

4 February 2019

# DGWSD



Spring  
Newsletter 2019

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## Chairman's Report...

I want to wish you all a belated but Very Happy New Year! We have an action packed year ahead, including our exhibition at Buckfast Abbey at the end of August - my challenge to you all for that is the 150gms of Bluefaced Leicester tops to create something out of, to which you can add up to 50gms of any fibre of your choice, plus any thread for warping that is required. This can also be embellished in any way that you like! Apart from the challenge I would urge you all to become involved with this exhibition in any way that you can, whether it be producing something to exhibit or sell, or to help with the stewarding. It will be a very rewarding 4 days, and should be a great deal of fun in the process. New members shouldn't let their lack of expertise put you off stewarding or entering items, it is always great to see what people are producing right from the start of their spinning, weaving or dyeing careers and encourages newbees into the the craft.

If you can help with any of the other shows throughout the year please do, if you are fairly new to the Guild don't let that put you off, meeting people who are also interested in our crafts is always enjoyable, you'll be surprised by how uplifting it is.

The challenge for the October Skills Day is to embellish a Guild Bag in any way that you wish - which should provide all sorts of exciting results.

Hope you all enjoy Katie Weston's talk/shop or workshop this month.

Best wishes

Sheilagh Robson

# Beginnings of my Hand Weaving Story



**by Jaqueline Hichen**

I have always had a love of textiles which began in the 1970's when my first son was six months old. My darling gran lent me £100 to buy a knitting machine. Within a year I was selling to clients around the UK, America and Germany and teaching. This chapter of my life came to an abrupt end when my dad asked me to work for him. Something had to give!

When I retired in 2014, I researched the crafts of spinning and weaving and discovered the Devon Guild which I decided to visit that September. I walked in apprehensively and said to the lady on reception (lovely Brenda) that I wanted to learn to spin! She immediately called Jae over, and as they say 'the rest is history'. Terri let me try her spinning wheel and I became the proud owner of a Lendrum DT.

One of the first workshops I attended was Amanda Hannaford's Long Draw Spinning. I knew nothing about raw fleece or staple length, but luckily Sheilagh and I connected and she purchased and shared a Clun fleece with me which fitted the required criteria.

Next I saw advertised The Devon Weavers Workshop Exhibition at Birdwood House in Totnes. It was there that I saw a Louet Jane 8 Shaft table loom. I looked at it longingly and thought we had room for that size loom! Immediately I signed up for their Beginners Course in February 2015. Loved it. We travelled all over visiting different Wool and craft fairs and by November 2015 Steve had purchased a Louet David 8 shaft Floor Loom for me. In 2016 I lost the love of my life suddenly. Weaving was difficult due to complete loss of concentration. However spinning came to my rescue.

I love learning the different spinning and weaving techniques. This year I have had the privilege of attending Workshops with Janet Phillips (Summer & Winter), Margo Selby (Double Weave Block Weave), Sue Hiley-Harris (Silk Spinning), Natural Dyeing with Sheilagh and have visited Wonderwool and Woolfest.

2019 ended with my son announcing to me in November that he had set a date. I asked what for - our wedding December 22nd! So I put my mind to designing a silk wrap for my wedding outfit. The pattern draft was 8 Shaft No. 70110 from

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[Handweaving.net](http://Handweaving.net) and the yarn 100% Silk Splendour from our very own Jean Field of [www.fleecewitch.co.uk](http://www.fleecewitch.co.uk).





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Winding the Warp and Dressing the Loom, and ON the loom pictured below

## **MEETING REPORTS:**

### **Devon Guild December Meeting**

A very jolly membership met up at the America Hall for the December meeting. Cups of Tea and Coffee were made, biscuits chosen and we were settling down to spin, or to try the braiding that Pam and Julian had set up.

At about 10.30 a tall, burly man in a boiler suit came into the hall. "Come on, the bus is outside", he said. Well, we had to go and look, and before you know it, we were all getting on the bus! Terri said "What about our things?", and the lovely young woman standing by the steps of the bus said "you don't need to worry, I will lock the door. Have you all got your seat belts on?" (She was wearing a very smart green onesie, and a fabulous long knitted Fair Isle kepi. I wonder where she got the pattern....)

As the last seat belt clicked, the bus started, and then took off. You can imagine the oohhs and aahhs! We were soon soaring over the City, then down the river, and out over the sea. There was lots of chattering, as we all speculated where we were going. Before long, the young lady stood up, and introduced herself as Elfrida. She told us that the driver was called Nick, at which he turned a little and gave a wave.

