



Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

News

July 2022

News from The Chair

One of the great privileges of being the AGWSD chair is that I am able to attend all the Area zoom meetings. They are a joy; familiar faces and new faces, conversations around subjects that are common to us all. Zoom can be difficult for some, broadband seems to do its own thing sometimes. I have the luxury of fast fibre broadband, one of the perks of living in a city. What I don't have is beautiful views of countryside, I have suburban houses and a road that is becoming increasingly busy. Whatever your broadband, and your view, please do join the Area Link zoom meetings. Perhaps we should gather together the dates a few months ahead and put them in this Newsletter. The Area meetings are for all members of your guild, not just those that are on the committee.

Another privilege is that I am invited to talk to guilds, some are zoom meetings some are in person meetings. The GPC members are always willing to come to you and to talk about the AGWSD, or about something more specific such as the certificates. All at no cost to your guild as the expenses are covered by the AGWSD.

I have just attended a zoom meeting hosted by Heritage Crafts. The discussion this time was about Adult Learning. I learned to weave at a local authority evening class; maybe you learned that way too. With the demise of craft based adult learning courses, how, or rather, what can we do to ensure that our crafts continue and flourish? I understand that many guilds give help and guidance to those who wish to learn to spin, weave and dye. Is this more informal teaching sufficient in carrying our crafts into the future generations?

Please do let me know what your guild does, and how we see it being developed, perhaps this could be a topic for the Area Link zoom meetings. The feeling from some of the organisations that were represented at the Heritage Crafts meeting was that we should lobby our MPs, asking that they forward our requests for craft based adult learning provision to be ensured. There is an election on the horizon, which can make MPs more receptive to their constituents.

Pene Blogg, the Area Link for the South and South West Area is retiring at the AGM in June. I am delighted that Kay Johnston of the Ulster Guild will take on the role. Remembering that we are an inclusive organisation, we have always maintained that an Area Link can live anywhere in the UK.

Kay has also agreed to take on some of the publicity aspects for the AGWSD starting with the AGWSD publicity leaflet. It urgently requires updating as the information that is on the current leaflet will be out of date quite soon. So, I am asking for images of your work, the best photos you can take, to be sent to Kay, gpckay@wsd.org.uk. Kay's email will change with her new roles, but this one will do to get us started. Pictures of your work, close ups are good, but not photos of people this time.

Thank you

Janet Crowther
AGWSD chair

Please contact me, Janet Crowther, chair@wsd.org.uk

My Favourite Piece of Equipment

The first in a regular feature, alternating with the Focus On feature, where members of the GPC share their thoughts on their favourite piece of textile equipment

My favourite wheel is actually the one that started it all.

In the 1970's my mother was a member of the Craven Guild in Skipton, North Yorkshire. I'm sure there wasn't the money around to buy a wheel so Dad made one. He started with a diagram of a table lamp from a 1950's issue of the Woodworker magazine. He scaled up the dimensions before turning wood from his stash (woodworkers have stashes too) into this beautiful wheel. I'm sure the wheel featured in many of Craven Guild's exhibitions and demonstrations as I can remember as a young teenager being pressed into service as carder and maker of rolags.

They all spun in the grease as I recall and the smell of the lanolin must have worked it's way into my system all those years ago. I have no recollection of ever having tried to spin.

Fast forward to 2011 and my mother passed away, succumbing to a stroke at her Monday patchwork group. At some point in the bittersweet process of deciding who would be the custodian of her many and various craft materials and equipment I got the wheel. The reasoning being that I liked sheep!

The wheel sat in the corner of the room for nearly a year when the voice over my shoulder nagged me into giving it a go. A friend had Jacobs sheep and he readily gave me a fleece; his wife put me on the poster for the Art Club exhibition as giving a demonstration of wool spinning. So I had to learn!

Fast forward to 2023 and I am part of a world wide community of hand spinners. A member of the Ulster Guild and the GPC. I use my handspun native breed wool in woven scarves, shawls and throws and I own many wheels and quite a few looms as well as all the ephemera that goes with our craft.

But this wheel started it all.

Lorna Shannon
Spinner & Weaver



Wheel, hand made by Bernard Rowley for my mother Maisie Rowley with deerhound Sceolan who has to be involved in everything.

The Journal

Issue 285: Spring 2023

Highlight from the latest edition include:

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19 Thinking Aloud - 3D Tapestry Weaving Lindsey Marshall

22 Readers Showcase: Highlighting three pieces from the National Exhibition 2022: Coal, Cotton Canals.

Carole Keepax, Jill Riley, & Amanda Hannaford

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Also: Notebook, Association News, Exhibition Reviews, Book Reviews, Diary and Guild Highlights

Stuart Groom Memorial Library: Open for Borrowing Books 1st March

Applications for membership are invited from current members of affiliated guilds. Please apply to the Association Library representative on library@wsd.org.uk. An application form will be emailed to you.

