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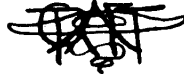
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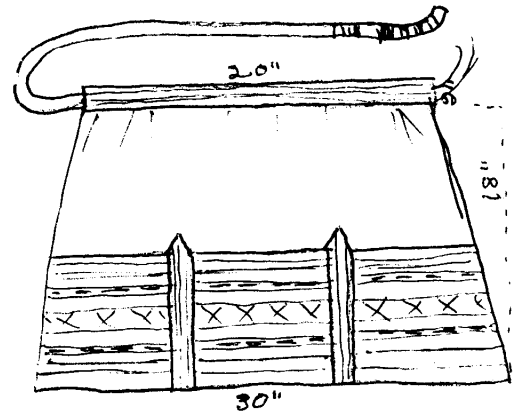
HANDWEAVERS BULLETIN

FEBRUARY, 1964



Late Afternoon in southern Mexico's exotico city of Oaxaca is the most delightful time of day for tourists. If finds most of them relaxing at tables under the sidewalk colonade of the Hotel Marquis del Valle across from the zocalo or main plaza, fascinated by the colorful activity in the center of the city. There is an almost automatic sorting of sidewalk-sitters: those wishing undisturbed contemplation who sit along the back row of tables, and those sitting on the front row, thus signifying their interest in the Oaxaca region handcrafts and the men and women from the handcraft villages who bring their wares to the street-side tables. Irresistible to the handweaver are the pretty women from Mitla selling gay cotton aprons, along with bright wool stoles, strings of onyx beads, gold filigree necklaces and earrings, and even an occasional artifact of ancient stone carving. The traditional salesmanship of the Mitla women is insistant, and bargaining is their pleasure. But the keen-eyed prospective purchaser of aprons may notice in the background a modest woman, handsome and meticulously neat in a western-style cotton dress, carrying a large bundle of colorful cottons. This is Amelia of Oaxaca, the apron lady — too shy to participate in the frantic salesmanship around the tables, showing her wares where invited, murmuring her modest, fixed prices when asked, but quietly drifting away if not wanted.

Amelia's aprons are many and varied in style and weave. They are well designed, well proportioned and well made. The gay cotton fabrics are woven, with infinite imagination, by her husband Senor Erasto Leiba, an expert weaver who uses many types of threadings. His warps and wefts are in gay colors, black and white. I was particularly interested in Senor Leiba's unusual handling of pattern borders on overshot threadings and was impressed by the manner in which he has solved the very difficult problem of weaving attractive pattern borders on a white warp with a dark color cotton weft, a problem which most American weavers handle very badly. I therefore had him weave for me a length of apron border repeats, samples of which are included for "Portfolio" subscribers. He weaves these six or seven inch border-groups in great variety, as does any imaginative weaver. The directions given here indicate how he handles his two shuttles in designing border groups of unusual emphasis and fine composition. By following his methods and making free pattern variations within the different shuttle rotation and shed rotation systems, the weaver can do his own designing, with variations.



A single material is used for the aprons: singles cotton for warp, set at 40 ends per inch, the same material for weft but always used double on the shuttle. The particular apron I have chosen to describe has white warp and white weft for one of the shuttles, deep blue for the other. The body of the apron is plain weave or tabby, using a double strand of blue, woven at about 36 ends per inch. This makes the blue dominant and reduces the customary salt-and-pepper effect of a dark weft on a light warp. Amelia's apron designs are as imaginative as her husband's woven borders. The one selected here has the wide border turned up to form a deep pocket across the entire apron. This is divided into three pockets by two vertical border strips an inch and a half wide, with mitered points at the tops. The fabric is 36 inches wide with a pattern border woven for the waist band. This border is cut into three pieces, one 20 inches long for the waist band, and two 8 inches long for the vertical pocket dividers. Two inches, including the selvages, are cut from each 24 inch apron length, along the sides. These strips are hemmed on the cut sides and attached to the waist band as the apron ties.

