Decorative Art Society

Transcribed and Annotated
by
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DECORATIVE ART SOCIETY

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HISTORY

Some Account of the Society of Decorative Art and Woman’s Exchange in Santa Cruz.

On June 1st, 1885, in response to invitations issued by Mr. F. A. Hihn, twenty-five ladies and gentlemen met in the upper rooms at 150 Pacific Avenue. The meeting was called to order by Miss A. M. Wells. Mrs. Elizabeth Buchanan was chosen chairman and Mrs. E. P. Vaux secretary.

As stated by Mrs. Buchanan and Mr. Hihn, the object of the meeting was the organization of a society for the promotion of art in Santa Cruz, for the furnishing of both paid and free classes for tuition in all branches of art and for the establishment of a depot where artistic products might be displayed and sold.

A committee of five ladies were appointed to draft a Constitution which should be submitted to a general meeting to be held on June 8th, to which date the first meeting was adjourned. The committee consisted of Mrs. Buchanan, Mrs. Vaux, Mrs. A. J. Hinds, Mrs. Drennan and Mrs. Raymond.

The Constitution as framed by the above committee was adopted by the meeting held on June 8th, and the organization was named the Society of Decorative Art of Santa Cruz.

An election of officers immediately took place with the following result: President, Mrs. G. B. Kirby; Vice-President, Mrs. S. Drennan; Secretary, Mrs. I. H. Raymond; Treasurer, Mrs. Elizabeth Buchanan. An executive committee consisted of Mrs. Elizabeth Buchanan, Mrs. H. Forbes, Mrs. W. T. Cope and Mr. F. A. Hihn.
Mr. Hihn agreed to donate the use of the rooms to the Society, and the lady manager was to be permitted, as compensation for her services to keep and sell at the rooms a stock of materials for fancy needlework.

It was the desire of those who inaugurated the movement that the Society should be a free one, and it was therefore resolved that no fees should be paid by members. Soon after, however, it was found that money was necessary to carry on the affairs of the organization and it was decided that members should pay twenty-five cents per month. Later the fee was reduced to its present amount. [not indicated in this pamphlet –sds]

Immediately after the organization of the Society an Art Loan Exhibition was held for the double purpose of formally opening the rooms and for securing sufficient funds for furnishing them. The articles exhibited were loaned by the citizens of the town and the affair proved interesting and profitable.

Entertainments of a high order have been given from time to time by the Society which have resulted to its credit and practical benefit.

Up to February, 1891, the rooms of the Society were under the joint management of Mrs. Buchanan and Mrs. Forbes. On that date Mrs. Forbes resigned.

Between October 1st, 1885, and February, 1891, the Society maintained, under the charge of Mrs. Buchanan, a class where twenty-four pupils received free instruction in embroidery. Also within that time nearly sixty little girls were instructed in plain sewing under the patronage of the Society.

On October 1st, 1891, a Woman’s Exchange and a store for the sale of materials used in artistic needlework and in the several departments of drawing and painting were opened by the Society under the management of Miss Marion Sherman. In February, 1892, Miss Sherman resigned and was succeeded by Miss Sarah Morgan, who still holds the position. Both institutions have proved eminently successful and, at this writing, May, 1894, the Decorative Art Society, in all its departments, is on a thoroughly substantial and prosperous basis, with a fair prospect of sometime accomplishing its ultimate object—the establishment of an art school.

In June of 1892, at the call of the Society, Miss Jenness of New York gave a lecture in Santa Cruz on physical culture and immediately after formed a class for instruction in that science, which was well attended.

In February, 1893, Mr. Edmund Russell, also of New York, gave, under the auspices of the Society, a lecture and several talks on art, and finally a series of fine art recitals, all of which were of high importance, leading to an increase of knowledge of the subjects of art and good taste. A souvenir program of the above named art recitals was published at the time they were given, which included the following account of the beginning and growth of the Decorative Art Society:

“It is now nearly eight years since a few enthusiastic persons talked over, in a quiet way, the proposition—a very ambitious one for a town like the Santa Cruz of that day—of establishing a Society for the encouragement of Art. While the advantages of such an organization were quite plain to these progressive persons, the ways and means for making it an active and operative society, rather than a collection of figure heads, were by no means so obvious. But the more it was talked over the more definite in form and intention became their purpose.
The first, the indispensable thing was a local habitation—the name was an after consideration. Here it was that Mr. F. A. Hihn became the good genius, the sponsor of the infant plan. Persuaded of the benefits that would result from the inception and growth of such an organization, he offered as a home for it the entire second floor of one of his buildings on Pacific avenue, remodeling it according to the needs of the society. This has ever since has been the abode of the “Decorative Art” entirely rent free. Mr. Hihn gave much other substantial help, became a charter member, a life member, and has ever been ready with business counsel and assistance to answer the many calls which the ladies of the society have made upon him.

