

# GCFCG Newsletter

April 1986

Vol. III No. 1



a von Helsing complex. Vampires are not supposed to have heart attacks...they're supposed to **Give Them!**

To be serious, it was a mild heart attack; I am doing all of the things that the Drs. want me to; I have given up smoking, cold turkey; and I am currently also off caffeine. I feel better than I have any right to, and I expect that that is due in great part to what Bobby described as "A Great Outpouring of Love!" that has come from many of you. THANK-YOU! for all the cards the telephone calls, the offers of help, and the many ways that you have said "WE CARE." Bobby and I are both very grateful, and we will be able to express our thanks to many of you, in person at CC-4.

Unfortunately, one of the stresses that I have had to give up is running the Functions Division for Atlanta. I will still M/C the Masquerade down there, and I will do my best to keep you informed as to what is happening from Sue Who and Maurine Dorris. By the way, any specific questions, forms, and correspondence about the ConFederation Masquerade should be addressed to:

Maurine Dorris  
410 North 16th Street  
Nashville, TN 37206

If you intend to compete, you must be registered by July 31st. If you have not done so, write to Maurine Today!

The latest word I have from Rick Albertson, is that the Technical budget for ConFederation has been cut drastically, and as a consequence, both the "Image Mag" and the rear screen units have been cut. This means that Rick will not be able to do the "color wash" that he had planned as described in the last Newsletter, and I am not certain how you will be able to see the stage if you are in the back of the hall. Maybe somebody will set up a binocular concession, and if you are not competing, perhaps it would

be a good idea to bring your own binoculars or a telescope.

Speaking of Atlanta, Barb Schofield is going full tilt with her Costumers' Suite for Atlanta. Details are inside, but she and Martin could also use some financial assistance. Our pledge is in, how about the rest of you?

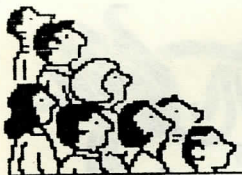
For those of you who had not heard, "The GCFCG Newsletter" is on the Hugo Ballot. We sent the message, and I'm going to do my best to convince Kelly Turner (and the rest of you) that it's worth voting for. Many Thanks to all of you who nominated it. Now, if by any strange chance we should get enough votes to win, everyone who attends the Hugos **in costume** is hereby asked to come up and receive the thing as part of the group because the Newsletter is **Ours** - it belongs to all of us!

This appears to be a "How to do it" issue of the Newsletter. Inside you will find Bobby's article on making a custom body mannequin with duct tape, a tee shirt, and fibre fill. (So I lied about the garbage bag.) We also have a report on Sue Wachter's beading demonstration at the April Founding Chapter meeting and Part 1 of a two part "Crash Course on Beading" by Karen Turner. Don Saker and Tom Atkinson review the Balticon XX Masquerade, and Denice Girardeau discusses a problem we observed with it, while Linda Sweeting's pictures of the winners make up our photo spread.

We have reprinted an article from the Washington Post on a source for Buttons, and depending upon our page count, we may or may not have room to run some other source lists sent to us by Linda Sweeting and by John Flynn. If they do not appear in this issue, they will in the next.

Last week, I received a copy of the CC-3 tape from Charlie Ellis. If you have not received yours, write him at:  
2910 Taney Road  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
(301) 244-8344

And finally, enclosed is a copy of a poison pen letter that was received by some members of the Guild. Though it was addressed to me, as of this date I have not received a copy through the mail.



# Balticon 20 Masquerade

by Don Sakers

The 1986 Balticon masquerade will probably \*not\* be the finest masquerade on the East Coast this year -- but only because of a small weekend party scheduled for late August in Atlanta. Regardless of the upcoming Worldcon, the Balticon 20 masquerade was quick, efficient, entertaining, and featured more talent than you're likely to see at any regional con east of the Continental Divide.

Held on Friday nite, the Masquerade was once again the best-attended function at Balticon; even though it was held in the Hyatt's largest room, there was standing room only. Luckily, this was a Guild-run masquerade, so it went quickly and no one died from heat stroke. There were fewer entrants than in the past, yet the quality of the competition was very high. Shorter and better is a formula that seems to work well. A complete list of award-winners follows this review, and pictures will be found elsewhere in this Newsletter; here we will just tell about a few of the costumes that impressed us most.

First of all, the Young Fans managed to make a respectable showing this year. Jason Condon was hilarious as a young Marty Gear; Jason may be next year's Emcee, if Marty can put the bite on him. Josephine Fredholm as St. Alia of the Knife, from the movie DUNE, was wonderfully done, with poise, self-control and remarkable stage presence.

In the adult divisions, The Aztec Sun God, complete with mirrors, feathers and all kinds of glitzy and impressive stuff, was a show-stealer. Animal X's Snow Queen was a gorgeous costume that began as an elaborate white outfit and won gasps of delight and applause; when the top layer was removed, revealing a second, multicolored costume, the audience went wild. The Bone

People made a stunning presentation -- a princess and guard, whose costumes were made entirely of bone, skin, fur and feathers...all-natural materials. The bone was elaborately carved and decorated with beautiful scrimshaw.

