

The logo features a stylized, intricate knot or braid design made of multiple parallel lines, representing weaving or textile work.

Cambridgeshire Guild of Weavers Spinners & Dyers

NEWSLETTER 69

August 2013



2013 Exhibition at Grantchester Village Hall

Photos by Chris Tucker

From the Editor

In another month the Autumn Term will start, and with it the next set of Guild Meetings. I hope you are all having a great summer.

I missed Art in Action this year but it didn't appear that there were many textile folk there – did anyone go?

Fibre East was wonderful this year. It was twice the size of last year's event, and the new venue was really good. We were lucky to have sunny weather, but the school site could easily have coped with last year's rain. Those folk from Cambridge who were prepared to drive to Ampthill all seemed to be enjoying it. Perhaps, if they hold it at Ampthill next year we should organise some care sharing?

There were lots of lovely British sheep and alpaca fibres for sale, and lots of wonderful yarns. Needless to say my stash has grown again, with another batch from My Fine Weaving Yarns and Oliver Twists. There were several vendors offering good deals on spinning wheels and other equipment.

Many of our neighbour Guilds were demonstrating and showing off some very talented work in the Guilds marquee.

I know that some of you are going to **Summer School** this year (I am very jealous!) It would be good if you could each write a paragraph and send it to me with a photo or two so that I could put a review together for the Christmas Newsletter (please...it won't take you long and we'd all like to see it!)

Have you thought about car sharing to Guild meetings?

As petrol gets more expensive and public transport more elusive it seems timely to remind folk about the benefits of car sharing. If you can link up with another member who lives near you, you can cut your travel costs and if you live "out in the sticks" you can save quite a lot, as I found out when I started car sharing to work. It's nice to have company too, especially as the nights draw in and we are driving home in the dark and the winter weather.

Thank you to all those who contributed articles this time around. It's so much more fun when you write things! As ever, keep them coming to:

chris.tucker@zen.co.uk or 24 School Close, Gamlingay SG19 3JY.

GUILD NEWS

Library As we have a budget to buy some new books for the library we would like to know what books would be of interest to the membership. You will find a Book Purchase Request sheet in the front of the Catalogue file – please add your request. If the book has already been requested please add your initials as a vote for it so we ensure that the popularity of a request is acknowledged.

Lesley Willcock

Janet Philips Workshop 27th & 28th October 2013

If you have been lucky enough to get a place, don't forget that you need to pay the balance at the **September** meeting.

Also at the September meeting we will have a **Bring & Buy Sale** so please bring along donations and money to buy.

National Exhibition May 2014 at Norwich Cathedral

Norfolk and Suffolk Guild have taken on the organisation. We have offered to help with the stewarding for one day over a weekend. More information will follow.

FOR SALE / WANTED

For Sale

Tapestry frame, 45 inches by 39 inches (height adjustable)
Metal with adjustable sides for tensioning, and a heddle bar for leases.
Contact Hannah Hurst hannah.hurst1@btinternet.com

Brown Fleece from Little Walden (recommended by Clarissa Cochran).
Contact Hazel Gray, stonebridgefarmhouse@btconnect.com

Volunteers Wanted

To demonstrate spinning and lace making at Sacrewell Rare Breeds Farm Country Fair, on 14th & 15th September. Pippa will be demonstrating on the Braid Society stand. Shire horse show on 15th.

Contact Megan Horner megan.horner@sacrewell.org.uk

Sacrewell is on the north side of the A47, just the Peterborough side of the point where the A47 crosses the A1. (You can camp there)

COME AND WEAVE DAYS

Bring any portable work and a packed lunch and spend the day working and chatting in good company. Tea, coffee, and often cake provided.

Comberton Village Hall, Saturdays, 10am - 4 pm. £4 a day. Dates:

12th October

16th November

2014 Dates:

19th January

16th March

11th May

12th October

16th November

All Guild members are welcome. *Info from Jacqui Fuller or Sue Wallis.*

March Come and Weave Day – Introduction to Fiberworks with Lesley Wilcock



Just to show that it's not all about chatting and eating cake, at our last meeting Lesley introduced us to the joys of Fiberworks; weave design software which allows you to try out ideas for threading and tie-ups to see if they will make a viable cloth, without spending hours with coloured pencils and graph paper.

It does a lot more too, as I found out.

