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DON'T FORGET THE ANNUAL MEETING SEE PAGE 3 AND THE C.S.C.L. WORKSHOP SEE PAGE 5

YOU HAVE TO REGISTER FOR BOTH . TRY TO BE AT BOTH EVENTS. THE PEOPLE ARE WORKING HARD TO MAKE THEM BOTH A SUCCESS.

EARLY HISTORY OF LEATHER

by Muriel McKnight

Leathercraft is as old as man's desire for clothing and footwear. Recently it has enjoyed a wide popularity both as fashionable wearing apparel, covering for furniture and craft hobbies, each requiring a completely different skills.

Stone age people would sling animal skins over their shoulder on the windward side, and as the wind changed direction, they would switch it to meet the wind for protection. As early as old kingdom Egypt, about 2500 B.C. the practice of preserving pelts was already established. Stone carvings from this period depict tanners at work, as well as Pharaohs caring sandals. Early uses include footwear, apparel, forms of protective armor, tents, shelters, deer skin blankets, canoes, water flagons (large bottles) writing material, window coverings in lieu of glass.

Princes appear before the Pharaoh barefoot, the King alone wore sandals, (but not in the house of God). Likewise merchants walked barefoot behind the shod Prince and so on down the line. Sandals in Hebrew culture were an important part of marriage contract, at the end of the ceremony, the bride and groom traded sandals, as a sign of mutual fidelity.

Leather was tanned or cured, by method of vegetable tanning. eg: bark from trees, Greece, wood ash, a treatment to make it functional. Casing (wetting) the leather makes it pliable to form, shape, then bake to harden leather to a permanent shape. eg: large pouches, jugs (called curia bosulles). Methods to make leather waterproof (in this time) was bee's wax and or pitch. This enabled water to be carried from spring wells to storage containers, as leather was a very important medium as far back as bible times. Even when the prodigal son returned his father ordered a feast, presented him with a robe, ring and sandals in honour of his return.

Leather versatility

It can be sewn like fabric, cut, scored and glued like paper, carved, laminated, nailed like wood, hammered and tooled like metal, painted like canvas, woven and tied like yarn, formed like paper mache, molded like felt, dyed like textile, it can be a structure in itself or as a covering. As insignificant as a bead or buttons, or as important as a sculpture. It is still used today in your barber shop to sharpen a straight razor, in industry for belts on pulleys, etc.

Common leather comes from cowhide, calfskin, lamb skin, sheep skin, pig skin, goat skin and more recently snake, fish, ostrich and emu skin. Hides become leather during the tanning process, which involves treatment with tannic acid, which make most leathers soft and supple. At the tannery there are vats of different solutions, were the hides are processed, not a pretty smell, but the end result is very impressive. Modern methods have been altered by the thermometer and hygrometer, also electronic PHmeter used to determine acidity or alcohol levels of the solution. The use of the splitting machine and other machines has increased the output of different leathers to a staggering proportion.

Vegetable tanned cowhide uses are; belting, tooling, carving, molding to name just a few. It is sold and measured by ounces per square foot. Belt weight 8-9 oz., purse weight 5-7oz. wallet weight is 2-4 oz., skivers under 2 oz.

Leather can be called a sensuous material. It has texture, colour, feel it, see it, smell it. many will pick up a leather article, the first thing they will do is smell it. With its softness, ease to mold, the feel and smell makes it an exciting material to work with. Working with leather makes you appreciate its versatility.

I have worked with leather for 35 years, it is always a challenge. This article covers a small part of its history and was prepared for a historical and United Church Women's group. I hope you will find it interesting.

Lets make our own History. Remember Woodstock is making history next year with the 50th anniversary Annual. Make your 6" x 6" Quilt piece, be resourceful or ham it up but do it, give them to Madeleine Mitchell at this years Annual, or mail them to her.

"The Annual is coming!!

The Annual is coming!! "

From the moment I was writing it is 33 days to the start of our 49th Annual Meeting. I have in hand 10 registrations and some more to be picked up later today, from Jim Edwards home base to be deposited tomorrow. Jim has been very sick, but his condition has improved and to the point he may be moved soon to a nursing home for further therapy. We wish him a quick and full recovery.

I believe registrations are about normal to other years, and they start to pick up as the end approaches.

If you have put it off until now, it would help us if you consider doing it soon as possible and avoid the last minute rush.

We have a few loose ends to clear up this coming week. One of them is rather to have "**Caviar**" or "**Fried Baloney**" for our Banquet. Our speaker will be chosen this week. Two demo's are booked and I will be resorting to the telephone shortly for two more unless we have volunteers. My telephone number is **416-284-5036**, supper time is a good time to call, that's when all the sales people call these days.

There you have it in a nut shell.

See you at the **Annual!** Bring something for the "**Draw table**"!

I have enough for one table already, so lets fill up the second table!

The sun is shinning beautifully this morning which is a good Omen for our party.

See you there and bring your leather work and you smiles.

remember call the **Motel** to reserve your room.

