



Birmingham & District Guild
of Weavers Spinners & Dyers



New Year's

H O P E S &

D R E A M S

to meet up with
family and
friends again

AGWSD
Summer School
15th—22nd August
Chelmsford, Essex

Chair's Letter

In this first newsletter of 2021 we look back and we look forward. Kate retired as our chair at the AGM and we thank her for guiding the guild over the last six years. Kate served on the committee in various rolls for many years before becoming chair and she continues to serve on the committee of the Association. High spots of her chairmanship have been our new colourful leaflets, links with Winterbourne Botanic Garden, our 70th birthday celebrations and, most recently, her promotion of our equal opportunities policy. We thank her for her hard work and dedication and hope she enjoys coming to meetings just as herself without having to wear any official 'hat'.

On a very sad note, we remember Brenda Nightingale who died in January. Brenda taught many of us to spin and served the guild in a variety of capacities over many years: it is hard to imagine meetings without her.

To say that the last year has been a difficult one is an understatement. It has been great to see some guild members at our zoom meetings but we recognise that many members have not been able to participate. We will continue to meet on zoom until we can meet in person, and have several talks arranged as well as time for a chat and a catch up. If you haven't used zoom please do consider joining us if you can. It is not difficult to get the hang of and one of us can talk you through the process.

And this is where we start to look forward: with vaccinations on the way we have the hope that we will be able to get together again at some time this year. We know that our crafts help us in times of anxiety and give us a sense of purpose, and many more people have been discovering the pleasure of making. So let's see if we can emerge from the pandemic stronger as a guild, ready to welcome new people and to share our love of all things weaving, spinning and dyeing.

Mandy and I are acting as joint chair for the coming year ***BUT if anyone is willing to act as our chair or assist with the duties they should speak to one of the committee.***

Carolyn

2021 Committee Members

Joint Chair: Amanda Davis and Carolyn Arber jointly for 2021

Secretary: Amanda Davis

Treasurer: Cyndi Husband

Programme Secretary: Charlotte Powell

Librarian: Judith Evans

Demonstrations Co-ordinator: Wendy Simpson

Newsletter Editor: Tina Helfrich

Social Media Editor:

Other members: Sarah Cage, Judy Prescott, Janice Price

BRENDA NIGHTINGALE (1934—2021)

It is with great sadness that I tell you that Brenda died on Monday night, 18th January, the day after her 87th birthday.

Brenda has been a very good friend to me and the Birmingham Guild WS&D. She did many things for the guild, she has been secretary, helped with the news letter, organised the school workshops for several years together with organising our annual



teaching day when we had up to twenty people learning to spin. Brenda was an exceptional teacher and never minded any one who wanted to try spinning, using her wheel, many many children have enjoyed their time with her at the many demonstrations she has participated in she also enjoyed spinning at Winterbourne spinning and chatting to other guild members. She enjoyed the Saturday meetings and tried never to miss one, it was a big disappointment to her that COVID stopped us meeting she was waiting to join us all again.

Brenda was very family orientated and loved being with her family especially great grandson Alex. I shall miss her dreadfully as I am sure other members will.

Ann Shingles



Charlotte Powell

I eventually knitted 12 baubles over the holidays, and also made 3 punch needle baubles, and 2 felt baubles!

I'm booked on the 'Four-Shaft Weaving for Beginners' course at this year's Summer School, so am hoping to get to grips with my loom then, if not before.

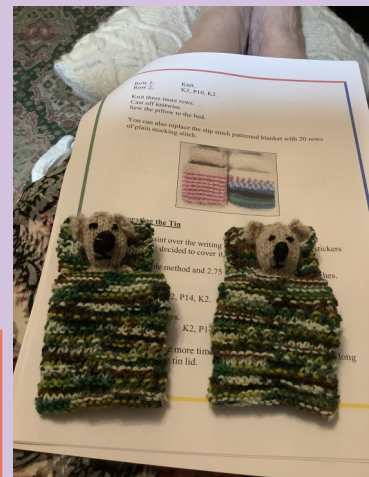
I've been working on developing some sewing patterns, and the main aim for the year is to release 3 or 4.



