

New Members: Robert Lanouette & Cheryl Brabant

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By Michael Milgram

The Valley Artisans' Co-op is proud to announce that two new artisans have joined the group. Gentle reader might wonder why this fact is of any interest to gentle reader. To respond, gentle reader should be reminded that this Co-operative of 30 members will shortly celebrate its 25th year of existence as a retail outlet for local artisans and craftsmen and the "go-to" place for residents seeking unique art and crafts. In that time, the membership has varied from three in its infancy to today's full roster.

Members come and members go, so patrons can never be sure of what they will find on display when they enter the store. Pottery, glasswork and jewellery - yes, always a staple, photography, wall art and wooden creations - most times, fabric art, millinery and basketry - usually, and now we offer "chain maille" jewellery. What's that you say? Visualize chains made by entwining tiny metal (jump) rings in intricate patterns to be worn as bracelets and earrings. Our newest member, Robert Lanouette who grew up in Chalk River, presently serves with the armed forces, and when not engaged in the physical activity that entails, can be found carefully prising apart tiny stainless steel jump rings and putting them back together in deliciously detailed patterns. A suit of chain mail armour anyone? He'll make it for you (with a deposit).

What of our other newest member; potter Cheryl Brabant? A Deep River native, Cheryl studied art at St. Lawrence College, specializing in photography. Somehow this training led her to establishing a florist business specializing in perennial lilies. Pondering speed-challenged vertical plant growth, led her to contemplation of circular motion - the potter's wheel. But her creations are anything but round - ceramic masks and free form dishes anyone? It has been said that a potter is not permitted to create crooked pottery until they have mastered the art of throwing circular pots. Have a careful look at Cheryl's work and decide for yourself. The Valley Artisans Co-op is located right here in Deep River, 33373 Hwy 17 West, next to the dairy. Open 363 days a year.

Photo 1) Robert Lanouette displays his maille jewellery.

Photo 2): Cheryl Brabant with a ceramic mask.