

www.somersetguildwsd.org.uk

March 2018



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Chair

Janet Maher
07703 829068

Treasurer

Caroline Murray-Gourlay
01458 897346

Secretary

Willow Iredale
07811 864529

Librarian

Hilary Bonney &
Thalia Skeath

Newsletter

Janet Maher
07703 829068

All email to: secretary@somersetguildwsd.org.uk

✉ Copy deadline for July issue is Friday 6th July 2018. Please email Janet Maher at secretary@somersetguildwsd.org.uk

Front cover: Shoes embellished with Dorset Buttons by Marian Dawson at the February Skills Day

Message from the Chair

Hello Members,

In the last Newsletter I talked about the prediction of cold weather, hoping it would not happen. Well, it sure did happen as most of us had freezing temperatures for weeks followed by a foot of snow in one day. I think we have had a proper winter this year but I have had enough now and wish the rain and damp cold away. As I write this, I hope we see a lovely warm Easter. Folklore says that if March comes in like a lion, it goes out like a lamb – here's hoping!

Despite all this, my mind has turned to spring and I have trays of dye plants in my greenhouse and am waiting for them to start germinating. I have Woad, Coreopsis, Weld and Anthemis Tinctoria in tray. Together with my Alder and Walnut trees and the Dahlias and Marigolds, I have a good set of plants for natural dyeing. Of course I may add to this mix with some discrete purchases of extracts from Debbie Tomkies pop up shop at our March meeting.

As a Guild we are fast approaching the Demonstration Season and already have some dates in the calendar. If you are new to the Guild, please think about coming along to an event or two. The public do enjoy seeing people at all stages of learning and this encourages people to join us and have a go.

I have two projects on the go at the moment. The first is a project from the Echo weave book I mentioned last month. I am currently threading up for a double weave, echo pattern to make a reversible jacket for summer months. I may not get it finished for this summer but am not worried as I prefer to go a bit slower so that I make fewer mistakes, hopefully. The second project is also a slow burner and that is spinning fleece from rare breed sheep to make a Scandi yoked sweater. So far I have Manx, Soay, Portland and some Leicester Long wool – coffee, white, brown and dark grey colours. I will use the Elizabeth Zimmerman formula to design the sweater.

The annual Guild Skills Day went very well with a range of topics suitable for all skill levels. I appreciate the work put in by the Guild members who run these groups. I receive some wonderful feedback and people go away inspired, which is exactly what the day is about.

As we move into warmer days we can turn our thoughts to things like solar dyeing, spinning outside and buying things we do not need at all the various fairs and festivals that will be happening.

Have a lovely Easter!

**Janet Maher
Chairperson**

Tea and Coffee Rota 2018

The tea rota for the remainder of 2018 is below. If you cannot fulfil your turn, please make arrangements for someone else to be there and let Caroline Maltby know.

Date	10.15 – 12.00	12.00 – 1.45
March	Lyn Blower Sue Prosser	Sarah Basham Mandy Stead
April	Jacky Calderbank Sue Coates	Brenda Lawrence Norma Sanders
May	Jo Cooper Sandi Kirk	Kathy Wright Kirsty Clifford
June	Helen Cridland Miranda Alison Haggas	Helen Cridland Miranda Rosemary Warren
July	Caroline Maltby Pam Mitchell	Chris Wright Yvette Jones
September	Sue Fenton Heather Rabbage	Sophie Fovargue Diane Colthorpe
October	Marilyn Biggs Brenda Hamblin	Chris Rice Lesley Hill
November	Lorna Ferguson Kate Whyte	Hilary Tudgee Christine Edmunds

Guild Competitions: Theme for 2018

The theme for Guild Competitions in 2018 will be “**Rainforest**”. As always people can interpret the theme in any way they like. The competition dates are:

Dyeing:	September Meeting
Spinning:	October Meeting
Weaving:	November Meeting

Please do enter, all skill levels wanted. There is a Novice section for each competition as well as an Improver Section. Novice is anyone with three years or less experience in the craft.

