

History of the Hamilton Leathercraft Guild

1956-2002

1956

Members: 29

President: Jean Newton

The Hamilton Guild held its inaugural meeting at the Recreation Center on Bay Street South on October 11th, 1956 with membership fees of \$3.00 per year. Irva Ford supported the Hamilton Guild becoming a branch of the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft (CSCL) which had been formed in 1950

At the second meeting 39 people were present while on December 1956 there were 42 people present and 29 paid members. At this meeting, a film was shown on the topic of Figure Carving courtesy of Al Stohlman, Bill Walker demonstrated 3-tone dying, and Lillian Beech taught Mexican lacing. News of our guild forming was put on posters, in stores, and on CKOC radio. We entertained demonstrators from Toronto, Sadie Roebuck and Reta Lamour with purse framing.

1957

Annual: Six articles chosen for competition

Members: 29

Irva Ford announced the annual meeting to be held in Toronto in April and explained the requirements to become an Associate or a Fellow in the Hamilton Guild. Six articles were chosen to be sent to the Annual meeting in competition for the Weston Trophy. By October 1957 there were six other branches of CSCL. Members from Hamilton, Smithville, and surrounding areas attended the International Assembly every second year.

In November 1957, Henry Longstaff spoke to us on design and its importance for leather. A handyman show was put on by the Hamilton Guild with 78 articles. Fred Brown and Reta Lamour commented on the workmanship.

1958

Members: 49

International Assembly: Held in Rochester

A comment was made by CSCL President Fred Brown on the good quality of work put out by the Hamilton Guild. Mr. D'Angelo, a former patient at the Sanitarium, gave a demonstration on tooling with morocco leather using tools handmade in the Sanitarium.

At one of our meetings held at the Wesley Community Center Harold Booth of Booths Hobby Store gave an interesting talk on types of leather and their uses. Our Guild was considering obtaining membership in the Handicraft Guild of Canada, which would provide the right to enter competitions and display work at various locations.

1959

International Assembly: Held in Flint, Michigan.

Annual: Came in 2nd for the Weston trophy with six articles submitted.

At our regular meetings, we periodically displayed samples of our work, both finished and in progress. Clarence Redman gave a talk on antique finishing. In November, Bea Austin, one of our faithful members, gave a demonstration on differently styled purse gussets. For the December meeting, the Guild moved to Booths Hobby shop for our regular meetings with 46 in attendance. Requests for workshops were as follows: desk pad sets, purse stiffness, and edge furnishing.

1960

Annual: Won first Weston Trophy at Annual in Toronto at the Woodgreen Community Center

At the Annual, Paul Bennett, a member of the Michigan Guild and a teacher at the University of Michigan, spoke on how to apply composition and design to leather. Hamilton was invited to display work at the Handicraft sale in Toronto. In November 1960, five guests from Barrie came to our Hamilton meeting where Frank Torry demonstrated millboard boxes, and covered them with leather.

1961

International Assembly: Hamilton was host for the International at Prudhommes and scored 92.2%

Annual: Irva Ford reported on Weston Trophy entries by London, Barrie, Hamilton and Toronto. Toronto won with 92.7% while Hamilton scored 92.2%.

Members: 46

At the February meeting Garnett Pratt from Garnett Dyes in Barrie Ontario demonstrated how to hide blemishes by carving them into a design and illustrated how fat wrinkles enhance an article when using water-based dyes.

The Annual was a great success with demonstrations by Mrs. Wheatley (desk pads), and Bea Austin (dying trays). Jim Courneya was our 2nd member of our Guild to enter the Sanitarium.

1962

Annual: 5 articles are required for Weston trophy eligibility.

Awards: Mildred Kemp and Alvin Haig received their Associate

At the January meeting Mrs. Campbell demonstrated glove making while at the November meeting, Irva reported on articles sent to the Pacific National Exhibition, which included forty pieces between the CSCL and the Hamilton Guild.

