

The East Sussex Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

www.esgwsd.org.uk secretary @esgwsd.org.uk

NEWSLETTER No 106 OCTOBER 2016

Dear

Firstly, I would like to thank Joan and Val, who kindly stepped in and edited the June issue of the Newsletter during my illness and also I would like to thank Members for all their kind wishes and cards.

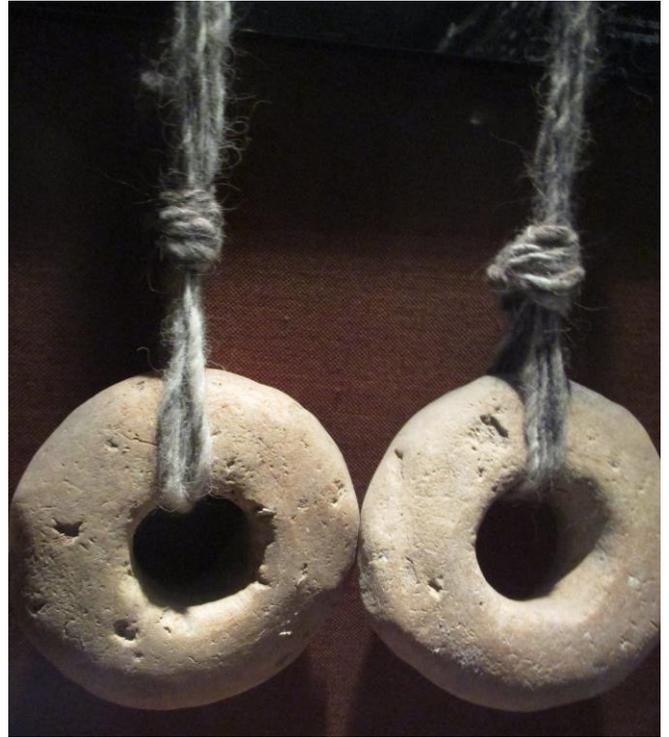
The new format for meetings whereby the meeting begins with a skills share in the morning followed by the talk at 2 pm seems to be going well and I understand the talk will be at 1.30 pm from this month to allow for the darker evenings. Between the skills share and talk there is now the opportunity for short 'shouts' and more time for 'show and tell'. It has been good to see that member's views have been voiced and acted upon. Keep up the good work. The committee members are always happy to hear your views and ideas.

Best wishes to you all.

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FEBRUARY ISSUE: Deadline for copy 21 Jan 2016



Anglo-Saxon stone weights for holding the warp or weft taut during weaving, Worthing Museum See p.15.

News and Notices

• **L**ibrary news

1. Easy Weaving with Little Looms. This is a special issue from Handwoven in a magazine format, with articles on the rigid-heddle, pin and tapestry looms, It also incorporates some unusual projects to make on looms.

2. Margaret Radcliffe - The Essential Guide to Color Knitting Techniques. A reissue from 2008 in paperback form. A book packed full of techniques using colour. There are a few patterns for small items included and a chapter on the basics of colour. A review can be found in Autumn 2016 edition of The Journal

3. Beth Smith - How to spin - From choosing a spinning wheel to making yarn. A small pocket size book, very basic, but worth looking at if you haven't time to read through some of the standard spinning books. At a very low cost it may be worth members buying for

personal use! A review can be found in The Journal - Autumn 2016.

□ News from the Guild

The committee have agreed that we would have some concentrated skills sharing on our core skills but still have the 'mini' skill shares as well. This is something that the London Guild and other Guilds do and Elizabeth Jackson has kindly volunteered to organise this for us.

Membership Lists

After considering the guidance given by the Association concerning Data Protection within Guilds, the Committee has decided that a policy document will be distributed to members at the time of renewing their subscription to the Guild. In this document, the Committee has tried to set out clearly how your personal information will be stored and used by the Guild and there is a significant change from previous practice in this matter.

Only the Membership Secretary will hold, on one computer, the entire details of members. For emergency contact, the Chairman and Treasurer of the Guild will have paper copies. Also, paper copies of the entire Membership List will be available to those members such as the Newsletter Editors, the Librarian and the Outside Events Organiser to enable them to contact members, if necessary, in the course of their work.

In future the printed Membership List available to members will contain only those details, which members have given permission to be circulated according to the information sanctioned on each Enrolment/Renewal Form. This process must be repeated each year when membership is renewed, though members may, at any time, modify their entries by contacting me.

Please read the Policy document when you receive it and tick the boxes, as you feel appropriate to you when you fill in your Subscription Renewal Form. You may renew your subscription any time from the October meeting and, as agreed at the AGM last March, the annual fee for Standard Membership is £20. For 2 Family Members, living at the same address, the cost is £32 and the cost for a Student remains unchanged at £6.

A Warm Welcome to the following new members:

Days Out and Courses.

□ Forthcoming exhibitions:

Fashion Cities Africa, Brighton

Textile Exhibition running from now until January 2017
Brighton Museum, Royal Pavilion Gardens, BN1 1EE
Exhibition includes wide range of apparel from couture to street style, alongside images, film and sound evoking the drama and creativity of four distinctive cities.

