

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2018



The Guild Challenge

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Guild Members,

A Happy New Year to you all, I hope you all enjoyed some nice moments during the festive season.

My thoughts in the last newsletter were about the summer we'd had and the events the guild had been at and also my forthcoming trip to India.

Well since then, we haven't done many external events and at present, I should think everyone is wanting to keep wrapped up and warm. Today as I write, it is very cold outside and when taking Poncho out this morning, I couldn't wait to get home, but he wanted to meet and greet all the dogs and people he could and didn't seem in any hurry to get home to the warm!!!

My trip to India – what can I say – I had an absolutely fabulous time. I managed to see lots and buy lots! I got really fired up about weft Ikat. The interesting thing is that warp Ikat can be produced on a power loom in a factory, but weft Ikat has to be had woven to make sure the weft threads are adjusted where necessary to fit the pattern. My aim in 2018 is to have a go at some weft Ikat, so that will be interesting as I will then definitely have to do some dyeing, which I want to do, but it always gets put off.

Before the weft Ikat, I must complete the three gents scarves that I did some sampling for last year. On Boxing day, I started to make the warp and this was all on the loom ready to weave by New Year. From the sampling, I had thought to combine two patterns without doing any further sampling – mistake. So having woven about 6 inches, I decided the combined patterns didn't fit together very well, so this has now been unpicked and I am re-threading to settle for just one of the patterns. Never mind, I will get the scarves completed.

Anyway as always – keep weaving, spinning and dyeing.

Della

Something I Just Had To Have!

For those of you who don't know, before my recent trip to India, I already owned three Sarees. The first was given to me by someone I worked with about 10 years ago. The second was given to me by my friend Nirlipta's mother (Mrs Dash) for me to wear at Nirlipta's wedding in 2011 (it is the custom in Orissa for the parents of the bride and groom to give presents to all the guests), this was a lovely hand woven maroon silk saree. The third one was given to me by a young girl I worked with in 2013, white printed cotton.

And before setting off for India in November, Nirlipta told me that her mother had already brought a new saree for me for Nirlipta's brother Asish's wedding (which was the reason for our trip).

So why would I need any more sarees?

I think the answer must be because they are so beautiful. Shortly after arriving in Bhubaneswar ready for the wedding, we went shopping to buy some things for the wedding. 'We' consisted of Pete and myself, Nirlipta and Mrs Dash. Pete needed an outfit for the wedding. I needed a saree skirt to go with the new Saree Mrs Dash had for me. Well we visited the state run emporium during this shopping trip.

The state run emporiums are filled with lots of genuine hand craft items and are run to promote the crafts of India and make sure the craftsmen and women get a fair price for their work.

Well I **JUST** wanted to **LOOK** at some of the hand woven items. Unfortunately, the textiles tend not to be displayed so that you just wander through looking at them, you need to ask for things to be shown to you. Need I say more??!!

There were the most beautiful sarees. And I just fell in love with a maroon and gold silk saree decorated with weft ikat including elephants plus elephants woven into the fabric.



Try as I might, I couldn't not buy this saree. I felt guilty afterwards, but the next morning I took another look and realised, no – it was beautiful, definitely worth the money and definitely nothing to feel guilty about.

So I wore the first maroon saree, that Mrs Dash had given me, on



Pete, Nirlipta, me (hair still damp from dancing in the rain) and Nirlipta's 4 year old son Adyant

the eve of Asish's wedding, when we were attending the eve of wedding celebration dinner with all the family. I wore my beautiful maroon and gold saree to the wedding (even dancing in the rain in it!). And I wore the new green saree from Mrs Dash to the wedding reception (2 days after the wedding).



OCTOBER MEETING

Once again the October meeting was Wingham Wool Day. Ruth and Alan arrived on Friday setting up the main hall with all their lovely goodies. As well as a wonderful selection of tops and fibres they brought lots of craft related items. Books, dyes, needle felting, looms, spindles, spools, soaps and many little things in plastic bags. Hooks, perns, wires, everything we need for our spinning and weaving craft.



