



NEWS January 2025

News from The Chair

The AGWSD is a truly magnificent organisation, totally dependent on volunteers, from your own guild level, through to those that are members of the GPC and who are responsible for the overall running of the AGWSD. The more I research into the history of the organisation the more I realise that all those who help to keep all the aspects running are following in the footsteps of those early enthusiasts who, 100 years ago, worked to keep the crafts of weaving, spinning and dyeing alive and flourishing.

From the information I have, they must have first been active in the 1920s, growing and developing from the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement. I hope in another 100 years' time, someone will be looking back on our time and saying suitably complimentary things.

You still have time to put yourself forward for nomination and election to the GPC at the AGM in June. Your Guild Secretary has the paper work for this.

I think many of us may not be aware that we have skills we can offer. Please do not make assumptions and rely on hearsay, I have heard a few interesting comments and some misunderstandings, about what we do. I would say there is a huge element of giving back, of bringing the skills of working as a team, communication skills, as well as being organised.

Sue Collins and I, as joint Summer School coordinators, were pleased to see that the bookings came rolling in and we anticipate another very successful AGWSD Summer School. Sue has written a piece about Summer School for this newsletter.

I feel we are so indebted to Sue for taking on the role, as well as seeking venues for future AGWSD events. Thank you Sue, and to all those who have booked and are looking forward with anticipation to a week of learning and fun. If you are attending Summer School, please let Sue Collins know right now if you are able to take up the place offered. Many of you have, Sue needs to know the numbers in each course for the tutors. I know from the Summer Schools where I was privileged to tutor, preparations for the course start very early.

Please do take a look at the AGWSD website, wsd.org.uk no fancy stuff, but straight forward information for anyone who wishes to know more about the AGWSD. It is not password protected. We had considered making the information protected by a password but that would involve considerable time and effort by many. We are far better spending our time bringing the educational opportunities to the members of the guilds.

I hope to see members of your guild at the Area Links zoom meetings in February, details of the zoom links will be emailed to your guild secretary.

With your help and support may the AGWSD continue to thrive through 2025 and for a further 100 years.

Janet Crowther
AGWSD chair

Dates for the Area Link Zoom meetings in February

North - Thursday 13th at 7pm
Wales & Central - Wednesday 19th at 7pm
South & South West - Wednesday 12th at 7pm
East & South East - Sunday 9th at 3pm
All details will be sent to your guild secretary

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

Summer School 2025

Thank you to all those who have booked a place on AGWSD Summer School 2025 at Queen Margaret's University, Musselburgh. The response has been amazing with over 250 bookings. Almost all the courses are now full. Although some of the courses were heavily oversubscribed, I am pleased to say that everyone has been allocated a place on one of their chosen courses. Emails have now gone out to all applicants telling them which course they have been allocated – please remember to confirm your place by 30th January.

There are a few places still available, and these are open for booking on a first come first serve basis. The details are:

- SS2025 - 03 Spinning fancy yarns (1)
- SS2025 - 05 Textures in woven tapestry (1)
- SS2025 - 06 Twist, Twine, Loop - art baskets (2)
- SS2025 - 08 Fine spinning for lace knitting (1)
- SS2025 - 10 Fair Isle steeked cowl (1)
- SS2025 - 16 Fascinating braids (2)
- SS2025 - 17 Plant fibres and beyond (4)

Please complete a booking form and send to bookings@wsd.org.uk if you would like one of these places.

Watch out for updates about Summer School in future newsletters.

Sue Collins
Joint Summer School Coordinator

The Ruskin Mill Trust are advertising for a Weaver and Textiles Tutor

40 hours/52 weeks Salary £25,458 to £32,900 per annum

We are seeking to appoint a committed, enthusiastic and professional Weaver and textiles Tutor to take responsibility for the delivery of weaving, spinning and textiles at Sunfield Garden School and Homes. This will involve a wide range of specific duties delegated by the Head of Education enabling, inspiring and developing an outstanding school for students in accordance with Independent School Regulations, Ofsted, Steiner Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE) and leadership.

