

Newsletter



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Pearl K. McGown

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NEWSLETTER
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*It is with considerable regret
and sorrow that I must inform
you of the death of my dear grandmother.*

Pearl K. McGown

*on January 28, 1983 at the
Wayside Nursing Home.*

Her passing was peaceful and serene.

We will all miss her.

Jane McGown Flynn

We have reprinted the Pearl K. McGown Autobiography from the June 1974 to March 1977 Newsletters. Contributing even when physically limited, her legacy will continue on in her books, Guild, Workshops and with her granddaughter. The Guild news in the back of this issue, is in itself, a tribute to the founder who took our folk art and made it into a tapestry art form.

M.B.

Pearl K. McGoun

I was born on Longfellow's birthday in 1892 in Clinton, Massachusetts-one of eleven children and one of seven girls. May, Sylvia and Kaddy played an important part in my life as a designer.

As a child I was painfully shy. At 14 I was a nursemaid to a druggist's wife, caring for her two very small children during the summer. I tell you this little story, for otherwise you couldn't believe I could be so shy and so dumb! We were preparing to go to Winthrop Beach for a month-a big event for me. I had never been away from home before, and Mother made me a black and white checked dress with a bright red collar and cuffs, and bought me a big navy blue straw hat that had ribbons down the back! We stayed at the hotel, and I immediately fell in love with the bell boy-he was the first boy I could remember wearing long pants, and I know I blushed every time I went by him. My big hat had been left on the beach and the tide rolled in over it. The next day he said to me, "I rescued your hat," and there it was on the wall, the worst sight you ever saw-out of shape and wrinkled streamers. "It isn't mine," I said, and hurried on and never did reclaim it.

When the husband went home after two weeks I was supposed to get up in the morning and go down into the kitchen and get the baby's bottle, which I very gladly promised to do. But when I was suddenly awakened by the baby's cry and started to dress, I was told I could not stop to dress. In those days Mother bought six nightdresses at a time-two years apart in age-and they had high necks and long sleeves, and I said, "I can't go down like this". She said, "Put my dressing sack on," a dimity one with ribbon around the waist. But I had no slippers and after I pulled up my stockings I had nothing to attach them to so she said, "Take mine and tie around your knees to hold yours up and put my pumps on". That was the way I looked as I opened the door to the dining room, which I swear must have been three miles long, with college girls setting up the tables for breakfast. I had to walk the length of that room hearing the giggles and remarks as I passed by. When I opened the door to the kitchen, with chefs in their tall hats, a darling little lady gave me the bottle and I asked, "Is there any way to get back upstairs without going through that long dining room"? She said, "Yes", and opened a door and I was right outdoors. "Just go to the first door and it is at the bottom of the stairs." But when I turned the knob-it was locked! Without thinking, I rattled the knob and banged on the door. I heard footsteps coming and the door flew open and there stood the bellboy! The stockings which were holding up my stockings fell to the ground! When I arrived in the room, I said to her, "Please don't ask me to go down there again". I don't really remember who went for the milk after that.

Later she said, "Pearl, go down street and buy some lime water for the baby's milk and PLEASE don't break the bottle"! Break the bottle? Why should I break the bottle? I took the older boy with me

in a go-cart - and the bottle was in the back corner - safe- at least for a time. But when I reached the beach on my return, my employer and the youngest were sitting on the beach, so I said to James, "Get out and walk down." Forgetting the planks were open to the rocks below, I came bump, bump, down those steps and the bottle smashed into smithereens right before her eyes. (Why didn't she send me home then and there?)

Another day she said, "Please go down and buy a dozen oranges." Now those fruit stands were a thing of beauty. I had never seen anything quite like them at home. And there were the most beautiful peaches I had ever seen. Perfectly luscious! So I bought the peaches!

The day came to go home and the children had soiled all their clothes except what they would wear on the train going home. After dressing the baby she said, "Pearl, take him and entertain him while I dress James." So I looked around and there was a great big wash bowl on the stand, and the baby had a new boat. So I filled the bowl with water and we sat on the floor sailing the boat until the baby got excited and leaned on the edge of the bowl and the flood drenched him. We went down to the kitchen to dry the dress and by train time my Madam was in shock! She gave me my ticket and said, "Amuse the children here - I am going up to the other end to rest, and DON'T LOSE YOUR TICKET!"

We had a good time playing and then I heard, "Tickets! Tickets!" and the hunt began. We had about six dress boxes filled with soiled clothes, and by the time we finally found the ticket between the cover and the bottom of one of those boxes, a month's laundry was all over the car!

Was I fired when I returned home? No, but I managed to keep her in hysterics the rest of the summer by what I didn't do right!

Now I was to enter high school and I was suffering agony dreading having to meet so many girls and boys.

CHAPTER 2

That first period of my life sounds pretty silly, but I had a point I wanted to make later on. The changes that take place in anyone's life are like stepping stones that lead you into unexpected paths.

As I entered high school I was still extremely shy, but I had a goal in mind. My sister Sylvia was my idol. She was the only girl of mother's seven daughters who went beyond high school into a secretarial school and was offered a position in a local attorney's office before she graduated. If I could only be like her!

To my great disappointment, high school did not have shorthand until the second year and typing was only one period a week. After three months I persuaded my parents to allow me to switch to night school where I could have shorthand immediately and much more time for typing and bookkeeping. This permitted me to work in my father's office (he was a building contractor), answer his phone and keep his books, with time to study shorthand and practice

typing. It was during this time that my father taught me to draw plans for houses that he was building, for in those days he did not think an architect was necessary unless it was an expensive house.

The use of a ruler and a few fundamental rules would serve me in later years, although I did not know it then.

I was fifteen and a half when my night school teacher in bookkeeping (he was an insurance agent in the law office where Sylvia worked) inquired, "How would you like to work for me? (His secretary was getting married). "But," I said, "I can't yet take a letter in shorthand." He replied, "You will have to continue night school until you can."

I could type well and I would be writing up insurance policies and keep records. He had a talk with Dad and I went to work at \$5.00 per week - 50¢ for my hair ribbons and the rest to my mother, and did I love it.

There were times when my work was caught up and since my employer was involved with politics, he gave me envelopes to address and I was paid a small sum per hundred. In time, I saw the possibilities of taking on a little public stenography with his permission, and it eventually carried over into the evenings. During political campaigns I had clothesbaskets full of addressed envelopes to swell my finances and often worked until 3 AM.

Sister Sylvia had an apartment in a building in the center of town and above her there was a men's club, a place to shoot pool and play cards. They seemed to have a pretty good time so I wondered why the stenographers (we didn't call them secretaries in those days) couldn't have a similar place to meet in the evenings. So we formed the Delta Club and hired a suite of three rooms below Sylvia. It was all very proper, for Sylvia's aunt lived with her and we made her our matron, so whenever we wanted to use the aptment auntie came down to be with us. No men were allowed. You should have seen what we used to furnish that apartment! An undertaker in the same building gave us a coffin box. We padded the top and pleated green burlap around it and presto, we had a divan. Old chairs and rugs from attics and odd dishes from our homes made it possible to sit down and make curtains for our windows and have a snack in the evening. There were about 22 of us and we brought our sewing in for the evening or gathered there to attend a movie as a group, and we thought we were pretty important.

We had programs to improve our minds and our social affairs were Gentlemen's Night when each one could invite a boy, and a dance in the town hall which added a little money to our treasury.

In three years the novelty wore off and the girls began to marry. At 22 I followed the others and the club was disbanded. I suppose you might call that the liberated period in my life.

Since president for two or three years, I learned how to get along with girls having 22 different opinions on most subjects-and that was my next stepping stone which was to serve me well later in teacher workshops.

When I began to purchase items for my new home, I ordered a half barrel of flour. My mother had always had a barrel of flour in her house so I figured a half barrel would be enough for us. I can remember how my mother-in-law howled when she heard it. I asked

Mother to teach me how to cook but with her large family she had no time for that. So I learned a great deal from my mother-in-law. She was economical and taught me how to make a beef stew and also to use the end of a pork roast for a pork stew with dumplings. So one day I thought, now I haven't made him a ham stew yet. So I cut up the ham and put it into hot water with onion and vegetables but was terribly disturbed when it didn't look just right. My husband said, "What's this"? "Ham stew, of course," I replied. He said he had never heard of it, and come to think of it, I hadn't either. But I learned more from my mistakes. And that was another stepping stone.

Now I was born a Pisces (two fish swimming in opposite directions). Very soon the bank called-could I substitute for the summer? I hadn't realized how much I missed the office until then, but before the summer was over I was wishing I was occupied with my home. And so it was until my son was born and this opened up a whole new world to me.

But in a short time we were in World War I. There were many trials and tribulations during that period and when my son was seven it was necessary for me to rebuild my life in the business world. I became a legal secretary and followed it for the next 25 years.

My son and I made our home with my sister May, in Worcester, until she remarried. It was then that I moved to West Boylston, a quiet village where my son could play without fear of any traffic. I bought a house and spent every free moment scraping paper off the walls and painting woodwork. The house was large enough for two apartments and eventually May and her husband moved into the other apartment.

I used to read the travel section of the New York Times and wondered how people earned enough money to take those enchanting trips. It was about 1928 when I saw an ad in the TIME magazine (which was then just a few years old) offering a five week trip abroad with all expenses paid, except gratuities, for 100 new subscriptions to their magazine. I had no time to solicit subscribers and at that time a magazine of current events costing \$5. a year was considered expensive by most women. In fact, I found that woman were not interested, so I wrote a letter telling of my desires to win this trip and mailed it to every businessman I knew and some I didn't. One of the men I worked for wouldn't subscribe but when he heard I had the 100 subscriptions, he gave me \$25. toward my gratuities and this, with \$50. I had saved, was the only spending money I had for the trip. But I managed to bring a little gift for all the family although some of them cost only 25¢.

A friend had given me a book on the meaning of the lines in your hands and I was busy reading this on the deck of the ship. There were a great many school teachers going abroad for the summer. They noticed me reading this book and began begging me to read their palms. I tried to tell them that this was all new to me but they insisted and soon I had someone at my side most of the time. This taught me that when you gladly do something for someone else there is a great satisfaction within yourself, and this lesson was the basis on which my interest in hooked rugs later in life was of great value. Thus another stepping stone.

In 1929 when I arrived home from abroad, the stock market skidded to an all-time low. The American people were also at an all-time low, for the depression created was to last for another few years. I was not affected by the skid for I was not an investor, and law practice went on with little interruption.

But my trip abroad had left me with a bad case of "wanderlust" Sister Kaddy lived in California and I had not seen her for a long time. Sister May had a pass on all railroads and could travel free. So, in the very face of disaster, when vacation arrived, I borrowed money for a trip west with May. We traveled over the Canadian National and visited Mr. R.B. Bennett, then Premier of Canada, who was my mother's cousin, and who had sent me two subscriptions to "Time" magazine the year before. We were entertained in Ottawa in great style. Then on to Lethbridge, Alberta, where May had lived several years before, and hence to the coast and down to Kadd's at Los Angeles. It was a marvelous three weeks-and it took me forever (it seemed) to pay the money back to the bank. Thereby I learned another lesson-don't borrow money to spend for pleasure! (It was 20 years before I could take another trip at my own expense!)

Upon my return Mrs. Caroline Saunders of Clinton asked me if I could draw a design from any picture she might show me. Remembering what my father had taught me, I said I would try. She had started a class for hooking rugs in Clinton to try to alleviate the worry of women over the depression. Her mother had taught her how to hook. The classes were held through the Women's Club and the charge was 25¢ per lesson.

It was about this time that May and I took Mother in to live with us. This meant that my son had to sleep in the attic. Later when Mother needed nursing care, we hired a live-in nurse and I transferred to the attic to make room for the nurse.

My working space was extremely limited and my designing equipment simple. A large piece of wallboard was placed on top of my dining room table. My pattern #1 was an immediate failure! #2 "Wentworth Brick" was copied from a hearth rug in an historic home in New Hampshire, and is still available. Mrs. Saunders was my only agent. As women requested more and different designs, I found myself becoming interested in antique rugs which were fast going out of existence.

My vacations were spent in the New England states haunting antique shops. When it came to pricing patterns I was stumped. I kept track of the time I spent designing each pattern, but that price would be outlandish. The only way was to price the pattern as though I was going to sell a large quantity and keep it reasonable for the rugger. Anyway, I was having fun! As a homemaker with a young son I was tied to my home in the evenings. Suddenly I found I could hardly wait for the supper dishes to be over so I could design.

It was about this time that my oldest brother, Brock, showed up. Brock was an excellent carpenter, but every so often liquor not only made him extremely happy and carefree, but left him

without a dollar, and he would always come back to us. With Win and me in the attic I said, "We have no place for you to sleep, Brock. Mother and the nurse have the two bedrooms and Win and I sleep in the attic." He said, "Well, what about the hen house?" Now the hen house was a one story building 15 X 22 feet, and while it had windows, there was no flooring. Luckily it was summertime, and in a very short time Brock had a floor, some better windows and a partition at the center. The walls and beams he white-washed. Presto!

Win and I moved out of the attic into the hen house. Brock and Win shared one room and I the other. My son loved Brock's humor, and spent many happy hours playing cards with him. When it was finished he made a sign and tacked it over the door "HOTEL de BUM". It played an important part in the business I was slowly creating.

I made a deal with Brock and found him work in my neighborhood, instructing those who hired him to pay the money to me. It was to be banked in his name so he would have something to start back to his former employer-but I hid the bankbook. Brock could stand living with us just so long (no wonder!) and suddenly he found the hiding place of the bankbook and disappeared.

By spring of 1934, Mother had to have more care than one nurse could provide, and we had to resort to a nursing home where she died December 15, 1934. Win and I moved back into our bedrooms and the attic became my workshop for designing.

During these years Mrs. Saunders' classes had spread throughout our immediate area into Lancaster, Littleton and on down to the Boston suburbs. Each year she would have an exhibit in her home (which was very spacious with lots of "hanging room" for the rugs). Many ruggers will remember the stacks of patterns which were on tables on the wide verandas, and ruggers would go home loaded to the hilt with enough to hook for several years.

