

Wiltshire Guild  
Spinners Weavers and  
Dyers



Newsletter March 2020

Registered Charity Number 1168349

## Letter from the Editors

Spring at last!

We have both decided to step down after the September newsletter as we have been doing it for nine years, since June 2011 and have our own crafting lives as well as growing families. With 8 French and Belgian step-grandchildren, Harriette is now expecting 2 British ones in September too. Julia has 2 Belgian and 2 British (so far) and still holds down a job as well.

As a new Guild website develops and most members using electronic media, we feel someone else, or a group, could create the newsletter which we have seen as a public showcase for the Guild; a resource for members to share knowledge; a means of sharing talks, exhibitions, techniques and fun; keeping members up to date with Guild events and activities. For those who don't have electronic access, the idea of buddying amongst Guild members could lead to great partnerships to share information.

Both of us will, no doubt, still share items and discoveries with new editors and hope that others will enjoy the fun and discoveries we have had since 2011. If you are interested please speak to committee members.

Harriette and Julia



A warm welcome to new members;  
Dide Lucas, Sandra Blair, Lydia Peters.

We hope that you enjoying learning and  
sharing new skills with the Guild.

*Front cover – see page 14 for a note about Sandra Blair's cushion*

### Committee notes

Firstly, I would like to say a big thank you to all those who made or offered to make soup for our January meeting: the lunch made over £100.

This is going to be a busy year for the new committee and we are going to need your help.

### Survey of members

As part of the review of the buildings I am undertaking a survey of the groups members attend and of member's interests. This is giving me a chance to put names to faces: I'll remember a face better than a name so you might need to help me out sometimes. It is becoming clear that members have a wide range of interests that are not covered by the current groups. There are a number of free days when studios could be made use of. Erica, Sarah and I are hoping to start up a dyers group after Easter and I know there is some interest in an embroidery group. If you feel inspired to help organise another group please let any member of the committee know.

### Steeple Ashton VE Day

The Guild has been invited to participate in the **Steeple Ashton VE Day** celebrations at the village church on **Saturday 9th May**.

We have quite a large area allocated to us in the church. We will be using this as a window onto the wide range of activities undertaken by the Wiltshire Guild of Spinners Weavers and Dyers at the Textile Studios. Part of the display will be on Make do and Mend as related to how people found ways of managing during the Second World War. Val Laverick has agreed to demonstrate spinning and we are hoping to have a weaver, possibly with a peg loom. We hope there will be space for some items for sale. This will also be an opportunity to advertise our own summer event.

### Discount Card – Helen Robins says:

“As many of you already know, Wiltshire Guild members are offered a **10% discount at two suppliers, Frank Herrings in Dorchester and The Spinning Weal in Clevedon**. These discounts are only valid for one year and some members may not have had their cards replaced for 2019/2020. If you have an outdated card and would like it renewed please email me: [helenrobinson1946@btinternet.com](mailto:helenrobinson1946@btinternet.com) and I will be able to give you the new card at the March/next Guild day.”

### **Contact Details – Helen Robinson**

On another topic, please can I ask that **if your contact details change** throughout the year you let me know so I can maintain an accurate contacts list. The recent Storm Dennis reminded me of the importance of this in case we needed to be in touch with you all at the last minute to cancel an event.

### **Shetland Day - June**

There have also been a few changes to the 2020 Guild Programme. The June meeting has now become a Shetland day and there will be a sale of Shetland sheep fleeces from local show-winning breeder Trish Gray, who we hope will also give a talk about her sheep.

Gill Cook, who has travelled to the Shetland Isles and has a passion for knitting and spinning in the styles traditional to the locale, has also kindly agreed to give a talk about spinning and knitting as it's done there.

If people who made haps and Fair Isle knitted items at Gill's craft and chat knitting group could bring them along, it would also be nice to have a display of them. If anyone has any other suggestions of things that might be relevant to this subject, we would also be interested to hear them.

### **Fleece Sale July**

The normal fleece sale will take place in July.

### **Skills day- August**

The Skills Day will now take place in August at the same time as the shared lunch and family day.

If you have any further suggestions for our Guild Day Programme please inform **Sarah Bond** or **Janet Milner**.

