

www.somersetguildwsd.org.uk

November 2014



Page

Contents

3	Message from the Chair
4	Guild AGM
4	Tea Rota 2105
5	Spinning and Dyeing Competitions
5	Spinning Wheels Made to Order
7	Textile Collection at Taunton Museum
8	Weaving and Research
10	Courses and Workshops
11	For Sale
12	Programme for 2015

Chair

Jan Newton
01823 669163
jammynewt@gmail.com

Treasurer

Caroline Murray-Gourlay
01935 862629
masseycbb@hotmail.com

Secretary

Janet Maher
07703 829068
secretary@somersetguildwsd.org.uk

Librarian

Miranda Hewitt, 01884 820263

Notice Board

Jan Arthur 01749 890266

Newsletter

Talitha Clarke
01823 669322
talithaclarke@yahoo.co.uk

Janet Maher
07703 829068
secretary@somersetguildwsd.org.uk

✉ Copy deadline for March issue is Friday 27th February 2015. Please email Janet Maher
secretary@somersetguildwsd.org.uk

Front cover: Award Winning Yarn in the Novice Spinning Section by Thalia Skeath

Message from the Chair

Hello Members,

Just a very brief note from the chair this month as I will be doing the Annual Report for the AGM in January. I hope the weather will allow as many of you as possible to join us in January. Your attendance really is important as it is when we vote for new committee members and it is an opportunity to share ideas for the coming year. Please do consider standing for election for the committee. Having done four years, I would like to resign as chair so if you think you would like to have a go do please let Janet Maher know. Janet will be circulating last years minutes and the agenda and all other relevant paperwork in advance of the meeting.

I have already started to make plans for Christmas. As soon as October has gone, it seems the festive season is upon us. John Lewis have their advert on TV and all the other stores follow suit quickly. It has taken me almost 60 years to understand that the whole thing about Christmas is the build up and one day and then that's it, all over, holiday ads on TV instead. So this year I intend to fully enjoy the anticipation and attend as many Christmas shenanigans as possible. Gosh I sound as if all I ever do is watch TV. I don't, honestly, but these are the signposts that demonstrate time is passing - well that and the incredibly fast passing of the months in between Guild meetings; they do seem to fly by.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Cheers,

Jan Newton
Chairperson

Guild AGM 2015

The Guild will be holding the 2015 AGM on Saturday 17th January at 11.00am.

If any member has a proposal to put to the meeting, please let Janet have the details before 19th December 2014 (the four weeks required in the Guild Constitution).

There will be vacancies for ordinary Committee members and Jan Newton has stated her intention to stand down as Chair this time. This is your Guild and we do need a full Committee so please consider standing for a role.

Annual subscriptions will also become due at that meeting. The rates remain unchanged:

Full membership £24 per year or £12 per half year
Postal membership £10 per year plus £3 per meeting attended

Subscription forms will be emailed to members before the AGM and posted to those on the postal list. Forms will also be available on the day but it speeds up the process if you come with a completed form. Membership cards will be issued which are useful for getting discounts at certain suppliers as well as proof of payment.

Tea and Coffee Rota 2015

The new tea rota for 2015 is below. If you cannot fulfil your turn, please make arrangements for someone else to be there. Please let Janet (Guild Secretary) know of any changes.

A Machin C Maltby	January	L Took A Stuart	June
P Northcott H Bonney	February	C Wright R Warren	July
S Coates H Rabbage	March	S Bail J Warde	September
J Rees H Rushton	April	M Biggs J Maher	October
T Simmonds N Sanders	May	J Arthur S Fovargue	November

Spinning and Dyeing Competition

Dyeing Competition

Trophies were presented to the winners of the dyeing competition, which was held in September. Marilyn Biggs was awarded the trophy for more experienced dyers for her work reflecting an aerial scene in Australia. Caroline Maltby won the award for novice dyers. Marilyn was unable to attend the September meeting so presentations were held over to October.



Spinning Competition

Amanda said she was impressed with the standard of the spinning for the competition. She awarded the trophy for more experienced spinners to Brenda Hamblin. Brenda had used a theme from holidays in Carnac. Her spinning used a technique called 'stacks'. Brenda described the technique as,

'Spin one single, then another, with a contrasting colour every so often. Then ply as normal, until you get to the contrasting colour, then hold that single at 90 degrees to the other, then wrap up and down until it's used. Carry on plying until the next contrast'.





Thalia Skeath was awarded the novice trophy. Her yarn is shown on the front cover of the Newsletter.

