

# *International Costumer*

Volume XV, Issue 4

July-August 2016



Congratulations  
to Lisa Ashton,  
recipient of the  
2016 Lifetime  
Achievement  
Award!

## President's Message

By Philip Gust

I want to thank Stace Feldmann for serving as ICG Vice President this past year, and welcome Rae Bradbury-Enslin, who was elected to the role at the ICG Annual Meeting at Costume-Con 34 in May. I also want to thank Jeanine Swick for serving as ICG Treasurer for the past seven years, Kathe Gust for serving as Recording Secretary for the past four years, and Tonya Adolfson for serving as Corresponding Secretary for the past two years. They were all re-elected to their roles.

In my report at the Annual Meeting, I suggested four areas for the ICG to focus on this coming year:

1. Finding new ways to add value for members and affiliated chapters and SIGs.
2. Providing additional tools, resources, and expertise to help chapters and SIGs operate and recruit members.
3. Encouraging new chapters and SIGs to form, and contacting existing costuming groups about affiliating with the ICG.
4. Increasing the visibility and impact of the ICG and its programs in the world-wide costuming community.

We've already made good progress on some of them in the last several years. Members regularly receive six issues of an attractive and informative *International Costumer* newsletter each year, along with an ICG membership card for use at merchants who offer discounts. Members can now form and join Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to pursue specific aspects of costuming, and can apply for grants to support projects that benefit the community. Chapters and SIGs get free web hosting and a domain name. They are also eligible for 501(c)(3) non-profit status at no cost, and can receive free or highly discounted software and hardware.

Resources on the ICG website now include step-by-step guides that make it easier for new chapters and SIGs to form, and to find important information about many aspects of getting set up and day-to-day operations. Customizable templates and media guides



Philip Gust as Cardinal de Richelieu, after a portrait by Philippe de Champaigne, c.1642. Photos: Ken Warren.

also help them communicate with potential members and publicize activities to their communities. In the past year several chapters and SIGs have formed and an existing costuming group has affiliated as a chapter.

The ICG can continue to build on this foundation in the coming year by focusing on the four areas that I suggested. For example, I'll be working with the ICG board, volunteers, and chapters and SIGs, to identify additional benefits that the ICG could offer organization-wide. We should also look at developing new and expanded online resources, especially ones that help new chapter and SIG leaders gain needed skills for their roles.

To reach out to more of the costuming community, we should look for opportunities to help costumers start chapters in geographical areas that are not currently served by chapters. We should also systematically contact existing costuming organizations, and let them know about the many benefits of affiliating with the ICG.

Finally, we need to increase the visibility and impact of the ICG and its programs world-wide by making more effective use of social media, publicizing and helping the costuming community make better use of the resources we offer, and promoting our

presence and participation at selected conventions and other costuming events.

Chapters and SIGs can also focus on these four areas. One way is to look at how to provide additional benefits for local members, such as arranging discounts at local merchants or to conventions and other events that members regularly attend. Another is to find ways for more members to attend meetings and events, including moving around meetings, encouraging “meetups” in different locations, and making it possible for remote members to attend meetings online. They can also encourage new members to join by actively reaching out and by distributing brochures and cards to costumers at local conventions and other events. Finally, they can promote and publicize their activities, and get more involved in their local communities.

The ICG has a lot to offer its members, its chapters and SIGs, and the wider costuming community. By focusing on these four areas in the coming year, we’ll be even better able to serve them. If you have ideas for things that the ICG or its chapters and SIGs can do in any of the areas I’ve suggested, feel free to contact me directly, (icg-president@costume.org) or post them to the ICG-D Yahoo group for discussion. (<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/ICG-D>) Every idea is welcome.

## From the Editor

*By Vicky Assarattanakul*

We are halfway through 2016, and well into the heavy part of the convention season. I seem to have the eternal costumer’s problem – so many projects, so little time. I am sure you can all relate!

It was fantastic to see so many of you at Costume-Con 34. As is typically the case at Costume-Con, I spent each day dazzled by the incredible talent of the attendees. Carole Parker has provided us with the results of the Tote Bag contest. I would like to share the major award lists from the Sci-Fi/Fantasy and Historical Masquerades. For a list of all of the winners, and the run orders, please see the ICG-D Yahoo group, or the CC34 Facebook group and page.

