

Edinburgh Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

Newsletter

August 2023

Hello, and welcome to the latest edition of the newsletter. What a busy month it has been with so many exhibitions and things to see and do. If anyone is going to the Tartan exhibition at V&A Dundee, the Mary Quant exhibition at the Kelvingrove Glasgow, or the Little Black Dress exhibition at the National Museum in Edinburgh perhaps they could write a review for next month's newsletter?

Guild Update: The planned programme of activities for the next twelve months is now available. Please see the next page for details. Paper copies of the programme will be available at the Broughton Gathering, and at future meetings at Craiglockhart church hall.

The Guild Secretary recently attended a meeting at the church hall for all users of these premises. Some items of health and safety were raised which are worth repeating here:

- There are two defibrillators at the hall, one is in the lobby to the left of the hatch and one is outside for the use of the public
- The only safe drinking water available in the hall is in the kitchen
- All users of the hall should familiarise themselves with the locations of the fire alarm and fire exits

The July Meeting: Guild members gathered at Ashfield House, the home of the Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh. We enjoyed an interesting and very informative tour of the premises, and had an opportunity to look at the many Trades-related artefacts displayed, including some belonging to the Websters. Our guides were very knowledgeable and entertaining. Many thanks to Katrina Balmer for organising and facilitating this visit. If you want to learn more about the Websters, contact **Katrina@ewsd.org.uk** who will organise a small discussion group at the September meeting if there is sufficient interest.

The August Meeting: This month sees the annual Guilds Gathering at Broughton Village Hall. This promises to be a fun day with an opportunity to meet with members of other Guilds. There will be a lot going on, including exhibits, a raffle, a competition, sales tables, and trade suppliers. Entry admission is £4, including refreshments, and the day runs from 10.00 – 4.00. **If you are able to donate a raffle prize or some home baking for the kitchen, that would be much appreciated.**

The September Meeting: Some advance notice that this meeting will include a de-stash sale opportunity for members. Now is the time to go through your hoard and sort out any fibre, fibre-related items, tools, equipment, books etc that you would like to sell. All items **must** be clearly labelled with the seller's name and the price wanted. More details in next month's newsletter.

Your contributions for the September newsletter can be sent to janehoworth@live.com

Deadline for contributions: Sunday 3rd September

EWSD Guild Programme 2023 - 2024

16 September 2023	The Great Big Bring and Buy Sale: De-stash your house! Bring your unwanted fibre-related items, books, equipment etc to sell Interest Group: Spinners
21 October 2023	Dual Meeting: Dyeing day in Shotts or Chat and Spin Day at Craiglockhart Church Advance booking for Dyeing day required (limited numbers). Small fee
18 November 2023	Talk: Ise Katagami. Carmen Wright will be displaying her collection of original Japanese Edo and Meiji period paper stencils and discussing how these 19th century stencils were used by Japanese dyers for textile printing, using resist print techniques Interest Group: Weavers
16 December 2023	Christmas Fun Day: Join us for a social day with a quiz or two, a 'bring and share' lunch and a Secret Santa
20 January 2024	Spinning the Blues Away: The annual fun fibre-swap challenge Interest Group: Spinners
17 February 2024	Talk: John Palmer will be demonstrating and discussing the use of computer software to draft weaving patterns Interest Group: Weavers
16 March 2024	Workshop: Carole Gascoigne will lead a workshop on needle felting. Advance booking required (limited numbers). Workshop fee
20 April 2024	Equipment Dating Day: Bring along your fibre-related equipment for other members to see and try out. Anything from a diz to a drum carder to a warping mill will be most welcome Interest Group: Spinners
18 May 2024	Open Day: Today we welcome visitors into the Church Hall to discover more about our crafts, try them out for themselves, and learn more about our Guild
15 June 2024	AGM and Talk: 'My life with Sheep' by Lyndsay Girvan Interest Group: Weavers
July 2024	Annual Visit: To be decided
17 August 2024 (10am-4pm)	Broughton Gathering: The Annual social get-together with neighbouring Guilds in Broughton Village Hall. Suppliers' stalls; Sales table; Exhibits; Chrissie Anne competition. Baking and raffle contributions welcome. Admission fee

We hope that there will be something to interest everyone within this wide-ranging set of activities. We are especially delighted to see that so many of our talented members will be sharing their knowledge and expertise with Guild members for the first time this year.

