

The Newsletter of The National Museum of the American Coverlet

Volume 11, Number 3 December 2016

In this Issue:

From the President's Desk

The Directors Corner

Fireball Run Adventure Rally Visits The Museum

2017 Class Schedule

Save the Date Coverlet College 2017

Shop News

NMAC at Sauder Village Fiber Arts Fest

Coverlet College 2016

Hannah Leathers Wilson Coverlet in NMAC Collection

Donation Wish List

Museum Receives Chamber of Commerce Award



Tim Weaverling, Chamber of Commerce Board President - Melinda Zongor, Coverlet Museum Director/Curator - Dennis Tice, Bedford County Visitors Bureau Director

NMAC has received the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce award for Excellence in Tourism. The award is presented in partnership with the Bedford County Visitors Bureau and "recognizes excellence in management and commitment to tourism in Bedford County."

The presentation was made on November 17th during the Chamber's annual awards banquet at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort. The banquet was attended by over 300 people and was a part of the Chamber's ongoing program of recognition of local businesses.

"The Chamber's Annual Dinner is the signature celebration of our diverse and outstanding business community," said Chamber President/CEO Kellie Goodman Shaffer. "We look forward to honoring this year's recipients as part of an evening of thanking our members and partners for all they do..."



Museum Receives Trip Advisor Award

by Melinda Zongor

Earlier in the year, the Museum was also recognized by the online travel website Trip Advisor. NMAC was awarded a 2016 Certificate of Excellence for "excellence in hospitality" and the "consistent achievement of high ratings from travelers."

From the President's Desk

By Edward Maeder

On a recent chilly December 3 night, after having just finished a delicious dinner of sauerkraut with apples and sausages with Gruyere/dill dumplings, I received an unexpected telephone call from Laszlo. As most of the business I do with the museum is transacted through either e-mail or phone chats with Melinda, I was surprised to hear Laszlo's distinctive voice over the ether. He sounded cheerful and upbeat and I was hoping that it was good news. It was. He was calling me to remind me that on this day, eleven years ago, a group of us were sitting in a restaurant engaged in an animated conversation about what it would take to create a national coverlet museum. He thanked me personally for my role in making it happen. At this point in my career I'd had more than thirty years of personal experience in both large and small museums, ones dedicated to both art and also to history. In spite of our mutual enthusiasm for the idea, I brought up some of the many road-blocks and complications that would have to be faced to accomplish this seemingly daunting, if not impossible, task. We all agreed that it would be a tall hill to climb, but decided to go forward. And now, more than a decade on, the museum is a reality, the collection is a growing one of national importance, and we have developed a reputation of presenting stunningly beautiful exhibitions, with accompanying publications as well as events and programs topped by an annual scholarly conference which is unequaled in the rarified world of American Coverlet studies

If you are reading this, it means that you are either already one of our loyal members/supporters or that you have only just discovered us, to your surprise and delight.

To those of you who know our museum, either casually, or in depth (like the stalwarts who have attended many, and in some cases, ALL of our Coverlet



College weekends) I want to extend, both personally and on behalf of the board of directors, our heartfelt thanks and gratitude and to everyone reading this newsletter, all the best wishes for a healthy and joyous holiday season. We have just celebrated both American Thanksgiving and a special thanksgiving in honor of our tenth anniversary as a star in the 'coverlet firmament'.

I wish to thank Melinda and Laszlo and our completely dedicated board of trustees, both past and present, and in particular Ron and Kitty Bell Walter for sticking with it through thick and thin and for their total dedication and hard work. We look forward to our next decade and to furthering the study, fascination, and dare I say 'love' of this so American of the decorate arts, the woven coverlet.

Edward Maeder

President of the Board of Directors

The Director's Corner

By Melinda Zongor

It's hard to believe that December is here! As we settle in for the winter, we like to reflect back on the year's events and accomplishments.

The Coverlet Museum achieved a few nice milestones this year.

