

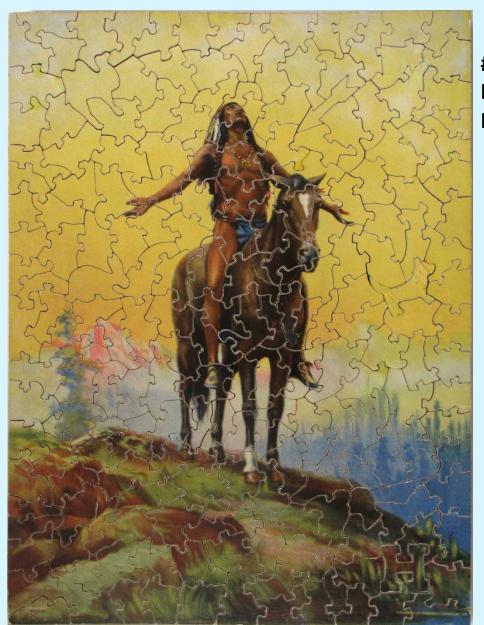


Serendipity, "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah" and a Lot of Help! or

How in the world did a lawyer end up with the Spilsbury Award?



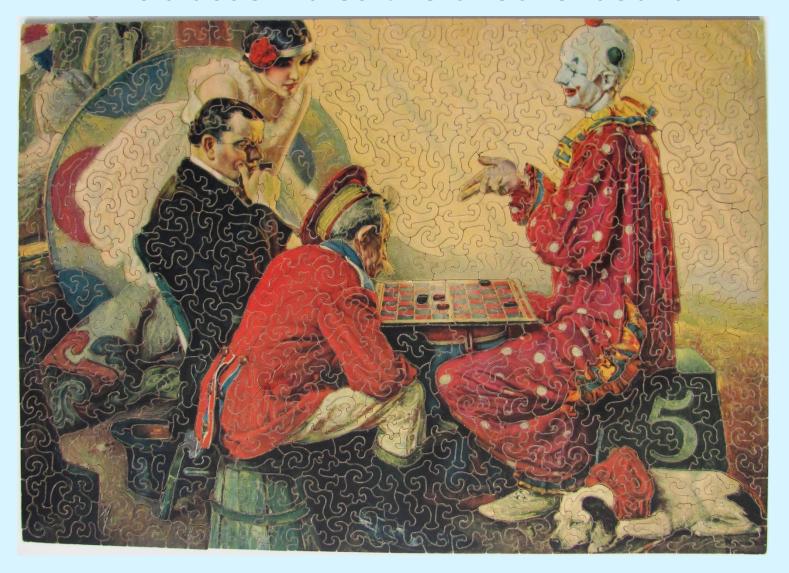
Late 1930s: first encounter—disaster!



#226 Sun Worshipper, Richard Hanchett, Book-o-the-Day Lending Library, Springfield, MA 1930s; 200 pieces; 7 figurals

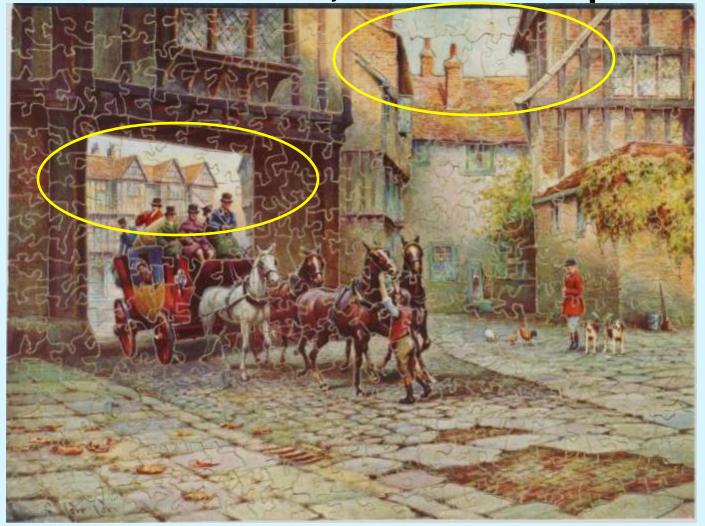


c.1940 baby steps Bob assembles the checkerboard!



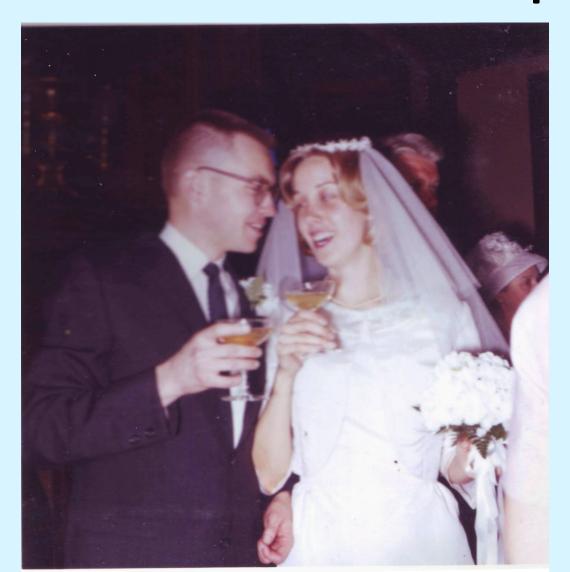
#208 Checkers, Arteno Co, Boston, MA 1930s; 730 pieces; color line cut

WW II: progress, Bob assembles the sky! Puzzle becomes his "favorite", assembled repeatedly



#212 The Arrival, H.E. Hamlen/Little Cut-up, Chicopee, MA; 426 pieces; color line cut

April 7, 1962 Marriage to Hildegard! We discover our mutual love for puzzles

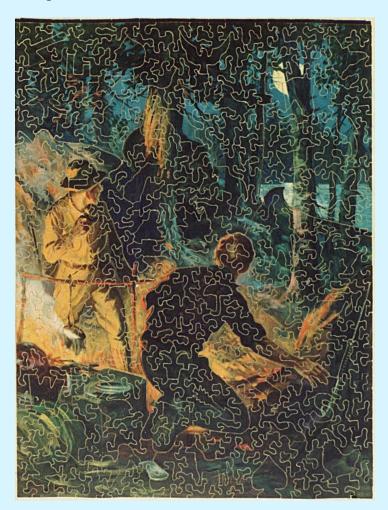


1963 Armstrong/Bliss puzzles found! Among 23 puzzles surviving:

2 Puzzling Puzzles by E.S. Tuttle, Providence, RI 1930s



#204 In the Hills of Devon, 280 pieces; color line cut; 22 figurals



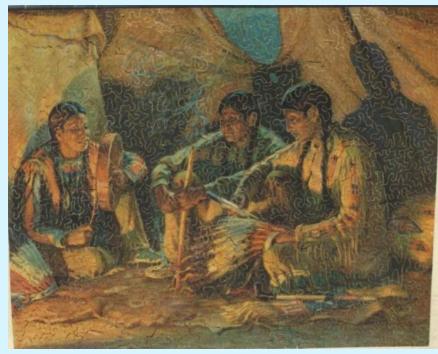
#201 Interrupted Supper, 320 pieces; color line cut; 42 figurals

2 C.A.T. puzzles by Carroll Towne Auburndale, MA 1930s





#203 Breeze! 463 pieces; color line cut; 19 figurals including clipper ship with 43 pieces, title, maker's signature piece (arched cat).

