

Presented by The Reading-Berks Guild of Craftsmen

THE STANLEY G. SELTZ STUDENT AWARDS PROGRAM

in honor of Hedwig Giering Miller, 1900–2001

THE HEDWIG MILLER FIBER AWARD

“Heddie,” as her friends knew her, was always busy and always asking “What can I do next?” Heddie truly loved life!

Born in Dessau, Germany, in 1900, Heddie remembers, “I always had my nose pressed up against windows trying to see how things were made.” After her father was conscripted into the service in World War I, Heddie’s dear mother died, leaving Heddie and her sister in the care of an aunt. Heartbroken on many levels, Heddie was then forced to leave school and the classes she loved.

Never one to shrink from a challenge, Heddie quickly applied herself to an apprenticeship in sewing and needlework and embraced her assignments with gusto. She quickly rose to the level of ‘journeyman’ and then ‘master’ which allowed her to teach her craft. Much admired for her modern designs, she consistently did more than was expected of her, and always delighted her patrons with her innovative mastery of the fabric items she constructed for their use.

After the war, Heddie hiked every weekend with a group of young people and during one such adventure she met her true love, Werner. Soon thereafter, Werner came to the United States to work for Textile Machine Works in West Reading. As soon as she received her permit to leave Germany two years later, Heddie stepped foot on American soil. She and Werner were married that very day.

Never interested in just one craft, Heddie continually jumped to something new. Fascinated by the subject of man’s first visit to the moon, Heddie enrolled in an oil painting class at the YWCA. Of her

numerous renderings, she produced one exceptionally noteworthy oil of earth as seen from the lunar surface.

Heddie skillfully pushed her work in amazing and productive ways. As a 100 year-old centenarian, she insisted she would continue tatting and crocheting “...as long as my brain is all right and my hands still work!”

Below left: Heddie in 1905.

Below right: Heddie in 2000 at age 100.

