



**THE FATEFUL FORTIES**  
**At Home - At War - At Peace**

**A 50th World War II Anniversary Celebration**

**1995**

Presented by:

The Friends of the Gustafson Gallery  
and the  
Historic Costume and Textiles Collection  
Colorado State University

OneWest Art Center  
Fort Collins Colorado

Exhibition Dates  
May 23 - July 8  
Tuesdays - Saturdays 10 am - 5 pm  
Information 970-482-2787



## **Welcome**

**We invite you to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of World War II  
and reflect upon the decade of the 40s.**

Let us remember, learn, and share memories as we honor the  
gallant men and women of the Armed Forces who served heroically  
and the citizens on the home front who worked  
together for freedom.

The City of Fort Collins has been designated by the Department of Defense a

### **World War II Commemorative Community**

in gratitude for the sacrifices made by veterans of World War II,  
their families, and the citizens of the United States of America.

**The Friends of the Gustafson Gallery  
and Colorado State University present this exhibition  
as a tribute to our community and  
those who went to war and those on the home front.**

**We gratefully acknowledge the following contributors:**

Department of Design, Merchandising, and Consumer Sciences  
College of Applied Human Sciences      Colorado State University  
OneWest Art Center  
City of Fort Collins      Fort Fund

## Radio Hour

As we pass by the service flag in the window, symbolizing a family member at war, we see our family listening to their radio in anticipation of the latest news on the war.

“Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all the ships at sea. This is Walter Winchell in New York.” Listeners gathered around their radios as the world became smaller on the home front.



- ✪ While listening to the radio, Dad looks through the family album reflecting on family times when they were all together. He's wearing a sweater vest and navy wool trousers. His 100% cotton broadcloth shirt predates “permanent press.”
- ✪ Mom is wearing a navy wool crepe dress with rayon lace.
- ✪ The child is wearing a wool gabardine suit. This suit, 1942, is made from the wedding suit worn by Jim Hamilton's father.

Average income in 1945 was \$2,424 a year.

A loaf of bread cost \$.10

Chicken was \$.41 a pound

Man's shirt was about \$1.18

A pair of Levi's cost \$2.65

Life magazine was \$.10 an issue



## 40's Fashions

As the forties began the female silhouette consisted of wide, padded shoulders, a narrow natural waistline, thin hips, and a skirt that fell just below the knee. Men's clothing also had the inverted triangle look from square shoulders down to the hips. Heavy shoes provided the counterbalance for both women and men. Hats were popular but became a casualty of the war. Snoods, in vogue for a time, were worn to hold long hair in place at the nape of the neck.

The government's War Production Board issued Regulation L-85 in 1942 to achieve a 15 to 26 percent savings in fabric by banning turned up cuffs, full skirts, double yokes, sashes, knife pleats, and attached coathoods. Order M-217 conserved leather and limited shoes to six colors. Laces and some kinds of embroidery were restricted by order L-116. Ten percent of fabric had to be saved from women's bathing suits -- leading to the two-piece suit. Men's suits were also regulated by Uncle Sam. Entirely eliminated were two-trouser suits, double-breasted dinner jackets, patch pockets, pleats, cuffs, and overlapping waistbands.



Home sewers mended, remade, and saved:

- ★ On the dress form is a brown wool crepe two-piece utility dress waiting for hemming. Decorative pockets were a prominent feature during the war when fabric was so limited.
- ★ The Chesterfield style coat was made in 1945 from a wool Navy blanket.
- ★ Fabrics were still in short supply right after the war. June Kisson's grandmother made her the peasant blouse from parachute material.
- ★ A Fort Collins High School prom dress was made from silk Ski Patrol jackets.

## Buy Bonds

Americans on the home front did their part to assist the war efforts by buying war bonds. From \$25 to \$10,000 they were America's favorite investment helping to provide security in America and paying dividends. War bond campaigns were in every town and every school.

Kate Smith collected \$40 million in one season. Children licked war stamps and pasted them into albums until 75 were collected -- enough for a \$25 bond. By war's end, nearly \$150 billion bonds were sold.