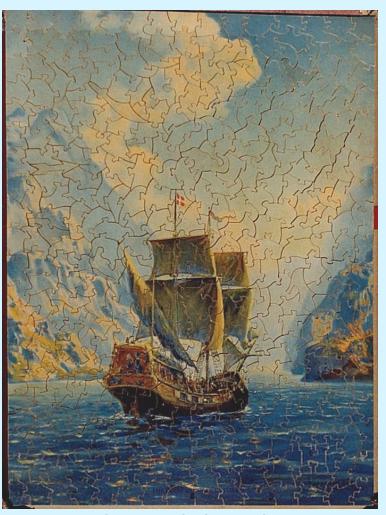


#207 Warriors. 650 pieces; color line cut; 15 figurals including "Warriors!" cut across top; arched cat signature piece in lower right.

Note: maker not identified until 1991 when Bob read Anne's first book which identified arched cat signature piece of maker.

3 Book-o-the-Day Lending Library puzzles

Richard Hanchett, Chicopee, MA 1930s



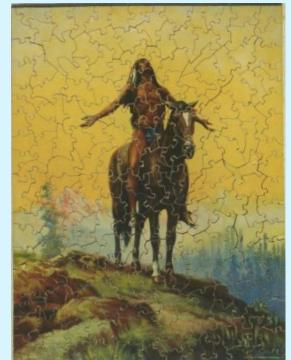
#202 The Good Ship Adventure

351 pieces; 11 figurals

#226 Sun Worshipper 200 pieces; 7 figurals

"H" signature pc. In lower right hand corner all 3 puzzles

#225 Saftey First **125** pieces; 5 figurals





2 Little Cut-ups by H.E. Hamlen Springfield, MA 1930s





#212 The Arrival
400 pieces; color line cut

#211 *Sailing into the Mist* **426** pieces; color line cut

5 Arteno puzzles by Arteno Co. Boston, MA 1930s

All 3 puzzles cut in classic Arteno style.



#205 *Inattention*400 pieces; color line cut



#213 [Stairway to Paradise]
334 pieces: color line cut



#214 [Winding the yarn]
400 pieces; color line cut

5 Arteno puzzles (cont.)

#206 Anthony Adverse 700 pieces; highly intricate cutting; color line cut





#208 Checkers
730 pieces; color line
cut; classic Arteno
cutting style

Plus another 13 misc. puzzles for a total of 23

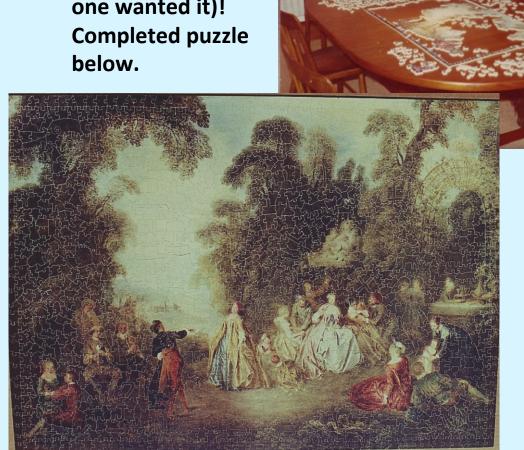
1960s-70s puzzling a family activity



Assembling puzzles during summer vacation at Cape Cod.

401 *The Dance*, Charles Russell, Auburn, MA 1960s; 1734 pieces; color line cut; 120 figurals. Original painting at WAM

Bob assembling 1734 pcs puzzle cut for Worcester Art Musum by Charles Russell and sold to us (no one wanted it)! Completed puzzle below.



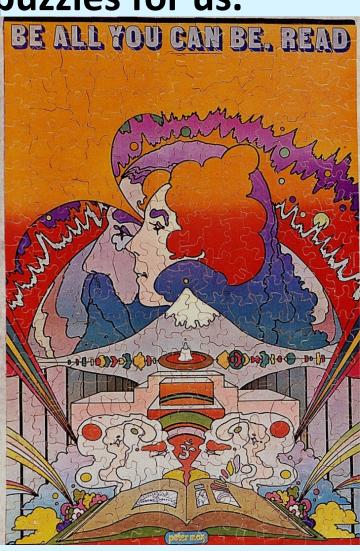
Early 1970, commissioned Roland Chesley, Buckfield, ME to cut over 40 puzzles for us.



#321 Wild Turkey-Night, 324 pieces; color line cut; 5 figurals. Austin Nichols Liquors promotion print

#341 A Four-Oared Shell Race, 220 pieces; 7 figurals. Currier & Ives print

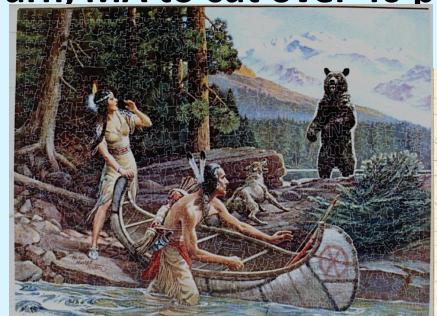




#320 Be All You Can Be-Read, 316 pieces; 4 figurals. Peter Max poster print

Mid-1970s commissioned Charles Russell, Auburn, MA to cut over 40 puzzles for us.

#416 A Hasty
Retreat, 1203
pieces; color
line cut; 120
figurals. Russell
provided print,
cut puzzle for
\$25!



#411 *Pilgrim Map of Cape Cod,* 632 pieces; color line cut; 15 figs



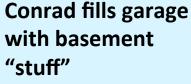
#403 Retreat from Lexington, 1154 pieces; color line cut; 71 figurals. H. Lassal Ripley print from Bob's company.

1990 Bob starts planning for retirement with \$25,000

basement renovation, intending to cut puzzles



1899 basement ready for asbestos removal



Voila! New basement and cutting begins

1990-91 Bob begins cutting, and struggles!



A7 Kansas Barn, 84 pieces; color line cut





A38 The Office Merry-Go-Round, 120 pieces; color line cut

A18 Winter Wonderland, 153 pieces; color line cut

Meanwhile Conrad flourishes!



A2 The Great Double Team Trot, 234

pieces; color line cut; 2 figurals. Conrad's 2nd puzzle

A4 St. Basil's Cathedral,

A45 Napoleon's charge, 282 pieces; color line cut. Wonderful scroll cutting.

