

FirstCut

Communication for Members of The Guild of American Papercutters



Volume 24

Number 1

Winter 2009



UNTITLED © Carol Chiros 2009

The **Guild of American Papercutters** is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization dedicated to original papercutting as an art form 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 Patty Kile at Guild of American Papercutters, P.O. 384, 214 South Harrison Avenue, Somerset, PA 15501 or email Patty at membership@papercutters.org. Dues for new members which includes the New Members Packet: Individuals \$36US (\$46 international) and Family \$46US (\$56 international). Renewal memberships are \$30US (\$40 international) and Family \$40US (\$50 international). We accept credit card payments for members through the secure online service PayPal indicated on the Guild's website for a small additional charge of \$2: www.papercutters.org. All payments are made in American dollars.

Current Executive Committee: *President* – Kathy Trexel Reed (2010); *Vice-President* – Trudy Kauffman (2010); *Secretary* – Marie-Helene Grabman (2009); *Treasurer* – Darcy Walker (2010); *Co – VP Membership* - Patty Kile (2010); *VP Exhibits* – Anne Leslie (2009).

Current Board of Directors: Don Cook (2010), Nancy Cook (2009), David Dorfmueller (also *Co – VP Membership*) (2010), Bernie DuPlessis (2009), Carolyn Guest (2009), Beatrice Goodpasture (2011), Barbara Stoop (2011), Pat Stuntz (also *FirstCut Editor*) (2010), and Sue Throckmorton (2011). Florine Strimel, *Historian Ad Hoc*

President's Corner

One benefit I enjoy when I am busy in my art studio is a blissful, "right-brain", unawareness of time. It's not that time is standing still when I'm papercutting, but it's just not as naggingly persistent as it seems when I have appointments scheduled, or I'm trying to get to the post office before it closes.

Trying to "beat the clock" just isn't fun; other amusing expressions related to the passage of time often pop up in our conversations. We spend time, borrow time, and heaven forbid that we waste it. Instead, we want to save time, even buy time, because we know it is fleeting and waits for no one. It is even said that time is a thief, and it marches on; sometimes awareness of it startles us.

But time has an artful presence too; just like the changing seasons that speak to our hearts, we also treasure the milestones and memories that time brings. We choose daily activities that are meaningful for us, and we plan for the future. We are cheered to see progress and growth when hard work is paying off.

So as we turn to fresh calendar pages, and receive the coming issues of FirstCut in the year 2009, I hope you will "HAVE A GOOD TIME" with your papercutting interests, and a very Happy New Year, too, staying connected to GAP activities.

Sincerely yours,

Kathy Trexel Reed, GAP President

FIRSTCUT'S Staff Comments

There's no doubt about it: volunteering for any organization takes time. GAP members who serve on the Board, monitor the website, or write articles for FirstCut are taking time from other personal pursuits to participate in GAP. These members are actively involved to make the Guild a viable and connected organization. Papercuts on the front and back cover of this issue graphically depict the topic of time.

But as we all know, "many hands make light work". We need *your* help to share the load. We are seeking members who are interested in writing an article, sending a cut, or participating in ways they can manage.

All the best for a happy, healthy and productive 2009!

Pat Stuntz, FirstCut Editor

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Front Cover:

I DON'T HAVE TIME

© Catherine Winkler Rayroud 2009

Back Cover:

FOUR SEASONS © Ingrid Schenck 2009,

Poem by Charlotte Gillman

Member Homework

- Spring:** Birds, mythical creatures, fantasy
Summer: Silhouettes of summer activities, Native Americans, patriotic themes
Autumn: Harvest, folktales/stories told using papercuts in an accordion book format
Winter: Trees in winter, cuts with border designs

FIRSTCUT Deadlines

Spring – March 15; **Summer** – June 15;
Autumn – September 15; **Winter** – December 15

All submissions for publication are sent to Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or emailed to pnstuntz@dejazzd.com.

Guild Business

The Guild of American Papercutters Board meeting was called to order on October 18, 2008 by President Kathy Trexel Reed at the home of Don and Nancy Cook.

Board Members Present: Kathy Trexel Reed, Bernie DuPlessis, Don Cook, Nancy Cook, Pat Stuntz, Marie-Helene Grabman.

Board Member via cell phone: Darcy Walker.

Other GAP members with us: Sandy Gilpin and Faye DuPlessis.

Minutes of the last Board Meeting previously approved and published in Autumn FirstCut.

Treasurer's Report: Darcy Walker emailed her report. Complete copy attached to the Secretary's Minutes. Total Assets as of Sept. 30, 2008: \$26,197.39. This includes the 2-\$5000 Certificates of Deposit (for the museum project); Checking Account: \$204.44; Savings Account: \$15,992.95.

Income January – Sept. 2008: \$40,016.42. Expenses: \$31,353.62. Net Ordinary Income \$8662.80.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for Audit: Pat Stuntz; seconded: Bernie DuPlessis. Motion approved.

Membership: Susan Hahn and David Dorfmueller reported we have 381 members to date.

Old Business:

Collection 2010 Committee: Don Cook reported he had only one site submitted for consideration. Joyce Yarbrough suggested we hold Collection 2010 at Spirit Path at Unity Village. Unity Village is located 15 miles southeast of downtown Kansas City, Missouri, and is the spiritual home and headquarters for Unity Worldwide. The campus includes 1400 acres of gardens, buildings with classrooms, auditorium, dormitories and dining facilities, etc.

Sandy Gilpin thought the current prices at Unity Village were a little higher than the Lancaster Bible College, site of Collection 2008, but a more careful study was needed. The Board would like more sites to be suggested and Pat Stuntz will run another announcement in the Winter FirstCut and David Dorfmueller will be asked to send out a general email announcement requesting site recommendations.

Board Replacements: Trudy Kauffman called each of the Board members whose terms will be ending at the March 2009 Board meeting. Board members Marie-Helene Grabman and Nancy Cook each agreed to serve

another 3 year term. Board members Bernie DuPlessis and Anne Leslie asked that replacements be found for their positions. Carolyn Guest, who was appointed to serve a 1 year term, ending in 2009, agreed to stay on the Board for an additional 2 or 3 years.

Trudy will look for 2 replacement members, to be voted on at the March meeting.

FirstCut: Pat Stuntz reported that postage has increased for the Autumn FirstCut edition with the addition of the 1 page colored insert - a dues renewal letter and end-of-year appeal, normally sent out as a separate mailing. This FirstCut has been printed with color covers. Prices for the color covers will run about \$597, which is \$90 more than black/white but still within her budget of \$600. Postage is approximately \$600 and envelopes \$50. Pat's other expenses include ink cartridges and CD's. She still needs more people to include articles and pictures of their work. She will be working with Debbie Baird to develop joint projects and is also formulating plans for future regional workshops.

Traveling Exhibits: Marie-Helene Grabman reported that Barbara Stoop has only received a few pictures for the upcoming Biltmore exhibit. Don and Nancy Cook will ask David Dorfmueller to send out an email appeal for work for the Biltmore and the DelRay exhibits. After these shows conclude, the artwork will be combined and Kathy Reed will take the pictures for exhibitions in Bedford, PA in March and Somerset, PA (at Laurel Arts) in May. Carolyn Guest will then take the pictures to the Catamount Arts Gallery, Vermont for an exhibition in late summer or early fall.

Kathy Reed needs members to send work for the Band Box exhibit. The deadline has been extended. The Bait Box and Shoe Box exhibits will travel to Arizona this January with Anne Leslie. Susan Throckmorton has then requested them for a library in Massachusetts followed Jean Marie Doel who is interested in hosting them at a public library in Brevard, N.C.

Web Site: Kathy Reed asked the Board to suggest what they wanted on the Guild Web Site.

The priorities are:

- 1) Clear information about who we are and what we do.
- 2) Easy access to forms, schedules, guidelines for Special projects (which are submitted in text ready format by those chairpersons).
- 3) Access by members to other members.
- 4) Block downloading of any papercut images.

Christine Smith has volunteered to work with Andrew Meserole, along with a possible 3rd person, to continue development of the website.

Susan Hahn and Angela Mohr have started a new GAP Yahoo discussion room called Front Porch Gapsters. There are currently 20 members. More information about this site will be in the Autumn FirstCut.

Memorandum of Understanding: Kathy Reed, Pat Stuntz and Marie-Helene Grabman have written a memo - Twenty Points of Groundwork Planning. Copies were distributed to the Board. This is a preliminary attempt to delineate how a future papercutting museum will operate and the requisite roles and responsibilities. Kathy gave an update on the expansion plans at Laurel Arts.

New Business:

Collection Speakers: There has been a disagreement among Board members on the selection of a former GAP member who was a speaker at Collection 2008. The Board was asked to disallow past members from any speaker role at future Collections; letters in opposition to this position were also received. A compromise was suggested.

A motion was made by Bernie Duplessis that any speaker, not a member of GAP at a Collection event, as part of their honorarium, will receive a one year membership to GAP to encourage them to become an active member; seconded by Nancy Cook. 6 members at the meeting voted yes; 1 no vote subsequent to the meeting; 3 yes votes subsequent to the meeting. Motion approved.



Doug Bell, GAP's pro-bono attorney, shown above, in period costume. Doug's bio was featured in the Fall, 2008 issue of FirstCut.

Winter GAP meeting: March 21, 2009 at the home of Steven Woodbury. The program will feature his extensive collections of papercuttings and related items and books.

2009 GAP Budget: A proposed budget was distributed and is attached to the secretary's minutes. Projected expenses for 2009 total \$8670. Projected available cash - \$28000; Projected end-of-the year balance - \$19330. We are under budget for our bookkeeper, so it was suggested we increase her duties.

