

The original documents are located in Box 44, folder “Ford, Susan - Needlepoint” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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SUSAN

ORGANIZATION: The New York Association for the Blind

REQUESTED BY: Joseph W. Brinkley

DATE OF REQUEST: January 9, 1975

SUBJECT: Re: The Lighthouse Biennial Amateur
Needlework Exhibition. They would
like to tell the public of your
interest.

(Letter attached)

PROPOSED ACTION:

Sent A 3606-15A

S.F. doing needlepoint



The New York Association for the Blind

111 East 59th Street, N. Y. 10022, (212) 355-2200

Serves blind people of all ages, races, and creeds

Accredited Member
National Accreditation Council

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Incorporated 1906
Under the Patronage of the
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January 9, 1975

Mrs. Sheila Weidenfeld
The White House
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

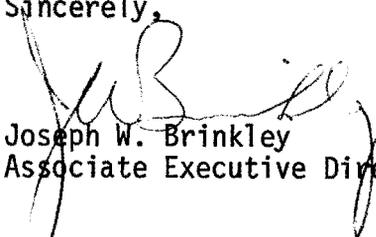
Dear Mrs. Weidenfeld:

I understand from Mrs. Foster of our staff that she has been in touch with you in reference to The Lighthouse Biennial Amateur Needlework Exhibition. I am sure she must have told you that for the last 38 years The Lighthouse has been mounting this program for the benefit of our visually handicapped clients. I have attached a copy of our recent press release on the subject for your further information.

We have heard that President Ford's daughter Susan is interested in needlepoint and has indeed done some of this work herself, and it was our hope that we might be allowed to tell the public of her interest and perhaps use a photograph of Susan doing some needlework as part of the publicity surrounding our exhibition. As you may know, two years ago we had the pleasure of utilizing information on Julie Nixon's interest in needlework. It would be most kind of you if you would inquire of the Ford family whether our request could be granted.

Should you wish additional information about the exhibition or indeed about The Lighthouse, The New York Association for the Blind, please don't hesitate to be in touch with me. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,


Joseph W. Brinkley
Associate Executive Director

JWB/pk
Attachment

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AMATEUR NEEDLEWORK OF TODAY, INC.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

111 EAST 59TH STREET • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

MRS. ANSON BEARD, *President*
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Contact: Joan Furlong
355-2200

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 7, 1974

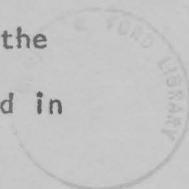
Amateur Needlework of Today, Inc. will hold its 19th Biennial Exhibit for the benefit of The Lighthouse, The New York Association for the Blind, at the agency, 111 E. 59th St., Manhattan, from Monday, April 21 through Wednesday, April 30, 1975.

An Anglo-American theme has been selected for this unique exhibit of 500 amateur works in needlepoint (canvas work) and embroidery, the only two categories accepted for showing.

Needlework from the Winston Churchill Memorial in Fulton, Mo. will be a special attraction of the exhibit. Mr. Churchill gave his famous "Iron Curtain" speech there in 1946, and it is now the site of the reconstructed Christopher Wren Church---rebuilt stone by stone after incurring extensive damage in the bombing of London during World War II.

Featured in the church are kneelers depicting activities from Churchill's life---such as Sandhurst Military Academy, Chartwell, as an author, receiving the Order of the Garter, etc. Designed in England, the petitpoint for the kneelers was executed there, with the balance of the needlework finished in this country.

-more-



Lady Lindsay of Woking, noted British needleworker, is loaning a needlepoint picture of her home, Old Vicarage. The clouds in this piece were worked with her own hair, and a sunflower was worked in beads.

Original-design chairs from the Governor's Mansion in Arkansas round out the theme. Illustrating seven phases of Arkansas history in a heraldic fashion, the chairs depict the State Seal, the "Arkansas Traveler", Indians from the state, French and Spanish explorations, Statehood in 1836 and Confederate Statehood.

Founded in 1934, Amateur Needlework of Today is the oldest society of its kind in the United States. Its stated purpose is to "advance the quality of needlework in this country". Since its beginning, all proceeds from its exhibitions have benefitted The Lighthouse Friendship Fund, which provides for unforeseen non-budgeted items specifically needed for individual and direct services to blind people.

This biennial exhibit has always been a national showcase for amateur work from all across the country. Twenty-three states were represented in 1973, with work ranging from bell pulls, cummerbunds, rugs and ecclesiastical stoles to fire screens, Victorian cuspidors and a "Hupah" (Jewish wedding canopy).