Moscow, 371 pieces; color line cut; 4 figurals. Conrad's 4th puzzle

15 Monadnock Road Worcester, MA 01609

May 1, 1991

Professor Anne D. Williams Bates College 14 D Libbey Forum Lewiston, ME 04240

Dear Professor Williams:

Congratulations! Your illus (I have purchased two copies puzzles in Fine Woodworking introduce myself:

I grew up working wonderful Rhode Island area in the 192 to Hildegard, we managed to Rehoboth, Massachusetts befo a number of old ones to the engaged the services of two Chesley of Buckfield, Maine chusetts, in the 1980's. Ch crude, but Russell's puzzles turned out to be our greates particularly our youngest wh

Approximately a year ago, I to be able to attempt cuttin also purchased a Delta 18" V was able to obtain quality p from American Intertool and labels, etc. Having saved c supply of prints. Considera has confirmed many of our fi some of the problems we have the proverbial "duck to wate his father has continued to and eye-sight problems. Tog

If you are ever in the Worce to our house for dinner and feel that we have some parti from time to time. Converse ment to show your collection next time we are passing thr

Professor Anne D. Williams Bates College 14 D Libbey Forum Lewiston, ME 04240

Dear Professor Williams:

Congratulations! Your illustrated history of jig saw puzzles is superb (I have purchased two copies) and your very recent article on cutting puzzles in Fine Woodworking has been of a great assistance to me. Let me introduce myself:

I grew up working wonderful old wooden puzzles which came from the Providence. Rhode Island area in the 1920's and 30's. After my marriage in the early 1960's to Hildegard, we managed to reclaim those puzzles from my Aunt's garage in Rehoboth, Massachusetts before they were lost. Since then, we have added a number of old ones to the collection totally about 65 now, but mainly have engaged the services of two cutters to make dozens of puzzles for us: Roland Chesley of Buckfield, Maine in the 1970's and Charles Russell in Auburn, Massachusetts, in the 1980's. Chesley's puzzles (1 1/2 cents per piece) are pretty crude, but Russell's puzzles (2 1/2 cents per piece) are excellent and have turned out to be our greatest bargain. Our sons have followed in our footsteps, particularly our youngest who is a ferocious puzzler and gifted woodworking hobbyist.

Approximately a year ago, I commenced the renovations of our basement in order to be able to attempt cutting puzzles in our big old house in Worcester. I also purchased a Delta 18" Variable Speed Scroll Saw and after many phone calls, was able to obtain quality plywood from Craftsmans in Chicago and PBOO2 blades our old ones show wear and t from American Intertool and Eberle blades from AMI, as well as, glue, boxes, labels, etc. Having saved calendar pictures for many years, we had a ready supply of prints. Considerable experimentation has taken place and your article has confirmed many of our findings, but also has given us new ideas for solving some of the problems we have encountered. Frankly, my son has taken to it like

ct to entuore er-

cuss

nce,

July 30, 1991 Pilgrimage to 49 Brooks Ave, Lewiston, ME





It was Anne who suggested I "take a look" at the old puzzles, especially since we lived so close to Brimfield.

So, Sept 1991 To Brimfield Flea Market Bob's first "big" find!



Conrad comes home to help Bob assemble Pastime cut for Otto Ulbrich Lending Library, Buffalo, NY, 750 pieces; color line cut; 94 figurals.



But Madmar in BFM purchase needed tedious repairs, so Bob's restoration career commences.

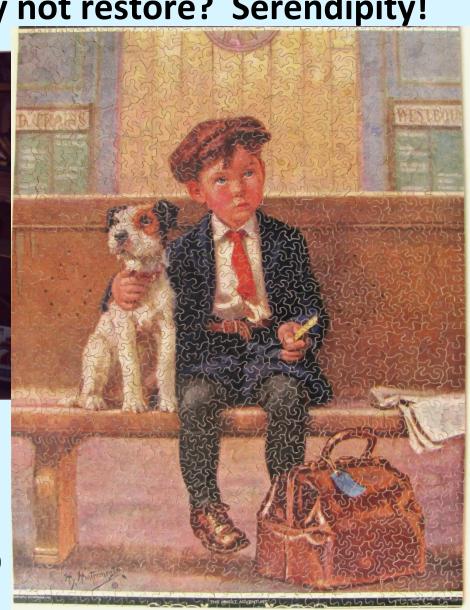
Unsuccessful at cutting; why not restore? Serendipity!



Significant water damage causing delamination of plywood, paper discolor.

Bob discovered: truly enjoyed "bringing back" old puzzles; no one else doing this. "Big frog in small puddle!"

231 The Great Adventure, Madmar, 1000 pieces



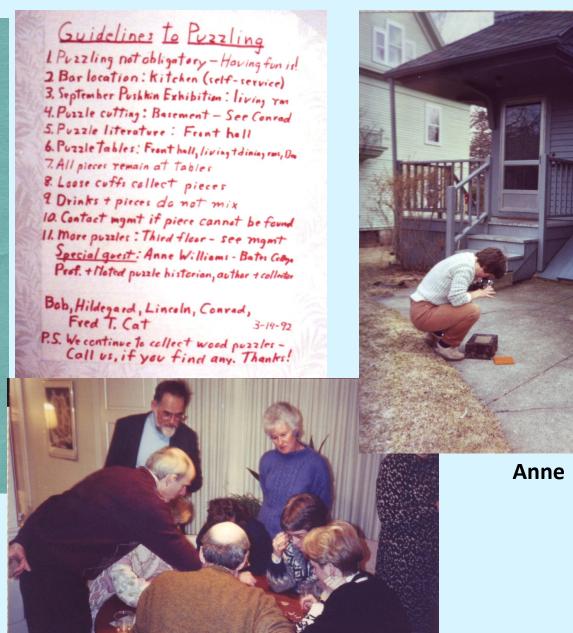
March 1992 our first Puzzle Party with surprise guest!

You are invited to try your hand at assembling our antique wooden jigsaw puzzles and newly cut puzzles from the Armstrong workshop. Join us for an evening of partying and/or puzzling.

Saturday, March 14 8:00 p.m.

Bob and Hildegard Armstrong
15 Monadnock Road
Worcester

Regrets: 799-0644



May-August 1992 Pagey Elliott enters our lives And with it, some of that "zip-a-dee-doo-dah" spirit!



Together with Pagey, Anne, others at Harry Rinker puzzle weekend

"Boot" sale or, in this case, display



Puzzle cutters, collectors, dealers at weekend event



September 1992 First Exhibition in Pushkin, Russia! Bob promotes puzzles and puzzle cutting but efforts ultimately fail. A major disappointment.



The Armstrong family has enjoyed collecting and assembling jigsaw puzzles for several generations. In 1990 they started cutting their own puzzles in the basement of their house in Worcester during their spare time. Most of the puzzles on display are cut by Bob, who is a lawyer, and son, Conrad who is a computer engineer.

