



Nottingham and District
Guild of Spinners, Weavers
and Dyers.
Newsletter Summer 2008

NOTICES.

EASTWELL COUNTRY FETE. Saturday 16th August.
The village is in the Vale of Bevoir, 5 miles from the
Castle, and the Fete is open from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm.
Our Guild will be having a stall there. If you'd like to
help, contact Liz or Sylvia.

NEWARK AND NOTTINGHAM SHOWGROUND.

Thursday 4th Sept to Sunday 7th Sept.
Following our successful stall at last year's show, we
have been invited back again this year. Jules is taking
the lead organizing the stand, please see her if you'd
like to be involved.

2008 PROJECT.

Just a reminder that the project is something made
from unusual materials. The July meeting may inspire
you as Mary talks about 'Yarns old and new.'

NEW CHAIR FOR 2008.

Margaret will have completed her 3 years this October,
any thoughts on who might be the next one?

SPINNING DAY.

Ever wondered what wool you needed to spin a particular garment? Angela and Debbie gave a wonderful, insightful talk describing various wools and other fibres which had different 'crimps' per inch, and how knowledge of these plus an increased knowledge of your spinning wheel, enables the spinner to produce the right wool for the right job. There was a marvellous turn out of spinners, 18 plus their wheels, all in a large circle, ready to listen and eager to learn.

Angel had samples of wools as well as samples of bamboo, soya bean and plastic bottle fibres, and how they looked when spun and plied. Everyone had chance to handle these whilst Angela described how she found them to spin. Debbie then discussed getting closer to understanding your spinning wheel. I had no idea that my wheel might have more than one 'wheel ratio,' the Ashford wheels have 3 separate wheel ratios that can be used. Feel free to ask how to work out your wheel ratio. 2

Using references from Anne Field's book on spinning 'Spinning Wool, beyond the basics,' we

all learnt how to calculate the number of crimps in the raw fibre, count the number of warps to the inch of the wool, and use the wheel ratio to work out how much wool will be needed to complete the finished, washed article.

I want to thank Angela and Debbie for the time they must have spent in preparation, and their willingness to pass on their knowledge to us all

Julie Rutherford-Moore.

The authors of the "Woolgatherings for Dyers and Spinsters" series were at the April meeting. They briefly went through how they learnt and experimented to find out how to spin and dye "Everything in the kitchen sink." We all hope to see them again.

A definition....."Jean"

"This is a species of fine fustian, being made of twilled cotton. It is a strong and thick material, made in white and colours; one kind is stripped, and another, called satin jean, is smooth and glossy. This make of goods is used chiefly for stays and white boots for evening wear."

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Rain on the 8th June foretells a wet harvest. It didn't rain this year, so we should be OK.

WHAT INSPIRES ME TO START A PROJECT

There are a few things that make me want to start to crochet. The main one being the yarn. I buy it and then have to decide what to do with it. The fun of trying out different stitch patterns to see what makes the yarn come alive: what size hook should I use? Often the hank of yarn looks lovely as a hank, but when I start to crochet the colours do not blend how I want them to, so it's out with different size hooks, different width of fabric until I get something I like. Then what do I want to make? I usually get ideas as I am making my sample.

In my bobble waistcoat I found one variegated yarn that I wanted to use, found all the yarns that had those colours, or in the correct tone or hue, threw them all on the floor, and discarded those that did not go. I then decided a) in what order I wanted to use the yarn, lightest colours at the centre going to darker colours at the side, and b) which stitch showed off the yarn to the best advantage. I eventually decided on 1 row of bobbles followed by 1 row of treble.

I will do lots of sample pieces when I learn a technique that is new to me, firstly with a smooth, light coloured yarn. When I have mastered the stitch I will go on to make something or just keep the samples for another day.

I obtained a few balls of a textured yarn and wanted to make a caplet, I tried a number of stitches, but lost the lovely texture, I eventually tried a granny square, and it was perfect. The texture all went to the back of the work- so the back became the front and a simple motif was unrecognisable and the yarn showed itself to its best advantage.

I teach a number of people how to crochet so have tried to find items that beginner and improver can do during a class, eg. twisted chain necklace, fish book} marks and little Tunisian bags

Well I hope this gives a little idea of how I work.