Wednesday Knit and Natter

The Wednesday knit and natter group is still keeping in touch by messenger, I and some of the group are knitting pocket Teds, these are small teddy bears in a bed that are designed to be given out by the emergency services to small children caught up in trauma situations, the pattern is on Ravelry. I have a contact in West Midlands Police who is helping with distribution.

Mandy



Judith Evans

I'm hoping to get down to some more spinning in the year ahead. I'm really enjoying my Ashford Joy, and my medium-term aim is to do the Foundation Certificate in Spinning. I've got a place on the Foundations in Spinning course with Amanda Hannaford at Summer School which I'm very much looking forward to -always supposing that it goes ahead!

In the meantime, I've been knitting winter woollies – fingerless mittens and a woolly hat to go with my woven scarves. At least they have diverted me from my sock knitting which has been quite addictive!



Hello

Happy New Year. Let's hope it's a better one for us all. Thank you so much for the newsletters throughout last year, they've been a lovely little treat to look forward to in the post and they do keep me in touch with what's been going on in the guild, especially as I'm not online and can't join in the Zoom meetings.

My main hope for this year is to meet up with family and friends again which I'm sure is the same for everyone, woolly wise I'm aiming to complete the gilet I've been stuck on for more years than I want to own up to!

I hope to see you soon and am so looking forward to when we can all meet again and enjoy a nice cuppa and some of Reg's lovely cake.

Very best wishes,

Lynne Bullock



Margaret Richardson

I had a great deal of pleasure over the Christmas learning to use my small fixed heddle loom and I made 15 scarves for the members of my various families (6 grandchildren, 2 daughters, 2 daughters in law, sister etc.). The scarves were all different and apart from learning how to use the loom, I learnt such a lot about colours, wools etc. I attach a couple of photos. Not exactly world shattering news! I also made my annual Seville orange marmalade.



I am now having a go at Lino printing which I find much harder!



Cynthia Husband

This is the fourth cardigan I have knitted since Christmas. Four Pillow lace book markers about to start another one.



Carolyn Arber



Little hope:

To learn to spin on my Russian spindle

Big hope:

To see my dear family and friends

Our Guild Library

We have a great resource for members in our library which the Meeting House so kindly houses for us.

One of the advantages of membership is that we have access to a surprisingly broad range of WSD titles – when of course we can physically get at them!

While we wait for that, and many of us are spending more time at home, PLEASE can I ask you to check your shelves and workrooms for any library titles you may have forgotten about, so we can add them back into the cupboard for others to borrow.

If you do find you have one, can you let me know so I can update my records? Thank you.

-Judith Evans

Rachel Lemon

My plan for the year, as it has been for years now, is to use up more yarn and fibre than I acquire. I succeeded in 2020 - using up 3.3Kg of yarn and 1.3kg of fibre more than I acquired (I'm not a massive online fibrey shopper but did buy some. For info I did knit 2 cardigans, 4 jumpers and a dress over the year. All for me).

I also plan to knit a pair of Kihnu gloves with travelling stitches. This came about as I recently did a talk for the Birmingham branch of the Knitting and Crochet Guild on Estonian knitting and was asked if I had ever knitted anything from the two splendid books I mentioned. To my shame the answer was no. They won't be from handspun as that would delay completion!

As part of my tidying up effort I'd been planning on ripping back a half-done top-down jumper but when I tried it on I actually liked the top half so have only ripped back to the armpits. On checking my lists I started it in 2015 and had abandoned it by the end of 2017.

Our Guild Website

Wendy has started updating our Instagram pictures and writing a blog for the website and it would be great to have posts from lots of guild members.

Could you write something for the blog? Or send a photo of what you've been making?

It is nice for us as members to see what we've been doing and also good to let others know.

Hopefully keeping the website active will help attract new members. Please send contributions to Wendy.