1963

International Assembly: Held in Rochester New York

Annual: Barrie won the Weston with a score of 91.6%, Toronto had 87.6% and Hamilton scored 86.6%

Awards: Ruth Haig won a craftsman and salon ribbon on her first braided belt, which is now in the OCC Traveling Exhibition

Lorna Robson from Fonthill joined our Guild and designed a wallet using ribbon for the bill section allowing for an easier fold. Irva requested articles for an Exhibition in St. John's New Brunswick. In October, our Guild meetings moved to West Pavilion of the Sanitarium. The Guild also participated in displays at the Westdale Library and in the Alice Peck Studio in Burlington.

1964

Awards: Janet Smith from Guelph received her associate.

At the January 1964 meeting, Harold Wilson demonstrated plug embossing. Each year Hamilton Guild has had displays with the handicraft Guilds at various locations. In April 1964, Irva Ford attended the International and demonstrated inverted carving. Past Chairman's to date have been Nana Wilson, Frank Torry, Ruth Haig, Irva Ford and Jean Newton.

1965

International Assembly: 10 members attended in Flint Michigan where Hamilton members received six craftsman ribbons

Annual: Hosted in May at the Scottish Rite in Hamilton.

Awards: Bea Austin and Reta Holman received their Associates.

President: Alvin Haig

At the 1965 Annual meeting, it was decided that CSCL would be involved in the CNE Hobby Show. In Jessie Strain demonstrated Gardenia's from white Kip.

Don McKinnon demonstrated covered bottles and Irva demonstrated suede poinsettias. At our December meeting there were 38 members in attendance.

1966

International Assembly: Held in March in Buffalo New York. Members who demonstrated at the International Assembly were Alvin Haig (Morocco wallets) and Jean Newton (soft leather belts)

Annual: Hamilton won the Weston trophy with a score of 94.58%

Awards: Ruth Haig received her associate with 94.18% along with Lillian Beech.

At the Annual Hamilton members won Salon: Jean Newton (belt), Al Haig (wallet), and Ruth Haig (pocket secretary). Receiving Craftsman were above as well as Jim Courneya (braided belt), and Irva Ford (tray).

In February 1966 we had articles on display at McMaster University and Clarence Redman demonstrated tooling and embossing. The articles for the Annual were a handbag by Rita Holman, a box with a jewel by Irva Ford, a book cover by Jean Newton, braided belt by Bea Austin, and a notepad by Reta Dewitt.

In October of 1966 at the CNE the Hamilton winners were: Irva Ford, Reta Dewitt and Ruth Haig. Bea Austin demonstrated folded chain purse and spatter dying.

In November 1966 the Guild celebrated its 10th anniversary as a guild. At the Head Table were Mr. and Mrs. Fred Brown, Dorothy Muma, Dr. Larmour, Viola Harris, and Mrs. Nevitt (president of Hamilton Handicraft Guild), Mr. Nevitt, Mr. and Mrs. C. Roebuck, and Jean Newton. Each of these members provided valuable assistance while the guild was formed. Irva reviewed the history of our guild and her speech was recorded in a special events book. Articles from our Guild were chosen for the Canadian Handicraft Exhibition and the evening came to a close with square dancing.

At the December meeting, Fellow and Associates were asked to display articles at the University of New Hampshire.

1967

Awards: Margaret Weldon and Jessie Strain received their Associates at the Annual. Garnett Pratt of Barrie demonstrated saddle stitching with a curved needle as well as gold stamping. The history of our Guild was recorded and sent to CSCL and Ruth demonstrated dying techniques. In February a joint meeting was held with the Rochester and Hamilton Guilds at Steffans store in Buffalo. The Hamilton executive met once a month.

Mildred Kemp, wife of Dr. Bob Kemp, was an active member of the Hamilton Guild as well as a volunteer at the Sanitarium, promoting leatherworking.

