



View from the Fringe

Newsletter of the New England Rug Society



Vol. XIII, No. 1 August 2005

www.ne-rugsociety.org

September Meeting: Jon Thompson on “How the Great Carpets Were Made – Some Observations”

Jon Thompson is the proverbial speaker who needs no introduction, but here goes anyway. He is one of the founders of the modern systematic study of rugs, using structural analysis and other objective criteria. In his famous book *Oriental Carpets from the Tents, Cottages and Workshops of Asia* he popularized the notion that it is at least as informative to classify rugs by whether they were woven by nomads, villagers, or townfolks, as by their countries of origin.

At present he holds the May Beattie Fellowship in Carpet Studies at the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford University. Some of his recent publications are:

Silk, National Council for Culture Art and Heritage, Doha, 2004.

Early Safavid Carpets and Textiles, in *Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501–1576*, edited by Jon Thompson and Sheila Canby, Milan, 2003.

Looms, Carpets and Ta’lims in Technology Tradition and Survival, edited by Richard Tapper and Keith McLachlan, London 2003.

The Nomadic Peoples of Iran, edited by Richard Tapper and Jon Thompson, London, 2002 (see note at end of article).

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September Meeting Details

Date: Friday, September 16

Time: 7:30PM

Place: Collins Gallery, 694 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown

Note: \$5 guest fee for non-members

Directions:

From Harvard Square take Mount Auburn street west 1.5 miles. The Collins Gallery will be on your right, just before a sign saying “Celebrity Pizza.” If you get to the Arlington/Grove street intersection you’ve gone a little too far.

From Watertown Square take Mount Auburn street (Rte. 16) east for 1.6 miles. The Collins Gallery will be on the left, just beyond the “Celebrity Pizza” sign, a little after you cross the major Arlington/Grove street intersection.

You can also get there by taking the MBTA line 71 from Harvard or Watertown Square.

Parking: Parking lot in back of gallery (driveway is between the gallery and the pizzeria), and on street.

October Meeting: Erik Risman on “Trappings of the Middle Amu Darya – an Excursion into what is commonly called Ersari/Beshir”

Erik Risman is an avid collector with very specific interests—trappings from the Middle Amu Darya region of Central Asia. He has been a collector for most of his adult life but rugs are his third iteration of collecting. Although his interest in rugs began 12-15 years ago, he started to focus the collection eight years ago and what you will see at this upcoming meeting is a significant sampling of those efforts.

Erik is an ACOR board member. He chaired the

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October Meeting Details

Date: Friday, October 14

Time: 7:30PM

Place: Armenian Library and Museum, 65 Main Street, Watertown

Directions: See page 12

Please don't forget to send in your membership renewal form by 9/10!



September Meeting

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Jon sent us the following introduction to his talk:

“Many different techniques are used by weavers to fashion the design of the carpet they are making. These include working from memory, or, alternatively, using some form of pattern guide, which may be either approximate or precise. Every method of design transmission leaves its own trace, and it is possible by looking at a rug to determine which method has been used. Observations of this kind reveal a lot about the history of patterns, though such ‘signs’ have sometimes been misinterpreted in the past.

“Current thinking on how the ‘classical’ carpets were made simply assumes that the methods in use today were also used in times past. Careful examination of some old carpets, however, tells quite another story; and it turns out that some long-standing assumptions will have to be questioned.

“This research is supported by evidence from some

unexpected sources, including the published account of a contemporary observer and the records of carpet weavers working for the Ottoman court. It casts new light on some thorny questions of carpet history and gives fresh insights into an area governed, till now, by unfounded assumptions.”

Note: autographed copies of the book *The Nomadic Peoples of Iran* will be available for purchase at the meeting for the reduced price of \$95 (it usually sells for \$110). Here are excerpts of what Peter Poullada (one of our last season’s speakers) has to say about the book: “... a magnificent volume ... I cannot say enough about the photos, over 350 of them. They must be seen to be believed ... the volume is a happy conjunction of entertainment, enlightening photographs and scholarly text.” Ann Nicholas and Rich Blumenthal used some of these pictures to illustrate tribal migration at our April meeting (see page 9). This is an opportunity not to be missed for acquiring an outstanding book!

