

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

SPINNING



WEAVING



DYEING



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FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Guild Members,

I'm afraid I have been in a thoughtful mood again since the talk about Musk Farm. After the talk I realised how little I know about the origins of our craft. I am aware of some fabrics from China and Egypt have survived and date back to around 3000 BCE. So to rectify my ignorance I thought a bit of research was needed.

So how far back in history can we go to find the origins of our craft. Because the materials available to early man are natural materials very few examples have survived the ravages of time. It is known that animal skins were the first clothing. Like all things they gradually evolved from just a wrap to being cut and sewn to give a fitted garment. The earliest evidence for sewing dates back some 50,000 years. A complete sewing needle some 7.6cm long with an eye has been discovered in a Siberian cave. There is some evidence of earlier needles but they are not complete.

The earliest evidence of prepared fibres is from the discovery of some dyed linen fibres found in a cave in Georgia and these take us back some 36,000 years. Currently the earliest existing example of cloth was found in Peru and dates back to around 10,000 BCE. The thread was not specified other than that it was a plant fibre. There is however earlier evidence of woven cloth from some 27,000 years ago. This evidence comes from impressions of fabric and basketry found in hard clay and not from actual cloth.

It is also interesting to note that weaving seems to have developed in all the major civilisations at various times but independently. Hemp and Linen seem to have been the original fibres. With Wool, Cotton and Silk coming later. So it looks likely that our craft of Weaving Spinning and Dyeing started to develop at the end of the Middle Paleolithic Period at around 50,000 years ago. A long tradition to be proud of.

Richard Grapes

JANUARY MEETING

It was so nice to see everyone again after the Christmas break and while the committee froze to death in the entrance hall the rest of the members has a good catch up with a spinning/knitting morning.

SHOW AND TELL

Joyce Buckland showed us her shawl which can, when needed, be folded up to become a cushion.



Patricia Silver Warner used her time when laid up with her ankle, making Dorset buttons into a long necklace.



Mary Drake wove a colourful scarf, as it was too long she cut the end off and made mittens with knitted cuffs from the spare material.



Mary Harris made a white scarf in Shetland wool which was commercially spun and became so soft after washing.