Useful Website

Norma Sanders found a very useful website which catalogues all UK spinning wheel makers over the 20th century. There are four in Somerset and more in whole South West

<http://ukspinningwheels.info/index.html>

Xmas Meeting



We had a lovely relaxed day with over 30 members attending. There was a lot of food – always amazing how much we eat on these occasions. We had a full table of veggie food as well as non-veggie delights, and a whole table of sweet things.

The Secret Santa took a little time to sort out with everyone getting a raffle ticket to ensure it truly was a random process. Not to disappoint, our members outdid themselves in the dressing up department. Can you tell who is hidden in the costumes?

This has become a bit of a competition now and I cannot wait to see what next year brings.

New Guild Committee

Following a successful AGM with 71 members attending (I cannot remember when we last had so many there), the committee is:

Chairperson:	Janet Maher
Treasurer:	Caroline Murray-Gourlay
Secretary:	Willow Iredale
Members:	Helen Cridland (Deputy Chairperson)
	Sophie Fovargue (Raffle prizes)
	Caroline Maltby (Tea/coffee rota)
	Patricia Ilsley
	Lesley Took (Programme Secretary)
	Debby Hills
	Steph Williams (Facebook editor)
	Sue Coates
	Jacky Calderbank (Assistant Editor for Newsletter)

The librarians, Hilary Bonney and Thalia Skeath, are not on the committee yet do a superb job for the Guild. Please feel free to approach any of the committee with ideas, concerns or queries. We are there to support you. Also if any member would like to support the committee, please do get in touch. We need people to learn some of the roles in an apprentice capacity so that new members can take on roles in the future.

A Felter's Journey: Jill Denton

21st January 2018



Left: The lovely felted dress made by Jill's Norwegian friend



Right: The stunning coat made by Jill

Although always fascinated by textiles, Jill was persuaded by her parents to have a “proper” job. However, at age 40 she managed to escape to SCAT in Taunton and to embark on a degree course in Fashion and Textiles. At the time, she found felting rather exhausting – one was expected to get very physical with the materials and at one point she was given a bag of materials and an instruction book and told to make felt between two pieces of calico, which was very hard work! She stuck with it and added an Adult Teachers Certificate to her qualifications so that she could teach Fashion and Textiles at North Devon College. Government cuts forced the college to reduce both Jill's hours and the course budget year after year until it closed altogether and Jill decided to work independently as a professional textile artist. Until recently, she was also the SW England regional representative on the International Feltmakers Association and she is well known in her field.

Jill has freelanced widely and has taught felting as far afield as Canada and Norway. She also had an exhibition at the Knitting and Stitching Show in 2015. She recently moved to Taunton from Devon and now finds herself making fresh contacts and finding new outlets for her talents in a new area. She arrived at the meeting wearing a stunning felt dress, specially made for her by a Norwegian felting friend. The dress was beautifully shaped and had no seams or darts but was shaped by the direction in which the wool fibres were laid down prior to felting - at which point it was 30% to 50% bigger than the finished dress!

Jill gave us a demonstration of her felting technique, which is a gentler way of creating the fabric than many of us had seen before. There was no exhausting pummeling of

wet, soapy wool, just gentle repetition of rolling and squeezing. She does not dye her own fibre but often incorporates recycled fabrics such as silk or fine viscose and admits to haunting the local charity shops for inspiration and materials. She sometimes lays the wool fibres down on the bias in order to obtain a more drapery fabric. The resulting fabrics were unusual and beautiful and we were able to examine several examples at the end of the talk which included nuno and semi-nuno felt used in hats, bags, scarves, wrist warmers and an amazing coat.

This talk and demonstration were very inspirational and I went home afterwards and dug out some coloured tops from my stash. My seven year-old granddaughter and I spent an afternoon making felted pictures for her new bedroom, so felting provided young and not-so-young with a shared activity and a pleasing result. Thank you Jill!

Lesley Took

January Chairperson Challenge: Rare Breed Sheep

Over the year quite a lot of fleece is donated to the Guild when people downsize their homes or move – usually from older people who have a stash. Quite a lot of the wool is not quite good enough to be put into the raffle. Janet decided to use this fleece for a Chairperson Challenge.

