

Catherine Burkhard

*Recipient of The Laura Young Award
2016*

To say that Catherine Burkhard is a very busy, AND accomplished person is an understatement. From childhood, she expressed interest in the bookarts. She learned calligraphy from a very innovative art teacher at a Dallas elementary school, around the 4th grade; as an adult, she picked up the art again around 1978. Her bookbinding study began at home, with her mother teaching her how to make books into major reports for school work; this study resumed in the 1980s, studying with Dorothy Westapher beginning in 1985 at the Craft Guild of Dallas.

Catherine and Robert (deceased) Burkhard reared four children, and Catherine is very proud of her four very talented grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Early on in her married life, she was employed as a secretary, an office administrator, and a life/health insurance agent. Among her many volunteer positions, she has participated, but mostly lead in the following organizations:

Lutheran Church:

- Locally, participation in various choirs, Bible Study leader, training seminars
- Statewide and national levels: constitution/bylaws, conventions, Lutheran's Women's Missionary League, Lutheran Outdoors Ministry of Texas

Camp Fire Girls, Inc:

- Member for 35+ years, club leader, trainer, chairman and other offices in Leaders' Association
- Board of Directors, Dallas Council
- Archivist-Historian
- Recipient of all of the adult awards, local and national

When the bookarts again caught her fancy in the late 1970s-mid 1980s, she jumped into both calligraphy and bookbinding. She is a Charter Member of Kaligrafos, The Dallas Calligraphy Society (est. 1980), serving faithfully in many capacities for over 30 years; she was designated as an Honorary Life member in 1993. She has also been active in the neighboring Fort Worth Calligraphers Guild since the mid-1980s, instructing at a few meetings, workshops, and acting as Bylaws Chairman in 2010. She placed many times in the annual State Fair of Texas in both calligraphy and book entries. Of special note and to the delight of both her family and her local students, Catherine was featured in **D Magazine** in 1993, and was again featured as "Best Dallas Binder" in **D Home Magazine** in 2002.

Upon Dorothy Westapher's death, Catherine began taking various bookbinding-related workshops, took over as Chairman of the Bookbinding Department at the Craft Guild of Dallas for 9 years, and was on the Board of Directors for 8 years. She began attending the annual Standards of Excellence in Hand Bookbinding in 1994. She established her sole proprietor business under the name of "*Books 'n Letters*" studio. Since the 1980s, she has continued to teach calligraphy and bookbinding, along with designing one-of-a-kind calligraphic broadsides and pursuing robust bookbinding work, both in original commissions and in restoration/conservation work.

I have known Catherine Burkhard since the early 1980s, where our paths initially crossed in the calligraphy world. Soon after she became involved in teaching at the Craft Guild of Dallas for a number of years, and was keeping quite busy with commission work. She has served the Guild of Book Workers faithfully in many ways. Here are some highlights worth noting:

Teaching:

- Catherine has faithfully and dutifully continued to preserve and teach the art of bookbinding of her predecessor mentor and teacher, Dorothy Westapher, an instructor at the Craft Guild of Dallas. Dorothy was a student of Swiss binder Hugo Peller. When Dorothy retired, Catherine took over as Chairman of the Bookbinding Department. After Dorothy's death, Catherine organized a retrospective of her work at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX. Dorothy had studied and apprenticed with Marianna Roach, one of the four founding members of the Craft Guild who set up the first Bookbinding Department. Catherine has strived to keep the memory and way of work set up by both these women binders.
- She has continued teaching with the historical values and practices of bookbinding in passing on her knowledge from renowned binders, including Don Etherington, Monique Lallier and others for over 40 years; she continues her own education with private bookbinding workshops with binders from around the United States in her studio. She credits Don Etherington, retired from the Etherington Conservation Center, Greensboro, NC, with being very helpful during her internship at that facility in 2002.
- She has greatly impacted the lives of her students over the decades to accomplish themselves as bookbinders, either as professionals, serious hobbyists or apprentices in her *Books 'n Letters* studio.

Commercial Work:

- Catherine has been active in her community as a bookbinder, where she has made, repaired and restored books for private clients, universities, art museum, libraries, churches and other institutions for many years. The majority of her work has come from referrals in the Dallas community, but she also accepts work from throughout the United States.
- She actively participates in numerous bookbinding competitions and exhibitions, as both exhibitor and judge, working with the late Jan Sobota and others to establish the Helen Warren DeGolyer Triennial Bookbinding Exhibition and Competition, the only U.S.-only competition to date. For several years, Catherine's students volunteered to help facilitate the conference proceedings.
- She works with bookbinding artists and bookbinding suppliers to sell and promote their products within the bookbinding community.
- She has joined with artists from other fields in collaborative works.
- She has earned the respect and admiration of customers and students alike in never waivering on the quality of work that she produces and teaches her students to achieve.
- She has received national and local recognition for her work in **D Home Magazine**, the **Dallas Morning News** and the set-title book exhibit, *The Thread That Binds*, by Pamela Train Leutz.

Guild of Book Workers Commitment:

- Catherine joined the Guild of Book Workers in 1991, serving on the Board of Directors as Secretary from June 1991 to October 2015. This position alone has meant much to the Guild, as she was instrumental in working with the Board in many ways: streamlining the position of Secretary; updating

the Bylaws of the organization; collecting, coordinating, sending out, tallying and reporting each summer on the results of the annual Board elections; researching and apprising the Board of updates and changes involved with *Robert's Rules of Order* in the past, and with new parameters in electronic motions, discussions, and voting procedures.

- She served on the Host Committee of the Standards Seminar in Dallas, Texas in 1994 with the late Jan Sobota.
- She worked closely with the Host Committee Chairman for the Standards Seminar in Dallas, Texas in 2007, utilizing the talents of her former and current students, and taught one of the Standards sessions.
- She is active in the Lone Star Chapter GBW, having served as President (2011-2015), Newsletter Editor (1992-2010), and currently as Secretary-Treasurer.

I can think of no one more deserving of the 2016 Laura Young Award than my friend and mentor, Catherine Burkhard.

Cindy Haller
GBW Newsletter Editor
Lone Star Chapter member