



EDINBURGH GUILD OF WEAVERS, SPINNERS & DYERS

Newsletter February 2023

Welcome to another edition of our monthly newsletter. Next month's newsletter will be circulated about the date of our March meeting (Saturday 18th March) which will be in the main hall of Craiglockhart Church. If you have any photos or links for inclusion in next month's newsletter just email them to pennyskett@gmail.com.

This Month's Meeting

Loom Dating

This month's meeting is on Saturday 18th February in Craiglockhart Church Hall. We're having a Loom Dating Day, similar to the Wheel Dating Day we organised a year or so ago. Members are bringing a variety of looms for others to try using on the day. It will be a great opportunity to try different looms and, if you haven't woven before, to have a go. The event will start about 11am to allow time for those bringing their looms to get them set up. There will be a 'round up' session at the end of the day for comments and discussion about the looms everyone has tried.

If you are interested in buying a rigid heddle loom there will be one on the day which Jane Buxton is happy to donate for sale for Guild funds. There will also be a small tabby loom for which Marilyn Caddell hopes to find a new home.

Weaving Group

Just a quick reminder that our subject for February is overshot. If you have done any overshot investigations, we would love to see the results and hear about your experiences with this weaving method.

Su Grierson Plant Dyed Samples



Su Grierson, author of 'The Colour Cauldron' about the history and use of natural dyes in Scotland, has donated a large number of her plant dyed samples and hanks and Trisha Gow will be bringing them to the February meeting for anyone who would be interested in taking some. They are all wool and labelled.

Fungi Dyed Yarn Samples

If you have some of the colourful fungi dyed yarn which Trisha brought to the November meeting don't forget to bring a sample of how you used it to the February meeting.

Cow Hair

Ken Hitchen, who had asked if any guild member might be interested in spinning cow hair which he had collected, is going to bring some to the February meeting in the hope that some members might be interested in trying it. Perhaps he should try to spin with a spindle so that he might be able to spin some himself. Although we are focussing on weaving at the February meeting hopefully one or two members will try spinning some of the cow hair for Ken – it will be interesting to see the results.

Last Month's Meeting

January's meeting was a welcome opportunity to get together after Christmas and spend time spinning and catching up with each other.

For our first meeting of the new year we organised a 'Secret Santa' style fibre swap. After the mystery fibre parcels were exchanged we got spinning straight away, some with spindles and some on wheels. We had a very enjoyable day, at the end of which our yarns were displayed for all to enjoy.



We were also very pleased to welcome four new members to our Guild, and hope that they will settle in, make new friends, and learn new things.

Spinning Group

We had an interesting discussion about spinning from the fold. Two members showed their yarns and the techniques they used. They also went into the reasons why they used this method, and how it affected the finished yarn.

The spinning group agreed to investigate spinning from fleece for our next meeting. Spinning group members should feel free to interpret the theme however suits them best. For example, this could be looked at from the point of view of obtaining fibre from a breed you are unfamiliar with and finding out how best to spin it, or it could be learning about and trying out the processes required to go from a raw fleece to a finished yarn.

Scottish Wool Producers Showcase 25th March

The Scottish Yarn Festival organisers have announced a companion event to the September Festival – the Scottish Wool Producers Showcase. It will be hosted at Dewars Centre in Perth on 25th March. Details of the event can be found at <https://thescottishyarnfestival.com/scottish-wool-producers-showcase>

Kaffe Fassett The Power of Pattern

The Fashion and Textile Museum is organising an exhibition about the work of Kaffe Fassett at the Dovecot Studios. The exhibition opens on 31 March and will be running until 8 July. Kaffe Fassett's career spans over 50 years and his work includes knitting, needlepoint, mosaic, quilting, textile design, painting and drawing.



Details of the exhibition can be found at <https://dovecotstudios.com/exhibitions/kaffe-fassett-the-power-of-pattern>

Weaving Workshops in the Lake District

Vanda Lambton has sent the guild an email with details of weaving workshops which are being held at Hare Hill Barn in South Lakes.

"I would be very grateful if you could let your members know about some Weaving Workshops we shall be holding at Hare Hill Barn in South Lakes in 2023. This is a good opportunity to have a mini-break in our beautiful area. Hare Hill Barn is set in a rural location overlooking the Winstar Valley with views to the Pennines. [Lake District Barn for Hire | Courses & Events | Hare Hill Barn](#)

We have three Weaving Workshops during the summer.

Our first workshop will be working on Rigid Heddle Looms and is for beginners over two days, 9th & 10th May. However, improvers with their own Rigid Heddle Looms are welcome to come for just the second day as long as they bring their own loom ready warped. [Two Day Weaving Workshop - Hare Hill Barn](#)

The next two, with Ali Sharman, are working on Four Shaft Table Looms - the first, on 11th August, being a one-day beginner's class [Learn to Weave - Hare Hill Barn](#)

The following comprehensive 3-day course on 15th -17th September is suitable for complete beginners but may also be of interest to improvers, and weavers using rigid heddle looms who are interested in learning how to weave more complicated patterns. [Three Day Learn to Weave on a Table Loom Workshop - Hare Hill Barn](#)"

Cumbria Wool Gathering June 2023

Unfortunately the organisers of Woolfest decided last year that they would not be organising any future Woolfest events.

However Wool Gatherings Ltd, who organise Buxted Wool Gathering and Bakewell Wool Gathering have announced they will be organising a Cumbria Wool Gathering in June 2023. Details of the event can be found at <https://cumbrianwoolgathering.co.uk/>

John Arbon Mill

If you happen to be in Devon in June you could visit John Arbon's mill as he is organising a Mill Open Weekend in June. Details can be found at <https://www.jarbon.com/mill-open-weekend/>

For those of us who won't be in Devon in June there is also a Virtual Mill Open Weekend on 8th and 9th July. And if you want an opportunity to see the mill working and don't want to wait until the summer there is a You Tube video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncDFUY1h-no>

Ethel Mairet – ‘the Mother of English Hand-Weaving’

There is an interesting article about Ethel Mairet, who was an English weaver, spinner and dyer and is renowned as ‘the mother of English hand-weaving’, at <http://www.angieparkertextiles.com/2022/05/ethel-mairet-the-mother-of-english-handweaving/>

Textile Information

To accompany their Textiles 101 collection the George Washington University Museum has provided an introduction to many fibres, dyes, textile structures, and patterning techniques.

The illustrated guide can be found at <https://museum.gwu.edu/textiles-101-resources>

Sprang

Not having heard of Sprang weaving I was interested in the workshop being run by the online guild this month. It is an ancient technique interlinking sets of threads to create a stretchy fabric.

If you are interested in finding out more about Sprang there is a useful introduction here <https://www.solrhizaarts.com/the-technique-of-sprang>

The amazing possibilities of sprang weaving can be seen in an interesting video outlining how a replica of the Braddock Sash (which was used to carry a wounded soldier from the field in an American battle of 1755 and was later presented to George Washington) was created. The video can be found here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoFMeGNshcM>

Next Month

There will be a change to the programme for next month. Instead of the Special Interest Group ‘catch up’ originally planned the focus will be on useful textile books and the Guild Library. The Guild Library will be brought to the meeting for members to have an opportunity to browse the books. The meeting will be held as usual in the main hall at Craiglockhart Church.

Next month's newsletter will be circulated at about the date of our next meeting – the third Saturday of the month (18th March). Do keep sending photos of your craft projects and links to items of interest to pennyskett@gmail.com.