I have owned Fibreworks for several years but not made much use of it, as computers are not really my thing. However I learned a huge amount and will probably use it a lot more, now that I understand it better and have more confidence with it.

Lesley gave a very clear demonstration, made sure we all kept up and made it fun. No mean feat!

Chris

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Certificate of Achievement Update

The revised CoA will be launched at the Association Summer School in August and will be valid from September 1st 2013. There have been a few significant changes, such as the change in fleece categories required by the Wool Board's new classifications. Most of the revisions are designed to make the syllabuses clearer and easier to follow. As before, there will be a separate syllabus document for each of the disciplines: Weaving, Spinning, Tapestry Weaving, Natural Dyeing and Synthetic Dyeing. In addition there will be a CoA Handbook giving a lot of useful general information. These documents will be circulated to all Guild Secretaries before the end of August and will be available for download from the Association Website. Guild members will also be able to obtain copies of the syllabuses and handbook by writing to the CoA Co-ordinator any time after August 15th.

The present CoA Co-ordinator, Amanda Hannaford, will be stepping down to be succeeded by Heather Seddon. Heather will be contactable by email: certificate@wsd.org.uk; and by post: 15 Asby Road, Asby, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 4RR.

Heather will be looking for volunteers to join the CoA Team in any of the following roles: Mentors, Assessors, Moderators, Advisors in specific disciplines, and also a Deputy Coordinator.

Heather Seddon, Deputy CoA Co-ordinator

Wanted: Weavers to work for Commission

Would you be able to supply me with any hand weavers who work to commission on scarves, wraps and so on. A client of ours has just had a quantity of top quality pure alpaca yarn back from the Border Mill (in different weights), which they would like to have made up.

Thanks, Jenny at Fowberry Alpacas

<http://www.fowberry-alpacas.com>

<mailto:jfm@fowberry-alpacas.com>

FEATURES

Ikat in Majorca, May 2013, by Anna Crutchley

Many years ago I had heard about the ikat weaving of Majorca, having seen some handsome, indigo-dyed ikat cloth in a friend's house. So, when I recently visited an old friend who lives in Palma, we decided to go on the hunt for ikat. It was all much easier than I had expected, thanks to the internet and the fact that the industry is thriving.

The Majorcin are very proud of this traditional fabric which they call *telas de llengues*, in their local Catalan dialect, or *telas de lenguas* in Castillian Spanish, which means 'cloth of tongues'. They also use the term *flàmules*, meaning little flames or pennants. Both terms describe the chevron shapes made by tie-dyeing bundles of warp in advance of weaving, carefully positioned to produce the pattern. The fabrics are usually a strong cotton plain weave (and sometimes linen) and you see it in many places in Majorca - in cafes, hotels and private houses, where it is used as upholstery and deckchair fabric. You can also buy ikat espadrilles.

This tradition shows an obvious eastern influence. The Balearic Islands were conquered by Arabs in 902, and inhabited by Moors until 1230 when James 1 of Aragon claimed them back for Spain. It has also been a constant stopping-off point on the east-west trade route over time. The Islamic culture has left its characteristic mark - elegant architecture designed to make the most of the island's climate, cunning irrigation networks on steep terraced hillsides throughout the northern side of the island, and ikat.

We visited the showrooms of two companies that produce ikat cloth - Bujosa Artesania Tèxtil which is 15 kilometres from Palma in Santa Maria del Camí, and Teixits Vicens at the very northern point of Majorca in Pollença - an hour's drive from Palma. The workshops are on-site and you are free to walk through the dyeworks and peer closely over the warping areas and dusty power looms.

Websites

<http://www.bujosatextil.com>

<http://www.teixitsvicens.com>



Ikat upholstered chair at Teixits Vicens showroom



Dyepot at Bujosa



Powerloom at Bujosa



Showroom at Bujosa



Warping at Bujosa

The Big Weave at Spitalfields

When the Huguenots had to flee Catholic France in the 16-18th centuries they sought sanctuary, amongst many other places, in Spitalfields, London. A two-week festival took place in April to mark the 250th anniversary of the death of Anna Maria Garthwaite 1690-1763, who lived in Spitalfields and worked closely with the Huguenot weavers as a textile designer. There were walks, talks, museum visits and other events tracing the history of this fascinating part of the city of London.

