

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2020



FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Guild Members,

Now there's a 'be Thankful'

In my wife's family they quite often would say "Now there's a be Thankful" It often referred to something unpleasant or sad but it was always to find a positive side to anything. So with the current emergency are there any positives?

As one of our Facebook members said that this current emergency is what we have been training for. I am sure that most of us who are confined to home are looking at what we have in our various stashes and thinking of what can I make. I have made up my mind firstly to try to finish several projects that have been started but never finished. These include two knitted pullovers, all the yarn is spun but still some way to go to finish them. A weaving project started, lost interest when I went wrong, restarted but not finished. Modifying and rebuilding my Dobby Loom.

Then of course there are all the projects I have planed in my head. Also the wife would be grateful if I tidied up my work areas (I am a messy worker) I'm not sure how long I am going to be confined to my small empire (I suspect at least another 8 weeks +) probably not enough time to finish everything I have started. However I am sure I will get distracted and start something else but without the home confinement I am sure that very little would be finished.

What a massive show and tell we can have when the Guild meetings start again. I am very thankful that I have a craft to turn to.

So although I am missing direct contact with the family and friends and especially the grandchildren there are plenty of "There's a be thankful". Our little local shop was the first to let us know if we have a problem to ring and they will do what they can to help. Someone two roads away posted a note in the door, If you need help and gave a phone contact. In spite of the news of selfishness by some there is always the other side, many people are kind, helpful and caring.

And I believe that the majority of people fit into the kind and caring group and that to me is a massive "Be Thankful".

Richard

JANUARY MEETING

The New Year meeting started off with a spin and chat session. Members were kept busy introducing 6 new members to the guild and all it does. Della was demonstrating spinning on the wheel, while Ann was showing another new member the drop spindle. Both were introduced to Beverley and signed up for her spinning lessons. Two more visitors were interested in tapestry and after joining were thinking of signing up for the tapestry workshop.



Richard gave us the notices about the coming guilds and we all gave a big thanks to Coral for all the work she did for the Exhibition at the Silk Mill, which was a huge success. He also thanked Jo for volunteering to become the web manager for the Journal. It is wonderful to have someone from our guild offering their services.

Richard suggested if people want to visit the 'AGWSD Gathering' for 'Colour - The Full Spectrum' in Worcester in June, consider car sharing.

While the members and visitors carried on spinning, Louisa and her helpers organised lunch. Nadine took charge of the sales table and many people took advantage of the plentiful bargains available.

The hot soup and salad lunch was very welcome.



SHOW AND TELL

Beverley invited Kathy to start us off by showing her scarf.



Joy modelled her jacket that she had started some 15 years previously and given up before finishing it. Mary took the unfinished jacket away with her and with her artistic flair and wonderful sense of colour changed a dull old piece of hand woven material into a wearable piece of art.

Victoria started weaving in November and made a checked scarf on a borrowed loom. She now has her own loom and we are looking forward to seeing some more weaving.



Mary made a triangular scarf with commercial double knitting yarn. Ann showed us a waistcoat she made which was a bit too big so she decided to shrink it - too much!!!! BEWARE THE WASHING MACHINE!!!

Beverly displayed her Macramé snowflake which Suzanne showed her how to make at Whitchurch. She also showed us a blanket spun and woven for a friend.

New Forest Tartan

Our new year started with an interesting talk on how a germ of an idea can lead to the forming of a small company in the New Forest. Using the diverse colours of its flora and fauna and producing a tartan unique to the area

Big oaks from little acorns grow so it would appear for Kate Collison. On her way home from trip to a small Scottish Isle which had its own tartan and where the majority of the population supported its use in many different ways from car stickers to cushions and curtains, Kate conceived her idea for a New Forest Tartan.



After researching how to design and register a tartan, Kate then had to persuade The New Forest National Park that having its own tartan was a good idea

The tartan is designed using the beautiful natural colours of the Forest incorporating the greens of oak and holly trees, silvery grey of the silver birch, purple from the heathers and the russet of deers and bracken. Kate then had to find a weaver and dyer who could replicate her design idea.

Unfortunately Kate was unable to find a resource in The New Forest but was lucky to find a hand weaver further afield who was not only able to weave the cloth but also able to dye the wool using natural dyes. Later this year new cloth designs will reflect the changing colours of the Forest throughout the seasons.





Realising the cost and limitations of using a lone hand weaver Kate has reverted to also using a Scottish Tartan Mill.



New Forest Tartans has a wide array of products, material for home use in curtains and soft furnishings, and a lighter weight for clothing, ready made waistcoats, hats bags and a limited edition of a Merry Thought Bears. The tartan has also been printed on to tea-towels and placemats. Most of the products are made by local crafts people living and working in The New Forest.