Kendal Wool Gathering, Cumbria

Stands and stalls representing all aspects of wool products. K Village, The Lakes Outlet, Kendal **29-30 October 2016** www.kendalwoolgathering.co.uk

Theo Wright – Wavelength – London Exhibition of handwoven textiles inspired by mathematics.

Craft Central Gallery, 33-35 St Johns Square, Clerkenwell, London, EC1M 4DS **9-13 November 2016.** Free.

www.craftcentral.org.uk/calendar

Waltham Abbey Wool Show,

The Crochet Chain and AboutMyArea EN9 website have joined forces again to organise a fourth wool show at Waltham Abbey Marriott Hotel, Old Shire Lane, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3LX

15 January 2017, from 10am to 4pm. Exhibitors' stands with hand dyed and hand spun yarns, beautiful handmade wool and felt items, unique knit and crochet kits, a wide selection of accessories from buttons to crochet hooks, demonstrations of spinning and weaving plus craft workshops for visitors to have a go at crochet, knitting, felting and spinning. This year there will be a "Funky neckware" competition and the organisers are asking people to bring along neckware creations

www.walthamabbeywoolshow.co.uk

Tel Diana 01992 679261

Embroidered Tales & Woven Dreams, London

Textile traditions from the Silk Road to Arabia
The Brunei Gallery, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, London, WC1H 0XG

January to March 2017

www.soas.ac.uk/gallery

Knitting and Stitching Show, London

Olympia, W14 8UX

2-5 March 2017.

www.theknittingandstitchingshow.com

Wonderwool Wales, Bluieth Wells
 Royal Welsh Showground
22-23 April 2017
www.wonderwoolwales.co.uk

Black Sheep: The Darker side of Felt, Cumbria
 Beacon Museum, Whitehaven **8**
May to 2 July 2017
www.blacksheepfelt.wordpress.com

preparation. Move on to carding on a drum carder and then start to spin on a drop spindle. Having mastered

26-28 October, 2017

The theme for the next exhibition will be 75 Years of Desert Island Discs. Any item for the exhibition should include at least one of our weaving, dyeing and spinning skills and should be accompanied by an A5 written piece about your inspiration for the item. There will be a raffle run by Eve Alexander and her team and they will be doing scarves in honour of Jean Hitchcox. If you are able to help please email Tудie Jacobs esg-exhibition-2015@googlegroups.com

East Sussex Guild Exhibition, Lewes Town Hall

□ **Forthcoming courses:**

Scrumbling Workshop Powdermill Hotel, Battle
 – there will be two Workshops on Tuesday 25th and Thursday 27th October. Workshops will take place from 1am to 4 pm. The tutor is Sheila Duffill, the chair

great fun and a great opportunity to learn new skills. of the East Sussex Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers and the owner of the Battle Wool Shop and these workshops form part of the PURE Arts Group Exhibition.

The aim is to create a Community Piece called Battle Meadows in Free Form Crochet and Knitting (lots of pieces make a big piece!) which is to help celebrate the 950th Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. We can take a good number of people for either a half or whole day and more information about booking etc. will be emailed and put on Julia Desch' Facebook page or telephone Julia on 01323 832781. This will be *The Vibrant World of Natural Dyes* **24 April 2017**

A natural dye 'taster' day to introduce natural dyes. Students will learn a little about using weld, madder, cochineal and indigo and discover fascinating history from a colourful past. Students can dye silk samples and/or purchase a pre-mordanted silk scarf to dye during the day. Contact: Isabella Whitworth Ardington School of Crafts
www.isabellawhitworth.com/teaching

drafting on the drop spindle progress to a wheel. Look at setting up a wheel and the principles of tension. Turn your prepared batts into spun singles. Learn the principles behind plying. Create and finish your own skein of hand spun fibre. Small group to ensure high level of one-to-one tuition. All materials and use of equipment included. During the course you will be invited to join the family for a simple lunch. If you would prefer to bring your own lunches please feel free to do so. Two-day course from 10am to 4pm on Saturday and 10am to 2.00pm on Sunday. Selfcatering residential option available for a maximum of four singles at a nominal charge of £25.00 per person per night at their luxury holiday home.

Shibori with natural indigo Nr Wantage, Oxford
25 April 2017

Students will learn about making an indigo vat, and some techniques for producing Shibori (tied, folded and clamped) designs on silk and / or cotton. This course will be a follow-on to the one-day *Vibrant World of Natural Dyes* but can also be studied separately.

Ardington School of Crafts, Nr Wantage, Oxford
www.isabellawhitworth.com/teaching

□ **Coming Soon** by Gina Price

Notes on 2017 Programme

Please note that the APRIL 2017 meeting is to be held on the FOURTH Saturday i.e. the 22nd. This is due to our meeting clashing with Easter.

We have included a Spinning Skills day as well as

and basket weaving using re-cycled materials with Weaving Skills. Workshops include a mini-workshop with Lyn Scott - sorting alpaca: Design for the Terrified with Alison Daykin: Inkle Weaving with Anne Dixon

From Fleece to Fibre: Two Day Course in Hand Spinning (residential option)

February 4 2017

Course Provider: Cartmel Handspun Spinning School

Contact: Elaine Ware **Telephone: 01539 533443**

Beckside, Lindale-in-Cartmel, Grange-over-Sands
Cumbria, LA11 6NA

Price: £150.00

Fun packed week-end in the Lake District National Park learning hand spinning. Start out in their fleece store to learn about fleece selection, purchase and Christine Brewster.

