

THE GOLDEN GOURD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CALIFORNIA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GOURD SOCIETY

Volume 1, Issue 8

• Winter 1998



Dolls! Gourds?

Lillian Hopkins, CGS member from Santa Monica combines several art forms to create her unusual, beautiful and intricate gourd dolls. "I love everything about the process of making gourd spirits and storytellers. Working on them puts me in a joyful and serene mood which is reflected in the doll. I have already been 'visited' by a number of spirits, all waiting more or less patiently for their turn.

I have a shed full of gourds and a head full of ideas – all I need is time to work on them!"

Always involved in many craft projects she had never considered being or becoming an "artist" until 1994 when she had an 'epiphany' one day at an art supply store. Looking at a brochure about sculpted polymer clay dolls, she just knew she wanted to sculpt in this new medium.

For the next two years, she bought books and taught herself to make polymer clay dolls. However, she found that making the bodies and sewing the clothes tedious and uninteresting.

In 1996 she discovered "ready-made bodies" in the form of hard-shelled gourds. It seemed so natural to add sculpted heads and limbs to the gourds. Hardening the polymer clays required baking at temperatures too high to be compatible with the gourds and switched to paperclay, an air-drying clay. She also found that the paperclay has a rougher texture that enhances and complements the "earthiness" of the gourds.

Lillian shares with us how she proceeded. "Having been enchanted by storytellers since the first time I saw one, and given the shape of a gourd, making gourd storytellers was a natural next step. After a while, I began being visited by 'gourd spirits.' Images come to me in dreams or during meditative moments, and I can see very clearly what the image looks like. Each spirit has its own character and belongs to a certain gourd. Sometimes I have the right gourd on hand, and sometimes I

have to go looking for it. But the spirits are very persistent and won't leave me alone until they've been made."

Lillian studied Biology at UCLA, changed majors and schools several times and received multiple degrees. None of her studies were in art. She has worked as a Court Reporter since 1990. She says, "Coming from an analytical, scientific background, it has been interesting to me how little input I have into the whole process. As long as I follow the image as it appears, everything goes well. As soon as I try to deviate – change a color or pattern, for example – then everything grinds to a halt until I give up and create the piece as it 'appeared' to me. Those spirits are strong willed."

Lillian's amazing dolls are featured in the Santa Fe Doll Art Show each April and one is in the Museum of Doll Art in Bellvue, Washington. About selling her gourds, Lillian says "I don't wholesale because of the amount of time it takes to make each piece, so I don't have any galleries representing me. I work mostly by commission, which I like because I enjoy the personal interaction with the people who are buying my art, and I don't have deadline



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MEMBER'S ON-LINE GALLERY

<http://www/calgourd.com>

Winter 1998 - Artists

Ann Blankenship • Lillian Hopkins

Winter 1998 - Holiday Gallery

Pearalee Bilodeau • Ann Blankenship
Jim Chamberlin • Linda Noblitt • Jeanie Dixon

President's Message

Carol Rookstool

Here we grow again! We are looking for someone to be our new Membership Chairperson and maintain our 600+ membership database. Jo Ann Perry has been wearing four hats this past year. She is (1) the Regional Representative for El Dorado County, (2) the CGS membership chair, (3) the creator of the incredible California Gourd Society Website (www.calgourd.com) and (4) works with Ginger in the production of the newsletter! During 1999, Jo Ann wants to focus her time on continuing the development of the website on a monthly basis and on spending more time on gourdcrafting with her local gourd patch. Somewhere out there is a CGS member who is willing to volunteer for the important job of membership management. Please let us know if YOU are interested!

CGS Regional Representatives and the Board of Directors will be meeting during the month of February for the annual officers' retreat in Three Rivers. During this annual working meeting, the business of CGS is discussed and plans for the coming year are finalized. Members are encouraged to contact any of the officers to share their interests or concerns which will then be forwarded to the retreat. This process will assure that any CGS member can have input into the planning agenda of our society.

Congratulations to Ginger Summit who was elected to a two year term on the American Gourd Society Board of Directors. She will serve a two year term and is the first Californian to serve on the AGS board! Way to go, Ginger!

It is time to start thinking about your entry into the 1999 CGS art competition. Our steering committee has proposed 10 categories for the June event. Descriptions of the categories and entry forms will be available on February 15 and will be published in the Spring issue of the Golden Gourd.

During this winter season, I want to express my thankfulness for the wonderful volunteers that make CGS so successful. Many hands make the work go quickly and the pleasures numerous. May each of you have a wonderful holiday season and a gourd-filled New Year!

