

JUNE'S GARDEN

"Rembrandts" in the Garden

Is it possible to turn a clothesline into an art form? Sean Ohrenich and I did. Well, at least it's a conversation piece.

Sean has held my house together for some years, repairing everything from roof-top to the foundation. I'm sure he sighs with weariness when I leave messages like "Help, Sean, the roof's leaking" or "I don't know if it's rats or raccoons scratching at the floor boards, would you crawl under the house to see if they've pulled out the insulation?" My latest message was, "I need a new clothesline, it broke, all my clean wash landed on the ground."

The next morning Sean and I had a summit meeting under the broken clothesline and discussed using natural fiber over plastic line. Sean is environment-conscious. One end of my clothesline is attached to the house, the other end to a post and crossbar. The post and crossbar are very evident when you view the garden and someone had subtly suggested adding a trellis next to the post, either to hide it or embellish it, I wasn't sure.

"Sean, would you build a trellis that can be attached to the end of the post?" Our conversation then was how wide, how tall? His answer was, "I can make a sturdier trellis than that store-bought junk." Sean doesn't hold with assembly-line workmanship.

He critically observed the old post and crossbar, and said, "They're rotten, a new one's pretty expensive." He is also very conscious of the cost of new lumber.

"Sean, wait, I have an idea. I've been storing an old post in my garden room for years." I laughed and said, "The last time I moved, the men that moved me scratched their heads and asked me whether I was sure I wanted them to haul this post, various large rocks, pieces of driftwood and other assorted questionable objects." You see, I'm known for saving all kinds of junk, which I prefer to call decor.

Sean looked at the round, 6' tall post, its circumference about 6". At one end four grooves had been turned, making it most decorative. "It's cedar," he said. "Could have been cut from old growth." While we were in the garden room, I spied another salvaged piece of decor, a bird carved out of driftwood, unknown artist, as it had been left in the basement of a house my husband and I bought many years ago in Washington. "Sean, could you mount this on top of the post?" I thought I saw a rare spark of interest in Sean's eyes when he left with the cedar post, driftwood sculpture, and measurements for the trellis he would make.

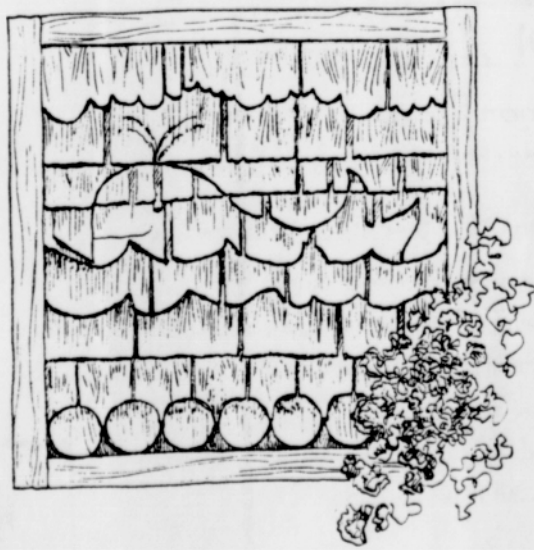
Sean called a couple of days later. "I've got everything done, it's not raining for a change. I'll be by early tomorrow morning." Early means early in Sean's world. I was up at 6:00 A.M. anticipating seeing the finished product Sean had created.

The new clothesline did turn out to be a creation. The 3-1/2' wide x 6' tall trellis was made from cut cedar strips woven together and reinforced with copper wire at each junction. The cross bar that holds the lines was also decorated, as he had turned grooves to match the post and rounded the ends. When he bolted the crossbar to the post, he hid the bolts by plugging the holes with wooden pegs. Even the mortar at the base of the post had decor, as before it was set he topped it with small round black rocks I had gathered.

