

Wiltshire Guild
Spinners Weavers and Dyers



Newsletter December 2011

Letter from the Editors.

We have had a lovely year getting to know people in the Guild and learning new skills which are shared so generously by all the members.

It has been quite a challenge to get to grips with the technology involved in producing the newsletter, but we hope that you have enjoyed our efforts.

Please feel free to give us ideas for items to be included and for articles that would be of interest.

If anyone feels the urge to pick up a pen or grapple with a keyboard and write news, reviews, patterns, or recipes please do not hesitate to get in touch. You can e-mail us or see us at the Guild meetings.

We hope that you all have a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful 2012.

Harriette Dottridge and Julia Shahin



A Warm Welcome to new members:

Liz Alford, Sue Andrew,
Jenny Atkins, Margaret Batchelor,
Una Carlow, Jennifer Coates,
Susan Davies, Simon Davies,
Charlotte Davey, Di Drinkwater,
Christine Ford, Beryl Francis,
Carolyn Haynes, Helen Newberry,
Rachel Newman, Gill O'Rork,
Ann Patel, Lyn Pybus,
Christine Ramsay, Lyn Ritchie,
Janette Sawyer, Laura Searle,
Jenny Smith, Dawn Thompson ,
Jose Walklate and
Daniel J Williams.

Chair's Report Nov 2011

Dear Guild Member

We recently had our AGM which proved to be a constructive and dynamic meeting, with many positive contributions from the floor. The normal meeting procedures were followed; previous minutes, my annual report and Terri's etc. I don't want to repeat every detail but the two main items were the Proposals and the election of a new Committee.

The main Proposal was from Terri (our Treasurer) who will explain it in her own report in the Newsletter. The result was that the subscription will be raised to £30 with the option to review the following year. This will not come into effect until next subscription year.

The election of a new Committee was agreed, with Jo Anderson stepping down and new members Margaret Moore and Sue Thatcher elected. The rest of the Committee stays the same. My thanks must go to everyone on the Committee which has been very small in the last year. This has meant a lot of work for a few people and hopefully next year the load can be spread a bit more. Particular thanks go to Jo who has been suffering from a broken wrist as well as other medical problems but has still worked tirelessly for the Guild.

Under AOB a suggestion was received from Rosemary Speller that we show our support for the Ashford Company in New Zealand, who have suffered a lot of damage after the recent earthquake. After some discussion we agreed that we would send them a card and photos of the Guild using Ashford equipment. The meeting did not feel it was appropriate to send a financial contribution.

We then had a normal Guild meeting. The main issue is what to do about our exhibition. We have the opportunity to be part of The Cloth Road, which is the local Arts Trail, as an alternative to our normal annual exhibition. This would be on our own premises and would be excellent publicity for us. We don't know if this would raise sufficient funds to replace the £500ish we made in Bradford , so we may have another event later in the year. This was agreed by the members but I emphasised that it needs commitment from the Guild as it involves two weekends and the week in between. This will be from Sat 5th May until Sunday 13th. Please mark it in your diaries; we will need items for Exhibition and Sale, Stewards, Demonstrators and people to sell refreshments. This is provisional on us getting our lease and rating exceptions checked.

Something I should have done formally at the AGM was to thank Helen Haysom and Sarah Maclean for their work sorting out the library, and Julia Shahin and Harriette Dottridge for doing the Newsletter. These were jobs previously done by members of the Committee, so it was a great help when they agreed to do them. Also I would like to thank Auili Part who has worked so hard in the Dye Garden.

This will be the Christmas Edition of the Newsletter so can I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thanks again to everyone for their support

Lesley Greaves

Chair



A reminder of the facilities available at Steeple Ashton on non Guild meeting days.

There is a charge of £20 per term for membership of the Weaving Group, with £2 door money payable each time you come.

The Weaving Studio is open for weavers on

Tuesdays: 10.00-4.00

Thursdays 10.00-4.00

Spinners, knitters, felters and dyers are welcome to come in on these days; £2 door money payable as usual.

The Patchwork Group meets fortnightly; at the moment on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, but changing to 2nd and 4th Wednesdays after Christmas.