Doug Clayton's Weapons-Master was a command performance -- in addition to designing and making the costume, he wrote his own background music, and performed it on tape. A couple of distinguished guests appeared onstage. The Chair of Costume Con 5 did a wonderful Kabuki-style dancer in silks, headdress and makeup. And an authentic-looking Mark Twain showed up, coming in with Comet Halley once again, as you'd expect.

Perhaps the most impressive group presentation was The Incarnations of Immortality from Piers Anthony's series: Death, War, Fate, Nature and Time, each in a unique costume with props ranging from Fate's glowing skein of yarn to Death's switchblade scythe.

There were, of course, touches of levity in this year's masquerade. Ricky Dick and Myla did "Katie and the Captain" -- a future interpretation of GONE WITH THE WIND, featuring a silver-faced Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler in a famous scene from the book. John & Dorsey Flynn did a pair of Lawas in Georgian dress, with beautiful and convincing masks. The funniest presentation was "The Previously-Unseen Last Episode of Batman and Robin," in which that arch-villainess the Catwoman faced the Dynamic Duo for what may be the last time.

The Re-creation division was well-represented too. From GHOSTBUSTERS was Gozer and friend: a white-clad Gozer and brown puppydog with horns and glaring red eyes. But the one costume that left the audience with mouths wide open was the very best

Glinda the Good Witch that has ever been seen on stage. All she lacked was the halo of light. All told, this year's masquerade was the perfect job we've all come to expect from Balticon.

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## Balticon XX Winners

### NOVICE DIVISION:

Best Make-up: Thrax the Cyclopien  
Thomas Berry Calvit

Prettiest Novice: Tarot -Temperance  
Sue Shambaugh

Best-in-Class: Lady Nicole Louise  
Suzanne R. Wachter

### JOURNEYMAN DIVISION

Honorable Mention: Incarnations of  
Immortality  
Atkinson, Blackburn, Palmer, Weiss  
and Willeford

Most Humorous: Revolting Troll  
Roberta Rogow

Best Presentation: King Simon of  
LeGree

Denice Girardeau

Best Workmanship: Solitaire and  
Shandar  
Guy & Sharon Frechette

Best in Class: Illegal Alien  
Diane & Jim Kovalcin

### RECREATION DIVISION

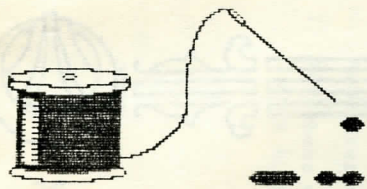
Best Presentation: Rum Tum Tugger  
Kathy Mayer, Patti & Philip Mercier

Most Humorous: Batman, the Previously Un-Seen Last Episode  
Woods, DeGuardiola, & Scheeler

Best in Class (tie)  
Gozer & the Terror Dog  
Guzzo, Davis, & Galintine

Glinda the Good  
Wendy Ross

(winners list cond. page 6, col 3)



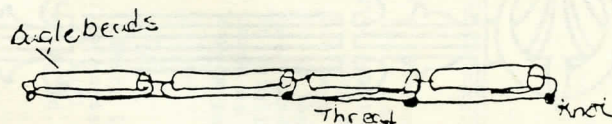
# Fringe Fandom: Beaded Fringe

HOW-TO by Sue Wachter

On Sunday, April 20, Sue Wachter presented a workshop on making beaded fringe. She supplied all of the necessary materials and after exhibiting her marvelous beaded costumes, she demonstrated flat beading with bugle beads and the creation of two types of fringe using bugle beads with small Rocheals and sequins for accent.

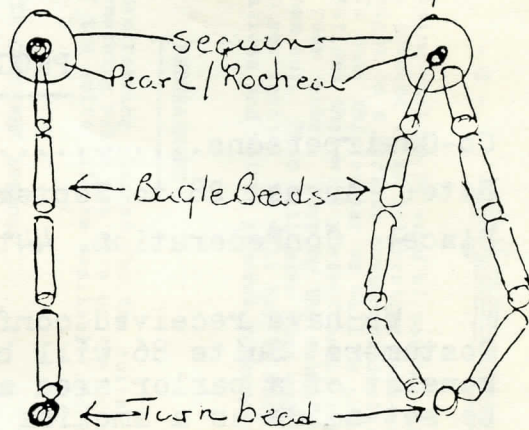
To begin any beading, you must prepare your fabric by cutting it larger than your pattern piece. Fray-check the edges or turn them under and baste. Mark the outline of your pattern in chalk or wash-able marker on the reverse of the fabric. Do the same with the beading design. Prepare the thread by waxing it with beeswax and knotting it securely after having threaded it through a special beading needle.

