

A Lifetime of Hobbies

By Marilyn Reeves

When I was in grade school I made my own paper dolls. I would first draw the doll, color it with crayons, and then cut it out with scissors. Then I'd lay the doll back on the paper and draw the clothes around it, color them, cut them out, and then fasten them onto the doll with tabs at the shoulders. My friends like my paper dolls so much, they wanted me to make them some, too.

In high school I drew pictures of movie stars and colored them with colored pencils. A couple of years ago I discovered I still had the one I had done of Elizabeth Taylor. Not bad for a teenaged artist, I thought – at least I could tell who it was.

In my senior year art class we did still-life pictures with charcoal and pastels. There was one I did of a Mexican scarf and a sombrero that turned out quite nicely. At some point I lost it, and have tried to replicate it, but none of them have looked as good as the original I did back then.

When I was in my twenties I made a about two dozen Christmas ornaments. Starting with satin-covered Styrofoam balls, I would use pearls and shiny beads and gold bric-a-brac, and anchor them to the balls with tiny pins, creating a variety of designs. Those hand-made ornaments graced my Christmas tree for many years to come. I still have them stored away in a large box somewhere. Perhaps my granddaughters would like to have them after I'm gone.

In the 1970's macramé was in. I made a number of things, but my favorite was a double-cradle hanger done with white cord in a snowflake design. With its beaded tails, it was roughly six feet long. I had a couple of spider plants hanging, one above the other, in sky blue, bowl-shaped flower pots nesting in those cradles. That hanger with the spider plants hung in front of my bedroom window at my house in Aurora for 25 years.

My old roommate Gail taught me how to knit. I was never any good at making sweaters, but I made a number of scarves and afghans. I made a dozen scarves for the various family members the last time we got together for Christmas. I think I had had my fill of knitting by then, because I haven't knitted anything since.

My sewing is limited to simple things as well. I make my own pattern for aprons. Over the years I've made a number of them – one for each season. I wear them a lot when I'm at home. Seems like I'm always either cooking, eating, or painting, so I need to wear an apron to protect my clothes.

Over the years I've had many hobbies, but nowadays my favorite thing is writing. But if I can't think of something to write about, I paint. I find it very relaxing. Painting helps clear my mind of other concerns and eat up the empty hours when I'm at home, alone.