



Newsletter

JUNE

2009

Forthcoming Programme

June 20th

Fleece Fair

July 18th

Dye Day – Two tone dyeing, painting a warp or skein of wool

September 19th

Art Project Documenting Sheep
Kate Lynch

October 17th

Round The Twist - Jacqui Carey
Braiding workshop for all

November 21st

60TH ANNIVERSARY
Diamond Celebration
(American Lunch, bring a dish
see 'notices' page 7)

Dyeing Competition:
Tie Dye using two colours

Good Bye To Carol Welcome To Helen

At the A.G.M. in May, Carol Mellish resigned her post as Chairman. She brought a great deal of enthusiasm and energy to the post and she will be a hard act to follow. Thank you Carol for all the time and thought you have given to Guild matters as Chairman. We hope you will enjoy Guild meetings as an ordinary member and that you will continue to share your expertise with us.

Our new Chairman, Helen Cridland, has been a valued committee member for the last year and is an enthusiastic member of the Guild. We all appreciate Helen's willingness to take up the challenge and wish her well. On a personal note Helen, I can say that although the learning curve can be steep you will find it interesting.

Ellen Doust (Secretary).

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members who have joined us in the last few months.

Karen Dunbill	Sarah Bowen
Talitha Clarke	Liz Goddard
Marilyn Biggs	Pamela Brown
Linda Piggott	Alison Haggas
Raine Beale	Shani Phethean-Hubble
Cathy Ainsworth	
Christine Rice	

Guild Meeting Review

March Meeting

**Hand-knitting Finishing Techniques
& Tips for Hand Spinners and Knitters - Edna Gibson**

A lovely sunny early spring day and a talk on Hand Knitting ...what more could we ask for. This being my second visit to the Somerset Guild I was not quite sure what to expect I was not disappointed.

The morning passed very pleasantly with spinning, tea-making and of course the odd purchase of wool from Amanda Hannafords sparkling collection of hand dyed wool.

Edna Gibson gave us a talk on Finishing Techniques for Hand Knitters and we had plenty to absorb. All her methods of completing a garment in the neatest and least obtrusive method were demonstrated with her excellent work. We looked in wonder at the neatest of seams, buttonholes so firm and exquisite necklines. Edna worked through her 'Points to consider' item by item.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Forward Planning. | 5. Shaping techniques. | 8. Seaming-knitted, sewn or grafted. |
| 2. Casting on methods. | 6. Picking up stitches. | 9. Darning in ends. |
| 3. Casting off methods. | 7. Buttonholes. | 10. Blocking. |
| 4. Selvedges- seam or edge? | | |

As Edna talked through each of these bullet points she allowed us to ask questions as she went along, and we did !....plenty of them. For myself I came to realise that I take huge care over the spinning and knitting and then zoom ahead to get the garment 'on the road'. I am not proud of my lumpy, bumpy seams.

Certain remarks that Edna made have stuck in my mind.

- ✘ Always make a tension square, at the least six inches square and leave it for forty eight hours to settle.
- ✘ Plan your garment and decide on what finish you want for neck, sleeves and so on.
- ✘ Knitting for many of us is like the cooking and gardening we learnt from our parents....passed on knowledge. We need to re-evaluate how we cast on, cast off and generally look at our work with new eyes.

Edna gave us advise on how to stitch a garment together - row by row for a perfect finish and to use the 'bump stitch [purl] rather than the bar stitch [plain] to give a neater finish, when sewing your garment together. Her talk was full of very good advice and I for one intend to improve my Finishing Techniques. We all had a very enjoyable day and I am so pleased that I am now a member of the Somerset Guild.

Alison Haggas.

April Meeting Knitting with Beads Fiona Morris

Right from the time in the morning when Fiona displayed her very attractive samples, it looked like this was going to be a very worthwhile talk. This gave everyone a chance to have a good look at her range of knitted garments, purses and jewellery. It was hard to get a look through her box of patterns for sale as so many members were keen to buy them.

