



Oxford Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers

Newsletter July 2025

From the Chair

How are you all coping in the heat? I hope you have been able to find cool projects to keep you busy. It strikes me that this might be ideal dyeing weather, just because everything dries so quickly. If only I had more time

I found Angie Parker's talk on Krokbragd weaving inspiring. Her journey to her current career was also a long-term project, although she didn't know that at the start, and one that she didn't give up on at any stage. How many of us can claim that we have achieved a dream that we have had for many years?

There has been a change to the role of Programme Secretary. Helen and Tamara have agreed to take this on and are looking forward to receiving your suggestions for speaker and workshops. They are also keen to have your offers for HAGD sessions. I know that there is a wealth of talent amongst our members and it's always wonderful when you share your passion with the rest of us.

I was sorry to miss Lyn's HAGD blending on a drum carder. I know a lot of time and thought went into the preparation and it was lovely to read all your positive comments in the WhatsApp group. I'd like to pass on my thanks to Lyn for agreeing to share her expertise with us.

Finally, a little reminder that we don't meet in August and our next gathering will be on 20th September. Have a creative and productive summer.

Kate G

Recent meetings

Angie Parker, the speaker at our May meeting, is a breath of colourful and enthusiastic fresh air. She weaves weft faced rugs in bright contemporary colours using an ancient method of Norwegian weaving called Krokbragd, which translates as crooked pattern.



She came to talk to us about her 20-year journey from textile graduate to successful business owner and teacher, and she blew us away with her talent.

Anyone who has ever seen her work will be aware of her ability to make colours sing, and her advice on colour combinations is *'If in doubt add one more!'*

Traditionally the colours were those of undyed fleece with some small amounts of plant dyed shades used as well, the result is a more muted but none the less beautiful textile.

Krokbragd is woven on three shafts threaded 12321232 and the lifts are 12,13,23. These three lifts, which each cover one warp thread, make one solid row of weaving, covering all the warp threads, it's not quick but *'There are no limits to how many times you can change colour in the weft, within reason, and the technique allows for spontaneous design during weaving'* * The pattern on the reverse side looks simpler because two warp threads are covered by each lift.



Luckily for anyone wanting to explore this creative method of weaving Angie has just written a book 'Krokbragd, contemporary weaving with colour' which has clear instructions with many photographs to illustrate the process. Each rug takes 22 hours including finishing and sells for £1,200 per rug. Two of our members brought in some beautiful examples of krokbragd weaving of their own. For anyone wanting to have a go under Angie's supervision she offers workshops at her studio in Bristol for beginners to more experienced weavers.

* Quote from Angie's book. [Angie Parker Textiles](#)

Have-A-Go Day on Drum Carding

On a very hot day in June, Lyn W showed how she uses a drum carder to produce her beautiful colour mixes and then patiently helped members to make their own.

Lots of compliments were paid to her on the What's App page; Mel O wrote that it was really interesting that Lyn put the tops she was using through the carder as one piece spread out, rather than breaking it into sections and laying it out before feeding through the drum. The next step was splitting it down the middle and putting it through a couple of more times. The results are really effective and it makes it a quicker process. Carol H wrote that as a painter, she was really excited at the idea of mixing colours by carding them together. Sue found it very useful to see the knitted and woven examples Lyn had prepared. Anne H also thought they were excellent as they showed how blending and plying influenced the end product.



Day 1 was a technical day where we learnt the steps we need to take to create yarns of different thicknesses, how to decide how much twist to put into a yarn depending on the intended end use, and how to measure if you have achieved the angle of twist that you desire. Also covered was how the staple of any given fleece will be affected by high or low twist, and how to avoid your short staple yarns falling apart or your long staple yarns turning into a hard twine.

Revolutionary to me was how your different wheel ratios are not a thing to be feared but a tool to be used to affect your treadling speed, and that your treadling speed should stay at a steady rate regardless of the amount of twist you are putting into the yarn. Hence if you want a high twist yarn you should use the smallest wheel on the flyer whorl of your wheel, your wheel will revolve faster and you don't have to treadle at 70mph! Also, a really useful piece of information was that rovings/batts etc have a right direction and a wrong direction, like stoking a cat the wrong way or the right way, and it will affect your spinning depending on which end you spin from.

Day two felt like time to play. The first technique we learnt was core spun yarn where we had a cone of thin sewing cotton attached to the bobbin with a knot, as the cotton twists you feed a strip of your coloured batt onto it aiming to cover all of the cotton, you can make it lumpy or as smooth as you like. Having produced a single in this way you can either ply it with more cotton or ply it with another bobbin of the same. The result is a very light and airy yarn where you have a lot more control over the colour placement from your batt, it also makes your precious batt go much further. This was probably everyone's favourite technique. We also learnt how to make a slubbed single and then how to turn it into a beehive during the plying, not something I really mastered!

Amanda demonstrated boucle, seed and snarl/pigtail yarns, and also how to spin a yarn with curls so that you can knit them like a fringe.

Amanda is drastically cutting down on her general teaching to concentrate on her own projects, but she will still be teaching at Summer



This picture shows some of the lovely batts made by members. It would be great to see the yarns spun from them and things made from the yarn on the Show and Tell table.

