

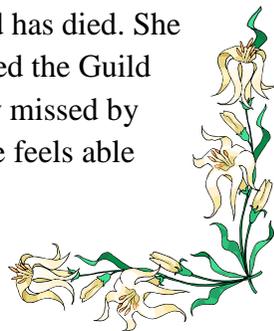
Wiltshire Guild
Spinners Weavers and Dyers



Newsletter December 2014

I am very sorry to tell the Guild that Mavis Whitford has died. She was a kind, generous, warm hearted person who loved the Guild and did all she could to support us. She will be sadly missed by us all. We look forward to seeing Izzy as soon as she feels able to join us.

Lesley



Letter from the Editors



We were both sad to hear of Mavis's death and send our love and thoughts to Issy and her family. With Christmas coming fast we have tried to include some seasonal items in this newsletter as well as excellent articles submitted by Guild members alongside some of the information from the AGM. We are quite excited that this is to be the first (mainly) electronic newsletter so have included colour pictures in it, but haven't redesigned it as it is also be printed in black and white for the few members who don't have email and in order to have a couple of hard copies at the Guild. Please do let us know what you think and any articles or ideas for them you'd like to see. We both wish you a peaceful Christmas and a creative New Year.

A very warm welcome to new members; Gill Cook,
Rebecca Pues, Rebekah Sloane Matner,
Kathy Yeaman, Chris Hewlett and Lesley Andrews.

Front cover photo: Mandala crocheted by Julie Holmes (a good stash buster)

Happy Christmas to the Guild

Although a few weeks ago I had not considered standing as Chair again, I am very glad to do all I can to help keep the Guild the thriving, exciting and worthwhile place it is. Sue has done a great job in the last two years and it's unfortunate that for personal reasons she's had to step down. Thanks go to her from all at the Guild.

I'm sure Sue will look back over last year in her report, so I won't repeat it.

Looking forward to next year we have really interesting Programme arranged as well as our annual Exhibition. As Terri said at the AGM, relatively few members contributed their work last year and I overheard comments at the AGM about members feeling their work wasn't good enough to submit. Please – we want EVERYONE involved. Our Exhibition is for ALL of us and all our work is valued. Just one piece of work from each of us would make such a difference. The Exhibition comes round really quickly, so start planning now!

The encouragement, development of skills, friendship, community and love of textiles that we all get from the Guild is invaluable. I'm sure we'll all enjoy the year to come.

Lesley

Chair



AGM 2014

The formal minutes of the meeting will be available for approval at the next AGM but a summary of the meeting is as follows:

- The Constitution was amended to increase the number of Committee members to 12.
- The named Officers will now be Chair, Treasurer and Vice Chair. Vice Chair replaces Secretary as a named post. There is so little correspondence to deal with now that most communication is via email.
- Due to personal commitments Sue Thatcher stood down as Chair
- The following people were elected:
Chair – Lesley Greaves
Treasurer – Terri Dodd
The rest of the Committee are Val Lenaerts, Jackie Pohnert, Kathy Davis, Collen Russell, Beryl Francis, Julie Holmes, Una Carlow, Margaret Moore, Lyn Pybus and Sue Thatcher. (*Roles listed on the back page*).
- Sales Table – volunteers will be asked for.
- Clearing up after meetings – volunteers will be asked for.
- An amended Constitution has been circulated.
- It was agreed that the next Exhibition will include all the groups who make up the Textile Studios. Each group will have a separate area.
- Information was requested about the hire charges for our equipment – this has now been circulated by email and available on website.
- The meeting wanted clarification about the different charges levied for different groups and the amount of notice given for changes. This will be reviewed by the new Committee.
- Rosemary Speller told the meeting that she will be handing over the running of the Spinning Course to Kathy Davis and Jackie Pohnert is intending to hand over the Weaving Course to Dawn Thompson. Thanks were expressed to both for their hard work and dedication to the Guild.
- Outings – there wasn't enough interest to fill a coach last year, so if the Guild wants an outing it will be organised on an ad hoc basis, maybe with our own cars.
- The next meeting of the Area Committee organising the National Exhibition is in March in Taunton, Lyn Pybus and Margaret Moore will attend.
- It was agreed to set up a Wiltshire Guild Face Book Page: Kathy Davis agreed to do this

Report of retiring Chairman - AGM 15th November 2014.