For someone giving her first talk Kate was able to show her enthusiasm for her product and gave a very detailed account of how her idea came to fruition.

Meryl Millar.



FEBRUARY MEETING

NEWS AND VIEWS. Richard started the session with the announcement of the Guild Challenge 2020. As this is the Guild's 70th Anniversary the challenge is to produce a piece of work 20cms x 20cms to celebrate 70 years of the Guild. It may be anything 2D or 3D as long as it incorporates at least one of our core skills i.e. spinning, weaving and/or dyeing. It is hoped to use the results to make a display for the many demonstrations that the guild does during the year.

Richard thanked me for doing the newsletter as I have to step down from producing the publication. Please will someone take this on? It is great fun to do and is lovely reminder of what we have seen and heard during the year.

The way forward for the Youth Guild was discussed and with a volunteer expressing an interest to help facilitate the programme it means we can continue discussing the ideas and preparing for a new approach next year.

Richard confirmed that he will also be stepping down next year and is looking for a deputy chair to assist over the next 12 months.

Jo is temporarily doing the secretary's work until someone comes forward to take the role on more permanently.

Coral gave the Treasurer's report, explaining that the Guild is in a comfortable position. The sales table has contributed very well to bringing in funds. Many thanks to Nadine for taking this on and getting it organised.



At the same time as the News and Views, many members were enjoying a tapestry workshop in the Compton room.

TAPESTRY WEAVING

Workshop and talk with Matty Smith

All of us who enjoy working with wool are always delighted to discover new techniques and textures, and that is just what I found in the tapestry weaving workshop at the February meeting. Mattie Smith from Weavers Bazaar not only gave a fascinating talk but also a morning workshop.



Tapestry weaving results in a heavy, draft-proof material by weaving the weft in very loose, serpentine waves under and over the warp such that the warp is completely hidden. Beating down the weft (a bit of welly required) gives a stiff tightness to the fabric.



In her talk, Mattie told us of the fascinating development of tapestry weaving, which originates from Egyptian times, coming to the monasteries of Europe with the Moors. It was an elaborate industry, with draftsmen, dyers (who created about 150 colours from natural dyes), spinners and weavers; and woven tapestries would take years to complete.



They were the transportable decorations used by aristocracy, not only draft-excluders but also interior design telling a pictorial story across their width. However, with the Renaissance, and the burgeoning importance of painting with its almost infinite colour palette and fine detail, tapestry weavings fell from favour.