- We celebrated the tenth anniversary of NMACs 2006 founding.
- A program of textile classes has been launched successfully and we are now planning the 2017 season with an eye toward gradual expansion.
- The catalog for the current exhibition, The First 10 Years Highlights and Favorites from the Museum Collection, has been well received and is now in its second printing.
- The fifth annual Coverlet College was held in September. Thanks to our great presenters, a number of attendees told us this was the best one so far!
- In October the Australian tour company that brought us our first group in 2006, came through again, as thirty-eight delightful Australian friends visited the Museum for the third time.
- The Trip Advisor website recognized the Coverlet Museum with a Certificate of Excellence.
- At a gala dinner at the Omni Bedford Springs, the Bedford Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Bedford County Visitors Bureau, presented the Museum with an award for Excellence in Tourism (see separate article for more details – and watch the video of our acceptance speech now posted on the NMAC Facebook page).
- The collections are growing in numbers and significance. Coverlets, ingrain carpeting and other handwovens, textile tools and library materials arrive from all over the country, enhancing the quality of our exhibitions and our ability to promote and conduct in-depth research.



 Contemporary floor and table looms and other textile equipment have been donated and, with volunteer and donor help, are being cleaned up, fitted out and (where necessary) reconditioned for use in our textile program.

All these accomplishments have been made possible by Coverlet Museum member/donors. It is you whose steadfast support through your membership, your attendance at exhibitions and events, your shop purchases and your varied and generous donations, has provided the ways and means to growth and success.

You are the essential ingredient, and we hope that you approve of our efforts. Along those lines, we are always interested in hearing your comments and suggestions, and we offer our deepest gratitude for your continued support.

A special thank you must also go out to our team of intrepid volunteers, who have helped in too many ways to mention and whose behind-the-scenes assistance is truly indispensable.

We heartily wish you a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and a warm and joyous Holiday Season!

Melinda Zongor NMAC Director / Curator

Fireball Run Adventure Rally Visits The Museum

by Melinda Zongor



Fireball Run is a wild and crazy live -action "adventurerally" – an eight-day, 2,000-mile trivial pursuit road rally. Teams compete to follow clues to "America's most obscure places and historic artifacts," designed to in-



spire people to "take the road less travelled." This ten-year-old show is streaming on Amazon Prime and a number of foreign markets, with the theme of bringing attention to finding missing children. (Several short videos from earlier episodes can be found on YouTube.)

On September 27, with great hullaballoo downtown, Fireball Run came through Bedford with a stop at the Coverlet Museum. Each team was required to locate several objects on display based on clues they had been given by the production crew, and they then had the opportunity to see our earliest coverlet (the 1771 dated overshot geometric) "up close and personal" before running off to their next destination. The teams were sincerely impressed with the coverlets on display, and (of course) we took the opportunity to answer their questions and tell them all we could in a short time. As an added bonus several team members made purchases in the Museum shop as well.

All in all, it was a unique experience and a hectic and fun day.



2017 CLASS SCHEDULE NOW IN THE PLANNING STAGES

NMAC INITIATED ITS NEW TEXTILE CLASS PROGRAM DURING THE SUMMER AND FALL SEASONS OF THIS YEAR, 2016. CLASSES IN WEAVING, SPINNING, NATURAL DYEING, INDIGO DYEING AND TAPE LOOM WEAVING WERE OFFERED, WITH SOME SUCCESS. WE'LL KEEP YOU POSTED AS THE 2017 SCHEDULE IS DEVELOPED. ANY SPECIAL REQUESTS? LET US KNOW.



The National Museum of the

American Coverlet

322 South Juliana Street Bedford, PA 15522 814.623.1588 info@coverletmuseum.org

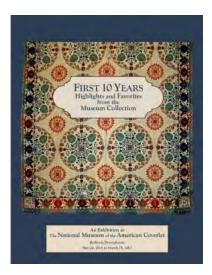
http://www.coverletmuseum.org

President, Board of Directors: Edward Maeder
Director/Curator: Melinda Zongor
Newsletter Editor: Ron Walter
Contributors: Edward Maeder, Melinda Zongor,
Ron Walter

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.

Shop News



Now Available Second Printing! Catalogs for the current exhibition have been so popular that we have printed more! "The First 10 Years: Highlights from the Museum Collection." Includes full color pictures of all 90 coverlets on display, along with descriptive information and new research. The catalog is available, still at the old price - Member price is \$31.50 (non-members \$35) plus \$3 shipping.