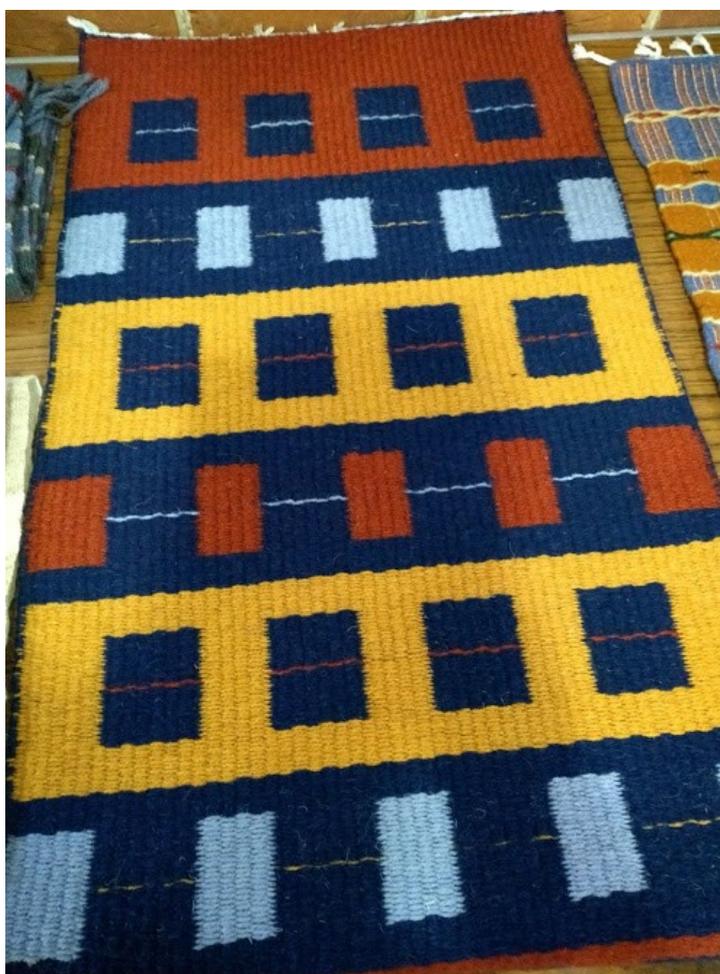


Gitta Cooper. A visitor was persuaded to show and tell us about the yarn she had dyed with mushrooms, which are found at the base of pine trees.

Veronica's cushions were backed and lined.



Coral, as industrious as ever, wove two rugs on the same threading. The first in blocks on the front and the back. the second with different lifts.



Nettles, harvest to fibre.

Caroline Ware of the Dunsmore Nepalese Trust

Caroline's talk described the background to the Dunsmore Nepalese Trust. They work with the women in the north eastern area of Nepal to sustain an income from producing nettle fibre and weaving the resulting yarn into items of clothing and tableware that could be sold.

Susi Dunsmore studied weaving at Bhopur in 1980, and Terhathum in 1981. She and her husband moved to Nepal when he was posted there to work in Rural Development. Susi saw that help and assistance was needed to improve conditions for the villagers in one of the poorest areas of the remote Koshi Hills region of north eastern Nepal.

During the months when there was little work and income from farming the people of the villages would harvest and process the Himalayan Giant Nettle (*Girardinia diversifolia*) which grows in the region. The fibre from this nettle is used to produce Dhaka-Topi Cloth. This activity has been carried out for generations in this region. The local name for the nettle fibre is 'Allo' and is woven by Limbu and Rai women mainly. The Rai are descendants of the ancient Kiratis, the earliest inhabitants of Nepal.

The Koshi Hill Area Rural Development Programme (KHARDEP) was set up and Fordhaka weaving established between 1981 and 1985 with VSO (voluntary services overseas) help to supply warp mills and roller shuttles.



Now ready for spindle spinning and weaving. A range of looms are used; simple backstrap looms, tablet and board braid looms and vertical rug looms. Women and girls spin as they go about their everyday activities.

The work produced is quality controlled by the Allo club and items produced include; Hats, scarves, placemats, curtains, waist coats Rai rugs and fishing nets which are sold in Kathmandu and internationally.



The Dhankilla Womens G.R.P.S had their first Allo weaving workshop in 1984. Their long-term aim is to ensure it is the individual weaver who can make decisions about yarn, texture, colour and style and what she will weave, so deciding the future of Dhaka Cloth.

Wendy Barry

[The Nepalese Nettle Website](#)



FEBRUARY MEETING

In February we were fortunate to have Dr. Susanna Harris telling us about the Extraordinary textiles and yarns of Must Farm Bronze Age settlement, 1000 BC.

We had 25 visitors from around the area including The Isle of Wight, and 45 members present.



Archaeological Discoveries at Must Farm , Cambridgeshire.

What stays in my mind is the photograph of blackened poles radiating out like spokes of a wheel - an image of the burnt roundhouse roof beams that collapsed as fire swept through the settlement, encapsulating a moment in time . A bronze age full of artifacts and textile achievement of astonishingly high calibre - as it fell into the water beneath it, layers of silt and gravel preserving it in time. This was Must Farm, the site of archaeological discovery, many feet below today's land level discovered as a result of commercial gravel extraction. Our February speaker, Dr Susannah Harris, came down especially from Glasgow University to describe to us the excavation, some 4000 years later and explain the findings and her recording and analysis of the textile and related finds which included some of the finest plyed yarns ever found of this period, various techniques including twining, tubular and tufted woven fragments - with CT scanning also being used to 'see' inside some of the 'yarn bundles'.

An absolutely fascinating talk - an incredible 'window' into our pre-history. Look it up on the internet - Must Farm - there is loads of interesting information.

