

# HISTORY OF CHAPEL HILL ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW – 2010

[www.chapelhill-craftshow.org](http://www.chapelhill-craftshow.org)

The first Chapel Hill Arts & Crafts Show was organized 31 years ago in the fall of 1980 as a Mission Fund Raiser by the United Methodist Women of Chapel Hill United Methodist Church in Sodus, MI. Sherry Burtchett, who was a member of Chapel Hill and a craftsperson herself, headed the Show. Sherry had a vision to make this Church Bazaar into a fine quality, juried Arts & Crafts Show. As the Show grew in size, the Women's group passed the Show over to the entire congregation, where it developed into a Mission project that utilizes the time and talents of many of the 230 Chapel Hill parishioners. The dedication of our members, both young and old, have helped us to accomplish Sherry's goal. Now 31 years later we reap the benefits and rewards. The Show provides:

- Monetary support for local and worldwide Missions;
- A marketplace for a large number of exhibitors and shoppers;
- An opportunity for members of Chapel Hill to work together and to grow in faith.

Sherry Burtchett served as Chairperson until 1997. Lenora Cuthbert became Chairperson in 1998. In 2001, this position was divided into two areas; Isla Case became Administration Chair and Lenora continued as Exhibitor Chair. Sherry Leto, in 2003, and Deb Cuthbert, in 2006, became Exhibitor CoChairpersons along with Lenora.

Our location changed through the years as we outgrew exhibitor and parking spaces. Moving to the Berrien County Youth Fairgrounds has provided us the opportunity to offer a larger variety of crafts, with excellent parking facilities. There are 285 indoor exhibitor spaces and room for over 70 exhibitors outside. We also maintain a Lunch area, which features Pie by the Slice and a Bake Sale. Outside there are additional crafts, produce, live plants/flowers, food vendors and a vintage tractor display by members from the Michiana Two-Cylinder Club. Two entrances to the Fairground are utilized for better crowd and traffic control

1980 - 1983	Fellowship Hall, Chapel Hill UMC, Sodus, MI – 50 Exhibitors	Attendance in hundreds
1984 – 1993	Gym & Hallways, Eau Claire H.S., Eau Claire, MI – 90 Exhibitors	Attendance reached 3,000
1994 – 2009	4 Commercial Buildings & 70+ Outdoor Spaces, Berrien County Youth Fairgrounds, Berrien Springs, MI – Over 280 Exhibitors since 2008	Attendance just under 7,300 in 2009.

(Record Attendance of over 8,000 in 2003)

Recruiting quality Crafters has always been our first consideration. Crafters have many choices as to where to exhibit, and they seldom consider new Shows. They prefer established Shows with excellent attendance records. We now have that history and reputation, and we can be very selective in who we jury into the Show. Jury decisions are based on quality & originality. We determine the number of spaces that we will allow for each "different" category of crafts and choose those we feel meet our criteria. We have many more Crafters apply than we have spaces for and must deny many due to limited room. This insures that we have "quality" crafts, which attracts thousands of shoppers. Many shoppers, artists and crafters come from outside our area/State. We have earned the unofficial title as the "Best Fall Craft Show" in southwest Michigan.

In 2000, we developed a Chapel Hill Arts & Crafts Show web site, [www.chapelhill-craftshow.org](http://www.chapelhill-craftshow.org). Exhibitors, potential exhibitors and shoppers can access this site to find out more about our Show. They can get applications and information, find exhibitor listings and how to contact them, search for crafts by category or word, and can contact us. In 2001, Exhibitor e-mail and Web Site address links were added for those who want to subscribe to this service.

Profits from the Show go to support Chapel Hill's Mission Projects. The combined profits from the past 30 years have totaled approximately \$436,200.00. Chapel Hill U.M.C. members thank God for blessing this Show!

Local contributions include: Benton Harbor Harvest Urban Ministries, Safe Shelter, Camping Programs, Salvation Army, Soup Kitchen, Boys/Girls Club of Benton Harbor, plus others.

Worldwide Missions include: Missionaries in Kazakstan & Alaska. Also: Personal Energy Transportation Program, Society of St. Andrew, Mercy Ships-New Steps, Motorcycles/Bicycles for Pastors in India, a School of Agriculture in Bolivia, UMCOR Projects and more.

Craft Show Committee: Isla Case: Administrative Chair; Deb & Lenora Cuthbert & Sherry Leto: Exhibitor CoChairpersons; Phyllis Dowsett & Chris Rathgeb: Publicity; Gloria Dibbet: Secretary; Shireen Hall & Shirley McLaughlin: Indoor Food Sales; Ken & Marge Krieger: Outdoor Food Sales; Deb Harris & Sandy Harner: Bake Sale, and LaVerne Glassman & Doris Culbertson: Advisory Members.