Fiona began with a brief introduction and a few slides of samples and her work. It was interesting to see the same sample made in three different sizes of yarn, 2 ply, 4 ply and DK with three sizes of Czech glass seed beads, 11, 8, 6, to compliment the yarn. The slides included a selection of small bags and cuffs based on a Norwegian pattern which were worked from a chart.

Her interest began with making small amulet purses after seeing Victorian beaded purses at a workshop. These she sold to a shop but the mark up was very high, so now concentrates on designing purses and a range of garments, selling the patterns to knitting magazines. All the garments for her patterns were either on display on a rack or on the table so they could be looked at in detail. She also bought a selection of beads, threads, double ended, circular and beading needles for sale.

The purses were made with size 8 perlé cotton and size 11 beads and were finished with beaded decorations, some of the handles were beaded and others had bought handles from Bags of Handles. The most recent purse design in silver had a wonderful drape to it and a clever vertical stitch in between the beaded sections which added to the very stylish result.

Fiona's use of beads on her garments was very subtle and attractive. The beaded hems are worked sideways in short rows for the length all round the garment, then stitches are picked up on the long edge for the main piece. She explained how to thread the beads and several ways of adding them in the knitting. I particularly like a jumper knitted with fine soft green mohair that had two rows of matching beads on the sleeves separated by yarn overs, giving a lattice effect.

There were also bracelets made of fine 0.2mm wire, or 0.2, 0.3 or 0.4mm fishing line and beads. A selection of leaves she had made with wire had successfully been fused in glass to make attractive mats.

A miser purse knitted with cotton had a beaded pattern on it, there were tassels on both ends but were different so that the owner could put silver coins in one end and copper in the other. It is thought it was called a miser purse due to the difficulty in getting the coins out of it.

Fiona was very enthusiastic about her work and generous with all the details of how to add beads in several different ways, the yarn to use, beads, how to cast on, include the beads and how to finish off.

I think we all felt at the end Fiona had given us enough knowledge and enthusiasm to successfully include beads in our future knitting.

Jaquie Teal

May Meeting

Cocoons to Cloth - A Talk By Jane Deane

Members are used to speakers surrounding themselves with the products of their art and craft for us to 'ooh' and 'aaaah' at, touch and fondle. May was different, amongst the reels and cones of silk, woven and spun samples, Jane brought her silk worms and beautiful moth specimens for us to admire. From the stunning Japanese Moon moth, with delicate, pale green colour, to the giant Atlas, with a 10" wing span, they were all exquisite and delicate. Contrasting markedly with the Bombyx Mori, bred specifically for commercial silk production. This modest and plain little moth was barely an inch long, pale white in colour.

Jane's interest in breeding silk moths was sparked when she attended the Association's summer school course in silk spinning, and the tutor brought some silk caterpillars into the dining room one morning! Not everyone at the table was as transfixed as Jane, but she describes this as a pivotal moment in her life and the beginning of a long fascination with these creatures in all their forms. Since then she has studied and reared many different species of silk moth.

Breeding moths starts with some eggs, which Jane obtains from the UK Lepidoptera Breeder's Association. Once hatched, the emerging caterpillars go through 5 instars, stages of continuous eating, growth and skin shedding. Once they reach their optimum size, they begin to spin a cocoon, and so produce the single thread of silk. Jane mentioned that while all of dozens of varieties of silk moth will produce silk, not all of it is of a quality you would like to use, but the best goes for prized 'wild silk'.

Jane supported her talk by passing around many large pictures of the moth during all stages of development, and the boxes of specimens she'd brought with her. She described and explained the method used for unreeling the cocoons, touching on the debate and controversy surrounding the practice of suffocating the chrysalis, so that it doesn't emerge from its cocoon and eat a hole through the silk cocoon, preventing the unreeling of a continuous length.

Jane gave us an insight into the fascinating world of silk production, and silk moth rearing, which seems to mean you regularly have to share your bathroom with many winged friends.

It was a captivating talk, Jane explaining the origins of the many by-products of the silk industry, such as carrier rods, which are the result of the reeling of the silk passing over metal bars in the mill, and waste gathering on the metal. I learnt too, that dupion, means 'double'. It isn't a special weaving process as I'd thought, but the result of two caterpillars spinning their cocoons close together, which fuse producing a double one, from which the two threads are pulled simultaneously.

