

Yarns



The Newsletter of The National Museum of the American Coverlet

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From the President's Desk

By Edward Maeder

I understand that these remarks are not intended to be deeply profound or philosophical, but I was thinking the other day, "Why are we all so busy?" We often give the excuse for not doing something that we are so "busy." But it seems that we do have time to do the things that we want to do and we "find the time" to do them.

Beyond food, clothing and shelter, our basic needs, the rest of our time on the planet is about "doing things." These "things" are not required to be alive, well fed and healthy, but they are the things that feed the soul. It can be collecting something; it can be spending time with those we love or those we feel obligated to spend time with.

We can enrich our lives by reading, watching a film or a documentary or any number of easily available ways to entertain ourselves while still enriching our lives. Perhaps it's knitting or weaving, sewing or embroidery or any of the time-honored ways we used to be taught to keep ourselves busy.

When I hear someone say "I'm just killing time" I have to admit that I am a bit shocked and saddened. Time, is the ONLY thing that we have that cannot be replaced, renewed or purchased again at Walmart. When it's gone, it's gone.

Which brings me to the point of this discussion: those of you reading these words have chosen to enrich your lives with collecting, researching, studying, learning and above all else enjoying woven coverlets. With the exception of a few rare individuals who live and breathe coverlets, and bless them for their dedication and passion, most of us find pleasure



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From the President's Desk continued:

in our exposure to this primarily American form of art and creativity.

It is because of your interest and passion that the very existence of The National Museum of the American Coverlet is a reality. I want to send you my personal thanks for allowing us to be part of your life and for us to continue to be part of yours.

With deep appreciation.

Edward

Edward Maeder

President of the Board of Directors

The Director's Corner

By Melinda Zongor



Picking up on Edward's discussion (see From the President's Desk), "busy" is the theme of the day.

Do you hate robocalls as much as I do? They drive me crazy. It is getting to the point where fifty percent or more of our incoming calls are

junk! They especially seem to know when I get up and move down the hall or to another part of the building. The phone will ring every time, it's NEVER a legitimate call, and I no longer run to pick it up.

Unfortunately it has gotten to the point where I hate to pick up at all. Now these people use false and deliber-

ately misleading caller ID information. A friend told me recently that she got a robocall with a caller ID of her own phone number!

The only good thing is that when there is a recording I can hang up immediately without feeling like I'm being rude.

Yes, it's bad for business when you don't answer the phone, but these darned things waste so much of my precious time! (Besides, we do have a message with our hours, etc. and if the call is important they can always leave a message.) And yes, I have blocked a number of callers permanently and that helped, but not enough. And yes, I am wasting time just writing about it – so that's the end of my thought for the day!

Melinda Zongor

NMAC Director / Curator

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We Need Your Email Address

If you are a member (past or present), donor, and/or event participant and are not receiving our eNotes, we do not have your current email address. Please make sure to update your contact information with us, as

email is the best way for us to get you important time sensitive announcements. **FACEBOOK:**

While you're at it, check out our Facebook page if you're "into" social media. We post messages there too! Yup – we're all over the place. Find us under **National Museum of the American Coverlet**.



Current Exhibition

STILL COLORFUL AFTER ALL THESE YEARS



The most often heard comment from our Museum visitors relates to color. Folks are amazed that the colors are so bright and vibrant – especially after all these years in textiles that are 150 years old or more! It is a tribute to the weavers and dyers who used their incredible design and technical expertise to bring us such creative, beautiful and resilient works.

It took real skill for a dyer to replicate a color reliably and consistently, in a quantity sufficient to complete a project. Some colors were more complicated to achieve than others. Some weavers did their

own dyeing, while others used yarns provided by the client, and yet others purchased their materials from professional dyers. No matter what the source was, the color selection and the dyeing itself were major components in the production of a coverlet.

Coverlet weavers did not limit themselves to a palette of red, white and blue. A wide range of color was produced and utilized via the many ways of blending, over dyeing and crossing different colored yarns to create the impression of yet other colors. Different handling resulted in shades of color that could vary in hue, saturation and intensity. In short, these guys and gals knew what they were doing.

Before the advent of synthetic dyes beginning in the 1850s, dyestuffs and mordants came from plants, trees, insects and, of course, the colors found in natural fibers. These natural colors were often derived from – and/or limited to – locally available resources, while others were rare, difficult to obtain and expensive.

