

# Newsletter No. 84

## Mid-Herts Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers May – July 2017

[www.spinweavechat.wordpress.com](http://www.spinweavechat.wordpress.com)

### From the Editor

As Spinners, Weavers & Dyers we spend much time indoors following our favourite pursuits but now that we are at the height of our British Summer, we all need to make the most of the great outdoors. Now is a perfect time to take our newly shorn fleeces out into the garden to be sorted, scoured and washed. It's also a wonderful time to explore the countryside for suitable plant material for dyeing, or even to grow our own in the garden. At last the sun is strong enough for us confidently to set up solar dyeing jars with the expectation of a good result. Our Guild Members have had a busy start to the Summer attending both the Living Crafts and the Herts County Shows. Already the wheels are in motion to set the theme for next

year's shows. It's going to be **'GREEN'** so hold yourselves in readiness!

Rita is taking a little time out from editing the Newsletter as she has the unenviable task prior to her house move, of sorting through her years of accumulated possessions. We all wish you well Rita, good luck with your move!

### Rosemary

*And the theme for this year has been..... 'SHETLAND'!*

When deciding upon a theme we consider whether it will:

- inspire members to make items for display
- lend itself to decorative bunting
- spark an idea for a hands-on activity
- link well to spinning and weaving demonstrations
- suggest information and pictures for the display board

Shetland ticked all the boxes.

- **Display items** included Fair Isle knitted hats, haps, a kepi, woven and knitted scarves, a baby jacket and wedding ring shawl which was midway through construction. There were also hand-spun, natural dyed skeins and "Feleecity" the sheep wearing a re-cycled Fair Isle waistcoat.
- When we approached Louise and suggested making **bunting** using knitted jumper shapes, we had no idea what wonders would develop. Lots of members joined in the project, spinning and knitting squares which were felted in the washing machine before being cut into garment shapes. There were jumpers, socks, hats and even a few trousers and skirts. They looked superb attached to a washing line with small pegs.
- What better item to make using the **mini-peg looms** than sheep made from Shetland fleece in a variety of natural colours? It required a lot of preparation sourcing wobbly eyes, glue dots and sticky Velcro dots; painting and cutting out cardboard heads and then assembling them all. We don't

charge for our hands-on activities but with all the work involved, some payback seemed appropriate. Knowing Margaret was busily fundraising for the "Air Ambulance", we put out a little notice welcoming voluntary donations. The total raised at both shows amounted to £296 and more than 150 sheep were made.

- **Demonstrations** included spinning Shetland fleece, peg loom weaving using a mix of fleece and fabric strips and the 4-shaft loom set up for woollen twill.
- The **display boards** provided information about the islands, the special breed characteristics of Shetland sheep, Fair Isle knitting and Wedding Ring Shawls. Katie's semi-completed ring shawl proved to be at the perfect size for pinning to the display board and attracted much admiration and attention.



With all of the above items, plus Samantha's polystyrene heads, Rosemary's washboard and tin bath, large amounts of washed fleece in a variety of colours and Dolores, our display dummy, we were ready for the shows.

At Living Crafts, we can set up on the day before opening. Six of us were there for four hours, covering boards and tables and trying to work out the best layout for the assigned space. For the Herts County Show, we rise early and appear on site at 7.00 a.m. We know what table layout works and know how the display will look, having assembled it at Hatfield. We work speedily as the show opens to the public at 8.30 and the judges will be round shortly after. Last year we were very pleased with being "Commended" for our display. This year we were delighted to be awarded "Third Prize". We were also astonished that the sun shone and the temperature was perfect.

**Tricia**

*And here's how the special display items were made.....*

## **Bunting with a Difference**

We decided that we would express the many aspects of the wool industry of the Shetland islands in our bunting.

Firstly, Members knitted 8-inch squares with yarn made using our skills of spinning and/or sometimes dyeing. Simple Fair Isle patterns were usually incorporated.

