

Jane Morris

WOMEN'S ROLES AND THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT

*Adapted from a presentation delivered June 17, 2023 at the
Center for Colorado Women's History*

By Jeff Icenhower

This is another 'tale as old as time' (with a nod to Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*)... but this is not love, but the Arts & Crafts Movement. And the tale? Men, men, men are always in the spotlight. Spend any time at all around Arts & Crafts aficionados and you will hear how Ruskin defined the need to reinvigorate the value of handmade items. Morris tied it to social causes and turned Ruskin's observations into a movement. Hubbard popularized (and some say shamelessly marketed and monetized) the Movement in the United States. And so on, and so on. But were there no women in these stories? There is Jane Morris (formerly Burden), of course, wife of William Morris, paramour of

Dante Rossetti. But what is her story? She did not just appear (POOF) from nowhere and fall into the Red House. In fact, the roles available to women at the time played a large part in Miss Burden's options, and so choices that led her to marry William Morris.

This specific story of women in the Arts & Crafts came to be after a tour of the home of the Center for Colorado Women's History at 1310 Bannock. This home, formerly occupied by Gov. John Evans and his family, contains many Arts & Crafts inspired examples, in the architecture, furniture and pieces around the home. Included among these are some excellent items of Arts & Crafts leatherwork created by Josephine Evans,

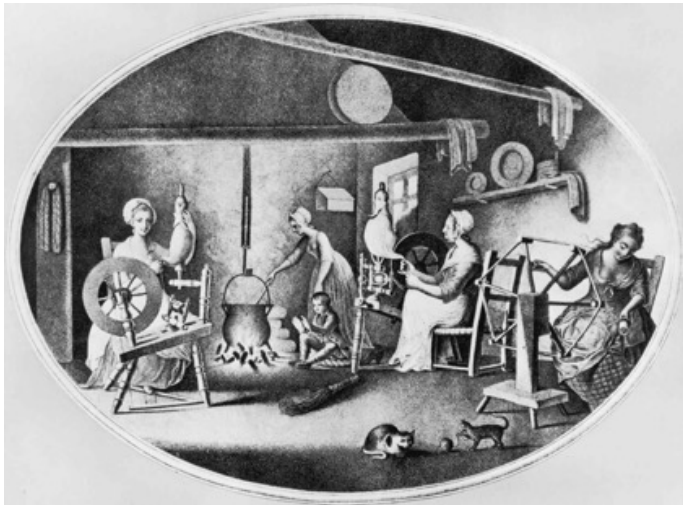
(continued on next page)

WOMEN'S (cont.)

including an exceptional cabinet signed Jo. Evans, Paris, 1910. She is one of many women who made contributions to the Arts & Crafts Movement.

To understand how women contributed to the Arts & Crafts Movement, women's roles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries have to be understood. To understand those roles, it is necessary to travel back to before the industrial revolution(s) of 1760 and 1856.

Before the industrial revolutions, economies were built on an agriculture and craft guild basis. Households were the center of production, and couples worked as partners. This is not to imply that life was easy, or blissful, or without its challenges. But production of foodstuffs, of clothing, of tools, of leather goods and so much more was concentrated in the hands of individual households. Husbands and wives worked together to make their households successful – that is – to eat, to stay dry and warm.



Pre-industrial revolution household

Around 1760, the first industrial revolution began in England. A series of inventions changed the production of cloth from a cottage industry to a large-scale manufacturing industry. Couple this with the use of coal to power steam engines, and suddenly (historically speaking) households shifted to reliance on a single wage earner.

Workers became dependent on employment, which was driven by market conditions. The well documented dehumanization of the individual worker, a key driver in the development of the Arts & Crafts Movement, resulted from this. The emergence of a wealthy merchant class and disruption of the landed aristocracy began. And women's roles changed from economic contributor to housekeeper – beginning the move to the roles women were able to take on during the Arts & Crafts Movement. Roles that will define how and where women impact the Arts & Crafts Movement. In Jane Burden's case, she had few options to move up in society except to marry someone in a higher class. Although this might offend today's sensibilities, it was common practice at that time.

And what of the United States? The transition to cloth manufacturing in England created an almost insatiable demand for cotton. The U.S. answered that demand by expanding the already heinous institution of slavery into its final form, as more and more slave families were broken up and individuals were "sold down the river," that is, sent to feed the cotton plantations of the American South. The "state's rights" battles in congress erupted into the American Civil War, ending in 1865. But America's own industrial revolution was already ramping up.