Carol Rookstool, President
45493 South Fork Drive, Three Rivers, CA 93271
Tel: (213) 629-5689; E-mail crookstool@aol.com

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CGS Board of Directors

<u>President</u>		
Carol Rookstool	213-629-5689	crookstool@aol.com
<u>VP-Communications</u>		
Ginger Summit	650-941-0101	gsummit@earthlink.com
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Jo Ann Perry	530-626-7624	daffodil@innercite.com
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Ardith Willner	408-427-3833	ardithk@aol.com
<u>Treasurer</u>		
Rita Tomlinson	209-561-0804	cbdad@mindinfo.net

Check our new website
www.calgourd.com
(see article on page 6)

Regional Representatives

(bold type denotes a new Gourd Patch)

<u>Bakersfield</u>	
Betty Finch	805-589-3368
<u>El Dorado County</u>	
Jo Ann Perry	530-626-7624
<u>Fallbrook</u>	
Mary Segreto	909-678-8835
<u>Lone Pine</u>	
Jeanette Whitehair	760-876-5679
<u>& Reggie Cook</u>	
<u>No. SF Bay Area</u>	
Lynne Bunt	415-459-3088
<u>Orange County</u>	
Susan Sullivan	714-997-4482
<u>Palmdale/Antelope Valley</u>	
Margureite & Paul Smith	805-722-0256
<u>Pasadena</u>	
Mary Jane Jones	213-224-8034
<u>Sacramento</u>	
Anne Mitchell	916-987-7027
<u>San Bernadino County</u>	
Kathy Riker	909-797-4591
<u>Santa Cruz</u>	
Ardith Willner	831-427-3833
<u>Santa Monica/West LA</u>	
Lillian Hopkins	310-396-3266
<u>South Bay-Long Beach</u>	
Lorene & Jim Coleman	310-769-0271
<u>So. SF Bay Area</u>	
Carol Morrison	650-493-2998
<u>Stockton</u>	
Karen Makal	209-887-3694
<u>Ventura County</u>	
Pearl Reece & Fern Wesley	805-482-3255
<u>Visalia</u>	
Linda Hayden	209-561-1109



Regional Roundup

ANTELOPE VALLEY gourd heads have been very busy. As everyone knows gourds have taken over like a fever. This is a very busy time of the year for everyone. Our festival at the Baal's Tree and Gourd farm was a lot of fun and it's getting bigger every year. Although it seems the weather has made a change in the festival dates next year.

Our members here have been very busy. Linda Noblitt has been doing very well with her Gordy Dolls and has attended many festival and events. The popularity of her dolls seems to be growing. Congratulations Linda. A new member Lisa Chavez Thomas has been shipping her work to several states. Her heritage of Indian has made her Corn Maiden Dolls and Gourd Pottery very popular. The Baal's Tree and Gourd Farm has been doing very well. They have had articles in Sunset magazine, L.A. Times and Craft Guide. It has been non-stop since then. It seems the gourd business is picking up in leaps and bounds.

There will be a new grower in San Luis Obispo this next year. They are flower growers who have been growing gourds for years. They send fresh small gourds to florists for flower arrangements. Good money in it! They didn't know what to do with the gourds after picking the fresh ones except to throw them away. Not any more!!!

I am taking on a new project by doing a series of wild animal gourds for the Shambala and Roar Foundation run by Tippi Hedren in Acton, CA.

Classes will be set up for our area after the first of the year. If anyone locally has news of things they have been keeping busy with let me know. I have the Detailmaster burning unit along with various pens in stock for anyone in the local Los Angeles area. If you need them now I have them. If there is something you need ordered, I can get it for you. Keep in touch with all the local gourd news. *Marguerite Smith (805) 7220256 or E-mail jerkyworks@aol.com Keep on burning!*

HELP WANTED PART TIME VOLUNTEER POSITION

**Great rewards!
Wonderful working conditions
with good people.
Creativity and enthusiasm a
definite plus.**

Regional Coordinators are still needed for many areas throughout California. Please think about starting one in your area. I guarantee it will be the best part-time job you ever had!

**Ardith Willner
831-427-3833 or
ardithk@aol.com**

The new ORANGE COUNTY GROUP met on Nov 21 at Tandy's Leather in Costa Mesa. Eight prospective members shared information, enthusiasm and plans for organization and objectives for the group. Initially, it was decided to hold business/program meetings on a quarterly basis. Several discussed having "hands-on informal gatherings/ workshops" in between the official quarterly program meetings. That possibility will be pursued, because there is plenty of expertise in the group to share. We discussed a variety of program topics and the possibility of having joint meetings with other Southern California groups.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Jan 23, 1999 at a time and place yet to be arranged. While their space is limited, Tandy Leather in Costa Mesa has graciously extended the invitation for the group to continue meeting at their store.

Tandy's will be scheduling more Gourd/ Art and craft classes. Lynne Everett, a member of the new O.C. group who is a talented professional artist and experienced teacher provided a beginning gourd class there on Sun Nov 22 and will be doing more. Persons in the Orange County area who are interested in joining the group should contact Susan Sullivan at (714) 997-4482 or via E-mail SusnaSPHN@aol.com



What Gourd Patch leader recently won First Place at the Ohio Gourd Show for his/her wonderful gourd mask?

FOOTHILL GOURDERS OF EL DORADO COUNTY continue their monthly meetings and have a full schedule planned for the 1st quarter of the year. Arrangements have been finalized with the Cooperative Extension office to have our 1999 meetings in their conference room on the third Monday morning of each month. The response to our booth at the September Harvest Fair was overwhelming. In December the group is having a pot luck brunch with table decorations of holiday gourds. For the January meeting we're going to talk about the use of paraffin as a resist in decorating gourds.