SHUTTLE CRAFT GUILD WORKSHOP — August 1964

As plans for the SUMMER WORKSHOP at WALDENWOODS develop and registrations come in, they indicate that the probability of cancelation will not occur. In fact, it would be well to register as soon as possible, as there is a maximum number as well as a minimum number of accommodations.

Announced as a workshop for teachers, occupational therapists, and Guild study group leaders, the opportunities which the workshop present are considerably broader and therefore there will be no registration limitation. Any weaver who would like to pursue a study or research program with the stimulation of the group and the guidance of staff members, will be welcome. The special subjects of the various staff members will make many branches of the weaving field available. For those who are interested in research, bibliographic work and comparative evaluation of the textile literature, I shall make available my personal library of hundreds of volumes, soft-cover material and periodical files. As it is impossible to transport a library of this volume to Waldenwoods, those doing reference work will "commute" the 50 miles to Lansing, and I hope everyone in attendance will spend at least a day with the weaving literature.

Although the full staff is not yet arranged, following are some who will participate.

Mrs Frances Afanasiev, former Professor of handweaving at Montana State College, and now in charge of the Shuttle Craft Guild correspondence course, will present academic instruction and weaving techniques.

Miss Helen Louise Allen, University of Wisconsin, noted textile historian and handweaving teacher, whose subjects will include Occupational Therapy, Weaving Crafts, Academic instruction.

Robert Sailors, noted textile designer and custom weaver will present his masterful "Introduction To Handweaving" for the first part of the workshop. Mr Sailor's name was familiar to all weavers during the year when he was weaving instructor at Cranbrook Academy of Art, but during the last dozen or so years his fame has been largely within decorating circles as all of his effort has been devoted to his highly successful business of custom weaving of exclusive fabrics in which he employs a considerable number of weavers.

Mrs Hallye Spurkle, Honolulu Hawaii, whose name is becoming well known for her creative use of primitive equipment for weaving contemporary textiles. Loomless weaving, this might be called.

Mrs George Cranch, whose fame as a spinner and teacher of the fiber arts has spread far beyond her Ohio home, will teach fiber preparation, spinning and the use of handspun yarns.

Mrs Ayliffe Ochs of the Hartland Area Crafts will conduct the dyeing workshop and be in charge of supplies and workshop yarns and books. Mrs Ochs is assembling the equipment and yarns for the workshop.

Mrs Faithe Nunneley of Minneapolis, Minnesota, a talented designer and weaver whose particular interest is in organizing and conducting purposeful Guild study groups.

Margaret Mears of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio will be the workshop secretary and will prepare the workshop notes from each study group, as the session progresses, for the workshop syllabus.

Harriet Tidball will conduct the study of looms and equipment. Examples of the major looms used in this country will be available, and a wide variety of warping equipment for studying many warping and loom-dressing methods. Drafting and fabric analysis will also be taught.

There will be daily lectures for the entire group, and then small study groups which will be conducted as creative workshops rather than as classes. There will also be panel discussions, exhibits and slide lectures. Anyone wishing to have a loom for exclusive use during the entire workshop should bring one or arrange through Mrs Ochs (Hartland, Michigan) to rent one. The workshop looms and tapestry frames will be used for the special group studies, and will be adequate for most of those attending the session. Further workshop subjects will be card and inkle weaving and leaders for the study of color, adult education programs and studio instruction are anticipated.

Do not delay registration. Dates are August 16 to 27, the place is Waldenwoods, Hartland, Michigan. Those arriving by train, plane or bus should make arrangements for transportation to Waldenwoods with Mrs Ayliffe Ochs, Hartland, Michigan. The comprehensive fee is \$195.00, \$45.00 of which is to be paid in order to make a registration, the balance due on arrival. To register, write to Harriet Tidball, The Shuttle Craft Guild, Route 1, Box 204B, Lansing, Michigan 48906, and include the \$45.00 registration fee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

As you notice, the winter Monograph and Bulletin are being mailed together. A single Portfolio sample is given, and this of Amelia's apron rather than for a Monograph subject. The reason is that a double Portfolio will accompany the Tapestry monograph in the spring, some very special tapestry samples.