In 1856, Sir Henry Bessemer invented the Bessemer Process (commonly known as the blast furnace), which allowed the manufacture of steel that was significantly less expensive, of higher quality and in greater quantities than previous processes. American manufacturing exploded. Steel required iron ore and coal, railroads demanded steel so they could move the ore and coal. Americans began pouring into the western states, driving the creation of the transcontinental railroad. Rise of the wage earner/consumer economy fostered monopolies of oil, sugar, salt, copper, tin, even paper bags. With the rise of the American uber wealthy class, the excesses of the Gilded Age began. Many women who benefited from their husband's success became drivers of the American Arts & Crafts Movement.

WOMEN'S (cont.)



Monopolists

And what changed in women's roles as a result of this economic upset? In many cases, they entered the wage paid workforce (along with children). Why? Because they worked cheaper than men. For women with wage earning husbands, the most telling indicator of change in their role might be the emergence of the "Cult of True Womanhood." Initially defined by historian Barbara Welter in 1966, the Four Tenets of the Cult of True Womanhood were:

- Piety
- Purity
- Domesticity
- Submissiveness

Clearly, women were expected to stay humble, stay wholesome, and to stay home. In fact, women were expected to control the excessive drives of their husbands through their good examples. Failure of the husband through straying or drinking was often blamed on failure of the wife. This model of women's responsibilities influenced the options available to women during the Arts & Crafts Movement. Many women with the economic means turned to art, crafts and/or social causes in England and America. The ties of the English Arts & Crafts movement to socialism and social causes insured American women exposure to that movements' political and aesthetic principles. Despite these limiting stereotypes, many women played important roles in the Arts & Crafts Movement.

Jane Addams provides a prime example of an American woman, inspired by an English social movement, returning to the United States and putting that inspiration to work. Toynbee Hall was an English settlement house - a facility where people of higher classes 'settled', to help people who were living in poverty. Returning to Chicago, she founded the settlement house Hull House with Ellen Gates Starr. Wary of simply copying Toynbee, she wrote, "Always on the alert lest American Settlements should become mere echoes and imitations of the English movement, I found myself assenting to what was shown me only with part of my consciousness which had been formed by reading the English social movements, while at the same time the rustic American looked on in detached comment." Those social movements included "a great deal of Ruskin... and (we) liked the most abstruse parts the best." In 1897, the connection between the English Arts & Crafts Movement and social issues came full circle, when an Easter Art Exhibit at Hull House led to founding of the Chicago Society of Arts and Crafts.



Jane Addams

In 1880, Maria Longworth Nichols Storer founded Rookwood Pottery, a well-known source of collectible Arts & Crafts pottery. She was the daughter of Joseph Longworth, an American

WOMEN'S (cont.)



Hull House

lawyer, real-estate magnate, art collector, and philanthropist. Her position of advantage allowed her to study at the School of Design in Cincinnati, taking classes in china-painting. Her work was on display in the Women's Pavilion at the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. There, she was also exposed to and inspired by Japanese and French ceramics. Unique glazes and kiln temperatures helped make Rookwood pottery a popular American art pottery.

Roycroft is a name well known in Arts & Crafts circles, along with its founder, Elbert Hubbard. Two women played important roles at Roycroft – both of them married to Hubbard (at different times). His first wife was Bertha Crawford Hubbard. She collaborated in startup of the Roycroft Press, after visiting Morris's Kelmscott Press. Her artistry greatly influenced the Roycroft's illuminated publications and hand-painted china. Hubbard's second wife was Alice Moore Hubbard. She was general manager for the Roycroft collective and Manager of the Roycroft Inn. She also served as Principal of Roycroft School for Boys. Mrs. Hubbard authored several works, including:

- Justinian and Theodora, 1906; with Elbert Hubbard
- Woman's Work, 1908
- Life Lessons, 1909
- The Basis of Marriage, 1910
- The Myth in Marriage, 1912



Marie Longworth Nichols Storer

And what of Jane Burden? Miss Burden was born poor, the daughter of a stableman and a domestic servant. She met William Morris and Dante Gabrielle Rossetti at a performance of the Drury Lane Theatre Company. Both were enamored with her beauty and she modelled for both of them. It was William Morris who asked her to marry him, though, and she did – despite the fact she later admitted she never really loved him. Jane Morris did not waste her new position, becoming expert in ancient embroidery techniques. Eventually she supervised and embroidered for Morris & Co. It is unlikely Jane Morris would have been as successful or had the influence she did on the Arts & Crafts Movement, without her 'socially acceptable' connection to William Morris. And so, the social roles of women both limited and benefited her.