Single drop fringe is done at the edge of a seam for fringe effect, along a line for the same reason, or in spot locations for shine. Prepare your fabric as for flat beading and prepare your needle and thread the same way. Starting at one end of your line bring your needle through from the back to the right side of the fabric. Put a sequin on the needle



## FLAT BEADING

### Drop Beading



Single Strand

then a pearl or rocheal bead, put your bugle beads on to the needle and thread for your length. Take a pearl or rocheal (this is your turn bead) and go through the hole once, now slide this up to meet the fabric. Do not go back through the turn bead. Take the thread back up inside the bugle beads, through the pearl/rocheal and sequin to the back of the fabric pulling firmly but leaving a little slack for movement and to keep the beads from cutting the thread. Make a tailor's (French) knot and DO NOT CUT the thread. Taking your needle, push through the fabric at a sequin's distance from the first strand and begin again.

For loop drop fringe, prepare as above and bring your thread through from the back of the fabric. Slide a sequin and small rocheal on your thread, now slide on the amount of bugle beads for the length you need and put a turn bead at the end. This time you continue with an equal number of bugle beads up to the original pearl/rocheal and sequin. Take your thread through the bead/pearl and sequin to the back of the fabric, pulling firmly but leaving a little slack for movement and to keep the beads from cutting the thread. At the back of the garment, make a tailor's (French) knot but DO NOT cut the thread. Tking your needle, push through the fabric at a sequin's distance and begin again.

There are many patterns and variations you can make by alternating the types and colors of beads you use. You are limited only by your imagination.



# Costumers' Suite 86

PROGRESS REPORT 2

APRIL 10, 1986

Co-Chairpersons.....Barb Schofield & Martin Miller  
 Date: August 28 to September 1, 1986  
 Place: ConFederation, 44th World Science Fiction Convention

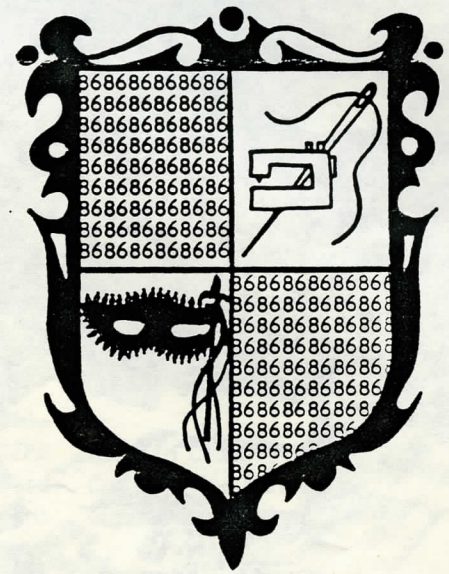
We have received confirmation of our hotel reservation. Costumers' Suite 86 will be in the Atlanta Hilton. It will consist of a parlor area and a connecting bedroom that will be set aside as a smoking area.

We selected the Hilton as the Hyatt Regency will not be used for any convention programs and the Marriott Marquis did not have any suites with connecting bedrooms in this price range.

## ADVERTISING

Costumers have expressed concern that the suite should be limited to those fans who are serious about costuming. However it is also important to reach new costume fans who are not members of Costumapa or a Guild chapter. Keeping both of these objectives in mind we have decided on the following advertising policy:

- 1) At ConFederation there will not be any obvious advertising such as posters or flyers. The emblem shown at the right will be used to identify the suite.  
 The room number will be posted on the convention notice/message board with the emblem. Hours that the suite will be posted on the suite door as they are known.
- 2) We will attempt to contact as many costumers as possible prior to ConFederation, through the Costumapa, Guilds and Costume Con 4, to tell them in advance about the suite and how to locate it.



3) At ConFederation advertising will be by word of mouth. If you see a costumer you know, someone in an interesting hall costume, or anyone else who might be a serious costumer, invite them to drop by the suite. To make this easier we will be printing business card size invitations that will present basic information about the suite and the room number. Drop by the suite and pick up a handful and pass them out. This will save time explaining in detail to each person you invite. We will try to word the cards as personal invitations and not as general announcements for a room party.

PROGRAMMING

There is no official programming planned for the suite. If anyone wants to organize something write and give us the details and we will let you know if the suite will be available and it can be arranged.

MASTER COSTUMER BUTTONS

A note to those will Master Costumer Buttons:  
Please wear your button at the suite. Sallys' original purpose in giving out the buttons to identify master costumers, so that other costumers will be able to ask questions, is a good idea and should be utilized. We will encourage costumers to talk to master costumers wearing their buttons.

VIDEO

Several costumers have offered to bring tapes of past convention masquerades to show in the suite. If you can bring tapes or a VCR please write and let us know so we can co-ordinate things and avoid having several people bring tapes of the same masquerade.

PARTIES

The following parties are planned and starting times will be posted in the suite:

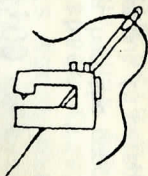
- 1) In keeping with the tradition of Friday night horror panels and because we like Vampires,

"THE FRIDAY NIGHT VAMPIRE PARTY"

Come dressed as your favorite vampire--past, present or future!