Professional judges award two gold thimbles for "Best in Show" in needlepoint and embroidery, and awards are made for categories within both groups. All exhibits are professionally staged. Nothing is for sale.

A preview cocktail party will be held Monday, April 21, 5-7 p.m. Tickets for the preview are \$25.00. Hours for the remainder of the exhibit are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and til 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 24. The exhibit will be closed Sunday, April 27. Admission is \$2.50.

endit



The New York Association for the Blind

111 East 59th Street, New York, N. Y. 10022

USE YOUR SIGHT..
be a
Lighthouse
VOLUNTEER



Mrs. Sheila Weidenfeld
Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford
The White House
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Tax Cut in View Thru the Dust

Assigned to Quarters

By FRANK JACKMAN

Washington, March 15 (News Bureau)
—The congressional battle over the shape and breadth of an antirecession tax cut is far from over, but Democratic leaders were confident today that a tax bill would be on President Ford's desk by Easter.

The Senate Finance Committee's mammoth \$29.2 billion package of tax reductions—approved on a 16-to-2 vote last night after two days of hectic and sometimes confusing action—will be sent to the Senate floor for action as soon as it is printed and held by the

next week—the basic form of the tax-cut bill is clear: There will be a relatively modest 1974 tax rebate of \$200 or less, plus 1975 tax cuts aimed at low-income and middle-income persons.

To the average taxpayer, this means that a tax-rebate should be in the mail by June and that less tax should be withheld from pay checks, beginning sometime this summer—at least for those making about \$20,000 a year or less.

Among the principal unresolved issues is whether to repeal the controversial 22% oil-depletion allowance. The House voted overwhelmingly to end the allowance, a tax break for the oil industry since 1926, but the Senate



Mecca for stitch scholars

A small town nestled in the New England hills has become a mecca for needlework buffs. The "pilgrims" who come to West Townsend, from as far as California and Texas range in age from early 20's to late 60's. Some are teachers eager to refine their skills, others are shop owners on the lookout for techni-

The emphasis at Homer House is on creativity. Students are taught the traditional basic stitches and then encouraged to "take off and express themselves" in whichever embroidery discipline suits them best. Some students, says Mrs. Williams, have an affinity for

week at the school was so rewarding, she said, that she planned to return the following year. Two homemakers up together from South Carolina were there to refine their skills in canvas work.

The owner of a needlework

invites experts in specialized skills for workshop sessions at the school. West Townsend is 45 miles northwest of Boston and students are met at and returned to Logan Airport. For further information write to Elsa Williams School of Needle Arts,

Success Yarn

Twenty-five years ago when Elsa Williams founded a small needlework supply business in West Townsend, Mass., embroidery was a genteel pastime engaged in by grandmothers and maiden aunts. Today, since 20 million Americans discovered the joys of stitching, it's become Big Business.

Everywhere you go, loving hands are turning out crewel and needlepoint pillows and pictures, vests and valances, counterpanes and chair seats, bell pulls, handbags, belts, eyeglass cases and telephone book covers in a frenzy of creative stitchery that's making bingo a has-been.

Needlework supplies, which used to share space with coat hangers and safety pins in notion departments, now star in their own elegant boutiques. Every Main Street and shopping center across the country has its needle 'n yarn shop, and even supermarkets and drug stores are cashing in on the embroidery explosion which shows no sign of abating. Industry sources report that last year teen agers alone "consumed" 15 million pounds of yarn.

The woman who played a major role in spurring the current insatiable appetite for yarn, canvas, linen, new designs, bigger and better kits, blocking equipment, crewel needles, teachers and instruction books is artist-designer Elsa Williams who's spent a quarter of a century raising the standards of needlework materials and designs and teaching the embroidery skills to teachers and shop owners across the country.

Recently, to make such instruction available to the general public, she opened the Elsa Williams School of Needle Art (also in West Townsend) which offers week-long, intensive training in all the embroidery disciplines. From a modest one-employe enterprise she's built Elsa Williams, Inc. and its affiliates into a mail-order empire that employs a hundred people to fill the orders that pour in from individuals and thousands of retail stores in the U.S. and Canada.

Guess you could call it the sweet yarn of success!