Some equipment can be loaned from the Guild: a typical example is an Inkle Loom which would cost £4.00 for a month. Wheels, looms, drum carder etc. are also available.

The Library has now been moved downstairs and is being catalogued on computer. The cost is 30 pence per book for a month.

For more information contact any member of the Committee or just call in.



Natural Dyeing Group

The Natural Dyeing group's meetings will start again on first Saturday of April 2012. The group has about four regular participants, although there are quite a few members of the Guild who have an interest in natural dyeing. We are happy to welcome anyone who would like to come along. We dye samples of our own yarn or fibre using plants from the garden and from our own gardens and allotments and spend part of the day tidying the garden. We felt that as we would need to heat the portacabin as well as using the cooker, it would be too expensive in winter. We will discuss what our charges should be, how often we should meet and the programme for the summer of 2012 at the April meeting. Meanwhile, if you would like to join us please speak to Auli Part, Julia Shahin or Harriette Dottridge.

If you are looking for a useful book for your Christmas list this one was updated in 2010: *Wild Colour, how to grow, prepared and use natural plant dyes* by Jenny Dean, published by Octopus Books £12.99.

Harriette Dottridge

The Treasurer's report AGM 2011

I would like to say how wonderful it was to see so many of you attending, over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the membership.

The end of the financial years bank balance stood at £8,308.10, an increase over last year's sum of £331.91, not a huge amount but at least it is on the positive side.

The spinning and weaving courses run by Rosemary Speller and Jackie Pohnert respectively have proved a great success in both adding to the coffers as well as introducing more potential members. This along with the new and increasingly successful patchwork group gives us a current membership of 89 full members and 5 associate members.

I put in a proposal for a £5.00 increase to next year's subscription fees to cover the increasing costs of electricity, gas and rent compounded by the fact we will have to pay rates from April next year as the local government rating department is not giving out discretionary grants due to the current financial crisis.

We will however still receive our mandatory relief due to our charitable status. The total sum of increments for next year will be approx. £2050.00 based on this year's prices. Having heard all the evidence a unanimous decision was taken to increase the yearly fee from next September to £30.00.

We are looking for suggestions for other suitable groups that can be run under the Wiltshire Guild Textile Studios name, all ideas are welcome.

Another item was the library; it was greatly under used last year. We now have a new designated library area down stairs by the office; so that you can browse in peace. Hopefully if sufficient numbers borrow the books, we will be able to afford to buy some more.

Terri Dodd



The Annual Exhibition

The Annual Exhibition was a great success although at the time we had many reservations. The West Barn is a beautiful venue, but despite making use of the upper floor as well this time, we still found it a little small and there were many complaints on the costs of parking, with the result we have not rebooked for 2012.

Ideas for an alternative venue are being sought; however we still need to find ourselves on a tourist route with a similar rent outlay. If you have any suggestions please see a member of the committee as soon as possible.

The takings for the 2011 exhibition were £3444.49 leaving us with a profit after everyone was paid of £597.27 a sum we cannot afford to lose, so please put on your thinking caps.

For anyone who wants a run down on how any of the figures in my report were achieved there are copies available.

Terri Dodd

Rosemary Speller's Spinning for Beginners

There were five of us on the six week course this autumn. It is fair to say that Rosemary packed an awful lot into the very well-structured lessons. We learnt the basics right from checking with the doctor that our tetanus injections were up to date before handling raw fleece; learning to politely decline the offer of a free fleece if it is going to be difficult to work with and only making garments with any dog hair content if the intended wearer does not mind the smell of damp dog. We are now more confident in choosing a nice fleece, being very brave and sorting out a surprising amount for the compost heap, scouring, teasing, carding, spinning, plying, finishing the yarn and planning the methods used for different types of end use. We are now well aware that our journey as spinners has only just begun, but are all keen to travel.

Julia Shahin

Forthcoming Programme 2012

This is my first time as programme secretary and I hope you will enjoy the variety of speakers that I have arranged for the coming year. I am away in January and so unfortunately will miss:-

21st January – Our ever popular In-house Skills Day.

