




Marjorie Ransom, and a foreword by Shelagh Weir, the book will showcase the jewelry of Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, north Yemen, the Hadramut region of Yemen and the Kurds of Syria.

This exhibition, *Silver Speaks*, will open October 27 and run until May 31 of next year. It and the companion book will supply both the impetus and credibility for her own book project, which will require her to return to the Middle East to interview older Arab women who wore the types of jewelry she collected. During a two year span, a videographer and female native speaker will accompany her, so that a visual and audio record can be preserved. Despite her training, background and contacts in that area of the world, she realizes this will be a difficult project, especially in countries like Saudi Arabia and Yemen, although a young Yemeni woman has already expressed interest in participating.

The Middle Eastern silver folk jewelry collection of the Ransoms obviously represents many aspects of their lives. Gathered during the course of their long careers in the Foreign Service, it not only gave them pleasure as wearable jewelry from the countries in which they served, as well as decorating their homes, but also enabled them to learn more deeply of these cultures. Simultaneously, it enhanced their relationships with the peoples of these lands, as the Middle Easterners easily interpreted the use of the jewelry as both acceptance and appreciation of their respective cultures. Now being recognized as a significant collection in the exhibition, *Silver Speaks*, by The Bead Museum, it will hopefully help understanding of Muslim/Arabic cultures. If Marjorie Ransom is able to carry out her goal of preserving an audio and visual record of this jewelry's use in the Middle East, she will have truly extended the collection's utility and value. Such collections enhance both the lives of those who collect the material and those who used it. 



Above: LIVING ROOM, with low table made from old Egyptian *mashrabyyi* screens; it contains their North African silver bracelets. By the fireplace are larger *mashrabyyi* screens. To the left is a Zanzibarian teak chest, with Isfahan and other Middle Eastern rugs on the floor. Top left: NORTH AFRICAN SILVER BRACELETS, which includes examples from primarily Egypt, Sudan, Libya and Tunisia.