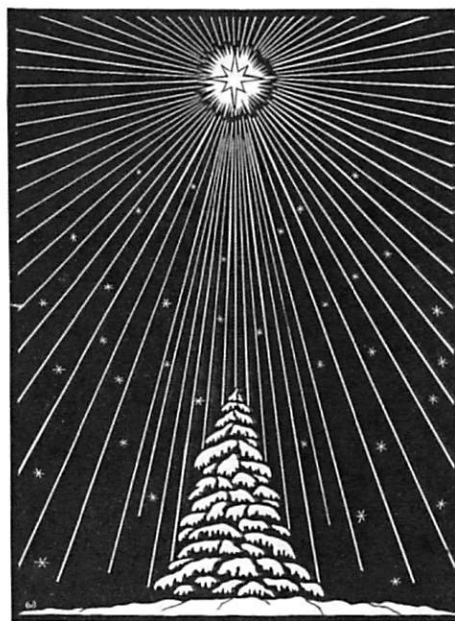
A motion was made by Bernie DuPlessis to authorize the bookkeeper, Wendy Boyer, to open and sort the mail, and increase her stipend to \$12/hour; seconded by Nancy Cook. 6 votes to approve at the meeting; 6 yes votes subsequent to the meeting; Motion approved.

A motion was made by Bernie DuPlessis to reimburse Pat Stuntz the preapproved amount of \$250 for computer expenses; seconded by Don Cook. 6 yes votes to approve the motion at the meeting; 5 yes votes subsequent to the meeting; 1 vote to abstain from voting; motion approved.

A motion was made by Kathy Reed to adjourn; seconded by Bernie DuPlessis.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie-Helene Grabman,
Secretary



WINTER STAR © William Oellers 2009

GAP's Pro-Bono Accounting Services

John Farkosh, CPA, Somerset, PA, is beginning his second year as GAP's Pro-Bono Accountant. His expertise is a valuable resource for the guild especially during the spring season of filing Federal and State forms. These forms include: IRS Form 8734; PA Form 5110; IRS Tax Form 990; BCO -10; and BCO -23. All of these are required during our conditional three year period of establishing and finalizing our 501c3, not for profit status.

A graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, John was attracted to science and chemistry, as well accounting, but his studies eventually centered on accounting, and he became a licensed CPA in 1977. Two years ago, he agreed to serve the guild at no charge when he was asked by Kathy Reed because they grew up in the same Somerset neighborhood. In addition to some woodworking and fixing up around the house, John's interests include amateur ham radio, and he is a member of the Somerset County American Radio Club.

Especially after 9/11 John was motivated to become licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to transmit on amateur bands and to assist in times of emergency.

John, his wife Wendy, and sixteen year old daughter Gabriele, very much enjoy the small town lifestyle of Somerset. Because of the people and the scenery, he is even willing to endure the somewhat harsh winters in the mountains of southwestern Pennsylvania. John observes that Somerset is a "slow, steady, stable place; not affected dramatically by the highs and lows of the rest of the country." "We're the tortoise, instead of the hare," he says, "but we get there when we need to be."



John Farkosh, CPA, GAP's pro-bono accountant.

Wendy Boyer GAP Bookkeeper

Like the Bob Cratchet character in Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, Wendy Boyer, Somerset County, PA, keeps the financial records straight for GAP. For over a year, the guild has contracted her to record all deposits by computer, and to prepare all checks from vouchers submitted by the GAP Board Members. Her work schedule requires about 3 hours a week during the busiest season of membership renewals. Her bookkeeping knowledge and computer skills were also quite valuable during the May Collection 2008 event. She keeps GAP Treasurer and GAP Membership officers informed and works closely with John Farkosh, Somerset CPA who is GAP's pro-bono accountant, during the spring season when federal and state reports are filed for GAP.

Wendy likes to work with numbers, and also has been serving seven years as the full time Bookkeeper for Laurel Arts, where GAP has located its centralized office. Prior to joining the Laurel Arts staff, she worked 12 years "in lending" at a Somerset, PA. bank. Dickinson College was the site of many banking seminars and her Banking School training in all areas.

Wendy and her husband Kevin have one daughter, two and a half year old Paige. Cooking is a special interest for her, and as the third youngest of eleven children in her family, she enjoys large family gatherings especially during the holidays..

A few years ago, the *Somerset Daily American* newspaper featured a front page article about Wendy. While waiting for her husband to come home, Wendy stretched out to sun herself in their rural back yard. Her fragrant tanning lotion attracted a black bear, which licked Wendy's arm, and startled her awake. They both jumped and ran in opposite directions as Kevin was arriving home. Despite this encounter, Wendy has no fears and loves country living. She enjoyed knowing the



Wendy Boyer, GAP's bookkeeper.

late Mrs. Dorothy Dressler, Laurel Arts' benefactor. Wendy thinks Mrs. Dressler would be pleased about the Laurel Arts expansion plans to grow the art center's programs and classes, and she is personally looking forward to the new facility.

Patty Kile Joins GAP Board

Patty Kile, a resident of Elizabethtown, PA has become one of two co-VPs of Membership for GAP, joining David Dorfmueller in that role.

Teaching in Springfield, Montgomery County then Upper Darby, Delaware County and finally Colonial School District in Montgomery County brought immense pleasure and rewards. Continuing her education, Patty obtained a Masters of Education with a core in Gifted Education, then acquired reading certification along with environmental courses. With these credentials she taught the gifted elementary program for the last twelve years of her thirty year teaching career.

Always interested in arts and crafts, Patty dabbled in many media, developing skill in each, and many times teaching courses -- copper enamelling, sewing, quilting, stained glass, photography, scrapbooking, scherenschnitte. Using her love of travel she and husband Wils created slide shows of their travels to a number of places. Patty taught herself computer skills so she could use her photographs in a creative manner. She printed, matted and framed her (and Wils?) photographs, then entered them in fairs, at which she gathered many ribbons. Wherever she traveled Patty tried to find samples of papercuttings for her collection.

Using her writing talents, Patty wrote feature articles for Pennsylvania Magazine traveling throughout the state to research the material. She published articles on the Mummers, Orphan Schools of the Civil War, PEEC Environmental Center, a young man who made potato wagons and another young man who designed slate into decorative floors. Patty also wrote news releases for the Paupack United Methodist Church and the American Association of University Women for which she was awarded Woman of the Year. For many years she has been a field editor for Taste of Home, submitting and having published over 50 recipes.

After living in the Philadelphia area for thirty years, the Kiles moved to the Lake Wallenpaupack region of the Poconos where they enjoyed the summers and became snowbirds to Nokomis FL in the winters. In the year 2005 they decided it was time to settle in a retirement community so they would be ready for whatever health issues developed. The Masonic Village in Elizabethtown PA was their choice since they would be half way between their children. Here Patty continues her active life.

We welcome Patty to the GAP board!

A Note of Thanks

Thank you to Susan Hahn who served GAP well during her year as Membership V.P. Susan responded to many inquiries about membership, and updated our membership records to eliminate duplications and changes of address. She remains moderator of GAP's Yahoo list serve group called Front Porch Gapsters where you can still chat with her. She also will continue to contribute "Cuttings from the Past" for FirstCut.

Since Susan's resignation from the Membership V. P. position, that role has been subdivided between David Dorfmueller, who maintains the database, and Patty Kile, who welcomes new members with information packets. Patty also fills and mails the orders for GAP Stickers.

GAP Stickers Available

GAP stickers that feature the oval logo are once again available. The stickers cost ten cents each and may be ordered in any amount. For orders up to 100 stickers, add \$1.00 for postage. For orders of more than 100 stickers, add \$2.00 postage. International orders, please add \$3.00 for postage.

Checks should be made payable to the Guild of American Papercutters with the notation "stickers" on the memo line. Please send to

Patty Kile,
454 Ford Drive
Elizabethtown PA 17022

Membership Listing Policy

As part of our website services to members, we have a membership listing which is *only* available to members. If you do not wish to have your information included in the GAP roster available to all members, please contact the named membership V.P.s by the end of January or as soon as possible.

David Dorfmueller (dddorf@usa.com)
or
Patty Kile (pat81134@aol.com)

Bandbox Extension!

Band Box 8"X 8" papercuts are still welcome for the mini box exhibit. No entry fee; no sales; only the chance to help share papercutting as it travels. See details in Summer & Autumn 2008 issues of FirstCut.

Send Bandbox entries to
Kathy Reed
153 Black Bear Run
Berlin, PA 15530

Last Call!

**From
Lancaster County, PA to ???**

A CALL FOR COLLECTION 2010

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

A committee of members will look at the features presented about lodging, food, and workshop/ meeting options and the relative costs, area attractions, and advantages.

Travel, accommodations and convenience for participation [eg. rooms, meals and meeting rooms at same location] at the site will help determine the first choice. Colleges and church conference centers are often quite suitable because of reasonable costs and ideal facilities.

On site volunteers for pre-arranging and coordinating Collection details will be an essential part of any submission.

Please submit your request to have a site considered for a 2010 Collection [or later] to Don Cook ASAP.

Don Cook Email: dcook@chesapeake.net
5486 Wellington Drive
Trappe, MD 21673-1779

Collage Artist Speaks to GAP

By Nancy Cook

For our fall meeting we had as a speaker, Susan Stewart from Oxford MD who spoke about collage and assemblage. Susan is a member of The National Collage Society and an artist who enjoys finding out what paper can be as an art form. She started the collage group at the Academy Art Museum in Easton, MD. It meets once a month and encourages the exploration of paper as a medium.

Susan was a Kindergarten teacher who pursued her interest in art by taking a course or two at a time. She has developed an individual style of working with various kinds of papers in collage and assemblage, including paper weaving. She brought samples of her framed work, to illustrate her various techniques.