A warm welcome to new members and those attending the AGM for the first time. And big thank yous to the committee for all their dedication and commitment during the last year. And what a busy year we've had! It began with members making squares to complete our beautiful 50th Anniversary Wall Hanging. I was amazed to see the variation of squares and my thanks go to everybody who took part and thank you Lyn & Ron for putting it up.

Our early Guild meetings this year involved fund raising for the Estonian visit. Thank you to all of you who took part. During early March, the hall and staircase were decorated ready for the installation of the stair lift. Thank you to Jackie for obtaining the grant for this.

The next event was The Cloth Road running from 3-11 May. This was purely an Exhibition of our members' work, not to sell and we felt the efforts involved were generally worthwhile: attracting new members and publicizing ourselves. We felt we had quality from the fewer people who came because we are not on a direct route connecting to other studios around the area, meaning they were almost breaking their journeys to visit us.

Straight after the Cloth Road we had the arrival of the Estonians. They were with us from 17-22 May. I understand they had a very enjoyable time, joining in with the wide programme of events that had been arranged. I was really sorry I couldn't take part in any of those and would like to say a big thank you to the hosts for our visitors and to everyone who helped arrange and carry out activities for them. They left behind some really lovely gifts for us.

Halfway through the year was our 50th Anniversary Party. What a lovely day! The weather was wonderful: we had two gazebos set out in the field, welcomed many past and present members, had a wonderful buffet and received some lovely thank you messages from people saying how much they had enjoyed the day. It was just a shame more people were unable to attend. It was a very memorable day.

The year then rolled on to our Annual Exhibition in Castle Combe, from 19-26 July including the August Bank Holiday. It was a new venue we hadn't used before; we would have liked more things to exhibit but then we always say that. Generally it was a successful event and having a little more space enabled us to do refreshments again. I would like to say a huge thank you to all the people who made cakes for that week and kept us topped up. You were so kind and some people brought cakes when they weren't even stewarding on that day. That is my synopsis of the year. It seems to have rushed past very quickly.

In conclusion, I have individuals to thank:-

*Thank you to Rosemary for running the Spinning courses, both beginner and moving on. Also being on hand at Guild meetings to give help and advice to all.*Thanks go to Jackie for continuing to run the Weaving courses ensuring people have a good grounding to go forward with their craft.*Thank you to Harriette and Julia for the excellent job they do with our newsletters, always managing to find interesting things to fill them with. On that note, newsletters will be sent via email from now on to the people who are online. Those of you not online will still receive yours as normal. For anyone else requiring a hard copy, there will be a charge.*Thanks to Dawn for cleaning the buildings and to *Sally for her work, with *Auli keeping our garden tidy and stocked with plants related to our activities.*My thanks go to Ron Pybus for dealing with all things maintenance.*Thanks to Mike Morley for always ensuring our electrical items are legal and kept in working order. I have two big thank yous now: two people are leaving the committee this time after many years. *Thank you to Nova for all her time on the committee, taking care of everything and being so committed. *My other thank you is to Valerie, also for all her hard work and commitment, arranging of the programme each year and all things over and above her normal duties.



Finally, I would like to say what a privilege it has been to be in the position of Chair for the last two years, I am sorry, due to professional and personal commitments I am unable to continue. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me.

Sue Thatcher

National Exhibition 2016 in the South West

Lyn Pybus and Valerie Laverick attended the meeting on 4th October 2014 to represent the Wiltshire Guild as part of the South West area collaboration for the 2016 National Exhibition of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers.