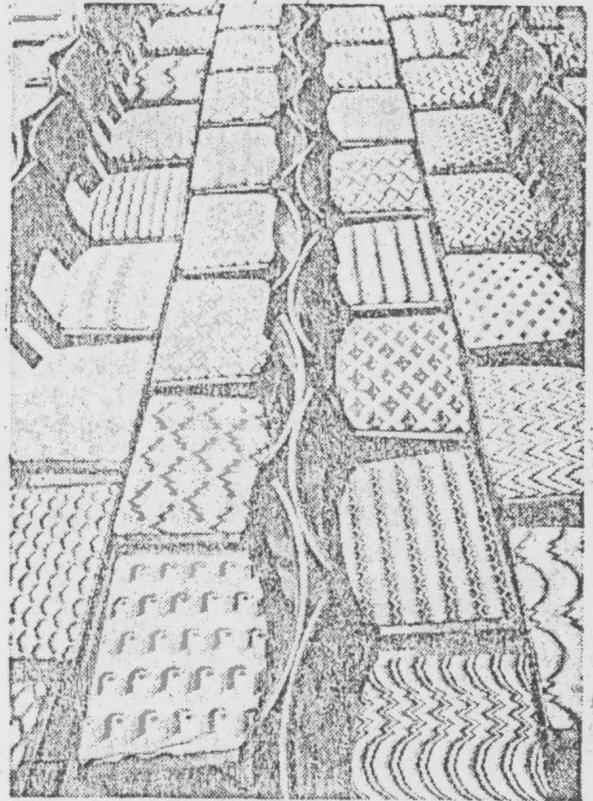
Memory links needle artist to Irvington

Newark Star Ledger
1/20/75



(Above) Elsa Williams of nationally known needlework firm and school, is shown with detail adapted from antique Coromandel screen that is twin to the one she worked, now hanging in the White House ←

Some of 50 bargello patterned seats worked by friends and students of Elsa Williams highlight auditorium-classroom of unusual live-in needle arts school in West Townsend, Mass., in the restored former home of artist Winslow Hamer



By SHIRLEY M. FRIEDMAN

Although she is considered by many "the first lady of the needle arts," author of best-selling needlecraft books, a globe-trotter for design inspiration for her widely distributed handwork kits, and an ultimately busy resident of both east and west coasts, some of Elsa Williams' fondest memories" return to Irvington, New Jersey."



King Features Syndicate 235 East 45th Street, New York, N. Y. 10017
Area Code 212 682-5600

Needle Art Is Classy

Stitches Are the Subject at This School

ELSA WILLIAMS didn't go out into the cold, cruel world — she settled for the crewel world, and the other needlework spheres as well.

Mrs. Williams, who has been called "the first lady of the American needle arts," has turned her home into a school for stitch scholars. The house in West Townsend, Mass., was once owned by the family of Winslow Homer.

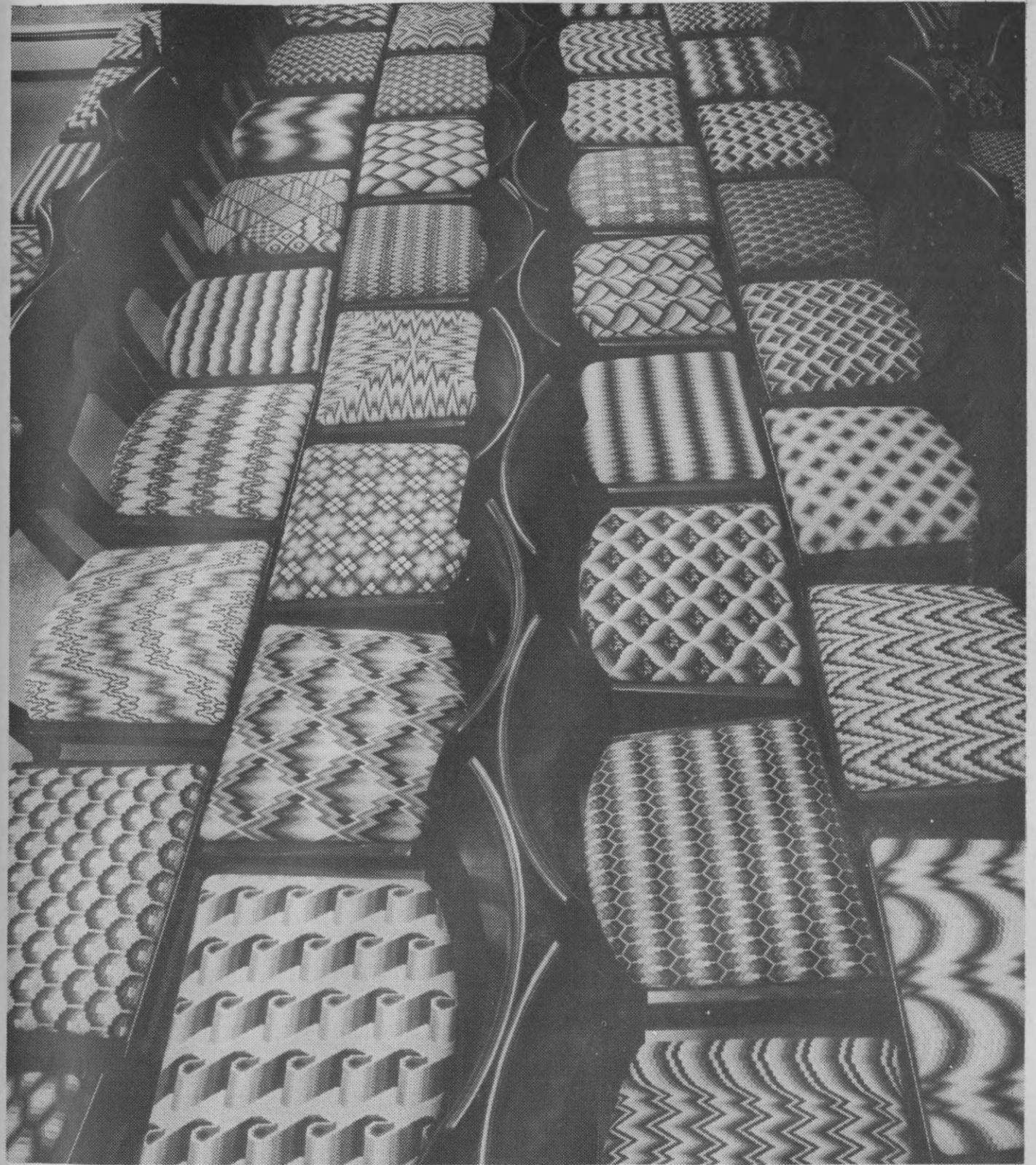
Students attend the school for week-long sessions. Classes occupy the morning and afternoon, and homework is done in the evening after dinner when everyone gathers in the drawing room of the 18th Century house. Some of the students are beginners, some are experts, and many are owners of needlework shops who want to learn techniques to pass on to customers.

