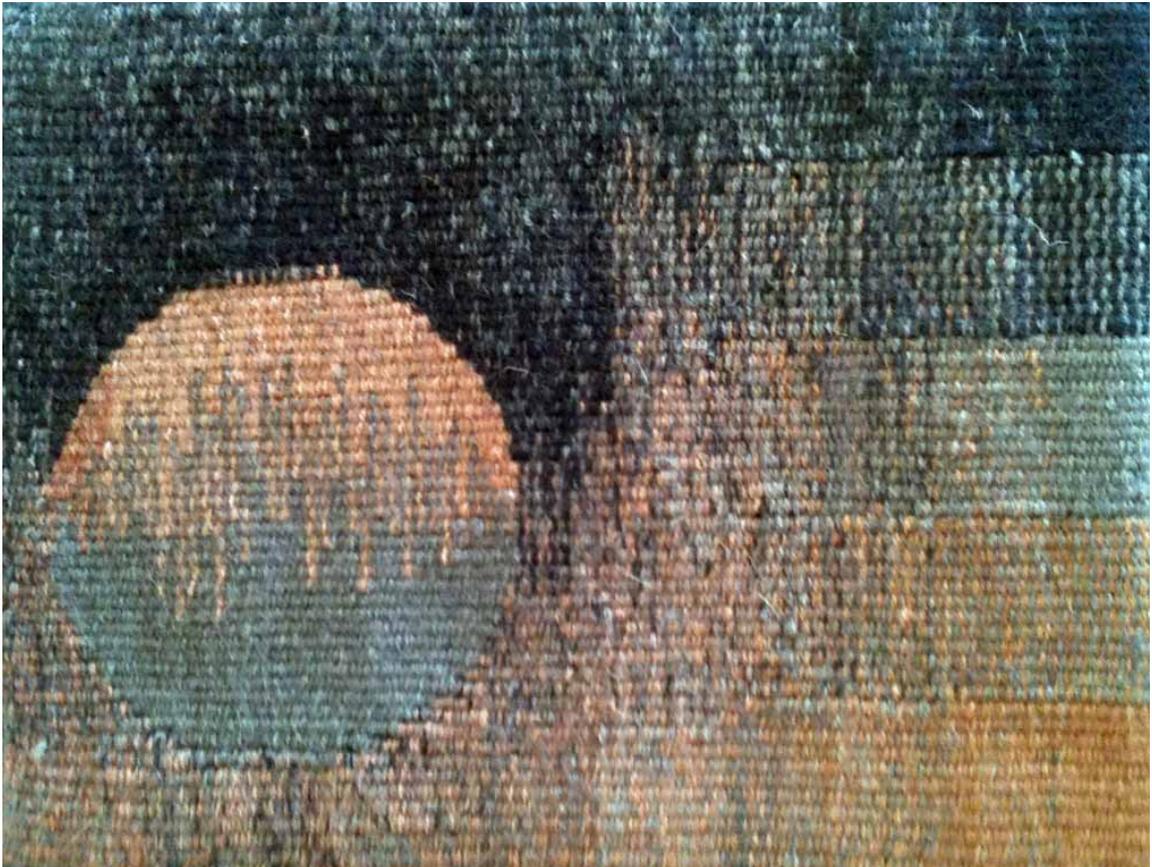


www.somersetguildwsd.org.uk

June 2014



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✉ Copy deadline for September issue is Monday 1st September 2014. Please email Janet Maher
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Front cover: Tapestry Art by Mattie Smith

Message from the Chair

Hello Members,

Here we are half way through the year and the Fleece Fair is upon us. We have a really full event this year with the most producers ever having booked tables and as a consequence there will be a wide variety of fleece for sale. I hope there will be something for everyone. I would like to thank in advance members who have volunteered to help serve refreshments and those who have offered to demonstrate during the day. I know this is always a popular part of the event. I am sorry I can't be there this year but I know you will all do your best make it go with a swing.

I have a confession to make to you all. After several years of battling, and it truly was a battle, with various spinning wheels, I have come to the conclusion I am not a spinner and I have sold my spinning wheel. Many people have very kindly sat with me and tried to tutor me in the gentle art and I have sat and treadled with fibre, without fibre but to no avail. So I had to consider my future with fibre and decided to focus on other ways to be creative which suit my haphazard ways and me. So I am going to rattle some pots and pans and get dyeing and I have strung my tapestry loom inspired by our last workshop run by Mattie Smith.