- 2) For those who survive the Sunday night masquerade.....

"THE MONDAY NIGHT MASQUARADE DEAD-DOG PARTY"



UPDATED BUDGET

Atlanta Hilton - Parlor and 1 bedroom:		(US \$)
	\$300.00/night X 5 nights (Thur-Tues) -	\$1,500.00
	- Plus 8% tax -	120.00
	<u>Total Cost Of Room:</u>	<u>\$1,620.00</u>
Projected Personal Contribution (by us):	\$1,000.00	
Pledged Contributions to date:	150.00	1,150.00
Balance Required:		<u>\$ 470.00</u>

We need contributions to help make up the balance of \$470.00 as shown above to have the suite for all five nights. If this is not possible we will drop Thursday night and have the suite from Friday to Tuesday. We need your contribution no matter what the amount is. Everything helps.  
If any surplus money is left over after the basic cost of the rooms is paid we will use it to buy soda, munchies etc. If this does not happen it will be a 'bring your own' situation.

VOLUNTEERS

We need fans to contribute their time to help us keep the suite open as much as possible. We hope to organize the suite to be open during the afternoon and evenings with a break for dinner. The suite may be closed during other costuming program items to allow everyone to attend. Please write to us at the address below and use some of your free time to help out.

COSTUMERS' SUITE 88?

With Costumers' Suite 86 becoming a reality we are thinking ahead to 1988. Costuming Fandom is more organized and unified through the Costumers Guilds and Costumapa. There is a need for an informal meeting place at worldcons and we hope to be able to supply this with our Costumers' Suites.

To start our fund for Costumers' Suite 88 we will be selling supporting membership buttons that will be available soon.

It has also been proposed to sell buttons with silly sayings, puns, cartoons etc, to raise money. If you have any ideas that we could use please submit them and we will try to have these buttons on sale at ConFederation. Please do not submit ideas that have been printed elsewhere and are copyright to a source other than yourself.

Our mailing address:

Barb Schofield (416) 699-0479  
c/o THE COSTUME WORKSHOP  
Box 784, Adelaide St PO  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
M5C 2K1

# 4 58-Year-Old Baltimore Store Is Right on the Buttons

WASHINGTON BUSINESS/APRIL 28, 1986

By Rebecca Kolberg  
United Press International

## BALTIMORE

Buttons may not be big business, but the humble bits of plastic, wood and bone have helped the Schenk family store survive the decline of Baltimore's garment district.

Since 1928, Morton Schenk & Co. has supplied buttons, zippers, thread and other sewing supplies to clothing manufacturers, tailors and household seamstresses.

Thousands of buttons—from huge, orange saucers to green rhinestone ovals to elegant mother-of-pearl—colorfully parade across the long shelves of Schenk's rather drab retail space, luring buyers from as far away as Virginia and New York.

Another floor of the turn-of-the-century loft warehouse is devoted to box upon box of more mundane buttons, such as those used on uniforms or work clothes.

"I don't think anybody is going into this anymore. It's not an easy business," said Victor Schenk, who took over the family enterprise following his father's death more than two decades ago.

Schenk said although his store's future appears bright because more people are sewing at home, it is growing increasingly difficult to stock quality buttons and other supplies in a wide range of colors and sizes.



Sidney Brown, employe at Morton Schenk & Co.

for more than 30 years, displays some wares.

"You can't get high quality unless you pay a lot of money . . . . Nobody wants to make fancy buttons; it's not profitable," said Schenk, who buys mostly buttons imported from France, Italy and other European nations.

At one time, Schenk said Holland was a major supplier because many buttons were made out of cheese casing, but that process has grown too costly. Also falling by the wayside are natural dyes, which Schenk said help buttons retain their hues far longer than synthetic coloring.

Another "total change" that hit the sewing and dry-cleaning supply store during the late 1950s was the demise of Baltimore's clothing manufacturing industry, Schenk said.

A store that once supplied dozens of local tailors and garment factories has been forced to turn to other outlets in order to remain afloat in a sea of foreign-made clothes.

Modern-day customers have included movie-production companies, a New York collector who loaded \$600 worth of buttons into his car and a General Motors Corp. buyer who purchased fabric to use in a new line of trucks.

In an era of synthetic thread and plastic buttons stamped to look like leather, Schenk's shelves are a tailor's dream, with silk thread, hair cloth and hand-beaded buttons. And prices often are below other stores' levels—with a woven, leather button costing less than its fake plastic counterpart at a dime store and the most expensive, rhinestone buttons going for \$4 each.

One reason for Schenk's reasonable price tags and wide selection is a stock built up and maintained over 58 years. Items that have accumulated dust for decades may be snapped up when they return to favor in another fashion age.

