



WSD Birmingham & District Guild
of Weavers Spinners & Dyers

ANNUAL OPEN DAY
SATURDAY 13TH NOV
11-3pm

VENUE:

Cotteridge Friends Meeting House,
23, Watford Rd, B30 1JB

Buses: 11, 38, 18, 19, 45, 47,

Train: Kings Norton Station is 5 mins
walk to venue.

Contact details:

Facebook: BirminghamWSD

email: Birmingham WSD@hotmail.com

instagram: @wsdbrum

ANNUAL OPEN DAY

**SHOWCASING SPINNING, DYEING
AND WEAVING CRAFT.**

FREE EVENT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**Exhibitions, demonstrations, and sale of
handcrafted work from our Guild
members.**

Chair's Letter

We have had a really positive few months with good attendance at the last couple of Guild workshops, I was on holiday for the 3D braid workshop but attended the patchwork knitting one which has sent me down a whole new rabbit hole.

It was lovely to see the return of some long serving members who felt able to return after many months, luckily the weather was nice and we had a garden corner full of crafting. We are so fortunate with the Friends meeting house as they have such a wonderful garden that we can use during meetings.

We have had some new members join us over the last few months, a very warm welcome to them, and a couple who are going to come as visitors for the next 2 meetings and join in January. New members bring new ideas, which help to stimulate all of us.

November brings our open day, so I hope you are all looking out the things you have made over the last 18 months to showcase at this meeting, thank you to Judy Preston who has done a lot to advertise it this year and who has put together leaflets which I hope you have all posted up in prominent places, and that you are all encouraging your friends and family and social media friends to come and see what has been produced during this most strange period of our lives where crafting took on a whole new meaning in keeping our spirits up.

We planted spindle trees in memory of Brenda Nightingale and Reg King, this month, a rather moving simple speech by Cyndi Husband led us to our tree planting exploits in the rain, I'm glad I didn't have to dig the holes, the ground was very hard. We will never forget Brenda and Reg and this was a great way to honour them.

Carolyn and I want to step down as joint chair in January, we only agreed to it for a year to keep things ticking over, so I really would urge all of you to seriously think about whether you could take on this role. You don't have to have been a member for years to be our chair, also people who have held this role before may feel they have something new to offer. Please speak to Carolyn or myself about what it entails, we also need a vice chair so a couple of you could get together and help each other.

See you at the open day.

Mandy Davis

Annual General Meeting Saturday 8th January 2021

**We urgently need new committee members.
Nominations to Amanda Davis or Carolyn Arber please.**

The Great Escape

We will still have our annual challenge and competition at our Open Day. So if you didn't submit in May now is your chance to enter The Great Escape. I hope you're getting your thinking caps on and your hands busy! All previous entries will also be entered so do bring your entry along to the Open Day to display for the Competition.

So start thinking, designing and crafting what The Great Escape means to you.



Guild Christmas Party



Saturday 11th December



Kate made an escape to Scotland and met up with a textile horse in Arbroath.

Memorial Trees Planted for Reg & Brenda

Tree Planting, bottom Scribbers Lane, 11am 1st October 2021

Sadly, in early 2021 we lost two long standing and respected guild members – Brenda Nightingale and Reg. Kings.

In ‘normal’ times we make a donation to Birmingham Trees for Life, to commemorate the lives of each member and family and friends can participate in the annual Family and Friends tree planting event up the Lickey Hills. These events were cancelled due to covid restrictions and our involvement delayed - I have requested two certificates and am awaiting details of their first Tree Planting event post- CV19 – Looks to be set for early 2022.



Brenda’s family at the tree planting

In lieu of this I asked if the Lickey Hill Rangers (most of whom knew Brenda through her Conservation workaroud Hall Green), if they could support a tree planting for our two members so family and friends could attend an outdoor event in Hall Green.

Steve Hinton suggested we plant Spindle due to the tree being associated with spindle making. As a native species, they would organise acquisition and discuss suitable dates when outside group gatherings began again.



I heard Elisabeth was moving away from the area at the end of the month, and from then everything happened very rapidly. Planting had to be in a designated area supervised by Rangers. Steve moved things along quickly and apologises for not being there in person. All very rushed but both families were able to come along to a very wet morning at Scribbers Lane, Hall Green.