For me one of the wonderful things about being a Guild member is having the opportunity to learn new skills and to learn from others who have years of experience. There is always something new and interesting coming up I really hope you all enjoy your membership as much as I do.

To finish I would like to quote Buddha:

*In the end, only three things matter:
How well you have loved,
How gently you have lived,
And how gracefully you have let go of things not meant for you.*

Jan Newton
Chairperson

Somerset Guild at the National Exhibition

For the first time in quite a few years the Guild submitted items for the Selected Section of the National Exhibition. We submitted six items and were delighted that two were selected. The items selected were:

A woven waistcoat made by Jackie Giles

A knitted poncho entitled "Waves" made by Marilyn Biggs

Marilyn and Jackie have given us some insight into making their creations.



Jackie writes "Being lucky enough to have a small herd of alpacas I have a ready supply of fleece in a wide variety of colours. As a rule I like to work with natural colours, however, I can appreciate the dyeing skills of those who enjoy working with colour. Wanting to combine both of these elements, I decided to take for my inspiration the beauty of the Scottish Heather that we miss so much since leaving Scotland.

I began by spinning fleece from Grace, our only white alpaca. I produced 4-ply yarn on my Ashford traditional spinning wheel and then dyed the yarn using acid dyes in mottled hues of blue, purple and pink. This was to be my weft. For the warp I used dark grey alpaca yarn that had been mill spun. Unfortunately, I am unable to hand spin all our fleeces as my hands won't stand up to it!

I have an Ashford 32" 8 shaft loom, but on this occasion I chose to weave Hopsack using just 4 shafts. I produced the cloth over a two-week period. The making of the waistcoat was a relatively quick process, although there were some tricky moments due to the loose weave that had the potential to fray! I knew it would have to be lined so I took some photographs of the waistcoat on my phone and sent them to my brother-in-law as he has a wide selection of lightweight fabrics in his shop, Bredons, in Taunton. I made my selection from 'photo samples' on my phone! Luckily I made the correct choice and the colours worked well. To add detail I made 4 decorative crochet buttons, 2 for the front and 2 to sit either end of the plaited yarn detail on the back.

I am looking forward to my next fabric project as it will be made from fleece provided by alpacas we have bred and reared here in South Barrow, the project from start to finish will be home produced"

Marilyn described the process that she went through to arrive at the completion of her poncho "Waves".



"My entry, which was chosen for the National Exhibition, was also my finished item for the Certificate of Achievement in Spinning that I completed last year.

My theme for the Certificate was exploring the seashore and all my samples were based on the colours and shapes that I found mostly on local beaches.

The yarn was blended and spun from Blue-Faced Leicester and silk that I had dyed myself, and merino tops in two colours, together with some Angelina for some sparkle. All the various colours represented the colours of waves and this worked well with the pattern that I chose to knit.

The poncho has an open structure that looked like breaking waves and I added some beads as I knitted to represent droplets of water. The pattern came from *Shawls and Scarves* by Nancy J. Thomas and was called *Mananita Magic*".

Spinning and Weaving and Dyeing Competitions 2014

The season for the competitions will soon be upon us so this is a reminder to use the summer months to produce something you can enter into any or all three.

We will hold the competitions in three consecutive months after the holiday season:

September: Dyeing Competition (natural dyes are more available at this time)
October: Spinning Competition
November: Weaving Competition

As announced earlier in the year, we are introducing a Novice Section to all three competitions. There will be a separate trophy in each field for entries from members with two years or less experience in that craft area. We know that members new to a craft area can feel overwhelmed putting their work alongside that of experienced members. We hope to encourage more members to participate.

The theme for all three competitions in both 'Novice' and 'Improver and Beyond' sections will be **'Holidays'**. As always, this is open to wide interpretation.

Please enter!

The History of Knitting: Joyce Meader

19th April 2014

This was the second time Joyce had been to talk to us about the history of knitting and her collection of memorabilia had certainly expanded since last we met. Joyce collects anything to do with knitting, particularly from the time the commercial production of knitting patterns started in 1800's. There are no examples before this time that she can find.

In addition to the previous items she had mentioned – Mrs Beeton's Book of Needlework (1870) and the Knitters Assistance pamphlet (1870) – she had found a series of work cards from 1847 by a Mrs Lambert. There was a log table of all the measurements one needed to knit socks. She had also found a pattern for an opera shawl from 1870 (see picture) in an open basket pattern.