VENTURA COUNTY is just getting started with a new gourd patch. Fern Wesley and Pearl Reece will be notifying members after the first of the year in their area of their presence and plan to have a kick off meeting in the latter part of February. If you haven't heard from Fern or Pearl by early February and would like to be included in their plans, please give them a call on 805-482-3255.

The FALLBROOK GOURD PATCH withered a bit during last summer's heat and went pretty much underground during the fall, but we anticipate renewed energy and growth in 1999. We look forward to a gathering of all gourd enthusiasts in the area to catch up and share ideas this winter. Check our website www.calgourd.com after January 1 for meeting details or call Mary or Dick Segreto, 909-678-8835 for meeting time and place.

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Regional Roundup, cont'd

The PASADENA GOURD PATCH has been meeting every month at the Farrin O'Conner Design Studios at 146 W. Bellvue Drive in Pasadena. The meeting is the third Wednesday at 7:30 PM. The Gourd Patch leader, Mary Jane Jones says that it is a fun group with a wide variety of interests. One of the participants is not a gourd artisan, but a gourd admirer - attending a multitude of shows, festivals and events featuring gourds. Just a reminder that you don't have to "do" gourds to love them and get involved.

The December meeting will feature a "gourd ornament" exchange. This gourd patch has a very informal structure with each meeting focusing on member's work in progress with a focus on helping one another along. If you are in the area, please stop by or call Mary Jane to see how you can get involved.



Kern
County
Gourd
Patch has
their first
meeting.

woodburned on the dipper. For those who are interested in woodburning Alex will be leading a demonstration of woodburning at the April 6, 1999 meeting.

Judith Serna shared one of her finely crafted gourd bowls and consented to lead a demonstration at the January 5, 1999 meeting on adding pine needle accent to a gourd bowl.

At our December meeting we looked at examples showing how picking gourds too soon can cause them to rot. We examined the effect of sunburn on a gourd and saw how a gourd can be purposely grown with a loop in the stem. We passed around an examples of uncut thick and thin gourds of approximately the same size to assist in learning how to tell the difference by weight and feel. An experimental gourd was shared in which the top half had been green scraped approximately one week before the bottom was green scraped. This resulted in a gourd with self induced splits around the middle.

The SAN BERNARDINO GOURD PATCH is going strong. We have had a very good response with interesting people attend our meetings and all of them have been bit by the bug. At our last meeting we demonstrated how to weave a dream catcher and everyone had a good time.

We will be meeting on January 11 Monday at 7:30 PM. February 13 Saturday 10:00 -2:00 PM bring lunch "Demonstration on the cleaning process and working with dyes". March 8 Monday at 7:30 PM. Meeting will be at Kathy Riker's home.

1999 will be a very busy year for this gourd patch we will be having demonstrations at the meetings, field trips, festivals and a lot of fun!!!!!! Please join us! Kathy Riker 909-797-4591.

THE KERN COUNTY GOURD PATCH held their first meeting November 3 1998. A fun time was had by all. Most of the attendees had never met before so there was a lot of getting acquainted.

Alex Villava displayed a variety of beautiful gourds he had crafted. Alex specializes in wood burned gourds bearing Native American designs and sells crafted gourds at Indian Pow-Wows. Several of his gourds are on display in galleries.

Alex presented the group organizer, Betty Finch, with a special dipper gourd and announced, "You did a good thing when you started this group - this is for you." The group listened intently as Alex explained the meaning of each of the symbols

The Kern County Gourd Patch meets the first Tuesday of each month 6:30 PM at Beverly's Craft & Fabric 2819 F Street, Bakersfield, California. Everyone is welcome to attend!

The SANTA CRUZ GOURD PATCH had a meeting in October to share gourd fun and friendship. The show and tell as usual produced a lovely variety of beautiful gourds and helped inspire the group for holiday gift ideas. Member Lisa Muhly had great success in her gourd garden this year, and has lots of dried gourds for sale to CGS members. The next meeting will be at the home of Jill Walker in Watsonville on January 9. Ardith will describe several techniques to create beaks, noses, ears and other parts to adorn gourd masks and dolls. All are welcome.

GourdPatch
Trivia
What Gourd
Patch is some-
times known as
"Gourdo & the
Gourdettes?"

The SANTA MONICA GOURD PATCH showed some signs of wilting as well during the hot fall months. But the New Year bodes well for the group who plan to meet on January 7. Lillian Hopkins is the "head gourd" and welcomes all to join the group. Details of the meeting can be gleaned from Lillian, 310-396-3266.

From the new STOCKTON AREA GOURD PATCH: Hi all the gourd lovers in the San Joaquin County and surrounding areas. The Gourd Factory would like to invite you to come

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Regional Roundup, cont'd

and join us in starting a Gourd Patch in our area. Lets get together and learn new techniques, share ideas, or we can have classes if there is something you would like to learn more about, or all of the above. Hope to have the first meeting Feb. 27, 1999 The meeting will be held at The Gourd Factory, 950 Fine Road, Linden, CA. *Karen Makal+*
I can be reached at: Phone: 209-887-3694, E-mail: gourdfac@inreach.com. Hope to see you all on the 27th

CALABASH CLUB OF SILICON VALLEY: It has been a busy fall for the South San Francisco Bay group. On September 20 we met at Custom Handweavers for a paint and dye workshop. In the open air we experimented with large vats of new dyes. Inside different members demonstrated new and unusual paint techniques. Everyone agreed that workshops are a welcome program activity.