1968

International Assembly and Annual: Combined event at the Park Plaza, Toronto in November
President: Lillian Beech

Irva investigated the possibility of a year round craft shop with the Handicraft Guild though this proved unsuccessful. At the February meeting, Irva introduced a new member and student of hers, Muriel McKnight. For the years 1967 and 1968 Evelyn Burgess, who lived near Clappison Corners and raised goats and chickens, was the secretary for the Guild. Ruth demonstrated skiving.

In February 1968 the Hamilton Leathercraft Guild displayed leather at the Royal Connaught in conjunction with the Artisans Guild of Hamilton. The demonstrators from February to April were: Evelyn Burgess (covering stools), Irva Ford (desk pads), and Alvin Haig (lace cutting and beveling).

In May 1968 meetings were held at the East Pavilion of the Sanitarium. Huldy Gulekunst from Buffalo, taught sandal making and Jim Rowett demonstrated his own fabric dyes and how they could be adapted to leather. The Handicraft Guilds name was changed to the Hamilton Artisans Guild.

Combined Annual and International saw Hamilton Muriel McKnight demonstrating honeycomb stamped trays. One of the things Hamilton has always been noted for are their turkey dinners and good food throughout the years as well as good workmanship in leather

1969

Awards: Muriel McKnight obtained her Associate and received the Zelaitis Pin for the highest mark of the year with 97.8%.

1970

At the February 1970 meeting, Guild members were asked for suggestions for demonstrations resulting in a flower pin by Dorothy Bradford, Crinkle leather dye by Hilda Darbyshire, candlestick molding by John Trapps, Covered ash trays by Frank Torry, and braided belts from Lillian Beech. Mr. McCord demonstrated leather masks at the April meeting. In addition, a request for more articles to sell at the CNE was made. The standards were high with very few rejects and the CSCL grossed \$4000.00. In October Dr. Larmour from Toronto passed away. In November, Mr. Barnes from McMaster held a workshop on book binding.

1971

Annual: 9 members submitted 30 articles

Awards: Irva Ford received a 99.04 mark for a piggy bank; the highest mark received at any annual for a single article

President: Ruth Haig

For the year of 1971, Ruth Haig was the president with Marion Bridges as secretary. Irva suggested a workshop on Cuir Bouille. In September 1971, Hamilton Leather Guild members, Marie Jonasson, Muriel McKnight, Jessie Strain, Ruth Haig and Ann Barrett, assisted at a one day exhibition at Kitchener auditorium to display and sell articles. In April 1971, Betty Syed, president of the Hamilton Artisan Guild, who had studied art in Bombay and New York, gave an informative talk on the history of art

Our exhibition convener for the Annual was Margaret Weldon. Dofasco employees had an arts and crafts sale at the Sherman Center with Ruth Haig as convener; 10,000 people were in attendance.

In October 1971 we were invited by Hamilton Artisan Guild to enter our work to sell at the Royal Botanical Gardens. Marg Weldon reported there was a good display at the Dofasco show and the public was very interested in the Hamilton Guild work.

Our programme convener Irva Ford had several programmes for the coming year including Doug Binstead (figure carving), Sadie Roebuck (guest speaker), Irva Ford (tricks in lacing, workshop on Cuir Bouille), Carol MacLean (workshop on masks). Carol, from Woodstock, became very experienced in design and quilting.

1972

Awards: At the Ontario Metal Arts show in Toronto, Margaret Weldon was honoured by the Guild for an enamel ring she designed and displayed.

President: Marion Bridges from Ancaster

Jan 13 1972 was a very stormy night with only 11 attending. The Executive of CSCL offered to organize a special purchase of 50 yard spools of 5/64 lacing @\$3.30 per spool from Tandy's in Barrie; minimum order was 10 spools.

By April 1972, the guild met at the Terry Berry Library and was involved with providing articles for display at the library for several years.

The second annual Dofasco show included HLG members Marie Jonasson, Anne Barrett, Bea Austin, Frank Torry, Irva Ford, Betty Hendstridge, Muriel McKnight, Mary-Ann Bull, Hope Drysdale, and Ruth Haig and was once again a great success.