Alex McArdle

Once again there was a wonderful lunch for all to enjoy, with soups and salad which went down well with the visitors as well as our members.

SHOW AND TELL

Beverley did the Show and Tell and we started with Richard who had woven a silk and mohair scarf in an open weave at 10 epi (ends per inch). He wanted a quick project and this took him 6 hours to set up and weave. Louisa told us about her lovely crocheted shawl.



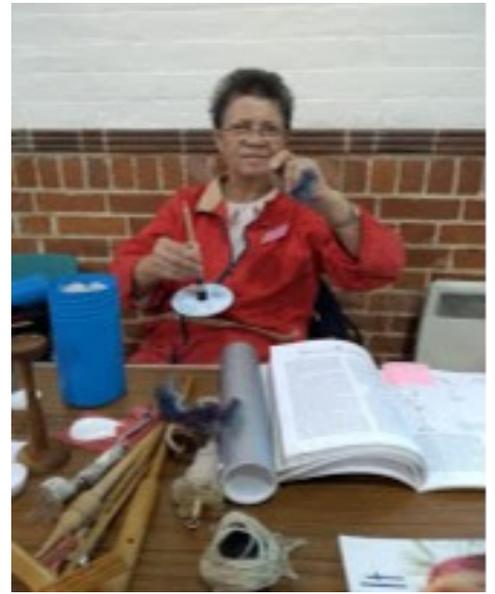
Beverley finished by explaining how she met some Keeshond dogs in the New Forest. So impressed with their wonderful coats Beverley persuaded their owners to let her have some which she blended with wool 50/50. The yarn created was so pleasing Beverley arranged to get some more and has knitted and warm and soft hat with the yarn.



MARCH MEETING

The hall was filled with tables and chairs waiting for skills day when we arrived for the March meeting. Soon every space was filled.

SPINDLE SPINNING; Beverley is such a good teacher, we all appreciated her knowledge and simple instructions. Using the 'twist and park' method, getting started was easy.



BOBBIN LACE

Coral had a table full of lace pillows and bobbins for members to try bobbin lace, some for the first time. The finished results were amazing



BRIOCHE KNITTING

Catherine taught the skill and the concentration in her class was incredible



SEWING CLASS

Della guided Mary and Louisa to make a cosmetic bag. Mary used her hand woven material and Louisa a lovely "hot air balloon" print.



LOCKER HOOKING;

Ann was very busy teaching Locker hooking and had much interest from Guild members in the technique.



WILLOW WEAVING;

Alex did willow weaving and had more people that she expected. Once again a very popular workshop with 8 people making plant supports.

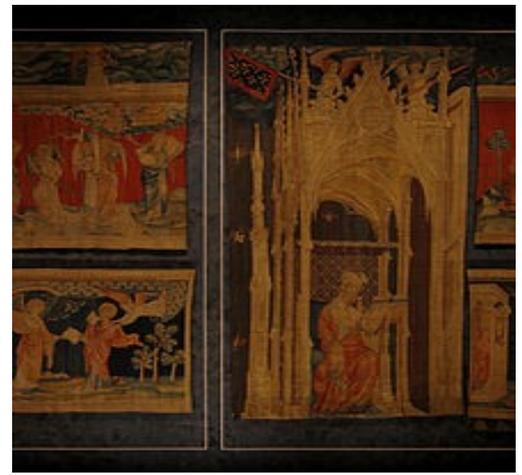


The Vyne House Tapestries

Lorna Goldsmith came to tell us about the restoration of the Tapestries at the National Trust property; Vyne House. Starting with the history of tapestries, she showed us slides of weaving from Norway with linen warp and wool weft dated 840 AD. Tapestries were used to tell stories and the well known eleventh century Bayeux Tapestry is actually an embroidery rather than a pure tapestry but it still tells a story.