You are welcome to the exhibition and meeting with Bob Armstrong, which will take place on September 22, 1992 at 7.00 p. m.

Address: St. Petersburg, Pushkin, Karl Marx str., 42.



1993 AGCA Convention in Worcester, MA First Open House displaying 150 puzzles









1994 more activities with Pagey who suggests a "puzzle parley" for cutters

Robert and Hildegard Armstrong 15 Monadnock Road Worcester, MA 01609 (508) 799-0644 - H (508) 793-5877 - W

Pagey Elliott 291 River Road Carlisle, MA 01741 April 13, 1994

RE: Puzzle Cutter's Workshop

Dear Pagev:

Thanks for including us in your visit to the Boardman's in Amherst, New Hampshire. It was a beautiful day and a very enjoyable time and I only hope we did not tire Mrs. Boardman too much.

To follow-up on your idea of organizing a puzzle cutter's workshop some time this year, we must schedule it around the AGCA Convention, October 7-9, 1994. Thus, we should look at the latter part of October or early November, or otherwise move it up to the middle of September. In any event, we must clear the date with Harry Rinker so as not to interfere with any plans he might have for another "Puzzle Weekend." And of course, with Anne Williams whom we wish to have participate and to whom I am copying this letter.

Hildegard and I thought that Deborah Greeley's house, as we drove past, looked fine, if we were looking at the right house. You should check this out with her and come up with a tentative date.

I would suggest that we plan on a Saturday running from 10:00 in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon. Lunch will have to be provided and will be the only significant cost so that we need not charge more than \$10.00 per person. Since the group is likely to be fairly small in numbers if we limit it to puzzle cutters, we may just want to contribute the lunch and not charge anything.

I will volunteer to organize and chair the program. I would suggest such sessions as follows:

- Anne Williams describing what she has learned about the cutters of the past and how they cut puzzles from her interviews and research.
- You describing the design and cutting of figure pieces
- Me describing how to repair damaged puzzles.
- Round table discussion on wood, blades, gluing, scroll saws, boxes, etc I would hope that most people present would be willing to share their information.

Any other suggestions/volunteers are welcome.

I would also like somebody, probably Anne, to talk about different cutting styles. I believe it is important to introduce the cutters to styles other

Pagey's generosity combined with puzzle parleys (her idea) change puzzle world from competition to cooperation

Conrad, Pagey, David (Pagey's son) market their work together at craft show



Puzzle Parley 1 held Sept. 10, 1994 but where was Bob? west Ambulance, County Ambulance, and MDI

Hiker injured in 50-foot fall on Acadia trail

SOUTHWEST HARBOR - For the third time in five days, rescuers had to use ropes to retrieve a person injured from falling in a steep area at Acadia National

Park rangers believe Robert Armstrong, 58, of Worcester, Mass., suffered head, spinal, chest and hip injuries Thursday when he tumbled 50 feet after fall-

The accident was reported around 3 p.m. by an unidentified person calling rangers from a telephone in the Echo Lake parking area, below the trail.

also a full recovery from his injuries, randors said

Search and Rescue used a fixed-rope system to pass the victim down the steep, rocky trail.

Rescuers had used similar techniques to save a hiker and a climber who fell in two separate incidents

Armstrong was hiking with people from the Appalachian Mountain Club and was about two-thirds of the way up the 750-foot Beech Mountain when he fell, said Rob Yates, eastern district park ranger.

It was nearly three hours after the accident was reported before the victim was down the mountain and could be taken by ambulance to Mount Desert Island Hospital in Bar Harbor, where he was listed in stable condition late Thursday night.

Armstrong was in pain, but was conscious and in stable condition after the rescue, Yates said.

At a critique session at 6 p.m., park rangers agreed that the operation had gone well, with no one losing their footing on the descent. At one point, the team had to pass Armstrong vertically down the trail

About 50 rescues are conducted at Acadia within an average year, Yates estimated, adding that the number so far this year is close to average.

The Beech Cliff Trail is one of several trails in the park in which hikers use iron-rung ladders built into the trail to negotiate the steep spots.



DOWN AND ON THE WAY OUT...Robert A. Armstrong, 58, of Worcester, MA, is carried off the Beech Cliff Trail by Acadia National Park employees and personnel from the Mount Desert Island Search and Rescue Squad and Southwest Harbor ambulance on Sept 1. Armstrong slipped on a wet log and tumbled 50 feet down a steep slope just after descending a set of ladder rungs on the rugged trail. He was taken to the Mount Desert Island Hospital, where he was treated for fractured vertebrae and cuts and bruises and monitored for internal injuries. The difficult two-and-one-half-hour rescue and carryout was the third in five days for park rangers. Armstrong is

@20 attended



Fred the cat loved Bob's convalescence!

So Bob buys 3725 piece puzzle for \$100 and retires on April 1, 1995 at age 58!



Bob's retirement party w Company President, co-workers

2235 Rome Coliseum, unknown maker, Trenton, NJ, c.1933; 3725 pieces; 50 figurals



1996 Puzzle Parley 2 in Lexington, MA @22 attended Another puzzle party at 15 Monadnock



Armstrong Jigsaw Puzzle Collection

Beginning with two dozen family puzzles "rescued" from the garage of Bob's aunt in Rehoboth, MA in 1962 and expanding with 80 puzzles commissioned to be cut in the 1970s by Roland Chesley, of Buckfield, ME and Charles Russell of Auburn, MA, the collection really "took off" in 1992 when Bob turned his attention to acquisition and restoration of old puzzles. Now over 1000 puzzles, the collection focuses on adult, hand cut, intricate wood puzzles from the first half of this century. Many have been repaired/restored by Bob, down to the last broken knob. The 65 puzzles on display have over 67 replacement pieces, mostly done by Bob. The Exhibit begins on the second floor hall way with 19th century and 1908-09 puzzles, continues down the front stairs with Pastime puzzles, and ends in the front room with puzzles from the 1930s. New puzzles are hand cut by Conrad with examples of his work on display in the front rooms.





1997 Bob's first article on puzzle cutting styles for AGCA Game Researchers' Notes Feb-May 1997

Jigsaw Puzzle Cutting Styles: An Analysis Bob Armstrong November 1996

Introduction

No two handcut jigsaw puzzles, cut separately, are exactly alike. As soon as the scroll saw blade cuts into the wood, subtle differences begin to emerge with the result that a piece from one puzzle will not fit properly into another, unless, of course, the puzzles are "stack cut" together at one time or individual pieces are "double cut" to create the effect of a "2-way trick". Dieeut puzzles, stamped out from the same mold, will have interchangeable pieces (although if the artwork has shifted in relationship to the mold, the exchanged pieces may look askew). However, despite the fact that even identical pictures handcut by the same maker, one right after the other, differ in the shape of their pieces and the way they go together, there are similarities in styles which can be analysed and described and which will assist the collector in identifying the maker and era if the original box is missing.

