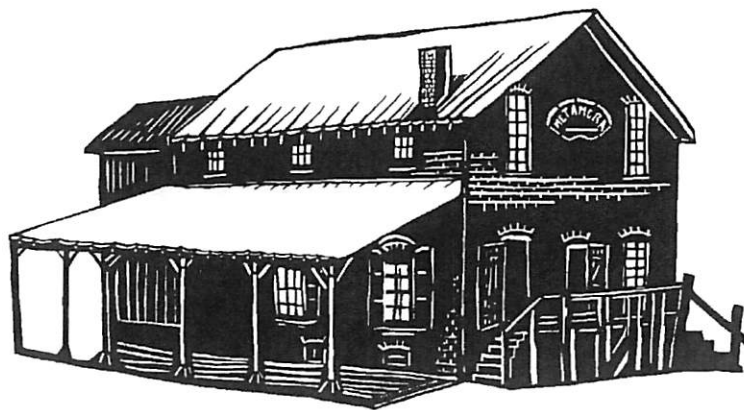


© Mark Dorfmueller, Ohio

artists, I asked them to teach me." Most of Mark's subjects involve either ballet, because of its poetic movement, or the garden, because of the flowers' flowing lines.

Dan (Lebanon, Ohio), Pat's eldest son, is the only sibling who does not cut silhouettes, but he may have engaged in more different artistic efforts. An architect by education and contractor by profession, Dan has been a woodcarver, stained-glass maker, building designer, and photographer, among other things. He is currently experimenting with decorative concrete.

With a long and varied career, Pat has much to be proud of. With children spread from Alaska to Alabama, her personal influence in the artistic community has extended far beyond where she began in Granite City. And, although she is pleased to have practiced her art all

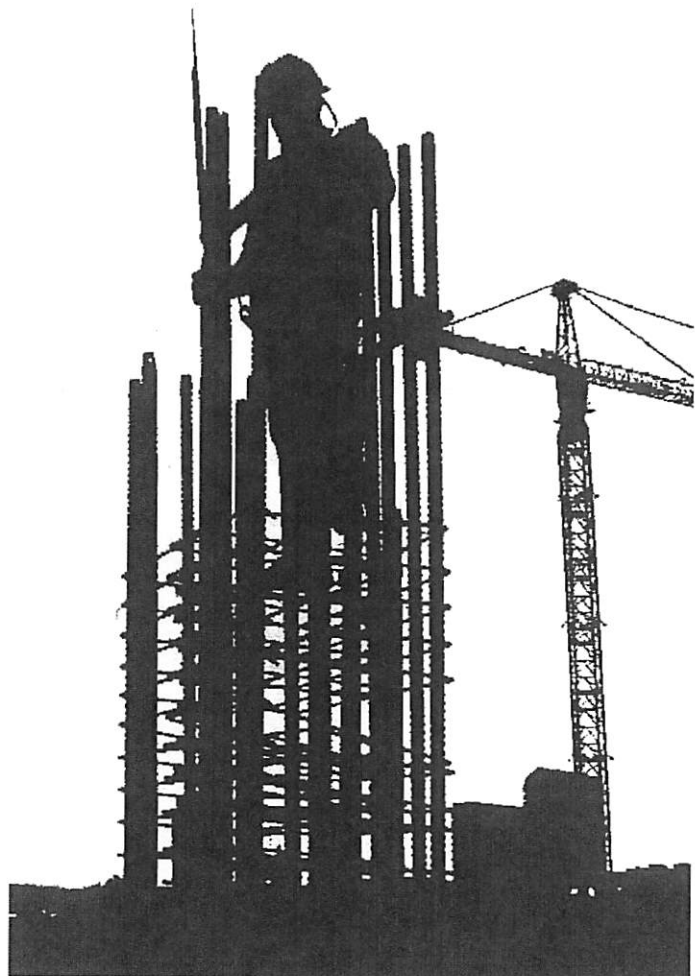


Metamora Old Mill © David Dorfmueller, Alabama



these years, Pat has concluded that “Having all four of my children find pleasure in the Arts is, I think, my greatest achievement.”

*For those with a computer, Pat Dorfmueller’s website is <http://www.silhouettesofyou.com>*



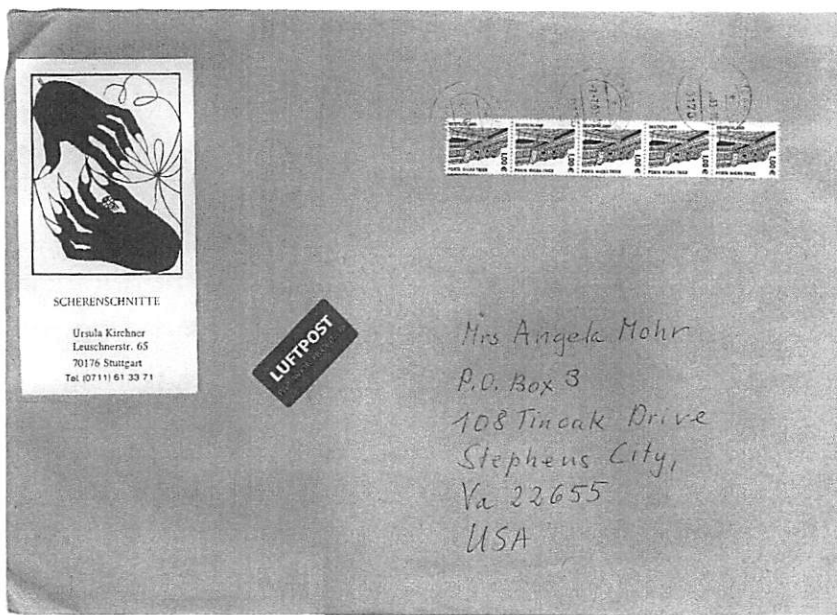
*DAN – PAUL BROWN STADIUM  
(image taken from a black/white photograph)*