Back in November, she gave out 21 bags of unwashed fleece in mixed natural colours. There was a mix of coarse alpaca, Black Welsh Mountain, Jacob, mohair and a few other unknown fibres. The challenge was a rare breed sheep using the fleece creatively in whatever way people wanted.

As always with these challenges, the level of creativity shown by Guild members was outstanding with 15 finished items being presented. Jill Fenton, our speaker for January did the judging but had great difficulty making a choice. The top five entries are shown including the winner Helen Cridland who received a £10 John Arbon voucher



Helen receiving her voucher from Jill Fenton our January speaker



Left: The runner up tapestry by Hilary Tudgee

Below: two of the other entries commended by Jill



New Chairperson Challenge

The next Chairperson Challenge will be at the April meeting and is about the open section of the National Exhibition. The National Exhibition is being held in Glasgow and this year is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Rennie Mackintosh. He was most famous as an architect (Glasgow School of Art), designer, water colourist and artist. Mackintosh took his inspiration from his Scottish upbringing and blended his designs with the flourish of Art Nouveau and the simplicity of Japanese forms.

The open section is a piece of jewellery in the style of Mackintosh. He designed lots of silver jewellery in an Art Nouveau style. Look him up on the Internet and you will have lots of inspiration for the challenge. Open means unselected and any item entered will be displayed. The piece of jewellery can be made using any craft skills so woven, braided, crocheted, felted, tatted are all examples of skills that you may use and any other you choose.

Entries to the unselected section will be sent in at the end of May but we need to know before that how many will be entered. Your piece will be displayed on a piece of 10cms square black card. You are free to do your own mounting or we can give you some support following the April meeting.

The National Exhibition 2018 will be held at Strathclyde University in Glasgow between 16 – 30 July 2018. The location is very close to the main railway station in Glasgow so easy to get to. Buses run from Glasgow Airport to the Centre and some cheap deals can be had from Exeter Airport. It is a good place to visit not just for the exhibition.

As always, there will be a £10 John Arbon voucher for the winner. Very useful if you are going to John's Open Mill Weekend. . At the last exhibition at Killerton, our Guild entered 15 pieces into the open section. Let us see if we can achieve more than 15 entries this time.

Janet Maher

Annual Skills Day

17th February 2018

There were 42 members at the skills day: 36 learners and 6 tutors. The topics for the day, which come from ideas and suggestions of members, were:

Dorset Buttons led by Marian Dawson

Basic tapestry weaving led by Hilary Tudgee

Knitting in the round led by Julia Jones

Broomstick crochet led by Pam Mitchell

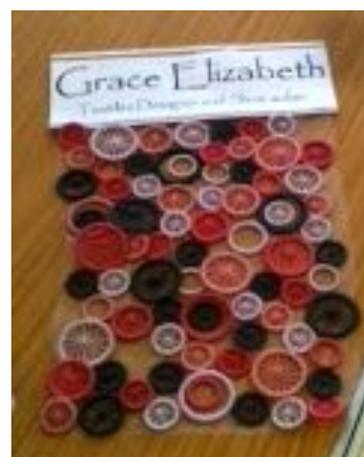
Determining sett and how to wind a warp led by Lesley Took

Fleece preparation for spinning led by Janet Maher

The feedback on the day has been extremely positive. We thank all those who led groups, as without you these days would not happen. We want all the skills days to be stimulating with topics that satisfy the more experienced as well as the beginner. We need your help to do this so there will be suggestions form at the entrance table for the next few meetings. Please note down something that you would like to see a taster session.



Example of tapestry weaving above and broomstick crochet to right



Examples of Dorset buttons

Forthcoming Workshops

A series of spinning workshops over the spring and summer:

Venue: Spinners and Weavers Workshop, Sweethay Studio, Taunton TA3 7HG

Tutor: Margaret Knight

Beginners Spinning Workshops: 9th April and 7th May 2018

For total beginners or those wishing to take a refresher course

Intermediate Workshop: 21st May 2018

Progression to designing commercial yarns including long draw spinning and Navajo plying

Cotton Spinning: 28th May 2018

Learn to spin all types of cotton and use a charka

Fancy Yarns Weekend: 30th June & 1st July 2018

Learn to spin a variety of fancy yarns – e.g. boucle, slub, cable

Silk Workshop: 16th July 2018

Spin a variety of different silks

Flax Spinning: 6th August 2018

Learn to prepare a strick and spin (fibres cost extra unless you bring your own)

English Wool Combing: 27th August 2018

Prepare and use English wool combs and produce true worsted spinning

All workshops are £40 per day except the Fancy Yarns Weekend, which is £75 for the two days. The Flax workshop is £40 but £10 more if flax strick required. All fibres for other workshops included in price. You may bring your own if you wish.