### *Sci-Fi/Fantasy Masquerade Major Awards:*

Best Workmanship Overall: Mandalorian Beast Armor – Master – presented by Elizabeth Frank

Best Performance Overall: Please Blink – Journeyman – presented by Shannon Green, Caroline Hardin

Best in Class Novice: Treebeard – Novice – presented by Elizabeth Dampf

Best in Class Journeyman: Mother of Dragons – Journeyman – presented by Hannah Stoppel

Best in Class Master: Jadis, Queen of Narnia – Master – presented by Vera Campbell

Best in Show: Witchery – Journeyman – presented by Cathy Loi, Marie-Claire Brisson-Huneault



*Witchery. Photo courtesy of Rosanna Caponi.*



*Photo courtesy of Rosanna Caponi.*

### *Historical Masquerade Major Awards:*

Best in Class Novice: Workmanship -  
Midnight Victorian - Teresa Nguyen

Best in Class Novice: Presentation -  
Sassenach - Michelle Farley

Best in Class Novice: Documentation -  
Airship Ball Gown - Carol Lewis

Best in Class Journeyman: Workmanship -  
Queen of the Night - Anne Hauser

Best in Class Journeyman: Presentation - An  
Edwardian Quick-Change - Sheryl Nance-  
Durst

Best in Class Journeyman: Documentation -

Artemis Leonis Bekiaries, WAC - Nell  
Bekiaries

Best in Class Master: Workmanship - The  
Wedding of Ann-Croghan - Hannah  
Stoppel

Best in Class Master: Presentation -  
Whatever Happened to Baby Jane - JoAnn  
Abbott

Best in Class Master: Documentation -  
Creating La Longe - 1873 Gown - Catherine  
Leeson, Eric Cannon

Best in Show: Interpretation - 10 Duel  
Commandments - Erin Emms, Chloe  
Perelgut

Best in Show: Historical Dress - The Wrong  
Hat - Maral Agnerian



*Photo courtesy of Rosanna Caponi.*



*Photo courtesy of Rosanna Caponi.*

Best in Show: Workmanship - The  
Absurdity of the Regency Fashion Plate -  
Jennifer Old-d'Entremont, Leo D'Entremont

Best in Show: Documentation - The  
Empress of Tenochtitlan - Alyssa Kersting

Best in Show: Presentation - 1872 The  
Mascot - Bruce Mai

Best in Show: Overall - What Would Miss  
Fisher Wear? - Laura Ulak, Jackie Anelbano-  
Bongard, Dana Baird, Erin Schneider, Shelly  
Kumar, Amanda Nerud, Gregory  
Laffrenzen, Audrey Caseltine, Melisa Ferns,  
Erica Ramisch, Karen Huse, Artemisia  
Moltabocca, Glynnis Vance, Lindsey Marth,  
Gilah Maashal, Chelsey Markfort

## CC34 Tote Bag Results

*By Carole Parker*

For the first time that I am aware of, Costume-Con 34 sponsored a tote bag contest. To encourage the green/recycling theme, they wanted people to make "... beautiful reusable bags..." We got several bags we felt were worthy of note.

The Reusable Tote Contest Coordinator was Stace Feldmann, and my co-judge was Rosanna Caponi. This was a fun contest to judge, and I hope that future Costume-Cons consider running this contest again because it was a lot of fun.

I admit to having a bias towards lots of appropriate pockets in totes. I really like pockets.



*Photo courtesy of Kathy van Beuningen*

### *Honorable Mention*

*Quick Draw - Monster Bag by  
Trixyloupwolf*

Trixy bought the material for the bag at the MAC Garage Sale in the Dealers Room on Friday, went up to her room, handstitched it together, and used some items that she had on hand for decoration.

*Deplorably Cute - Kitty Cat Head backpack  
by Shelly Kumar*

It was cute. It was fun.