Jenny Smart sharing her wonderful Kumihimo braiding skills. Please bring a Marudai and threads

Auli Part with her popular woven paper baskets. Please bring scissors and old glossy magazines.

Judith Kennerdale will show you how to make dyed silkworm cocoons into jewellery.

Diana Bennie will be showing how to produce some wonderful colour blending on the drum carder. If you have a drum carder then please bring it with you together with any fibre you want to blend.

Jackie Pohnert will be helping with some basic weaving in Studio Three.

18th February - Guild Morning followed at 2.00pm a talk by Clare Clensy

Clare has completed an apprenticeship at the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court Palace. As one of the few people trained in this traditional way she can be called upon to work on Robes for royal ceremonial occasions. Clare has her own Studios 'Vine Embroidery' at March Farm, Hilperton where she holds many and varied workshops, teaching wonderful hand embroidery.

17th March – at 11.30 a talk by Europa Chang Dawson

In the morning Europa will talk about the uses and legends of Chinese Knots and at 2 pm she will show us how to make a Chinese style tasselled lavender bag. Europa will supply the silk rope and most other materials you will need, for which there will be a charge of no more than £5, but you will need to supply the lavender to fill your bag, a pair of scissors, glass headed pins, an 8" or larger cork mat, a sewing needle and a larger needle with a sewing needle and a larger needle with a rounded point (as used for sewing up hand knitting). Traditionally these knots were to ward off evil spirits and act as good luck charms. As this course is likely to be very popular let me have your names as soon as possible.

Valerie Laverick

Review of September Guild Day:

Julia and I travelled together and immediately were swept up in putting out the newsletters for collection, chatting to people and working out where the workshops were going to be and at what time.

At about 11.00 we went over to Studio for Anne Lander's Rolag workshop. We were almost three deep but ensured everyone was able to see and hear as Anne explained how to make mini-rolags which are particularly useful for the shorter stapled Down sheep wool. She demonstrated how she made little, airy rolls and even how she could make two at once. We all then had a go – which, given the number of us there, was almost a health and safety risk with hand-carders being wielded backwards and forwards. Anne gave us samples of different wools and fleeces to feel and helped us understand better how they could be processed. Then she demonstrated long draw spinning with her little rolags and several of us had a go to emulate her beautiful fine yarn. I have since practiced making much smaller rolags as she showed us and have found it much easier to produce a more even yarn and even had a light-bulb moment when my hands and head fell into sync! Thank you, once again, Anne for sharing your knowledge and experience.

After lunch Helen Haysom and Diana Bennie gave us a drop and supported spindle demonstration and workshop. They explained the different sorts of spindles, how to start the wool off on them, how to join new fibre onto the yarn already spun and why Helen has quite so many spindles of different weights and styles! A number of us had a go and I certainly found her explanations helpful and have managed to wind my yarn onto my spindle diagonally, as she explained which not only makes my spindle more balanced but takes less effort to wind on. I'm always keen to learn useful, labour saving hints like that. Diana explained how cotton and fine yarns need much more twist in them so smaller, lighter spindles are used while for thicker yarns and longer fibres less twist can be used. I still want to learn how to ply with a drop spindle, but again I enjoyed their demonstration and have felt much more confident about using my (only two) drop spindles since.

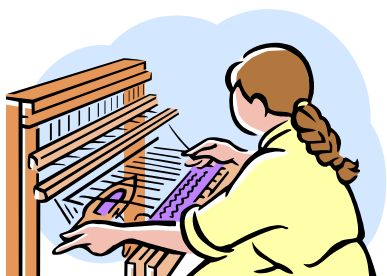
Harriette Dottridge

Advanced Crochet Workshop

The afternoon at the October meet included an intermediate workshop with Sue. I had taken her beginners workshop, which I found really helpful even though I have been dabbling in crochet for a



while. We were shown how to form texture stitches such as bobbles and popcorn. A range of stitch heights was demonstrated together with a really lovely ripple stitch in two colours. It was an interesting class and was fun but at times was challenging. Ultimately



though I was left wanting more. Sue has agreed to come back and cover filet lace which I definitely plan on tackling. I also hope she can find time to cover some

essential techniques such as crocheting without a foundation chain, and how to anchor and secure ends when changing yarn so it isn't necessary to deal with ends once the project is finished.