Coral's little home-made 8-shaft loom



While Wingham's was on in the main hall, I thought I'd take advantage of the small room to bring in my new little 8-shaft loom for people to see and have a go on.

The inspiration came from visiting the Guild summer school at Sparsholt. I hadn't signed up for any of the courses as I didn't have a portable loom, but seeing the outputs from the weaving classes, I decided that I had better put this right in time for the next Summer School. So I had a close look at all the looms in use.

Like my original 4-shaft floor loom, the new loom is made to my own design with hardwood from the Southampton Wood recycling centre. The ratchet wheels are a washing machine spare part, and the beater is hinged from the top which gives quite a good working length – thanks to a comment from Jenny Crawford. The stand is converted from an Ashford rigid heddle loom – a second hand bargain which Veronica found for me.

I had a sample warp on the loom, a navy Orlec (acrylic), threaded up for twills and was sampling drafts from the 8-shaft book of pattern weaving in different colours of Orlec, bamboo and silk.

It was lovely to see other people having a go on the loom. New weaver, Ruth, took to it like a duck to water and Mariana produced a few inches of a beautifully even diamond pattern, spoiled only by my threading error.

Almost as popular as the loom was my wheelie kneely chair, which perfectly fits the loom stand and is so much more comfortable than trying to weave with the loom on a table. My soup-pot holders for the shuttles also attracted comment – they may not be pretty, but they are very practical!



This was to be the MkI version, my original idea being to convert it for multi-shaft tie-up. But with a bit of tinkering with the lift mechanism, I think I like it as it is. It's a good for small projects and sampling for my big 8-shaft.

I am getting quite handy at working with the 8-shafts and means I appreciate the pattern better as I weave.

Coral Newton

Editors note. I thought the soup-pot holder was great and over Christmas, when my grandchildren had finished a tub of Pringles I grabbed the empty carton. With one on each side of the loom attached with cable ties each carton will accommodate two boat shuttles. I have covered them with some hand spun samples and they look quite professional. Thank you Coral I hope you don't mind me copying your bril-

NOVEMBER MEETING

News and Views - The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted and matters arising were discussed. Ute is in charge of the sales table and Amanda and Josie have taken on the notice board.

Della spoke about the John Arbon fleece and sent round a questionnaire regarding the distribution of it. The result, at the end of the meeting, was that the fleece be divided up between all the member of the guild to produce something for the 2018 challenge.

Jo has agreed to help Sue with the events diary. The Treasurer gave her report. Maya reported on the enthusiasm of the Junior Guild in January, the next junior guild being held in February.

Jenny told us the exciting plan for next years programme (see page 18)

In Any Other Business Ella thought more advertising with posters and stickers would be helpful and Ella and Veronica agreed to be our Press Secretaries.

NEWS FROM THE YOUTH GUILD



The Youth Guild year started with a peg loom workshop during the October half-term, with 11 eager participants. As peg loom weaving is easy to learn, the plan was to introduce tapestry weaving techniques within the weaving which would add interest and teach further skills. After a short introduction and demonstration the girls and boys set to work with great concentration. Initially they worked to a proposed design but the youngsters were free to choose their own colour schemes in order

to personalise their work. As they became more familiar with the weaving they began to branch out, as they often do, and began to deviate from the original design in a variety of ways.

A team of helpers was on hand to give advice and help sort out any potential problems. Lastly the pieces of weaving were tidied up and finished off and were then attached to thin rods to create small wall hangings. The results were delightful as you will see from the photographs.

The next workshop to look forward to will be a felting event on Wednesday, 14th February, 10.30am - 3.30pm, at Shawford Village Hall. If you know a youngster who might be interested to take part, please email: maya.whitmarsh@yahoo.co.uk for further information.