I shall never forget the first exhibit I attended. I was still shy and moved quietly from one frame to another (everyone demonstrated at these exhibits) and I saw my #28 "Open Flower" which I copied from a picture of a rug lying on the floor so it was a little difficult to make the design exactly like the picture. I noticed one rugger had changed the five petaled flowers to four petals and I said: "I see you have changed your flowers". She said sharply, "I certainly have, for you never see a flower like this with a leaf like the one in this design-the person who made the pattern certainly didn't know much about botany." I escaped before she could identify the culprit, but it taught me another lesson: research my subject when I create a design.

It was during those years that every penny I received from my designs went into burlap-first buying by the single bolt of 100 yards-then by the dozen bolts-and as time progressed by the thousands of yards at a time.

The part I enjoyed most were those vacation days. My sisters and their husbands would drive me anywhere to see an old rug. Sometimes those in antique shops would be so dilapidated it was difficult to trace the details. Two of them I found in an antique shop of Mrs. E. E. White of Belmont, Vermont. She was Sherman Adams' mother-in-law

and a delightful woman to meet. One was #86 "Vermont Geometric" and the other #87 "Belmont Scroll." The latter is still one of my favorites and remains one of the most popular designs (illustrated in "The Dreams Beneath Design," page 36, and in color in "You Can Hook Rugs," page 302).

That was a glorious period for me. I had found a new interest-an all absorbing one. Sister May would often climb to the attic at 2 a.m. and say, "Are you going to work all night long?" But it was the long evenings far into the morning hours that brought new and unexpected results.

CHAPTER 4

There was one phase of my work that not many teachers will recall. Perhaps Sally Newhall might. One of my problems, when I began to design, was how to get the pattern onto the burlap. I had to figure it out my own way. I first drew my design on heavy Kraft wrapping paper, and then with very large sheets of pen carbon between the burlap and pattern, I pressed real hard over EVERY line of the design with a blunt instrument (that would not tear the paper). Of course in due time, the design had to be redrawn to replace the worn one.

At first my son traced them-then sister May-and as demand grew I had to train high school boys who would work in the Hotel de Bum which was now my workshop.

Finally my father-in-law, who had retired, came to work full time. He was always so glad to be near my son. I leave it to your imagination to figure out how long it would take to trace all the lines of a design. It could not be done carelessly. In a scroll it was important to keep the graceful curves rolling smoothly. I shudder to think how little I made on a pattern in those days after the labor, burlap and commission was paid.

My father-in-law had been head of one of the departments in the Bigelow Carpet Company in Clinton, Mass., where he lived. I wonder now if he ever thought of his former work in connection with our craft so closely related.

It was while he was with me that I learned of the present way of transferring patterns. Mrs. Saunders was not pleased with them. She preferred the hand tracing, and at first said she would not buy any more patterns, so for a while I expected my little business was going to crash. Gradually she was won over.

"Prize Rug" #85 was one of the early designs and it was named that because it won first prize at the first National Exhibit of Hooked Rugs conducted by Eastern States Exposition in W. Springfield, Mass.

When that was over we were invited to take the whole exhibit of rugs we had displayed there to New York and show them at the Astor Hotel for a week. From that exhibit we had an order to hook a rug for a beautiful apartment in New York, which was hooked by some of

Mrs. Saunders' pupils. That led her to thinking she might pick up similar orders (for we were not out of the depression at the time).

She sent me to New York to call on interior decorators. At first I had wrapped my sample rug, but after the first call I thought it was too much trouble to rewrap the rug, so I rolled it up under my arm and was about to alight from the elevator when a guard stopped me. "Madam, just a minute, you can't go out of here with that rug." I replied, "But it's mine." He said, "You'll have to prove that by going back to where you came from and get permission." So up to the 26th floor I went. I suppose they thought I had stolen it. After that I carried a light wrapping in my bag to get in and out of buildings, but that unwrapped rug was under my arm as I waited to cross the street.

It was in the days of Al Capone when there was a great deal of shooting going on. A bus backfired and scared me, so I yelped a bit. A nice looking gentleman asked, "What is the matter?" I replied, "I thought I was shot." He said, "Shot or half-shot?" And with all my dignity I replied, "SHOT". Whereupon he took my arm and guided me across the street. "What in the world have you got under your arm?" he asked? "You wouldn't know," I replied, "it's a hand hooked rug." He asked, "Let me see it." I stood there on the sidewalk and unrolled the rug. He stood there and viewed it, and then said, "Why in the world do you want to spend all that time hooking one when you can buy one from Japan for \$5.98?" I laughingly replied, "You are trying to ruin my business."

Then he inquired, "Where do you come from?" My answer was, "Oh you wouldn't know, a little town called West Boylston in Mass." He said, "Well, I'm from Great Barrington, Mass." I said, "Then we are both from the sticks." He then invited me to have lunch with him. I replied, "I don't have lunch with strange gentlemen." Now at my present age I think that luncheon might have been very interesting!!

There are so many stories to be told about the early rugs and why they were named as they were-but that's another story. Back at home we decided that making rugs on order was not our cup of tea.

Gradually word was passed around, for I never advertised, but I began to receive letters wanting patterns. Mrs. Saunders was not willing to encourage teachers, and did not want the patterns sold to anyone but her. I wanted to help these people who were writing me, but the question was HOW?

I decided to get out an entirely different set of patterns from those I had then designed. I called them "Pearl Patterns" but I would never sell them to anyone I knew was in Mrs. Saunders' classes, but only areas where people hooked on their own. I issued a little flyer illustrating them.

Some of them are still available and you can identify them in the "PICK AND CHOOSE" catalogue because they have pp before the number.

This was the beginning of a direct mail order business which I watched very carefully to be sure they were only sold to those at a distance or in areas where I knew there were no classes. But this presented a problem. I was turning every dollar into burlap, and could not afford office help. Sister May again came to my rescue

and she would fill the orders. Correspondence had to be kept at a minimum because she did not type.

By this time many pupils in Mrs. Saunders' classes had become very efficient and desired to teach. Once more I suggested to Mrs. Saunders that she train teachers and agreed to keep all sales through her, but this she did not favor.

Then one day Ruby Frederick of Winchester, Mass., appealed to me to let her have some patterns so she could train her friend in Michigan whose husband was ill and she could not leave him. However if she could learn to teach she could have classes in her home. This was a great distance from Mrs. Saunders' classes but I said no because there is nothing I dislike more than discord. But I said to her, "I will make a special group of designs for your friend, and make them available only to her." So I made what I called "Special Designs" and those patterns that have SD before their number were in that group. SD1 was called "Ruby" in her honor.

The teacher in Michigan was Mrs. Aura Maxwell, known by her friends there as "Eleanor" and she was quick to learn and turned out some gorgeous rugs with her friend's help. She became what I call the "grandmother" of most of the Michigan teachers, for she either trained them or they were trained by her trainees.

Another one who approached me was Mrs. Charlotte Stratton. She would come down from Montpelier, Vermont at regular intervals for instruction, and at the same time she was keeping Mrs. Gibbs (whose husband invented the first cutting machine) busy hooking rugs for her. (There is a story about this which I will tell later) She wanted me to give her a franchise for the whole state of Vermont. Mrs. Saunders said, "If you do I'll never buy another pattern from you." (Mrs. Stratton later became a competitor.)

Other women who desired to teach approached me but my answer was always no, although my instinct told me something was wrong in not encouraging others to teach this craft.

In the late thirties, my sister Kaddy and her husband moved to West Boylston from California. She had business training and there were many ways in which she could help me. At that time of my life I was still somewhat formal in meeting people, but not Kaddy! One pupil was a Mrs. Fletcher (some patterns have been named for her) and I always addressed her that way because she, too, was formal and very dignified. I nearly died one day when Kaddy answered the doorbell and I heard her exclaim, "Why, hello Marietta, I am so glad to see you!" I never saw Mrs. Fletcher more charmed. Kaddy said, "Women like to be called by their first name." I guess she was right, for I gradually changed and now all our teachers call each other by their first names.

I was rapidly approaching a year in which I had to make decisions. I think it was the 1938 exhibit in Mrs. Saunder's home that my whole world blew up in my face. Or so it seemed then. These exhibits had become quite famous for women flocked to them from all over New England and the house was always packed for three days.

It was during this period that LIFE magazine, which was published by the same company as TIME magazine, was featuring "LIFE Goes to a Party". I had considerable correspondence with Mr. Roy Larson while earning that trip abroad by selling subscriptions to TIME. I decided to write him and ask him to come to a "different sort of party" and described what he might see. I told this to Mrs. Saunders but she said that I would never hear from him again. I wasn't sure but what she was right. Lo and behold, a telegram arrived saying "LIFE is coming to your party." We were both riding high on this excitement.

Arthur Griffin of Winchester was the photographer (and later became my photographer for slides at the annual exhibits in Horticultural Hall in Worcester and since then his work has become widely known.) He came with his assistants, and candid camera shots were taken all over the house. The pictures were never printed in LIFE-apparently not enough general interest in our craft.

The editor of the daily newspaper in Clinton called on Mrs. Saunders and asked, "How in the world did you get LIFE to come to your exhibit?" She said, "I haven't any idea," intimating it was because she had become so well known. When I heard these words I went into shock. This was the straw that broke the camel's back. I thought I had earned that little bit of recognition.

After several days of deliberation, I asked Mrs. Saunders to return the patterns she was holding on consignment, and told her I intended to encourage others to teach. Instead of returning the patterns, she sent me a check for their value. The patterns were taken to Hudson where a young man copied them. Before a year was over, there was some difficulty between them, and she took them to Providence where they were again copied under the name of Heirloom.

All that I had worked so hard to bring to pass was in a heap. I'll not record the hours I spent in tears.

CHAPTER 5

It was during 1938 that a health problem restricted me for six weeks in the summer. To have to be quiet was a real problem, for my thoughts were way ahead of what I was permitted to do. I decided to put together some of the stories for a small book about the old rugs I had copied. Thus, "Dreams Beneath Design" was written and published by Bruce Humphries, Inc. in Boston in 1939.

When everything I had been doing in designing seemed to fall apart, sister Kaddy helped me to pick up the pieces and go on helping those who desired to teach. I did not have to hunt for teachers. The grape-vine brought many letters from those desiring to pass on to others what they had received. This was to become the philosophy of my life.

Sally Newhall was one of the first teachers and I have been grateful over the years for her very staunch support. From the work I had seen in previous exhibits, I knew how well some were prepared. The growth was gradual, but by the spring of 1940 I felt there were enough teachers to put on an exhibit. Where it could be held was the big question.

The Colonial Inn in Concord, Massachusetts, had at that time a lovely old colonial atmosphere. It was filled with antiques and old paintings hung on the wall. I consulted the manager, who naturally didn't know just what an exhibit entailed. I could not guarantee the attendance, although I felt it would be fairly large. There was an annex to the inn, and it was agreed that all of us, including the teachers, would stay for the entire exhibit and have rooms in the annex. I wanted to get some rugs hung on the walls of the inn itself. The manager agreed we could take down the paintings and hang the rugs if we would return the paintings to the walls when the exhibit was over.

Kaddy and I went down in advance to prepare the exhibit. The teachers were not to arrive until the next day. I had asked the manager to find a strong young man to help us hang the rugs and he turned out to be a young minister.

We were snowed under with rugs - good, bad and indifferent. By the 11th hour of the evening he was all in, saying his feet hurt. We still had a couple of hundred rugs to place somewhere. I asked him to go down to the junction and pick up some sandwiches and coffee and to please stay with us.

His only reply was, "How do you stand it?" There were moments when only our sense of humor helped us solve the problems we met. When the young man returned we consumed our midnight snack and went at it again, ending at about 3 AM and having to put many of the rugs on the beds in the rooms occupied by the teachers. They had to remove them to go to bed, make up their own beds and replace the rugs in the morning.

The exhibit was a huge success - they came from everywhere! The porches on the Inn were filled with teachers demonstrating their craft and women asking questions. The food ran out at the inn and they ended up on one day serving canned beans and frankfurters.

The exhibit was good publicity. We added several new teachers to our list, which involved correspondence and book work. Kaddy helped on both, and by burning the midnight oil I managed to keep up my end.

In the spring of 1941 it was decided to repeat the exhibit. I knew a little more about how to run it and restricted the number of rugs to be shown by each teacher. We displayed dyed materials, for by this time I found the dyeing was going to be a very important part of the project. Later that year Kaddy returned to California.

Then the next blow fell! On December 7, 1941, the world was shocked by Pearl Harbor. World War II brought an embargo on all burlap. Luckily I had a good stock on hand which was to last for a while. But what would happen to the teachers who had started classes? They had worked hard. How could we hold the interest in hooking until the war was over in one year, or possibly two? It was a good thing that we could not foresee its end in 1945.

I wrote my first Letter Service on December 15, 1941 and sent it out to the names of both teachers and pupils saying that

I would write 10 issues a year, with the exception of July and August, for \$1.00. It was meant to be mailed bulk rate, which meant that they all had to be sorted by city and state and tied in separate bundles, and the count had to agree with the Letter Service records. Many hours were consumed when we were off one or two, for we had to check each one individually. My main idea was to say, "Keep hooking, it will help you overcome some of the shock of having loved ones go off to war." Later, by popular demand, we had to change to first class mail as they didn't want to wait for the slow delivery of bulk mail, and that is why it is now \$3.00.

When my supply of burlap was exhausted, teachers would send me pieces of burlap or linen to be stamped, or even meal bags if they were clean and straight. How we ever managed to get them stamped and back to the right person is a mystery to me now.

The Red Cross provided burlap for the veterans, for I was appointed head of arts and skills at Cushing Hospital in Framingham, where 27 of my teachers, and some of their pupils, gave their time four days a week teaching the boys. We had 400 of them hooking in this program. I copied the arm patches of practically every division of our Army, Navy and Air Corps, enlarging them to 12 or 14 inches. I went to the hospital on my day off from the office. My evenings were spent copying their insignias. It was in this hospital work that Adelaide Scott and I were brought together, for she taught at Fort Devens, and we often had extra meetings at both hospitals, thus beginning a lifelong friendship which has enriched both our lives.

By the spring of 1942 it wasn't possible to get gas to drive a car, so I had to decide where we could have an exhibit that could be reached by train or bus. I sought the Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston. The manager was delighted and would do everything we desired to help us, even to sending out formal printed invitations.