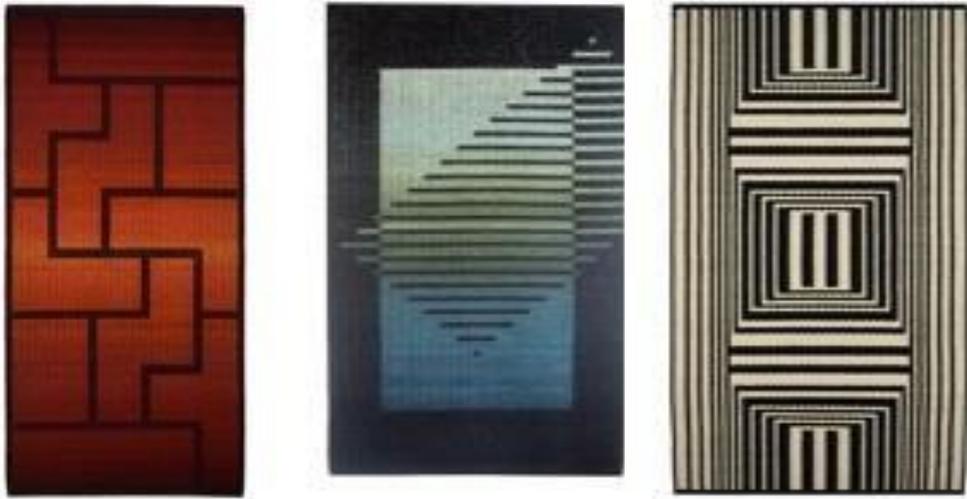
19th November 2016 at 1.30 pm Talk 'Surviving as a Rug Weaver' with Jason Collingwood

It is a pleasure to welcome Jason back to Lewes.

He learnt to weave at 18 but his first love was music. He pursued a largely unsuccessful career in this field before returning to weaving some 6 years later and set up his own workshop in Nayland, Suffolk.

Over the last 27 years he has woven to commission somewhere in the region of 2000 rugs, mostly to private individuals and for a small number of corporate clients and also worked with many architects and interior designers. Amongst his large commissions were 24 rugs for the Sheraton Hotel in Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania and a series of rugs for a castle in Switzerland.

His rugs can be woven to any size and colour way, are strong and durable for use on the floor but equally can be used as wall-hangings. In addition to his commissions and designing, he spends 3-4 months each year teaching at various art schools in North America, Australia and Europe. This has led Jason to introduce his own brand of rug wool available in the USA as well as producing instructional DVDs and publications. Some photos below of recently completed commissions. www.rugweaver.co.uk



Sunday, 20th - Wednesday, 23rd November, 9 am - 5 pm Rug Weaving the Jason way £230

VENUE: Hillcrest Community Centre in Newhaven Jason will be teaching us his "3-end block weave" course which covers shaft switching. This course is now fully booked but if you would like to add your name to the waiting list, please let Gina P know. You must have a four-harness loom (table or floor loom). Details about warping up has already been sent out. **Deposits have been received to secure places and are non-refundable unless another participant can be found.**
Cheques payable to Gina Price.

gina.price401@gmail.com 01323 896851

17th December: Christmas Lunch with Show &

Tell

Our last meeting of the year and an opportunity to showcase some of our craft projects undertaken in 2016. Please bring along anything you have made, anything that you're proud of, or something you've had a go at which may not have turned out quite right but its inspired you and may inspire others to have a go as well. The lunch is usually a 'bring & share' arrangement'. A list will be circulated at the November meeting so that we have a good spread of fare for the day. Don't worry if you can't bring anything as there is usually plenty to go around.

21st January 2017: Talk at 1.30 pm Alison Ellen: Stitch Led Design

Again we welcome Alison back to Lewes. Her latest book is 'Stitch-led Design'

"I approach designing and making hand knitted garments by using the flexible structure of knitting and the way different stitch combinations shape the fabric. I play with variations in scale, stitches and the direction of knitting, designing for different body-shapes, allowing the structure of the fabric itself and the three-dimensional form of the garment to emerge seamlessly together.

I dye my yarns for added patterning and richness, often looking to plants and landscape as a source of ideas. Having run a small business making knitwear for 35 years, my ideas are shared internationally through teaching courses, and through four books on designing in knitting.

This year's exhibitions include 'soft engineering: textiles taking shape', which is touring to NCCD Lincoln in November, and reviewed in the latest 'Journal', and another exhibition with a group of artists inspired by gardens, also this November."

**18th February 2017 Talk at 1.30 pm****Eliza McClelland 'To Bead or Not to Bead'**

Eliza gives a lively talk about beading and has asked me not to reveal too much about her as it will spoil the talk!!! Just 'google' her and see what comes up.

