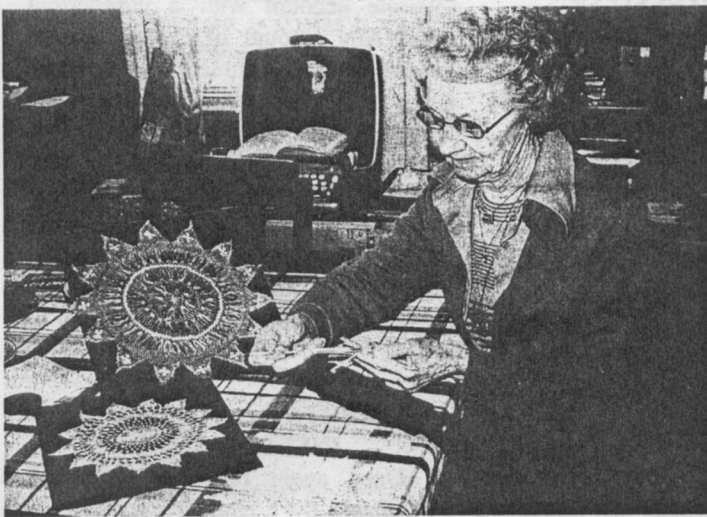


Golden Oldie Featuring Wilma Louise Hix

Recently the community of Rhodes lost a friend. Wilma Louise Hix, 91, passed away June 17th, 2001 at Iowa City, Iowa. She had spent all her married life and then some with her husband Luther in this area. As I (Juanita Gibbs) was going through some old newspaper clippings, I found an article that Inne Taylor of the State Center Enterprise had written about Louise on **January 13, 1978**. I thought it would be fitting to publish it in the Rhodes Rocket this month. Article reads:



"The Ancient Art of Netting," is demonstrated by Louise Hix, Rhodes, who is one of the few people possessing the talent and the tools for this craft. The two delicate d'oileys are both netted and, according to Mrs. Hix, a lot of time and patience are required for the process.

With the neatly, packaged convenient and time-saving kit-

world of today, many of the arts and crafts of yesterday are in danger of becoming extinct.

Louise Hix, Rhodes, has taken the time to learn a form of handicraft rarely seen anymore. This ancient art is called netting and, according to Mrs. Hix' dictionary of needlework, this craft is so old that no date can be found of its origin. There are, however, reports of over 3,000 year old Egyptian nets, used mainly for fishing and bird catching.

Mrs. Hix learned the craft some four or five years ago from Agnes Buck, who died just last year at the respectable age of a hundred. Mrs. Hix explained, that Miss Buck netted many items for church bazaars even during her last year.

Miss Buck had been concerned about the fact that there were not many to carry on the talent of netting, Mrs. Hix pointed out, and explained, that her older friend wanted to teach the craft to her, for that reason.

As far as Mrs. Hix knows, she is the only one in the area that still nets. One of the reasons for this is, that the tools needed, are not available any more. Her implements were given to her by a friend and she estimates that they are over 50 years old.

The set of instruments used include a netting needle with two flat slotted ends to wind the thread, different sizes of meshes and a heavy weight to keep the work steady.

To start a project of a netted d'oeiley, for example, Mrs. Hix explained, a foundation loop is the essential step. This loop becomes the center of the d'oeiley. Then the thread is thrown around the mesh with the needle and the needle is pulled through the foundation loop making a knot and creating a design. The size of the mesh determines the size of each design.

The different stitches used in netting include a rose stitch and crisscross stitch. When the netting has been completed some of the designs can be darned for an exquisite look.

The finished netted d'oileys of Mrs. Hix are all different with a variety of delicate designs. Besides d'oileys, also 'filet work' can be carried out with the netting tools, although Mrs. Hix explained that she never learned how to do this.

"Netting is very difficult," this Rhodes enthusiast also explained mentioning that once a design is knotted, it is hard to get it out, so there is not much room for errors.

Time and patience are the essential factors for a netter, Mrs. Hix pointed out. It took her four or five sessions with Miss Buck to learn the basics, and although she has completed several netting projects, it still takes her several weeks to make a d'oeiley.

Mrs. Hix has been asked by several friends to conduct a class in netting, but she said, she doubts she'll ever do that. Like her friend Miss Buck, she does want to however pass the talent on to one or two interested friends.