

and expansion, was set aside, also a separate fund to assist groups, with instructors and equipment, and an adequate fund for running expenses for the coming year.

Sales are held every two years to meet the budget expenses, and to give the members an outlet for their craft work. A high quality is maintained at these sales by having a special committee appointed before each sale to examine every article for perfection of work. If it passes this inspection the article is then marked with a 'Kingcraft' label.

Such is the power of a group of women devoted to a worthy idea.

The early years were not lacking in amusing incidents, indeed enough to fill a book, but space allows me to relate only the most memorable one.

It was on the occasion of the first Annual Meeting of Kingcrafts, 1951, held in the basement room of the United Church. The monthly meetings had been conducted according to parliamentary procedure, and we were anxious to have the Annual Meeting run true to this form. We had invited guests from the city, representatives from the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, and also an important guest speaker. So reports were carefully prepared and rehearsed, and everything seemed to be in perfect order. The night turned out to be cold and stormy, but the room was filled to capacity and our city guests arrived safely in spite of the weather.

In one corner of the room there was a large furnace in full view of the audience, and behind it a small kitchen where the women had prepared refreshments for the meeting. Everything ran smoothly until the guest speaker stood up to address the meeting on the subject of "The Importance of Handicrafts in any Community." He had just become warmed up to his subject when an explosion occurred from the direction of the furnace. Fortunately, our guest speaker, and incidentally the only man at the meeting, turned out to be an engineer. So he calmly put down his notes, walked over to the furnace, repaired the trouble, returned and resumed his address. A few minutes later a repetition of the trouble occurred. Once again he attended to the furnace. When for the third time the noise and rattle broke into his remarks the meeting became almost hysterical. But the third time completed the job satisfactorily and the speaker was able to finish his address in peace and quiet. Loud was the applause of the grateful audience, and no applause was ever more genuinely earned than by our ingenious guest speaker.

As the invitation for refreshments was being extended by the President, the lights suddenly went out (the result of blown fuses from the furnace), and we were in total darkness. However, some candles were eventually found, and refreshments were duly served by artistic candlelight, and in spite of the coffee being slightly cool

the meeting was acclaimed a great success. The first Annual Meeting of Kingcrafts will be remembered by many of its members when other more smoothly running ones will long be forgotten.

Step by step, during the early years, Kingcrafts grew to maturity as the need developed. A set of aims and objectives were proposed and accepted and were as follows:

- 1) To promote the various crafts in King and the surrounding districts.
- 2) To promote the skill and artistry of those practising the crafts.
- 3) To foster a community spirit through the medium of handicrafts.

An unwritten, but well understood, aim from the very beginning, was to strive for perfection and high quality in all of our work.

A fitting prayer was written especially for Kingcrafts by a beloved minister and every meeting is opened with the reading of this beautiful prayer.

The need for a constitution and by-laws governing Kingcrafts arose. These were carefully drawn up and incorporated into our charter.

In the beginning the membership was limited to fifty, as our homes would not accommodate a larger number, but soon we reached this limit when a fourth craft, Leather, was added to the others and drew the interest of even more women.

One of the first contributions made to Kingcrafts by the leather group convenor was an attractively designed round leather pin, showing the Kingcrafts insignia of a pair of hands. Fifty pins were immediately ordered and sold to the members, who proudly wore them on the occasion of the meetings. There have been many of these pins re-ordered through the years as membership increased.

In 1952 our craftsmanship had so improved and our reputation for artistry and quality had become so well known far and wide, that it was decided to hold a sale to raise funds to help provide much needed equipment, the sale to be held in June in the gardens of "Kingswold".

The aims were set high, with an objective of \$1200.00. Tickets were sold in advance to insure us against inclement weather and thus total loss. Nature shone upon our first big effort, for the day was perfect, and about seven hundred people attended the sale. The garage at the entrance to the grounds was decorated with apple blossoms and the posts covered with cedar boughs. It looked very attractive when filled with the colorful craftwork, including weaving, hooking, leather work, smocked dresses and nighties for children, and dolls.

The barbecue house by the side of the swimming pool was gaily decorated and housed the 'Country Home Baking.' A section of the flower garden was the background

for a booth where perennial plants and flowers were sold. Afternoon tea was served on the lawn near the house so that the kitchen facilitated the serving of tea and refreshments.

