



# EDINBURGH GUILD OF WEAVERS, SPINNERS & DYERS

## Newsletter March 2023

Welcome to another edition of our monthly newsletter. Next month's newsletter will be circulated about the date of our April meeting (Saturday 15th April) which will be in the large 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](mailto:pennyskett@gmail.com).

### March Meeting

This month's meeting is on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March in the large hall of Craiglockhart Church. Jane Buxton, who is looking after the Guild library books, will be bringing them to the meeting for members to browse through them for items of interest. Although the more valuable books will be available for reference only others will be available for members to borrow if they wish.

### Last Month's Meeting

#### *Loom Dating*

In February we held our 'Loom Dating Event'. Members brought a wide variety of looms for others to try – rigid heddles, a 2 shaft tabby loom, four shaft and eight shaft looms as well as a peg loom, tapestry frames, a circular loom, a palm loom and inkle looms. It was a busy, enjoyable day as we tried the many different looms available – some of which are in the pictures below.



### *Weaving Interest Group*

The weaving group met to discuss and compare their work relating to overshot. We had a rewarding discussion that delved into appropriate materials, techniques, sett and sources. This was a valued opportunity to learn from the practice of others. We are keeping on with the overshot theme for next time, though members can of course deviate from and interpret this as they see fit.

### **Highland Cow Hair**

Ken Hitchen brought the Highland cow hair he had carefully collected from the barbed wire fence surrounding 'Dave' and 'Ed's field to the meeting in the hope that some members might be interested in trying to spin it. He persuaded a few to take some and Penny Skett took what he had left. Here is the hank she spun



and she says:

*"There was a mixture of fibre from both the short inner coat and the long outside coat. I tried initially to spin it on it's own but, being hair and not wool, this did not work. I then tried spinning it on to a thin woollen thread but again this did not work for me. Eventually I decided to add a small amount of Blackface/Cheviot fibre to the cow hair and this did work and enabled me to spin a single which I then plied. The Blackface/Cheviot fibre shows up as white in the picture above.*

*The end result was a very hairy (and scratchy) hank of 2 ply yarn, 56 gms in weight and approximately 32 metres in length. The yarn was relatively thick and certainly not my most even spinning! I would not want to wear anything made from it as I found it irritated the skin as I was spinning.*

*It was an interesting experiment but not one I would wish to repeat. How did others fare?"*

### **Venetian Silk**

Carmen Wright suggested members might be interested in the story of Venetian silk. The Bevilacqua family is the last family in Italy producing velvet in the traditional way and they can trace their history back to 1499. BBC Global News has an interesting article about the family which can be found at

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20181113-the-last-velvet-merchant-of-venice>.

The Luigi Bevilacqua website itself includes a short article about Venice, Silk and the Renaissance – A Journey Full of Surprises. It can be found at

<https://www.luigi-bevilacqua.com/en/silk-and-venetian-fabrics-renaissance/>

### **Broughton Gathering**

After three years we will finally be organising another Broughton Gathering this year. Don't forget to put the date - Saturday August 19<sup>th</sup> – in the diary. For those who haven't been to a Broughton Gathering Katrina will be talking about the event at the March meeting.

Vendors at Broughton this year will be:

The Border Tart

Sealy MacWheely

Sue Mcniven of Handspun Exotics

Woolly Originals

### **Merino and Polwarth Fleeces**

Sarah Henry has sent the guild this email about fleeces she has for sale.

“I am a spinner and have some beautiful Merino and Polwarth fleeces for sale. The sheep are based on my brother's farm in Northumberland, but I live in Glasgow.

I have a website where I list the fleeces, and will be updating this regularly. I still have many fleeces on the farm, so if anyone is looking for a particular kind of fleece for carding, combing, or natural colours etc, please let me know.

The fleeces are extremely fine and soft, my brother is a vet and health of the flock is the top priority. The quality of the fleeces indicates their good condition. The sheep are grass fed and outside bred all year.

The website is [www.raburnwool.co.uk](http://www.raburnwool.co.uk) and each fleece is listed on the '[Our Fleece](#)' page. I would be very grateful if you could share this with your members, please.

Kind regards,  
Sarah Henry”  
[sarahlhenry77@gmail.com2](mailto:sarahlhenry77@gmail.com2)

### **Ashford Traditional**

The Guild has received a donation of an Ashford Traditional wheel. It is in full working order although it only has one bobbin. If anyone would be interested in the wheel please contact [pennyskett@gmail.com](mailto:pennyskett@gmail.com)



### **Next Month**

Next month's newsletter will be circulated at about the date of our April meeting on the third Saturday of the month, 15<sup>th</sup> April). Marilyn Caddell will be leading her 'Triangular Board Weaving' skillshare for those who have signed up for the event. If you would like to join the event but have not yet signed up for it please contact Frida Bleakley [fbleakley7@gmail.com](mailto:fbleakley7@gmail.com)

Do keep sending photos of your craft projects and links to items of interest to [pennyskett@gmail.com](mailto:pennyskett@gmail.com).