

NATIONAL SEWING CONTEST 1952

Report of the National Final Judges: May 27th, 1952.

Mr. John French, who was judging the Finals for the second time, found that the standard overall was higher than last year. While he again criticizes some over-ambitious efforts, he finds that the general improvement is in the main due to a movement into on the whole simpler lines which has produced better work.

Her Excellency Madame Rene Massigli congratulates competitors on the high standard reached in children's clothes and lingerie, in which she is particularly interested. Many of the children's frocks entered she found almost perfect, while a great deal of the hand sewing on lingerie was exquisite. On the other hand, while most materials were well chosen, she warns competitors against a tendency to choose fabrics too heavy for the purpose intended. In the choice of prints Madame Massigli felt that some competitors had clearly had difficulty in finding the right choice between the extremes of the garish and the uninspiring.

Mr. Norman Hartnell was delighted with the general high standard of workmanship which frankly surprised him. This was particularly good in the case of the children's clothes and lingerie, where he was particularly impressed by the excellent embroidery and hand stitching. Mr. Hartnell was also impressed by the controlled styling of the day clothes, many of which displayed a high degree of the simplicity essential to them. He also pointed to the difficulty in choosing from the enormous range available the right print - both attractive and wearable - and thought that competitors had been less successful in this respect. He also regretted that so few evening dresses had reached the National Finals.

Miss Wilding praised the general high standard reached but found that in some cases inside neatness was not all that could be desired. She also pointed to some cases of too-tightly sewn hems, in which too many stitches had been used. Miss Wilding thought that the standard of finalists in Class 6, for Garments of Own Design, was not so high as in the other classes which, she suggests, proves the value of using a good, reliable pattern.

Mr. Godfrey Winn thought that the standard of entries as a whole was excellent and many of the clothes were really professionally finished. He praised the style and taste shown, which he thought in every way showed a great advance over the last twenty years.

He thought the children's clothes superb, and felt that they demonstrated the loving care of the English for their children.

Mr. Winn did not think that the fabrics used were always ideal; he pointed out that the design and colour schemes of materials were not always up to the standard of the workmanship that had been put into the garments, and suggests that in many cases basic blues and greys would have been better.

Mr. Winn was most impressed by the standard of the teenager entries, and thought it was encouraging for the future to know that teenagers had the taste and patience to execute such good work; it was evidently absolute nonsense to say that the youngsters couldn't do it!

NATIONAL SEWING CONTEST 1952.

National Final Awards

National Prize-winners.

Class 1 - Day or Evening Dress	Miss Betty Chafer, 10 Axholme Road, Doncaster.
Class 2 - Blouses, Nightwear or Lingerie	Miss E.E. Thomas 40 Church Road, Earley, Nr. Reading.
Class 3 - Coats, Suits or Skirts	Mrs. I. Basford, 26 Ryder Crescent, Southport.
Class 4 - Summer frocks, Sports, Beach or Play Clothes.	Mrs. A. Melling, 58, Brightmet Drive, Bolton.
Class 5 - Garments for children up to 12 years old.	Mrs. A.M. Lambert, 206 Royal Palace Hotel, Kensington High Street, W.8.
Class 6 - Garments of Own Design	Mr. H.W. Leonard, 26 Clapham Mansions, Nightingham Lane, S.W.4.
Prize for the best Teenage entry.	Miss Audrey Longmore, Benges Wick, Hertford.

Highly Commended.

Class 1.

Mrs. F.M. Dennis,
124 Howbury Street, Bedford.
Mrs. M.A. Willan,
18, Shortheath Road, Farnham, Surrey.
Mrs. B.L. Hilson,
14 Davigdor Road, Hove, Sussex.
Miss C.M. Hicks,
High Street, Odland, Bristol.
Miss K. Leake,
70, Goodwins Road, King's Lynn.
Mrs. M.G. Litchfield,
147 Somerville Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex.
Mrs. N.G. Hughes,
Plas Bach, Cerrigceinwen, Anglesey.
Mrs. Kay Astbury,
Muchall Lodge, Muchall Road, Wolverhampton.

Class 2.

