



Canadian Leathercraft

Volume IV Number 4

Summer, 1955

REFLECTIONS ON THE ASSEMBLY by Robert Muma

Since its inception five years ago, the C.S.C.L. as a national organization has planned and realized one success after another in a measure beyond expectation. Now in the field of international cooperation, we have begun to glimpse horizons we did not know existed.

Our Second International Assembly which was held at the Royal York Hotel May 7th and 8th, again showed how much, in our plans, we have underestimated the enthusiasm of leathercrafters everywhere and answered the question, "How far will an enthusiast travel just to see and talk leathercraft?"

They came from Regina and Winnipeg, from New Brunswick, Timmins and Kirkland Lake, from Cleveland, Chicago and Philadelphia, from Windsor, Detroit and Hamilton, from Lindsay, Ottawa and Wisconsin, and many points between, to make the most interesting and exciting group of displays and demonstrations yet enjoyed by leathercrafters anywhere.

The variety of the leathercraft displays and the range of techniques demonstrated by masters from the different guilds was a day's experience impossible of realization a few years ago. However, the success of the Assembly lay not so much in this range and versatility as in the cooperation of the various groups in this concerted effort and in the free exchange of ideas. In this pooling of our efforts with those of other organized groups across the border, we have formed a team of climbers striving to attain a contemporary leathercraft culture, the success of which depends on each individual group. Perhaps we have wondered if this success was our "Everest". Rather, should we not ask, "What other summits lie ahead?"

All material published in "Canadian Leathercraft" is the property of The Canadian Society of Creative Leathercraft, and may not be reprinted in any form without the written permission of the Society. Editor of "Canadian Leathercraft" - Mrs. Dorothy Muma, 62 McGill Street, Toronto 2, Ontario.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES by Deane H. Russell

The summer months offer Canadians many chances to enjoy a change of leisure-time activities which may differ completely from the spare-time hours of winter. For those who plan to follow some form of hobbycraft during the next winter, our Canadian summers offer unsurpassed opportunities to improve general knowledge and technical skills in our chosen crafts.

Craft Design Excursions

One of the most enjoyable plans for craftsmen to try during the summer months is to work through a series of "craft design excursions". Craftsmen who like to venture into new horizons and try something original, can give their minds a rest from copying and a chance to conceive new ideas, while at the same time giving their hands a chance to practice and develop new skills at working with tools and materials. Before long, such craftsmen will enjoy very real personal satisfaction at having actually created something original.

Two objectives should be worked through during any program of improving craft skills:

- (1) plan to collect as many new design inspirations as possible;
- (2) plan to experiment with tools and materials to develop skills in translating new design ideas into articles which will display improved design, working and finishing techniques.

Start a Design Portfolio

To gain practice in collecting new design ideas, a large-size scrap book is helpful or several large brown paper envelopes may serve nicely for assembling designs according to classified articles. Use a section of the scrap book or one large envelope, for temporary sorting of design ideas into various finished-article categories, e.g., belts, handbags, desk sets, book covers, wallets, keycases and change purses, etc.

Design Sources

- (1) old and contemporary style magazines (back issues often found in second-hand bookstores);
- (2) trade journals;
- (3) libraries;
- (4) daily newspapers -- Canadian and American;
- (5) nature books -- flowers, plants, birds, animals, insects, etc.

Wherever possible, simply clip or cut out design ideas which appeal; if not convenient to cut out such pictorial ideas, they may be carefully traced with tracing paper (not carbon paper); or rough free-hand sketches may be made with notes of details written in longhand just enough to record the ideas which capture your imagination.

(6) visits to museums, antique shops, modern department stores, specialty shops -- make mental or written notes for filing in your portfolio; a written note is often as valuable as a pictorial note, since it serves as a reminder for a design inspiration for later development which might otherwise become forgotten and remain undeveloped.

