



**THE ASSOCIATION OF GUILDS OF WEAVERS, SPINNERS AND  
DYERS**

Reg. Charity No. 289590 Website: [www.wsd.org.uk](http://www.wsd.org.uk)

President: Jennie Parry Life President: Paddy Bakker

Vice President: Steve Kennett

**Association Newsletter, March 2020**

**Association News**

**Message from the AGWSD Acting Chair, Janet Crowther**

Hello to all members of the AGWSD guilds,

The GPC greatly appreciates the ways the guilds are working round the current difficulties, to look after their members, to keep in touch using social media, whilst we can't meet face to face, and to keep the whole AGWSD organisation in one piece, for when we can return to our normal meetings.

We are lucky to have such an organisation, and our creative skills to keep us occupied. Charlotte will continue to email the AGWSD Newsletter, we also have Facebook, Twitter and Instagram that can be used for communication.

Keep safe, keep smiling and keep creative

Janet Crowther  
AGWSD Acting Chair

**AGM**

The format for the AGWSD AGM planned for 18 April in London was changed, we are now holding a postal AGM. Information was sent to all guilds on 12/03/2020. Thank you to all the secretaries who acknowledged receipt of the message, a further thank you to those guilds that have already sent their voting form to the AGWSD Secretary, Mary England. Please remember to return your guild's voting form by 30 April to [secretary@wsd.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wsd.org.uk) or to the postal address on the form. Thank you

For the GPC to continue, and therefore the AGWSD, we need 30 of member guilds to reply to make the AGM quorate. This is particularly important as we need to formally elect Mary England as Honorary Secretary, she is currently co-opted, and to elect Janet Maher as Honorary Vice Chair. Janet is currently on the GPC as acting Vice Chair, but needs to become an Honorary member of the GPC as elected Vice Chair. We have only two Honorary officers at the moment, Caroline Murray Gourlay and myself, which just keeps us within the constitution.

Queries from guilds concerning aspects of the AGM, along with the GPC replies can be found in the AGWSD website <https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/2020-agm/>

**Guild Gathering**

Currently the Guild Gathering is under review. Unfortunately as further constraints are put on everyone, the Guild Gathering may have to be cancelled for June 2020. This decision will be made soon by the GPC in discussion with the Convener and the Guild Gathering Committee, taking into consideration Government advice. Those who have booked to be at the Guild Gathering will be contacted by the Convenor and her team as soon as the decision is made.

## Exhibition

The GPC are currently discussing all options for the AGWSD Exhibition at Leigh Spinners Mill, planned for September. Whatever the outcome there will be an opportunity for sharing all the wonderful work created by guild members. We can't wait to see how creative everyone is so please keep working towards the exhibition.

## Summer School 2021

Plans for this are going ahead. There is a wonderful line of tutors planned.

## AGWSD Newsletter

The AGWSD Newsletter will continue to be a line of communication for all guilds. Email your information to Charlotte, [newsletter@wsd.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wsd.org.uk)

## AGWSD Social media

There are many guild social media groups that are already sharing.

The AGWSD has Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. These are for use by all to keep in contact and communicate with each other.

## The Journal

Every effort will be made to publish the summer Journal as usual. I am sure the JEC would be grateful for copy for further editions, please look in your Journal or at the Journal website, <https://www.journalwsd.org.uk> for who to contact.

## Online Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

Margaret Parker would like to share the Online Guild's very generous offer of free membership . Due to the numbers of people applying to the Online Guild, please read the following before looking at the offer:

21<sup>st</sup> March 2020

Since the scheme was announced on Tuesday 17th March we have been inundated with requests to the extent that the OLG has potentially doubled in size and we thus feel the need to pause the arrangement for at least a week. This will give everybody who helps manage the OLG the time to draw breath and the chance to check that the existing procedures, policies and structures are fit for purpose for the greatly enhanced numbers. Only by doing this do we feel that all concerned, both new and old members, will have a positive experience.

Unless you respond otherwise your name will be placed on a waiting list to be dealt with as the situation becomes clearer. We will then be in contact further.

Margaret Parker

Convenor, OLG



Online Guild of Weavers, Spinners  
and Dyers



## Free membership

Because of the outbreak of **coronavirus** a number of Guilds have already cancelled their regular meetings and in the days to come more people may be in self isolation.

In response to this the OLG is offering **free** membership for a limited time until the current situation changes.