The exhibit was to be for three days. Now we had new problems in trucking all our supplies to Boston, for we always sold supplies during the exhibits. We also had to have more help.

Our exhibit was held in the Ballroom, which was a very large and long room. Our problem was that the carpenters were not willing to work in the evening when we were hanging the exhibit. A frame of wood had to be built around the top of the walls from which we could hang or attach a rug. It was exasperating! Here we were with plenty of help and three hundred rugs to be hung, and we couldn't do a thing! Hattie, an old friend, persuaded me to go to bed and get a good rest. She promised to be up extra early in the morning to instruct the carpenters. The exhibit had to be ready by 10 a.m.

That was the last time I trusted someone else to carry out my duties. I had left word that some of the rugs could be placed on the floor around the periphery of the hall, and to sort out the larger ones which were to be hung. At 8 the next morning, none of the rugs had been placed around the hall, nor had the carpenters shown up. When they did we broke up into groups, and I don't think

they ever saw such a bunch of women bossing their every movement to be through by 10. Of course, we were not through! Several rugs were still rolled up on the tables. Try to explain to the woman who had worked far into the nights to finish her rug why hers had to land on the table!

It gradually became a beautiful sight, and how the crowds poured into the hotel. I guess everyone was tired of having to stay at home and boarded the nearest train or bus for the Copley.

When the Spring of 1943 arrived, the thought of trucking all those supplies to Boston forced me to look closer to home. We had a beautiful Horticultural Hall in Worcester and I visited the manager. In the other exhibits the managers were glad to have people pouring into their inn or hotel, for they brought business, thus there was no charge for rent. Now I had to face a different situation. Prices were settled upon, and I decided to take a chance. I would call this my advertising expense, for I did no other advertising.

The building consisted of a lower level which had a dining room and some display rooms, the main floor consisted of a very large hall and a side hall, and the upper level had a very long hall and a small room leading off from it. Best of all there was a balcony where one could rest and view most of the exhibit. We asked no admittance charge.

The Hookrafters Guild, which 12 of my teachers had formed when we were teaching the boys at Cushing Hospital, offered their assistance. We had a real problem because the authorities said we could not hang the exhibit until Saturday and it had to be completed before midnight and we could not have access to the hall on Sunday. It required about 27 men, many of them brought in from the office of my son, and my own office help.

Sister Sylvia, who had always worked in a bank, and whose husband had died, decided to retire from the bank and work for me. She took full charge of the supply room on the upper level. Besides its many exhibits, it was alive with color from the dyed swatches and the back issues of the letter service. Mr. Burdick of W. Cushing and Company was with us in those early years with all of his dyes.

The walls were covered with rugs. Tabletops stood on end in the hall off the main hall with rugs completely covering them. During the war years we always showed some of the work of the veterans in the hospitals.

Realizing the importance of colored slides of rugs which I might never see again, I hired Mr. Arthur Griffin of Winchester, Massachusetts, who later became a famous photographer with several books to his credit. He brought an assistant and while the women were tacking the rugs to narrow strips of wood to be hung, he was photographing the rugs which I had chosen. Many of the slides from those early exhibits are in some of the carousels which the Guild loans to its members.



Pearl off on a trip.



The seven sister were:upper row: Gertrude, Ruth, Sylvia, Rachel and on the lower row: Kaddy, May and Pearl.



A busy day at Rose Cottage.

Our exhibit opened on Monday to teachers only with an all day conference. Teachers were selected to give a talk or discuss ideas which helped them. At noon we adjourned to the dining room on the lower level where tables of eight or ten had a little hooked rug frame with the name of the hostess who would gather enough to fill her table. We were lucky in having a neighbor, who was a marvelous cook, prepare and serve the luncheon. The dining room was also hung with rugs.

We opened to the public on Tuesday. We were swamped-you couldn't even get to the periphery of the main hall to see the rugs on the floor. The crowds gathered before 9 a.m., when we were to open, and we had no way to count our attendance. One frantic gentleman sought my help to find his wife. "What kind of a hat is she wearing?" I asked. "A little white one with a big bow on it," he replied. Well that ought to be easy to spot over the shoulders of our guests.

Suddenly I heard him say, "Here she is!" I asked, "Where is your hat?" She replied, "I didn't wear any." How unobservant some husbands can be!

On the opening of the three day exhibit we had seats set up on the lower level so that I could chat for 10 or 15 minutes about the things I wanted them to especially notice. I had three new dresses, one for each day. Sylvia usually gave me the once over but one day she missed. I often talk with my hands. I was waving my hand toward a certain rug and I was suddenly conscious that there was something wrong. Mae Bacon and Sylvia were wildly motioning me from the side door to do something-but I didn't know what-until I closed my remarks and a lady in the first row said to me, "I know what you paid for your dress!" The tag had been waving wildly while I talked.

The next year we charged 50¢ admission which kept the curious away, and our attendance which ran between 5,000 and 5,500 could then get to the periphery of the hall. These exhibits were held every May until 1957 when the problem of brushing, rolling and wrapping more than 300 rugs and getting them safely into the hands of the Express Company, where they were insured and returned to their owners-some as far away as California, was an exhausting experience. Very regretfully they came to an end.

Those exhibits were marvelous dreams. I can close my eyes now and remember many of the rugs and just where they were hanging.

Some time during the year of 1943 Kaddy returned once again from California-I called her my "will of the wisp", but she was a tremendous help. However, what came into my right hand went out of my left, for now I had May, Kaddy and Sylvia to pay each week, besides Fran (my secretary). I still didn't dare give up my steady wage so I continued as a legal secretary. The years from 1943 to 1945 were financially lean. I foresaw that when peace came we would get back to normal and I had faith that this would mean more business.

In 1945 Rose Cottage came on the market. I could see it from the kitchen window of the place I was then living, and thought of what a lot of closet space there must be in it. My neighbor was the executor of the estate that owned Rose Cottage, and she said, "Pearl, my uncle's house would be a wonderful place for your business. There is a big room over the kitchen that would make a good classroom. I would rather see it go to you than anyone else, because they might make it into apartments." I toyed with the thought, then I would get cold feet. Then I would think of all those closets! I looked over the place and drew plans of how it would fit my purposes. Then I would falter again. As you know from reading my book "You Can Hook Rugs," I was using every closet in my house for wools and swatches. I didn't have a place to put a can of beans. Then I made the leap!

I sold my house at a good profit. But I needed a small mortgage and because it was small I wanted it for 4%. I visited my Savings Bank. When the treasurer inquired into my background and found I was only a legal secretary, he didn't think much of this mortgage, especially at such a low rate of interest. So I told him I had a little business on the side making patterns for hooked rugs in the evenings. He was still not convinced, so I told him I also had a Letter Service that went out monthly to subscribers who pay for it. He asked, "When do you sleep?" and he turned me down, and when I returned to the office a young lawyer, who was counsel for a neighboring savings bank, said, "Don't worry Pearl, I'll get your mortgage for you and at 4%." He did and thank the Lord it has long since been burned.

Alterations in Rose Cottage started. At last I was to have a home for hooked rugs and a place where all who enjoyed this craft could come and see them on the floor in use (as every rug in the house was hand hooked) and many were hung on the walls. But I still had problems. The shortage of materials when peace was declared made it most difficult to find radiators for the new heating system, and I could not find a PINK bathroom and had to settle for a white one.

CHAPTER 6

When my son was in his late teens (before we moved to Rose Cottage) said, "Mother, let's get some new furniture. I was still using what I had when I was married. I said, "Winthrop, these things are okay and probably will be for the rest of my life." My friend, Hattie, (who experimented with me on the "Dye Dabbler") said, "Pearl, why don't you buy some sterling silver?" "Why this Rogers' silver, which my husband's parents gave us, is still good and will probably last the rest of my life."

But in 1945 Winthrop had his own home and I had moved into

Rose Cottage. It included an ell at the rear which had been a woodshed, and which I had made into a cozy three-room apartment for sister May. A very large barn which had never been used except for hay was perfect-the patterns were made on the second floor and stored on shelves on the first floor, with an area for bundling. Because it was such a busy place, we called it the "Bee Hive."

My lovely hooked rugs were the most important thing in my house but they needed the proper companions, so I went on an antique binge to find pieces which would make my rugs even lovelier. Since I hoped to entertain teachers in my home, I bought sterling silver flatware for my table. It took a while to assemble the antiques that I wanted. Some of the wallpapers available right after the war ended did not please me and were replaced as soon as possible. It took a little while to get a fireplace in my kitchen, but as these various items were finally secured, I felt that my rugs were eventually complimented by their surroundings.

Rose Cottage will be remembered by those who visited it while I lived there, but for those who were never there I would like to describe it, for Rose Cottage became a mecca for all rug lovers.

Most of the floors were very wide boards and were sanded and polished for the background of my rugs. The front room was a studio with two floor-to-ceiling windows opposite each other looking onto the two front porches. A pair on the third side of the room looked out onto the highway, and the fourth wall had a white marble fireplace. Draperies of soft rose with green trim softened the windows. The walls were a soft grayed blue-green and the ceiling, about 10' high, was a soft rose pink, bringing it down. Shelf cabinets were built along two walls to hold patterns with soft green curtains closed when not in use. Another with closed shelves held the Letter Service issues and catalogs. The tops of all of these were scalloped and an artist painted roses around the top.

Before the double windows, an old-fashioned sofa with carved top had been refinished to a dull luster and upholstered in plum velvet. A pair of carved straight-backed chairs upholstered in plum velvet matched the sofa. A pair of blue-green velvet chairs were at the fireplace. My desk had a registration book, for it was always interesting to note the far-away addresses, many of them from abroad.

On the floor were "New England Twist", "Prize Octagonal", "Sumac Checkerboard" and "Lincoln's Log Cabin" rugs, and several rugs were displayed on the walls. These were changed every spring and fall. I tried to create a feeling of a welcome and a comfortable place for women to sit while my hostess would display varied rug patterns on the floor. There was a communication system that connected the studio with the offices upstairs and my loft, a very large room over my sister's apartment.

Sylvia's beautiful tip-top mahogany table was just right for the front hall. A pair of carved walnut chairs were reupholstered with a hooked seat and back for each side of the table. (Illustrat-

ed on page 232 in "You Can Hook Rugs.")

Sheer white curtains were shirred to brass rods to hold them taut for the long narrow windows on both sides of the two doors that opened into this hall, and best of all, a brass rose knocker was found for the front door. The main attraction in the hall was the hooked stair runner "Bermuda" which had a grayed-blue mosaic background and gray to white scrolly leaves with touches of gold. These were the colors that were picked up from the wallpaper. On the floor was "Maze Border", "Stained Glass Window" and "Basket Weave."

The living room was papered in pencil-striped blue-green with a deep mauve ceiling. A beautiful old tambour desk and a 30" round cherry table balanced each other on either side of a sofa. The fireplace was flanked with a wingchair and a small wine-colored velvet slipper chair. A Lincoln rocker and a rose-colored upholstered chair and my piano finished the framing of the lovely "Victorian Square" which had been hooked by Sally Newhall for my living room. Smaller rugs, "Rose Belmont", "Scalloped Scroll" and "Little Eddy" were at the thresholds of the three doors leading into it. During the winter my draperies were a deep rose and in summer a sheer light green.

I found a beautiful hand carved four-poster bed for my bedroom with tester top, and used a soft green quilted spread that met the sheer ruffled flounces and the covering on the top. It took three of us to tack and arrange that cover every time it was laundered. I also had a hand-made maple chest of drawers, not as tall as a highboy, but with Queen Anne legs, and a similar style dressing table with a large eagle on top. The frame of tiger-maple pulled these three pieces together. A lady's carved top walnut chair and a pair of straight backs to match covered with tufted soft rose velvet completed my bedroom, with dainty sheer curtains at the windows during the summer and rose satin during the winter.

The wallpaper in the dining room was a soft greenish-gold Chinese grass paper with pale grayed-green wainscoting at the bottom and for the woodwork. A very large cabinet on one side of the room had two sets of doors which could be folded back to show my china collection and my rosebud Spode. The walls and shelves within the cabinet were painted a lovely soft Chinese red. It took me some time to replace my dining room table with what I wanted, but eventually I found it in Woodstock, Vermont. Though it was painted with black enamel, Mrs. Harding, a well-known antique dealer, assured me it was solid mahogany. One leaf was off and when my son saw it on the back porch he said, "What are you going to do with that old table?" "It will be my dining room table when it is finished." "That old thing?" Sure enough, it was solid mahogany with two drop leaves nearly reaching the floor and what a beautiful grain of wood it had!

Edith Cramer of Sutton, Mass., who had written a book on stenciling furniture, found me a set of six original Hitchcock chairs

with a "lace back", and after she had taken them all apart, re-glued them, made rush bottom seats and refinished the wood, she stenciled them with her delightful gold designs. A cabinet maker had made me a tall cabinet with shelves above and a broad bottom below with two doors, which gave me a place for my collection of Royal Doulton figurines and Majolica. An old fashioned rocker and a large easy chair on either side of a square mahogany table at the end of the room was where you would find me and my housekeeper on most evenings.

When the painters finally left, my kitchen, which was a large one, had been turned into a small breakfast room at one end, with a round table and chairs painted a soft blue in front of a closet from which I had removed the door and filled with shelves to hold my dishes. A pair of screens painted like the table partially hid the remaining part of my kitchen. Later, the other end of the kitchen had a small fireplace built about 30" from the floor. The brick wall was white. There was always a fire in it for breakfast during the winter months. Best of all, a lovely yellow Boston rocker, hand painted by Edith Cramer, was before it.

All of these additions kept me working as a legal secretary, and anything I had left from the expenses of doing business provided these treasures which made my rugs even more beautiful.

Sylvia had the front bedroom on the second floor over the studio, which she had filled with antiques. Two of the other bedrooms were used as offices and another was for my housekeeper, next to the bathroom.

It was at this end of the hall that I had a classroom, very large, in which I kept only chairs. From this room I stepped down two levels to a small room where my secretary worked, then into a large area over May's apartment which we called "The Loft". I kept my supply of swatches, dyes, a large designing table in the center, and my desk. Here I could close the door and find nothing touched when I returned. One of my teachers later gave me a sign for it - "Bless This Mess".