A large colorful awning attached to one wall of the garage sheltered an amazing display of 'Country Antiques and By-Gones.'

Raffle tickets for handicraft pieces donated by each group had also been sold previously to the sale, each member being responsible for selling a certain number of entrance and raffle tickets.

By four o'clock we were 'sold out' and the money realized far exceeded our highest expectations. Each member received 85% from her work which was sold, and Kingcrafts received 15%. Even with this distribution Kingcrafts netted \$1200.00.

We could now afford to pay for professional instruction so as to improve our craftwork, assist the groups with better equipment, rent a room in the church for our monthly meetings which had by now outgrown the capacity of our homes, and donate prizes to the Handicraft booths of the Country Fall Fairs, thus encouraging better handicrafts. In general, we were able to take an active and important place in the community life, which was fulfilling one of our main objectives.

Vision and enthusiasm never waned in Kingcrafts. During the third year, 1953, a sketching group, later to become the Art Group, was organized, with an experienced and talented artist to instruct the class both in still life and outdoor sketching in the Spring and Fall. This has developed into a very large and enthusiastic group. One member won a first award in a competition held by the Women's Institute for all of Ontario. This group has held two separate art sales and many of their paintings have been sold.

Early in 1954 a ceramic group was organized, but as it was found difficult to work with clay and water in private homes, the basement of the Anglican church was rented for two days each month, and there could be found a keen and happy group moulding and creating figures and articles of grace and beauty.

Fortunately, about this time a woman experienced in pottery moved to King and brought with her a kiln (a necessary piece of equipment for pottery). She took over the instruction of this group and fired the pieces of pottery made by the members, in her own kiln.

It was only natural that the next group to be formed in this picturesque countryside would be Gardening and Flower Arrangements, for in the country we all have gardens but had much to learn about the care and cultivation of flowers in a section of the country which experiences severe winters. This group was skilfully

developed under the guidance of a Toronto Garden Club member living in King, who is an artist in flower arrangements and with a green thumb as well. She opened our eyes to the possibilities of using driftwood, dried leaves, weeds and dried flowers. Soon our clothes cupboards were sharing the space with strange companions, such as weeds, branches from shrubs, and flowers being dried for winter arrangements. Christmas decorations for our homes were no longer bought in florists' shops but were created by our own hands and even sold to our city friends at Christmas sales.

With the addition of four craft groups to the original three, the problem of adequate and central work rooms became a vital issue. It was imperative that Kingcrafts look for a permanent home to house its ever-increasing membership. In February, 1954, we learned that a lot 50 x 200 feet, ideally located near the centre of the village, was for sale at a fairly reasonable price. An emergency meeting was promptly called, and the issue presented to the members, who, after a short discussion, voted unanimously in favor of purchasing this lot. There was a sufficient fund in the bank from the previous sale to cover the cost, and so the first step in a long-cherished dream of a permanent home for Kingcrafts was realized.

This ownership of property spurred us on to even greater effort, that of raising money to build a workroom on our newly acquired lot. A sale was planned for the following October, 1954. The objective this time was set at \$2500.00, double the previous sale. The large Community Hall at Maple was engaged, and an able and enthusiastic committee appointed to organize the work and urge the members on to redouble their efforts for this important project.

At our first sale in 1952 there had been many inquiries for knitted articles and although there was no organized group for knitting in Kingcrafts, many of our members volunteered to knit for the coming sale during the summer months. Wool was purchased by Kingcrafts, and under the guidance of an expert knitter was given out with directions for attractive and unusual articles, such as caps, scarves, mitts, children's sweaters and socks, sizes two to eight years. Baby dolls were also beautifully dressed in knitted clothes. This booth turned out to be a great success and brought in substantial financial returns to Kingcrafts, so much so that knitting has been included in all of our recent sales and continues to be a popular feature.

The Community Hall was turned into a veritable fairyland, with the assistance of the display department of a widely known department store in Toronto. The Kingcrafts members produced beautiful craft work. The publicity and efficient organization during the month preceding the sale brought gratifying results in the tremendous attendance and enthusiastic praise and purchasing of our craft work. Once again the

final results were far beyond our most optimistic expectations.

With the beginning of the New Year, 1955, a building committee was appointed to arrange for the construction of a basement workroom, the main floor to be built later. However, and fortunately, both the architect and the building contractor were of the sound opinion that the construction of a building in two stages was both impractical and more costly.