Museum Now Carrying Woolrich Blankets

Everyone knows about wonderful, quality Woolrich blankets. Did you know, however, that the Woolrich mill is located in Pennsylvania? Did you know that the company was founded by John Rich, who was a weaver of blankets and figured and fancy coverlets? It's true.

In our continuing effort to offer American-made and Museum-related products, we now carry Woolrich blankets in the Museum shop. Prices range from \$55 to \$149 (minus a 10% discount for Museum members). We encourage you to take a look ...and think Christmas.

Pictures and brief descriptions are here. Feel free to call the Museum with any additional questions you may have.

Woolrich Blankets Descriptions and Prices:



#1 – Seven Springs
Red and Black
56" x 70"
\$149 – non-members
\$134 – Museum members



#2 – Rough Rider Stripe
Teal, Blue, Green and Grey
50" x 60"
\$95 – non-members
\$85 – Museum members



#3 – Gettysburg
Gray with Black Stripe
60" x 84"
\$115 – non-members
\$103 – Museum members
continued on next page

Shop News

Woolrich Blankets Descriptions and Prices (continued):



#4 – Cavalry
Blue with Red Stripe
66" x 80"
\$145 – non-members
\$130 – Museum members



#5 – Rough Rider Plaid
Blue, Light Blue, Green and Red
50" x 60"
\$95 – non-members
\$85 – Museum members



#6 – Fort Sumpter
Tan with Brown Stripe
60" x 84"
\$140 – non-members
\$126 – Museum members



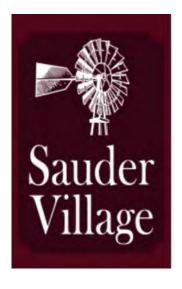
#7 – Rough Rider Sherpa Red and Black with Fleece 50" x 60" \$120 – non-members \$108 – Museum members



#8 – Atlas
Blue
42" x 60"
\$55 – non-members
\$50 – Museum members



Green
42" x 60"
\$55 – non-members
\$50 – Museum members



NMAC at Sauder Village Fiber Arts Fest

You may recall that three years ago, the folks at Sauder Village (Archbold, OH) invited us to participate in their renowned Hooked Rug Week as their featured exhibition. We showed a number of coverlets together with hooked rugs that were inspired by coverlet pattern motifs. That event was a resounding favorite, with a wonderful response from their attendees.

This year, our friends at Sauder invited us again. This time for their Fiber Arts Fest, held in Ohio on October 1st and 2nd. It was a fun opportunity for us to take more coverlets, as well as examples of handwoven household textiles. As expected, we had a great visit there, and the Sauder folks are now talking about a group visit to Pennsylvania to see the Museum!

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.

Coverlet College 2016

by Ron Walter

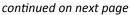
Coverlet College 2016 was held at the museum September 23-25, 2016. On Friday afternoon we held two workshops, Weave Structures Used for Geometric Coverlets presented by Gay McGeary and Understanding Overshot presented by Pat Hilts. Friday evening at the Meet and Greet most of the presenters and attendees enjoyed getting to know each other and seeing the current First 10 Years exhibition.

Saturday started with all present introducing themselves to the group. Edward Maeder gave an interesting history on of the fibers used in coverlet weaving. He showed this middle ages



conception that sheep grew on trees. Of course the German word for cotton is Baumwolle which literally translates to tree wool.

Rowland Ricketts gave a wonderful presentation titled: A Life of Blue: Growing, Processing & Dyeing with Indigo. He went to Japan to teach English but eventually apprenticed with an indigo farmer in Tokushima. He now grows and processes indigo at his home in Indiana using Japanese methods that are centuries old.





Viewing Weaving Books at the Meet and Greet



Coverlets of many Weave Structures exhibited on the New Rack installed in the All-Purpose Room





Edward Maeder introducing the Richard Jeryan Memorial Scholarship Winners

Laura Logsdon (left) and Kirsten Schoonmaker (right)



Rowland Ricketts presenting how he learned Indigo Processing in Japan

Next Single Geometric Coverlets was presented by Gay McGeary. Single coverlets are woven with one set of warp threads and one set of weft threads. The weave structures include point twill diamond, turned twill, combination weave, point twill star and gebrochen. Her presentation was followed by a short lab session showing many examples of single coverlets.