In the early years, sister May was in charge of wrapping bundles in the Bee Hive. A cousin, after being shown through Rose Cottage, turned to May and said, "Where do you live, May?" May, with her usual wit, replied, "I live in the woodshed and work in the barn."

Although we had hours for the public and a hostess to show them through every afternoon except Saturday and Sunday, there were always callers at almost any hour of the day or night. I never turned anyone away if they were from a distance. I am reminded of one evening when the bell rang at about nine o'clock, and at that hour of the evening I had changed into my nightie and robe and was working at a card table in the dining room. When I answered the door a woman said, "I know these are not your hours, but we are from the West and we cannot go home without seeing Rose Cottage." I asked her to come in.

Now I had a problem, for underneath my nightie I had a pair of panties in which the elastic had been stretched to the point where they would not stay in place after I had removed my girdle. Luckily, I had two large pockets in my housecoat and I hung onto the panties for dear life. The moment she stepped into the hall she asked if she could bring her husband in, too. Her son and daughter were also with her. I made a beeline for the chair and sat in front of the desk and anchored myself during their visit. Usually I got up and moved around and showed various items, but I took no chances that evening.

In all the years I lived in Rose Cottage I could never find out how old the house was, although I thought it might be 150 years old. Even our Historical Society could not seem to put its finger on who built it, but one evening at our Historical Society meeting I saw a woman I had not met before. When I asked her name she said she was Miss Marsh, a school teacher when she was younger. When she asked my name and I told her, it didn't seem to mean much to her, so I said that I lived in Rose Cottage. "Oh, my uncle built Rose Cottage for his wife," she said. We were circling the smorgasboard table and I told her not to leave until I had a chance to chat with her.

After the program was over she told me her story. Her uncle was an innkeeper in Framingham and travelers stopping at regular intervals brought gifts to his wife but she never had a good place to display them. He told her he would build a house for her in West Boylston so that she could be near her sister, and Rose Cottage was built with gingerbread trim, his son-in-law being the architect. Thus the house is now about 130 years old.

Miss Marsh had two brothers and they were the two men of that name who formed a partnership with a Mr. Jordan and the company was called Jordan Marsh Company, a well known department store in Boston.

In 1946 sister Kaddy left again for California. Since the adult education system had many classes in hooking throughout California, Kaddy felt that it was wise to become a distributor there so the teachers could come and look at patterns before purchasing them. She opened a little shop and I sent several of my rugs out to her to show on the walls. I wonder how many California teachers will remember this little shop?

It was not long before she needed more room and moved to Sepulveda Boulevard, Sherman Oaks, into a large shop which had a very large room in the rear used for classes and also for storage of patterns and wool.

She couldn't resist purchasing huge stocks of wool and had large open bins to hold the various colors, especially for backgrounds. Pupils loved to keep tabs on anything new and would spend hours and money, too, to pull these remnants and ends from the bins.

One of her greatest thrills was that Clark Gable, in walking by the shop, always stood for some time admiring the rugs and small

pieces displayed in the window. Ann Harding, a well known actress of those days, was a regular pupil in some of the classes.

In 1950 she wanted to have a similar exhibit to those that I had been having in the Worcester Horticultural Hall each May. Many western teachers had generously sent their finished work to these exhibits and it now seemed an appropriate time to ask the easterners to send their work to a western exhibit.

I hired the Masonic Hall in Hollywood and we publicized it in the Teacher's Letters and Letter Service. The support was wonderful and rugs poured into Kaddy's studio from all over the country. We had as many as at any Horticultural Hall exhibit, well over 300, but we ran into a big problem for nothing could be attached to the walls and there were no moldings to hang from.

Joe, Kaddy's husband, built framework around the walls and we hired a big truck and the three of us, with a few of the teachers, prepared a three-day exhibit. Kaddy was extremely protective of me and insisted on taking a cot into places behind the scenery where I was to frequently rest. But, guess what! Kaddy became ill with the flu and she spent the entire time on the cot!

Several times each day I presented the western teachers to our guests. We had a tremendous crowd, and I told our guests where the classes were held.

When the exhibit closed, most of the teachers left, for most had long drives to their homes. The bulk of the work fell upon Joe and me with a little bossing from Kaddy. Joe had hired a very large truck, and of course, after the rugs were rolled the framework had to be torn down. At 3 a.m. the three of us climbed into the front of the truck and rolled down the boulevard toward home. Unknown to Kaddy, I had called the doctor, for I feared she had pneumonia. Kaddy disliked doctors, and to add to her chagrin, he gave her an injection which knocked her out for 24 hours. Kaddy recovered in a short time but always liked to torment me with my cruelty in allowing a doctor to inject anything into her bottom.

It was a tremendous job to brush and wrap all of the rugs that had been sent in by other than western teachers, and get them safely into the hands of the express company. I think I slept for three days following, but oh, what a lovely exhibit it was!

It brought all the western teachers closer together and they decided they would like to have a Teachers' Workshop. Since they were all so busy with classes, they came to Kaddy's studio for four weekends, arriving Friday evening and leaving Sunday evening, which gave us two whole days. Now this really was the first McGown Teachers' Workshop, but for several reasons there never was another western workshop. It did cement many friendships between the teachers and the benefits from that first one were lasting.

The year previous to 1950 I had been writing the book, "You Can Hook Rugs" and the proofs were sent to me for reading, which Kaddy and I did together in the evenings. Joe was listening and all

at once he exclaimed, "What did you just say?" I repeated the sentence. "Why, you can't put that in your book. Don't you know what a hooker is?" I said, "Of course. It's a woman who hooks rugs." "Oh, no," said Joe. "A hooker is a prostitute." I had never heard of such a thing! After that I always referred to women who were hooking as "ruggers", but there were those as naive as I, and for one reason or another (sometimes pure mischief) a woman insists that she is a hooker. Now when articles are written about teachers and their exhibits, and even on TV-the headlines or references are often about "hookers", of rugs, that is! I had incorporated the business in 1948 and in 1949 I felt that I could give up my legal secretary work and make my living designing.

CHAPTER 7

Thoughts of an eastern workshop lay like a dream in my mind. Then one day in 1951 a group of ruggers were spending a day hooking with Louise Hopfmann, who had a very lovely spacious home in South Lancaster, Mass. As we were chatting over lunch someone said: "Wouldn't it be nice to meet somewhere for a whole week and just hook?" Louise said, "You can meet here-there are seven vacant rooms on the third floor, formerly occupied by servants in the days when wealthy families had several of them in their homes. We could probably hire some cots from Atlantic Union College across the street." I didn't realize that my dreams and their desires were beginning to merge.

Our attendance had to be limited to 30 because of capacity, with only one bathroom for the 30 women! Word was flashed among the teachers and almost immediately we were at full capacity.

It was understood we were to eat breakfast and lunch at the local "Cream Crock" (a sandwich and ice cream parlor) or at the local drug store, and then drive somewhere at night for dinner. Thus began one of the most pleasurable and hilarious experiences of our lives.

We decided to make it worthwhile with a program for each day. We spent days on the spacious flagstone terrace shaded by huge elms. Part of our program included various ways of dyeing. Eileen Briggs from Bennington, Vermont, showed how to get all the colors around the color wheel with three packages of dye-red, yellow and blue-which she had dyed in many gradations over men's woolen underwear (her pupils never used anything but old garments). Mary MacKay introduced us to her delightful "painted dyeing". Phyllis Larsen (Moermann) from Washington, D.C. brought her room sized rug which lit a fire of enthusiasm for large rugs under every teacher.

At sunset we filled five or six cars and went to one of the many good eating places not too far away, such as the Sterling Inn and The Old Mill in Westminster.

It was at bedtime these adult women became kids again, such as firing a shoe at a sleeping snorer in their room. You could hardly find room to walk from one bed to another.

Having one bathroom for 30 women presented problems! One teacher arose at 5:00 in the morning to get her bath first and, of course, woke everyone in the room next to the bath, which meant no more sleep for them. With so many baths, the facilities needed almost daily attention from the local plumber.

Thus the McGown Teachers' Workshop was born and Louise has always been recognized as its founder. The week left us with marvelous memories and established many friendships beyond our common interest in hooking. When other teachers heard about it they wanted to make it an annual event. We then made arrangements to meet the next year at Atlantic Union College just across the street.

There was an entirely different setup. Now we had large spacious classrooms, but we were to live in a three-story frame dormitory (dubbed the "fire trap" by the husbands who delivered their wives). There were only double-decker beds with badly sagging springs which looked more like hammocks, a table and a couple of chairs with no curtains or screens-with rolls of dust and debris left by the students at the end of the year.

It was quite an adjustment for these gentle women coming from comfortable homes and clean rooms to face a new way of living. They were good sports and the brooms were soon busy. Sometimes there were two double deckers in one room and it was into one of these that Peg Noeltner and three others were assigned. Peg just couldn't cope with all those bags of wool and suitcases, so she ordered the others out of the room and she went to work. When her roommates returned the place was as clean as possible, and the varied luggage was stacked neatly beside the bed they were assigned to, and thereafter Peg was known as "The Warden."

We solved some of the problems of mosquitoes, June bugs and moths by gathering in the evening in a very large room on the first floor which was screened, in which there was a small stove and refrigerator. The many small tables were pushed together to form one huge table with chairs all around it. The teachers kept the chairs full, with some retiring early, and others, fascinated with all the bits of knowledge they were sharing with each other, plus the midnight snack and coffee, stayed until one and two in the morning.

In spite of the sparse furniture some of the rooms seemed very small. Adelaide Scott, who met Irma Wettstein for the first time, changed their furniture every way she could imagine, and ended up with her chair in the closet and the table up against it so as to have a little space in the center of the room.

Though there were more baths, there were no doors to the stalls, nor curtains for the showers. It was extremely intimate and a somewhat embarrassing way to say good morning.



The rug business in California.



National Exhibit at O.S.V.



Carolyn Collett's Hooking Bees conducted under a huge tent.

You wouldn't believe the tricks they would play upon each other. One night Irma couldn't stand the loud ticking of her alarm clock, so Adelaide set it outside the door. Someone saw it and set it for 3 a.m. Then they quietly collected any other alarm clocks they could find and set them just outside the varied doors and there were constant alarms through the night!

There were good things, too. Elizabeth Spalding (then of Wisconsin, now of Maine) showed the girls how to blow up a flower to a huge size by the use of an old-fashioned picture lantern, by drawing around its outline and then coloring it with pastels. These were of invaluable help in the adult education classes, for pupils could see the large flower clearly while the teacher instructed its shading.

Now our program became a serious one. No one could charge a fee for their services nor accept money from another for knowledge shared. A teacher was given a subject to be presented finished and to take on a class of about 10 for one day and thereafter she was free to attend all other classes. I became Program Chairman and have remained so until this day. Our workshop was a "give" session and one of the days we had a "give" session for the public by putting on an exhibition in the gym of the many rugs we brought with us. This was free to the public.

This, in itself, became valuable to all teachers, for in a period of two hours in the morning every teacher being assigned to either placing rugs colorwise around the periphery of the hall, or carrying out some other duty, found this experience of inestimable value to her in later years in arranging her own exhibits.

The memories of those early years are treasured by all who experienced them, and the younger teachers always enjoy hearing the older teachers tell of their pranks.

The late forties and early fifties were extremely busy ones. Dr. Hollis of the Parker School of Greenville, South Carolina, had asked me to establish a rug camp at the Blythe Shoals. I brought several of my northern teachers down for the week's session. In those years I was trying to break down any feeling of competition among the teachers. It was a great opportunity to prove that once a group of teachers are brought together, and come to know each other, they would give of their knowledge to each other, and in that way all of them would expand and grow. It worked!

Southern teachers, and pupils, too, said, "You know, you northerners aren't so bad at all!" We all came to have a new respect for each other. By the end of four years I felt that Blythe Shoals was well established and turned it over to Miss Claribel Harn to continue. The rug camp was later transferred to Furman University of Greenville, where Claribel's niece, Kay Estes, continues to operate it each summer. It was a great pleasure to attend the 25th anniversary a couple of years ago.

Allen Eaton wrote "Handcrafts of New England" in 1949 of

my activities:

"Mrs. Pearl K. McGown of West Boylston has helped to preserve the best traditions of rug making. In addition to being a designer and craftsman, she is a teacher, lecturer, collector and writer. Each year special exhibits are held of the work of Mrs. McGown and her pupils, usually at Horticultural Hall in Worcester. These exhibits are attended by persons from all parts of New England and from many other states. The various processes of dyeing and hooking are demonstrated. Prepared materials with instructions as to how they may be used with some of the patterns are available at reasonable cost. There is a general interchange of ideas and experiences among hookers and teachers. This is probably the most important annual gathering of rugmakers in our country. With its exhibitions, demonstrations, and general information, it is the starting place for many workers in this folk art."

The first Hooking Bee was held in Storowton on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition at West Springfield, Massachusetts, during which McGown teachers demonstrated various ways of dyeing, and LIFE photographers attended, taking 176 pictures, but alas, they did not appear in the magazine.

During this period I had started a correspondence course in color, based upon the Munsell system recognized the world over, and hoped that eventually all teachers would refer to their values correctly with No. 1 the darkest, running to the higher numbers in lighter values. But many had become used to dyeing their lightest value first and called it No. 1. You can identify those who studied color with me by the numbers they apply to their values.

In this same period I had four of my teachers hook four rugs of new designs which I made for McCall's Magazine. They were featured in color in their monthly magazine and again in their Needlework Annual.

All of these activities meant more work, and therefore more help. Syster Sylvia, who had retired as a teller from the Clinton Savings Bank, was head of the office, opening and routing the mail so the teacher's orders would be rushed out first. Grace Phelps made out the invoices and her sister, Marion, kept the records of the Letter Service, for it was getting mailed into 30 states. Phyllis Webster recorded sales and Eleanor Loftus helped me with the records of the Color Course in the mornings and was hostess in the afternoons.

In the rear of Rose Cottage there was a small room between the classroom and my loft (the whole area over Mae's apartment where I worked) and that was where my secretary, Frances Milstead, worked. She has been with me longer than any other employee and still comes on a part-time basis. There never was another quite so efficient. In the Bee Hive there were usually two stamping patterns, and one assembling and wrapping bundles.

