

## THE JOURNEY ~ Keith Morrill

"*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step,*" is an ancient Chinese observation of wisdom. Another observation of wisdom say, "*Life is more the journey than the destination.*" Likewise, those sayings can be combined in the observation that "*Woodcarving is more the journey than the destination.*" The meaning being that with woodcarving (as with many other endeavors) it is the activity of carving that is the journey that gives meaning to carving more than the end result (destination) because once a carving is completed the carver is ready to continue the journey of carving activity.

Beginning the journey again is to experience a growth in skill, growth in imagination, growth in creativity and a growth in self-awareness. Or in other words, "*the more one carves the better one carves.*" The activity of woodcarving is a growing experience of learning by doing and reviewing the road signs of the journey already traveled.

The journey of woodcarving also includes the people we meet along the journey in the making of new friends, being inspired and encouraged by fellow travelers on the same journey as well as participating in activities related to woodcarving with other likeminded travelers.

This journey also includes a "*trip down memory lane*" by journeying back to remember fellow travelers, remembering experiences of an earlier time on the journey and observations made by looking back in order to go ahead.

A fellow traveler on the journey of woodcarving is Keith Morrill who is a fellow Caricature Carver of America (CCA) Emeritus Member who tells the story from his journey past of first meeting and being interviewed by author Elma Waltner who authored ***Carving Animal Caricatures*** and the resulting friendship that developed.

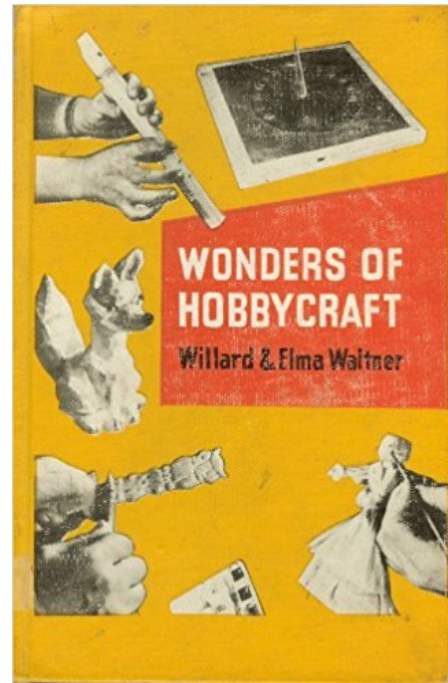
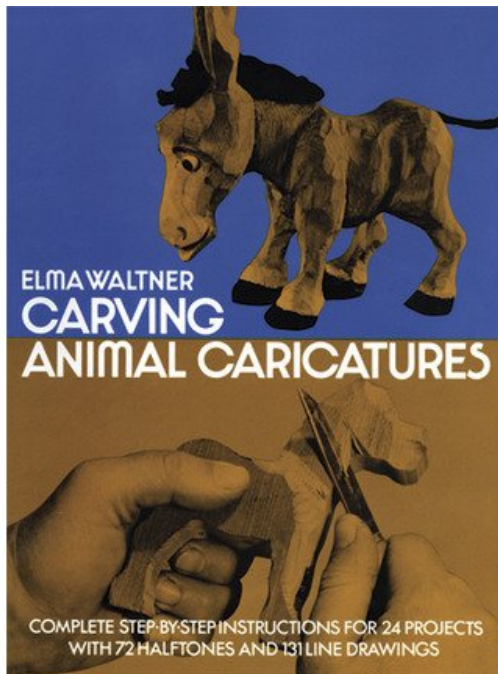


[ KEITH MORRILL]



[KEITH and Larry Piety at CCA Seminar]