There is a joyous announcement for those handweavers who have long wished to purchase a horizontal warping reel that can be conveniently used for warping any loom of any width. Mr Gilmore has designed a new reel that meets these needs perfectly. The reel itself, with its side tensioners, is the same successful one he has supplied for a dozen or so years. However, instead of being mounted on folding standards (the problem has been the lack of stability of the standards) the reel is mounted on one side of a solid frame. The other side of the frame, which has one sliding end to adapt it to a loom of width narrower than the reel, has slots in which the warp beam may be placed for beaming. (This is the system used in Scotland and in India.) But if it is not desirable to remove the warp beam from the loom, the frame may be braced at the back of any loom and is sufficiently stable for any warping. In this case, a reed may be placed in the slots and sleyed, to give a perfect warp spread on the beam. The reed is not necessary, but some warpers like the extra confidence it gives, and it can have a special use for warps such as those described under the SOFA THROW in Monograph Eleven. My 36" wide reel requires 44" by 36" of floor space, and it may be dismantled and folded for storage when not in use. A wider reel is available for wider looms, but I have reduced my own looms to a maximum of 32" wide. Because of the larger frame and the special sliding attachment, this reel is of course more costly than the previous model. I feel that this successful new equipment is a real victory, as for a dozen years I have been trying to persuade one or another of our major loom manufacturers to produce this much-needed equipment for the easiest and most secure of warping methods. Resistance has stemmed from unfamiliarity with the method and no desire to learn it as long as weavers seemed satisfied with the crude methods available to them. The address to write to about this reel is:

E E Gilmore, 1032 North Broadway, Stockton, California 95205.

Those of you who have found me slow about answering letters, slow in getting out publications, slow in accomplishing many jobs, are in full agreement with me. During the past three months I have been slow, and worse. It is easy to find reasons for one's failure to accomplish, but mine has been a very real one. In the past three months I've been involved in the complicated process of building an addition to our home west of Lansing, an addition to accommodate my growing textile library, my textile collections which in recent years of traveling have expanded beyond normal controls, and to accommodate files and yarns. But at last I am moved in and more or less organized with 700 additional square feet of space on two floors. There are large cupboards for storing fabrics on rolls and on shelves and many feet of new book-shelf space, and even space for a weaving room. At last I can take care of these things which are so necessary for my study and work, and keep them in good condition.

My textile collection started many years ago when Mrs Atwater and I traveled in Guatemala. It grew gradually mainly with pieces of early American linens and coverlets sent to me by various Guild members and with certain rare and valuable things from Mrs Atwater. At first, trying to keep my collecting instincts under control, I gave collecting little attention. But as the years with the Shuttle Craft Guild passed, I realized more strongly how important it was to have fine examples of textiles available when making textile studies. My real collecting started without my realizing it when a Guild member, preparing for a move to a smaller home, gave me a rare and valuable old shawl. From that time on I have collected handwoven textiles old and new wherever possible. Some are single examples, some have been shared with subscribers as Portfolio samples. I know that the collection will continue to grow, and to that end I am making formal arrangements for these things to be kept together and made available for study in the future — that inevitable time when I must give them up myself. Because of that I now feel free to accept any interesting textiles which anyone might wish to contribute to the collection. This is not a request for contributions. It merely means that if anyone has interesting textiles to dispose of, perhaps like my friend of the shawl who could no longer care for a valuable article that was not immediately useful, I can promise respectful and careful storage, study use, and eventual disposition to a non-profit institution that will keep the collection available for study. This applies to books and articles as well as to textiles, and I should be pleased to add any old and out-of-print books to the Shuttle Craft Guild library.

Harris Tibbals - 1964