From the Artisans Guild, Joan Wuricke demonstrated macramé which dated back to the 13th century in Arabia.

In February Harold Murphy passed away and in September Ilene Schooley's husband passed on.

At the Canadian Guild of Craft Exhibition there were 640 entries and 120 items were chosen. Two of which were leather made by Irva Ford and Ruth Haig. In October of 1972, the Hamilton and Toronto Branch were invited to Barrie for their monthly meeting.

At the November meeting, Mrs. Hill from the Six Nations Reserve showed Moose hide moccasins which sold for \$10.00. As always, the December Christmas meeting (party) included the great potluck supper for which the Hamilton Guild is noted. It was announced that Mohawk College was considering a leather craft course for a reasonable fee.

1973

President: Marion Bridges

Members: 38 paid members

At the January 1973 meeting there were 38 paid members. The President was Marion Bridges and the Secretary was Audrey Gorton. A paper mache technique was applied to leather using very thin splits torn into small pieces and dipped into a mixture of white glue and water. Our guest speaker for the month was Paul Bennett, Executive Director of the Canadian Guild of Crafts, who was experienced in design. In February a proposal was made that the 1974 CSCL Annual be reverted back to a weekend rather than a single day. In addition, Marion Bridges proposed purchasing leather wholesale from Deardmore Tannery in Acton.

In April, Gladys Riddell gave a workshop on woven wallets, which was well received. In May of 1973, the Guild invited Woodstock to the meeting and Mrs. Hilda Darbyshire of Woodstock demonstrated her technique of crinkle leather and Royce Richardson took orders from the Deardmore Tannery. Marian informed members that Irva had won an award by the Ministry of Industry and Tourism. Muriel McKnight toured the tannery in Acton; the experience was a memorable one both for the eyes and the nose ... 'ugh'.

In October of 1973, the Terry Berry library informed the Guild that they could no longer accommodate the monthly meetings so the Guild meetings were moved to the Holbrook Pavilion at the Chedoke hospital, courtesy of Ruth Haig. Irva spoke at Image 74, Design Canada, Woodcraft conference and Leather 74. This was the beginning of exhibitions by CSCL. CNE entries for that year were excellent with Muriel McKnight receiving third prize and Audrey Gordon earning an 84% on her leather entry.

The December 1973 Christmas party was held at All Saints Church and was a well attended formal affair with great food and a silent auction.

1974

President: Royce Richardson – Marion Bridges

In February of 1974 a number of demonstrations were requested including Batik hanging (Nora Huyck), moccasins (Gladys Riddell), Sharpening tools (Walter Mickey), and leather boxes (Hilda Darbyshire and Fred Brown). President Royce Richardson was returning to Manitoba and Marion Bridges replaced her as President. It is also noted that the Hamilton Guild participated at Gage Park "It's Your Bag Day". Unfortunately, the Guild table was under pine trees which dropped sticky sap onto the leather pieces on display. In March 1974, Doug Binstead from Tandy Leather in Barrie demonstrated carving.

1975

Annual: 25th annual to be held at the Geneva Park in the Haliburton area. The April 1975 Annual was held in Belleville and the Hamilton demonstrators were Muriel McKnight and Ruth Haig.

Awards: The Annual Artisan sale saw Irva win first prize for a tray and Ruth Haig second prize for a pocket secretary.

President: Hope Drysdale

The January 1975 meeting was attended by 37 members. In addition, the Canadian Guild of Craft Exhibition was held at the Dominion Bank Center in Toronto and the Hamilton Guild chartered a bus for the event. Dr. Larmour of Toronto donated his extensive library book collection to be circulated among CSCL.

members forming the start of the CSCL library. The force behind many social parties in 1975 can be credited to Betty Hendstridge, Convener.

During the winter of 1974-1975 the Guild were asked by Queenston Mall to demonstrate leather. Volunteers Mildred Kemp, Margaret Jennings, Muriel McKnight, Audrey Gordon, and Marg Weldon attended.