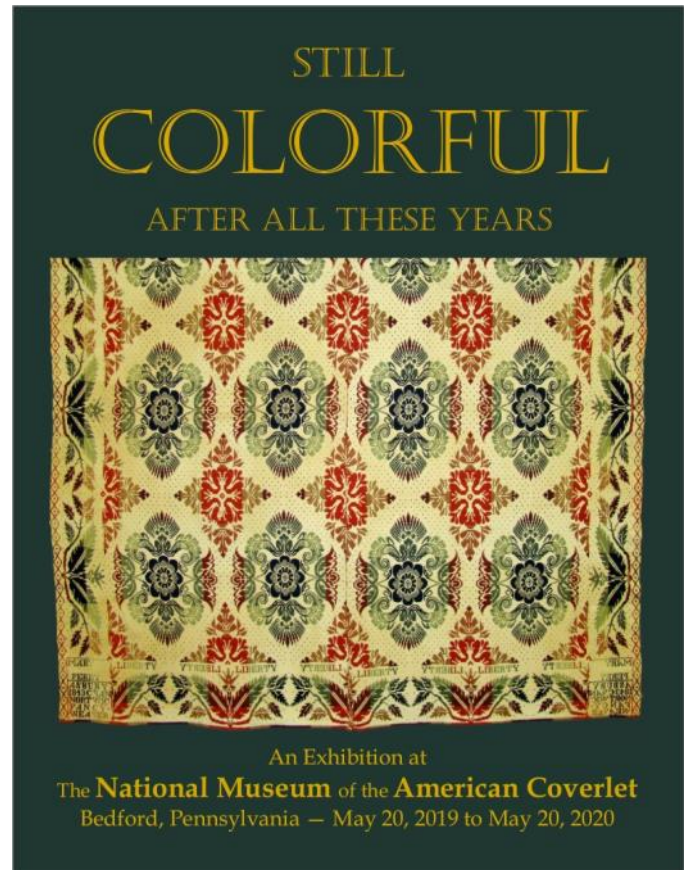
As with so many details seen in coverlets, the use of specific colors can sometimes offer clues to the region of a coverlet's origin. The study of color in coverlets can yield all manner of interesting discoveries.

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Current Exhibition continued:

The accompanying exhibition catalog, now available, shows 98 coverlets in color along with a detailed description of each one.



Special Note:

This STILL COLORFUL exhibition focuses not only on the rainbow of *chroma* (purity or intensity of color), but also *local color*. A portion of the exhibition highlights coverlets from our own Bedford, Pennsylvania and its surrounding counties, including Blair and Somerset.

And then there are the *colorful stories* ... stories about the weavers, owners or weaver family histories, or how a coverlet was discovered or came to be in the donor's or Museum's collection. We have lots of those. Visit the Museum and we will be happy to regale you with a few!

New Exhibition Space Opening Soon

by Melinda Zongor

As many folks have noticed, one of our spaces has been closed off for a while now as we prepare a new display.

Five early barn frame looms are being assembled and readied for the public. Two of the looms are in the Museum collection, and the remaining three are on semi-permanent loan from Tom Knisely, renowned and much loved weaver and teacher at Red Stone Glen Fiber Arts Center in York Haven, PA. Tom was manager of The Mannings, a legendary weaving school and yarn shop. When the owners retired, Tom and his

daughter Sara Bixler, a master weaver in her own right, opened Red Stone Glen. Since they have no space for their big barn frame looms, the looms came here.

With the help of Kathy King, Kelly Grotzinger and their husbands, we have been working toward getting the looms restored, set up and functioning, hopefully with warps on, for interactive purposes. It is hoped that the always-busy Tom will offer occasional workshops utilizing these looms!



Recent Donations

Two Collections Arrive at NMAC

by Melinda Zongor

Some exciting things have come to the Museum lately. Recent donations include the entire collections of Nancy Rawson and Carol Strickler.

RAWSON - Nancy Rawson, a Colorado resident, was an NMAC Charter member, a longtime collector of geometric coverlets and an active member of Complex Weavers. Nancy's daughter, Holly Weik, shipped us the Rawson coverlet collection (35 geometric coverlets in various weave structures) along with two loose leaf binders of documentation, analyses and provenance/acquisition information. This special collection will be discussed during the upcoming Coverlet College.

