



Newsletter of the Berkshire Guild of Spinners, Weavers & Dyers

BERKSHIRE YARNS

No. 155

May 2019



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER.

Dear Members,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Guild newsletter.

With warm, sunny, weather and spring flowers, it has started to feel like spring at last and a crafters mind turns to putting away winter woollies and taking out new projects that reflect the brighter weather; be it preparing and spinning fleeces bought at the June Fleece day, attending Country fairs and demonstrating and perhaps entering the craft competitions, or possibly taking part in one of the on-line challenges, such as Spinzilla, or Tour de Fleece.

Whatever you do enjoy it, share it and challenge yourself, just a little!

Happy crafting

Roz Jones (Chair)

Your Guild needs you!

Please have a look through your stash to see what you might have for the Sales Table. By providing goods you have an opportunity to make some space and money (and also raise funds for the guild). Note that all items must be priced and listed before being put on the table.

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MEETING AND WORKSHOP REPORTS

March 2019

I may have over looked this month's speaker at the Berkshire, Spinners, Weaver and Dyers meeting day. In fact I did until the lights went down and there was no going back. Perhaps if I had researched her name, Barley Roscoe, I would be better prepared. So, I started with a blank scrap of paper and wrote foolishly. She told us about the setting up of the Craft's Study Centre, originally at The Holborne Centre in Bath but now in Farnham. Drawing our attention to influential crafters she had discovered, driving hither and thither to find archival materials

Names like Ernest Gimson the furniture designer whose work is greatly admired. Ethel Mairet, Enid Marx, Phyliss Barron and Dorothy Larcher; textile artists undoubtedly influenced by William Morris, but who went on to make their own mark in the world of Arts and Crafts. It seemed Barley knew everyone and had links to everyone else. Sadly, we weren't able to keep up and my handwriting was so appalling I had to email her to fill in some names. Nonetheless, I have an extensive list and thanks to Wikipedia I have an Aladdin's cave of good gems to research. Barley went on to tell us about Elizabeth Peacock; who was a fine textile artist, who also had experience in calligraphy and was able to produce fine illustrative books. She told us of the pioneering modernist designer-makers Phyliss Barron and Dorothy Larcher who set up a textile business that counted Coco Chanel and the Duke of Westminster among its clients and includes historic and contemporary illustrations, and text contributions from interior designer Kit Kemp and design writer Alan Powers. I for one will be a visitor when U attend UCA later this year.

Helen Westthrop

April 2019

As it was Easter Saturday members had been asked to bring in cakes to share and, of course, there was an amazing assortment of lovely goodies. A mini workshop on colour blending was run very ably by Jay with lots of useful information.

The Chairman's Challenge was to create a masterpiece, using cardboard framing mounts provided. Members had been asked to bring darning needles, crochet hooks and wool or cotton thread. Also some embellishments e.g. a selection of buttons, braid, tassels, ribbon, string, lace, fabric or whatever they had to hand. Some amazing masterpieces were produced.

Lorna, from the Kennett Valley Guild, gave us an interesting talk about the renovation of the tapestries at the Vine, a Tudor building near Basingstoke, and the demonstrations she is organising there, through the summer.

FUTURE GUILD MEETINGS

Meeting	Type of meeting	Activities
15 June 2019	Fleece Day	What to do with Coarse fleece. Also fleece sorting and preparation, fleece washing.
20 July 2019	Guild Dye Day	Practical activities for members using dyes,
17 August 2019	Summer Party	Shared summer picnic, Sales Table and a chance to catch up with friends and work on your wheel, loom, dyeing projects, or anything else that is taking your attention at the moment.

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UP-COMING DEMONSTRATIONS

There are a number of shows coming up between now and the end of June :

Sunday 26th May - Berkshire Country Fayre

Saturday 8th June - Sheffield on Loddon

Saturday 15th June - Reading Museum Waterfest

If you would like to be involved in any of them please do contact me on sarah_rose50@hotmail.com or have a chat with me at one of the Guild or group meetings and I would be delighted to answer any questions you may have.

Each event really needs to have three members attending, to help with informing the public as to what we are doing as we spin, and to safeguard equipment when members leave the stand to stretch their legs.