### **Email buddies**

The new committee is getting to grips with our new roles, and for me this has included getting a new computer and setting up the new chairman's website which is now up and running. This reminds me there are a few members who do not have internet access. If you know someone who is missing out on our communications because of this could you please ask them if they would like you to be their email buddy and then you can pass on information. I would be grateful if you could let me know who you are buddying. Thanks, **Margaret**.

## **Cholderton Charlie's Rare Breed Farm Volunteer- demonstrators required.**

Kathy Davis needs volunteers for a demonstration day at Cholderton Charlie's Rare Breed Farm between Salisbury and Andover.

The event is held on the **Whitsun bank holiday Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020**. This is a shearing day. The Guild has for the past 3 years offers visitors the chance to try various crafts:

- Dan provides two gazebos and tables and chairs (we normally have to go find the chairs but tables are often there already).
- In the past we've provided spinning, drop spindle spinning, RHL weaving, Inkle Loom weaving, peg loom weaving and stick weaving. But we don't have to offer all of these.
- I need minimum of 4 volunteers from Guild.

Please contact [Rachel Berger](#) if you are interested in helping. She won't be confirming details with the farmer until spring but we want to know there are enough volunteers before I do get in touch.

Thank you,

**Kathy Davis.**

## **The West Shires Alpaca Group craft completion at Royal Three Counties Show 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June**

The West Shires Alpaca Group are organising their second craft competition. Entries will be displayed in the Alpaca Tent at the Royal Three Counties Show in June. Check the [flyer](#) on the noticeboard and the website for entry fees and classes. Check out the website to see the work they are doing to improve husbandry skills, quality of fibre and the varied end uses of this very special fibre.

*Eds. Thanks for passing this on, Manda. If anyone puts in an entry we would love to have a picture and know the result.*

## The Beginning

When I was around the age of seven one of my Grandmas taught me to sew and how to do embroidery and the other one taught me how to knit and crochet. Many happy years followed with me making many clothes for toys, embroidered boxes for treasures and small blankets for anything that needed wrapping.

However, it was knitting that held my main interest and as time went on I began to knit my own clothes, unravel jumpers from charity shops to reuse and drift into anywhere that sold yarn to browse and maybe buy. The Holy Grail would be to own my own spinning wheel and spin my own yarn. Many, many years later, with children grown and a bit of money free I finally realised that dream and learnt to spin at Urchfont Manor a year before it closed in 2012. It would be a year before I owned a spinning wheel: an Ashford Traditional, kindly delivered by the owner from Warwickshire: he was so keen that I received it in one piece.

Because of the year's lapse it took me a while to get going. By then I had met Rosemary Speller who kindly took me under her wing and introduced me to this Guild. I distinctly remember one Saturday meeting when I borrowed a wheel at the Guild to sit and spin with everyone else. I just could not get going: the yarn kept breaking, what did get onto the bobbin looked like string. I felt like a complete fool.

But everyone was so kind and I managed to achieve something and regain a bit of confidence. I went home and grabbed a bag of Jacob fleece which was 'in the grease' and literally spun it straight as it came out. The resulting yarn was very thick and thin but I was thrilled and knitted it into a V neck vest which I still have and wear. It has so many bobbles on the back it is positively thermal but I love it and it has a charm of its own.

Well, that was it: I was hooked. Looking around the Guild everyone seemed to be spinning with different fibre. How would I know what I liked best? That's where ***The Quest*** began: I would spin as many different types of sheep fleece as I could and then I would know which I liked best and could concentrate on them.

## **It's 2020 and 50 different types of sheep fleece later, so what have I learnt?**

I've learnt that it is difficult to buy a small amount of raw fleece to try: many places sell processed fleece, such as World of Wool, but these have been homogenised into roving. I wanted fleece in the grease and quickly realised that I would have to buy a whole fleece. If I did find somewhere that sold a small quantity of raw fleece I could not guarantee where on the sheep it had come from; maybe the hindquarters and therefore not be the best representative of that sheep.