These squares were then collected together and machine washed at 40°C with just a few other items, such as a pair of jeans or some towels, for the squares to rub against during the cycle. This brought about felting of the squares, reducing the size by about one third. The resulting fabric was tough and durable.

By using tracing paper pattern shapes as a guide, the squares were finally cut with scissors into clothing shapes, such as jumpers and socks.



These small 'Fair Isle' items were then pegged on a 'washing line' and used to decorate our display. They were colourful and attractive. The natural colours of the Shetland Sheep were used for those pieces decorating a table which displayed the garments knitted with un-dyed naturally shaded yarns.



## The Shetland Hap

The Shetland Women of history were very hardy folk, often maintaining their croft houses alone for their families, while their men were away fishing. Knitting was a vital cottage industry; it put food on the table in most households. The women were seldom without their 'makkin' (knitting). They continued even while they carried the cut peat back to the croft on their backs, in special baskets called 'kishie'.



They commonly wore a square of knitting folded in half to the shape of a shawl to keep out the bitter wind of the islands. These were made to traditional patterns and stretched to the limit on a hap board to fix the shape.

I spun yarn and knitted a hap using a Jamieson and Smith traditional pattern with a simple garter stitch square at the centre, surrounded by a wavy design and lacy edge. I used four natural shades. These were white, moorit, black and fawn. I realised as I followed the pattern that the edges were going to be made in pieces to be stitched together. I was a little disappointed by this as I would have liked to be completely traditional using a pattern that was made in one piece. However, I think the hap and those made by Sheila D. demonstrate the look of these garments, which were practical and warm. The versatile haps were also used as baby shawls and even for special occasions. There are many very attractive modern adaptations of haps.

## Sheep Heid

This was a Fair Isle hat pattern, shown on the right of the photograph. Every year for Shetland Wool Week a pattern is issued - each unique to the year in particular. It's fun to walk around on the islands wearing the hat and recognising other wool enthusiasts. This hat was from a previous year's pattern but is particularly special because it incorporates nine natural shades, white, gulmogot, katmollet, mooskit, shaela, sholmit, moorit, yuglet and black. This hat was not made using hand spun wool. It was designed by Kate Davies.



**Louise**



**Sheila B's** Scarves (L-R)

Rigid Heddle Loom. Plain Weave.  
Italian Silk Warp with Shetland Weft

Rigid Heddle Loom. Plain Weave with  
floats created by using pick up stick.  
Worsted Wool Warp. Shetland Weft



**Louise's** 'Feleecity'

Re-cycled felted Fair Isle waistcoat

## Wedding Ring Shawl

I was halfway through my wedding dress before it occurred to me that I had never made anything from a pattern before, and my mother informs me that I stood up and ran straight from crawling with none of that walking business in between. So, deciding to spin and knit a wedding ring shawl in a year, at least came once I had many years of knitting and several years of spinning, already under my belt. Knitting one has been on my list of "things to do one day" ever since I'd heard of them and the Shetland theme gave me the impetus to get going. I started the spinning sometime around last year's shows but I am very easily distracted and many things tempted me away from my wheel. I had only spun and plied 13.7g by Christmas Day, when finally, I cast on. Patterns for wedding ring shawls were scarce and I flirted with the idea of designing one. Fortunately, a shred of sense made itself heard and I went for The Wedding Ring Shawl by Heirloom Knitting, which I found on Ravelry and it was available for purchase through Etsy. Using a tried and tested pattern seemed like the best chance I had for getting the finished article through a ring as promised. The pattern came with the recommendation to take your time with the project. The designer, Sharon Miller, took a year...never mind. The construction is not that of a traditional Shetland lace shawl, where the knitter starts with the border on straight needles, then fills in the centre (seaming the border on as you go, by knitting the end stitches of the centre together with those of the border). Instead it called for the rather more user-friendly method of first knitting the centre back and forth, before picking up the edges and the provisional cast on to knit the border in rounds, on circular needles. I decided that the modern construction was probably just as well in the end, as if I hadn't finished the whole shawl in time (inconceivable!) this would at least be able to be presented attractively as a work in progress.