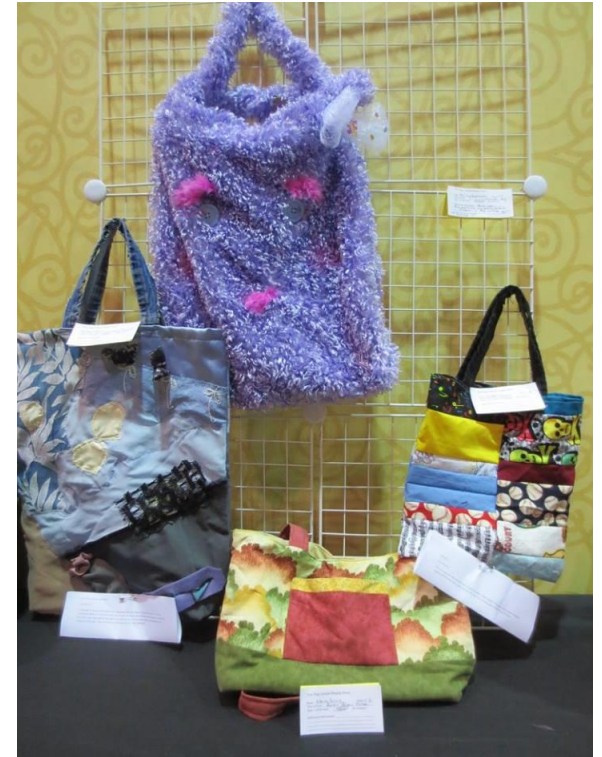
*Felting - Tote with Felted Flowers by  
Jacqueline Ward*

The tote was made from a pair of old jeans, and the felted flower was lovely.

### *Awards*

*Best Trash Rescuer - Kathy Van Beuningen*

Two totes were made from items from in the trash. One was the poster bag from a wall restoration project that had stripped off layers of posters from the 1800's to restore the site. The other was a bag made with fabric flowers (Garden in Hand) that were trashed and illusion from her stash.



*Photo courtesy of Kathy van Beuningen*

*Best Stash Award - Big Yellow (Two Bags)  
by Ellen Rustad*

Two bags from fabrics in her stash. Lots of pockets were on the outside and inside of both bags, and she had some items inside to demonstrate how you could "stash" groceries in the bags and pockets.

*Best Embellishment - Daddy's Garden by  
Judy Mitchell*

This is the bag that I, personally, would have loved to take home. What made this

bag so outstanding, besides the construction with lots of pockets, was the extensive free hand painting on the bag. It was beautifully done, and because she did not know how she was going to construct the bag, the painting was also on the bottom of the bag.



Photo courtesy of Kathy van Beuningen

### *Best in Show*

Because two totes were so exceptional, we have *\*two\** Best in Show awards.

*Best Unconventional - Tool Tote by Dave Kinnanman*

Caponi pointed out that the historical definition of "tote" was the tote that a craftsman used to carry his tools, so this was the literal definition. The workmanship on this wood tote was outstanding. The joints were stable and structural, and the tools inside the tote were functional

woodworking tools. The wood used for the tote and tools were all from his stash, as well. The tools were silky smooth and had excellent balance.

*Best Conventional - Green and Gold Purse by Elaine Sims*

Caponi noted the excellent seaming and construction of this tote, and we also noted the numerous functional pockets inside.



Photo courtesy of Kathy van Beuningen

## Report on the Civilian Symposium at Harrisburg 2015, Part One

*By Lisa Ashton*

*Editor's note: This report is the first part of a two-part series. The second part of this report will appear in the September – October issue of International Costumer.*



*Photograph of Miss Lizzy on Saturday evening of the event in a traditional setting.*

Thanks to the generosity of the ICG Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund, in March 2015 I attended **The Civilian Symposium at Harrisburg**, a 4-day conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



*Two views of vendor tables in the 2015 Conference Dealer's Room. Many authentic pieces were available as well as materials for one's own projects.*

pertaining to clothing and culture of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century. This event began over 20 years ago and is primarily academic in nature.

### *Introduction*

For the 2015 event, subjects included: mid-19<sup>th</sup> C. Wrappers and Sheers, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Solo Women Travelers, African-American Slave Medicine, a history of the U.S. Post Office of the time, Men's Dressing Gowns, Home Entertainments: What Made our Ancestors Laugh, Dirty Jobs, and others. Past conferences have included topics such as the Industrial Revolution, identifying fabrics, Victorian jewelry, and how to research people of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> C. It is a diverse mix of topics, with very knowledgeable speakers. It is impossible to

attend every talk, as there are two simultaneous tracks.

There are also workshops the two days prior to the conference, which begins Friday evening, as well as a dressy dinner ball on Saturday night. Of course there is a Dealer Room, which is re-enactor and historical costumer heaven, including many difficult to find reference books, patterns, fabrics, accessories, vintage and antique clothing and jewelry, millinery, even such items as perfectly reproduced Civil War military stationery.

