

STENCIL A FLOORCLOTH WORKSHOPS

Presented by Polly Forcier and Vivian Bisbee
Offered July 30 or 31, 9am-5pm

These beautiful and useful floor coverings, of which there are two in the exhibit, are enjoying a resurgence of popularity. In the workshop you will make a floorcloth in the design and colors of your choice. Cost: \$150 for 2' x 4'; OR \$200 for 3' x 4') includes materials. **50% of proceeds will benefit the Norwich Historical Society.**

Limited to 10 participants per workshop, pre-registration required. For more information and to register, please email: polly65@comcast.net



NORWICH
Historical Society
and Community Center

277 Main Street, Norwich, VT
Corner of Main and Elm Streets

Open:
Wed. and Thurs., 11am-3pm;
Sat., 10am-Noon (June-Oct.)
Or by appointment: 802-649-0124

info@norwichhistory.org
www.norwichhistory.org

UPCOMING EVENTS AT NHS

Summer Sunday Walking Tours:

- Waterman Cemetery, July 31, 3-5pm
- Norwich Main Street, August 7, 3-5pm

Registration required.
Cost: \$5 (free for members)

Norwich Antiques Show
September 10, 10am-4pm.
Cost: \$5 (12 & under free)

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EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION

A Retrospective of the
Historic Decorative Art
of Polly Forcier



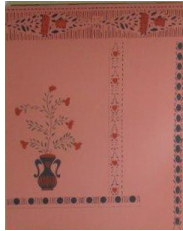
On exhibit at the
Norwich Historical Society
July 1 – October 29, 2016

277 Main Street, Norwich, Vermont

EARLY AMERICAN DECORATION

A Brief History

Early American Decoration begins chronologically about 1760 with painted and stenciled floors; 1780 with scrolled vines and brushstroke hand painted walls in imitation of imported wallpaper; and 1790, with wall stenciling in imitation of carved woodwork such as was found in the Norwich houses built by the Emerson brothers in 1815-1820.



Following and overlapping that time, there appeared the truly American Moses Eaton style of wall stenciling around 1815. His was an unsuccessful attempt to mimic imported block-printed wallpaper, but by using simple stencils (cut from heavy paper varnished to strengthen the stencil) it became its own unique American art. His work utilized many recognizable symbolic motifs: the pineapple, flower baskets, hearts and willow tree, to name a few.



At the same time, around 1825, “country painting” on ordinary household tinware, an American art, and painted and stenciled furniture were reaching their zeniths of excellence and craftsmanship.



American landscape murals by Rufus Porter and followers first appeared in 1824, but, like all other of these arts, faded out about 1840-1845 with the coming of our industrial revolution when wallpaper became readily available, and housewives exclaimed, “Let's paper over that old stenciling!”



Large rectangular and lace edge trays – hand painted, stenciled, and decorated with gold leaf – were exported from England and Wales to the United States and abroad by the millions. They were not an American art, but through the efforts of the Brazier Guild, were imitated by students from 1940 to the present. Today the originals are highly collectible from the early American “Golden Age” of décor.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Polly was 29 and a young mother when she first picked up her own mother's oil paints and brushes.

At the League of NH Craftsmen in Hanover she found her first Early American Decoration teacher.

Concurrently Polly stenciled her first wall in her family's 1790 farmhouse in Norwich because she could not afford wallpaper.

She studied for years with teachers at the Fletcher Farm School for the Arts and Crafts in Ludlow and finally gained acceptance into The Historical Society of Early American Decoration.

She developed an interest in Folk Art painting and a great interest in wall and floor stenciling, and taught both in her studio and at Fletcher Farm.

In 1994 she started MB Historic Decor, which now offers two DVDs and more than 700 stencils in six categories including, Moses Eaton, Rufus Porter, Floors, Walls & Borders and the Victorian era. To order and learn more visit mbhistoricdecor.com. Today her daughter, Vivian, carries on the business and her son, Ken, creates custom floorcloths for the US and abroad through his company Gracewood Design, online at gracewooddesign.com.

Polly can still be coaxed into picking up a stencil brush.