June 7th and 8th Spinning Workshop

The wonderful Amanda Hannaford visited us for a full weekend of spinning tuition. Thankfully she has a very calm and patient way of teaching, which was definitely needed by me! Amanda brought a wonderful display of samples from many different types of fleece, with information about fleece types and exactly what she did from fleece to fibre to produce her knitted samples.



School and her new book covering all aspects of spinning is available to pre-order on Amazon: <https://amzn.eu/d/hKSNMoj> Amanda Hannaford
'Handspinner's Companion: From Fibre to Yarn'
Pippa

Guild Demonstrations

Ffennel Festival June



Usually, the Ffennel Festival takes place on a lovely sunny day. One year after sunshine and joy, the heavens opened at the end and we got soaked packing up. This year was different. We got the joy, but the sunshine was erratic and the gazebo was crowded. I was cold all day which is why I am wearing my crocheted jacket over my waterproof.

Normally, we spread out on the grass and make a spinning and weaving encampment. This year the participants needed to be in the dry and near the action, which was sheltering in the gazebo. Despite being rather crowded the weaving on card frames was more successful than ever before, lots of earnest children having fun and plenty of people wanted to have a go at spinning.

Karin P brought a basket with a piece of wedge weaving and yarns dyed with plant dyes and Sandie brought her sheep models, but both things got stuck at the back of the gazebo and were not fully appreciated, which was a shame as they do help people get an idea of our crafts. Millie the bigger sheep was so exhausted at the end that Sandie had to carry her home.



Janet F

Bloxham Steam Rally

One can be difficult to please: 7th June was too cold and damp, 28th June was too hot. Despite that we had a good time. Once again, our site was immediately opposite the main arena, where the vehicles processed round. This year they had some unusual entries, to my surprise, I really liked the front cabs of large lorries, they didn't seem old to me but they were impressive moving slowly round the arena before slotting into their allocated space, like a modern ballet. There were also tanks, tractors, motor bikes, rescue vehicles, old cars and many more. Another fun item was getting the rescue lorries to pull as many vehicles as they could, it was surprising how many they could pull round the arena, I thought I saw one pull 15 other heavy

vehicles. 50 children tried to pull tractor. They succeeded in the end but it is possible they were allowed to win. I think the adult tug of war with a tractor was not so benign.



We were busy for much of the day showing off our skills and knowledge of our key crafts. A colourful display of plant dyed wools drew people to our tent. Children had a go on the spinning wheel and the 4-shaft loom, enjoying taking home their lengths of spun yarn and seeing the pattern emerging on the loom. Sarah's weaving on card looms was also popular



As always, the big wheel was a focal point, intriguing passers-by. It is always lovely to introduce (even re-introduce) people to our crafts, I hope more than a few have gone home with firm intention of taking them up. Lots of people picked up leaflets about the Guild.

Janet and Liz M

Artweeks

Members of the Barn in Sandford (known as Oxford Textile Collective) had a busy time during Oxford Artweeks. It was their 20th anniversary and their main display was a retrospective exhibition of Marion Owen's tapestries. She had been a guild member and was an original member of the Barn. Marion was an expert of blending colours of wool to perfect shading in her tapestries. She drew her own cartoons to work from and had varied subject matter.

There was also a display of the Barn member's work, dyeing, weaving, Sashiko and darning. There was also a display of all forms of miniature textiles mainly in 1/12 size.



It was wonderful to read the comments left by our visitors and thank you if you visited us.

Anne A



Show and Tell

April



Kate's mosaic knitted wrap made from yarn that she bought from Diana Bird at Chilton Grounds Farm at our meeting last September



May

Karin P wove the rug after a Krokbragd workshop she took with Angie Parker at Devon Weavers Guild. The cushion cover was an experiment with Krokbragd pattern and colour using knitting yarn.



The rug on the right is Angela P's. She writes: *It was some years ago that I wove the rug so before Angie's talk, I looked at Peter Collingwood's instructions in "The Techniques of Rug Weaving". He covers three methods but the one I had used is the three-shaft technique which Angie uses. I am looking forward to experimenting and I am planning to put a sample warp on the Guild Four Shaft loom so members can also have a go.*

Sarah A's selection of dyed fibres from 100gm of dried onion skins. Skins were cooked up and removed from pot before adding fibres. She started using no mordant and then experimented with Alum.



June

Mill spun yarns.

Sarah writes: *This little bundle of skeins is taken from some mill spun cones of yarn from sheep owned by Shaun Smith at Harcourt Rare Breeds. He has been a regular visitor to the Guild in the past at our Fleece Sales Day.*



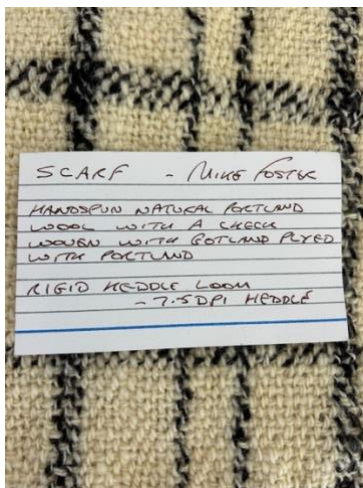
The reason for bringing these skeins was to show the difference in the fibres between the yarns oiled and straight off the cone to those which have been washed.

