

# The Sheep Geek's Gazette

April 2017



*One of Carla's bobbins (no surprise there!), spun up at the Industrial Museum, Wollaton Hall.*



# JANUARY SALE

There was a tremendous buzz in the Hall at the January meeting when the Guild held its Sale. The tables were piled high with fleeces, yarn, books, equipment and various 'stashes.' Whoever planned the selling process knows the Guild well. Guild members remind me of flocks of magpies who, whenever there are piles of freebies on show, swoop forwards. To prevent the magpies picking all the bargains, and late comers missing out, nothing could be bought before 11.30am, and the silent auction finished at 2pm.

Equipment sold well, looms and wheels were snapped up, books were popular, but the sale of 'stashes' was a little slower! The trouble being that all the customers already had stashes of their own. I wonder how many people are like me when they buy 'irresistible bargains' which then land up at the back of a cupboard. I had fallen for several grammes of beautiful orangey/red alpaca in the wool shop at Whitby (which has since closed and turned into a basket shop) and was delighted when it found a new home.

The other Guild January custom is a lunch of jacket potatoes and fillings provided by the committee. Cooked to perfection the potatoes were delicious and the fillings scrumptious. It was interesting to see how many people left the skins, how could they? To my mind the best part! The Guild has many strengths, being encouraging, supportive, friendly, clearing up etc etc, and talking and eating. The January meeting enabled us to demonstrate all these skills!

Thanks to the Committee for the lunch.



## Silk Painting Workshop

25 February 2017

The workshop this Saturday was enjoyed by all and hopefully the pictures have captured the beauty of what we all created with such artistic flair. Since joining the guild my interest in all things spinning, weaving, and knitting has grown to incorporate many more very different crafts, and today was no different.

Some of the group bought their own silk with them, while others worked with the material Jenny bought for the group. This was more along the lines of a voile type material. While silk allows the paint to bleed and flow more easily, we improvised and drew on Jenny's expertise to produce a similar outcome. Jenny was very knowledgeable and encouraging. There were samplers that Jenny had bought to show the group; Jenny has attended workshops with the very talented Sue Townsend and her work is truly very beautiful.



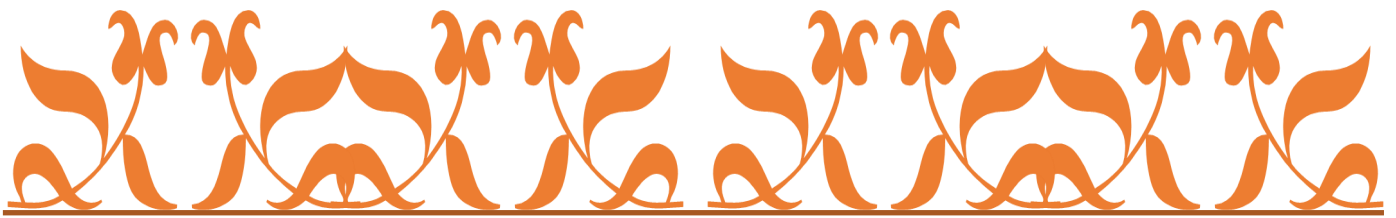


When working on an art project the medium I favour is working with pencils but working with Jenny's gentle encouragement I started to experiment and draw motivation from her and the rest of the group. My firework piece was my favourite, which was in fact the first piece I worked on. I returned to this piece throughout the workshop to add colours, using different brush strokes to change the shapes and dimensions of the original silk painting, allowing the painting to morph to its finish. The background you place your final piece of work against changes your creation, a dark background strengthens and deepens the colours, where a light background creates a delicacy and softness.

Walking around and seeing the silk painting of the others in the group, the talent was incredible and quite humbling too. Others' work spanned from abstract to fine art, and the beauty in the shapes, colours and styles was inspiring. My thanks go to Jenny and the whole group for making this an enjoyable experience and another wonderful day at the Guild.

Lesley Kirby





## February Fun Day

On Saturday 18th February was the annual February Fun Day – a bonus meeting where members get to try something new.

This year we spent a wonderful day crafting vintage-inspired brooches with Julie from 3 Little Daisies, based at the Edwinstowe Craft Centre. She brought with her a treasure trove of felt, lace, buttons, fabric stamps and many bits and bobs, some of which were new to us. There was much interest in a type of fabric that could be printed directly onto using an inkjet printer. I think some creative braincells were set whirring with the potential applications!

The aim for the day was to create brooches using the available materials. Some however decided to create stitched pictures instead. Our embroidery skills were put to the test! The atmosphere was very relaxed and jovial, having met in the Lowdham W.I. hall, which is quite an intimate venue and suited our literal sewing circle nicely.