This will take place at **Cotehele House**, a **National Trust** property near **Saltash** in Cornwall. (NT description: *This rambling Tudor house, with medieval origins, nestles in the Tamar Valley. **With no electric lighting**, time stands still in this former home of the Edgcumbe family. The Hall provides an impressive gateway to the warren of tapestry-festooned rooms beyond, embellished with carved oak furniture, embroideries, pewter and ceramics. The garden includes formal and informal plantings and orchards.*)N.B. **Torches probably required!**

Representatives of **Somerset, Cornwall, and Devon Guilds** all appointed as officers. **Judges** will be from outside the area for exhibition selection. **Date of exhibition: 8-18th September 2016**, with set up on 7th and take down on 19th. At least 12 stewards needed to cover 18 rooms in the house. **Hanging and Display:** Penelope Blogg, Dorset Guild. **Promotion and Demonstrations:** Paul Ashton and Devon Guild. Amanda Hannaford will help organising these: either in Education Room or outside if weather clement. **Certificate of Achievement** items might also be displayed. **Event Management:** Cornwall Guild. **Adverts** sought for brochure and to be sent to designers, Jo and Paul Differy. **Articles:** **Wiltshire** to provide an article about the Woollen Industry in and around Trowbridge. **Somerset:** Fox Bros, cloth makers and John Brightwell, spinning wheel manufacturers. Delegates to bring articles for next meeting.

Need to establish what is required; security provision, stewards, signage. It was felt that the NT publicity machine will take the lead. It will be mentioned in **2016 NT Book**.

120 articles selected for Norwich last year. **Two large suitcases of information and material sent to SWA to help the new Exhibition Committee.** Dorset Guild will take them and sort through. **Discussion about a theme:** Suggestion to be discussed at next meeting: **“Journey through Time”**, holding old and new textiles together.

Date of next meeting: 7th March 2015, Staple Hay, Lyn Pybus and Margaret Moore to represent Wiltshire Guild.

Thanks to Lyn and Valerie for providing notes, which I hope I have summarised adequately.

Harriette



Synopsis of the article in the Estonian Magazine “Käsitöö” (Handicraft) written by Liis Luhamaa, one of our Estonian visitors.

Auli Part

Welcoming England –Wiltshire

This May a group of handcrafters visited WGSWD. Our group consisted of spinners and sheep farmers Liis

Luhamaa, Julike Roos, Lilian Freiberg and Olivia Till; and textile artists Kadi Pajupuu and Tiivi Sooden, hand handcrafter Pihla Põldma, plus weavers Kristel Põldma and Veinika Västriik.

Thanks to our hostesses we saw Britain close up from a very different perspective. We lived with families, enjoyed handicrafts and the culture and typical landscapes of England.

This was the second group visit to Wiltshire Guild, this time as part of the Guild’s 50th Anniversary celebrations.

We travelled past famous Stonehenge, with people and sheep wandering about the venerable stones. We later visited Avebury stone circle, which, unlike Stonehenge, was free.

We passed huge fields of pigs – this being historically a pig rearing area. As the roads got narrower we were amazed as to how narrow and how high the roadside hedges were.

The spacious Guild rooms are in Steeple Ashton, which, in common with other nearby villages, has beautiful stone houses and gardens – just like in “Midsomer Murders”! In the Guild garden I noticed many familiar dye plants. Our hostesses made every effort to offer us as much as possible that was British – including a pub meal with ale and fish and chips on our first evening.



Anniversary Celebrations

Wiltshire Guild is very active with about 100 members. There are regular meetings, courses, exhibitions, trips and a newsletter. Very many members came on the celebration day.

Whereas in Estonia guilds consist mainly of professional handcrafters, in England they are what we would describe as handicraft societies, most of the guild members being hobby crafters. Everyone was very friendly and really interested in Estonia and Estonian handicraft. They enjoyed our small exhibition, especially Julika's fleece and Estonian handicraft books which were a present to the Guild. After Kristel's little talk, Kadi did a presentation about the invention of her special reeds, invoking a lot of interest. The richly laden lunch table was added to by our offering of "kilu" (fish like a Baltic sprat) sandwiches (all of which were eaten) and "Kalev" sweets.

Breakfast

The next day was on a canal barge in Bradford-on-Avon, a town known for its wool industry. Canals which used to be an important means of transport are now being restored all over England. We saw well preserved medieval buildings, the 14th Century Tithe Barn and 8th Century Saxon church.