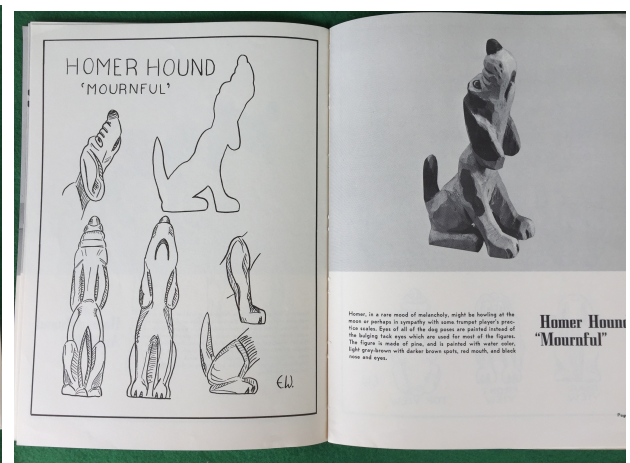
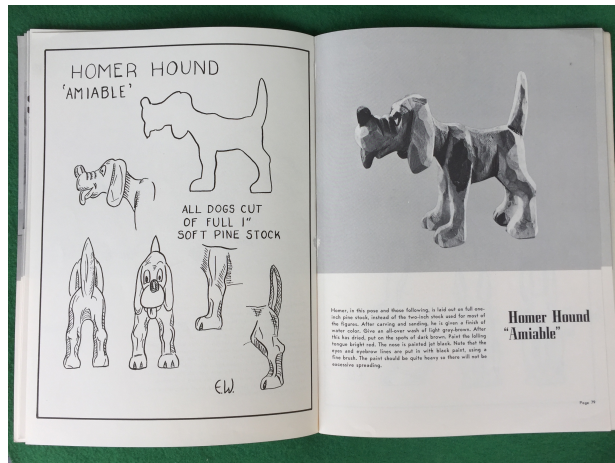
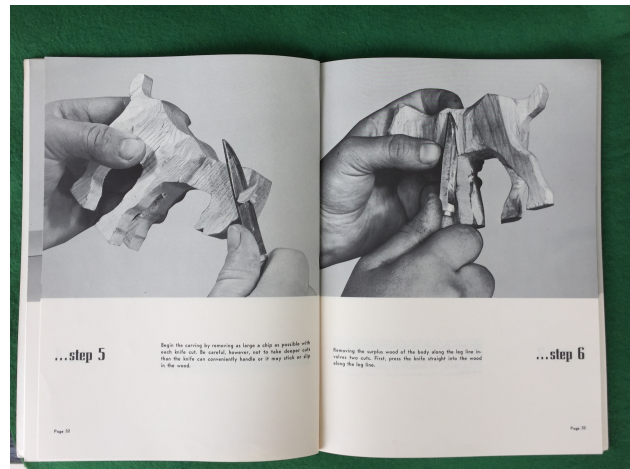
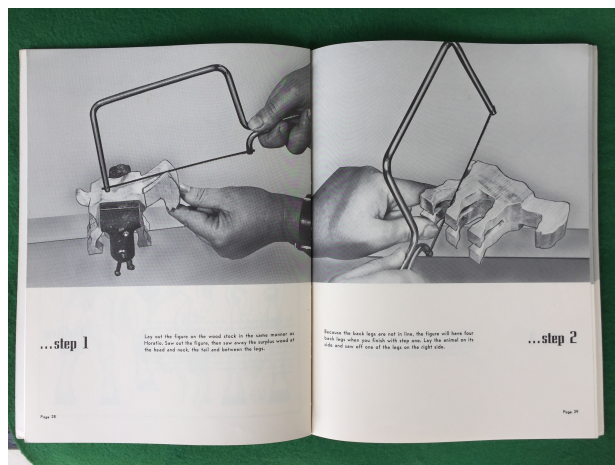
At the time, Elma wrote her landmark caricature book in 1951 there were very few books being published on the subject of woodcarving. So, in a very real sense she was a pioneer on this journey of woodcarving resources. Elma and her photographer brother Willard were free-lanced reporters of the arts and craft movement. Their business was called **"Crafts Designing – Pictorial Reporting"** which interviewed a variety of craft and hobby endeavors along with their own creative pursuits. Their free-lanced reports appeared in a variety of newspaper and magazines that appealed to the arts and crafts enthusiasts (Boys Life, Mechanix Illustrated, Popular Science, etc.) Elma's **Carving Animal Caricatures** was welcomed by woodcarving hobbyists whose primary contact with woodcarving was through periodical articles in newspapers and magazines. She and her brother Willard also published a few Hobby Craft books on various projects.



The books available in the 1950's on the subject of woodcarving were limited to a few authors like Andy Anderson, E. J. Tangerman, and Ben Hunt. There were only a few small woodcarving clubs meeting since the National Wood Carvers Association did not get organized until the mid 1960's. It was not until the mid 1970's that Harold Enlow opened the flood gates of carving book publishing to be followed by a growing number of woodcarving authors of which Tom Wolfe has been most prolific in authoring carving books. It was in the 1970's that with the growth of carving clubs who subsequently sponsored woodcarving shows and woodcarving seminars that woodcarving grew with participants and resources.