Doug Black was the speaker at the January 1975 meeting. The Guild members attended a show and sale at the University of Guelph. In March of 1975, the President was Hope Drysdale while the Secretary was Ruth Haig and the Vice President, Audrey Gordon. The Image 74 exhibitors that received ribbons were Evelyn Burgess, Elma Luckett, Marg Weldon, Irva Ford and Muriel McKnight. Suggestions for demonstrations included lace cutting (Jean Hunter), and inlay (Frank Torry). In October Woodstock and London were guests at the Hamilton Guild monthly meeting where dying techniques were demonstrated. In addition, a workshop in Smithville was attended. Five members were trying for Associate and five for Fellow.

Guild work was on display at the Westdale, Ancaster, and Hamilton Central libraries over several years.

1976

Annual: Hamilton won the Weston Trophy with a score of 88%.

Awards: Salon Ribbons were awarded to Irva Ford and Marg Weldon. Bea Austin, Hope Drysdale, Lillian Beech, Art Morris, Don Harrington, and Ruth Haig were awarded Craftsman ribbons.

Leather 76 was held in Toronto at the OCC and a bus was chartered for the occasion. In April of 1976 Lydia Vincent joined the Guild and Ann Hook from Toronto spoke on design and showed four prize winning articles. Irva's Cuir Bouille was well accepted and there were guests from Barrie, London, Belleville, Woodstock, and Hamilton. Muriel demonstrated using X-ray film to transfer design onto leather. Due to work and health problems, Audrey Gordon resigned from the Guild. Mohawk College asked the guild to display some of their work.

1977

President: Don Harrington

During May 1977, the Guild arranged a very interesting tour of Daphne's Studio in Caledon East. At this point, the Guild was meeting at the Hamilton Spectator auditorium. The CNE's Hobby Building was the site of additional prizes for Hope Drysdale, Muriel McKnight, Margaret Jennings, Don Harrington and Ruth Haig.

Two new Hamilton members included Irene Kirkland and June Sommerville and Dr. and Mrs. Kemp demonstrated a double key case and the meeting closed as usual with refreshments. Ann Hook suggested a workshop on Lino block cuts, to be held in Smithville. Around this time the President was Don Harrington and Ruth Haig held the position of Secretary. A good workshop was held by Jessie Little on dying and finishing edges. The President of CSCL at this time was May Corbett.

In October of 1977, the Guild was saddened by the passing of Irva Ford, a founding member.

1978

In March 1978, a banner competition for the CNE was held. One of the winning banners was made by a CSCL member. Sadly, in April 1978, two long time members passed away; Jim Courneya, and Evelyn Burgess.

A sale of Irva's tools was held at St. Margaret's Church with 10% of sales, \$1853.40, going to the Guild. The June meeting was a pot luck dinner where ideas were shared and problems solved. Our Guild attended a workshop by Margaret Monteith on flower pins at Woodstock. Christine Whitlock from Artisans will go into anyone's home to take a picture of your work, while you are doing your craft; this was done by many

member and pictures were put on slides. Susan Ricketts attended the meeting presenting us with \$1000 from the Ford family as a retainer with the interest to be used for the Annual Awards in Irva's name. At the time when the Hamilton Guild is no longer in existence, the \$1000 is to be returned to the Ford family.

In December, the Guild displayed at the Ancaster Library. A couple of many workshops attended were Morocco book covers by Fred Brown and Buck stitching by Art Morris.

1979

President: Muriel McKnight

During the summer several of our members attended Haliburton School of Fine Art for a course conducted by Paul Williams from Bethany Ontario. There is a growing demand for leather classes at night school: Westdale, Westmount, and Delta. Muriel teaches at home and later at Delta High School.

1980

Membership: 33, Paul Kubilis joins the Guild as a new member.

