



Cambridgeshire Guild of Weavers Spinners & Dyers

NEWSLETTER 71

April 2014



March Guild Day at Comberton

Photo by Chris Tucker

From the Editor

Spring is here, and we are gearing up for holidays and summer events such as the National Exhibition and Fibre East. The summer yarn bombing season has already started (see page 8).

I may be slow on the uptake, but I have only recently realized that nobody notices the copy date on the back of the newsletter. So I thought for a change I'd put it at the front. Please let me have items for:

- August newsletter by June meeting
- January newsletter by November meeting
- April newsletter by March meeting.

Many thanks!

Also please consider volunteering to write up a meeting. I welcome write-ups of all meetings but I particularly need help with the April Workshop and the June meeting as I won't be able to come to those.

A huge thank-you to everyone who contributed articles this time around. As ever, keep them coming to:

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

Chris

FOR SALE / WANTED

Looms for Sale

Ashford 60cm Rigid Heddle Loom with stand plus all necessary reeds and kit, complete and assembled ready to use, excellent order - £130

Ashford 60cm Eight Shaft table loom with stand, heddle hook, shuttle, cross sticks etc complete and ready to use, never been used - £350

Harris Warping Board, again never used - £40

Also Ashford Books, Eight Shaft Loom £5 Four Shaft loom £8

Contact Dave Drummond at davece.drummond@uwclub.net or ring 01507 523711

Demonstrators Wanted for the Countryside Life and Crafts event on Sunday 20 July 2014, at the Farmland Museum, Denny Abbey.

Contact Ann Wise (Museum Manager) at info@farmlandmuseum.org.uk

Obituary, Alan Pheasey 1919 – 2014

I heard with great sadness that Alan had passed away, just before his 95th birthday. Alan had been a Guild member for many years. He was a very kind, gentle man; always interested in what others were making, ready to encourage and offer advice if asked. He was happy to demonstrate at Guild and share his great knowledge and experience. His work was exquisite, using very fine yarns and infinite patience.

We knew him as a weaver and braid maker, but I'm sure he once told me that he started with lace making. He wove yardage for his wife, for clothing, curtains and other domestic uses. He was also an expert with a marudai and takadai and used to "proof check" for Jennie Parry by making up the braid patterns before her books were published. He was an engineer by profession and made a lot of his own equipment.

I got to know Alan well when he decided it was time to stop driving in Cambridge, as I picked him up at Papworth and brought him the last stage of the way to Guild meetings, until he gave up driving altogether and Pippa began collecting him from home. We spent many a journey chatting about anything and everything, and putting the world to rights. I shall miss his gentle wit and insight.

Chris Tucker

Spindle Spinning with Abby Franquemont

There is a possibility that the Peruvian textile study group can organise a spindle spinning workshop with Abby Franquemont on the first weekend of August. She is an expert on Peruvian textiles, having been brought up in the sacred valley. We may have some spaces if we can organise this. If you are interested please let me know. owens.frankie1@gmail.com

Frankie Owens

Fibre East – 26-27 July at Ampthill

I have just heard from Jean at Rampton that Alison Daykin will be running weaving workshops. There will also be workshops with Sara Lamb and Abby Franquemont. Definitely not to be missed!

Films of Scotland: "Weave me a rainbow" DVD to borrow

On a wet and windy visit to The Highland Folk Museum at Newtonmore, I bought this DVD, which contains five archive films dating from 1955 to 1971. They are a nostalgic and sometimes revealing cameo of a few of Scotland's historic/iconic textile industries. We found it fascinating. The films are:

- Royal Occasion (June 22nd 1955, a visit to carpet manufacturers James Templeton & Co of Glasgow)
- From Glasgow Green to Benigo (1961, promotional film of manufacturing processes at the same company)
- Weave me a Rainbow (1962, "award-winning" feature on Scottish Woollen industry)
- Fine Floors (1962, made for Kirkcaldy linoleum firm Michael Nairn, showing manufacture and export).
- Island of the Big Cloth (1971, the story of Harris Tweed and the life of the islanders involved)

If you would like to borrow the DVD, do email me on kathy@mcvittie.me.uk

Kathy McVittie

Bags for the National Exhibition

Don't forget that we need your bag, plus £3 entry fee, plus your entry form to be handed in by the **April** meeting please so that they can be posted off. (If you aren't coming in April you can post to Sue Wallis)

Bags need to be no larger than 8" in any dimension (handles excluded). They need a swing label with; Name of Guild, makers name, title (if applicable). Techniques used. Inspiration (if applicable).

