

THE SEATTLE WEAVERS' GUILD

By Irma F. Robinson

HORATIO ALGER should be around to write the story of the Seattle Weavers' Guild because, from a small group of ten or twelve meeting at the home of Mrs. Dana Linn in 1936, it has grown into an active group of 220 members. Its growth is measured not only by numbers but also by the type of organization, the service to its members and its plans for the future.

First as to its organization. Any one may apply for membership who is actively interested in weaving and who owns a loom. Each candidate must have two sponsors from the Guild membership. The dues are two dollars per year, one dollar of which is for the running expenses and the other dollar goes into an educational fund which will be mentioned later.

After shifting around for many years, meeting one place and another, we finally found a home in the Seattle Art Museum which has been of untold benefit to us. Dr. Richard Fuller, the director, has brought textile exhibits to the Museum which have been outstanding. Mrs. A. M. Young, the educational director, has shown us many films of special interest to weavers. And in addition we find ourselves wandering through the galleries taking inspiration from the treasures on the walls and in the cases to apply and adapt to our own

craft. I cannot urge too strongly that other Guilds make similar arrangements wherever possible because the link between the Art Museum and a craft group is a tremendous stimulation.

The fourth Thursday of the month is a busy day for Guild members. The session begins at ten o'clock with a study period. It may be a lesson in draft writing, pattern analysis or anything of a technical nature which the committee feels would be of interest to the group. The business meeting comes at eleven o'clock at which time action is taken upon the recommendations of the executive board. We have found during the years that most of the people want to hear about weaving and really care very little about the problems of running the organization, so our constitution calls for a large executive board of 12 to 14 members which the nominating committee, each year, tries to make a complete cross section of the group. Their recommendations then are brought to the Guild to be accepted or rejected.

Our monthly exhibit is also shown at this meeting. The idea of this exhibit was born in the early days of the Guild and we feel that it has been one of the biggest factors in our development. Members are invited to bring things they have made during the month. They not only show them but tell how they were made as to material, pattern, sley-



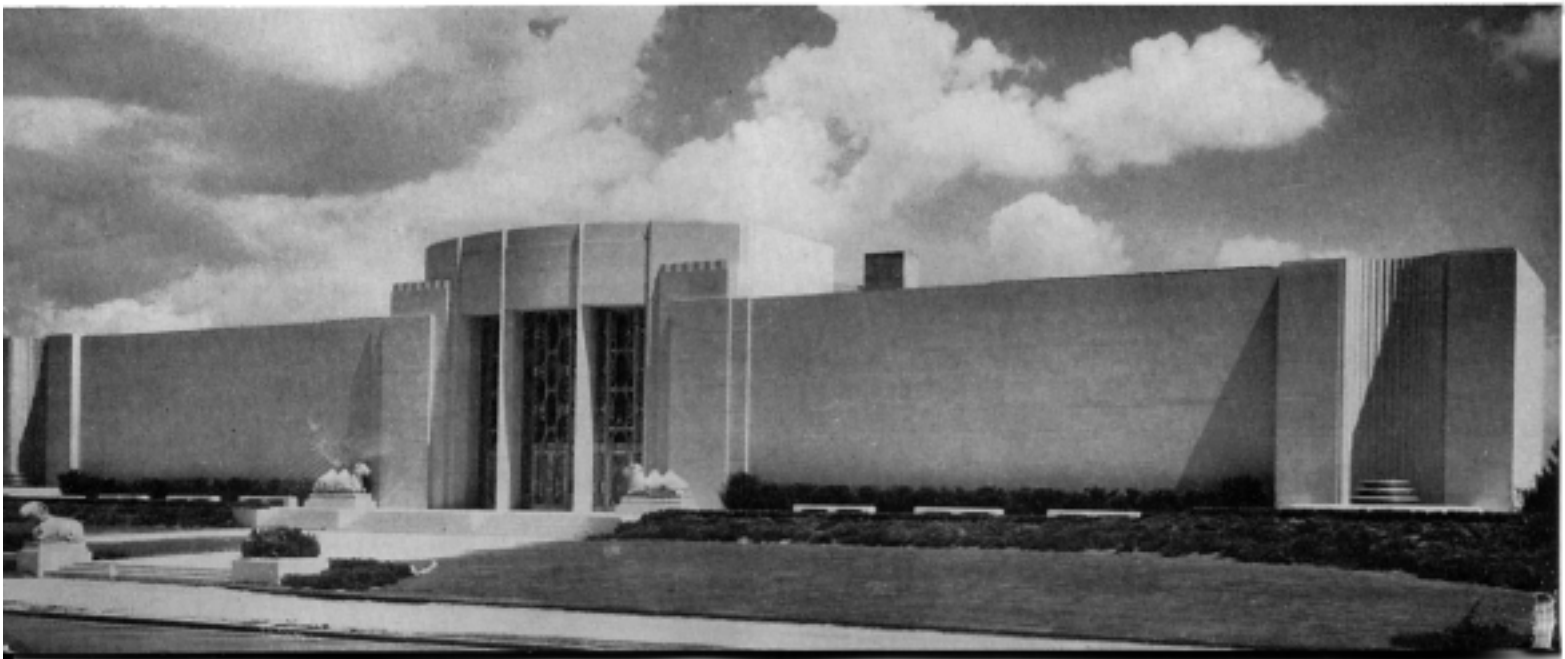
ing, etc., and members feel free to copy any information. The common supposition is that this procedure would lead to a group of plagiarists but we have found the opposite to be true. In studying one person's idea, a new, and, perhaps, a better idea comes which in turn creates something entirely new and different. As a result of this interchange of ideas the caliber of the exhibits has risen steadily until each monthly "show" is a real thrill. This year we bought a delineograph to show close-ups of materials on the screen as well as the complete article.

