



## NEWS October 2024

### News from The Chair

There are many parts of this organisation that merit a huge accolade to all those involved. The AGWSD National Exhibition, 'Battles, Borders, Books', 14<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> October at Hay Castle, Hay on Wye, is one of those. It was a triumph for the AGWSD.

I found this snippet from the Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers 1935 exhibition. It sounds as amazing as the 2024 exhibition has been.



THE GUILD OF WEAVERS, Spinners and Dyers are holding an exhibition at the White-chapel Art Gallery, which was opened yesterday by Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone. Princess Alice is seen with the Earl of Athlone watching a demonstration of weaving.

A huge thank you to all the guilds and their members who sent work for selection and also the non-selected notebook covers. To Sue White and Sarah Freer as joint convenors, to Sue Ballantine for finding so many to steward and demonstrate; thank you to all who took part, visited and enjoyed such a wonderful AGWSD National Exhibition.

I complete my years as AGWSD chair at the AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025  
'Swansong' hung at Hay Castle, is my farewell piece before I fly off into the sunset. Further information about the exhibits can be found on [wsd.org.uk](http://wsd.org.uk)

Janet Crowther  
AGWSD chair



Dot Seddon "Okay who was it?" - a personal battle'



Caroline Thompson  
'Proscription'



A selection of notebook covers

Janet Crowther  
'Swansong'



From one extraordinary AGWSD event to the next...

AGWSD Summer School 2025, 3<sup>rd</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> August, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh  
Bookings are now being taken and all the information is on the [wsd.org.uk](http://wsd.org.uk) website

Don't delay in booking, even though it is a 'names in a hat' selection process, we do need to see the bookings coming in to ensure it is viable.

Please feel free to contact me about any of the above, Janet Crowther, [chair@wsd.org.uk](mailto:chair@wsd.org.uk)

## A Focus on.....Wales and Central

Carmarthen Weavers, Spinners and Dyers have had a very busy year...



“During the summer months, we’ve had many opportunities to demonstrate our skills and engage with the public by attending events throughout Carmarthenshire. We’ve been to several agricultural shows, participated in the 25th Anniversary celebrations at Aberglasney Gardens, attended the Llandovery sheep festival and visited several W.I. groups. We have a long-established relationship with the National Botanic Garden of Wales. We spin there one day a month talking to visitors, raising the profile of our group and answering a wide variety of questions about our craft. For the first time this year we attended their

August Bank holiday bonanza demonstrating spinning and weaving techniques and providing a wide range of activities for the children.

Some members took part in the Tour de Fleece 24 this year. We ran this through our Facebook page, with members setting their own individual target for the tour and posting their progress daily. Targets included; to spin a particular fleece, spin fibre to complete a project, or just spin every day, but half the group decided to spin a Tour de Fleece fibre pack. This proved to be an interesting project, particularly the discussion, post tour, about the ease or difficulty of different fibres within the pack. The TDF group spun an impressive 6,978g, which equated to nearly 12,000 yards. We look forward to taking part again next year.” Committee members, Stella, Donna, Liz and Karen.

Shrewsbury Guild held their annual exhibition at St. Mary's Church, Shrewsbury in June this year. The Church Conservation Trust, which manages the deconsecrated church, asked them to run a drop spindle workshop. Vikki Rushton made up 10 drop spindle kits and it was well supported. Zoe Gregg also helped participants to hone their skills. The guild also attended the Shrewsbury Food Festival in July for the first time where they had many enquiries from visitors and a lot of interest in the spinning skills of one of their members, Nikki Allen pictured here.



North Shropshire Guild have been showing the public their skills.



“We are a small group with a wide variety of interests. Whilst the most common activity to be seen at regular Guild meetings is spinning, we also have talented weavers and dyers amongst our members. We get out and about and have demonstrated this year at the National Alpaca Show, Welsh Alpaca Show, Oswestry Show, Otely Park Estate and Babbinswood Farm open days. There are also regular opportunities to meet and spin at members houses between our monthly meetings. In July we had a fascinating and educational outing to Macclesfield Silk Mill.”