(7) free-hand sketches -- done during excursions to the countryside, where design inspirations come easily with a little practice. Sketch only bold details, leave out fussy details which might prove difficult, if not impossible, to transpose into leather. A convenient size sketch pad and a box of conte crayons are sufficient for sketching equipment. Don't use sharpened pencils, as beginners are tempted to record too many small and unnecessary details. Try oversize rather than undersize sketches wherever possible.

Using Design Portfolio

Remember, the true craftsman collects design ideas not for the sake of copying nature or designs already worked out by others, but in order to fire his imagination and enthusiasm for developing new ideas. Practice at adapting tried and proven ideas to new materials will help in developing confidence when attempting to conceive something "entirely original".

Equally as important as collecting and classifying is the matter of putting our new, fresh and vigorous design idea into concrete form before its freshness wears off. This means getting at our tools and materials and actually translating our design thoughts into finished products.

Collecting Technical Knowledge

Every opportunity should be seized to improve our general technical craft knowledge. This may be done by: taking summer courses at craft schools; visiting factories or professional studios, where partly finished work may be studied; visiting museums; department and specialty shops where finished products may be viewed; reference sections of libraries. Some craftsmen advance furthest by simply conducting their own workshop programs--quietly working along experimenting, testing, making written or mental notes of unsuccessful as well as successful research. Others make better progress when working in company with another fellow craftsman or group of students sharing common interests. They enjoy the stimulation which develops from friendly exchange of design and technique ideas among fellow craftsmen.

With such a summer program behind him, the craftsman can be reasonably sure that his next season's efforts will reflect both advance taste in design and increased technical skills. His works will stand out as examples of time well-invested in exploring original ideas and developing higher standards of craftsmanship.

SELL YOUR WORK THROUGH THE HANDICRAFTS GUILD

Anyone who lives in or has visited Toronto is probably familiar with the Canadian Handicrafts Guild store on Bloor Street near Bay. For a number of years this store has carried a wide variety of hand-crafted articles -- ceramics, weaving, metalcraft, jewellery, etc. -- but very little leather. The store management now wishes to stock leather articles as a continuing item for sale and invites members of C.S.C.L. to send them such articles. Lower-priced articles are more readily saleable and any pieces sent in for sale should mostly be priced to sell below \$5.00, including the Guild's markup. These articles would be purchased outright by the Guild. Small articles such as keycases, billfolds, bookmarks, change purses, etc., would be most acceptable.

Larger articles such as handbags, bookends, belts, book-covers, desk sets, etc., will be accepted for display purposes and orders will be taken by the Guild. On these pieces, the Guild would get a sales commission of probably 10% with the rest of the price going to the craftsman.

Articles sent in will be passed on by the store management for suitability and not all articles will necessarily be accepted either for sale or display. To take advantage of the tourist season, articles should be sent in as soon as possible to Miss Lex Cullingham Canadian Handicrafts Guild, 77 Bloor St. West, Toronto 5, Ont.

Garnett

CRAFT LEATHER DYES AND FINISHES

16 colors keyed to color originality

Choose your color or create a new one

SIX ANTIQUES FOR MELLOW AGED EFFECTS:

GOLDEN TAN
CHESTNUT BROWN

HAVANA BROWN
ROUGE

MAHOGANY
FOREST GREEN

TEN TONING DYES FOR FINE COLOR HARMONIES:

YELLOW
ORANGE
SCARLET

BLUE
LIGHT BLUE
GREEN

TAN
MIDDLE (Walnut) BROWN
DARK (Chocolate) BROWN

POLISH COAT FOR SATIN-SMOOTH, WATER-RESISTANT FINISH

EDGE DRESSING AND INLAY BACKGROUND DYE

for that final professional touch.

Ask for the GARNETT INSTRUCTION MANUAL at your hobby supply store.

Dealers write for information to:

GARNETT COMPANY

1 HANNAFORD STREET

- TORONTO

- Phone OXford 4587

SECOND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF LEATHERCRAFTSMEN
Royal York Hotel, Toronto, May 7th and 8th

What had promised to be just another large meeting of leathercraftsmen turned out to be a two-day course of instruction in all phases of leathercraft. When the Second International Assembly of Leathercraftsmen disbanded at 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 8th, after two days of intensive leathercraft, everyone felt that there had been so much to learn and absorb that it would probably take several weeks before everything was really taken in.