Caroline spoke of the problems of demonstrations as follows-

Demonstrating with the Hampshire Guild

Della asked me to attend the October committee meeting to discuss the funding for our workshops at Hillier's in August. I wrote up the "discussion so far" and it was printed in the Newsletter and on the web-site. It had started with Hillier's reducing the funds that they gave us towards costs, and opened out to cover how we plan and advertise demonstrations, how we support demonstrators, how we promote ourselves, but mostly, why we demonstrate, who benefits, and how we encourage more people to join in! Hence, Della asked me to speak to the News and Views Meeting in November about the importance of demonstrating.

The Objects of the Guild are

- a. To further the preservation, skills, excellence and improvement of craftsmanship in weaving, spinning and dyeing for the benefit of the public, and
- b. To advance public education in such craftsmanship.

That says it all really. Membership of the Guild and the Association confers benefits on those members, but with those benefits come responsibilities! However, we need to organise the Guild in such a way that members are enabled to participate, and understand what's going on. 50% of those present at the News and Views meeting had arrived at the Guild via a demonstration. I'm fairly sure that in the 13 years that I've been a member, the age of joiners has gone down, from predominantly retired people, to include a significant proportion of working people with young families. Less time rich!

I know that some people think that you have to be good at the crafts to demonstrate, and you should know what you are talking about! I refute this! Well I'd have to, wouldn't I?! Just being there and enjoying yourself, is the main thing. Dish out a leaflet! That's a great beginning. Saying that you are a beginner might be just what's needed. Not so scary for a potential new member. But maybe we should be a bit

more inviting when asking for volunteers? Explain what to expect? Make the details more accessible?

Making information readily accessible in a wider sense is also important. We have 2 bits of paper which are being updated for circulation at the moment. One is called “The Index of Everything!” and it’s the briefest mention of everything we can think of that members should know about. If it makes you ask questions, then it’s done the job!

And the other is a very simple members’ profile. A little about your interests, experience, and your willingness to help out with the myriad of tasks that get done to make each meeting possible, and the other things that happen outside the meeting....like demonstrations!

Caroline Tilley

THE GUILD CHALLENGE



After a break for morning tea, judging took place for the guild challenge. Della started us off with her necklace times two. Which can be worn as one or two separate necklaces. This was followed by Anne; Ross, Eileen; Patricia; Carol; Veronica; Wendy; Lindsey; Gill; Suzanne; Coral; Alex; Mary; Ella; Boudicca and Hilary.

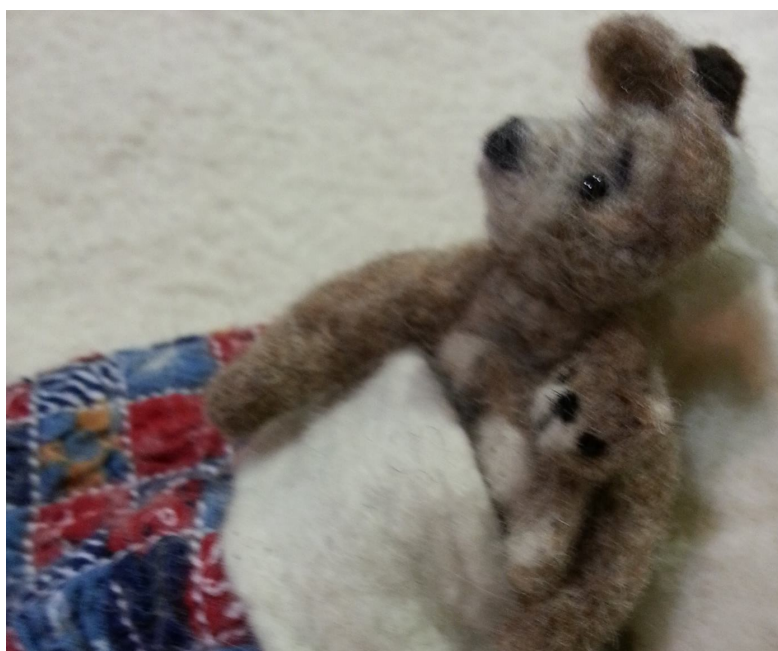
Everyone spoke about the items they had made and how they made them.