□ **Reports of Meetings.**

18 June 'Halcyon Days'

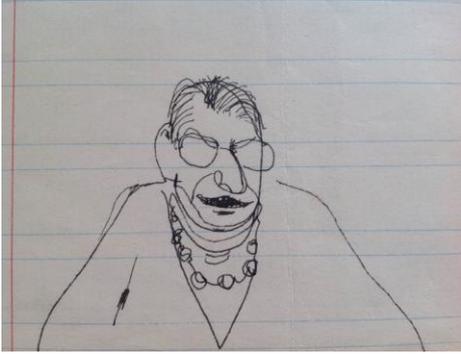
Barley Roscoe's name was familiar to many of us, mainly because she had helped to found, and for many years had been responsible for, the Craft Study Centre, where an archive of work by 20th Century artists/craftspeople is kept. Her subject was Halcyon Days and she was referring to the amazing flowering of talented artists and craftspeople in the years between the wars.

Although many worked in textiles she also included many other crafts as they often set up retail outlets together. Phyllis Barron, who block printed fabric, found some old French wood blocks and started a thriving business with her friend Dorothy Larcher. After she died it was her textiles that would form the nucleus of the Craft Collection.

As she worked for many years locally in Ditchling we were interested in Ethel Mairet's story. Not only did she run a busy workshop with helpers, apprentices and friends at Gospels but was taking on commissions and teaching. So many important weavers were influenced by her – Peter Collingwood, Marianne Straub, Alastair Morton, Hilary Bourne and Mary Barker to name a few. I am old enough to have a slight link with her. Ethel died in 1952 and my old weaving teacher Mary Barker said that she used to call on Ethel and at her last visit helped by adjusting the pedals on a loom. Ethel died a few days later and had woven a yard or two more. My interest in Ethel Mairet was revived 20 years later when I found a red painted spinning wheel in a junk shop in Brighton. I loved it but friends thought it was spoiled by the paint. When older friends verified it as the wheel Ethel brought back from Finland in the 1930's and was one she used mainly for teaching, I knew I had to buy it. After I had bought it we could clearly see that there was a railway sticker with the work Hassocks on the treadle. Forty-five years later I don't think you can see the word now. Imagine taking it on the train to teach or demonstrate.

I enjoyed the talk very much especially realising how important these craftspeople were. They lifted a peasant craft to an artistic one, taught it to others, created thriving retail outlets in very difficult times and took on commissions. To our eyes some of their work may look rather dull and uninteresting but they did work almost exclusively in natural fibres and with vegetable dyes. Just the occasional strand of cellophane to brighten things up! My link with people in Barley's talk was that in 1967 I joined a course at Dartington Hall, Devon led by another teacher/etcher Robin Tanner. He had persuaded Phyllis Barron to come and speak to us. She brought piles of her beautiful samples of her block printed fabric. It was these that were to form the start of The Craft Collection, as she died a year later and left them to Robin. As she said "you will know what to do with them"/ He didn't at first, but the problem was solved and they were originally housed at the Holbourne Museum of Arts, Bath and are now at the West Surrey College of Art and Design. Hence the archive collection was created and is now housed in a new building for all to see and use.

The following sketches show Phyllis Barron and Robin Tanner



16th July **Fiona Morris' Knitting Talk**

As the projector was not working Fiona Morris could not use her pictures to illustrate and remind her of what she was planning to tell us.

As it was she recalled her years of designing knitwear and this really took off about ten years ago. She was born and brought up in Zimbabwe, returning to boarding school in England where they were encouraged to knit for charity during Lent, making blankets and baby clothes. As she liked knitting she taught herself to knit and read at the same time, and being dyslexic this came in very handy. In due course she acquired a knitting machine, this had a charting device which made it easier to create her own designs, and she began making children's garments. She did various courses, City and Guilds etc. and made some garments for John Allen, going back to hand knitting. Then she met Jackie Bennett of the Mohair Centre and did some designs for her. She learned to dye and started designing multi coloured patchwork knits, made as one piece. She then ran a designer group for John Allen at Farnham and did some designs for the Knitting Magazine. The top down designs began and were featured in Let's Knit and she found that using different sized needles to shape a garment, if it was in a lacy design, to be much easier than having to alter the lacy pattern. She began giving workshops using various types of knitting, jewellery, hats, bead knitting with wire etc. and she showed the meeting many of her garments, to illustrate the various points she was

making which certainly helped us to understand her techniques, although some did look a bit complicated!

She finished her talk by saying that she always makes her own sample garments and never farms them out which was very reassuring!

She was going to be teaching in a workshop here on the following day, to demonstrate how she works from the top down, and had suggested that each of the members involved should follow some instructions which should be knitted to work out our individual tensions, depending on the wool being used, and the feel we liked, and of course what garment we intended to make.

Fiona Morris Knitting Course –Top down Raglan Workshop using Handspun Yarn

This was a day course held on Sunday 17th July 10am to 4pm at the Village Hall in East Hoathly attended by 15 members of the Guild.

I had attempted to knit a top down garment previously and didn't get on very well so I was hoping for some enlightenment!

Prior to the course we had been asked to knit a tension swatch in the yarn we intended to use for the garment and to take various body measurements. Although it was proposed that we could use our own handspun yarn we could of course use shop bought yarn.

We were given detailed written instructions a few weeks prior to the course on the tension swatch which once knitted was to be washed and blocked prior to the course. The tension swatch together with our own measurements would allow us to work out the number of stitches needed and increases required for our own variation on Fiona's basic top down pattern.

Fiona's basic pattern was for a raglan sleeve cardigan which could be adapted for a round or "V" neck and for varying sleeve lengths. The pattern could also be used to knit a sweater with an open neck.