The early fifties were very busy for I was publishing "Color In Hooked Rugs". Downstairs, Auntie Bancroft, my house-

keeper, ruled the roost. She was always good natured but sharp in her remarks. When Mr. Reilly, my publisher, was to arrive one morning about eleven, I knew he would be here during the lunch hour so I said, "Auntie, add another place for lunch". "Now look here," she said, "don't start inviting gentlemen to lunch"! I am not asking you to do anything extra, just have enough for one more," I never knew what we were going to eat for she planned everything-bless her. She made a cheese souffle, green salad and one of her delicious apple pies for dessert. When she served the pie to Mr. Reilly, he said, "What, no cheese with my pie?" "You had your cheese in the souffle, you can't have it again on your pie," she retorted. That did it, from then on they were great pals. He could always stay for lunch and Auntie always received a box of assorted cheeses from him at Christmas.

Those same years brought me competition! I now had to learn some new lessons. Mr. Burdick of the Cushing Dye Company purchased from seven or eight New England women some patterns they had drawn for their own areas, and he added designs to his supplies. Helen Carlson of Nashua, New Hampshire, had been one of my best teachers for many years, but her husband, who painted, produced another line. Margaret Masters, who was one of the very best teachers in the Midwest, eventually went into designing. Mildred Sprout, who was a teacher and using McGown patterns from Kaddy's studio, started a pattern business. I was sorry to lose them, but always wished them well and remained on good terms with them. I never knew what they were designing because I wanted to keep my mind clear in what I wished to design myself. In some cases when pupils would ask me to design something like another's design I refused, because if they could get it from another designer, why duplicate it.

Besides the McGown Teachers' Workshop, of which I was always Program Chairman, my days were full of planning, for they were always calling for something new. Another fact impressed me immensely. I found my McGown teachers were vital and happy. They were doing a fine thing for a lot of people, and they saw the results which came from participation in hooking which helped relax the mind from work and worry. The freedom and the imagination which each of them displayed in bringing out latent talent in their pupils, but it gave the teacher a sense of vital importance on the part she played in the lives of others. With such thoughts in mind, one does not have time to think of what a competitor is doing.

CHAPTER 8

Competition was something to adjust to. True, for eight years I had none. By the early fifties I would come upon designs of competitors in teacher exhibits. The best barometer was my business and my sales increased each year, so why worry? I preferred to

stick to my formula of a dozen new rug designs each year and between two and three dozen small pieces. Teachers would be bored being confined to a few designs, they wanted the challenge of new pieces every year.

I found that competition was good for me, it taught me many lessons. I saw their mistakes which I tried to avoid, like scrawny scrolls, poorly drawn flowers or lack of balance in the repetition of details.

Two years after I published "The Dreams Beneath Design" in 1949 and told the story of Edward Sands Frost, who was the first commercial designer of hooked rugs, I was surprised to learn that Mrs. Charlotte Stratton had unearthed the old stencils which Mr. Frost had made from old copper boilers, which he took in part-payment of new ones in his tin peddler business. All the information in that book had come from Mr. Frost's granddaughter, whom I finally traced to California, but she said she had no idea where the old stencils were. It was not that I desired to own them, as the stencils had very broad lines. Because his designs had never been copyrighted, they had become public property, and his patterns which I had found and copied in fine lines were much easier to follow in hooking. Later Mrs. Stratton sold the stencils to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

Mrs. Stratton was a very clever businesswoman. I had known her for several years since she had long been a pupil of Mrs. Caroline Saunders in the earliest days of my designing. In fact, she had wanted me to give her a franchise for my designs for the state of Vermont. This was while I was selling them only to Mrs. Saunders, who said that if I gave her the franchise she would never buy another design from me, so I refused. Mrs. Stratton continued her lessons with Mrs. Lester Gibbs (whose husband had invented the first cutting machine) of Clinton, Massachusetts.

Mrs. Stratton must have invested considerable money in publishing a Frost catalogue and specializing in his designs. She turned her barn into a studio and invited the public to come. I went, as I was on good terms with her and I wanted to see her lay-out. I invited a friend to accompany me.

Shall I tell you of my deceit? I told my friend not to recognize me, but to ask questions, and see how much she could absorb with her eyes. We were to separate and go in singly. "How will I know when you are going to leave," she said. "I'll take my handkerchief out of my bag and touch my nose," I replied. She went into the house to see finished rugs and I went into the studio to see supplies. My "Prize Rug" #85 was on display and was hanging in the studio. She noticed that I was looking it over and said, "I made quite a few changes in the center" (hardly noticeable) but she was most gracious and we were getting along very well.

In the meantime my friend was looking at the rugs in the house which had been hooked by Mrs. Gibbs. As my friend entered the studio I walked away and in a few minutes Mrs. Stratton came

to me and said, "There is a woman here from Mass. and I think you should meet her." We were introduced, and I asked, "Do you hook rugs? She replied, "No, but I have a friend who does, and she will be so interested in what I have seen." I knew this was the time we should leave, so I put my handkerchief to my nose and left. Soon after my friend followed me down the street to the car.

Mrs. Stratton had a fine layout and the patterns were well displayed, woolen materials were stored in cedar closets, and there was much to attract the eye. She gave me just what I needed at the time—a desire to have a place where the public could see the finished work and get all the supplies they were seeking. Charlotte gave me the push I needed and for which I will always be grateful. It started a dream which ended in Rose Cottage.

She was smart in another direction. She started what she called a "Normal School." I don't know just how it worked, whether by correspondence or personal lessons, but in doing so she stressed technique. Her work was very fine, but her colors left much to be desired. So once more she woke me up.

It was Marjorie Thompson who pushed me into studying the Munsell color system. We joined forces and conducted a series of lessons held in the local Odd Fellows Hall which accommodated a large group. Teachers came from considerable distances. When it was over I wanted to extend to teachers who could not attend by a correspondence course, but Marjorie was not interested. It meant a lot of correspondence and I had the facilities for carrying that on, but Marjorie didn't. So I paid her a sum and went at it alone. These experiences taught me many lessons, for as competition increased I saw it as a challenge to do more and better work, and to keep on studying everything pertaining to my craft.

It taught me another valuable lesson, to always give credit where credit is due. When other designers came into the picture there was never any reference as to where they had received their training, especially the McGown Teacher Workshops. Although most of them were off-shoots of my earlier teachers and the workshops, it was seldom, if ever, stated.

These workshops were growing by leaps and bounds. Drawing the teachers together every year was knitting friendships into strong bonds which have lasted through the years. One of the first remarks of a lecturer would often be, "Before I begin, I want to pay tribute to my teacher or the one who helped her in the workshops."

In the meantime, rug camps began to spread. Blythe Shoals had shown the way and others followed. Iris Wheeler and Alice Brown had them for several years at Green Lake, Spicer, Minnesota, Louise Battle at the Art and Craft Colony in Way, Mississippi, Mrs. A. D. York in Gearhart, Oregon, and Hazel Giacomini at DeFuniak or Tallahassee, Florida.

During these years our McGown Workshops had become well established for one week in March at the Arts and Craft Center,

Ripley, West Virginia, and one for two weeks in August in Worcester, Massachusetts. Part of that period we had a Mid-West Teachers' Workshop in Detroit or Ferndale, Michigan, but this was a small one and the members enjoyed going to the Southern Workshop in March, so it was discontinued.

Hooking Bees spread from Springfield to Hingham by the South Shore McGown Teacher's Guild, and for several summers Caroline Collett pitched a huge tent in Cherry Valley, New York, and we gave demonstrations in dyeing.

A great boost to our craft came from the annual exhibits conducted for many years by the Women's International Exhibit in New York City, when I arranged programs for my teachers, and these exhibits lasted for several days.

For two very good reasons, 1953 was an eventful year. I published my third book, "Color in Hooked Rugs", and at our 14th Annual Exhibit in Horticultural Hall, Worcester, Massachusetts, the teachers presented me with a sterling silver tea set, which nearly floored me! I never dreamed of owning such a beautiful gift, and as a result, every Wednesday afternoon I served tea at Rose Cottage to anyone dropping in. It gave me an opportunity to meet and chat with ruggers. One woman I'll never forget. She said, "I was a registered nurse all my life and worked until I was 75. Then I retired and took up hooking. I am now 82 and have nine rugs. Why didn't I learn this years ago? It would have added so much joy to my life."

Sometimes there would be no callers, but the office girls always joined me and the afternoon would turn into an hour of comedy. Sister May had the ability to tell very funny stories, mostly of her own life experiences, and whatever she was telling she would demonstrate. How we used to howl at her. Then she would growl later, "I talk too much."

The New England tornado was also in the year 1953 and three of our teachers were in its path. Ethel Bull was rescued from under the stairway which had collapsed when the whole house had fallen in. Eleanor Loftus and Lillian Stoliker suffered considerable damage to their homes. I mentioned it in my Teacher's Letter and do you know that \$1,694.74 was sent in to be divided among them. I personally acknowledged every gift. Was there ever such a wonderful group as our teachers?

By 1956 Sister Sylvia semi-retired, and Kaddy came back again to Rose Cottage. The California school budget had been cut so all school classes were cancelled. Her business was continued for some time after that by Libby Martin, her employee.

The Buffalo Museum of Science staged an exhibit for us under the direction of Myra Schwarzmeir, who trained many of the teachers in western New York.

Ever since 1951 I took a winter vacation, not because I wanted it, but I was having some physical problems and the verdict was to go into a hospital for treatment or get away from everything for a month. Naturally, I chose the latter, and except for 1955

when I went to Mexico and found the inspiration for "Fountain of Youth" and "House of Tile", my vacation was a cruise where I did nothing except read and hook. Oh yes, I almost always took my frame with me. On these cruises I found someone that hooked or knew of someone that did, and often in the strangest places. Once on a jungle river boat trip on the way to Peru I met a woman from Syracuse, N.Y. She asked me if I knew anyone there. I mentioned Adrienne Bradley, then one of my busiest teachers. Her eyes lit up like a candle. "She is one of the finest women I have ever known!" Then she asked me, "Did you know that she was an expert on hooking rugs?" Later in Peru, when a gentleman found I was from West Boylston, he said his wife bought her rug designs from a lady in that town. When I gave him my name he excitedly brought his wife to greet me, and she was the sister-in-law of one of my teachers. The world is really small.

In 1957 I purchased a beautiful piece of crewel embroidery from the Arts and Craft League Exhibit in New Hampshire. The imaginative detail and fanciful flowers started me on a search for more crewel designs. At that time there were no patterns for crewel embroidery in any of the large stores, and I found little information about it except in libraries and museums. The only place where a pattern could be purchased was from the Women's Industrial Union of Boston, which was on a custom-work design which you would choose from their sources and they would then stamp one design, but I insisted that they would have to put in certain stitches for me to follow. This was not what I was after.

Through Joan Toggitt, who imported English crewel designs, I created my first hooked rug design in crewel details. It was an instant success. Now my Letter Service was being mailed into 40 states, so this started many women talking about crewel designs. It was about three years later that magazines began to have articles about crewel work, so I feel certain that the scattered seed had taken root. You know what has happened since to crewel! It was a crewel design, "Fantasia," hooked by Mrs. Katherine Bush, (Mrs. Iva Amrhine, teacher) which won the popular vote for design at the International Platform Association's Art Show in 1953 as Best in Show.

In the late fifties my son, noting my enthusiasm for my craft, wanted to soften what might be a blow later by saying, "You know Mother, this craft might be just a fad and could go out-so you must be prepared for that!"

I wasn't prepared for the decision which I had to make after the 1957 exhibit in Worcester. The physical work in connection with exhibiting 350 rugs and many small pieces each year, in spite of all the help we had, was beginning to take its toll. A decision was made that this era had ended and I must face it! Reading over the old Teachers Letters each May for several years after that, I note that I was still weeping for the return of these exhibits. The teacher's own exhibits, and especially those where several teachers joined in a Regional Exhibit, softened the blow.

I spent the greater part of 1958 planning and writing "Persian Patterns," showing illustrations of the finished rugs in different ways of development, and with instructions on each small detail—even the room sized Oriental called "Persian Palm."

In 1959 Allen Eaton, representing the Department of Agriculture of our country, selected eight rugs and 15 small pieces from Rose Cottage to be a part of the New Delhi World's Fair in India from December 15 to February 15, 1960. It was to show the use of India burlap.

CHAPTER 9

Rose Cottage was not only a mecca for rug hookers, but a center for my family as well. It was the gathering place for my son and his family and those sisters who were near enough to join us on Thanksgiving Day. Cousins joined us for the evening meal and the children raced through the cottage—up the front stairs, down the long hallway and back down the back stairs. In spite of Nile Foam under the rugs, they were askew most of the evening. We enjoyed music and sisters or cousins played all the old songs while we all joined in singing.

The cottage was also where the seven sisters and their husbands (those living) gathered for a reunion, the first time we had been together for eleven years. Sister May, who was an excellent cook, and my housekeeper had prepared goodies for this occasion. I had a photographer take candid shots of the various members and their families throughout the day and had seven sets mounted in a book and presented one to each sister.

When teachers phoned they were in our area they were invited to join us for lunch or dinner, for I never tired of hearing of their latest rugs, or their stories of how hooking had helped their pupils.

The six "girls" who were employed in the office carried on their designated work without supervision. They would all be busy at their particular work when I came into the office around 9:30 and for a short time they would listen to my book report of my current reading material. I often read amusing passages which started the day with a good laugh. Not all—but most of them were gray haired and we often laughed at the stories we would hear of those who passed Rose Cottage, saw the cars parked and the sign, but never knew just what went on in Rose Cottage.

I kept it as non-commercial as possible and only my lamp post sign showed an old-fashioned lady hooking a rug. We heard that those who didn't know had wondered if Rose Cottage was a nursing home or a home for the retired! In fact, a gentleman one night asked if we had rooms for overnight. Only those who hooked would know what really was going on inside.

During our annual exhibits at Horticultural Hall, Rose Cottage was open to visitors attending the exhibit. My son's wife and a

friend served as hostesses and there was often a long queue from the front door around the driveway waiting to get in. Our guest book contained names of those from great distances, even abroad.

