



Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

January 2022

NEWS



News from The Chair

AGWSD AGM 28th May 2022, Conway Hall London.

It is planned that the AGM will be an in person meeting, with facilities for attending via zoom.

The information pack was emailed to Guilds last November. The deadline for sending nominations, propositions, points for discussion is 12th February. We appreciate that some guilds are only just able to meet again in person for discussion.

The GPC will require new volunteers to fill vacancies.

Please contact Mary England, secretary@wsd.org.uk, or myself, Janet Crowther, chair@wsd.org.uk if you would like to find out more about the AGWSD and the work of the GPC.

Introducing a new feature - Focus on...

Every other month the AGWSD News will focus on the activities in one of our five Areas.

We are starting with the East and South East where Area Links Andrea Easey and Roberto Campana, have been collecting photos and items of interest about the guilds in their Area.

In March the focus area will be the Wales and Central Area. Your Area Link, Cath Snape, will be in touch with the guilds to see what they would like to include.

Janet Crowther AGWSD chair

AGWSD Certificate of Achievement

Those registered for the Certificate of Achievement have been contacted by the coordinator for the annual review and for registering for assessment. The CoA assessment exhibition will be at the Guild Gathering, Worcester, in June.

Graduate Showcase

Jennie Parry, our President, is organising a second Graduate Showcase. The first, at the summer school at Askham Bryan in 2019, was so very successful. This, our second Graduate Showcase will also be held at the Guild Gathering.

Looms to Go

Dear Guild,

Farnham Art School are closing down their Weaving department and are getting rid of ALL of their looms .

I am enclosing the email address of the technician who is trying to sell/pass them on .

Please get on touch with her asap before they go in a skip!

JHayward2@uca.ac.uk

Many thanks

Clare Summons

Please contact me, Janet Crowther, chair@wsd.org.uk, if you would like any information on the AGWSD or the work of the GPC

In Focus.....

The East and South East Area

The East and South East Area includes Guilds from Norfolk and Suffolk, through Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, to Essex, Kent and the Sussex coast. In the past year, the Guilds in this Area have managed to meet in person and organise a series of mainly outdoor activities that celebrate our crafts of weaving, spinning and dyeing. The Guilds have also kept in touch with members by creating new styles of newsletters and hosting smaller meetings in members' gardens.

Several of the East Anglian Guilds have been busy in 2021, both with regular meetings and getting out and about. **Mid-Norfolk Guild** has been meeting regularly and took part in this year's Worldwide Spin in Public day in the Eleanor Fenn Garden at the centre of Dereham. Mid-Norfolk Guild also demonstrated at Gressenhall Workhouse and Farm Museum where about a dozen Guild members demonstrated our crafts on 1 August 2021.

In early September **Diss and District Guild** ran an indigo dyeing day that was well attended by members (see image below). They set up two dyeing areas, one for warm dye pots using indigo powder and one for ice dyeing using fresh indigo leaves. The participants brought materials for dyeing including wool, flax, silk, cotton - in all stages of processing. As seen below, the ice dyeing produced a subtle blue, while the indigo powder produced a stronger colour that proved perfect for trying tightly wrapped tie-dye patterns

Later in the same month, some of the members of Diss and District Guild organised a woolly-themed trip to Shetland. In a packed itinerary they began with a visit to Shetland Textile Museum on the Bod of Gremista where they were met by Brita who comes over from Sweden every year to help in the museum. The textile museum has become a hub for the virtual wool week. They also had the opportunity to watch a fine-spinning demonstration and try traditional Shetland knitting using long pins, held in a knitting belt. They followed this with a trip to Jamieson's of Shetland's shop where they were tempted by the astonishing range of colours of wool on display. The following day they enjoyed the stunning natural scenery before attending a Fair Isle workshop with Elizabeth Johnson, which gave them the chance to think more about combining the colours of Shetland.