In part of her artist's statement, Susan says, "My chosen medium is collage. I primarily work with paper for some of the following reasons: I love carefully cutting out objects, just as I used to love cutting out paper dolls and their clothes when I was a child. I like the fact that paper doesn't slip around on the surface as paint does, so I feel I have more control over the medium. I've discovered that paper can not only be cut, but also punched, curled, burned, painted, slashed, printed and woven. Another reason I enjoy paper art is because it is ignored by many artists, and therefore I feel there is more freedom for exploration and innovation in this medium. and finally, a real positive to the paper art I practice is that there are no rules. If you feel the need for a rule, then "create " your own!"

Susan uses very little glue in her work, preferring to "tack her pieces" together with a little "Yes" glue. She showed us a piece of fabric she had photocopied, so she could use its color and texture. She demonstrated the technique of using slivers of color (paper) to create a new design. She also uses print photos of interiors and exteriors in which she changes many details to suit the subject of her piece. These she often will coat with medium for her finished work. She has won awards for her work; the most recent one was featured on the advertising postcard for the National Collage Society show.

Susan said she enjoyed meeting everyone and learned a lot from all of us.



Susan Stewart

Member Reminders

Winter Quarter GAP Meeting

Open Meeting for all GAP Members

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Home of Steve Woodbury and Ann Bauer
5250 Lonsdale Drive
Springfield, VA 22151
703-425-5943

See information and directions at right. ►



Summer Quarter GAP Meeting

Open Meeting with program at the
home of Kathy Reed.

Tuesday, July 7, 2009

Details and directions will follow in the
Spring 2009 issue of FirstCut.



The Shoebox and Baitbox Exhibits will be taken by
Anne Leslie
to

Arizona when she goes there in January.
Other venues are being planned in the East for these
exhibits.

Watch for further details on the Shoebox, Baitbox,
and Bandbox Exhibits.



The DelRay and Biltmore Show pieces will next be
taken to Kathy Reed's for an exhibition in Bedford,
PA, followed by 2 more, one in Somerset, PA and
one in Vermont.

Oops! We goofed!

On the inside back cover of the Autumn issue
the papercut titled "Sometimes She Talks to Crows"
should have listed the artist as Nikki McClure ©
2008.

Winter Quarter GAP Meeting

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Home of Steve Woodbury and Ann Bauer
5250 Lonsdale Drive
Springfield, VA 22151
703-425-5943

Gather 10:30 – 11:00 am ; Meeting 11:00 am
Informal program 2:00 pm

The meeting will be followed by an informal
introduction to Steve's library, and assistance in
helping guests pursue their particular interests (a few
possibilities include: German scherenschnitte
illustrations from the 20's and 30's, Chinese
papercuts, Japanese papercuts, shadow puppets
(Asian to Greek to contemporary), origamic
architecture, contemporary children's books in cut
paper collage, portrait silhouettes, teaching
papercutting, etc)

Those attending should bring a bag lunch.
Drinks and dessert will be provided.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, March 18, 2009.

Directions to the home of Steve Woodbury and Ann
Bauer:

From most areas, get on the Washington
Beltway (I-495), and head toward the southwest
'corner' of the Beltway. [From I-95 or I-170 and the
north, come around the beltway (I-495)
counterclockwise. From I-66 and the west, head
south on I-495 toward Springfield. From I-95 and the
south, exit onto the Beltway (I-495) west towards
Tyson's Corner.]

From the Beltway, exit onto Braddock
Road (Rt. 620) Westbound. Proceed west for about a
mile, and get into the left hand lane. Just as the road
starts uphill, you will come to a traffic light at the
intersection with Wakefield Chapel Road, which goes
to the right. Stay in the left hand lane through the
light; about 100 yards past the light, there is a left
turn lane; turn left onto Danbury Forest Drive.
Continue on Danbury Forest Drive and take the first
left-hand turn, onto Lonsdale Drive. Steve's house is
in the middle of the third group of townhouses on the
left.

Member Commentary

From Ruth Grabner:

You requested some humorous or exaggerated cutting for the Autumn issue. Here is one of "AISHA" which could come under that category.



AISHA © Ruth Grabner 2008

It was thrilling to be selected as one of two demonstrators at the 42nd annual Senior citizens Art contest and exhibit. Winners from all over the state of New Jersey came to Flemington (NJ) to receive their ribbons.

Keep up the good work.

From Dan Deslaurier:

Just wanted to send along a note of thanks for including my submissions in the latest FirstCut--what an inspirational issue! I always enjoy seeing the variety of responses to "Member Homework" as I enjoy looking through the magazine on the train on my way to and from school. I have to tell you that after looking at these many offerings, I have the urge to get home and break out the scissors and get to work!



WINTER FROLIC! © Dan Deslaurier 2009

From Ursula Kirchner:

About "*A New Perspective*"

- We spent a week in the home of Britta Kling and we also went to the old "San Diego", which was very interesting. In one of the shops there was a very nice lady and we got to talk. I told her that we had taken part in the GAP collection in Asilomar. Of course, she didn't know anything about papercuts. So I got out my scissors and cut a little mermaid. She was so pleased that she decided to have a tattoo of it made on her left shoulder.

- "*Send in the Clowns*": I like the clowns of Cindy Stinson-Chennell very much.

- About *Frida Kahlo*: The approach of Susan Throckmorton is very modern. At the moment in Germany there is an artist: Annette Schroeter from Leipzig, a professor of Art at the Art Highschool of Leipzig, who makes huge papercuts which are a little similar. I like Susan cutout: Kitty, Kitty, Kitty.

Did you know that Frida Kahlo's father was a German photographer from Pforzheim, who emigrated to Mexico and married a Mexican lady?

- I like the idea of the "Inchies". They are also very interesting for work with children.

From Carol Chiros:

I am sending this papercut for possible inclusion in the winter issue (of FirstCut).* (The following) is a quote from the poem *Winter Song* by Ludwig Holty, who I think does capture the many charms of winter in his work.

Winter Song

Winter, still I see
Many charms in thee,
Love thy chilly greeting,
Snow storms fiercely beating,
And the dear delight
Of the long, long nights

*The papercut can be seen on the inside front cover of this issue of FirstCut.

Answers to Design Challenge Papercuts
on pages 26 and 27

1. Barking up the Wrong Tree
2. A Bed of Roses
3. Three Blind Mice
4. To Eat One's Words
5. To Cut Across the Road

Ruth Grabner Demonstrates Papercutting at New Jersey Statewide Senior Convention

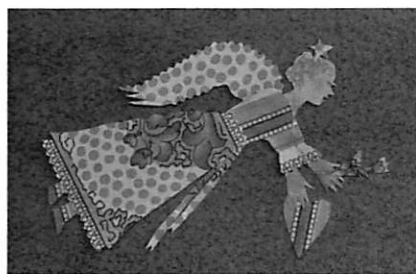
Ruth Grabner of Washington, NJ was selected to be one of two demonstrators at the 42nd New Jersey Senior Citizen Annual Juried Art Contest and Exhibition on September 26, 2008. The exhibition took place at the Hunterdon County NJ Complex in Flemington, NJ. Enrique Flores Galbis, a prize-winning painter, conducted a workshop in oil painting in an upstairs gallery while Ruth was placed directly alongside the lobby demonstrating silhouette cutting. It was obvious that this art form was completely new to most who attended, but once several of them had their profiles cut right there, they were captivated by the medium.

Sharon Schaich was kind enough to send an example of one of her cuttings along with Sandy Gilpin's watercolored ones. These were displayed for all to admire. The magnificent 20 year Collection cut by Sukey Harris featured on the front cover of the summer 2007 issue of FirstCut awed many viewers. Ruth handed out copies of the new GAP brochure to encourage some to join.



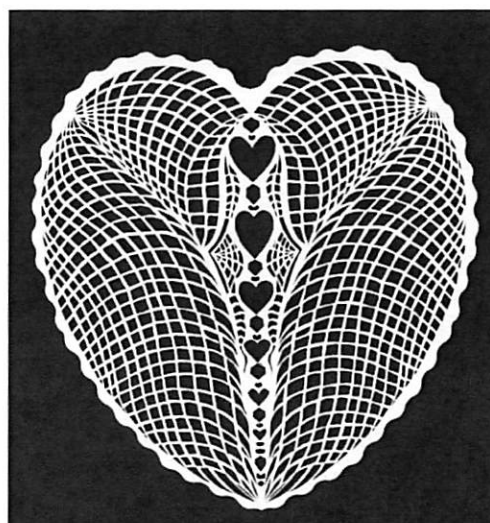
▲ Ruth Grabner poses with a sample of her silhouettes at the New Jersey Senior Citizens Exhibit in Flemington, NJ.

Paper Angels



Our thanks go to the following individuals for their generous donations to GAP:

Barbara Barrett	Dottie Netherton
Dorothy Buchanan	William Oellers
Kay Buchanan	Catherine Winkler
Betty Christy	Rayroud
Helene Fox Clayton	David Reichard
Stuart A Copans	Irene Reichert
Barbara Falk	John and Dorene Rhoads
Gudi Wittgen Gilbert	Nancy Rosin
Sandy Gilpin	Kathryn Shultz
Richard Goodall	Arlene Staats
Ruth Grabner	Roma Starczewska-
Col. William Hammann	Murray
Gertrud Hendler	Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt
Beth Magnuson	Monika Stewart
Alice Helen Masek	Pat Stuntz
Judith Meyers	Joan Sulecki
Connie Minnich	Susan Throckmorton
James Morehead	Beth Wunder



HEART FULL OF LOVE © Peggy Gleason 2009

Historic Paper Mill Site in Philadelphia Area

By Nancy Cook

One of the most interesting historic places in the Philadelphia region has to be the site of an old paper mill. A National Historic Landmark District, Historic RittenhouseTown is located in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park. According to Chris Evans, Executive Director for the site, "Many folks think the old mills are still at RittenhouseTown. They are not. Philadelphia's Fairmount Park demolished them at the end of the 19th century. We have no restored mill here. We do have six Rittenhouse structures including the 1707 Homestead, circa 1720 Abraham Rittenhouse Home, the circa 1725 Bake House, the circa 1810 Jacob Rittenhouse Home and the circa 1845 Enoch Rittenhouse Home. We also have a 1938 Barn which houses our paper making studio."