The items were varied and included spectacle cases; Bands; Inkle and pick up. Sari loom bag and free weaving Purse in different thicknesses. Hollyhock dyed tapestry; mini jumper; tablet bag; felted teddy bears; Kaffe Fassett inspired bag and a beautiful white wedding bag.





The Winner of the 2017 Challenge is Suzanne Butler with her wonderful felted teddy bears in a felted bed sitting on a felted rug. The bears have moveable arms and legs and a wonderful cuddly look on their faces. Congratulations, Suzanne, we all thought they were wonderful.



SHOW AND TELL

After a break for tea and coffee we had the show and tell.

Not only had she woven a pretty little bag for the competition but Bou-dicca also showed us her cushion cover that she wove on the Rigid heddle loom.

Sue dyed her Alpaca fleece and made a lovely warm stole for the winter months.



In anticipation for her visit to India Della had been busy making some beautiful silk scarves to take with her as presents for her hosts.



Suzanne not only won the Challenge cup but also produced some wonderful little felted robins. Just right for the Christmas decorations.

KNITSONIK – Stranded Colourwork

A talk by Felicity Ford

The connection between knitting & sound? Not a concept easily explained, who would think to link the two?

This is the foundation on which Felicity Ford (aka as Felix) has built her career. Felix, Our speaker at the November meeting lead us through her journey with sound & knitting from University to the present day.

While at university & always being intrigued with sounds Felicity joined a knitting group called 'Oxford Blue Stocking' to help her develop this theory. Keen to 'knit a sound system ' Felix has been inspired by feminist Artists such as Bobby Baker & Alison Knowles, with many influences from the 70's.



During this time she has spent time using acrylic yarns for her work as well as learning about natural yarn production from it's beginning. A greater understanding of the costs involved, the passions & way of life, the everyday sounds, the sense of texture time & rhythm connected with yarn & it's production. From farm to factory as well as how poor the pay is for workers in the wool industry. Following this she has made a strong connection to rough fell farmers, spending time in Cumbria. This knowledge has lead her to change her vision, to discard her use of acrylics & to use only natural yarns, where she can trace sources of materials used from a manufacturer who she trusts.

Continuing with her studies she has spent time in Estonia where she learnt about the tradition of recording heritage through weaving cloth, this cloth is then made into a skirt, again her interest in sound coming to the fore by making recordings of the sounds in particular that of the tradition Estonian spinning wheel.

Closer to home she has listened to many recordings from the 60 & 70's, of Kate Davies in the Shetlands associated with wool & crofters . All of this leads us to the heritage of Shetland and Fairisle.

Felicity now lives in Reading, she is very keen on embracing the every-day things about life. The sounds & actions that we too often take for granted. She has turned her experiences of life & living in her 'stranded colour work' that I & many of you will know as Fairisle. Her book by the same name 'Stranded Colour Work' has followed via a 'Kick start' project.



It is a beautiful book! Full of colour & ideas on how to make a colour plan & knit a swatch, a way of gathering inspiration from the everyday things we see around us, maybe a brick wall or an A Road such as the A407! as has been her experience. She freely admits she makes mistakes (as do we all!), but feels they are to be considered a valuable part of the process too. A few of our members did buy her book, it would be an interesting follow up to know what they have been inspired to do & whether they have mastered 'steeking'?



Despite some technical difficulties with our own projector system

which Felix overcame admirably, I am still not sure I can make the connection between knitting & sound? No doubt others will. However I was intrigued with the idea of having a go at 'stranded colour work' maybe the library can run to buying the book?? Or the next one that is on its way.