Our starlets selling war bonds are wearing:

- ✪ Softly belted brown wool crepe dress with copper beads and sequins, worn with mink. Typical of 1940's women's apparel it has a metal zipper on the side seam. Metal zippers were in short supply during the war years.
- ✪ Green cotton gabardine dress with shirred bodice, shawl collar, and bias binding creating a tiered effect.
- ✪ Black brushed-wool crepe suit with asymmetric front closure and gold dickey. Schiaparelli hat. During the war years fullness at the hemline was regulated by "L-85" enacted to conserve fabric.

## Victory Garden

Gardening helped ease the burden on the nation's food producers and cultivated patriotism. Millions of greenthumbers -- mom and children -- worked the soil for victory and vitamins. 140,000 Victory Gardens were in Colorado alone. Fresh vegetables and canned foods were the products of Victory Garden Drives.



- ★ Our victory gardener is wearing a cotton blouse with machine embroidery and pink rayon faille slacks. Note her fabric sandals.
- ★ Child's polka dot cotton dress with cotton taffeta collar.

Don't Do This! The Dozen Don'ts... or

Good Gardeners Obey Simple Rules:

- Don't start more than you can finish.
- Don't work the ground too soon.
- Don't plant rows up and down a hill.
- Don't use too much seed.
- Don't waste good seed on bad soil.
- Don't plant too much of one thing.
- Don't wield too heavy a hoe.
- Don't let tall plants shadow low ones.
- Don't let the weed crop win.
- Don't spare the water.
- Don't let the bugs beat you to it.
- Don't let anything go to waste.

Department of Agriculture, *Consumer's Guide*, March 1945



## Just Married !

United until death do us part. People fell in love, married, and waited for mail from overseas. Censored V-Mail left many not knowing where their loved ones were. Words on paper and emotions in the heart. Love was strong as newlyweds waited to be together forever.

Informal and traditional weddings brought joy to many couples as their new lives began together in the 40s. Photos and wedding books unwrap loving memories of wedding days and honeymoons.



Stewart and Elizabeth were married June 1942.

★ Liz Case wore this light taupe wool crepe dress and jacket on her wedding day. Fern embellishment is created with self-fabric cording.

★ Still in active service at the time of their wedding, Stu Case wore his Army "pinks."

### *My trousseau:*

*Brown linen dress with white accessories*

*Green check gingham dress*

*Green striped seersucker playsuit*

*Brown gabardine slacks and white blouse*

### *My hopechest treasures:*

*Set of Wearever aluminum pans*

*Presto sauce pan and skillet*

*Glass mixing bowl set*

*Eight sheets, blanket, and bed spread*

*Radio and clock*

*Tablecloths*

*Tea towels and bath towels*

## USO in Action

Time for entertainment -- whether it's a game of cards or just the chance for good conversation. Thousands of lonely service men and women counted on the USO for food, entertainment, and comfort. Volunteers spent countless hours and touched the hearts of our military as they shared dances, stage productions, celebrity appearances, holiday shows, music festivals, and home-cooked food.

Tireless Red Cross and Salvation Army volunteers set up "clubs" and canteens across the country and the world. Movie stars and big hearted Americans adopted our fighting men and women -- hoping to give them a touch of home and a little laughter.



Our Canteen ladies are entertaining in:

✪ Raspberry wool crepe evening dress. Vertical pleats create the lovely shaping in the bodice and control the fullness in the skirt. Sequins embellish bell sleeves and the self fabric belt.

✪ Black wool waffle fabric dress with lace peplum and collar. Many apparel styles were frozen in 1943.

✪ Our soldier from the Army Air Force is in uniform with the popular "pinks." Notice the pale pink cast on the wool.



## Thanks to the GI Bill

President Roosevelt signed the GI Bill of Rights to benefit our veterans and their families. Housing became more available and unemployment benefits were included. Many young men were able to start their college education on the GI Bill. Our government was trying to make life easier after the hardships of the war



★ Mom's in her wrap-around cotton house dress. Faggoting decorates the neckline. American designer Claire McCardell was commissioned by Lord & Taylor's to design a similar house dress during the war.