RittenhouseTown has ongoing "digs" to find more information about the site. For "paper people" this is fascinating. The dig is indeed on the site of the second circa 1702 paper mill but, as yet, there is not much that has been exposed.

Many people erroneously think they made the paper for the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. "The Rittenhouse family did not produce the paper for any of the important historic documents. Rittenhouse paper was used to print the earliest German language Bibles in nearby Germantown and a small newspaper in Philadelphia. A good bit of it was shipped to William Bradford in New York City", adds Chris Evans.

By preserving and restoring these significant buildings, Historic RittenhouseTown is able to accurately interpret and educate about early American life.

Information from the historic site's brochure tells us that "The 1690 paper mill (the site of British North America's first paper mill) was built by William Rittenhouse and his son Claus, and provided Philadelphia, Germantown and other nearby areas with much needed paper for maps, letters, legal documents and books. Forty-five or so buildings were once part of RittenhouseTown, the industrial village that developed around the Rittenhouse paper mill. Seven buildings dating from 1707 to 1845 are all that remain of the original structures. These buildings include the 1732 birthplace of scientist, statesman, and first Director of the US Mint, David Rittenhouse.

Historic RittenhouseTown's education department welcomes organized groups year round. The average group visit includes a detailed tour of the site given by an experienced interpreter and a hands-on papermaking session. They accommodate groups of all ages and sizes and tailor tours to the needs and interests of these groups."

Contact information:

Historic RittenhouseTown, Inc.
206 Lincoln Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19144

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information@rittenhousetown.org
215 438 5711



Scenes from Historic
RittenhouseTown



Book Reviews

Snip, Snip.....Snow by Nancy Poydar

Published by Scholastic Books 1997
and Holiday House
ISBN -0-590-38643-3

By Carolyn Guest

Poor Sophie, it was so cold out, she had to wear her winter clothes, the trees were bare and there was no snow! She and her friends could hardly wait; they had their sleds ready and materials to add to the snowballs to make snowmen but no snow despite a predicted snowstorm. She and her friends convinced their teacher to let them "make snow". The teacher provided them with paper, scissors and let them cut snowflakes "no two were alike". As they were cleaning up after their "snowstorm" Sophie saw the first snowflakes falling from the sky.

Like Sophie and her friends you too can create your own snowstorms with paper and scissors to see a touch of magic..."no two alike" hand cut snowflakes with your young friends after reading this wonderful story to your older preschoolers and primary school age friends. The book ends with very clear illustrated directions to cut your own snowflakes.

I have read this book with Preschoolers and Kindergarten students ending with a cutting session. Instead of cutting out circles of paper, we used flattened coffee filter paper. Craft suppliers even market these "disks" of filter paper for craft projects. Have fun reading Sophie's story and cutting snowflakes!



Paper Transformed by Julia Andrus

Published by Quarry Books
ISBN 1-59253-370-1

By Pat Stuntz

Paper Transformed is a practical "how-to" guide that provides artists with a wide array of paper modification techniques that can be adapted to the papercutting genre. The subtitle "A Handbook of Surface-Design Recipes and Creative Paper Projects" aptly describes several of the processes presented in the eight chapters of the book.

Each section covers a specific design technique, provides a materials list, step by step instructions, and includes variations on each process. The accompanying illustrations clearly demonstrate the technique outlined.

Beginning with old favorites such as marbling and watercolor washes, the book includes very contemporary approaches as well. To create one-of-a-kind designer papers, multi-media applications with classic art materials such as pastels and colored pencils are interwoven with the innovative use of everyday materials such as plastic wrap, cornstarch, and table salt. Processes for producing textured papers are included as well.

What makes this book special are the number of processes used in today's scrapbooking applications that may be cross linked with papercutting. For example, the book provides a method of fabricating filigrees using die cuts and metallic paints. For the papercutter who wishes to create original filigrees, the die cuts may be omitted in favor of hand cut designs, and the remaining steps in the process applied.



This book is highly recommended for papercutters who are interested in creating their own special effects on modified papers.



When is your Paper Cutting a Snowflake?

By Carolyn Guest



Would you walk up to someone with a horse and say “Oh, what a beautiful llama” or into a yard full of hens and say “Oh, these are the most beautiful geese”? Probably no, but how often have you looked at a round or square multi-repeat/fold paper cut out and exclaimed “Oh, what a beautiful snowflake!”

In reality, snowflakes are amazingly unique creations, they come in different types (i.e. plates, needles, prisms, simple stars, fernlike stellar dendrites etc.). What each one has in common is the hexagonal form. In other words for a paper cut to be a snowflake, it has to have a hexagonal format. The cutting has to have a six repeat base structure. Of the many types of snowflakes, most of us prefer cutting fernlike stellar dendrites type snowflakes.

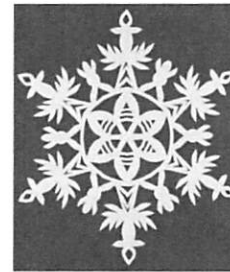
As educators (passing on the art of paper cutting), we need to choose our language carefully. If you prefer to teach cutting eight repeat stars that is fine just call them stars. Actually you may want to teach this first for your youngest students. You may also want to teach how to fold for five, seven, and nine repeats.....but refer to them as the stars they are... not the snowflakes they are not.



Examples of four and five design repeats that are not snowflakes

Teaching students to fold paper in half, half again and again and calling it a snowflake feels easier at the time but perpetuates the unspoken myth students are not capable of higher levels of learning. This also leaves the student with inaccurate information and many times the feeling of why bother to learn more details (my teacher doesn't bother so it doesn't matter).

In conclusion, any two snowflakes are never exactly the same in nature but they all have a hexagonal format. Let's teach our students how to make this hexagonal form to create their own unique snowflakes. If you prefer to teach the quadrangular/octagonal format, teach them how to cut stars. In the end we want our students to experience the magic of opening a folded cut out to see their own unique creation and to also be accurately informed.



All paper cut stars and snowflakes pictured in this article were hand cut with sheep shearing shears and are copyrighted by the author. The snowflakes were each cut from a three-inch square of acid free tissue paper.

To read more about snowflakes visit any of the following web sites:

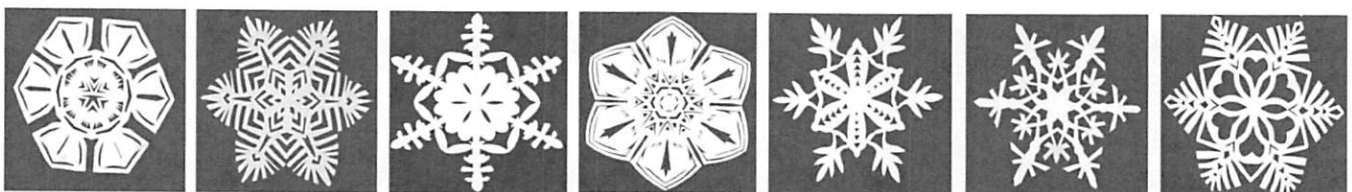
www.snowflakebentley.com/

www.Snowcrystals.com

www.bentley.sciencebuff.org/index.htm

www.jacquelinebriggsmartin.com/snowflak.html

*“ WILSON A. BENTLEY (1922), Popular Mechanics Magazine, Vol. 37, pages 309-312” article. It states: The above Bentley snowflake photos are Copyright/Public domain works. Wilson Bentley did not copyright his photographs and thus they are in the public domain.



Ideas & Inspirations

By Pat Stuntz

I have always liked to design my own cards for all occasions. I also like to personalize the symbols and messages in the cards I send. This year, I wanted to create a special Valentine for my daughter, with symbols that represented her family, and would have special meaning for her.

Beginning with the idea of “flowers of the month” representing the birth months for each family member, I sketched out a heart-shaped wreath using the flowers of the month as design components. I quickly realized that the papercut would be far too busy for the size of the Valentine card I had in mind, especially since one of the flowers was the tiny lily of the valley.

I was about ready to give up and create a more conventional heart shaped cut, when I happened to come across a note that Kathy Reed had sent me months earlier. On the front of the note was a lovely symmetrical cut with hearts, but these hearts were small, not the single large heart that I had been trying to create. These tiny hearts also seemed to literally flow from the stems that “grew” out of the central vertical fold of three larger shapes.



UNTITLED © Kathy Trexel Reed 2009

I took one look at that note card, and saw the answer to my design dilemma. I had been trying to work a complex botanical theme into a size format that just wasn't a workable combination.

Those tiny hearts of Kathy's were just the solution I needed. Keeping with the idea of personalization but abandoning the flowers of the month concept, I moved to the birthstone as the color component for each person I wanted to depict on my card. By doing this, I was able to keep the heart theme alive and still make the card very special for my daughter.

Since it was a special occasion card, I worked in color with the large hearts, stems and leaves cut from hand watercolored papers positioned on colored cardstock. The tiny hearts overlaid on the larger ones were cut from shiny metallic papers. The project was cut using scissors and a paper punch for the round shapes around the white heart. The scalloped edging was achieved by the use of a circle punch, and then trimmed down with scissors.



CHERIE'S VALENTINE © Pat Stuntz 2009

So thank you, Kathy, for providing the inspiration for developing my idea of sending my daughter a very special memento for Valentine's Day!