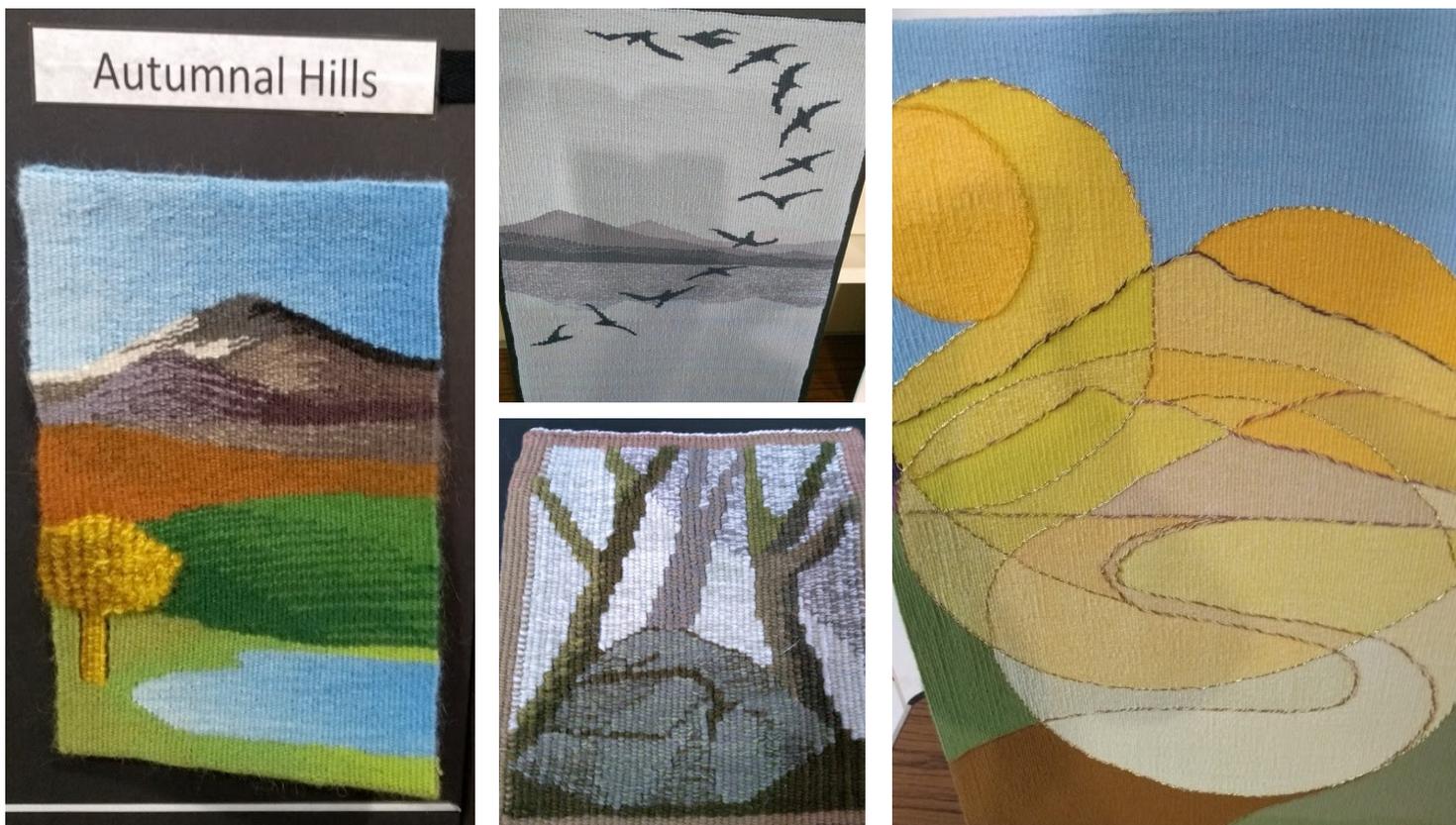


In the nineteenth century, William Morris resurrected the art of tapestry weaving in the medieval style at Merton Abbey, and there was a massive revival of the art form in both France, spearheaded by Jean Lurçat, and Germany with the Bauhaus Movement. Over the last 50 years, the fabric has become more of an art with the use of colour blending, abstract shapes, and the incorporation of objects and texture, while still being incredibly thick and tactile.



Mattie brought several of her own smaller pieces which showcased the range and intensity of her art work. And after trying it in the morning workshop, I can testify that it is both creative and relaxing, and the scrap I produced is very satisfying to fondle at the end.

Carole



Show and Tell

With a very wet couple of months, we has a fantastic display for the show and tell.

Coral's weaving was in Acrylic and Mohair warped on her rigid heddle, **Veronica's** indigo colours were 25% silk and 50% wool a very special yarn. **Kathy** was delighted with her piano woven in wool, while **Gill** had her Loom for Christmas. **Tiffany** spun her yarn on an electric spinner and **Sarah** used alpaca. Last but not least **Beverley** did her show and tell.



Sewing with handwoven – A tunic with a handwoven panel

I didn't set out weaving this piece with the intention of making a tunic. The idea just kind of grew on me as I was weaving.

It struck me that this is an approach which could be used to make a nice feature of any narrowish piece of handwoven – perhaps a colourful piece from your rigid heddle loom?

My piece was 34cm wide (13”) by about 1.7m. Holding it up against me, it seemed to lend itself to a simple tunic, paired up with denim from a recycled pair of jeans.



I have a collection of easy sew patterns for basics and selected one with a simple pullover dress.

I didn't want to start cutting my handwoven until I had tested the pattern, so I first made a mock-up out of remnants.

First, I marked the edges of my woven panel on the pattern, adjusted the line of the shoulders and neck to fit, and shortened to dart a bit.

I cut and edged a piece of remnant the width of my handwoven panel and then attached it to the contrasting (denim) fabric before cutting out.

Having made it up, I found I needed to allow a bit more room as I wanted to be able to wear this over a sweater, so I added a strip in at the each side. For the final tunic, I would make the side panels quite a bit wider - its easier to take some out than adding it in!

Now for the real thing! I was happy enough with the edges of my woven panel to make a flat seam with the selvages on top.

I faced the neck and shoulders with denim – to give some extra support to my handwoven. I made the armholes a bit squarer to make finishing the edges easier. And I added fake straps over the shoulders as a feature.



Finally, I put a denim pocket on the front, having sewn a reinforcing panel across the back, again to give some extra support. I machined this in place with 4 rows of stitching across the full the width.

I struggled a bit with the shoulders – they were very bulky with all the layers of denim and handwoven. I carefully unpicked them and layered the fabrics to the back facing before stitching the top layer of the tab over, thus flattening the seams.

The final touch was to add my signature Dorset buttons to the shoulders. Voila!