The discussion here is that the cone mentions a certain thickness i.e DK or Aran and when on the cone in its oiled state it doesn't look like stated thickness yet once it is washed the fibre obviously brightens and bounces out to its required size.

The question being is that if a garment was knitted straight from oiled yarn would the tension be different and if you washed it later would it change the dynamics all together of your knitted item and in some cases maybe lose its appeal? INTERESTING CONUNDRUM!

Mel's Brioche shawl. Pattern is by Stephen West. It's called Brioripple Wrap. Knitted with leftovers. Mix of commercial 4ply sock yarn and hand-spun. 765 rows of brioche knitting!





Mike F's Scarf
woven on a rigid
heddle loom using
hand Spun Portland
wool and Gotland
plied with Portland.

syringe. The back was left with a subtle hint of colour where the front is more definite.

You can use these methods in larger or smaller quantities. Ideas like bags, cushions and waist coats were mentioned. Also these methods can be done on finer wools to create scarves and other such fashion items. !!!!!

Sarah

Guild programme

25th August

Demonstration at Rollright Stones Open Day,
Contact Janet on events@oxfordwsd.org.uk if you would like to be involved.

September 20th Guild

Establishing a Dye Garden with Claire Shovelton
Claire, from Studio EVIG natural dye company.
She will talk about how to establish a dye garden.
She will also bring seeds for sale.

October 18th Guild

Being Creative with Your Stash
An inspiring and fun talk by Wendy Usher
on how to integrate your beautiful work into useful
items for yourself, gifts or to sell.

November 15th Guild

Cath Snape from Beechwood Crafts will give an 'all
things spinning' talk based on her book with Alison
Daykin 'Inspired to Spin'.

November 16th Workshop

Colour Blending for Spinning. Cath Snape will be
showing how to use hand carders, drum carder, and
blending board.

December 20th Guild

Christmas lunch and the Chair's Challenge.

Outside Events

There are a number of natural dyeing workshops in
Whitchurch on Thames.

<https://www.theoutside.org.uk>

Until 7th September

Textiles: The Art of Mankind
Fashion and Textile Museum, London.

26th -27th July

Summer Wool Festival, Ampthill.

30th -31st August

Southern Wool Show, Newbury.

3rd – 21st September

Canopy of Trees - An exhibition by Kennet Valley
Guild – Newbury.

Rhonda F's
Crochet top "I
have attempted to
add some Sashiko
style stitching to
brighten it a bit.
The whole thing
was made with
de-stash yarn.
Obviously, no
pattern was
involved which explains why it is slightly askew! (Not
noticeable when worn).



Dye Day

A dye day at home that leads to some
experiments on using acid dyes on an old wool
blanket inspired by Karen Schellinger book "Dyeing
Wool".

The blanket got cut down into a number of
pieces and here are just a few of the results. All
pieces were wetted out first.



The first piece was folded into a bundle and
two dyes were chosen. The green went down from
the top and then the orange dye was put in the base
of the pan.

The second piece was placed in a large
catering tray placed on top of the cooker and
scrunched into a wave effect, on this the two dyes
were poured down either side to create this pattern.
The darker colour was more of a thug and you could
see it travelling as the water heated up.

The third piece was placed in the same pan
but this time it had very little water in and the three
colours were speckle dyed on to the fibre by using a

3rd October

Band Weaving Workshop with Susan Foulkes

Learn how to weave narrow bands on two reproduction heddles from the Roman era

Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

Details and information on wider events can be found at Journal Website [Diary \(journalwsd.org.uk\)](http://Diary(journalwsd.org.uk)) and at

[UK yarn festivals: dates and details for 2025. \(beingknitterly.co.uk\)](http://UKyarnfestivals:datesanddetailsfor2025.beingknitterly.co.uk)

Committee

Kate Gardener - Chair

Sue Greenwood - Secretary -

Mike Foster - Treasurer

Liz Roberts - Membership Secretary

Anne Hughes – Library, Website

Angela Pawlyn - Newsletter Editor

Sarah Allan

Karin Piggott

Felicity Record

Co-opted:

Tamara Cartwright-Loebl - Programme Secretary

Helen Allen - Programme Secretary

Other responsibilities

Lyn Wymer - Equipment

Emma Pilley and Helen Allen -Sales Table

Janet Farnsworth - Outside Events

New Members

A warm welcome to Carol H and Olwyn M who have recently joined the Guild.

From the Editor.

Many thanks for the contributions to this newsletter.

The Committee have agreed that the forename and the first letter of the surname should be used for all contributors. I have done this the first time they are mentioned.

I aim to take pictures of all the Show and Tell items. I will include them if I receive the accompanying description. Please either email to newsletter@oxfordwsd.org.uk. or put them on the Guild's What's App page

The deadline for next issue is 6th October. No need to wait until then to send me input.