Resources mentioned during Jane's talk

Tiny Masters

<http://www.wormspit.com/tinymasters.htm>

Lepidoptera Breeders Association, UK

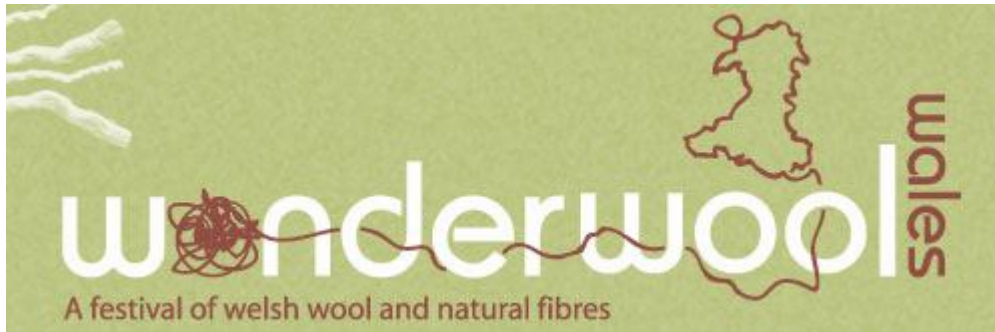
<http://www.lba.uk.com/default.aspx>

Sustainable Fashion and Textiles, Design Journey

Dr Kate Fletcher

Available from Amazon UK

Rita Ovens



Walking into the huge barn where Wonderwool Wales was held, the first thing I saw was the Wingham Wool stand – a mind-boggling kaleidoscope of Merino tops in every colour imaginable.

That set the scene for a fantastic collection of stalls selling just about everything one could possibly need for any craft to do with wool. There was equipment, from pop-pom makers, through peg looms, spinning wheels and knitting needles, to large looms, and materials from raw fleece – sheep, rabbits, alpaca, cashmere, angora, silk – prepared tops, lots & lots of dyed tops, to silk bricks & caps.

The friend I went with & I felt definitely out of place as we were not wearing handspun, dyed & knitted or woven clothing – there were some quite amazing articles on view, and that was not including the Fashion Show. This allowed stall-holders to display their products, or what their products could be used to make, & was good publicity for them & loads of ideas for the audience.

Only two slight grumbles: I would have liked to see more 'hands-on' – people actually doing crafts. Some of the stall-holders were trying, but were too busy serving people, and three of the local Guilds had stalls & were being very productive, all doing different things & willing to talk about what they were doing.

The other problem we had was finding something to eat & drink – essential when one is working hard all day trying to take everything in!

Somerset Guild must have had a reduced attendance at the Quantock Weavers day in April – I kept bumping into our members, which was lovely.

If you get the chance, I highly recommend Wonderwool Wales, even if it does clash with a Guild meeting! My apologies for absence at the committee meeting that day!



Fay Wilks

Photos courtesy of Jackie Lindsay

What's On

FIBREFEST 2009 22nd and 23rd August.

Coldharbour Mill, Working Wool Museum, Uffculme Devon.

Fibrefest is an extravaganza of textiles and fibre organised by the Blackdown Hill Natural Fibre Group. It will be a festival of desirable textiles; gorgeous yarn to knit and weave with; fleece and fibre to spin and felt and animals to admire.

There will be a range of inspirational workshops and seminars for you to learn new skills or polish forgotten ones. Including;

Sasha Kagan, creative knitwear designer

Vintage sock machine workshops, Helen King and Janet Coleman, come and have a go!

Natural Dyeing with Jane Deane

Wild Rovings and Bling Batts with our own Amanda Hannaford

Tapestry Talk with Ann Jackson

Introduction to ply splitting with Julie Hedges (no, I don't know what it is either, but it looks fun.)

Tassle making with Tracey Bell

Creative, colourful, comfortable but crazy crochet. Talk with Pauline Turner.