Fiona started the course by giving an overview of the basic pattern we were going to use and how this could be adapted to produce different garments. She showed us a number of garments, some plain and some patterned, with long, short or three quarter length sleeves. These could all be adapted from the basic pattern we were going to use. The aim was to give us ideas for the style of garment we wanted to make, for example short or long sleeves, a round or "V" neck, the length of the garment and whether we wanted to incorporate a stitch pattern.

Fiona also discussed the various types of increases that could be used and how these looked on finished garments and how for example a yarn over could add a lace effect to the raglan arm increase. Fiona passed around samples she had knitted showing the different increase stitches which gave you an idea of how this would look in your own finished garment.

We then moved on to the "maths" part which was adapting the basic pattern to your fit and yarn. This was where the tension swatch came in and using this and your own measurements we needed to work out the number of increases we needed. The garment was cast on from the neck edge and increased either side of the raglan sleeve and at the front edge.

There were knitters of varying experience on the course and I think the majority of us found the "maths" part challenging. We had a worksheet to complete with notes to help us and Fiona came around to each knitter individually to go through our calculations but I personally found this quite difficult and felt I was in the middle of a maths exam. I could understand why we need to do the calculations but the actual process was quite complex and I struggled with the concept. It was quite a while before I got my head around it and even then I found the process of working out the number of stitches and increase required for your own individual garment pattern very difficult.

I think a number of us were frustrated at how long it was taking to do the “maths” bit and were keen to start knitting. It was early afternoon before I cast on although the actual knitting process itself made me understand how the calculations worked and I realised quickly I had gone wrong and needed to start again.

Fiona continued to go around the group giving individual attention. Some of us were on our way, if a little shaky may I say, and hoping they were doing the right thing. 4 o'clock came very quickly and we agreed that we would all continue knitting at home and have a catch up at the next Guild Meeting. I found that later at home, over the next few days, when I was able to go over the pattern at my own pace, that I understood the concepts more and realised how, once you had mastered the basic pattern you could use it to produce various different garments.

Overall I found it an interesting, although challenging course. I learnt a lot and hopefully something that I can now build on.

August 16 **Weaving skills day**

Ironically, even though I have been part of the Programme Secretary Team for nearly two years I have not been able to attend a Weaving Skills Day since 2014 and Gina C very ably organised last years event. Now my weaving skills are novice to say the least but I have now got a rigid heddle knitters loom and a 30 inch rigid heddle and frame bought at the last Exhibition. I brought along with me the larger rigid heddle so that I could assemble it and warp it up to make something. I also bought warp at the exhibition too, lovely organic cotton which is super soft. My intention originally was to warp up to make a rug but somehow my enthusiasm went off and warped up too finely to achieve this but there is enough warp and I have enough fine yarn in the stash to make a yard or so of fine cloth. The day went quickly with lots of interaction amongst members and guests. There were other looms to see (inkle, rigid heddle, strap) as well as a variety of weaving techniques. A great time was had by all and thank you everyone who brought their looms and expertise.

September 17 **Spinning, what's the point?**

An interesting talk by Amanda Hannaford started out early when she and her husband laid out an exciting range of dyed tops and other natural coloured fibres including some wonderful cashmere. Amanda and her husband dye all the wool themselves.

Then we were shown a Walking Wheel, a Pakistani Charkha and a Book Charkha all of course being spindle wheels. The first Walking Wheel was based around the wheel. The Huguenots brought the first solid ring wheels to Britain. The first settlers in America took their spinning wheels with them. The first wheel in India was the Charkha, a similar style was used for silk reeling in China. The fibre used on these wheels is generally cotton and Amanda explained how Gandhi was a great influence on the spinning of cotton in India.

A map was shown on screen to show the discovery of cotton throughout history.

The first spinning wheel was believed to be used 1,120AD. There was also a selection of spindle whorls and during the talk there was a video of some very old spindle whorls dating many hundreds of years, the basis of drop spindles today.

Amanda explained the difference between the bobbin driven pull on the spinning wheel and the twist and wind of the spindle. She also gave us a demonstration of spinning on a support spindle. The ratios of wheels were mentioned meaning the number of turns of the wheel to turns of the flyer, for example a traditional Ashford might be used at 6 to 1 while the Charkha can be as high as 36 to 1.

In 5000 BC cotton seeds were found in Mexico. The first cotton was grown in Greece. In India they believed cotton was sheep's wool growing on trees so it was referred to as “The vegetable lamb of Tartary”. Cotton was used for Candlewick embroidery in England.

A video picture of the Venus de Milo at the end of this very interesting talk showed what it would have been like if she had arms, she would surely have been holding a spindle.

September 18 **Core spinning workshop**

Don't tackle your teeth with your Doffer! By Pat Oakley

After hearing Amanda Hannaford give a fascinating talk about Spinning on Saturday 17th September (who knew that development of the Spinning Wheel was partly responsible for initiating the Industrial Revolution?!), I was curiously waiting what the Sunday workshop would bring for myself and 12 other intrepid spinners (not that we wanted to start any kind of revolution).