I've heard proper wedding ring shawl spinners manage just 5 or 6 wool fibres per single. I think I managed about 20 as something I could comfortably spin in any great amount. I may have to borrow my husband's wedding ring... I have read historical accounts of a shawl spun of just 2 fibres but must admit some scepticism. Perhaps they were mistaking the plies for wool fibres? Spinning time varied hugely but at one point I was spinning up to 1.32 grams in an hour.

In the pattern's suggested yarns, it called for anything from Cashmere that yielded 1125m per 25g to a Merino at 600m per 25g. About 2900-3625m total is necessary. My first 13.7 skein was 215.8m resulting in 396m per 25g, although all subsequent skeins came up longer and finer, between 511 and 590m per 25g. So I wonder if I made a mistake in my notes, as there is no unduly obvious line where the first skein ran out.

When I got my first full set of knitting needles (2mm-10mm) I remember marvelling at the 2mm (UK14) needles and wondering “who would have the patience for that?”. About a decade or so later, that would be me. Each row in the centre would take me an average of 10 minutes for the 247 (266 on some rows) stitches. I had chosen the alternative centre purely for aesthetic reasons, which was, as it turns out, 5,000 more stitches than the original at 96,486. Never mind. A further 249,200 stitches for the border and edging results in a total of 345,686 stitches, so the pattern tells me. I did accidentally miss out a row of the centre, however.

When the shows were drawing perilously close, I decided that a finished sampler which the punters could handle might make up for the fact that I must have had over 200,000 stitches left undone on the shawl itself. Some of the plied yarn had come up too thick for my liking and I used that for the edging of the sampler. It seemed glaringly obvious to me but probably not to many others. I put the shawl, which by this time was a complete centre and 40 odd rows of border, onto blocking wires. This was easier said than done as the blocking wires weren't much less than 2mm themselves and required semi-sharpening to allow the stitches to pass onto them. Obviously, this was done at 11 o'clock at night before Living Crafts opened the next day. The blocking wires allowed the shawl to be displayed fully stretched out and it really was heartening to see the lace shown off to its full glory. The whole thing ended up filling one of George's boards almost perfectly and I maintain that this was entirely deliberate and nothing to do with my frittering away the first 7 months of the allotted time, in which to complete this project. Since the shows, I am afraid to say I have done very little on the shawl but I do have a couple of other deadlines, which have already screamed by, that must have my attention for a while but I am very fond of the shawl and will most definitely be finishing it, one day. It would be ridiculous of me to be planning another wouldn't it? Never mind.

## Katie





Clockwise L-R:

**Shetland baby jacket** Hand-spun 2 ply laceweight using Superfine Shetland tops from Jamieson and Smith. Pattern is 'Field of Flowers' Baby Jacket from Heirloom Knitting by Sharon Miller.

**Fair Isle Fisherman's Kep** Hand-spun using various natural coloured fleece. Knitted using a basic pattern purchased from the museum on Fair Isle. Choice of colours and patterns and the placement of each, is up to the knitter so infinite variety possible.

**Half Hap Shawl** This was made from a Shetland katmoget fleece in which I spun the two colours separately. The pattern I used was 'Hansel' (Half Version) by Gudrun Johnston, and knitted until I ran out of yarn.

**Shetland scarf** Hand-spun 2 ply laceweight using Superfine Shetland tops from Jamieson and Smith. Knitted using lace patterns from Heirloom Knitting by Sharon Miller.

**Sheila D**



And the icing on the cake, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize at the Hertfordshire County Show.

