

Irena Felomena Juškien was born on the 20th of September 1943, in Kemešys, Utena district, Lithuania. In 1970 she graduated from Vilnius University, acquiring economics degree. Until 2007, she worked for the Ministry of Economy. Irena learned embroidering, knitting and crocheting from her mother.

She began to participate in various needlework expositions during school time. Also she participated in exhibitions, organized by her employer.

Since 1987 she got interested in wristlets and started to knit. She replicated original wristlets, stored in museums and private collections. In 2005 she published a book "Wristlets", in 2008 the second edition was released, and in 2010 the latter release was repeated.

She participated in exhibitions, exposing her made wristlets, also conducted seminars, introducing wristlet knitting technology (more than 40 times).



Her works were presented abroad:

November 2002, Nordic art exhibition in Reykjavik, Iceland;

February 2005, international exhibitions "Traditional Knitting in UK and Lithuania", "Hands in Gloves" in Hawes Town Museum, Valley of the Yorkshire, Great Britain;

July 2006, Baltic States Exhibition, Festival Baltica in Riga;

February 2007, Baltic States Festival in Norwich, Great Britain.

March 2009, Exhibition - Fair "Piece of Lithuania V" in Turku, Finland.

May 2010, World Exhibition of Peoples in Reykjavik, Iceland.

January 2011, wristlet knitting workshops in Russian ethnographic museum and Kunstkamera, St. Petersburg.

Since 2006, Irene Felomena Juškien belongs to the Lithuanian Folk Artists' Association. In 2007 she was granted the status of artistic creator.

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Bd.Repubsublicij str.37/5,Baia Mare,Romania

www.fundatia-iuga.ro



Folk Artist

Irena Felomena Juškien

Lithuania, Vilnius, Didlaukio 70-96
irena.juskiene@gmail.com

In the late 19th – the early 20th century, in Lithuania both men and women, adults and children used to wear wristbands – a knitted cuff on a wrist from 4.5 to 19 cm in length. Their function was purely practical: they were worn for warmth as well as for beauty. In the mentioned period it was a highly fashionable item of clothing. Wristbands went out of fashion in the early 20th century, although later they continued to be knitted not on a mass scale.

Sunday wristbands would be knitted from manufactured high-quality thin wool thread. Sometimes it was a knitting in knit-stitches patterned by colour thread, knitted in a round technique. The most sumptuous wristbands were knitted cross wide the wrist in flat knitting technique, mostly in rep (on both sides of the knitting only knit-stitches). The beads (white, more seldom colour, clear or transparent) would be strung on a knitting thread, moved closer at a proper place and knitted in. Then the knitted wristband would be sewn together or could be buttoned up by a row of small buttons along the wrist.



The majority of the bead-adorned wristbands have been knitted by Irena Juškienė after the examples of the wristbands kept in the depositories of Lithuanian museums.



Everyday wristbands used to be worn in a cold season of the year, working on the fields or in the forest, to protect hands from cold (incidentally, they were also used in summer for the same purpose). They were mostly knitted from various remnants of yarn or unstitched thread of faded colours. Everyday wristbands used to be knitted with knitting needles from thicker homespun yarn or were crocheted.

The patterns of wristbands are similar throughout Lithuania. They were eight-pointed stars, the motifs of fir-trees, chainlets, blossoms, rhombuses, crosslets and small triangles.