A trip to Jamieson and Smith wool brokers in Lerwick caused much excitement with choosing colours, patterns, needles and fleece - all so hard to resist. Parcels of yarn and fleece were wrapped and addressed to arrive in Suffolk on their owners' return. In the shed next door to the shop, where fleeces arrive for sorting and processing, Oliver Henry, who has been sorting fleeces from Shetland farmers and crofters since 1967, gave a talk as he sorted fleeces from grade one to grade four. At a drop-in session at the Loose Ends Hub, running as part of the virtual wool week, they had another chance to try using the traditional Shetland belt and double point needles and tackle Fair Isle patterns. The group also visited the Shetland Museum exploring the social, industrial, and geological history of the Shetlands. They also enjoyed knit and natter at the Shetland Textile Museum on the evening before their return home by land and sea.

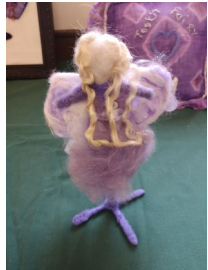
Norfolk and Suffolk Guild hope to return to regular monthly meetings at Broome Village Hall in 2022 and have a full programme of meetings planned for the year. In addition, the Makers' Festival at the Forum in Norwich, 13-15 March 2022 offers an exciting opportunity to showcase their work and meet the general public and they welcome the chance to meet up with the other area guilds.

The Guild were able to have some work on display in the 2021 Makers Forum including woven rugs, one Krokgragd & one made with hand-spun Jacob wool, tapestry weaving, a fine herringbone woven wrap, a comprehensive sampler of spinning techniques and natural dyes on silk fibre.

They were fortunate to have a handful of in-person meetings in 2021 which were supplemented by Zoom meetings during lockdowns and periods of higher transmission rates of Covid 19. Although Zoom meetings have their limitations they found them to be an essential part of retaining a sense of community and organising for their guild.

Frances Betts gave a fast-paced and fascinating talk about her long career in costume making for the stage and screen with many wonderful examples of her work interspersed with anecdotes and descriptions of the challenges faced in bringing an item of clothing to life from a sketch under extremely tight deadlines. They also had a chance to meet up in the summer at the hall to reconnect with each other and work on portable projects. Their regular event of 'Show & Tell' was held in November.

Mid-Essex Guild came together on 11 December for their Christmas meeting and those who were able to attend brought along their work to display following a common project.



Everyone who had signed up to take part received a small package of mixed fibres, yarns and fabrics, together with a small packet of acid dye for the animal fibres and some Dylon cold water dye for the cellulose fibres in the nearest matching colour available. The instructions for dyeing allowed for adding extra items to the dyebath. The participants could spin, knit, crochet, felt, or embroider the resulting materials and had total freedom to make anything they wished. They could also add other material to create a larger item - the only rule was that some but not necessarily all of every original item in the pack had to be used.



This fun project generated quite a lot of discussion when live meetings eventually started; initially to compare colours but then some secrecy about the way it would be used before the reveal in December.



The Guild also did a couple of workshops on the day of our Christmas meeting, one of which was a beaded snowman - led by one of the members, who showed everyone how to create these motifs for earrings or necklaces.

(Images © all rights reserved)



Sarah Howard of **Mid-Essex Guild** had a piece published *The Wheel* magazine about weaving fabric for a dress.

Sarah says 'When I was ten years old I was given a 10in 2-shaft Weavemaster loom and I've been weaving ever since, later, at college, on Dryad looms. Like most people my first spinning was on an Ashford Traditional wheel, using Jacob fleece, although I now have an Ashford Joy 2 which I love.

Since 2009 I've mainly been weaving on Ashford Knitters Looms, my favourite is their 20in version on which I weave most of my clothing. I love their portability, reliability and ease of use, and I've been lucky enough to meet several members of the Ashford family from New Zealand when they've been in the UK promoting their equipment and materials.