Margaret O'Mara.

Some types of Crochet.

Afghan	Finger	Basket weave
Amigurimi	Floral	Diagonal
Aran	Jacquard	Knot/love stitch
Bosnian	Linked	Polish star
Broomstick	Omega	Swedish embroidery
Bruges	Patchwork	Magic square
Camel	Pineapple	Rope
Clothes line	Relief	Tambour
Crocher'n weave	Romanian	Tapestry
Double filet	Irish	Waffle
Entralac	Hairpin lace	Elmo.
Elmo	Freeform	Tunisian double filet
Doily crochet		

Can you add more to the list?

WEAVING DAY.

As a non-weaver I was apprehensive about these workshops, but I need not have worried and was inspired to borrow the Guild's fixed heddle loom, as a result of the day's activity.

Sylvia demonstrated tapestry weaving, she had made looms out of old place mats with, amongst other things, cup hooks and elastic bands. I'm amazed how inventive members are. I learnt how to make "butterflies", wool wrapped around thumb and little finger which runs freely when used as the weft.

Eileen set up her stall with inkle looms and an extensive display of her own work. I thought this a straight forward method of weaving, no complicated warping up until I overheard a totally incomprehensible conversation between experts as they discussed the finer details of warping up a most complicated looking Inkle loom.

Mary demonstrated the fixed heddle loom, and it really is as simple to warp up as she said, [for full details of how to warp up see the Spring Newsletter.] This loom gives a quick, easy method of weaving that is ideal to use up "textured" spinning.

Chris had made up a rug loom from an old warping frame, string and nails, on which she was making a rug using home made thrums and Turkish knots. The thrums used up wool that had been nibbled into short lengths whilst being stored in her garage. Nothing is wasted in our Guild.

Guild members who do our workshops put so much effort and thought into their preparations, we are lucky to have such people in the Guild. Thank you Sylvia, Eileen, Mary and Chris for an inspiring day

A weaving convert.

HEATHER'S WORKSHOP

Those of us who had made Christmas fairies with Heather knew we would be given lots of ideas and inspiration for making eye catching items with very simple materials, and Heather's workshop did not let us down.

She talked us through weaving on willow sticks, either collected or bought from the garden centre. When partly woven and then embellished with anything from buttons to odd earrings, they made effective wallhangings or accent decorations for bags. Just remember to knot the yarn on the first stick and you've started on a lovely way to use up odds and ends of yarn.

Then we looked at weaving with weaving sticks and peg looms, producing lengths of fabric which can be sewn together either vertically or horizontally to make bags and hats.

Heather showed us many examples of her work, all of which used great colour combinations and a variety of finishing touches, like knitted edges or decorative fringes. She surprised us all with the different effects you can build into off loom weaving, including cable.

And of course there were animals and magical creatures galore, which Heather showed us how to make using only odds and ends of yarns and pipe cleaners in every colour and thickness. We all had our own favourites- mine was the horse.

So there's no excuse for us not coming up with something for this year's project; an item made from unusual materials

Karen Winyard.

HOW TO IDENTIFY UNKNOWN FIBRES.

Just as many sheep are now a mixture of breeds to produce "meat boxes on legs" so many fibres are mixed to make yarn "fit for purpose." The burning test is probably the easiest to do at home, but be careful, hot residues and flames spell danger.

The flame test will readily separate fibres into 1. protein, 2. cellulose, 3. synthetic chemicals

1. Protein fibres This group can be either animal, eg wool silk mohair, casein(milk), or plant, eg soya. All these contain nitrogen in their molecules, and this latches on to acid type dyes. Many also contain sulphur that gives the characteristic 'bad egg' smell on burning.

Wool smoulders and goes to a black crushable bead smelling of burnt hair. It does not burn.

Silk smoulders readily and goes to a black bead smelling of feathers. If the fibre is weighted with chemicals the bead will glow like red-hot metal.

Soya, casein and hairs react like wool.

2. Cellulose fibres. This group are plant in origin eg. cotton, linen, bamboo. Viscose is made from waste wood pulp, and acetate rayon from waste cotton linters. These fibres need hot Procion dyes or cold fibre-reactive dyes as they only contain carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. They are much more inflammable and need extra care.