Ann Shields, Sheila and Margaret braving the rain.

So many turned out it was super, as soon as I opened my mouth to welcome everyone and thank them for coming and say why we were gathered there - the heavens opened.

Elisabeth and Reg’s sister came by car – Elisabeth planted a tree

close to the gate opposite the Allotments. Penny and Jan brought plenty of spades and Spindle whips for everyone to have the opportunity of either planting onsite; or planting in their own garden.



The newly planted spindle trees down the path



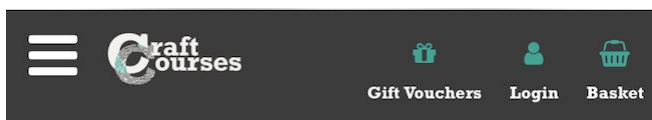
Elisabeth with Reg's sister

What a turnout; in addition to 7 Guild members around ten Conservation group members also came, all groups mingled and dug trees in alongside the path beside the River Cole into the woods.

In addition to Brenda's daughter Wendy and her husband; there were two more generations represented by Grandson and Great Grandson. The Landrover also serves some interest as well for the youngsters.

What made this location special was that both families had a long relationship to the area with walks, playing when out with their families. Kids playing there and dog walking, cycling it gelled for all. Thank you all who managed to find the lane.

- Cyndi Husband



What does this mean?

About Judy P. dye - print - weave

I am a Weaver, Printmaker, Felt maker and Dyer living and making in the West Midlands. I practice and I teach. I have learnt from some of the most generous of makers/teachers and I hope that their good practice and generosity shines through in my teaching too. I love learning from students and from fellow makers in my neighbourhood. I am the founding member of Made in Boldmere.

An opportunity to learn Eco Dyeing with Judy Preston

i have two places on my next Introduction to Eco Dyeing Workshop on Saturday Nov 6th 10-4.30pm.

For more info -

Email judyannemariepreston@gmail.com

Or call me on 07908 219834
insta:judypreston403

Open Studios

Birmingham Open Studios was organized for the weekends 18-19 and 25-26 September. As the first day was World Wide Spin-in-Public day, I invited the Guild to come and spin on my front lawn. We put up a gazebo, and Tina and Wendy came and spun. It was a good attraction for the artists – and we had 32 visitors that day.



I have taken part in Open Studios for several years. I enjoy the demonstrating aspect, and it's good to show the work I've been doing to a different audience. This year we had Carol with Tiffany glass and Anna with knitting and crochet in the front room, and Brenda with felt, and me with watercolours, machine embroidery, dyeing and weaving in the dining room/conservatory. Plus tea and cake in the gazebo on the patio, which was a great success.



I warped up my scarf loom on the first day, and demonstrated simple weaving for all four days – and I got a buyer for the unfinished scarf on the second Saturday – so it won't be available to display at our Open Day.

I also demonstrated machine embroidery, and talked about my art and textiles. It was a good (if exhausting) ten days.

- Sarah Cage

Craft Town Scotland

If you ever find yourself vaguely in the west of Scotland on the coast between Ayr and Largs (where there is a fabulous ice cream shop), then do visit West Kilbride (by train, car or bus). I was there for a wedding and had a spare day. West Kilbride is not a pretty tourist town, but what it does have is a number of craftspeople. The town has branded itself Craft Town Scotland, and has converted an ex-church into an exhibition space with a permanent shop and a cafe. The space is staffed by volunteers and the steward when we were there let us know she had recently reduced her days from 3 to 1 now she was 80, and had married in this church 60 years ago! In addition to the exhibition space there are several studios on the high street, such as a ceramicist and a glassworker, plus two bookshops. And for your spinning and weaving needs this is where Weftblown is based with an actual shop with equipment to try out (she does mail order too).