This article will propose a detailed system for analyzing and describing the cutting styles of handeut jigsaw puzzles, with diagrams of actual puzzles to assist the collector in classifying his/her own puzzles. Hopefully, a common language will emerge that will allow jigsaw puzzle collectors to talk" to each other about their puzzles, particularly in the process of buying and selling or simply displaying their collection. Because of the unique nature of every undividually handcut puzzle, no system will cover every style. Rather, the focus will be on the more common styles employed in the United States over the past 150 years.

Acknowledgements

Anne D. Williams of Bates College, 49 Brooks Ave, Lewiston, ME 04240, on page 57 of her landmark book, Jigsaw Puzzles--An Illustratel History and Price Guide, Wallace-Homestead Book Co, Radnor, PA, 1990, identifies four catagories of cutting design in a sample form for collectors to use in cataloguing their collections. Interlocking? Color Lines? Figures? Stripcut? These four categories are basic to any study of jigsaw puzzles and should be incorporated into every collector's records of their collection and used in describing puzzles for sale. Betsy and Geert Bekkering of J.P. Coentraat 24, NL 7541, BP Enschede. The Netherlands, on page 70 of their important book, Piece By Pieces A History of the Jig-Saw Puzzle in the Netherlands, Van Soeren & Co. Amsterdam, 1988, identify twelve catagories of cutting design primarily employed in England and the continent. Several of these styles are (of were) employed here in the United States and will be included in the descriptions set forth below. Finally, Steve Richardson of Stave Puzzles, PO Box 329, Norwick, VT 05055, in his various catalogues describes a variety of cutting techniques and cutting styles which his firm employs in making new handcut puzzles. The analysis below will utilize their work and definitions wherever possible. Copies of their books and catalogues may be ordered directly from the above addresses.

Special acknowledgement must be given to Anne Williams for her continuing support, information and suggestions over the past six years, and to my son, Conrad Armstrong who, as a cutter himself, made several key observations about the techniques employed in the 1930s. Finally, none of this would have been possible without my wife, Hildegard, allowing me to take over several rooms of our large house in Worcester, MA for the collection, restoration, study and display of puzzles.

General Analysis With Diagrams

How a jigsaw puzzle is cut can be analysed from four perspectives: the shape of the knobs (assuming it has knobs), the shape of the lines between knobs (or from piece to piece), the overall pattern created, and special techniques (or effects). The shape of knobs (ork/a)keys or tabs) comes in nearly limitless variations, depending upon the imagination and skill of the maker. In an article titled "Production of Fine Pieture Puzzles in the Home Workshop" by Bernard J. Roemer, published by The Puzzle Makers, Colorado Springs, CO (1933), a chart is displayed outlining (without naming) over 70

round

square

curve

different knob styles. For our purposes, the major shapes will be defined as:

earlet (classic)

Above: p. 1 of 5 pages of interlineated "corrections" Right: p. 1 of 3 full pages of Anne's own comments

Anne D. Williams 49 Brooks Avenue ewiston, Maine 04240-5901

October 22, 1996

Dear Bob.

Thanks for sending the draft of your article. You realize, of course, that as a teacher, I have my red pen always close at hand, and use it liberally. I'm also a fussy writer, so I've made some comments about style too. (I'm a big fan of E.B. White's injunction to "omit needless words.") But I don't expect you to adopt *all* my suggestions.

First, congratulations on setting out a much more detailed classification than any attempted heretofore. You have obviously put a lot of time and effort into thinking about these issues and writing them up. I've marked some details on the enclosed draft. Below are some broader comments. Hope they are helpful.

Sincerely.

Anne

Classifying vs. Cataloging. You start out by saying you want to help collectors classify their puzzles, describe them on a sale list. But in various places in the article you refer to catalog forms. In fact, only a few collectors ever sit down to catalog their puzzles. So I would tend to eliminate references to catalog forms, except in the next to last paragraph.

Your article is also judgmental. You not only describe cutting patterns, but you also identify the best ones (figures, classic scroll, semi-clc) and the least popular ones (strip-cut). Would it make sense to move the judgmental comments to a section towards the end? It is not necessary to say which cuts are best or worst in order to describe them. Would it be better to save the critique for another article?

Overall Pattern.

I don't really understand your discussion of overall "pattern." Maybe it's because I don't have the accompanying drawings. Also to show overall pattern it seems like you need to show a larger diagram with a bunch of pieces, not just one or two pieces. But here are some questions: Your first two sentences in this section suggest that this section only applies to interlocking puzzles. Is that correct?

Is overall pattern something different from the combination of knob shape and line shape?

It seems that the "classic scroll" cut you describe is really a type of strip-cutting, but one where the strips are not straight.

I adopted the term strip-cut from an article about Jerry Guiles' puzzles written years ago. But on reflection, I'm not sure it's so good a term. What I mean by a "two-way strip-cut" might be better described as a "grid-cut". And grid-cut could be either interlocking or non-interlocking. (See figs. 1 to 3 on enclosed diagram.)

I use the term "one-way strip cut" to refer to all designs shown in figs. 4 to 7 of my diagram. Maybe it would be better to use your "ribbon-cut" term for one-way strip cutting, and that could be for either straight strips, or non-straight ones.

You state correctly that most collectors view the grid-cut as in my figure 1 as undesirable. If you keep the judgmental stuff in, you probably want to explain why. I think there are several reasons:

• it's the same type of cut used in most commercial puzzles today. Therefore it's familiar and boring

1997 Puzzle Parley 3; @32 attended. Bob organizes major exhibit at Worcester Public Library

The World of Wood Puzzles: Beauty and Challenge

Catalogue for the exhibition of old and new handcut jigsaw puzzles organized by Bob Armstrong of Worcester, MA.

October 1-31, 1997

At the Worcester Public Library Salem Square, Worcester, Massachusetts



Exhibition includes 100 puzzles dating from 1850 with special focus on early 20th century, Pastime puzzles, Worcester area cutters, and examples by current makers.

Catalogue includes notes and labels for the exhibition puzzles and display cases prepared by Bob Armstrong, and "Jigsaw Puzzles - A Brief History" authored by Anne D. Williams of Lewiston, Maine.

Copyright 1997 by Bob Armstrong Worcester, MA



Current makers. Many cases of old puzzles as well.



With their puzzles displayed, more cutters attended! Successful formula for future parleys

1997 WPI Exhibit follows Library Exhibit



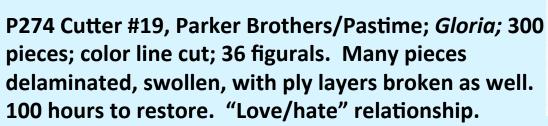
At entrance to WPI library, Conrad's puzzles (L) and Pastimes (below) captured attention of students.
Many more puzzles displayed inside.
Students are fascinated.