Kate is a director of Cordwainers Garden in Hackney and is involved with small community plots around London, including one just behind the London College of Fashion. A couple of years ago, she was involved in a project to grow and make a garment entirely within London. Its aim was to educate people about the process of growing, harvesting, processing and spinning flax, and the true cost of the production of clothing.

Kate began by talking about the history of flax. It is one of the oldest textile crops and has been cultivated for around 10,000 years. We saw a photograph of one of the oldest surviving garments, a fine linen shirt from 3482-3102 BC and heard how the Egyptians used linen for bandages especially in mummification. We learned how the Romans' custom of wearing linen tunics under woollen outer garments, led to these undergarments being called lingerie. Also, that linen has anti-microbial qualities and also helps to repel clothes moth.

### **The London Challenge**

Ideally, the flax would have been grown on one suitable sized plot of land, instead it was grown in lots of little community garden areas dotted around London. Over the 90 days from sowing to harvest, some crops thrived, whilst others were overcome by weeds, dogs and/or litter. Tended by young and old, when the flax was ready to harvest, it was pulled up by the roots, tied in bundles and left to dry. I loved the slide showing one school's crop drying under the roof of the bicycle sheds. Some flax was retted immersed in water, a lot was laid out on the ground and dew retted. This was an anxious time as it wasn't clear exactly how long this process should take. If the flax bundles were removed too early it would be difficult to process, if left too long, it would start to decompose and be unusable.



Before Kate moved on to talk about the processes that follow retting: - breaking, scutching and heckling, she handed round little bundles of flax. Using just our hands, we broke the outer sheath and released the long fibres within. The more we fiddled, the more the pile of debris grew at our feet, and the more our flax fibres looked like golden hair.

Next the children needed to learn how the flax fibres could be spun into linen. Through the National Association of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers, Kate found a couple of spinners from the London area who were interested in helping. Some children learned how to spin using a drop spindle. Others discovered that a short length of yarn could be magically created using a hand drill and a hook.

About 400g of greyish linen yarn was spun and this was handed over to the students at the London College of Fashion. Here, to add a little more interest, a small quantity was dyed with madder. A loosely knitted top was designed and machine knitted, and as Kate removed her jacket, the top was revealed beneath. As a garment; it was not a lot to show for one whole year's efforts. As a project; educating, enthusing and strengthening ties within the community, it was outstanding.

### **Tricia**

Sarah Wroot is a self-confessed cotton addict, a 'cottonophile' (if there is such a word). Her bubbly enthusiasm was very catching and her knowledge was extensive on all matters related to cotton. There are 50 species of the cotton genus *Gossypium*, 4 of which have been independently domesticated for fibre. (*G. arboreum*; *G. herbaceum*; *G. hirsutum*; *G. barbadense*) There are tree cottons and herbaceous cottons with the fibre being composed of 80-90% cellulose, 5% fats & waxes and 0.1% protein. Cotton is a member of the Mallow family *Malvaceae*, having creamy-yellow flowers which when fertilised produce seeds attached to the precious fibres. Cotton originated in Africa between 12 and 15 million years ago. The Peruvians processed cotton as long ago as 1000BC using the same species as used today. India was originally thought of as the land of cotton and it wasn't until the Arabs introduced *G. herbaceum* from Turkey that the Egyptians began to use cotton in place of flax. Modern Egyptian cotton still maintains a premium on the world market.

Cotton has remarkable properties. It is hypoallergenic, has low thermal conductivity so keeps cool, has low elasticity, doesn't hold static charge, is biodegradable and is easy to wash, dry and dye. Furthermore, it can hold 7-8% water without feeling damp and is much stronger wet than dry.

Sarah skilfully demonstrated how to card and spin the short cotton fibres. She recommended using curved carders with very fine teeth and to spin using a long draw or a double drafting technique. "It doesn't stretch like wool" she said, "it snaps"! She advised minimal handling of the fibre otherwise slubs are created; fibre should be loosely coiled and not packed tightly. It is apparently very difficult to buy good quality cotton fibre in the UK as it is usually packed far too tightly, in which case light steaming from a kettle may help to open up the fibres.

