

Neighborhood News

Staff News

There have been a number of recent staff changes at Penland. After ten years of serving in a variety of capacities, **Connie Sedberry** left staff at the end of August. Connie came to Penland as a secretary when Bill Brown was the director. She has been Registrar, Executive Assistant, Assistant to the Director, Assistant Director, and Interim Director. After leaving Penland, Connie first took a month's vacation and then plunged into working with her husband Ken Sedberry in his craft business.

Tim Veness, who came as Services Coordinator and stayed on to be Interim Assistant Director, also left at the end of the summer to return to his home in Petaluma, CA. Tim took off right away on a vacation to Spain and Morocco. He is working with a fabric business in Petaluma.

Geraldine Plato has joined staff as Assistant Director with responsibility for on-site administration. Geraldine brings to the position a knowledge of Penland which she gained in the eighties as a studio assistant, core student, assistant to the director and an instructor. She came to Penland from Jackson, Mississippi, where she was Public Information Director for the Mississippi Arts Commission. An independent studio artist working in mixed media constructions and fibers since 1979, she has been a Sessions Director at Horizons: The New England Craft Program/Elderhostel. Geraldine is married to studio artist John Clark, a former Penland Resident in wood. They have two children, Stella, four, and Lucy, one.

A second Assistant Director position combines the administration of programs, oversight of the Penland Gallery, photography, public relations, and publications work. This position has been filled by **Dana Moore**, an artist from Gainesville, Florida. Dana has an MFA in photography from the University of Florida where she was a student of Evon Streetman. She was an instructor in photography last summer. In describing her own studio work Dana said, "I try to take photographs that seem to suggest a history other than what is apparent and then add that history using oils, pastels, or chalks."

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A JUMP START FOR SKILLS

This fall, Penland had the largest Concentration session ever. A total of 83 people (students, instructors, and assistants) spent eight weeks together in intensive studio work. Most of the classes had waitlists, showing us that there is an increasing interest in Penland's alternative to the university setting. As one student put it, "This was a chance to jump-start my studio skills."

Enrollment is strong for the spring Concentration which runs from March 14 to May 6, with classes in book arts, clay, glass, metals, surface design, and wood. Two classes are planning to pursue the crossover possibilities between the two media. These include *Bookworks: Paper, Book & Box Structures* with **Linda Crabill** and **Julie Leonard** and the surface design class entitled *Composing with Cloth*, taught by **Carmen Grier**.

Not Just Jewelry with **Paula Garrett** will explore the versatility of precious and non-precious metals, small and large pieces. In the wood studio, **Bob Leverich** will be helping students develop their own approach to wood in a class he calls *Woodworking: Yours*.

Douglass Rankin & Will Ruggles will focus on straightforward yet lively pots for home use in a woodfiring clay class called *Learning Through Making*. Glass instructor **Dimitri Michaelides** is offering a class in *Off-Hand Blowing Technique*.

Visiting artists are an important part of concentration classes. For example, in the book arts class additional specific areas will be covered by **Dan Kelm**, an innovative binder, and **Beverly Plummer**, a paper artist who will focus on pulp painting. **Lee Malerich** will cover embroidery with the surface design class. An eight-week class also provides time for field trips, visits to nearby studios, and time to explore business practices, production work, and other aspects of making a living as a studio artist.

Although the clay and glass classes are full and only accepting people for the waitlist, there is still space in the other studios. Call the registrar for more detailed information.

WHY CONCENTRATION?

Why do people choose to come to a Concentration? That was a question asked on the application this year, and here are some of the reasons.

