

Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft
CANADIAN LEATHERCRAFT



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We'll be missing you, Ruth

**The Late Ruth Haig FCSCCL (Life) when she won the 2005 John Mather Award
from the Ontario Crafts Council**

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Notes from the Editor...

The frost was on the pumpkin this morning, the leaves are almost all down and we get an extra hour this weekend – to sleep, or better yet, to do some leathercraft! I don't know what it is, but I always feel more inspired as the seasons change and we start approaching those long dreary days leading up to another winter. Maybe, it's the anticipation of the festive season; we just finished Thanksgiving and Hallowe'en and now we move onto big Holiday Season and the plans for 2012. Its time to think about how you can apply your leather crafting skills to decorations for the Holidays. How about jingle bells on a leather strap? Or those cute little leather reindeer from last Autumn's newsletter.

Thanks to Norland Branch for contributing to this newsletter's. Tracey and her club are always up to something, and usually with a simmering pot of homemade goodness. They have been working on their Bookends this Fall.

CSCL Executive Meetings have resumed after the Summer hiatus – check out the plans for upcoming events in this edition. Find out what Jim Wilkes was up to in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jim brought back some amazing photos.

Ruth Haig FCSCCL passed away September 1st, 2011 in Dundas ON. Anyone who knew Ruth will always remember her as an inspiration both for leathercrafting and for living. See pages 4 and 5 for memories of Ruth.

Mississauga Branch has already been busy planning the 2012 Annual Weekend and it is going to be something! So far, just a few enticing tidbits in this issue.

Strategies to encourage General Members to move up to Associate, and Associate Members to Fellow status were discussed at the October Executive meeting. David McPherson, Chair of the Council of Fellows has an important message in this newsletter.

As always, contributions and comments about this newsletter welcomed by your editor at

Highlights from Executive Council Meetings...

From the September and October, 2011 meetings:

- Madeleine Mitchell reported that the New Woodstock Art Gallery is very interested in hosting the event. Madeleine will report back to the Executive Council at the January meeting.
- a change in the Constitution is not likely to happen next year. After much discussion, status quo will prevail.
- Jim Wilkes attended the International Internet Leathercraft Guild's "Leather Feista!" in Alburque, New Mexico this October. He took a couple of courses – one on Southwest Carving and the other on Northwest Techniques, Jim shared some of the resources with the Executive. You might want to look up the IILG website at www.IILG.org.
- if you are on Facebook, Madeleine Mitchell has set up a "Leather Craft Friends Group". We are also in the process of setting up a Facebook Page for CSCL – so watch for it
- Thanks to Kourtney Brauweiler for her help.
- Peter Grove is part of the Workshop Planning Committee, and he has been working on an enticing **"Mystery Project" for a Workshop on January 8, 2012- watch for details.**
- Mississauga Branch will be hosting the 2012 Annual Weekend on April 20, 21, and 22, at the Burlington Arts Centre. An internationally known Leather Crafter will be our guest.
- Discussion at the October meeting focused on the lack of new candidates for Associate and Fellow levels in CSCL.
- Lauren McPherson is taking on the challenges of organizing CSCL Members-at-Large.

It's not too late to join CSCL...

CSCL Memberships (April 1st –March 31st)

Contact Tracey Howard at [REDACTED]

Email to [REDACTED]

Or your Branch Membership Chair



CSCL Christmas Display circa 1960's – from the archives

Calling all CSCL Members-at-Large

Lauren McPherson at [REDACTED] is looking to help MAL's get more involved in CSCL.

- **How about more involvement at the Annuals?**
- **Want increased communication?**

Contact her with your and ideas of your wants and needs.

Lauren McPherson

**[REDACTED]
London, ON [REDACTED]**

MOVING UP THE LADDER

**David McPherson FCSCL
Chairman of the Council of Fellows**



When you look at a CSCL membership list you will find 7 Fellows and 3 Associates. That is not good for the longevity of the guild. It is important that General Members improve on leather techniques and work up the membership ladder to provide continued leadership to new and future members.

The standards required to become an Associate or Fellow are not intended to discourage you from trying, but to challenge you to persist in trying to improve your leather skills. Skiving and burnishing take practice. Seek out the help of a Fellow to assist you with techniques to create a belt, a piece with a gusset, and two other pieces of your choice. If you are not successful on your first try, then the challenge is to try again. Some of the current Fellows were not successful on the first attempt. Start now to have 4 pieces ready for the March 2012 judging for the Annual.

Ruth M. Haig FCSCCL (Life) - A Lifetime in Leathercraft



RUTH M. HAIG, R.T., FCSCCL (Life) Recipient of the JOHN MATHER AWARD 2005 with Carol McLean FCSCCL (Life) at the 2006 Biennial Exhibition

On September 1, 2011, CSCL lost one of the most creative and indomitable spirits in the world of leathercrafting. Ruth M Haig passed away in Dundas, ON after many years of dedication to CSCL and her Hamilton Branch. She will be remembered as a teacher, colleague, friend and accomplished leather artist. Since the 1960's until the mid-2000's Ruth has been a part of Annual Weekends, Exhibitions, Sales and all things CSCL. Even when she was no longer able to attend CSCL events she kept in touch with members and what was going on, until her passing.

Her untiring pursuit of perfection in leathercrafting with her elegant colouring, clean smooth edges, and functional, beautiful articles helped set the standards of leathercrafting for CSCL.

Below is an excerpt from DorothyMcPherson's 2005 article about Ruth Haig:

"In 2005, Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft (CSCL) celebrated its 55th anniversary – due in large part to the untiring efforts of Ruth Haig, Hamilton leathercrafters.

