

Frank Lash Practices 'Dying Art' of Fretwork

In the sawdust covered workshop in the attic of 1224 Street in Utica, the terms "dying art" and "mass production" seem meaningless. It is in this attic studio that Frank Lash creates intricate examples of the "dying art" of fretwork, the handcraft of making intricate lacelike designs in wood for ornamentation, production of miniature craft designs, lamps, furniture and other small decorative items.



Frank Lash is pictured at work on the fretsaw.

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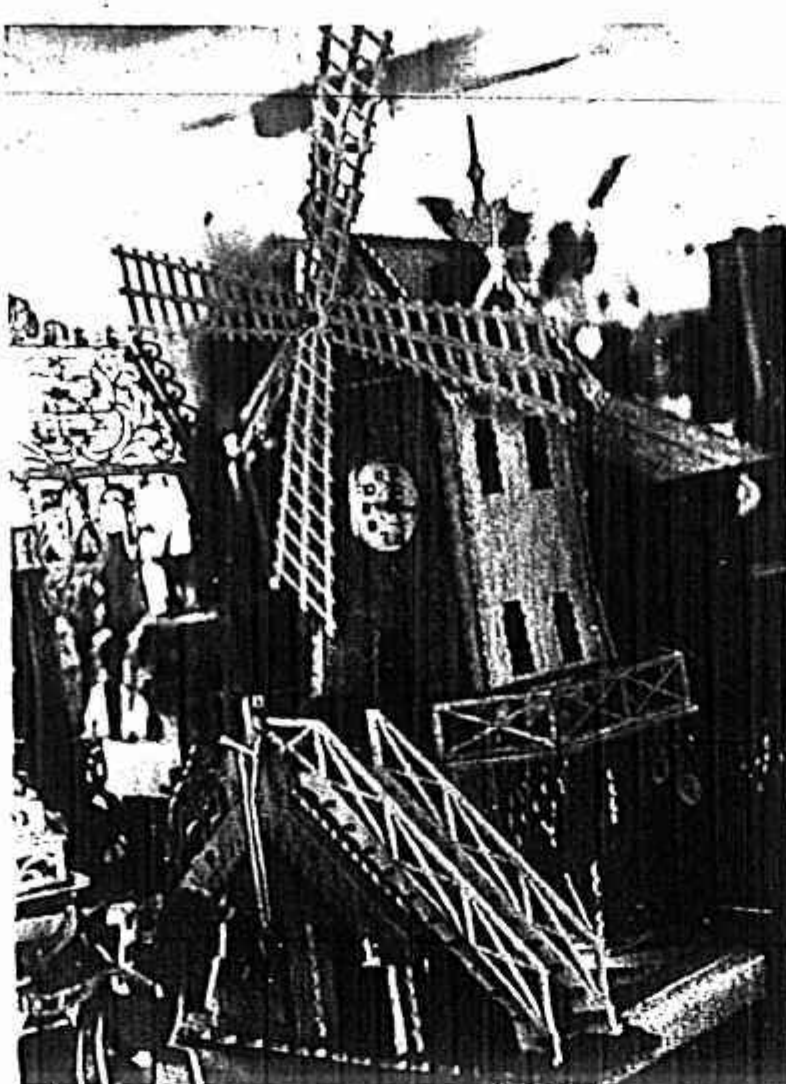
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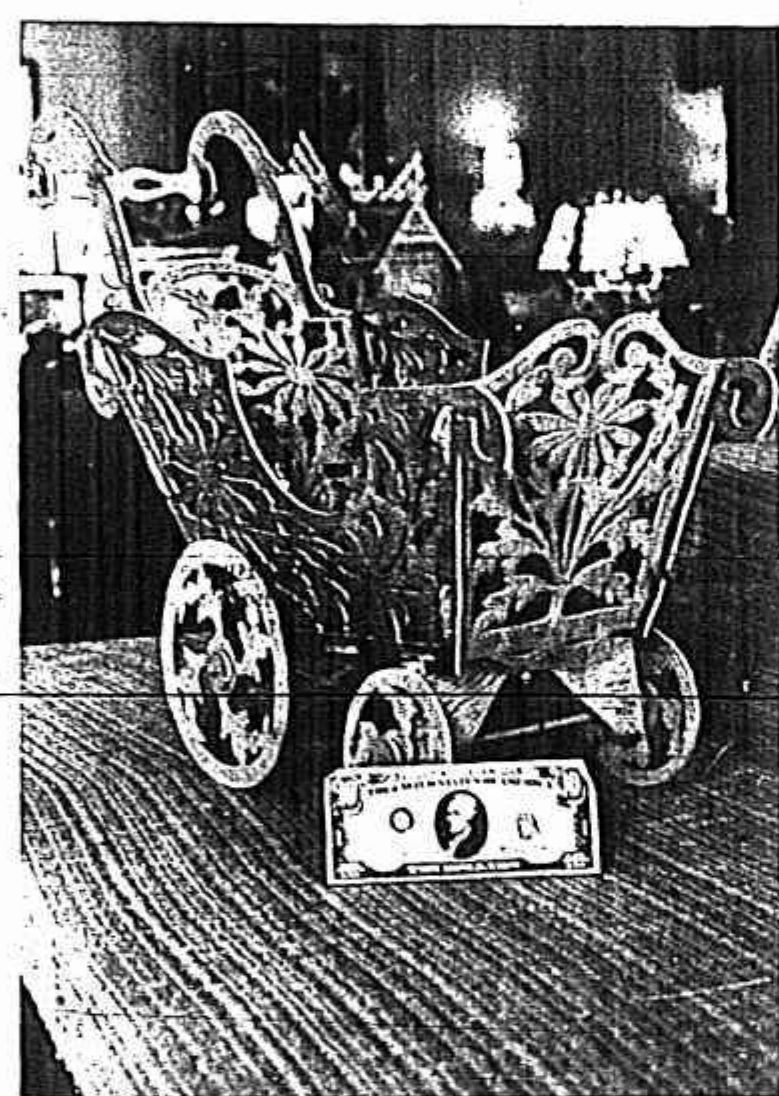