The meeting got underway early Saturday morning with a long line-up at the registration desk. Commercial and Guild exhibits had mostly been set up the night before and all was in full swing. Saturday morning and afternoon were taken up with demonstrations of many leathercraft techniques by specialists from the participating guilds. Each session was one hour long and demonstrations included coloring, carving, making name-plates, purse-framing, embossing, making moccasins, moulded leather trays, high relief tooling, saddle stitching, tool making, braiding and lacing, silver engraving, box covering, portrait carving and glove making. At times the demonstration tables were so crowded it was impossible to add any more spectators and the demonstrators disappeared from view. With a total of about 375 leathercrafters registered on the Saturday, the demonstrators were kept very busy answering questions and reviewing special points of their techniques.

Displays were set up by guilds from Detroit, Buffalo and Rochester, along with the Travelling Exhibition of C.S.C.L., and a group from Windsor. Craft dealers from both Canada and the United States had display booths. It was interesting to see the trend toward original design in the guild displays, with a good number of the pieces shown being original work or simplifications of existing designs. A great deal of effort was put into making the displays attractive and the guilds are to be commended for their fine work.

Of the 377 leathercrafters in attendance, 132 were from the U.S.A. and 245 were Canadians, of which 144 were members of C.S.C.L. This gives a good idea of the widespread interest in this Assembly.

The banquet Saturday evening in the Crystal Ballroom was attended by 256 members and guests. Dr. Ralph Larmour, President of C.S.C.L., welcomed the leathercrafters, and awards were made to the new Fellows and Associates. The main speaker for the evening was Thor Hansen, who spoke on "Creative Imagination at Work." Mr. Hansen stressed originality and appropriateness of design for leather, emphasizing Canadian motifs. He showed colored slides of decorations in the two newest British American Oil buildings, where he had charge of the decoration and in which all work was done by Canadians. He

suggested that ideas for leathercraft design could be adapted from the old Indian and Eskimo art work and from Canadian scenery, even city skylines and the grain elevators of the west.

Following the talk by Mr. Hansen, there was a fashion show by the Michigan Leather Artisans under the direction of Mrs. Liz Freriks, demonstrating that nearly anything can be made or covered with leather. One feature of this show was the combining of leather and aluminum in making handbags, hats and jewellery.

A draw was held for door prizes which had been donated by various craft houses in the U.S. and Canada. At the close of the dinner meeting, the display room was reopened for viewing the exhibits. On leaving the ballroom, each person was presented with a souvenir tumbler donated by Mr. Harold Frost, of Wallaceburg, Ont.

On Sunday morning, the Annual Business Meeting of the Canadian Society of Creative Leathercraft was held, of which a further report appears elsewhere in this issue. This was followed by a panel discussion based on questions presented by members of the various guilds. Experts on the panel included Harry Kellest of Buffalo, Bob Dengler, Carol Ruffin and Jack Yarko of Rochester, Gordon Drummond of Detroit, Robert Muma and Don MacKinnon of Toronto. Fred Fischer of Buffalo acted as Moderator. A great deal of extremely interesting and useful information was contained in these questions and answers and the discussion had to be cut short because of the time limit.

A talk and Viewgraph demonstration on "Basic Design for Leather Carving" with emphasis on monograms, was given by Frank Radke and Larry DeRosia of Detroit, in which was shown a simple method of rearranging designs to suit specified areas and the construction of monograms.

In the afternoon on Sunday, there were more demonstrations and viewing of exhibits, with the last demonstration ending at 4 pm. Such was the extent of interest of the attenders of the Assembly that some of them stayed to help dismantle the exhibits and clear the room.

During the Assembly, a meeting was held consisting of representatives from the participating guilds, at which it was decided that future Assemblies be held in mid-May, with the Third International Assembly to be held May 12th and 13th, 1956, at the Hotel Statler in Detroit. Bob Hartmann of Detroit was appointed Chairman, with Mrs. Liz Freriks, also of Detroit, as Vice-Chairman. The C.S.C.L. later appointed a local committee with Ray Potter as Chairman, Harold Frost as Vice-Chairman and Viola Harris as Secretary.

