

COMMUNITY NEWS

# Rug work selected for international honor

By MANDY MARTIN  
STAFF WRITER

Another international accolade has come for Shiloh fabric artist Germaine James. The master rug hooker has had a piece selected by a jury from 120 world-wide submission for inclusion in an American book.

"A Celebration of Rug Hooking VII", published by Starlight Publications, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, includes a full colour reproduction of Germaine's piece "Creation".

"I feel very honoured," Germaine says of her selection. It is the first time she has entered the juried competition. Hers is one of 30 pieces featured.

"Creation" is far from an crafts project. Seeing the piece is to appreciate the hours and hours of time that have gone into it.

Each piece of wool was aniline dyed. Starting with basic beige wool fabric, the cloth was washed to remove all traces of lanoline. From there, each piece of fabric was dyed a basic pastel colour. Cutting those lengths into measured strips of material, the laborious chore of hand-dipping and dying the cloth swatches was undertaken in Germaine's downstairs work room.

"My goal was to dye the cloth swatches so that no dye remained in the boiling water once I was through with one colour," explains Germaine. "Each piece of cloth was hand-dipped up to one-third the length and then dried.



"Creation", the rug designed and hooked by master rug hooker Germaine James of Shiloh, has been selected as one of the 30 works from around the world for inclusion in the book "A Celebration of Hand-Hooked Rugs VII" published in August.

Photo by Mandy Martin

From there, I mixed the next colour dye in boiling water and dipped the cloth in up to another third the length. The process was repeated for a third colour."

The result is variegated lengths of cloth with colour building and blending from darkest at one end through lightest at the top. Those pieces are cut into shoelace-wide lengths for the rug hooking.

The design of "Creation" is elaborate and - as Germaine laughs, some feel resembled primordial ooze from which human creation evolved.

But, on closer inspection, the runner includes the initials of four generations of James family.

Germaine's expertise, teaching skills, innovations and dyeing techniques have

worldwide acclaim. Since 1972, she has written for Canadian, British and American magazines and newsletters. She is in the process of writing a book on one phase of her art form.

For Heritage Hands, the local guild of the Ontario Rug Hookers, Germaine has been a welcome asset. She will resume teaching classes again this fall for the Colborne-based group.

"There are some wonderfully talented people in this area," Germaine enthuses. Herself an enthusiast since 1968, she continues to be delighted and intrigued with the never-ending learning and development rug hooking presents. Her own works are in private collections in Canada, the United States and England.

## Rug hooking exhibit September 9, 10, 11

The beauty of hand-dyed, designed and crafted hooked rugs will be on display in Colborne September 9, 10 and 11. The limited run show, featuring the works of Colborne and Area members of Heritage Hands, the local guild of the Ontario Rug Hooking Guild, will be open business hours at McGlennon Insurance, King Street East in downtown Colborne.

The guild, preparing for the resumption of its regular monthly meetings the third Tuesday evening of every month, is urging anyone interested in the craft to come out to the display and then to the inaugural September 15th meeting at the Colborne Municipal building.

The guild has deliberately chosen the downtown Colborne location for daytime display so those coming in and out of town on business will have easy access to the exhibit.

The artistry of the works on display is breathtaking, ranging from original designs to custom crafted wall hangings. Many of the wools are hand-dyed by the artisans.

28