

Item 3. Chair's Report

As many of you will already know the severe illness and subsequent death of our chairman Stuart Groom created uncertainties and difficulties for the GPC. As in previous years it was up to me, as Vice Chair, with the agreement of the GPC, to take the role as Acting Chair, and I am here today to complete my job.

In the years I've been on the GPC it has been really exciting to see our activities develop. And it has given me much pleasure to have worked with such a brilliant team. In this time, thanks to Angela, our incoming Chair, the regions have been established. Now there is a clear programme of activities to be organised by Guilds in their Regions. It may surprise many Guild members of the length of time needed to organise and run the Association's major events. The Summer School and the National Exhibition, for example, each take two or more years to organise. So, it should be no surprise, now, to hear that the team for the 2018 Exhibition, ably led by Barbara Wright, is already working and is close to finalising the location.

This year's Association's Exhibition held at Killerton House, was one of the best attended we have ever had. Our hosts, the National Trust, were most impressed with the outcome, as were most our visitors. Many were very pleased to see the Certificate of Achievement entries displayed there too.

Meanwhile, Janet Crowther, leader of this year's Summer School, is now on the final lap before it starts in August. I have seen how much Janet and her team have put into making this year's Summer School into something really special.

The Certificate of Achievement, led by Heather Seddon, has moved forward, too. I understand that the demand for this continues to grow. Beverley Usher, the GPC's minute taker, offered her knowledge of database management to develop a database that enables the CoA to be easier to manage. We owe Beverley our special thanks.

Liz Day our Treasurer works quietly with all of us, keeping a tag on expenditure, and making sure that the accounts come out on time. Each major activity has its own account so the number under her gaze seems endless. Yet it all comes together at the year end as it should do!

A central focus for our activities is kept by Sarah Williams, the Association Secretary. Sarah organises us, reminds us to do what we promised, knows most things the rest of us have forgotten, or never knew.

At this meeting we will be saying good bye to Heather Seddon, Sarah Williams, Andrew Johnson, and me. We all have spent our allotted time on the GPC. Heather and I will continue for a time, in the background, with the CoA and the Foundation Certificates. And we will welcome those who are elected to take our places.

Steve Kennett

chair@wsd.org.uk

Item 7. Treasurer's Report

Our finances remained sound, our costs keeping pace with our income.

Bank balances on 31.12.16

Current account (HSBC)	£6,090.44
Reserve Account (HSBC)	£26,015.02
PayPal	£1,967.47
Bursary account (Santander)	£13,215.12
(£4,025.00 since transferred to the Summer School account)	
NS&I Investment account	£33,599.04
Transact Investment account	£21,440.51
Event accounts (NatWest)	
Conference	£3,815.21
Exhibition	£645.16
Summer School	£42,136.25

I am pleased to say that all of our affiliated guilds have renewed their fees, and with new guilds there are now 114. There are approximately 5,275 members, although this number includes people who are members of more than one guild.

I use the Association database of guild secretaries for notification of fee renewals, and also for follow up reminders, and sending out the insurance documents and membership cards, so rely on communication between guild officers for the message to get to the treasurer. There is no way we could set up another database for guild treasurers so please ensure that notifications are passed on promptly.

We currently have five non U.K. guilds associated, Irish (Dublin), Cork, South West France, Bretagne and Association for handspinning and yarndesign, Switzerland.

Current account summary of income and expenditure for the year:

Income	
Affiliation Fees	£23,870.25
Certificate of Achievement	£1,440.00
Donation	£90.00
Foundation Certificate	£935.00
Interest Income	£310.57
Sales	£378.50
Total Income	£27,024.32
Less Operating Expenses	
Advertising & Marketing	£60.00
Audit & Accountancy fees	£2,670.00
Charitable Donations	£40.00
CoA Assessor & Moderator Fees & Expenses	£1,429.36
Direct Expenses	£420.00
Future Exhibition Expenses	£264.35
Future SS Expenses	£269.85
General Expenses	£1,147.25
Insurance	£4,905.83
Interest Paid	-£4.07
IT Software and Consumables	£148.58
Journal Sales	£117.00
Other Travel Expenses	£769.28
PayPal Fee	£5.14
Postage, Freight & Courier	£185.20
Printing & Stationery	£241.86
Rent	£3,599.74
Travel for AGMs	£3,404.15
Travel GPC members	£3,699.99
Xero fee	£281.57
Total Operating Expenses	£23,654.83
Surplus	£3,369.49

As always, our major expenses are for insurance and accounting together with travel claims for AGM delegates and our committee meetings. However, this year we have reduced our insurance payment by £600 by taking out a long-term commitment of five years with our insurers, Ansvar. We have been insured by them since 2003.

As we are planning events further ahead to ensure that suitable venues are available, we are spending more for future events for travel expenses etc., which will eventually be refunded from the income for that event. We are fortunate that all our activities this past year have been able to call on a number of willing volunteers to act as both convenors and stewards.

It was agreed at the last AGM that the membership fee would be increased by 25p to £4.50, and that it would be kept at this level for 2 years unless there was a major unforeseen increase in expenditure. I am pleased to report that there have been no unforeseen increases, therefore membership fees will remain at £4.50.