I have bought fleece from many places. Our own fleece sales: excellent because you can see and feel the fleece and usually speak to the breeder. I have bought on line from breeders. I have bought at shows such as Wonderwool, although these fleeces are sometimes a bit pricier. I have bought many fleeces from eBay and surprisingly, maybe, have rarely had a bad buy in the nine years I have been buying. I have also been given various fleeces and learnt that it may not always be the present the giver intended! Luckily I have a big garden and various sheds to process and store my fleece. I cold-water soak the fleece and dry them by hanging them over bushes and trees in the garden causing some amusement to the people walking by. The fleeces are stored until used. Each fleece ultimately has had its own square knitted for future reference.

I have learnt that a fleece may look and feel lovely but the end product knitted up may be nothing like what you were hoping for. Conversely, the opposite is also true: I had a Manx Loughtan fleece to spin. The staple was short, the colour a rich brown with toffee coloured tips and it was as springy as a brillo pad. However, the resulting yarn was soft and bouncy and would make a lovely weekend pullover.

I have learnt that although one can spin all the fleece it really does pay to be selective in which parts one selects for each project. It also pays to take care in the preparation. I am an impulsive and enthusiastic person, it took me quite a while to realise some of these things as I rattled through various fleece.



### **The names of the sheep fleece I have spun to date?**

Massam, Kent, Cotswold, Merino, Scottish Blackface, North Ronaldsay, Manx Loughtan, Soay, Ryeland, Ouessant, Norfolk Horn, Black Cheviot, Welsh Mountain, Speckled Beulah Blackface, Alpaca, Herdwick, Navajo Churro, Jacob, Bleu de Maine, Gotland, Hebridean, Portland, Shetland, Dorset Horn, Bizet, Blue Texel, Icelandic, Lleyn, Balwen, Blue faced Leicester, Oxford Down, Charolais, Kerry, Lincoln Longwool, Wensleydale, Clun Forest, Derbyshire Gritstone, Castlemilk Moorit, Southdown, Zwartbles, Teeswater, Shropshire, Torddu, Leicester Longwool Llanwenogg, Valais Blacknose, Mohair, Exmoor Horn, Polwarth, Jacob.

## Which did I like best?

I spun the fleece as it felt it would like to be. This meant that I have yarn that ranges from lace-weight to chunky. I aimed at a yarn that was hopefully pleasantly hand spun rather than perfect and the yarn was natural, not dyed. I knitted the square in a pattern that seemed to suit the yarn and I appreciate that I have only sampled one fleece from each breed. Another fleece from the same breed may be quite different due to many factors such as health of the sheep, weather conditions, the way it was shorn, feed etc.

I found that a Shearling fleece (the first fleece shorn) is generally the best although not exclusively; often the fleece tends to deteriorate as the sheep gets older.

### The fleeces that I would definitely try again are as follows –

- Longwool – Lincoln Longwool, Gotland, Wensleydale and possibly a Cotswold lamb if I wanted to do a particular project.
- Downland – Kerry Hill, Oxford Down, Norfolk Horn and Ryeland - shearling
- Medium – Jacob, Polwarth, Blue Texel, Clun Forest and Zwartbles - shearling
- Short Tail – Castelmilk Moorit, Shetland, Manx Loughtan, North Ronaldsay
- Mountain and Highland – Speckled Beulah Blackface, Black Welsh Mountain – shearling, Torddu – shearling, Hebridean - shearling





I have one or two fleeces that are to be added but I have decided that I need to concentrate on the next part of the journey. I kept my own basic notebook to jot down thoughts but have deliberately not given details on each fleece and its qualities as I feel that it may spoil your personal journey and the excitement of the experience.

Having decided on this quest I soon realised that I would have to be more systematic in my spinning. Otherwise I would never get to that point in time for my projects. One New Year I made the resolution to get up half an hour earlier as many days a week as possible to spin before I started my day. Sitting in the early morning with the dog as company and a cup of tea gave me some calm before my work day had begun. I also resolved that I would always have some fleece ready to spin at any time so that I maximised any odd spinning moment I got! It was surprising how much more I got done per week.