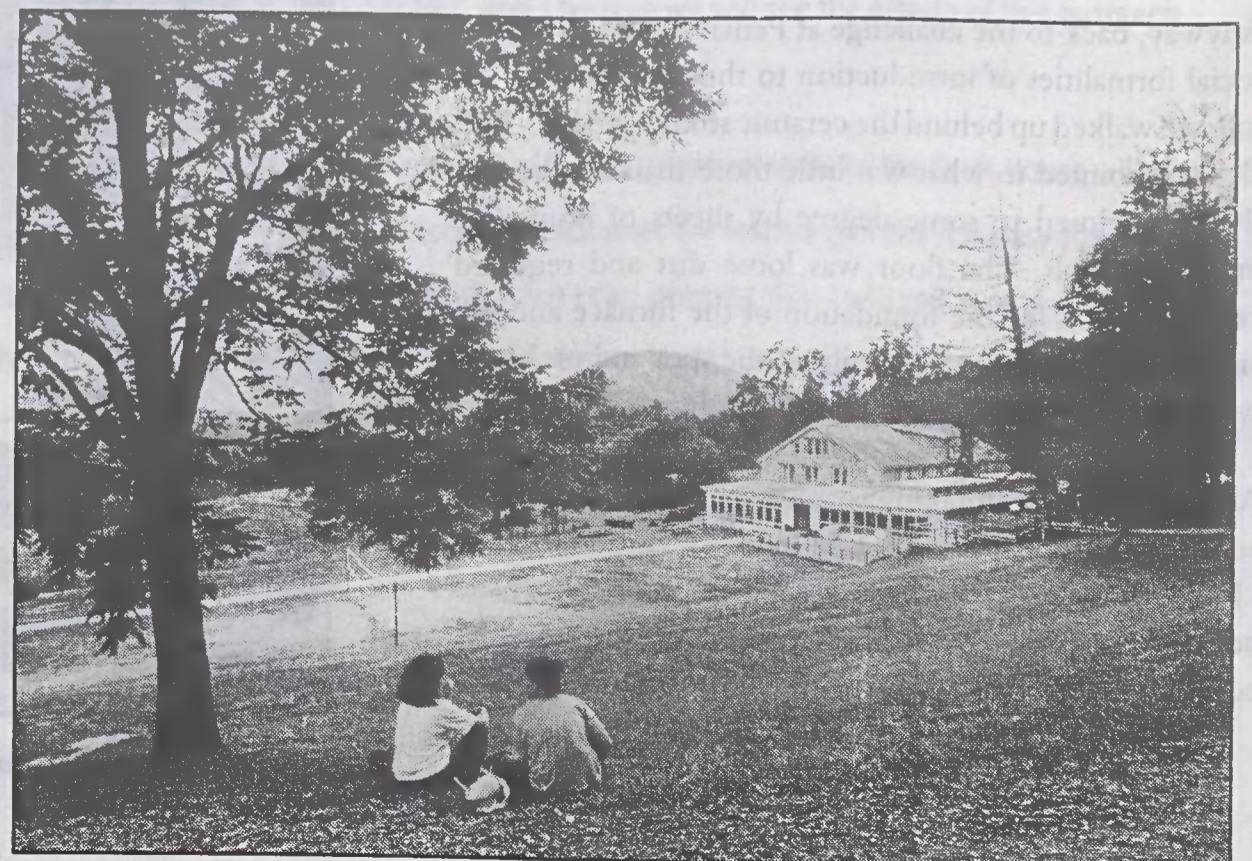
For many people, it just seemed to be the right moment in their evolution as a craftsman to work under the guidance of an instructor for a longer period of time.

The second most frequent reason relates to some kind of transition. In terms of the work itself, students cited such things as a move from part-time to full-time crafts work, a desire to change from clay to glass, or making a major change in the direction of their work. Life transitions included leaving a 50-hour a week job, changing careers, ending a personal relationship, or a decision to drop out of school.

For some, Concentration seems to be a planned part of a total approach to their education. Several students commented that they were preparing grad school applications and needed a stronger portfolio or wanted to be better prepared; others said that they wanted a break from school at this point to be away from distractions or to finish a thesis. In some cases an instructor had urged them to take a Concentration course at this point in their development as an artist.

We asked about their goals as well, and most students this fall were hoping to develop a career in crafts or anticipated that they would be earning at least a portion of their living through their work. A few plan to teach.

One person who has been to several Penland summer classes wrote that a two-week class could be a roller coaster ride, but Concentration would be a time to work hard and make friends. That about sums it up!



In an eight-week session, there's time to make friends.