Later in Lacock Abbey we followed the history of it to the present day. Lacock is also famous for Fox Talbot, producer of the world's first photo.

A truly English tea awaited us at 5 o'clock: beautiful china, strawberries and clotted cream, scones and traditional cakes from various English regions.

Colour and Detail

A very exciting day in Bath began with Kaffe Fassett's exhibition on his 50th anniversary in the American Museum. A real riot of colour; as Kaffe Fassett said: "If in doubt, add 20 more colours". Outside, his colourful wool baubles were hung on a huge tree; inside the textiles were shining out in every possible hue. Unforgettable were his wonderful patchwork quilts. The museum itself was memorable particularly for the historical patchwork quilts. Although from another continent, there was a connection in detail and workmanship with Estonian very fine wool knitting and weaving – both making one gasp.

Afternoon in Bath

A city famous since Roman times – now a World Heritage site. Our textile appetites were still not sated. Thus we went to the Costume Museum with costumes dating from the 16th Century onwards. The audio guide was really worthwhile, pointing out details of note and explaining the background of the costumes. It became really fun when we could try on the costumes, giving us new dimensions and a lasting memory.



Shetland Sheep

Our penultimate day was at Trish Gray’s farm. Trish is an extremely active lady, with her sheep and fleeces winning many prizes at shows. Shetland sheep, like some of our Estonian sheep, belong to the European short tailed sheep breeds. Shetland sheep are very colourful with 11 different colours and named combinations. As the weather warms it is possible to roo Shetland sheep. There is a special category for rooded fleece at shows. Trish had saved one sheep especially for us to have a go at rooing: i.e. separating the fleece on the back and gently starting to press downwards along the sides. It was very special feeling how the fleece separated and left behind a warm, fuzzy skin. We were able to have samples of these fleeces, soft and in many colours, to bring home.

Next day we said goodbye to Wiltshire Guild, but Julike and I still had adventures in Cumbria – next time in “Käsitöö”.

Eds. Thank you Auli for translating this article. It is especially good to see that the Estonian visitors really enjoyed their visit and appreciated the events and excursions.

Book Recommendation

Gill Cook (new member with amazing Fair isle pullovers) recommends “**Fearless Fair Isle**” by Kathleen Taylor (ISBN: 9781600853272) (available from about £10). You can browse through this book online and it certainly seems to have everything that you ever wanted to know about Fair Isle knitting with 30 patterns. *It is definitely on our “wish lists”.* Eds.

Dyeing with Janet Phillips

Last month Diana Bennie and I spent a very enjoyable and informative 3 days learning the secrets of dyeing with Janet Phillips. Her weaving studio is situated in the very pretty village of Nether Stowey in the Quantock Hills.

The programme that Janet had planned for us enabled us to experience 3 different types of dyeing and we arrived with samples of plant and animal fibres, some spun into small hanks, warps and wefts and a T-shirt or two – far too much as it turned out! One day was to be spent using Acid dyes on animal fibres, one working with Fibre Reactive dyes to make a painted warp and dye the weft and the last day was for experiencing Indigo dyeing. This all looked very simple and easy.....I had a lot to learn!

The first thing we had to understand was that all materials for dyeing had to be thoroughly washed to remove any chemicals used in the manufacturing process of plant fibres and of course dirt, which inhibit the samples from taking up the dyes efficiently. In fact it is necessary to boil cotton yarn. Secondly, this process, particularly with acid dyes, needs to be very precise; dye powders need to be weighed out with accuracy and mixed carefully with the equally carefully measured amounts of water.



When we had weighed out our animal fibre samples and thoroughly wetted them, we chose our colours and prepared 6 different dyes in large jam jars. The samples were then added and the jars were placed in stainless steel pans of water which were brought slowly to boiling point. This process could not be rushed; the aim was to bring the dyes up to 100c, monitoring the temperature and stirring the samples to make sure that the dye was evenly spread. When dyeing was

complete the water in the jars was clear!