'I Have No Time' - 21st Century Motto

By Catherine Winkler Rayroud

Ed. Note: On Saturday September 27th, 2008 the opening of the Southwest Biennial took place at the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History, in New Mexico. Catherine Winkler Rayroud was awarded a 'best of show' prize for her cutting, which appears on the front cover of FirstCut. The museum received 1400 entries; 85 pieces from 65 artists were chosen, including two of Catherine's. The juror of the show was Dr. Stephanie Hanor, Senior Curator and Department Head of the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego. Dr Hanor explained that "she was drawn to works that demonstrated innovation in both the use of material and approach to subject matter... A strong sense of drawing permeates the final selections and crosses all media in the form of lines drawn or etched on canvas and paper, created through intricate hand-cutting, or sculpted in three-dimensions."

A papercutting always starts with a feeling, an idea or something that has caught my attention. I keep the idea in my mind for a while, until the papercutting theme emerges and then I start drawing the piece. The papercutting "I have no time – 21st Century Motto" had been brewing in my head for quite a while. Lately it seems that every time I talk to someone, I always hear "I have no time". We live in a world with so much technology, but all that technology is robbing us of our time. Growing up in Switzerland it seemed that people were more laid back and it is common to sit around a cup of tea or coffee or a glass of wine and take time for a chat and to relax (perhaps that has changed now too!)

One of my first American friends in the US was retired. She had been a teacher all her life and now was enjoying her retirement. The first thing that surprised me with my friend Betty was that she was always running and seldom had time to sit down. When I mentioned it to her one day, and asked her why she was running like that, her reply was "I did it all my life". For her, drinking coffee happened on her way to work in the car and was certainly not a moment to sit around and do nothing.

In 2003 I had a major horse riding accident and I "broke my back". I had to spend 6 months in a brace. I couldn't drive so I was confined to my house. I quickly realized that when your life is turned upside down and you are forced to slow down, the notion of time and the lack of it become rather futile.

Since then I have a lot more compassion for sick and elderly people, who are quickly marginalized in our society as they disturb our active lives and now I make a point to take time for others. Even when I am in a hurry, I try to remember that life is too short to constantly be on the run.



▲ Motion was a way to express the notion of being in a hurry and having no time. So everything within the watch is on the move.

◀ Mothers who juggle between two full time jobs (at work and at home) seem to have a spinning mind that never stops and they spend their days torn between both jobs.

Being a papercutting artist has also given me a different outlook on life. There is no way that a papercutting can be made in a hurry. Some of my pieces require several months of cutting. What I love with papercutting is that this old craft/art hasn't changed much over the centuries. Sometimes I humbly see myself as a witness of the past and a bridge to the future. I can use this old art as a mirror of what is happening in our lives today. And when people ask me why I make papercuttings which are so time consuming, I always reply that whether I make a cutting or not time will go by anyway!

"I have no time, 21st century motto" won best in show at the 2008 Southwest Biennial at the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History. This show was a

contemporary art show and it is the first time that one of my papercuttings was actually recognized as contemporary art and not some kind of old fashioned folkloric craft. It was a very special moment and I understood that much can be said with a piece of paper and a pair of scissors. For us papercutters it certainly is a sign that there are no limits to our art unless these limits are in our minds.

So remember next time you are about to say "I have no time" take a breath and think "Yes I will take the time". Maybe if we all slow down a bit, this world can become a better place for all of us and you might be able to make a big difference in the life of someone that needs a bit of attention.



Planes have shrunk the world. Every destination is now a few hours away. We travel further and further to get the "Holiday feeling", but it doesn't mean that we take the time to discover other cultures. We just consume them.

The size of the original papercutting "I Have No Time" is 15.5 x 11.5 inches. Catherine notes that "The shadows you see (that show in the enlarged detail images) are done on purpose when I take pictures of the papercutting so that people understand that the papercutting has a 3D feel to it and is not a print or a reproduction." She also says "With a lot of humor I placed myself on the outside of the watch taking time to make a papercutting. See the full cut on the front cover.

Art in the Round

By Pat Stuntz

“Going around in circles” often has a less than stellar connotation when the phrase deals with an individual’s ability to solve problems. In the papercutter’s world, however, circles offer design choices that are quite different from the more common rectangular arrangement. The circular format can soften the edges of a papercut, but at the same time can present design issues that present a challenge to the papercutter.

Three paper artists are featured here; each creating unique designs that demonstrate the many ways circles can be used as the dominant outline contour. Nancy Cook, Gene Toutsy, and Trudy Kauffman all utilize round formats in different ways.

Among other things, **Nancy Cook** is a botanical paper artist *par excellence*. Her papercut flowers, painstakingly rendered in three dimensions, are so convincingly real that you almost want to pick them, or at the very least, enjoy them as if they were in a vase or a garden. When asked for her perspective on working in the round, Nancy says “When I work with circles it is usually when I’m “creating” flowers. The way to make a flower is to realize that most flowers are based on circles. If you closely examine a flower you can see how many petals there are in each layer. Then you decide if the layers vary in length. Some circles are smaller than the one beneath them etc.

A simple flower has one set of petals around the center. Usually these flowers are plants that bloom in profusion. A peony is not a simple flower. It has many layers of petals, each layer slightly smaller than the previous one. Peonies always have “plump” buds for this reason.”



◀ Untitled vase with flowers
© Nancy Cook 2009

Although **Trudy Kauffman** often works with rectangular shapes, she also works in circular formats as well. In several of her compositions, her signature style of incorporating text with form can readily be seen, as in the papercutting “Be Still”, seen below. Here, the letterforms become part of the motif of the framework. In “Spread Your Wings” on page 17, the framework is more delicate but the fine lines of the circle are holding their own as the birds seem ready to burst out and fly away. In “After the Flood” on page 25, the composition is a design created on the vertical fold, with the animals and leaves creating an alternating pattern in the elaborate circular border.



BE STILL © Trudy Kauffman 2009

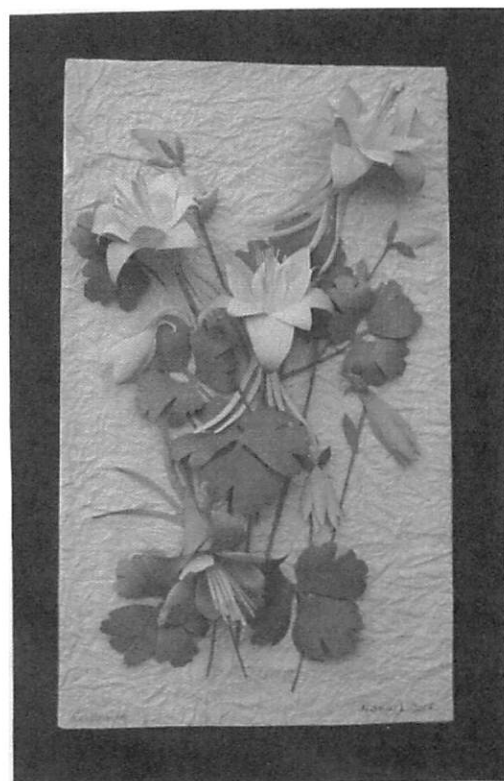
Gene Toutsy, known for her newspaper landscapes, is also very proficient at creating designs in circular forms. She credits Polish papercutting as being an early inspiration for working in the round: “My first experience with paper-cutting was with Ramona Jablonski and Polish paper-cutting. From her basic introduction, I was “hooked”. I loved the black framework, the round format, and the symmetry. In art, I have always appreciated high contrast and compositional balance. As a small child, I followed my mother around antiques shops, buying and collecting interesting plates. When I first discovered the Polish paper-cuttings, my mother commented, “Of course you like them; they are round – like plates.”

Gene also credits specific artists with influencing her credo of form and function: "For several years, I did mostly folded symmetrical cuttings. As I got braver with the media, I began seeking new adventures and challenges, thus the asymmetrical cuttings of places and structures. Louis Sullivan, often called the father of modern architecture, preached the principle that "form should follow function". His most famous student, Frank Lloyd Wright, expanded that statement by stating that form, function, and organic aesthetics should always work together. He cited the example of the windmill as being beautiful, functional, and agreeable to man and the natural environment. With the aforementioned in mind, I created a group of asymmetrical round cuttings that depicted structures that I thought Frank Lloyd Wright would find beautiful, functional, and agreeable to man and nature. That group includes "The Grist Mill", and "The Covered Bridge".

It is evident that working in circles can, indeed, provide papercutters with a design format that has the potential for an infinite variety of interpretations.



SPREAD YOUR WINGS © Trudy Kauffman 2009



▲ Untitled © Nancy Cook 2009

◀ Above, left: THE GRIST MILL © Gene Touts 2009
Left, COVERED BRIDGE © Gene Touts 2009

A BELORUSSIAN BONANZA!

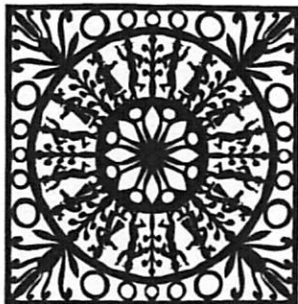


By
Susan
Throckmorton
via
Warsaw, Poland



Belarus, or White Russia, is a large, flat country lying low to the east of Poland, and squeezed between Lithuania and Latvia to the north, Ukraine to the south and Russia to the east. Once a part of the Soviet Union, today it is an independent country but the only country in eastern Europe which is still in the grip of a Communist dictator.

Try to Google "Papercutting from Belarus", and the computer screen comes up empty. I am friendly with Stanislaw Mulica, a papercutter from Grodno, who, when he gets the chance to leave Belarus, comes across the border into Poland to sell his papercuttings at fairs and other festive annual sales. I've always thought he was a papercutting majority of one from that country.