The architect submitted drawings of his ideas of a building suitable to our requirements. Because of the nature of our sloping property, a split level building was advised. The main or upper level, 30 feet wide x 50 feet long, to have floor to gable windows at each end, the westerly window giving an intriguing view of the garden and distant rolling hills. This room to be used for meetings, sales and lectures. The lower level of the same dimensions, and with a similar west window, to be used for a bright and pleasant workroom for the crafts, and which would also house the kitchen washroom, storage cupboards and heating equipment. From this lower level there would be easy access to the garden.

This attractive drawing was unanimously accepted by the members of Kingcrafts, but in order to comply with these plans more money than we then had in the bank would be required. The executive met this situation by a well-conceived idea. A special meeting of all members was called to approve or disapprove of the plan for financing it. Ninety percent of the members voted in favor. The extra amount needed was \$4200.00, and the plan conceived by the executive was as follows:

To approach forty-two persons living in the communities in which our members lived (these boundaries now reached Aurora, Newmarket, and Thornhill), and to ask for individual loans of \$100.00, without interest, from each person, the loan to be repaid by Kingcrafts within a period of five years.

Each member of the Executive took her share of names and agreed to report the results within ten days. The organization of Kingcrafts, during the past four years, had apparently earned a very fine reputation in the community, for the response to our requests for loans was overwhelming. At the end of the ten days each member of the Executive reported one hundred percent success.

With the necessary funds now in the bank, the "go ahead" signal was posted, and no time was lost in turning the first sod. Great was the excitement on that day.

In view of the fact that we were now property owners, and a very substantial body, it was felt that it would be wise to incorporate under the laws of the Province. In June, 1955, we became incorporated as KINGCRAFTS: A Self-Supporting Non-Profit Organization.

In the meantime the building progressed slowly but surely and carefully under

the watchful eyes of an indefatigable and enthusiastic building committee. In talking to our friends about our hopes and plans for the future, numerous generous gifts were offered to us for the new building, including the furnace, floor covering, electric fixtures, aluminum storm and screen doors, and paint. One man in the village offered to do our plastering free of charge. Such was the encouraging response to our efforts from the whole community.

As the building neared completion the problem of basic furniture loomed up. On the main floor, measuring 30 x 50 we needed a minimum of sixty chairs, a large pine table and a chest of drawers, also curtains for the large picture windows at both ends of the room.

Once again a brain wave came to one of the members. She approached a well-known furniture and cabinet maker in Toronto, told him the Story of Kingcrafts and the need of a large pine table, selling the idea to him that this piece would be on loan to Kingcrafts and that the name of his firm and the price would be neatly printed on a card in full view. Many people building new homes in the district would see and admire this piece and probably order a similar one, or buy this table which would then be replaced by another; in other words - an out-of-town showroom.

The owner of the shop, a great artist in wood carving and deeply interested in the crafts, agreed to the proposition, and in due time the beautiful table was delivered. A short time after Kingcraft House was opened the table was sold and replaced by another. The idea was proven a success. But I might add, the owner of the shop generously made a gift of the second table.

Following the first successful effort in securing furniture, a second cabinet maker was approached with the same proposition, but this time the need was for a pine Welsh dresser on which to show off our ceramics, with cupboards below in which to store stationery and supplies. Hearing of the experience of the former cabinet maker he quickly agreed and produced for us a very beautiful piece which greatly enhanced our room. This Welsh dresser was also on loan but did not readily sell as it was fairly expensive. Two years passed by, and then one day we received a very polite note from the cabinet maker to the effect that he was not in a financial position to make a gift of the dresser but if we wished to buy it he would sell it to us at a reasonable price for such a beautiful piece of furniture.

This problem was brought before the executive, for it entailed a substantial sum of money not included in our budget. We had grown accustomed to this beautiful piece of furniture and could not picture the long blank wall without it, yet we had to be practical about the matter.

Two choices faced us: We would either have to pay the expense of having it moved back to the owner, which would amount to a considerable sum, or have a special Home Bakery sale to raise the money. Country Home Baking sales are always an assured success. The matter was put before the members at the monthly meeting, and they unanimously voted in favor of the sale. It was to be held Saturday, October 31st, Hallowe'en Day. This gave us an opportunity for interesting decorations both in the building and in the food.

