

## Intertwined Histories: Manning and Marge Goldense

From their courting days until their deaths, Manning and Marge Goldense of Lincoln, Rhode Island, made OSV a central part of their lives, maintaining an active museum membership for more than 57 years. And a hobby they first learned at the Village – braiding rugs – became a lifelong passion, creative outlet, and way to unwind at the end of a busy day.

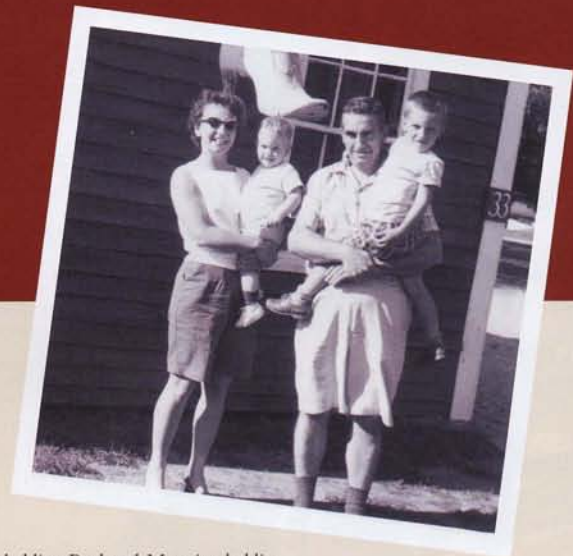
As a tribute to their parents, sons Brad and Paul Goldense (of Dedham and Medfield, Massachusetts, respectively) recently gifted 28 of their parents' handmade rugs to the Village, where they are being used in the executive offices and the Oliver Wight Tavern.

"Mom and Dad went on many dates at the Village between 1951 and 1953," recalls Brad Goldense. "Dad proposed, she said yes, and

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they then spent many 'romantic weekends' over the next three years of courtship braiding rugs to furnish a new home they were building on The Great Road – the original Indian trail running from Providence to Worcester in colonial times.

"Dad grew up poor and knew if he wanted nice things, he'd have to make them himself. He couldn't afford expensive rugs, but he knew he could make rugs just as nice for a tenth of the price and a little sweat equity."



*Marge holding Paul and Manning holding Brad at OSV's Cobbler Shop in 1960.*

Early on, Manning and Marge decided that OSV would be part of their boys' education. "Both of us were in strollers on the dirt roads of the Village within months after we were born," Brad says, adding, "My brother and I have been to the Village more than 100 times – we could both walk it blindfolded!" Later, as grandparents, Manning and Marge enjoyed many more trips to the Village with Paul's young daughters Dana, Ellie, and Kate.

Despite successful careers over the years, Manning and Marge maintained their passion for braiding rugs. They made more than 100 rugs in their lifetime – Manning died in 2003 and Marge in 2009. "In 1993, the original rugs they made as newlyweds had seen lots of traffic over the years, and the second giant wave of braiding began. These are the rugs that are now at the Village" notes Brad.

Manning, an engineer who graduated from Brown University at age 19 and served in WWII, founded his own company – M.D. Goldense Inc. of Lincoln, a supplier of engineered commercial building products. In addition to braiding rugs, he restored antique furniture, made weather vanes, and dabbled in leaded glass and calligraphy.

After several years as an at-home mom and handling finances for Manning's company, Marge started volunteering and became president of the R.I. League of Women Voters. She also was named Citizen of the Year by the Northern R.I. Chamber of Commerce for securing voter approval to build a new library in Lincoln, Rhode Island.

Despite their career accomplishments, the couple retained their passion for braiding rugs, and their hobby gave back unforeseen benefits. After a stroke, braiding rugs helped Manning regain his manual dexterity. And now, having begun at OSV, their passion for braiding rugs has come full circle, and their rugs will be in use at the Village for generations to come.