Sarah generously shared a wealth of amazing tips on how best to handle and spin cotton. She recommended a high ratio spinning wheel and suggested learning the technique with very fine Merino wool and graduating to spin cotton. She told us to "allow the twist to chase the fibre" and "always pinch the formed yarn, not the fibre, otherwise a slub would be formed". It seems you can even spin cotton wool balls! We learnt that cotton needs to be spun hard to make it last, if it is spun fine it doesn't last.

She made it look effortless but of course that is her mastery.



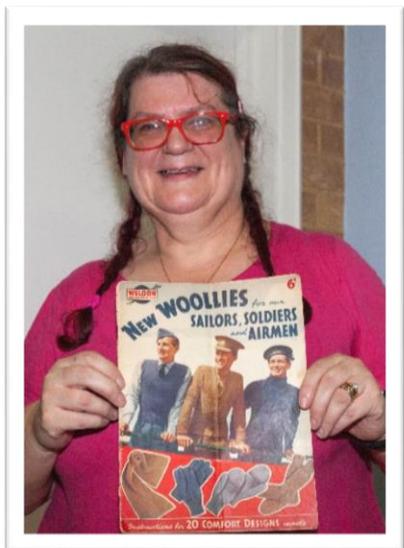
Sarah had brought with her some interesting looking equipment used for spinning and weaving cotton. She also brought a beautiful display of cotton fabrics including antique cottons, indigo dyed cotton and fabric sourced from many parts of the world.

It was a thoroughly fascinating evening and it will make me treat all the variety of cotton items I have at home with the due deference they deserve.

**Rosemary**

## 'Historic Knitting from the Crimean War to WW2' Joyce Meader 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017

Despite the title, Joyce Meader's talk covered so much more than was suggested; she packed in as much as she possibly could about the history of knitting. Her engaging style would have entertained and informed not just 'ladies' in a Spinners, Weavers & Dyers Guild but people of any age and gender. She romped through her talk with authority presenting her subject with a wonderful mixture of well researched facts, interspersed with amusing and sometimes risqué anecdotes.



Joyce began by telling us how her hobby of collecting historical knitting patterns had flourished into an obsession of collecting everything related to historical knitting. The two tables behind her were completely covered in a huge array of patterns for military garments and war related items. She owns the largest collection, her earliest being pre-1800.

Joyce had with her some bags with Mary Poppins type qualities. As she spoke she continually delved into the bags and brought out seemingly endless extraordinary knitted garments, which were fully described and then generously passed around amongst the audience. We were able to see and feel the garments and to marvel at how they had been made to fulfil their purpose. It made us all realise how much smaller people were in the past than present day and how these garments were made to last. They included the seaman's oiled jumper that was so thick it almost stood up on its own, keeping out the elements and never being washed. Other items ranged from Tudor style helmets and gauntlets to a very small

gansey, that looked as though it would only fit a child but had been made for a man fighting in the Crimean war. The versatility of the garments was remarkable; a Boer war helmet knitted from the top to the bottom had a very long neck which could be rolled up and used as a muffler.

The garments were designed to protect and to keep the wearer warm and dry. One of the most important of these were the socks that were essential in protecting the soldiers' feet. She even had a pair of knitted American Civil War socks with stars and stripes where the wearer treads on the Southern flag!

We were able to see and feel for ourselves how the military garments made for today's service personnel are infinitely inferior compared with the sturdy and versatile items made in the past.

The extent of knitted items related to the military was much more than I would ever have expected. Particularly intriguing was the wither pad used to prevent saddle sores in the horses and an ingenious range of supports, bandages and protective covers used for the wounded in the field and the hospitals.

Joyce knits garments for enactments and was also commissioned to make garments for the film 'War Horse'. She has written a book: *Knitskrieg: A Call to Yarns! A History of Military Knitting from the 1800s to the Present Day* and was interviewed on BBC's Woman's Hour on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016, discussing her book and the history of military knitting.