We had a shared lunch which was, as always, excellent and diverse. Highlights for me included smoked salmon and cream cheese sandwiches, coronation chicken, couscous and delightful Viennese whirls (my favourite)! After lunch, Julie left us to our own devices, with a small gift pack each, containing a teabag, chocolate and the materials to make a heart shaped brooch. As many of us had brought along our stashes of threads, buttons and beads, there was plenty to



keep us occupied for the rest of the afternoon. I wonder just how many buttons were in the room with us – into the thousands I should think!

After such a relaxing, happy day of chatting and stitching, we photographed our efforts and went our separate ways, back to reality! I am very much looking forward to next year's Fun Day as I enjoyed this one so much! Many thanks to all those who organised it for us.

Carla Cawser



### Memories of a good friend.

Sadly, our friend and fellow Guild member Eileen Meylan died just before Christmas. Here some of her Guild friends share their memories of her.

At the passing of my dear friend Eileen, my mind is awash with memories all flooding and obscuring any way of putting them down succinctly. I shall reserve that until some clarity kicks in. Suffice it to say at the moment that we have lost a very special person who has left behind a huge legacy from a full, well-lived and imaginative life which has reached out and touched so many of us.

Yes, I miss having her around, but no-one can take the memories away. They live on in all of us who knew her well. I count Eileen as one of my closest friends; in weaving, she was my mentor and my life has been all the richer through our friendship.

I feel very privileged to have known her.

Chris Jesson

I'm not sure how long I've known Eileen, perhaps 15 years, but I know I have a lot of admiration for her. She had such strength and determination, particularly where her health was concerned. For most of those years, she was in and out of hospital and yet she still kept on weaving. She started spinning after she and David spent a holiday in New Zealand, and she could spin very fine yarns. She studied weaving with Susan Foster, a well-known weaver of wall hangings, after finding an old loom in a barn which she and David put together.

Her weaving was second to none. She loved fine yarns and colours, making gifts for her family and friends, especially her two granddaughters. And she excelled at making rugs using her large Glimakra loom. She joined the Hallamshire Guild and progressed onto other textile media, one of which was tassel making. And what tassels they were! She was very generous with her knowledge and I have some lovely tassels, which I made at one of her classes.

We were very lucky when she joined the Notts Guild because there were only a few weavers at the time and she brought new ideas and enthusiasm to the group. She will be truly missed.

Sylvia Houghton

Eileen and David had an allotment for over 30 years; in her latter years so determined was she to keep the allotment going, her gardening was done on her knees.

When I first met Eileen, I was a bit in awe of her, but getting to know her I found Eileen to be a warm, friendly, kind and generous lady who tried very hard to teach me how to use an inkle loom, with no success!

Jane Ashley

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## Recent outreach events

April at Idle Valley.

The Idle Valley Nature Reserve is just outside Retford and has a large lake covered in birds, an easy walk round the lake and a Centre for Rural Learning, where they run all sorts of courses. There is also an excellent café with a well-earned reputation. And on Sunday the 9th April it was buzzing with its Spring Fair.



What a lovely day to have a Fair! The sun was shining, a cool breeze was blowing and there was lots to see and do, including visiting the Guild's stand! Two spinners, Sue Routledge and Angela, attracted lots of interest and some enquiries about our Guild. The thing about spinners is that they seem so relaxed and happy - I think they find any excuse to spend the day spinning!

Children gathered around Sue Relf to make "Sue's sheep" which they proudly carried away. Some children also bravely tackled the weaving sticks! Weaving sticks can be quite tricky for young children as holding the sticks is a problem for very small hands, and it takes concentration to understand the weaving pattern.

I played with needle felting and punctured two fingers, which hurt!

I hope we get invited again. Nottinghamshire Wildlife are happy and friendly people, and it's a good day out!

Jane Ashley

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## The Machine Knitting Show at Long Eaton



The annual Machine Knitting Show at Long Eaton took place on the same day as the Idle Valley Nature Reserve, but we were still able to turn out lots of willing demonstrators and a fantastic display!

Huge thanks to Patricia for organising the event, and to all those who went along to represent the Guild.



