



Edinburgh Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

NEWSLETTER

January 2025

Happy new year and Welcome to the January newsletter!

January meeting

The next meeting of the Guild is on Saturday, 18th January 2025, in the Centenary Room at Craiglockhart Parish Church halls. For those who want to join in, we'll be *spinning the blues away*, and if you don't, it'll be a normal crafty-chatty meeting.

Spinning the Blues Away is an optional activity, and works a bit like a Secret Santa.

If you want to take part, bring along 50 grams of ready-to-spin fibre, packaged to obscure the contents. It can be any kind of fibre, but should be prepared so that the recipient of your parcel can start spinning straight away. Parcels will be exchanged amongst participants at 11am.

The aim is to spin and ply the fibre by the end of the meeting – so bring along anything you'll need for that – and have a display for mutual admiration and compliments at the end.



December meeting

December's meeting was a lovely and relaxed and full of members' wonderful contributions to the pot luck lunch.

The Christmas tree decoration competition was won by Dhileas Heywood with this festive shrimp!



Guild constitution

The committee is working on drafting a new constitution in support of the work to change the Guild's legal form to that of a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

This is a bit of a process! The first part is assessing the template constitution provided by SCVO (Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations) to identify which elements will need adapting to suit the needs of the Guild. The second part is to draft these adaptations, and this is where we are now. If you would like to be involved in drafting and shaping the constitution, we'd love to have your input! Please email edinburghguildwsd@gmail.com – or tell us in person – by the next meeting in January. When we know who wants to be involved, we'll arrange a meeting by video conference.

When a first draft has been completed, it will be circulated to the membership for consideration.

Contributions

The next newsletter will be distributed at the start of February. Items for inclusion can be sent at any time to edinburghguildwsd@gmail.com. Show us what you've been working on, share the name of the book or website you found really useful with everyone, tell us about really cool exhibitions or events you've been to or you've found out about!

National Exhibition

Members Penny Skett and Trisha Gow submitted and had accepted pieces to the selected section of the Association of Guilds of Weavers Spinners and Dyers' National Exhibition, held in 2024. Here Penny tells us her experience of the process!

The Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers organises a National Exhibition every two years. It is designed to showcase the skills and creativity of all guild members. All members of individual guilds are asked to enter items either in the open section, in which all submissions are displayed, or in the selected section, in which proposed submissions are selected after consideration.

The National Exhibition was held this year at Hay Castle in Hay on Wye. None of us put an entry into the open section but Trisha Gow and Penny Skett put submissions in for consideration in the selected section both of which were accepted. Trisha submitted a beautiful tapestry 'Sunset Song' and Penny submitted one of a pair of lovely woven cushions which she had produced for two recently acquired folding chairs. The entry for the selected section is very straightforward and only requires the submission of photographs together with a small 'feelie piece' representative of the work to accompany the entry form. 'Feelie pieces' accompany items displayed to provide visitors with the opportunity to 'feel' the texture of the work.



Trisha Gow, *Sunset Song*

Penny Skett, woven cushion



Trisha's tapestry was woven with a cotton warp sett at 8epi. The weft is predominantly wool hand-dyed with fungi but also some grey mohair and synthetic black and blue yarn. It was inspired by Lewis Grassic Gibbon's classic novel 'Sunset Song'. Penny's cushion has a linen warp sett at 6epi. The weft is handspun wool - the grey from Jacob fibre, the white undyed Shetland fibre and the red the same Shetland fibre hand-dyed with madder. It was inspired by traditional donkey saddle bags.

Details of all the entries for both the selected section and the open section can be found at <https://www.wsd.org.uk/news-events/agwsd-national-exhibition/>. Members of the Online Guild have put together an album of photographs of many of the wonderful exhibits on display. You can see them here <https://ukwsdonline.groups.io/g/Main/album?id=298507>

When the National Exhibition was held in Glasgow several years ago the guild submitted five entries for the selected section all of which were accepted, including Jess McCaffery's amazing Taatit Rug, a pile bedcover made for her granddaughter's wedding. One of our entries was a string of bunting showing all the Scottish native breeds of sheep to which all members contributed handspun knitted 'flags'.



Penny Skett, feelie piece

Trisha Gow, feelie piece



The next National Exhibition will be held in 2026 and hopefully we can submit a few more entries. Although there is a general theme for each exhibition entries do not have to relate to the theme. All items are eligible provided they showcase at least one of our three crafts - weaving, spinning and dyeing - and have been produced since the previous exhibition.

Penny Skett