**Rosemary**



## Tanja's Peg Loom Rug "Reflection of the Sea as My Life's Journey"

In Springtime 2014 I was at Livings Crafts at Hatfield House, helping the Spinners, Weavers and Dyers Guild to promote their unique ancient skills.

We always have some time to wander off and explore the exhibition for ourselves.

So I did. I met a sheep farmer from New Zealand who was so skilled in sheep shearing.

He worked so gently and at the same time so quickly. We started a little conversation, then he recognised my accent. 'Are you Dutch?' he asked me. 'Yes, I am', I answered. 'Well my wife is Dutch', he said.

After a little while continuing our conversation he said 'I have a present for you'. Well I did not know what to say. He then disappeared for a moment and came back with a fleece under his arm. It was from a Texel, a Dutch breed. It was special he said, unfortunately I cannot remember why, but he said it was not good for spinning but very good for felting. He said he thought I could use it.

So at the end of the day, I sat in the bus back to Welwyn Garden City with a big bin bag with a fleece of a Dutch Mother sheep from Texel. So, what do I do with it?

In Spring the following year, I opened my shed and suddenly I remembered the sheep fleece. Ho, it was still in there and still untouched. I need to use this but how?

I first looked at it closely, could I still use it? Yes, it was alright, so.

By that time, I had bought myself a peg loom. I had learnt from the Guild about staple length and yes, the fleece had nice long staples.

At first, I struggled, I used a dog comb. Then Louise advised carders so I bought them, George helped me to use them and I must say after a little while I became confident. The long staples I rolled into rolags.

By that time it was not cleaned yet. I must admit it was not dirty at all but it smelled of sheep which I did not mind and I must confess I worked a lot outside in my garden. So, the next step was a gentle wash in a natural product then a rinse with vinegar. 'WAUW!' (Dutch for WOW!) what a difference, it became lighter and cleaner, great I thought!



The next step was setting up my peg loom. Dear Hilary helped me. Then it was my journey.

I liked what happened, I stretched the rolags then twisted the rolags then wove the rolags.

After a while I thought I need to introduce something else but what?

Well, under my bed I have some treasures, I hope you do too, otherwise it is such an empty space.

Out came a plastic box with some very thin wool on cones in lots of colours. Yes, that's it!

I chose the colours I wanted and twisted and wove them in and liked it.



Because the process was time consuming, it took me 2 years to finish my tiny carpet.

I am very pleased with the end product and I had some wool left. So last winter, I made my second project of 2 wall hangings, one you can see in the photo and the other is in Swanage in Dorset, a gift for my friend.

**Tanja**

## Chris Ofili: 'Weaving Magic' until 28<sup>th</sup> August 2017 National Gallery

We popped into this exhibition when in London and it was a magical experience.

*The Caged Bird's Song* was commissioned by the City of London's Clothworkers' Company and its permanent home will be the Clothworkers' Hall in the heart of the City (this is a private building and tours are limited). Founded by Royal Charter in 1528, the original purpose of The Clothworkers' Company was to protect its members and promote the craft of cloth-finishing within the City of London. Today it continues to support the nation's textile heritage.

The tapestry is a triptych and Ofili's first designed tapestry. He has been collaborating closely with the weavers at Dovecot Tapestry Studio in Edinburgh since 2014; the challenge being to capture the qualities of watercolour painting in thread and this project (unsurprisingly) took two and a half years to complete. Hung against a painted mural in shades of grey (which incidentally will be painted over at the end of the exhibition) the vibrant colours, which really do look like watercolour, make an immediate impact. I felt that the effect was almost hallucinogenic, but there may be an undercurrent to the surface brilliance.

