

# Elder Craft Shoppe Provides Outlet for Busy Hands

By Teresa A. Parsons

Even after a lifetime of hard work, Helen Dell, 89, can't stand to leave her hands idle. The results are scattered throughout her home, a farmhouse in West Henrietta, on every table and armchair — intricate patterns of crochets and knits and starches with names like "kaleidoscope" and "cosmos."

She learned the stitches years ago when she and her sister decorated the borders of sheets, pillowcases, handkerchiefs and other household linens. Dell says she made all she could use, then gave her delicate work to everyone she knew, and finally began to sell the doilies and tablecovers.

Along with her daughter and son-in-law, Raymond and Elizabeth Fallon, also of West Henrietta, Dell has traveled to craft fairs and shows for years. But when a senior citizens' craft cooperative was established in 1980, this family of craftsmen became an integral part of the shop's small army of some 70 producers.

The Elder Craft Shoppe was founded in response to the difficulty many older people encounter in selling their crafts. In particular, transportation and setting up displays, long hours spent manning booths and increasing exhibit fees charged by organizers combine to limit both the additional income and the enjoyment that seniors find at craft shows.

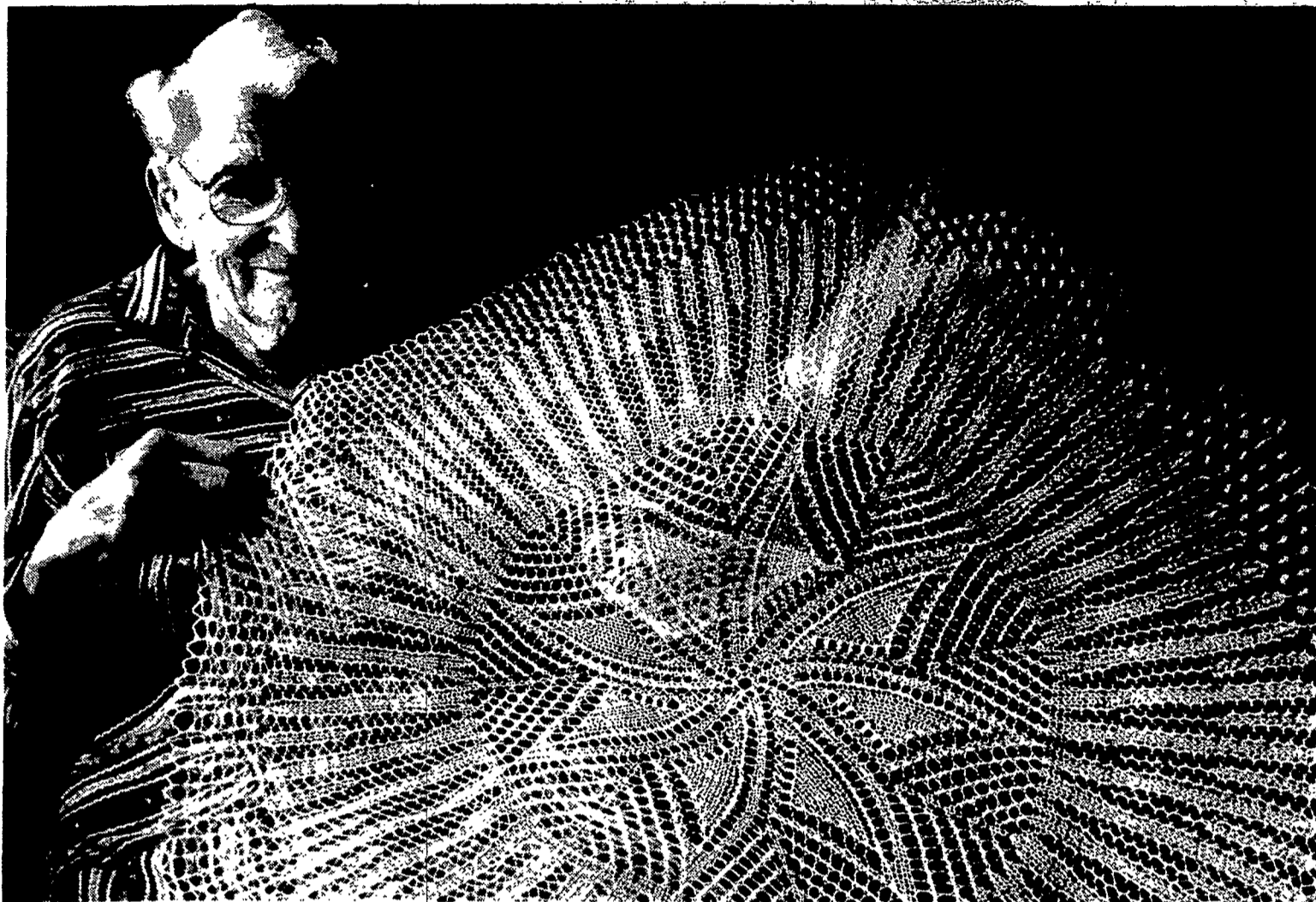
First located in the Garson Meyer Downtown Senior Center, the shop moved to Peddler's Village at 274 North Goodman Street in 1982, and moved again in 1984 to newly renovated space in the same complex, now known as Village Gate Square.

