

Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft
CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT



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The Round Knife - Enduring Symbol of the Leather Craft

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Past President: Sean Dalgetty

Past 1st Vice-Pres.: Jim Wilkes

Past Treasurer: Della Chynoweth

Past Recording Secretary: Lauch Harrison

Past Membership: Barbara Chynoweth

Last Editor: Lauch Harrison

Website: Eugene Pik www.canadianleathercraft.org

Notes from the Editor...

This is my first and last edition of the Bulletin. Writing has taken me awhile, as memories come and go I'm saddened by the end of our Society. The Final Reports and the Voting tell the story of why this is the only way to conclude. Our Membership has dwindled and grown old. What is our **Legacy**? We have three Guild Branches in Hamilton, Mississauga and Norland, two of them still having regular monthly meetings. **Legacy**. The Lamour Library with additions is available for viewing online and in person. **Legacy**. Craft Ontario will fund Bursaries that focus on Leathercraft. **Legacy**. The web site incorporating an incredible amount information and history. **Legacy**. The Members that pass down the Craft. **Legacy**.

We have many people to thank: Paul Kitchener and Kim Winchester for keeping the Library alive, Eugene Pik for the incredible work he's done on overhauling the web site and collecting our History, Lauren Malec for her work with Craft Ontario and Members at Large, Sean Dalgetty & David McPherson for their work keeping the Standards for the Council of Fellows, Barb & Della Chynoweth (and Hilda & Phyllis) for being the **Heart and Soul** of our Society as Executive Members for so many years. The hours (years) of Society Business Meetings would make your head spin let alone the travel to and from Norland.

I cherish the Legacy of the Canadian Society for Creative Leatherwork and all the talented and dedicated people that made it possible.

Your Last Editor, Lauch Harrison FCSCL

Letters to the Editor...

Hi Lauch

I was happy to write some remembrances for the last publication. As you can tell, CSCL has meant so much to me..for many years.. and the friendships I have had.

I loved the judging sessions.. and the open judging discussions..So informative. Each fellow would have their own perspective and criteria.. Such a learning situation for we, as Fellows, from each other.

If you see Sean, say hi to him for me.. He is such a great leather craftsman/designer. Not many like him, that is for sure. I always waited with anticipation to see what he had come up with each year.

David McPherson and I correspond on occasion too.

Anyway, Lauch, you have been so faithful in keeping everything organized. Your efforts are certainly appreciated. Your Hamilton weekend sounds like fun. Interesting events.. You are carrying on some fun leather events.

Take care and if you have the time to drop a quick email on occasion, I would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Carol McLean.

Some Memories

Carol McLean F.C.S.C.L.

Hi Lauch

Sorry I have been so long getting this to you.. So much to do getting an estate settled.. Still more to go too. When I got Eugene's email, it reminded me that I should get this done. So, here it is.

I remember helping form the Woodstock Branch of CSCL. We were a small group of leather workers who had met in each others homes. At the time Laureen Manuel was teaching at Continuing Education through the night school programme. After a while Laureen asked if I would teach it.. I had been teaching different projects at our guild by then and also fibre arts at night school too. (Quilting, Embroidery and Japanese Bunka embroidery to mention a few).

I said I would try. I had to apply to the Teaching Standards Committee of CSCL to teach leather. Bob (Robert) Muma was its chair. Also a Fellow member of CSCL..I was very intimidated presenting a lesson to him and be critiqued on it. I demonstrated making masks. He had not seen leather masks before and was intrigued by them. I was the first CSCL member to make and teach leather masks..Now many do them in so many ways. Bob was a world renowned Master Book Binder. He passed me and gave me his blessing. I cannot remember what year that was..but I was happy to have met CSCL Teaching Standards.

Some Memories Continued from page 2

When I taught at Cont. Ed. it gave me the opportunity to introduce the avid students to CSCL. We gained a nice amount of members that way and they, of course became CSCL members too. I taught the leather programme at Cont. Ed for approx 15 years. This fed a lot of new members into CSCL and Woodstock Branch. We had to discontinue the Leather class because of dropping registration. The main reason was cost. Leather and basic tools became too expensive for the hobbyist or parent with 2 children at home etc. By then Woodstock guild was quite strong. We even competed in Weston Trophy competitions. You will read more of the branch's complete history in the Branch story in a separate article, by Nancy and Madeleine.