While Diana was busy with that I painted my cotton warp with Fibre Reactive cold water dyes. This took place under the veranda of another studio in the garden, and was great fun. The warp was loosened and stretched out on boards and was painted with brushes, the weft was put into a bowl and soaked in the same type of dye. I had chosen Tencil which took the colour very well. The following day we changed over as there was insufficient room in the small 'kitchen' for us to work together. It gave us the advantage of being able to experience the 2 processes on both days.



On the last day we were introduced to the magic of indigo dyeing, which we loved. Because the weather was so fine we had our dye 'baths' in the garden. To watch the colour of the samples change from green to blue as they came into contact with the air was quite amazing. Diana dyed a number of hanks of different fleeces and plant fibres. On one of my T-shirts I put in 3 rows of over stitching and pulled them up as tightly as possible. The result is very pleasing and I am already wearing it.

While we were there a few students came on different days to weave or dye and it was good to meet and work with others. Janet's husband, Nigel, was on hand to provide us with well-timed cups of tea or coffee and blackbirds, robins and wrens serenaded us as we worked.

The whole course was very relaxed and great fun; Janet teaches with endless patience and thoroughness, her enthusiasm is infectious and stimulating and her standards are high.

The B and B at which we stayed is very comfortable and accommodating; we were well 'fuelled' to face each day with a large and extremely tasty full English breakfast!

Judy Bird

Why the Bobbin Rotates!

Whilst participating in the WW1 day at Codford this summer, I was asked by a gentleman, “Why does the bobbin [on the spinning wheel] *have* to rotate?” Having dutifully researched the Queen Mary’s Needlework Guild and their role during WW1 to prepare for questions connecting to the theme of the day, I was caught slightly on the back foot. Easy to know the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ but perhaps not always the ‘why’ in ‘why the bobbin rotates....?’

The answer may seem obvious, however I decided to go away and research, ‘Why the bobbin rotates?’ in more detail. It has led me to discover more about the evolution of the spinning wheel and has given me several happy hours of excuses to be lost in the wonderful world of spinning. At the same time, I notice that Paula and Helen are holding a workshop in the New Year on ‘Drop Spindling and What Wheel to Buy,’ so hopefully the exploration detailed in this item will provide interesting background reading to the topic.



Detail of *The Spinning Wheel*, by Chinese artist Wang Juzheng.

It’s widely agreed that the spinning wheel was invented in China about 1000 AD with the earliest drawing of a spinning wheel from about 1035 AD by Chinese artist Wang Juzheng, Song Dynasty 960 -1127AD. Spinning wheels later spread from China to Iran, from Iran to India, and eventually to Europe. For the previous 5,000 to 8,000 years, fibre was twisted or spun by hand on variants and precursors to the drop spindle.

The drop spindle is a slow way of making the long lengths of fibre required for weaving cloth. An even longer length of fibre was required to make the sails of Viking longboats. Spinning was therefore so important and time-consuming for cloth production that it was the bottleneck for clothing and for sail-making at a time when vertical warp-weighted looms were already in use to weave cloth and to an even greater extent when horizontal heddle looms took their place in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

It is not possible to accredit the invention of the spinning wheel to an individual but one day, around 1000 AD someone turned a spindle on its side, added a pulley and connected it to a drive wheel. Despite this useful development, when the invention reached Western Europe in the early 13th century it met with strong resistance. Wool merchants saw it as impairment in quality by producing thread that was lumpy and uneven. The method of spinning with a spindle, although time consuming and awkward, produced more consistently even thread. Nevertheless, the machine was simply more economical, saving almost half the work of hand spinning. The invention of the spinning wheel speeded up the rate at which fibre could be spun by a factor of 10 to 100 times, thereby alleviating the bottleneck to cloth production by a significant degree.

The ‘great wheel’ shown here is an example of the type of wheel that marked the first stages in mechanising yarn production. The ‘great wheel’ was a large spoked wheel with a belt that drove a thin shaft which twisted the fibers, and

around which the thread was wound by hand after it had been twisted. The spinner turned the wheel, often with a stick, and drafted the wool with the other hand. The great wheel was very good for creating long drawn soft fuzzy wools, but very difficult for creating the strong smooth yarns needed to create warp for weaving. Nonetheless, for weaving, weft thread did not need to be as strong as warp thread, so eventually, the wheel was accepted for that use.