Liz Day
February 2017

2015 SummerSchool Summary

Income

C/F from ss2015	£2,219.24
Total payments from /for students & companions	£132,935.57
Payments for Wednesday trip	£1,882.00
Income from traders	£2,728.50
CoA contributions to costs	£472.50
Auction income	£1,172.25
Cash collected for bursary fund	£361.37
Minibus/taxi income	£115.00
Misc income	£55.71

Total Income **£141,942.14**

Expenditure

Accommodation, teaching rooms & meals	£110,438.07
Tutors fees and expenses	£13,625.40
Refunds to applicants who cancelled or overpaid	£5,082.50
Visits expenses	£1,691.00
Mugs for students/volunteers & bags for volunteers	£1,136.05
Administration	£2,746.21
Extra-mural activities	£901.12
Van hire	£269.39
PAT testing	£40.00
Advertising	£275.00
Refund of fees	£175.00

Total Expenditure **£136,379.74**

Surplus **£5,562.40**

Item 8. Honorary Secretary's Report

As this is my last AGM as secretary, I thought I would look back at the past 7 AGMs. I have been concerned at the low attendance figures and wondered if I could see any patterns in them. The meetings have been held in London (3), Lincoln, Manchester, York and Mansfield. The numbers attending varied between 36 and 51. It was noticeable that the two lowest attendances were for Mansfield and Lincoln, whilst London, Manchester and York had similar numbers (between 47 and 51).

Firstly I'd like to award metaphorical gold stars to the following 12 Guilds who sent delegates to all 7 meetings. These are Brecknock, Derbyshire, Durham, Gwent, Hallamshire, Kennet, Kent, Lincolnshire, London, Online, Wigtownshire and York Guilds. On a less happy note, 26 Guilds didn't attend any of the them, and two thirds of Guilds attended less than half the meetings. At this AGM, one of our points for discussion will be about conference and by inference, the location of future AGMs. I hope delegates will have some suggestions on how we can make attendance at AGMs more attractive to Guilds.

Members may not be aware that, as well as GPC members, there is a little band of stalwart helpers who take on some of regular jobs needed to keep the Association running smoothly. So I'd like to record my thanks to them all here. Without them we should certainly struggle to get everything done. Beverly Usher who takes such excellent minutes at GPC meetings (and the AGM). Beryl Cole who has compiled the new Speakers List. (Beryl has now handed over to Sara Clayton who will continue the good work). Another GPC helper, Brenda Gibson, has been transferring the images of Association events (previously distributed to Guilds on a CD) to an online archive. This is almost ready to be made available to Guilds. Hilary Miller and Edna Barker who organise the Association presence at Wonderwool, Woolfest and Harrogate Knitting & Stitching shows. Margaret Parker who acts as webmaster for the Association website. There are also a group of helpers for the Certificate of Achievement and the new Foundation Certificate.

Together with the Chair and Treasurer, I have administered the Summer School bursary scheme (for the 2017 Summer School). Thirteen people have been offered bursaries, at a total cost of £4,025.

I am so pleased to welcome my replacement, Marylyn (Lyn) Bennett. She has attended a couple of GPC meetings as a co-optee and she is frighteningly enthusiastic and efficient.

Sarah Williams
secretary@wsd.org.uk

Item 9. Journal Report

THE JOURNAL FOR WEAVERS, SPINNERS AND DYERS EDITORIAL COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE ASSOCIATION OF GUILDS OF WEAVERS, SPINNERS AND DYERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016 (subject to audit)

The Editorial Committee presents its report and draft accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015.

The accounts have been prepared for audit in compliance with the Charities Act 2006 and the requirements of The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2005, issued in March 2005.

Structure, governance and management

The Journal was established in 1952 and operates as part of, and is under the control of, the Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers (Registered Charity No 289590). The management of the production of The Journal is entrusted to the Journal Editorial Committee, a committee of volunteers.

The	Name	Role	Current Status	Date
	Dawn Willey	Chair	Retired	April 2016
	Christina Chisholm	Chair, Book Reviews	Elected	2015
	Theo Wright	Secretary	Retired	April 2016
	Judith Evans	Secretary	Elected	2016
	Jill Davies	Diary & Exhibition Reviews	Retired	April 2016
	Gretchen Roth	Treasurer	Elected	2012
	Ann Fisher Rhodes	Spin Features Webmaster	Elected	2013
	Lorna Lindfield	Social Media & Web	Elected	2013
	Angela Pawlyn	Dye Features	Elected	2016
	Jill Riley	Weave Features	Elected	2014
	Martina Müller	Notebook	Elected	2014
	Lyn Duffus	Collator	Elected	2014
	Colleen Pope	Diary & Exhibition Reviews	Elected	2016
	Jenni Stewart	Individual Subscriptions	Elected	2013
	Peter Leonard	Advertising Manager	Elected	2015
	Sally Firth	Guild Highlights & Readers Showcase	Elected	2015
	Rosalind Moffit	Web Redevelopment (retired Oct 2016)	Elected	2016
	Angela Colbridge	GPC Representative on the JEC		
	Joy Pocock	co-opted July 2015 Resigned January 2016		

Honorary Members			
Claude Delmas	Archivist		
Rosalind Lobb	Designer		

Editorial Committee Members are elected as per the Constitution of the Association, i.e. they are nominated by a Member Organisation of the Association, normally their Guild, at an AGM and then voted upon by the delegates at that AGM.

There is a maximum of 16 members and a minimum of eight. No more than four members can be co-opted to the Committee. In addition, the General Purposes Committee of the Association nominate one member to the Journal Editorial Committee. The Committee decides who shall be Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. The Chairperson and the Treasurer are Trustees of the Association and attend meetings of the General Purposes Committee. All other responsibilities are agreed by the Committee according to interest and ability.

The Journal is run in accordance with the constitution of the Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, Registered Charity No. 289590.

The Editorial Committee must present its Report at the AGM of the Association together with unaudited Journal accounts. The audited Accounts for The Journal are incorporated into the full set of audited Accounts of the Association by the Association's Auditors.

The Editorial Committee has assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed by their actions, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to those risks.

Objectives and activities

The objective of the Editorial Committee is the production of a quarterly magazine, The Journal for Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, and there has been no change in this objective during the year.

Achievements and performance

The Journal has enjoyed another successful year, with many positive comments received regarding content and cover design.