In keeping with my interests as Miss Lizzy, I was thrilled to be able to bring to Costume-Con 33 (CC33) and Costume-Con 34 (CC34) many of my acquired Victorian dresses, accessories, style periodicals and artifacts of daily life, and to exhibit them and give guided presentations of the displays. The items exhibited ranged from the 1850's through the 1920's (not really Victorian or Edwardian, but one begins to understand the evolution of fashion and culture better), and I always enjoy seeing everyone's reactions to being allowed to touch things.

In 2015 I moved from my home of many years to a smaller home in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, a very historic location, and designated the lower floor of my new home as "Miss Lizzy's Parlor". From the start of

2016, I have focused on the 1860's as the first of two "special interests" in Victorian clothing and culture over the upcoming year or so. The second is looking for dress elements in colors, rather than the black-and-white that is popularly held to be the daily wear of the average Victorian (and nothing could be further from the truth). This written presentation will focus on two topics of the 2015 Conference I attended and



*Miss Lizzy's Interactive Exhibit area at CC34 in Madison, WI, May 2016. The Exhibit area was actually quite popular and Miss Lizzy received many thanks for allowing attendees to examine and gently handle items of clothing and paper ephemera, such as fashion periodicals, antique autograph albums and photograph albums, as well as a small collection of her reference books.*



Attendees at CC34 in Madison, WI visiting Miss Lizzy's Special Exhibit and Discussion on Sunday afternoon. Special Exhibits included many dresses and bodices from the 1860's, an Ivory fan-like "day planner", fashion periodicals, a leather and silver chatelaine purse, and a petit-point and silver brooch.

discuss how these have furthered my own understanding of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century culture and daily life. The conference has certainly given me the impetus to concentrate on clothing and civilian life of the 1860's over the next year or two, and it is constantly amazing how very inventive fashion was then.

### Rubber and Pre-Plastics from the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century

The first presentation to report on is the opening lecture: "From Waterproof Apparel to Jewelry for an Empress: Rubber and Pre-Plastics in the Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century." This was quite illuminating; I had no idea that products of the Industrial Revolution had

penetrated the domestic sphere with such force. The speaker was Mike Woshner, known as an expert and avid researcher on rubber materials, and writing what is considered the definitive text on the subject, *India-Rubber and Gutta-Percha in the Civil War Era*.

In his introductory remarks, he notes that "...America and indeed the world were transformed by these materials (vulcanized and molded hard rubber) at least a half-century before the great tire manufacturers ....", and "...articles such as buttons, combs, toothbrushes, medical instruments, mechanical pencils and personal items that look and feel like modern plastic but are actually made out of hard rubber..." were catalogued and in common use.

I occasionally find (and acquire) smaller items of this material, such as thermoplastic Union cases for small photos, as were carried by Civil war soldiers. I also have a thermoplastic button and a few small pieces of jewelry, as well as a lady's belt buckle probably from the mid 1860's. In the Sears Roebuck, and Montgomery Ward Catalogs of 30 to 40 years later, many of these items are still present.

Mr. Woshner discussed the earliest notice of rubber by Western explorers to the New World, then went on to discuss its

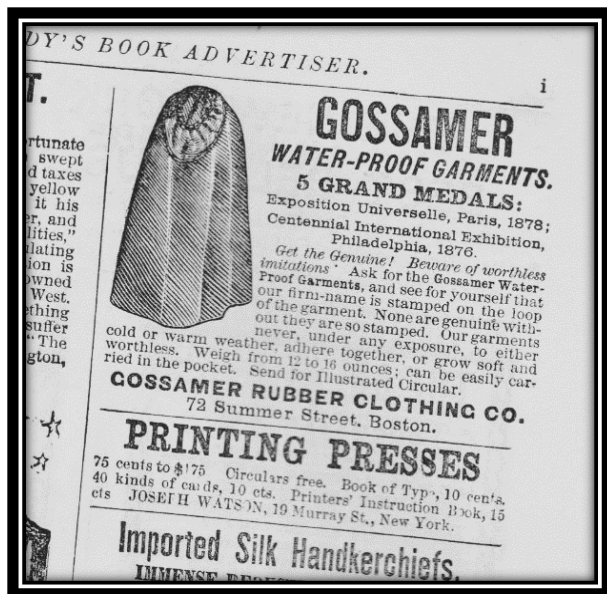
invention/ formulation in America and the developing process of vulcanization. Interestingly, boots, coats and capes were among the first items produced with the new substance. Charles Goodyear, in his autobiography of 1855, lists almost 1000 applications for rubber and hard rubber.