Single Coverlets - Gay McGeary Lab

Next Pat Hilts presented Beiderwand: Ancient Silk Weave to Coverlet Weave. Historically this weave was used as an Italian Silk weave, which is now call "Lampas" and has a ribbed appearance. Marx Ziegler published a weaving book in Germany in 1677 that included "Ligetuhr Arbeit" literally binder work. The binder also creates a ribbed appearance. By the 1830's some American coverlets were woven in the tied Beiderwand weave structure.

After a lunch break we gathered for a tour of part of the First 10 Years coverlet exhibition led by our NMAC Director / Curator Melinda Zongor. This is an exhibition of coverlets that had been donated to the museum over its first ten years. She told interesting stories about many of the coverlets and their weavers.



On Tour of the First 10 Years Exhibition in the Red Room



On Tour of the First 10 Years Exhibition in Room 1

Virginia Gunn presented Nineteenth Century Coverlet Weaving and Carpet Weaving: Exploring the Connections. Virginia explained that the figured and fancy loom attachments allowed coverlet weavers to weave ingrain carpeting. In the 1850 U.S. Census of Industry Benjamin Lichty of Wayne County, Ohio wove 260 coverlets in a year valued at \$6 per coverlets and 500 yards of carpeting valued at \$0.50 a yard. Her presentation was followed by a lab where attendees examined many pieces of carpeting from her collection.



Virginia Gunn showing Carpeting after her Presentation

Christian Frey's Day Book: A Brief look at Textiles produced by One Weaver was presented by Ron Walter. Christian Frey wove geometric coverlets and all types of other textiles in Adams County, PA from 1834 to 1852. His extant day book covers eight years from 1844 to 1852. During this period he wove 52 coverlets and 831 yards of carpeting. The last presentation for Day 1 was a Discovery Session for Coverlets brought by Attendees New to Coverlets. Shown below are a John Rich 1854 Chathams Run Factory coverlet, a geometric red, blue and white double weave coverlet with a pine tree border and a Lewis Weighley 1853 coverlet.



Some of the Discovery Session Coverlets

Most of the attendees stayed in the museum for the optional dinner prepared by Melinda and Laszlo. It was a good time for the attendees and presenters to meet and learn about each other's interests.



Attendees enjoying Dinner in the All-Purpose Room

Following dinner we had the Show and Tell session where attendees and presenters show some of their favorite coverlets or latest additions to their collections. Many coverlets were examined and as usual the Show and Tell session was a good ending to a very long day.

Continued on next page



Attendees examining Show and Tell Coverlets



Attendees examining Show and Tell Coverlets



Some Show and Tell Coverlets



Hannah Leathers Wilson Coverlets Displayed on the Large Rack on Day 2

In Museum Director / Curator Melinda Zongor's presentation, Our First Ten Years, many interesting photographs were shown that gave the details of how the classrooms were transformed into exhibition rooms, a gift shop and office space. It was evident



Melinda telling how NMAC changed in 10 Years

how many volunteers worked large numbers of hours to get the museum to where it is today. The school building is a wonderful place to exhibit the coverlets with the tall ceilings allowing coverlets to be displayed fully open. Next Edward

Maeder talked about Care, Caution and Dated Textiles. Textiles are often dated but you need to be sure the date is consistent with the characteristics of the textile. Also textiles shown in a dated painted are not



Edward Maeder presenting

necessarily of the same date. Virginia Gunn followed with an interesting presentation, Mathias Heilbronn: Coverlet Weaver in Upstate NY & Ohio's Western Reserve. This Heilbronn family arrived in New York