Every member was asked to produce home cooking, to the cost of \$1.00 to her, which would possibly sell for \$2.00.

The Garden Group offered to help by making a dozen or more attractive dried arrangements with driftwood, and the members were allowed, if they so desired, to sell any crafts they had on hand.

The sale turned out to be much bigger than planned. Practically everything was sold. The Baking Sale alone raised more than enough to buy the Welsh dresser, and the surplus was used to purchase a much needed electric stove.

Chairs were an absolute necessity. We appealed to active and associate members for donations of chairs. The chairs were of uniform stack type. The response to this appeal was very generous. An old chest of drawers was given by one of the members and we scraped it and waxed it ourselves.

Another member, who was renewing her livingroom curtains, gave Kingcrafts her very suitable ones of theatrical gauze. Another member made us a gift of cups and saucers. Odd plates and trays drifted in from kind friends, and a two-burner electric plate and teakettle were also given to us.

Each group expressed a desire to contribute to the furnishings of Kingcrafts. The Hooking Group some years previously, had, as a group project, hooked a rug approximately 54 x 36, depicting the Village of King. This rug had been shown throughout the country at exhibits. The Hooking Group now offered this as an interesting piece to hang on the wall. Another member had a wrought iron frame made upon which to hang the rug, and it made a most attractive wall decoration.

The Weaving Group offered as their contribution to provide hand-woven curtains for the downstairs workroom; ivory with deep bands of many colors.

The Leather Group made a beautiful guest book with Kingcrafts and the Insignia of the Working Hands carved on the cover.

The Ceramics Group contributed pottery ashtrays and a lovely plate, with 'Kingcrafts' worked into it. This adorns the Welsh dresser.

The Art Group had a metal strip, painted green, to match the wall, and this was attached to the wall and affords the group an excellent opportunity of exhibiting

their art work and adding colorful interest to the room.

The convenor of the Garden Group made two unusual wall plaques in the shape of an artist's pallet, on which she made a most artistic arrangement of dried fruits, nuts and leaves. Also she contributed a large and handsome piece of driftwood filled with a colorful dried arrangement for a centrepiece on the pine table.

The products of the Smocking Group naturally did not lend themselves to furnishings, but they contributed their share by keeping attractive and colorful smocked articles in the show cases. Several women volunteered to paint the downstairs work-room to save the expense of a painter.

So the essentials were now ready for the grand opening.

In January, 1956, our new home, Kingcraft House, was completed sufficiently for us to hold our monthly meeting, and that was a proud and never-to-be-forgotten day in the history of Kingcrafts. Every member took a personal pride in the accomplishment.

With the new building came an influx of new members and groups were greatly enlarged.

With such a low fee as \$1.00 per year, there was the danger of women becoming members primarily for social reasons, with no serious intention of learning a craft or abiding by our laws of attending the minimum fifty percent of their work meetings. To overcome this difficulty we established an initiation fee of \$5.00 and found that this helped to answer this problem.

While enthusiasm over the new building was at its height, plans were formulated to repay our loans and obtain a fund to meet the yearly budget for maintaining Kingcraft House. We had met with such great success at our previous sale in 1954 that we decided to organize immediately for a yet bigger and better sale in September 1956, to be held once again in the Community Hall at Maple.

While we longed to have the sale in our new Kingcraft House, yet our better judgment told us that in order to raise our objective of \$4000.00, we would need a hall big enough to accommodate a very large attendance, possibly fifteen hundred to two thousand people. Tickets for admittance were once again sold in advance. Each member was responsible for selling a minimum of ten tickets and five books of raffle tickets. These were given to the members four to five months in advance of the sale.

Every member put her shoulder to the wheel for this effort, for we were all anxious to have Kingcraft House free of debt. Once again we far exceeded our objective and thus were able to repay by October. 75% of every \$100.00 lent to us, and by the following spring, assisted by the fact that a few generous-minded people returned our cheques and thus made us gifts of their loans, we were enabled to repay

all outstanding amounts. The result was that loans were entirely repaid in eighteen months instead of the five years as promised, and the fine reputation and confidence in the members of Kingcrafts was maintained and even enhanced.