The National Gallery's website states that 'the imagery reflects Ofili's ongoing interest in classical mythology and the stories, magic and colour of the Trinidadian landscape he inhabits'. The BBC programme *Imagine... Chris Ofili - The Caged Bird's Song* gives a fascinating insight into the whole process:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08yw74w/imagine-winter-2017-4-chris-ofili-the-caged-birds-song>

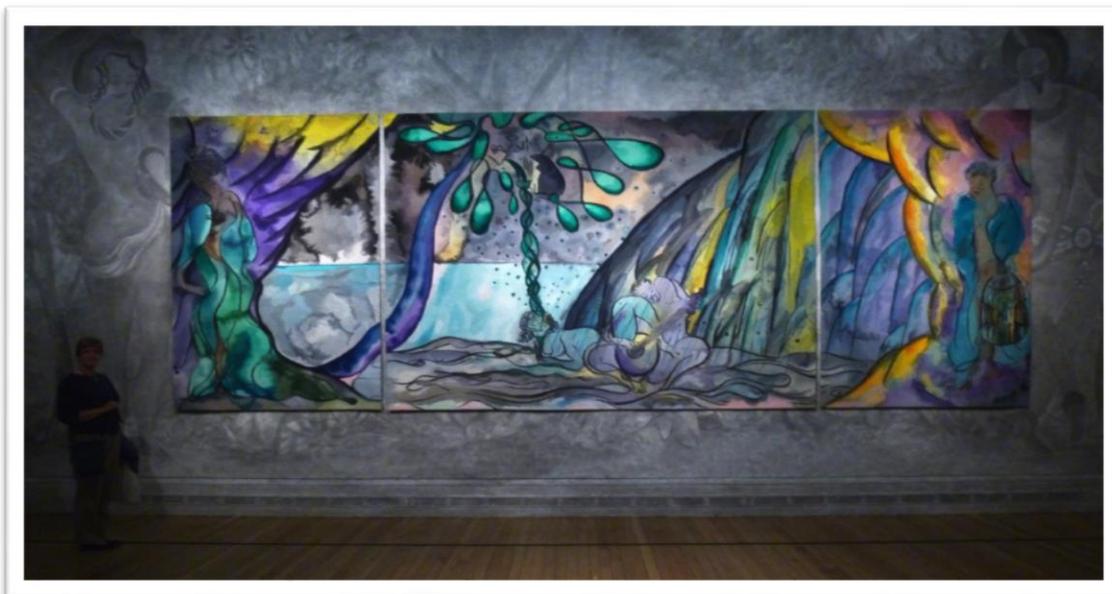
Other websites:

<http://www.clothworkers.co.uk/>

<https://dovecotstudios.com/>

[http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/chris-ofili-weaving-magic?qclid=CL\\_6qsigwtQCFRa3GwodhssOSw](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/chris-ofili-weaving-magic?qclid=CL_6qsigwtQCFRa3GwodhssOSw)

**Priscilla**



## Sampled Lives: Samplers Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge until 8<sup>th</sup> April 2018

This exhibition turned out to be historically fascinating. I particularly liked the hidden messages contained in the seventeenth century samplers.

<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/sampledlives/hiddenmessages>

The web site explains that, with 'obvious symbols, such as a prominent sunflower suggesting veneration of the monarch, Charles I, or references to the Battle of Worcester with depictions of Boscobel House, and the Royal Boscobel Oak telling the story of the flight of the future Charles II, then they become stitched documents of their time'. I had never thought about samplers being stitched documents of their time, but then if one thinks about it, records do not have to be only written documents. The talk we had by Joyce Meader about historical knitting is a case in point.

Not long after this visit we were in Wolverhampton and made a visit to Moseley Old Hall (Boscobel House was closed), where Charles II also sought refuge on his flight from England. An interesting snippet gathered there was:

The smell of ammonia from the chamber pots kept the moths away, and also the Parliamentarian soldiers (lucky for Charles II as he was squeezed beneath in a priest hole). And incidentally medieval garderobes were literally thought to "guard robes" with the ammonia smell.