The Best Western Beacon Harbourside Resort and Complex center

"The Beacon" 1-800-823-2266 remember exit 55

Respectfully Submitted

AL FOSS Pres. of Toronto Guild
the Host Group for **1999**

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The Facts of Life

HOW TO KNOW YOU'RE GROWING OLDER

Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt, doesn't work.
The gleam in your eyes is from the sun hitting your glasses.
You feel like the night before, and you haven't been anywhere.
You get winded playing chess.
Your children begin to look middle aged.
You finally reach the top of the ladder, and find it leaning against the wrong wall.
You join a health club and don't go.
You decide to procrastinate but you never get around to it.
Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet.
You know all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions.
You look forward to a dull evening.
You walk with your head held high, trying to get used to your bifocals.
Your favourite part of the newspaper is "25 years ago today"
You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.
Your knees buckle and belt won't.
You spent an hour skiving an edge, then find just skived the cut off piece, you say it was just practice.
You stop looking forward to your next birthday.
Dialing long distance wears you out.
Your best part of the day is over when the alarm goes off.
You burn midnight oil after 9 p.m.
Your back goes out more than you do.
A fortune teller offers to read your face.
The little gray haired lady you help across the street is your wife.
You get your exercise acting as a pallbearer for your friends who exercise.
You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.

Original Author unknown

All our respects and condolences go out to Dorothy Muma, who lost her sister the end of March, after a long illness.

C.S.C.L. WORKSHOP

"ONE PIECE PURSE WORKSHOP" (FRICK DESIGNS)

Saturday May 15, 9.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m

Elegant, Stylish designs that can be adapted to handbags, briefcases, and utility bags. Adapts well to simplistic colourings or more elaborate carved or embossed designs. Minimum tools required.

Patterns and design ideas will be available. Workshop project has no lining or pockets.

Workshop materials needed;--

6--7oz leather

Cutting tools and cutting board

Square, Ruler, Pencils

Dyes, if desired

Tools for designs

Contact cement (Regular or Gel) and brush

(Barge cement preferred but not completely necessary)

Split rivets 3/4" and 1" (will be available at workshop)

Optional: Handbag clasp or Domes

maybe the proper setting tools for clasps or domes

Small amount of Skiver to cover Findings

Pre-Registration preferred --at the Annual Registration Desk
or call **Madeleine Mitchell**

519-537-7821

\$15.00 Registration fee is required

Bring your own **lunch**--Tea and Coffee will be available

Location "St. Margarets Church, Hamilton
131 Emerson St. off Main St. West
opposite McMaster University and Health Centre

LEATHER AND THE MILLENNIUM

BY BILL WHITTINGHAM

First of all, I would like to take a moment and thank those of you who have E-mailed or personally delivered kind comments about this column. It is nice to know that the long arduous hours researching the material included here is being appreciated. I would also like to thank a few people who have started donating "fodder for the fire". In this issue, the first site I am reviewing was spotted by Gary Anthony Cook of the Mississauga guild, the next two by Silva Fox, also of the Mississauga guild, and the last, stumbled upon in the wee small hours by yours truly. Also printed material has been given to me from Member-at-large, Marion Kehoe, and I am currently trying to find more information about those leather artists. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those three members specifically for their assistance in helping me cast the net a little farther, and would like to mention once again that any help whatsoever in locating more information about this noble craft we have chosen as our own, will be greatly appreciated. No lead forwarded to me will go uninvestigated or unthanked.

Now, before I get to the reviews, there is an omission that must be corrected from the last issue. Somehow the URN for the Denis Gouey Bookbinding Studio that I raved about did not get scanned into the bulletin from my original article. This 'gold star' site can be found at:

<http://bookbinding.net/>

On to the new material.

For those of you who enjoy the "braided arts", there are some fine examples to be found at:

www.hought.com

The site is divided in the following areas:

Art Gallery- This is basically greeting cards and watercolour painting, but some of the material would definitely lend itself to carved work.

Braided Tack- There are some wonderful braided items here. When it comes to braiding, I have twelve thumbs, but I do admire the work presented under this heading.

Braiding instruction- There are two books available for purchase mentioned here, also two articles. One titled "Braiding a Key Fob" that appeared in the July/August 1998 Leather Crafters and Saddlers Journal. The second is titled "Tying the Mecate" which appeared in the September 1997 issue of Western Horseman. Supplies and finished items are also available here.

Saddles- Five examples of saddler Eric Hought's work which range from plane to stamped to carved work.

All in all, this is a tidy little site and very easy to get around. This next site loads fairly slowly, so I want to warn you about that from the beginning. Pictured here are the works of Scandinavian leather artists Eva Maria Rosvoldsve and Olaug Kalve Storkson. go to:

<http://home.sol.no/~fellow/>

First click **GALLERY**, then choose from:

Drawings- This is basically framed art ie. pastels etc.

Purses- Most of the carved and COLOURED work here is dog portraits that are quite well done.

Belts and Straps- This is going to be carved work, but there is some construction going on here, and a promise of "more to come".

Gilt Leather- There are to be additions here at a later date as well.

Olaug Kalve Storkson- This lady is in her late 70's, and bless her heart, she is still banging away. It seems that chair backs and large carved two-seaters are her specialty. There are two very fine examples of full view completed works, plus some close-ups of other panels. A very nice presentation.