Sue Wallis

Come and Weave Dates

The remaining dates for 2014 are:

10th May

13th September

11th October

15th November

10.00am to 4.00pm at Comberton Village Hall – bring a packed lunch.

More information? *Contact Jacqui Fuller or Sue Wallis*

WEAVING ON A 4 SHAFT TABLE LOOM
Cottenham Summer School 28 July - 1 August 2014
Tutor: ANNA CRUTCHLEY

This course is suitable for beginners, as well as those with previous weaving experience.

Beginners: On this course you will learn to weave on a four-shaft table loom. You will sample a variety of weave structures, experimenting with different colour combinations, yarn qualities and surface textures, for a range of functions such as rugs, scarves, table runners, trimmings and so on. Looms will be threaded up ready for beginners, and you will also see how to set up a loom from scratch. There will be an opportunity to make a finished object. By the end of the course you will have a comprehensive set of samples and notes, and masses of information to take away and help you continue with your new found craft.

Weavers with previous experience: You are encouraged to discuss your ideas with the tutor in advance so that the course can be tailored to meet your requirements. This could take the form of sampling a new weave structure, developing a new design idea, etc. The course will provide a lively and positive tutorial environment in which new ideas can be explored and developed.

If you have your own loom, please contact Anna on 01223 327685 (daytime), and we can plan a warp in advance of the course.

Cottenham Village College, High Street, Cottenham, Cambridge, CB24 8UA

Email : community@cvcweb.net

Web : www.cvcweb.net (click on Adult Learning)

Tel : 01954 288751

Braid Society "Come & Try"

Making Braids on the Marudai, disc or plate
or bring your own work to show and share

Sacrewell Farm & Country Centre
Thornhaugh, nr Peterborough, Cambs PE8 6HJ
(close to the junction of A47 & A1 near Wansford)

Tuesday/Wednesday 6/7 May 2014 from 10.00 to 3.45pm
You are welcome to join us for either or both days, charge £5 per day.

PLEASE contact Sylvia Winn beforehand as it is essential to book your place:
[01455 633090](tel:01455633090) or [07734429465](tel:07734429465) or sjwinn2911@gmail.com

Food available at the Visitor Centre or bring a packed lunch

Always relaxing, informal & fun - do join us!

Learn to Spin Workshop with Carol and Pete Leonard

Saturday 3 May 2014, from 11am to 4pm

Alston Hall College, Longridge, near Preston, Lancs

<http://www.alstonhall.com/courses/category.php?id=5492>

All enquiries and bookings should be made through the college (<http://www.alstonhall.com>), though we (Spindlers2@aol.com) are happy to answer any queries on the course itself.

Alston Hall is a fine building, in a lovely location. The staff are friendly and helpful, the food is excellent and there's a bar!

Beginners and improvers are welcome. We can easily cope with people who want to refresh their skills, learn a new trick or two or just spend the day spinning. New spinners will spin and ply their own yarn.

No equipment is required, though you can bring your own wheel, spindles and the project you are working on. We'll have wheels and spindles to try and fibres to spin, for which there will be a small charge.

Above all, we aim for everyone to have fun. We get a great deal of pleasure from spinning and would like others to do the same. There's a little bit more information about us on our web site at <http://spindlers2.com/index.htm>

ARTICLES

Jacqui and Sue's Big Viking Adventure

Some months ago, a teacher from St Anne's Primary School in Godmanchester contacted the Guild to see if we could demonstrate weaving and spinning to some of the children as part of their 'Viking' topic.

In a moment of madness I agreed to go – I couldn't really say no - and by devious means persuaded Jacqui to come and hold my hand!