Veronica Biddlecombe

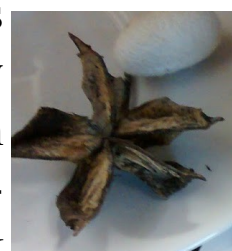
DECEMBER MEETING

Having been let down just two weeks prior to the meeting by the speaker, Hilary Dunwoody agreed to fill the gap. She had recently been on her travels and was happy to tell us about it.

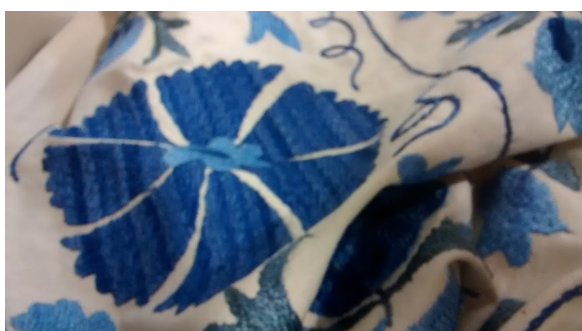


The Golden Road to Samarkand

December's meeting was not just about sharing a Christmas meal and getting to know other members of the guild, Hilary shared her experience of the Golden road to Samarkand with us, Samarkand is in central Asia along the trade route between China and the Mediterranean and Hilary's travels took



her on a very creative journey. Cotton is grown in Uzbekistan, cotton flowers (with five petals) are used in decoration and in older architecture and cotton sticks are used to stoke fires in people's homes because nothing is wasted in this country. Hilary showed us some pictures of suzanis and a piece that she brought back with her, this is embroidery using woven cotton, embroidered in cotton or silk threads.



Along her journey, Hilary encountered much of the culture of the area, watching locals painting, weaving, chiselling on to a brass plate and enamelling on brass as well as listening to local music, watching dance shows and soaking up the history of the people. Hilary observed some of the craft traditions such as woollen hats for shepherds, looms and weaving in surroundings of mulberry trees and people selling their wares. A beautiful wool shawl/blanket was available for us all to see and touch, it was purchased



from a woman who had one draped over her shoulders; this was my favourite item from Hilary's display because of its design and simple fibre used.

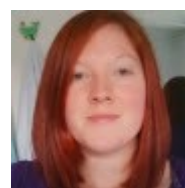
Hilary also took us on a historical journey, showing us insights into how the city was founded, the architecture highlighting Arabic calligraphy, the foods that were eaten during the trip including the national dish of plov, which is a rice dish. Looking at how men and women dress in Samarkand

highlights that not all women are Muslim and that many dress in western clothes and that while younger people in the country are becoming Islamic, older people are atheist.



From this talk I have learnt a lot about Samarkand and seen through Hilary's eyes the passion of craft in the Samarkand area and how they live today.

While listening to this talk I had to remind myself to take some notes to write this for the newsletter because Hilary's enjoyment, passion and knowledge gained during her trip was quite captivating; and if everyone else didn't leave feeling like they wanted to visit and see the colour and vibrancy of this golden road for themselves then I certainly did.



Louisa Saunders

After Hilary had taken us all on holiday with her we got down to the serious business of eating. Once again everyone had bought some fantastic food and with candles on the tables we got the Christmas month off to a very good start.



THE LIBRARY



Have you been to see Maya lately in the library? She is quite fantastic and appears to know every book in the library. In October I was keen to know about double weave. She knew exactly which book I would need. After I gave up on that weave, Coral took out the book and did some wonderful weaving on her new loom using the book.

In November I wanted to try out the blending board, yes, you can borrow equipment from the library as well as books. Due to the dates of the meetings I only had it for two weeks but boy oh boy did I have fun. I took all my odd tops and rovings, sorted them into compatible colours and blended them together. I now have enough fleece to either knit or weave something interesting.