*© Rita Dorfmueller Bishop, Alaska*



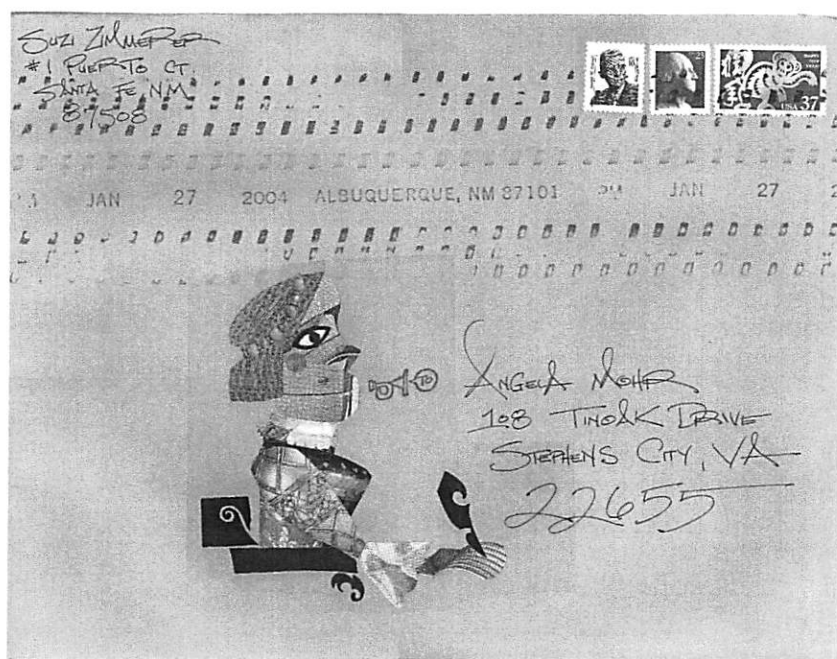
*IRIS' © Mark Dorfmueller, Alabama*



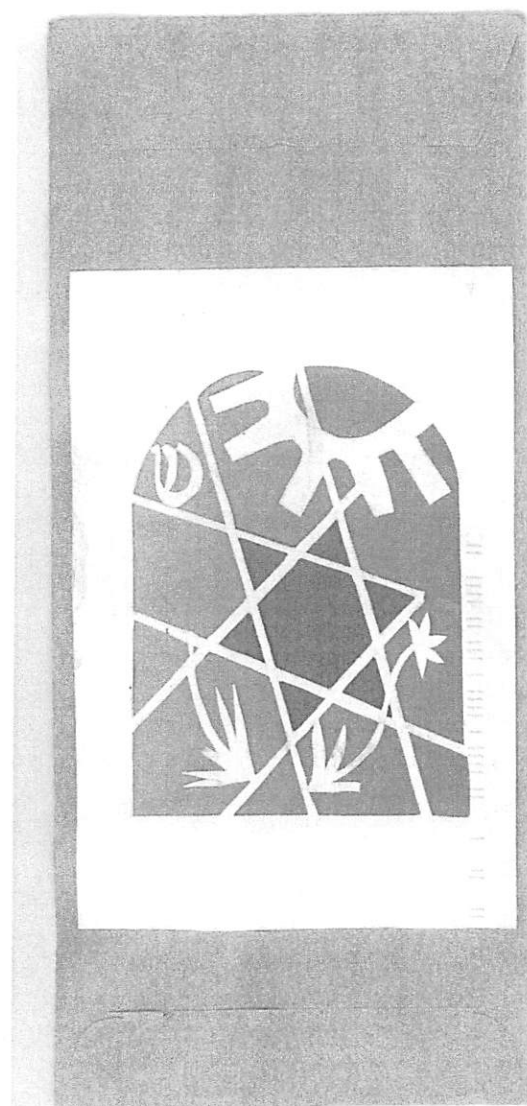
← Packing envelope from Ursula Kirchner (Germany)—  
Ursula mails *FIRSTCUT* books from time to time.  
Her envelopes always have a signature return address  
with different cutting images on them.

Suzi Zimmerer(NM) is another papercutter whose mail  
I routinely look forward to receiving, if only for the looks of humor  
I get from Ronnie and Jane at my small, rural post office.

↓



↑ The back of Mindy Shapiro's (PA) envelope is  
multi-colored papers cut and assembled as a collage.



# THE HISTORY OF ENVELOPES

*By Pat Stuntz, FIRSTCUT Assistant Editor*

Historically, the envelope is a relatively new invention, but its predecessors go back as far as recorded history. The earliest "envelope" was the clay wrapper used by the Babylonians in 2000 B.C. to protect documents such as bookkeeping accounts, deeds, mortgages, and quite possibly letters as well. The clay in its unfired state was folded over the original message, crimped together, then baked. It was a foolproof system, for the outside wrapper had to be completely destroyed in order to gain access to the tablet hidden under it. Because this was an inconvenient kind of package to transport, messages came to be written on lighter materials: tile, skin, leaves, and papyrus.

Little is known about how these later documents were protected from prying eyes, but it is doubtful that anything like our present day envelopes were made of parchment or papyrus. Lengthy scrolls were sometimes rolled on thin wood, then wrapped in a covering of the same material on which the message was inscribed.

Paper came into use in the tenth century, and by the 15th century posts were considered a necessary part of each well-run country. Letters, folded and sealed with wax, needed no containers. In fact, when early postmasters counted sheets of paper to determine rates, one would have been labeled a spendthrift for wasting money on such an extravagance as an envelope. From early times, governments not only organized the posts but operated them as a monopoly of the state. In England, King Henry VIII appointed Brian Tuke as his Master of the Posts in 1510, and from that time on such terms as 'royal posts' and 'King's Highway' are encountered in literature. In America, many modern roads were once known as "post roads".

Between 1840 and the end of the 19th century the United States grew from a largely agrarian nation to a modern industrial giant that was leading the world in invention and technology. Postal reform, which spread from England to the United States during that time, changed the way people and businesses used the mails. Postage rates were no longer based on the number of sheets in a letter but on the weight and distance. Reasonable rates encouraged more businesses and individuals to use the mails, and helped launch the development of the envelope industry in America.

These early envelopes were made by hand, about 25 at a time, by stationery store clerks. Using sharp knives and tin patterns, clerks would cut out a stack of envelope sheets. They then folded and sealed the side flaps of each envelope by hand. The top flap had no glue, for the same stores also sold sealing wax, seals and other items to seal the envelopes.

The development of automated envelope production began with the first American patent issued in 1849. A sophisticated 1876 invention featured a built-in gum dryer. In the intervening quarter century, the envelope industry came of age as competing manufacturers and their inventors vied with one another to create a fast and self-contained mechanism.

In recent years, envelopes have become an extension of creativity for artists of all types. In addition to a variety of colors and sizes, the commercial card industry has extended design themes featured on cards, to the envelope itself. Handcrafted envelopes demonstrate the creativity and inventiveness of the artists who design the cards inside them.

## References:

Pope, Nancy A.: EnRoute: Envelopes In the Machine Age. Volume 6, Issue 2: April-June 1997.

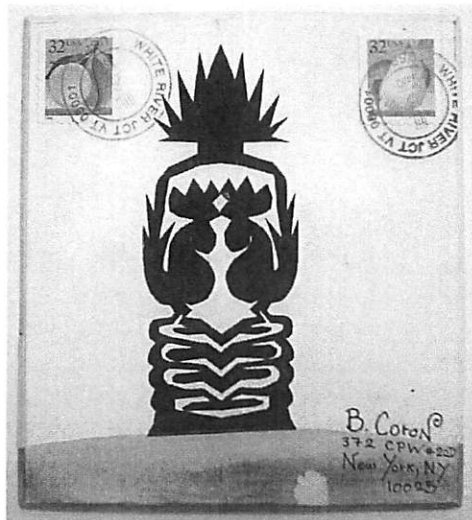
From the Internet:  
<http://www.royalenvelope.com/history/>

---

*Here are some examples of decorated envelopes mailed to FIRSTCUT. Many have papercuttings glued to them; several have included other media as well.*

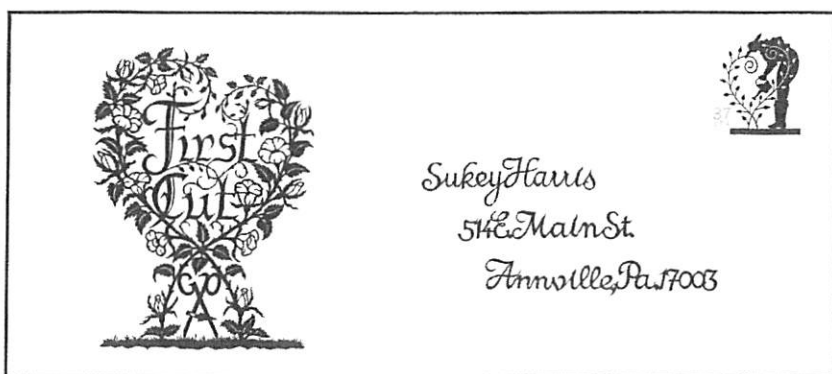


This is the envelope that inspired this article. →  
 Ingrid Schenk (CA) sent this envelope to  
 Sukey Harris (PA) wrapped within another envelope.  
 The cutting on the right is black paper glued to  
 a pre-printed post office envelope.

