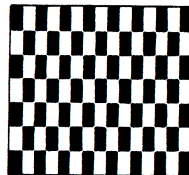


Nottingham and District Guild of
Spinners, Weavers and Dyers.
Summer 2009



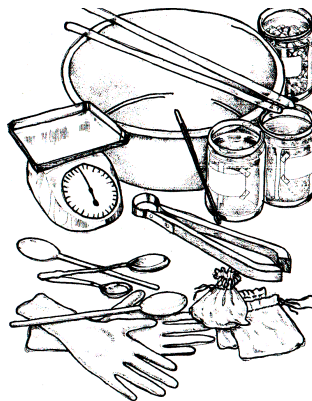
Core Crafts Workshop. – 25th. April 2009.

We were a little nervous about our first trial run of these workshops. Would members be interested? Would running three consecutively on one day be too much? Could we stick to time slots of only one hour?

Dyeing

Dee was the first to step up to the plate with her workshop on dyeing. She took us through the process right from the beginning and focused on four wood dyes:

Barbary bark (from the berberis plant); Logwood; Sanders wood and Fustic (Hartwood). We looked at the equipment you need and Dee shared some great tips with us such as using a spice box from Lakeland to eliminate the need to filter out the bark later; or if you do have to sieve out the bark use a coffee filter or sieve with coffee filter paper lining. Another good tip was to use chopsticks to lift yarn/fleece out of the dye bath and to label each one so that you didn't contaminate a dye by using a logwood stained chopstick to lift yarn out of a barbary bark dye bath.



Three golden rules:

1. Always wear rubber gloves;
2. Always wear a face mask;
3. Always be patient as natural vegetable dyes take a long time to extract.

These dyes are all available commercially but you can use any clippings or prunings from your garden: eucalyptus and apple tree included. Hooray, I have both!

We looked at mordants and Dee told us not to bother with Chrome, copper or tin as they are all toxic requiring the use of harsh acids. Stick to alum and iron is Dee's advice. Alum is most used and as it is sticky and can spoil yarn over time, only use a small amount combined with cream of tartar. Dee uses 10% of the fibre weight of both alum and cream of tartar and finds this successful. To alum mordant fibre you place it in water containing the alum and cream of tartar, slowly bring to the boil over 45 minutes, then barely simmer for a further 45 minutes. Tip out into the sink to cool.

When using iron as a mordant this is always done after dyeing rather than beforehand and again only small amounts are needed. Dee uses a quarter to half a teaspoon of Ferrous Sulphate.

The different mordants will produce different colours, as will dyeing with no mordant and also using cold water dye baths. Dee has compiled a box of samples of yarns she has dyed with a variety of vegetable dyes using alum, iron and noan produce. Everyone is welcome to consult the box before dyeing.

Lastly, a tip on testing colour fastness. Wrap the dyed fibre in tin foil leaving the end unwrapped and sit on a sunny window sill. At regular intervals unwrap a little more of the fibre over an 8 week period. This will give you a record of how that dye will fade over that period of time. Weld, elderberry and turmeric fade fast, which is why old tapestries have blue trees. The green was produced by a mixture of indigo and weld. The yellow from the weld faded leaving the blue indigo colour behind.



I have been collecting dyes for a few months now and, to be honest, have been a little scared to give it a go. I added to my collection at the end of the workshop, buying packs of the wood dyes, some alum and Dee's booklet. But I also added to my understanding of the whole process and it all feels less scary now.

Karen.

"Grandma's Ghastly Beads,"

"This is an opportunity to use up Grandma's ghastly beads," so went Nancy's introduction to her talk on Textile Jewellery. Her audience was fascinated for over an hour, with her demonstration of 10 different ways to make necklaces, brooches, 'attractions' (bits to enhance the person), earrings and corsages, using simple techniques, a very little sewing, some wire twisting and glue, and all using bits from her 'hoard' of treasures.

There were bracelets made from Suffolk Puffs, handmade and commercial felt, buttons and felt balls, and necklaces made from hand dyed silk and re-cycled beads, chokers woven on an inkle loom and decorated with beads, a Monkey's Fist - an adapted sailor's knot - and a chinese ball button used as a bead.

