

# 'Hand and Eye' Volunteer job leads to show

By ROSE WEBER  
Volunteer jobs have a way of mushrooming into a way of life for some women.

For Lois Melchert of Troy, her volunteer work for the Troy Historical Society has led to an interesting part-time job.

"It all began when I was chairman of the fund-raising project for the museum. I seemed to have a knack for taking a group of people and building a good show out of their talent," Mrs. Melchert explained.

And for several years the only show she directed was "Hand and Eye." But when a group of Lutheran churchwomen wanted a fund raiser for the new Lutheran High School North, she was the first one they thought of contacting.

The "Hand and Eye" show is known all over the state for presenting amateur craftsmen selling quality workmanship in items created with love.

"WE STARTED the show nine years ago because I love to create things and I thought others did too. It was a chance for people to sell things they create," she said.

The show was given its title because everything sold is something that can be created through the use of hands and eyes.

A small show originally, Mrs. Melchert's list of exhibitors now numbers between 500 and 600.

"And we really attract big crowds. People seem to agree with me about buying locally produced things instead of always something 'Made in Japan,'" she said.

The purpose of the school benefit show was to prove that Troy wasn't just a farming community but was the home of many talented people and could host other communities with style.

"YOU KNOW then everybody thought Troy was just a cornfield and you had to go to Birmingham for art," Mrs. Melchert said.

The spring show, her first as an independent coordinator, was held Saturday at Lutheran High School North, 16825 Twenty-four Mile Road.

More than 90 exhibitors displayed crafts designed to give a "Breath of Spring" to Michigan.

"I asked everyone to gear their designs toward spring. There are lots of pastels, birdhouses and Easter things. It is such fun for me to work with these people, they come up with such different ideas," she said.

## Troy teen dances to tune of bagpipes

By ROSE WEBER

Not everyone appreciates the music of a bagpipe. Some will even argue the merits of its being called music.

But the sight of Leslie Deagle, 14, of Troy with kilt flying, arms akimbo, toes pointed, joyfully dancing through the intricate steps of a Scottish sword dance, makes the skill of a bagpipe more enjoyable.

"For practice we use records. I have about 100 different tunes," Ms. Deagle explained.

Two hours of practice plus exercise time every day, in addition to Saturday class time, has helped her reach the highest category in competitive dancing.

As a member of the U.S. Highland Dancers Association, she has

entered competition dances throughout the United States and Canada.

"I LIKED ballet when I was little but when my Mom took me to a class, they said I was too young. Then a friend suggested Scottish dancing lessons and that's how I got started," Ms. Deagle said.

She now takes ballet lessons, also, and gymnastics at Athens High School, where she is in the ninth grade.

There are at least six tartans she is entitled to wear because of her Scottish ancestors, including Campbell and MacDonald. She wears the dress Stewart tartan in competition. The kilt — red, blue and yellow plaid on white — made with 26 pleats is extremely heavy, and the final practice before each competition is danced in costume to become accustomed to the extra weight.

A white lace blouse and red velvet vest decorated with the Scottish thistle in gold completes her costume.

The sword she uses came from Masonic Temple and is at least 60 years old. It is four feet long, the handle is engraved and has a red cross painted on it. Her name is also engraved on it.

FOR EXHIBITION dancing she uses the sword and its scabbard (holder). For championship competition, she uses two swords with a hilt or handle that is five inches high and five inches long.

"The height makes the dance much more difficult. If you touch any part of the sword, you are automatically disqualified," she explained.

She enjoys dancing for senior citizen groups, weddings and parties, both here and in Windsor.

When she is not sword dancing or in class at Athens, she is delivering the Troy Observer and Eccentric newspaper to earn money for competition trips.

just fine, a foundry donated slag to make the lot weather proof.

Some of the Troy area people exhibiting at the show were Maria Sochowki, pottery; Karen Lambert, macramé; Josh Johnson, peacock stone jewelry; Mary Callahan, jewelry and silver casting; Nancy Hatfield, calico art and Susan Molnar, watercolors and ceramics.

Others were Dick and Diana Gruce, Eileen Seerbak, Peter and Jeanne Breen and Letame McCall of West Bloomfield.

Also Wayne Berge and Chuck Hall of Birmingham.

Mrs. Melchert admits the work is hard. "I talk to myself and cry a lot."

"But I am dealing with a bunch of beautiful people whose thinking is enthusiastic and progressive. They are not thinking about what is wrong with the world but optimistically and I like that," Mrs. Melchert said.

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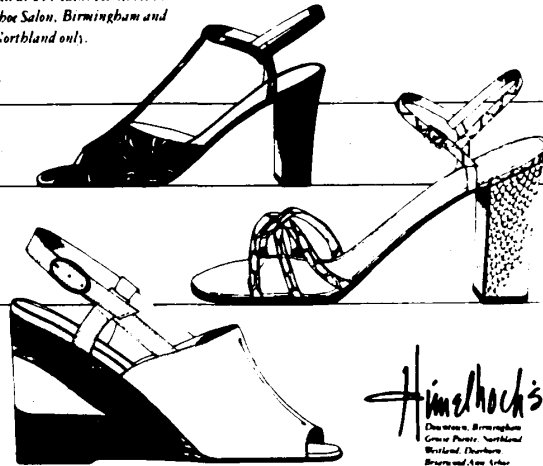
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