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Recent Donations continued:

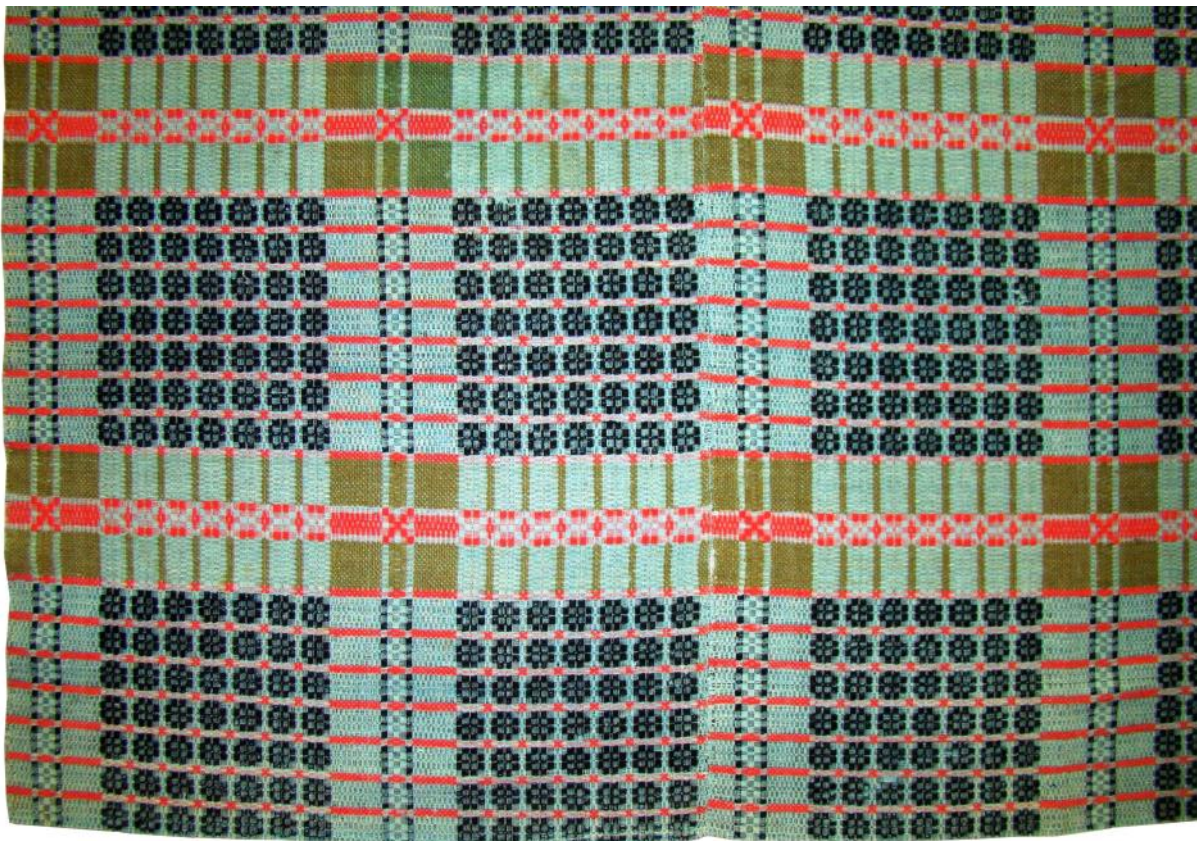
STRICKLER - Carol Strickler's daughter Janet found herself in a similar position. Carol, coincidentally another longtime Colorado resident, had amassed an impressive collection of both geometric and figured coverlets. You might recognize Carol Strickler as the author of several books and pamphlets including *American Coverlets*, *Weaving in Miniature*, *Weaving on Eight Shafts* and more. Carol was technical editor of *Handwoven Magazine* in 1992, and she was a superb weaver and expert on the subject. She kept meticulous records of her collection. Janet's gift to NMAC in her mother's memory included not only the coverlets but also the paperwork – research, acquisition records, reference books, presentation materials, etc. as well as projects in miniature. Like the Rawson collection, this collection will be discussed at the upcoming Coverlet College.

We are honored that these important collections now reside in Bedford. We promise to do them justice;



that is, they will not just sit in storage. The coverlets will see display time, and the notes and research materials will be available for study in the NMAC library.

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Recent Donations continued:

Among other donations are three figured coverlets gifted by Patty Clendennen in memory of her husband Bob, and a lovely Pearson figured coverlet from Helen Smith.