★ Dad, our returned GI starting college, is studying in his old high school sweater and wool trousers. Clothing styles for men became more relaxed following the war. Men demanded more casual civilian clothes with the comfort of their utilitarian military uniforms.

★ Six year old Sally is wearing a typical cotton print dress. Prints of this type often appear in post World War II quilts.

★ The toddler is wearing a wool shirt and shorts.

## In Honor of . . .

Each had a unique experience. Each has memories of the events and the people. Yet, we were in it together. World War II was our war, uniting us as a nation.

We honor the more than 10 million men and women who served in the various branches of the military. We honor medical personnel and nurses. We honor the families and friends. We remember those who gave their lives and are eternally grateful. From all Americans who cherish freedom, we say "Thank You."



Uniforms clothe members of the same service in the same type of costume. They identify friend from foe, and also promote uniformity and smartness in appearance. Insignia worn upon the uniform indicates the corps, rank, and other details such as awards, decorations, length of service, and personal character.

American Red Cross

Blanch Magnuson

Army WAC

Catherine (Bell) Chrisma

Navy WAVE

Bernice Hotchkiss

US Army

David Leland

US Navy

Dwight D. Blaesi

## Special Recognition

... to our community friends who have loaned memorabilia for this exhibition and for sharing their special memories.

Bob Andermann	Barbara Laughlin
Jim and Margaret Banghart	Van Linck
John and Margaret Batson	Virginia Loeffler
Donna Beard	Blanche Magnuson
Sarah Bennett	Betty Maloney
Avery and Doris Bice	Elaine Marschner
Dwight and Vlasta Blaesi	Daniel Martinez
Ralph Bryant	Nancy D. McComb
Doris Campbell	Carolyn McCoy
Jennifer Campbell	Roy and Sybil Melin
Liz Case	Shirley Melvin
Jack Curfman	Gill and Margareth Merrill
Al and Bernita Curtis	Ila Miller
Jan Else	Al and Joan Oesterle
Anna Everitt	Connie Pfeiffenberger
Phyllis Ferguson	Dr. Robert and Marian Pike
Bonnie Frantz	Reta Ralph
Ginny Gleason	George Riddle
La Vada Goranson	Doris Rust
Jim and Lois Gordon	Mrs. John Simpson
Jim and Marti Hamilton	Jeanne Stevens
Jane Hayman	Lisa Sullivan
Carol Herron	Inez Tomlinson
Dick and Beth Hill	Pat Venable
Laura Hill	Richard Voss
Court and Bettie Hotchkiss	Alice Warner
Verna Jara	Ret. Col. Althea Williams
Jerry and June Kissock	Carousel Dinner Theatre
Ruth Ware Koelzer	Foothills Fashion Mall
Lloyd and Lillian Lair	VFW Fort Collins

Monarch Range, Quick Appliance Repair Service  
WWII original posters, Colorado State University Archives

*Patrons' Party May 20th:*

1947 Coupe Lincoln - Mr. and Mrs. Herman Schneider

1948 Super Deluxe Ford - Mr. and Mrs. Robert Morris

Catering by Lopiano's Music by Otto Werner & The Music Staff





## **Special Thanks**

**... to those who spent hours of dedication and preparation for  
The Fateful Forties exhibition:**

LaVon Blaesi, Event Coordinator  
Linda Carlson, Curator  
Jack Curfman, Exhibit Designer  
Kathryn Greenwood, Docents  
June Kissock, Vignettes

Friends of the Gustafson Gallery, Board and Members:

Barbara Laughlin, President  
Donna Beard                      Brenda Brandt  
Liz Case                              Carol Herron  
Beth Hill                             Betty Hutchins  
Julie Katzenberger              Jennifer Kutzik  
Reta Ralph                          Lisa Sullivan  
Bev Veazie                          Ginny Webster

Jennifer Schulle and Mary Williams, Graduate Students  
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Community Volunteers:

Dick Hill  
Bill Kissock  
Monica Jasiak  
Annie O. Cleveland



We thank you, our friends and patrons,  
for your support of the Gustafson Gallery.  
Colorado State University