In addition to repaying the loans, we had sufficient surplus to purchase some much needed furnishings for the kitchen and workrooms on the lower level. As Kingcrafts was now being rented to other organizations for evening meetings, this necessitated an addition to the number of chairs and cups and saucers to the capacity of one hundred people.

In the year 1956 Kingcrafts became an affiliated member of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild of Toronto, and we were honoured when they asked our Hooking Group to exhibit their rugs, and to demonstrate this craft at the Guild Exhibit at the Canadian National Exhibition. This group has now fulfilled this request for three consecutive years, and has become well known to people far and wide who are interested in this craft.

Throughout the years Kingcrafts hookers and weavers have exhibited and won many awards and honorable mentions for their work at the Montreal Canadian Handicraft Guild Exhibit, London District Weavers, and Canadian Handicraft Guild Exhibit at the Canadian National Exhibition. For two consecutive years the Rug Hookers have demonstrated their craft at the Dalziel Pioneer Museum. They also exhibited at the Simcoe County Arts and Crafts, where our President was asked to tell the Story of Kingcrafts.

Amongst the members of Kingcrafts were many young women with small children, who could not attend our monthly meetings and thus lost touch with the work being done outside of their own group. Also by this time we had nearly one hundred associate members whom we rarely contacted. In order to keep these members and associate members informed of the ever-increasing activities of Kingcrafts, it was suggested that a quarterly publication be edited and sent out to all members. Thus THE KINGCRAFT CHRONICLE came into being in 1956 under the able direction and editing of one of our younger members. Now, in its fourth year, it has proved to be of inestimable value and of great interest to all who receive it. The circulation of the last edition in November, 1959, was over three hundred, and at every issue there is an increase as membership expands.

About this time one of our members made a pen and ink sketch of Kingcraft House, with the idea of having it used as a frontispiece for "Hasty-Notes", and on the back page a route map from Toronto to Kingcraft House. The drawing was submitted to the executive. They agreed that there was a need for such stationery for sending out invitations and letters of thanks. Also it could be sold to the members for personal use. One thousand were printed and made up into packages of ten and twenty-five.

and sold for 50¢ and \$1.00 respectively. This stationery proved to be very popular, and before long a second order was printed, this time in green ink. Many thousands of these Hasty-Notes have been sold throughout the years, not only to Kingcrafts members but also to visitors to our attractive Craft House.

In 1957 a yearly budget for the maintenance of Kingcraft House was carefully studied and estimated at \$600.00 per year. This included taxes, water, light, oil for heating, caretaking, grass cutting, snow shovelling, plus an ample surplus for any necessary small repairs. The President at this time (1957) was a very level-headed and far-seeing person, and while we were free of any debt and had sufficient funds in the bank to carry us for one year, she felt strongly that we should have a reserve building maintenance fund, for any emergency which might arise regarding the building, thus alleviating the executive of any personal financial responsibility. In order to raise this fund we decided to hold a smaller sale at Kingcraft House in October 1958. We had nine months in which to work and prepare for this sale. Everyone was enthusiastic in anticipation of the first sale in our own attractive building, where the artistic surroundings would lend themselves to the favourable showing of crafts.

Entrance tickets, including lunch, were once again sold in advance, for Kingcraft House would not accommodate more than about one hundred and fifty people at one time. A revolutionary idea in display was planned by a member who had years of experience in her own artistic gift shop, and the result was breath-taking in its beauty. Our work, though attractive and of high quality, was enhanced by the ingenious way in which it was displayed.

The sale opened at 10.30 and we were practically sold out by 2 o'clock.

Our patrons from Toronto and outlying districts appreciated the opportunity to shop early and partake of an attractive lunch served in the Anglican Sunday School across the road. Here many treasured handicraft articles, which were not for sale, decorated the walls and made interesting conversation pieces.

The financial results of this sale were once again beyond our expectations, and we were not only able to establish a substantial building maintenance fund, but also put aside a sum for special instruction to the groups and make additions to our equipment and to the reference library. In this sale the members received 75% from the sale of their work and Kingcrafts 25%. Many of the members spent their returns on buying better materials and equipment, thus ever improving the quality of their work. But in some cases this extra amount of income has helped many a family through an anxious financial period.

The years 1958 and 1959 saw great changes in the garden at Kingcraft House.