Despite many personal challenges, the Journal team continued to work together to ensure the production schedule was maintained. We are entirely dependent on the goodwill of and many voluntary hours of work from both our own team and our external contributors.

All 'departments' have put considerable effort into sourcing and developing interesting and rounded out content for varied interests and skill levels, while encompassing the Association's core skills of weaving, spinning and dyeing.

One of the Journal's major achievements at the beginning of 2016 was launch a digital version (FlippingBook), alongside the print version. A combined print/digital subscription is also available. Digital subscribers have enjoyed the portability and space-saving benefits of each issue. During 2016 the Committee started to work on a new Journal website, which will be launched in 2017.

We also increased the number of pages in each issue from 50 to 54 pages, starting from Summer 2016. This was in response to requests from our readers for an increased font size for Exhibition Reviews and Book Reviews, and additionally enables us to increase our overall editorial content.

Financial review (year end 31st Dec 2016)

Income generated from sales of the Journal totalled for the year £32,707 (2015 = £36,218). There has been a reduction in bulk guild sales, with a smaller increase in individual sales. We have also noted subscription renewals as at the end of the year to be slower than the previous year

Income from advertising decreased to £9,060 (2015 = £13,575). The reduction is due to timing of invoices at year end, and not because of a real reduction. Although advertising could be increased, we would like to maintain the balance of content to advertising.

An overall profit of £76 was generated for the year (2015 = £11,126). Total capital and reserves stands at £94,527 (2015 = £94,452). Funds not needing immediate access are held in deposit accounts. There is a requirement to keep a contingency (reserves) to cope with unforeseen financial demands.

For the 2016 subscription year, we have introduced a digital edition. This has been priced equivalently to a UK subscription rate. There are costs for conversion, hosting, and delivery administration of this. As we are only beginning this delivery method, we have had a slight loss on this in 2016 (<£100). Future years should see an increase in subscribers. We have begun the redesign of the website, part of the costs of which have been paid in 2016. The rest will be payable in 2017.

The Journal received no subsidy from the Association in the year. Capital items have been written off to expenditure as they have no material value. Likewise unsold copies of the Journal have been written off as they have no commercial value.

Plans for the Future

To maintain the highest editorial standards at reasonable cost, appeal to a wide audience, achieve the best advertising income and maximize subscriptions and circulation. As described above, our new website is currently being redeveloped to meet the discerning requirements of an increasingly technology based society. We are also working on our content balance in order to publish some shorter, practical articles, in addition to longer inspirational feature articles.

On behalf of the Editorial Committee

Christina Chisholm
Chair

Gretchen Roth
Treasurer

Dated: 2nd February 2017

Item 10. CVs for Nominees

Nominee for election as Chair of the GPC

Angela Corbridge, nominated by Durham Guild

I have been on the GPC since 2009 and have been incredibly fortunate to have worked with some amazing Guild members, from all over the UK, who I have learnt so much from, that I now feel confident and able to offer myself for nomination of Chair.

I have the energy and enthusiasm to take on this demanding role and well aware that there are areas which could be improved or enhanced. The Certificate of Achievement and the Foundation Spinning certificate are now proving so popular amongst members that one of my priorities would be to form sub committees of willing volunteers, who do not have to sit on the GPC but willing to assist and support the GPC members, responsible for these. We have sub-committees for our National events, with the convenor reporting to the GPC and this works extremely well.

Likewise I would like to set up regional reps on the GPC, so each Guild and each Guild member, has a name, face and generic email to contact, whenever they want to. Within the Association we have large thriving Guilds and Guilds, so small they simply cannot afford speakers or workshops, so hopefully, in the longer term we may see regions organise workshops, talks, exhibitions etc., so that all Guild members benefit.

I want to see us inclusive not exclusive, to be encouraging not discouraging, reaching out to all members and that whilst some members will always want to excel at their craft and stretch themselves, others find complete satisfaction and enjoyment from it being a hobby or past-time. All have something to offer and this should be celebrated. We need to offer a broad church of skills, ideas and aspirations and hopefully bring in the many, many spinners, weavers & dyers who are not affiliated to or members of The Association.

However, if the Association is going to continue to thrive and to ensure that these skills, which we take for granted and survive for future generations to enjoy, it will need many, many more Guild members volunteering to help, in whatever way they can. We were all new once and were welcomed, so we all need to continue to offer that hand of friendship. We are all passionate about what we do and now we need to pass that passion on.

Nominee for election as Vice-Chair of the GPC

Janet Crowther, nominated by the GPC

I have been involved with the world of spinning, weaving and dyeing since I was given a spinning wheel in 1981, having previously knitted and stitched. I went to evening classes to learn to spin and leaned to weave instead, it was magic. I joined the London Guild in the early eighties, the Kent Guild in 1985 and the Online Guild when Margaret initiated it. Over three years in the late eighties I completed a C & G Creative Textiles course, leaned to spin and became totally hooked on dyeing.

Since then I have done a few years as Chair of the Knitting and Crochet Guild, Chair of the Kent Guild, and I am now their Secretary. I also wrote the minutes for the GPC meetings for about ten years but was not a GPC member. A fascinating experience that gave great insight into the way the Association works through the GPC and Guilds.

In between, I had a full time teaching job for thirty six years that has given a decent pension, a couple of children and am now into the grandchildren era. I now indulge in a little freelance textile work.

I am a supporter of the Association and the many aspects of its work, having attended many Conferences and Summer Schools, tutored at three and am now, as Convenor for Summer School 2107, a member of the GPC. The Guilds are the life force of the Association, the GPC the central pivot, as Vice Chair I would support the Chair in promoting the Association and its activities to the Guilds and to a wider audience.