Pembrokeshire Guild have also been busy, there was a Friendship day in July. They have twinned with the Handweavers Guild in Cork, Ireland with the hope that they can help each other by exchanging information. They have also successfully organised and held their Annual Wool Show.

## A Focus on.....Wales and Central continued

Gwynedd Guild is a talented group and have had a busy season.

“We have demonstrated at many local events, including the first North Wales Wool and Fibre Festival, Anglesey Vintage Rally, Anglesey Agricultural Show, Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens garden party and Spin in Public Day in The Tunncliffe Gallery at Oriel Môn. Our new display panels, made by a member’s husband have been very useful. Workshops on Dorset button making, wet felting and making a pouch from handwoven material were very popular.” Pippa Evans, Chair Gwynedd Guild



Conwy Guild took a trip to the British Wool Marketing Board, Newtown, Powys.

A group of eight members from the Conwy Guild visited the British Wool Board Depot in Newtown in August to learn about the grading process of fleeces. Of course it was absolutely necessary to stop for a nice lunch on the way at Coed-y-Dinas! It was a very informative and enjoyable visit and well worth the journey. The Guild is now planning a trip to visit the laboratory in Caernarfon, to see the next stage of the wool processing story, hopefully in Spring 2025.

Glamorgan Guild were delighted to take possession of a new storage space for their equipment.

“Until now, our library of books and equipment has been spread around the homes of members and we haven’t been able to carry out an accurate inventory of what we have. Now, with it all in one space, right outside the community centre where we hold our meetings, we can actively manage our library and members can see what we have on offer to borrow. I bet you can imagine the collective sigh of relief as members got some of their living space back! We are thrilled to have this facility, which we have been trying to establish for years!”

Oxford Guild have been busy with workshops.



“Lots of spinning wheels were brought to our meeting in July when Guild members Bob Field and Sarah Allan talked about how to maintain wheels as well as how to use them. In June Susan Foulkes, gave us a fascinating talk on the Sami culture of band weaving. The following day she ran a workshop on the technique. We also have “Have a Go Days” run by experienced members. In April a large collection of warping boards and mills were assembled so that Anne Addyman and Sarah Williams could help members plan and make warps.”

Jo Monk

Wales and Central Area Link

### Words from the Chair about an exciting opportunity

As I mentioned, I will be coming off the GPC at the AGM in June next year when a new chair, and a number of other GPC members will be required.

Right now we rather urgently need support for the AGWSD secretary. We have identified a few jobs that you could help with, and of course you would have the full support of the current GPC while you learnt the ropes. The GPC is a wonderful group of committed people, all working for the betterment of the Association.

Are you some one who would be good at booking venues, organising the GPC meetings and the AGM, sending out information emails to guilds and keeping the guild information up to date?

Please email [info@wsd.org.uk](mailto:info@wsd.org.uk) even if you are only curious but would like to know more.

## Journal News

### Be in the know!

Get involved with the team that creates The Journal. We're all volunteers and most of us have no formal editing or publishing experience at all, but there's lots of help and experience on offer if you would like. The Journal is looking for the following people:

**Secretary:** Pulls the agenda together for the meetings, sorts out room bookings and online meeting links, keeps on top of the admin and has the help of the Association's web manager.

**Minute-taker:** for four JEC meetings a year, produces minutes as soon as possible after the meeting with the option of taking advantage of transcription software and other technology or to follow a more traditional approach. Not a technical role at all.

**Journal Notebook pages:** searches out snippets of weaving, spinning and dyeing related news with associated illustrations, gets any relevant permissions and fills a couple of sides of the Journal four times a year, as well as getting involved with proof-reading and content suggestions

**Advertising Manager:** liaises with advertisers and deals with our publishers and designer who advise on the format of 'camera ready copy'. Bills the advertisers. Four bursts of activity a year ready for each copy deadline. Needs admin skills, but no advertising expertise.