Come December I just wanted a book to sit and read. A story to relax with over the holidays. Once again Maya went straight to 'Weaving A Life'. The story of Mary Megs Atwater. What a wonderful story it is. It tells of Mary's life in America bringing up her children in the most difficult of circumstances and finishing with a report of her weaving. I highly recommend this book for an interesting read about a very inspiring woman.

Joy Stevens

2018 Guild Programme

20th January

10am Main Hall 'Spin & Chat'
10am Compton Room
Committee Meeting
2pm Main Hall – Speaker, Coral Newton
'My weaving journey, the first two years'

17th February

10am Main Hall 'News & Views'
Announcement of
Guild Challenge 2018
2pm Main Hall – Felting workshop
with **SUZANNE BUTLER**

17th March

10am Main Hall '**AT HOME DAY**'
Member's skill sharing & workshops

21st April

10am Main Hall 'Spin & Chat'
10am Compton Room
Committee Meeting
2pm Main Hall – Speaker
TO BE CONFIRMED

19th May

10am Main Hall 'News & Views'
2pm Main Hall –
Make a Beaker Button
with **JEN BEST**

16th June

10am Main Hall 'Spin & Chat'
10am-1pm Workshop with
Alison Crosthwaite
2pm Main Hall Speaker –
ALISON CROSTHWAITE
'Weaving in Colour'

21st July

10am Main Hall **AGM**
11am 'Bring and Buy' in aid
of Guild Funds
2pm Main Hall - Speaker
ALISON HULME
'My Life in Stitches'

August No Meeting

Volunteers always welcome for
craft activities with children at
HILLIER'S ARBORETUM
On Wednesday afternoons 1.30 - 4pm
August 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd

15th September

10am Main Hall '**TASTER DAY**'
for non-members

20th October

10am **Wessex Woolcraft Fibre Day**
10am Committee Meeting
2pm –Speaker **Luke Reading** of Wessex
Woolcraft

17th November

10:30am Main Hall 'News & Views' and
The Guild Challenge Reveal
2pm Main Hall—Speaker
Ditchling Museum

1st December

10am Meet in Main Hall for Tea / Coffee
10.30am Main Hall – Speaker
MAY MARTIN
'Life on the Sewing Bee'
Followed by our own
Festive American Lunch

EVENTS

UNRAVEL 2018

The Maltings Farnham

Fri Feb 16th

Sat Feb 17th

Sun Feb 18th

For further details visit:

www.farnhammaltings.com

WEAVING WEEKEND with

MARY KEER at Cheriton

14/15th April 2018

12/13th May 2018

Booking essential

Tel: 01962 771268

BROCKENHURST NEEDLWORK FIESTA

Brockenhurst, Hampshire

Sat 21st and Sun 22nd April

For more details visit:

<http://brockenhurstfiesta.co.uk/>

WONDERWOOL 2018

Royal Welsh Showground

Builth Wells – Wales

Sat April 28th – Sun April 29th

For more details visit:

www.wonderwool.co.uk

WOOLFEST COCKERMOUTH

Fri June 22nd 10-6pm

Sat June 23rd 10-5pm

For more details visit:

www.woolfest.co.uk

FIBRE-EAST

Redbourne Comm. Coll. Ampthill, Bedfordshire

28/29th July 2018

For more details visit:

www.fibre-east.co.uk

HILLIERS ARBORETUM

Ampfield

Children's Craft Activities

Each Wednesday

1:30-4pm

Aug 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd

ROMSEY SHOW

Broadlands

Sat 8th September 2018

IN HOUSE GUILD WORKSHOPS

For fully paid up members:

Feb pm – Felting with **SUZANNE BUTLER**

May pm – Make a Beaker Button with

JEN BEST

June am – Weaving with

ALISON CROSTHWAITE

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Next Newsletter Deadline: 3rd April 2018

Website address: www.hantswsd.org

Registered Charity Number 1170781.