Some of us decided to try at different times, for our Associate and eventually Fellow Standings. When I tried for my Fellow Standing, I made it on the first attempt, with a very respectable mark. I was cautioned not to expect that those marks would continue. I was so thrilled, because I enjoyed making original projects.

This was one aim of CSCL.. to encourage creativity and also to promote Canadian aspects in our work. (Isn't this very timely in today's Proud Canadian movement?) CSCL was ahead of the times.. and has been all along. I remember being the youngest Fellow and now I think I am the eldest. Time passes. I enjoyed every moment of it. Especially the teaching and judging. Passing our standards and knowledge on to others.

I remember making yearly trips down to demonstrate leather at the CSCL booth in the Arts, Crafts and Hobbies Building at the C.N.E. We could also sell some of our work. Fred Brown, who was also a Fellow member of long standing then, was Head of that building. We were fortunate to be able to expose C.S.C.L. to thousands of people passing by. We had info forms for people to pick up and contact the branch nearest to them. I remember driving down for many years with 5 or 6 branch members in the car. Took our lunch or grabbed something at a nearby outside food booth. Those were exciting and fun times too. Wonderful experiences that furthered interest in CSCL. and created wonderful camaraderie too.

Other exciting times were the Annual Meetings competitions in many categories.. even Branch competitions. These were hotly contested and were great fun. I remember coming home from one annual meeting with quite a few ribbons and was most proud of the Craftsmanship and Salon Ribbons. There was always the desire to create and excel in your work. Come up with something unique. A new dyeing technique or type of project.

My leather working days did come to an end when my fibromyalgia worsened to the point that my hands did not have strength to do a lot of the work. But I could still help with the judging, which was an important part of a Fellow's commitment. Eventually the trips were too difficult and I had to discontinue attending the judging sessions. Time passes on.

I have enjoyed the newsletters because it still kept me in touch with the "going's on" of the Society. Also email kept me in touch with some members.

I have had the good fortune of making so many dear friends. I feel that is one of the greatest gifts CSCL has given me. It is sad to see that all of this will be coming to an end.. So many wonderful people... precious memories and dear friends. A true gift.

I am pleased that information about CSCL will still be available on the internet. I give a proud salute to the founding members of CSCL and their foresight to create a unique and distinctly Canadian leather organization. I am grateful and fortunate to have been a member for so many years.

Sincerely,
Carol McLean
F.C.S.C.L.

CSCL Annual Competitions Virtual/Photo Competition

see Minutes of the 75th AGM for full report

The Virtual Annual Competition was opened a week late on April 8 due to a massive Ice Storm and power outage and closed April 24, 2024. Sean & Lauch on April 26, 2024 to discuss and judge 13 entries submitted by Three General Members, and One Fellow.

The high quality of the entries allowed the Judges to give out Best in Show - \$50, Muma Award for Tooling and Colouring - \$50, and Best General Member - \$50 and a Salon Ribbon to Greg Belenky for his Lady Godiva. Greg also was awarded 2 Craft Ribbons for Lady Godiva and Art Nouveau Wallet

Julien Jans received a Craft Ribbons for his Sturgeon Scutes Bracelet. Julien's Ripple Watch Strap earned a Craft Ribbon.

Best Belt in Honour of Jack Meharg - \$50 and a Craft Ribbon went to Bob Richardson for his Guitar Strap, he also received 2 Craft Ribbons for Western Style Belt and Octagon Box

Lauch Harrison received 3 Craft Ribbons for Black Billfold, Tea Box Toadstools and Hinged Box.

As the fifth iteration of the Virtual Annual not all the photos are showing the aspects, quality and telling a story. The images were smaller with less detail and it is hard to Judge. We were happy to give monetary awards to well deserved pieces and their makers.

Annual AGM Competition

Paul and Nancy judged the Annual Competition and were pleased to announce these prizes

Best Fellow \$50 & Best Wearable \$20 to Sean Dalgetty for Coon Skin Hat

Best in Show \$50 & Best Colour Robert Muma Award \$50 to Lauch Harrison for Hinged Box

Best Workshop Al Foss Award \$50 to Jim Wilkes

Best General Member \$50 & Michigan Soft Leather Award \$50 to Sheena Burger

CSCL MEMBERS-AT-LARGE FINAL NEWSLETTER REPORT - MAY 2026

Submitted by Lauren Malec

In the span of 75 years, **Members-At-Large (M.A.L.)** viably sustained CSCL standards, even long into retirement.

