

Patty Schleicher

Side 1:

[1/1] In 1945 she and her husband honeymooned here. He, working in petrochemicals, moved often and most of their married life was spent on the gulf of Texas. They always wanted to return and in retirement work with their hands.

[1/32] In 1973 she and Mimi moved to Asheville - her husband followed. Two sons remained in the west. [Mimi Schleicher, Hans Schleicher, Hart Schleicher, Hans Schleicher, Jr.]

[1/41] Mimi attended the Newfound School which was a year or so old, located in the old YWCA on Grove Street off Patton Ave. (photos with Thelma Caldwell tape). This was a short-lived alternative school with an unusually fine curriculum. She graduated in 1975. Patty worked as librarian in Weaverville to support tuition (enclosure). [John Bridges, Cissie Folckemer (Mrs. C. E.)]

[1/70] The family had purchased land in 1970 on Reems Creek Valley on Pink Fox Cove. She designed the house and her husband and two men built it. They continued to work on it over the next 15 years. She had always wanted to be an architect but was discouraged because she was a woman. [Huston Monday, Oscar McDervos]

[1/107] The house, which was on 3 levels, was difficult to run when her husband developed Parkinsons. Needing one floor, they moved to 1333 Merrimon overlooking Beaver Lake in December of 1993.

[1/116] Both she and her husband, anticipating joining the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, worked on their crafts. She was involved with weaving until it became difficult for her back, he went into woodworking.

[1/140] She discovered marbling though an American artist magazine. She sent for material from the bibliography, but, in experimenting, found that each formula omitted an ingredient. This was done deliberately [shades of the old guilds of the middle ages] but she gradually pieced the ingredients together and is still excited with the craft after 15 years.

[1/157] In 1980 she and her husband were accepted into the Guild.

[1/174] She has attended two marbling gatherings - one in Santa Fe and one in San Francisco [where my friend met her and told me about her shop on Wall Street]. People came from all over the world. The Europeans who, up to this time, had been closed with their secrets, opened up and everyone shared. [Geert Van Doal]

[1/215] Her first book was on oil marbling. The group publishes a paper called Ink and Gall.

[1/280] She was the first marbler in the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild. Five examples of work are submitted and judged by a jury. Design consistency is a basic criterion.

[1/300] She is currently on the standards committee. It is hard criticizing work. Candidates, whose work has been rejected, are invited to return for a critique, but only half show up. [Andrew Glasgow]

[1/330] She discusses the beginning of the craft movement which was an economic life-saver for the mountain people during hard times but also preserved the crafts and cultures (enclosed). [Frances Goodrich]

[1/341] Penland started in N.C., the Kentucky School of Crafts in Hindman, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. John Campbell Folk School worked with Cherokee Indians. Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual is an arts cooperative. The Guild was a marketing organization with individual and cooperative membership. Allenstand was one of the cooperatives. There are educational institutions: Penland School of Crafts and Haywood Technical College. Many of the same people are members of more than one organization. [John Campbell]

[1/412] The Allanstand shop was given to the Guild. It had been in town. [Frances Goodrich]

[1/420] The Southern Highland Handcraft Guild has an unusual relationship with the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Guild built the building and gave it to the park service. She came in just as it was finished and dedicated by Mondale in 1980 (see clipping). [Joan Mondale]

[1/440] She has always been active with the Guild. An extensive library was catalogued and shelved and a fund raiser for needed materials was held. [Roxa Wright]

[1/480] She discusses Mrs. Vanderbilt's involvement in furthering the mountain crafts. Prior to WWII there was a shop in N.Y. and in Washington D.C. where weaving and quilts were sold. Biltmore Homespun was another co-op. [I told her about the suit Jesse Ray wore for our interview - woven in 1956] There are several crafts people and artists who are members of the Guild - some work is traditional and some modern. [Mrs. Vanderbilt, Stewart Nye, Blenko handmade glass]

[1/541] There is a constant dialogue between the traditional and the modern. Traditional craft is dying out everywhere. It is not easy to artificially revive it. [Mitzi Tessier]

[1/563] Efforts to keep the arts alive in the city are manifold. Traditional music is played at the fairs (the instruments are made by the performers). Story telling revival started in the late 70's. The Guild sponsors folk tellers in the summer and feels responsibility for keeping tradition alive.

Side 2:

[2/1] The Guild is alert to picking up on crafts that can be lost and preserving them - such as log cabin building.

[2/19] She has been active on the development of the library, education, program committee, a board member, and vice chairman of the board. At present she is on the standards committee. Work is submitted for judging twice a year.

[2/27] For over 60 years gifts of books and artifacts have been donated to the Guild. There is a vast collection and it is hoped that a full-time curator can be employed.

[2/41] The Guild is under obligation to the Park Service to give demonstrations of craft procedures. School children come to the Guild and some speakers go to schools.

[2/52] The log cabin in Weaverville built by Conway (see enclosure - article mentioning but not showing cabin, finished 1993) is discussed. A cabin, one of the first school houses in another county, has just been reconstructed on the corner of Lakeshore and Mt. Vernon. [Bob Conway]

[2/75] Recapturing the art of early cooking is demonstrated at Vance's birthplace (photo of Vance house from Cabins and Castles).

[2/88] The new project HandMade in America (see enclosure), with \$620,000 to use over a 3-year period, should publicize the arts that are here and stimulate more interest. The Biltmore House draws people to the area.

[2/106] Not enough effort is made to tell visitors what is available in the area.

[2/116] She tells about setting up her shop with her daughter and a high school friend her daughter had known in the Newfound School. Classes are taught by invitation. Mimi continues to teach at workshops and goes to Arrowmont for a week or two at a time - living on campus. [Mimi Schleicher]

[2/164] Mimi worked in Huston from 1980-1987 to make money for her pottery but when she came back became involved in marbling and has more orders than she can handle. [Mimi Schleicher]

[2/186] Patty feels that her timing for the rediscovery of marbling has been perfect for her. The last revival was in 1890's and marbling was taught around the world. [Joseph Haufner]

[2/209] This renaissance has been approached from the hand craft angle. Only one piece is obtained from each process. The Americans get \$9-15 a piece whereas the Europeans charge \$40 a piece. The appreciation of fine marbling doesn't exist here. That is one reason why the Inklings was started.

[2/245] New tax laws helped kill good publishing companies because publishers, no longer in a separate category, are taxed on inventory in hand. This has created a big market for remainders and discourages large inventories of slow-selling quality books. It was the expensive books that used marbling end plates.

[2/263] She wholesales her work as well as selling through her shop. Scarves go to ladies stores and museum shops. Craft shops call for cards, small blank books, and framing stores need paper for their industry.

[2/307] No two pieces of marbling are photographically alike but by using the same colors, tools and procedures it is possible to make 50 almost identical pieces. The maximum order they have had is for 500.

[2/338] Each marbler's work is identifiable. She considers the art "sophisticated water play."

[2/376] She was thrilled to find the shop - a 1926 building with trim around the windows. Just the right size. However she feels that Wall Street should never have been remodeled.

[2/397] She hopes downtown will continue to improve. She chose Wall Street because she hates driving to Biltmore Village. (34 Wall Street).

[2/440] The Earth Guild moved to Haywood Street. It is a co-op, publishes a catalogue and, through fax, sends orders all over the country.

[2/455] Downtown, she feels, will be the art center of the east for handmade items. The art community needs to pull together and publicize itself. A few more eating places are needed but she thinks the city is past the hump.