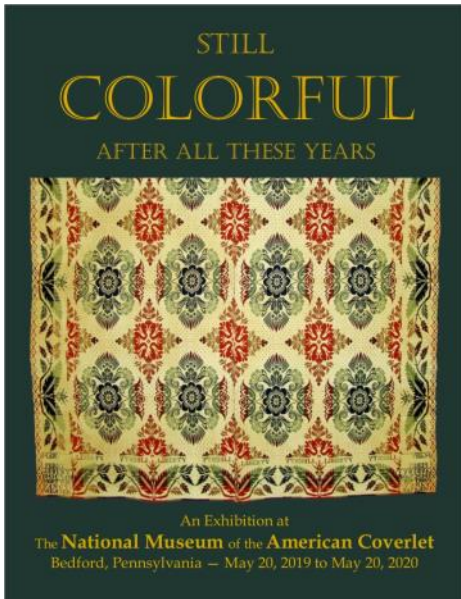
Patty brought us two lovely coverlets by Adam Hoerr of Harmony, Butler County, Pennsylvania, along with a very nice coverlet by William Schnee of Freeburg, Snyder County, Pennsylvania.

As the collection continues to grow, we need shelving and boxes! Each urgently needed rolling shelf unit (cost \$89.85) holds 30 coverlets, and each conservation grade box (\$25) holds three coverlets. Please help if you can. We – and the coverlets – will thank you!!



Shop News

NMAC EXHIBITION CATALOGS

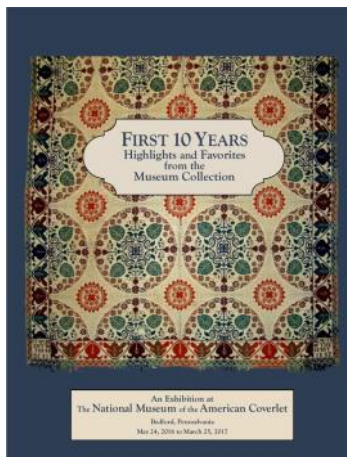
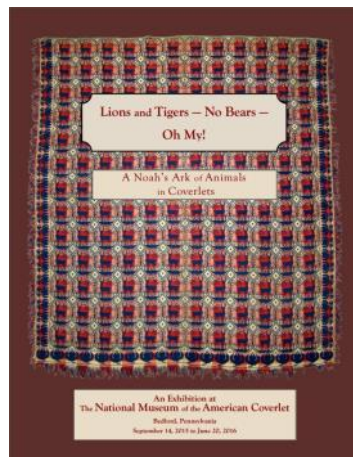
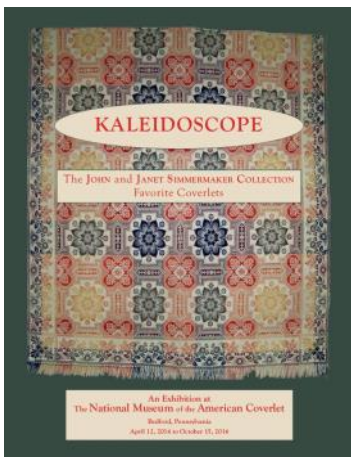


Current Exhibition
**Still Colorful After All
 These Years**

Includes color pictures of all 98 coverlets on display, with descriptive information and new research.



Past Exhibition Catalogs Available



**Kaleidoscope:
 John and Janet
 Simmermaker
 Collection
 Favorite Coverlets**
 Includes color pictures
 of all 90 coverlets,
 descriptions and index.

**Lions and Tigers -
 No Bears - Oh My! --
 A Noah's Ark
 of Animals
 in Coverlets**
 Includes color pictures
 of all 100 coverlets,
 descriptions and index.

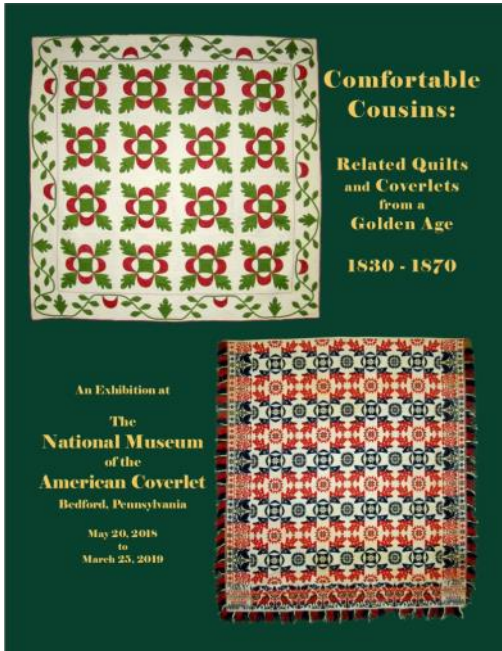
**The First 10 Years:
 Highlights and
 Favorites
 from the
 Museum Collection**
 Includes color pictures
 of all 90 coverlets,
 descriptions and index.