Helen Haysom

Talk by Marilyn Burton 19th November 2011

Marilyn told us all about the two year course she is doing with Janet Phillips learning extensive colour and weaving techniques. We were all amazed at the quantity of samples, notebooks and cloth she has produced in just nine months. She reassured us that she had given up

housework to produce this incredible amount of fabric but if you want to find out more she recommended Janet's book:

Designing Woven Fabrics Natural Time Out Publications

ISBN-13: 978-0955762017

The book costs £31.95 from her website which is

<http://www.janetphillips.clara.net/designingwovenfabrics.htm> although any good bookshop should be able to order it.

Harriette Dottridge

Anagram – Clue- Dates for your diary? Answer on page 23

That Cold Hero

Summer School and other Courses

Mabel told us how she'd done a Summer School Art course at City of Bath College. Here are some courses that could be of interest next summer.

Arts for Young Artists – 8-14yrs: £35 daily, £140 weekly.

Ceramics – one day: 19.5.12 or four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Creative Textiles – four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Fine Art – four day: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Fine Art – Stone Carving – four days: 17.7.12-20.7.12

Jewellery – one day: 25.2.12 or four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Millinery – four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Pattern Cutting – one day: 25.2.12 or four days: 10.7-13.7.12

Portraiture – two days: 12.7.12-13.7.12

Sculpture – theme: Human Head – four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

Stained Glass – four days: 10.7.12-13.7.12

One day courses are £48, two days £90 and four days are £158

For more information www.cityofbathcoll.ac.uk

or call 01225 312191 ext. 715 or 716.

Urchfont Manor in Devizes has lots of day and residential courses; they range in price from about £42 for a day course to £206 for a weekend residential course. Courses run all year but here are just a few examples:

Stitches for Pictures 13 July-15 July: £149-£206

Japanese Embroidery 23 July-27 July: £315-£409

Let's play with Dyes 25 July-27 July: £171 - £228

Beadweaving on a Loom with a Twist 21 August-23 August: £171-£228

Beadweaving for Beginners and Improvers: Ogalala Lace 20th August: £42

There are lots more in their Course Brochure

For more information <http://www.urchfontmanor.co.uk/>

or call (01380) 840495

Other colleges run courses so if you know of any which you'd like to recommend to others then please do let us know and we can include details in the newsletters.

Harriette Dottridge



Jackie Pohnert's weaving course and onwards ...

Lisa Layzell has only recently joined the Guild after doing Rosemary's spinning course earlier in the year and was introduced to the Guild at the AGM by Jackie Pohnert as her star weaving pupil of the recent weaving course!

Lisa showed us all her sample placemats, table runner, carpet wool bags made with left over warp and explained that her final project, a fine wool scarf, had already been given away as a birthday present. After only four weeks we were all impressed with her achievements.

I thought it might be interesting to find out how Lisa had "found" the Guild and what she planned to do with her new found skills.

Lisa was taught to knit and sew by her grandmother which sparked her interest in textiles and she has made many hats and small Christmas presents over the years. She'd always wanted to spin and picked up information about the Guild at the Frome Show just over a year ago. She signed up for the spinning course and so enjoyed the atmosphere and facilities that she joined the Guild. Then she decided to learn to weave.

She freely admits she gets bored easily on big items and wanted a way of processing her yarn (wool being her fibre of choice) more quickly than knitting and thought that weaving might be the solution. She learns quickly and picks things up easily particularly when shown how to do them. So the practical, hands-on involvement has been ideal. As she has a busy life and was unable to make one of the Saturday lessons she particularly appreciated that the weaving studio is open during the week and she was able to come in on a Tuesday when Jackie was about and could continue her weaving practice with support, when needed.