Guild News

AGWSD AGM

The AGWSD held its AGM on 10th June. Our representative (via Zoom) was Katrina Balmer and our observer was Jane Howorth. Here is the Observer's summary of the meeting:

- The Association is looking for volunteers to fill several posts both within the Association and The Journal, and anyone who may be interested is encouraged to contact the Association for more information.
- There is a new website www.wsd.org.uk which incorporates the two previous websites of both the Association and The Journal.
- Membership fees (these are the fees paid by each Guild on behalf of every member) will be increased by 25p per member for the coming year (to £4.75), and there will be a further increase to £5 per member by 2025.
- The Association's library (the Stuart Groom Memorial Library) is now open by appointment at Trowbridge Museum. Anyone can borrow a book in person or by post. The library catalogue is available online.
- The next conference will be held at Bicton College, Exeter, on 12th – 14th July, 2024. The theme is 'The riches of wool'.
- The next national exhibition will probably be held in Wales, although no location has been found yet.
- There are around 60 students studying on the Foundation Certificate in Spinning. The Certificate in Natural Dyeing will be launched shortly. There is an urgent need for more mentors for both certificates.
- Point for discussion: The (optional) ability to sell work at the National Exhibition. Hallam and District Guild sought views on the possibility of selling members' work at the national exhibition. Generally, there were a lot of concerns raised about the difficulty of achieving this, the extra work and responsibility it might cause volunteers. Supportive opinions suggested a simple method e.g. business cards displayed near a piece of work, to put potential buyers in direct contact with the maker of the particular item.
- Point for discussion: Diversity levels within Guild membership, was raised by Bradford and District Guild. The Chair of the meeting stressed that the Guilds are autonomous and the Association does not provide top-down leadership, and that there should be a grassroots response to this issue, not one dictated by the Association. A number of points were made about working with minors, unconscious bias, the levels of outreach achieved by Guilds, the use of inclusive language and images. The time allocated to this discussion was deemed to be insufficient by some delegates, who proposed to continue the discussion online. The Chair recommended that they use Area Link Zoom meetings/AGWSD News instead of forming a new, separate group.

EWSD Membership Renewal

August is the time for membership renewal for all members. The annual membership fee is just £25. Please make your payment by bank transfer if at all possible.

The bank account details for the Guild remain unchanged and are:

Account name: Edin Guild Weavers Spinners

Sort code: 80 11 20

Account number: 00233082

Reference: Your surname and initials

Please do not bring a cheque or cash for your membership renewal payment to the Broughton Gathering this year: neither our new Membership Secretary, Sam Case, nor the previous year's Secretary are able to attend. If you cannot pay by bank transfer and need to pay by cheque or cash (cash preferred), this can be done at our September meeting.

Photos from Ashfield visit.

A few images from the Ashfield visit, especially for those who were unable to attend.

The Websters coat of arms in the lower half of the first photo is a tapestry worked by Trisha Gow.



Members' Items for Sale

Both of these looms are offered for sale by Carmen Wright. Contact her on carmenwright567@gmail.com for more information and photos.

Ashford 12 inch/30 cm Knitters' Rigid Heddle Loom, carry bag, 4 Reeds. £206



The loom folds in half with the weaving in place, to put in its bag to transport or store. Excellent condition. Included: Loom, 4 reeds: 5, 7.5, 10, and 12.5 dpi, carry bag, wooden shuttles, 1 Reed hook, 2 Warping pegs, Ashford instruction booklet.

Ashford Knitters Loom 28 inch/70 cm. £398



This loom comes with carrying bag, stand, reeds and extras. The reeds are 5, 7.5, 10, 12 and 15 dpi.