I went to 'The Big Weave' event at the Spitalfields undercover market. The first 'event' I came across was Stitches in Time, a participatory organization at which anyone could try their hand at weaving. Stitches in Time exists to help the people in the local community who are finding it difficult to integrate into society. They organize community projects in stitch and make wonderful wall hangings through patchwork, quilting, kantha stitch, applique and weaving. It enables participants to hold on to the textile traditions of their indigenous cultures. On this day hundreds of the general public found their way to their activity area to participate in their weaving and quilting activities and to see displays of some of their textiles collection. They completed a text installation "Huguenot weavers", wove circular mats and had a go on table looms.

<http://www.stitchesintime.org.uk/exhibitions-events/thebigweaveatspitalfields>

The Handweavers Studio had a stall as did the London Guild. One of their members was demonstrating knotted pile rug weaving. He had an impressive display of small rug looms that he had made, and was attracting considerable attention. London Guild were also demonstrating spinning. West Dean had a stall with Philip Sanderson and some of his diploma students demonstrating tapestry weaving.

I spent a while talking with them and learning a new knotting technique on the loom.

There were about 60 stall holders selling knitted, felted, and sewn items, some producing some interesting and beautifully made work, silk yarns and antique fabrics. Everyone was friendly, kind, willing to talk, explain, demonstrate, and share what knowledge they had, practical or otherwise. It was a wonderful event, and my effort to go was well rewarded. The entire area holds such cosmopolitan interest. It is a great place to be, just to enjoy life, people and things on any day of any week.

Paula Armstrong

WHAT'S ON IN AUTUMN 2013

- 22 July - 22 August Exhibition at Handweavers Studio**, Finsbury Park. Showcasing the work of the first students of the Handweavers Diploma, and celebrating Handweavers 40th anniversary. Info www.handweavers.co.uk or 020 7272 1891
- 6 - 10 August Norfolk & Suffolk Guild Exhibition** United Reformed Church, High Street, Southwold IP18 6DS. Open 10.00 - 5.00. Info spinner@btinternet.com or Judy Read 01598 528356
- 8 - 11 August Festival Of Quilts at NEC Birmingham B40 1NT.** Info www.twistedthread.com
- 20 August (Tuesday) to 15 September A Field of Cloths:** London Guild Exhibition at The Gallery in the Crypt, St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 4JJ. Open 11.00 - 6.00. Info www.londonguildofweavers.org
- 24-25 August Glastonbury Wool Festival** rare breeds, sheepdogs, shearing, lots of stalls and including a fashion show at the Rural Life Museum on Saturday 24th August at 2pm. Info from www.glastonburywoolfestival.co.uk
- 7 September World Textile Day at Mundford Village Hall**, Norfolk IP26 5DW. 10.00 - 17.00, free entrance. Lectures from Jim Gaffney and Maggie Relph at 11.00 and 14.00. Exhibition of stitched embroidered and woven textiles and artefacts from around the world, specialist traders, refreshments, disabled access.
- 28 September Colour & Creation at King Edward VI School, Stratford on Avon.** A Six Guilds event with speakers Isabella Whitworth and Joan Baxter, and displays using British Fleece. Entry by ticket only £22 including lunch and coffee breaks. Info from Angela Pawlyn at pawlyna@waitrose.com or Tel 01235 833361
- 10 - 13 October The Knitting & Stitching Show** at Alexandra Palace, London N22 7AY. Info www.twistedthread.com
- 14-20 October Wool Week** Info www.campaignforwool.org/

MEETING REPORTS

27 & 28 April – A Colourful Yarn Talk and Playing with Colour Workshop – Fiona Rutherford

The first image I had of Fiona as I met her at Cambridge Station last Saturday was of a small woman wearing a bright red coat and wearing a bright yellow hand woven bag on her shoulders. That bag was the start of Fiona's journey into weaving. Having graduated from Newcastle University in English and History she took a holiday in Crete and was intrigued by the women weaving in their homes. One day she saw a woman weaving a bag and she went back the following day and bought that yellow bag!

In the late 1970's she bought a four shaft Harris floor loom and began weaving rugs. Peter Collingwood and Navajo weaving were her major influences. In the beginning she was afraid of colour, so she says!