October Meeting

Continued from page 1

ACOR 6 conference in Indianapolis, and co-founded the Rug and Textile Society of Indiana. He is also vice-chairman of ACOR 8.

Erik’s talk is a “hands-on” presentation of over 40 pieces from his collection along with a discussion of the design influences among the Amu Darya weavings. Erik will also discuss “what’s Ersari?” In past generations, the term Bokhara referred to mainly Turkmen main carpets. Today, Erik posits, the same issue prevails with Ersari and particularly Beshir, the former being a legiti-

mate tribal identity while the latter is simply a city like Bokhara where many pieces were traded. Both names have become a catchall for trappings of questionable origin.

Erik classifies his pieces into three groupings: left bank Ersari; right bank Ersari (Beshir); and Northern Afghan Ersari. Regardless of whether or not you agree with his thesis, you will see some rare and wonderful trappings.

Turkomanians are encouraged to bring pieces whose origin is considered “Ersari”.

NERS and Other Notes

New members

We welcome the following new NERS members:

Fred Mushkat, Pamela Whitehead, Mohammad and Maryam Yamin

Ed Berkhoff takes over f&b from John Clift; more volunteer help needed

After 10 years of loyal service heading up the efforts to serve food and beverage at NERS meetings, John Clift has elected to hang up his apron and let someone else buy the goodies, make the coffee, and other-

wise manage the lavish spreads that he, Gillian Richardson, and Tom Hannaher have organized for our meetings. To replace John, NERS member Ed Berkhoff has generously agreed to take over the reins. Many thanks to Ed for coming forward.

We still need more help, because Tom Hannaher has had to cut back on his availability owing to the press of starting a new business. All that’s required is simply coordinating with Ed to accomplish a bit of shopping, schlepping, arranging, and packing up afterward, doing

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NERS and Other Notes

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whatever tasks he needs help with. It's easy. And it's only six times a year! If you'd like to lend a hand, please contact Mark Hopkins at mopkins@comcast.net or 781-259-9444.

Collins Gallery has moved

NERS member John Collins has moved his well-known Collins Gallery from its longtime home in Newburyport to a new location at 694 Mount Auburn Street in Watertown, MA, midway between Cambridge and Watertown square.

John reports that his newly renovated 2100 square foot facility has 60% more floor space, along with 16 foot high walls to accommodate the expansive Bijars and other room-sized carpets for which he is well known. (*Editor's note: it looks great!*) A parking lot behind the store provides ample parking. Phone at the new gallery is 617-926-5600.

Noteworthy: A rug book signing in Framingham, September 14

Ruggies put off by the plethora of rug books offering little more than wads of color plates accompanied by warmed-over texts about knot counts and natural dyes

will be interested in a new book called *The Root of Wild Madder: Chasing the History, Mystery, and Lore of the Persian Carpet*.

Author Brian Murphy, until recently the Associated Press's bureau chief in Athens, became fascinated by rugs during his years of middle eastern travels and has compiled recollections of his explorations into a very readable 300-page text. Admittedly starting out as an oriental rug neophyte, he weaves his enthusiasm into penetrating reflections on the colorful characters, exotic places, and challenging searches he experienced among the bazaars and byroads of Afghanistan and Iran.

I had the pleasure of working with Brian to review some of his chapters as the manuscript progressed, and can attest that you'll find his writing delightful, spanning the gamut from light and humorous to compellingly thoughtful.

Brian will be signing books at Borders Books, 85 Worcester Road in Framingham starting at 7PM on Wednesday, September 14. The event will include a talk and Q&A period as well. The book, which is currently available through bookstores and online sources, is published by Simon & Schuster, New York.