City in 1833 from Havre, France. Mathias was the voungest of four brothers who wove coverlets. Before 1840 the family moved to Erie County, NY and then the brothers moved to Ohio at various times. John Jacob born 1809 wove coverlets in Basil, Fairfield Co., OH signed J.J. Heilbronn 1839 to 1842, the year he died. George born 1811 bought three of J.J.'s looms and wove coverlets in Basil and Lancaster. Fairfield Co., OH signed G. Heilbronn, 1843-1855. He remained in Ohio. John born 1815 wove coverlets in Ross Co., OH signed J. Heilbronn 1839 to 1843. He moved back to Erie Co., NY in 1844. Virginia's research showed Mathias born 1819 wove unsigned coverlets in Erie Co., NY 1841-1846. He moved to Lake Co., OH where a newspaper ad appeared in June 1847 that Heilbronn and Escher were weaving coverlets in Perry, Lake Co., OH. Two ads appear in Aug 1848. One states J. Escher remains in Perry and the other one states M. Heilbronn removed his weaving establishment to Centerville, Madison Township, Lake Co. OH. An ad in July 1849 states M. Heilbronn is weaving at Mitchell's Mills, Chardon, Geauga Co., OH. Virginia's Research shows Mathias Heilbronn and family moves back to Eden Town, Erie Co., NY about 1855 where they are living with his brother John and family. Jacob Escher and family moves to Hamburg, Erie Co., NY before 1860. Neither Mathias nor Jacob are shown as weavers in NY at this time. Below are three coverlets Virginia showed after her presentation.

continued on next page







1845 coverlet woven for Sarah B. Rathbone of Hamburg, Erie Co., NY 1847 coverlet woven for Caroline L. McMurphy of Perry, Lake Co., OH 1854 coverlet woven for Cynthia M. Haskins of Bainbridge, Geauga Co., OH

Edward Maeder presented Ute Bargmann's presentation titled, Phony Colonie: The Romanticizing of a Bygone Era. After the Civil War there was a movement to revive crafts including coverlet weaving in the Appalachian area. Later the weaving revival took on a romantic name called "Colonial Weaving" in spite of the fact that the Colonists were not permitted to weave fabrics, they were a source of the raw materials that were shipped back to England for the production of textiles that were then shipped back to the colonies and sold at high prices.

There were a small number of posters made for the First 10 Years coverlet exhibition that were donated to the museum. One of these posters was raffled off each day. The proceeds made a nice donation to the museum and two attendees were fortunate to take a poster

Creat IV Viana



Winners of the First 10 Years Poster Raffles

home with them.

After lunch
Melinda led the
group on a tour of
the rest of the First
10 Years coverlet
exhibition. She
told interesting stories about more of
the coverlets that
made their way
into the museum
collection through

donations.

"Agriculture and Manufactures" Coverlets: Understanding the Context was presented by Vic Hilts. Vic explained that this group of coverlets was woven by more than one weaver whose identities have not been found. He answered the questions of what is the significance of the motto, why the patriotic motifs and what was the rationale of the Masonic imagery. Vic said he found many slogans between 1811 and 1821 that included Agriculture and Manufactures but the





1827 Agriculture & Manufactures Are The Foundation Of Our Independence for ELECTA DODGE - McCarl Gallery collection

1839 American Independence Declared July 4 1776 for C.H. - NMAC collection closest to the phrase woven in the coverlet was a statement in an 1818 address by Pennsylvania Gov. William Finley to his legislature: "Agriculture and Manufactures are the great sources of our wealth, and the only solid foundation of our comforts and independence." The Masonic symbols include the two columns representing establishment and strength, the square reminds the Mason to be guided by the rules of morality and virtue, the compass reminds the Mason to limit ones desires, for the dot within the circle, the dot is the individual Mason and the circle the boundary of his duty to God and Man, the little man is the Tyler, he guards the entrance to the meeting room, the goat symbolizes the Horn of Plenty and the Baboon represents the Egyptian god Thoth, the scribe of the gods, the inventor of characters, language and science.