There were many amusing stories about Rose Cottage. One concerned Sister May who was the "Carrie Nation" of her day. She had married twice and both husbands had been free with the bottle and she would pound her fist on the table and say, "That's why I hate booze."

I am a teetotaler myself but I had read a recipe that called for some sherry in baked chicken, so when I was in Canada I purchased two bottles. I never did get around to using it and it laid there for two years. Then one day I read that if you put a teaspoon of sherry on top of a green salad it was good. May was sitting in my kitchen watching me prepare a green salad for lunch and I went into the pantry and came out with the bottle of sherry and was measuring the teaspoon when she exclaimed, "What have you got in your hand?" I replied "I just thought I would try it." She exclaimed, "To think that I would see the day when YOU would have liquor in your house!"

Another amusing incident happened because of my appetite for peanut brittle. If there was a dish of it handy, I couldn't let it alone and I said, "If a man likes whiskey the way I like peanut brittle, I can understand how he becomes a drunkard." So I always called peanut brittle my "whiskey." My friends knew of my weakness and would often send me a box. I told my housekeeper to hide it where I couldn't find it and she brought me a cup of tea about 4 in the afternoon and she would put a piece about the size of a silver dollar on my tray. This had become a daily custom. But one day I looked at the clock and it was after 4 and no tea. There was a communication system throughout the house and the Bee Hive. That day it was open in the studio where 15 to 20 women visiting heard my voice: "Auntie, where is my whiskey?" My hostess turned purple and said, "Mrs. McGown is really asking for her cup of tea." Who was going to believe that!

Another was when my hostess Eleanor Loftus, opened the door for a visitor. The lady inquired, "Are you Mrs. McGown?" She answered, "No, I am Mrs. Loftus her hostess, please come in." As the visitor stepped into the hall, Mrs. Loftus said, "The portrait over the piano is of Mrs. McGown." Whereupon our visitor crossed the room and stood under the portrait for a moment and said softly, "Is she still with us?"

The mail we received was often amusing. A dear little old lady (I judged from the writing) wrote, "I would like a doorstep but don't send the brick, I have one." Another ordered a spot-dyed swatch for rose leaves in six values and a hot letter came back saying "65¢ for six small pieces of material? I could buy a pound of wool for 65¢. I was so mad I burned it." My reply was "You should have returned it. I would have returned your money and I could have given it to someone who would have appreciated the time required to dye six values."

The letters I have enjoyed the most are those that have said "Please send me the pattern by return mail. I am 95 and I must make one more rug for my great-grandchild." There are many of this type which pleases me immensely, for I know the pleasant hours they are going to have creating an heirloom for their loved ones.

The early 60's found us increasingly busy at Rose Cottage, though I had reached the stage of slowing up, or trying to. These were the years when I realized how my teachers had enriched my life by creating rugs through their pupils that were a credit to them and treasured by those who hooked them. I realized that the teachers were the motivating force in the revival of our craft and that all these beautiful rugs in the homes of pupils were evidence of this fact.

It reminded me what an important part our McGown Teacher's Workshops played in this revival. As Program Chairman, I assigned subjects to several teachers and by giving one day of their time at Workshop to lecture on the design and teach its development, all the teachers went home with many new ideas. From the very beginning I stressed how important it was to give credit to the teacher who had helped them to broaden their instruction. Today the McGown teachers as a group pay tribute to those who have helped them, and when a teacher doesn't it is noticeable.

Our McGown teachers are a close knit group. They are free to conduct their classes as they wish, teaching what they like, but if they choose to stress McGown designs it is because they like them. At our Workshops they recognize the abilities of their peers and eagerly sign up for the classes of those who are interpreting new designs so they may return to their own classes with more new ideas. As I write this, we have had our 25th anniversary for the Northern Workshop and the 21st anniversary for the Southern Workshop.

The teachers recognize too, the need for preparing their pupils for change. A teacher may be moving to a new area or find she cannot cope with ever-growing classes, or in some cases she may feel the time has come to slack off. To aid her we created a Trainees' program at both Workshops. An advanced pupil may attend these Workshops as a trainee through the recommendation of her teacher, or through my recommendation as one who had advanced through my Correspondence Course for teacher training.

In making up the program, I assign well-known and capable teachers to the trainees' classes so they receive four different teachers' instruction at Southern or eight at Northern. They not only have the instruction on one type of design, but it is a question and answer period for them. So much that we take for granted is new to them and they are full of questions. This gives them varied methods of teaching. Since they get a Workshop Report comprising 100-150 pages, they not only have what their teachers have taught them, but the lectures and illustrations of the teachers in the experienced group. It also gives them a final boost and the urge to start conducting classes on their own. To attend Workshop

again, they must register as a teacher, and the result has been almost 100%.

These Workshops have taken the place of my social life. When my son was growing up I was too busy maintaining and caring for a home for us with no time for joining social groups. When he married, I had become engrossed in designing with still no time for social life. Looking forward to these two annual events became the greatest joy of my life. To renew old friendships which had become precious and make new friends brought me great happiness.

Part of that happiness has been my close friendship with Adelaide Scott. We were a pair, we sparked each other and she had charisma that charmed all the girls. I say "girls" for age disappeared when we met. To the young ones, the experienced teachers gave freely of their knowledge. To the experienced ones the young teachers would carry on their methods. One so often heard young teachers say proudly, "I was trained by Sally Newhall, Ethel Bruce, Mae West, Margaret Howell, Donna Pounder, Bonna Stone or Bea Christoff," and hundreds of others fully as experienced.

At rug camps held in the summer, teachers attended in order to study under another teacher. No restrictions are placed on the type of designs taught, so a teacher would also gain through close observation of what ten others were doing, and by listening to the varied instructions.

These summer rug camps have flourished so that at present the original Blythe Shoals Rug Camp is now held at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, under the leadership of Kay Estes and is in its 28th year. Liz Tompkins and Ruth Smith's Rug Camp at Cedar Lakes, West Virginia, in May is over-subscribed every year. Marianna Sausaman's school started through the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, and became part of the Nordic Fest and Arlene Cull's school at the McKeever Environmental Learning Center, Sandy Lake, Penn. and Mae West conducts her school in San Antonio, Texas. This jumps the gun in chronology to include our National Guild's Rug School in Maryland and New Hampshire. Others will spring up in other areas.

CHAPTER 10

Dye instruction played an important part in my business, not only what I published under my own name, but publications I encouraged teachers to write and publicize themselves.

I had started another monthly publication in 1945 called the Dye Dabbler, similar to the Letter Service but giving specific instructions on dyeing for the detail of a particular pattern. Harriet Keyes had been a close friend since school days and had a natural talent for combining colors. I made a business arrangement with her to actually dye the colors I was describing and she gave me her proportions of dye according to the quantity of material dyed.

I then wrote the publication and for over six years I paid her a substantial royalty on these publications which ran for 76 issues, ending in June 1952. It only came to an end because of meeting deadlines, Hattie hated regimentation and I was frustrated in trying to put her experiments in writing so close to the distribution date.

In 1950 I published a pamphlet entitled "The Rainbow in Rags", describing the varied colors in Cushing Dyes, and simple ways of dyeing for various details. In 1955 I urged three of my teachers to combine their methods in another publication called "Multi-Dye". Mary MacKay gave her method of painted dyeing in various formulas, Arline Robbins described her method of clothespin dyeing and Sally Newhall told of her casual ways of dyeing and I paid them royalties. In 1957 Lydia Hicks published "Triple Over-Dyeing" with 103 formulas in which she combined three or more dyes in varied proportions to form families of colors which would be compatible when used together. She later added 117 more formulas in Book #2. In 1964 Laverne Brescia came up with something quite different to help our color planning. She called it coat hanger dyeing because she pinned several long strips of varied pastels and white to a wire coat hanger and lowered about a third of the pieces into a strong dark value of one dye. When that was absorbed she added a moderate strength of a second dye, dipping the pieces two-thirds of the way into the dye bath. When that was absorbed she added a light tint of a third dye and dropped the whole thing into the dye pot to continue simmering. Thus in an 18" or longer strip she could shade a scroll from a dark value of one color to a light tint of a third color in the tips without changing the material, so there was a smooth flow of color. The strips were all related. This method was a huge success, so she published a pamphlet entitled "Scrolls Are Easy" with 17 formulas. Ruggers were delighted. In 1965 Jane Elliot, who had become one of the most successful McGown teachers, then carried the transitional dyeing with great imagination to a new peak with 50 formulas to very unusual transitions of color from a dark value of one to a light value of another color. She published her pamphlet called "Color Flow" with 50 different formulas. Later "Color Flow" #2 added 50 more formulas. In 1965 Edna Fleming experimented with my casserole dyeing (Dye Dabbler #35) She illustrated the use of her formulas in her "Antique Bottles" rug on the cover of her pamphlet "101 Formulas for 'Casserole Dyeing'".

In the summer of 1967 an important event took place that was to become a boon to our craft and those who participated in it. Since we used wool scraps and remnants for backgrounds, it was difficult to find enough of any one color to finish a good sized rug. Women were known to buy a new woolen garment for this purpose if it happened to be just the right color. One of my teachers sent me some samples of wool and gave me information of its source. I wrote to the company and suggested that if they would send me samples of materials they stocked and quote prices I would publicize them in my Teachers' Letter and Letter Service.

Rose Cottage was just about to close for summer vacation when the telephone rang. "Mr. George Dorr calling Mrs. McGown." "This is Mrs. McGown." "I received your letter," he said, "but I suggest you come up to Guild, New Hampshire to see what we offer." "But all vacation plans are made," I replied. Then Jane, my granddaughter, spoke up, "I'll drive you up, Gram, if we can go tomorrow." So I said, "We'll be there, Mr. Dorr."

Never will I forget my first impression of his new building for a shop as a showplace of beautiful wools. Bolts upon bolts stood in smooth gradations or were arranged to complement each other. Bins along one wall held remnants and scraps of wools at low prices. It was a hooker's paradise!

It appeared from his conversation that Mr. Dorr wanted to go into the swatch business and sought suggestions. But I told him it was backgrounds that we needed the most. We went into a long discussion which ended with his agreement to print cards of samples of what I called good background colors. We could always replenish if we ran short. I pored over his sample books and chose colors which he agreed to stock for an indefinite time. I agreed to give him continuous publicity through my publications. Then he said, "What do you expect to get out of this?" I replied, "Nothing, Mr. Dorr, except service to my teachers and their pupils."

Every teacher and most of those who hook know how this revolutionized our craft. True, backgrounds would cost more by the yard than scraps by the pound, but think of the assurance of always knowing there would be enough background to finish a rug. Mr. Dorr still had swatches in mind, and eventually produced a line of 37 Potpourri swatches of six values.

We had become so used to dyeing our own colors that the acceptance of commercial swatches was slow, mainly because of their limitation of colors. Eventually they appealed to those who did not want to dye or did not have the facilities for dyeing. Later, in an effort to use his swatches with more imagination I suggested he make transitional swatches that would smoothly change from a dark value of one color to a light value of another. Again I planned the transitions and they began with 27, later increasing to a total of 53.

Betty Maley, a teacher of Newport, N. H. who has had classes in his shop for several years, is especially clever in adapting both the Potpourri and Transitional swatches to her color plans, thus avoiding dyeing for her classes. Mrs. Gloria Hautanen, a teacher in Truro, Mass., created a gorgeous "Gray's Circle" with twenty different flowers, by using only Dorr's swatches. Like artists mixing their paints from a few tubes of color, these two teachers were especially clever in combining both colors and values with great imagination.

Mr. Dorr has always been in close relationship with Lincoln House, so whatever Dorr produces, Lincoln House sells, and McGown designs outsell all others in Dorr's shop. Thus this relationship has greatly benefitted our craft.

CHAPTER 11

In the late fall of '67 my world fell apart, or seemed to, when a fall cut my right arm and a coronary hospitalized me and my nights became days. If I had tried to knock a glass off the table and break it in just the right place so that I would fall upon it and cut my right arm in the right place to sever the cords to my middle finger, I am sure I would have failed. Yet I did it in a blackout with my eyes shut. I don't like to reminisce about such an incident, but it left me with a dropped wrist which I had to cope with later, and that taught me another lesson.

I ended up in the hospital and was there about a week. The night I came home a dear friend, who was a registered nurse, was visiting me when I was stricken with a coronary. She called the ambulance and accompanied me to the hospital. Then began a long period I prefer to forget.

Six weeks later I was sent home from the hospital in the depths of despair. They could not seem to cope with my depression nor could I. It was though I was in a bottomless pit with no way to get out. It was then that I called sister Kaddy in California and said, "Kaddy, I need you." Kaddy arrived by plane the next day and as she swept into the room, she said, "Now this is Dr. McCabe. What are you doing in a housecoat? Come, let's get dressed."

One had to know Kaddy to realize how she could cajole me into doing anything. She roused my pride, fussed with my hair, and the whole atmosphere at Rose Cottage changed. As I gradually resumed my former way of life, she said, "Now we must do something about that dropped wrist."

The verdict was that I would have to go through an operation that would make the arm immobile for six months, or wear a metal or leather contraption that would support the wrist of my right hand. My concern was color, wouldn't you know it! It should not be noticeable. But Kaddy was so insistent on some points that she antagonized the young man who was forming it and when it was delivered it was painted black. That did it! The contraption was thrown into a drawer and I said to my right hand and wrist, "Now you're going to work."

I had two long runners that needed to have a binding on the edge which meant close stitches, pushing the needle down with my left hand and then reversing and pushing the needle back up to the top again. After two six foot runners had been completed, I found my wrist stronger, and soon it was normal, though the disconnected finger still drops hitting on the wrong keys of the piano and typewriter and generally getting in the way. During those four months of my life, my granddaughter Jane, bless her, wrote both the Letter Service and the Teacher' Letters.

I had to miss the 1968 Southern Workshop, but again the years we have been giving the McGown Teachers' Workshops, the teachers

have proven over and over again that they are equal to any emergency. Laverne Brescia stepped into my place and everything moved very smoothly.

