

AIFD

1965-1991

HISTORY

American Institute of Floral Designers

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PROLOGUE

In the first years of the development of AIFD there was a historian on the Board. Each year an AIFD member was appointed to record the activities of that year. This information was kept in “scrapbook” form including clippings from the media, pictures from the symposium, etc. For several years Jim Roberts was the keeper of the history of AIFD. This book was stored with the membership portfolios which were ultimately destroyed. What that the records of the first eight or so years were gone as well. The information about AIFD other than the scrapbook was kept in the files or a drawer of the people who were on the Board, headed committees or served in offices. There was no central location for the records until we hired an Executive Secretary which brought us an office. Since 1984, I am sure, the business part of AIFD history could be located in Tom Shaner’s office.

Prior to that the records are not complete in any one place about the business proceedings and certainly there are no records of the social activities and the many statistics concerning AIFD.

After many letters, phone calls and interviews, I have attempted to gather a skeleton of this information and put it together in one volume and perhaps the history of the next 25 years can be started immediately so it can be more precise and in a broader scope.

This publication is definitely a group effort. The former Presidents furnished the information about themselves, people from each Region furnished the history of that Region as well as the advisors of SAIFD furnished the information about the Chapters. I think everyone who jumped in to this project in the inimitable AIFD style.

My wish and recommendation to each President from this day forward is to appoint a historian who can compile and write the history of the previous year and gather material for the next historian.

FORWARD

By Bea Frambach, AIFD

AIFD – American Institute of Floral Designers came into being as floral designers confronted with the realization that although numerous specialized services were offered to customers and clients, there was little or no recognition or prestige enjoyed for the knowledge and experience required for these services.

The primary purpose, therefore, was to create for floral designers and decorators and identity, recognizable by the public, of personal achievement of superior design and professional practices.

AIFD formed the student program for the purpose of introducing your people to the floral industry. The projected activities were teaching students, professional advice for those entering business and providing scholarships.

The proposed Associates Division seemed logical for both designers and wholesalers for the exchange of ideas and product development. Early plans were for a designers directory to be available to wholesalers for mutual participation in design panels and trade shows.

Special awards were planned. They were honorary members, two awards of merit, one within the industry and one non-industry and the AIFD College of Fellows.

For further education there were ambitious plans for an AIFD School of Advanced Design, which became the annual symposium.

Most of the early dreams and plans for the eleven founding members have materialized but not without the help of many. AIFD is sincerely grateful to all who have contributed much along the way.

*Bea Frambach was a founding member and one of the early Presidents of AIFD.

CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Members of the American Institute of Floral Designer assume the following obligations.

TO THE PROFESSION:

No Member of the American Institute of Floral Designer shall defame any other members, or no-member, by falsely making statements which will unjustifiably injure his reputation of personal integrity. He will refrain from misrepresentation or false accusations as to the other's contracts and agreements.

TO THE PUBLIC:

Each member of the American Institute of Floral Designers will produce and complete with integrity his highest quality of design with the materials specified. No members of the American Institute of Floral Designers shall advertise in any nature in a false or inaccurate manner in order to misrepresent merchandise or services as to its grade, quality, quantity, origin or materials. No member of the American Institute of Floral Designer shall withhold or falsify any invoices of accounts.

TO THE ALLIED PROFESSION:

Every member will strive for the greatest cooperation and understanding of the mutual problems for the benefit and furtherance of trade relations. He will further maintain a satisfactory credit rating with all allied members of the floral industry.

TO THE STUDENT:

Every member of the American Institute of Floral Designers will give sincere encouragement and assistance to novices wishing to enter into the field of floral design. He will give voluntary assistance and supervision to those entering the field toward acquiring a full understanding of the functions, duties and responsibilities of a floral designer.

In The Beginning...

Picture yourself in the mid-sixties, you are a talented floral designer on the cutting edge of design in general, but in floral design specifically. You are earning your living in a flower shop and are experiencing the frustration of knowing there is more to this wonderful field of work but not knowing where to find it. Where can you find new ideas where can you share your ideas, what can you do for recognition in the field of floral art? Design shows as we knew them were just getting off to a good start and people like Tommy Bright, Sylvia Valencia, Buddy Benz and several others were just beginning to make a dent on the art of floral design. They had been publishing and commentating and begging for the attention of the industry but their concepts were innovative and for many years fell on deaf ears except for a few ardent followers who believed in what that small group of people were trying to accomplish. Education was basically limited, especially in the campus atmosphere. There were great trade schools offering short courses as there are today but there was a need for a more broad education with concentration in floral design and retail shop management. Could floral design move into the college curriculum and offer an avenue to growth and upgrading? That need has more than proven itself in today's market place. Could we make the move from trade or cottage industry to a profession? That need is there as well but we have a distance to go.

At this time in southern California there was a designer who envisioned a professional organization whose purpose was to showcase floral design to offer recognition to accomplished designers, to make the public aware of good design and to proceed to do this through education. Her name is Bea Frambach, AIFD and at that time she was on the Board of Directors of the California State Florist Association. She approached that Board with the idea of an organization of designers, not for shops, that would have a rating system perhaps licensing and offer recognition to floral design. The Board felt there was no need for such an organization and argued they had no money for establishing the organization or for assigned as a co-commentator with Art McKee, AIFD. They met to discuss commentating and she shared her idea about this organization with Art. He became enthused and suggested they start it now on their own. The spark was rekindled and they shared the idea with Wayne Andrade, AIFD. He was also very enthusiastic. Bea and Art shared the idea from the podium at a florist meeting and 11 people responded with their support and their money and they began meeting at Art and Wayne's to formulate plans for an organization that emerged as the American Institute of Floral Designers. Those 11 people deserve special recognition at this point.