Spinning Wheels Made to Order



Double treadle spinning wheels available to order **£350**

Loosely based on the Majacraft Suzie Pro, these wheels have been made with economy in mind. They come with a standard flyer, which will accept Ashford bobbins. Three bobbins are included.

A larger flyer, to take Ashford Jumbo bobbins is also available to order. Wheel and whorl can be painted the colour of your choice (most colours can be obtained or mixed to requirements). Sturdily made, by hand, from pine and English oak, with the wheel and whorl from painted and lacquered MDF. Mechanical parts made from stainless steel.

Also available: Ashford style bobbins, standard and jumbo sizes. Other bobbins reproduced following pattern or photo with accurate measurements.

Spinning wheel repairs on all makes.

Lazy Kates in various styles, drop spindles, niddy noddys, and other accessories.

Contact: Helen Cridland via Guild meetings to try one out
Tel: 01460 57345
Email: helenxyz@talktalk.net

Textile Collection at Taunton Museum: Estelle Gilbert

20th September 2014

Estelle works for the Trust set up by the County Council that deals with three museums as well as the portable antiquities scheme. The Trust deals with: Archive records, Historic Environment Scheme and the Victoria County History of Somerset.

Everything is housed in the Somerset heritage Centre in Norton Fitzwarren where visits can be arranged. The Centre does a lot to support learning by going into schools and loaning out material. They support independent museums using volunteers.

Textile Treasures, part of the Heritage Centre, was started by the Archaeological and History Society, which began collating social history in the eighteenth century. There are 10,00 items including those from around the world but these are not well documented. Lots of the clothing collected is best outfits or wedding attire.

One of the earliest pieces is the Chapel Allerton Cope dating from the 15th Century that was originally in Wells Cathedral but is now framed. It is made in silk with couched metal threads. Estelle listed some of the key pieces housed by the museum:

- There is a large button collection – more than 3,000 from 18th – 20th centuries as well as hatpins
- There are quilts but these are difficult to access. The museum is looking for funding to exhibit and store them more appropriately
- They have lots of shirts for men and women dating from the 17th century
- A large collection of samplers
- Smocks from all over Somerset with patterns that are specific to particular farms and lovely white work pinafores
- Babies gowns in superb condition
- Friendly Society Banners, very important in Somerset, later becoming Unions
- Lots of Victorian ladies dresses and a few earlier
- Late 18th – early 19th century waistcoats
- Military collection
- Dolls clothes collection

The Somerset Textile industry was vast using fabrics from wool, linen, flax and silk. Pieces were often made here and sent elsewhere. Companies such as Foxes are still going. There were also silk workers in Frome, Pearsalls embroidery in Taunton, Wyatt and Johnson shirt making in Taunton, machine lace in Chard, shoes in Street, webbing in Crewkerne and collar making. Somerset is rich in items across the centuries.

Sadly, there is little on display. The Heritage Centre is working to conserve the Friendly Society collection and exhibit them. The cost of £50,00 is going for grant applications. They are looking to do more textile exhibitions and to do conservation work on the Cope. They will be doing exhibitions at Chard gallery including the waistcoats.

The collection is stored in acid free boxes or hung and rolled. Estelle did say that visits could be arranged with notice as long as which exhibits were seen was clear, not too large and not being loaned out elsewhere. This is maybe a trip we could organise as a Guild if there is enough interest. Please let Janet know if you would like a visit and what you would like to see.

Weaving and Research: Lauren Ferrero MA BA(Hons)

18th October 2014

Lauren Ferrero is an Archaeology graduate who has recently completed an MA at Exeter University. She came to our Guild to talk about her fascinating research into archaeological textiles. Lauren was at pains to explain to us how most ancient textiles decompose over time and that there are very few examples of any textiles before medieval times. Those that have survived have been preserved in peat bogs or the Swiss lakes. Lauren's incredible research allowed her to 'read' the impressions of textiles made upon ceramics.

After a year 9 science lesson that showed a film of a spinner, Lauren was desperate to spin. She joined the Devon guild so that she could learn how to spin and weave and by the time she was taking her GCSE Textiles course she felt that she knew more about the construction of textiles than her teachers.

Lauren went on to take an archaeology degree at Exeter University and travelled to Pompeii, America, Germany and Kazakhstan. She loved being out of the classroom and delighted in getting her hands on the finds. Back at university she decided take a Material Culture course, which focussed on textiles and archaeology. She was hooked by the course and soon came to realise that archaeologists consult crafts people, they don't usually do any crafts themselves. Lauren is very passionate about her research and about how textiles are recorded and categorised.