"Shoulder pads didn't sell at all for years after the 1940s. Now I can't keep them in stock," Schenk said. Rhinestone buckles and buttons experienced a similar comeback, with the large, loud buttons from the '60s expected to be next on the fashion recycling list.

But Schenk is not an entrepreneur to dwell on the past, and stocks Velcro and any new sewing supply that he deems "worthwhile."

As for the future, the man who dubs his trade "no different than any other business" doubts the store will stay in the Schenk family after he leaves, perhaps going the way of other garment district buildings that now house fern-filled loft apartments. ■

MORTON SCHENK & Co.  
412 W. BALTIMORE ST.  
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

(301) 685-2950

HOURS: 8:30-4:30 M-F

8:30-1:00 SAT

While I have not had the opportunity to check them out in person, I have talked with Schenks by phone and learned that they accept mail orders, (checks or M/Os no plastic) and ship by UPS. They will also ship UPS-COD, and attempt to match any buttons sent for that purpose.

The gentlemen that I spoke with stressed that buttons were only a very small part of the business, and that they also carry a very wide line of lining fabrics & speciality trims as well as special hangers, bags & zippers. We hope to have a first hand report in a future N/L.



Balticon 20 Winners (continued)

CRAFTSMAN DIVISION

Most Beautiful: Summer Morning  
Jennifer Ketcham

Rambo Award: Weapons Master  
Doug Clayton

Honorable Mention: Katey & the  
Captain  
Myla & Ricky Dick

Best in Class: The Lawas  
John & Dorsey Flynn

JUDGES' APPRECIATION AWARD  
Aztec Sun God - John D. La Mothe

**BEST-IN-SHOW**

The Snow Queen  
Animal X, Favian X, & Anglique  
Trouvere

# Beading: A Crash Course

## PART I

by Karen Turner

### YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIES:

**BEADING NEEDLES:** Available at many fabric and hobby stores as well as places that carry beads. These needles are usually very long and thin, although shorter ones are also available (but harder to find). (Dragginwood carries the shorter needles in several diameters.) As a general rule, the longer needles work better when making beaded fringe, and the shorter needles work better when making beaded appliques.

**NEEDLE THREADER:** Trying to thread a beading needle can be a frustrating experience. Although threaders sometimes break the delicate eyes of beading needles, they are often worth the risk if other methods prove ineffective.

**THREAD:** I strongly recommend Nymo Beading thread, size "D", or a reasonable equivalent. Beads will cut right through regular thread or lighter weights of Nymo (we had a friend who had an unhappy experience with Nymo size "B"). "Invisible" thread works, but knots tend to come out of it very easily. Nymo usually comes on 400 yard spools which cost approximately \$3. It is available at Berger's.

**BEESWAX:** For extra strength and to tangle-proof your thread, beeswax your thread. This is especially important on beaded fringe, which moves and therefore gets more wear and tear. Buy your beeswax from a hardware store instead of a fabric store--it costs less and is a harder kind that lasts longer.

**PELLON:** Unless you're planning on doing a design which has a lot of openwork or single lines of beads, I STRONGLY recommend that you do your flat beading separately and then applique it onto your garment. Use the heaviest weight pellow you can get to bead on. You can transfer your design lines onto white pellow using a fine-line laundry marker (ordinary felt

pen will come off on your hands). Designs can be transferred onto black pellow using chalk pencil or colored carbon paper. Although black pellow is more difficult to transfer designs onto, it produces a better-looking end result where it shows through in-between the beads.

You can also bead on "PHUN FELT", which is lighter weight pellow which comes in a variety of colors, or use permanent felt markers to color in portions of the white pellow that show through behind your beads. The woman I learned to bead from used POOL TABLE FELT to bead on, but it is expensive and the edges tend to fray.

**TWILL TAPE:** If you are making beaded fringe, you can bead onto TWILL TAPE, BIAS TAPE, SEAM BINDING, or even directly onto TRIM if you wish.

**EMBROIDERY HOOP:** To keep your beading from puckering, put your work in an embroidery hoop. You might want to get a variety of sizes to accommodate different sizes of work. If you are attempting to cover a large area or an entire garment, get the biggest hoop you can find! There are large quilting hoops available at many craft and sewing stores. Some even come with frames. Whatever size hoop you get, make sure it is the type that has an adjustment screw in the outer hoop, so you can ease the hoop over portions of your project which are already beaded.

People who bead for a living have actual beading frames, which measure several feet by several feet. The garment is marked on the fabric and then beaded before it is cut out and assembled.

