



The **NATIONAL MUSEUM** of the **AMERICAN COVERLET**, Inc.

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## Coverlet College 2024

### Friday Afternoon - September 27

1:00 – 3:30

#### **Concurrent Workshop: Amish Knot Rag Rug**

**Cassie Dickson**

The Amish pride themselves on being thrifty. Amish knot rugs, also known as toothbrush rugs, were a beautiful way of salvaging worn-out fabrics. Fabric strips connected by using a blanket stitch, are worked around the outside to form an oval or circular rug. This class will cover the technique of making the working knot, methods of cutting fabrics, stitch placement for making rugs lie flat, and joining strips. Students will also have the opportunity to learn other methods of making rag rugs.

Number of students: Minimum: 4, Maximum: 12

about 2:10

Short Break

1:00 – 3:30

#### **Concurrent Workshop:**

#### **L'Amour de Maman - Acadian Weaving of French Canada and Louisiana** **Melissa Weaver Dunning**

L'Amour de Maman (A Mother's Love) is the charming French phrase for a handwoven wedding dowry, and this class highlights fabrics and techniques from the early French settlements in maritime Canada that were carried along to modern day Cajun Louisiana. Beginning and advanced weavers alike will be amazed at the variations of pattern possible with just 2 harnesses and a few simple techniques. Melissa will share samples of Acadian textiles and demonstrate the techniques of the Couverture de Mariage, summer skirting with a la planche and other delightful patterning, a winter weft-faced skirt fabric, Boutonne and Cordonne.

Number of students: Minimum: 4, Maximum: 12

about 2:10

Short Break

4:00

#### **Coverlet Market Opens**

Attendees can offer coverlet and weaving related objects for sale in the classroom opposite the entrance to the all-purpose room. This room will be locked during presentations and off hours.

### Friday Evening - September 27

#### **Keynote Address and Day 1 Sessions**

Hand-Outs of Summary Information and a Bibliography will be provided.

6:30 – 7:00

#### **Registration**

#### **New-to-Coverlets Attendees Register Coverlets for the Discovery Session**

7:00 – 7:45

#### **Keynote Address - Coverlet Weavers of the Year:**

#### **Hausman Brothers, Jacob, Solomon, and Benjamin**

**Ron Walter**

Three Hausman brothers, sons of Johan Jacob and Maria Catharina (Moser) Hausman, wove figured and fancy coverlets in Pennsylvania. Jacob Hausman wove in Trexlertown (Lehigh Co.) from 1832 to 1837, in Lobachsville (Berks Co.) from 1837 to 1847, in Friedensburg, Oley, (Berks Co.) from 1848 to 1850, and in Lobachsville again 1852 to 1862. Solomon Hausman wove in Trexlertown from 1832 to 1850, and Benjamin Hausman wove in Allentown, (Lehigh Co.) from 1836 to 1845, Lancaster City (Lancaster Co.) 1845, and in York, (York Co.) from 1847 to 1848. Examples of their coverlets and information on some related coverlet weavers will be presented.

7:45 – 8:30

#### **Reception**

Meet our presenters and other attendees.

### Saturday Morning - September 28

8:30

Registration and Continental Breakfast (fruit, Danish, coffee and juices)

9:00

#### **Opening Remarks and Introduction of Attendees**

**Melinda Zongor**

9:20

#### **#1 – The Making of a Weaver**

**Bonnie Weidert**

What makes a coverlet weaver in the past and in the present? How and why did people weave in the past? Bonnie explores the past weavers (professional and home weavers) and then tells her story. She explains her process for weaving a coverlet.

10:00

Short Break

10:10 **#2 – Weft-Faced Ribbed Coverlets** **Cassie Dickson**  
 A coverlet found inside an 18th century quilted counterpane is considered to be the oldest coverlet textile in the Smithsonian. It is woven with a linen warp and a fine hand-spun wool weft, natural dyed in brown, blue, and gold. It takes two pattern shots to complete one row of weaving, and there are around 60 pattern wefts per inch. Learn more about this coverlet and other weft-faced ribbed textiles: one of the earliest methods of weaving coverlets.

10:50 Long Break (fruit and juices)

11:10 **#3 – Geometric Coverlets in the Four Seasons Exhibition** **Gay McGeary**  
 Gay will discuss the geometric coverlets in the Four Seasons Exhibition.

