

Indiana Heritage Fellowship Awards recognize traditional artists who make outstanding contributions to their artistic tradition and to their community. This fellowship honors an individual's lifetime achievement as an artist whose work is rooted in community life in Indiana.

[traditionalarts.indiana.edu/Programs/Indiana Heritage Fellowship.html](http://traditionalarts.indiana.edu/Programs/Indiana%20Heritage%20Fellowship.html)



Traditional Arts Indiana Presents *The 2019 Indiana Heritage Fellowships*



Bob Taylor, Woodcarver
Columbus, IN



Dee Nierman, Rag Rug Weaver
Brownstown, IN



TRADITIONAL ARTS INDIANA

Awards Ceremony: March 28, 2020
Mathers Museum of World Cultures
Indiana University, Bloomington

Bob Taylor

Woodcarver, Columbus, Indiana

Bob Taylor began carving when he was eight years old using a pocketknife his grandfather gave him. Around the age of 11, Bob met Mooney Warther, who set up his traveling woodcarving museum at the Bartholomew County Fair, and young Bob became enthralled



with his display. This chance encounter encouraged Bob's lifelong passion for carving. Once grown, he apprenticed as a patternmaker. From engineers' drawings, he carved prototypes that manufacturers used to produce molds for making metal castings. While he carved professionally throughout his life, he also continued to whittle for his own enjoyment.

In the 1980s, he discovered the work of Rupert Kreider (1897-1983), an itinerant carver who occasionally worked as a farmhand in Bartholomew County. Though Bob never met Kreider, he was impressed by the landscapes Kreider cut into flat boards. By day Bob worked as a pattern maker,

and at night he taught himself Kreider's distinctive style. When Bob retired in 1999, he started using this pictorial-carving technique to create "memory carvings." From church festivals to circus trains, he has carved meaningful scenes from his youth. His current creation shows Mooney Warther at the fairgrounds.

Bob Taylor has devoted his time to mastering his craft and sharing his talents. From teaching Boy Scouts to carve neckerchief slides to exhibiting his carvings at area woodcarving clubs, county fairs, and festivals, he enjoys sharing his talents, carvings and stories with others.



Delores "Dee" Nierman

Rag Rug Weaver, Brownstown, Indiana

Fourth generation rag rug maker, Delores "Dee" Nierman weaves on a barn loom that was built in 1864 for her great-grandmother, Sarah Cox Collins. She explains, this loom has "seen many, many miles of rugs and carpets come off of there."



While Dee weaves on the loom that came to her from her mother, Dee can trace weaving through both sides of her family tree. Dee's niece for instance, Margaret Luckey, makes rugs on a loom from Dee's father's side of the family. After Dee's father died when she was only two years old, her mother would weave to support the family. She recalls, "We needed a little income, and my mother would weave some rugs. And when I was young, I wound the shuttle. I'd be too little for my feet to reach the treadles."

Although she learned the craft out of necessity, weaving has remained an enjoyable practice throughout Dee's life. She explains, "That's where I do my thinking... [about] the years gone by, my childhood, some happy thoughts. You know the world's so busy nowadays, and I just enjoy having my time for myself to do my own thinking – my own thoughts."

Known locally as the "rag rug lady," Dee has long been an ambassador of fiber arts in southern Indiana. She and Margaret participate in regional fairs and festivals, where their rugs are met with an enthusiastic market. As Dee puts it, "you've got to either sell the rugs or stop making them!" In addition, she has demonstrated her craft at area school and libraries, moreover, she has often opened her home to anyone interested in learning more about her rugs and family tradition.