Miss Freda M. Elliott,
4 Horning Road, Branksome, Bournemouth
Mrs. E.G. Hansford,
66 Old Turnpike, Fareham, Hants.
Mrs. E.M. Maggs,
95 Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.
Mrs. J. Clarke-Maxwell,
Speddoch, Dumfries.
Miss M. Oakes,
The Cottage, Great Barton, Bury St. Edmunds.
Mrs. M. Webster,
11 Harvey Close, Thorpe, Norwich.
Mrs. I.H. Widenbar,
129 Aberdyberthi Street, Hafod, Swansea.
Mrs. R. Ockenden,
Brookside, Ponthir, Caerleon, Mon.

Class 3.

Mrs. E.R. Davies,
"Homelea", St. Neots Road, Sandy, Beds.
Mrs. A. Winnard,
14 Park View Road, Hove 4.

Class 3 (Contd).

Mrs. E.M. Evans,
"Fairview", Newlands Road, Riddings, Derbys.
Mrs. E. Sturgess,
12 Masefield Road, Kettering.
Mrs. G. Haste,
Police House, Martham, Great Yarmouth.
Mrs. K. Jones,
Beck House, Lund House Green, Harrogate.
Mrs. L. Scott Owen,
Clydeforth, Hillside Crescent, Swansea.
Mrs. K. Astbury,
Muchall Lodge, Muchall Road, Wolverhampton.
Mrs. S.H. Hewitt,
322 North Drive, Anchorsholme, Blackpool.

Class 4.

Miss Jean Knight,
2 Station Road, Dyce, Aberdeenshire.
Miss M. Boast,
22 Westbourne Place, Hove 3, Sussex.
Mrs. E. Boucher,
Lake House, Leigh Woods, Bristol.
Mrs. H.B. Webb,
St. Peters, Knight Street, Walsingham, Norfolk.
Mrs. G.E. Rees,
44 Glanbrydan Avenue, Uplands, Swansea.
Mrs. Anne B. Wright,
Rough Acres, St. Mary's Platt, Nr. Sevenoaks.

Class 5.

Mrs. M. Melvin,
14 Ashfield Road, Cults, Aberdeenshire.
Mrs. A. Luther,
The Haye, Sherborne St. John, Nr. Basingstoke.
* Mrs. K.M. Rees,
Thornlea, Holyhead Road, Wellington, Salop.
Mrs. L.E. Clyde,
21 Lansdowne Crescent, Edinburgh.
Mrs. E. Rimer,
7 Cranbrook Rise, Ilford, Essex.
Mrs. V.M. Fox,
"White Heather", Ipswich Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk.
Mrs. E.O. Davies,
Oakfield House, Highfield, Stansty, Wrexham.
Mrs. D.A. Fox,
38 Church Street, Ribchester, Nr. Preston.

Class 6.

Miss A. McKewan,
10 Wilton Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 20.
Mrs. M. Driver,
5 Orchard Drive, Wisbech.
Mrs. I. Kingham,
187 Bonham Road, Dagenham, Essex.
Mrs. E. Lawrence,
15 Alexander Road, Bexleyheath, Kent.
Mrs. P.V. Lowe,
60 Park Drive West, Blackpool.

Teenage Entries.

Miss J. Prescott,
65 Easlebury Gardens, Birchfields, Birmingham.
Miss T. Cleveland,
227 St. Peters Street, Lowestoft.
Miss Mona Wood,
Burton Leonard, Harrogate.
Miss N. Gosling,
4 Winifred Road, Stockport, Cheshire.
Miss K.E. Nolan,
53 Pool Street, Crossens, Southport.
Miss E.M. English
"Knoll Dorf", Todd Lane, Lostock Hall, Nr. Preston

* Indicates that entries were especially highly commended.

NATIONAL SEWING CONTEST 1952 (Third Year).

Final Fashion Show and Prize-giving Ceremony.

May Fair Hotel June 25th.

Entries were received from all parts of England, Scotland and Wales and from women of all ages. The oldest competitor is in her 90th year and the youngest, Virginia Palmer of Earley near Reading, who presents a bouquet to H.E. Madame René Massigli at this Ceremony, is only seven.

For the first time all the National Prizes go to England, in spite of the fact that more entries were received from Scotland and Wales than ever before. For the first time too a National Prize is won by a man, Mr. H.W. Leonard, 26, Clapham Mansions, Nightingale Lane, S.W.4., who designed and made a town suit for himself.