Nominee for election as Secretary of the GPC

Marylyn Bennett, nominated by Diss and District Guild

After working in a bank for five years, I joined the Civil Service as a personal secretary and worked in the Ministry of Technology. I transferred to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1971 as a personal secretary until I transferred to the Diplomatic wing in 1982. I served full tours in India, Liberia, Panama, Paraguay and Malawi as well as short tours throughout Central and Southern America and the Middle East and Africa. I was trained in consular, immigration, management and accounts work overseas. In the UK, I was trained and served as a Senior Welfare Officer and my last job, before I retired in 2007, was managing the Chevening Scholarship Scheme as First Secretary.

Since my retirement (and after a move to Norfolk) I joined Diss and District Guild in 2010 where I learned how to spin, weave and dye. I have been Guild Treasurer since 2013. I was also Treasurer for the Yarns in the Cathedral exhibition in Norwich in 2014. I think I have the skills needed to be an effective Association Secretary and look forward to the challenge.

Nominees for election to General Purposes Committee

Kate Batchelor nominated by Birmingham and District Guild

I have always had an interest in textiles maybe inherited from my Gran who was a Tailoress and my Mother who was an excellent and prolific knitter. On retirement I enjoyed doing a City and Guilds embroidery course and dabbled in various techniques including dyeing. I joined Birmingham Guild WSD about 12 years ago encouraged by a friend who kept a few sheep and was keen to share her love of spinning. Birmingham is an active, friendly guild and I soon became involved, taking on the role of assistant programme organiser, then organiser, then demonstrations organiser before becoming Chairperson 2 years ago. I've also been involved with the organisation of two group Guild days.

I personally have benefitted from being a Guild member and would like the opportunity to support the Association.

Maria Bennett nominated by the Online Guild

I joined the Online Guild in September 2016. I am 32 and live in Cardiff with my husband, Mark. Formerly a Hydrologist, I opted to take voluntary redundancy in July 2015 due to ongoing health issues. I'd previously undergone neck surgery and was suffering ongoing joint pain. A few months later I was also diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

Although this was a very difficult time, I decided to try something new and with funding from the Welsh Assembly I signed up to some Spinning and weaving courses run by a fellow guild member, Dunja Roberts. I've now been spinning and weaving for just over a year and absolutely love it. Encouraged by my family and friends I decided to try and make it a full time passion and in September 2016 I launched my online shop

(www.LovelyWoolByMaria.etsy.com). I'm really enjoying it and have found that by working for myself I am better able to manage my health conditions.

I have really enjoyed being a member of the online guild; the monthly workshops have been brilliant and it's ideal for me as I don't drive. I now have some time available and would really like to be able to help the GPC with the work they do.

Janet Maher nominated by Somerset Guild

Although I have always been engaged with textile crafts, I came to weaving, spinning and dyeing only 9 years ago. I joined the Somerset Guild at the Annual Fleece fair in 2007 and have only missed one meeting since then.

After qualifying as clinical psychologist, I spent a career in organisational psychology, working in industry and the public sector with executive teams and trade unions. I became managing Director for UK and Europe in 2004, a post I held until retirement in 2012.

Whilst no longer a novice officially, I am close enough to understand the challenges for new people joining Guilds and what we need to do to sustain their involvement. I can bring organisational skills to the Association as well as an understanding of working with geographically dispersed groups. I was Convenor for the recent National Exhibition held at Killerton House, an experience that gave me a lot of insight into working with Guilds across the UK. I have been Secretary of the Somerset Guild and am currently Chairperson.

Dunja Roberts nominated by Crickhowell Guild

I have been spinning for about 8 years and after my introduction to the craft immediately realised that this was going to be a lifelong interest. Since that first day I have spent thousands of hours at my spinning wheel, enjoying the process of spinning and learning from other spinners, guilds and courses with experts. A year later I began weaving, first with a rigid heddle loom and now also with table and floor looms, specialising in wool cloth spun from native breed sheep. An abundance of white fleece from my own Clun Forest sheep also led to an interest in dyeing. I gave up my career as an education manager in 2011 to concentrate on developing my spinning skills and now I run a business called 'All in a Spin', teaching hand spinning, weaving and dyeing, with an emphasis on spinning. I am a qualified adult education tutor and I love passing on the textile related skills of our intangible cultural heritage to others. This, along with my interest in supporting our native breed sheep, is my passion. I have developed a suite of hand spinning units which are accredited by Agored Cymru, the Welsh awarding body, to raise the profile of the craft.

I am a good organiser and communicator, having had a career in education administration as a manager in large schools and colleges. I have lots of energy to get projects off the ground, having started up and run a new farm business in the past, which included a large building development. Currently I organise the admin/finance side of our farm and run All in a Spin.

I would like to offer my skills to the GPC as I realise that the Association cannot carry out its remit without volunteers. Joining a Guild as a beginner spinner was a huge source of support and friendship, and I continue to both receive and give support in two land Guilds and the Online Guild.

Mary Watkins nominated by Diss and District Guild

I have been spinning for over 35 years. I joined Diss and District Guild in 1991. After 2 years as programme secretary I became Chairman for 5 years, ending Nov.2016 so now I feel ready for a new challenge.

I need to learn more about the Association as I have very little experience of attending National events so I well understand why people do not like attending conferences etc. I do like meeting people. I enjoy starting people off spinning. especially at Thetford Ancient House Museum and the larger public events. I have become especially interested in spinning rare breeds since organising the Wall of Wool (and other fibres) for the 2014 National Exhibition in Norwich and attending 'A Fleece a Day' at Summer School 2015.

I am representing the 5 Norfolk Guilds; we meet together regularly now since joining forces for Makers Month at the Forum in Norwich last February.

