



# NEWSLETTER

VOL I

"FRIENDS OF RENFREW"

AUGUST, 1978

NO. 1

Dear Friends:

Thanks for your support and interest in Renfrew Museum. To date, we have 36 individual memberships and 45 family memberships. It is indeed gratifying to see such a tremendous response!

We would like to continue to add new "Friends" to our membership program. Why not tell your friends and neighbors about Renfrew and encourage them to join us.

## NEW EXHIBITS FOR SEPTEMBER

Planned for September 10 through October is a new exhibit installation highlighting the outstanding hooked rug collection at Renfrew. It is titled: "The Hooked Rug as Folk Art." The exhibit will be in the upstairs gallery. Plan to attend the exhibit opening on September 10 from 4 to 6 p.m. No formal invitation will be sent this time. (Note that the "Flowers!" exhibit will be closed and dismantled the first week in September. Better hurry and see it!)

## FOLK ART

There is quite a bit of confusion and some controversy in defining folk art. Often the term is used to describe furniture, pottery, carvings, paintings, and almost everything in the realm of material culture.

Probably the most accepted definition of folk art is that it was (or is) the product of a self-taught or naive artist or craftsman. Crudeness is often associated with folk art. The quality of the folk piece, be it pottery, furniture, painting, etc., does not enter into the definition. Hence a poorly designed or constructed chest of drawers by a trained cabinetmaker is not a folk piece. It is just a poorly made chest of drawers--nothing more.

The folk art aspect of hooked rugs is contained in the decoration or design and not the technique of hooking. Most home made hooked rugs contain designs created by untrained artisans, usually by a female member of a family. So, hooked rugs often fall into the realm of true folk art.

As with all forms of artistic expression, sometimes the end product is charming and delightful and sometimes not. The sampling of rugs in the exhibit will contain examples that range from delightful to the ordinary. Why not attend the exhibit opening and engage in a lively discussion of folk art with the curator/consultant.

## CURATOR/CONSULTANT

Speaking of the Curator/Consultant (Jim Koenig), he is attending the Summer Institute at the Winterthur Museum. The Institute WINTERTHUR is an intensive

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three week course on the American decorative arts from 1640 to 1830. About 20 people a year are permitted to attend the Institute. All the lectures and demonstrations are given at the Museum.

#### WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

Renfrew recently acquired three pieces of John Bell pottery -- a cider mug (brown glaze); a butter tub; and a small crock with an unusual blue decoration -- not the standard Bell rose.

#### BY THE WAY.....

Some people have undoubtedly noticed the Museum's collection of Bell pottery is no longer in the gallery. Due to the new exhibits program, the once well lighted pottery is now in a dimly lit corner of the maple bedroom. Sorry! Every effort will be made to assist visitors who are especially interested in Bell pottery.

Before moving the pottery, each piece was individually photographed in color. The photographic record is available (at the Museum) to anyone wishing to see the entire collection of Bell pottery.

#### ANYTHING ELSE?

Yes, one last item. There will be an informal seminar at the Museum loosely titled: "Ways to Identify Antiques for the Beginner."

This seminar will cover a variety of antiques from furniture to glass. Tricks of the trade will be divulged! The seminar is for the beginner, but seasoned veterans may learn something too!

The seminar is for "Friends" only. Three dates and time are listed below with the same material covered at each seminar. So pick a day convenient to your schedule. Attendance is by reservation and each seminar is restricted to 12 people. Better call and make reservations now. Telephone 762-4723.

#### SEMINAR DATE AND TIME:

Monday, September 18	10:00 A.M. to 12 Noon
Tuesday, September 19	7:00 to 9:00 P.M.
Wednesday, September 20	2:00 to 4:00 P.M.

If the response to this seminar is overwhelming, arrangements will be made for additional dates.