As well as two spinning wheels Lisa now has acquired two old rescue looms and, having just returned the borrowed table one from the Guild, intends to save up for one of her own. The floor loom has taken over the summer house and, whilst she misses him, the plus side of her older son having left home is that she has been able to dedicate his bedroom to fibre and associated tools!



Harriette Dottridge

Summer School at Bath City College 2011

One of life's regrets has been my inability to draw. This was especially so when I did City & Guilds embroidery thirty years ago and since then I have regularly decided to do something about it but have been too afraid of failing again. My memories of drawing at school are two. The first when I was about seven and was smacked for drawing a purple woman and the second, a couple of years later, when I drew a bird on the bottom of a piece I had written and the teacher said it would not be put on the wall because the drawing spoilt it. I am sure many others had similar experiences.

Well, in April this year a leaflet dropped through the letter box advertising summer school courses at Bath City College. There were a number on offer but what caught my eye was a four day fine art course and no experience required. Without thinking I had signed up over the telephone, wrote the dates in my diary and blanked it out of my mind because it was so scary.



The day arrived, I had paid and worse, I had told my neighbour, the principal of the college, I had enrolled so I had to go. I was faced with a room full of strangers aged from sixteen to seventy plus and a bunch of enormous easels one of which I had to erect and put a large board on it with shaking hands. Within seconds others had rushed to help me fathom it out. Once I had recovered from that I was able to observe the other people. There was a woman wandering round in a bath robe, now I had taken an apron thinking that would be enough to keep me relatively clean but how messy did she think we would get? Then I noticed she was wearing slippers! Blimey, she's escaped from hospital I thought. Nobody else seemed to think her odd so I just waited to see what would happen next. We were given a short talk by the lecturer about what we were going to do and the woman took her robe off! That was when I realised she was the life model.

Throughout the day we were issued with huge sheets of paper and various tools to draw with. Jackie Harding, the lecturer, could not have been more supportive and encouraging. She circled the room giving everybody individual attention. She could see I had no experience at all and gave me tips on where to start. She would always say something positive about some line I had drawn and then show me how to use that line to see where another piece of anatomy fitted in. We started with ten minute drawings and by the afternoon were doing an hour drawing. Between each drawing came the “show and scare” moment when we looked at each other’s work. By the end of the day I could draw without shaking. The second day included “messy” drawing using emulsion paint applied with strips of card to get the colour tones and more detail drawn with charcoal. At the end of the two days she told us how well we had done and then announced to the group that I had not had any lessons before and they all expressed surprise. All the others had varying abilities and the five sixteen to eighteen year olds were working on their portfolios for further education. All said what an excellent teacher Jackie is, how she encourages and is genuinely delighted by our efforts. The following two days were spent in the printing studio where we used some of our drawings to try out various types of printing. This teacher was equally as encouraging and I found the printing quite fun. The four consecutive days were tiring by the end but my family and friends were suitably impressed by my efforts.

Would I do it again? Absolutely. I can’t say I have consistently practiced drawing but I have lost the fear and am usually pleased with my attempts. I have enrolled on Jackie’s weekly class at the college and am really enjoying it even though it is challenging. She is so supportive, encouraging and obviously loves teaching and I am starting to experience drawing as an enjoyable activity.

The same summer schools are advertised for next year. It’s just a shame they all happen at the same time because I can’t decide which one to do. Sculpture, millinery, pattern cutting?

Mabel Smith.

My Textile Education: so far!

I've recently been on a couple of courses which I thought you might be interested in. The first was a Basic Rug Weaving Course with Jason Collingwood. Jason is one of the foremost weavers in the country so it was a great opportunity to learn from him. It was organised by the Cornwall Guild and was a weekend in their local village hall. We had to warp up in advance and I took my own loom. We only wove samples so a table loom was suitable.

The weekend was hard work; from 9.30 – 5.00 with only short breaks, but it meant we made the most of the time. We learnt different edging techniques and patterns as well as tips on weaving in ends and preparing shuttles. Jason was very patient and calm – he didn't mind demonstrating again and again and spent time going to each person individually to check their progress. Everyone had different skill levels but I don't think anyone felt awkward about that.