The next presentation, Hannah Leathers Wilson: Celebrated Weaver of the Year, was prepared by Donna-Belle Garvin of New Hampshire and given by Craig Evans a noted New Hampshire traditional weaver. Donna-Belle describes the efforts it took to identify the illusive weaver of these three-panel weft-faced weave coverlets that surfaced in Strafford County, NH area as well as in a lot of the major museums in the U.S.

continued on next page





Melinda leading the Day 2 Tour of the First 10 Years Coverlet Exhibition



Hannah Leathers Wilson Presenter Craig Evans

One coverlet shown in Safford and Bishop as signed "L. N. Whitehouse no. 177 1839 H.W. Aged 72" was a clue that the weaver's initials were H. W. and they were age 72 in 1839. However it turned out the date actually is 1859. Donna-Belle found a Hannah Wilson but she had no occupation in the 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census and she could find no record of her birth. Finally she found a Hannah Leathers who was awarded \$3 for Best Counterpane in the 1825 Strafford County











The Hannah Leathers Wilson Coverlets that were exhibited
1833 no. 47 - McCarl Gallery collection
1841 no. 113 - NMAC collection
1848 no. 154 - KB and RE Walter collection
1861 no. 184 and no date no number - both Nancy Biggs collection

Cattle Show. This lead to finding that Hannah and her sister Mary had their name legally changed from Leathers to Wilson in 1829. We were fortunate to have five of the twenty-eight known Hannah Leathers Wilson coverlets on display during Day 2 of Coverlet College 2016. The name portions of these coverlets are shown below. Note one does not have a name woven in the top of the center panel. This coverlet is a much smaller size and there was not enough time to do a thorough examination of it to determine whether it was woven a smaller size or had been reduced in size at a later date after it was woven.

The final presentation, Who Wove this Coverlet?: Weaver Trademarks, was presented by Ron Walter.

He presented many trademarks for which the weaver has been identified and at least as many that the weaver has not yet been identified.

Our fifth annual Coverlet College came to end. We thank all the attendees and presenters who make this event so enjoyable by sharing their coverlets and also by so willingly sharing their knowledge.

We hope to see you all next year and bring a friend along too.





Paul W. Goltry, Reading, Steuben County, NY





Salmon Lake, Fredonia, Chautauqua County, NY





Leonard Metz, Norriton Township, Montgomery Co., PA





Peter A. Diller, Cumberland County, PA





Richard A. Garrison, Troy Township, Bradford Co., PA

Hannah Leathers Wilson Coverlet in NMAC Collection

by Ron Walter

One of the most interesting coverlets in the current First Ten Years coverlet exhibition at the National Museum of the American Coverlet is the Hannah Leathers Wilson coverlet number 113 woven in 1841 for Mary C. Leighton. Mary C. Leighton was born August 1, 1824 in Farmington, NH. She was the daughter of Levi W. Leighton and Tamson Chamberlain. Mary died in Farmington, NH, at age 26 years on August 4, 1850.

Hannah Leathers Wilson was born Hannah Leathers but in 1829 she and her sister Mary had their names changed by an Act of NH Law to Wilson. Apparently a group of the Leathers family were giving the family a bad reputation. Hannah wove at least 184 of these three-panel weft-faced coverlets from about 1825 to 1861. There are currently 28 extant Hannah Leathers Wilson coverlets recorded. Of these most are blue and white, eight are all white and one is green and white.





STORAGE

As the Museum collection grows, so does the need for storage supplies. After extensive comparison shopping, we are careful to use products that are the best in price, quality and function. ... And there is *always* a need for more of the following:

Unbuffered Acid-Free Corrugated Textile Storage Boxes

Our boxes are sized to fit the shelf units as well as the textiles, and each box will hold three coverlets. Current purchase price is approximately \$35/box, depending upon quantity ordered.





Steel Shelving

It is important that shelving be strong, sturdy and movable for everyday access and for emergency evacuation. Our units have high quality casters, making it possible for one person to move the unit comfortably. Each unit has six adjustable shelves and holds 10 textile storage boxes. Cost for each six-shelf unit: \$89.99

EVERY DAY TASKS

Folding Work Tables

These tables are used for a variety of projects, both at the Museum and at off-site events, so they must be strong and portable. Our six-foot tables cost \$49.98 each.



DEHUMIDIFIERS / AIR CONDITIONERS

Dehumidifier / Air Conditioner

In the heat of summer, dehumidifiers and/or air conditioners can be a great help in regulating the comfort level for visitors and textiles. Part of our space is air conditioned, but not all ...!