- Rachel Lemon

My virtual trip to Shetland Wool Week

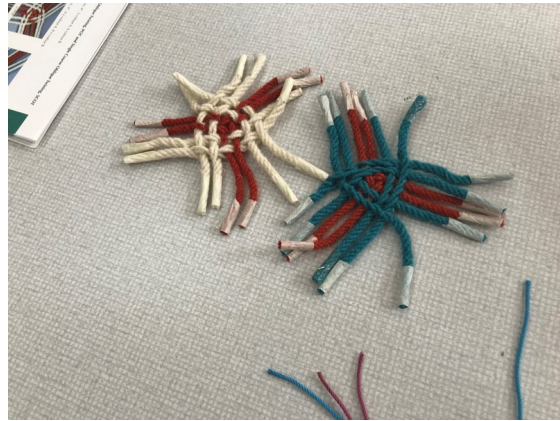
For a long time now I've wanted to visit Shetland and so when an email offering a virtual visit to Shetland Wool Week dropped into my inbox I succumbed to it. For a SWW membership costing £28 you could log-in every day from September 25th - October 3rd and access 3 films per day - all accompanied with fiddly dee music - featuring different aspects of SWW. I thought it was a bit pricey but a lot lot cheaper than the real thing! The programme included a series of specially commissioned films produced through Spring and Summer ranging from 5-60 mins. They covered weaving, spinning, crofting, Shetland lace, Fair Isle knitting, natural Dyeing and Rooing plus 3 masterclass knitting technique tutorials by Elizabeth Johnson. There were also features from their archive collections.

The scenery was just spectacular and the people warm and friendly. I found it enjoyable informative and almost feel that I've now been there.

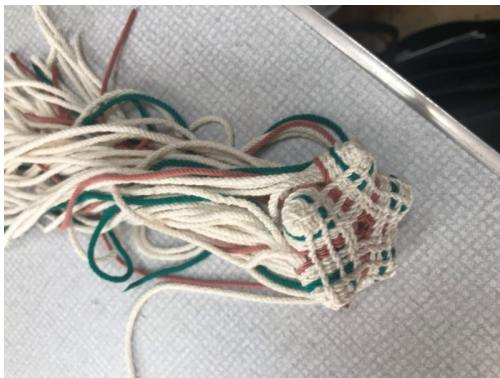
Kate

Split Ply Braiding in September

Our first meeting after the summer break was a workshop with Julie Hedges. 9 of us gathered in the schoolroom with windows and doors open. There were a few other members who came for a chat and worked on projects in the main room. We brought our own refreshments as the kitchen is not being used yet.



These are some of the vessels we made. The brilliant ones on the bottom are Julie's! We didn't finish them as there was a lot of work involved so we took



them home to complete. Top right shows how Julie taught us to start with a triangle shape. These were our practise samples. She had pre-prepared all the cords so we could begin straight away. During the day she showed us how to make the 4 ply cords with a cord winder. We have a guild cord winder for anyone who would like to borrow it for a small monthly fee and deposit. We used a tool called a gripfid to

split the cords and to pull the cords through the gap. Its a bit like a rug tool or the one you use for proggng with rag rugs.

I thought it was going to be very complicated but I managed to follow the instructions well. Julie was able to give us all help when needed as it was a small group. Everyone did well and I will add some photos of our completed vessels in due course.



Patchwork Knitting Workshop with Fiona Morris

- 9th October

I didn't really know what to expect from this workshop so I went with the required materials of wool in different colours but a similar thickness and suitable knitting needles to go with it and then hoped it would go well! There were 13 of us in the main room all spaced apart and doors and windows left open. There was another group of members in the smaller room who were not taking part in the workshop and some people outside who were being more cautious. I was prepared for this as it can be a cold room even in normal times! (t shirt, woolly jumper and thick woolly coat). I took some handspun and hand dyed wool - small amounts.



Fiona started by showing us some of her knitted garments including blankets, cushions, shawls and bags. They were beautiful - she must have spent hours knitting them. She makes her own designs and sells the patterns and she has a new book being published in January about patchwork knitting. She showed us a video of her cast on method which gives an elastic edge and then we watched how to make the basic square, with decreases in the centre of the rows which makes a mitred diagonal line when completed. We also had printed instructions and everyone worked at their own speed to complete their square, some people using 2 colours to make stripes. Then Fiona showed another very clear video about joining the squares. I was able to follow the instructions as long as I was concentrating!