The journey through the history of tapestries highlighted the famous Apocalypse Tapestry, a large medieval French set of tapestries commissioned by Louis I, the Duke of Anjou, and produced between 1377 and 1382.

Despite being lost and mistreated in the late 18th century, the tapestry was



recovered and restored in the 19th century. Now on display at the Chateau d'Angers, it is the oldest French medieval tapestry to have survived.

The Devonshire Hunting Tapestries are a group of four magnificent Flemish tapestries dating from the mid-fifteenth century. These enormous works, each over 3 metres wide, depict men and women in fashionable dress of the early fifteenth century hunting in a forest.

Tapestries were very expensive to make and were a statement of power and wealth. The V&A has the cartoons for the Raphael Tapestries in the Sistine Chapel and in 2010 the actual tapestries were loaned to the V&A and it was wonderful to see the tapestries as well as the cartoons. I was lucky enough to see them at that time.

The Tapestries usually on display at the Vyne House were made in 1720 by John Vanderbank. These chinoiserie tapestries were made for smaller rooms and are now undergoing conservation work.



Lorna asked if anybody would like to be involved in the Vyne Project. Volunteering to demonstrate spinning and weaving at the Vyne while the tapestries are away. The project will take place through the summer months from June to August, this year. If you are interested contact; Lorna C Goldsmith on goldsmithlorna@hotmail.com [More Info](#)

Joy Stevens

SHOW AND TELL

Beverley started the Show and Tell with a very pretty brooch. Coral showed us the ball she made to help entertain her father who has Alzheimer's and she has already noticed an improvement in his catching and throwing.



Richard needed a special card and decided to weave one and carried on for Christmas and other occasions.



Jean showed us her wonderful dogtooth scarf that she wove on her rigid heddle loom. The first time she used this loom.



I (Joy) showed my Feather and Fan scarf which should have been shaded light to dark as the hand dyed roving looked. Unfortunately I didn't spin it or ply it correctly so the colours came out wrong. I will try harder next time.



Feather and Fan Scarf Pattern

Cast on number of stitches devisable by 18 + 2 for the edges

For a small scarf cast on 38 stitches (k 1st and last stitch on every row.

Knit 8 rows garter stitch.

Row 1 Knit.

Row 2 Knit 1 Purl to last stitch K 1.

Row 3 K1; K2 tog 3 times; (yarn over k1 6 times);

Knit 2 tog 6 times; (yarn over K1 6 times);
K2 tog 3 times, K1

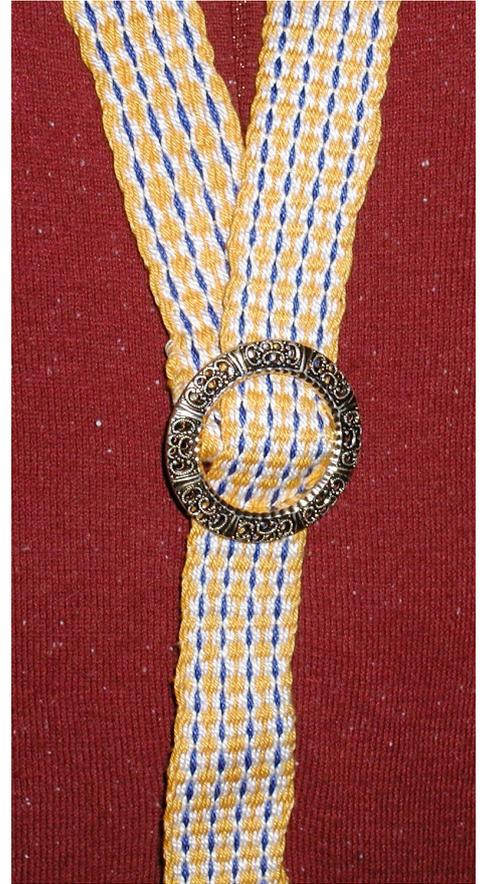
Row 4 Knit.

Work to required length then 8 rows garter stitch, cast off.