The Cornwall Guild provided fantastic home cooked food (including cream teas) which was included in the price. My husband and I rented a cottage for a week and stayed on to go walking and visit the Eden Project, but there are plenty of B&B s nearby for a weekend. It was very well organised by the Guild and they will be repeating it next year if anyone is interested. This will be from Fri Sept 28th until 1st October for £150. This is provisional. The subject will be blockweave. Please contact Audrey Durrant on audreydurrant@btinternet.com if you want a place. She is the Chair of Cornwall Guild so her telephone number will be in the Journal.



The other course I am doing is felting at Bicton College near Buddleigh Salterton. I went to the Fibre Fest they had there and saw the lovely things the Creative Textile Department produced and decided to do their Certificate course. This involves a long drive each week for 15 weeks but it had been well worth it. Just setting a day aside to concentrate on felting has been great. There are too many distractions at home as you all know. The course is more about techniques, creativity and colour, rather than producing particular items.

As a result of doing more felting, I'm wondering if anyone would be interesting in joining a felting group one day a month? Please let me have your thoughts.

Both courses have been completely different but I'm pleased to have done both. It really helps having structured learning and a tutor for support.

Lesley Greaves

Wordsearch

Here is a little puzzle just in case you have five minutes spare.

The words you need to find are :

Scour, bobbin, spindle, card, wheel, fleece whorl, ply, worsted, rolag

T	B	M	T	R	G	A	L	O	R	F
N	Y	L	P	J	P	C	R	E	S	N
R	S	X	S	F	G	S	C	O	U	R
Q	Z	P	Q	V	D	Y	Y	E	W	Y
C	U	N	I	B	B	O	B	A	O	N
A	A	H	A	N	H	H	U	E	R	E
B	S	R	P	L	D	R	L	L	S	C
D	U	Z	D	R	J	L	E	T	T	E
B	D	U	A	O	C	E	E	A	E	E
I	N	J	T	H	H	R	K	X	D	L
Q	R	N	E	W	B	T	I	A	J	F

French Cowl or Snood.

We have family in the South of France and I like to have a fairly simple knitting project for the long car journeys. I made this cowl or snood for my French daughter-in-law from a couple of 50g balls of fairly chunky variegated wool she'd chosen.



I've since made another out of two balls of Noro chunky wool in two different colour shades, which makes it a fun range of colours and that it'll go with almost anything!

My son has asked for one to use on his scooter when commuting across London.

I designed it so that it could be worn over the shoulders and round the neck or round the neck and up over the head, like a sort of hood.

Measure around your shoulders so that you make it loose enough to go round them, if you want it to do this.

Cast on 80 stitches on a circular needle or sufficient stitches to allow it to stretch round your shoulders.

K3, p2 repeated for the first 2 rounds

Then every 3rd row K1, Yarn over, K2tog, p2 – repeat for one round.

Continue with this holey rib till you've used one ball of wool.

Then K1, K2 tog, p2 for a round.

Then K2, P2 till you've virtually finished the second ball of wool, just leaving enough to cast off loosely.



Harriette Dottridge

The next best thing to a care-share buddy...

...is Radio 4. Harriette and I usually share a lift to Steeple Ashton, but I have been driving alone to the Spinning Course on Saturday mornings. The guests on *Saturday Live* are my companions for the journey and on 7th October, they included Elvis McGonagall and Gyles Brandreth. Elvis opened the show with this poem which he has kindly allowed me to share with you.

Keep Warm And Carry On

Things are unravelling, our fabric is frayed
Britannia is hanging by a thread
It's time for some woolly-minded thinking
It's time to make a balaclava for your head
So click your needles in Cheadle, clack your loom in Frome
Slip-stitch in Ipswich, darn your yarn in Speke
You'll feel miles better in your Gyles Brandreth sweater
Let's get cardiganed – it's National Knitting Week

by elvis mcgonagall

I was intrigued with his use of the reference to Frome, he explained that, he was challenged at a recent performance to include the word in the show. He certainly rose to the task. There may be those amongst us who are pleased to know that the noise they make when weaving in Frome has been immortalised in verse.