The third site is for those of us that are "tool fiends". Go to:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~kenhale>

This is the home of the "Pro Series Tools" by Bob Beard. Some of you may have heard and remember Bob's name in connection with a stunning piece of work from a few years back called "The Ancient Ones". It is a carved and coloured cave scene that is completely three dimensional because pieces of leather are filigreed and layered one on top another to create a "pop-up" type picture. Just a gorgeous piece from what I can tell from pictures I have seen.

Bob's tools are individually designed and hand-crafted from tempered high carbon steel, and have a deep black oxide finish to protect them from rusting. There are four pages depicting the various stamping impressions of tools available and can be accessed by clicking "View Tools". Many of the tools will appear to be standard issue, but there are many, many new variations for you to browse as well. Anyone that I have talked to who has used these tools, say they are superior in every way.

This site also has information about the "Leder-Gilde" which was founded in 1990 by Dutch, German and Swiss leather crafters. There are now 46 members of this guild, and there is a 100 page book of the works of the members available to the public. Ordering information is available.

Pictured is a purse by Rene Berends (Germany), the picture "The Ancient Ones" by Bob Beard (USA), a stunning candle base decoration by Harue Yoshida (Japan), and a Viking Saddle by Armin Dobsetter (Germany) which oddly enough looks like a very large bicycle seat. Steller work by these four leather artists.

The final site comes from award winning Australian leather crafter Mark McMahon. Go to :

www.picknowl.com.au/homepages/leatherwork/default.htm

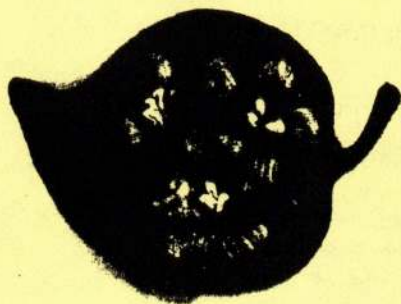
Once you have accessed the site, click MY LEATHER PRODUCTS and you will see headings for "Chokers and Collars", "Necklaces and Earrings", "Bracelets", "Hairpins", "Belts and Buckles", "Bags and Purses", "Bookbinding", and finally "Prizes and Awards".

There are some exotic leathers used as accents, some excellent design ideas, and the belts appear to be finished well. The pictures of his other work make it difficult to comment about the finishing techniques, but the designs are very unique indeed.

If any of you have any specific requests about a particular technique in Leathercraft, please forward your requests to me, and I will do my best to assist you. Many hands make light work, and the more input I have from you, the more fun we can have increasing our leather knowledge. The world is at our fingertips. Happy Crafting!

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Whittingham F.C.S.C.L.

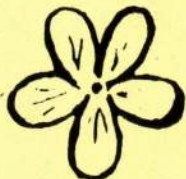
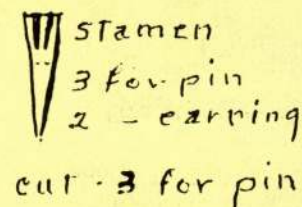


"A Promise of Spring"

by Marion Kehoe

This **Violet Pin** requires small scraps of 1 1/2 oz. carving leather for flowers and stamens and 3 oz. for leaves. Both for the earrings and the pin. It is important to use leather that is easy to mould.

1. After transferring designs on damp leather, swivel cut details, bevel main stems of leaves, and a single tap with a #936 at stem base.
 2. Swivel cut 3 veins on each flower petal.
 3. Using a triple "0" punch place holes 1 in each flower center.
3 in pin leaf, as in diagram.
1 in each earring leaf.
 4. Make 2 cuts in each Stamen.
 5. For a dark Violet I use **Dye Master-- Purple** tint, diluted with a small amount of water-- Test on the leather first, as each piece can result in an entirely different result. Then submerge flowers in dye for a few minutes and place on a paper towel, until almost dry. Then shape, using the spoon end of your **Modeller** on the underside of the Petals, let dry, apply **Polish Coat**.
 6. Dye stamens with **Garnett Yellow**, dry.
 7. Mix **Garnett Green**, add enough **Yellow** to please, for the leaves. Dye the leaves then finger shape. the curved end of a **modeller** used on the underside of stem base will help curve this nicely. Now **Polish Coat** the leaves.
 8. From the top side of each flower insert the point of Stamen and pull through, leaving the three tiny ends positioned as a triangle ().
 9. Now place Stamen point into the leaf hole leaving a tiny space between the flower and the leaf, then cement Stamen point towards the leaf centers. All three Flowers on large leaf. Place back as desired and when dry glue a circle of green sciving leather, to cover pin and Samen ends. A 11/16th" circle punch is perfect.
 10. Other options "Folk Art" acrylic "#CA 410" **Lavender** gives a beautiful bright flower, this is sold at most Art or Craft shops and Zellers. The 2oz. size for under \$2.00 (then Polish), also add a dab of bright **Yellow** acrylic to each Stamen tip. I use a tooth pick for this.
- Good luck!!



CUT - 2
1 reverse
for earring
cut 2 slightly smaller
flowers - 1 on each leaf