### **What now?**

I am going to go back to the beginning to learn how to spin, prepare and present fibre better, I am keen to achieve my Spinning Certificate: something that I am hopeful we will be able to offer as a Guild. I am going to try and achieve some of my ambitions including being able to prepare, spin and weave my own Jacob throw to replace the one that the dreaded moths got and ruined years ago. I am currently spinning some Shetland to knit a Hap in my own hand spun yarn inspired by the one I've knitted already following Gill's recent group.

I hope this may fire you up to try different fleece and especially prepare a raw fleece.

Finally, to Rosemary, thank you for your guidance and patience. I have learnt so much through this process, maybe the wrong way round but now I'm going to try and do it even better!

Janet Milner

## Loom for sale

Auli Part is selling her **TOIKA ½ folding counter march floor loom**.

Dimensions: Depth 115cm (45ins), Height 120cm (47ins), total width 103cm (40.5in) Weaving width: 61cm (24in)

Auli bought this for about £550 twenty-four years ago and it has been lovingly used and upgraded since then. It is currently ready to use with universal tie up and 4 (of the 6) shafts in use. It has 8 treadles and 6 shafts, 1 reed (12), 2 aprons/canvases, Universal tie-up.



It is similar to a [Laila](#) but with 6 not 4 shafts. It is designed for weavers who do not have enough space for a very large loom, or who want an additional loom for sampling or experimental projects: a countermarch loom, it can be folded with the warp in place, and it occupies very little space when being stored or transported.

Please contact her if interested and to make an offer.

She is in Melksham: 01225 790082

### **A Link for two downloadable books by Peter Collingwood.**

Sandra advises that the Weaving Chat UK *Facebook* page includes a link to weaving books which can be downloaded free, including two books on rugs by [Peter Collingwood](#)

*Eds. Thanks, Sandra. I am afraid that I cannot check FB, so am grateful for this link to some very technical documents. I am sure the link will be well used.*  
*Julia*

## Using data as a design tool

In the summer edition of *The Journal* 2019 there was an article about Joan Sheldon's rather thought provoking scarf "[The Globally Warm Scarf](#)" which is a representation of the global temperatures since the 1600's. It is very sobering to see that there is a lot of blue at one end but by the time the scarf finishes it is dark red. This scarf was designed a few years ago. Joan would need a bit more dark red to bring the scarf design up to date. The pattern for the scarf is a free download and there are instructions for making it using Tunisian crochet.

Joan is not the only person to use [climate change data to design textiles](#): a recent article in the *Fast Company* blog cited groups of people knitting with the data both to raise awareness and to calm their own anxiety on the issues.

I claim that I try to avoid social media but Josie George aka [Porridge Brain](#) on Twitter is knitting a scarf to record the temperature for every day this year – watch out for her in mainstream media as the tweet went viral.

Data driven design does not need to be complex. You can make a note of the colour of the sky every day or the colours that you see through a certain window and use that sequence in a project.

The concept of using data as a design tool is taken one step further by Pat Ashforth and Steve Plummer who publish articles on their website called [Woolly Thoughts in pursuit of crafty mathematics](#). They taught maths for many years and have used these skills to produce a huge variety of knitted designs. Their website is a cornucopia of information and has some useful instructional videos. I particularly liked their [modular jumpers](#).



That is maybe because I have fond memories of [Patricia Roberts'](#) designs in the late 70's. Not that I ever had the patience to knit one of her patterns.

*Julia*

*Julia (with thanks to Harriette for spotting the article in *The Journal*).*

## Shaft Switcher in Studio Four

For many years now a strange gadget looking a bit like the wooden keys of a piano has been lurking in the corner of studio four. This gadget is in fact a SHAFT SWITCHER, designed and used by Peter Collingwood the world famous rug weaver. None of us really knew how the shaft switcher worked, or how it could be attached to a loom, but Karen joined our Guild a couple of years ago and we discovered that she had inherited a loom with a shaft switcher attached. Although Karen no longer weaves with us she volunteered to help Jean and Susie who were both very keen to get the shaft switcher installed and working. This took several weeks, and listening to them both threading up the shaft switcher sounded like brain surgery was being undertaken on the loom next to me. The shaft switcher is now warped up and in use. A long warp has been attached and weavers who wish to learn how to use the shaft switcher are taking it in turns to weave a small strip.