National Knitting Week was apparently 3rd to 9th October this year, but as every week is knitting week in my house I am afraid it went un-noticed.

If you would like to hear more of Elvis's work, he is an occasional guest on *Saturday Live* and performs all over the country. His website is <http://www.elvismcgonagall.co.uk/>

Julia Shahin

Sometimes, I think that the world would stop turning without homemade cake. My local schools have funded all sorts of projects using money generated by a stalwart army of Victoria Sponge makers. Now that my children are grown up, I no longer bake for P.T.A's, but, the cake baking tradition is alive and well in various fund raising events at work. A colleague made these rather lovely **Date Bars** and she passed the recipe onto me.

I am sure that the dates could be replaced with mincemeat, or, perhaps some stewed apples with dried fruit and a generous dose of cinnamon to give seasonal twist. The recipe is by **Rachel Allen** in her book **Bake**. If and only if, you hide these bars from your family and put them in a locked cupboard and throw away the

key, they could last a week in an airtight container. **Julia Shahin**

Date Bars

Ingredients

250ml (9fl oz.) water
200g (7 oz.) (stoned weight) chopped dates
175g (6oz) plain flour
½ tsp. bicarbonate of soda
175g (6oz) soft light brown sugar
100g (3 ½ oz.) porridge oats
Good pinch salt
175g (6 oz.) butter diced

Method

Preheat oven to 180 deg. C Gas Mark 4
Line the cake tin with greaseproof paper
Place water and dates in a saucepan.
Simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until the mixture is thick. Cool to room temperature.
Sift flour and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl. Add the sugar, oats and salt.
Rub in the butter with fingertips until moist clumps form.
Press half the mixture into the cake tin.
Spread the date mixture evenly over the base. Sprinkle the remaining mix on the top and gently press down.
Bake for about 40mins or, until golden brown.
Allow to cool completely. Cut into bars.

Sue Thatcher's Rocky Road Cakes which she brought to the AGM went a stage further in proving the theory that the world turns on homemade goodies.

Recipe for Rocky Road Cake

200g Rich Tea biscuits
300g dark chocolate (70%)
150g soft butter
3 tblsp golden syrup
100g marshmallows



Line a baking tin with foil or use a recycled foil tin.

Gently melt butter, syrup and chocolate in a pan. Reserve 125g of this liquid for topping.

Bash the biscuits into bits, leaving some lumps.

Add the biscuits and marshmallows to the melted chocolate and spread in lined tin.

Top with melted chocolate and refrigerate overnight.

Cut into squares and serve.

Thank you Sue.



Source of professional catches and equipment for bag making

I wondered if others would be interested to know about a great website I use quite a lot for bag making. It's called U-handbag and can be found at www.u-handbag.com. It's written and maintained by a lovely woman called Lisa who manages to give the site a very personal feel. There are lots of helpful free tutorials to help you fit bag hardware, zips and clasps, and how to create three dimensional shapes etc. It's really for people making bags from fabric rather than knitting or crochet but a lot of the techniques are transferable and she sells a good range of purse frames, handles, magnets, and closures.

01273 747112 Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 4pm

Or you can write to

**U-Handbag, 35 Lower Market St, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 1AT
Issy Whitford**

Around the World in Knitted Socks – 26 inspired designs by Stephanie Van Der Linden

This is a beautiful book full of a wide selection of socks. All but two socks have a minimum of two full colour photos and clear charts are provided for all except for Far Eastern Flair. This sock is a plain knit sock which is then decorated by interlocking circles embroidered on the surface. The patterns seem well and clearly written but I have not yet had an opportunity to knit from the books yet. At the start of each pattern there is a brief summary which links them to their country/region of origin. For example 'Knit Sampler' represents England as "The British Isles are home to a large variety of knitting patterns ... As a result, a rich treasury of expressive patterns developed, including the typical tree of life motif...".

As with most books each pattern includes details of the yarn used, needle size, notions and gauge. Finished measurements are provided for each sock and, where more than one size is offered the writer recommends going up a needle size. Every yarn used in this book is produced by Regia.