However, an experience like this made me realize that one's house should be put in order. Our Workshops were well founded with their own by-laws and dedicated to the spreading of the knowledge of our craft to those desiring it. Commercial companies were consulted, but they were not interested in carrying on my type of business which was really custom work. I was concerned about the many teachers who were earning their living through their classes.

Old Sturbridge Village seemed to be the answer to my problem. Hooking was taking place in their historic period of 1790 to 1840. I consulted with Mr. John Auchmoody. Then began a series of interviews that continued for two years. I had to convince him that our Teachers' Workshops would continue without interruption and this was the reason for appointing Erna Burghardt to be the Director of the Northern Workshop, and Marianna Sausaman as Director of the Southern Workshop. In choosing them, I believe I selected women who could get along with women. It is quite an accomplishment to bring 100 to 150 women to live together for a week or two weeks in harmony with each other. I had watched these two girls for some time and decided they had the broad understanding necessary to solve the problems which might arise, and to this day I am proud of these appointments. They in turn should select one to follow them, if that becomes necessary and in that way the Workshops would be enduring. I would continue to plan the programs and appoint those who teach.

Then there were other matters to be settled. Who would continue the Letter Service, Color Plans, and challenge the teachers with new designs each year? Designing is the love of my life, I would gladly continue to design for Sturbridge gratis.

Two years later on March 1, 1970 my designs and everything connected with my business was transferred to Sturbridge, including my collection of rugs which I had exhibited on the walls of Rose Cottage. They also agreed to work with the teachers as I had done for so many years. Thus I could be sure that what I had created over a period of 40 years would be available to those interested in the craft. Most of all, I had assured the continuation without interruption of the business developed by my teachers. Though many of them taught as a hobby there were many whose whole livelihood came from their class work. I didn't want any interruptions in their way of life.

Besides the trainee program another wonderful result of our Workshops was our annual auction. This money was set aside for scholarships and amounted to between \$4-500 each year from each Workshop. Any teacher who had attended Workshop but found that finances prevented her from returning could apply for a scholarship, which may be anywhere from \$50. to \$100. This is absolutely confidential. The application comes to me and I send the teacher

my personal check which she must promise to keep absolutely confidential. The Treasurer of our Workshop then reimburses me without in any way knowing who received the scholarship.

1971 brought both pleasure and sadness. The Southern Workshop presented me with a plaque upon which was engraved, "In appreciation for 40 years of designing", and the Northern Workshop presented me with a charm for my bracelet with a pearl at the center and engraved.

It was a sad year too, for it brought the death of my sister May. She had participated in every phase of the business from producing patterns, shipping, making orders and being Treasurer of the corporation even during the ten years she was in the nursing home. Her remarkable memory could quote the number, name and size of any pattern and all the teachers by name. They would remember her love of music and her keen sense of humor in relating stories of her life.

In 1971, my housekeeper became ill and I finally followed my son's advice to get into an apartment. Sturbridge offered me a two room apartment in the Wight House to make it convenient for periods of time that I might have to be there for meetings, but my family was very important to me. In the end I moved into a new four room apartment in West Boylston, using the Sturbridge apartment only as needed.

How does one tear apart something one has spent 25 years creating? I was fortunate to live in the charming Rose Cottage surrounded with my lovely rugs. Kaddy again came to my rescue, She would bring one of my treasures and say, "What do you want to do with this?" My son and grandchildren had had their choice and Kaddy had packed many boxes to be shipped back to California, but there were still many treasures, usually connected with my craft. When Kaddy would say, "What do you want to do with this?" I would say, "Oh Kaddy, I can't part with that." "All right, where are you going to put it in a four room apartment, or a two room apartment at Sturbridge?" It was the New England style to save everything. "All right, take it to the barn for sale."

Somehow we got through it and ended up in four rooms with boxes stacked almost to the ceiling in the room to be used as an office. The next day the movers had to carry most of the stuff to Sturbridge where I would have time to sort it out.

Kaddy settled me into my new quarters, pasted a note on my door so I would always see it as I left the apartment, "Take your keys!" which from sentiment still remains-then flew back home to California.

Now a new life opened up for me. For 31 years I had a housekeeper and never knew what would be served at a meal, for I had complete confidence in her ability. Doing dishes was only a weekend chore. All that was different now. All alone-no voices-that's what I missed!

CHAPTER 12

In summing up the important facts and happenings of my life it would not be complete without recognition of the people who have had an important effect upon my life. What was the basis of my motivation?

The greatest influence has been my son Winthrop. First a struggle to make ends meet, to have enough money to buy him a new pair of shoes before the old ones were discarded. I have a little story I have told many times. When he started high school he came home one day and said, "I want to buy a set of drums." "What for?" I asked. "I'm going to start an orchestra." "But, Win, I can't afford to buy a set of drums." "You don't have to, the school makes it possible for me to buy them \$1 down and \$1. a week, and when the orchestra starts I can pay it off." Well, he bought them- had no lessons, but every night when I would return from the office I would hear that beat-beat-beat of the drums. One night, when unusually tired, I said, "Put them up, I can't take any more." Whereupon he cried and said, "You're not thankful I am musical!" That did it! No more complaining! When the drums were paid for he bought a saxophone, and without lessons we went through that practice period together. When that was paid for he bought a clarinet, and again we went through the long practice period. The orchestra was started and when he finished high school, the instruments were all paid for. He then traveled every day to Boston to study to become a Certified Public Accountant and he found plenty of engagements for either drums, sax or clarinet in orchestras that played for the Harvard dances. So I was finally glad he was musical.

His progress was like most CPA's, gradually becoming a partner in the business. At the present time he is the senior member of the partnership of seven, with about 60 employees on the staff, traveling from the Cape to the Berkshires for their clients.

He is more than a success at his work. During all those years, he prepared my designs so they could be transferred to burlap, working long evenings and many periods during the summer months. He has a pleasing personality and a keen sense of humor, something we have both enjoyed together. Since I moved from Rose Cottage into an apartment where I live alone, he drops in three times a week, bringing the outside world to me. Have I been lucky to have had such a son!

Then his daughter, Jane, my granddaughter, as many of you know, has become a very good teacher of our craft, has taken over the writing of the Letter Service, the illustrations of all the Color Plans, designing many of the new patterns (always identified by a "J" after its number) and carrying the greater load of my Correspondence Course for training teachers.

Her brother Jimmy is a graduate of Worcester Tech and is an Engineer having to do with quality control.

These are some of the jewels I am daily grateful for.

Then there is Fran Milstead (my secretary for 10 these many years), who comes in one, two or sometimes three days a week to keep my correspondence up. She has a remarkable memory and we fit together like "hand and glove".

Gwen Fairfield to me is the very heart and soul of Sturbridge Village, yet she has furthered the interests of both teachers and students, always working closely with me in any matter that concerns me.

Ruth Shepard and I are in constant touch by phone each day to be sure every need of the craftsman, whether teacher or pupil is met as promptly as possible.

One more satisfaction is my volunteer work for Sturbridge Village. When I sold my business to them I agreed, in fact offered, to continue designing and writing for them without recompense. There is something about volunteer work that satisfies one's inner being. I don't have to do this, but I enjoy doing it, and I know in continuing this as long as possible I am (hopefully) making the teachers more interested in their classes. They would be fed up by planning the same designs over and over again, even in other colors, but having new designs each year is a challenge.

New designs are the food we need to sustain our McGown Teachers' Workshops. To date I have contributed 74 new rug designs of varied sizes and 217 small pieces which have consumed 9053 hours of work, but pleasure to me.

Whatever Lincoln House clears on the sale of the patterns (their expenses are far beyond what mine were) will be used for the Old Sturbridge Village Museum. So I am glad the net income goes into something so worthwhile.

Important too, is the staff of teachers. Our Northern McGown Workshop is meeting this year for the 27th year at Worcester Tech for a two week session, our Southern Workshop this year meets for the 22nd time. In 1976 we started a new Workshop called Southeastern on Jekyll Island, Ga.

In 1972 Mr. J. E. Auchmoody, President of Sturbridge Corp., approached me for my support in establishing the NATIONAL GUILD OF PEARL K, McGOWN RUG HOOKRAFTERS, INC. to be controlled entirely by a Board of Trustees of McGown Teachers, making me President for life. We started with 130 Charter members, and at present have 126 Charter, 202 Regular and 533 Associate members. The Guild has had three biannual exhibits, the first in 1972 in the ballroom of Holy Cross College, the second in the new educational building at Sturbridge and the third in the same building in 1976.

The Guild also has two rug schools, one in Garrison Forest School at Garrison, Md. in 1975-1976, and one at Mount Saint Mary's College in Hooksett, N.H. in 1976. Both will be repeated in 1977 and hopefully will continue for a long time.

One of my greatest satisfactions in life is the amount of money raised for religious or charitable organizations through Teacher's exhibits. How I wish I had asked them to report to me the total amount and to what it was contributed. However, two of



the largest were held by Lillian Isaken, which purchased new hospital equipment each year, and Lucille Novak for historical buildings.

The Guild has 16 carousels of color slides of different types of designs, several finished visual aids, books about our craft and on orientals, all of which may be borrowed by its members for their programs. Many of the members have started local chapters, and in some cases they travel 100 miles to attend the meetings.

I belong to the OSV Chapter, and we meet the first Sat. of September, October, and November and again after New England winter is over in March, April, and May. We have a project, usually a small piece to work on at home without any help from Teachers, and at the end of the season we have an artist come in and review our work with constructive criticism, and end up with a special luncheon.

In July 1973 I entered two designs (rugs were finished) in the Art Show of the International Platform Association in Washington, D.C. My "Nomad Runner," hooked by Esther Butler won Honorable Mention and my "Fantasia" hooked by Katherine Bush, both under Iva Amrhine, won the popular vote of the visitors as the Best of Show.

This led to an invitation from the Eisenhower Galleries of the Johns Hopkins University to put on a one designer show from Nov. 28-Dec. 7, 1973, which was largely attended.

As a result of this exposure two of my designs were chosen by the Baltimore Art Museum for a traveling exhibit of ten months throughout the state colleges and museums.

In 1973 I was asked to submit my biography to a publishing house in England and to my great surprise it was included in a volume entitled "2000 Women of Achievement." They sent me a diploma and it hangs upon my office wall for this reason-seventy years ago it was not unusual to be a high school drop-out. I chose night school as the quickest way to get shorthand and typing, so I went to work at 15½. Over the years I have felt somewhat sensitive when asked "What college did you graduate from" or "What art school did you attend?" I had to state I had no formal education. I call this diploma as coming from "God's College of Experience." That biography was also in "The World's Who's Who of Women 74-75" and then in "Who's Who of American Women," 1975-76.

I don't know who suggested my name but they state entries are "judged on a position of responsibility held and level of achievement attained by the individual, something that distinguished her from the vast majority of her contemporaries. She may scarcely be known in the local community but may be widely recognized in some special field of endeavor. Such a person often is one whose work is better known than she is herself.

All of which reminds me of one evening my housekeeper and I drove a half mile to a roadside stand for some fresh vegetables. When I was paying for them the little Italian lady said, "Did you drive all the way out from Worcester?" "Oh, no," I said, "I live right here in West Boylston." "What's your name?" she asked. "Pearl McGown," I replied. "Oh, I never heard of you."

So as I end my story I am so grateful for the simple things of life, for as I make my bed I say, "Thank you, Lord that I can get out of this bed and make it." At the end of the day I say, "Let me reach out and touch the lives of others in thy name."

Pearl K. McGown

Remembrance

I know that Pearl was something special to each one of us in different ways. For most of you she was an inspiration because of the way she lived her life in service, providing beautiful designs for you to add your crowning touches of color. But for me, she was a dear grandmother as well as mentor. She gave so much to everyone, through encouragement, challenge, example and dedication.

My first memories of Gram began when she lived in her home on Prospect Street in West Boylston, not far from Rose Cottage, which you could see from her kitchen window. She lived on the second floor. Sister May and her husband Brooksie lived downstairs. In the attic I recall rolls and rolls of paper and burlap, the most familiar signs of the burlap pattern business. The garage was loaded with woolens and more burlap. I know that I wasn't very big at the time, because I had to stand on a little stool in order to help wipe the dishes and put them away. I might have been three or four years old. I spent most weekends with her and a few weeks in the summer.

Summers were great fun, especially packing up the car and moving to the lake (where we now live) with bottles of water to drink, food, bedding, rolls of designing paper and pencils and erasers (all of the paraphenalia I now work with). When everything was packed into the trunk and back seat of the old DeSoto, Pearlie would be at the wheel. My brother Jimmie and I squeezed into the middle of the front seat and Auntie (the housekeeper) sat next to the door. We weren't twenty feet out of the driveway when Gram would burst into "In the good old summer time, in the good old summer time...Strolling down the shady lane..." and so on, all the way to the camp, which was four miles. We'd all join in at the top of our lungs. After dinner in the evening we would all walk down to the water and sit on the pier until the sun had set behind the mountain in the distance. Then it was off to bed. We were lulled to sleep with the rattle of the designing paper being moved about on the table.

My other childhood memories are of Christmas mornings. Gram would spend Christmas Eve with us and spend the night. Because of Dad's late hours, my parents usually wanted to sleep in. Pearlie's job was to keep the two of us quiet and upstairs until a decent hour. Those who knew her best recall her tremendous ability to tell a story (and she had a ton of them from her childhood with a family of eleven children.) Gram would sit in the middle of the spool bed with Jimmie on one side and me on the other, holding us spellbound until we would hear a voice from downstairs say that it was all right to come down.

I thank Gram for making me learn how to iron my clothes at the age of ten. I stayed with her one Fall when Mom and Dad were away on a trip. She taught me how to hand launder my own clothes and take responsibility for ironing them. It was good training. Incidentally, when each of my own girls had her tenth birthday

cont.

she began taking over the responsibility for her own ironing.

Of course all my early memories are intertwined with the activities of the rug hooking business...the hectic schedule she kept while getting ready for the exhibits at Horticultural Hall in Worcester for so many years...the births of the various workshops...her marvelous trips with Adelaide...my trip with her on an ocean liner for three weeks when I was fourteen...

I think that one of the keys to Pearl's long, happy, and for the most part, healthy life, was her dedication to her work and her drive to satisfy her teachers. Having that interest right up to the end was important. Why, she was still working on the skeleton of a new book one week before she died.