Participants will have access to all the OLG resources including files, photos and workshops but will **not** receive a copy of the Journal. Technical help will be available for those less certain of their ability with emails and the internet

To join via this scheme simply email the Convenor, Margaret Parker.

[parker@aireweave.co.uk](mailto:parker@aireweave.co.uk)

with your postal address so that a printed Welcome Pack can be sent direct to you.

At the end of this scheme you will be offered the choice of paying your membership at the relevant rate or of leaving the OLG as you so wish.

Please feel free to circulate this document widely.

*Online Guild of Weaver Spinners and Dyers – your guild meeting on PC,  
Laptop, Tablet or Smartphone – any place, any time*

Janet Crowther  
AGWSD Acting Chair

## President Jennie Parry's AGM Opening Remarks

I am sorry not to be giving this to you in person at the Annual Meeting. I was looking forward to meeting and getting to know more of you that day. However here is an update of what has been going on and what I have been doing.

It has been a busy year all round and difficult for the GPC:

a) with Soo Coates resignation (I was so glad to hear that she was able to go to her guild meeting recently),

b) an exciting Summer School and Angela's sudden resignation too after a long time on the GPC.

We have been extremely fortunate that Janet Crowther has stepped up as Acting Chair, that Mary England came forward as Acting Secretary, Janet Maher as Acting Vice chair, & we also have a good GPC minutes taker in Janette Matthews. Some comments have been made about the wearing

of more than one hat, and potential burn out. I know I speak for our life President & Vice President and GPC when I say how relieved we are that Janet Crowther has agreed to stand as Chairman, possibly for a limited time, but this gives us some much needed stability as we move forward and plan for the future. A heartfelt thank you to you all from us all.

c) We now have to cancel a face to face Annual Meeting. It is so unfortunate, and it was not a decision taken lightly at all. Well done to Janet and Mary for undertaking all the extra work involved. That precious Gift Time has certainly been fully stretched.

I have had a busy year too, trying to visit several graduate shows, then initiating the Graduate Showcase within a tight time frame. This year I have had more time to invite 4 for this year's Graduate Showcase at the Guilds Gathering in June.

I am very keen to promote the work of the Association and that of the Guilds, and looking for ways to build relationships, to reach the public as well as the universities & graduates. A lot of work has been done to bring the Association brochure up to date (the last one was published 20 years ago). A huge thank you to Angie Lee for her excellent design work, redoing, tweaking and re-tweaking so willingly, and to all the wonderful members who so generously allowed us access to photographs of their work. There was not room to use them all, but it helped us so much to be able to explore from a good group. Difficult decisions had to be made and we so hope that you approve.

**There will be an email coming very soon asking for you to give us a postal contact address so that we can send you a small pack. If you have a major event coming up, then please do ask for more.**

When your Guild's pack arrives please note it has been especially designed for you to insert your own information too. There is a slot inside for this. Do please use this to advertise your own events, or major ones, when you are out demonstrating, having exhibitions, visiting schools, talking to suppliers. There will be a template on the website to help you produce this, both in Word and Pages.

I am using the brochures as I make contact with the colleges, under graduates, all potential guild members, possible advertisers and suppliers.

I urge Guilds and Guild Members to be proactive in giving them out to enable us to continue to grow.

Last September I was fortunate to be able to attend and represent the Association at the Farewell to Nancy Lee Child, the founder of Handweavers Studio. The following month, October, I raised the profile of the Association and the Guilds when I went to Braids 2019 International Conference in Japan. It has also been very rewarding to help some recent graduates obtain their own equipment too. This is such an enormous challenge for them when they leave behind all the amazing college facilities. Guild members have been so wonderful and often very generous too in the re-homing process.

May I encourage Guilds to make a concerted effort to have an opportunity within their programme to share some of our skills with local young people in their area: perhaps through the local library, or community centre, museum or village hall. If children are accompanied by an adult we don't need to get bogged down by police checks! So, no excuses please! Young people are fascinated and also very able - and they remember these experiences too, especially if they have made something they can take home.

I am really looking forward to The Guilds Gathering in June, and, of course, to the National Exhibition in September. So, do keep encouraging members to take part in both the selected and the unselected sections, and to tell everyone to come! With so many events currently being cancelled or postponed, there should be more time to make some even more stunning work!