By that time, many types of waterproof clothing were being manufactured including aprons, gloves, shoes and gaiters, as well as overalls, leggings, vests, capes and sleeves. Many non-clothing items, such as life-preservers, luggage, sponges, buckets, tents, mailbags, brushes and



These medical items made from hard rubber certainly had an influence on domestic culture.





*This advertisement from Godey's Lady's Book, Dec. 1881, shows that rubber waterproof items were still in demand.*

combs, saddles and pontoons were also well-known. It was true that items such as shoes made from rubber cost far less than those made from leather, and in 1860, the year prior to the onset of the Civil War, "...American industry output was estimated at 1,200,000 pairs of rubber shoes valued at \$795,000...", and production only increased from that time on.

These applications revolutionized the clothing industry in America, utilizing vulcanized rubber in the form of various types of elastics: for suspenders, gloves, and girdles, among others. The manufacture of elastic webbing started in America around the 1840's, and within 10 or 20 years became

a form of stretchable sheeting sandwiched between fabric sheets. Elastic straps on corsets of the time is completely accurate! Even better, the rubber goods could be printed in colors.

As an interesting side note, rubber "water beds" were "...developed in England around 1831" and "were available for purchase from the 1850's through the 1890's...before reappearing..." in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Mr. Woshner notes that the Union Army's Medical Department purchased over 1,000 of them for the relief of wounded soldiers. Godey's Lady's Book, a popular domestic periodical of the time, reported in 1867 that many ladies were wearing "falsities" of India rubber, such as ears, noses, lips, and bust enhancers (has anything really changed?).

Gutta-percha and natural thermoplastics are actually *not* rubber products, but are the source of a lot of confusion surrounding them. There were manufactured from various recipes of gum-shellac combined with sawdust, fibrous materials, and other substances, thus many iterations. True gutta-percha was derived from trees in Borneo, Ceylon and Malaya, and was known since the 1840's. Gutta-percha becomes pliable with heat and could be vulcanized, expanding its range of possibilities



*A salesman's sample card of various buttons made by the India Rubber Comb Company. Exhibited at 2015 Civilian Symposium by Mike Woshner.*

By the Civil War, a variety of items made from gutta-percha were available but were felt to deteriorate over time at a much faster rate than genuine hard rubber. Based on my own acquisitions of both substances, which include Union cases for Daguerreotypes and tintypes, as well as gutta-percha jewelry and buttons, I believe that if not repeatedly exposed to temperature extremes and humidity, they both endure well without degrading much.

## About the ICG

### **Membership Benefits**

ICG membership benefits include participation in local Chapters and in Special Interest Groups, voting rights, eligibility for grants, online forums, learning and volunteer opportunities, and the International Costumer.

### **ICG Online**

Visit the ICG website for current information and resources:

<http://www.costume.org/>

Join us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/internationalcostumers>

Join the ICG-D Yahoo! group for lively discussions on costuming-related topics:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/icg-d>

Send comments and suggestions to the ICG board and standing committees:

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[icg-board@costume.org](mailto:icg-board@costume.org)

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### **Costuming Arts & Sciences Grant Fund**

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### **The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund**

The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund provides grants for projects and activities that promote the art and science of costuming. For information on how to apply for a grant, please visit <http://www.costume.org/grants/grants.html>.

### **The International Costumer**

The *International Costumer* newsletter is published bi-monthly by the ICG. The current issue is for members only. Back issues are freely available to the costuming community on the ICG website.

### **Online Submissions**

We welcome short costuming articles, book reviews, event reports, and news items. Submit your copy as rtf, doc, docx or txt files to the International Costumer editor: [icg-newsletter@costume.org](mailto:icg-newsletter@costume.org). All graphics formats are accepted.

### **Contacting the Editor**

Please contact the editor to report problems, or to offer comments and suggestions: [icg-newsletter@costume.org](mailto:icg-newsletter@costume.org).

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