Sunday began with a demonstration from Amanda of the spinning we would be learning to do during the workshop followed by a review of how to use drum carders – a number of us had never used one before and I think it would be fair to say we are now 'hooked'...and on the lookout for 2nd hand Barnett's. When using a drum carder, main points to remember are: less is more when it comes to feeding fibre in; length of fibre should be no longer than 4-5 inches to avoid tangling, and place some wool over any silk or 'slippery' fibre to ensure all fibre ends up on the big drum. Remove the carded fibre using your Doffer.

Core Spinning was our aim for today and involves 'wrapping' your (thicker) carded fibre around a (thin) core fibre (in our case cotton but you can use anything as long as it's strong enough) on our spinning wheels. Maintaining tension on the cotton holding it straight out from the wheel with one hand, feed the carded fibre onto the core holding it at an angle. Keep tension on your bobbin low to avoid the spun fibre being 'pulled' in too fast. Avoid twisting of your carded fibre (before it has been spun onto the core) by holding it at right angles to the cotton as you tease it out. Then reduce the angle and allow the carded fibre to wrap around the cotton.

Once you have completed your core spinning, finish your yarn by doing a 'spiral ply' which is exactly the same technique as core spinning. Whereas your core during the spinning phase will be hidden from view, when you come to plying, this core will be seen. Amanda suggested using cotton if trying this technique for the first time.

Everybody had a successful day due to Amanda's expert tuition and we all enjoyed seeing the colourful results at the end of the day. Many thanks to Amanda (and 'Ginj') for coming to visit the Guild and core spinning and spiral plying will no doubt make their way onto the skills share timetable in the future. *Illustration p.10.*

Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers - Conference and AGM by Stella Wiles Bishop Grossetesse University Norwich 2016

Both Jean Weddell and I had chosen to attend the Conference because of the scheduled speakers, and then found ourselves with jobs to do – I as our delegate for the AGM and Jean who volunteered as our observer. I am not reporting on the AGM as that was sent to the Guild separately.

Headed by Vice President Peter Penneck, the Guilds organising the event had made excellent plans for the weekend with wonderful speakers, and all went with a flow. The 56 members attending the event were accommodated on the campus so everything was close to hand and it was good to get to know names and faces of people who work voluntarily for the Association.

After the usual signing in and settling in, we were welcomed by the committee, then as hoped, Stuart Groom arrived. From his wheelchair he spoke informally, but emotionally, of his pleasure at being back with us all. He thanked us for all the get-well messages he had received.

Jenny Balfour-Paul then spoke at length, giving, not just the welcome we expected, but, a long talk about her recent visit to launch her new book 'Deeper Than Indigo' in Burma. (there is a report by Jenny, 'Snapshots from the Land of the Lotus Weavers' in the summer edition of the Journal). It was a real treat. (The programmed speaker for that evening, Daniel Harris was unable to attend and was replaced by Alison Brown).

This was the first talk on conservation, and not restoration, I have heard, with the difference of using modern yarns and fabric which revealed where the repairs had been made.

Alison Brown of Doddington Hall Tapestry Conservation team told us of the six year work on the tapestries.

None had been moved since their installation in 1760. It has been an important project to conserve the tapestries as the inclusion of figures of common tradesmen and the gentry in tapestries is rare. 1600 plus tacks were removed and the tapestries taken down which revealed the brick and lime plaster walls for the first time since the 1760s. The tapestries were carefully vacuumed before wet cleaning in Belgium. The water was thick with soot and dust. The broken warps and missing weft were repaired with modern yarns and then the tapestries were lined with linen, using conservation (visible) stitching. With the additional weight another mechanism for hanging the tapestries had to be found.

Three inch Velcro was attached on all sides and fixed into corners, around doors and over the fireplaces on frames. The tapestries now look as they did before they were removed from the walls in 2010 – but clean.

Fiona Gardner

Our second speaker Fiona Gardner, moved to Australia at age 23, and has a large flock of Merino sheep on Taramin Farm on South Island. Australian sheep farmers strive to keep their flocks white, but Fiona was interested in the coloured merino. She advertised for black lambs and got no replies except ones of contempt! Gradually, over many years as well as white sheep, she had reasonable sized flocks of different colours, but also bred them to achieve a fine count as low as 18nm. She then aimed to get her beloved coloured sheep fleece to the top of the fashion industry. In 2007 she gained the interest of Loro Piana of ultra-luxury fashion. He would buy the coloured fleece, but not the black. Fiona insisted that he took all the colours, for without the black there would never be the colours. (In biblical times, all sheep were black). He agreed! Fiona calls him 'God' and recalls the day when three red and white helicopters landed on her farm and she entertained Loro Piana to lunch in her kitchen. Just immediately before coming to Conference, some of the wool had been blended with silk and we were the first to see this new fibre and take a little.

Because of her determination, she has a niche market which all other Australian farmers shunned – clever woman. A fascinating talk by a dynamic lady.

Bobbie Kociejowski

Bobbie loves to talk about Designing with Colour and colour interaction. This talk explains how sometimes we lay out colours for a project to knit or weave on the table and the end result is disappointing. The colour wheel was used to explain primary, secondary colours and what is meant by tone and hue. We learnt how colours have different visual weights and how much of one colour is needed to balance with another before it dominates. We learnt of colour compliments and contrasts.

However many times I have listened to Bobbie talk about colour, I am forever learning more. Sadly for those who have not heard this lecture, this was the last time Bobbie was to give her talk 'Designing with Colour', but happily Bobbie will still continue teaching and with her weaving.