Nancy's ideas looked simple and inspiring and her witty and encouraging style were inspiring, a huge amount of thought and preparation had gone into planning the session, but my final impression was that Nancy has a terrific flair for colour and design and the ability to put together disparate treasures to make fantastic jewellery. Karen's reaction to Nancy's talk, "you should

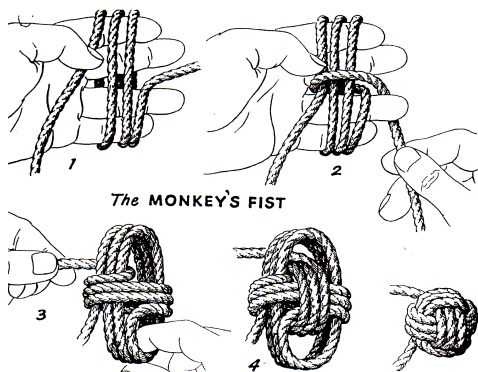


In the afternoon we were let loose on Nancy's stock of goodies to have a go ourselves.

Thank you for your talk Nancy.

1. Monkey s Fist.

Materials: about a yard of decorative, soft cord.



Method

1. Make 3 turns around the hand.
2. Start making turns passing outside the middle of the first 3 turns.
3. Complete the 3 second turns.
4. Make 3 more turns passing inside the first set of turns and outside the second set of turns.
5. Tighten up the knot pulling each in turn in the order they were

wrapped. Good luck.

HOLIDAY COTTAGE

Sealey Cottage, Staithes North Yorkshire coast, nr. Whitby.



3 bedrooms, sleeps 4+, sea views, coal fire, small and cosy.

Old fishing village with shops, cafes, pubs, gallery, crafts.

You can sit by the fire knitting or spinning and see the sea!

From £220 up to £300 per week peak season, available all year for short breaks, £40 or £45 per night.

Valerie Wheatcroft.

The first time I met Valerie was in February 1981. Valerie always struck me as a very gentle soul. She had this quiet way of talking and she always took an interest in what you were doing, whether it was craft work or other hobbies we had in every day life. Over the years she was a valued member of the Guild and, if she was absent from a meeting for one reason or another, she was inevitably missed.



One of my fondest memories is a day we both spent at Kelham Hall. giving a spinning demonstration. In spite of it being a bitterly cold day, Valerie and I were given a section in the stable block, we were told to keep the door open and as the day progressed it got colder and colder and our fingers were blue. Hardly any visitors came until Valerie said, “Look out we have a gentleman.”

He came over and stood in the doorway eyeing both of us. We were waiting for the usual comments, “Where’s your witches hat? Where did Sleeping Beauty prick her finger?” But all he did was look at our spinning wheels. I’d taken my pride and joy, my lovely Norwegian Double Band with the 24ins diameter wheel. Valerie had taken her Ashford traveller. We waited and waited for some response and eventually he said, looking at my wheel, “I don’t like yours, but I like hers.” and then promptly left. I can tell you we had great difficulty keeping straight faces. After that we gave up our ‘demonstration’ and sat sharing coffee and Mars bars. Some years later Valerie wanted to sell her Ashford Traveller and knowing I was in the market for one, she offered it to me at a very reasonable price. Since then my Norwegian wheel sits in the hall looking pretty and my main spinning wheel is Valerie’s. Now, whenever I spin, I’m reminded of her and Kelham.

I shall miss Valerie and the good times we spent spinning together but I have some good memories of a very good friend. It was a joy to know her. Dee.

Sylvia attended Valerie's funeral and gave a £10 donation on behalf of the Guild. Sylvia's words on the card to Val's family reflect the affection in which Val was held in the Guild.

"The Notts S.W.& D. Guild were so sorry to hear of Val's death. She will be sadly missed. She was a lovely lady and friend always with a smile and a chat for every one. Please accept condolences from all members of the Guild past and present."

A plea from Eileen.

Sometime ago a Guild member borrowed Eileen's books on weaving, and she hasn't had them back yet. If you know where they are, please get in touch with her. 01949 20457

Plaid.

A long broad woollen scarf, with fringe at each end, worn in the following manner:- It is passed across the chest to the back, an end is brought over each shoulder, and finally both ends are passed under the fold across the chest

Tapestry-woven frieze of lions on an Achaemenid textile, 4th century B.C. or earlier.



“He’s a bit of an ‘Arris”

“Harris Tweed” is the Cockney slang for a small, ineffectual man, but there is nothing small or ineffectual about the Harris Tweed industry.

Rough and hairy, worn by country folk to protect themselves from the environment and the weather, Harris tweed is a famous, locally hand crafted cloth that has survived the industrial revolution and the ravages of modern industrialists.