The National Finals were judged by H.E. Madame René Massigli, Miss E. Wilding, Mr. John French, Mr. Normal Hartnell and Mr. Godfrey Winn. They awarded the 7 National Prizes and 50 Highly Commended Certificates.

All garments entered in the Finals had qualified to do so by winning first prizes of £10 in one of the 6 classes of 21 Regional Contests covering the whole of Scotland, Wales and England which took place in April. Both Regional and National Contests were divided into the same Classes:-

1. Day or evening dresses,
2. Blouses, nightwear or lingerie,
3. Coats, suits or skirts,
4. Summer frocks, sports, beach or play clothes,
5. Garments for children up to 12 years old,
6. Garments of own design,

with additional special awards for the best work entered in any Class by a teenage competitor (under 20 years old).

Miss Audrey Longmore, Bengoe Wick, Hertford is the National Teen-age Prizewinner and is especially to be congratulated because there were more entries from teen-agers this year than ever before.

This Final Fashion Show of the National Sewing Contest 1952 is presented as a tribute to the "woman who sews". Here is proof that the women of our country possess skill and talent second to none in creating for themselves and their families beautiful clothes, most beautifully made.

NATIONAL SEWING CONTEST

1952

The National winners were brought to London three days ago, and have been entertained with theatre and restaurant parties, and sightseeing tours.

The winners are:-

Class 1. Day or Evening Dresses.

MISS BETTY CHAFER. 10, Axholme Road, Doncaster. Has never had a Sewing lesson of any kind, but has always been interested in dressmaking, which she finds great fun. She attributes her success to the excellent patterns and books that are available. "It is so gratifying" Miss Chafer says "when one's friends think one is wearing a model".

Class 2. Blouses, Nightwear and Lingerie.

MISS E.E. THOMAS. 40, Church Road, Earley, Nr. Reading. Has been sewing ever since she started making clothes for her dolls, but this is the first time she has ever won a Competition. The lace insertion for her winning blouse caused Miss Thomas a great deal of trouble. She could find nothing in London or Reading that she really liked. Her problem was however successfully solved by a friend who brought her this lace as a present from a holiday in Italy.

Class 3. Suits and Coats.

MRS. IRENE BASFORD. 20, Ryder Crescent, Southport. Wins a National Prize for the Second time. Last year she won with the first suit she had ever made. Although she started sewing 12 years ago, soon after her daughter was born, it was wartime rationing that encouraged her to make more and more clothes. Now sewing is her chief hobby.

Class 4. Summer Frocks and Sports, Beach & Play Clothes.

MRS. A. MELLING. 58, Brightmet Drive, Bolton, Lancs. Makes all her own clothes. She is a voracious reader of fashion books and she found the idea for her prize winning dress in a French magazine. Mrs. Melling has never stayed in London before, and her husband is as thrilled as she is over her prize. Besides looking after her home, and this includes gardening, Mrs. Melling has a part-time job with a firm manufacturing films.

Class 5. Childrens' Clothes.

MRS. A.M. LAMBERT. 206, Royal Palace Hotel, Kensington High Street, W.8. She was highly commended in the Contest last year for a child's dress. Mrs. Lambert lived for many years in Burma where her husband was a director of the Crown Office, Burma-- a key legal post. He is a barrister-at-law. She makes most of her own, her children's and her grandchild's clothes. She has never had a needlework lesson in her life, but has always loved sewing. Mrs. Lambert is a part-time W.V.S. worker.

Class 6. Garments of Own Design.

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MR. H.W.LEONARD. 26, Clapham Mansions, Nightingale Lane, S.W.4. Wins the National Prize in this class for designing and making a suit for himself. He is a Sanitary Inspector of the Camberwell Borough Council and has learnt all his sewing and tailoring at the L.C.C. Battersea Evening Institute. Mr. Leonard is an all round seamster who does not confine himself to tailoring, having made 9 shirts with separate collars and a pair of pyjamas for himself in the last year. He also admits to making clothes for his wife.

The Best Teen-age Entry.

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MISS AUDREY LONGMORE. Bengeo Wick, Hertford. Is just 19 but was still 18 when she made her winning evening dress for the Regional Contest in the Spring. A domestic Science student she was on holiday in Devon when she heard the news of her prize. Miss Longmore's hobbies are sewing, tennis, golf and hiking. She has made 9 things this year.

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