Below is a picture of Susie and Jean threading up the shaft switcher



For those who wish to know the technical details I will try to explain as briefly as possible:

The loom is threaded using a three-end block weave design.

Usually this design means that block A is threaded 1, 2, 3 and block B is threaded 1, 2, and 4.

With the shaft switcher device the warp is threaded 2, 3, 1/4.

Shaft 4 can be changed to shaft 1 or shaft 1 to shaft 4 at the flick of a lever.

This gives the possibility of changing the size and placement of the blocks instead of them being permanently threaded for the whole of the weaving.

It is actually simpler than it sounds.

Do feel free to visit studio four and take a look.

Dawn

### **Krogbragd cushion- picture on front cover**

Sandra is a new member who came to one of Harriette's Craft Days in Compton Dando last year. Sandra was inspired by Jenny Smart's weaving, so joined Warmley Weavers then had weaving lessons with Dawn in Steeple Ashton and has now joined us as a member too.

She is an accomplished knitter and needlewoman and has taken to weaving like a duck to water. When she discovered Krogbragd (see book review December 2019 newsletter) she decided this would be her sample. She says: "it was a very enjoyable project using 8 ply wool for the weft and a fine cotton thread for the warp. This particular weave was quick and easy to follow as it involves three picks of shafts 1+2, two picks of shafts 1+3, and one pick of shafts 2+3 repeated all the way through. The pattern is created by the selection of different colours which are added gradually but this becomes obvious as you weave. As you beat down the weave the thickness of the weft easily covers the thin warp. I am looking forward to weaving a Krokbragd rug but in a different pattern."

*Harriette*

## A visit to my Mother's homeland

I have recently been to Canada where my mother was born. Though I have visited several times before, this time was primarily to spend time with my mother's sister. My aunt being 14 years younger than my mother is now aged 93 years and (a very important) three quarters.

She and two of my cousins live in the Toronto area, so a most attentive family is close by which is a terrific comfort to everyone. My aunt chose to move from their family home of some 60 years to live in a complex where there are suites: one can live independently but not alone and not being a burden.

When she showed me around what she calls, "The Institution" there was a wide range of activities and plenty going on most days. One huge hall had several looms in action. My aunt is a member of the [Canadian Milk Bag project](#). I was fascinated by this as you can imagine, so was treated to a one-to-one demonstration of the whole process. "The Institution" mainly weaves mattresses which are distributed to parts of the world where there is a need and regular demand for them. What they have achieved is quite outstanding. This is an amazing project where there are talented people hanging loose, learning a new skill and being praised justifiably for their efforts.

My aunt insisted that we all go out every day, which was great however unexpected. Visiting Canada in January isn't exactly warm sunshine weather but out we went: here, there and everywhere, including Niagara Falls, which is where my mother was born to Scottish parents. My grandfather was a fruit farmer and came home to Scotland to fight in the First World War, where my aunt was born.

I hadn't taken loads of layers of clothes; I did however have the presence of mind to take: a woolly Shetland hand-knitted hat, headband complete with a woollen Dorset Button all made using our Shetland yarn, cosy hand knitted cabled Shetland long-wristed fingerless mittens, a woollen jumper, hand knitted woolly socks, sheepskin wrist warmers, neck warmer, a long-sleeved silk vest, an outer layer fleece lined hooded garment, fleece lined jeggings, sheepskin gloves and for my feet leather Dubarry boots!!

Notwithstanding all of that, even my bones felt cold.

Not only was my Aunt at the airport to greet me, but she also came to see me off which I really hadn't expected but for which I shall be forever thankful.

Trish Gray

*Eds. Thank you Trish; we think your clothes inventory was about as much as you could be expected to take for a winter adventure without incurring extra charges for luggage!*

*Aunt Heather must be fun to be with – indeed Trish says that when her son was a teenager he asked his great aunt, if he may call her plain Heather, to which she replied: “Heather, yes but plain, never!”*

*This project adds yet another layer to the complexities of environmental issues!*

*I wondered what the environmental impact of the plastic bottles that we are familiar with is, compared to glass bottles or plastic bags. If you want to know the answer it could be in [this report](#) (Spoiler alert! The answer is complicated.)*

**Online Weaving Courses: one recommendation: [Jane Stafford Textiles](#)**

This course looks very good and is suggested by a friend. I know there are other online courses and don't know how this compares but it is highly recommended by a friend from Bristol who says this:

*“I’ve enrolled on a wonderful online course with Jane Stafford who is based in Vancouver and very experienced. I can’t recommend it highly enough to anyone at any level and I think she has a great teaching style, with a gentle and humorous approach.”*

It seems to cost \$99 per year but you get a new module every five weeks for that and an online forum, with access to all previous sessions/modules.