Adam Jordan

Adam is a young, enthusiastic, disabled weaver – and certainly a one off. His lame right arm seemed not to be a disability! He told an amusing tale of how his grandma allowed him to have a loom upstairs in her house - which was adjacent to his family home, and how, when she died, the wall between the houses was knocked down to move the loom back home! He works in an unconventional way and admits he does not understand colour and declares he is not a weaver. His work is wacky and he produces articles which include maribou feathers and beads.

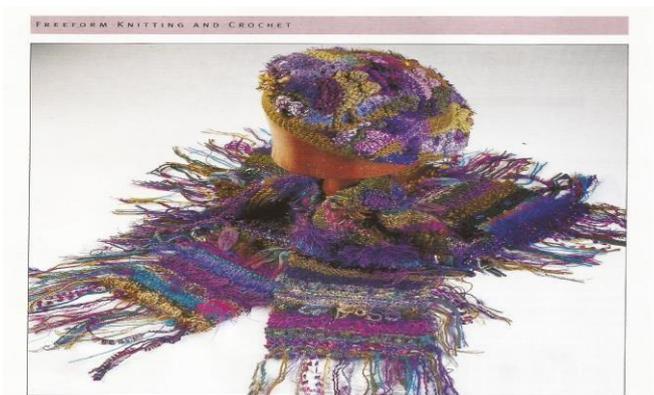
Although he makes some wall panels he also creates the most beautiful evening bags. These are no more than nine inches in width and each is deliberately unique. Pink is his favourite colour and frequently uses it with black and white. He also makes lampshades and this is a theme he is

expanding at present. He is a most likable, easy talking young man and was fun to have at the end of the Conference weekend.

I can wholeheartedly recommend the Conference weekend. All the organising Guilds put together commendable enjoyment for us all. I was aware that our big Guild was so lightly represented and moreover you all missed a treat. The next one is nearer to home at Milton Keynes in 2018 – keep it in mind.

Scrumbling! Unleash your creative side!

Freeform crochet and knitting is the seemingly random combination of crochet, knitting and possibly other fibre arts to make a piece not constrained by colours, stitches, patterns or other limitations. The scrumbles you make can then be used as individual pieces or joined together to create a larger fabric. They can be fixed to a base material – for example felt – to make a hat or bag. There are no constraints with stitches occurring in a random manner, changing direction as the knitting or crochet takes you and you can alter the stitch type and needle size to suit. You can use whatever wool, yarn or thread you have to hand and the technique is particularly useful for using up those special balls of wool in your stash which may not be quite enough for a larger piece. The idea is to adapt, customise, modify, turn and change colour sometimes using weird or unusual thread combinations. Generally, scrumbles do not have instructions or a pattern to follow as they are intended to be unique and have a 'free form' style. See also page 3 for Shelagh Duffill's scrumbling workshop.



Navajo Weavings June 2016 by Virginia Blackburn (abridged)

Property investor Peter Herfurth is a collector of Navajo weaving. He started buying in 1981 and now has 40 pieces. Navajo weavings are now considered some of the most desirable of all Native American textiles with the best pieces reaching \$650,000 to \$750,000.

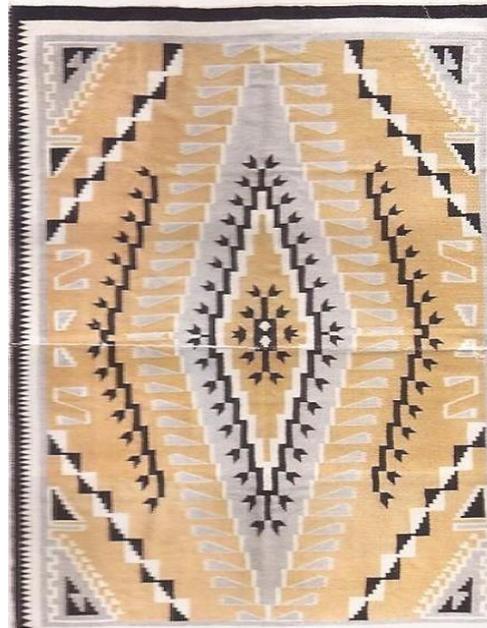
These woollen textiles began to develop in the southwest with the arrival of the Spanish who brought sheep with them. The oldest weavings are from the

1700's. It is the simplicity of design and vibrant colour that draws you in although early examples used undyed wool in brown and white. The weavers began to use plant-dyed yarns in the mid.19th Century, switching to synthetic dyes around 1870-80. Natural dyed works are the most desirable with spectrographic analysis being used to determine if indigo or aniline dye has been used.

The patterns evolved with three distinct design phases. The first was stripes, the second stripes and an odd number of little squares, typically nine, and the third included diamond shapes instead of squares, inspired by Mexican Saltillo weaving.