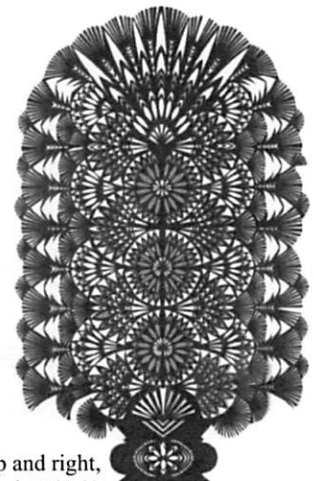
Stanislaw Mulica (Grodno)

That is why, when I was invited to the opening of a papercutting exhibition in my favorite small folk art museum just outside Warsaw, besides seeing papercuttings from Lithuania, I was amazed to find a wealth of diverse and interesting papercuttings from Belarus. Why had I never known about this before was answered in reading later from the well-illustrated exhibition catalog and in my conversations with Dr. Marian Pokropek, the curator of the museum, and Dr. Olga Lobachevskaja from the Belorussian State Institute of Cultural Problems.

There *was* a tradition of papercutting in Belarus dating back to a period between the 16th and 18th centuries when small pieces of paper were folded four times and ornamented with cuttings around the edges with the middle left blank for seals on official documents.

This custom disappeared, but, as in Poland, by the end of the 19th and during the first half of the 20th centuries, especially in the first ten years after the war, papercutting could be seen in almost every house. By this time houses without chimneys and their fire-blackened rooms had disappeared. Now people living in the new houses with chimneys could white wash the main room for receiving guests and decorate it with their best furniture and with papercutting ornaments. It was a period of industrial production of paper, especially colored paper, so paper was cheap and, therefore, popular as a method of ornamentation.

Three groups of papercutting could be distinguished: rosettes which were used to decorate walls and furniture and "snowflakes" which were put on windows for the New Year; symmetrical designs, such as "trees of life" and bouquets, which could be used as patterns for embroidery and lace making; and long pieces of paper folded many times which were used as curtains, shelf liners and around pictures and mirrors. Except for "snowflakes," none of these traditional groups exist in their original forms in Belarus today.



Above top and right,
Nina Sakalawa-Kubaj (Minsk)

Arts such as embroidery and weaving were passed down physically from generation to generation, but papercutting was ephemeral. New work was exchanged for the old, and the old was discarded. In Belarus, unlike Poland, there was no great early effort to protect and promote the paper art of its "folk;" ethnography was undeveloped so no comparable research was conducted into the history and development of papercutting; no museums collected, preserved and exhibited the work of its papercutters; no local or national artisan organizations existed to bind like-minded artists together for mutual support and camaraderie. As a result, any effort to restore traditional papercutting could be based only on the oral traditions of older people and by looking to the work done in neighboring countries.



Joanna Imbrasiene
(Glinicki, Wileńszczyzna)



Natalia Gamajunawa (Mińsk)

Late in the 1980's, along with its neighbors, Belarus was caught up in the spirit of freedom and independence. It finally did enjoy a brief period of real independence, and with it there was a revival of the people's consciousness of Belorussian culture. There was a new yearning for a national identity. Papercutting became one of the most popular folk crafts once again, but by now it had taken two different tracks: 1) copying traditional styles and 2) following a more professional, artistic direction. In time the second prevailed, and the use of papercutting changed. Papercuttings were now framed and sold as works of art. They were used as illustrations for books, postcards, invitations, lampshades, etc. From the 1990's papercutting was taught from preschool to high school and even university. The Union of Folk Artists included a department devoted to papercutting. Today there are the beginnings of research into papercutting, and exhibitions and competitions are being organized. This year, for example, a competition entitled "The Artist and His Work," was devoted entirely to papercutting.

Regional differences are evident in Poland, but there was and is no discernible regional style in Belarus. Rather papercutting, in a sense, represents Belarus as a whole because it reflects its beliefs, customs and folklore, legends and folk songs, proverbs, etc. As a result, papercutters there have developed their own individual styles. The most popular motif continues to be the tree of life throughout the country, but many papercutters have become known for the predominance of a particular theme in their work such as folklore, local culture, customs and holidays, village life, religion, architecture, mythology, etc.

The most famous papercutter in Belarus, Wiaczeslaw Dubinka, who was already a journalist, writer, bookbinder, photographer and traveler, started papercutting in the 1970's with themes based on memories from his childhood and gave new artistic status to papercutting. His range is astounding and best illustrates the variety and inventiveness of Belorussian papercutting today. He is a kind of universal papercutter, so exceptional that he is copied by others. At once modern and traditional, he cuts from black paper but often integrates color, can be both simple or complex and decorative, and displays a sense of humor and a wealth of knowledge of his heritage.



Wiaczeslaw Dubinka (Mińsk)

I went to this exhibition three times, and each time I was excited and enchanted by a type of papercutting I never knew existed. It was a testament to the old adage that one learns something new every day. In this case, I was happy that that "something" was related to papercutting.

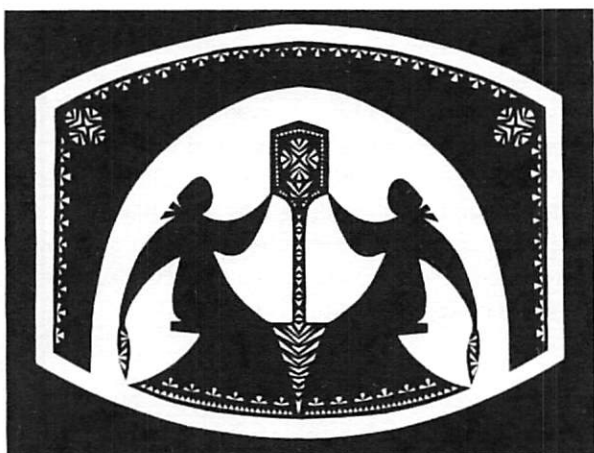
Many thanks to Dr. Olga Lobachevskaja and especially to Professor Marian Pokropek whom I interviewed twice and to my friend Maria Dabrowska who patiently translated all the conversations and the exhibition catalogue for me.



Wiaczewslaw Dubinka (Mińsk)



Halina Rudnicka (Mińsk)



Wolha Baburyna (Mińsk)

More Belorussian Papercuts



Halina Rudnicka (Mińsk)



Halina Rudnicka (Mińsk)



Natalia Gamajunawa (Mińsk)



Aleksander Auczynnikow (Grodno)

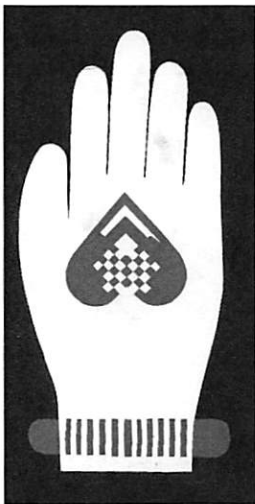
Ingenious Inventions Captivate and Challenge

~ Crafting a woven heart basket~

by Nancy Rosin, Valentine Editor

Two cherished icons in American folk art, *woven hearts* and the *heart and hand*, are often found in the form of delicate paper love tokens. In their many variations, they reflect sentimental designs that, despite their usual small size, appear to symbolize a most significant gift. Considering the scarcity and cost of paper in the mid-nineteenth century, it is not unusual to find them crafted from recycled paper - letters with writing, advertising, wallpaper scraps, or decorative linen labels. Expressed through these snippets of “found” paper, they convey a tender emotion that, for me, personally, goes far beyond the elaborate

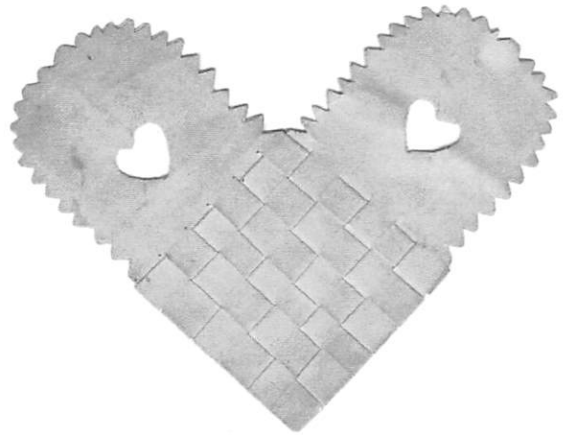
confections and costly expressions. It is that special emotional content, the care or naive quality, that is close to the heart. Made with love, given with love, the heart is extended in exquisite purity. It is understandable that the heart and hand imagery continues to be recognized today as an eloquent design motif.



▲ The simplicity of this classic love token reflects the purity and intense symbolism of a gift from both hand *and* heart.

The Victorians' obsession with puzzles of all forms was certainly encouraged by the challenges of weaving paper. Like the folded puzzle purse, which is difficult to reassemble, and the cobweb device, which lifts and reveals surprises, the woven heart is an affectionate curiosity of paper engineering. The author has mastered a simple basket comprised of four rows, but owns an antique with twice that number, which seems to defy possibility! And so, for this audience, it seems appropriate to generate enthusiasm for this craft, which requires only a few snippets of paper, endless time, infinite patience, and your innate talent. The reward is an exceptional tribute of love – an appropriate gift any day of the year!

While sorting among a pile of papers at a recent fair, a sad-looking woven paper heart basket surfaced. It appeared to be a perfect candidate for my proposed disassembly project – until I was home, and removed it from its protective plastic. Once in my hand, I saw that the now-faded paper had once been two interesting textures, in two different shades – obviously made with care; the tactile quality I call “the fingerprints of love”, convinced me I had to save it. The Internet proved to be a surprising resource, as I pursued my plan through online directions, which enabled me to create a heart-shaped basket, without ruining my little treasure. Agile fingers, and an equally agile brain, are ultimate requirements, but practicing enables anyone to dramatically improve on the original, and become creative.



▲ The original faded love token that inspired this article...the love has never faded.