Lauren's dissertation explored the impressions that textiles have made on ceramics. She taught herself to weave so that she could create samples that could be pressed onto wet clay. She was then able to identify the impressions that the weave and fibres made. Lauren is able to determine from impressions whether a fibre has been single spun or plied, she can also tell if the fibre is animal or vegetable.

A visit to the British Museum early on in her research allowed her to view, but not touch, a scrap of linen fabric from the Swiss Lakes. She was surprised to see that the textiles pieces are not recorded correctly or in any detail, which is common when dealing with items collected by Victorian archaeologists. From these samples Lauren noted that the wool fabric was single spun and the linen was plied.

In order to weave her samples correctly Lauren chose to spin fleece from Soay sheep as these are the closest sheep that we have to the Neolithic flocks. She advertised in livestock magazines and managed to find Christine Williams from Wales who has her own flock. Christine was a great help to the research because she was able to tell Lauren about the specifics of the breed. Mainly that the sheep shed their fleece and that it is half hair, also that the fleece quality is varied in the flock and even in the same family. These sheep were introduced to this country at the end of the Neolithic era and the beginning of the Bronze Age, they came from the Iranian area known as the "Fertile Crescent". The Devon guild was able to help with her research and spin this fleece for her.

For her research into flax spinning Lauren visited Flax World and learnt everything to do with the retting and spinning of flax. She was astonished at how much work goes in to getting the fibres and how much waste there is.

As for her impressions, she was able to use her father's knowledge of clay types, as he is a ceramic artist. Various types of clay, from fine clay to the local gardener's clay were trialled. The little squares of clay had her samples of woven wool and flax placed on

top; pint glasses of water were rested on these to apply pressure. Terracotta, surprisingly, was not good at retaining an imprint and it was the rough local Devon clay that gave good readable impressions.

Lauren found that more open weaves imprinted clearly and that only the warp threads were visible. Spaced weaves also were good at imprinting and she was able to see the single threads, the twist and even hairs. After making these samples Lauren was able to determine that single threads were made from wool and that plied threads were made from linen.

Lauren's research is starting to be taken seriously and she is in the process of applying for a PhD, researching the organisation of weavers in Neolithic societies. She is passionate to explain how most archaeologists see textile manufacture as hobbyist and not as an essential role in society. She explained how important textile manufacture was with such enthusiasm and delight that she is bound to cause a revolution in how textiles are viewed in prehistoric research.

Lauren left us feeling thrilled to have heard her talk, to have learnt so much about ancient textiles and to have been in the presence of someone who is about to make waves in textile research.

Talitha Clarke

Courses and Workshops

Summer School 2015

The details of the Summer School for 2015 are now available. It will be held at Moreton Morrell Campus of Warwickshire College 16th – 23rd August 2015.

If you are interested, the Association website has lots of details about the venue and the courses being run. You can also contact Janet Maher, Guild Secretary, who has a brochure you can see and application forms.

The Association of Guilds offers bursaries up to 75%. You can download an application form online or ask Janet.

There are also two Guild bursaries of £50 available to help with costs. Bursaries are given on the basis that a case for learning benefit can be made and that any skills learned are brought back to the Guild and shared on a skills day.

Understanding Acid Dyes on Wool: Day Workshop

A workshop on using acid dyes on wool will be held Sunday 7th December.

Location: The Studio in Trull (TA3 7HG)

Times: 10.00am to 4.00pm

Cost: £25 (+£5 for materials)

You will need to bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be available. It would be advisable to wear old or protective clothes. A notebook and pencil for making notes and some small plastic bags for your completed samples would be useful.

If you wish to attend the workshop, please contact Barbara Spicer on 01278 691264

For Sale

Leclerc Colonial 60 inch 4 shaft loom £1995 o.n.o



Comes complete with flying shuttle beater with a 12 dents per inch reed. The loom has many extras:

- Conversion kits for it to be set up as a Jack type or as a Counter Balanced loom-
- A sectional direct warp beam and tension box
- A brand new 8 dents per inch reed still in its original wrapper
- A custom made weavers bench with storage
- Full set of Leclerc instruction leaflets and weaving manual
- Range of accessories including a 40 bobbin yarn rack as well as various ski and boat shuttles

Contact: Lesley Stimpson

Tel: 01934 822218 (Banwell, Near Weston-Super-Mare)

Beautiful 100% wool yarn

Available every month at the Guild

- Beautiful shades
- Felts easily
- Knits with a lovely drape
- Strong enough as warp thread.
- Takes dye well (acid dyes)

£1 per ball (approx 150g) or 50p if you wind your own balls straight from the cone

Contact Talitha Clarke on talithaclarke@icloud.com for more information

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 Gilbert

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