Elma's book, ***Carving Animal Caricatures*** played an important role in the advancement of woodcarving by providing unique animal caricature designs that are still copied even without much awareness of the designs origin. Many beginning woodcarvers have carved Elma's "Homer Hound" designs without any realization of her pioneering design work. Many of her other animal designs and how to do photos using only hand tools were a monumental contribution to the journey of woodcarving activities during those early years of the growth in woodcarving.

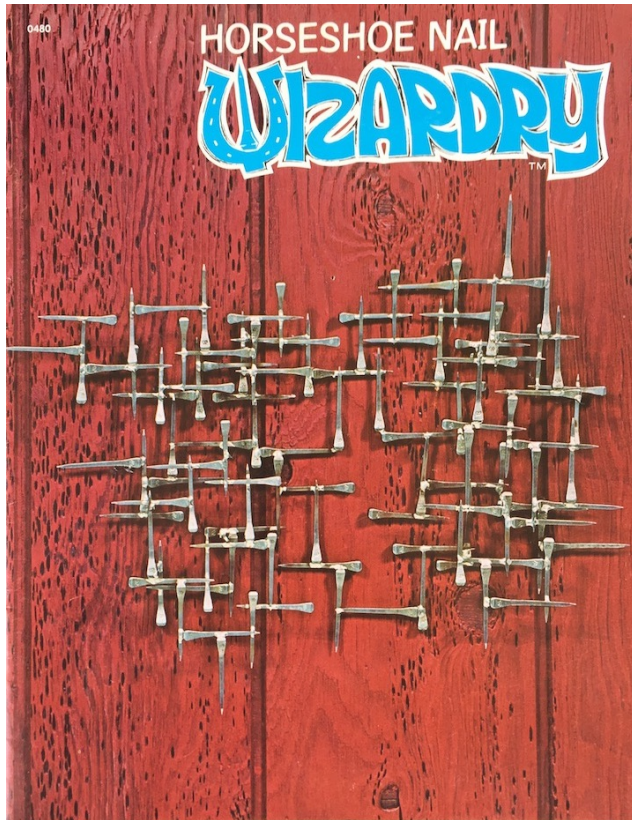




The journey continued to mile marker "October, 1974" when Elma wrote to Keith Morrill asking to do an interview of him about his craft of making "Hang Nails" (jewelry and art work) that she had read about in Sunday's Argus Leader. (See APPENDIX for letter)

Keith had been making "Hang Nails" using horse shoe nails for a few years and his unique art/craft had garnered such great interest that David M. Mangelsen's (craft supplier), commissioned Keith to write a how-to-book on his art. The company flew Keith to Chicago all expenses paid for the national craft vendors annual show where he demonstrated making jewelry out of the horse shoe nails.





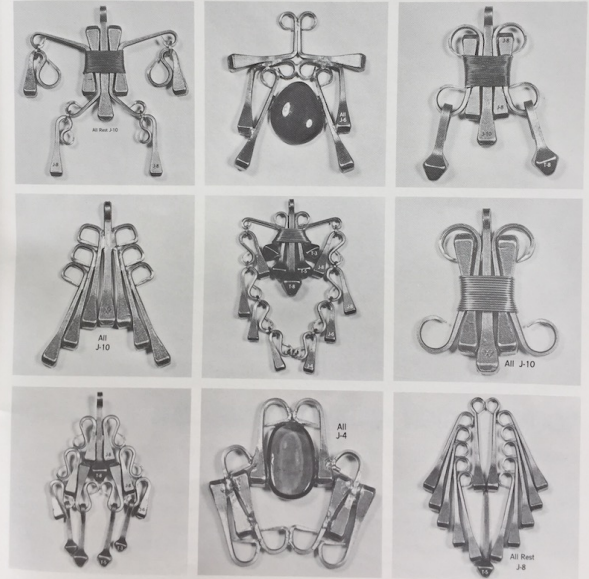
### PENDANTS

Pictured are some suggestive ideas as to what may be accomplished when you let your imagination and bending skills take over. With the use of copper wire, craft wire, some stained glass nuggets and a few jump rings, many attractive possibilities may be obtained. These designs could be incorporated into the mobile pictured on page 16.