On the south side of the front lawn an attractive rockery had been built the previous year and planted by the garden group. This in the spring was a blaze of colour. A nursery of small government evergreens filled the back of the two hundred foot lot. A cedar hedge for the entire south boundary was donated and planted by one of the members, with the aid of her husband. Several very fine specimen shrubs, including lilacs, flowering crabs, spirea and forsythia, were purchased from funds made available by a special sale of plants and bulbs arranged by the garden group.

In the autumn of 1958, many fine species of bulbs, including tulips, scillas, grape hyacinths and daffodils, were planted on the north border, and lately a few perennials have been added. We were fortunate in having two very large old and widely-spreading apple trees in the garden, and in the spring we occasionally sit under them for our meetings.

The husband of the convenor of the garden group made three high redwood trellises for the south wall of Kingcrafts and now vines hide an otherwise plain and unattractive wall.

The garden group members, numbering about eighteen, took on the responsibility of keeping the grass and flower beds watered during the summer months -- no mean task when one realizes that these women all have gardens of their own to attend to, and many have at least five to ten miles to drive to reach Kingcraft House.

The enthusiasm of this group is inspired by the leadership of a member with tireless energy and one increasing purpose, to make our gardens beautiful. Kingcrafts throughout the ten years, has been most fortunate in the high quality of its leaders not only the executive level but also in the individual craft groups. All members hold office for a period not exceeding two years; but there has never been a lack of efficient leaders to follow the high standard of their predecessors. A feeling of the need of most women for the expression of beauty, finds an outlet in Kingcrafts, and this spirit produces a desire to give freely and ably of their individual abilities for leadership.

However, in spite of this splendid leadership, in the spring of 1959 a certain note of apathy seemed to be apparent in some of the groups. It is the belief of Kingcrafts that nothing stands still in this world; there must be either progress or recession. Of course it is possible that this apathy was partially due to 'Spring Fever', but psychologically the time had arrived when inspiration from an outside source was needed. The idea of introducing a course of lectures on 'Colour and Original Design' was thoroughly looked into and the results presented at the June meeting.

The course was to consist of a series of six lectures to be given once a week from mid-October to mid-November, by a well-known artisan and lecturer on this sub-

ject, the fee for this course to be \$3.00 per member (50¢ per lecture), to be payable in advance. This was to cover the expenses of the teacher's fee. A book was passed around at this meeting for members to sign if they wished to take these lectures, and to our amazement sixty women out of the sixty-five present at the meeting expressed their desire to take the course. We thought that by the fall the enthusiasm might wane, but on the stated date in October sixty members arrived at Kingcraft House at 10.15 A.M., equipped with pencils, rubbers and drawing paper, ready and eager to broaden their horizons.

It was an exhausting morning, for it had been a long time since many of us had experienced such concentration of effort. The group turned out to be much too large for one person to manage, so we were divided into morning and afternoon classes 10 o'clock to 12 and 2 o'clock to 4. We left at the end of our first lecture with, alas! home-work to be done before the following week. This seemed almost more than we could take. For some of us it had been forty years since we had been given homework.

An amusing experience is told by one of the younger members, the mother of four young boys. She was sitting at the table with the two younger sons while they were doing their homework. Eventually she brought out her drawing paper and pencil and started on her work for the lecture the following morning. When asked by the ten-year old why she looked so worried, she replied, "I am doing my homework." The boys thought that this was a big joke and laughed heartily at the sight of their mummy doing homework. The older boy, somewhat of an artist, said: "But what are you so worried about to which she replied, "I have to make an original design for a Christmas card tonight. The artist lad said, "Why that's as easy as falling off a log", and in a very few minutes he produced an interesting and certainly an original design.

Such is the ease with which imaginative and uninhibited youth can produce originality while to adults it is a struggle.

The results of the series of lectures was very gratifying. Naturally some benefitted much more than others, but many of our members produced their own original design for Christmas cards by the block linoleum method, others made block prints on place mats for Christmas gifts, while everyone gained an insight into the field of the importance of colour and originality in design in modern-day craftsmanship.

There was a surplus left over when all expenses had been paid, and with this we bought a much-needed "green" blackboard framed in pine, and an excellent textbook on design which was highly recommended by our instructor, another valuable addition to our reference library.

It is quite possible that, in the not too distant future, we may add an eight

craft to Kingcrafts, that of 'Textile Printing', and this would be the result of the keen interest shown by many of our members in the lectures and demonstrations in this fascinating and most useful craft.