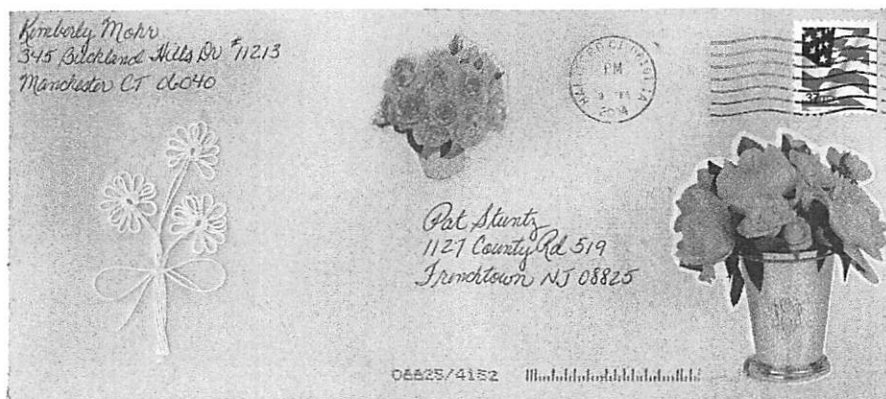
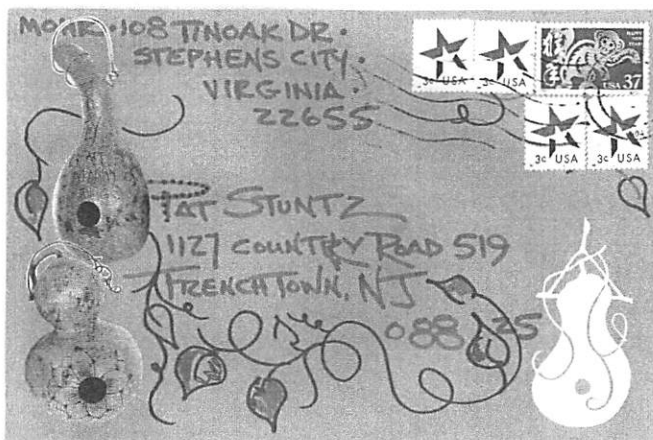


←

But then, we learned Bea Coron (NYC)  
 had received some interesting mail from Stu Copans (VT)  
 and he wasn't protecting them in any particular way,  
 just stamping the work and letting it fly.

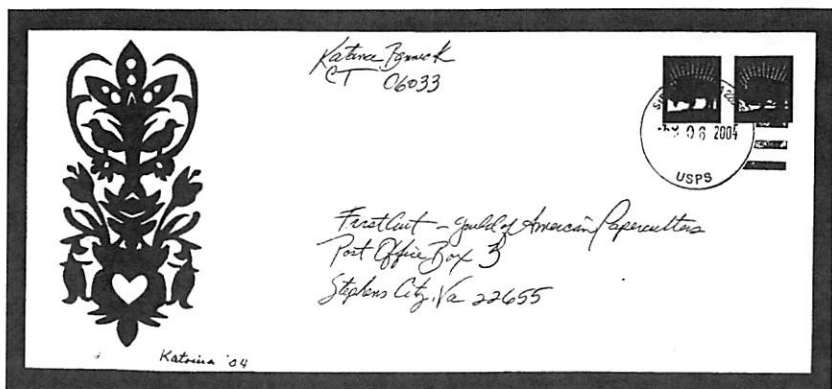


So, I sent Pat Stuntz (PA) an envelope test.... →



← and my sister, Kimberly Mohr (CT),  
 sent me something with her tatting and  
 Victorian flowers on it.

Katharina Benneck (CT) sent several possibilities,  
 but this one is more detailed and, as you see, it survived  
 intact. →



# Papercutter Profile

## William Oellers

I emigrated to the United States from Germany in 1952 and settled in Connecticut to work as a Registered X-Ray technologist in Manchester Memorial Hospital until my retirement as the Chief Technologist of the medical imaging department in 1988. During that time my artistic works involved using the radiographic process as photography and creating pictures of varieties of plants and flowers. These are now permanently hung on the walls of the medical imaging department of the hospital.

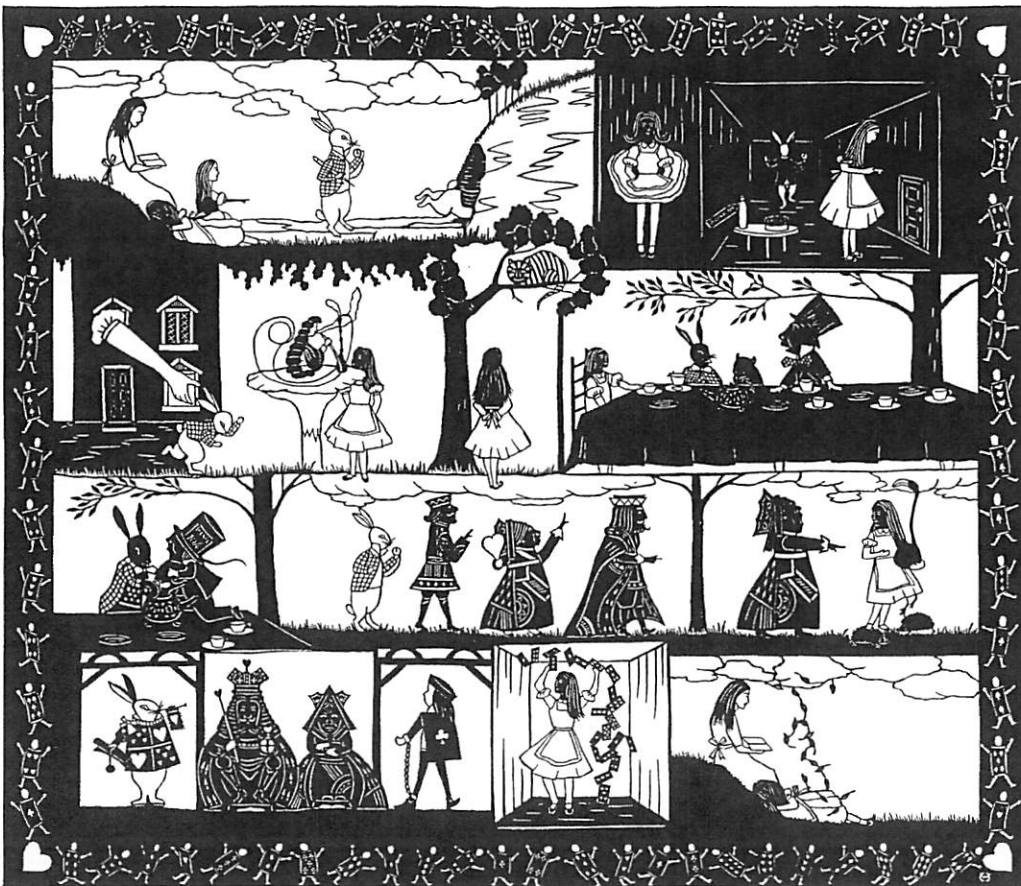
It was after retiring and returning to Germany to live for four years that I began to pursue an interest in papercutting. A life-long interest in art and drawing, coupled with the work done using the black and white medium of the x-ray pictures, inspired the creation of papercuts. It was a natural evolution.

I am completely self-taught. I will often sketch an idea or inspiration as it comes to me, or use one of the photographs I have taken, in order to capture an image. These become the basis for future works and can range from designs of utter simplicity to considerable

complexity. Whatever method I use to spark the initial idea, the design is then altered so it can be cut out of a single and entirely connected piece of paper. This process requires painstaking attention to detail. Few art forms require so little in the way of tools and yet allow the artist to create works of beauty.

I am very fortunate to have been given this gift and the ability to share it with others through exhibits and sales. In the process, I can join with other artists who take pride in their skill and handwork and help revive the art of papercutting. Many of my papercuts were first shown in exhibits at museums in Germany. Since my return to the United States, participation in exhibits here has expanded to include galleries.

For two consecutive years, I have been asked to share my knowledge and skill in papercutting with elementary school students by explaining the process of papercutting. I involve the children in hands-on demonstrations that have been met with enough enthusiasm to encourage me to teach papercutting techniques to adult groups.