In the 1990's Fiona had a new studio, and celebrated this by changing to tapestry weaving. Her major influence was Marta Rogoyska, who in turn was influenced by Matisse. Fiona made a series of weavings of birds in bright colours, with whimsical humour, and a sense of fun. She then became more abstract in her work with clean lines and bright uninterrupted colour planes, clearly being influenced by the Bauhaus.

In 2000 Fiona wanted to do something different again. She was funded by the Arts Council for a three week stay in Japan where she worked with fashion designers. Her work changed as she was influenced by the kimono. She wove a kimono tapestry, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum contemporary textile collection.

Other projects included an installation of ten long strip-shaped tapestries hung horizontally, but which could and have also been hung vertically. Once again this was in Japan, and influenced by the obi sash worn around the waist to keep the kimono closed.

Fiona often asks herself why she weaves. For her, creativity begins at the loom. Yarn is a fibre and a story, an invisible link between her work and her personal life. Colour is all important and she is interested in the emotional impact that it has on the viewer. Her palette is of vibrant colours against neutral backgrounds much of the time, in simple but eye-catching designs. Her tapestries are large but she also weaves small pieces such as her white and blue panels for the Saatchi Gallery in 2011.

As Fiona continued to take us through her textile career, showing us images of her work, it became obvious that she is always open to something new, a challenge, an opportunity, which shakes her out of her comfort zone. She talks in these terms, and as a result her work is always alive, fresh and joyous. She is indeed, like her birds, a blithe spirit.

This continued into her workshop the following day, in which she showed us her sketchbook of a commission, in the Singest of Summer tapestry for a link room between house and garden of a horticulturist. She talked about design and then we worked on our own designs with paper collage and crayons, just playing and having fun. Fiona teaches by non-teaching, just facilitating and taking each individual from where they are at the time. She gives everyone her undivided attention in turn, and enables them to move their own project on.

It is difficult to know what the weekend was for other guild members, but I gained a great deal from both the talk and workshop, and felt a much richer person for the experience. I hope others did too.

Paula Armstrong

25 & 26 May - Hanging by a Thread, Triennial Exhibition at Grantchester Village Hall

What can I say? A resounding success! Thirty one members exhibited 104 pieces, and others gave items for the sales table. It was wonderful to see the range of talent within the Guild, and it was so much easier, more fun, and more rewarding to have an exhibition in a venue that we could control, as compared to the previous two.

Grantchester Village Hall is a lovely venue with lots of natural light and space, and the people who came were genuinely interested in the work. Members demonstrated carding and spinning, inkle, tapestry and table loom weaving, and lots of folk were eager to have a go.

An added bonus was the second room which Jacqui and Sue converted into a tea shop with lots of lovely donated cakes to sell for Guild funds. In total, we made a profit of approx £90.

The retrospective of Doreen's work and the display of the Lylie Smart trophy, and Sue Melvin's winning piece were an inspiration.

Lack of space prevents me from putting in pictures this time round but I believe they are going on our Web site.

Also, a message from Anna in her role as Exhibition Committee Chair:

I would like to acknowledge all those who had contributed so much time and effort to making the exhibition such a success.

The body of work from Doreen was absolutely inspirational.

The Exhibition Committee worked really hard throughout, and the ingenuity, commitment and determination of all was fantastic. Everyone did their bit to the full (this is where the otherwise tautological concept of 200% doesn't seem unreasonable - as that is what everyone did) and that made the whole endeavour such fun.

Also to be acknowledged and praised are the contributions and efforts made by Guild members on all levels - not least from producing such high quality work. It was quite obvious that our visitors were truly impressed by the show and the deep knowledge that members have of their craft. Also, I think we were all so impressed by each others' work, as well! The variety of it, and seeing what our fellow members are engaged in their individual projects was really interesting. The demonstrators were really good at engaging with visitors, and I think all of us there had such interesting conversations with them, and each other. Guild members who had not submitted exhibits themselves this time helped with hanging, invigilation, teas, demos and sales - and that was a truly generous gesture.

15 June – Guild Visit to May Berkouwer, Textile Conservation, Sudbury

The advantages of meeting May Berkouwer in her own studio was that we could inspect several ongoing projects at close range, see how the studio is set out in terms of equipment and space, and get a feel for how the business is run day to day.

May trained in textile conservation at the Opleiding Restauratoren - State School for Conservation in Amsterdam, and came to the UK in 1989 to work at the Textile Conservation Studio in London. She set up her business in Sudbury in 1996 where she works with one assistant. Her client base includes a variety of heritage organisations such as the National Trust, English Heritage, and the V&A, as well as private individuals and other organisations.



