

# The Canadian Gourder



March 2018

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Do you have thoughts about what gourd plants you hope to grow this year? Fortunately for those who live in Ontario, a variety of gourd plants will be started again by the 'Greenhouse on the River' just north of Peterborough. When they are ready for planting, I will let you know what varieties are available, and the cost per plant. I can pick them up and bring them to the centre for you.

Why am I thinking of growing gourds? I am recently returned from Arizona, where I spent some time at Wuertz Gourd Farm. We went there three times this year, while I conservatively bought only a few gourds to bring home. (Bruce may have a different opinion.) The farm was in the process of picking last year's crop, and it was wonderful to see the fields full of gourds. They estimate that they



Barbara at Wuertz Gourd



Wuertz Gourd Farm

grew 600,000 gourds at least! Two 4'x4'x4' bins held only miniature jewellery gourds. On our last visit, there were huge bins being filled by gourds as the pickers brought them in. Waylon Wuertz said that their planting will start in April. For those who have met Leah Wuertz, you will be pleased to hear she is having her third child in June.

At last year's festival, Bruce had the brilliant idea that we should take advantage of all the Canadians visiting the show, so for this year Anne Carling and Sharron Anstey made up flyers advertising the Canadian Gourd Society on one side, and the Kawartha Gourders on the other. Bruce spent considerable time walking the huge parking lot placing these flyers on any vehicle with a Canadian license plate on both Saturday and Sunday. Bruce has reconsidered the wisdom of this practice based on the size of the parking lot!

While at Wuertz Gourd Farm, as well as at the Festival, I had many opportunities to chat with Canadians buying gourds. We left the remaining flyers at the farm, to be passed out to any Canadians who come to buy gourds and supplies. You may be surprised to hear that in March and April, over 60% of the farm sales are to Canadians. I would love to be there to see the cars, trucks, and campers that line up on the road while they fill every available space with gourds before heading north! We hope to hear from some of these gourders, so we may team them up with other gourders in their area.

I am sure you understand that although I hate to miss a month or so of our Canadian winter, I will suffer the heat of Arizona every February as long as I can, to be able to report on the largest Gourd Festival in North America for you. It is the least I can do as President.

Smiles,  
Barbara



Gourd for carrying water  
On display at the museum -  
Montezuma Ruins near Sedona

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## MEMBERSHIP.....

Welcome Victoria England and Pat Alford, our newest members. Victoria lives in St. Catharines and Pat in Pefferlaw.

A sincere *THANKS* to all members who joined/rejoined the CGS again this year. It has been difficult for the executive to find creative ways to maintain and increase the membership. It would be wonderful if, in the future, we could come up with ideas to have the west meet the east.

## WEBSITE.....

The *Canadian Gourd Society Website* is still not working. This is what our president, Barbara, says:

*“Unfortunately, someone bought our web address and now wants to sell it to us for \$700! We are in the process of changing the address to [canadiangourdsociety.ca](http://canadiangourdsociety.ca). We will let everyone know when the website is up and running again. Janet Bisset has taken it over, with help from a local webmaster. Lots of work to be done!”*

If you are interested in any gourdng workshops held by the Kawartha Gourders, they will be listed on the Artisan Centre Peterborough website or follow *artisancentrepeteterborough* on Instagram. Join the Kawartha Gourders Facebook page by sending a ‘friend request’ and check out following Monday workshop/activity.

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## IN MEMORIAM!

It is with sadness that we pay tribute to Steve Stott, a member of the Kawartha Gourders and Artisans Centre Peterborough, who died in December 2017. Our deep condolences to his wife Valerie.

Steve built this gourd banjo. It is well made, fretless and tunable and sounds really good. Steve did a wonderful job on the beautiful stained and wood-burned decorative trim. He was a talented artist!



Valerie would like to sell it if anyone is interested. It cost in excess of \$200 to make and this doesn't include the time Steve spent to make it. Comparative instruments run up to \$550. If you would like to make an offer to purchase this one-of-a-kind gourd banjo, please contact Anne Carling at [artisanity@artisanscentre.ca](mailto:artisanity@artisanscentre.ca).