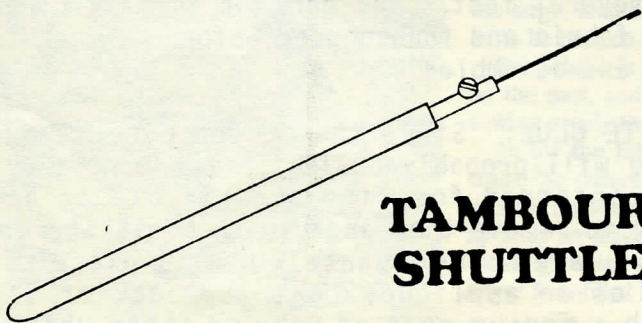
**WHITE GLUE:** Since the beaded pieces you make will probably outlast the garment they are intended for, it is desirable to be able to remove them and use them elsewhere. If you are doing a densely beaded piece to use as an applique, coat the back of it with a medium coat of Sobol or other white

glue before affixing it to your garment. The glue will strengthen the threads and keep them from coming undone. For similar protection on beaded fringe, coat all knots with Sobol. Do NOT overdo the coating of glue, or your applique will lose its flexibility!

**BEADS:** The two most common kinds of beads are SEED BEADS and BUGLE BEADS. Seed beads are the small, rounded kind most commonly used for Indian flatwork and beaded earrings. Bugle beads are the straw-shaped, shiny kind you most often see on commercial beaded garments. Bugle beads come in sizes which are based, apparently, on tenths of inches. #5's are approximately 1/2 (0.5) inch long, #10's are an inch long, etc. The longer the bead, the more expensive the price, as they are cut from glass "straws" which are hard to keep straight. You will pay a premium for anything over #5, so beware!

The most commonly used sizes of beads are 1, 2, 3, and 5. If you have chosen a design with a lot of curves, you will need to buy beads in ALL of these sizes! Use the smaller sizes as filler or to get around tight corners. If you are trying to cover a lot of area quickly or bead fringe, the longer the beads you can use, the better (use #5's as a minimum). DO NOT make fringe entirely of #1 bugle beads or seed beads--it does not reflect light worth a damn and looks the same as chainette (cloth) fringe.

**TAMBOUR SHUTTLE:** This is an OPTIONAL tool but worth mentioning. The Tambour Shuttle consists of a 1-1/2" needle which fits into a metal or wooden handle. The needle resembles a micro-miniature crochet hook. Shuttles are available from Berger's for under \$10. They currently only have one size of needle available.



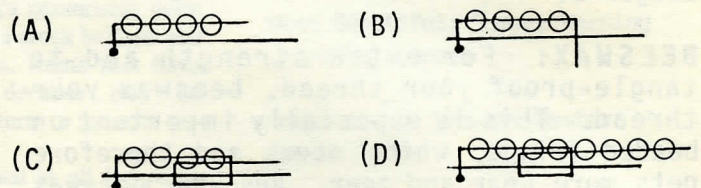
**TAMBOUR SHUTTLE**

By prestringing your beads onto Nymo thread and using the Shuttle, you can put beads onto fabric very quickly using a "chain" stitch. This has the advantage of being a very fast technique once you have mastered it. Most of the overall sequined and beaded dresses you see (such as the ones Bob Mackie is famous for) are done in 8-10 hours using a Tambour Shuttle. However, if the chain stitch is cut or damaged in any way, you lose an entire string of beads instead of one or two. Also, the Shuttle technique seems to be limited to sheer, loose-weave fabrics because (a) you have to put the rather thick needle THROUGH the fabric and (b) you have to work from the WRONG side. I'll talk more about tambouring next time.

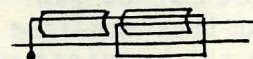
BASIC TECHNIQUES:

The simplest and most lasting way to make beaded appliques is to "embroider" the beads onto the fabric one or several at a time.

The 4-Bead Technique. (This is most effective with seed beads and #1 and #2 bugle beads.) Knot your thread. (A) Come up through your fabric and string 4 beads onto your needle. (B) Go back down through the fabric with your needle at the end of the four beads. (C) Move back two beads, come up through the fabric, and put your needle through the last two beads AGAIN. (D) String 4 more beads onto your needle and repeat.



The 2-Bead Technique. (Used with longer sizes of bugle beads, or on tight curves.) Essentially the same steps as above, except only two beads are strung at a time. You are "locking down" one bead at a time.



NEXT TIME: Fringe, Tambouring, Advanced Techniques, Tips and Hints, and Sources.



EDITORIAL

There was a rather alarming development at Balticon this year - there were very few novices competing in the masquerade. This was brought to my attention by the masquerade director and MC Marty Gear, who asked my opinion as to why I felt this was the case (if it was not just that this was the way it happened to come about this year). Almost immediately a possible answer came to mind. I discussed it with a few people and a couple of other possible reasons were brought up, but mostly the consensus was the same.

First and foremost, it is felt that they are being frightened away.

With the advent of Costume Con, the Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild and its branches - The California Costumers Mafia, the Virginia chapter, and the latest addition of the New Jersey Costumers Guild (known to its members as the Sick Pups) - costumers, who up to this point have been the freak children of fandom, have finally the opportunity to get together and form a united front. In some ways this is very good: due to the hostility of some World Con committees towards masquerades, it becomes necessary that we have some kind of organization to protect our interests. Also, the quality of costuming on the East coast regional level at least, is beginning to reflect the support which is offered in these groups because there are now people to talk to and exchange ideas with. Unfortunately, on the down side, these groups might just seem to be a barrier to those who are on the outside looking in.