Mark Hopkins

ACOR 8 News

ACOR 8 registration starts in September; early reservations are recommended!

As you've no doubt heard by now, the American Conference on Oriental Rugs (ACOR 8) opens in Boston on April 20-23 of next year. This will be the largest and most significant Boston-based event ever devoted to antique oriental rugs and textiles in recent memory, if not ever.

All NERS members will receive registration materials in the mail within a few weeks. And the advice from ACOR board of directors is clear: register early to insure that you get reservations for the events you prefer.

Here's why. Among the most popular ACOR events are the hands-on sessions in which experienced collectors share their treasures in the intimacy of informal, small-room sessions with limited audiences. This time ACOR is increasing the number of those sessions.

And they won't conflict with other attractions because they'll all be held in the afternoons while the larger lectures will take place in the mornings.

There will also be reservations available for special tours of the Museum of Fine Arts collections and for a class on carpet structure led by Val Arbab just prior to the conference opening.

Because these sessions are limited in size, *advanced reservations are necessary*. ACOR will record preferences on a first come-first served basis. So the earlier they hear from you, the closer you'll be to the head of the line when they assign places for the sessions.

The ACOR planning committee reports that plans are well along in making this an ACOR like no other. There will be interesting speakers and wonderful col-

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ACOR 8 News

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lections to view; an amazing array of exhibitions (nine in all) featuring rugs and textiles of all kinds; gala receptions; a treasure-packed dealers' fair; events and happenings to liven things up. And all this takes place in an intimate setting loaded with character and atmosphere, situated smack in the middle of everything else Boston has to offer. We look forward to having a large portion of our membership on hand to represent the society, share the excitement, and participate in the festivities.

Watch your mail for the registration package, which will be along shortly. And if questions arise, they can be addressed to Mark Hopkins, who is chairing the conference planning committee. He can be reached at mopkins@comcast.net or 781-259-9444.

NERS assumes ACOR 8 sponsorship role

At its annual end-of-season meeting, the NERS Steering Committee voted to become a major sponsor of ACOR 8. Specifically, the NERS will provide ACOR a gift of \$5000 which will be earmarked to fund two major conference undertakings: the conference's *To Have & To Hold* bag exhibition, and its Friday evening gala reception and ethnographic costume contest.

The source of this funding, appropriately enough, was the original ACOR 1 conference that took place at Boston's Colonnade Hotel in January of 1992. Our organization (at that time named the New Boston Rug Society), sponsored a rug exhibition and catalog in a cooperative effort with the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, where the exhibition hung before moving to The Textile Museum in Washington, DC. Through income derived from the sales of the *Through the Collector's Eye* catalog, our society was able to salt away a modest sum which has been accumulating interest ever since toward the day when ACOR would return to Boston.

That day is about to arrive, and with our \$5000 gift the NERS is proud to be one the principal sponsors of ACOR 8. The following letter of thanks, dated 7/11/05, was recently received from Sharon Fenlon, ACOR Board President.

Dear Mark:

We are thrilled to know that the New England Rug

Society will be a major sponsor of the 8th American Conference on Oriental Rugs now being planned for Boston in April of 2006. Your steering committee has generously voted to allocate the amount of \$5000 toward the exhibitions and receptions of that event, an amount that will greatly enhance the richness of the ACOR experience.

Specifically, we welcome your sponsorship of the *To Have and To Hold* exhibition of storage and transport bags, which will allow our attendees to enjoy the "real" pieces which they have admired on-line, and the conference's Friday night reception, traditionally one of ACOR's most eagerly anticipated events.

We are most enthusiastic about returning to Boston, the site of ACOR 1 where it all began. We know that much effort has already been put into preparations for ACOR 8 and are most grateful for your society's inspired help and support.

Warmest thanks from all of us on the ACOR Board of Directors and the ACOR 8 Planning Committee for your society's generosity. We look forward to welcoming your members when the conference opens on Thursday, April 20.