All places can be reserved with a deposit of half the cost. Only 4 places per day per workshop except Fancy Yarns, which is 6 places.

For more details contact: Margaret Knight, 3, The Beacon, Ilminster TA19 9AH

Email: spinner54498@btinternet.com Tel: 01460 54498

Forthcoming Fibre Events

Craft4crafters

Dates: 12 – 14 April 2018

Venue: Bath & west Showground

More Information available online: www.craft4crafters.co.uk Flyers on front desk at Guild

Wonderwool Wales

Dates: 28 & 29 April 2018

Venue: Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells

More Information available online: www.wonderwoolwales.co.uk

John Arbon Open Mill Weekend

Dates: 19 & 20 May 2018

Venue: South Molton, North Devon

More information: www.jarbon.com Flyers on entrance desk at Guil

For Sale

Ashford Traditional Wheel with extras £150 o.n.o Inkle Loom £20



These pieces of equipment belonged to Astrid Grensted.

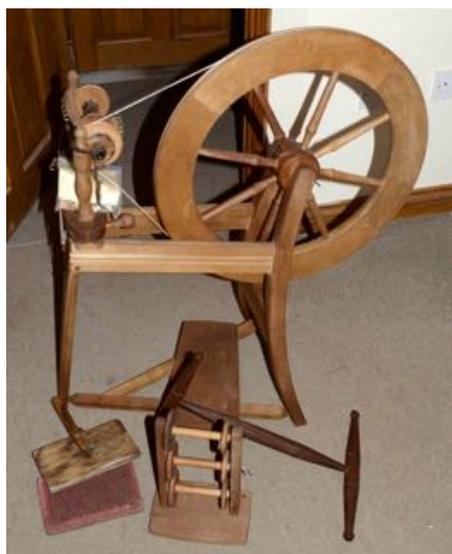
The Ashford wheel has a pair of carders, Lazy Kate and six bobbins included in the price.

For more details or purchase please contact Marian Dawson:

Email: mariani.dawson@outlook.com

Phone: 01823 665855

Ashford Traditional Wheel with extras £150 o.n.o



Ashford Traditional Spinning Wheel previously owned by my Father-in-law and has been in storage for some years.

Included in the price is a Lazy Kate with 3 bobbins, a Niddy-noddy, and a pair of very well used hand carders.

Buyer collects from Somerset
Please contact Diane Colthorpe on:

Email: dcolthorpe@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: 01460 63368

Programme 2018

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

20th January

The Journey of a Feltmaker
Jill Benton
AGM 11.00am
Chairperson Challenge: "Rare breed sheep"

17th February

Skills Day
Committee Meeting

17th March

My Life in Dyeing
Debbie Tomkies
DT Crafts Sales

18th March

Workshop in using natural dye extracts
Debbie Tomkies

21st April

Horse Hair – the John Boyd story
John Miners

19th May

The Art of Liberty
Anna Buruma, Liberty Head Archivist
Committee Meeting

16th June

Fleece Fair
Craft demonstrations

21st July

The Bronze Age Fabrics of Must Farm
Dr Susanna Harris, University of
Glasgow

18th August

Fun with acid dyes: Workshop
Amanda Hannaford

15th September

Stitch-led design in knitting
Alison Ellen
Dyeing competition
Committee meeting

20th October

Passementerie
Anna Crutchley
Spinning competition

21st October

Cord spinning or tassel making
workshop
Anna Crutchley

17th November

Learning about Sheep Fleece in a Small
Commercial Mill
John Arbon
Weaving Competition
Committee meeting
Soup and bread lunch

15th December

Social event
Shared lunch and Secret Santa