May explained the main causes of degradation in textiles that she has to deal with. Light is the most common, followed by damage caused by fluctuations in environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity, various degrees of soiling from surface dirt through to staining, and damage caused by insect or rodent activity.

May had four or five jobs in progress that we could look at. One of these was the colours (i.e. flags) of the Suffolk Regiment that hang at Ickworth Church. These fragile textiles had badly degraded not least due to the effects of gravity - the way they had been draped from their poles having caused diagonal faded streaks and creasing. They are complex objects to conserve as they are made up from a variety of textile types, often with embroidered embellishments, all of which need different treatments. Both were edged with silk and metal fringing and of course their poles hung with braided cords and tassels. That particular project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the colours will be returned to the church once completed. Behind us was a privately owned tapestry that May was backing with linen fabric to support the fragile areas which had been woven in silk thread, and re-stitching where the weaving slits were causing gravitational distortion.

May was hugely generous with her personal experiences and insights into textile conservation science, practice, and business. The decisions she has to make on a daily basis about the textiles in her care are daunting. As she

revealed the pieces on the table from their tissue paper covers, she also unpacked and revealed their history. We studied a well-worn embroidery that featured Catholic saints and May surmised how it had survived the Reformation, and we also heard about the procedures that determine how a regimental colour is donated by a monarch and why they are kept in churches. It was surprising to learn that very few tapestries remain that have never been repaired, and how this history of previous interventions impacts on the decisions she has to make about their conservation.

I think one of the interesting things that came over from May's talk also was that it is the *future* of these textiles that she must consider, and prepare them for. May's website is very informative and worth a visit:

<http://mbtexcon.co.uk/>

As usual, no Guild trip is complete without being followed by good grub and we repaired to the Swan in Clare for a superb lunch, followed by a visit to the best hardware store in the world next door, which we left with German cleaning products, an iron, a snazzy mop bucket (purple) and more. Baby Isabella, as ever, behaved perfectly throughout.

Anna Crutchley

June 29 - Ikats of the Orient – Jennifer Hughes

Jennifer started out as a geography teacher, but on her travels to Thailand she became captivated with textiles, and began her collection of textiles and making techniques from all around the orient.

Jennifer showed us beautiful examples of warp and weft ikats, and the traditional costumes and religious textiles made from these fabrics. She showed us how the techniques, fibres and dyes used, and the patterns differed from country to country in Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, India, The Philippines and Uzbekistan. She also described how things are changing in modern times and in some places the traditions are in danger of being lost (although modern synthetic dyes and fibres might be used to make items for the tourist trade).

For more information see www.threadsoflife.com

CGWSD Programme 2013

Remaining meetings for the year are:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| September 28 | Fibre Craft Afternoon at Arbury, plus Bring & Buy |
| October 26 | Thirty Years of Weaving – Janet Philips |
| October 27-28 | Weaving Workshop with Janet Philips <i>Booking essential</i> |
| November 30 | A Brush with Fine Art – Diane Ashley-Smith
Christmas Tea & Raffle |

If you are travelling a distance to see a specific speaker please check with our Programme Secretary, Beth Parks, for programme changes.

The Programme for 2014 will include:

- | | |
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| April 26 | Silk - Jane Deane |
| April 27 | Creative Spinning Workshop with Jane Deane |
| May 31 | Mexican Textiles – Chloe Sayer |
| June 28 | The Tapestries of Maximo Laura – Della Storr |

Please send any suggestions for speakers or workshops to Beth Parks, at beth@chezparks.demon.co.uk or 01353 649855

And finally... please send news, articles and adverts for the newsletter to chris.tucker@zen.co.uk or 24 School Close, Gamlingay, Sandy SG19 3JY.

And don't forget to send a copy to Tina for our website, tina.tribe@ntlworld.com

Next Newsletter is out in January – please let me have your contributions by the November Meeting. Thank you.

Meetings are held at the Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road, Cambridge, CB4 2LD unless otherwise stated.

Open from 1:30 pm. Talks start at 2pm.

Visitors welcome – entrance £5

(F/T students/JSA/Income support £2.50)

www.cambsguildwsd.org.uk

Contact: secretary@cambsguildwsd.org.uk 01223 247790