Sincerely,

Sharon Fenlon

President, ACOR Board of Directors

NERS members Collins, Grogan, and Pap will be major ACOR 8 sponsors

Three of the NERS's longest standing dealer members will sponsor major exhibitions at the forthcoming ACOR 8 conference in Boston, the ACOR board of directors announced recently.

John Collins of Collins Gallery (formerly of Newburyport, now Watertown) will sponsor the "Highlights from Four Collections" exhibition featuring selections from the collections of NERS members Gerard Paquin, Mark Hopkins, Ann Nicholas and Rich Blumenthal, and Al Saulniers.

Michael Grogan, proprietor of the fine arts auction house Grogan & Company in Dedham, will sponsor the Rudnick Collection, an exhibition of antique Caucasian rugs belonging to Rosalie and Mitchell Rudnick.

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ACOR 8 News

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And Peter Pap, proprietor of Peter Pap Oriental Rugs of Dublin, NH, and San Francisco, CA, has agreed to sponsor the conference's exhibition of rare Central Asian weavings from the collections of Jeff Spurr and

several other NERS members.

All three NERS members have been mainstay influences in the world of antique oriental rugs for many years. They have been generous supporters of our society since the mid-1980s.

President's Year End Review

It doesn't seem possible, but it was 20 long years ago that **Rosalie Rudnick, Judy Smith, Kate Van Sciver** and a few others met in the Rudnick living room to form what they named the New Boston Rug Society. Ten years later, to better reflect the geographic diversity of our membership, we made a one-word change and it became the New England Rug Society. And today, as we enter our 21st year, I'm happy to report that we're as healthy and vibrant an organization as we've ever been.

We closed out the season with a membership of 168, which remains at about the same level that we've enjoyed for the past five years. As before, our members' home locations include all six New England states, plus New York, Indiana, Illinois, and California.

Meeting-wise, it was an interesting and—for most of our members—a very rewarding year. Mid-west collector **James Douglas** opened our season by driving all the way from St. Louis, MO, with a carload of his wonderful Baluch rugs and presenting a resplendent show-and-tell that prompted several members to comment that they had no idea Baluch weavings could be so colorful and graphically interesting.

In October, Californian **Peter Poullada** presented a series of fascinating slides depicting nomadic life in Afghanistan that were taken by his diplomatic-corps parents in the 1950s. Currently president of the San Francisco Bay Area Rug Society (SFBARS), Peter is now engaged in research to better identify the tribal affiliations of the weavers along the Amu Darya River, most of whom are usually (and perhaps incorrectly) identified as Ersari.

Our November meeting was a new departure for us. It was a four hour, hands-on seminar on oriental rug structure held mid-day on Saturday and taught by San Diego's veteran rug lecturer **Val Arbab**. About 25 NERS members plied tweezers and magnifying glasses to gain

a better understanding of how oriental rugs are identified by examining their structure, weaving materials, and dyes.

In February we hosted **Sumru Belger Krody**, a curator at the Textile Museum in Washington, DC, who gave us a broad survey of classical Anatolian carpets. The event was hosted by the Armenian Library and Museum of America, where we traditionally hold one meeting each year.

Bhutanese textiles were the subject of our March meeting. Author and curator **Diana Myers** drove from Washington, DC, with a trunkful of incredibly lovely silk garments and textiles which she modeled for the audience while providing an intriguing travelogue of mysterious Bhutan.

In April, NERS members **Ann Nicholas** and **Rich Blumenthal** gave us a refreshingly enlightening presentation about South Persian nomads, interspersing historic photographs of nomadic living with examples of the weavings (from their wonderful collection) that are so integral to their way of life. The meeting was at **John Collins'** gallery in Newburyport.

Finally, our annual picnic came off as usual with good weather, good cheer, and our inevitable major show-and-tell at the beautiful Concord farm of NERS member **John Bordman**. I was disappointed to have to miss it owing to some minor surgery the day before, but all reports were that master of ceremonies **Julia Bailey** was a great hit, and that a good time was had by all.