All organized leathercraft groups on the continent are to be invited to participate in this Third Assembly and it promises to be even bigger and more interesting than the two previous ones.

Those who attended the Second Assembly agreed that it was a leathercraft experience which could not be duplicated anywhere, and those who missed attending it should plan now to be in on next year's proceedings in Detroit.

~~~~~

### EASTERN LEATHERCRAFT INVADES THE WEST

The day following the Second International Assembly of Leathercraftsmen, word was received that one of the prominent members of the Detroit Leathercrafters, Mrs. Melba Fisher, had been awarded the grand sweepstakes prize for the best piece in the show at the California Hobby show. Although this news did not come in time for congratulations to be offered to her at the Assembly, the C.S.C.L. now takes this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Fisher.

The outstanding and important feature of this award is that it was given for a beautiful picture done by Melba Fisher, entitled "Land of Make Believe". It is a picture of a dreamy-eyed child with wind-blown hair, surrounded by little characters such as any small child draws representing make-believe people. The whole picture gives an impression of freedom, completely unlike the cluttered western motifs. The technique is kept simple, with few tools being used in its execution.

That such a leather work could win top honors at a western U.S.A. exhibition is a signpost of the times, pointing to the future trend in leathercraft, and is truly an example of the best of eastern leathercraft invading the saddle-stamping ground of the west.

*Handicraft Leathers and Supplies*

Fine Assortment of Beautiful Leathers

Complete range of Leathercraft Tools and Accessories

Comprehensive Detailed 64 Page Catalogue with 24 Page Supplement

Experienced Personalized Service

**THE BIRT SADDLERY CO. LTD.**

*The Leather Goods House*

519 Main Street

-

Winnipeg, Manitoba



### C.S.C.L. APPROVED LIST OF TEACHERS

Many organized groups are interested in the list of teachers our Society is preparing. Community Programmes Branch, Department of Education, Ontario, is particularly interested since they are building up a list of qualified teachers to which they can refer requests coming to them from groups in their various districts. It is especially difficult to get good teachers in the more isolated districts.

If you have not yet filled out the questionnaire sent out by us with the Autumn, 1954, Bulletin, and would like to apply for inclusion on this list, write for a form to Miss E. A. Prince, 153 Close Avenue, Toronto 3, Ontario.

### BOOK REVIEW

"Color In Leathercraft" by Robert Muma

This book is a new and enlarged edition of Mr. Muma's previous book on "Color Decoration of Leather", but its appearance and contents are such that it replaces the previous edition completely. It is illustrated with half-tone pictures and plenty of charts and drawings, with a set of progressive exercises in the use of colors. Even a beginner in the field of color in leathercraft can follow the detailed instructions on the many varieties of coloring materials. For the advanced craftsman there are many suggestions for experimenting with color. Mr. Muma, a Fellow of C.S.C.L., and an authority on the subject of coloring leather, has here offered an interesting, informative, educational book which should be in all leathercraftsmen's libraries.

### MEMBERSHIPS NOW DUE

Renewal memberships for 1955-56 are now due. With the International Assembly an annual event, members will not want to miss any copies of their Bulletin in order that they may know all about these meetings. Articles full of technical leathercraft information are planned for future Bulletins along with news of other events of interest to leathercrafters. If your membership card is dated 1955 or earlier, now is the time to renew so that you will not be left out. Fees are as follows: General membership, \$2.00; Associate membership, \$3.00; Fellow membership, \$5.00; Sustaining membership, \$10.00. Send all fees to Membership Chairman, Miss E.A. Prince, 153 Close Avenue, Toronto 3, Ontario. Renew now!