The 'writer' volunteered as M.A.L. Appointee (2012-23), and Executive Council Secretary (2021-23), and viewed *videoconference* technology as a game changer. After her 70th Anniversary M.A.L. Annual Report of an additional 25% attrition, Lauren served as 'Backup Secretary' preparing the minutes of virtual-held meetings. Here she brushes the surface, bearing pointedly on her M.A.L. NEWS *email blast* readers.

Dorothy (freelance arts reporter) spearheaded more than 50 successful OVSA nominations, a leather exhibition and new Editorial columns when she and David were tasked with increasing M.A.L. **representation**. Lauren followed with 5 summers of CSCL Larmour Library Review, grateful to hand over the reins to Doug (Kingston, Ontario) who fulfilled his 2-year Executive term ending in 2025.

When the Woodstock Branch disbanded in 2010, the M.A.L. **roster** rose to over 20 and an unofficial London Leather Guild (LLG) was founded. Meetings were held at the home of Dorothy and David. Marion (CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT, Fall 2019) and Dorothy co-founded the Annual's LONDON JEWELLERY AWARD. Loreen, the first Woodstock VP in 1967, is the benefactor of the *CSCL Teaching in Leathercraft Fund*.

CSCL **Sustaining Member**, Sea Leather Wear, in Calgary, Alberta, sponsored the CSCL for decades, and donated shipments of the company's Canadian tanned fish leather. Their sueded, glazed, salmon and carp skins inspired the 73rd Annual LEATHERCRAFT MADE OF FISH SKINS AWARD.

David, FCSCCL, is an international crafter with a mathematics background. While serving CSCL nationally and locally this award-winning leathercrafter estimated in 2010 that he had made over 400 of his leather **boxes** since he began retailing in 1990. *"In the early 1950's my parents signed me up at a booth at The Western Fair in London, Ontario for 10 weekly leathercraft lessons at the YWCA . . . I now assume that the London Branch was providing the lessons. If that is the case and if I had known to join CSCL I could have been a member for over 70 years!"*

Charter Members were highly influential at CSCL workshops and Betsy, FCSCCL, recounts their attention to fine tooling when she became a member in 1983. The **camaraderie** included travels to judge U.S.-held leather guild events. Earning her Fellows in 1990, she never looked back: Annual Convention host, Editor and award-winning leatherworker along with demonstrations through her Hamilton Branch roots (The LEATHERCRAFTERS JOURNAL, Volume I, No. 4, page 52).

The 2008 Annual Convention display featured the work of four **Junior Members**. Many milestones were met by these students. Darren, Norland Branch, got his start here with his *Gloves* and *Belt* entries. In 2010 Joanna, LLG, won the CRAFT ONTARIO AWARD for her *sculpture* and the next year Julia's *leaf picture* garnered a SALON RIBBON.

From his studio in **New Brunswick**, Julien equates his story of endurance on adventures in harsh climates to furthering his leathercraft career. He handcrafts custom dog collars, watch bands and more. Speaking from experience running his own leathercraft website, wagramleather.com, Julien explained SEO (Search Engine Optimization) during the Executive Council Meeting's 'Guest Spot' in February 2022 via Zoom. He was awarded two CRAFTSMAN RIBBON's and the BETTY HEACOCK MEMORIAL AWARD FOR BEST NOVICE at the 2022 CSCL Virtual Leatherwork Annual Competition.

Nancy, FCSCCL, is a Woodstock-area artist who has enjoyed success producing fine leather products for retail. She learned to shape, mould, carve and tool leather through her membership to CSCL in 1987. Her work earned her honours and awards often for belts, buckles and cases. Members extoll her willingness to take on administrative duties and to offer rides to meetings: a fair judge and patient instructor. At the 72nd Virtual AGM she received well-deserved **recognition** with a CSCL Honorary Life Membership (CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT, M-J-J-A, 2022).

World traveller and publisher of a Scandinavian Leather Journal, Alf lives and works in **Norway**. He supports CSCL and participated online where his *Winter Hat*, outerwear unique to Arctic climates, was entered in the CSCL 72nd Virtual Annual Leatherwork Competition. His writing credits include: A Study of the Pompadour Bag (CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT, S-O-N-D, 2022). For his *matchstick holder* entry in 2023, Alf had obtained leather remarkably preserved for 200 years, salvaged from the shipwrecked *Metta Catharina* off the coast of England.