# WORKSHOPS

Group of Ladies having fun at a get-together to make birdhouses



Anne Carling in 'teaching mode'



The End Product



Pat Kelly's Grandson using eggshells to decorate an egg



Powertex Ladies



Barbara Bellchambers



Mary Gladwin



Brigitte Thompson's workshop



Powertex Herons

# PATCH REPORTS

## KAWARTHA GOURDERS

The Kawartha Gourders have had a productive time since the last newsletter. There have been several workshops (all available to the public to join the regular gourders) which have produced some great work. Barbara practised her 'zipper on a gourd' technique on the group to help her iron out any *kinks* before heading to Wuertz Festival in Arizona where she taught her workshop (see tutorial in this newsletter).



Barbara Bellchambers



Mary Gladwin

'Sisters doing the chicken dance'

## MUSKOKA GOURDERS

The Muskoka Gourders continue to meet once a month. Sue has successfully completed her bowl with its wrapped rim and is looking forward to her first pyrography lesson. Judy's pyrography skills are rapidly improving as she continues to make ornaments.



Judy Simmonds



The gourders, in conjunction with the Muskoka Wood Carvers, are working towards having a 'decorated dried gourd' category at the Bracebridge Fall Fair in September. Last year a lot of interest was shown in the gourds so perhaps this will be an opportunity to increase our membership. Sharron will also demonstrate gourd carving again.



Sue Robertson

## ZIPPER GOURD

Barbara Bellchambers [bellcham@nexicom.net](mailto:bellcham@nexicom.net)



### MATERIALS:

Gourd	Memory dyes	Masking tape	Small paint brush	White glue
Pencil	Paint	Dremel	Brush for varnish	Toothpicks
Fine marker	Formula 49	Duragrit 3/16" cut off	Varnish	Mask
Glue dots	Cosmetic pads	wheel or similar	Heat gun	Rubber gloves
Tracing shapes	Ruler	Duragrit 1/8" grain of	Hair dryer	
Wet ones	Scissors	wheat bit or	Sand paper	
Math compass	Zipper	Small diamond ball	Wax paper squares	

### DIRECTIONS:

#### 1. Preparing Gourd:

- Clean outside of gourd.
- Remove top of gourd, clean inside, sand smooth.
- Draw desired design on outside of gourd with pencil. Remember that fairly straight lines are easier to carve than tight circles.
- When you are happy with your design, go over the pencil lines with fine marker.
- I did not have you paint the inside of your gourd. When you are carving on the outside of the gourd but not going all the way through, it is best to leave finishing the inside of the gourd until after all carving is completed. In this way, you can hold your gourd up to the light to check how deeply you are carving. If you can see the light easily through the gourd, you are going too deep.

#### 2. Preparing zipper:

- Using sharp scissors, trim away the excess material next to the actual zipper. You want to cut right next to the edge of the metal zipper.

#### 3. Carving:

- You need to wear a mask at all times while carving.
- You may want ear plugs also. They allow you to hear voices, but not the dangerous sounds from the machines.
- When carving with a wheel bit, you need to make sure that the bit has dug into the gourd all the way before you start to carve along your line. Hold your carver with a full hand grip so the carver is held by your 4 fingers. Your thumb will be bracing your hand on the gourd. The carver will be almost parallel to the gourd. As you carve, let your thumb slide along the gourd, helping to guide your hand. Keep that bit fully in!
- Carve all your lines, moving right to left (towards you) with your carver. Remember to check from the inside of the gourd to see if you are carving too deeply.
- Please note that the duragrit bits will not cut you; do not be afraid of them. They can go either way, forward or back.
- After finishing carving the lines, I like to turn my gourd, and carve the same line from the other side. This will make the groove a bit wider and will straighten out the sides. If you are like me, you will have one side shaped in more than the other. Carving from both sides corrects this.
- Now you will use the diamond ball or the grain of wheat bit. Change how you hold your dremel. For this bit, you want to hold the dremel like you would a pencil, so it will be closer to vertical.
- Turning the gourd so you have the carved line vertical, use this bit to open the groove a bit more, and to go a bit deeper. Again, make sure you check from the inside to see if you are going too deep.
- Use a small piece of zipper to see if it fits inside the groove you made the way you want it to. If it is not as deep as you want, carve your groove a bit deeper.
- Blow or brush along all the grooves to make sure you have removed all the gourd dust.

#### 4. Finishing outside of Gourd:

- Use the Memory Dyes to finish the outside of your gourd.
- Formula 49 will help you dilute the colour to get just what you want.
- A small paint brush works well to make sure you get the dye in the groove.
- Remember that it does not take much dye to cover the gourd!
- Heat set the dyes.
- Varnish.