At present we are very busy planning and organizing for our fifth Kingcrafts sale to be held in October, 1960.

One of the main objectives for this sale is to raise funds to purchase a fifty foot lot next to Kingcraft House, if and when it becomes available. We feel that it would not only be a good investment, as our present property has doubled in value in three years, but also another and more important reason is that if Kingcrafts continues to grow in membership at the rate that it has done in the past ten years, we shall have to face the necessity of enlarging our present building to accommodate the members.

Many of our members feel strongly that any new addition to Kingcrafts should provide accommodation for a workroom for the men of our community, especially those who have retired, in order that they too might follow the hobbies of their choice and at the same time meet in friendly unison. Of course this is still a dream, but to quote Carl Sandburg, "Nothing happens unless first a dream."

Gifts still continue to arrive at Kingcraft House, the latest being a much-needed pine lectern to match the beautiful pine table referred to earlier in this story. It is being made by the same firm and will be presented at the January month meeting. This is a gift from the author of this story, to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Kingcrafts.

The foregoing has been a chronological account of the material and fascinating growth of Kingcrafts over the period of the last nine years. Now for the even more important human side of the story.

Any community enterprise, to be successful, should be unselfish in its objectives. It must attract and hold its members, through their sincere desire to help one another rather than in any spirit of competition. Human values far outweigh those of dollars and cents, necessary as they were and are and will continue to be in our future advancement. The human values to which I refer are not merely theoretical but have been vividly apparent throughout the years.

The following human values seem to be uppermost. They are:

- 1) Congenial companionship has been found, both by long-time residents and newcomers to our fast-growing community. Women who had experienced great loneliness, and in some cases where life was without purpose, have found a way to happiness by joining a group of women who are eager to share their knowledge and experience of a craft with their neighbours.
- 2) Working creatively with the hands and mind breaks down any social barrier that otherwise might exist, and almost all of us have some latent talent which, when discovered and developed, will bring a profound sense of reward and satisfaction to the individual.

- 3) The joy of learning and discovery of new fields at any age.
- 4) Our homes and gardens have been enhanced in beauty by the knowledge we have acquired through lectures and demonstrations throughout the years, on colour and design, history of fabrics, gardening and the use of driftwood and dried flowers for winter arrangements, vegetable dyeing of wool, conservation, and many other subjects of interest. The creative work of our hands in weaving, hooking, ceramics, leathercraft, smocking, art and flower arrangements, have found important places in our homes, and have given to us a wider realization of life's enduring values.

It is with great pleasure and a feeling of pride that I write this account of the 'Kingcrafts Story' and the magnificent achievement of the women of King and district. My hope is that it may prove to be an inspiration and valuable guide and pattern for any group of women desiring to find expression of Beauty through the work of their hands and minds.

Perhaps the truest meaning of Kingcrafts is best exemplified in the following verses written by our Publicity Convenor, who takes for her title the Kingcrafts insignia, which is 'A Pair of Working Hands'.

A Pair of Working Hands

A pair of working hands,
Symbol of Kingcrafts,
Sturdy, deft and sensitive,
Fashioning creative instinct
Into tangible workmanship.
This is Kingcrafts.

A pair of sensitive hands,
Country women at work
Capturing the light and shadow of a summer day,
Catching the burnished autumn tones,
The tender grace of a leaflike spring,
Taking the vivid hues of the garden's ecstasy,
This is Kingcrafts.

A pair of creative hands,
Searching design, seeking perfection,
Hidden joys springing to life,
Heart and hands producing,
Knowing that handcrafts are
Inseparable to living.
This is Kingcrafts.

Laura Rolling - 1956.

Muriel I. Flavelle,
"Kingswold" King,
January 15, 1960.

With grateful acknowledgment to:

- a) Mrs. James Baxter, whose research through the minutes of meetings of nine years for a chronological report of the development of Kingcrafts, which she gave at our Ninth Birthday Meeting in September 1959. This has proved to be of great assistance to me in writing this 'Kingcrafts Story'.
- b) Mrs. Laura Rolling for the verses which she wrote on 'Kingcrafts'.
- c) My husband, Sir Ellsworth Flavelle, for the pictures he took of all the most important events in the development of Kingcrafts, and for his encouragement and helpful vision all through the years.