Not all contributors to the Arts & Crafts Movement involved managing inns or starting large social reform efforts. Many were just artists, creating works that reflected the values of the Movement. Maybe they knew about the Arts & Crafts Movement, maybe they didn't. One such artist was Josephine Evans of Denver, Colorado. And so, this story comes full circle. At the Center for Colorado Women's History several of Miss

WOMEN'S (cont.)

Evan's pieces are on display. Two book covers and a picture frame show excellent mastery of leatherworking techniques, comparable to work shown in Roycroft's 1912 Copper and Leather catalog. Overshadowing even these examples is a cabinet covered in embossed leather panels. Its flowers and leaves and coloring are exquisite, a superb piece of craftsmanship.

The Arts & Crafts Movement was clearly influenced by women as well as men. They may not have had the spotlight of some men, but their contributions were invaluable.



A: Bertha Crawford Hubbard B: Alice Moore Hubbard



STUDIO HOME TOUR for JULIE LEIDEL

Sept. 16 & 17 10am to 5pm



2023
Artists of Evergreen
OPEN DOOR STUDIOS

SEPTEMBER 16 & 17, 2023
WE'RE ALWAYS THE 3RD WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER!

Roycroft Master Artisan Julie Leidel invites you all to her home Sept. 16 & 17, 2023 for Evergreen Open Door Studios. Her artwork will be on display, and her art studio will be full of artwork in progress. Original artwork and prints will be for sale, and there will also be a discount tent of things that have to go, like scratch & dent, overstock, and irregulars. Julie will present a talk on her Arts & Crafts inspiration, and there will be a process talk in the studio about how she makes her various styles of art. She will be taking orders for commission artwork, and there will be appetizers and drinks on hand. As you park on the street and walk up the driveway, you can also take the circular forest hiking path around her property. There will be self-guided tours to the tree house and backyard as well. Come see why Evergreen has been the muse on her shoulder these past seven years.

Julie is just one of twenty-six artists on the home studio tour that weekend in Evergreen, so download the tour guidebook with maps and directions to each artist's home and you can make an entire weekend of it. Visit other artist studios and see why Julie is so honored to live in a community with so many talented artisans.

Julie Leidel

20

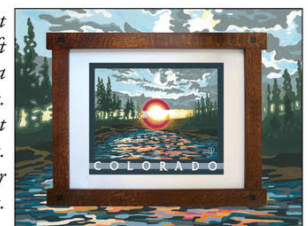
See Map Pages 14-15

Medium: Gouache, Acrylic, Enamel, Mixed Media

Inspired by the Arts & Crafts Movement (1880-1920) and the WPA era, Roycroft

Master Artisan Julie Leidel evokes a feeling of yesteryear through her artwork.

Craftsman oak frames often complement her gouache, acrylic, and enamel paintings. Originals & prints in 6 sizes are available for over 180+ paintings.



Directions: 6582 Annapurna Drive

From North Turkey Creek Rd & Kilimanjaro Dr: Go 1.6 mi on Kilimanjaro. Left onto Olympus Dr, go .5 mi to a sharp right onto Annapurna Dr. 2nd driveway on the right where the mailbox says LEIDEL. Park on street & walk on up.

303.263.8577 • TheBungalowCraft.com

THE VICTORIAN HOUSE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

By Beth Bradford



Bryony working on her silver porringer

This is Part 3 in a series of 4 articles

Bryony does not appear to have any problems in producing her silver porringer as the process of raising (hammering to form the bowl shape) the silver is not far removed from the processes she is used to employing. Her largest concern is in creating a pair of flawlessly symmetrical handles soldered to the bowl. She works independently to create a beautiful porringer that is not far removed from the inspiration piece. In addition, she provides Rod with a silver ring for an unassigned project he undertakes to create a candle sconce with ceramic leaf decorations.



Ilsa's parlor wallpaper

Ilsa designs the wallpaper around a leafy background pattern produced by one existing block, approximately two feet square. The integrated final floral design has three colors,

so two additional blocks are needed. Rod helps in cutting one of the wood blocks. Ilsa gets help from a wallpaper expert with the printing process and from another expert artisan with the hand retouching. In the Arts and Crafts era, men would have handled the wood printing blocks as some blocks would require a two-person team to maneuver. Women would have finalized the wallpaper with the hand retouching. The printing of the needed amount of paper for the parlor walls took 22 hours and approximately 2300 block prints. Finally, four of the crafters work as a team to hang the wallpaper.