Christmas 1997 and Bob becomes obsessed with the *Gloria* restoration



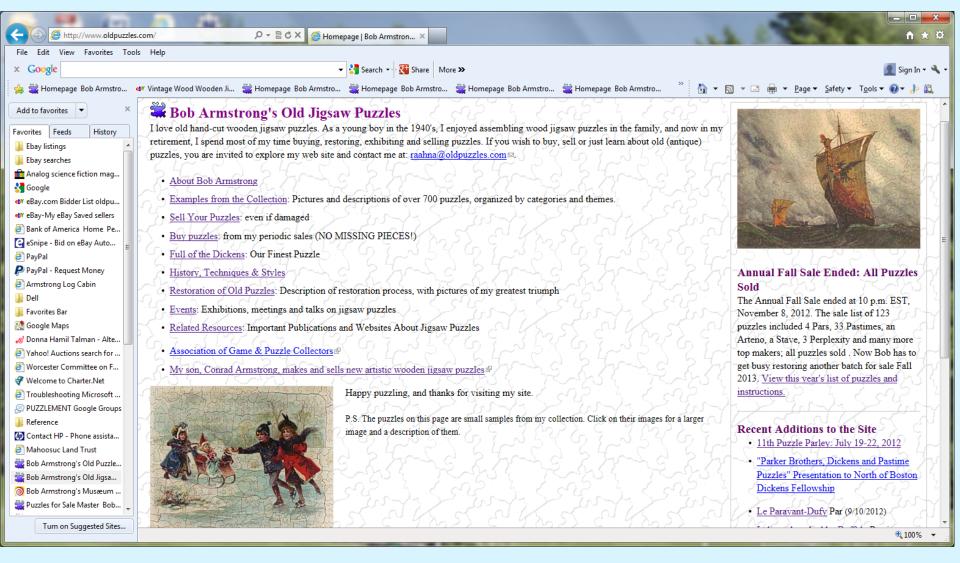




Hildegard's only "competition" in 51 years of marriage!



May 1998-Conrad launches "oldpuzzles.com". Now Bob can reach anywhere in the world in his efforts to "proselytize puzzles." Current main page displayed below.



1999 Anne, Dick Giese and Bob exhibit puzzles: "By, For, and About Women" as part of Worcester Women's History Project Exhibition at Worcester Public Library. Bob's puzzles drawn from his "unusual women" special collection on website.

Exhibition Synopsis

By 1908, puzzles had become popular for adults, as they had been for children. Women were active buyers of puzzles, setting them up for their afternoon visitors (usually female) and in the evening as entertainment after dinner, replacing bridge in many households. Men did join in working puzzles after dinner but many found the small pieces, non-interlocking aspects and color line cutting extremely frustrating. The majority of puzzle cutters were women, with many of them operating their own business of selling and/or renting puzzles. Companies like Parker Brothers, whose Pastime puzzles were the rage in 1910, hired young women who had experience with a sewing machine to cut puzzles. They would cut first along color lines, such as between sky and land; then they would use patterns to cut figural pieces such as people, birds, animals, geometric objects, numbers within a color section at a ratio of 12 such pieces per 100 puzzle pieces; then they would cut the rest of the pieces freehand. The cutters selected the illustration that would be on the puzzle from stacks available. It is no wonder then that puzzles showing the new athletic and independent women which evolved from the "Gibson Girl" image were popular into the teens and twenties. Seen here are puzzles from the collection of Bob Armstrong and Dick Giese of Worcester, MA and Anne Williams of Lewiston, ME, showing women in newly emerging roles as outdoorswomen, athletes, travelers, college graduates, WW I canteen operators.





2000 Visit to Dave Cooper and Tom Tyler in England



Dave Cooper after buying 4000 puzzles!



One of Tom Tyler's classic cars about to take Hildegard for a spin. Tom was recipient of 2010 Spilsbury Award.

2000 Puzzle Parley 5, Katonah, NY along with opening of exhibition of mechanical and jigsaw puzzles curated by Anne and Jerry Slocum.





Over 65 attended Sunday session's featured panel chaired by Will Shortz (NYTimes puzzle editor) and including Harold Raizer, Anne, Stuart Coffin, Bob



Mary Lou Alpert organized exhibition, panel; hosted Parley



2001 "Jigsaws and Jazz", our best puzzle party

Please join us for an evening of assembling antique wood jigsaw puzzles from the Armstrong collection.

Come for a casual evening of Jigsaws, Jazz and light refreshments.



Saturday, March 24, 2001 8:00 p.m.

Bob and Hildegard Armstrong 15 Monadnock Road Worcester

RSVP: 799-0644



2002 Bob's most important article (in his opinion) Major research and editing assistance from Anne

Article defining 38 special cutting techniques appeared over 3 issues in B & W (except for Conrad's puzzle). Still, many new cutters have studied article and incorporated special cutting techniques into their puzzles.

Other AGPC articles:

- -"To Russia with Puzzles"
- -"Jigsaw Puzzle Cutting Styles"
- -"Arteno Jigsaw Puzzles"
- -"Celebrating the Life of Charles Dickens in Puzzles"
- -Write-ups on most Puzzle Parleys
- Just a fraction of Anne's articles over the years!

Game & Puzzle Collectors Quarterly

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Volume 3 Number 1

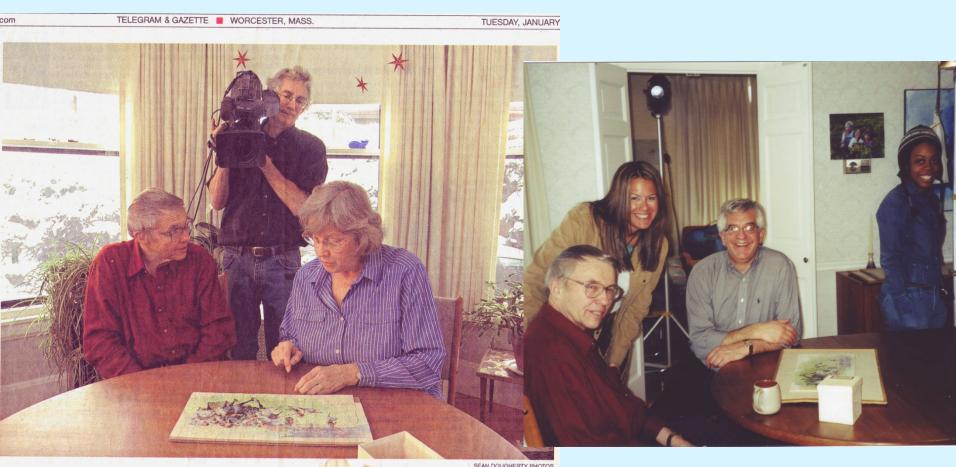


Illustrating multiple puzzle cutting techniques described in article on page 17 by Bob Armstrong. Puzzle cut by Conrad Armstrong, 2001.