President: Muriel McKnight

Some demonstrators as follows: Dorothy Proctor on glove making, Hope Drysdale on book covers and a notebook. After the demonstration a lively discussion re: problems and solutions occurred. This suggestion really caught fire and audience participation carried the discussion into and beyond the social hour regarding how we should get back to the basics. The slate of officers was read by Hope Drysdale as follows for 1979-1980: Past President Dan Harrington, President Muriel McKnight, Vice President Lorne Robson, Secretary Lillian Beech, Treasurer Lydia Vincent, Liaison to Artisan Bea Austin, Social Margaret Jennings, Bulletin Mildred Kemp, Programs Ruth Haig, Membership Jessie Strain, Library Hope Drysdale, and Exhibitions June Somerville.

1981

Annual: Hosted by Hamilton – aimed to get the Beacon for the Annual
Guild now meets at the John Howard Society at 19 Albert Street for monthly meetings

1982

Annual: Weston trophy piece was a gun case by Art Morris, free form box by Ruth Haig, 3D ring binder by Hope Drysdale, soft purse by Bea Austin and a 3D desk pad by Muriel McKnight

Members helping to make the Annual a success were Betsy Rennie, Lorna Robson, Audrey Gorton, as well as guest speaker Dave General speaking on native crafts. The demonstrators for the Annual were Hilda Chynoweth with blue bird pins, Madeline Mitchell with Mexican weave on belts, Sharon Beasley with marbled end papers, Karla Van Horne with straps and handles, and Gladys Riddell with wallet interiors. Audrey Gorton was in charge of the demonstrators.

1983

1984

Awards: Ruth Haig won many ribbons and an award for a leather lunch box while Bea Austin won many awards for her bowls

Hamilton Guild participated in Image 84, Ruth Haig won many ribbons for a leather lunch box plus an award. Some demonstrations: 3D by Fred Brown, Filigree by Bea Austin, Lino Block by Olivia Smith, Laminated bowl by Bea Austin.

1985

Awards: Betsy Rennie received her associate.

Membership: 18 paid members with a new member; David Windeyer.

Guild now meets at St. Margaret's Church on Emerson Street. The Christmas party was held at a restaurant with the programme for the evening being a gusset demonstration by Muriel McKnight. David McPherson

was treasurer doing a great job. Nine meetings were held on the following topics: welted seams, various dyes, turtle pins, raw hide mobiles, 3 part mine workshop on embossing a wallet, wallet interior and pattern making.

1986

Awards: Ruth Haig obtained her Fellowship standing CSCL

1987

1988

Awards: Betsy Rennie received her fellowship.

Program was as follows: masks by Bea Austin and Chalk pastels on leather by Betsy Rennie. The yearly potluck was craft oriented involving the making of Christmas ornaments, various finishes by Karla Van Horne, Ranger belts by Ruth Haig, flowers by Bea Austin, 4 strand braids by Karla Van Horne, small bag with welted seams by Betsy Rennie. During May, the guild took part in an exhibition of leather at Black Creek Pioneer Village just north of Toronto.

Programming included Inlay & Onlay by Jessie Little, boxes with hinged lids by Dave MacPherson, covered bottles by Ruth Haig. An open invitation was made to all CSCL members to an OAC Open House for workshops. November saw the first fall meeting and many things were discussed. The Christmas demonstration was on ornaments by Betsy Rennie and Karla Van Horne.

1989

President: Muriel McKnight

Membership: New guest Jean Tsuchido

The HARAC Designer Crafts show ran at the Art Gallery from February 13th to March 16th and the Black Creek sale took place on May 14th and 15th. The December meeting held at St. Margaret's Church was a potluck with a silent auction and a sale of Jessie Strain's tools ending in Betsy showing beautiful slides of Holland. The programming included finishes by Karla Van Horne.

Tools and leather were donated by Mrs. Hazel Brintnell to be sold by silent auction at a later date and Peter Groves volunteered for an instructor position at the Arnell Observation Home. With regrets, a resignation letter was read from Karla Van Horne.