Nominee for election to the Journal Editorial Committee (JEC)

Laura Hegarty nominated by Leicestershire Guild

I've always been a maker and have toyed with many different crafts over the years. I've been a serious knitter since 2005 but I resisted the lure of spinning until 2013. I joined Leicestershire guild three years ago and added weaving to my fibre addiction 18 months ago. In order to fund my ever increasing stash, I work as the Finance Manager for my local Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Item 11. Certificate of Achievement

REGISTERED CANDIDATES

The CoA continues to attract candidates. At 01 February 2017 there were 114 registered candidates, of whom 22 had registered since the last report to AGM. Meanwhile, seven had been assessed in 2016 and 17 had lapsed or withdrawn. The breakdown of the registrations, with 2016 figures in brackets, is:

Spinning	Weaving	Natural Dyeing	Synthetic dyeing	Tapestry	Advanced	Total
65 (73)	31 (25)	8 (9)	5(6)	15 (17)	1 (1)	125 (131)

The total is greater than the number of registrations because some candidates have registered for more than one subject.

ASSESSMENTS 2016

Two assessment occasions were arranged for 2016. The first was at Bishop Grosseteste University in conjunction with the National Conference in June, and the second was at Killerton House in conjunction with the National Exhibition in September. Six candidates were awarded certificates. In Spinning there were three passes and one credit, in Natural Dyeing one credit, and in Tapestry one distinction. All the candidates had worked hard to achieve their well-deserved certificates. The June submissions were on show at BGU during the Conference, and the September submissions were included in the Exhibition at Killerton House.

ASSESSMENTS 2017 AND 2018

In 2017 the assessments will be held 16-18 August in conjunction with the Summer School at Sparsholt College. Ten candidates are submitting: seven in Spinning, two in Weaving and one in Tapestry. In 2018 the assessments will be held in conjunction with the National Conference, which is booked for 11-13 May 2018, Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes.

CoA TEAM AND FUTURE MANAGEMENT

Currently there are 20 mentors and we are still looking for more as not all candidates who want mentors can find them. There are 15 assessors of whom two are also moderators. There are three subject advisors to cover Spinning (Amanda Hannaford), Weaving (Melanie Venes), and Dyeing (Jane Deane). Since the last AGM, when Heather Seddon said that she needed help, volunteers have come forward. Janet Crowther will take over as CoA Co-ordinator later this year. Myra Scott has volunteered to be Assessment Organiser and is currently shadowing Heather. A key development is the CoA Database which Beverly Usher has built and which she continues to develop. Beverly is also helping with communication with candidates. Roberto Campana has offered to edit CoA Courier when this is revived. Janet Collins is advising on the development of criteria. Heather will continue as a member of the team for as long as necessary. Amanda Hannaford, currently Deputy Co-ordinator, will continue as Spinning Advisor and mentor. It would be good to have somebody who could manage the Facebook and set up and manage a Flickr account for CoA images.

CoA COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

The CoA Blog continues to be used but is not very busy. The email contact list has proved popular. CoA Courier has lapsed this year due to pressure of work but we hope to revive it. The CD of CoA images and information was

updated last year, but Heather has been considering the possibility of using Flickr as well. The Facebook group for CoA candidates is not as lively as hoped and clearly needs more active input and management. A very welcome development is the growth of CoA Study/Support groups in Guilds where several candidates are based.

PROMOTION

Somebody has suggested we have a CoA badge made for the successful candidates and this is under consideration. The displays of submitted work and articles by the candidates published in the Journal seem to stimulate registrations. Where one member of a Guild is doing CoA, this seems to encourage others to try.

SYLLABUS AND HANDBOOK REVISION

Following discussion at GPC on the experience of the CoA since September 2013, it was agreed to amend the statements about freedom of interpretation and the assessment decisions in the CoA documents.

For example, in the Handbook section 3 now begins: **In setting out the syllabus it was intended to allow candidates complete freedom of interpretation within the requirements of the syllabus and any stated criteria, and so avoid the constraints inevitable in more formal courses. The amendment is underlined. Unfortunately a few candidates had understood the original statement to mean they could ignore parts of the syllabus or produce work unfit for purpose.**

To section 3.6 the following paragraph has been added:

The Assessor's decision is final

Our assessors and moderators are chosen for their experience in the subject(s) and their assessment-related skills. The assessor's decision on marking and recommendation for a certificate is final. If you are concerned about anything in the assessor's report, please contact the Co-ordinator for clarification.

Since September 2013 there have been several appeals against the grade recommended, none of which has been upheld, and all of which have required considerable expenditure of time. We recognise this is controversial, but there is a firm intention to strengthen the assessment process by developing criteria.

CRITERIA

The need for criteria, both in assessment and in the learning aspects of the CoA, is recognised. With the help of Janet Collins a start has been made. Pressure of other work has delayed progress. In any case, this is not something which can or should be done in a hurry.

CoA SHOW AND ASSESSORS' REPORTS

At the 2016 AGM one delegate suggested that the assessors' reports should be displayed on the table with the work so that others could see how the recommendation for the grade had been reached. Although there was some support for this idea, it will not be adopted. The assessors work under considerable pressure of time to examine the work and make notes on it before coming to a decision. In order to write a considered and useful report they need time for reflection. The main purpose of the report is to help the candidate to see the strengths and weaknesses in their work. Always remember that the principal aim of the CoA is the personal development of the candidate in their craft. In addition, even if it were possible to produce a report in time for the show, it would hardly be appropriate for others to be reading the report before the candidate had seen it. At present the only people who see the report are the candidate and the CoA Co-ordinator plus other CoA team members where necessary. The candidate may show the report to anybody they choose.