We couldn't achieve what we do without our hardworking Steering Committee, and I'd like to extend heartfelt thanks to all its members. They are **Jim Adelson, Bob Alimi, Julia Bailey, Yon Bard, John Clift, Tom Hannaher, Jo Kris, Gillian Richardson, Janet Smith, and Jeff Spurr**. Between them, the du-

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President's Year End Review

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ties of food and beverage preparation, newsletter production/distribution, and speaker accommodation were all handled with efficiency and good humor.

We should also thank those who contributed newsletter articles and illustrations, which included **Jim Adelson, Yon Bard, Ed Berkhoff, Ann Nicholas, Judy Smith, and Jeff Spurr**; those who helped with our audio-visual equipment storage and set-up, which included **Lloyd Kannenberg, Buzz and Louise Dohanian, and Yon Bard**; and **Bob Alimi**, who has continued to do a great job running our web-site..

To those members who went the extra distance by enrolling in Patron and Supporting memberships, we send extra thanks. They were patron members **Jim Adelson & Debbie Sheetz, John Collins, Jeremy & Hanne Grantham, George Grillo, Michael & Nancy Grogan, Lloyd & Susan Kannenberg, Lawrence Kearney, Mario & Caroline Ratzki, Beau Ryan, Holly Smith, and Peter Walker**, and supporting members **Basha Ahamed, Richard Belkin, Tom & Vir-**

ginia Gasho, Jo Kris, Phil & Sharon Lichtman, Gillian Richardson, Mitch & Rosalie Rudnick, and Tom Stocker & Jim Alexander.

As a result of the generosity of its members, the NERS has been able to extend a bit of its own generosity stemming from our belief that helping to support worthy causes within the oriental rug and textile world is a responsibility of all of us, our society included. Consequently, the NERS made cash donations to Boston's Museum of Fine Arts (Textile and Costume Dept.), The Textile Museum, the Armenian Library and Museum of America, and the American Conference on Oriental Rugs during the past year.

Finally, many enthusiastic thanks to all of our members for pitching in when help is needed, and for contributing the enthusiasm and encouragement that is so vital to keeping our society a healthy and rewarding one. We couldn't do it without you! Here's to another great season as we approach the September opening of our 21st year.

Mark Hopkins

April Meeting:

Ann Nicholas and Richard Blumenthal on South Persian Tribal Bags

By Jim Adelson

Note: illustrations accompanying this review appear on pp. 8-9.

On April 17, long-time NERS members Ann Nicholas and Rich Blumenthal shared their knowledge, love, and collection of South Persian tribal bags with about 45 attendees at John Collins' gallery in Newburyport. For the occasion, Ann and Rich had prepared a talk, and also hung many of their pieces around the gallery for illustration and enjoyment. Using bags from their collection and previously published photographs of South Persian nomads, they described how weaving and weavings are an integral part of nomadic life. Ann and Rich showed a map depicting the location of the five South Persian tribal groups—Afshar, Khamseh, Lur, Bakhtiari, and Qashqa'i. They also defined the concept of tribal pastoral nomadism and its key elements: 1) a tribal identity with a common language, common culture, and tribal organization; 2) reliance on raising sheep and goats for livelihood; and 3)

seasonal migration between summer and winter pastures. Ann and Rich went on to give a picture of the lifestyle that produced these weavings—they spoke as much about the context of creation and use as they did about the weavings themselves.

They started by describing the annual migration cycle with a look at the winter camp. Winter camps are typically located at around 1,000 feet in elevation in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, near the Persian Gulf. In winter camp, each family with its flocks inhabits its own site. The family sets up its black goat hair tents—the tents' open weave allows smoke to pass through in normal use, but rain will cause the goat hairs to swell, making the tent waterproof. Within the tent, large rocks are piled at the back to provide a windbreak and a dry place for household items, including the storage bags in which the possessions are kept.