Surveying the finished project, I envisioned summer blooming clematis climbing through the woven trellis. Sean said with a chuckle, "I call it a **monument to environment.**"

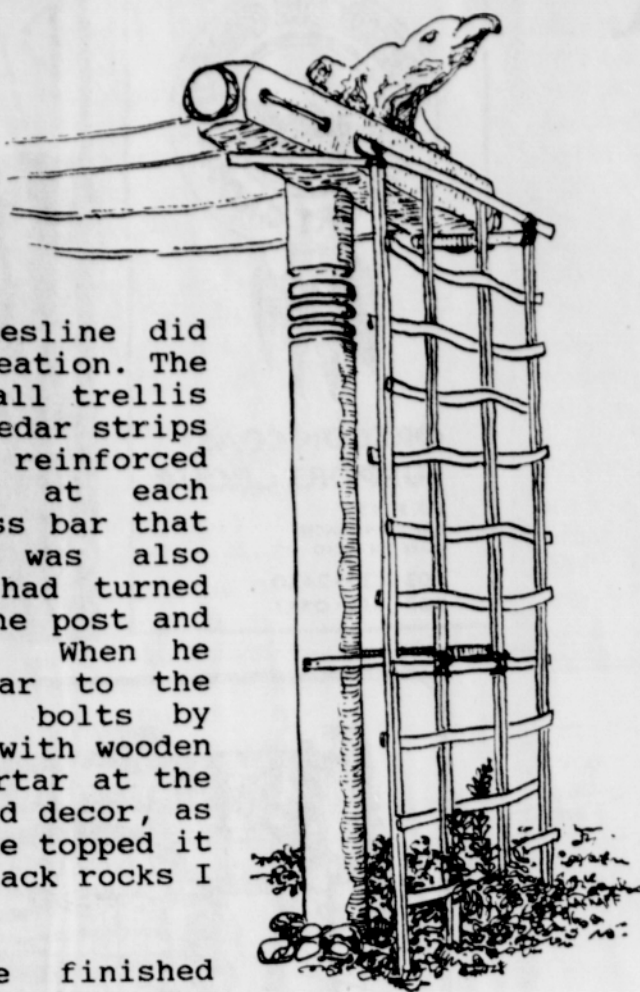
This isn't the end of the story about the new clothesline, as I later had Frailey's Landscape crew enlarge the flower bed to incorporate the monument. A gardener's dream, a new flower bed ... and I was naive enough to think all I really needed was a new clothesline.

Sean's true love is chip carving and wood turning of exotic woods. He has made many different shapes of bowls, lamp bases and other art objects out of wood. Sean lets the wood dictate the style it eventually forms with the essence of his sensitivity. You can see examples of his artistic ability at the White Bird Gallery in Cannon Beach. He also does fine cabinet work. An example is the wooden cabinet that features Cannon Beach historical displays in the Cannon Beach branch of the U. S. Bank. Wooden lawn furniture, gazebos, decorative gates and many other forms of his wood art are spread throughout this town. Sean is a true artist when his hands touch a fine piece of wood.



The whale and ocean shingled scene that is mounted on the wall of my house above the back deck was made by my late husband, who got the idea after watching a young man shingling a wall in geometric designs. This was in the early 1970's. I later found out that that geometric wall that was on the north side of what's now called El Mundo for Women was created by Sean Ohrenich with the help of 20 or more people and a bottle of Zinfandel wine. They labeled it "Essence of Zinfandel." This wall is no longer evident as it's been covered with new construction.

"Kids will suffer." (Measure 38-con)



My decorative, one-of-a-kind garden shed with its long, sloping glassed roof that brings light and heat from the sun and helps me to start spring seedlings was designed and built in 1981 by Ted Shillock. Ted used windows I had salvaged, and added window boxes outside those windows that are held up with antique iron braces. Ted is now well known as a sculptor in stone and marble, and his sculptures are shown in many galleries throughout the U.S.

Also in 1981, Jeff Hull designed and made a cupola to hold a metal whale weather vane that is mounted on the roof of the garden shed. During that time Jeff was building a house near me. Jeff now owns his own gallery in Sandpiper Square in Cannon Beach, where he displays his watercolor paintings.

Two years ago the garden shed was further enhanced by adding a handcarved door, made by an artist from Mexico who also made Cannon Beach's Midtown Cafe's decor of hand-carved screen doors, tables, chairs and signs.



One of my garden chairs was created by my son John from a maple tree in his yard that had blown down during a windstorm. It sits next to a stump I left standing from a tree that had died and I later used the stump as a base for a gazebo-styled bird feeder made from prunings.

Some of my wind chimes, bird houses and feeders were built from various salvaged copper, driftwood and other objects. There is also a raku clay mask that represents a smiling face of the sun that now hangs on the grape stake fence I built long ago. The mask was made by a well-known Oregon artist, Mona Cordell. It