2002 Puzzle Parley 6 at National Arts Club, NYC. @32 attended

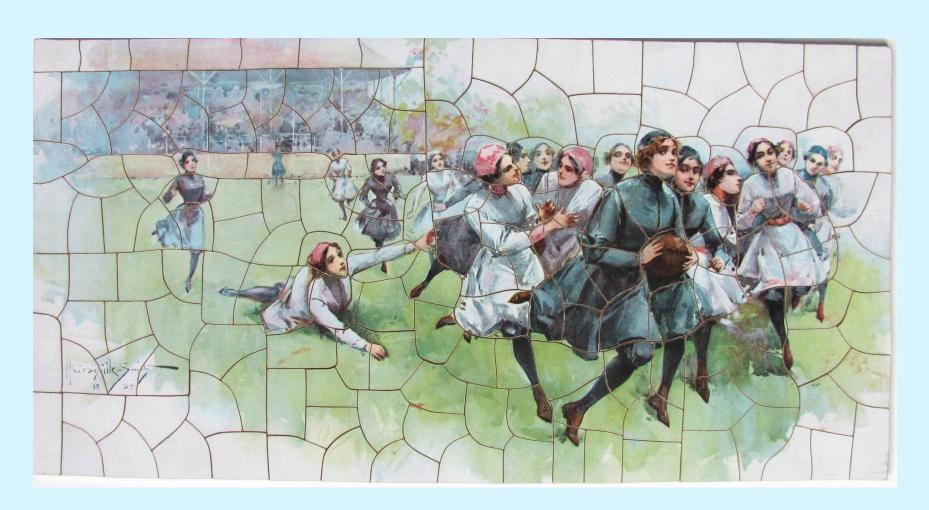


2003 PBS TV series "History Detectives" stars Bob, Hildegard, Anne, and Best of the Season



"History Detectives" cameraman John Hazard films Robert A. and Hildegard Armstrong as they piece together an early 20th-century puzzle in their Worcester home.

Bob relaxing between "takes" with Elise Marx and Wes Cowan 1261 Best of the Season by Mary E. Underwood, Boston, MA c.1909; 170 pieces; color line cut Centerfold in 1894 football issue of *Truth*, a racy magazine intended to "titillate" gentlemen in 1890s



2004 Puzzle Parley 7, Concord, MA, @65 attending Melinda Shebell joins Bob as co-organizer and creates one of the greatest puzzles for Pagey Elliott

Friday morning Bob holds restoration workshop in basement for 25

attendees.



Saturday morning session ends with presentation to Pagey Elliott of huge puzzle designed by Melinda including sections cut by 17 cutters



Pagey's complete surprise

Pagey still in shock

Golden Retrievers @1200 pieces



Saturday night's banquet



Anne making presentations

Joe gets back puzzle "History Detectives" misappropriated!



Terrific shot of Pagey & Bob

Sunday morning Open House at Bob & Hildegard's



Display of personalized Pars

Armstrong front steps

2005 London AGPC Convention



Panel chaired by Joe Seymour, with noted experts Geert Bekkering (Europe), Keith Lambeth and Tom Tyler (England), Bob (?), Anne (US)

Tom and Bruce blow out candles on cake celebrating 25 years of BCD (Benevolent Confraternity of Dissectologists)

2007 Bob's puzzle displayed in major exhibition at Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC



eSnipe - Bid on eBay Auto...

PayPal - Request Money

🔊 Donna Hamil Talman - Alte...

Yahoo! Auctions search for ...

Worcester Committee on F...

Troubleshooting Microsoft ...

@ PUZZLEMENT Google Groups

(Contact HP - Phone assista...

Bob Armstrona's Old Puzzle...

Bob Armstrong's Old Jigsa...

Bob Armstrong's Musæum ...

Puzzles for Sale Master Bob...

Turn on Suggested Sites...

Mahoosuc Land Trust

Armstrong Log Cabin

Puzzles cut by Roland Chesley

Puzzles cut by Charles

1950s to 1980s hand cut

Pre-1950 die cut cardboard

Puzzles cut by today's makers

Puzzles cut by Armstrong

Puzzles cut by Joseph K.

Map puzzles from the 20th

Par Puzzles from Ted & Ruth

1950 to current die cut

cardboard puzzles

Children's puzzles

nuzzles

century

Novelty puzzles

Pastime puzzles

Par Puzzles

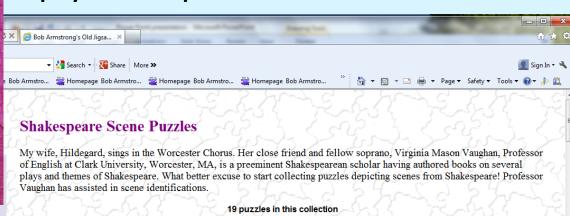
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Reference

#1268 Midsummers Night Dream: Titania displayed along with Folger print of same scene. Puzzle part of Bob's Shakespeare special collection advised on by Ginger Vaughan who arranged loan. P. 1 of website display of Shakespeare collection below.





Anthony and Cleopatra

136 pieces 7"H x 8"W Isabel Aver / Picture Puzzle Exchange

Picture Puzzle Exchange puzzle cut 1920/30 by Isabel Ayer, Boston, MA, plywood, noninterlocking, extensive color line cutting. From "Anthony and Cleopatra" Act I, Scene 3. As Anthony takes his leave of Cleopatra to return to Rome, he promises, "And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee". Scene selected by George Lyman Kittredge, Harvard U. Artist: Edward A. Wilson.



As You Like It

ca. 1934 100 pieces 8"H x 6"W Madmar Quality Co. / Interlox

Made 1930s by Madmar Quality Co, Utica, NY, plywood, interlocking. From "As You Like It" Act

2007 Puzzle Parley 8 held preceding AGPC San Francisco convention (60 attending). Melinda Shebell creates 2 more "greatest" puzzles for an unsuspecting Anne and Bob









Bob's puzzle, Full of the Dickens, cut by 15 different cutters using nearly all 38 special cutting techniques defined in Bob's Quarterly article; 3200 pieces; 2-layered; 2-sided in sections; center Pickwick figure stands up; color line cut; @60 figurals; many more special features. Bob is a Dickens' admirer and collected Dickens' puzzles.



AGPC convention follows Parley; Joe Seymour builds special frame for *Full of the Dickens* and ships both to Worcester. Now, proudly displayed on mantel.



2008 Puzzle Parley 9 in Sturbridge, MA @87 attended



A room awash in puzzles!

Bob addressing a crowded room



2008 Puzzle Parley 9 (cont.)

Melinda's 3 "greatest" puzzles previously awarded to Pagey, Anne and Bob on display together for first time





2008 Puzzle Parley 9 (cont.) Bob & Hildegard sponsor another open house



Puzzles displayed all over 1899 house

Bob's basement workshop

2009 Pagey, Melinda and Bob together for last time shortly before Pagey's death at age 96



It is my joy in life to find At every turning of the road The strong arm of a comrade kind To help me onward with my load.