We got ourselves all prepared with a simple warp on a table loom and samples of fleece and spun wool. Wednesday 12th March was 'D-Day' and we arrived laden with all our kit. Somewhere along the line I had it in my head that we were demonstrating to 8-9 year olds. In reality it was Year 1 who are 5-6. (Note to self - double check demographics of target population if you do this again!) We had brought far too much 'stuff' for this age group but no matter, better that than too little.

We were greeted by 30 bright-eyed and enthusiastic little people. Jacqui showed them a raw fleece and they thought it hilarious that it was dirty from mud AND poo! No, the sheep didn't die having its haircut. She showed them clean, carded wool and used a drop spindle.



Breaking into groups, the children were able to make bracelets out of lengths of fleece. This was a great success as they proudly showed their efforts. All the children had a go on the loom. There was a full range of abilities and some were absolute naturals at it. One bright little girl worked out the 1+3, 2+4 sequence as she watched me helping her classmates. A future Guild member perhaps?



All the children were delightful and asked searching questions. They were so enthusiastic it was a joy. We felt like royalty when we were presented with flowers at the end. I have sent back the weaving for them to show at their end of term assembly.

We entered into this with some trepidation, but actually had a wonderful time.

Sue Wallis

Yarn bombing from another Angle

Many readers will know Anglesey Abbey, with its beautiful winter gardens, working flour mill and poorly lit house full of ceiling-height tapestries and other delights. It's typical National Trust in many ways, which these days means you can also guarantee a decent tea shop and over-priced gifts. Don't get me wrong, I like National Trust properties as much as the rest of the middle classes, but there is so often something sterile, past and joyless about them. Despite their opulent interiors and manicured gardens, they remain the essence of English restraint, throwbacks to the days when church and gentry swallowed up almost all the best examples of English craftsmanship. So I was delighted to see Anglesey Abbey embrace a sneaky bit of yarn bombing in support of the Lode-Quy cycle path, the forthcoming visit of the Tour De

France to Cambridge and the National Trust's own support for sustainable cycling.



We waited for a few minutes by one of the main examples, a King of the Mountains-clad statue, with red polka dots on a white ground, crocheted to fit, to watch the reaction as visitors passed by. Every visitor of every age noticed and smiled in a way that they simply hadn't for any of the other statues in the gardens. To quote the graffiti artist Banksy: "If you want someone to be ignored then build a life-size bronze statue of them and stick it in the middle of town. It doesn't matter how great you were, it'll always take an unfunny drunk with climbing skills to make people notice you."

Yarn bombing is fashionable, relevant and accessible in ways that the giant tapestries in the main house simply aren't. It's a combination of light-heartedness, bright colours, naughtiness and surprise that makes it work. It feels like a young and vibrant approach to traditional textile skills, and a million miles away from the dogged perseverance that must have gone into the wall hangings.

If it did nothing else for craft, the yarn bombing at Anglesey Abbey drew visitors' attention to the textiles on display elsewhere in the main house. One small picture, embroidered in silver thread, intrigued me –and I perhaps wouldn't have noticed it had I not

been sensitised by the cycle crochet outside (I tend to focus more on ceramics). It shows a man in bishop's regalia and with an axe releasing three children from a barrel. The room guide didn't have much more information on the picture, but it seems to relate to the legend of St Nicholas resurrecting three boys who had been murdered, chopped up and pickled in a barrel by an evil shopkeeper. If the National Trust was really on the ball, it wouldn't be relying on yarn bombers to bring the narrative power of textiles to life.

For more info see www.angleseyinstitches.wordpress.com

Mark Boyd

Handweavers Studio 40th Anniversary Exhibition: The Handweavers Diploma

In July 2013 the Handweavers Studio in London celebrated its 40th anniversary. It seemed appropriate, then, that an exhibition of the work produced by Handweaver Diploma students for their final project should coincide with this event. The exhibition was a celebration of the end of two years hard work by the eleven Diploma students, and proved to us all just how much we had learned and developed our design and weaving ability.

During the second year of the course, (an article about the first year appeared in a previous Cambridge Guild newsletter) we were set three further projects, including the final project. Over the summer of 2012 the requirement was to create a piece of woven art inspired by a piece of music or prose. Following that we were set a technical challenge; and then the final project. For this we took inspiration from a source of our choice and worked on it from January 2013 to the final weekend at the end of July.