These difficult times do also offer opportunities for thoughtfulness and generosity of spirit to shine. Along with a great many of the Online Guild Members, I am really thrilled by our Convenor,

Margaret Parker's wonderful offer to land guild members to Temporary Free Membership of the Online Guild, to enable them to access the OLG resources including files, photos and workshops (but no Journal - hopefully they are already subscribers!). Please do sign up. We all hope this will help those who are really missing out on their Guild meetings and have enforced isolation. Thank you so much. I know this will take a good bit more of your precious Gift Time but is a great example of the huge strength of being part of such a wonderful organisation with so many like-minded amazing generous people.

Please take care, keep safe, and take advantage of this unexpected time for creative work.



## **Journal News**

### **Peter Collingwood Special Issue**

The Peter Collingwood issue, published in 2009 is now available as a digital issue from the Journal website for £1. Peter Collingwood was passionately interested in hand-woven textiles and this issue is mainly a compilation of articles he wrote for the Journal, whose editor he was for many years. After training as a doctor he became a rug weaver, developed the shaft-switching technique and researched traditional textile crafts including ply-split braiding, sprang and tablet weaving. Also included is a reflection on Peter by his son, Jason Collingwood, a discussion on split-ply braiding with Jennie Parry, and an account by Margaret Seagrott of learning rug-weaving with Peter.

### **The Journal on Social Media**

Keep up with the Journal on **Facebook** ([facebook.com/journalwsd](https://facebook.com/journalwsd)), **Twitter** (@journalwsd) and **Instagram** (@journal\_wsd)

### **Journal 273: Spring 2020**

The Spring issue of the Journal includes Chrissie Freeth's report on researching medieval tapestries across Europe, courtesy of a Churchill Fellowship. Medieval tapestry weavers would have relied on natural dyes, mostly from plants. There are two related articles in this issue. Pat Denne has experimented with natural dyes from woody plants and shows the range of colours that can be achieved. Carolyn Griffiths provides useful advice on growing woad and then dyeing with it; a magical experience. From a more recent era, Tim Willcocks tells the story of Hedgehog Equipment, with the development of a drum carder for handspinners, an innovation in the 1970's. Right up to the minute, Jill Riley wove a piece for the 2018 National Exhibition with monofilament, creating pockets with inserts to reflect the Charles Rennie Macintosh theme of the exhibition. Joan Baxter has written an appreciation of Archie Brennan, the tapestry weaver who was closely associated with the Dovecot Studio in Edinburgh for many years and was instrumental in changing the direction of modern tapestry weaving. The final part of *Weaving to Wear* by Lesley Willcock is great encouragement to weave for garments. Finally, there are three reports from the 2019 Summer School, including a summary of each course, two profiles of young weavers who exhibited there and the report from the Certificate of Achievement show. A great way to remember the excitement of working together last summer, or to think forward to the next Summer School.

### **Guild Highlights**

Now that we are missing Guild meetings, workshops and exhibitions is there anything that Guilds are doing to keep their members together virtually or setting challenges or other forms of collaboration? If so we would be very pleased to have reports and images so that we can keep Guild Highlights going in the autumn issue. Reports or queries to: [chair@journalwsd.org.uk](mailto:chair@journalwsd.org.uk)

### **Elsewhere on the Web**

- Knitwear designer Kate Davies' most recent patterns are inspired by weaving on an inkle loom, and include drafts to weave accompanying belts: [Coofle Pattern](#) and [Land o' Cakes Pattern](#);
- Handwoven Magazine is [open for submissions](#);
- The [Selvedge World Fair](#), taking place in London 03-05 September 2020, will be a celebration of Cloth, Culture and Creativity. Selvedge are offering members of the Association of Guilds of Weavers, spinners & dyers a 25% discount on tickets with offer code SWD3592020.

### **Current & Upcoming Events & Exhibitions**

Visit [The Journal's Diary](#) pages for detailed event listings.

### **Contact & Social Media**

Sign up to receive the newsletter direct: <http://eepurl.com/dhDYkX>

If you have an item for inclusion in the next monthly newsletter, please sent to: [newsletter@wsd.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@wsd.org.uk)

If you have an event/exhibition for inclusion in the next issue of The Journal, please send (at least four months in advance) to: [diary@thejournalforwsd.org.uk](mailto:diary@thejournalforwsd.org.uk)

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Association Website: <https://www.wsd.org.uk/>

Web Information Point (WIP): <https://wipagwsd.wordpress.com/>