1. Remember to Clean and Spray all your nail projects, using the instructions on page 4.

2. Stained glass nuggets are held in place by spotting areas next to nails with epoxy glue.

3. When wire is used, wrap as desired, but be sure to leave enough at both ends to tuck in behind! (See illustration.)



17



12



13




## HORSESHOE NAIL WIZARDRY™

### INTRODUCTION

You needn't operate the village smithy under that well-known spreading chestnut tree to make good use of horseshoe nails. In fact, they're for everyone and you can work with them anywhere.

Nail sculpture will provide many hours of fun and satisfaction as you make interesting com-



Our thanks to Keith Morrill of Boulder, Colorado for the designs that went into the making of this book.

positions from horseshoe nails. An ideal hobby for a man, the nails can be used in ways that release them from their customary role and convert them into attractive, decorative articles. Simply bend them and shape them; solder or glue them. It's easy; it's fun. And you're sure to be pleased with the results.



"For the want of a nail the shoe was lost,  
For the want of a shoe the horse was lost,  
For the want of a horse the rider was lost,  
For the want of a rider the battle was lost,  
For the want of a battle the kingdom was lost,  
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail."

—Benjamin Franklin, "Poor Richard" 1758


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#### Materials Needed

\* MUSTADFORS Horseshoe Nails  
Round Nose Pliers  
Flat Nose Pliers  
Needle Nose Pliers  
Silver Solder  
Silver Solder Flux  
Small Fine File  
Soldering Gun or Iron  
600° to 700° F (316° to 371° C)  
Asbestos sheet, brick or concrete block  
Clear Acrylic Spray  
Pipe and Wooden Dowels (assorted sizes)

#### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Because they are made of soft iron, horseshoe nails are easy to bend. With a little practice, bending a nail into a perfect circle will become easy.

Figure A shows the way to grip nails in jaws of pliers to start a circle. End of nail should extend past center line of jaws, so jaws do not slip off while bending. (A file mark can be made on tapered jaws to indicate point at which nail should be gripped for size circle desired.) Keeping nail in line with mark and keeping nail pressed closely against jaws will produce circles of same size. Twist hand with pliers while at the same time using thumb to help and mold nail around plier jaw.

Figures B, C and D show sequence of movements to make a circle. (Note: left hand remains in same position throughout the series. Its function is to maintain enough pressure to keep nail pressed firmly against plier jaws while wrist and pliers do most of the work. Hold jaws tightly on nail while turning wrist in counterclockwise direction.)

Stop wrist when end of nail is bent in a semi-circle. Release pressure on pliers and slide jaws back around partially completed circle. (Figure C) Re-apply pressure to jaws and, still applying pressure to nail with left hand, again turn wrist in a counterclockwise position until nail closes in circle. (Figure D)

By grasping nail below circle already completed (Figure E) and bending nail in opposite direction, bends to the right (Figure F) can be achieved.

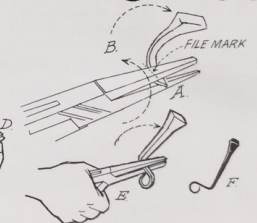
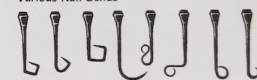
\*MUSTADFORS are genuine Swedish Horseshoe Nails. Look for the "M" on each nail.

#### NAIL CHART

Styles and Sizes Available

REG-12	82MM/3-1/4 inch
T-8	63MM/2-1/2 inch
T-5	50MM/2 inch
T-3	41MM/1-5/8 inch
T1B-7	56MM/2-3/16 inch
T1B-4	47MM/1-7/8 inch
J-10	65MM/2-5/8 inch
J-8	59MM/2-5/16 inch
J-6	53MM/2-1/16 inch
J-4	47MM/1-7/8 inch

#### Various Nail Bends



Elma's interview of Keith about his art/craft of Hang Nails became an intersecting crossroad of serendipity on the journey of friendship intertwined with the common interest in woodcarving.

In order to capture the essence of the serendipity of the meeting and interview with Elma in 1974 it is helpful to recapture what prepared Keith for this memorable event. In his own words, Keith reminisces:

I always say my carving started in my early grade school days when I built model airplane kits, mostly solid wood models. Not too much actual carving but I was working with wood which I really enjoyed. During my high school days, I lived just outside of Sioux Falls along the Sioux River and spent many hours sitting on the bank fishing. Since the fish weren't always biting I started carving on pieces of driftwood with my pocket knife. I was also active in the Methodist Youth Fellowship and the MYF director did a little carving and got me carving other kinds of scrap wood. About that time, the only carving

books available were a couple of Tangerman books, Andy Anderson's, and Elma Waltner's. I started carvings projects from those books and my interest in carving continued to grow. I didn't know of any other carvers so just stumbled along on my own.