For a wider scarf + 18 stitches or a shawl add multiples of 18 stitches



The Youth Guild



During February half-term 11 keen youngsters assembled at Shawford Village Hall to learn how to weave on inkle looms. The looms had been set up beforehand, so - on a first come first served basis - the participants chose a braid warp that they liked the look of. After a short demonstration they set to and worked diligently to achieve a length of braid that could be made into a belt. Some of them finished by lunch time which was unexpectedly fast. The belts were finished in various ways, with or without buckles. One of them ended up being worn as a neck piece.



With time to spare the youngsters were taught how to set up an inkle loom by themselves and they carried on weaving until it was time to tidy up the braids and proudly take them home.

The Workshop team

[More photos on the website](#)

The story of a weaver

I was born profoundly deaf (discovered at the age of 4) in Penzance, Cornwall. I was provided with a box hearing aid and taught to speak by a very good speech therapist at Great Ormond Street hospital in London.

On moving to Dartington in Devon I went to primary school and was taught to read but by the age of 9, I went to the Partially Hearing Unit (P.H.U) in Torquay. I could not go to college - no interpreters, so looked around for a job. Firms would not employ deaf people so I was very lucky that a foreman at Dartington Hall Tweeds, who had a deaf son was prepared to accept me on a trial, to learn and work as a weaver.

Dorothy, a very good and patient lady, taught me by showing me how to thread the various patterns, to weave, passing shuttles, to look for faults and rethread broken yarns on a fast moving electric loom. I was under supervision then progressed to working on 2 looms. The foreman would check now and then and as it was a very noisy mill everyone could lip-read. It would take 3 or 4 days to weave a roll of cloth and when finished, 2 men would come and lift the roll away on a trolley. Then it is an hour or so of taking the loom apart and cleaning it up, it would get very oily as the wools have not been washed. I put the loom back together and re-oiled the hinges. Rolls were taken away to be checked for faults and darned then washed.

I then re-threaded the warp – never the same pattern and that took an hour or so. I was very happy and loved being a weaver.

The mill had times of being very busy with a big order and I would often work from 8.00am to 8.00 pm, tired but loved it.

Other times were quiet, I would then be put on as a ‘bobbin winder’ as they like weavers to have a grounding of all that is involved from start to finish. I also learnt to ‘wind the warp’, to do spinning and also to go down the road to the other mill for darning. I enjoyed darning as my hands were soft; moving them over the tweeds feeling for knots and faults. My mum used to have rolls of tweed at our cottage and darned them when I was a child. A few cottagers would do that.

I was told a director of the firm would sponsor me to go to Textile College, but I turned it down; still no interpreters. However, I have no regrets.

I married my husband, moved to Eling, Hampshire and again it was very difficult to find a job as employers still would not accept deaf people. The new disability law came later. I was lucky to get a job with Millbrook Furnishings, High Street, Totton by word of mouth . It was a 'timepiece sewing' job, sewing up 100 pillowcases in half an hour, mattress covers and also in the 'feather room sewing up pillows filled with feathers and stitching the ends. We wore masks. We also did jobs for the M.O.D. One was to put weights in the bottoms of nets and curtains as a precaution because of the I.R.A.

I left to have a son and daughter who then gave me 3 grandsons and made baby clothes. My grandmother gave me her old Singer hand sewing machine as it was broken. Mum took it to pieces, cleaned and oiled it and gave it to me when I was 14. It still works well now and it is 93 years old.

I love sewing, knitting, crochet, french knitting, embroidery and love to try different crafts. I do some weaving on a small hand loom. I first came to Shawford last September for the Taster Day and I love being there and have been coming ever since. The ladies are very kind to show me how to do different crafts. I am very grateful to Wendy, she writes notes on what the speakers say.



Darlington Hall Tweeds closed down in 1975. The buildings were pulled down for houses, but the other mill is still there by the river with the water wheel still working although nothing to do with tweeds.