The final project was to produce a woven length of cloth with a clear end purpose. Students found inspiration from garden birds, the Norfolk landscape, architecture, the 1920s and Africa. The work, including mood boards to show development of the idea, was displayed in Handweavers Studio for three weeks at the beginning of August. We hope they provided inspiration for the students on the second intake of the Handweavers Diploma whose Summer School overlapped with the exhibition. All the final project work was then displayed in a special stand for the Handweavers Diploma students at the Knitting and Stitching Show at Alexandra Palace in October.

Thanks to inspiring tutelage from Melanie Venes and encouragement from Wendy Morris, the course Director, and wonderful support from all the staff at

The Handweavers Studio there are now eleven fledgling weavers looking for opportunities to share their new skills. The whole experience was fantastic. We learned a wide variety of weaving structures and approaches, and had contact with inspiring tutors including Jennifer Moore on double cloth and Jette Vandermeiden on tied weaves. I hope many more weavers are able to take the same opportunity to develop their skills.

Suzanne Townshend

Editor's Note: This article came in just too late for the last Newsletter, but do look at the photos of this exhibition at the Knitting & Stitching Show in Newsletter 70, pages 10 and 11. It was spectacular! And there are more photos of Suzanne's work in this Newsletter, with the write up of her February talk on page 14.

And here are a few more pictures from the exhibition:



ASSOCIATION NEWS

National Exhibition "Yarns in the Cathedral" 15 May – 1 June. Monday–Saturday 9.30am–4.30pm; Sunday 12.00noon–3.00pm.

Selection for the exhibition has now been completed with 123 items of work chosen. These will be hung in the Hostry at Norwich Cathedral.

The bags, which we hope you are all busy making, will be exhibited in the Crypt at Norwich School which is just across from the Cathedral.

Bags must be sent between 28 April and 3 May. **Please bring or send your bag to Sue Wallis by the April meeting.**

Also - dyeing workshop with Aviva Leigh on 23 May, lecture by Kaffe Fassett on 24 May, and the Family Drop-In-&-Try Day on 28 May. More info at www.wsd.org.uk

And a message from Judy Read:

It is approximately 8 weeks to the opening of the Norwich Exhibition and we still need volunteers for demonstrating/stewarding.

PLEASE volunteer, it should be fun - you will get to see the exhibition AND you can claim travel expenses.

Times are 9.30 am to 1 pm and 1 pm to 4.30 pm, you can do a half day or a full day. A loom and spinning wheel are available if you don't wish to bring your own. I wait with the rota calendar and pencil at the ready! Contact me at spinner@btinternet.com or telephone 01508 528356

AGM/Conference - Saturday 26 April, from 11 am - 4 pm

The Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, Stuart Groom, would like digital photographs for the conference showing the wide range of events that guilds attend in order to inform the public and other groups of the activities of the Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Guilds. Please email him at chair@wsd.org.uk

Calendar 2015 – Deadline for submissions 20 April

Send digital photos (at least 200 dpi) to calendar@wsd.org.uk and good quality prints or slides to Hilary Turner at 37 Blundellsands Road East, Liverpool L23 8UJ. Landscape format please.

WHAT'S ON IN 2014

26-27 April Wonderwool Wales, at Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells.

Info from www.wonderwoolwales.co.uk

6-7 May Braid Society "Come and Try" days at Sacrewell Farm near Peterborough, (see Guild News)

11 May Textile Fair at The Warner Textile Archive, Braintree, info from

www.warnertextilearchive.co.uk/textile-fair-2013/

15 May – 1 June AGWSD Exhibition, Yarns in the Cathedral at The Hostry, Norwich Cathedral and The Crypt, Norwich School.

27-28 June Woolfest, Cockermouth, Cumbria.