Leathercraft in Canada reached its zenith in the late 1950s with 276 CSCL members distributed among seven branches throughout Ontario. The charm and beauty of leathercrafting caught Ruth Haig's attention and, in 1962, she joined the Hamilton Leather Guild, Hamilton Handicraft Guild (now the Artisans Guild of Hamilton) and CSCL (all of which she later went on to serve in an executive capacity). Then, for 8 years, she studied leathercrafting at Adult Education classes taught by Hamilton's renowned Irva Ford. CSCL interacted with the International Assembly of Leather Craft (IALC), situated in Buffalo, New York. The IALC disbanded in the 1980s, but prior to that, Ruth participated in these cross-border competitions and taught a workshop there.

Meanwhile, Ruth assumed executive roles with CSCL (including that of president) and now serves as Chair of Teaching Standards thus helping to maintain a high level of excellence: Carve crisp clear lines! Dye evenly! Burnish edges!

Ruth M. Haig FCSCCL (Life) – A Life in Leathercraft continued...

There were, however, several events that had a positive influence on leathercrafting in the province. One was the establishment of the Ontario Crafts Council (OCC) in 1976 and the opening of its retail location, THE GUILD SHOP, in Toronto. Ruth adopted this new look in her work that retailed at TEXTURES, Hamilton, craft co-op. This international artist's involvement with TEXTURES began, by invitation, in 1983 when she became a charter member of the combined-effort craft gallery in Hess Village.

Ruth's fine handwork has been recognized with numerous prizes and awards including: 20 CNE ribbons, Michigan Leather Award (1980), Irva Ford Memorial Award (Best molded leather, 1984), Robert Muma Memorial Award (Best tooled article, 1995), and numerous CSCL ribbons and prizes for excellence.

Ruth has been a member of Ontario Crafts Council and Canadian Craft Council. She attended: the World Craft Conference, Vienna (1980); the Maritime Canadian Craft Conference (1982); the World Craft Conference, Vancouver, 1986. Ruth was delighted to have her first woven belt selected for inclusion in an OCC travelling exhibition in the 1960s.

In 1986 the Canadian Society for Creative Leathercraft honoured Ruth with an Honourary Lifetime Member Award and, in 2000, with an Ontario Volunteer Service Award recognizing "OVER 35 YEARS SERVICE". She has served faithfully and competently on craft guild executives and, as a strong advocate of crafting, her dedication continues, especially to the medium of leather. This Canadian heritage craft continues into the 2000s due, in large part, to the efforts of visionary people like Ruth.

For 43 years she has supported crafting on a local, provincial, national, and international level. Born in Mildmay, Ontario, in Bruce County in the early 1930s, Ruth became an x-ray technician and her work led her to Hamilton in 1960. In 1993 she retired as Director of Medical Radiography Services at DOFASCO Inc., Hamilton, after 23 years of employment. Ruth Haig's lifetime dedication to, and exemplary support of, the arts makes her a most worthy candidate for THE JOHN MATHER AWARD. (Written by Dorothy McPherson, Director CSCL)

"She (Ruth Haig) has long held the opinion that leatherwork should be a full-time course taught in community colleges and art schools." Dorothy McPherson

Notices!

Tundra Leather has updated its Website!
Have a look at www.tundraleather.com

**Mark your Calendars for the 2012 Annual Weekend April
20,21 & 22 at the Burlington Arts Centre!**
Meet an Internationally Known Leather Artist!

Did you know? ...

Carol McLean, Fellow of CSCL, Honourary Life Member, and frequent judge at CSCL Exhibitions is also a World Class Quilter. Carol recently had her One Woman Show of her Amish Inspired Quilts at the Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre, Ingersoll, ON. Carol has taught quilting around the world and remains an inspiration to quilters at home and abroad.

We're proud of you, Carol!



Update from the Norland Guild

by Tracey Howard, President



Future Norland Leather crafter and Tracey



Norland's Leather and Historical Pictures

*My name is Tracey Howard and I'm the President of the Norland guild. Norland is a small community east of Orillia or north of Lindsay. My grandmother, Hilda Chynoweth, was instrumental in starting this guild in the late 1970's and we have been going strong ever since. I'm a third generation leathercrafter. We have about 18 members in our guild. My mother and my three aunts are part of our guild too, so it is a family tradition. We are well known around Norland, my family has been there for five generations. We do fundraising and all sorts of things to raise money to keep us going. We meet once a month on a Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm for 9 months of the year, at our Norland Community Centre as many of our members have to travel 35 to 45 minutes to get there. Our June meeting is a BBQ at one of the member's home.

For promotions we go to fairs and different events. My grandmother started demonstrating about 18 years ago at the Kinmount fair. She also demonstrated at the Bobcaygeon Fair and Fenelon Falls fairs in the past. She handed out little key chains to promote our guild. She would demonstrate along with my mom and Aunt. Sometimes she would get the odd order for a wallet or belt. My grandmother passed away on March 1st, 2010 but her traditions are being carried on. She was 100 years young and still did a bit of leatherwork up until the end.

The last 2 years we have had a spaghetti dinner at our church to raise money. We set up several tables with a display of the leather items that we have made to show people what can be done with leather. The first year we raised about \$ 160. This past year was a great success we raised over \$ 400. The money we raise help us out with supplies, rent and projects that the group would like to do. We have been working on getting the younger generation to come and join and have had some success. My sons and nephew like to come and help out too.

(For More Information about the Norland Leather Guild, contact Tracey at [REDACTED])

Merry Cristmas & Happy New Year to All!