FINANCE 01 Jan to 31 Dec 2016

01 JAN TO 31 DEC 2016			
INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Registration fees	640.00	Postage and printing	167.57
Assessment fees	420.00	Supplies for CoA Disc and Certificates	53.40
		Co-ordinator's travel	203.95
		Assessors' fees	750.00
		Assessors' travel, board and lodging	1251.25
TOTAL	1060.00		2426.17

The Association subsidises the costs of the CoA as part of its remit as an educational charity and to ensure that fees are kept within candidates' means. However, to keep up with rising costs and to reduce the burden on the Association finances, the fees will continue to increase every year. At the 2016 AGM some delegates felt that increasing the fees would put people off or even make the CoA unaffordable. If this is the case, it is a pity, but there has to be a compromise between what the Association and the individual member can afford. In any case, the fees are not the main cost of doing the CoA. Even for a well-equipped person there is a considerable cost in materials. Tuition, books, travel and entry to exhibitions can all add to the costs.

Heather Seddon, CoA Co-ordinator

Amanda Hannaford, Deputy CoA Co-ordinator

CoA@wsd.org.uk

Item 12 Foundation Certificate

Since the last AGM when the meeting agreed that the Association should start running the foundation certificate in spinning many things have happened. In the intervening time the number of people who signed up for the certificate have slowly increased. I'm delighted to say that Caroline Mallinson has agreed to help me with the Certificate.

At the time of writing, January, 28 people have registered for the certificate and a high proportion are already moving on to the third and fourth modules. By the time of the AGM I expect a number will have already qualified for their certificate. It is interesting to note that Leek Guild has decided to take the Certificate as a group project starting in April, eight have signed up. I have asked Caroline to be their Mentor.

It is early years for the certificate and it needs time to bed down. As the numbers of participants increases we will need to look for further mentors. With the development of the regions it is tempting to think that we may try to appoint mentors in each region.

I would like to create a small committee, responsible to the GPC, to help handle the growing workload. While the emphasis will be on managing the Spinning Certificate, we also need to finalise two new certificates one in dying with chemicals and another in natural dyeing. Already I have volunteers to provide first drafts. If there is anyone here who would like to lend a hand or knows someone who may be interested, then please let me know after the meeting.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped shape the spinning certificate. Their support is much appreciated.

Steve Kennett

foundationspin@wsd.org.uk

Item 13 Conference 2016

The thirteenth biennial Conference, entitled LASTing IMPressions, was held at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln 10-12 June 2016 organised by Region E member Guilds. Most of the helpers were provided by the nearest Guild, Lincolnshire, as the area is a large one in travelling distances. We were able to use the new accommodation block containing all en-suite rooms which is the standard that members now seem to expect. This of course raises the costs for the packages available.

The speakers were – Alice Brown, Conservator Doddington Hall, Lincoln

Fiona Gardner, NZ Haunui flock, International speaker on fleece added value

Bobby Kociejowski, colour specialist

Adam Jordan, weaver.

Numbers were down on the usual expected attendance. A questionnaire was raised after the Conference to help the GPC to understand the reasons for the lower than expected numbers.

48 members paid for package 1. 9 other members selected various other package options.

There was one unexpected last minute change when one speaker (Daniel Harris) pulled out in the last fortnight before the conference. Fortunately a good substitute (a conservator from Doddington Hall, near Lincoln) was found and many members expressed they felt the replacement was as good as the advertised one. This altered the finances slightly but not too detrimentally.

Members expressed their enjoyment of all the lectures. Coincidentally the last speaker confirmed remarks made by the previous speaker even though he had not been sitting in listening.

As usual a raffle was held so that members could select only those prizes they wish to win. This was well supported financially. As was printed in the Conference leaflet, the money raised was split between the Association and the British Heart Foundation, in memory of a Guild member. Members expressed support for this having read the reasoning in the leaflet. As Adam did not supply his donation to the raffle until after the draw had happened his contribution was auctioned off at the end of the Conference and raised an excellent sum adding to the raffle total. The Certificate of Achievement was available for members to view the submitted items once marking had been completed. This was enjoyed, with many expressing that they now understood what was required for submission. Extra to the Conference booklet was a leaflet informing members of the importance of Lincoln in establishing the foundations of the Magna Carta within English law. Many had not heard previously of the Battle of Lincoln Fair 1217. Originally this was to be a talk at the end of the AGM but as the agenda filled up it was decided that a leaflet would be the best way of informing members of the event. The cost of production was covered by an anon. donation.

Members were supplied with a 'goody bag' of information on the area. Unfortunately the new Bomber Command Memorial, although officially open, was closed to the public due to the grounds being incomplete

There were two hiccups – one caused by an information mistake, the other by BGU Refectory. As a result I feel that the Association did well out of the hiccups as the final costs were down on the expected bill.

Thanks to all the helpers from three Guilds have been recorded.

Members expressed many favourable comments at leaving-'as good as ever', 'excellent – best one I have attended', 'this is my first conference – I will most certainly come again' are typical of those received.

As the numbers attending were lower than expected the income was not as good as expected but with payment from the Association for the use of the theatre for the AGM and the covering of rooms expenses regarding the CoA a loss of £378.68 resulted. Please remember prices are set well before any indication of numbers attending. Whilst many members expect Association activities to automatically produce a surplus this has only been happening since the 2004 Lincoln Conference and is never a certainty.

I do feel however that this Conference has been successful – the members are the judges.

Peter Penneck

Lead Convenor

Item 14 National Exhibition 2016

Introduction

More than 7500 people visited Killerton during the exhibition, some 4350 more than they usually have in the same time period. The additional numbers came specifically to see the exhibition. Some people, Guild members and non-members, came back two and three times to bring other people to see the exhibition.

The written feedback from Guild members around the UK has been overwhelmingly positive. These are detailed in the Spring edition of the Association Journal. There was a broad consensus that having the pieces integrated into the house worked well. There was also very positive feedback about the demonstrations upstairs and the dyeing materials display. The brochure for the exhibition was well received.

Inevitably there was constructive criticism, which has gone forward to the 2018 planning group. The key points made were that the lighting was less than desirable in a couple of the rooms and people were not aware that there were folders in each room giving more detail on each of the pieces exhibited.