Luttrell Psalter c. 1320 – 1340. British Library.

However, even with the use of the great wheel, the imbalance between spinners’ output and weavers’ needs led to further innovation. About 1480, craftsmen developed

a U shaped device which was driven by the wheel, but which had at first a brake (Scotch drive) and later two driven pulleys, one for the spindle and the other for the “flyer” so that the flyer spun around the spindle at a faster rate than the spindle turned, thus winding the thread on the spindle continuously. This was a dramatic technical innovation. As the historian Lynn White says,

“...It is the first instance of belt transmission of power and a notably early example of the flywheel principle... it focused attention upon the problem of producing and controlling various rates of speed in different moving parts of the same machine.”

The drafting principle was the same on the new wheel as its predecessors. With the flyer, however, the spinner almost doubled her output because the flow of work was uninterrupted, as she no longer needed to stop and take up her thread.

Subsequently, in 1533, a citizen of Brunswick, located in the lower state of Saxony (Germany), is said to have added a treadle which the spinner could rotate her spindle with one foot and have both hands free to spin. During the 16th century a treadle wheel with flyer was in common use, and gained such names as the Saxony wheel and the flax wheel. So the developments in spinning went on to newer and faster technologies, with the use of modern production methods in textiles playing a key role in the industrial revolution. The rest, as they say, is history.

And so my exploration of ‘why the bobbin has to rotate,’ concludes. The bobbin *has* to rotate, albeit it at a different rate to the flyer, so that it winds up the yarn continuously. I would also add that it has to rotate as it sits on the spindle and needs to be replaced when full, thereby necessitating the ability to remove it from the flyer. After all providing a new flyer each time it was full, if the bobbin didn’t remove, would surely be an expensive option!

I am grateful to the gentleman who posed the question, ‘why does the bobbin have to rotate?’ Firstly it reminds me that in ‘teaching’ one of the most valuable resources is your student. Secondly, I feel I could answer the question so much better now, albeit it in shorter form to save the poor chap’s patience! No doubt, having given the question full consideration, I will be posed with a *completely* different question next time. How else will I learn?! As a footnote, I have just spent a second session with Anne who kindly showed me how to use the drop spindle. Having impatiently dismissed it as being far too slow, I have since spent more time on it and have fallen in love with its simplicity and its insistence that one should slow down sometimes. Paula and Helen; please put me top of the workshop list as I would like to learn how to ply using the drop spindle. I never thought I’d say that!

Kathy Davis

Sources: Most authors agree that the practice of spinning fibres to form thread and yarns has been in existence for over 10,000 years. The fact that the spinning wheel evolved over time means that, by its nature, it is difficult to pinpoint its development to a specific time and place. Therefore there is slightly conflicting information about the place and order that the various developments took place. The author believes that facts in the article to be broadly accurate or as much as they can be.

Quilting Exhibition – Filton, Bristol – November 2014

www.westcountryquiltshow.co.uk

I thoroughly enjoyed my trip with my next-door neighbour and both had fun doing a workshop each. She learnt how to quilt free-hand with her sewing machine and I spent a happy hour painting in some paper stencils with fabric dye and then ironing them onto poly/cotton to make an embroidered patchwork ... not yet finished.



My teacher was Mary Gamester (www.mary-gamester.co.uk) who has self-published an excellent book with the techniques, suggested patterns and lovely clear photos and explanations. She used to be a children's teacher and it shows. I bought a set of her transfer paints (dyes for synthetic mix textiles which

need ironing to fix) and am looking forward to making things with grandchildren next year. The patchworks were fantastic and true art, not just craft and I could have spent a lot longer studying and enjoying them.

One stall which sorely tempted me was Rachel John and her Extreme Textiles (aka Megaknitz): I bought some enormous knitting needles (27mm) and hope that, using her techniques; I can get some positive stash-busting done and create some rugs and wraps.

www.megaknitz.com

Then I had a lovely chat with Sheila from Celyn Textiles who was doing some incredible machine embroidery with recycled coffee packets at the time I passed her! www.celyntextiles.co.uk.