On October 11 we welcomed our first guest artist, Nancy Miller. Fresh from her success at the Sausalito Art Fair, she told stories of her development as a gourd artist, showed slides of her fabulous work and generously shared her techniques and philosophy about marketing and promoting gourd work as fine art. We were greatly inspired.

The Treasure Faire, a November 17 bazaar in Los Altos, provided the opportunity to sell gourds as a group. Eight members participated and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Many other members are selling gourds in their own booths at various Christmas arts and crafts events in the South Bay area. One member, Carol Morrison, participated in the Fine Arts division of the Ohio Gourd Festival and won a "Special Recognition" ribbon.

The Christmas Party is scheduled for December 6 at the home of Helen Bos in Saratoga. As has been the custom for five years we will have a gourd ornament exchange and gather around the Calabash to celebrate the season and the joyful friendships we share as group.



Check our new website
www.calgourd.com
(see article on page 6)

Gourds on Display

(Editor's note: if you have had or will be having your gourds exhibited, please drop us a line so we can include your name here. As well, if an occasion arises and it is too late for this newsletter, send the information to our website coordinator and she will promptly post the information there)

Jo Anne Sadler tells us that she donated a gourd to the recent "Out of Your Gourd" auction in Santa Fe that benefited the New Mexico diabetes association. Robert Rivera was the honorary chairman this year.



The holiday season was particularly busy for many California artists, especially since gourd art is gaining so much attention and our artists are such a talented bunch. These are a few that we know of:

Jo Anne Sadler's work is included in Ornaments and Adornments VII -The Folk Tree Collection, 199 So. Fair Oaks, Pasadena, CA. This show and sale runs from 11-14-98 through 12-31-98.

Lois Rainwater's gourds and basketry were included in the Contemporary Crafts Market, Santa Monica Civic Center, Nov. 6-8.

Lynne Everett's baskets and gourds were available in the Artistic License Fair in Costa Mesa. This fair was held Oct. 30-Nov. 1.

Janet Hatfield's Simply Gourdeous Gourds were for sale at the Stanford Holiday Craft Faire which was held Dec. 4, 5 and 6.

Please let us know in advance if you are going to be included in a show, so we can let other gourd artists know. If you miss the deadline for the newsletter, send us the information anyway so we can include it in the new web-site. This is available for all California Gourd Society members, so please let us help you!

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Gourd-Darn! That Smelly Gourd

by JoAnnis Mohrman,
Lake County, CA

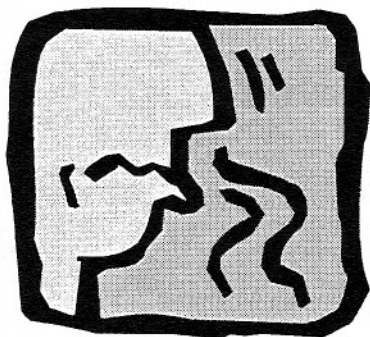
Ready to craft? Right! Respirator on, saw ready, and gourd is cut open. Whooo-eee! What a smell! Right out of the manure heap! Ever happen to you? So I just asked myself, who is in control here, me or the gourd? I am!

So, taking that bull by the horns, here's how I got rid of that manure perfume:

1. Clean interior out thoroughly
2. Sand interior really well and rinse out with water
3. Fill with water and let sit for 15 minutes, then discard water
4. Sprinkle a thick layer of borax inside all over, coating it like flouring a cake pan. Borax should stick well to the interior walls.
5. Dry coated gourd out for two days and brush out all the borax.

Most of the smell was gone! Just a hint left. I use homemade pot pourri in some of my containers, so I got out an appropriate essential oil and with small paint brush, streaked a bit here and there on the interior of the gourd, both the bowl and it's lid. Trial and error proved that "a little dab will do you" and you can always use more if necessary later. That did it! I had two others that were just mildly unpleasant smelling, so spread a few drops on them as well without the borax treatment with success. I have used both essential oils and pot pourri fragrance.

The oils are stronger and last longer. However, being an oil, it would be wise to color the inside of your gourd before you use the oil in the event that oil in the pores will not accept your dyes, paint, etc.



Cinnamon and clove are very strong, apple and citrus are less so. Use scents appropriate for your

project, i.e. fruit bowl, use a fragrance that is fruity. I have used a mix of cinnamon and nutmeg in a bread warmer and rose inside a pot pourri container with excellent results. In one instance, I coated the inside of a bowl 3 times with polyurethane after a few dabs of essential oil, and, although the aroma was less intense, it was still pleasantly there. Enjoy this aroma therapy in your workshop, guaranteed to enhance your creativity!

(Editor's note: this subject came up in a recent Gourd Patch meeting and several other suggestions were made: one CGS member uses a scented dryer fabric softening sheet, another uses fragrant herbs.)