Selection process

The process went smoothly with 236 entries and 116 selected. The general view from the judges was that the number of entries had been falling year on year and that, in the past, in excess of 300 items could be expected. There was much speculation about the reasons for the reduction but no clear answers. We were very fortunate to have Janet Philips, Dot Seddon and Andrew Johnston as selectors.

Planning process

The process went smoothly with all 15 Guilds in the region wanting to be part of the process. Twelve Guilds were usually represented at the larger planning meetings. The committee met 10 times over the two years with most of the detailed work done in small task groups.

Sponsorship

We were fortunate to receive a large donation of £5,000 from the Ashley Family Foundation, which helped considerably with the costs of running the exhibition.

Impact of Exhibition

The key consequence of the exhibition has been the increase in membership queries in the region. In many places, these are materializing into solid membership applications.

The second major benefit is the positive relationship that has been forged with the National Trust. There were real financial benefits for Killerton and they would be pleased to have us back again. They will give a good reference to any other NT property where we wish to do something co-operatively.

Financial Details

Income	
Balance Brought Forward	£1,306.60
Donation	£5,000.00
Transfer from Association	£1,000.00
Fees	£3,080.00
Other Income	£4,270.87
Total	£14,657.47
Expenditure	
Design/Printing	£3,458.40
Sales	£2,519.12

Postage	£825.34
Travel	£5,072.35
Other	£2,164.60
Total	£14,039.81
Balance Carried Forward	£617.66

Janet Maher

Convener National Exhibition 2016

Item 15 Vice Chair's Report - Future Events and Publicity

Regional mapping

The regional mapping, which was introduced in 2012 is working extremely well and we have had some wonderful National Exhibitions, National Conferences and Summer Schools.

Regions can now plan well ahead, as everyone knows when and where events are due to take place. The sooner regions begin their initial research for venues; the easier it is for them to find suitable, affordable places that meet the criteria required for each of them. Leaving it too late substantially reduces the number of venues in their region that meets their criteria, as they can and do get booked, up to four years ahead.

It is also very helpful to consider which tutors you wish to invite for Summer School, as again the most popular and interesting ones will also get bookings well ahead.

Thus far, all regions have produced some memorable events but we are only too well aware that the success of any of these is totally reliant on volunteers giving up their time, so that others can participate and we would like to thank all of them, past, present and future. If for any reason a region cannot or will not organise an event, then for that particular year there will obviously be no event.

It would be totally impossible to stage any of these events if they were organised by professional organisations, as all would be prohibitively expensive.

Having the calendar also helps members to either work up ideas for the National Exhibition or save, so they can attend a Summer School. Guilds should always remind members that The Association does offer bursaries for those unable to meet all of the costs of Summer School. Some Guilds also have their own bursary for their members.

Campaign for Wool & TwinSpin

TwinSpin was launched on social media and still continues to generate enquiries from people wanting to learn to spin. We have no idea how many members this might have generated for Guilds but over 280 enquiries have been sent to individual Guilds. Some Guilds do still appear to be unaware of the project, even though all have been sent the posters for their own events and updates do appear in the Association Newsletter sent out to all Guilds.

At the last AGM it was agreed to change the annual May National Spinning and Weaving week to October, to coincide with Campaign for Wool's own Wool Week and hopefully benefit from their publicity machine. We hope all Guilds will want to participate in some form and all events can be posted on the CfW website 'LoveWool'.

Many Guilds already have excellent relationship with their local National Trust properties but for those Guilds still seeking opportunities to demonstrate at NT properties or indeed other similar properties, they should highlight the amazing success of our National Exhibition at Killerton House when footfall was more than doubled for the same period in 2015 and the spend in both shop and café increased by 45%, so we can honestly say we are a valuable partner to anyone willing to offer us free space to demonstrate our skills. It maybe, that they would be willing to host and publicise a TwinSpin event for you, if you ask?

We will update you on WoolWeek, via The Association Newsletter, as and when we get relevant information from CfW.

The Association was involved with a WoolWeek event, organised by the Selvedge Magazine in London, which was hugely successful, with the owner of the magazine, Polly Leonard being extremely complimentary. Five members of the London Guild gave a drop spindle workshop to about 35 delegates.

The follow up from this, is the possibility of an article in Selvedge later this year, highlighting the work of three members from around the UK but also detailing what The Association is all about, so hopefully this might even generate more new members to Guilds across the UK.

The Association is always looking for opportunities to promote the work it does, which in turn will hopefully help Guilds to enrol more members. Whilst some Guilds have an extremely healthy membership, some Guilds are struggling, so if we are going to ensure that these skills are there for future generations to enjoy, what we all take for granted, then we have to ensure that Guilds, everywhere thrive.

Angela Colbridge

vicechair@wsd.org.uk

Item 16 Social media

Instagram and Twitter accounts for the Association (in addition to the existing Facebook account) have been in use since September:

- <https://www.instagram.com/guildswsd/>
- <https://twitter.com/guildswsd>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Association-of-Guilds-of-Weavers-Spinners-Dyers-150556108426791/>

Similar content is posted across all three social media channels, with a mixture of links to events/interesting articles, and pictures of the work of Guild members (using photos from previous exhibitions and events). The difference between the social media channels, apart from potential audience, is the way in which content is presented, with Instagram heavily focused on images, Twitter focused on text, and Facebook providing opportunity for discussion and information sharing.

It is intended that content will be posted across all channels a minimum of weekly, in order to gradually build follower numbers. Current follower numbers are:

- Instagram: 190
- Twitter: 157
- Facebook: 1,617

The majority of followers are liable to be non-Guild members, so content needs to have general appeal, while promoting the Association and its crafts, with the intention of raising awareness of Guilds.