If anyone else can recommend any classes/courses or resources that we don't have at our guild or that you find locally to you, please let us know.

Harriette

*Eds. The [blog](#) is well worth a look as she generously highlights other weavers' work each month*

## Unbound: Visionary Women Collecting Textiles Two Temple Place

25<sup>th</sup> Jan-19<sup>th</sup> April 2020

This beautiful building is hosting the latest in a programme of Winter Exhibitions dedicated to raising awareness of one or a group of the wonderful collections held in public museums and galleries around the UK. This one takes the stories of seven pioneering women and has been designed to highlight the importance, breadth and inspiration of textiles. My friend, from Yorkshire, says:

*“So good that items from provincial collections are getting a showing in London. Having seen some in Yorkshire (Bankfield Museum in Halifax), it was good to feel they were getting an airing elsewhere. I liked the varied, if limited, selection. Given the space considerations, I thought it was well-curated and interpreted (and a charming venue, to boot).*

*The mix of modern textiles into the exhibition (the blue balls and hangings up the staircase), interesting juxtaposition – illustrating the contemporary transition of textiles from what one might call practical decoration (i.e. embroidered coat) to pieces created simply as “art”.*

*And what an interesting light shed on those pioneering ladies, too, not only collecting and appreciating but also fostering early 20<sup>th</sup> century revivals of making and dyeing techniques - “craftwomanship”. Well done, those ladies (and the odd gent, I think)!*

*And, don’t you love the idea of an embroidered sleeve? Such a practical idea to add a bit of pizzazz to your plain chemise (that might need laundering a bit more often than a sleeve).”*

I enjoyed it so much I am going to try to get back before it ends. It’s just off the Embankment and has a good café where you are encouraged to move to sit in other rooms and so get to appreciate the building as well.

Harriette.

## Beginnings in Basket Weaving



I have long admired basket-makers from all corners of the world and the beauty of willow. Five years ago I asked my creative sister-in-law, Claire, to show my daughter Maddy and me how to make a willow basket. Claire had made loads of

baskets before, really good ones and kindly agreed. After a day in her garden, our first round baskets were woven.



Five years later, I have areas of willow growing at home, in an allotment and in the school garden where I teach. When Sally showed me more willow in the Guild dye garden on the recent gardening day, my eyes lit up and I offered to look after that too.



I've learned more skills since that first basket. My mentor has been the wonderful local basket maker: [Norah Kennedy](#), from Stroud. I've attended two weekend courses with Norah now, at Lower Shaw Farm in Swindon (and I'm going again in June). Norah has been teaching there annually for many years! The community farm has been a peaceful haven for decades whilst outer Swindon has expanded to surround it. Norah provides pre-soaked willow and all tools; her instruction is clear and mostly 1:1 but she invites everyone over to watch certain tricky techniques, such as borders and handles. This way everyone in the group can make what they want, at the speed they want. Book quickly if you want to go!

At home, my greenhouse now stores many varieties of willow in different colours, lengths and thicknesses. Before they can be used for weaving baskets, they have to be soaked in water to make them super pliable. (See request below.)

Last summer holiday I produced my first basket from homegrown willow: a small laundry basket for Maddy to take to uni. I even managed the border by myself, with the help of a youtube video, a book and Norah's handout.

I'm learning a useful, traditional, eco-friendly craft and that makes me happy.

Almost as happy as spinning Trish Gray's lovely Shetland fleece, almost...

Kath Steggall

World of Willow [Website](#)

PS I am looking out for an old 8 or 10ft galvanized water trough if anyone has one for sale, for soaking willow in.