*ALICE IN WONDERLAND ©  
William Oellers, Connecticut  
Original Size: 15 1/2" x 18 1/2";  
Cut with knife,  
Paper from Germany.*

## Papercutter Profile

### Ursula Kirchner

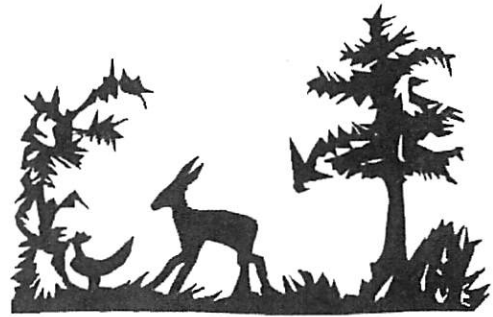
*(Editorial Note – Ursula has been a devoted contributor to FIRSTCUT for several years. When I got this email, I couldn't resist sharing it with you, especially since she and her husband will be joining us in Asilomar for Collection 2004.)*

Maybe I ought to talk about my own career as a papercutter. When I was a little girl before the war, my father was a schoolmaster in a little village. Altogether there were 32 children in his class, ages 6 to 14. I was very little when I went to school. The most interesting place was near my father and so I couldn't be stopped going to school. He gave me a slateboard and a slate-pencil and told me to keep quiet otherwise he would throw me out. One day I got hold of scissors and started cutting a tree. My mother, who was very ambitious, seized the opportunity to turn me into a papercutter. She told me a scissor-cut is made in one piece and without a design. Where she got that from, I don't know, because I have never seen a papercut she had made. But all my life I kept to these rules. Later on I realized my father taught the children at school to cut laces and other things. I got a fine scissors and paper and went to work. And mother was so delighted.

After the war we got care-parcels from an aunt in America. You can't imagine how glad we were. I started to send her cutouts, which she appreciated and collected. We exchanged letters until she died in the 1980s. She was living in a residence for old people in Florida. I hope the cutouts have not been lost.

I still make all my cutouts out of black paper, the same way without a sketch or design. My only tool is scissors. For me, it is important that one can see it is made with scissors. There is always a tiny little tear where I prick the paper. Some people eliminate that, but I never do. It is part of the structure of my cutouts and nobody can take it for a pen and ink drawing. The design also is a work of art, if it is good. I do not judge quality of work on technique. Everybody has his or her own way of making a work of art. It is the result that counts.

Here are two cutouts, which I made for my grandparents. I could hardly write, when I cut the first one. The other one I made when I was about 16 or 17. My schoolteacher told me not to overload it with ornaments, like stars and so on. It is 6 x 6 cm.



*This is the cutting Ursula made for her grandparents before she could write well.*



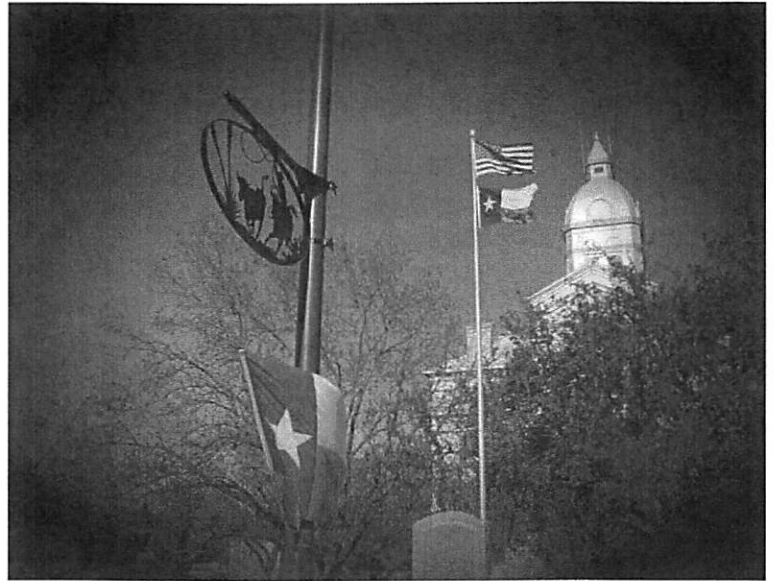
*This cutting was done when Ursula was about 16 or 17 years old.*



*© Ursula Kirchner, Germany 2003  
A full-size cutting recently sent to FIRSTCUT.*



# Paper Meets Metal in Bandera, TX



*ED Note: While visiting Bandera, Texas, and surrounding small towns last Thanksgiving, I noticed the entrances to ranches, some businesses, and even smaller residences were heralded with gates of black silhouetted art. There was silhouette art along the downtown street echoing the countryside gates of welcome – a beautiful gesture of community spirit and unity. This is the story of Bandera and the artists who help paper meet metal.*

Nestled in the beautiful Hill Country of central Texas is the quaint town of Bandera: Cowboy Capital of the World, home to eight World Champion Rodeo cowboys, and now, stage to cowboy silhouettes as community art.

Established 150 years ago, Bandera began as a farming and ranching community. Over time, many ranches invited guests to stay overnight, giving birth to *dude ranches* – places where the uninitiated could enjoy the cowboy life. During wartime, soldiers stationed in nearby San Antonio found Bandera's dude ranches to

be a perfect escape for rest and relaxation. Today, many of these first dude ranches are still in operation, welcoming guests while functioning as working ranches. Bed and breakfast retreats and campgrounds have been added to the list of guest accommodations.

## ***Maintaining the Town Spirit***

Since tourism has become part of Bandera's primary industry, a concerted effort has been made to uphold the western theme and style in the town's architecture. When modern-looking light poles were installed along Main Street, the Economic Development Committee of the City of Bandera decided to make them appear a bit more *cowboy* and capitalize on the town's rich past and scenic beauty. Metal silhouettes have long been a popular regional art form that withstands the test of time, so they chose to commission silhouette art to be attached to each light pole. Driving down the street, visitors are greeted with 30 different scenes depicting this western heritage. The story of a cowboy's life is told in each piece, whether it is the traditional cowboy chores such as roping, breaking horses, and branding, or modern rodeo events of bull riding, and barrel racing.

## ***Artist and Metal Artisan are Commissioned***

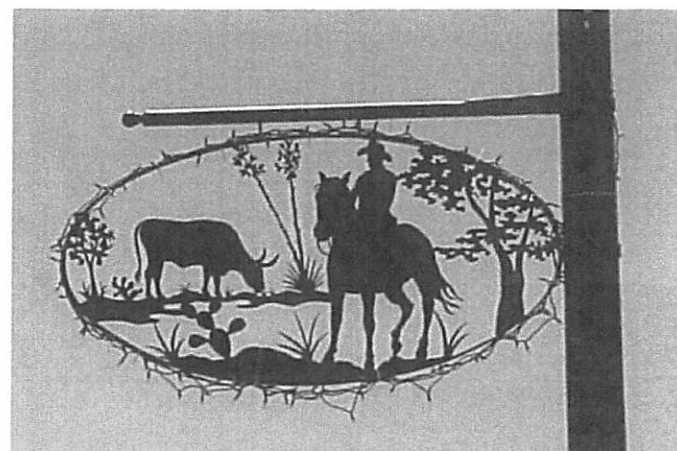
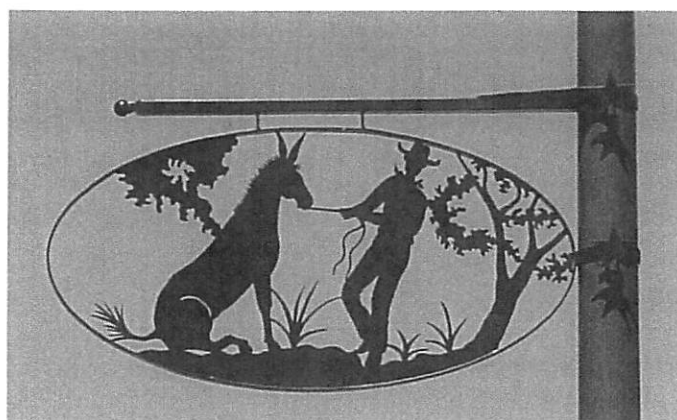
Metal as an artist's medium, has been used for centuries. In the 1800's, silhouette art was often an advertising tool, used to express the nature of a business. An anvil for the blacksmith, the hand planer for the woodworker, a tooth for the dentist! With the popularity of the Southwest and Cowboy design, a resurgence of silhouette art has been seen since 1980. Commercial uses still exist, but the majority is for individual enjoyment and expression. The rise in computer technology has seen an influx of mass produced metalwork, but there are still the few who keep alive the old fashioned tradition of custom made and hand made crafts. Bandera natives, Artie and Bunny Erfurt of Quality Ironworks were chosen to do the art pieces. Highly recognized in the field of metal art, Quality Ironworks specializes in hand torched silhouette art.