New to her collection were examples from the Harvard Library Knitting Collection. There are lots of American reproduction compilations available and she commented that old Weldon's booklets can now fetch quite a price – Interweave do reproductions of most of these.

In knitting equipment, Joyce had found more old steel knitting needles. She had shown us old sizes 17 & 18 for knitting silk stockings previously but she had found some in size 28! – the larger the number, the finer the needle historically. There were also some old needle gauges. She said that, although inaccurate, these could change hands for £30 + and were very collectable.



Joyce had some of the old favourites we had seen before such as the examples of knitted knickers, underpants and vests. A new one was the ladies' swimsuit in red wool. We laughed at the thought of the impact water would have on the stretch factor and the red faces that must have been around.

There were many examples of items that Joyce had knitted up from old patterns. Wherever possible she had tried to use the authentic yarn so we could see what the item would really have looked like.

As always with Joyce, we all learned a lot and laughed lots, lots more.

Tapestry Weaving: Talk and Workshop Mattie Smith

17th & 18th May 2014

On Saturday Mattie gave us an insight to the history of tapestry weaving. This was followed up on Sunday with a practical workshop giving us some basic skills of tapestry weaving. Mattie described tapestry weaving today as a modern textile form based on ancient craft traditions. Different from weaving, the weft is discontinuous and works are all weft faced. She said tapestry weaving was a very simple craft using a very strong warp. The weft is typically worsted wool and also strong as the weaver wants a firm, non-bouncy weft.

Tapestry weaving goes back as far as three centuries B.C. in Roman/Byzantine times. Kilims are an early form of tapestry. Tapestries were traditionally used as wall hangings as in the well-known 'Hunt of the Unicorn' set. Early tapestries were very stylised and had no perspective. They usually depicted hunting, mythological or religious scenes. They were portable evidence of wealth.

In mediaeval times, tapestries were almost exclusively designed and woven by male weavers. By the time of the Renaissance, cartoons were used as the basis for tapestries and artists and weavers collaborated on works. A famous example is the cartoon that Raphael painted of the 'Miracle of the Fishes', which was used as the basis for the tapestry. However, dyes in tapestry fade and the weavers did not have the skill to replicate the painted cartoon. As more and more people wanted tapestry to look like painted cartoons, there was a problem and the status of weavers went down. Flemish weavers ended up fleeing to the UK and tapestry, as an art form, was subservient to painting for the next four hundred years.

The turnaround came with the Arts and Crafts movement. William Morris, in particular, supported and proclaimed the work of artisans, including weavers. He described tapestry as the noblest weaving art. The Bauhaus movement came later in Germany in 1920's. Tapestry weaving became fashionable again in Scandinavia and France, and was reactivated in Belgium.

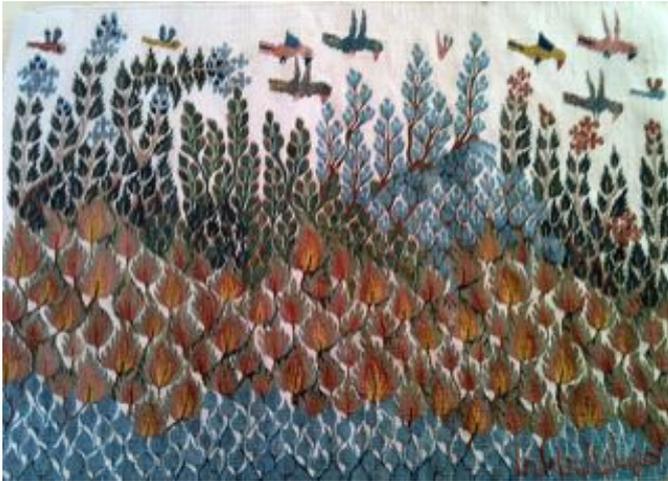
In more recent times, Christ of the Apocalypse in Coventry Cathedral was designed by the painter Sutherland and the tapestry woven by Abusson weavers in 1962. Over 900 locally dyed colours were used. The organ was only installed after the tapestry was hung as the acoustics can be changed.