Wendy Simpson

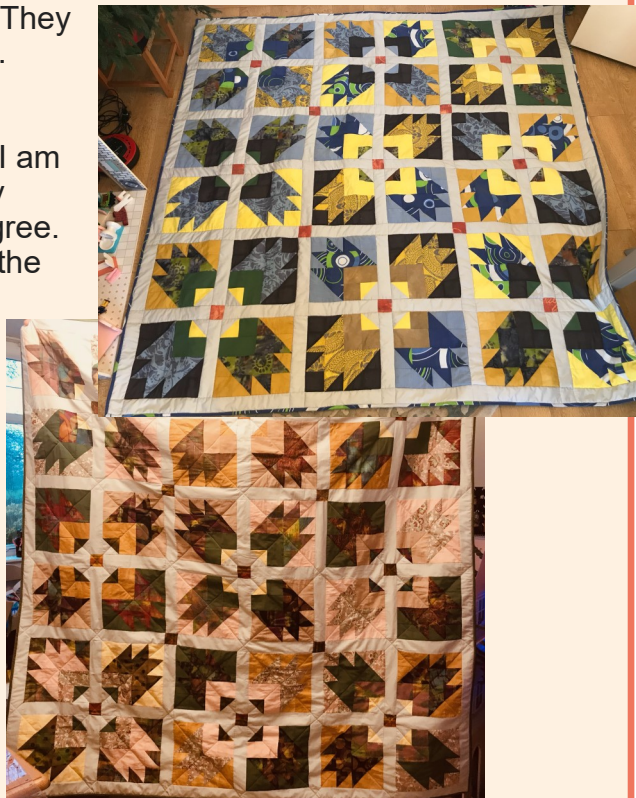
My hopes for 2021 are mostly that summer school goes ahead and I get to go and learn all about Shibori and see lots of friends and have fun! Someone had posted on the online guild that they expected summer school would be cancelled so I hope they are wrong! My second hope is that my family stay healthy and that we can have our booked holidays in the UK.

I completed 2 giant quilts for my sons and partners for Christmas all made out of old clothes and duvets. They are the bear paw design and I think they like them. These were done in lockdown 2.

Lockdown 3 is here and I am so much happier as I am homeschooling Zach and I feel useful. That is very important to me and I suspect others of you will agree. It's not 'a walk in the park' though! He was star of the week this week and it brought a tear to my eye, I don't mind admitting. I'm also back to making scrub hats. We have been asked for 200! Anyone with suitable fabric they would like to donate please let me know (old duvet covers and large cotton mens' shirts work well)

I walk every day but find the footpaths near here that I walked in the summer are too muddy and the roads are busier so it's dangerous - no pavements by us.

I'm doing an online course making body stuff- body butter and creams I think- next Saturday so I will let you know next time if it was good.



National Association AGM

19th June 2021, 11am-4pm

London

The Association are planning to hold the AGM in person if possible. Guilds are invited to send a delegate and observer to the AGM (expenses paid). The delegate's role is to speak and vote on behalf of our guild where necessary.

We are also invited to send propositions in advance. If you have any proposals they should answer the questions:

WHAT do you want to happen? The wording of your proposition should be specific.

WHY do you want this? How will it benefit the Association/Guilds/Individual members?

HOW do you see it happening? Who do you expect to organise this? How much time/money/other resources do you think will be needed? What are you (the Guild) offering to contribute?

WHO will be present at the AGM to introduce this proposition and answer questions? Ideally your guild will send a representative to present your proposition at the AGM.

If you have anything you wish to propose or if you would like to go please contact Mandy: birminghamwsd@hotmail.co.uk

Programme

The programme for the next 3 meetings is:

Saturday 13 February - Adaku Parker of [Dovetailed London](#) on wax print fabric

Saturday 10 March - John Parkinson of [iinouiio](#) on making yarn from 'shoddy' recycled fibres

Saturday 10 April - [Sarah May Johnsonn](#) on weaving, yarn wraps and tips on choosing colours

All the speakers will be joining us at 14:15. The meetings will be on Zoom and the room will open at 14:00 and will remain open for 30 minutes after the end of the talk to allow us to catch up. The meeting details are:

Membership Renewal for 2021

The membership fee is £20

No concessions; payable before the March meeting.

Staying in Touch



BirminghamWSD@hotmail.co.uk



www.wsdbrum.com



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Birmingham & District Guild of Weavers, Spinners, and Dyers (private group)



Birmingham and District Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers (public group)



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