Ann and Rich illustrated the basic aspects of a

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April Meeting

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South Persian saddlebag with a Qashqa'i example. The two bags normally have decorated fronts, created with pile or flatweave techniques. By contrast, the back of the bags is typically flatwoven, either undecorated or simpler in design, with stripes or patterns rendered in tapestry or plain weave. The two bags are connected by a bridge which in South Persian bags tends to be narrow compared with bags from Anatolia. The bags are closed using a series of loops which are passed through slits in the closure and then interlaced. Rich noted "sometimes nomads put a padlock at the end; I don't think it will work in Boston." Another saddlebag that had never been assembled was unfolded to show how it was woven in one long strip.

The spring migration starts around the first of April. This is not a willy-nilly affair—much planning goes into it, and it is conducted in a very organized fashion. Usually, 20-30 family units get together to form a migrating group. A headman leads the group, scheduling all activities so as to prevent traffic jams.

Each day, most of the men and the teenage boys leave very early with the flocks. They travel about ten miles to the next campsite and then the flocks rest and graze in the afternoon. The women, the children, and a few men are part of a later party—packing up camp, loading the pack animals, and traveling on to join the earlier group. The very youngest children and animals get to ride while the rest walk.

The storage bags hold household possessions during the migration and at camp. Storage bags are used for clothing and food, while odd items like pots and pans may be tied directly to animal bands for the migration. Ann and Rich showed examples of storage bags with a square format, in some cases with a repeating design element like *botehs* in the main field, and in other cases with a central medallion and a design element in each of the four corners of the field. Smaller *chanteh* carried personal items like jewelry, and these also varied in technique—Ann and Rich showed a Qashqa'i example with warp-faced complementary weave, and an Afshar pile example.

Ann and Rich spoke about daily life during migration. Meals typically consist of bread, yogurt, and hot

sweet tea. The women wear their finest clothes on the migration, since it's when they get to be seen in public. The nomads produce many of their food and clothing items, but they aren't completely self-sufficient, and they stop in bazaars like those of Shiraz to pick up food, spices, metal products, felt hats, and cloth for clothing. In the weaving realm, they also acquire materials like cotton, special dyestuffs, beads, and amulets.

The summer camp is usually at an altitude between 6,000 and 8,000 feet with abundant green grass when the migration arrives. For summer, the nomads put up three-sided tents. The flock animals are sheared in early summer. The women have planned their weaving and know how much wool they'll need, and the excess is sold in a village market or saved for trading with itinerant peddlers for fruit and other goods. In addition to planning the necessary wool, the women know what colors they want; madder and indigo, singly or doubly applied, provide many of the desired colors.

The horizontal ground loom is a popular device, well-suited to the nomadic life because of its ease of assembly and disassembly. Weaving skill is cultivated across generations, with an older woman overseeing and teaching the younger girls how to weave. Weaving skill is highly esteemed within a woman's own family in consideration for marriage, and more broadly in the tribe.

Weddings are probably the most important celebrations in South Persian tribal life. Marriages are arranged, with the bride's price negotiated between the groom and the bride's father. The bride rides to her wedding on a brightly decorated horse. A bridal tent is constructed out of flat-woven textiles, and the dowry pieces are stacked for display. The wedding itself lasts several days, with dancing, horseback riding, and feasting. After the wedding the couple lives with the groom's family for several years.

The women weave mostly when they're not migrating. Depending upon conditions, weaving can be done in- or outdoors. Ann and Rich showed many pieces to cover the different tribes and weaving types. They showed Afshar bags with repeated elements like rosettes and *botehs* in diagonal arrangement. Afshar examples also utilize other design concepts, like a pile bag with a

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April Meeting

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vase design of diminutive scale. A Qashqa'i example demonstrated design links to Safavid weaving, with a border descended from court carpets. See NERS website, *To Have and To Hold* exhibition, plates 25, 27, 30, 31, and 32b for several examples.

As summer ends, the fall migration returns the tribe to winter pasture. The fall migration is similar to spring, but there is less grass and water, so the animals need more rest and it takes longer. The female animals are pregnant, so they can't go as quickly or as far each day.