Everyone was enjoying the knitting and getting enthusiastic about their work and what they could make in future. We are looking forward to the book and I think many of us will be buying our own. We could see lots of possibilities to use up small quantities of yarn which all knitters seem to accumulate. We worked all day and I think some people would have stayed past 4 o'clock if they could!

Here are some photos of Fiona's work and our samples. Fiona was an excellent and inspiring teacher and was able to give very clear instructions. We all succeeded and no-one felt they had failed.



www.fionamorrisdesigns.co.uk
@fiknits (instagram)
Also on Ravelry as Fiona Morris

- Wendy

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Tales from AGWSD Summer School 2021



Breakfast at Summer School with our motley crew— Kate, Charlotte, Rachel, Wendy, Tina and Judith.

Inkle Weaving with Anne Dixon

Kate and I were both on the Inkle Weaving course with Ann Dixon. It wasn't an easy learning experience. Ann has written the books on Inkle patterns and weaving but the class itself was unstructured. Realising that many classmates had brought their copies of Anne's book with them and spotting



the Amazon lockers outside our classroom, I ordered her book the first day and it arrived the next day which helped immensely. Many of the classmates were experienced inkle weavers and helped me learn. We started with letters and numbers and then



moved on to Baltic style. I wanted to learn South American pebble patterns as they create pictures. And nothing motivates me quite like telling me "no that is too difficult for you". So I spent the last two days working out how to do the pebble designs. I can

recommend that if learning from the Inkle Pattern Directory that you read the directions very, very carefully. But I enjoyed the class and sharing the week with the other 220 attendees at the Summer School. But especially helped to meet up with Kate, Rachel, Judith, Charlotte and Wendy for meal times.

- Tina

Structured Knitting with Alison Ellen

My first Summer School for some years and what a joy it was. Writtle College (near Chelmsford) has many buildings so we all got a bit of a walk in the fresh air moving between classrooms, dining room and the bar (and the lecture theatre!). There were also footpaths out past a reservoir with a large number of rabbits in the fields. Masks were worn when moving inside buildings, though with agreement not within each class.

During the day I attended Alison Ellen's entrelac workshop. Some members may remember she gave a talk to our Guild a few years ago which showcased her incredibly inventive use of entrelac. Twelve of us with either years of knitting behind us or gaps of decades began with a straightforward sample, with plenty of supervision and help as needed. After that we could choose what samples to tackle, whether playing with colour, yarn choice or textured patterns. Those who came with a planned project experimented with a purpose in mind and others of us just played with all the possibilities. Alison continued to give technical help or suggestions and we nosied at each other's work for more inspiration.

At mealtimes and in the evening it was so nice to spend time with the other five from our Guild. I really enjoyed a talk on silk weavers in East Anglia, and of course I strutted my stuff in the fashion show – you'd expect nothing less from me! I'm saving up now for the next one in 2023.



- Rachel Lemon

Foundations of Spinning with Amanda Hannaford

Judith Evans brought her spinning wheel to summer school to learn spinning with Amanda. She did express some frustration in the first few days but managed in the end to

produce some lovely skeins of yarn including a Lilliputian skein to go with the tiny Turkish spindle and niddy noddy that she bought at the sales. Judith's yarn is in

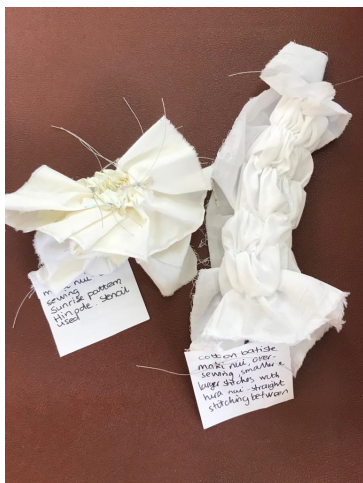


table.



Stitched Shibori with Jane Callender

This year Summer School was in Essex at Writtle College near Chelmsford. I'd never been to Essex before – it was more rural than I expected. Kate and I were lucky because Richard was our chauffeur! I was doing Stitched Shibori with Jane Callender and I was a bit nervous about it as I have never done any before and I know Jane is an expert. I needn't have worried as Jane was a lovely kind teacher who took time to check that everyone was happy and knew what to do.