Inventory is accepted on a consignment basis, with 65 percent going to the crafter and 35 percent to the upkeep and maintenance of the shop, according to John Briggs, who coordinates the program through the Regional Council on Aging, an agency which provides the shop with administrative support.

Briggs fears that the shop may face yet another move in the near future, as Village Gate management prepares to redesign the area around the shop to accommodate a new restaurant.

"We ideally hope to stay on the same floor in the Village Gate complex," said Briggs.

The shop is completely staffed by volunteers, both crafters and other senior citizens who want to be involved, but don't want to make anything. Grants from the Catholic diocesan Campaign for Human Development and the Self-Development of People Fund of the Presbyterian Church, provide the store with a part-time manager, Mary LaBue, to whom much of the credit for the



Helen Dell, 89, prominently displays one of her table covers that takes her about a month to complete. It is knitted out of cotton thread and then starched to give the large piece integrity. *Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal*

shop's success is given. But LaBue characteristically defers to the crafters, saying of the Fallon family that "they make almost every darn thing in the place."

"It's not a way to get rich," Elizabeth Fallon said of the dolls, animals and pillows she sews, "but the shop isn't what is sold there — it's people themselves. And it does help out a little."

Elizabeth, 66, is a member of the shop's advisory board, 12 crafters who meet once a month to make decisions on sales, pricing, promotion and crafters' relations. "We also give moral support to John (Briggs) and Mary (LaBue)," she added. She and her husband Ray, 68, have been active with the shop since its inception.

Ray recalls that he always liked fooling

around with wood. But since retiring from his trade as a tool-and-die maker for the New York State Thruway, woodwork has become his main interest. He says he still gets up at 5 a.m. to enjoy what he calls "the best part of the day" in the small workshop he built in his back yard.

The Fallons get more from the shop than just a 65-percent share of their sales. "It's good therapy for us" said Ray. "It gets you out and keeps you involved, and the craftwork itself takes your mind off problems — it's relaxing."

Elizabeth cites the companionship of the other crafters, and the feeling of selling what they've made as two reasons they keep at it.

"It's a thrill when you're working at the shop to see people come in and look at what

you've made or to wonder whose homes our creations end up in," she said.

The Fallons encourage anyone looking for a retirement activity to try crafting. They suggest that beginners take their time, take advantage of adult education or try kits to get started, and read craft magazines for ideas. Elizabeth added that the key to selling any craft is that it be well made.

They haven't discovered a formula for success, however. Ray's biggest seller currently is a wooden duck-on-a-stick which flaps its feet when pushed. "I just can't make those fast enough," he said. But he also recalls a wooden gumball machine they were sure would be a bestseller.

"It was an absolute bomb," Elizabeth added. "You just have to get out there and try things."

## Community Calendar

Thursday, May 16

**CARNIVAL:** sponsored by Cardinal Mooney Parents' Guild to benefit the high school; games rides, prizes and refreshments available; rain or shine; through Sunday, May 19; special ride ticket available Saturday and Sunday — \$4; free parking.

**LUNCHEON:** Pass-A-Dish sponsored by Golden Age Committee of St. Mary's Church, Elmira; rolls, beverages, meat and entertainment furnished; bring table service; Marion Center on Franklin Street; 12:45 p.m.

**FESTIVAL:** Church of the Holy Spirit, Plank and Hatch Roads, Webster; Thursday — "Bush's Basement" with used items priced to sell; Friday — Auction Boutique Booth, new items at reduced prices; Saturday — 5th annual auction; preview at 11 p.m.; sale begins at noon; features sailing yacht cruise and many other items; call 671-0975 for information.

Friday, May 17

**RETREAT:** Antioch Retreat for young adults (18-35); 7 p.m. Friday through Sunday, May 19, 3:30 p.m.; Kämp Koinonia; for information or to register, call Mary Martin Davis, 385-4636.