She is going to leave a great void for many of us.



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A 1977 photo of some of the people mentioned in the autobiography. In the front row L to R are: Florence Gideos, Iva Amrhine, Pearl, Betty Maley and Louise Hopfman. In the back row L to R are: Katherine Powell, Betty McClentic, Gwen Fairfield, Jane Flynn, Erna Burghardt and Mary Tilson.

Dear Friends,

I was utterly overwhelmed with the box of my favorite body powder from the members of the Guild. This is as near as I can get to each member to express my appreciation to each one of you. It will remind me of your thoughtfulness many times in 1983. To each one of you I would like to express my appreciation all thru 1983.

Happy New Year in 1983
I love you all!

Pearl K. McGown

Honorary President



Pearl at Rose Cottage

President's Message

On so many occasions I have thought with dread of eventually having to write this letter, wondering how I could bear to do so and how I could adequately express my deep feelings.

There are many things I could write about my devastation at the loss of my beloved friend, but that would not be appropriate to the Pearl McGown credo. She would not want us to dwell on the pain of parting from her. Instead I am going to remember and appreciate the joy, the happiness, the true abiding friendship and the steadfast support Pearl has brought into my life for the past fifteen years.

I have been especially privileged because for many of those years I was able to travel with Pearl to the McGown Teachers Workshops, rug schools, camps and exhibits. Ruth Shephard, who for years was your contact with Lincoln House, and Adelaide Scott, Pearl's dearest friend, usually travelled with us. Each year our little foursome set off in my car, packed to the rafters with Pearl's visual aids, for another joyous adventure; and with Pearl and Addie our trips were always adventuresome. Our traveling hours were never boring. The "girls" regaled us with stories of their escapades on the many cruises they took together. They were a well matched pair. What one didn't think of, the other was sure to! They were ladies always, but with a devilish twinkle in the eye and a marvelous sense of humor to lead them, and any innocent bystanders astray. They were constantly landing in the midst of an outlandish situation, but you can be sure fate always had a "gallant" on hand to rescue them.

One night after attending a "Fun Night" performance at Southern, I borrowed a wild blonde wig which had been used in the play, and took it back to the dorm where Pearl tried it on in great glee. She ended up sitting on the table, wearing the wig, her knees crossed and a cigarette dangling from her fingertips, very out of character. The cameras snapped aplenty that night and I just wish I had a picture to share with you.

Best of all though was the next morning when Pearl appeared for the pre-class lecture dressed in a snappy red pants suit and the blonde wig - the teachers erupted in an uproar.

It wasn't necessary to travel to the August Northern Workshop since Worcester was so close to both our homes. Pearl and Addie were happiest during the wonderful hours spent with the McGown teachers and Guild members. They lived for the pleasure of being with their many hooking friends.

The development of the Southeastern Teacher's Workshop, held in October of each year on beautiful Jekyll Island, Georgia, added another joyous week of sharing and learning together.

I also have such fond memories of the wonderful year Pearl and I drove up to Canada to attend a workshop of the Canadian Hooking Guild held at Trent University. It was a rewarding experience and I loved being with Pearl as we drove through the beautiful northern New York and Canadian countryside.

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It brought special joy to Pearl's heart when Iva Amrhine arranged for an exhibit of McGown rugs at the Baltimore Art Museum, a first of its kind which brought much well-deserved praise, recognition and admiration of Pearl's great genius. A later exhibit arranged by Iva at the famous Hershey, Pennsylvania Museum furthered the art of rug hooking. It was a great joy for me to attend both of these events with Pearl and to share in her happiness.

On another occasion we flew to Furman University to attend Kay Estes' well-established rug camp. Then there was the year we returned to Ripley, West Virginia to join in the fun of Liz Tompkins' and Ruth Smith's Cedar Lakes Rug Camp. Within the past ten years there was the excitement of developing and attending the National Guild Rug School held at Garrison, Maryland and the one at Rivier College in Nashua, New Hampshire. Unfortunately, Pearl did not have the pleasure of visiting the Guild's newest rug school in Asilomar, California.

In 1980, the year I retired from Old Sturbridge Village, Pearl asked me to help her fulfill a request from the Chautauqua Institute to develop a rug school at their beautiful facilities in northern New York. I shall never forget it, as it turned out to be an experience without parallel. Pearl and I had run so many workshops, we approached the week with the complete confidence of a couple of pros. Little did we know what awaited us. Due to a freaky accident, approximately half of the fourteen cartons of supplies sent from Lincoln House were accidentally diverted to a town with a similar sounding name and zip code twenty miles of New York City instead of Chautauqua, New York, some four hundred miles west. The daily wait for the arrival of UPS was agonizing. It was only the supporting ingenuity of the McGown teachers, especially Betty Swank, who had a class of brand new beginners and whose patterns did not arrive until Thursday, that kept us going. They came though the emergency with great fortitude and helped keep the eighty attendees from bitter disappointment. As for Pearl and I, we decided it was a character building experience, but it didn't do a thing for our ulcers! Pearl was most remarkable!


The recent tremendously successful Bi-annual National Guild Rug Show held in November, 1982 at the Chicago Botanic Gardens brought Pearl ultimate happiness as she eagerly awaited reports of the show. This was an accomplishment Pearl had long dreamed of since the inception of the Guild. It was especially rewarding that her goal was realized before her death and that this show is an on-going project that will be held bi-annually.

...CONTINUED...

This past Christmas, while Pearl was in the Wayside Nursing Home, I assumed your permission and purchased a Christmas gift for her bearing the name of the Guild. I chose some dusting powder in her favorite fragrance- "Joy". She was elated and grateful and I know the gift brought her fond memories of all of you.

Pearl was a most remarkable lady and person. She was beautiful in person and spirit, loving, compassionate, sharing, strong, deeply religious and a person of unlimited talent. The many memories of the time spent with her will forever be a source of enduring strength and joy for me.

Sincerely,



A special Memorial Fund will be set up in honor of Pearl K. McGown. At present gifts may be so designated and sent to:

Dorothy Lepisto
39 Dan Ave., P.O. Box 598
Pittsfield, MA 01202

More information will follow in the next Newsletter.

NOTICE

Local Chapters of the National Guild of Pearl K. McGown interested in holding a National Exhibit in their area in 1984 will submit a request in writing to the National Guild Director of Exhibits, Ruth Shepard. Please designate the following: location, exhibit area available, facilities such as motels, hotels and restaurants, accessibility by air, train and auto, approximate costs National Guild responsible for as well as local chapter and the chairwoman of the exhibit. The Director of Exhibits will then submit these requests to the Pres. of the Guild who will instruct the Sec. to send out a mail vote, to be returned by one week and tallied and the Board informed of results by mail. Cut-off date will be April 30, 1983 (void if only 1 request). Announcement by the Director of Exhibits will appear in the June '83 NEWSLETTER.

Submitted by
Ruth Shepard
Director of Exhibits

Chapter News

It looks like the lucky number 80 was taken by the newest and most welcomed chapter, the Buckeye Rugcrafters of Ohio... Congratulations.

BUCKEYE RUGCRAFTERS
organized November 29, 1982

President	Mrs. Sue Kotila
V. President	Mrs. Ruth Andrews
Sec./Treas.	Mrs. Genevieve Bolin

Perhaps not many of you know the procedure for starting a new chapter, so let me try to show you how simple it really can be. Say, several of you hookers feel you would like to share your hooking ideas and knowledge with others, or even want to learn more about color, technique, design or workmanship. Nothing develops enthusiasm more than having a group with whom you can "show and tell". Fine, now all it takes is a minimum of two people but naturally the "more the merrier". Write or call me (516-437-6559) stating your desire of forming a new chapter. I'll send you five application forms that ask questions like officers names and addresses, date organized and other members and their addresses. The five copies are dispersed to the following "bigwigs".

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) Gwen Fairfield
45 Fisk Hill Rd.
Sturbridge, MA 01566</p> | <p>President of the National Guild</p> |
| <p>(2) Dorothy S. Lepisto
P.O. Box 598
Pittsfield, MA 01202</p> | <p>Treasurer
check as well as list of new members</p> |
| <p>(3) Katherine Huffman
101 Kenny Drive
Fayetteville, N.Y. 13066</p> | <p>Chairman of Membership</p> |
| <p>(4) Brenda Kraft
27 Fern St.
Floral Park, N.Y. 11001</p> | <p>Chairman of Chapters
for roster records</p> |
| <p>(5) This copy you retain for your records
See it isn't hard at all. So for those of you who just need that added push, drop a line or give a call and I will take it from there.</p> | |

Bye for now,

Brenda

HIGHLIGHTS — A Handy Guide to What's Happening

CANADA

April 30 time 7:00-10:00pm
May 1 time 10:00am-4:00pm

Ontario Hooking Craft Guild Show at Bingeman Park, 1208 Victoria Street North (Hwy #7 East) Kitchener, Ontario. The admission is \$2.00. There will be approximately 1,000 hooked pieces on display.

CONNECTICUT

May 20, 1983 time 11:00-3:00pm

Laurel Chapter Biannual Rug Hooking Exhibit at the Trumbull Library in Trumbull, CT just two miles north of the Merritt Parkway exit #48. Some pieces will be exhibited for the entire month in cases in library.

MARYLAND

June 21-23, 1983 time 10:00-8:30pm

Garrison Forest Rug School Exhibit will be held in the library

MASSACHUSETTS

April 29-30 time 10:00-5:00pm

Lakeville Library Circle at the Lakeville United Church of Bedford and Precinct Streets. Call 617-947-2522 for information.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

July 12-14 time 10:00-8:00pm

Rivier Rug School Exhibit in college Nashua, NH. Exhibit free.

NEW YORK

May 20 time 10:00-5:00 pm
May 21-22 time 1-5:00 pm

Hooked Rug Exhibit at the Arnot Art Museum, 235 Lake St, Elmira, N.Y. Rugs by students of Marge Dovi and Ruth Lawton. \$1. to benefit museum.

OHIO

April 24 time 1-5:00 pm

Emerald Chapters Biannual Show at 13169 Smith Rd. Middleburg Hts. Call 216-234-6657 for information.

TENNESSEE

June 8 time 10-6:00 pm

Covenant College Rug School Exhibit in the Fine Arts Building, Chattanooga

Rug Camps

IOWA

July 24-29, 1983 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Room rates can be extended for those who wish to stay on for the Nordic Fest to be held the week following the rug school. Teachers include: Orpha Blaisdell, Harriet Brown, Carol Kassera, Mary Melvin, Marianna Sausaman and Phyllis Zacharias. For further information contact Esther Miller, Box 28, Decorah, IA 52101 or Ann Duder, 714 Decorah Ave. Decorah IA, 52101

MAINE

May 22-28, 1983 St. Joseph's Rug Hooking Workshop, No. Windham, Maine. For information contact Viola George, 6 Ramsey Rd., Great Neck, N.Y. 11023 or phone 516-487-4667.

MARYLAND

June 19-25, 1983 National McGown Rug School, Garrison, MD. This camp for National Guild members and has class fees of \$50. for five days. Teachers are Iva Amrhine, Helen Connelly, Shirley Hacker, Hallie Hall, Maryanne Lincoln and Marge Moss. For information contact Erna Burghardt, 41 N. Plain Rd. Box 119, Housatonic, MA 01236

MASSACHUSETTS

Sept. 25-30, 1983 School of Traditional Rug Hooking at Craigville Conference Center. Teachers are Anne Eastwood, Shirley Hacker, and Maryanne Lincoln. For information contact Maryanne Lincoln, 139 Park St., Wrentham, MA 02093

MICHIGAN

Sept. 19-23, 1983 LaNue Kelly will have a rug camp for four live-in students and six commuters. For more information contact LaNue Kelly, 235 So. Lakeside Dr., Jerome, MI 49249

NEW HAMPSHIRE

July 10-16, 1983 National McGown Rug School, Rivier College. Class fees are \$50.00 and room and board \$92.00 double occupancy and \$102.00 single. Teachers are Ethel Bruce, Jeane Fisher, Carol Garrity, Florence Gideos, Hallie Hall, Betty McClentic, Sally Newhall and Barbara Sleeper. For more information contact Betty Maley, RFD 3 Box 23, Newport, N.H.

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PENNSYLVANIA

September Western Pennsylvania at Sandy Lake. Contact Arlene Cull, 2749 Tamarack Dr. RFD#1 Sharpsville, PA 16150 for more information.

SOUTH CAROLINA

June Carolina Rug Hooking Camp, Furman University, Greenville, SC. For more information write Kathleen Estes, 62 West 85th St. #A, New York, N.Y. 10024.

TENNESSEE

June 5-10, 1983 Castle in the Clouds Rug School held at Covenant College atop Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga. Teachers are Phyllis Regan, Marianna Sausaman, Jenny Podlasek, Joan Reckwerdt, Carol Kassera and alt. Edwina Lawson. For more information contact Ramona Maddox, 7108 Panavista Lane, Chattanooga, TN.

TEXAS

April 17-23, 1983 Lazy Hills Guest Ranch Texas Rug Camp. Class fees \$48. for five days and room and board \$33. per day. Husbands welcome. Teachers are Ethel Bruce, Dotti Ebi, Betty Maley and Peg Schneider. For more information contact Mae G. West, 4435 Eagle Nest, San Antonio, TX 78233

NEW YORK

June 12-18, 1983 Chautauqua Institution/McGown Rug School. Class fees are \$50.00 for five days. Room and board \$145.00 Sunday supper through Saturday breakfast. Husbands are welcome. Teachers are Anne Boissinot, Claire de Roos, Shirley Hewitt, Peg Noeltner and Kitty Huffman. For information contact Andrea Magnuson, Chautauqua Institution, Box 28, Chautauqua, N.Y. 14722 or Jane Flynn Box 301 Sterling Jct., MA 01565

WEST VIRGINIA

May 15-21, 1983 Cedar Lakes Rug Camp at Ripley. Teachers are Shirley Bloom, Dotti Ebi, Shirley Hacker, Ruth Hogue, Margaret Howell, Mary Ann Johns, Mary Melvin and Bonna Stone. For more information contact Elizabeth Tompkins, 107 Tahoma Rd., Lexington, KY 40503.