Please read the policy on borrowing books before applying for membership. This can be found on the WIP (Web Information Point) on the AGWSD website under the Members tab.

Books will be available to borrow from 1st March with a valid library membership card. If you have any queries, also contact above email address.

Janet Maher
Vice-chair and Library Representative

Help needed for Foundation Certificate in Spinning

We are very short of mentors for this Foundation Certificate due to more students registering over the past few months. We would not want to be in the position of having to start a waiting list for this programme so we are asking for more people to come forward to support students. It is not an onerous task and we control how many students each mentor supports.

You will need to be an experienced spinner, preferably with the CofA or equivalent. Specifically you will have:

Knowledge of different types of spinning wheel and how they work

Experience in using a wide range of different fibres from the raw state through to spinning

Skill and knowledge of English woollen long draw, preparation and spinning

Skill and knowledge of worsted preparation and spinning

There is a mentor support group. Most work with students is now completed via Zoom, something we have gained from our lockdown experience.

If you have the skill, please think about giving some time to support spinners at the beginning of their career. If you can help, please contact either foundationspin@wsd.org.uk or foundation@wsd.org.uk

Thank you
Janet Maher
Foundation Certificates Coordinator



Guild Day 2023
Saturday 25th March, 10am-3pm
 Arbury Community Centre, Cambridge CB4 2LD



The Vikings arrive at Guild Day!

Try your hand at Viking Weaving with
 Jayne & Stephen Delarre

Shopping: Uppingham Yarns and
 Nature's Rainbow (dye plants & seeds)

Corn Dolly Favours Workshop
 (balloted places for Cambs Guild members only)



Tea/coffee and cake available throughout the day. Sister Guild members and members' guests welcome.



The Jacquard Project

In March 2023, Sunny Bank Mills will present a unique project of collaborative work led by weaver and artist Hannah Robson. Hannah has created a series of dynamic woven textiles using an industrial jacquard loom at Bradford College. These striking fabrics have been developed in partnership with four local artists: a sculptor, a jeweller, a weaver and a mixed-media artist.

Hannah describes her motivation for the project:
 'I wanted to work with other artists to open up the process of weaving, which can be very technical and hard to access outside of an industrial setting. Weaving is a magical process that offers infinite possibilities in terms of design, colour and surface. It has been stimulating for me to see how each collaboration has unfolded and the results are distinct and surprising.'

In 2021, Hannah began working with an industrial loom at Bradford College that needed some attention. Through The Jacquard Project she has coaxed the machine back to life with the help of local weavers and loom tuners, who generously advised her, replaced parts and serviced the machine. The Jacquard Project celebrates the weaving heritage of West Yorkshire through the process of creative exchange and collaboration. These new textiles have a contemporary and conceptual edge, presented as large panels on wooden frames. The cloths carry evidence of the making process - the experimentation and exploration, colour and scale variations, yarn testing, and the glitches of the loom. The exhibition aims to demystify the process of weaving and invites visitors to follow the threads as one artist's work blends into another's.

The exhibition will take place on the first floor of the iconic 1912 Mill at Sunny Bank Mills, in Farsley, near Leeds; itself a former worsted mill and weaver of fine cloth. 2023 marks 10 years of arts and culture at the Mills and this exhibition forms part of that yearlong celebration.

Project supported by Arts Council England
 Exhibition details
 22-26th March 2023
 Sunny Bank Mills, 1912 Mill, Leeds
 Opening Hours 10am-4pm

Speakers List Update

Has your Guild had a really inspiring speaker or workshop recently? If so, please share the details with the wider community of Guilds by contacting the Speaker's List Coordinator (email below) and letting her have the details.

There is a ready-made form you can use, downloadable from with the Speakers List web page or the Speakers List WIP page.

The Speakers List is at
<https://www.wsd.org.uk/speakers-list> using your Guild's login. If you prefer the print-based/fully searchable PDF version it can still be found, without any password, on the WIP at
<https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/contents/speakers-list>

If you have any problems, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

Matty Smith
speakerslist@wsd.org.uk

Contact

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please send to:
newsletter@wsd.org.uk.

All news received by 20th of each month will be considered for that month's edition.

If you have an event/exhibition for inclusion in the next issue of The Journal, check page 3 of the Journal for print deadlines and send to:
diary@journalwsd.org.uk

If you miss the deadline your copy could still be included in the Diary on the Journal website.
 Association Website:
<https://www.wsd.org.uk/>
 Web Information Point (WIP):
<https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/>