The designs are drawn on the steel by hand, and then flame cut with an oxygen-acetylene welding torch. Thinner metals are plasma cut, which utilizes an arc to cut the metal. The designs cut are a product of the wishes of the customer and the creativity of the artist. No two pieces are the same. Bunny handles the layout of each

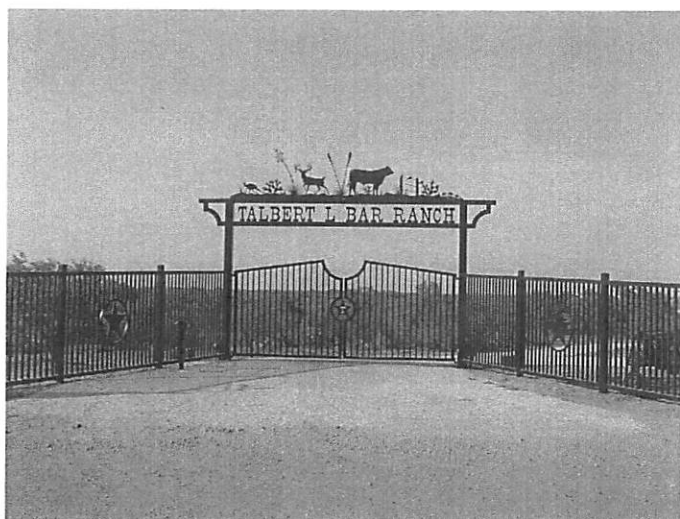
order. The first step is listening to the customer for any special items they want to be included in the artwork. An overall feel for the piece is attained from this consultation.

Next the design process begins. Every piece contains two basic components – the “main characters” and the “filler”. Over the years, Bunny has made pattern templates for the frequently requested main characters. Sometimes it is necessary to do research on particular items never used before. Sources include copyright-free illustrations, actual photographs and hand drawings. The main characters are drawn to scale onto the steel. The filler is then drawn in by hand. Filler is anything that makes the scene natural and true to life. It is also used to maintain structural integrity in some pieces. Trees, small plants, grasses and small ground animals are all considered filler. They are what make the design come to life. Great attention is given to detail, dimensional effect, and proportions, achieving a very realistic work of art.

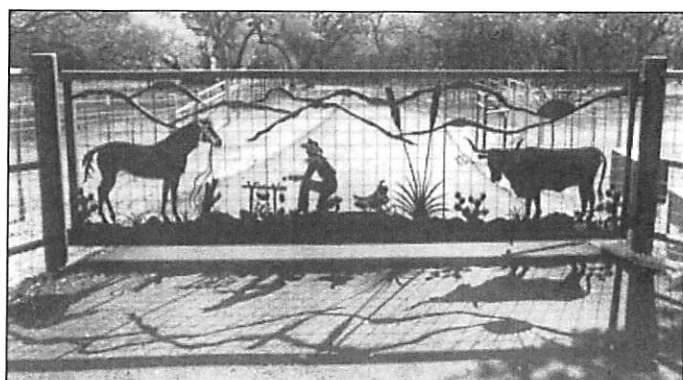
In the next step, Artie uses his torch to cut out the scene, following the drawn lines. The torch artist must “listen to the metal”. It reacts to heat in many different ways and it is all about experience. When to cut where,



*Two examples of the many street lamp silhouettes.*



*Talbert L Bar Ranch entry gate.*



*An example of on the smaller residence driveway gates.*

how fast to travel, and knowing how metal responds to heat is all part of years of trial and error. Artie’s expertise with the torch results in smooth, fluid cuts, requiring no grinding. The only cleanup necessary is the filing of a sharp edge on the backside of the cut. Once the metal is cleaned, it is ready for the final process of painting or rusting. Most silhouette pieces are painted black.

### ***Silhouette Art in Everyday Use***

The city light poles are just one way silhouettes are being showcased. The majority of the artwork produced by Quality Ironworks is used outdoors on gate entrances and yard signs. Smaller pieces are used indoors as accents wherever a painting might have been placed before. Furniture, fire screens, light fixtures, name signs, weathervanes, and grave makers are also custom made using silhouette art.

Phone, mail or Internet to make requests for brochures: Quality Ironworks; P.O. Box 1567, Bandera, TX 78003; 830-796-3106; [www.QualityIronworks.com](http://www.QualityIronworks.com)

## Papercutter profile

### Patricia Turner

I have been an artist in a wide variety of media almost all my life, winning awards and exhibiting in juried shows. I have used my talents in my teaching career with young children in England, and since 1987 in Maryland. I retired from teaching in 2002 to Postdam, NY and become a full-time artist where I continue painting and enjoying three-dimensional work with salt dough.

Though I began papercutting as a child, my activities as a silhouette artist began in the early 1990s by initially cutting portraits and then rapidly developing my own style of fine original papercut artworks. The starting point was when the school PTA asked me to cut children's silhouettes as a school fund-raiser. Despite assurances that I had no experience, the parents were pleased and this became a very successful annual event. To my delight, I discovered a new and exciting form of expression.



An example of the sketch Patricia makes before making a papercutting.

I continue to enjoy the challenge of reproducing true likenesses in my portraits, while developing ever more detailed designs like those shown here. I am especially interested in creating original pieces with emphasis on accurate period dress.

I begin with a carefully drawn design on the reverse side of the paper. (My silhouette portraits also begin with drawing.) Then comes the cutting with scissors and Exacto knife. Eventually, one *extremely* fragile piece of paper, and negative space, must be glued to the backing card to produce the finished work. Gluing can be the nerve-racking part of the process since many hours of painstaking effort can be lost in a heartbeat! The photograph of *The New Recipe* on the back cover shows the cutting against my hand before gluing shows just how delicate this operation can be!



The finished papercutting. The image before framing is shown on the back cover.

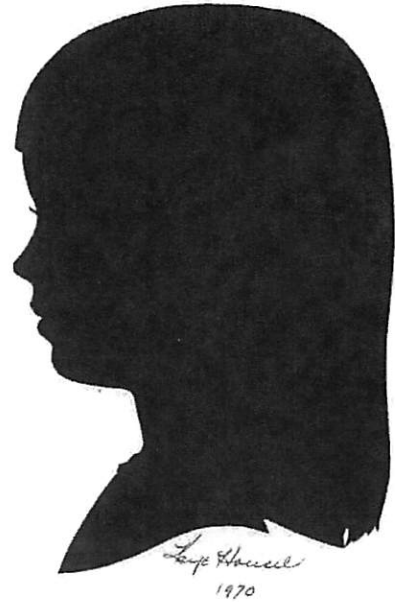


## Papercutter Profile

# Housel Family of Cutters

*[Editorial Note: When Dave Shelly contacted GAP member Marsha Housel Hayes, he found out she was one papercutter in a family of silhouette cutting artisans. It began in the fall of 1946, in the mountains north of Los Angeles, California when Kaye Housel was asked by Marsha, the oldest of her five children, what her class could do to raise money at the school PTA Carnival. Since it was Halloween, Kaye envisioned black profiles against orange background, done in construction paper. She volunteered to cut silhouettes, went to the library, found a book about silhouettes, and practiced on her children. In spite of having no experience cutting silhouettes, Kaye cut excellent likenesses both at home and at the carnival. The idea was a great success – she charged a quarter apiece and used 9" dressmaker's shears. Eventually all four of her daughters took up the art form, (which is obviously inherited since none of them has had any training): Marsha, Nancy, Judith, and Kathie. Their styles, techniques and philosophies on papercutting are as varied as they are personally.]*

Kaye Housel was born Kathrine Marsh in Rochester, NY in 1913. At a time when very few women attended college, she went to Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute (now called Rochester Institute of Technology) and graduated as a Dietitian. After marrying Dale Housel, she followed her husband (a Contract Flight Instructor) to various assignments and began cutting silhouettes at the before-mentioned school Halloween party. In the years following, she cut silhouettes of her own children from time to time and those of her friends. When guests came to dinner, they would not leave without their silhouettes.