But since I have no gold to give, And love alone must make amends, My only prayer is, while I live, God, make me worthy of my friends



To think, my efforts to cut puzzles led serendipitously to associating and working with Pagey shows how lucky I have been. Her open,

optimistic, generous spirit is embodied in the song, "Zip-a-dee-doo-dah". Her last words to me shortly before her death, "Bob, I want you to carry on." And "carry on", we have tried.

2009 Worcester Historical Museum Display and Talk



Bob's special theme collections (opera, Dickens, Shakespeare, unusual women, rowing, WW I, female pirates, galleons, Arteno, wild bears) have helped acquisition and collection, as well as providing numerous opportunities for talks, exhibits, research, involving others.

Bob's collection of Worcester area makers will go to WHM. McLoughlin and other 19th century puzzles will go to American Antiquarian Society. WPI interested in Dickens puzzles.



2010 AGPC Cruise Convention-Cozumel, Mexico.

Two beachcombers?





2010 Puzzle Parley 10 in Salem, MA @ 120 attended



Left: Shawn Ferguson & family **Right: Rob Jones** Lower R: John **Stokes puzzle** which sold for over \$20,000 on **Ebay; Lower left:** full ballroom at









2012 Puzzle Parley 11 in Salem, MA @ 120 attending



Above: another full house at Hawthorne Inn

Below: Sat. night puzzle contest





Above: laser cut Liberty puzzle

Below: restoration panel chaired by Bob:

Panelists L to R: Melinda Shebell, Karen



2012 WPI Library exhibit featuring puzzles from Dickens, female pirates and galleon ships collections



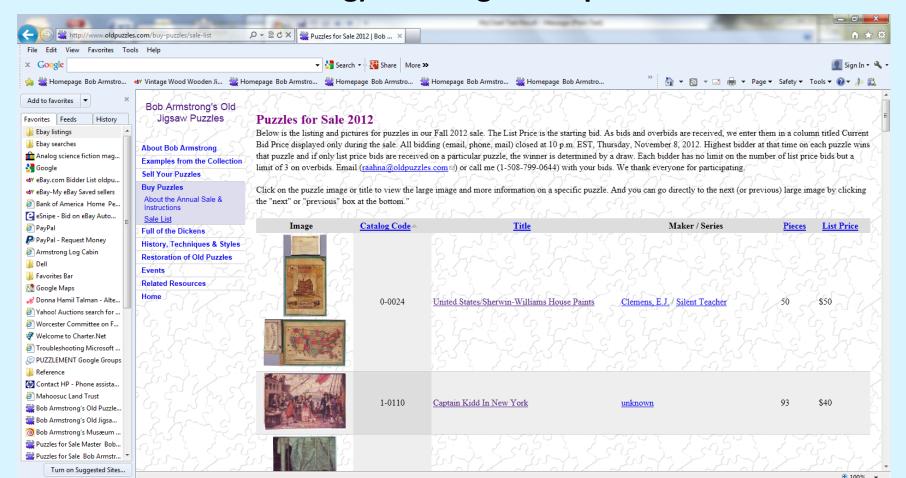
Above: pirates and galleons excited students at entrance. Puzzles can be fun!

Right: serious Dickens exhibit showing Library's Dickens manuscripts, memorabilia needed "color" of puzzles. Library print of Ludovici coaching scene same as used for Bob's Pastime and Zag-Zaw puzzles

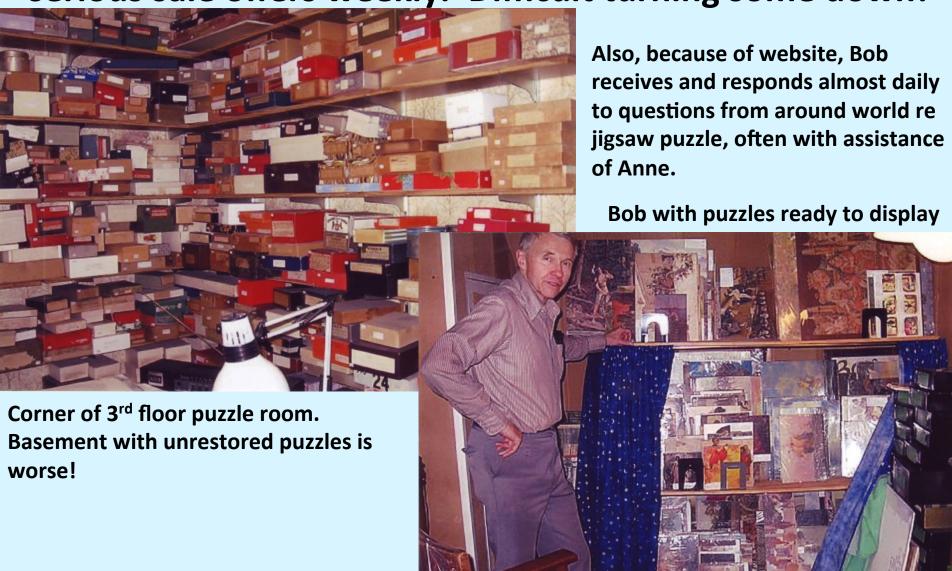


Bob's sale activities

1994-2005: 2 sales/year; 2006 to date: 1 sale/year (Fall). @125 puzzles now sold each sale through website listing and email, nearly all restored by Bob. 3800 sold since 1994. First page of last Fall's sale listing below. Must notify Bob if interested in receiving notice of sale (or watch for website listing). Bidding is complicated and limited to 3.



Despite sale activities, 1900 remain in house with several hundred awaiting restoration. Meanwhile, Bob receives serious sale offers weekly. Difficult turning some down!



Still, Bob's greatest satisfaction: restoration





Before



Ready for coloring

#2741 Snowbound Coach, Baker & Taylor, Traydac, New York, NY . 1930s; 500 pcs. Repairs: 1 piece replaced; 8 pieces repaired; 10 pieces relaminated; 66 knobs repaired; discolor muted; wash; touchup

Ready for sale in Fall; on display here

Conclusion

- Impossible without support of Anne, Pagey, Conrad, Melinda, Hildegard, and others.
- Interest in puzzles has grown, especially in the cutting of new puzzles and restoration of old puzzles. Proselytizing puzzles works!
- Ebay has made collecting easy.
- With Melinda "stepping back" and my "growing old", the highly successful puzzle parleys need "new management". Liz Platais
- Culture of puzzles has changed from competition to cooperation,
 both in collecting and cutting. Pagey may rest easy!
- Anne is absolutely indispensible! Please don't grow old!
- My decision to retire at age 58 in 1995 and pursue full time my love of puzzles was one of the wisest decisions I have made in my life.
- Last but not least: I am deeply honored and thankful for the Spilsbury Award and will prize it the rest of my life.