**Flora Borealis
 Idyllic Woven Gardens
 Coverlets from the
 Kitty Bell and Ron
 Walter Collection**
 Includes color pictures
 of all 95 coverlets,
 descriptions and index.

NMAC exhibition catalogs, whether separately or together as a collection, serve as high quality permanent reference materials for anyone interested in seeing beautiful pictures and learning more about coverlets.

Price is \$35 each (minus 10% discount for Museum members), plus \$3 for postage.
 Call the Museum at 814.623.1588 for information – and yes, we accept credit cards.

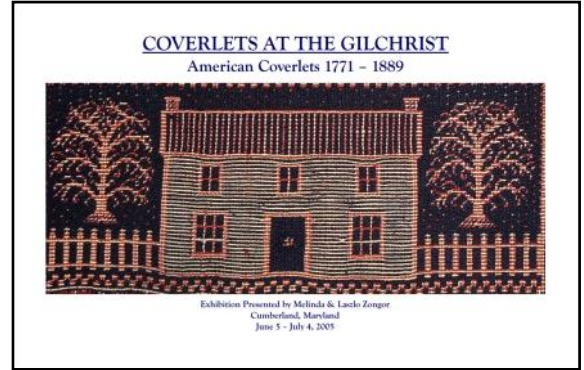
Shop News continued



Comfortable Cousins: Related Quilts and Coverlets from a Golden Age

Includes color pictures of all 23 quilts and 38 coverlets with descriptive information and new research.

This catalog includes an extensive article by renowned expert Virginia Gunn, whose quilts (yes, we said quilts) are shown in partnership with the coverlets.



COVERLETS AT THE GILCHRIST is also available in a third edition. The **Gilchrist** reprint offers several new editorial notes and clarifications, including a new update in the preface section, and the weavers of several previously unidentified coverlets in that exhibition have now been identified.

The **Gilchrist** catalog is published in 5-1/2"x 8-1/2" spiral-bound format for easy handling and reading. It includes images, details and descriptions of each coverlet in the exhibition.

All catalogs are \$35 each, plus \$3 postage. Call the Museum 814.623.1588 for information and yes, we accept credit cards.

An additional section called **The Basics** addresses the most common questions posed by folks new to coverlets: pattern types (geometric and figured), identifying origins and makers, weave structures, fringes, reversibility, the weavers, the looms and more. There are also a bibliography of suggested reading, a list of represented weavers in alphabetical order, a list of unidentified weavers by state and a list of represented states both identified and unidentified.

All catalogs
Place your order now!
Always keep in mind Museum membership entitles you to a 10% discount on your Shop purchases.

COVERLET COLLEGE 2019

September 20-21-22, 2019

Save the Date !!!

Coverlet College

September 20-21-22, 2019

The full schedule for this year's Coverlet College is now posted on the NMAC website. If you are on our eNotes list you will have received a notice when the schedule became available. A quick list of the presentations appears following this next article.

If you did not receive an eNote and you wish to be on the list, please let us know. In the meantime, here is a highlight of the (optional) Friday field trip:

EXHIBITION OF HOOKED RUGS AND COVERLETS FIELD TRIP TO LIGONIER, PA



We are partnering with rug hooker and teacher extraordinaire Barb Carroll in presenting a guest exhibition at the Ligonier branch of the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAMA). Dates are August 17 through October 27. The subject is: A CELEBRATION OF TEXTURE AND PATTERN: HOOKED RUGS & HISTORIC COVERLETS.

In an unusual pairing of contemporary and antique, Barb and the Coverlet Museum have joined forces to offer a fun exhibition of primitive-style hooked rugs and historic nineteenth century woven coverlets.