### C.S.C.L. ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Business Meeting of the C.S.C.L. was held Sunday, May 8th, in conjunction with the Second International Assembly. Because of the activities of the Assembly, the business of our Annual Meeting was kept at a minimum.

An application from the London Leathercraft Guild to become an affiliated group of the C.S.C.L. was approved and we heartily welcome this group into affiliation with the Society.

New officers and committee Chairmen were appointed, and a list of these will be found on another page of this Bulletin.

After several years of discussion and work, a crest was adopted for the Society. This is to be used on the front page of the Bulletin, beginning with this issue, as part of the mast-head. It will also appear on membership cards and stationery. In the form of a stamping tool, it will be sold to Fellows and Associates only.

Reports from the various committees had been prepared in advance and were distributed to those present. Anyone who was not present will be receiving a copy of these reports through the mail. The report of the Membership Committee showed a drop in membership and there are now approximately 270 members in the Society. The Exhibitions Chairman reported that the Travelling Exhibition had travelled across Canada and was shown in 10 centres with good publicity. It was agreed that this Exhibition should continue to travel as long as requests come in, and another Travelling Exhibition is to be gathered together to go out in October, 1956.

It was approved that the Society should take advantage of the offer of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild for the use of their premises at 77 Bloor Street West, Toronto, for a sale of leathercraft sometime in November.

### NEW ASSOCIATES AND FELLOWS APPOINTED

The following were awarded certificates at the Annual Meeting upon qualifying as Fellows and Associates of C.S.C.L.:

Fellows: Mr. Robert Shaw, Toronto; Mr. Endel Ruberg, Montreal;  
Miss Clarice Packham, Weston; Mrs. Nora Huyck, Willowdale;  
Mrs. Dorothy Muma, Toronto.

Associates: Mrs. Sadie Roebuck, Toronto; Mrs. Clara Cavanagh, Barrie.





CANADIAN HANDICRAFTS GUILD CRAFTS COMPETITION AND DISPLAY  
C.N.E., AUGUST 26th TO SEPTEMBER 10th

The prize list for this interesting competition, just announced, is as follows:--

Best tooled or carved work -- \$10.00, donated by Clarke & Clarke  
 Leathers, Barrie, Ontario.

Best work neither tooled nor carved - any other treatment -- \$10.00 donated by Lewis Craft  
 may be used, such as applique, Supplies Ltd., Toronto.  
 contrasting leathers, coloring, etc.

Best original entry -- \$25.00, by Women's Committee, Canadian  
 Handicrafts Guild (Ont.)

Best original design with minimum decorative treatment --- \$12.00, donated by Ottawa Valley  
 (decoration not to exceed 20% of article) Leathercraft Studios, Ottawa.

Best Leather Gloves --- \$10.00, donated by Lewis Craft Supplies  
 Limited, Toronto.

Please note that this is an entirely different competition to the Handicrafts - Women's Division, Leather Class, N.C.E., listed in the C.N.E. Prize List.

Last year we appealed to our C.S.C.L. members to support this competition by submitting their best articles, in the hope that it might become the show window for the best in Canadian leathercraft. Critical comment amply justified these hopes. This year again we hope our members will give it their best support. Prize winning entries will be shown and as many others as space will permit. To have your work accepted for this display will bring recognition to you as a leathercrafter, even though you do not win a prize. As a point of interest, all entries last year with one exception, were from C.S.C.L. members.

A limited number of entry forms are available, and these have been sent to the members we think are most likely to compete. If you do not receive one, and are interested, please write to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, 77 Bloor Street West, Toronto 5, and ask for forms.

XXXXXXXXXXXX



### C.S.C.L. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES, 1955-56

President: Dr. R.K. Larmour, 59 High Park Blvd., Toronto 3, Ont.  
Vice-President: Harold Frost, 104 Margaret Ave., Wallaceburg, Ont.  