Digital Gourd

announcing
www.calgourd.com

Completely overhauled and streamlined for easier use, the CGS website has a new website address and a new look. There is a brief introductory page and each of the "departments" is on its own page now. Work is underway to have our new URL placed on the major search engines and this will enhance our visibility considerably.

If you have a bookmark or link on your Browser to the old site, please change to the new address. The old page will be left up until February 1 with a referral to the new URL.

A very popular feature of our website is the Member's Gallery. This is where *you* can showcase *your* interest in gourds. Photos of decorated gourds, odd shaped gourds, folks wearing gourds, et. al. are welcome, and *all* members are invited to participate. In the Member's Gallery for the next quarter you will see work by:

Ann Blankenship
Lillian Hopkins

Special this month, in addition to the regular Member's Gallery is a Holiday Gallery featuring photos of gourds all dressed up for the holidays. Featured in the Holiday Gallery are:

Pearalee Bilodeau
Ann Blankenship
Jim Chamberlin
Linda Noblitt
Jeanie Dixon

A new website page for CGS is for those members who wish to announce that their work is on display in a gallery, museum or commercial establishment. Another wonderful benefit available only to CGS members.

Just a reminder that if you are teaching a class, members may list that class on our website, independent of what may appear in the newsletter. Several members have reported that students have obtained the class information from the website, when the class was not announced in time to appear in the newsletter.

If you are a CGS member and have a website with gourds and you are entitled to have your site "linked" to the CGS site. A reciprocal link back to the CGS website would be appreciated.

Contact Jo Ann Perry, the website coordinator (530-626-7624 or e-mail daffodil@innercite.com) if you want to participate in the "digital gourd" or have ideas on how we can better utilize our website. This is YOUR gourd connection to the Internet.

Have a "Ho Ho Ho"
HOLIDAY

A Patient Husband

by Kathy Riker



Our vacation had been carefully planned, *but* at the last minute I made some changes. I added gourd farms on the first of my list to visit on the way to my mom's. Hubby said O.K. but don't you have enough gourds already! My reply you can't ever have too many gourds. I'm just going to look for some unusual looking one's, not too many so I

told him not to worry. We each had one suit case and the rest of the stuff I packed was gourds from home and all of my supplies to hold me over for the 7 week stay I would have at my mom's. So that left a little room in the back to work with.

With my map in hand and the smell of onions and bell peppers in the air we drove into Porterville late Saturday night. Our first stop Sunday morning was going to be Thomas Farms in Lindsay. I called Noi for directions and off we went. She is located in the heart of farm country. Everything was so green and blooming. On our arrival Noi and her husband were in the front yard to greet us. Noi has a green thumb and her farm shows it. While our husbands sat under the shade Noi and her 2 dogs gave me the tour. Her farm in on 2 1/2 acres and she has every bit of the ground covered. She walked me through her rose gardens and into to her herb garden and over to the water garden. with a beautiful pond full of Koi. The farm is shaded with old eucalyptus trees, fruit trees, berries and grapes.

Noi has been growing gourds for 3 years and has a festival on the farm in May. She said her gourds grow good because she has a lot of nitrogen in her soil. She has 19 varieties and she was already bearing fruit when we were there in June. She showed me her studio which is stocked with all the supplies you would need to create gourd art. We shared our art with each other and of course I packed in my car a few of her gourds. Had to say good bye with a real big hug and on to our next farm.

Our next stop was Zittel's farm in Folsom which was very easy to find. As we pulled up in the drive way all you can see was gourds, gourds and more gourds! "OH LA LA" I said to myself. Can't get away from this place with out buying some gourds! Roger Zittel came up and introduced himself to us and began to tell us about the farm. Roger's farm is the last of the growing farms in Folsom. He has been farming since he was 6 years old. He is a 5th generation farmer. He has been selling gourds for 6 years and has had a gourd festival for 4 years.

Roger is the largest supplier of the Hawaiian Ipu gourd and has a wide variety of every gourd shape you can think of. There were crates and crates of gourds, all sizes and all shapes under immense shade tents. Of course the men went off to talk so

that gave me some time to pick out a few gourds. Just a Few!?! Well it's never just a few!

Roger has a nice shade area set up for classes out side and has a festival coming in September. He is also working on a gourd museum. This will display some of Mother Nature's art work, some silly gourds that have grown to odd shapes in the field and to display some of the local artist's creations.

The one thing that stood out the most to us about both of the farms was how nice everyone was. The hospitality of these people will always be etched in my mind. It was like meeting an old friend. I think the California Gourd Society and the farmers are all unique people and I have made so many new friends that it now feel's like a family. That's what we are FAMILY! "OH YA"

Check our new
website
www.calgourd.com
(see article on page 6)

Ohio Show Report

The first weekend in October found many Californians shivering in Mt. Gilead, Ohio at the annual gourd show. The California Gourd Society had a booth in the main building, where the new Gourd Resource Guide was introduced. Carol Rookstool was helped in the booth by many volunteers, including Carol Morrison, Betty Finch and Lillian Hopkins, all welcoming visitors with warm California hospitality. Betty, Lillian and Ginger all participated in the event as student judges, gathering tips for our own shows to come.