For years Barb Carroll of Ligonier, PA, a much loved and well respected hooked rug expert and teacher, has been attracted to the antique coverlets she has seen on display at The National Museum of the American Coverlet in Bedford.

Focusing on the colorful, graphic pattern motifs of the coverlets, Barb adapted these motifs to design a series of contemporary, primitive hooked rug patterns. In turn, her friends and followers have used her patterns to hook rugs of their own.



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Coverlet College continued:

The special exhibition in Ligonier features a selection of these hooked rugs paired with the original “period” coverlets that inspired them. The result is a striking, almost organic connection between the two types of textiles, illustrating and highlighting the timelessness of good design and bold texture.

Barb and the Coverlet Museum collaborated previously at both the Coverlet Museum (in 2013) and at Ohio’s Sauder Village (in 2014), and the public response was an enthusiastic “You have to do this again!”

“We had so much fun with this before that we couldn’t resist when Barb suggested this new project,” said Melinda Zongor, Director/Curator of the Coverlet Museum. “I want people to see how wonderful these coverlets are, and this is my way of supporting their efforts,” said Barb.

Special Note:

Because the Ligonier exhibition coincides with Coverlet College weekend, we are planning a special field trip by bus on Friday, September 20. This is the day normally reserved for hands-on workshop opportunities. The 29-passenger bus will leave NMAC in Bedford at 12 noon on Friday for the trip to Ligonier. Riders will enjoy a box lunch on their way, admission and a guided tour of the exhibition at SAMA, and the return trip, which will arrive back in Bedford in time for dinner (on your own) and the Friday evening reception and keynote presentation at Coverlet College.

Price is \$50 including round trip bus ride, lunch, admission and tour. Refer to Coverlet College information on the NMAC website for info and registration form. Space is limited, so please reserve your seat and make menu selections asap.



Coverlet College

September 20-21-22, 2019

Quick list of Presentations

Details and registration form are posted on the NMAC website <http://coverletmuseum.org/events.htm>

Friday:

(Optional) Field trip to Ligonier – Coverlet & Hooked Rug Exhibition

Registration – New-to-Coverlets Attendees Register Coverlets for the Discovery Session

Keynote Address: The LaTourette Family – Celebrated Weavers of the Year

Reception – Meet the presenters and other attendees

Saturday:

Registration and Continental Breakfast (fruit, Danish, coffee and juices)

Opening Remarks & Introduction of Attendees

Brief History of Fibers Used in Coverlet Weaving

The Story of Bates Mills (Lewiston, Maine)

Scraps to Warm the Heart – History of Hooked Rugs and Their Connections w/Woven Goods

Exploring Recent Donations – the Rawson Collection

Lunch (included)

Tour of the Current Exhibition - Part 1

Colonial Revival Tastemakers: Romanticizing and Promoting Hand Weaving and Coverlets 1893-1943

American Fancy – Exuberance in the Arts 1790-1840 – A 19th century cultural phenomenon

Discovery Session for Coverlets Brought by Attendees New to Coverlets

Dinner with Other Attendees (optional)

Combined Show and Tell for Day 1 and Day 2 – bring one or two of your favorite coverlets to show and discuss

Sunday:

Registration and Continental Breakfast (fruit, Danish, coffee and juices)

Opening Remarks & Introduction of Attendees

The Fashion in Color – Its Impact on Clothing and Domestic Textiles, From Early Sources to 1900

Exploring the “Ark Factory” Coverlet Weavers of Asbury, New Jersey, 1820s-1840s

Exploring Recent Donations #2 – Strickler Collection

Great Grandmother, how did you get that color? – A look back at the recipes of the masters.

Lunch (included)

Tour of the Current Exhibition - Part 2

Local Color – Bedford, Blair and Somerset County (PA) Fancy Coverlet Weavers

Membership Renewals

The National Museum of the American Coverlet is your museum.

It is here *for you and because of you.*

By renewing your Membership, you help this Museum continue in its mission of education, exhibition, and conservation, introducing the public to American woven coverlets.

Your membership includes

- a full year of free admission
- reduced rates for events and programs
- a 10% discount on your Museum Shop purchases
- free access to the reference library.

Take advantage of these “perks”—visit frequently and make the most of your membership. Meet and greet other people who share your (and our) interests in early textiles. Come and enjoy the beautiful town of Bedford, Pennsylvania, with all its myriad attractions.

Your continued support and membership are truly appreciated. We hope to see you often. Let us know what we can do for you.