Just as we were all beginning to wish we had brought our knitting, Elfrida said we would be landing shortly. By now, we were flying over snowy forest. After another minute, we descended to earth, and landed very softly. The bus drew up just outside a wooden lodge. Once inside, we were given hot drinks and shown into a big, warm room with comfortable seating, arranged in a semi-circle.

A jolly lady came into the room, and stood in the curve of the semi—circle and introduced herself as Mary, and her helper (who looked very like Elfrida) as Elfrith. Mary then gave us a very interesting talk on "Spinning in Traditional Folk Tales". Elfrith was very adept at showing the appropriate illustrations for each story, on the screen on the wall behind Mary. Her last sentence was "Don't forget that every Spinner turns straw into gold." At the end, Sheilagh gave a charming vote of thanks, and also thanked Jae for arranging the outing.

The light was beginning to fade, so it was time to leave. The return journey seemed much quicker- too quick really.

When we arrived back in the America Hall, it was to find all the food we had brought with us that morning put out on the prepared tables, ready to eat. Margaret said "Oh look, it's only

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one o'clock!" So we had a delicious, generous lunch, accompanied by lots of friendly chatter. After that, we all went on with what we had started that morning.



Thanks to  
Nick & Mary  
Christmas,  
and Elfrida &  
Elfrith  
ElfricsDottir



LindatheLibrarian/LinDragon



## January Meeting:

Judy Throup kindly agreed to write a report of our Social Meeting in January, but it appears to have morphed into a report of the inaugural meeting of the Exhibition Committee Meeting held someplace up high on the Moors...

Although August bank holiday seems such a long way off the coordinating group for the exhibition held its first meeting at the height of a blizzard in the highest village on Dartmoor. Needless to say it was a fairly short meeting but very productive.

We really felt we want this to be an exhibition of all members of our guild no matter how much or little experience we all have and would appreciate any contribution, practical or physical, from everyone.

The setting is beautiful, worth visiting at anytime especially when we are exhibiting. So please feel free to talk to us with suggestions, offers of help and any other support you feel you can give.

Our main focus at present is advertising as far and wide as possible.

From Judy, Amanda, Jackie, Sheilagh, Sara and Jane

(Ed's note: I have it on good authority that 'the highest village on Dartmoor' referred to Bridford, so of course I had to check this. I think the author meant 'highest in the TEIGN VALLEY' - as Bridford is a mere 1,100feet above sea level and Postbridge is a tad higher, at 1,167feet above sea level. Princetown, although technically a town and not a village, caps the both of them at a whopping 1,430 feet above sea level and is the largest settlement at this height in the UK..





Continuing the series featuring local yarn and fibre shops and resources -

Part the second -

Wool on the Exe - 2 Okehampton Street, Exeter EX4 1DW

Wool on the Exe is a yarn shop with a difference, situated in Exeter and run by Debbie Judd with help from Sam, Gail and Ella. Between them, they have many years of expert experience in knitting and crochet to share with you. Wool on the Exe specialises in beautiful British yarn, from companies such as John Arbon, Fyberspates, Woolyknits, West Yorkshire Spinners, Eden Cottage Yarns, and British independent hand dyers Ovis Yarns, Handdyed by Kate, RiverKnits, The Knitting Goddess and Lilypond Yarns. We also stock a good selection of King Cole, some Sirdar and Patons. They also sell fibre art accessories such as such as knitting needles, crochet hooks, darning needles, row counters, i-cord makers, pompom makers, and the like, and artisan gifts made by locals. Like many yarn shops, they run regular knitting groups (including a 'Philosophy club') and fibre art workshops for all abilities -knitting, crochet, weaving, spinning and dyeing included, (our previous Chairman, Isabella, taught weaving there and Terri Bate also runs knitting workshops)



However, Wool on the Exe is unusual in that they are also part of a community interest company (CIC). The shop itself was established to provide a fibre art community space and to financially support their fibre-related community initiatives. Their emphasis is on personal and community well-being through the learning and sharing of fibre arts skills, including outreach work.

To elaborate further - Wool on the Exe is a community fibre arts space designed to provide local people with a place to learn, be creative, make new friends and connect to their community. The idea grew out of two successful projects they started and have been running for the last few years - Neighbourworks and The Knit-Stop.



**Neighbourworks** is a not for profit community interest company - a social enterprise that supports people who want to use their time and knitting talent to raise funds for local charities. Wool on the Exe operates on the same principles, so even though they're a shop and they sell things, their 'profits' go back into the community. That's how they work.