40 HOURS' WORK—

Frank Lash reports that this Electric Windmill clock represents 40 hours' labor and from the intricacy of the design this is readily obvious. The clock sells for \$40.

fretwork Lash built some thirty years ago.

The handbuilt saw, workhorse of the Lash operation, was made from an English-built Free sewing machine. Retaining only the machine's frame, treadle and balance wheel, Mr. Lash made the saw's table, arms and saw portions of the device. Deeming electric



DOLL CARRIAGE—

The bill gives a comparison of the size and intricate detail necessary to make this wooden doll carriage. This is a 10-hour project.

power too indelicate to perform the intricate cuts, he spurned electricity and the machine remained hand, foot operated.

Mr. Lash's production volume could lead some to believe his hobby is a business, but he denies this, saying that fretwork is "just a way to keep me occupied."

Forced into retirement from his welder's job at Partlow Corporation by illness at age 63, Mr. Lash wants to pass on the art of fretworking to his grandson, but "he's only 17 now, and all he has on his mind now are football and baseball, and they keep him out of the house all the time."

It's really hard to get a young man interested in fretworking right now, Mr. Lash says, "but I would like to pass it on to someone...teach them all the tricks there are to this...shortcuts and many other ins and outs one has to learn. Eventually he'll probably show an interest and I'll be able to get him upstairs again."

Fretworking, an unusually time-consuming pursuit, has been Frank Lash's hobby since 1928 and any but the most understanding wife might be jealous of such a competitor for her husband's attentions. But Mary Lash, decidedly an understanding type, has only one regret about her husband's hobby: "I just wish I had more of his works around the house. Every time he makes some, people come around and want to buy it. Now I haven't any left."

Mr. Lash's daughter, Patricia Schaeffer, resides at 67 Stebbins drive, Clinton.

Chamber Unit Sing at Colgate Sunday at 4

The Colgate University music department will present the Colgate Chamber Singers in concert on Sunday, November 7, at 4:00 p.m. in the Dana Arts Center theater.

The 16-voice ensemble under the direction of Timothy Adams, instructor in music, is composed entirely of Colgate students. The group draws its repertoire primarily from the Renaissance and contemporary periods.

This Sunday's program will include works by Italian and English madrigalists Gastoldi, Marenzio, Wilbye and Morley Of special interest are the settings of French Texts by Debussy ("Trois Chansons") and Hindemith ("Six Chansons") and four settings by St. Louis composer Robert Wykes of American Indian poems.

The Sunday concert is a part of the Colgate Chamber Series. The public is invited free of charge.

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CLINTON, NEW YORK
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