I now have two lovely tunics – the mock up is lighter weight and will be idea for summer with a t-shirt underneath.

Although I used and adjusted a pattern I already had, Sarah Howard makes patterns specifically designed for narrow handwoven fabrics. Check out ‘GetWeaving’ on Facebook or Etsy.

Coral Newton
March 2020



Ute, weaving with plant dyed yarns from her stash

March (meeting cancelled)

With the whole world on lockdown, Groups have not stopped getting together, just doing it virtually! On the Guild meeting day, Coral suggested on our Guild Facebook page to hold a virtual show and tell.



Della, blouse made from silk, she wove.



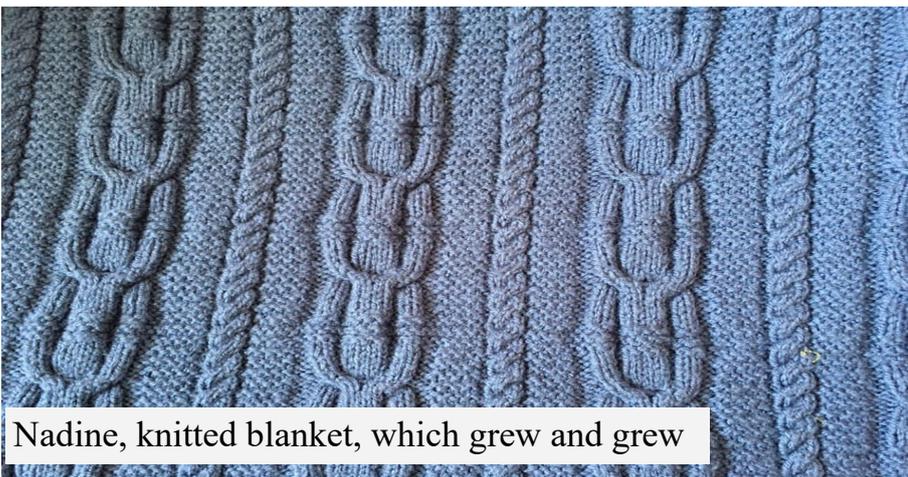
Sarah, crocheted blanket



Ann, Thrum rug



Karen, learning Nalbinding



Nadine, knitted blanket, which grew and grew



Richard, spun dog hair!

A letter from your Editor

Hi Everyone,

Just a few words to thank everybody for your help over the last six years. Unfortunately, this is my last newsletter so please, please somebody take up the reins.

It has been great fun, although I have needed a lot of help, Ann with the computer in 2014, and Alex with collecting the printed copies. I thought I would have to give up earlier, but Jo took over the technical side and organised the printing which enabled me to carry on, so thank you ladies for your help.

Thank you also to all the people who have written articles and those of you who have sent in 'write ups' of the many talks and workshops you have attended.

The 'show and tell' has been an invaluable part of the newsletter, so thank you for allowing me to record all those lovely items. Maybe I will be able to participate more now that I will have more time.

I am looking forward to reading the next newsletter when the next person takes over to carry it on. It is a great way to meet people and to get to know everyone in the Guild.

See you at the next meeting, whenever that might be. In the meantime keep well, keep busy, keep safe and keep happy,

Joy



HWSD Guild Programme 2020

16th May

Meeting to be confirmed
If we are able to meet we will notify
everyone as soon as possible

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## 20<sup>th</sup> June

10am Main Hall 'Spin and Chat'  
10am Workshop- Spinning with nettles  
2pm Talk – Weaving with nettles  
With Brigitte Kaltenbacher (BeeKayMakes)

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18th July

10am Main Hall **AGM**
11am 'Bring and Buy' in aid of Guild Funds
2pm Main Hall Talk – 'Indigo',
Jenny Balfour - Paul
3pm HWSD Guild 70th Birthday Tea

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**August No Meeting**

## 19<sup>th</sup> September

10am Main Hall 'TASTER DAY'  
for non-members

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17th October

10am **WESSEX WOOLCRAFT
FIBRE DAY**

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## 21<sup>st</sup> November

10am Main Hall 'News & Views' including  
The Guild Challenge Reveal  
2pm Talk - What is the Certificate of  
Achievement? Janet Crowther,  
AGWSD CoA Co-ordinator

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5th December

10am Meet for Tea and Coffee
10.30am Main Hall – Speaker TBC
Followed by our own festive
American Lunch



Virtual show and tell - Cathy, 3 samples on one warp

For information on events visit the [Diary page](#) on our website.

July 15th to July 21st 2021

AGWSD Summer School, Writtle College, Chelmsford, Essex

More detail will be released later in the year

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