They were: **Bea Frambach, Art McKee, Wayne Andrade, Virginia Burgee, Lily Cowell, Mariellen Gaudi, Bates Hinds, Jack Kloss, Paul Sanders, Lola Schmidt, David Wittry.**

There was much to do to establish a professional organization. Graphic formats and a logo were planned, an attorney was hired and the legal aspects of becoming non-profit, incorporated and chartered were investigated and accomplished, the code of ethics and professional practices was written and a format of action was established. Our first attorney, Dr. Robert Benton Craig gave the organization great support and help and offered his services at a most nominal fee. The organization recognized this by presenting him with an honorary membership. This was given to him publicly at a testimonial dinner at Century City. One of the first public recognitions of AIFD.

It is interesting to note at this time that organization office was a card table with a typewriter on it in the dining room at Bea Frambach's home. In a short time a filing cabinet was added. After that, Art Ito offered space in the office at his flower shop and we all dreamed of our own office and an Executive Secretary which didn't happen until 1982.

The organization actually became incorporated in 1965. At that time charter membership was opened across the United States, the code of ethics and by-laws were in place and the College of Fellows was in the making. Honorary membership and Associate memberships soon followed. We should recognize the Charter Members. Those 45 people who had the faith in the organizing committee and foresight of the need of AIFD to associate their names and their money on a new venture. They are:

Wayne Andrade	William Brown	Virginia Brugere
Bruce Brugere	Daryl Dryden	Bea Frambach
Mariellen Gaudio	Robert Gervasoni	Larry Greene
Roslyn Haas	Jef Hackbarth	Robert Harvey
Gilbert Heath	Bates Hinds	Pat Hoyt
Arthur Ito	Kirk Kirpatrick	William Kistler
Jack Kloss	Mary Lakshas	John Lancaster
Arthur McKee	Erwin Menn	Morri Molho
Mary Jo Napier	Paul Plantz	William Plummer
Rudolph Postag	Paul Sanders	Lola Schmidt
Robett Schroeder	Harold Schuth	Hortense Seymour
Lucille Sifers	Edward Silacci	Ronald Sinicrope
Marion Speer	Angelo Taverma	Robert Taylor
Scotta Thompson	Jeanne Tucker	Dean White
Joyce White	David Wittry	Victor Yack

In 1966 Charter Membership was closed and the organization set up membership in three categories. Active members, Associate members, and Student members.

The founding group had elections and established the first Board and officers. The Board was elected by the membership and the officers were elected by the Board. This policy was set to avoid politics for office as far as possible. This policy exists today and through the years has generated a cohesiveness that would not have been possible otherwise. The Board decided their format of industry activities would be educational rather than shows. The symposium format was chosen. At that point in history the concept was very innovative but today has become the norm for design sessions. The first symposium was scheduled for the Cal Poly campus in the summer of 1967. A budget was established and it was determined there would need to be 50 registrants to break even financially. Two weeks before the symposium date there was only 42 registrations so the symposium was cancelled. The Board was not to be defeated on this so they began to immediately set plans in motion for a symposium in the summer of 1968, again on the Cal Poly campus. Bob Gordon who had joined the faculty of Cal Poly by that time was put in charge of publicity so it could be done on campus with campus facilities to save money. He decided that Symposium needed to be defined in the publicity so people would know what they were attending. It was amusing to discover Webster defines Symposium as: “a convivial meeting for drinking, music and intellectual discussion.” There indeed was much of all three of those necessary items in the first Symposium and those factors remain in the Symposiums of today.

Student members were in the process of things in the Fall of '67. The motion was started with a phone call from Bea Frambach, the current President of AIFD, to Bob Gordon at Cal Poly. The gist of the conversation was:

Bea- “We need student members for gophers at the Symposium. You will form a Chapter under AIFD and Cal Poly guidelines and have it installed by the summer of 1968. Art Ito will help you with the format and we will come to campus for a meeting to finalize the Symposium and install the Chapter while we are there.

Bob- “Oh sure”

With that the guidelines were established, applications and procedures were put in place and the first student members were accepted by the Board. Following that, Bea and Art arrived on the campus to install the Chapter on the first Tuesday night in March of 1968 at a banquet held in the Staff Dining Room on campus. That Chapter still meets for dinner on the first Tuesday of the month.

Those students did indeed become gophers for the first symposium and student members of AIFD continue to do that today.

We had very little to offer Associate members but we needed their support and encouragement. Some of the industry was willing to give us that support. Our first membership directory published in 1972 listed the following members:

Flot-aire, American Can Co., Smithers-Oasis, Roses, Incorporated, Design master, Needl-Pak Company, Lion Ribbon Company, Floralife, Inc., Gard Industries, Inc., and A.L. Randall Co.

Early in 1968 special awards came to the forefront and it was decided this should be a function of AIFD. The following were proposed and accepted and then activated: Honorary membership for people in the industry who were not eligible for active membership but had been supportive of AIFD in some way; Award of Merit for people outside the industry who made exceptional use or promotion of flowers; and the College of Fellows for our active member who gave exceptional service to AIFD. The recipients were nominated and voted on. If it was decided to grant the award they were invited to final night of the Symposium for presentation and if they couldn't be there one Board member and one active member were sent to the recipient to make a presentation. The first Honorary membership was given in 1968 to Edward Goepfert, the first Award of Merit was given in 1968 to William Cahill. The first membership in the College of Fellows was awarded in 1972 to Bea Frambach.