17-20 July Art in Action, Waterperry House, Oxfordshire OX33 1LG. See

www.artinaction.org.uk

26-27 July Fibre East, Redbourne Community College, Ampthill, Beds. Info

from www.fibre-east.co.uk

28 July – 1 August Cottenham Summer School. Anna will be running her weaving course. (see Guild News)

2-3 August – possible PTSG workshop with Abby Franquemont on

Peruvian spindle spinning. Further details to follow

24-25 August Glastonbury Wool Festival

20 September World Textile Day at Mundford Village Hall, Norfolk. The theme this year is *Spirit of the Cloth*.

Info from www.worldtextileday.co.uk

4 October Workshop with Canadian weaver Carol James at Comberton Village Hall. Carol is here for the Braid Society Conference and will give a workshop on Finger Weaving or Sprang. Further details to follow.

13 -25 October Braid Society Biennial Conference at Reading Central Library, including AGM on 17 October.

Info from www.braidsociety.com

MEETING REPORTS

January 25 AGM

Another year has passed and we are in the black with a growing membership. Our updated constitution was approved and the Committee all re-elected, although we need another volunteer to take on our web site.

The meeting agreed that a workshop surplus of more than £20 per person should be refunded, and that the Guild should run a Weaving Course next autumn. Tina thanked all those who were involved on our Grantchester exhibition and in organising workshops.

The show and tell included bags for the unjuried part of the AGWSD exhibition, and samples from the Janet Phillips workshop last October.

February 22 – The Handweavers Diploma - Suzanne Townshend

Suzanne began weaving in the early 1990s, and wove her own stair carpet in an evening class (it took 3 years, but only because she had to finish when the centre closed). She decided to do the Diploma course to increase her confidence and competence in designing her own cloth.

The course begins with a 10 day intensive weaving school, followed by module-based study in Knowledge and Understanding, Excellence of Design and Technical Proficiency. This first ever intake consisted of 12 students from all walks of life and varying levels of weaving knowledge.

The course was primarily taught by Melanie Venes but there were many other tutors, including Jennifer Moore, Ann Richards, Eleanor Pritchard, Stacey Harvey-Brown and others. At the end of the first year students submitted a portfolio for marking (one third of final mark). At the end of the second year they submitted a further portfolio and length of cloth.



Suzanne took us through each of her six projects in turn, describing the project parameters and her design process and showing us her beautiful samples, which included double cloth, collapse weave, upholstery fabric and wedding fabrics for waistcoats, cravats and bridesmaids' sashes.



It was very inspiring to see the variety and complexity of the work and I hope it will encourage others to have a go.

March 29 Guild Day at Comberton Village Hall

A very successful day with some unexpected bonuses. Canadian weaver Carol James was a surprise visitor, and gave us a short but fascinating talk on Sprang. Jo Wexler brought her new toy – a great wheel – for us to play on, and it is a fantastic thing.

Diane Ashley-Smith gave a workshop on cloth analysis, Pippa Le Roux taught us to finger weave, and Helen Brotherton brought lots of her very fine weaving yarns for us to purchase.

The Bring and Buy brought in £86 and Helen will also donated £50 from her takings, so we are building up a nice fund towards the cost of our next exhibition.



Finger Weaving with Pippa



Beth and Jo with the Great Wheel

CGWSD Programme 2014

- April 26 Cocoons to Cloth – Jane Deane
- April 27 Creative Spinning Workshop with Jane Deane, at Comberton Village Hall, *booking essential*
- May 31 The Textile Arts of Mexico - Chloe Sayer
- June 14 OUTING to The Warner Textile Archive, Braintree. *Booking essential* - £20 per person
- June 28 The Story of Maximo Laura and Woven Colour – Pete & Della Storr
- September 27 Craft Afternoon at Arbury: Weaving on Small Looms
- October 4 Workshop with Carol James at Comberton Village Hall. More info to follow, topic will be Finger Weaving or Sprang.
- October 25 From Concept to Clothing – A Weaver’s Journey – Lesley Willcock
- October 26 Sewing Handwovens Without Tears Workshop with Lesley Willcock, at Comberton Village Hall, *Booking essential*
- November 29 Ever Increasing Circles – Stacey Harvey-Brown
Christmas Tea

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

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 August – please let me have your contributions by the June 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 £7

(F/T students/JSA/Income support £3.50)

www.cambsguildwsd.org.uk

Contact: secretary@cambsguildwsd.org.uk 01223 247790