She had a pretty difficult job as we were put in the chapel to begin with but it really wasn't suitable (too small, wooden floor, no water.....) then were moved to the gym which was better and bigger but we still had to cover the floor with tarpaulins to protect it before we could prepare any dyepots. As the weather was good we were able to have the dyepots outside until the last 2 days when the trade fair had to use the gym and then we went into the bar. Poor Jane had to deal with all this upheaval but she just got on with it.

Anyway I loved the shibori and made some good samples to bring home. I spent every evening stitching so I would have a prepared sample to put in the indigo in the morning. I have tried some more at home. I grew Japanese Indigo in the garden this year which did really well once I got the seeds to germinate. I thought I'd use that but I found it would only give me a very pale turquoise kind of blue which was not what I wanted. I thought it would be like woad which I have also grown in the past. I don't know if there is just not much indigoferin in it or whether the weather conditions weren't suitable. My dye books say it should work but I'm not going to grow it again as it was a lot of work for little reward.



Summer School was great, Hyde Hall was excellent on Wednesday afternoon and it was even better not having to cook for a whole week! Thank you to Kate, Tina, Judith, Charlotte and Rachel for being great company.

- Wendy

Charlotte at the loom

Charlotte managed to fit her floor loom into the boot of her tiny electric car and drive it to Chelmsford on less than a single charge. Happily she found a station to recharge her car as she offered me a lift home from summer school and she made it back with 5% charge remaining. Meanwhile between journeys she wove some lovely patterns.



Pictures from the Exhibitions

On the final day of the summer school all the classes display their student's and tutor's work for us all to see. Visitors are also welcome to come to see the exhibitions.



Clockwise from left
Weaving with metal
Natural dyeing
Eco-dyeing
Entrelac (centre)
Split ply braiding
Manipulated weaving
Weaving





Charlotte has been busy since Summer School setting up her pattern business as well as organising Sew Brum for the weekend of 29-31 October and her Stitch Advent calendar on sale now from her website:

Charlotteemmapatterns.com



SewBrum 2021 is just four weeks away, so I thought it was time I shared all the details for this year's event which will take place Friday 29th – Sunday 31st October. If you haven't registered yet, [you can sign-up for free here](#).

SewBrum 2021 will include a combination of online and in-person activities:

Online, we'll be sharing video messages and offers from local businesses and will be hosting a charity raffle (with all money raised going directly to [Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid](#) & [Birmingham Mind](#)).

In-person, a number of stores (including SewBrum co-host [Guthrie & Ghani](#)) will be offering in-store discounts to SewBrum visitors over the weekend 30th-31st October.



I've been working on a new project behind the scenes – announcing [#StitchAdvent Calendar](#), a digital (PDF) advent calendar for sewers.

The run up to Christmas is my favourite time of the year and, once I got the idea in my head, I couldn't resist pulling together an advent calendar designed for sewers to celebrate Christmas and/or New Year 2021.

The advent calendar will take the form of a PDF document, and the daily surprises will be a mixture of small festive sewing patterns (designed by me) and offers from some of your favourite sewing businesses.

Nilupa Yasmin: Tera- A Star



This exhibition is an exploration of artisan craftwork through the practice of photography. Nilupa Yasmin's work consists of beautifully handcrafted and digitally woven artworks. The artist uses this creative process as a means of contemporary storytelling to carefully interlace cultural identity, loss and belonging with her own South Asian heritage. At the mac, Cannon Hill Park, until Sunday 7th November.

2021 Committee Members

Chair: Carolyn Arber & Amanda Davis

Secretary: Amanda Davis

Treasurer: Cyndi Husband

Programme Secretary: Charlotte Powell

Librarian: Judith Evans

Demonstrations Co-ordinator: Wendy Simpson

Newsletter Editor: Tina Helfrich

Public Social Media Editor: vacancy

Other members: Sarah Cage, Judy Preston, Janice Price

Staying in Touch



BirminghamWSD@hotmail.co.uk



www.wsdbrum.weebly.com



@BirminghamWSD (Twitter)



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



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



wsd_brum (Instagram)



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