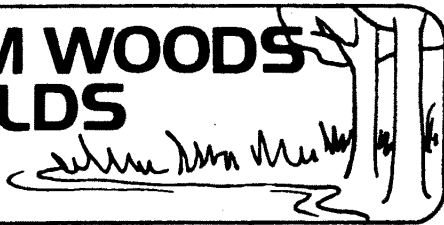


# FROM WOODS & FIELDS



by Connie Magoffin

This last month I have received several kind words concerning my November column. Because the topic was a departure for me and because it was so personal, I especially appreciated your comments. Turning it over to Karen was much like watching your child give a solo performance or putting your favorite weaving up for criticism by your friends. The comments I received reminded me how often I think of giving a few words of praise or thanks to someone and then for one reason or another never do. Unfortunately it often takes a similar situation to understand how much a little kindness means. For example, once you've been in the hospital you realize how much those calls, cards and visits are appreciated. I taught high school art for seven years and it was a "D" student that took the class for an easy grade and who never finished any project, that made an important impression on me. He returned one year later announcing that he spent all his extra money on art supplies. The fact that he bothered to come back and talk to me meant a great deal. No one expects or wants praise unless it is really felt, however, your recent comments reminded me to verbalize my appreciation, not just think it. It might just make someone's day, as you did mine!

Since this column is supposed to be on natural dyeing, how about a few words on that subject:

1. **Mordants** -- As you probably know the Guild has been selling mordants for natural dyeing. We are close to the end of our supplies; we have about 15 lbs. of alum, no tin left, and still a large supply of sodium hydrosulfite for making an indigo dyebath. If this service has been helpful to you please let me know. I would also like to know if you want any other mordants offered.

2. **Dye Safety** -- Someone sent me, anonymously, an article on dye safety. This is an extremely important topic of consideration and with the help of this article and further research, I hope to write a future column. Who was the kind soul?

3. **Donations** --- There are so many of you who are continuing to give me dye plants, dyed yarn samples, and dye articles as well as leads on new books. I always appreciate them and will share with you information on the recent donations soon. I'd like to mention three here, however. Thanks to Edna Gonske and her sister for the boxes I used for the natural dye kits-- they were perfect! Ruth Brin left about 50 dyed yarn samples at the Guild for me. Ruth did some of the samples at a Shuttlecrat Special Subjects Workshop in Michigan and some were done by Kay Boydston of Fernwood, Michigan (Fernwood sounds like a great place; does anyone know something about it?). The yarns were dyed around 1964 and are still lovely. So many newcomers to natural dyeing ask if they are fast--they certainly can be! And finally, a million thanks to Irene Wood for her donation of some leftover warp from her coverlets class to the cause of warp-painting. Lotus and I are continuing our experiments and progress is being made (I think).

4. **Dyers** -- Does anyone know the whereabouts of Mrs. Dan Halvorson, a weaver originally from Two Harbors, who used her naturally dyed yarns in her weaving? I recently met Luvan Troendle, a former Weavers Guild member, who knew Mrs. Halvorson at one time but has since lost touch. I am always interested in meeting and corresponding with fellow natural dyers.

5. **Next month:** My trip to the Southwest in search of Navajo dyes.

## ETC...

## ???

### NEW ORGANIZATION GROWS FROM NATIONAL SURFACE DESIGN CONFERENCE

The first national textile printing and dyeing conference was held in April, 1976, at the University of Kansas. This 3-day event attracted over 600 conferees from all parts of the country, from Canada and England. The program and exhibits related to the conference theme, "Communication; Art/Education/Industry". It was well-attended by those in the fiber arts from Minnesota and Wisconsin.

From this beginning, an organization, Surface Design Association, was formed in answer to the need for improved communication and distribution of technical information among artists designers, industry and teachers in the textiles area. A newsletter was established to provide a forum for exchange of information and ideas. Two issues have already been published.

The new Board of Directors met in September at the University of Indiana to formulate the By-Laws, make decisions about the organization, and begin plans for the second national conference. Surface Design '78 will be held at Purdue University in April, 1978. The theme will be "Process: Creative and Technical".

Membership in SDA is \$15 a year and one receives, as a member, the newsletter, regional membership, news of shows, workshops, graduate schools, etc.

Elsa Sreenivasam, chairman and organizer of Surface Design Conference I, is now president of the new national organization. She is a resident of Lauderdale and a member of the faculty of the Art Education Department of the University of Minnesota.

Ms. Sreenivasam invites anyone interested in this organization to send her a card or call her. She also has extra newsletters she will send to acquaint area residents with the Surface Design Association. Contact her at home or work.

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373-4050 (Tuesday and Thursday afternoons are best)

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