



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK ARTS & HERITAGE PROGRAM

FIELDNOTES

Fieldworker(s) [(Initials) Name]: (MH) Maggie Holtzberg, (GB) Gabrielle Berlinger

Accession Numbers:

MH-05-10-FN

Fieldnotes

MH-05-10-D

Audio recordings

MH-05-10-CS

Photographic documentation

- - -M

Additional materials

Initial Contact: 9/28/2005 Contact Date: 10/12/2005

Related Accession Numbers: SI-88-BB, - - -

Individual/Group/Event: Anthony Cooper, saddler

Address: [REDACTED]City: [REDACTED]Zip: [REDACTED]County: [REDACTED]Phone: Daytime: [REDACTED]Evening: [REDACTED]E-mail: [REDACTED]Website: www.anthonycopersaddler.comContact person: [REDACTED]Title: [REDACTED]

Location of Interview: Anthony Cooper's Sudbury studio

Street Address: [REDACTED]City: [REDACTED]Zip: [REDACTED]County: [REDACTED]

Special Needs (including translation): [REDACTED]

Traditions documented on visit (traditional art/skills, occupational experience, ethnic or religious community): Saddle making, saddle fitting

Traditions noted for follow-up: possibly more photography of saddles at Royalston studio

Other Possible Contacts: [REDACTED]

Summary Description: Anthony Cooper, a saddler born in Dublin, Ireland, is a member of the Guild of Master Craftsmen. He has extensive training in both making and repairing saddles. Top riders who have employed his services include such names as Kathy Connelly, Renate Lansburgh, Sue Steinhof and Denny Emerson. Maggie spoke with him on Sept 28. Once he is back in town, we will arrange a field visit.

Maggie and intern Gabrielle Berlinger drove out to interview Anthony Cooper at his Sudbury studio on Wednesday October 13. The house belongs to his wife; his home is in Royalston, where his main studio is. Tony had suggested we come to Sudbury, since it is significantly closer to Boston.

We circled around a suburban neighborhood of ranch and colonial style homes and found 56 Victoria Road. Tony's van was parked outside -- a dark green van with gold lettering. In addition to "Anthony Cooper, Saddler" there was Tibetan text. We asked about this and learned that he is practicing Buddhist. The studio was located upstairs -- rather small and cluttered. Downstairs, where we stopped to have tea midway through the interview, was also very cluttered. Every surface was covered with objects, papers, or plants.

We learned about how he got into the trade of saddlery -- and it is a trade. He mentioned how customers consider him a "tradesman" and wouldn't think of paying much beyond then \$50.00 an hour he charges for saddle fittings.

After we had put the tape recorder away, he mentioned, "Well one thing you didn't ask about is my education." He mentions being educated in England. He did an apprenticeship in electrical engineering at an aircraft company, and teacher training. (He also dug graves.) I, of course, had thought of his education in a very limited sense -- what led to his being a saddler.