Shiprock Santa FE gallery currently has a number of chief's blankets for sale including a c1890 Navajo Germantown example at \$18,000 in black, white, red and purple. The term 'chief's blanket', however, is a misnomer as the Navajo don't have chiefs. They were so called as only the chiefs of other tribes could afford them. The blankets were primarily produced for the Navajo themselves and tend to have simple banded designs whereas the rugs were intended for a wider commercial market and are more complex. The latter were produced from 1890 to 1915 and sell for between \$35,000 and \$60,000. Rugs dating from 1900 to 1925 start at around £5,000 and are known as 'dazzlers' as "there is a lot of movement and colour in the geometric shapes", said Jan Finch, a specialist in

ethnographic art. But not all collectors want to be dazzled. Fred Klein, a collector who now has 35, including several chief's blankets, looks for the natural desert colours.



Illustrated: Examples of Navajo weavings Top picture 1870 flannel chief's blanket \$75,000

Bottom picture C1950 Trading Post rug \$ 6,618 **Beaming On – The art of the warp spreader** I thought readers might be interested in this rather more industrial aspect of weaving – Gaynor Lamb

(Ed.)

For those of you involved in weaving cloth, purchasing your preferred warp yarn is just the start of the yarn manipulation process, as the quest begins for a perfect back beam. For small warps of up to approximately 3.2 yards, with the help of a friend pulling manually on the warp ends, you can manage to roll the threads in a fashion that at best, may be adequate and at worst result in broken ends and a bird's nest!

The solution to the problem of even warp tension is to control the threads using the ancient craft of the warp spreader. This skill allowed the warp to be removed from the mill in a chain or on a warp stick and then with the aid of the beamer drum, get the threads onto the beam all at the same tension. Read **Warping the Threads of Time** to learn about the warping process which takes place prior to Beaming on.

The warp is made up of many sections, or “portees”, as the warp threads are accumulated on the mill. The “portee” could be any number of ends, preferably even numbers, consisting of up to 96 bobbins on a creel. A narrow width silk warp of 53.5 cm (21 inches) could require 4992 ends in the width, by running a creel of 96 bobbins back and forth 52 times to get the number required. The portees must be tied up individually whilst on the mill to keep the risk of slippage off the mill to a minimum. Traditionally warps were “chained off” by pulling off the entire core of assembled threads from the mill and looping the warp over the hand continuously to form a loose chain which shortened the length for the ease of handling. The method worked well for lengths of warp up to around 40 yards but holding the warp under tension manually as the core of threads were plaited off became more difficult for longer lengths. The answer to this was to wind the warp onto a holding arrangement known as a “warp stick”. This was a flanged broad bobbin enabling the warper to wind off continually, direct from the mill in a folding method to lay the warp core as neatly in a slight traverse from one side of the flange to the other. This would enable a two piece (120 yards) length to be warped and wound off in a safer way than chaining off.

Illustrated: Members skeins from core spinning workshop p.7



A warp stick hanging outside a warp spreaders house in Spitalfields

When the warp is safely wound onto the warp stick it is ready to wind back onto the beaming drum. This mechanism is a horizontal timber drum constructed on a centre spindle so it freely rotates. To tension the drum whilst spreading the warp, weighted leather straps are suspended around the diameter. A warp spreader was a specialist trade, the art of putting the correct number of threads onto a back beam in the loom all at an even tension was a craft occupation. The success of the beaming depended not only on these hand skills but on the amount of length you could spread between the drum and back beam. The length needed was important to keep all threads evenly

tensioned and the success of this process was to have a great impact on the weaver's challenge to weave perfect cloth. On extra wide cloths of 63 inches, such as those made by Daniel Walters in the early 19th Century, the beamer would have double drums to allow for the wider spread required.



Long warps on vertical chain mills in the jute industry The warp can now be wound onto the beaming drum in reverse by attaching the warp ends to a rope wound around the drum. The rope will allow the entire length of the warp to be wound on the beam by allowing the cross end of the warp to reach the raddle face. The warp must be neatly rolled onto the beamer drum with the threads in their gathered state so that they do not pull over one another. In order to spread out the threads the "portees" (sections) need to be put in order and divided equally across the width planned. This requires the use of a raddle which resembles a large comb to keep the threads aligned whilst winding onto the beam. The threads are retained by a cap on the raddle, which keeps the threads in the slots used.

When the threads are spread in the raddle and the cap is in place over the pins, the portee ends which are spread on a "dweet" are attached to the back beam. A "dweet" is a steel rod used to accommodate the required width. The beam may now be slowly wound around to pull the warp forward and onto the back beam. The beam is held in position on the beamer stand which enables the back beam spindles to revolve in bearings. The beam is wound by a hand driven gear attached to the beam which pulls the warp



Richard spreads out the “portees” in the raddle

on. As the warp winding proceeds the raddle is placed back to allow progress and wind on. Side way traverse on the beam is achieved by moving the raddle from left to right. This traverse levels out the uneven build-up on the beam. Regular papers should be inserted which are at least a revolution of the beam in length. The purpose of the paper is to even out any different warp yarn tensions that may have built up during the process. Also paper collars are used on the edges of the warp to keep the edges level on the beam.

Over tensioning the warp edges in beaming can spoil the weaving process as the threads will unravel slacker than the central ones making for a bow in the fell of the cloth at the reed's edge. The attention to this process cannot be over stated. Difficulties in this beaming-on process occur when threads in the raddle divisions snag with one another if they have any slackness. Therefore, each forward movement of the raddle must be carried out with caution as a broken thread could be lost out of the warp sequence.



This process was superseded in the 19th Century in most weaving operations, by the invention of the