Guild members can contribute to social media via the following:

- Following the accounts, if they are existing users of Instagram/Twitter/Facebook;
- If posting relevant content on Instagram/Twitter/Facebook, linking to the Association accounts;
- Relevant news items or photographs submitted to the newsletter email address (newsletter@wsd.org.uk) will also be shared on social media.

Charlotte Powell

newsletter@wsd.org.uk

Item 17 Association Library

The Association library was set up in 2010; it was previously the Journal library and books have continued to be added. It consists of books and a few magazines sent to the Journal for review, plus some donated books, plus a set of Journals and some other miscellaneous papers and a few VHS tapes and DVDs. At the last count there are some 400 books in the following subjects:

- Weaving (67)
- Fibres and Spinning (35)
- Dyeing (25)
- Braids, cords, passementerie and tassels (19)
- Embroidery (15)
- Felting (22)
- Knitting and Crochet (74)
- Other crafts (38)
- Textiles (General, Design, Fashion etc.) (102)

The books were available for postal loan and, until Stuart Groom's illness, were also available to visit at Freeman College in Sheffield. After Stuart was no longer able to work at the College, another member of staff has kept an eye on the books for us. But there has only been one request for a book in that time.

That member of the College staff has now resigned (January 2016) and the College are not able to offer any assistance at all with the library and have asked us to remove the books. This is now being planned and should have been done by the date of the AGM. The books will be temporarily stored in a GPC member's house until the Summer School in August 2017.

We now have to decide what should happen to the books.

Some suggestions have been made:

- (i) publish the list to all member Guilds and offer the books for sale at Summer School. (Any income received to return to the Association - possibly to the bursary fund.)
- (ii) donate the books to a library, if one can be found willing to accept them. Depending on the type of library (council run, private, archive etc.), it may be possible to organise postal loans but this could have a cost implication.
- (iii) sell the books not directly relating to our crafts and retain a more manageable quantity of relevant books somewhere. This would require volunteers to look after them and operate the postal library.
- (iv) does any member Guild with suitable premises have space and time to operate a library (either all books or a subset as in (iii))?

After discussion at the GPC it was decided that the situation should be discussed at the AGM. Other suggestions will be welcomed, but the practicalities of storage, transport, time and cost must be considered. A decision must be reached by the GPC meeting in June.

Sarah Williams
library@wsd.org.uk

Item 19. Propositions

Proposition 1. From the GPC

The GPC proposes to add the following paragraph to section G of the Association Constitution (dated 2015):
“The General Purposes Committee may require any officer or member to resign if, for any reason, she or he is not carrying out his or her duties or if she or he is acting in a manner not in the best interests of the Association.. In order to enact this, a proposal must be notified to GPC members in advance of the meeting and it must be agreed by at least two thirds of those present at the meeting and entitled to vote.”

Background to Proposition:

The proposition has been made to ensure that the Association can continue to conduct business effectively in the event of significant illness or other major problem for any of the officers. If the proposition is agreed, Section G in full would read as follows.

G Determination of Membership of the General Purposes Committee

- (i) A member of the General Purposes Committee shall cease to hold office if he or she:
 - (a) is disqualified from acting as a member of the General Purposes Committee by virtue of sections 178 and 179 of the Charities Act 2011(or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
 - (b) is incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
 - (c) notifies to the General Purposes Committee a wish to resign (but only if at least six members of the General Purposes Committee will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect). All resignations to take effect from the time that a written resignation is received by the Chairman or the Secretary
- (ii) The General Purposes Committee may require any officer or member to resign if, for any reason, she or he is not carrying out his or her duties or if she or he is acting in a manner not in the best interests of the Association.. In order to enact this, a proposal must be notified to GPC members at least 21 days in advance of the meeting and it must be agreed by at least two thirds of those present at the meeting and entitled to vote.

Proposition 2. From the JEC

The Journal Editorial Committee proposes that the wording of Section J (iii) be amended. Currently the clause says “A quorum of the Journal Editorial Committee shall consist of any two Journal Committee officers, plus 50% of the remaining current members.”

This will be changed to

“A quorum of the Journal Editorial Committee shall consist of 50% of the current members including at least two Journal Committee officers. This can include members attending via Skype (or other electronic means agreed by the committee) where physical attendance at the meeting venue is impracticable.”

Reason for the Proposition

The size of the JEC was increased from 12 members to 16 members in 2011 in order to provide sufficient volunteer time to maintain the high standard of Journal content.

In practice however it has not always proved possible to achieve a quorum in accordance with the current constitutional requirements at quarterly meetings. Travel difficulties, personal pressures on time, etc. have resulted in the necessity to make provisional decisions at inquorate meetings and to confirm agreements in consequent email with absent members.

It is also not entirely clear from the existing wording whether a third officer present could be counted within the “50% of the remaining current members”.

The amendment is therefore proposed both to facilitate the smooth running of the JEC and for clarity. As Skype has been used successfully to enable unavoidably remote members to contribute to discussion and decision-making, we have also included a confirmation that this will constitute valid attendance.

Proposition 3. From Montgomeryshire Guild

The Montgomeryshire Guild proposes that Regions be renamed to indicate their geographical area.

Reason for Proposition

Calling Regions by a letter is confusing. Whilst Guilds may know their ‘own’ letter, they probably don’t know the letter of every other area. This means that when information is sent out, Guild members have to go away and look up to check how the code corresponds to an actual region. Calling an area ‘Wales’ or ‘South West’ would be clearer, easier to understand and avoid confusion. We suggest the following names:

Region A- Scotland & Northern Ireland

Region B- North

Region C- North West

Region D- West Midlands

Region E- East Midlands

Region F- Wales

Region G- South Central

Region H- East

Region I- South West

Region J South East

Proposition 4. From the GPC

The GPC proposes, with regret, that the Association will close the library and that the GPC be asked to take action to appropriately consider the future of the books.

Background to the Proposition - see the report for item 17 on the agenda.