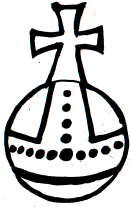


Families living on the Hebridean islands of Lewis, Harris, Uist and Barra, used local materials to produce a hard wearing fabric which was waterproof and warm, for their own use, and for sale in local markets.

Made from virgin wool, some kept it's natural colour, some dyed using natural dyes, and mixed together to get the required colours, the wool was oiled and teased, carded, spun and woven on a hand loom.

The Hebridean Isles were owned at one time by the Earl of Dunmore who wanted a copy of his Murray tartan for his soldiers kilts, and it was his widow, Lady Dunmore, who took an interest in the making of this tweed in 1846, she was instrumental in marketing the tweed and improving it's production..The women had been doing the weaving until this time, producing material 28 1/2 ins wide and 72 ins long. The introduction of a new “fly shuttle” loom, made of wood and iron, was a lot heavier and could produce wider and longer material, and the men took over the role of weavers. It was at this point that the Harris Tweed Industries developed

In 1906, a meeting standardised the production of harris tweed, to protect the industry from cloth made from machine spun yarn, and the Harris Tweed trade



Harris Tweed

mark was registered, an orb, a Maltese cross and the words 'Harris Tweed'.

The industry has gradually contracted since the 1980s, and in 2006 a business man, Brian Haggas, bought up Harris Tweed and 'turned it around.'

"The crofters used to produce over 8,000 different patterns of tweed, which involved anything from 5 to 25 different coloured wools. I have rationalised that down to 4 of the best selling patterns," and made 36 mill workers redundant in 2008. Mr Haggas had 75,000 men's jackets in these 4 designs made, which he had difficulty selling!

Now there are 3 names fighting back, 'Harris Tweed,' 'Harris Tweed Scotland' and 'Harris Tweed Hebrides.' The traditional skills are being maintained by these factories and their fabrics are being used by famous designers such as Vivienne Westwood, Nike and "The healthy Back Bag Company."

The 1993 Act of Parliament states,

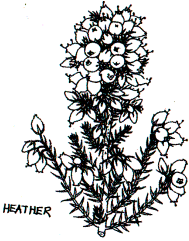
"Harris Tweed means a tweed which has been hand woven by the islanders in their homes in the Outer Hebrides, finished in the islands of Harris, N.Uist, Benbecula, S. Uist and Barra and their several purtenances (The Outer Hebrides) and made from virgin wool dyed and spun in the Outer Hebrides."

The Harris Tweed Authority sends out inspectors who check every 50 metres of genuine harris tweed and hand stamp it with the Harris Tweed orb.

Cuttle

To fold a finished fabric down the centre, known in the woollen industry as rigging, and placed in transverse folds. Sometimes fabric is not folded and usually placed in folds in open width.

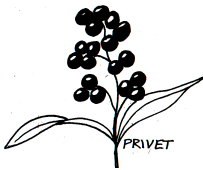
Some of the traditional natural dyes used in the production of Harris Tweed.



Heathers. Heather gives a good yellow dye if the flowers are used before they are fully open and mordanted with alum.



St John's Wort, this can give green, maroon, yellow and black. The Gaelic name, Achlasan Challum-chille, means 'armpit package of Columba.' It was thought that evil would be warded off and peace brought to anyone carrying the plant under their left armpit.



Privet berries, when they are ripe and after the first frost, give a good blue colour.

The ripe berries with salt give green and crimson.



Lichens. Steeped in putrid urine for 3 weeks lichens give a purple dye, but when boiled in water yellow/tan/brown dyes are extracted. Lichens are usually dried and powdered before being used as a dye.

There are records of other dyestuffs being imported to Scotland, for example indigo, logwood, and brazilwood.

Between 1686 and 1696, 100,000 lbs of madder were imported from Holland.

Making a Finger Knotted Door Mat and beating the 'Credit Crunch.'

You will need:-

A wooden picture frame approx. 18ins by 27ins. (I used an old warping frame.)

A large ball of string.

2 x 6 ins length of wooden architrave stuck back to back to warp wool round and cut into 5 ins lengths.



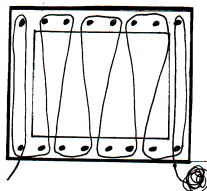
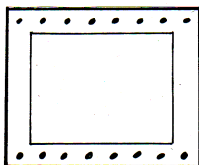
Lots of scrap coarse wool, axminster thrums are ideal, and some thin strands to give colour interest.