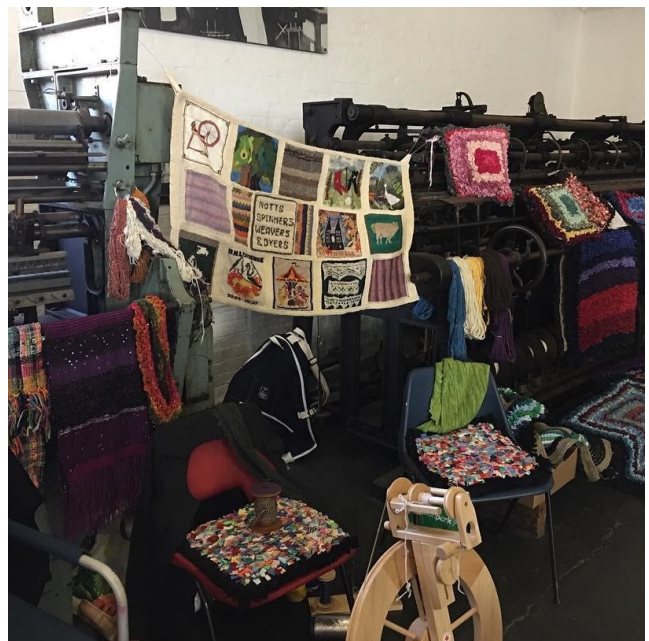


## The Industrial Museum at Wollaton Hall



Recently we were invited to show off our skills at the Demonstrator's Weekend, held at the Industrial Museum, Wollaton Hall. Aptly, we were located in the Textiles Room alongside many interesting machines. Zoe organised the event superbly and had lots of activities on hand for both children and adults alike.

Thanks to Kate, Sheena, Carla, Angela and Angela's Mum (a.k.a. Rag Rug Lady) for representing the Guild. If we're invited back again, we'll definitely wear more layers—despite the sun shining brightly outside, the Textiles Room was actually very cold!





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## CLIPPERS IN THE WOOL TRADE

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The old Clipper ships brought green tea from China, but when the Suez Canal was opened up and steam ships took the trade from China, the poor Clippers were out of a job ... until someone had the bright idea to send the Clippers to Australia to bring back the wool!

### **The North/South Divide**

I'm almost ashamed to admit that I sometimes watch "Money for nothing". I'm interested to see how throw-away articles can be re-used, but absolutely staggered at the prices things sell for. Presenter Sarah Moore had found some old felt/fleece which had been used for insulation. This she turned into needle-felted garden birds which, ok, were *quite* good, but she sold five for £200!! Here 'up North' we'd be lucky to get a tenner a time!

Seems like the North/South Divide is going strong!



## **Remaining 2017 Programme**

27 May 2017: Starting & Finishing Techniques for Weaving.

18 June 2017 (Sunday): Dyeing Day. Hope and Elvis Studio, Welbeck Abbey.

29 July 2017: Table Top Sale and Using Hand & Drum Carders workshop.

26 August 2017: Chinese Tassels Workshop.

30 September 2017: Intermediate Spinning Techniques.

14 October 2017 (Note – not the last Saturday in the month): AGM and Open Afternoon.

25 November 2017: Tablet Weaving Workshop.

9 December 2017: Christmas Fuddle.

## **Upcoming Outreach Events**

17 June 2017 Calverton Church Summer Garden Fete. Guild contact – Sheena Priestland.

24 June 2017 Beeston Heritage Day. Guild contact – Liz Harrison.

16 July 2017 Balderton Show. Guild contact – Paula Duckworth.

24 August 2017 Skylarks Nature Reserve – Holme Pierrepont. Guild contact – Angela Donaldson.

28 August 2017 Lowdham Show. Guild contact – Jane Ashley.

3 Sept 2017 Easton Walled Gardens. Guild contact – Jane Ashley.

13-15 Oct 2017 St Barnabus Cathedral, Nottingham. Guild contact – TBC.

11-12 Nov 2017 Nottingham Yarn Expo— Nottingham Trent University. Guild contact—Angela Donaldson.

## Committee

Chair:	Angela Donaldson	ruddington@hotmail.com
Secretary:	Kate Padwick	kate.padwick@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Sue Routledge	suejroutledge@hotmail.com
Committee	Sheena Priestland	
Members:	Liz Harrison	
	Pat Parry	
	Paula Duckworth	
Newsletter Editor	Jane Ashley	ejaneashley7@yahoo.co.uk
Librarian	Sarah Gardner	

Want to see your words in print?

We're always on the lookout for items for future Newsletters, so if you've got something to contribute then forward your content to Jane.

It doesn't just have to be about what goes on at the Guild meetings. Been somewhere fibre-related lately? Found a good website that others might not know about? Or maybe you want to share a project that you've just completed? If it interests you then it's likely to interest the rest of us, so share it via the Newsletter.