1970 JOYCE © Kaye Housel

Once all five of her children were in school, she entered into the work world as a Link Instructor, teaching would-be Air Force pilots how to fly instruments by use of the Link Trainer or "blue box" as it was called in the fifties. She always cut silhouettes of her students and eventually began supplementing the family income by cutting silhouettes occasionally at a store or antique show. In the sixties she began to cut more often on the weekends by going to art shows, children's shops, and department stores. This went so well her husband decided it would do well for him to quit his flying and travel with his wife, making and selling frames for her silhouettes. They worked as a team and lived for twenty-three years while working in the silhouette business in the New England and New York area. As they aged, they began going to south Alabama for part of each year and continued on a more limited basis to work in the silhouette business.

Kathrine Marsh Housel, at ninety, now lives with her youngest daughter, Kathie Housel Bogue, most of the year, and with her eldest daughter, Marsha



© Marsha Housel Hayes



© Marsha Housel Hayes

Housel Hayes, while Kathie is on the road cutting silhouettes in major department stores during the fall and spring. Very often while Kathie is on these business trips, she meets customers whose parents or even grandparents have had their silhouettes cut by her mother.

The eldest of Kaye's children, and yet the last of the sisters to start cutting silhouettes professionally was Marsha Housel, the one who caused it all to happen with her innocent question in the sixth grade. Marsha and her husband, Roy Hayes, started teaching in 1958 and for 35 years taught in Texas public schools. Marsha taught primarily biology and art, while Roy taught math and coached football, basketball, and tennis. During the years after 1970, they worked as a silhouette team on weekends and during summers. She worked as a professional silhouette artist and he took care of the receipts and

framing. Marsha has cut silhouettes at art festivals, the Texas State Arts and Crafts Fair, and department stores. She has done work for many charitable causes and, most recently, for several years has cut silhouettes all night at each of the pro-grad parties held for the new graduates at the two local high schools. Marsha, like most of the family, uses the classic freehand cutting method with surgeons' iris scissors on black silhouette paper to capture as near a likeness of her subject as possible.

Marsha's daughter, Joyce Hayes Wade, is a third generation silhouette artist. Although she has won state and national honors for her work on numerous theatrical productions, Joyce picked up the scissors in 1996 when she and her husband decided to start their family. They had moved to Uvalde, TX and Joyce decided it was time to do what her mother had long encouraged her to do. She bought a pair of surgeon's iris scissors, the family's preferred silhouette cutting instrument, and began practicing. She soon found she also had a talent for cutting



© Joyce Hayes Wade

silhouettes. Her first designs were created as gifts for family and friends. First was a heart shaped tree with two love birds perched inside for her parents 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, next a pineapple symbolizing welcome for a housewarming gift, then a basket of flowers to cheer a friend in the hospital. Joyce has since created many other designs and

continues developing more, supplying her work to shops in central Texas.

Nancy Housel, also known as Nancy Gee or Nancy Lynch over the years, always had a natural interest in artistic expression (drawing, painting, leather work, woodwork, cooking, etc.) and could do anything to her satisfaction with her “only problem being procrastination.” The first time she cut silhouettes for money was in 1967. It seemed a lot easier, faster, and more satisfying than painting, and there always seemed to be a very long line of nice people waiting to have their silhouettes cut. In addition to human silhouettes, Nancy has cut animal profiles. She no longer cuts professionally due a back



© Nancy Housel



© Nancy Housel

injury a few years ago. (Sister Kathie Housel Bogue says it's “a shame she quit because she has more talent than the rest of us put together, and you use that in the article too!”)

The first of Kaye Housel's children to become a professional silhouette artist was Judith Housel Akers. She began her career in Pennsylvania in 1966 and has been prolific, cutting at more different types of venues than her sisters: fundraisers, children shops, department stores, craft shows, art shows, on her houseboat, and in recent years at daycare centers in the western states primarily. She has traveled extensively in her motor home for the purpose of seeing the country as well as cutting silhouettes. In

addition to cutting silhouettes, Judith is a successful painter and pastel artist, and is in high demand for her portraits in those media as well.

Judith's daughter, Pam Benton Hines, is a third generation of silhouette cutters. She cuts in the family's traditional method by looking at the profile of the subject and cutting the paper by eye. Pam believes this keeps the profile in its purest form. Each silhouette only takes a five-minute sitting, so even wiggly babies or embarrassed teens (and husbands) don't have to sit very long.

Kaye's youngest daughter is Kathie Housel Bogue. Cutting entirely freehand using only surgeons' scissors and silhouette paper, Kathie has been cutting silhouettes for over thirty-five years in better department stores, antiques shows, art and craft shows, fundraisers, children's shops and by mail order. Her attention to detail captures a person's likeness and even personality. Recently, in addition



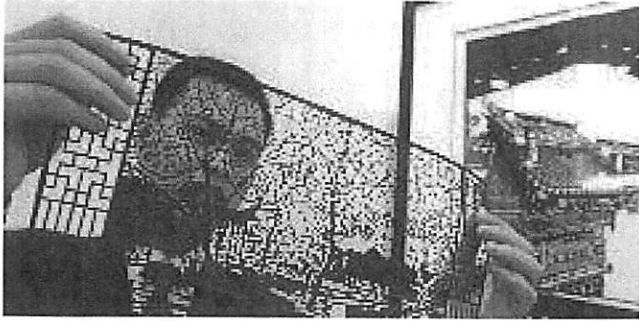
© Kathie Housel Bogue

to displaying her on-site cutting skills in finer department store and some art shows, Kathie has been exploring her horizons by cutting silhouettes from photographs for online customers.

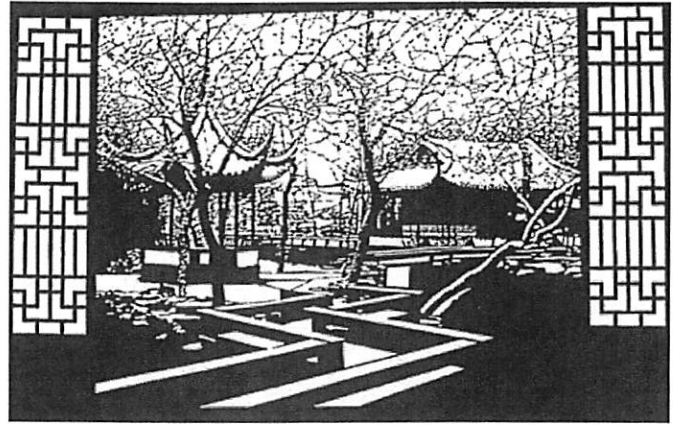
The Housel websites are Kathie Housel Bogue at [www.silhouetteartist.biz](http://www.silhouetteartist.biz) and Pam Benton Hines at [www.silhouettecutter.com](http://www.silhouettecutter.com). We did not get images for each person in time for FIRSTCUT production deadlines, but you can see more at either of these websites.

## Papercutter Profile

### *The Silhouettes of Jiangnan*



*Zhou Bing holding up a finished cutting before framing*



*This is the papercutting Zhou Bing is holding up to the left, SNOW OF ZHOZHENG GARDEN.*

*[Editorial Note I: Member Zhou Bing is from a family of papercutters in China – award-winning artisans who have shown their work in many national galleries and competitions. The family website is <http://www.qingyunge.com>]*

“We really appreciate the chance of introducing our family papercuts in FIRSTCUT. The six members of our family, Zhou Yunhua (father), Luo Xiufang (mother), Zhou Bing (me), Shenfeng (my wife), Zhou Qun (my sister), and Jiang Yunzhong (my sister's husband), are papercutters who design and cut as couples. Therefore the works I selected for FIRSTCUT are not from each papercutter, but from each papercutting couple.

The article that follows was written by my father and translated by my assistant. It tells why we began papercutting and how we continue. The translation may not be good and may cause confusion, so you may correct it where you think it needs.