In order to be successful in this role you must be able to demonstrate: • Significant experience as a craft practitioner in the subject area of Weaving and Textiles.

CLOSING DATE – Friday 31st January at midday For further information and to apply visit <https://www.rmt.org/jobs/> or contact the Recruitment team at ryan.banks@rmt.org

My apologies that I wasn't able to share all of the details and also if this has arrived with you after the closing date, Lorna

Journal News

Did you realise that there is a quarterly UK magazine devoted to weaving, spinning and dyeing? It's The Journal for Weavers, Spinners and Dyers an A4-sized colour publication that is also available as a digital download.

Every issue has articles on each of the three activities as well as book reviews; news of Guilds' activities; details of forthcoming spinning, weaving and dyeing exhibitions, yarn fairs and courses; reviews of exhibitions and books; advertisements for suppliers. It's aimed at all skill levels as well as those who simply enjoy reading about textile matters and have never touched a loom, spindle, spinning wheel or dye pot. You can see a selection of past articles at <https://www.wsd.org.uk/the-journal/features/>

One of The Journal WSD's strengths is that it is compiled by a team of volunteers who are all members of Guilds and who can bring a wide range of interests, approaches and even regional considerations to creating the publication. This means there should be something for everyone in each issue. Lots of subscribers keep their back copies and refer to them for years.

The Spring issue will be mailed to subscribers in late February. In its 48 pages and amongst all the usual sections, there will be articles on how to calculate the amount of yarn for a project, growing natural dye stuffs, tapestry weaving and how to take care of your spinning wheel. Why not take a look at your Guild's copy and see what you are missing? If your Guild does not subscribe maybe you could suggest that they should. Subscriptions can start at any time of the year. All the details are at <https://www.wsd.org.uk/the-journal>

Lesley Fidler

Chair of the Journal Editorial Committee and a member of Bradford & District Guild and The Online Guild.

Some useful insights on balancing the books from the Herefordshire Guild

Since the pandemic, our programme had comprised a mixture of visiting speakers and less formal skill sharing sessions in equal measures. Our members requested that our 2024 programme be more focused on excellence, inspiration and education with emphasis on tutors from further afield, renowned in their area of expertise.

The inevitable budget consequences worried the committee. Our solution was to create and market a separate guest programme. This proved so successful that we increased our membership by almost 50% and the additional membership fees balanced the books and gave a boost to our reserves.

This could not have happened without the wholehearted support of all our members, who 'spread the word', warmly welcomed newcomers and increased their personal spend per meeting (including the annual membership fee) to £11.67.

Janet Crowther gave an interesting talk about the AGWSD in February and shared our concern about budget matters, telling us other ways that Guilds overcome this problem. By sharing our experience, we hope it may help others who find themselves in a similar situation.

The committee designed a questionnaire to better understand the wishes and talents of our members (new and existing) and the results were shared at our AGM in December. The information gleaned helped to speed up democratic decision making and planning for 2025 during that meeting so that we had time for festive fun in the afternoon.

HGWSD Chair

Clare Greaves

Speakers List Update

A very Happy New Year to you all!

Many Guilds will be starting to think about their 2026 programmes. Maybe you are looking for a speaker to deliver on a particular topic? Or one who lives in a specific location. Or perhaps you want a workshop tutor to combine with a talk. Whatever you are looking for, feel free to challenge me to help you find the perfect speaker/tutor.

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.

Highlight of the month: Eliza McClelland



Eliza is an actor and her talks are about using beads to embellish cushions, bags, throws, anything! How to make bead soup, use texture, find the right materials and have glamorous fun. Eliza brings gorgeous examples to pass round – with stories of an actor on tour and how she came to find her designs. Her workshops show how to make a sampler with areas of all the different techniques for varied colour work and textures. It can be used as a future reference and as a beautiful piece ready for applique. Based in London, Eliza is located within the East & South East Area.

You can access the web-based Speaker's List 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 GIH 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 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