The suite of apartments occupied by the Society consists of a meeting room, a room for the sale of art and needlework materials and articles of woman’s handiwork, and two studios. The latter have been continuously rented by the society to teachers of some department of art, the proceeds going into the treasury of the organization. The rooms are plainly but comfortably furnished, have a cheery aspect and are very well supplied with glass cabinets and show cases for the protection and display of decorated china and delicate handiwork of all sorts. Art magazines and periodicals are taken in and kept on file for the use of the members.

Beginning in so modest a way, the society has been obliged, of course, to make haste slowly. Yet a few principal objects have been kept steadily in view. One of these was the establishment on a permanent basis of a Woman’s Exchange for the sale of the work of women of Santa Cruz who desired, by this means, to add to their incomes, but who were unable to place their articles of handiwork before the public in an attractive way. This was finally accomplished in 1891 and the ladies have now reason to feel that this most desirable branch of their work is on its feet and will be self supporting.

Articles of handiwork or of cookery are received, exhibited and sold without commission, the entire proceeds going to the producers. A complete stock of art work material is also kept on hand and for sale.

The members of the society of Decorative Art desire to thank the public of Santa Cruz for the constant encouragement and the kindly aid received in their efforts to establish and maintain the organization.”

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
- OF THE -
SOCIETY OF DECORATIVE ART,
———
of santa cruz, organized june, 1885. with
the order of business to be observed at the meetings, also the rules gov-
erning the management of the business of the store and woman’s exchange.
ARTICLE I.

The object of this society is the fostering and furtherance of Art, the promotion of tuition in the varied departments of artistic and industrial handiwork and the sale of articles in the several departments.

ARTICLE II.

The Society shall be called the Society of Decorative Art of Santa Cruz.

ARTICLE III.

The officers of this Society shall consist of a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer and an executive committee of five members, with Mr. F. A. Hihn as sending advisory member.

ARTICLE IV.

The elected officers of this Society shall hold office for a term of one year.

ARTICLE V.

The recognized members of this Society are those who shall have signed the Constitution up to July 7th, 1885. Any person wishing to become a member subsequent to that time may be proposed at any regular or adjourned meeting of the Society; the name shall then be submitted to the executive committee for approval and balloted upon at the next regular meeting. Three negative votes shall constitute a rejection.

ARTICLE VI.

The regular meeting of this Society shall be held on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

ARTICLE VII.

Weekly receptions shall be held at the Art Rooms, to which the public shall be invited and an admission fee of ten cents be charged.

ARTICLE VIII.

At any meeting of this Society seven members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE IX.

The Constitution can be changed at any meeting of the Society, where a quorum is present, by a vote of a majority and the written approval of a majority of the officers.

BY-LAWS.

1. Officers to be elected by a viva voce vote.
2. The duties of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer the same as in other organizations.
3. The duties of the Executive Committee of the Society shall consist in the management of its affairs according to the will of the Society, expressed from time to time by a majority vote at any regular meeting.
4. The entrance fee to membership in the Society shall be one dollar until further notice.
5. Dues, ten cents per month, payable by the year or any portion of the year, at the option of the member.
6. Any member who is six months in arrears shall be notified thereof; failure to pay the amount due within six months after notification shall constitute a reason for erasing the name of said member from the membership roll unless an extension of
time shall be granted her by a majority vote of the Society. A delinquent member may be reinstated by payment of back dues.

7. The Treasurer of the Society shall pay no bills except those audited by the President or Executive Committee.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

1. Meeting called to order by the Chairman.
2. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
3. Report of Corresponding Secretary.
5. Report of manager of the store.
8. Election to membership of persons proposed at the previous meeting.
9. Names received of persons proposed for membership.
11. Reports of special Committees.
13. The Chairman to receive suggestions or requests.
14. The Chairman to call on members for remarks.

On putting a motion for adjournment the Chairman shall mention to what date the meeting is adjourned.

On the opening of the meeting all conversation shall cease until after adjournment. Any member having remarks to make shall address the Chair and speak standing. Any person having a report to make shall stand while doing so. No motion shall be made by any member while another is speaking, and no motion shall be made or seconded without rising.

No member shall be interrupted while speaking except it be to call her to order.

RULES.