3/4 ins nails with flat heads.



1 12ins shuttle

Now how to do it. The frame and warping.



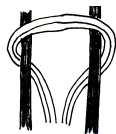
1. Knock in nails about 3/8 in apart along the top and bottom of the frame.

2. Wind the string up and down the frame, doubling up at the edges for selvedge, to make the warp.

Wrap wool scraps round wooden block and cut along slot to form 5 ins lengths and sort into bundles of 3 or 4 threads.

With full shuttle of string weave 6 rows of tabby across and back on frame.

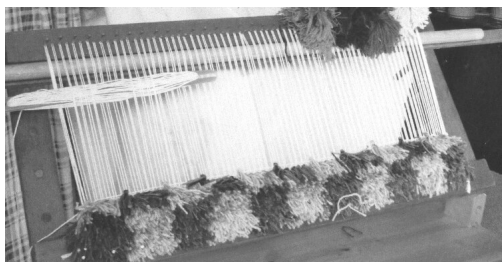
You are now ready to start knotting.



Lay first bundle of threads over 2 warp threads, wrap round to the back and pull up ends between them to form a knot. Continue along the row pushing well down on the strings.

Do 2 rows of string tabby, push well down and start knotting again-

this time pairing up on alternative warp threads. 2 more rows of string tabby and you've got it!



This cost me only the price of a ball of string and some nails, and it makes a very effective door mat.

NB. As the rug progresses, the string warp becomes increasingly tight. To

offset this, put a length of 1 in deep wood across the frame to create some slack. See photograph.

Chris Jesson.

The International Year of Fibres.

2009 has been declared as the International Year of Fibres by the United Nations General Assembly as a way of raising awareness, and to create greater demand for natural fibres.

The aim is to foster a stable international partnership among various fibres industries and to encourage suitable policy responses from governments in regard to the issues and problems faced by the industry.

The INYF covers a wide range of fibres, all animal and vegetable fibres and brings to light their uses, from the traditional to those with luxury appeal. There are many events planned throughout the year which range from growing plants to the care of animals whose fleeces are used to spin into fibre. Events span the globe – UK events are planned for April June September and December. More info go to www.naturalfibres2009.org.

There are 3 events still to come in the UK.

1. UK Ravelry Day. June 6th, in Coventry.
2. Wool and Willow Festival. 6th-26th June. Llanidloes, Wales.
3. Three Shires Textile Festival. 4th-19th July. Cheshire.

These web-sites might interest you.

1. Fibrefest 2009 22nd-23rd August at Coldharbour Mill, Uffculme, Devon, a working wool museum. More details on www.fibrefest.co.uk.
2. Mayfield Alpacas have a limited special on excess stock of Alpaca fleece. A complete fleece, 5 kg in weight for £30; 1 kg= approx. 44 balls of yarn. Contact 0114 263 0033 or info@mayfieldalpacas.com.
3. www.makepiece.co.uk This is a shop in Todmorton which sells designer knitwear made from wool from their own flock of sheep and goats. It was featured on 'Down on your Farm' Radio 4's farming programme.
4. www.62group.org.uk The 62 Group is an artist led initiative established in 1962 to create a supportive and educative network to promote "textile practice" in its broadest sense. They have an exhibition at the Hub in Sleaford 11th July - 6th Sept. 2009.
5. www.kenana.co.uk This is a group of women in Kenya who buy in homespun wool and knit it into marketable products. "A women's lot in rural areas is a hard one - no running water or readily available fuel for cooking; no transport to the market place; very little access to basic medical attention. The money earned goes directly into the hands of the women who are thus able to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.
6. www.clothkits.co.uk Popular back in the 70s, (I had one!) these are available again, although I don't remember them being so expensive!
7. www.workaid.org This is a registered charity which supplies refurbished tool and equipment to vocational training projects in developing countries, mainly in East Africa.

Please let me have any sites that you've found to be interesting.

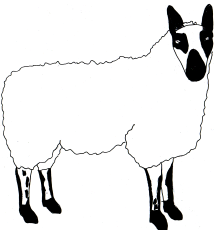
There is no substitute for wool.

Fair Venus surfaced from the spray,
And not much work was done that day.
The elders came, they turned bright pink.
They coughed, they said, "We really think
Some well-placed wool would do no harm
Indeed, it might enhance your charm.
Besides, you'll find the nights are cool,
There is no substitute for wool."



