Folk art is craft from the past - history in an object. Whenever we admire a beautifully woven basket, a perfectly carved decoy duck or an exquisitely hand sewn quilt we are appreciating articles of folk art. But what exactly does the term "folk art" mean? Simply, it was adopted in America early last century to describe works made by people who had never had any formal training in carving a decoy duck or sewing a quilt for instance. Previously terms such as "naive" or "primitive" had been used to describe such objects, but neither is as evocative as the term "folk" art - the simple, ordinary, modest art made by plain ordinary folk.

Folk art is craft from the past - history in an object. Each time you admire a beautifully woven basket, a perfectly trap carved duck or an exquisite hand-sewn quilt, we appreciate folk art items. But what exactly folk art expression "mean? Simply adopted in the last century the United States earlier to describe the works carried out by people who never had any formal training in carving a duck decoy or a sewing quilt, for example. Previously, terms such as "naive" or "primitive" have been used to describe these objects, but is not as suggestive as the term "popular" art - the simple, usually, the modest art made by normal everyday people.

Folk art is always unique and embodies the spirit of it's creator, comprising both decorative and utilitarian items. It is rare these days to find original items at inexpensive prices, and neither can they be found in great quantities, but from time to time beautiful folk art items can be found at car boot sales, markets and country auctions. Before industrialisation and mass-manufacturing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ordinary people hand made objects, such as decoy duck s both for decoration and for everyday use. It's these handmade items that are so desirable to collectors today.

Painted tinware, hand-turned wooden bowls, all kinds of baskets, colorful quilts and other textiles may still be found. Spongeware pottery - which is named from the pieces of cut sponge used to apply patterns to the pottery surface - is much harder to find in the UK than it is in the USA as a large amount of spongeware was exported to the US from the 1820s onwards.

Tin hand painted turned wooden bowls, all kinds of baskets, blankets and other textiles can still be found. Ceramics Spongeware – called pieces of glass sponge used to apply patterns to the surface of the ceramic – is much more difficult found in the United Kingdom than in the United States as a large number spongeware was exported to the United States since the 1820s.
Hunting with decoy ducks became popular in Victorian Britain, although Native Americans have a long history of using lures and carving is a tradition firmly rooted in American folk art. The finest American ducks were carved in the 1920s and 1930s, and beautiful examples are still being produced today. In top condition with original paint, a decoy duck could fetch more than $20,000 if made by one of the big names such as Elmer Crowell of Cape Cod.

Duck hunting decoys are became popular in Victorian Britain, though the Indians have a long history of using decoys and carving is a tradition deeply rooted in folk art America. Top American ducks were carved in the 1920s and 1930s, and good examples are still produced today. In excellent condition, with paint original, a trap could raise more than $20,000 if done by one of the big names like Elmer Crowell of Cape Cod.

Many basket weavers were farmers who made their own containers for agricultural use - look out for those bearing the initials of the farmer who made them, or stencilled details of the contents.

Many weavers were farmers who made their own containers for agricultural use – look out for those who bear the initials of the farmer who made them, or details of content template.

Rustic textiles in coarse linen and woollen cloth were woven on domestic handlooms which were often very narrow - so the pieces of cloth then had to be joined together to make larger items such as sheets and bed covers. You may find some with characteristically bold patterns in reds and blues.

textiles Rural, fabric and wool have been woven on looms servants who are often very close – if the pieces of fabric, then had to be there to make large items like sheets and blankets. You can find models with features bold red and blue.

Quilting, which is the quintessential American folk art technique was also carried out in Britain in the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly in Wales and Northern England where keeping out the cold was so extremely important. Women used the long winter hours to apply their needlework skills to create the beautiful quilts we treasure today. Their skills crossed the Atlantic to America with the first European settlers.

Patchwork, which is the quintessential American folk art technique also has done in Britain in the 16th and 17th centuries, especially in Wales and northern England, maintaining the cold was so important. Women used to winter hours their skills to the needle to create beautiful quilts that today we cherish. His skills have crossed the Atlantic to America with early European settlers.

Bringing these wonderful old handmade items of folk art into our homes is not just a great way of honoring the traditions of the past, but is also a way of paying tribute to the many unknown, but incredibly skilled folk who crafted them so beautifully.

Reconciliation of these items on hand wonderful old art into our homes is not only a great way to honor the traditions of the past, but also a way of paying tribute to the many unknown but incredibly talented people so beautifully designed.

About the Author
Caroline Jones lives in Devon, England and delights in visiting craft fairs and festivals to indulge her passion for collecting vintage and folk art items for her home and shop.