I spotted an ad or story about Chip Chats in a magazine, sent for a subscription, and joined the NWCA. Chip Chats was just a mimeographed few sheets of paper at the time (My membership # is 513). It was through Chip Chats that I learned about the Doane Workshop in Crete, NE. My first year there I was in the same class with Bob Travis [CCA member]. I was teaching for a few years in Sioux Falls, then moved to Brookings where eventually in the early 70's I bought a small hunters cabin in the Black Hills near Custer with another prof I taught with at South Dakota State University (SDSU).

About that time, the father of the recent owner of the Museum here in Custer (Dale Schaffer) brought the Museum here from Denver. I continued teaching at SDSU in Brookings, SD (Biology professor) for a number of years but came out here in the summers when I wasn't teaching summer school. I met Dale and his Dad and they asked me if I wanted to carve for the tourists when I was out here.



[National Museum of Wood Carving ~ Custer, SD]



Somewhere along the line Steve Prescott and Dave Stetson got to know the Schaffers and started coming here to Custer for a while in the summers (all their kids were of HS age at the time). During those early years, some of the other CCA members showed up from time to time (Sears, Raine, Travis, Wolfe, Batte, Bishops, Harold, Desiree, and others?). We all became friends and eventually everybody's work was displayed and eventually the CCA Circus. None of these guys knew me before all this happened but they did invite me into membership of CCA in 1993. *[Keith became Emeritus Member of CCA 2016]*.

What I learned about Elma's life is that she had never done any carving before doing the book. She and her photographer brother worked together on doing books on hobbies. She taught herself to carve, did the book with the photography and assistance done by her brother. That apparently is the way they earned their living. She would teach herself about a craft hobby, then do a book and move on to the next one. She called me one day and asked if she and her brother could come to Brookings and interview me and take pictures of my hangnail jewelry/art. This happened several years after I started carving. I had already bought her book and done some of the pieces but I didn't make the connection from the phone call and it was only during the interview that it dawned on me that this might be "her". We spent most of an afternoon on the jewelry and it wasn't till I was helping them put their stuff in their car that I asked if she had ever done any carving. She was as surprised as I was. She reached into the car and brought her book *Carving Animal Caricatures* and proceeded to show me the drawings and stuff from the book. This was her own copy of the book and she asked me if I would like to have it. She gave me her book and reached into the car, brought out the fox carving and gave it to me. She said the publisher didn't have room to include all the carvings. She was very nice and friendly and seemed to be as happy as I was that someone was interested in her

work. That is probably the only known carving of Elma's that still exists. She never did another carving after doing that book. I guess that's what she did with all of them. Once a book was finished she moved on to the next one.



The second letter in the Appendix along with Elma's drawings were a follow-up of the interview which further gives a picture of a very generous and creative contributor to the advancement of not only woodcarving but also many other creative hobbies and activities.

The one and only meeting during the interview in 1974 remains a memorable event on the journey of woodcarving for Keith Morrill and is a testimony of lasting impressions of a remarkable woman who contributed so much to creative endeavors.

[written and edited by Donald K. Mertz]

## APPENDIX

[two letters and three pages of drawing by Elma Waltner]

Elma Waltner

Willard H. Waltner

## Crafts Designing - Pictorial Reporting

P. O. Box 190

730 South Dewald

FREEMAN, SOUTH DAKOTA 57029

Phone 605-925-7627

October 23, 1974

Mr. Keith Morrill  
Biology Dept. SDSU  
Brookings, South Dakota 57006

Dear Mr. Morrill:

The article on your "hangnail" crafting in Sunday's Argus Leader was most fascinating.

Mr brother and I are a free lance photojournalist team and we believe one of our editors- possibly more- might find this subject as fascinating as we did. There are several possible angles from which it might be approached, as we see it.

We would like to learn more about this unusual craft which you have developed. Would you be willing to grant us an interview and let us take pictures of the pieces and of you at work?

I have done all sorts of crafts for many years but this is a new one and I should like to learn more about it and perhaps dabble in it a bit also. Not for commercial purposes-I haven't time for that- but for my own pleasure as I do wood carving, pottery, spinning weaving -.