At lunch time tea and coffee are served to go with the members' own sandwiches—25 cents is collected to cover the costs of the drink and cateress.

Then at one o'clock the program committee presents the speaker of the day, usually a person outside the Guild who is an authority on a subject that pertains to weaving or is of interest to weavers.

Another field of growth is in the service which the Guild offers to the

THE SEATTLE ART MUSEUM, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON



membership. First, we have collected a large library: all the monthly bulletins, Miss Frey's and Miss House's books, some Swedish books and a number of others. Members may borrow these for a month without charge.

The formation of ten study groups has been another project. These are open to any member who wishes to participate. They are small groups, preferably not over eight or ten people, who get together in various homes once or twice a month for serious study. If the group consists mostly of new weavers they may have a sponsor or teacher from the Guild. If they are more experienced they go on their own, doing whatever they wish for their own advancement. The guild purchased ten 20-inch folding looms, one of which is rented to each study group for \$1.50 per month.

Last summer we tried putting on a "school." We felt that we could comfortably house thirty people and thirty looms in our space at the Art Museum but when the first prospective lists were passed round in January we had over fifty signers. So instead of one session of two weeks we had two sessions, each with thirty people, covering the whole month of July. Victoria Strand from Portland, Oregon, was our teacher and was a marvelous inspiration, both as a weaver and as a person.

I mentioned the educational fund earlier in this article. This fund is reserved exclusively for things which have to do with the educational growth of the Guild. For instance, the delineograph was paid for from this fund; also the ten looms, the cost of which eventually will be returned through rentals. To increase this fund we hold an annual sale in November. Each member is

asked to contribute \$10 worth of woven materials. Beyond that any member may send in any of her work on consignment, the Guild taking 20 per cent as commission.

In June of last year we had an exhibit at the Art Museum. The material was jury judged, the judges being Dr. Fuller, Mrs. Young and Ed Rossbach of the University of Washington, a former Cranbrook student. The show was hung in the east gallery and created considerable interest from the general public as well as from weavers.

The Seattle Weavers' Guild is a live organization which is trying to foster the craft of weaving and to assist its members to enjoy their hobby and to become proficient in it. We need a room that will constantly be available for teaching, for the library, for possible stocking of some yarns and for the display of woven articles. The museum hopes some day to add a wing to its present beautiful building for educational purposes and for the use of crafts of all kinds. We hope that by that time our educational fund will be large enough to permit us to make a sizeable contribution in order that space may be allotted to us for a much wider field of service. We feel very earnestly that our growth in the future depends upon the same terms of cooperation and generosity which have been typical of the Seattle Weavers' Guild in the past. Our beloved Margaret Bergman's constant counsel and admonition was that sharing meant growing. • • •

Connecticut

New officers of the Hand Weavers' Guild of Connecticut are: Miss Gula Gamble, Easton, president; Mrs. Lyman B. Bunnell, West Hartford, first vice-president; Mrs. Helen H. Cronk, Watertown, second vice-president; Mrs. Harold G. Garrett, Ridgefield, treasurer; Mrs. Louis Dietze, Hamden, recording secretary; and Mrs. Rowena Jacoby, Bridgeport, corresponding secretary. Mrs. Marggerita Ohberg of Colchester is member at large of the executive committee. Almost 100 people attended the January meeting in Stamford, at the YWCA, where an exhibition of members' work was held.

At the March meeting in Meriden,

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