## Vintage Tea Cosy

We thought that as we have been invited to show our skills at Steeple Ashton's VE day celebrations it would be timely to remind everyone of some free resources on the V&A [website](#).



There are such delights as knitted underwear and this cardigan using just 5 and half ounces of yarn. I think the pattern may need scaling up for even the slimmest 21<sup>st</sup> century woman.

My favourite has to be this charming tea cosy. Use odds and ends of yarn to more or less the tension listed:



5 sts to the inch in width, with No. 7 needles, the cosy will measure 16 inches round the base and 7.5 inches high.

**To work one side;** Using No. 7 needles, cast on 39 sts. Work 6 rows in garter-st., working into the back of the sts. on the 1st row to give a neat edge. Pattern rows; K. 1, \* p. 2, k.2 ; repeat from \* until 2 sts. remain, p.2. Repeat this row 39 times more.

**Shape the top as follows:** 1st dec. row: K. 1, \* p. 2 tog., k. 2 tog.; repeat from \* until 2sts. remain, p. 2 tog. (20 sts.). Work 5 rows in single rib. 2nd dec. row: K. 1, \* k. 2 tog. ; repeat from \* until 1 st. remains, k. 1 (11 sts.). Work 4 rows in s.s., beginning with a p. row, then cast off. Work the other half of the cosy in the same way. **Sew together** leaving space for the spout and handle.

Decorate as desired – a pom-pom is quite sufficient, but be adventurous if you like! The instructions for the flowers illustrated are disproportionate in terms of effort to the benefit gained unless you are a purist. So I have missed them off.

Julia

## Rabbit Stew

On a theme of old fashioned recipes as well as sustainable meat eating, you could always try a rabbit stew;

### Ingredients

3 tbsp plain flour

Chopped thyme and bay leaves and Salt and pepper to taste

15g/½oz butter

2-3 tbsp oil

8 pieces of rabbit

6 rashers rindless smoked streaky bacon, cut into 2cm/¾in squares

2 onions, chopped

500ml/17fl oz dry cider

300ml/10fl oz chicken or vegetable stock

350g carrots

150g peas

### Method

Coat the rabbit in seasoned flour

Fry in butter to seal in the flavour.

Transfer legs joints to a casserole dish.

Fry onions and bacon in the oil

Add to the casserole dish.

Put half the vinegar in the pan and bring to the boil scraping the flavours from the pan

Add stock to the casserole dish and cook at 170 degrees for 45mins.

Add remaining boneless joints and cook for a further 1-2 hours.

Reduce juices in a pan if required before serving.

## Whats on

<p><b>2 May - 31 May 2020</b> <b>Signature X1</b> The Gallery in the Park Stratford Rd STROUD GL5 4AF</p>	<p><a href="#">Zero3 Textiles Artists</a> If you cannot make the exhibition it is well worth looking at the biographies of the artists on the website with examples of their work.</p>
<p><b>14 March - 14 June</b> <a href="#">Touch &amp; Identity</a> Compton Verney Art Gallery and Park Warwickshire CV35 9HZ</p>	<p>Playful and provocative, this exhibition explores how clothes and textiles conceal, reveal and seduce through the lenses of art, design, fashion, film and dance</p>
<p><b>29 Feb - 21 June 2020</b> <a href="#">Kimono; Kyoto to Catwalk</a> V &amp; A London</p>	<p>This exhibition presents the kimono as a dynamic and constantly evolving icon of fashion, revealing the sartorial, aesthetic and social significance of the garment from the 1660s to the present day, both in Japan and the rest of the world.</p>
<p><b>24 May</b> <a href="#">Britain's Knitted History</a> 10.30am -11.30am Bath Festival – venue Masonic Hall</p>	<p>Esther Rutter ( <i>This Golden Fleece</i>) explores wool's influence on communities ,culture and history.</p>

### **Online tool to aid choice of yarn for Fair Isle colour work**

[Yarn Palette](#) is an online tool to help decide what colours to use for your Fair Isle knitting, select a supplier, upload an inspirational photo and up the website selects the yarn, colours and shade numbers. Then it's easy to order as the site is supported by several yarn suppliers. Simple ...!

From Julie Holmes on Guild Facebook group.

Thanks, Julie.

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