



NEWS April 2024

News from The Chair

Last month I mentioned that I had been reading through copies of The Journal from the very first edition in its current format. I know some will be saying, 'current format'? A bit of history first, back in 1931, which is 93 years ago, Miss Hester Viney formed a Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, it had 270 members. She, along with others, produced a magazine for the Guild. Sadly, as with so many things, the Guild and magazine did not survive WW2. Revivals were attempted in 1946, but it took until the autumn of 1947 for the first of the guilds as we know them today, to be formed in Dorset. From the start education was the focus of the guilds. In 1954, the original Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, who published the earlier Journal, wound up their affairs and presented the current Journal with the balance of money in their account. Miss Hester Viney started this wonderful organisation and I wonder what she would make of it now. She must have had to use handwritten letters, licked the stamp for the envelope and posted in a pillar box to communicate with other likeminded people. We are so lucky we have such instant communications now. Miss Hester Viney, if you are looking down on us now, you would be so surprised, we are still here and thriving. One woman, using her influence and determination has led to us now continuing her legacy. Please do make contact, chair@wsd.org.uk if you would like to be part of this legacy.

Are you working towards something for the AGWSD National Exhibition 2024? 'Borders, Battles, Books', Hay Castle, Hay on Wye, 14th – 27th October. Email contact, exhibition@wsd.org.uk

The GPC (General Purposes Committee) who you hear from regularly via your guild secretary, are very pleased to have co-opted Sue White and Sarah Freer as joint convenors of the National Exhibition 2024. Also co-opted recently was Sue Collins, as Events co-ordinator and Jenny Sergeant has volunteered to be the AGWSD/GPC minute secretary. The GPC is made up of guild members who have volunteered to be part of the organisation that puts in place all the benefits available to members of affiliate and associate guilds. I would like to say a huge thank you to them and to all the volunteers who keep this organisation running.

Our AGWSD Treasurer, Christina Chisholm, has decided to move on, I am sure we all thank her for the years of volunteering that she has put into the AGWSD, through the JEC, as 2021 Summer School Convenor and recently as treasurer.

I wonder, do you have experience of book keeping and/or accountancy? The AGWSD uses Xero accountancy package but if you don't have experience of this, full training will be given. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me, chair@wsd.org.uk and I will give you further information.

I am a great believer that we will find the right person to help. The AGWSD News reaches all members of our guilds, and has shown great results finding volunteers in the past.

There is a small team continuing to put all the necessary parts in place for the summer school 2025 at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. I have already found three courses I would love to go on but you will have to wait until the autumn to see just what is on offer. Of course, there is no preferential treatment, my name goes in the hat along with all the others.

Please feel free to contact me about any of the above, Janet Crowther, chair@wsd.org.uk

Journal News

Do you have a special skill?

When surrounded by others who can do the same thing, it is easy to forget that, in the wider world, being able to spin or weave or dye or even sew on a button can be something special. It's the same with things learned at work. At the moment The Journal WSD is looking for volunteers who may not even realise how valuable the skills acquired in their day job are. But they're skills that we really need. It takes a great deal more than writing skills to create and distribute the Journal.

If you can handle IT systems and data, you could be just the person (or one of a pair of persons) who could take on the role of Subscriptions Manager. Please give it a thought. Maybe you know someone in your Guild who fits the bill? We're always delighted to hear from anyone with any form of IT, administration, governance or finance experience. And if you'd also like to have a hand in the production process, all JEC (Journal Editorial Committee) members have the opportunity to proof-read and to write for the Journal as well carry out their allocated roles.

With a quarterly issue of the Journal WSD to fill, create and distribute, the JEC's short term goals are clear. Everyone on the JEC has a part in achieving this followed by the delight of receiving the finished issue. So, not only the satisfaction of working as part of diverse team the members of which are linked by a common interest and goal, but also having something tangible to show for it. Does that sound like something you would enjoy?

To find out how you could be part of a creative process in a multi-skilled team, do please get in touch with JECChair@wsd.org.uk for an initial chat with no strings attached.

Don't forget to let the AGWSD secretary know your delegate's details for the AGWSD AGM Saturday 8th June 2024, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, secretary@wsd.org.uk

If you would like to read through those early copies of The Journal, they are fascinating, don't forget they are in the Stuart groom Memorial Library in Trowbridge. For more information and details on joining contact Janet Maher at library@wsd.org.uk



Exhibition of Ukrainian Folk Art

FREE ENTRY
17 April - 11 May 2024
Wed to Sat
12pm - 4 pm

John Bunyan Museum Basement Gallery
Mill St, Bedford MK40 3EU

Vibrant colours, intricate designs, traditional costumes, jewellery, woodwork, Petrykivka art, kilims, pysanky eggs and more.

Experience the beauty up close - with over 200 items in this cultural extravaganza!

Register via Eventbrite or just come along
For more info e-mail ukrainiancultureclub.bedford@gmail.com



The poster features a vibrant yellow and blue header with the title 'Exhibition of Ukrainian Folk Art'. Below the title, the event details are listed in white text on a blue background. A photograph of several intricately decorated blue and white pysanky eggs is shown. A QR code is provided for registration. The bottom section of the poster shows a close-up of colorful, embroidered Ukrainian folk costumes. The entire poster is framed by a decorative border of traditional Ukrainian folk patterns.

My favourite piece of equipment - Dye pots courtesy of the mayor

Way back in 1986, after finding the information in the London Guild newsletter, Warp and Weft, I signed up to a three-year City & Guilds Creative Textiles course at Urchfont Manor College. It was only a couple of lines but it changed my life. The course was five weekends a year, for three years and the very first weekend was spent natural dyeing. I had discovered magic.