Betty, Lillian and Carol Morrison all won ribbons in separate categories of the competition, and Betty was a great hit in the gourd mask (winning a first place) and gourd hat contests!

This event is always a rollicking success. If you would like to join the CGS group next year, let us know plenty of time in advance so we can make reservations together. It is sure to provide a gourdgous memory!

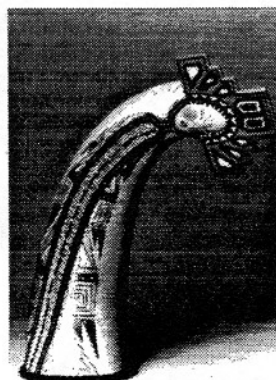
Dolls! gourds?, cont'd

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pressures. Late deadlines.

"Prices vary according to the type of piece. I have three 'lines' I guess you'd call them: Gourd Spirits, Storytellers and Singing Spirits. The Gourd Spirits start at \$850 for a small one and go up from there depending on the size and complexity of the piece. Bead work adds considerably to the price of a gourd. Storytellers range in price from \$250 to \$1200 and Singing Spirits are around \$200, more for larger and more complex creations.

"As to advice, I would say that as gourd artists, we are accustomed to letting the gourd tell us what it wants to be, and this is especially important in this kind of figure work. I really have to let the gourd reveal itself so that the sculpting of the head and arms and legs flows from the gourd. When working with the Paperclay patience is required. I sculpt in stages, letting it dry and then sanding and carving and adding as required."



Example of Lillian's dolls above include on the upper left a Singing Spirit, in the right a Gourd Spirit and directly to the left a Storyteller.

Lillian reports that a Storyteller like the one shown here may take three weeks working full time to complete.

Thank you Lillian for sharing your photos with us.

Dear Dr. Gourd

(Editor's note: recently a message was received via the Internet from a gal who was having problems with cleaning new gourds. The inquiry was referred to Ginger Summit for response and this is what Ginger had to say.)

I'm glad you are trying green gourd scraping, but was a bit surprised with the problems you seem to be having. I have scraped many gourds, but have never had them collapse. I called my friend Jim Story in Indiana, who is the expert in these matters. These are the possible reasons we came up with:

1) The gourds you have been scraping were picked early, or were 'late-set' on the vine. In both cases, they were not fully mature, and the shells may have felt solid but were really not completely developed. This would cause them to shrivel or shrivel, as you described. Did you wait until the vines were dead, or at least the stems were brown, before they were harvested?

If this is what has happened in your case, then select another gourd, perhaps another shape and size, and try again. Once the gourds are harvested, it is difficult to determine which ones were first to set, and which were set further along on the vine. Sometimes you can judge by size, since usually the first-to-set are larger, but this is not always the case, and again once the gourds are harvested you simply can't tell. Some gourds have a thinner shell than others, or more porous. These may also be more delicate and if scraped hard may be susceptible to a mold or fungus.

2) Occasionally people will cut the green gourd into a bowl, clean the inside and then scrape the outer shell. Often the edges will tend to shrivel or sink in, although the rest of the gourd will dry normally. I have heard of people trying to fill the green gourd with sand to prevent this collapse, but usually it will happen anyway. My suggestion in this case would be to cut the lip of the bowl at such a point that there is plenty of gourd that can be trimmed off once it is dry.

3) I often wait until the skin begins to soften before I scrape them. (I describe this as similar to a sunburn, when the moist skin begins to 'sweat' and blister and before it peels.) Some of the gourds I harvested last week are beginning to reach that stage in places, but most probably won't until January. If you catch them before the mold turns brown, you can usually scrape the skin off rather easily and avoid the mold problem.

4) The Japanese soak the green gourds in water for a couple weeks to soften the outer skin. I haven't done this but it is sure worth a try. They usually drill a hole and clean out the inner pulp and seeds first, but that isn't necessary. Just put the gourds in a large bucket and cover them with water for a while, until the skin tends to slip off, almost to the touch. Let me know if you do try this. I'll also give it a try this year.

Most other folks whom I have talked with have not had the problem of gourds shriveling, so I'm hoping that the problem you described is an isolated case.

continued on page 9

Do You Hear Voices?

Ginger Summit

One of the comments I hear over and over again from gourd artists is that their gourds "talk" to them. I often tell students in my classes that you don't have to be an 'artist' to work on a gourd--just a good listener. The gourd will tell you what to do, and all you have to do is to follow directions. Sometimes gourds say to just leave them alone and they remain in your home or studio, beautiful and simple--and perfect.



Others will suggest by their shape, mottles, texture or inner voice what the potential embellishment or decoration should be.

I recently got a message from gourd artist Joannis Mohrman in Lucerne, CA., describing exactly this feeling as she prepared for the Lake County Christmas Fair: "What will be will be, especially since the gourds talk to me. Had one last week I was going to make into a pear with a carved leaf on top for dried fruit, but the thing just looked at me sadly and said it did not want to be a pear--it wanted to be a madonna. I used a small gourd for the head which I inserted under what became the madonna' cloak. And so evolved another unusual piece and I just love it."