Kerry Hill Sheep.

This breed of sheep originally came from Kerry near Powys in Wales in the early 1800s and were popular around the English/Welsh boarder. Although not so common now these days, they can still be found throughout England, Ireland and the Netherlands, where they were first exported in 1992.



The sheep are white with cute 'panda' faces with black round their eyes and noses, black standing up ears and black markings on their white legs Kerry Hill ewes make good mums and have lots of large, lean lambs which produce the type of meat that our fat conscious culture values to-day. A fully grown ram weighs in at 176lbs-209lbs and the ewes between 121lbs -143 lbs. The quality fleece can weigh between 5-6 lbs, is good to handle, white and dense, and is considered to be one of the softest of British wool. Margaret Dixon says that Kerry Hill fleece "most suitable for hand spinning into knitting yarn." The fleece has a quality count of 56-58's and a staple length of 4 ins.

Knit a mini - beast for your 2009 project!

Fly.

This pattern for a fly can be adapted to any species, of mini-beast, depending on the colours you use, and the number of wings.

Materials.

Using 4 ply wool, or adjust needle size depending on your wool.

Oddments for main colour (A) Oddments in contrast colour (B)

Oddments of shiny wool (C) 1 pair 2 1/4 mm (no 13) needles.

Stuffing and wire.

Body.

With A cast on 10 sts.

Work in st st for 4 rows

With B work 4 rows

With A inc 1 at each end of next and every foll row until there are 16 sts.

With B work 4 rows

With A dec 1 at each end of next and every foll alt row until 10 sts remain.

Work 3 rows.

With B work 16 rows. Cast off.

Making up.

Stitch body in half lengthwise, right sides tog.

Gather up and sew tail end (cast-on edge)

Turn right side out and stuff.

Insert length of wire into body and sew up open end.

With C embroider large knots for eyes.

Make legs and antennae from wire twisted with C

Thread wire around edge of wings and neaten.

Wings (make 2)

With C cast on 4 sts.

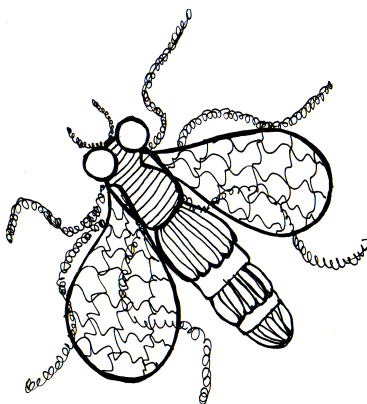
Work in st st for 4 rows.

Inc 1 at each end of next and every foll alt row until there are 16 sts.

Work 5 rows

Dec 1 at each end of next and every foll row until there are 4 sts rem.

Cast off.



Guild committee for 2009-2012.

At the A.G.M. in October this year Karen and Jules will be standing down from the committee which means that a new secretary and treasurer will have to be elected/appointed.

There may also be a vacancy for a committee member.

The role of the secretary is

- To produce the agendas and take the minutes for the A.G.M. and monthly committee meetings.
- Receive and deal with correspondence.
- Be the contact person with Guild Headquarters.

The role of the treasurer is

- To collect annual and monthly subs.
- Pay out petty cash.
- Pay speakers.
- Pay for the hire of the Hall.
- Keep an upto date record of the Guild's funds and present them for the annual audit.

All the other roles, such as booking speakers, organizing demonstrations, keeping tabs on the library, are taken on by the committee in general or indeed by non-committee members who have a particular interest in that area.

If you are interested in standing for either post, or have any ideas who else might be interested in joining the committee please see Karen.

Gilstrap Exhibition.

We still need examples of your work to photograph for the Exhibition, Nancy will be taking the photos, so please contact her. 0115 846 9340.

Details of the Exhibition are in the Spring copy of the Newsletter

Meetings are held in Lambley Village Hall, Catfoot Lane. 10am - 4pm.
Workshops and speakers start at 11 o'clock.
There is a large car park and easy access for disabled people.

Programme for 2009.

- June 17th.** East Bridgeford Show, **no** meeting at Lambley.
- July 25th** Do your own work.
- August 29th** Dorset buttons with Karen and Jane.
- September 26th** *“Pictorially speaking.” External Speaker. A lecture on creating images in loom controlled weaving without being a tapestry weaver*
- October 31st** A.G.M. and Guild show.
- November 28th** Core skills workshops, as April.
- December 19th** Christmas fuddle and seasonal fun.

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