#### 5. Finishing inside of gourd:

- Paint the inside of the gourd.
- Make sure you paint the top edge of the gourd too.
- Use hair dryer to dry the paint.
- Sand lightly where the inside is rough.
- Wipe out all dust particles.
- Paint the inside and top edge again.
- Dry with hair dryer.



Barbara Bellchambers

#### 6. Adding Zipper to design:

- Cut a piece of the zipper to either fit in your design, or if it is a continuous design, cut a piece no longer than 6" to begin with.
- Run a thin line of glue along the bottom of the groove where you will be placing this piece of zipper.
- Use the toothpick if needed to spread out the glue. The small paintbrush would work also.
- Starting at one corner, place the zipper into the groove.
- When in place, use your fingers to press it in as far as it will go.
- Run your fingers along the zipper a few times, to make sure it will stay in place.
- Continue adding pieces of the zipper along your design. The joints will not show as long as you trimmed the ends neatly.
- Use the tape to hold the zipper in place. Tuck under one end of the tape ¼" (to make it easier to take off) before placing over the zipper.
- Leave to set.



Barbara Bellchambers

#### 7. Adding Zipper to top edge:

- Cut the zipper to fit the top edge of the gourd.
- Put glue on part of the edge, add the zipper, tape in place, and continue this way until you finish adhering the zipper.
- Go back along the zipper and make sure it is properly in place. Adjust if necessary.
- Leave to dry.

**MANY THANKS TO BARBARA FOR THIS WONDERFUL TUTORIAL AND FOR PERMISSION TO PUT IT IN THE NEWSLETTER!**

*The following is a note from our western fellow-gourder who has been extremely productive over the winter. Check out her thirteen pictures in the member gallery!*

Hello Canadian Gourders. I hope you are all looking forward to spring and a chance to get out and Gourd up a storm. My husband and I have been very fortunate to spend the last five months in Mexico in our motorhome. And guess where we stop on the way down??? At the Wuertz Gourd Farm where I am a kid in a candy shop. I load up and dream about what they might turn into. I had a great winter as I was able to do more gourding than I do at home in the summer. Hope you enjoy the pictures.

Lorraine Hodges - Gourd Artist

# FEATURED ARTIST

Barb Powell is our featured artist for this issue of the CGS Newsletter. She lives in Victoria, BC and was an enthusiastic student in Barbara's Art Waves Okanagan class in the spring, 2016. This is what she has to say about herself:

"After retiring from a nursing career in 2008, and always being a "bit crafty", I was looking for something to "pique" my interest.

In 2009 while walking on a beach in Mexico, I met a lady (from Port Alberni!). She was making pine needle baskets—it immediately had me interested as they were beautiful, and the craft was portable, an important point, when you are travelling.



*Gourd Carving in Peru 2011* That was the start of my journey. Along the way I have met great teachers in kelp weaving, and pine needle basket making, and with much encouragement from family and friends I made a zillion small baskets, stitches getting better with each basket.

On another trip to Arizona, I was introduced to gourds at the Wuertz Gourd Festival, and brought home my first bag of dusty, dirty gourds to play with. I love that you can do so many things with gourds. Lately I am working on my wood burning skills, and having fun making thunder gourds. I love to see people's reaction when they hear the thunder.

I have been selling my work privately and have been involved in the Scattered Artist tour for several years."

Barb Powell



Barb's 9-month old Rotty Grand Puppy



Barb Powell



Barb Powell  
'Thunder Drum'



Barb Powell

# MEMBER GALLERY



Chris Brandon



Rosario Wilke's class at Wuertz Gourd Festival

Barbara Bellchambers



Judy Simmonds



Lorraine Hodges



Janet Bisset



Judy Simmonds



Chris Brandon





Anne Carling



Anne Carling



Lorraine Hodges



Sue Robertson



Lorraine Hodges



Barb Powell



Sharron Anstey

02/0



Chris Brandon



Lorraine Hodges



Sharron Anstey



Anne Carling



Sharron Anstey



Julie-Anne Wallewin



Barb Powell



Dorothy Hawkins



Anne Carling



Lorraine Hodges



Margo Knapp  
Commissioned  
Thunder Drum (4 views)

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Julie-Anne Wallewin

'PAISLEY'