This year in the Balticon greenroom, I noticed that while the more experienced costumers were greeting each other effusively, the novices and even some of those who had been in competition the year before were virtually being ignored unless they had extremely notable costumes or were brave enough to approach people on their own. Granted, we are all nervous before going on and tend to want to be around people we know as a form of comfort... yet and still.

Costumers, I've observed, are not really outgoing people outside of their own interests. They also tend to be shy and somewhat anarchistic in their behavior, which is par for the highly creative. (This is a sweeping generality, of course.)

Again at Balticon - I've realized that the programming tends to lean toward the more advanced costumers. The panels are well attended by many people who have not, as yet, been seen on the Balticon stage, and the fact that they haven't may be indicative of a need to structure some of the talks and workshops towards more primary levels.

Humankind, as a whole is fascinated by those who make the effort to construct and wear unusual clothing. Many would like the chance to do the same but lack the knowledge as to how to start.

Finally, (and this may not apply to any other convention outside of Balticon, although I will be keeping an eye out at future cons) the very reputation that Balticon has gained as having the best masquerade on the East Coast may be discouraging many who hesitate to venture among the perceived wolves. However, if that is the case, why are there so many who brave the bigger and hopefully, better World Con stages?

When I was an up and coming costumer, (as opposed to the hoary, age bitten veteran that I am now...) I was put through a gauntlet of sorts by the established community. For several years, I was basically ignored until I had "proven" myself to be, if not good, then at least persistent. I slowly but surely got to know and be known to others until finally I am accepted as a "serious" costumer. I'm not saying this was done deliberately or with vicious intent, but it did happen, and I see the pattern continuing even now. Those who are less intrepid then myself could very easily be totally discouraged by this attitude. Running this same gauntlet with the addition of a Guild might have defeated even me (though I doubt it, knowing the type of person I am). Its unconscious intimidation on our parts.

There are some who would say "well and good; if they can't stand the heat they shouldn't be in the competition." If this were a sporting event where part of the game plan was to psych out your opponent so that he/she performs at a lesser level, this type of attitude would be perfectly acceptable. (Not nice, but acceptable.) However, my perception of this type of competition (and no one correct me if I'm wrong) is that the main object is to try and better my efforts every time I go out there and in the process try to impress the judges that my costume is of merit and should be awarded. Due to the nature of this type of competition, there must be other people entered so that there is a scale of sorts to measure against. That means that we are competing against other peoples efforts, not other people. (There is a fine distinction here which must be perceived.)

As an example, when I compete against others in my particular class (Craftsman now - groan) I'm trying to prove that my costume meets the standards of the class, not that I am going to show them up as the losers they are. (Humor. Ha!!!)

Back to Balticon - I think that once we all realize just what it is we're doing and why it becomes relatively simple to effect a cure. We all love costuming or we wouldn't be doing it. (Even the ego boo wouldn't be enough if we hated doing the work.) If we want to continue doing it in an atmosphere of friendly and worthy competition we must all make the effort to open up to each other and to the newcomers. Its a risk since there is a chance of rejection and no one likes to be rejected. But only through the constant infusion of "new blood" will the art of costuming move forward, and for it to prosper and continue we must constantly be moving forward.

Denice Girardeau



# ALL WRAPPED UP !

by Bobby Gear

There are always times when we need to be in two places at one time. Ours came this winter when our friend, Katharine Condon, offered to make historical costumes for us if we would only (1) buy the material (2) help with the research and (3) move into their place so she could fit us at will. Well, we allowed her to twist our arms for all of 2 1/2 seconds before we threw ourselves at her feet in gratitude, took out a second mortgage to pay for the things, and made ready to move to Mt. Airy, Md., in order to be handy for fittings.

As we planned this escapade, it became obvious that we really didn't fit into the Condon's house - and the commute would be hell, anyway. We don't own dress forms (one of those things we're hoping to get around to ...) so what could we do besides drive an hour each way three or four times a week? I remembered a quick comment that Peggy Kennedy had made during a panel at LasCon T'ree - you can make your own dress forms from T-shirts and duct tape, said she. Aha !

And so we went to the store. There we purchased T-shirts in sizes that would be comfortably large on each of us and a total of 8 rolls (four for each body) of that silver duct tape that flexes and curves and sticks like a som-ov-a-bee. We went to the Condons' and the four of us began to create as follows.

- 1) Wearing whatever underpinnings you usually wear, don the T-shirt.
- 2) First the person (or persons - it can be quite a job) doing the tape application goes horizontally around the torso, overlapping the tape and being sure that body curves are appropriately supported.



- 3) Next the tape is applied vertically, carefully overlapping the edges following the body lines.
- 4) Finally, the taping is completed by going over the crossed layers of tape with yet **more** tape, this time in a double layer of diagonal strips. By this time the body being taped has held still for about an hour and sweated off at least two inches.
- 5) Having completed the taping, you cut the "body" down the middle of the back and carefully slip out. You now have a silver "body" with holes at the neck and arms. Tape up the center back slit.