So do we, Joannis. Thanks for sharing!

Dear Dr. Gourd. cont'd

continued from page 8

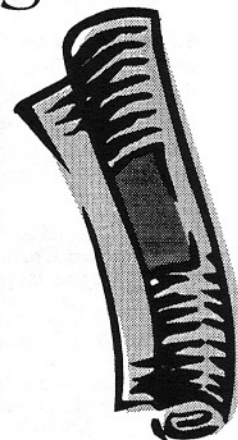
As to what to do with all those black gourds:

- 1) Try using texture paints. They are available in a huge variety of textures and colors, and could be fun to experiment with. I like to use them on the interiors of gourds as well as the exterior.
- 2) Use dark leather dyes. These sometimes turn out beautifully mottled. I put green and turquoise on a blackened gourd, and got a fabulous finish.
- 3) Try decoupage on the shell. Some wonderful wrapping papers, napkins and tissues are available which can really do wonders for a messed-up gourd shell. I especially like some of the tissues that have a slight metallic sheen or decoration—they give the gourd a real shimmer. But these days you have a fabulous array to choose from

Good luck, and keep me posted as to your results.

Gourds In The News

Gourds are appearing more in magazines and newspapers, featuring not only gourd art and craft in general, but our own very special California artists and growers. Check them out to share your excitement with friends:



Sunset Magazine, October issue. Article featured a simple craft for the fall season, but would be suitable for any time and especially for beginning classes. Also provides addresses for several growers in the state.

Pacific Horticulture, Winter 1998. Features a wonderful color photograph of many unusual gourds on the cover, and the first article entitled *The Wild and Wonderful Family of Gourds* by Wayne P. Armstrong (professor, Palomar College, San Marcos, CA). It also includes an article on growing gourds by Ginger Summit.

The Crafts Report, November 1998. The very first article in the issue is "The Gourd: A Natural Medium for Art," illustrated with many beautiful color photos, including one by California artist Lillian Hopkins. It also mentions the gourd festival at The Tree Mover and Gourd Farm, run by Tony, Tom and Sheryl Baal.

Chip Chats, September-October, 1998. This magazine for wood carvers includes an article by Bob Boyer which describes using wood burning techniques on gourds. Marguerite Smith from Lancaster outlines the steps for selecting, preparing and decorating a gourd. The article is illustrated with a photo of one of Marguerite's beautiful works of art.

Many newspaper articles throughout the state also feature local artists, especially in the fall. Look for these articles, for the information may not only help you in your gourd adventures, but will inform friends and perhaps students of the endless possibilities of gourd craft. Also, please continue to keep us informed as these articles appear. It is exciting to see the coverage, for it not only helps the artist become established, it educates the general public of our passion. (*ginger summit*)



Up-Coming Gourd Classes

All members of the California Gourd Society may list classes they are teaching. To list your class here contact Ginger Summit or Jo Ann Perry. If you are teaching a class and it is too late for publication in the newsletter, again contact Jo Ann or Ginger to get it listed on the CGS website. There is no charge to list your class and it is a wonderful benefit when you belong to CGS.

December 5 Gourd Crafting

Duane Teeter
The Caning Shop
926 Gilman, Berkeley
510-527-5010

December 12 Transferring Designs to Gourds

The Caning Shop
926 Gilman, Berkeley
510-527-5010

December 19 Miniature Gourd Art Pieces and Gifts

Lois Rainwater
San Gabriel Mountain
Basket Art
818-352-3756

December 19 Gourd Fountain

Lynne Bunt
The Caning Shop
926 Gilman, Berkeley
510-527-5010

December 19 Huichol Gourd Art

Guillermo Matrinez
Farrin O'Connor Design
Studio, Pasadena
626-796-1837

December 28 Take Care of Yourself After the Holidays Gourd Crafting

Carol Rookstool
Rookstool Ranch, Three Rivers
213-629-5689

January 9 or 19 Collage on Gourds

Lois Rainwater
San Gabriel Mountain
Basket Art
818-352-3756

January 12 Woodburning Techniques

Leigh Adams
Farrin O'Connor Design
Studio, Pasadena
626-796-1837

January 16 Gourd Kayum Drum

Guillermo Matrinez
Farrin O'Connor Design
Studio, Pasadena
626-796-1837

January 19 (9 weeks) Gourd Crafting

Carolyn Potter
Barnsdall Art Center, Los
Angeles
(213) 485-2116

January 22 Beginning Gourd Art

Linda Noblitt
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

January 23 Indian Beading on Gourds

David Snooks
Thomas Farms, Lindsay
209-562-9640

January 23 Diorama Gourd

Carolyn Potter
Farrin O'Connor Design
Studio, Pasadena
626-796-1837

January 30 Stitchwork With Pine Needles

Candy Kruger
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

February 13 Stitchwork With Pine Needles

Candy Kruger
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

February 25 Beginning Gourd Art

Linda Noblitt
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

February 27 Wild Fiber Weaving

Kathy Riker &
Valerie Martinelli
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

March 6 or March 7 Gourd Drum Class

Guillermo Martinez
Rookstool Ranch, Three Rivers
213-629-5689

Classified Advertising

Classified advertising rates will change with the Winter
1998 issue to 25¢ per word

GOURDS 1/2 PRICE SALE

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woodburners; large inven-
tory of colored leather
dyes, waxed linen thread,
mega putty.