<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/calendar/whatson/sampled-lives-samplers-fitzwilliam-museum>

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/moseley-old-hall>

**Priscilla**



## *Gypsy Girl*

*Some people weave their lives from golden threads  
spun by servants on machines far away  
Avoiding danger that may cause a tear  
they weave in a way that they're told  
They choose all the latest colours  
and keep their eyes upon their little looms  
never questioning the bars on the windows  
The lives they weave flow seamlessly  
smooth as silk and soft as rain  
into themselves and into others  
a grand monochrome tapestry  
lovely for its uniformity  
elegant and predictable  
or ominous as a shroud*

*I prefer to weave another way  
I begin with nothing  
so I spin my threads from scraps  
things I pick up along the path  
choices and lessons and laughter  
And should I stumble and tear a hole  
I'll mend it with memories and moon beams  
no bother  
Wild and untidy is this life I weave  
rough and unpredictable  
full of bells and shiny things  
but never dull  
It keeps me warm on cold winter nights  
and shields me from the sun  
This little life I weave  
connects to others on all sides  
with the strongest threads you'll ever find  
A great patchwork quilt  
mad and formless and free  
and as we live and love and wander  
we will dance in our bright banner  
a flag for freedom and change  
And somewhere in our mad and passionate dreams  
this quilt will grow  
until it is large enough to warm the whole world  
and spark the ordinary lives  
We'll all forget our pain  
And dance together in the rain  
One gorgeous human tapestry  
woven on the edge of a new day*

*Myshele Goldberg*

## Summer Party July 19<sup>th</sup> 2017



Everyone tucking into the fine party fare. The savouries have been attacked at the far end, while the dessert is still pristine. Everyone was no doubt relieved that the weather was a lot more bearable than forecast.



Twenty of us came to the party and enjoyed the food and quiz. Tricia kept us occupied and entertained with her original quiz. She should have been on stage with her humour – nice one Tricia.

Everyone had one vote for their favourite competition entry and Tricia won the most votes. Here she tells us about her winning krokbragd rug. There were no losers – all the other entries were runners-up.



Hilary awards Tricia the Beswick sheep trophy



Louise tells us about her knitting cat



Sheila D tells us how she made her handbag from various wools she had around



Maureen wearing her shawl she spun on the drop spindle



Jill wears the scarf she wove as her first ever attempt

Thanks to all the committee and people who came and helped and made the party a great success.

**George**

## And finally...



Our Chairman Hilary doing her bit, modelling craft aprons to raise funds for the Air Ambulance!

## Guild Dates for your Diary

Just in case you book something before next year's programme is announced at the AGM.....

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November** Spin, Weave & Chat

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November** "The Master Craftsmen of Kashmir... and the Search for REAL Pashmina"  
Speaker: Helen Phillips

[www.doortothehimalayas.co.uk](http://www.doortothehimalayas.co.uk)

"Door to the Himalayas" The business was established in 2007 to promote the creative talents of hand-spinning, weaving and embroidery of the Himalayan craftsmen and women. Of course, there will also be an opportunity to buy some of these products!

## Forthcoming Events

'A Touch of Silk' 1<sup>st</sup> August - 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017

Whitchurch Silk Mill, 28 Winchester Street, Whitchurch. Hampshire. RG28 7AL

Open: Tuesday to Sunday 10.30am-5.30pm last entry 4.15pm

[www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk](http://www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk)

An exhibition of work from the Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight WSD Guilds in conjunction with AGWSD Summer School 2017

*Newsletter printing: January, April, July, and October – Please email Guild Secretary your articles by 20<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding printing. Any photos you include should not be embedded in the article but sent separately in JPEG format otherwise it makes editing very difficult. Captions for your photos can be listed at the end of your article. Also, it would be helpful if you leave your document in an editable format with Arial as the font.*