Ranging from teenagers to old sew-and-sews in their retirement years, the students tackle Bargello, needlepoint and crewel work. Women outnumber men, but more and more, male craftsmen are coming to the school.

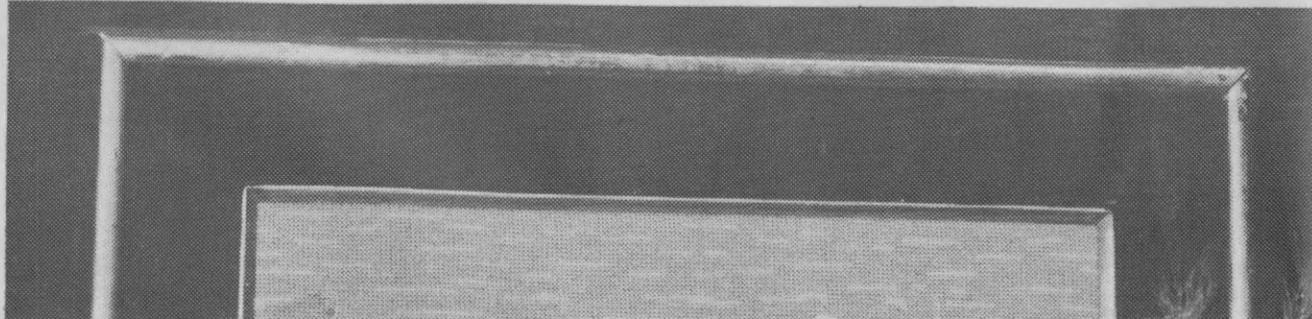
"And why not?" asks Mrs. Williams. "There's plenty of precedent. Louis XV of France used to boast he could outembroider anybody in his realm, and an English king who gave up his throne to marry the woman he loved was a superb needle artist."



ELSA WILLIAMS demonstrates crewel embroidery for a student, Kathleen Strawhacker, at the Elsa Williams School of Needle Art in West Townsend, Mass.



MORE THAN 50 Bargello patterns have been worked by students for chair seats in the school classroom.





THE TEACHER did a field with embroidery stitches for flowers and canvas-worked tent stitches for background.



'PROUT'S NECK,' a moody seascape by Winslow Homer, has been copied in needlepoint by Mrs. Williams.



THE MAIN BEDROOM of the 18th Century house that is now a school is decorated with stitched bedspreads and curtains in shades of blue and green.



MRS. WILLIAMS is proud of an embroidered work inspired by a Chinese screen.