11:50 Short Break

12:00 **#4 – FOUR SEASONS Exhibition Highlights Part 1** **Ron Walter**  
 Highlights of coverlets in Part 1 of the Four Seasons exhibition will be presented. This part includes the coverlets displayed in the Red Room, Room 1 and Room 2.

12:30 Catered Lunch

1:20 **#5 – Attendees Tour Part 1 of the FOUR SEASONS Exhibition** **self-guided**

1:50 Short Break

2:00 **#6 – Why did Many Early Pennsylvania Weavers identify Themselves in their Advertisements as a “Diaper and Coverlet Weaver”** **Victor Hilts**  
 During the mid eighteenth century and on into the early nineteenth century, many Pennsylvania weavers referred to themselves as a “diaper and coverlet weaver.” This talk will attempt to explain what they meant by the term “diaper” and how diaper weaving related to coverlet weaving. Many of the same weavers also wrote that they wove coverlets “single and double.” What did they mean by this phrase and how does it fit into the picture?

2:40 Long Break (fruit, cookies, and drinks)

3:00 **#7 – L’Amour de Maman - Acadian Weaving of French Canada and Louisiana** **Melissa Weaver Dunning**  
 The earliest European settlers arrived in Maritime Canada beginning in 1632 and were known as Acadians. Caught in the political conflict between France and England, the Acadians were forcibly removed from their homeland in 1755 and many spent ten long years imprisoned or homeless before eventually settling in Louisiana where they became known as Cajuns. 250 years later, Cajun weavers were following the same weaving traditions as their Acadian foremothers. Come and hear about this remarkable story and see the beautiful fabrics they created on their two harness looms!

3:40 Short Break

3:50 **#8 – The Evolution of the Varafeldur to the Rya Coverlet in Iceland** **Diana Buck**  
 This presentation will cover the evolutionary process of textile production of the Varafeldur (pile weave) in the Viking Age to the Rya, as we currently know it. Varafeldur’s were pile weave cloaks that were woven on the Warp Weighted Loom. They could be woven in plain or twill weave. During the weaving process, tog (the outer coat from the short-tailed sheep) is wrapped into the weaving to create the pile weave affect. Varafeldur’s served as outerwear for bad weather. The Varafeldur evolved into a pile weave which involved inserting yarn instead of tog into the weave, producing an item used for coverlets or rugs, depending upon the choice of materials. While the main focus will be on the weaving of the Varafeldur and Rya, the entire process from sheep to cloth will also be touched upon. In addition, the impact of women in Scandinavia, weaving in its practical and economic sense, as well the spiritual connections will be presented.

4:30 **Closing Remarks and Graduation** **Melinda Zongor**

4:45 **Dinner on Own**

**Saturday Evening - September 28**

7:00 **Discovery Session for Coverlets brought by Attendees New to Coverlets** **all**  
 Learn information about coverlets brought in by attendees new to coverlets.

7:30 – 9:00 **Combined Coverlet Show and Tell for Day 1 and Day 2** **all**  
 Bring one or two of your favorite coverlets to show and discuss.

## Day 2 Sessions

Hand-Outs of Summary Information and a Bibliography will be provided.