Cotton flares up readily with a yellow flame leaving a very little grey ash. Cotton mixtures are very popular, for example with terylene to make polycotton, and these react very differently, confusing the results.

Linen flares up and burns with a yellow flame leaving a grey ash.

Viscose rayon reacts as cotton

Acetate rayon is made from waste cotton with chemicals added. It flares up, but then melts into a black bead which crushes and gives off an acid smell.

3.Synthetics. Made from chemicals derived from coal and petroleum, they are too complex in molecular structure to dye easily.

Polyamide-nylon.This runs away from the flame and melts into a very hard smooth bead. The white smokey vapour smells of celery and the flame is orange. It is the only synthetic that readily dyes with acid dyes.

Polyester-terylene. This is difficult to set alight, but then burns with a yellow flame, giving off an aromatic smell and black smoke. It then fuses to a hard bead that is very hot.

Polyacrylic-acrilan. This shrivels from the flame and melts to a soft black tar-like bead.

These tests can be useful to try and identify bargains from charity shops or fibres without their labels. Textiles can be also be tested in this way, but only test a small piece and be very careful. Try these tests on known fibres first, which gives a benchmark for comparison.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE MERINO SHEEP.

“People have got the impression that the merino is a gentle, bleating animal that gets its living without trouble to anybody, and comes up every year to be shorn with a pleased smile on its amiable face.” Not so. “If a mob of sheep see a bush fire closing round them, do they run out of danger? Not at all, they rush round and round in a ring until the fire burns them up.” Andrew Barton Paterson. 2008.

Merinos are very woolly, they have been bred to have wrinkly skin, giving a larger surface area, and more wool. It has wool on its cheeks and forehead and woolly double chins. Their wool is finely crimped and soft, the staple 2.5 to 4 ins long and a good sized ram can give up to 10.5 lbs of fleece. Being such fine wool, it is usually made into luxury garments, and being an exothermic material - one that warms up if it gets wet - the wool is used to line wet suits, giving a warm, cosy layer next to the skin.

Mulesing is a welfare issue with Australian merinos. The skin around the tail is so wrinkly, it is prone to flystrike which can lead to maggots doing untold damage to the sheep, even eating them alive. The treatment of choice is mulesing, which involves cutting off, without anaesthetic, the skin around the tail, the scar tissue which forms is smooth, and less liable to flystrike. Small pain, longer gain is the reasoning.

On a happier note a New Zealand ram, name of Shrek, avoided being sheared for 6 years, living a solitary life in rugged, freezing country. When finally rounded up, he looked like a woolly bundle on legs, carrying 59 lbs of fleece, 15 ins long. And some of the wool was used to make a coat for the late Famous New Zealander, Sir Edmund Hillary. Jane Ashley.

HATS FOR PREMATURE AFRICAN BABIES.

This pattern was brought to Guild, with a selection of cute, completed hats by Heather. If you want to support this venture, please don't knit all white hats, as white is the colour of mourning.

Materials. 4 mm. needles, odd bits of wool.

Cast on 48 sts.

K1 P1 rib for 1.5 ins.

Work in stocking stitch-1 row knit, 1 row pearl-until work measures 5 ins.

Shape the top.

Row 1. K 2 tog. K 2 repeat (36 sts.)

Row 2. P.

Row 3. as 1 (27 sts.)

Row 4. P.

Row 5. as 1. (18 sts.)

Row 6. P.

Row 7. as 1. (9 sts.)

Cut the wool leaving a long thread, draw this through remaining stitches, draw up tight, fasten off, and sew up side seam.

Address to send hats.

Save the Children.

1 St. Johns Lane.

LONDON.

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Meetings are held in **Lambley Village Hall, Catfoot Lane. 10am-4pm** Workshops and speakers start at **11o/c.**
There is a large car park and disabled access.

Dates for 2008

July 26th	Yarns old and new.
August 30th	Items used in re-enactment. Jules.
September 27th	Design for the terrified. Pure Tinctoria
October 25th	A.G.M. and project
November 22nd	Open Day.
December 14th	Christmas fuddle