Image © all rights reserved

In 2015 I started to make and share my sewing patterns for narrow, hand woven fabric. This dress has a Shetland 4-ply warp, 25wpi, sett 12.5dpi, dyed with the help of my granddaughter with Ashford acid dyes. The weft is acid dyed, handspun, singles wool, 25wpi. I submitted an article and was very pleased to be included in *The Wheel*.'

In October, **Mid-Herts Guild** ran a dyeing day with Michelle Turner. The participants learnt about the types of dyes needed for cellulose vs protein fibres, the mordants required for each type, the effects of temperature and so on. Michelle helpfully distilled some important notes into posters for the team to copy and take home so that we could carry on with our experiments at home. They also tried ice dyeing with folding and heating with a slow cooker or microwave.

The **London Guild** held their first whole Guild in-person meeting since February 2020 on 11 December 2021. At the meeting members presented their submissions for the Christmas competitions of Weaving, Spinning and Design and prizes were awarded. 32 members attended which was good, given the current situation and the fact that most have to use public transport to access the meeting. Members took lateral flow tests before coming and followed all the guidance in place at the time to ensure the meeting took place in as safe a way as possible. The Guild's spinners have met in person fortnightly in a smaller group since restrictions were relaxed, and also demonstrated at Kentish Town City Farm in October.



A selection of entries to the Christmas competitions
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During 2021 members in London voted to retain some Zoom meetings moving forward, keep an eye out for the invitations to attend as a guest via Eventbrite which are included in the monthly AGWS D newsletter.

The **Kent Guild** is now back to holding meetings in person with a full programme for 2022. They held their Fashion Show and Contribution Lunch, last November, an annual highlight of the year event, of many years standing.

Andrea Easey
eandse@wsd.org.uk

Speakers List Update

The latest Speakers List can be found online at <https://www.wsd.org.uk/speakers-list> or if you prefer the print-based version of the list it can still be found on the WIP at <https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/contents/speakers-list>.

As always, I would appreciate your feedback on both versions of the Speakers List, and your experiences of using them.

Matty Smith
speakerslist@wsd.org.uk

Guild Bulk orders

Guilds can take advantage of the discount for bulk orders. It is possible to have more than one bulk order per Guild (subject to a minimum of three copies to a single address). New orders can be arranged at any time of the year. Buy online at: <https://journalwsd.org.uk/subscribe> and remember to click on the 'Buying on behalf of a Guild' button before clicking on 'Add to cart'.

Journal News

Issue 281: Spring 2022

Due out towards the end of February, this issue marks 70 years of the Journal. Content include:

- ◆ Anne Lander and News Sheet of the Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers
- ◆ Journal Timeline - Hilary Miller and Alison Castle
- ◆ The Versatility of Overshot - Stacey Harvey-Brown
- ◆ Moving with the Time - Peter Collingwood
- ◆ Interview with Paddy Bakker - Janet Maher
- ◆ Madder Myths? - Marietta Richardson
- ◆ Body, Mind and Fibre - Alice van Duijnen
- ◆ Theo Moorman Trust for Weavers: Reports on Grants made in 2020
- ◆ Report on Summer School 2021

Plus the regular items: Notebook, Association News, Exhibition Reviews, Book Reviews and Diary.

Volunteers

The Journal Editorial Committee is looking for volunteers to help with production of the Journal. If you are interested to know more about what is involved, please contact: Hilary Miller chair@journalwsd.org.uk

Contact & Social Media

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please sent to: newsletter@wsd.org.uk. All news received by 20th of each month will be considered for that month's edition.

Follow the Association on social media: [Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Twitter](#)

Association Website: <https://www.wsd.org.uk/> Web Information Point (WIP): <https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/>

If you have an event/exhibition for inclusion in the next issue of The Journal, check page 3 of the Journal for print deadlines and send to: diary@thejournalforwsd.org.uk If you miss the deadline your copy could still be included in the Diary on the Journal website.