In 1960's tapestry weaving became more contemporary with painters and weavers coming together to produce works of art. Designer Harold Cohen and weaver Archie Brennan are examples of the collaboration. New techniques such as blending were introduced. In the 1980's the West Dean Tapestry Studio was closely associated with Henry Moore. They wove a number of his paintings with weavers adding colour to his black and white drawings. West Dean weavers continue to expand their expertise today. Recently Tracey Emin commissioned them to re-create the Black Cat painting (2011).

Grayson Perry has done some painting but has reproduced it on a Jacquard loom not by hand in the traditional way.

The Ramses Wissa Wassef Centre in Egypt produces very fine tapestry weaving. The centre was started for children to foster creativity. They work untaught and just learn in

free form. They literally are painting on warps straight from their head as shown in the picture below. The warp and weft is all cotton.



There is currently a vibrant and exciting community in tapestry weaving globally. In the UK there is the British Tapestry Group and the V & A has a fantastic website about tapestry. There are studios such as West dean, the Dovecote and Morley College in London.

Mattie said that the traditional ideas around the discontinuous weft and weft faced weaving are being challenged. She showed us many examples of modern tapestry, including her own pieces, one example of which is shown on the front cover of the Newsletter.

On Sunday, eight of us attended the workshop in tapestry weaving skills. There was a strong sense of quiet concentration and satisfaction as we worked to produce a sampler. Talitha was the only one to completely finish her sampler (see picture) but we all went away inspired to do more with most of us buying a tapestry loom and yarn!



Tea and Coffee Rota

This is the rota for the rest of the year. If you cannot fulfil your turn, please make arrangements for someone else to be there. Please let Janet (Guild Secretary) know of any changes.

July

Pam Mitchell & Tracy Miles

September

Sue Hamblin & Debby Hills

October

Willow Iredale & Patricia Ilsley

November

Julia Jones & Margaret Knight

Abbey Hill Steam Fair

2nd – 5th May 2014



There are always volunteers to demonstrate at this event as it is so enjoyable. This year we had: Marilyn Biggs, Annie Chapman, Patricia Ilsley, Debbie Hills, Jenny Bowie, and Brenda Hamblin attending the Steam Rally. As in previous years, we put on a colourful display of yarn, fluff and finished items. There were demonstrations of weaving spinning and peg looming. It was lovely to see all the usual stallholders there and, thankfully, they were pleased to see us. The lovely Brian kept every body in order and the weather, for once, was good. I can really recommend attending this event in future years.

Future Dates for Diaries

Woolfest: Cockermouth Cumbria Friday 27th-Saturday 28th June 2014

Killerton House: The Nature of Fashion, Costume Exhibition. Daily April – Oct
11.00am – 3.00pm

Bristol Wool Fair: Clifton and Durdham Downs, 3rd – 5th September

Design and Craft Fair, Event at West Dean College 20th – 22nd June
See www.westdean.org.uk/designandcraft for more details

Courses and Workshops

Fancy Yarns Spinning Workshop

Date: Friday 1st August

Times: 10.00am until 3.30pm

Tutor: Margaret Knight

Location: The Spinners and Weavers Workshop, Staplehay, Taunton TA3 7HG

Cost: £40 per person

Tea/Coffee/Soft drinks provided – bring your own lunch

A deposit of £10 is required to reserve a place on the workshop. Places are limited so book soon.

For details and booking contact: Margaret Knight

3, The Beacon

Ilminster TA19 9AH

Tel: 01460 54498

Email: spinner54498@btinternet.com

Plant Dyed Wool Summer Workshops

Location: The Forge, Byford, Hereford

August 1st – 4th : Summer School – *Fleece processing, spinning, plant dyeing, peg loom weaving, Brinkley loom weaving and felting*

August 22nd – 25th : Summer School – *as above*

September 6th – 8th : *Plant dyeing, peg loom weaving, Brinkley loom weaving and felting*

There are several places left on all three events. For further details contact:

Email: jane@plantdyedwool.co.uk

www.plantdyedwool.co.uk

Tel: 01981 590370

Spinning Club

The Spinners and Weavers Workshop have a Spinning Club. We meet the first Monday of each month (except Bank Holidays), then it is the next Monday of the month.

Join us to just spin and chat and exchange ideas, get away for a day and enjoy quiet spinning and putting the world to rights.

11am to 3.30pm only £3 for the day

Bring along a plate to share or your own sandwiches if you are on a special diet.