May we hear from you. If you are willing to let us come see you, is there some time that would be especially suitable for you? Daytime would suit us the best but if this is not convenient we could do it in the evening. As to day of week, we could fit that in almost any time.

Thank you for your help in this.

Sincerely,

*Elma Waltner*  
(Miss) Elma Waltner



Elma Waltner

Willard H. Waltner

## Crafts Designing - Pictorial Reporting

P. O. Box 190

730 South Dewald

FREEMAN, SOUTH DAKOTA 57029

Phone 605-925-7627

November 5, 1974

Dear Mr. Morrill:

We surely did enjoy your hospitality the other day and the "hangnails" were every bit as fascinating and lovely as I had anticipated, I have not yet tried bending any but will get around to it one of these days. I am in the same fix with those as you are with the wood carving, I don't have an editor waiting to see these so they get put off while other things are taken care of. I shall wear my silver cross with pleasure.

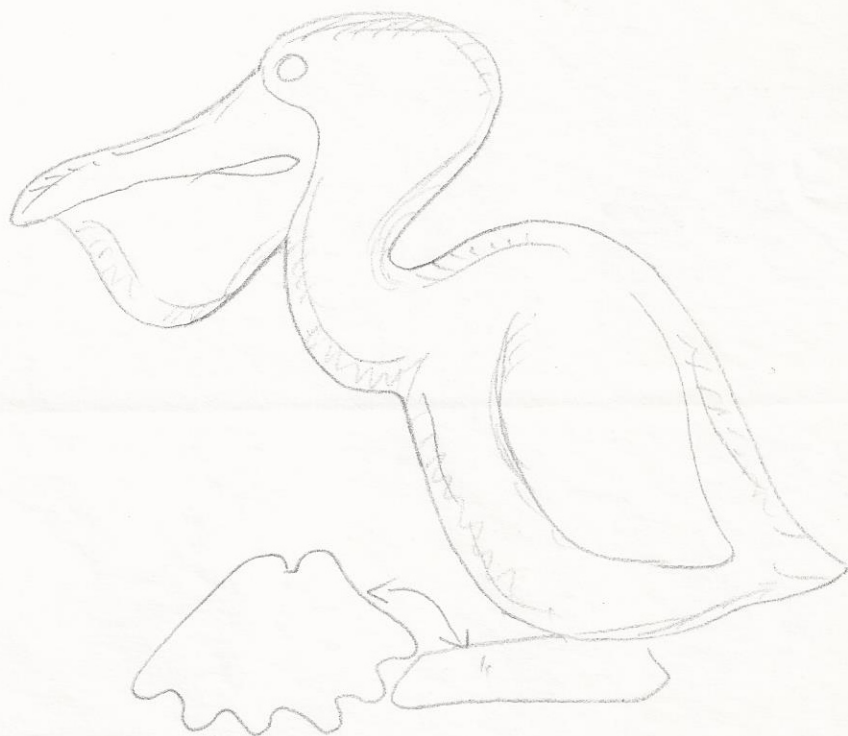
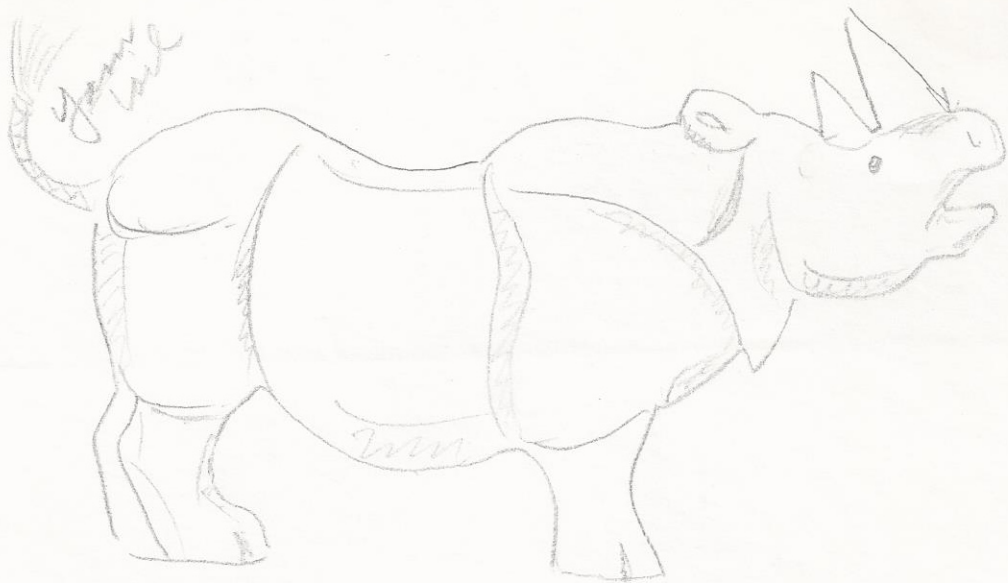
Enclosed are a number of "critter" patterns. I may have missed some for the ones I had along, and included others which carvings I did not bring. I didn't make a list of what I had and put them away again when I got home. Then when I got out my patterns I wasn't sure which should be included, but these should keep you busy for a while.