### Sunday Morning - September 29

8:30	Registration and Continental Breakfast (fruit, Danish, coffee, and juices)	
9:00	<b>Opening Remarks and Introduction of Attendees</b>	<b>Melinda Zongor</b>
9:15	<b>#1 – When is a Coverlet Not a Coverlet?</b>	<b>Patricia Donald</b>
	<p>My research is on handwoven counterpanes woven in the United State during the 1800s. When looking at groupings of coverlets and counterpanes, I find the definitions of the two textiles blur. The differences come down to fiber(s) used, absence or presence of color and emphasis or lack of emphasis on texture and the weaves used. Sporadically over the last 10 years I've come across counterpanes woven entirely in white cotton using weaves that one associates with coverlets.</p>	
9:55	Short Break	
10:05	<b>#2 – A Rose by any Other Name: A Descriptive Framework for Coverlet Pattern Analysis</b>	<b>Emily Barth</b>
	<p>Research into the history of figured &amp; fancy coverlets tends to focus on the corner blocks, for obvious reasons. The text can be compiled into databases, dates and locations can be cross-referenced, and names can be researched with census data. Historic pattern names, occasionally woven into the textile itself or published in weavers' ads, can also be recorded in coverlet databases. But the vast majority of patterns have no documented names, and there is currently no standardized terminology for describing or referencing historically unnamed coverlet patterns. As a result, comparably little work has been done to track where, when, and by which weaver(s) individual patterns were used.</p> <p>My ongoing research project, The Coverlet Pattern Index, aims to produce a searchable 'field guide' to figured &amp; fancy coverlet patterns. This survey of commonly recurring motifs, patterns, borders, and layouts produces systematic and potentially universal naming conventions and descriptive tools for coverlet cataloging and research.</p> <p>Standardized descriptive language also enables broad trends to be identified. Tracking the geographic and temporal distribution of these figured &amp; fancy patterns offers a window into the aesthetic tastes of clients and weavers. Identifying the weavers who used identical patterns also sheds light on the exchange and propagation of patterns, potentially revealing working relationships between professional weavers who shared or sold their equipment and resources.</p>	
10:45	Long Break (fruit and juices)	
11:05	<b>#3 – Coverlet Names, Do they mean Anything? Can we learn anything from them?</b>	<b>Pat Hilts</b>
	<p>The names of geometric coverlet patterns often seem puzzling and mysterious, and it is easy to dismiss them. Most coverlet enthusiasts are familiar with names associated with nineteenth-century coverlets. However, weavers have been naming patterns at least since the seventeenth century, and by asking the right questions, it is possible to extract a surprising amount of information from these names. This talk will ask a number of questions, and the attempt to find answers will reveal some of the hidden meaning in pattern names.</p>	
11:45	Short Break	
11:55	<b>#4 – FOUR SEASONS Exhibition Highlights Part 2</b>	<b>Ron Walter</b>
	<p>Highlights of coverlets in Part 2 of the Four Seasons exhibition will be presented. This part includes the coverlets displayed in Room 3 and the Hallway from Room 3 to the Gift Shop.</p>	
12:25	Catered Lunch	
1:15	<b>#5 – Attendees Tour Part 2 of the FOUR SEASONS Exhibition</b>	self-guided
1:45	Short Break	
1:55	<b>#6 – Woven Together: An Exhibition of Indiana Coverlets</b>	<b>Mary Figueroa</b>
	<p>At the beginning of 2024, the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites proudly exhibited a selection of coverlets from the John and Janet Simmermaker Family Collection. The exhibition, Woven Together, featured coverlets with an array of vivid colors, mainstay materials and astounding patterns. In addition to celebrating a Hoosier family's decades-long dedication to building the finest collection of Indiana Jacquard coverlets, the show aimed to educate visitors through hands-on interactives that emphasized the history, artistry, and labor of weaving. Along with exploring these visitor engagement strategies, the presentation will focus on Indiana's Jacquard weavers and the finest examples from the Simmermaker's collection.</p>	
2:35	<b>Closing Remarks and Graduation</b>	<b>Melinda Zongor</b>
	<i>Class Schedule Subject to Change.</i>	

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## Coverlet Marketplace

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Attendees are encouraged to bring antique coverlets or related items to sell during Coverlet College weekend. Sellers will be responsible for tagging individual items with relevant details (NMAC will provide tags) and arranging sales directly with buyers prior to our closing session on Sunday. Although not required, we hope you will consider donating a portion and/or the proceeds of your sale to support the Museum's mission. Donations can be made upon the conclusion of the conference via the Donate button on our website or by cash, credit card, or personal check at the event.

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**Emily Barth** is the curator of the Foster and Muriel McCarl Coverlet Gallery at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. A native of western Pennsylvania, Emily studied historical linguistics and classical languages at Georgetown University and went on to earn a Ph.D. in linguistics from Cornell University. During graduate school, she began spinning and weaving with the Black Sheep Handspinners Guild in Lansing, NY, and gained an interest in historical textiles, both as a weaver and as a student of history. In addition to overseeing the installation of rotating coverlet exhibits at the McCarl Gallery, she is currently engaged in ongoing efforts to digitize coverlet collections and resources. Her primary research interest involves tracking the use of common patterns by different weavers in The Coverlet Index

**Diana Buck** has been involved in fiber arts for most of her life. She grew up in a family of knitters, crocheters, quilters, needle workers, and sewers, and learned these crafts as a child. As an adult, she continued to expand her knowledge and experience, until she found her true calling to research and teach textile arts through history. She has been involved in living history for over 35 years and, over those years, has focused her studies and activities on both women's roles and historic textiles of early 18th Century through early 19th Century time periods.