March 6 Knotless Netting

Lois Rainwater
San Gabriel Mountain Basket
Art
818-352-3756

March 13 Stichwork With Pine Needles

Candy Kruger
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

March 20 Beginning Gourd Art

Linda Noblitt
Baal Farm
Lancaster
805-947-7121

March 29 (6 weeks) Gourd Crafting

Lois Rainwater
Learning Tree University,
Chatsworth
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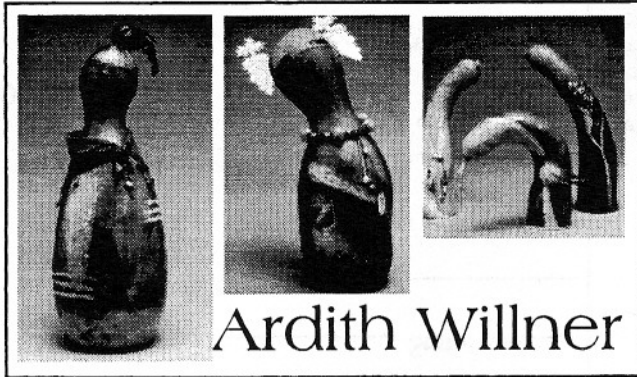
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ing

More Dolls!



Ardith Willner

Holidays are the time of year when many young, or young-at-heart, have visions of dolls. Perhaps some of the gourds in your studio or workbench are waiting to be turned into dolls right now. Many gourd Santas and Mrs. Claus, elves and angels will find their ways to hearths, homes and trees this season!

There are many ways to use gourds to make a variety of dolls:

- Find a bottle gourd with a smaller bulb on top for the head, and the larger bulb a ready-made body. Either paint the limbs, or add body parts with clay or other found objects.
- Use a gourd for the head, and add a soft body. You can either select one ready-made (which is often available in many sizes at a complete craft store) or sew one yourself.
- Use a gourd for the body, and add a head and limbs. Heads can be constructed of a separate gourd and attached to the body, or you might look for a doll head in a craft store or doll "hospital". Look for hands and other body accessories that may help complete your work of art.
- Gourd dolls can be completely assembled from many pieces of gourd. Let your imagination loose with all the scraps on your workbench to create a one-of-a-kind original.
- Don't overlook the great possibilities of puppets made of gourds.

Gourd dolls made by Ardith Willner and Linda Noblitt use different shapes of gourds for the heads, which are attached to soft bodies and then dressed. The Hopi maiden by Ardith won blue ribbons at the gourd shows in Ohio and Indiana. Linda Noblitt uses the necks of small bottle gourds to create unusual and delightfully "nosy" faces on her creations.



Linda Noblitt

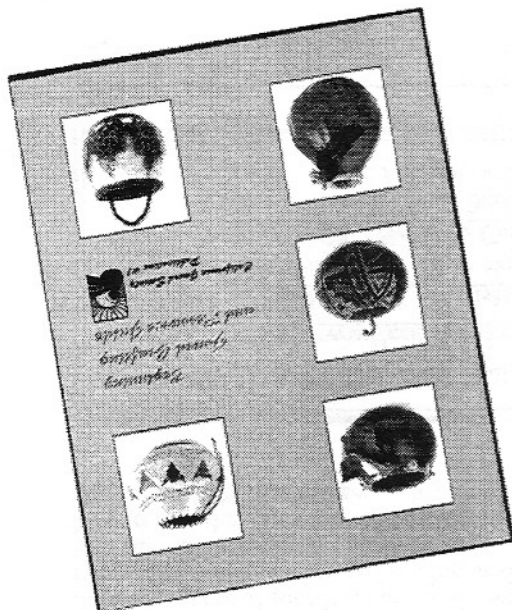


A New Book is on its Way!

Making Gourd Musical Instruments by Ginger Summit and Jim Widess is currently at Sterling Publishers in New York getting the finishing touches for publication. The tentative release date is scheduled for April, 1999. The book will include historical descriptions of gourd musical instruments from around the world, and feature instructions on how to make over 20 of them. 400 color pictures will illustrate the projects as well as many instruments which have been collected and made by musicians and artists around the world. The book covers not only the familiar instruments such as drums, rattles, shekeries, guitars and banjos, but folk instruments from India, the Far East, Africa and Mexico.

Ginger and Jim also plan to release a CD to coincide with the sale of the book. This will include most of the instruments which are included in the projects and many of the unusual instruments which they identified. This will provide the reader an opportunity to hear the sounds which are produced by the various types of instruments described.

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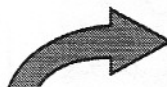
California Gourd Society
 c/o JO ANN PERRY,
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Annual dues for CGS are \$10.00. Membership in the American Gourd Society is \$15.00 annually and can be paid directly to them:
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