Ann and Rich concluded by summarizing the many dimensions that weaving provides in tribal life. Most products are utilitarian, and many get heavy, everyday use. The weavings reflect cultural identity, with certain characteristics and designs connected with each tribal group. Weavings are a both generators and indicators of wealth, and in turn draw respect and admiration from the society for the owners and for the weavers. And for the weavers themselves, they provide an artistic outlet in a hard and busy life.

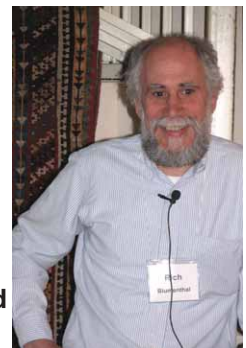
After Ann and Rich concluded the talk, NERS member contributions provided a small Show-and-Tell.

This portion started with a Bakhtiari double bag that had been opened, and showed three different techniques as these pieces typically do: pile for the heaviest-wear areas, supplemental weft for the main panels, and simple, striped flatweave for most of the backs, with two white background panels with supplemental weft designs (see this item in *To Have and To Hold*, plate 32a). Members brought several *chantehs* made with a number of different weaving techniques and varying design motifs, including one with a lot of animals. A Luri purse represented the small end of the weaving scale, while the Show-and-Tell finished with an Afshar vase carpet that shared a rare and complex border system with one of Ann and Rich's pieces.

Our sincere thanks to Ann and Rich, who put an enormous amount of work and thought into their presentation, and were kind enough to transport many items from their collection to the gallery in Newburyport for the occasion! And another dollop of gratitude to John Collins for his terrific hosting, as always. This was the last NERS occasion in this particular location, as John is moving to new gallery space in Watertown, closer to downtown Boston!



Above: displayed at the Gallery,
Clockwise from upper left: Luri bagface; Afshar bagface; Afshar balisht; two Afshar bagfaces; Qashqa'i bagface (all piled)
(more pictures on page 9)



Right:
Ann Nicholas and
Rich Blumenthal



Migrating through a steep mountain pass



Weaving a gelim

(pictures by Nasrollah Kasraian, from *The Nomadic Peoples of Iran*,
edited by Richard Tapper and Jon Thompson)



Khamseh Federation piled saddle rug



Afshar pile bagface

The New England Rug Society is an informal, non-profit organization of people interested in enriching their knowledge and appreciation of antique oriental rugs and textiles. Its meetings are held six to eight times a year. Annual membership dues are: Single \$45, Couple \$65, Supporting \$90, Patron \$120. Membership information or renewal forms can be obtained on our website www.newenglandrugsociety.org, or by writing to **New England Rug Society, P.O. Box 582, Lincoln, MA 01773**, calling Mark Hopkins at 781-259-9444, or emailing him at mopkins@comcast.net.

NERS 2004/5 Steering Committee:

Mark Hopkins (President)

Jim Adelson

Robert Alimi

Julia Bailey

Yonathan Bard

John Clift

Tom Hannaher

Jo Kris

Gillian Richardson

Janet Smith

Jeff Spurr



May Meeting: Picnic, Show & Tell, and Moth Market

Editor's note: Here are images of some of the pieces from our Show & Tell session. Unfortunately several of the pictures we took didn't come out well,

and the notes we took were almost unreadable. So we apologize to those members whose striking pieces do not appear here or are mislabeled.



Clockwise from upper left: Mongolian Kazakh embroidery; Miao (China) jacket; Ewe (Africa) man's cloth (detail); Ersari main carpet detail and chuval (both with Saryk design elements); Baku wedding embroidery; Gazni (Afghan) head scarf

More pictures on page 12





Upcoming Rug Events

NERS 2005/6 Meetings (some dates to be determined):

November 11: Alberto Boralevi on *Prayer Rugs or Curtains for the Gate of Heaven—The use of niche-shaped rugs in the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian houses of worship.*

January 2006: Sackler Museum *Silver and Shawls* exhibition (see below) tour, led by Jeff Spurr

February: Jenny Wood on natural dyes

March: Thom Mond on Tibetan rugs

April: no meeting (ACOR)

May: Picnic and show & tell.

