

# Short Subjects

## Frozen Fabric

*A costumer recommends a surprising way to soften linen fabric.*

### [Greater Bay Area Costumers' Guild](#)

member Lynn Downward recently suggested a novel way to soften linen. Most people run the linen through multiple washing cycles to soften it, but Lynn says that she's had good luck sticking the wet linen in the freezer.

According to Lynn, the ice crystals break up the threads microscopically and it feels like the fabric has been washed multiple times. She points out that the process saves water, and seems to do no more damage to the linen than the multiple washings. Although she might not freeze linen she was using to make something to last forever, like a baptismal gown, she would definitely use this method on a nightgown for herself.

## Oldest Leather Footwear Found

*Copper Age shoe discovered in Armenian Cave similar to ones worn in the 20<sup>th</sup> c.*

According to a recent [press release](#) from the Archeology Department of the University College Cork, a perfectly preserved shoe dating back to 3500 BC, 1,000 years older than the Great Pyramid of

Giza in Egypt and 400 years older than Stonehenge in the UK, has been found in a cave in Armenia.

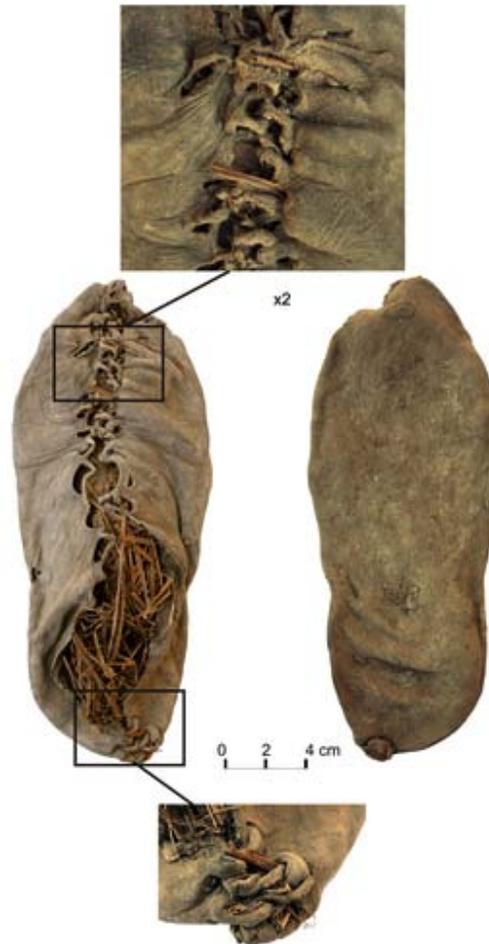


Photo courtesy of Dr. Ron Pinhasi, Archeology Department, University College Cork and PLoS ONE.

About a modern woman's U.S. Size 7, the shoe consists of a piece of cowhide that wrapped around the right foot. A leather lace running through eyelets pulled the hide together on top of the foot and another connected flaps at the wearer's heel. Grass stuffed inside the shoe probably maintained its shape during storage.

The 5,500 year old shoe, the oldest leather shoe in the world, was discovered by a team of international archaeologists. Their findings were also published on June 9th in the online scientific journal *PLoS ONE*.

The shoe is very similar to the 'pampooties' worn on the Aran Islands (in the West of Ireland) up to the 1950s. "In fact, enormous similarities exist between the manufacturing technique and style of this shoe and those found across Europe at later periods, suggesting that this type of shoe was worn for thousands of years across a large and environmentally diverse region," according to Dr Ron Pinhasi, the lead author of the research.

## Vionnet, The Art of the Cut

*Learn more about Madeleine Vionnet's techniques in a free lecture.*

The Textile Arts Council will host a free lecture at the De Young Museum in San Francisco, California on the techniques

pioneered by Madeleine Vionnet in the 1920.s and 1930's.

Vionnet represented the epitome of a master “cutter” or pattern designer and pioneered the use of the bias to achieve intricate designs beyond the slip-dress, becoming a geometrician or architect in fabric.



This lecture on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 at 10am will explore all the ways Vionnet envisioned her cut pieces prior to draping and will identify principles and techniques that she used throughout her career, eventually producing over 600,000 designs. It is a career which has never been equalled; she was the best.

## Fashion Afoot

*New exhibit features 20<sup>th</sup> century styles and purpose-built shoes.*

Fashion returns to the [Bata Shoe Museum](#) in Toronto, Ontario Canada with an area dedicated to style in their All About Shoes semi-permanent gallery. 'Fashion Afoot' is an exciting look at the development of fashion shoes in the 20th century. No longer hidden beneath voluminous skirts, the shoe emerged as an essential fashion accessory. Its ascendancy also lifted the

cloak of anonymity from the shoe designer. Over the course of the century, a handful of visionaries profoundly influenced fashion and many became adored celebrities in their own right. Visitors will be able to see how much shoes changed decade by decade in response to design, politics, and social change.

Along with their new fashion area, function is also explored in the revamped section of the 'All About Shoes' gallery called 'What's Their Line', offering visitors an in-depth look at footwear with a purpose over the past two centuries.



Chestnut crushing clog, France, 1800-1900. Photo by David Stevenson and Eva Tkaczuk

## Look Like Greta Garbo

*This web site includes instructions for recreating 1920's and 1930s hairstyles*

The web site [Beauty-and-the-Bath.com](#) provides a wealth of information on historical hairstyles and how to produce them, in a section entitled “[Vintage Hairstyles and Vintage Hair Style History](#)”. Tanya Meyer includes a pages on choosing a style, vintage hair history, vintage hairstyles of the 1920's through the 1960's, celebrity styles, geisha styles, techniques, and men's vintage hairstyles. Other sections cover ancient Egypt, Greece, and medieval and

renaissance hair styles. This site is a wonderful resource for vintage hairstyles.

One of the [pages](#) discusses Greta Garbo's hats, scarves and finger waves, and provides instructions on recreating the hairstyle. “Many ladies, even superstars chose to make their own finger waves at home, this way, their locks would be styled exactly to their liking.”



## Whatzis?

*A puzzling photo of a costuming related object. Can you guess what it is?*

The answer to the challenge in the last issue: a vintage Dritz Point Presser and Pounding Block #695. You use the Pounding Block to flatten facing/collar edges, points, pleats, and button holes. The point presser is for pressing narrow, hard to reach seams, facing, cuffs, corners, etc.



Do you have an unusual photo? Send it, together with a description of what it is, to [vc@siwcostumers.org](mailto:vc@siwcostumers.org).