

A Look Back at our Anniversary Celebrations

By Donna M Hopkins, Historian

Our old scrapbooks have been an invaluable resource for finding interesting tidbits about our past activities and celebrations of our anniversaries. We started officially as the Handweaver's Guild of Connecticut in 1948. Here I want to look at our anniversaries and tell you a little about the ones we celebrated. After the scrapbooks stopped being kept in 1982 we relied on issues of the The Weavers Knot.

On January 18, 1958 the guild celebrated its 10th Anniversary. They held a special meeting at the **Whitneyville Congregational Church in Hamden**. A special exhibit was put on by members who brought their favorite pieces woven during the ten years of the guild's existence. They had a workshop given by Miss Marion Powell on "Bronson Lace." A business meeting was held including the election of officers. This meeting was presided over by Miss Agatha Keltie and following this they had lunch and an afternoon program given by Dr. L. S. Stone, guild member, and professor of anatomy at Yale, where he showed pictures and lectured on "Looms, spinning wheels and other gadgets used by Colonial Weavers." Along with the newspaper article from the "Litchfield Enquirer" the scrapbook had some color photos of the cake that all enjoyed and the members of the guild's Board.

On May 19, 1973 the guild celebrated its 25th Anniversary. It was held at **Wesleyan Hills Barn in Middletown**. Charter members and past presidents were invited to the anniversary luncheon. Mrs. Dorothy Kaestner and Miss Esther Tuttle attended. Both were past presidents. The membership had grown from thirty-odd to over 300 members during the 25 years. The program started at 9:00 am given by Mrs. Robert Landis on drafting. New officers were installed following the coffee hour. The cutting of the anniversary cake was a highlight of the buffet luncheon. The afternoon program was given by Libby Crawford of Michigan titled "Putting a Little Weaving in Your Home." The officers installed were: Mary Gunn (President), Connie Lebovitz (recording secretary), Inge DeWarge (Treasurer).

On November 19, 1983 the guild celebrated its 35th Anniversary at the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. It was a day that started early and was packed with many activities: an early ratings meeting; workshop registrations; a general meeting in the meeting house; a book fair in the social hall; book reviews; a 35th Birthday Party in the fellowship room and a show of "Old and New Coverlets" in the meeting house; Library Sales Tables; soup and sandwiches were served in the hospitality room where the cake was cut into 100 pieces; The historian, Jean Chappell, had an exhibit of items of interest; guests were introduced and included here are some that many of us may remember: Evelyn Straub, Martha Davenport, Kate Edgerton, Jackie Herlth, Dorothy Kaestner, Antonia Kormos, Josephine Parsons, Norma Smayda, Esther Tuttle. Many sent regards who couldn't attend. Members provided corsages, tea table settings, escorting of guests and serving cake. Members of the Committee for the Anniversary were: Jean Chappell, Jo Parsons, Betty DeCoursey, with assistance from Betty Billings, Mary Elva Erf, Karen Chase, and Deborah Pierce.

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On September 19, 1998 the guild celebrated its 50th Anniversary at the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury. This celebration included many activities during the day of a regular guild meeting. Complex Weavers study group met, and there was a Sharing Exhibit; The Library was open and Sales Tables were up. There was an Open Workshop from 10:00 – 12:00 titled “The Undulating Path of a Weaver” given by Leonore Alaniz; three Mini Workshops were offered: “Color Theory” by Leslie Voiers, “Unlocking the Mystery of Profile Drafts” by Fran Curran, and “Textiles TLC” given by Evelyn Kennedy. Lunch from 12:00 – 1:15 was bring your own, during which a dramatic presentation was performed. After lunch in lieu of the business meeting everyone enjoyed cake and punch. From 1:15 – 3:00 Leslie Voiers presented a “Discussion of Paddle Warping.”

The **celebration of our 75th Anniversary was Really Special!** Lots of special things going on that we all enjoyed and will remember. Many people contributed their time and efforts to making it above and beyond what we had celebrated before. Many thanks to the 75th Committee: Liz Borajkiewicz, Jody Brewer, Carolyn Coates, me, Susan Jackson, Karen Leach, Bev Lewis, Steph Slattery, Cynthia Wallace and Denton Hoyer, photographer extraordinaire.