Crochet, "Working in a metal ring" with Pauline Turner

Exploring felt making with Geraldine Field

Felted Corsages with Andrea Coleman

Rags to bags with Jane Tillet

For more details of the above workshops and seminars, see the website, <http://www.fibrefest.co.uk/about.asp> or telephone for a booking form 01598 752490 or 01884 841442.

There are also some brochures on the notice board.

The event is to be held in the grounds of Advance tickets, Adult £6.50 1 day, £12.00 weekend.

Advance tickets, Adult £6.50 1 day, £12.00 weekend; on the door, £7.00 day and £13.00 weekend.

This is our local fibre showcase, lets support it!

Woolfest

Woolfest is another annual festival celebrating all aspects of natural fibres – their sources, uses and products. It takes place over 26th and 27th June at Cockermouth, Cumbria. It's quite a happening, with a giant 'Spin-in', with a grand supper in the marquee on the Friday evening before, (additional tickets required). You can even camp near by!

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

Items for Sale

Harris Foldaway Floor Loom

Four shafts, 8 treadles, 36" weaving width.
PERFECT CONDITION.

Many accessories, worth £1,600 approx, new.

Asking Price £250 ONO.

Phone: Beverley Dean 01984 641238 (Watchet, Somerset)
Offer with transport if a reasonable distance.

Four shaft floor loom, 8 treadles plus equipment.

Free to a Good Home, can be dismantled to be moved.

Mrs Sackett, Ivy House, Long Street, Croscombe,
Wells BA5 3QQ.

Telephone no. 01749 342695.

NOTICES

The demonstration day at Somerset Rural Life Museum Glastonbury scheduled for Saturday the 25th of July has been moved to Saturday the 15th of August 10am till 5pm.

Saturday and Sunday July 25th & 26th we have been invited to provide a demonstration/ display at Montacute House. Any one wishing to take part let Helen Cridland know on 01460 57345.

Jim Doust.

60th Anniversary Diamond Celebration!

The 21st November shall be a very special meeting this year, we shall be celebrating the 60th anniversary of our Guild. Instead of a "Fork Lunch" as previously advertised it was thought that a little more effort should be made and that it would be more of a sociable event if we could have an "American Supper" where we could all be sitting down at a large table to eat.

SO! Please bring your forks and a dish of your own creation (to share ... not a ceramic master piece) or, if you are rather busy or not so confident a cook, something snaffled from the shelves of your local supermarket! Savoury and sweet dishes are both welcome. At the April meeting Carol volunteered to make a celebration cake, and asked for a volunteer to ice it (Royal, not fondant). If you think you would like to, please let her know at the next meeting.

I for one, as a new member, am really looking forward to getting to know everyone a bit better over something delicious, rather than over my oily spinning wheel!

Roll on November!

7

Talitha Clarke

NOTICES

Volunteers Required for Demonstrations/Talks

Bonnie Bindon is looking for craftspeople to demonstrate and/or talk about weaving and other textile crafts to groups of people aged 50+ in various parts of Somerset.

She is promoting an organisation called Somerset Active Living, which has been formed to promote active living by encouraging participation in various interests, hobbies and occupations, through talks and demonstrations.

If you are interested, would you please telephone 01984 632506.
The evening would probably be best.

Newsletter Contributions

There shall be a new format to the newsletter which shall be published ready for our 60th Anniversary, more colourful and easier to access. If you would like to contribute to our newsletter please contact **Talitha Clarke: talitha-clarke@yahoo.co.uk or 01823 667251**. Please email me your reviews of any exhibitions local or national, comments on any of our talks/meetings, experiences of any courses or new techniques or reviews of any publications or websites that may be of interest to spinners, weavers and dyers. Photographs and any graphic images are very welcome, please send via email if possible, if it is not possible to do so, bring them to a meeting and I can scan them.

CHAIRMAN	SECRETARY	TREASURER	NEWSLETTER
Helen Cridland 01460 57345	Ellen Doust 01278 683748	Barbara Spicer 01278 691264	Talitha Clarke 01823 667251