Saturday, May 18

**FESTIVAL:** Join parishioners at St. Boniface Church, 330 Gregory St., for Spring Festival 85; features games, baked-food sale, flea market, and T-shirts; rain or shine — 4-9 p.m.; donations for flea market and bake sale accepted; call Babs Leslie, 271-0972 or the Vargas, 461-9424.

**MEETING:** National Diocesan Parish Council meeting; St. Nicholas R.C. Melkite Church; Archbishop Joseph Tawil, Melkite Apostolic Exarch of U.S. will attend; noon luncheon and reception dinner Saturday; brunch Sunday, May 19; call Father Salem Faddoul, 467-8925.

**FAIR:** 20th Anniversary Fair; Montessori

School of Rochester, 170 W. Scholfield Road, West Irondequoit; Saturday, 10-5 p.m.; Sunday, May 19, 1-5 p.m.; new and used sale, auction, baked food and fruit, music, balloons, pony rides and more; call 544-8540.

**MISSION:** Renewal in preparation for Pentecost conducted by Father Basil Trahon, well-known Passionist preacher; St. Agnes Church, Avon; Fr. Trahon to preach at weekend liturgies and at two daily liturgies through Thursday, May 23; 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; all welcome

**DRAMA:** "Antoinette Brown" performed by In Celebration; sponsored by United Church of Christ, 1400 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta; Saturday — 7:30 p.m., Sunday, May 19 — 11 a.m.; all welcome; donations accepted.

Sunday, May 19

**PLAY:** "Alice in Blunderland" performed by Crossroads; St. Augustine's Church, 420 Chili Avenue, Rochester; 4 p.m.; all welcome; donations accepted; call Page Simpson, 442-9486.

Tuesday, May 21

**OPEN HOUSE:** Nazareth College newly accredited department of nursing; for registered nurses interested in upper-level nursing program; speaker — Dr. Barbara Smullen; Smyth Hall, Room 236; 7:30-9 p.m.; call 586-2625, ext. 596.

**LUNCHEON:** Nazareth League Spring Luncheon; President Rose Marie Boston of Nazareth College to speak; Medaille Dining Hall; noon; open to public; \$6.50 per person; reservations by Friday, May 17; call Mary Geirin, 586-2525, ext. 377.

**AWARDS NIGHT:** for Catholic Daughters; St. Philip Neri School Hall; 7:30 p.m.

**DINNER:** Italian Women's Civic Club Annual Mother/Daughter Dinner; the Party House, Behanon Road, Rochester; entertainment by the club's Players; call Marge Vincent, 458-7399.

Wednesday, May 22

**LITURGY:** for young adults in Rochester area; St. Christopher Church, 3350 Union St., North Chili; 7:30 p.m.; refreshments provided.

## CROSSROADS III

SIXTH WEEK OF EASTER

Sunday's Readings: Acts 1:15-17, 20-26; 1 John 4:11-16; John 17:11-19

The focus of this Sunday's readings is discipleship: "God is love, and they who abide in love abide in God, and God in them." The gospel centers on the missioning of the 12 in the high priestly prayer of Jesus set within the background of the Last Supper.

This Sunday seems an ideal time to celebrate the ministries alive in the parish community. It is through baptism that everyone has received a mission in the world. This mission revolves around the activities of people, needs of people and gifts of people. What an ideal occasion to rejoice in the richness of a people's diversity of gifts and prepare for next week's Pentecost celebration.

Sometimes it happens that ministries become so singled out that they are isolated from others. When this happens, competition arises. The ideal of the seamless garment can be seen in this situation. There must be a blending of all ministries that become the activity of the Church. This requires patience, openness and understanding.

Project:

- 1) pray for those who have offered their gifts to others;
- 2) take time to thank those who are constantly involved in parish ministry;
- 3) reflect on how you, as an individual, might be called upon to live out your Christian discipleship.

### Diocesan Appointments



Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following diocesan appointments: **Father Joseph Catanise** from associate pastor of St. Mary's, Auburn, to study canon law. **Father Catanise** eventually will be working in the tribunal office.

**Father Daniel Hogan** from associate pastor St. Agnes, Avon, to diocesan sabbatical assistance (residence, Blessed Sacrament rectory).

**Father Gerard McMann** from pastor St. Patrick's, Moravia, to pastor St. Gabriel's, Hammondport, and St. Patrick's, Prattsburg.

**Father Robert Gaudio** from associate pastor Holy Name of Jesus to pastor St. Monica's, Rochester.