- 6) Seal the neck and arms of the T-shirt and begin stuffing the body with pillows, polyester fluff, or whatever you have handy. You can even fit the new "body" over a wrong-size dress dummy, stuff the excess space, and have a perfectly sized dummy. Another option is to make a "T" of 2x2 lumber and slide the silver body over the "T", stuffing it to fit and then sealing the bottom by stitching or taping it. Brace the wooden "T" at the bottom to stand up and there you are - literally!

Completing this process on two bodies took about four hours in all. However, we managed to have two perfectly proportioned dummies that cost less than \$20.00 each; Katherine could do her fittings without having us live in or run back and forth; and we now have bodies of our own stacked in the corner and waiting for the next time we have a need.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR HISTORICAL CLOTHING, PATTERNS,  
ACCESSORIES, AND WEAPONS

By John L. Flynn

While researching and attempting to find the correct accessories for my French Officer's Uniform, I discovered a whole number of new sources for historical clothing, patterns, accessories, weapons, etc. It was - unfortunately - too late to make the deadline for this year's WHOLE COSTUMER'S CATALOG, so I am presenting them here with the hopes that you'll be able to use them throughout the year.

The following list of names and addresses are valid as of this writing:

1. The Bonnet Brigade, P.O. Box 79042-LH, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, (415) 965-1841. They specialize in handmade hats and bonnets from the Civil War period; but they also have a nice selection of arms, accoutrements, books, patterns, and undergarments. Their catalog costs \$2.00, and it is a good reference source on Bonnets.

2. Buffalo Enterprises, 308 W. King Street, Box 183, East Berlin, Pennsylvania 17316, (717) 259-9081. They are well-stocked with merchandise for both the 18th and 19th century, from the French & Indian Wars through the Civil War. They carry a number of hard-to-find accoutrements for both civilian and military equipage. Their catalog costs \$3.00, and it is seventy-six pages of wonderfully-detailed information. Open daily 10-5, and closed on Monday.

3. Calico Corner, 513 East Bowman St., Dept. LH, South Bend, IN 46613. (Note: this is different from the one listed in the WCC.) They specialize in lady's Victorian clothing and accessories. They offer books, patterns, lace-up shoes, and many more items! Their catalog costs \$2 (which is also refundable with order). Prices are very reasonable. [For example: a 6-Boned Cotton Hoop (with drawstring waist) costs \$30, or 2/\$25 each, or a cotton corset cover (with crocheted trim) \$20, or 2/15 each.

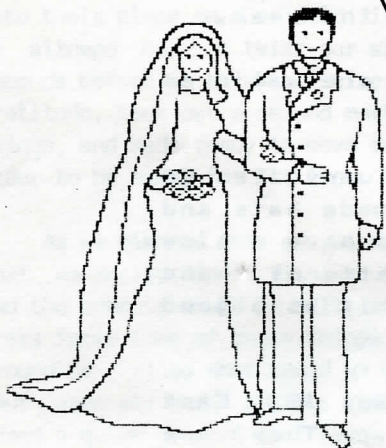
4. Fall Creek Suttlers, c/o A.J. Fulks, P.O. Box 20149-LH, Indianapolis, IND 46220, (317) 253-4975. They carry a "complete line of quality equipage for the civil war reenactor and his lady." Their catalog costs \$1.

5. James & Son, 1230 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. They refer to themselves as "military clothiers," and they make custom uniforms from the 18th and 19th century. Although most of us would prefer to do it ourselves, they do stock a fine selection of bullion and silk embroidery. Catalog - \$1.



# End Notes

Costumers To  
Wed!



CONGRATUALIONS are in order to **Selina Mears**, President of the Tidewater Chapter of the GCFCG and **Mark Harju** the Treasurer of the Tidewater Chapter who are getting married in Norfolk, Virginia on Saturday, May 31st, 1986.

The wedding party will be attired in an Edwardian motif ala Somehere in Time and to complete the "Costume Guild" nature of the occasion, the Matron of Honor will be Dorsey Flynn, former Treasurer of the Guild, and the Best Man will be John Flynn, current President of the Founding Chapter.

Please join us in wishing them both the best. Your good wishes may be sent to: Selina Mears  
8618 Chapin Street  
NORFOLK, VA 23503



I'm not certain if it is a bug going around or what, but the Treasurer of the Cosmaf **Gary Anderson**, proposed to President **Janet Wilson** on May 2nd and Janet said "YES!"

To the best of my knowledge no date has been set yet, altho Bobby has suggested that they have "Wedding Con" so we can all come.



I am beginning to feel like a character in a Bradbury story. It has been an **interesting** last two months hasn't it?

*Warty*

Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers' Guild  
P.O. Box 683  
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Columbia, MD 21045