**Cassie Dickson** of Whittier, NC, is a member of the Southern Highland Craft Guild and a traditional pattern weaver who specializes in the weaving of coverlets and the processing of the flax plant to linen cloth. She has been spinning, weaving, and natural dyeing for over 40 years. She has raised silkworms for the past 28 years and processes silk cocoons to silk fabric. Cassie presents to museums, colleges, guilds, and regional fiber events.

**Pat Donald** joined the Columbia Weavers and Spinners' Guild of Columbia, MO. While in Columbia I took two historic weaving workshops from Marjie Thompson and loved them. After moving to Jackson, TN I took several workshops at Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts where a librarian allowed me to xerox copies of handwritten weaving drafts from the school's archives. I was hooked. Since then, I have concentrated on handwoven counterpanes from the 19th century and my weaving research has taken me to 20 state archives and museums. Currently I have documented over 300 counterpanes including textiles I've seen in person or images. I have slightly more handwritten weaving drafts of weaves used in counterpanes from the 19th century.

**Melissa Weaver Dunning** of Berryville, Virginia, is a hand-weaver, spinner and knitter with over 40 years of experience working on antique and modern equipment to recreate 18th and 19th century home produced textiles. She began her textile study with Scottish master weaver Norman Kennedy in 1980 and carries on this rich tradition in her own teaching. Melissa is an avid tartan and linen weaver, a compulsive knitter and a lover of wool who enjoys sharing her passion for weaving and spinning with students. She is also a ballad singer, specializing in the ballads and songs of Ireland, Scotland and England from before Napoleon's time.

**Mary Figueroa** is the Curator of History at Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites, overseeing the decorative arts and textile collections. Her early focus on 19th-century women's history led her to begin researching textiles, especially antique quilts. In preparation for the Indiana State Museum's Woven Together exhibition, Figueroa began studying Indiana Jacquard coverlets, gravitating especially towards the technological and labor histories associated with these textiles.

**Pat Hilts** of Columbus, WI, began weaving in 1968, and one of her earliest weaving projects was an overshot coverlet. Since then her interest in coverlets and in historic weaving patterns have continued to intertwine and reinforce one another.

**Victor Hilts** of Columbus, WI, is a professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

**Gay McGeary** of Sewickley, PA, has been weaving, collecting, and researching early coverlet patterns, weave structures and fringe techniques for over 30 years. In recent years she has added southern counterpanes to her research and weaving endeavors. While her weaving is inspired by her research, her research is enhanced by her weaving explorations of the early craftsmen.

**Ron Walter** of Hilltown, PA, is a respected coverlet historian with broad experience in early textile tools and techniques. He researches American textiles and textile-related tools used in the home and on the farm from about 1750 to 1875. His special interests are fiber processing tools including decorated and dated hetchels and their makers, spinning wheels and their makers, and coverlets both geometric and fancy, as well as the weavers who produced them. He is a member of the NMAC Board of Directors, the CCGA (Colonial Coverlet Guild of America) president and the CCGA Newsletter editor.

**Bonnie Weidert** of Henrietta, NY, has been weaving for 45 years exploring a range of different weave structures. Early in her weaving, she learned how to weave a traditional Coverlet from Helen Jarvis, nationally known coverlet weaver and author of Weaving a Traditional Coverlet. Bonnie has since woven 9 coverlets from overshot/floatwork to double weave. Join her as she takes you on a tour of weaving a coverlet.

**Melinda Zongor** of Bedford PA, NMAC Director/Curator, has been "hanging around" coverlets for nearly 40 years. As a former collector, weaver and antiques dealer specializing in coverlets, she has authored books on the subject and has worked with collectors, the antiques trade, the feature film industry, print media and a variety of groups, large and small. She and her husband Laszlo were co-founders of the Coverlet Museum.

SCROLL DOWN FOR REGISTRATION FORM