**Showcase co-ordinator:** Finds articles, usually from readers, and works with the contributor to produce a piece for publication (there is a set of guidelines and lots of advice if wanted)

Go on! You know that one of these is where you – or someone you can persuade - could make a difference (and enhance their own CV). There's no need to have worked in publishing or to be an expert at any of our crafts. Please get in touch with Lesley at [JECchair@wsd.org.uk](mailto:JECchair@wsd.org.uk)

### Area Links Zoom Meeting Schedule

Prior to our General Purposes Committee meetings, each area link invites representatives from all guilds in their area to a Zoom meeting. This gives them a chance to catch up with their areas as well as to pass on information from the Association and it gives the guilds an opportunity to have their say on issues that are important to them.

The following meetings have been scheduled and guild secretaries will get joining instructions by email.

#### South & South West

Wednesday 20th at from 7-8pm

#### East & South East

Sunday 24th November from 3-4pm

#### North

Tuesday 26th November at 7pm

#### Wales & Central

Wednesday 27th November at 7pm

#### Scotland, NI & Others

Thursday 28th November at 7pm

### Foundation Certificate in Spinning

The cost of registering for the Foundation Certificate in Spinning has been £55 for a number of years. The fee covers the cost of the provision of mentors, assessment of completed modules and return of submitted work. Given the recent increase in postage costs, the cost of registering for the Foundation Certificate will increase to £60 from 1st January 2025.

If you would like further information about the Foundation Certificate in Spinning please contact me at [foundationspin@wsd.org.uk](mailto:foundationspin@wsd.org.uk).

Chris Knowles

AGWSD Foundation Certificate in Spinning

Assistant Coordinator

## Speakers List Update

Two new speakers have been added to the list this month.

Charlotte Grierson trained as a textile designer in weave and began designing and weaving scarves. She loves exploring structure and materials in weave and combining them with colour. For many years she hand-wove scarves. Now she designs ranges of scarves for small-scale production in the UK. Later, after completing an MA in textiles and concentrating more on artwork Charlotte began experimenting with structure, to emulate the geological forces of landscapes. She began weaving with materials such as wire, horsehair, lament and paper yarns and combining them with high twist wools and silks to create sculptural and textural work. Charlotte offers a talk on her personal weaving journey and a workshop on creative textures using 8-shaft looms. She is based in London, within the East & South-East Area.

Dr Michael Nix is a maritime and textile history researcher with a particular interest in the manufacturing of and trade in Norwich textiles in the century following 1750. Michael's current interests include identifying Norwich textiles in collections, European folk costumes made with Norwich textiles, and the city's involvement in the Baltic trade. He also likes to tailor his talks to the audience. Recommended by the Cambridge Guild, he provides a wide range of fully illustrated talks. Based in Norwich, Dr Nix is located within the East & South-East Area.

### Highlight of the month: Veronika Kapsali



Veronika is an academic and industrial research specialist, bestselling author, broadcaster and communicator of Biomimetic led approaches to Innovation in materials, textiles and products. She is a Reader at the London College of Fashion in Material Technology and Design and is regularly invited to speak at international conferences and symposia and has several publications on the subject. Biomimetics is the practice of imitating nature's systems, models, and elements to solve complex human problems. Veronika's talks and workshops introduce the fascinating topics of textile technology, textile futures, smart textiles and biomimetic design. Based in Bishops Stortford, Herts, Veronika is centrally placed within the East & South-East Area.

### Guild Recommendation: Susan & Elizabeth Cranmer visit Mid-Herts Guild

Mid-Herts Guild recently had a visit from Susan & Elizabeth Cranmer. It was a full-day session with a talk and a workshop during which the members could try out different types of spindles. There was also lots of encouragement to tackle different spinning styles with spindles. The Chair of Mid-Herts Guild contacted me to share her members' appreciation for the quality of the Cranmer sister's preparation, the range of resources they brought with them and the relaxed and informative atmosphere they created.

If you have booked a speaker or workshop tutor from the Speaker's List, do share your feedback to help other Guilds make their choices. You can access the web-based Speaker's List at [www.wsd.org.uk](http://www.wsd.org.uk) 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 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](mailto:speakerslist@wsd.org.uk)

### Contact

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please sent to: [newsletter@wsd.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:library@wsd.org.uk)