Demonstration at Reading Museum

This was a new venue for us and whilst it was only for the morning it was very busy, with lots of visitors trying their hand at drop spindling, weaving on a rigid heddle loom as well as being able to see different fleece samples and demonstrations of spinning and the processes involved.

The loom is a recent addition to the demonstration items that go out for each event and it is hoped that at the end of the year we will have a textile representation of all the shows we have demonstrated at during the year.

Also on its first outing was the 8” square” blanket that had been made by a number of members using 50grms of Southdown fibre using one or more of our core crafts of their choosing to produce each individual square. The blanket looked stunning and gave a really good focal point for the wide range of crafts enjoyed by members with many visitors spending time admiring the blanket and looking at the write up for each square.

We also indulged in a bit of “yarn bombing” by decorating the various statues in the gallery with our own personal items much to the amusement of the museum co-ordinator !

So a very enjoyable, albeit busy, morning and a big thank you to all the demonstrators who helped make it such a successful event.



GUILD GROUP MEETINGS:

All the day-time groups meet at Charvil Village Hall.

Here are the dates for the next few months.

Spinning Group Co-ordinator Lesley Dunn 10am-1pm (Alternate Wednesdays)

Dates: 22nd May, 5th, 19th June, 3rd, 17th, 31st July, 14th, 28th August

Weaving Group Co-ordinator Mary Paul 10.15am – 1.15pm (Alternate Thursdays)

Dates: 30th May, 13th, 27th June, 11th, 25th July, 8th, 22nd August

Dyeing Group Co-ordinator Debbie Cogger 10am – 3pm

October, January and April,

UP-COMING FIBRE EVENTS

Soft Engineering, Textiles Taking Shape – Whitchurch Silk Mill	When:	Until 23 rd June
http://whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk	Where:	Whitchurch, RG28 7AL
	Time:	10.30 - 5
Woolfest - Cumbria	When:	28-29 June
	Where:	Mitchells Lakeland Livestock Market, CA13 0QQ
	Time:	Fri:10-6, Sat: 10-5
Fibre East - Bedfordshire	When:	27-28 July
	Where:	Redbourne Community College, Amthill MK45 2NU
	Time:	Sat: 10-5, Sun:10 – 4.30

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OTHER EVENTS

Guedelon - A castle in the making

Medieval crafts and much more.

In Burgundy, in the middle of France, in an undeveloped area of forest close to a disused quarry an astonishing project is underway. Posters and a website announce GUEDELON - NOUS BATISSONS UN CHATEAU” We are building a castle.”

In 1995 Michel Guyot, with two other specialists in medieval architecture, inspired by discoveries they had made while renovating a local chateau, discussed building a medieval castle using medieval tools, materials and techniques. The workers were to be dressed in authentic outfits and as far as was possible they would be recreating the construction of a castle as it would have been done in the thirteenth century.

..... For the project to succeed the essentials were: solid foundations, a good supply of hard stone, rubble and sand for infill, access to water, a good supply of timber, and clay for tiles and for utensils. At this site in Puisaye, all these requirements were met so, in May 1998, once twentieth century planning permission had been obtained, the first stone was laid. This was seven centuries after the construction of a now ruined chateau in the area. The castle and therefore the site, was called Guedelon after the surrounding forest. Michel Guyot’s aim was that “Guedelon would actively encourage visitors. The project would in fact be financed by the public. The project’s goal would not be to finish the castle itself, but to explore over 25 years the daily life of a medieval construction site”

For anyone interested in traditional crafts there is much to see. Over two visits we have watched; rope and cord winding, making and using natural dyes, some from the remnants of charcoal burning, basketwork, tile making, blacksmithing, There is also carpentry, stone carving and masonry, in fact everything which is required to build a castle., There is an abundance of natural materials but nothing manufactured, or imported or mechanical. Therefore, no machines, so to get huge stones up to the second and third level a