Do you have something fibre-related you would like to sell? Or are you looking to buy something? Please send your small-ads to the Editor

Out and About

Information and events of potential interest to members

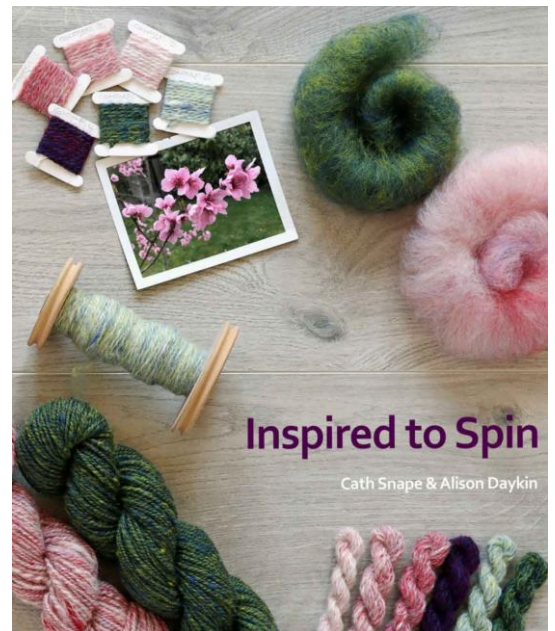
A New Book on Spinning

A comprehensive 250-page book: "From understanding fibre, through preparation and spinning, to design, fancy yarns and finished projects".

Cath Snape and Alison Daykin have spent over 3 years writing, developing this new book.

Pre-order at the pre-launch price of £30. Valid until 1st September 2023. Thereafter £40. More information available here:

<https://beechwoodcrafts.com/new-book-inspired-to-spin/>



Dumfries and Galloway Guild Gathering

This poster was spotted on a notice board in Castle Douglas: the Dumfries and Galloway Guild will be holding their Gathering in October.

Although it's a two-hour drive from Edinburgh to Lincluden, some members may like to get a car load of like-minded individuals together and make a day of it, while other members may live close enough to be able to visit more easily.



Sedburgh Sheepfest

This is a community festival in the Yorkshire dales celebrating sheep and wool. At its heart are model sheep crafted by locals “with more than a fair amount of wit and humour!”

Sheepfest is also hosting a **British Wool Fair** so there will be a number farmers and artisan makers from the region who use traceable British fleece and will be delighted to tell visitors about their produce. Details of the vendors can be found on the event website at <https://sheepfest.co.uk/vendors/>



There will also be activities for all the family including livestock displays, craft activities for children, weaving and spinning demonstrations, exhibitions and more. The regular artisan market will be on Main St, and the annual art festival will be in Sedbergh School Library.

See <http://www.sheepfest.co.uk> for more details.

A change in Scottish Dealership for all things Majacraft

The Wheel Ewe has passed on the dealership for Majacraft spinning wheels and equipment to Sealy MacWheely, who also stock Ashford and Kromski wheels, accessories, fibre etc. The shop in Kirkentilloch is open on Saturdays. Take a look here: <https://sealymacwheely.com/>

New Design Majacraft Spinning Wheel

Majacraft have a new spinning wheel on the market. Called the Luna, it is a very different looking wheel. The drive wheel is mounted end-on, in the same way as Schacht's Side-kick wheel. Take a first look at it here: https://www.majacraft.co.nz/?page_id=3371 or here: <https://sealymacwheely.com/collections/majacraft-spinning-wheels/products/majacraft-luna>

From the website: “The Luna is designed to be both excellent to spin on and aesthetically beautiful. It has a very unique design and is crafted primarily in bamboo to create a look like no other. It has been developed over several years in collaboration with Suzy Brown”.

Spinning ratios extend from 5.9 to 16.7 with the standard pulley.



Odds and Ends

Did you know?

The first synthetic dye was created by accident in 1856 by English Chemist William Henry Perkin, when he was just 18 years old. He was trying to create an anti-malarial alternative to quinine, but while experimenting with aniline, he discovered the purple dye, Mauvine, instead.

As dyes go, this one was a knock out and became very fashionable, very quickly.

Photo: *Magenta dress, Madame Vignon, Paris, c1870. Victoria and Albert Museum, London*



Are you sitting comfortably?

Carmen Wright has shared a useful article which may make us stop and think for a moment before we start to spin. You can read all about what you *ought* to be doing here:

<https://spinoffmagazine.com/at-your-ease-spinning-chairs-posture-and-finding-the-right-fit/>

And finally... we wonder what this person does in their spare time...