Delores E. Rixon

'Spinning a Yarn, Weaving a Thread'

An exhibition of work by the Hampshire Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

*30th November 2019 to 5th January 2020
Whitchurch Silk Mill, Hampshire*



THE GUILD CHALLENGE

This year the Guild Challenge may be any item you can produce using at least one of the three core skills;

*Weaving,
Spinning and
Dyeing*

We hope that the items made for the Challenge will be in the exhibition at the Whitchurch Silk Mill in November. This does mean the 'Reveal' will be held at the October Meeting so we can spend November preparing for the exhibition. Dates and details on the [Guild Website](#).

Equipment for Hire

The Guild has various items of equipment for hire which include;

Drum Carder (standard and narrow), Blending boards, Marudai Stands, Wool Combs, and wooden tapestry rail

The list of equipment is on the Guild website in the members section.

For more detail on the equipment and how to hire them go to the information on the [website](#) or speak to Maya.

HWSD PROGRAMME 2019

18th May

10am Main Hall ‘News & Views’

2pm Main Hall – Speaker

FREDA ROBINSON

‘Braids around the world’

Arabesque Braids

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**15<sup>th</sup> June**

10am Main Hall ‘Spin & Chat’

2pm Main Hall - Speaker

**STROUDWATER TEXTILE TRUST**

‘400 YEARS OF Stroud Wool Textiles’

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20th July

10am Main Hall **AGM**

11am ‘Bring and Buy’ for Guild Funds

2pm Main Hall - Speaker

To be confirmed

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**August No Meeting**

Volunteers always welcome for craft activities with children at

**HILLIER GARDENS**

On Wednesday afternoons 1.30 - 4pm

Dates: 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> August

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21st September

10am Main Hall ‘**TASTER DAY**’ for non-members

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**19<sup>th</sup> October**

10am Committee Meeting

The Guild Challenge Reveal

10am **WESSEX WOOLCRAFT**

**FIBRE DAY**

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16th November

10am Main Hall ‘News & Views’ including

Main Hall – **GUILD WEAVING DAY** –

Bring your loom, try new techniques or just have a go.

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**7<sup>th</sup> December**

10am Meet in Main Hall for

Tea / Coffee

10.30am Main Hall – Speaker

**PETER HEWLETT-SMITH**

‘Journey down the Silk Road’

Followed by our own festive American Lunch

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EVENTS COMING UP 2019

April 27th to 28th | Material Textile—Weekend, Tisbury | [More Info](#)

April 27th to 28th | Wonderwool, Builth, Wales | [More Info](#)

April 27th to 28th | Brockenhurst Needlework Fiesta, Hants | [More Info](#)

May 4th | Cuckoo Fair, Downton, Nr Salisbury | [More Info](#)

May 11th | World Textile Day, Wickham, Hampshire | [More Info](#)

May 25th | Totton Arts Festival, Hanger Farm | [More Info](#)

June 8th | Fleece and Fibre Day | New Forest Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, Ringwood | [More Info](#)

June 8th and 9th | John Arbon Mill Open Day, Devon | [More Info](#)

For more Diary Dates visit the [Diary page](#) on our website.

For information on the Events the Guild will be demonstrating at and to volunteer, you can; [email Caroline](#), talk to her at a meeting or visit the Guild Demonstration Events page on our [website](#).

Our Guild Contact details

<u>Chairperson</u>	Richard	Chairofhantswsd@yahoo.com
<u>Secretary</u>	Ruth	secretaryhantswsd@yahoo.co.uk
<u>Events Co-ordinator</u>	Caroline	eventshwsd@yahoo.com
<u>Newsletter</u>	Joy	pendine@gmail.com

THE COPY DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER NEWSLETTER IS JULY 1ST 2019

ARE YOU VISITING EXHIBITIONS OR GOING ANYWHERE WITH INTERESTING TEXTILE RELATED ACTIVITIES? CONSIDER WRITING A SHORT ARTICLE WITH A PHOTOGRAPH FOR THE NEWSLETTER.