Janet Bisset



Lorraine Hodges



Sharron Anstey



Sharron Anstey



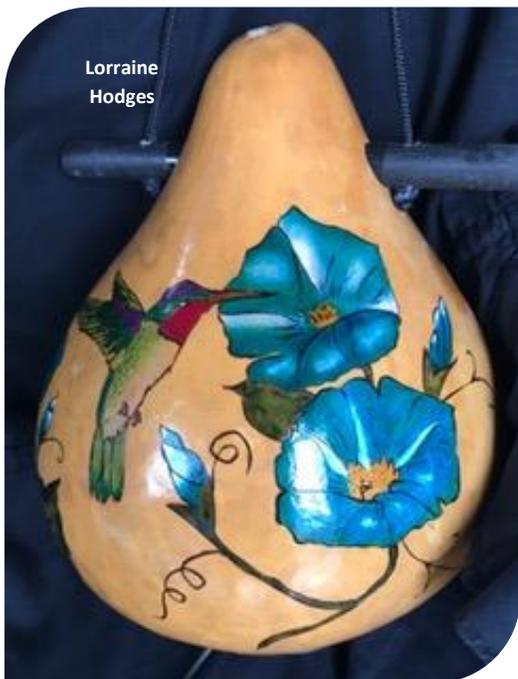
Barb Powell



Barb Powell



Lorraine Hodges



Lorraine Hodges



Barb Powell



Julie-Anne Wallewin



Lorraine Hodges

PIC-COLLAGE



Asian Gourd  
taught by Barbara  
Bellchambers

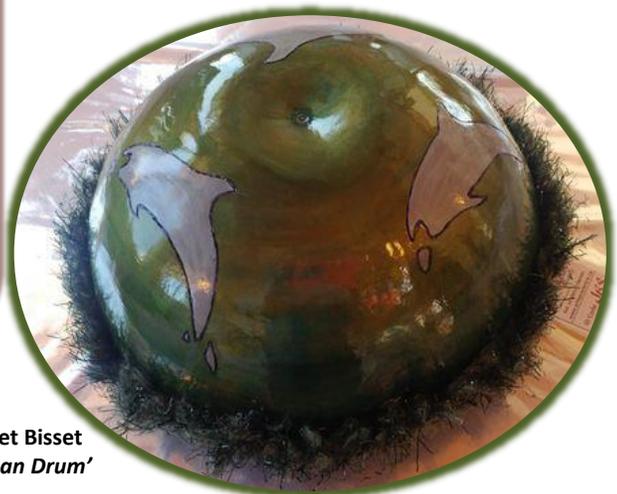
Barb Powell

Thunder  
Drum

Bowl with  
Burning &  
Painting

Pine Needle  
Basket

Kelp Basket



Janet Bisset  
'Ocean Drum'



Lorraine  
Hodges



Lorraine  
Hodges

PIC-COLLAGE



Lorraine  
Hodges



Janet Bisset



Janet Bisset



Chris Brandon



Julie-Anne Wallewin



Lorraine Hodges



Sharron Anstey



## HAPPY SPRING EVERYONE!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Newsletter and to all the CGS Members who read it. The creativity and quality of the gourd art is both inspiring and beautiful to look at.

Happy Gourding Everyone and keep the pictures and stories coming!!!!

Sharron Anstey

### President

Barbara Bellchambers  
4 Victoria Ave., Box #1062  
Lakefield, ON K0L 2H0  
705-652-5115  
[bellcham@nexicom.net](mailto:bellcham@nexicom.net)

### Show Secretary

Mary Gladwin  
[mgladwin@rogers.com](mailto:mgladwin@rogers.com)

### Treasurer/ Membership

Patti Blackburn  
[pat\\_blackburn@hotmail.com](mailto:pat_blackburn@hotmail.com)

### Classes

Julia Hayes  
[joules123@msn.com](mailto:joules123@msn.com)

### Public Relations

Anne Carling  
[jacarling@hotmail.com](mailto:jacarling@hotmail.com)

### Newsletter

Sharron Anstey  
[sashadow@sympatico.ca](mailto:sashadow@sympatico.ca)

### Fundraising

Elizabeth Gordon  
[llisapi\\_kuatan@hotmail.com](mailto:llisapi_kuatan@hotmail.com)

### Website

Janet Bisset  
[janetbissetstudio@gmail.com](mailto:janetbissetstudio@gmail.com)