traditional tread mill is powered by ... a man. More recently a two man treadmill has been built for the heaviest loads. There are two carefully trained carthorses, but many of the loads are pulled by workers, or carried in baskets. Ducks, goats, and pigs wander freely, a water mill makes flour, which is used in the restaurants. (but it had been dry since June on our recent September visit!). There is a pottery, dyes made from the remnants of charcoal burning, a lime kiln.etc etc. As well as watching workers at their various tasks there are some special demonstrations to give a bit of background. One of the most interesting of these was a 'lesson' on medieval systems of measurement. Not enough space here to say a great deal just that many of the measures were based on the human body, foot, palm, thumb etc. and that complicated calculations for curves were carried out using a cord with thirteen knots. (I have a booklet explaining all!) The various measurements used on any site were calculated according to those of the master mason. Who does the work? All sorts of people who may have had entirely different careers in their twentieth century lives. They wear traditional dress although modern regulations require appropriate hard hats under the straw ones. Workers are also encouraged to lead tours, so everyone is familiar with the whole undertaking. There is so much to see, all in a woodland setting. There is also (Hello, twenty first century!) a website, and, at the moment, a regular weekly podcast showing life on the site. It is in French but there are subtitles.

www.guedelon.fr

Marjorie Hodson

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Gingerbread Cake

Ingredients

3 ozs/90 gms Plain Flour	¼ Teaspoon Mixed Spice
1 Teaspoon Bicarbonate of Soda	1 Teaspoon Ginger
2 ozs /60 gms Butter or Margarine	2 ozs/60 gms Raisins or Dates
2 ozs/60 gms Soft Brown Sugar	1 Beaten Egg
3 ozs/90 gms Black Treacle (3 dessertspoons)	4 Tablespoons Milk

6” cake tin or 8” x 4” loaf tin well greased (line it to make it easier to remove)

Method

Mix dry ingredients together. Cream fat with sugar in saucepan, add treacle, mix and warm gently. Add beaten egg a little at a time and beat well.

Stir in the dry ingredients and the fruit. Finally stir in the milk.

Scoop into tin (which it will by no means fill) and bake for c 40 mins at oven 350 F/180C or at 160C for about 60 mins.

Note

It will sink in the middle and be very dark and quite sticky but that is intentional.

Leave in tin until quite cold before removing

Can also be microwaved (c 4-5 mins) but not so nice

Known in our family as “Goo” cake, it was so popular that my mother has to make 4 times the amount and bake it in a meat tin.

Jacquie Kavanagh

Crochet cape/shawl

Pattern is recorded from the shawl shown by Shirley Barrett at BSWD Guild meeting of March 16 2019
© Janet Scotton 2019

Work in yarn of choice using a crochet hook size bigger than usual so that shawl will drape well. You might want to try a sample to obtain the correct combination before working the whole piece.

Make 8 loose chains and join into a circle with a slip stitch

1st row: Make 3 chain and 8 treble crochets (tr) into the hole, turn [9 tr]

2nd row: Make 3ch then 1 tr into first space between trebles worked into the hole. Make 2 tr into each of the next 7 spaces, turn [16 tr]

3rd row: Make 3ch then 1 tr into first space and second space, then 2 tr into 3rd space, 1 tr into fourth space; repeat working 1 then 2 tr to last space and work 2tr, turn [23 tr]

4th row: Make 3ch then 1 tr into first space, second space and third space and 2tr into the gap between the 2 tr worked on the previous row; continue working 1 tr, 1 tr, 2tr to end [30]

5th row: Make 3 ch then 1 tr into first, second, third and fourth space and 2 tr into the gap between the 2 tr worked on the previous row; continue working 4 x 1 tr, then 2 tr into gap between 2 tr of previous row to end [37 tr]

6th and following rows; Make 3ch then 1 tr (x 5 for row 6 and increasing by 1 every following row), 2 tr to end until the shawl is the required size. [44 tr for row 6, add 7 for each following row]

The increases will be at each edge and 6points around to give 7 segments

Finish with a row of double crochet around entire edge and across starting circle and any other edge or lace 77stitch of choice,

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair and Speaker programme	Roz Jones
Minutes Secretary	Carol Crowdy
Membership Secretary & Library	Helen Westhrop
Communications with members	Jay Montague
Treasurer	Debbie Cogger
Member – led workshops	Sarah Cook
Equipment co-ordinator	Carolyn Mansi
Demonstrations	Sarah Rose

NON COMMITTEE HELPERS

Facebook page	Carol Crowdy and Sue Malvern
Website Coordinator	Mary Paul

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINES: Copy – to be sent to sarah@ksr.me.uk

Copy deadline: 15th July

Publication date: August

Have you something to say about our fibre world? Then tell the Guild about it.

Please send your contributions to Sarah (sarah@ksr.me.uk)