Later I moved on to Liz Hewett and her African mud dyeing with African strip cloth stand, and was sad that I couldn't do the workshop the next day. www.celticstitch.co.uk

The final stall that I was particularly taken with was Monty's Beads www.montysbeads.com which is based in Exeter and I was able to get some lovely coloured beads to thread into my knitting and spent some time just admiring his wonderful range of semi-precious beads. I thought some of these exhibitors might just be of interest to others in the Guild and I'd share their contact details with you.

Harriette

Fund Raising Idea from Auli

How about arranging a spinning bee in your own home as a local fundraiser for the Guild? Most people can manage a light lunch and space for 3-5 people, with wheels or spindles. Maybe one weekend day, or on a dreary January day when you can share the fun, warmth and enjoyment of doing some spinning in company with local like-minded people.



Beautiful individually handcrafted buttons

Jenny Smart's husband makes beautiful buttons from various different types of wood. Each button is individually handcrafted. Prices are £1.50 each for the small size, £2.00 each for the medium size and £2.50 each for the large buttons. They are available from Jenny Smart on Guild Days or contact; jensmart@talktalk.net, 0117 960 3310.

News from Trish Gray and her Shetlands: October, 2014.

I enjoy being successful in Fleece as well as Wool on the Hoof classes. We sheared later this year so that we could demonstrate to the Wiltshire Guild of Spinners, Weavers & Dyers and their Estonian visitors who were all keen to see rooing as well as having a go themselves. This was a great success as some of our ewes obliged beautifully, which was a relief as I had had to roo a dozen before the visit, with seventeen eventually being completed, thus limiting the choice of whole fleeces I could show.

I chose to show two fleeces, one from a shearling & the other from a ewe, both being patterned. We won the following prizes at various shows:

New Forest: 1st & 3rd & Reserve Champion.

Mid-Somerset: 1st & 2nd & Champion.

Sedgemoor: 2nd & the ewe's fleece was bought by the Gloucester Guild of Spinners, Weavers & Dyers.

Gillingham & Shaftesbury. Wool on the Hoof 1st & 3rd (14 in class.)





At the Gillingham & Shaftesbury show, using the natural coloured wool from our sheep, Margaret Winter entered a beautiful Fair Isle croptop which won 1st prize in its class & also won a trophy & an award for the entire section. Both Margaret & Alex Summers were first & second in a few classes, again with knitting, at the Frome Agricultural & Cheese show, where

I also managed to do quite well with my kilim weaving & a Dorset Button pendant.

We are using four tups again this year in order to breed the colours & staple length that we want. We will be choosing the tups from six rams who are anxiously raring to go, possibly next week if they are lucky.

It has been lovely receiving glowing comments from Guild members who have visited us here on the farm & also found us at shows. We are always very happy to show people around & for them to be hands on with the sheep. I know that not all are enthused by the nitty gritty of it all & would choose to spin from the already processed products, which is fine, there is a place for it all. The photos are of Mandeville Japonica with Mandeville Guinevere & the moorit on her own is Mandeville Gabanna, the wool on the hoof winner at the G&S show out of a class of fourteen, we were also third with Mandeville Nectar who has a very unusual coloured fleece.



Trish.



Sole-up socks. Size 4 to 5

Knitted in the round either on a circular needle using the magic ring method or on dpns. To increase the size cast on more initial sts.

Designed and provided by Julie Holmes

- Cast on 25 sts
- K1 row, co3 sts, k in back of 25 cast on sts, co 1 st.
- K25, inc in next 3 sts, k25, inc 1
- K1 round
- K25, (k1, inc 1) x3, k25, inc in next 2 sts
- K1 round
- K25, (k2, inc 1) x3, k25, (k1, inc1) x2
- K1 round
- K25, (k3, inc 1) x3, k25, (k2, inc 1) x2
- K1 round
- K25, (k4, inc 1) x3, k25, (k3, inc 1) x2
- K1 round
- K25, (k5, inc 1) x3, k25, (k4, inc 1) x2
- K1 round
- K25, (k6, inc1) x3, k25, (k5, inc1) x2
- Change colour if desired
- K2 rounds
- K24, k2tog, (k6, k2tog) x3, k to end
- K1 round
- K24, k2tog, (k5, k2tog) x3, wrap and turn
- P2tog, (p4, p2tog) x3, wrap and turn
- K2tog(k3,k2tog) x3, k to end
- K21, k2tog, k10, ssk, k to end
- K20, k2tog, k10, ssk, k to end
- Cont to k2, k2tog, (32 sts)
- Cont in k2, p2 rib to required length.