1990

President: Muriel McKnight

Membership: 21; new members included Mildred Kemp and her husband Dr. Bob Kemp.

Slate of Officers included: Past President Audrey Gorton, President Muriel McKnight, Vice President Ruth Haig, Secretary Audrey Gorton, Treasurer David McPherson, Programme Sharon Beasley, Publicity June Somerville, Library Hilda Newitt, Social and meeting policies Betsy Rennie, Telephone and Sick Bea Austin. May meeting was a potluck where Rene Hacksteter showed slides of Europe including old leather guilds, museums in Holland and other leather articles.

1991

Annual: David McPherson in charge of the Annual to be held at the Beacon. Hamilton won the Weston with an 85.7% average.

Awards: David McPherson received his Associate, the Zalaitis pin for a score of over 80% in his Associate, and the Tandy Leather award at the Ontario Crafts for his black box. 12 Craftsman and 9 Salon ribbons were won by members of the Hamilton guild. Ruth Haig was awarded a life membership in CSCL.

President: Betsy Rennie

Annual demonstrators included Bruce White, Lois McPherson, Bill Whittingham, Betsy Rennie and Ruth Haig. Sharon Beasley noted she needed more ideas for programmes.

The guild celebrated 35 years at a Christmas anniversary meeting. The following charter members were on the guest list: President Betsy Rennie, Marion Bridge, Lorna Robson, Margaret Weldon, Nina Wilson, Harold Wilson, Audrey Gorton, Laura Walker, Jean Booth, Elizabeth Courneya, Winnie Comfort, Ruth Haig, Hilda Newitt, Florence King, David McPherson, Dorothy McPherson, David Windeyer, Bea Austin, Mildred Kemp, Lydia Zdura, Muriel McKnight and Bob Kemp.

1992

Muriel offered to put together a photo album for the 35th Anniversary and June Somerville continues to advertise guild meetings in local papers and on TV.

A workshop on molded boxes by Ruth took place in May and David McPherson taught at the Haliburton School of Fine Arts. Guild continued to display articles at Westdale, Terryberry and Ancaster libraries.

1993

Awards: Hamilton won the Weston trophy with a score of 85.4, Sharon Beasley, Ruth Haig and Dorothy McPherson won Salon awards. Sharon Beasley, Ruth Haig, Betsy Rennie and Dorothy McPherson won Craftsman ribbons and Ruth Haig won the Irva Ford award.

In October the guild lost longtime member Jessie Strain whose specialties included Gardenia flower pins and card case holders. In December, the usual potluck was held and Betsy Rennie demonstrated slide knots and pineapple knot closures.

1994

Membership: 18 members

President: Ruth Haig

Ruth Haig was president, David Windeyer Secretary, and David McPherson Treasurer. In October the guild attended the Acton outdoor show and Lois MacPherson conducted a workshop on molded face masks. In May a BBQ was held at Dorothy and David McPherson's home in Port Colborne that included a Ruby Conway as a guest speaker describing the history of the Niagara and Port Colborne areas. The guild learned of the passing of Lorna Robson and Art Morris. Leather 94 was held at the Etobicoke Art Center on December 9th.

1995

Annual: Hamilton won the Weston trophy thanks to articles by David McPherson, David Windeyer, Ruth Haig, Betsy Rennie, and Muriel McKnight submitting articles.

The first meeting was a demonstration on Dream Catchers by Nancy Durham that was well received by members. Ruth reported on the great job that Woodstock did as hostess for the Annual.

Suggestions for programming included: plant picks, one piece wallet, Christmas ideas, wallet interiors, dream catchers, pins and flowers, 40th anniversary pins, and tooling workshop. A workshop on bottle making was held by Bill Whittingham in October. A motion to send a donation in memory of Fred Brown was approved.