It was interesting to see that several of the sources were Scandinavian. Christmas ornaments as well as Valentines, they are projects you might even recall from your childhood. I noted the *Kindergarten* teachings of Friedrich Froebel in Germany in the 1830's in *FirstCut, Winter, 2003: Youthful Valentines and Gifts from the Heart*. Attention came to be placed on the dynamics of teaching children the concepts of mathematics and geometry in addition to the skills of personal and spatial relationships, by using simple tools such as building blocks, parquetry tiles, and

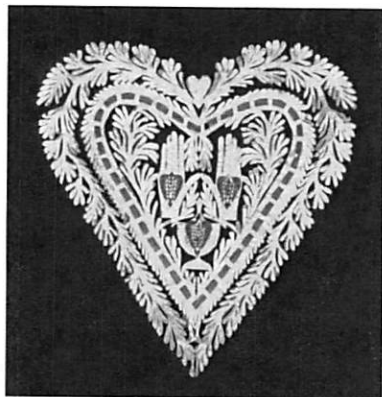
paper art. Actual folding, cutting, and weaving, were essential techniques used to achieve these goals. Similar to the challenges I remember with school geometry, these weaving techniques require mental concentration, but produce great satisfaction. Incredulous admiration of the results is not unusual!

Following the step-by-step images, you will discover the tricks, and demystify the process. Strips can be designed so that patterns, images, or words appear, color combinations elicit applause, and the weaving becomes easy, or even elaborate, as you discover the potential. The Danish website, listed below, offers unique templates and ideas.

I have included a number of images of nineteenth-century love tokens from my personal collection – inspiration, if you will, for the possibilities are endless. Small and flat, to enclose a lock of hair or a love note, or large enough, with a handle attached to the sides, or with a central loop to carry a bouquet, they offer much more than any card you could purchase. A gift from the heart, made for love, is a treasure to cherish.



▲ Emblazoned with romantic sentiment, this ingenious, four inch, four-sided, heart pocket was a cherished keepsake.



▲ Tiny woven hearts, hands, and delicate woven hair, adorn an exquisite five-inch *scherenschnitte* heart; circa 1800.

References:

History:

May, Leslie Spraker, *Hand and Heart Shall Never Part, A Study of Basket-Weave Scherenschnitte*, Folk Art Magazine, Vol. 31, Nos. 1-2, Spring-Summer, 2006

Crafting:

1. A fabulous Danish site with unusual and creative templates:

English introduction: <http://haabet.dk/users/julehjerter/english.html>

Wonderful patterns: <http://haabet.dk/users/julehjerter/moenstre.html>

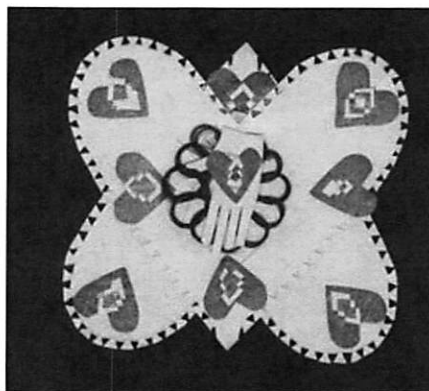
2. This site features a unique silver and gold Valentine trinket, with very good instructions for making the woven heart:

http://www.vintageimagecraft.com/heart_basket.html

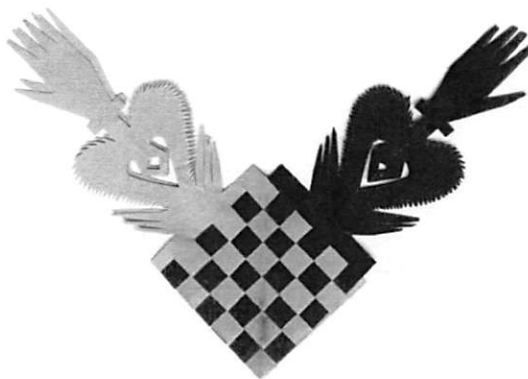
3. The essential detailed weaving diagrams:

<http://www.northpole.net/crafts/baskets.htm>

Nancy would be happy to answer any inquiries. You can contact her at NancyRosin@aol.com; her Valentine website is www.VictorianTreasury.com.



▲ Woven paper hearts and hands are further embellished with a symbolic, endless knot of woven hair; circa 1850.



▲ Using two strips of paper, four hands appear to grow from fringed hearts, as they weave to create an unusual box.

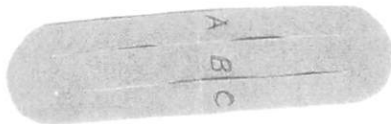
Directions for Crafting a Woven Heart Basket

Another fascinating technique, referred to as *basketweave scherenschnitte*, can be used to weave, thereby joining together, two hearts, or inserted into any paper item, as a row or border effect. The basic technique is to cut V-shaped lines in a row, on both pieces, insert one point of the “V” into the slits in the other, carefully weaving, row by row. (See figure 5) Variations on these themes can yield delightful results.

1. Select two pieces of different colored paper and glue. Cut a rectangle 2 ¼ inches by 8 inches out of each piece of paper.



Label the strips 1,2,3 and A, B, C to make the process easier.



2. Fold the rectangles in half. Hold each one so that the open edges are at the top. Round off the corners. Cut two slits up from the folded edge, making them ¾ inch apart and 2 ¾ inches long. ▼

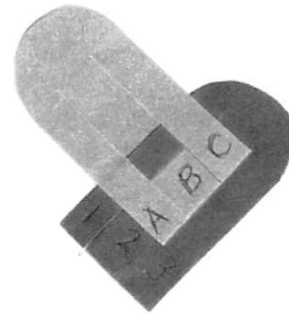


Folded
and
Labeled

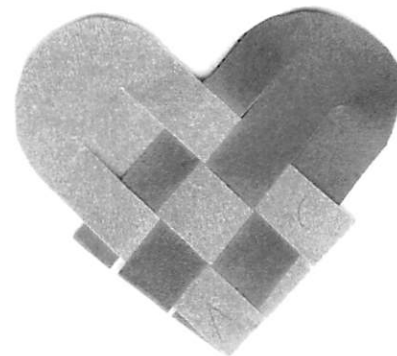


3. Start weaving one part into the other. Tuck 1 between the layers of C, tuck B between the layers of 1, and 1 between the layers of A. Slide the woven part up a little and now tuck C between 2, 2 between B, and A between 2. Finally, tuck 3 inside C. B inside 3, and 3 inside A.

You should be able to see a pattern on the inside as well as on the front and back when you open your basket.



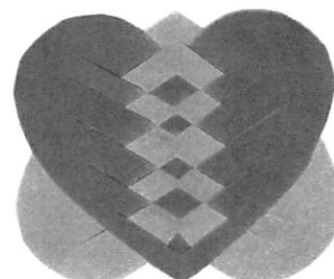
The weaving process



The finished woven heart basket

4. Glue a handle between the two woven layers on each side of the heart if you wish. Multiples may be strung as a garland. The handle may be created from a ribbon or paper strip. The project may be done in paper, foil, or fabric, as well.

5. Another antique mechanism: *Basketweave*



Papercutter Profile

Michael Velliquette

Michael Velliquette was born in Sandusky, Ohio in 1971 to parents of Sicilian-American and French Canadian descent. At age four his family moved to the suburbs of Florida's Gulf Coast where he was raised on a steady regimen of Roman Catholicism, H.R. Puffenstuf, and MTV. In 1993, he received his BFA in the Visual Arts from The Florida State University in Tallahassee. He subsequently backpacked for two years throughout southern Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley where he studied Macrobiotic cooking and Yogic philosophy. In 1997 he entered the graduate program in the Department of Art at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After receiving his MFA, he spent two years working for Royal Caribbean Cruises, living aboard a luxury liner, and sailing extensively throughout the Western Caribbean, Central America, and the Hawaiian Islands. For the past six years he has lived concurrently in San Antonio, TX and Madison, WI, working primarily as a visual artist, and deepening his interest in paper cutting and collage.

Michael has had one-person exhibitions at DCKT Contemporary (New York), Ratio 3 (San Francisco), La Montagne Gallery (Boston) and The Suburban (Oak Park). His work has been included in group exhibitions at Western Bridge (Seattle), Deitch Projects (New York), Western Exhibitions (Chicago), Bravin Lee Programs (New York) Ferragamo Gallery (New York), Finesilver Gallery (Houston), and Sala Diaz (San Antonio). He was the recipient of an artist residency and one-person exhibition at Artpace (San Antonio) in 2004. In 2008 he participated in residencies

at the SIM (Reykjavik) and the Vermont Studio Center (Johnson).

Michael explains his design process this way: "My hand-cut paper dioramas begin as flat sheets of commercially-colored heavyweight card stock. Shapes then emerge by scissoring individual pieces and assembling them by hand into polymorphic narratives, ranging from the intimate to the epic. These are glued (using a combination of "Yes" paste and hot glue) onto a paper ground in successive layers- working from side-to-side and background to foreground, in a process that references drawing, painting, mosaic, relief sculpture, collage and other paper crafting traditions. The flatness of the paper is countered by a dense layering of successively smaller and more ornate pieces; bending, folding, and rolling elements coupled with the graphic qualities of the cut-out's edges create dramatic contrasts. They are framed in deep shadow boxes to create a sense of spatial intimacy.

In recent work, I use imagery from the natural world as a stepping off point to explore an inner, subjective landscape populated with brightly feathered bird creatures, serpents and dense accumulations of paper flowers. Elsewhere, wild jungle terrains are inhabited by animistic personas and are concerned with the tendencies of otherness. Some inspiration was drawn in these works from Henri Matisse's later paper cuts. These works also speak to me about spiritually driven object making, devotional ornamentation, and the value of the handmade."

For more information visit: <http://www.velliquette.com>
Telephone Contact (608) 695-8498



FAMILIAR © Michael Velliquette 2007
Cut cardstock and glue, 24" x 24"



THE INTUITIVE JUNGLE © Michael Velliquette 2006
Cut cardstock and glue, 12" x 12"



THE MASSES OF MEN, © Michael Velliquette 2008
Cut cardstock and glue, 12" x 12"



CHRISTMAS SNOWFLAKE © William Oellers 2009

▲ This cut was a present to the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum in Hartford, CT for the Festival of Trees & Traditions.



THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM © Gene Touts 2009



AFTER THE FLOOD © Trudy Kauffman 2009



“BURIED TREASURE: IN CLOSETS AND TRAVELS”

By Debbie Baird

When I first started quilting in 1994, it was a very exciting time. I studied quilt books and actual quilts for hours. I even dreamed about quilt patterns in my sleep. Has this happened to any of you? Once I transitioned to papercutting, I started seeing designs everywhere: sewer lids, graveyards, T-shirts, tattoos, and book covers. I will even admit to purchasing certain secondhand outfits because they had a design I wanted to eventually use for a papercut. (True confessions: the design elements included with this article all came from a top and slacks outfit that is slowly becoming too big for me thanks to Weight Watchers. Maybe I should make that papercut NOW!)

One might think that male papercutters might be exempt from this artistic lunacy. Have you checked out your necktie collection lately? About a year ago, I did a column on ways to utilize design elements. I would like to re-visit those techniques and enlarge on them.

I always carry a sketchbook. I have a series of books that range in size but I always have one with me. I especially take one with me when I travel. Seeing new places for the first time helps me see with fresh eyes. I collect little images that I want to use in the future. I sketch in hotels, art museums (ask first- some prefer you use pen, others prefer you use pencil), restaurants, and antique shops. I hope you too will start carrying a sketchbook as it enriches your life as an artist. I also date each entry, and write the location where I sketched so it becomes a little diary of my travels.

I am enclosing some design elements taken from that one consignment store outfit. Feel free to use them with an element of your own or modify them. I hope you will send in some cuttings to show the rest of us what you did. ►

CHALLENGE #1

Find a design element that you like. It can come from anywhere – your closet, your drapes, upholstery, carpeting, any visual source. Then decide if you want to just vary this one element to create a cutting or combine it with other elements (hmmm, like your initials. . .) to create a cutting. Then decide if you want to cut it using a folded method -single fold, double fold, triple fold, or quadruple fold? Do you want to flip-flop it to create a border print, or use it in graduated sizes? Do you want to put it in a square cutting, a round cutting, or an irregular cutting? Could it be graduated in size and become a spoke on a much larger wheel with alternating elements? Play with it and then send us your results. Help us all grow as artists and papercutters. Keep your eyes sharp and your blades oiled!



Some design elements to consider using in a papercut

Meeting the Autumn 2008 Transitions Design Challenge

In the Autumn issue of FirstCut, Debbie Baird challenged GAP members to use words, phrases, or folk tales in their papercuts. On this page is one cut created by Susan Throckmorton that visually depicts an expression familiar to most of us. Can you guess what it is? There are more on page 27. See if you can guess the titles without looking at the answers, found on page 8.

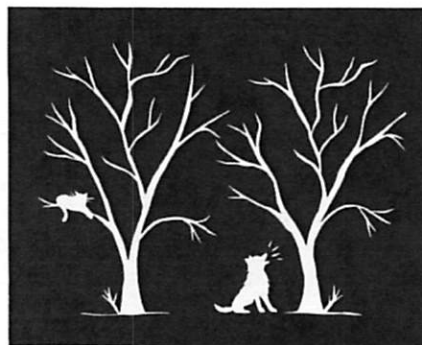


Figure 1 © Susan Throckmorton 2009

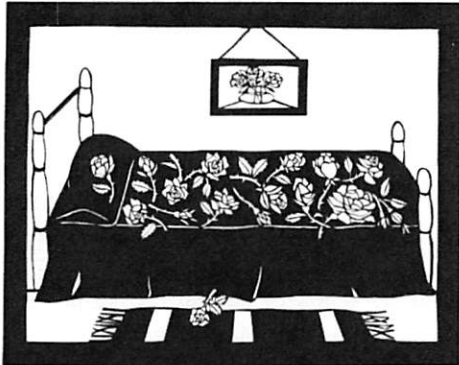


Figure 2 © Susan Throckmorton 2009



Figure 3 © Linda Peck 2009



Figure 4 © Susan Throckmorton 2009

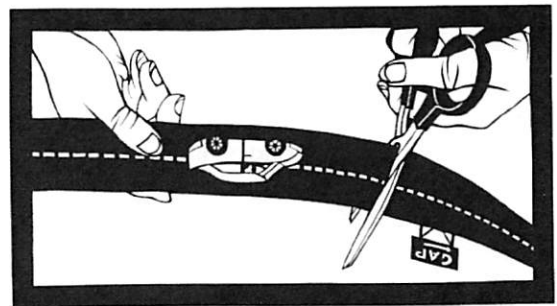


Figure 5 © Susan Throckmorton 2009

And some witty sayings that may *not* be so familiar:



◀ "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."

- Groucho Marx

© Ursula Kirchner 2009

▶ "Coffee isn't my cup of tea."
- Samuel Goldwyn

© Ursula Kirchner 2009



Cuttings from the Past

By Susan Hahn

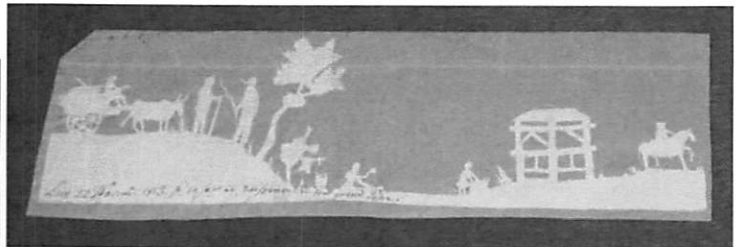
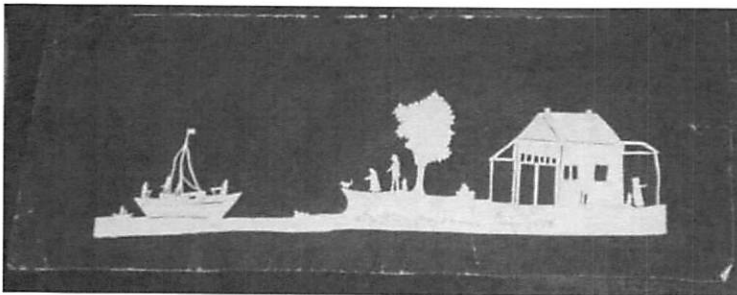
The papercuts featured in this article were found in the former St. Louis home of Miss Elise Pettus, a member of the prominent Pettus family of Virginia and Missouri. She occupied the family mansion in the 1890's. The address of the residence is 4371 Westminster Place. In fact, this family owned TWO mansions on old Westminster Place, which is an older section of the Central West End of St. Louis. (Just up the street and on the same block was 4446 Westminster, where T. S. Eliot lived as a young man with his parents and family during the 19th century.)

This was an upper and middle class section of town that began to develop in a building boom in the 1890's. It was then located on the edge of the city. It became an exclusive residential section for residents who belonged to elite clubs, drove automobiles, advocated for the less fortunate and politely worked for women's suffrage. Children here attended private schools and vacationed with their families on the East Coast or in Michigan. It became home of the 'Big Cinch' - men who made big money and controlled city politics. Westminster was named after England and was originally a 'private' street.

The Pettus family are well known in Missouri, perhaps one of the greatest families in the state. In 1820, William Grymes Pettus' (born 1794) helped form the first Constitution of the state. He went on to serve in many important and illustrious positions in Missouri, including the Secretary of State for Missouri. In fact, numerous members of this family were actively involved in the politics of Missouri. This family began with Thomas Pettus of Virginia, who immigrated to the states in the 17th century.

The cuttings themselves originated in Virginia in 1813. Miss Pettus apparently collected them, but it is uncertain if she cut them herself. They were acquired in 1960 when the Pettus home was purchased by the Hirschfeld family. They were offered for auction on Ebay by Hirschfeld Galleries of St. Louis, MO. in July 2008.

(Many thanks to Michael J. Hirschfeld, who granted me kind permission to use these cuttings for this article.)



Early 1813 Papercuttings from the Pettis Family, Missouri



SKI © Edie Johnstone 2008
5" x 7", X-acto knife and scissors on black
scherenschnitte paper



TELEMARK SKIER © Edie Johnstone 2008
4.5" x 6", X-acto knife and scissors on black
scherenschnitte paper

The Guild of American Papercutters' publication, *FIRSTCUT*, welcomes and encourages its members to submit artwork, articles, commentary, and Papercutter Profiles for publication.

All submissions should be sent to
Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522
pnstuntz@dejazzd.com

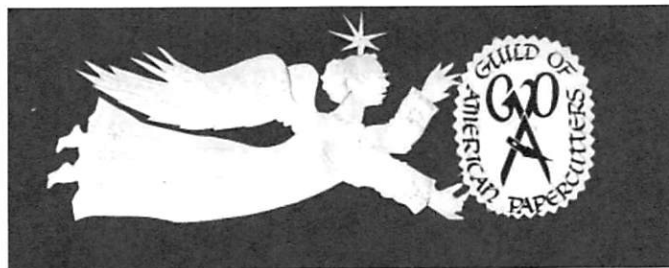
To submit artwork: Clear black/white photocopies of an original papercut may be mailed to the above address. Digital images may be postal mailed via CD or emailed. Label each item with identifying information (name, address, title of work, dimensions, date cut, tools and materials used).

To submit articles: Send articles in Microsoft Word format via email or on a CD. If that option is unavailable, articles may be mailed as a typed manuscript. To submit a Papercutter Profile, send a one page typed essay about the member including information about how papercutting became an interest, tools and techniques used, any personal papercutting advice or tips for other members, and examples of the member's work. (Follow artwork submission requirements.)

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(ANGEL© 2009 Sukey Harris)



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Don't forget the FrontPorchGapsters!