Best regards, Zhou Bing”

*[Editorial Note II: I left much of the translation intact, editing only to delete repetition or provide English clarity.]*

*Translated from an essay written by Zhou Yunhua, Zhou Bing's father:*

I have been buried in the work of teaching the public about art for many years. I am known as a Chinese painting artist, good at drawing clouds and waters, and keen on the technique of using water and ink. Some time

ago, it was the requirement for my job to pick up papercutting and at the end of 1970s, I spent almost eight years teaching papercutting to local people at the Jintan Culture Palace. At the time, this was only an episode in my artistic journey and though I was just an amateur, I enjoyed memories of the New Year festivals of my childhood. Seeing people cutting blossoms, door curtains, and illuminations for holiday decoration, especially the paper-made houses build for the dead were cut vividly and incisively with delicate composed patterns, dramas, flowers, birds, and animals had left deep marks on my little heart. Probably the road to papercutting began in the late 1950s when I got the chance to know a famous folk artist from my hometown, Rui Jinfu. His papercutting masterpiece titled *Building of Lion*, was composed skillfully with outstanding lively scenes representing the national spirit of helping the poor and overthrowing cruelty. So indelible in my mind was this papercutting, it can be said it is from this experience I fell in love with papercutting.

For the past thirty years I have been researching the local towns of Jiangnan and their customs – a long-term investment on sentiment since I grew up in Xiyan Village, located in Guanlin, Yixing, a town of waters in the Jiangnan area. In my youth, the small village surrounded by waters from three directions only had tens of families and a large piece of plain, a net of waters, a field of farmland, a garden of mulberries, and a forest of aloes and bamboos. If one had to reach the outside, he had to walk over the bridges. In the north of the village,



stood a 200 year old stone arch bridge named Zhongli Bridge. My house was just beside that bridge. Every time I went back and stayed in its attic, I had thousands of memories to think about, especially when it was at dawn and the whole area was covered by heavy evening mist.

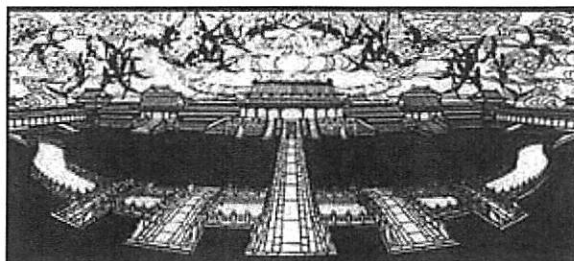
The local residences and gardens in Jiangnan began to form in the Feudal society of China as a reflection of Oriental Agricultural Civilization. The core is the harmony and order of Heaven, Earth and Human – its development connecting the beauty of rivers, mountains, and weather to the beliefs, culture, and history of the people in the area. Every village and workshop, street and lane, pavilion and bridge, and courtyard and corridor I have ever visited consists of the art of circumstance. The abstract construction of decoration on doors and windows, inside and outside, is like a melting pot of calligraphy, painting, literature and philosophy. All are practical, beautiful and harmonious, arousing people's cordial feeling of return and getting together. If human's architectural history could be described as a long torrential river, the local residences here would be the springs and brooks running into it. In the course of civilization, these residences are the exact reflections of history, as well as the social results.

After moving into a modern building of steel and glass, I realized the disappearance of those old residences was inevitable as stated in a quote by Yanshu, a poet of Song Dynasty, "The flowers have no other alternative but to fall." Yet, I knew I would miss them and as I aged and longed for my childhood, a strong passion for my hometown inspired a fire in me to create images of the fields and local buildings. The ancient art of papercutting

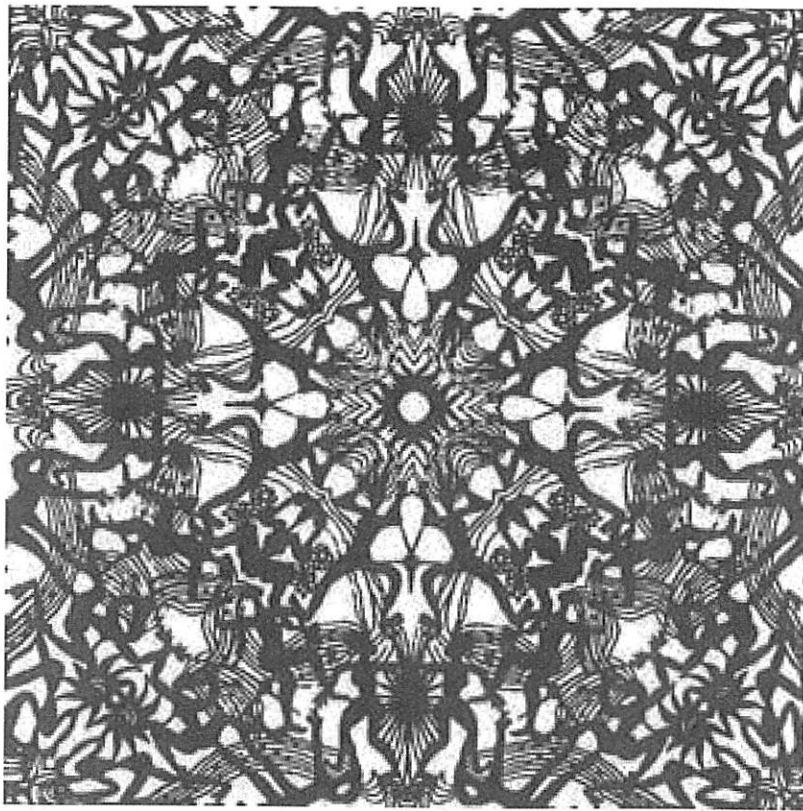
would be a natural way to express my feelings and knowledge. The residences and gardens have different doors and windows, folding screens, and railings. The carvings of wood, stone, brick, and other materials are of geometrical shapes, or natural ones, and have single lines that are symmetrical and balanced in doubles or quarters, or all-around circular. Everything is connected with open-work, the basic language of papercutting art. The holes, regular or irregular, big or small, compact or loose, form the characteristics and artistic conception of papercuts.

For many years, my wife and I have spent lots of energy on papercutting creations, leading my son and daughter with their wife and husband...costing nearly all our spare time. We went to Suzhou, Wuxing, Yixing and Shaoxing five times in pursuit of the beauty of the local residences. The residences and gardens of our country are dazzling as stars...all different but with respective characteristics of the areas. It may be because I was born in Jiangnan, but I have a special love and interest for the classical architectures of Sunan and Zhebei. The great architectures not only owe the success to the craftsmen, but also the efforts paid by the intellectuals of their time.