Contact Margaret Knight for details on 01460 54498 or email:

spinner54498@btinternet.co

For Sale

Harris Folding Floor Loom 90cm wide, 4 shafts, 8 foot pedals

Accessories included: Weaving bench, warping frame, selection of lease sticks, simple shuttles, assorted threads and weaving books (pictures below)

This is a complete weaving kit at a good price. Great for someone moving to multi-shaft weaving. Only one owner from new.

Buyer to collect from Hemyock.

Price for package: **£550**

Contact: Janet Johnson on janetuw@gmail.com or 01823 288973





'Little London Spinners' Spinning Wheel

Double band suitable for flax and fine wool spinning

Full working order complete with three bobbins

Price: **£60**

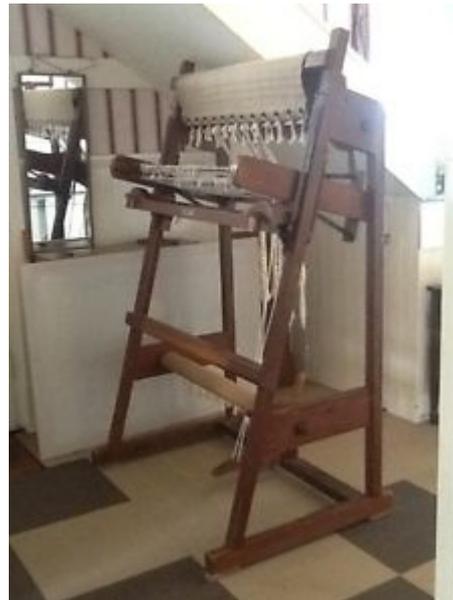
Contact: Margaret Knight
3, The Beacon
Ilminster
TA19 9AH

Tel: 01460 54498

Dryad Vertical Rug/Tapestry 2 Shaft Loom with cloth aprons
Height over 6.75 ft Width over 4.50ft Depth 2ft. All in working order.

Contact: Miranda Hewitt 01884 820263 kkoverock@yahoo.com

On page 11 of link below there's a picture of a dryad rug loom as well as instructions.
http://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/monographs/dry_85.pdf
Needs a large open-backed Landrover or similar to transport
Price: **£85**



Also for sale by Miranda Hewitt

Books:

Hedley Gwen, <i>Surfaces for Stitch</i>	PB	£3.00
Goodhue H R., <i>Indian Beadweaving Patterns</i>	PB	£4.50
Conceicao Maria, <i>Exquisite Clothes 2 make</i>	HB	£2.00
Sako Takako, <i>Beadweaving Classics</i>	PB	£10.00
Edmonds Janet, <i>Embroidered Boxes</i>	PB	£3.00
Carroll Amy, <i>The Sweater Book</i>	PB	£2.50

Equipment:

Bobbin Winder (lace?) TLC **£9.00**

Lace pillow with roller **£20.00**

Bead Loom **£13.00**

Spinning Wheel Bobbins (4 fit Ashford)

4 @ **£4.00**

3 @ **£3.00**

Drumcarder TLC **£35.00**

This might be of use to somebody who wants to make a new drumcarder – as it needs reworking so it operates smoothly

Programme 2014

Meetings begin at 10.30am at
Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall
Talks begin at 1.45pm

18th January

AGM 11.00am

Hunting Purple: Leeds Treasures
Isabella Whitworth

15th & 16th February

15th Wet Felting Talk

Jennie Loader

16th Workshop: Felting 3D Forms

8 places £40

Committee Meeting

15th March

**15th Wingham Wool Sampling
Workshop**

19th April

Knitted Comforts for your Soldier

Joyce Meader

Soup and Bread Lunch

17th & 18th May

**17th Weavers Bazaar: Talk on
History of Tapestry Weaving**

**18th Workshop: Introduction to
Tapestry Weaving**

Numbers and price to be confirmed

Committee Meeting

21st June

Fleece Fair

19th July

**Skills Day: Making PMC Silver
Pendants**

Tamsyn Simmonds

Also other skills sharing

20th September

Textile Collection at Taunton Museum

Estelle Guilbert

Dyeing Competition

Committee Meeting

18th October

Natural Dyes and Fibres

Teresina Roberts

Spinning Competition

15th November

P & M Woolcraft

Members open sales day –bring
unwanted textiles/goods/fibres for sale

Committee Meeting

Soup and Bread Lunch

Weaving Competition

6th December

Social Event

Shared lunch and Secret Santa