Treasurer: Miss Marjorie Murdoch, Apt. 3B, 1048 Yonge St., Toronto.  
Recording Secretary: Miss Viola Harris, 47 Snowden Ave., Toronto.  
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Louise Smyth, 40 Strathmore Blvd. Toronto  
Committee Chairmen: Membership: Miss E. A. Prince, Toronto.  
Editorial: Mrs. Dorothy Muma, Toronto.  
Exhibitions: Mrs. Nora Huyck, Willowdale, Ont.  
Publicity: Mrs. Reta Larmour, Toronto.  
Advertising: Cecil Roebuck, Toronto.  
Executive Council: Mrs. Jean Newton, Toronto; Mrs. Margaret Jennings, London; Deane Russell, Ottawa; Mrs. Edith Roscoe, Weston; Bill Dixon, Toronto; Fred Brown, Toronto; Robert Shaw, Toronto; Don MacKinnon, Toronto; Ray Potter, Toronto; T.H. Kribs, Toronto; Robert Muma, Toronto; Miss Elizabeth Arnold, Kirkland Lake, Ont.



### FALL SALE OF WORK -- CANADIAN HANDICRAFTS GUILD

Our Annual Meeting approved that we accept the Handicrafts Guild's offer of their premises for a sale, possibly in November, to take advantage of Christmas buying. It was suggested that articles should mostly be priced below \$5.00 with a fair quantity up to \$10.00 and only a few of higher price. Of these amounts, 10% would go to the Handicrafts Guild for the use of their premises, and 10% to the C.S.C.L. to take care of expenses incurred in the sale. All work will be reviewed by the Board of Selection before being included in the sale. It is important that the quality of the work be good.

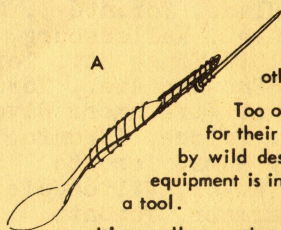
Also, the Board of Selection will reserve the right to reprice articles if they seem out of line, either too much or too little. Definite instructions for your guidance will be published in the fall bulletin. This preliminary notice is to give you the opportunity to work on your articles during the summer months.

### WORKSHOP TIPS

Among tips given in answer to questions asked of the panel of experts at the International Assembly were the following:

- (1) There is no satisfactory way to bleach leather. Although Oxalic Acid has been suggested from time to time for this purpose, it is really not a bleach, but actually darkens the leather. Such preparations as household bleaches have been used, but here again the action of the chemical might be harmful to the leather.
- (2) To ensure an even dye job, especially on a large area, always dampen your leather before applying the dye.





YES, It's TRUE! Illustration (A) — a tool conjured up in our minds when asked this actual question not so long ago: "Have you a tool with a SPOON on one end and a PIN on the other?"

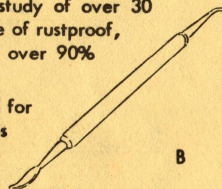
Too often, beginner craft students don't bother to learn correct names for their tools. They seem content to order by catalog number alone, or by wild description, without realizing that learning of proper names for equipment is in itself an aid to better understanding of the special functions of a tool.

It's equally true that some of the finest decorative leathercraft in Canada today was produced with tools little better than tool "A" — tools quickly beaten from nails and crudely bound with cord or tape for handles. But such work represents exceptions — accomplished in spite of tools used, and only because of highly developed skill in tool manipulation by the craftsman.

It is our firm belief that such masters of leather modelling could increase their enjoyment of leather decorating, if not their already excellent work by becoming the proud owner of a new OVLS "Canadian Modeller-Tracer" (B) — developed after long study of over 30 different typical modellers from Europe and North America. Made of rustproof, nickel silver, individually hand finished — this one tool suffices for over 90% of all modelling needs.

A finely-designed and finished tool adds pleasure to any craft. Send for your "Canadian Modeller" today. Price \$1.10 — postpaid. Groups may receive 12 for the price of 10!

Ottawa Valley Leathercraft Studios, 116 O'Connor St., Ottawa



## *Our Catalogue Club provides a valuable service for you.*

FOR INFORMATION

Write to:

**Clarke & Clarke Leathers**

**BARRIE**

**MONTREAL**  
(636 Dorchester St. W.)

BRANCHES

**ONTARIO**

**TORONTO**  
(523 Mt. Pleasant Rd.)