Hope our paths cross again sometime.

Sincerely,

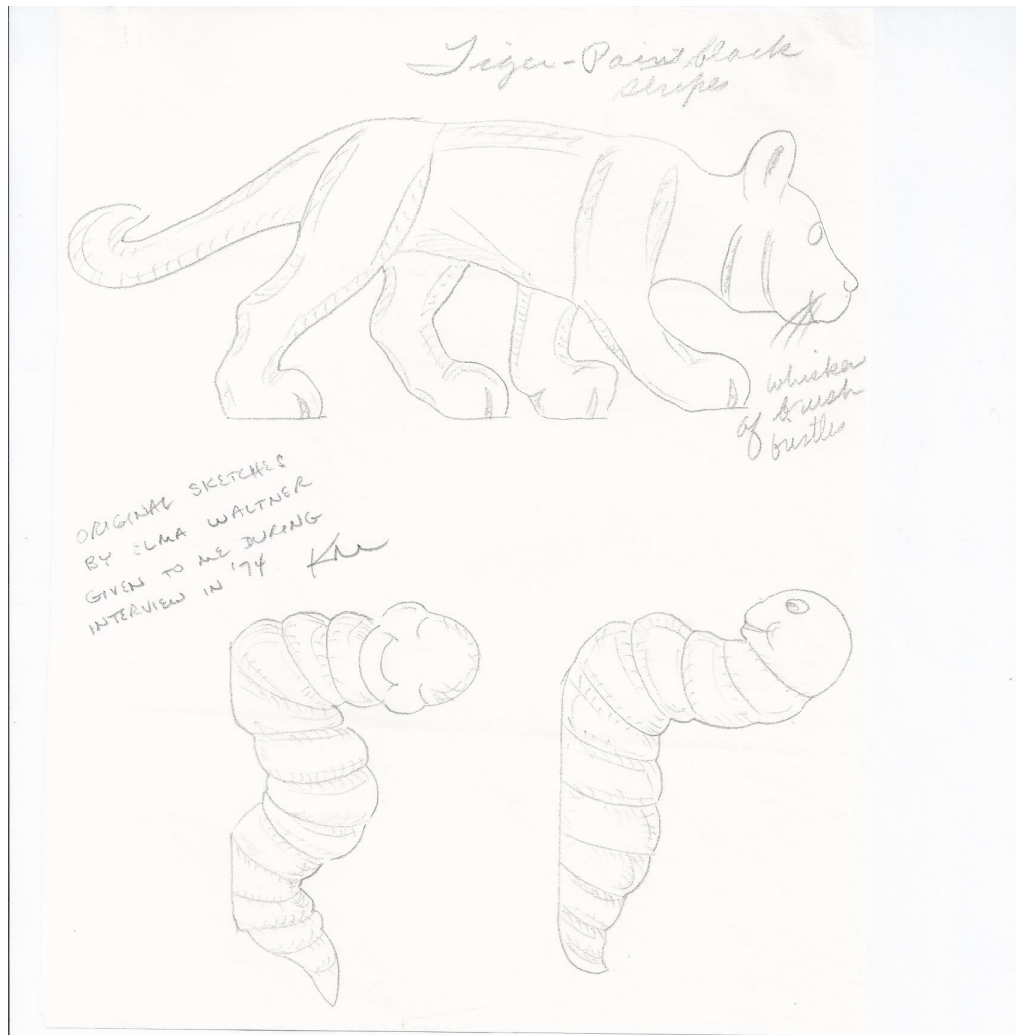


(Miss) Elma Waltner









DRAWINGS BY Elma Waltner