Stephen working on the centerpiece fireplace surround tile

Stephen produces tiles for the fireplace surround including a centerpiece tile replicating a front elevation of the house. Unfortunately, the program doesn't highlight either this finished product or Rod's finished candle sconce.

After the finished room is revealed and critiqued, the craftspeople can relax. They are entertained by a troupe of Morris Dancers who engage the crafters in dancing.

There are two quotes from the first episode that highlight the psychological undercurrents of the first week of the crafters' experiences. One of the judges remarks on "the amount of patience that the crafter needed to achieve these beautiful objects ... you have to admire that and you have to respect that". From the craftsperson's viewpoint, Bryony states, "It's been quite a big learning curve to work with people who work in quite different

VICTORIAN (cont.)

ways from me. Knowing when to talk to people, when not to talk to people about something ... that's a really valuable thing to learn".

In the second episode, Ilsa becomes the project manager for the transformation of the master bedroom. The team of Rod and Abby are assigned creation of a bed inspired by an Ambrose Hill designed Heal and Sons commercially produced bed, Stephen is assigned a decorative panel inspired by three Mary Seton Watts gesso panels, and Niamh is assigned the creation of a bedspread inspired by a May Morris embroidered panel.

Time constraints seem less of a problem this week with time taken for a countryside picnic.

Since the bed is to use the construction methods of a commercial product, the simplified design uses precut ash wood, resulting in a substantial time savings when compared to the first week's wood chair production. The main decorative elements are copper inset diamond plaques on the footboard. Despite Abby and Rod's teamwork, all hands are needed to sand the bed pieces to complete it in time.

Stephen needs the help of a gesso panel expert as he has never worked with the materials making up a panel. Gesso is a mixture of chalk, linseed oil, and glue. Rope and felt elements are used to create raised designs and set into the gesso.

Niamh designs the bedspread's main embroidery as a diamond shaped element signifying the changing seasons. She pulls all the crafters together with embroidery lessons so everyone can work on stitching the side panels gathered around the table in the evenings.

Bryony creates a hammered and riveted copper clock with acorn, oak leaf and heart motifs. Ilsa whitewashes the bedroom walls and designs and paints a mural with an Arts and Crafts style motto.

After the reveal of the finished bedroom, the crafters enjoy a freshwater swim in period swimwear.



Abby and Rod's bed, Niamh's bedspread, and Bryony's copper clock

The Arts & Crafts Messenger, the newsletter of the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, is published quarterly for the society's members as part of their membership contribution.

All articles are ©2023 the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, with rights reverting to the authors after publication.

Directors & Officers of the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society:

President:

Mark Davidson.....303.355.8582
mdavidson@fwlaw.com

Vice President / Education Chair:

Cynthia Shaw303.324.1269
cshaw8623@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Beth Bradford303.778.0580
Bbradford6@gmail.com

Secretary:

Jeff Icenhower.....970.310.0756
Icenhower@aol.com

Membership Chair:

Helene ArendtCACSmembership@gmail.com
www.csbmetalsmith.com

Tour Coordinator:

Robert Rust720.732.6922
rust2r@me.com

Director-At-Large:

Dennis Barrett303.744-8682
dennis.barrett@du.edu

Newsletter:

Jenny Goring.....
www.jennygoring.com

All correspondence concerning the society or membership should be sent to Colorado Arts & Crafts Society, 8623 Garland Court, Arvada CO 80005



www.coloarts-crafts.org
8623 Garland Court
Arvada CO 80005

A Year of CACS Membership

Annual membership fees are below.

You can make your membership payment through PayPal to:
[Paypal.me/CACSmembership](https://www.paypal.com/US/membership).

Checks can also be made out to the Colorado Arts & Crafts Society and mailed to: Beth Bradford at 413 S. Humboldt St. Denver, CO 80209.

Please contact our membership chair, Helene Arendt at CACSmembership@gmail.com with any questions.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Full-time-student membership | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Artisan/Guild membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family membership (same address required) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Individual membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Organization or Business membership) | <input type="checkbox"/> GIFT MEMBERSHIP |

Name _____

Organization or Business _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Clip out this message and send it along to your friend:

This is your ticket
To a world of
Beauty and Delight



A Year's
Membership
in the Colorado
Arts and Crafts
Society!