I started using stainless steel dog bowls for mordanting and dyeing. They worked well for small amounts, but I needed larger containers.

A while after, I was invited to the London Borough of Bromley mayoral presentation tea party for those that had stuck with teaching in the borough for 25 years. We were each given £100 to purchase a gift for long service. Here was my opportunity to have my large dye pots courtesy of the day job. For the £100 I found, in a sale, two large stainless steel casserole pots with lids, with enough of the £100 left over for a wicker hamper to take the natural dyed samples to shows for display.

I arrived for the afternoon presentation, all the canteens of cutlery, clocks, cut glass bowls arranged beautifully on the presentation table. The Mayor was beaming, all was set for the afternoon. But where were my dye pots? Certainly not on the table, I couldn't see them how ever hard I peered. I should add that I didn't purchase them myself, I had to give the information to the mayor's secretary, poor soul, no doubt she had to trail round Bromley buying all these presentation items way before online purchasing with delivery. Had she forgotten to buy my pots?

My turn came, my smile was applied, handshakes made, commemorative photo taken, still no dye pots. All this smiling and being so grateful, I walked back to my seat without my prize pots.

Afterwards when everyone was taking away their hard earned rewards I asked for my two large stainless steel casserole pots and wicker basket. 'Oh those', said the secretary, 'they are here somewhere'. They had been hidden under the table as they were not 'quite the thing' for putting on show with the posher items.

But you can't dye in a canteen of cutlery or a cut glass bowl, I think I had the very best bargain of all. Those pots are still in use. They have dyed hand spun yarn used for items I have had in the AGWSD National Exhibitions; they have appeared at summer schools; they have been used when dyeing in schools, even for an Ofsted inspector. They have been taken on holiday, when I was researching the historic dye methods in Wales. I have spent many, many happy hours using them.

A very just reward for all those years at the chalk face; interactive whiteboard face doesn't have the same connotations as a blackboard. There were a considerable number of years to go before I reached the age where I was 'let out'. By then there was no Mayoral thank you, no presentation, just a form asking why I had resigned.

How times might change, but dye pots remain forever.

Janet Crowther AGWSD chair





Date: Monday 13 May 2024, 1-2pm BST

Dovecot Studios, 10 Infirmary Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1LT

The *Mingei Undo* was a revolutionary cultural movement in Japan which started in 1926. Grandfathered by YANAGI Soetsu, it intended to identify and treasure the beauty of the hand-made works produced by anonymous craftsmen, each one created amidst the climate of each local region and to its specific daily needs. It was born against the backdrop of an existing notion that only ornately-decorated ornamental pieces had value as works of art. The re-discovery of beauty in Mingei covers media from ceramics to textiles, with the works of HAMADA Shoji regarded as some of the most representative of the movement, including within the UK.

In celebration of the exhibition *Art Without Heroes: Mingei* at William Morris Gallery in London, the Japan Foundation and Dovecot Studios will host a talk by **YOSHIZAWA Tomo**, a key partner of the exhibition, that will examine the historical significance of Mingei along with its socio-economic impact. As a granddaughter of MUNEHIRO Rikizo, a Preserver of Important Intangible Cultural Property, Tomo will also delve into Mingei's influence on contemporary makers and craftsmen, along with the relationship between maker and user, by focusing on MUNEHIRO's textile works

Cheshire Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers

[Invite you to our Friendship Day](#)

on Saturday 18th May 2024 10am-4pm

At Frodsham Community Centre, Fluin Lane, Frodsham. WA6 7QN

11 a m - Talk by Ann Martin – “Spinning Cotton Yarn – Ancient to Modern” with a chance to have a go.

Suppliers Stalls

Open to all members of AGWSD Guilds. Free entry – bring a dish for the shared meal.

For more information contact – cheshireguildwsd@gmail.com

Speakers List Update

Covering travel expenses is one of the big challenges many Guilds face when booking speakers. Whilst various suggestions have been made to mitigate these costs (having virtual rather than face-to-face events, combining with another Guild or opening places to non-Guild members paying a fee) it might also help to be able to filter the list according to location. Over the next few months, I will be highlighting speakers from the various Regions. To start with, here is a list of speakers living in the '**Scotland, Northern Ireland & Other**' area. For more details on any of them, go to the Speakers' List (see below)

Carole Keepax. Dyes; natural and historical, textiles of the Miao people in Southern China, resist dyeing and printing, Scottish dyes.

Elisabeth Viguie Culshaw. Eco-Printing and Indigo Dyeing workshops delivered face-to-face, and talks presented virtually,

Karen Haggis, Nepalese Indigenous Textiles – Nettle, Cotton and Wool

Sue Macniven. Spinning, especially to create exotic or lace weight yarns, using long-draw techniques and spinning to combining colour and texture

We have another new speaker on the list - this time with a focus on spinning.

Highlight of the month: New Speaker



James Perry comes highly recommended by the Oxford Guild.

The range of topics he covers is wide including all areas of hand-spinning with specialisms in woollen yarns, fine spinning, consistency and the science of wool and fibre preparation.

James is also a PhD educated chemist, with chemical specialisms in dyeing and wool scouring detergents. He offers Guilds both talks and workshops and is based in Southend-on-Sea, in Essex.

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

If you have any problems or would like to share details of a new speaker, 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 sent 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: jecdiary@wsd.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/>

Stuart Groom Memorial Library: library@wsd.org.uk