Auctions:

Rippon Boswell, Wiesbaden, 9/24, 11/19

Grogan, Boston, 9/25, 12/4 (including rugs)

Skinner, Boston, 10/8

Bonham's, London, 10/11

Sotheby's, London, 10/12

Christie's, London, 10/13

Nagel, Stuttgart, 11/8

Christie's, New York, 12/14

Sotheby's, New York, 12/16.

Conferences:

ACOR 8: Boston, MA, 4/20-23/06.

11th ICOC: Istanbul, 4/19-22/07. The following ICOC will be held in St. Petersburg in 2009.

Volkmanntreffen 2005: Classical Chinese Carpets 1400-1750: 10/14-16 at the Museum for Oriental Art, Cologne, Germany. Lectures will be given in both German and English by Dr. Adele Schlombs (director of the Museum for Oriental Art, Cologne), Hans Konig, Michael Franses, Helmut Neumann, Murray Eiland, Sarah Kuehn, Sandra Whitman, maybe also a Chinese scholar

knowledgeable in the field of Chinese textiles and carpets. Accompanied by a major exhibition of classical Chinese carpets.

The Volkmanntreffen is an annual meeting of people interested in rugs and textiles.

Information at www.volkmanntreffen.de.

Exhibitions and Fairs:

Silver and Shawls: India, Europe, and the Colonial Art Market, Sackler Museum, Cambridge, until 1/29/06. Curated by NERS member Jeff Spurr. Highlights the evolution of shawls and silver table wares produced during the Colonial period in India

The Rudolf Smend Collection of Batiks, Textile History Museum, Lowell, until 9/5

New York International Carpet Show, Javits Center, New York, 9/27-30

Ottoman Imperial Textiles from the 16th & 17th Centuries, Sackler Gallery, Washington, 9/29/05-1/22/06

At The Textile Museum, Washington:

Silk & Leather, Splendid Attire of 19th Century Central Asia, 9/2/05-2//26/06

Rozome Masters of Japan, 10/14/05-2//12/06

Huari Ceremonial Textiles, until 1/8/06

At the RISD Museum of Art, Providence:

Resist-Dyed Textiles from Asia, until 10/16

Ottoman Embroideries, 10/21/05-1/16/06.

Tours:

The architecture, carpets, and textiles of Moorish Spain and Portugal, an ICOC Educational Experience: 11/3-13/05. Call Academic Travel Abroad at 800-556-7896, or ICOC at 215-248-0494 for information

Treasures for sale: Jeff Spurr is offering a wide range of textiles and basketry for sale in the service of rationalizing his collection. They represent South Asia, Central Asia, East Asia, SE Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania. Anyone interested please contact him at (617) 492-6510 (eves) or spurr@fas.harvard.edu.

Newsletter contributors and helpers: Yon Bard (editor), Jim Adelson, Dora Bard, Mark Hopkins, Janet Smith.

Comments/contributions/for sale ads to: Yonathan Bard, doryon@rcn.com



May Meeting (cont.)



Left: Coca bag,
Siguras culture
(Peru),
ca. 1st century
A.D.

Below: Ersari
trapping

October Meeting Directions

Directions:

Go to Watertown Square (out-of-towners, get off the Mass Pike at exit 17 and follow the signs.) Take Main Street (Rte. 20) westbound (left turn if coming from the Pike). The second light is Church Street, and the Museum is on the righthand corner.

Parking:

Go right on Church Street and into the municipal lot on the right. Most meters are free after 6PM, but check to make sure!



New England Rug Society
Post Office Box 582, Lincoln, MA 01773



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Please don't forget to send in your membership renewal form by 9/10!