Professional Artist and Honorary M.A.L., Peter Main, lives and works in the U.S. He is a renowned graphic artist and author, publishing leathercraft books on carving styles with colour guidance. During a visit to Canada as the 2012 Annual Convention **Guest Speaker**, his making of a 'plug embossing' horse head that could be used as an appliqué was well attended (CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT, Spring 2012).

Madeleine began leathercrafting at night school, intrigued by the change in texture of her first carved work. Her Woodstock Branch successfully hosted CSCL's big anniversaries and she initiated the commemorative CSCL Leather Quilt in 1990. A multi-term **Editor**, she steered the 2005 origin story of the CSCL website. Madeleine was awarded a CSCL Honorary Life Membership (CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT, Summer 2016).

Carol, FCSCCL, is world-renowned as a quilter, with exhibitions and awards. She often guided her Continuing Education leathercraft course students to CSCL where she was heavily relied on for jurying while **dedicated** to the Woodstock Branch for its duration (1967-

2010). Nominated by Dorothy (Director), Carol was honoured to receive the QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S DIAMOND JUBILEE MEDAL with ceremony in 2012 and recognized for her exceptional volunteer achievements with the GOVERNOR GENERAL'S CARING CANADIAN AWARD

Respectfully submitted for all of the M.A.L. who enthusiastically gave back - the anvil never cools when the heart is warm.

The End.

Continuation Committee

see the Minutes of the 75th Annual General Meeting for full information

All Members of the Society were invited to voice opinions and join the Committee struck for the investigation of the possibility of Dissolving the Society. We met as a committee on Tuesday nights prior to the Exec Meetings, starting in October, 2024, to discuss the way forward and lay out the path for dissolution if going on can not be done. The Committee met 7 times to define the parameters of dissolution: asset division, caretakers, library disposition, how to take the vote.

The Continuation Vote

By the show of hands and proxies. Do we Dissolve the Society?

The Vote was taken by the 11 Members Present in good standing with Proxies for 6 Members. There are 13 votes to Dissolve. There are 3 votes to Continue. There is one Abstain. By a vote of 13 to 3 the Society has been Dissolved.

Roll Call of Members in good standing in person – 11 Members - Sheena Burger, Tracey Howard, Della Chynoweth, Barb Chynoweth, James Wilkes, Nancy Durham, Lauchlan Harrison, Sean Dalgetty, Paul Kitchener, Doug Schavo, Betsy Rennie.

In Proxy- 6 Members – Barry Taylor, Colin Paddon, Tammy Gray, Alf Luneborg, David McPherson, Lauren Malec

By a Show of Hands & Proxies- Do we continue the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft?

For **Continuation** 3 votes

For **Dissolution** 13 votes with 1 vote Abstain

The Canadian Society for Creative Leatherwork is Dissolved.

the Caretakers

Lauch Harrison, Sean Dalgetty, Della Chynoweth, Paul Kitchener and Doug Schavo will have monthly meetings starting in October 2026. Other Members of the Dissolved Society are invited to attend on a online forum. Tuesday 7:30 pm on Zoom October 13, 2026.

The care takers will oversee the distribution of the funds to four Member Guilds: Hamilton , Mississauga, MAL, Norland, and the fifth amount to Craft Ontario Bursary.

Bursary Proposal to Craft Ontario

TITLE: EXCELLENCE AND EDUCATION IN LEATHERCRAFT sponsored BY THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE LEATHERCRAFT \$500 BURSARY

ELIGIBILITY: Leathercraft, all career levels, must not have been a CSCL member

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS: completed Application Form.

DESCRIPTION: On the occasion of its 75th Anniversary, the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft, CSCL, establishes this 'bursary for leathercraft artisans'. All career levels are encouraged to apply.

Founded in 1950, CSCL's main objective has been *to establish high standards of craftsmanship by improved standards in workshops and judging*. This bursary is intended to support those who study, teach or work with similar standards that promote leathercrafting skills. Application criteria are broadly based for example, due to innovations in types of leather, construction methods, colouring and the use of traditional tools, etc.

At the time of the guild's dissolution in May 2025, the members wished *to encourage education to anyone seriously interested in leathercraft regardless of experience*. It is the intent of CSCL that this fund remain ongoing and reflects an appreciation of the decades-long support from Craft Ontario.

Branch Meetings

Branch meetings are held in Hamilton and Norland, Ontario. Guests are always welcome at meetings with opportunities for newcomers to meet members and glean valuable leather crafting tips.

Signing off

Lauch Harrison FCSC