**The Knit-Stop**, their second project, was funded in 2014 by the Peoples Health Trust. They started up 12 knitting groups in central Exeter and held a big community project at the end resulting in 90 knitted and crocheted cushions on the benches of Exeter's High St. You can see a short video of the event [here](https://vimeo.com/148561396). (<https://vimeo.com/148561396>)

They learned a lot while developing and running both of these initiatives. One of the things they learned is that there is an abundance of beautiful British fibre right in our backyard. But most people don't have an opportunity to see, feel or use it because the makers are small and the yarn market is dominated by the bigger brands.

The other thing they learned is that people really love to come together to share with and support each other, learn new skills and expand their circle of friends. Many Neighbourworks knitters are older, widowed women and they appreciate the opportunity to come together and use their time and talent to benefit their community. And it's not just older people who are isolated. Our groups are made up of people of all ages and abilities and the common bond is a love of making and a desire to connect.

So they thought it was time for Exeter to have a space that supports these things. A place where local people who are experts in knitting, crochet, spinning, felting, weaving and dyeing can share their



skills in a space that is warm, welcoming and nourishing for the spirit. The shop will continue to support Neighbourworks groups and plant the seeds for more Knit-Stop groups in the community. They aim to have lots of opportunities for people to connect - through events, projects, and charity knitting initiatives. They even have a teen group started last Autumn.

They also wanted to have a place where local fibre artists could sell their products. You will find beautiful wood bowls, hand-made bags, felted art, cushions, cards and beaded accessories in our shop. If you're a fibre artist and are interested in Wool on the Exe, please get in touch.

Of course, everyone knows if you're a knitter, a cuppa and a cake are sure to be nearby, so we have a small cafe where you can have a cup of tea or coffee and a home-made cake while you ponder the next project for your needles or hook!

So that's the story of Wool on the Exe so far. Follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) or sign up for their newsletter and stay connected. Wool on the Exe are open every day except Sunday from 10am. They stay open until 5pm Mondays and Saturdays, 6pm Wednesdays and Fridays, and 8pm Tuesdays and Thursdays.

They can be reached in a variety of ways and will endeavour to respond to your query within 1 working day

phone: 01392 669015

email: [news@woolonthexe.com](mailto:news@woolonthexe.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/woolonthexe/>

## Your Committee:

**Chairman:** Sheilagh Robson  
**Secretary / Vice-Chairpeople:** Karen Ball  
**Webmaster;** Terri Bate  
**Treasurer:** Paul Ashton  
**Programme Secretary;** Jo Williams  
**Fleece Fair Co-ordinator:** Sue Heathcote  
**Events Co-Ordinator:** Vacant  
**Newsletter Editor:** Terri Bate  
**Coach Trip Co-ordinator:** Jae Burgin  
**Committee Members:**  
Sara Parnell

## Non-Committee Posts

**Membership Secretary / Journal:** Karen Ball  
**Catering Organiser:** Sara Parnell  
**Librarian;** Linda Drage  
**Welcome desk;** Brenda Patten

A Wordsearch to put you in a Spin...

S N Q K S S B N C R A L A O G W E N	TENSION
C O A S R O P R O H E S P S N V L I	TRADITIONAL
H T E I B O I I K I H Y A L I O D D	SPINOLUTION
A Q R B G T M R N F S X L R N R N D	NORWEGIAN
C J I E C E A S O O O N D F N I I Y	NIDDYNODDY
H N R E A H W R K N L E E V I F P N	ASHFORD LENDRUM
T F L T C D D R Y I L U M T P I S O	BABE LOUET
N E D I A M L O O B N A T E S C I D	BOBBIN MAIDEN
M U R D N E L E U N J D L I I E L D	CASTLE MAJACRAFT
T R A D I T I O N A L T E U O L E Y	CHARKHA ORIFICE
S C O T C H D Q C V S E X E Z N E I	DISTAFF RATIO
D I S T A F F R N A E D I R B E H R	DOUBLEDRIEVE
O I T A R V A M C H G R E A T A W I	ELECTRIC SAXONY
F L U C V F L A Z Y K A T E R E B S	FLYER SCHACHT
W X N T T D K I L Y R O Z U Z O L H	GREAT SCOTCH
	HEBRIDEAN
	IRISH SPINDLE
	KROMSKI SPINNING
	LAZYKATE WHEEL