For the Direction of the Executive Committee in the Management of the Store and Woman’s Exchange,
Adopted Feb. 3,
1892.

1. All goods purchased shall be by order of the Executive Committee as to quantity and quality.
2. All bills shall be audited by at least two members of the Executive Committee.
3. The Treasurer shall be empowered to pay bills by order of the President or Executive Committee.
4. The Executive Committee shall fix the price on work done for sale by the Society.
5. Two members of the Executive Committee shall meet at the rooms of the Society once each week to order stock and attend to the operating expenses.
6. The manager shall keep an account of all receipts and expenditures and present a report thereof every third Wednesday of the month.

7. THE OFFICIAL BOARD

Of the Society of Decorative Art is Composed as follows:

President, MRS. H. M. BLACKBURN.
1st Vice-President, MRS. EMMA BROOKS.
2d Vice-President, MRS. GEORGE HASTINGS.
3d Vice-President, MRS. T. V. MATHEWS.
Recording Secretary, MISS S. A. TYRRELL.
Corresponding Secretary, MRS. ED. PERRY.
Treasurer, MRS. S. A. PALMER.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Executive Committee, acting also as Auditing Committee: MRS. W. T. COPE (Chairman), MRS. S. H. BAILEY, MRS. E. A. DEWOLFE, MRS. E. T. JEWETT, MRS. A. P. SWANTON.

NOTICE:

The Exchange of the “Decorative Art Society” is for the purpose of helping women to help themselves individually, and not as a society.

ARTICLE I.

After a piece of work is sold and the money paid to the owner of the work, the article cannot be returned or exchanged by the purchaser, as the Society has no interest in it further than a sale.

ARTICLE II.

The store belongs to the “Decorative Art Society.” The balance of the profits, if any, (after providing for the necessary increase of stock and the payment of fixed charges and operating expenses) are to be placed on interest, creating a fund toward the building at some future time of a “School of Art and Design.”

ARTICLE III.

If the “Decorative Art Society” accept from any society or association articles to be placed on sale in “the Exchange,” said society or association shall pay to the “Decorative Art Society” ten per cent of the gross receipts from the sale of said articles.

ARTICLE IV.

Individuals purchasing from the store of the “D. A. Society” all the material for an article to be sold in said store shall be exempt from the charge of ten per cent for the sale of said article.

ARTICLE V.
Individuals purchasing elsewhere, the material for articles to be sold in the store of “D. A. Society” shall be charged ten per cent of the receipts from the sale of said articles.

**ARTICLE VI.**

The Executive Committee are empowered, at their discretion, to deny the admission for sale of the work of any society or association, as the Exchange was not organized for that purpose.

—— 1891 ——

The Decorative Art Society will open on October 1st at the Art Rooms, 150 Pacific Avenue, a Women’s Exchange for the sale of articles of use and beauty made by the women of Santa Cruz and surrounding towns. Women taking articles to the above named place for sale can have them disposed of for two months from the date of opening without the payment of a commission. Materials for plain and ornamental needle-work will be kept for sale.

Annotations:
Bailey, Ella S. (Mrs. Sanford Hunt Bailey)
Blackburn, Harriet Mead (Mrs. William Blackburn)
Brooks, Emma Christine Trust (Mrs. James Brooks)
Buchanan, Elizabeth Ellis (Mrs. William Buchanan)
Cope, Katherine Charlotte Hihn (Mrs. William Thomas Cope)
DeWolfe, E. A. (Mrs.) (books, stationery, musical instruments & free reading room)
Drennan, Louisa Fernald (Mrs. Samuel Drennan)
Forbes, Harriet (Mrs.)
Hastings, (Mrs. George Hastings)
Hihn, Frederick Augustus, capitalist
Hinds, Sarah E. Howe (Mrs. Alfred Joseph Hinds)
Irish, Harley E., bookseller & publisher
Jenness (Miss) (of New York)
Jewett, Mary E. (Mrs. Eduard T. Jewett)
Mathews, Emma Jane (Mrs. Theodore Vinton Mathews)
Morgan, Sarah (Miss)
Palmer, Sarah S. (Mrs. Sylvester Asa Palmer)
Perry, Ellen (Mrs. Edward Perry)
Raymond, Isabel H.
Russell, Edmund (of New York)
Sherman, Marion (Miss)
Swanton, Emily J. Parshley (Mrs. Albion Paris Swanton)
Tyrrell, Susana A. (Miss)
Vaux, Fannie Fern Griffith (Mrs. Dr. Exeter P. Vaux)
Wells, Anna W.