1996

International Assembly:

Annual: David Windeyer organized the Annual at the Holiday Inn on Guelph Line

Membership: New member Ann Kowalchuk

President: David Windeyer

Demonstrators at the Annual included Peter Grove and Allen Foss on leather plates, Betsy Rennie on arrow head basket weave, Cliff McTavish and Hilda Chynoueth. A presentation was made in honour of Irva Ford by her family, Susan Ricketts and Peter Ford on Irva's career in leather.

Peter Grove gave a tour of his shop, Tundra Leather, on King Street East and David Windeyer demonstrated a case to carry a computer disk. During 1996, the guild lost a founding member; Winnie Comfort from Smithville

In May David Windeyere moved to Toronto and resigned from the Hamilton guild to join the Toronto guild. At a potluck at Muriel McKnight's, the guild presented David with a pocket secretary for his service.

Ruth demonstrated a one piece wallet and the guild met with Woodstock for a workshop on masks by Madeline Mitchell.

1997

Annual: Weston Trophy articles included: rectangular box by David McPherson, half oval box by Ruth Haig, and masks by Betsy Rennie and Muriel McKnight.

Muriel and Ruth conducted a workshop on desk pads. Dorothy McPherson gave an informative demo with the theme of the 3 R's: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Cliff McTavish held a meeting and workshop on a 3D buckle design. At the December Christmas potluck meeting, Bill Strongman and members of the artisan guild Vida and Ken Rodgers were our guests.

Dorothy and David resigned from the Hamilton guild as they were returning to London Ontario. Longtime member Harold Booth passed away.

1998

Membership: 15 members by February including a new member: Peter Grove.

Everyone was pleased to see Karla Van Horne, a former member, at the January meeting. In May Nancy Durham from Woodstock conducted a workshop on moccasins where Hamilton Guild Artisan members Vida and Helen participated.

1999

Annual: Toronto hosted Annual meeting

President: Peter Grove

Membership: 15 members

In February, Betsy Rennie demonstrated saddle stitches while in April of 1999 Muriel married Bill Strongman and a name change too place. In October, with regrets we announced the passing of Bea Austin, one of our founding members. Bea held her Associate and Fellow and taught in her early years; her talent will always be remembered. As of November, the Guild was meeting at Tundra Leather courtesy of Peter Grove. At this meeting Muriel demonstrated poinsettias while Peter Grove demonstrated braiding.

There were no minutes available for November as Muriel forgot the minutes. Excuse: recently married.

2000

Awards: Peter Grove received his Associate

Membership: New member Lauchlan Harrison was introduced in February

At the February meeting, new member Lauchlan demonstrated a one piece fur lined mitt and hats. In October Lauchlan conducted a workshop at St. Margaret's Church on fur lined mitts for members of the CSCL.

2001

Annual: Hosted by Hamilton at the Beacon Best Western.

Membership: 11 paid members

At the January meeting plans for the Annual were discussed and there was a single guest, Bill Strongman. In February, everything was arranged for the Annual hosted by Hamilton at the Beacon Best Western. Grab bags, demonstrators, and entertainers were scheduled with the Senior Hula Wahine Hawaiian Dance group from the Hamilton Senior Centre performing. It was a successful Annual due to Peter's organizing efforts. Ruth Haig gave a one-piece wallet workshop that was completed by each member between the November and December meetings.

2002

Awards: Peter Grove received his Fellowship

Membership: New member Brian Teal joined in November to bring the total membership to 11.

Lauchlan demonstrated a leather rose and made for a very interesting evening. In addition, Lauchlan did a mini workshop on mule slippers at the February meeting and in October, instructed on change purses. In December, the Guild made differently shaped Christmas decorations using a technique of wetting leather and using heat to curl the edges. The pieces were dyed and an application of Rolex gold was applied to them.

2003

In January Ruth H. continued instructions on hinged boxes that began in December 2002. In February, Ruth held a workshop on 5 strand braid lacing in belts.

This brings the records of the Hamilton Leather Guild to completion from 1956 until 2003.

Compiled by,

Ruth Haig and Muriel McKnight Strongman