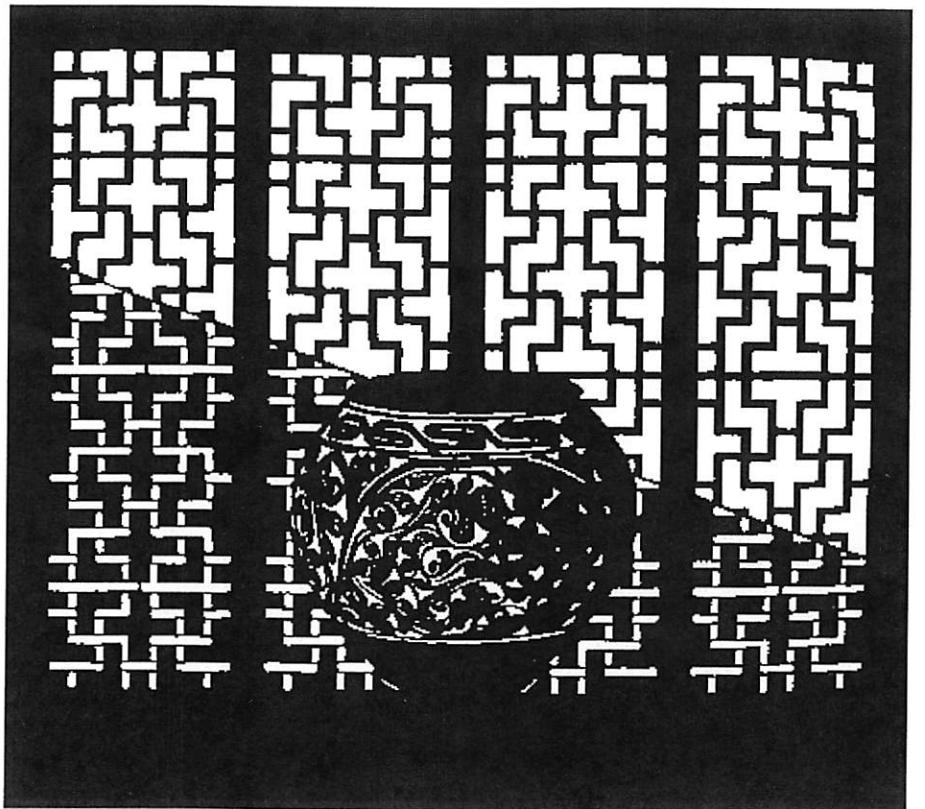
Although my interest in Chinese painting has not faded, colleagues have been surprised to see my shift to papercutting. It has been difficult for them to understand why, when I have already achieved so much with painting with much more financial potential, I would fall in love with this little craft. For me, one cannot be forced to work for profit only, because pursuit of purpose is a kind of self-payment. Material gain supplies one kind of need, but artistic play and devotion supply other needs.



*Forbidden City © Zhou Yunhua & Luo Xiufang*



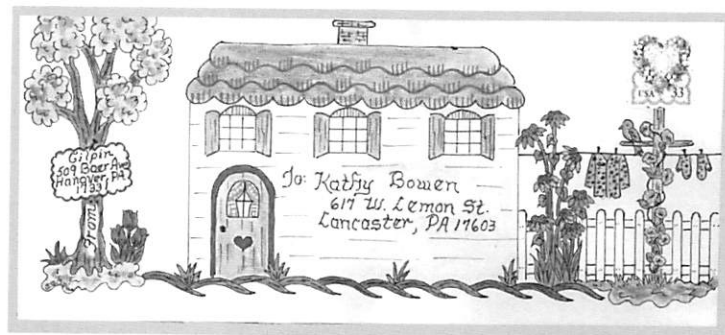
*Crazy Dance* © Zhou Bing & Shenfeng



*Window Vase* © Zhou Qun & Yunzhong



Keith Kleepsies' envelope is a play with the words 'snail mail.' The stamps reinforce a snail/shell theme.



Sandy Gilpin made this for her art study group project. It is not a papercutting, but it could be since it reflects Sandy's papercutting style.



The Guild of American Papercutters' publication, **FIRSTCUT**, welcomes and encourages its members to submit artwork, articles, and Papercutter Profiles for publication. **To submit artwork:** send a clear, black/white photocopy of an original papercut. Label each item with identifying information (name, address, title, dimensions, date cut, tool(s) utilized, and type of paper). **To submit articles:** articles can be sent to the editor as a typed manuscript, a floppy disk in Microsoft Word Format, or as a Word document attachment to an email. **To submit a Papercutter Profile:** send a one page typed essay about the member. Include information about how papercutting became an interest, what tools and techniques are used, any personal papercutting advice or tips for other members, and examples of the papercutter's work (follow artwork submission requirements). Send materials to *Angela Mohr, FIRSTCUT Editor, P.O. Box 3, Stephens City, VA 22655, or email: tinoak@visuallink.com* (note that visuallink has two l's). Submission implies permission for use according to need and space. **FIRSTCUT** reserves the right to edit articles when necessary.

## Paper Angels

Members and institutions contributing financial support to the Guild of American Papercutters are welcomed blessings – *Paper Angels*.

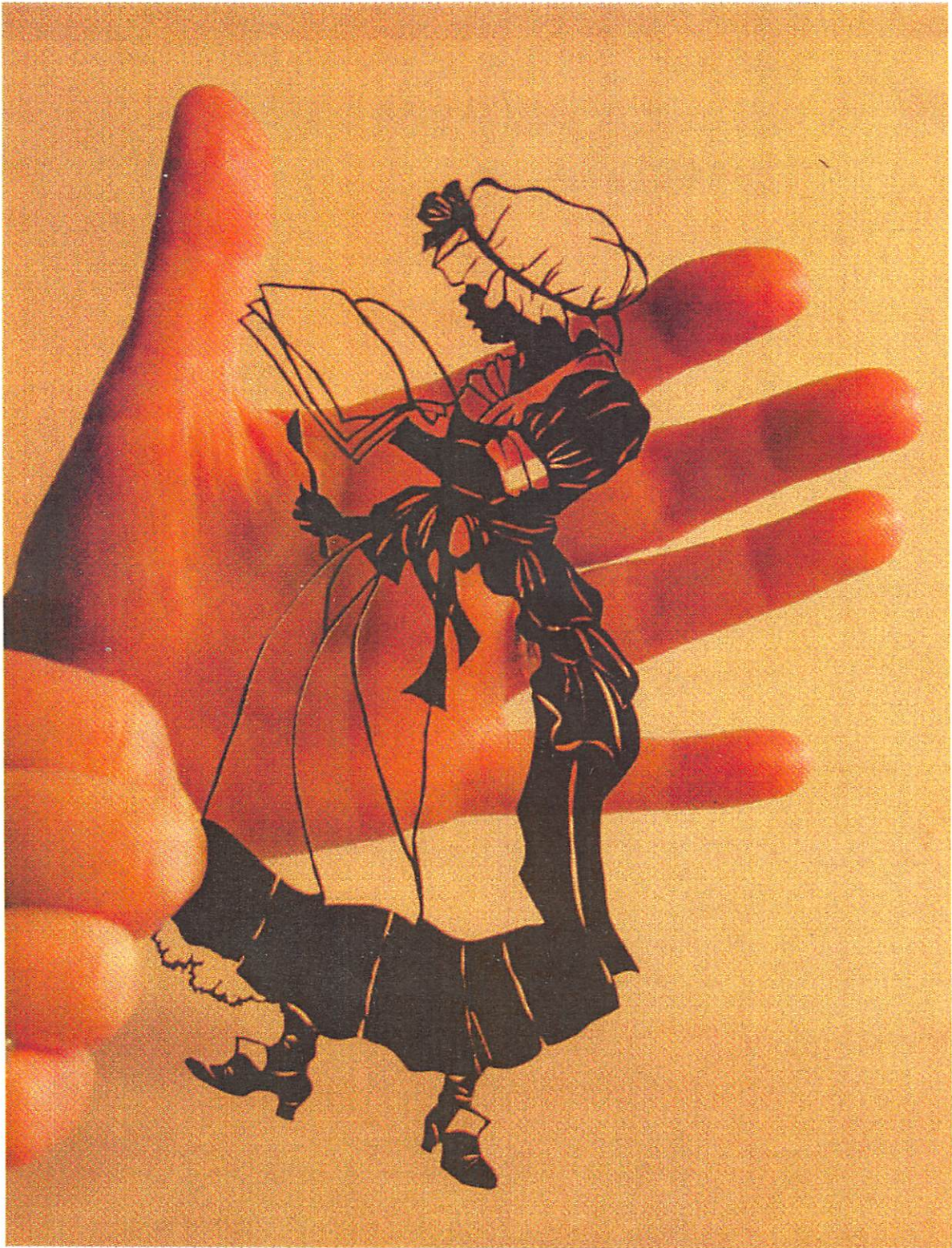


You can be a *Paper Angel* by making a **DONATION** beyond your membership, a **CELEBRATION CONTRIBUTION** in someone else's name for a birthday or anniversary, or a **MEMORIAL GIFT** in a loved one's name.

Mail a check or money order in any amount to  
Guild of American Papercutters, Paper Angel Program,  
Box 651351, Sterling, VA 20165-1351.

(ANGEL@ 1999 Kerch McConlogue)





©Patricia Turner



Visit our website at [www.papercutters.org](http://www.papercutters.org)