Christmas Kipferl

Here is an Austrian biscuit recipe. They are 'Vanille Kipferl', a traditional Christmas treat, the crescent moon being a representation of new life.

150g unsalted butter
50g caster sugar
75g ground almonds
210g plain flour

Vanilla sugar and icing sugar mixed together in a shallow bowl to dredge.



Preheat oven to 180C.

Beat the softened butter, sifted sugar and almonds together until light.

Gently add the sifted flour, and mix lightly but well.

Shape into a fat sausage and wrap in foil. Put in the fridge for around half an hour to stiffen.

Cut 1cm slices of the mixture and divide into little cubes about the size of a hazelnut.

Shape into crescents and place carefully on silicone paper on baking trays. This will take ages. They need to be small. And they are crumbly.

Bake until just lightly pale golden, 10 to 15 minutes probably. They will swell quite a bit.

Allow to cool slightly on the baking sheet then lift carefully a few at a time and dredge with the powdered sugar. (They need to be warm still so it will stick better). Carefully transfer to a wire rack to get completely cold.

Store in an airtight tin. They keep quite well - if you can stop eating them!

Enjoy.

Happy Christmas, see you in the New Year,

Harriette, from a spinning friend in Wells.

A big Thank you to Harriette for bringing the Christmas baking forward especially for the photo-shoot!



Don't throw empty sweet jars away!

If you or someone you know has eaten all the sweets in a large plastic jar, give it a wash and follow Rosemary Speller's good advice.

The empty jar makes a perfect container for portable craft projects such as sock knitting or for your precious spindle.

Perhaps you don't want to eat the sweets before you can use the jar? Empty 2 litre jars can be sourced at about £1.85 each. (Plus postage if ordering online).

Storage of circular knitting needles

Harriette keeps her circular and sets of needles in a fishing tackle case with lovely clear sections and Velcro closures: available from Fishtec, and probably other fishing suppliers



Waste not want not!

Christine Stedman keeps the spare/waste fluff when carding wool. It can be felted and made into beads which can then be used to make jewellery, buttons and decorations.

Recommended breeder of Suffolk/ Texel cross

Janet recommends Cindy Nolan at Bowden Hill in Lacock, as a supplier of good Suffolk/Texel cross fleeces which wash and dye well. The fleeces this year were mainly shearlings. The cost this year was £5. Cindy is happy for people to contact her. Tel; 07799 476864

What's on from Dec 2014

To 18th Jan 2015

Knitwear: Chanel to Westwood – London Vintage fashion knitwear from the 20th Century. Fashion and Textile Museum, Bermondsey
London
SE1 3XF
www.ftmlondon.org

To 14 February 2015

Fleece to Fibre: The Making of the Large Tree Group Tapestry Gallery One

Fleece to Fibre: The Making of the 'Large Tree Group' Tapestry comes to the Fleming Collection from Dovecot Studios and is based around Victoria Crowe's celebrated painting, Large Tree Group (1975) which was selected by Dovecot in 2012 to be transposed into tapestry.

The Fleming Collection
13 Berkeley Street
London W1J 8DU

T: +44 (0)20 7042 5730
www.flemingcollection.com

To 6th April 2015

I don't know. The weave of textiles language

Tate Modern's Turbine Hall welcomes the largest work ever created by renowned American sculptor Richard Tuttle, which combines vast sways of fabrics designed by the artist from both man-made and natural fibres in three bold colours.

Tate Modern,
London
www.tate.org.uk

To 25th January

Alke Schmidt: Tangled Yarns,

Exploring the politics and morality of the textile industry past and present.

William Morris Gallery,
Walthamstow.
www.wmgallery.org.uk

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