The majority of patterns are knit from the cuff down, which is my preferred construction. There is a mix of interesting construction such as use of an afterthought heel, fold over cuff, provisional cast on and Delft Blue appears to have an underfoot gusset to ensure continuity of the pattern. Most patterns make use of heel flap construction although there are at least 8 pairs with short row heels.

There are 15 colourwork, 1 sideways, 2 lace and 1 beaded sock as well as the embroidered sock I mentioned earlier. Within these socks Stephanie makes good use of a variety of techniques such as twisted stitches, travelling stitches and vikkell bands.

The book finishes with a good glossary and techniques section where instruction is provided about distributing stitches on dpns and 2 circular needles, short row heels, twisted stitches, stranded knitting and knitting with beads. Instruction is also provided on provisional cast on, kitchener stitch and finishing touches.

I am very happy with this book and would be happy to knit every pattern in the book. The book is published by Interweave Press, contains an index and 144 pages and is a softback.

I should like to say that I was provided with this book by UK Hand Knitters Association as a competition prize but it has happily joined my personal library.

Helen Haysom

Knitting Vintage Socks – New Twists on Classic Patterns by Nancy Bush

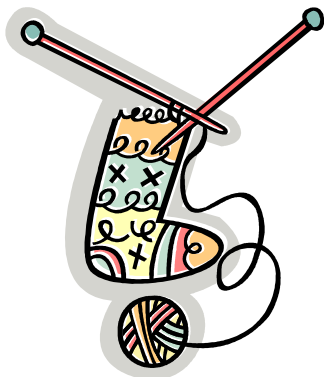
I must say that Nancy Bush is a knitting hero of mine and I find her very knowledgeable when it comes to socks. This book has been around for a while and is a classic, reworking 23 patterns that were originally published in Weldon's Practical Needlework. The book starts with an introduction by Nancy followed by a brief history of Weldon's. In section three Updating Weldon's Techniques excerpts from Weldon's are quoted, followed by a brief discussion. Within this section useful information such as using doubled yarn when casting on provides a more elastic cast on. Details of how to form four different heel shapes together with six different toes are provided. This enables the knitter to try a range of heels/toes and select the shape that is most comfortable for them. This section also contains 4 sock ribbed sock patterns although one is a variation of a pattern provided later in the book. Each sock showcases one of the heels discussed earlier in the chapter and four of the toes.

The following 20 patterns are then provided with a clear colour photograph, a copy of the Weldon illustration and details of the yarn and needle size detailed in the original pattern. For historians the volume and page the original pattern was printed in is also detailed. Each pattern contains sock measurements, details of the amount of yarn needed, needle size, notions and gauge. A nice touch is that the yarn used, colours and number of skeins is provided. The number of wraps per inch (wpi) is also detailed, which is useful if spinning for socks.

Each pattern also contains a brief instruction detailing adaptations made from the original pattern. The majority of patterns are textured although there are a few patterns that use accent colours. These socks particularly suit semi solid, tonal or solid coloured yarns. The majority of the instructions are written so this may not be a good book for knitters who prefer to work from charts.

The book finished with a list of abbreviations used and a glossary which details two varieties of cast on, 4 decreases, 2 increases, how to splice yarn and when this joining method can be used, a couple of ways to join the starting round, Kitchener stitch, gathered tip and how to measure wpi. A bibliography and list of sources (all located in USA) is also provided with the last page (120) containing the index.

One of the things I really like about this book is that a large portion of the patterns would easily be worn by a man and the colour pallet used in the book would make it easier for a gentleman to choose a pattern. This book is published by Interweave Press as a hard back book with a spiral spine, allowing pages to easily stay open.



Helen Haysom

Wanted

Dress weight cotton fabric for patchwork group. Please bring to Guild or give to committee member for group.

Wanted

Ashford Traditional spinning wheel with bobbins.

An older model would probably be suitable.

Please call -

Jeanne Laurence Telephone number 01373 827820

The Cloth Road – make a note of the dates! May 5th to May 13th

Answer to anagram on page 10

Guild Committee

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