



Ceredigion Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers

August 2017 Newsletter

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Workshop Reports

May Meeting - Silk Spinning with Sue Hoyland

Report by Nicky Evans

At the May meeting some of us were treated to a workshop on spinning silk. Sue Hoyland came from Pembrokeshire to give us the benefit of her extensive knowledge.

Sue was really well organised; she told us a little about how silk is produced and then we started spinning. She provided us with little bags containing examples of all sorts of silk and a little viscose to start off with. She said that the viscose was easier to spin than real silk but would help us to get the feel: then we were away, Mulberry silk, Tussah silk (lovely, my definite favourite), broken tussah combs (apparently these are waste products of the spinning process), silk noil carded with combs (noil is the very short fibre left over after carding and used as a decorative feature in yarn). Sue had given us pierced cards to hold our samples, which worked very well, there were so many different textures and colours it would have been very difficult to remember which was what, and write this report, without my reference card.

Sue then taught us how to cope with silk hankies and caps, and then noil on its own, which I found really difficult though people around me seemed to cope with it well and produce lovely bits of soft yarn. There were another half dozen sorts of fluff to play with including throwsters waste and various silky bits carded with merino. Sue encouraged us to try plying different singles together and to card different sorts of silk with wool.

The whole workshop was very helpful, I learned what I really like (Tussah and wool/silk blend) and really hate (noil, never ever again!). This sort of workshop can help us to separate the things we want to try again (and spent our money on) from those things that look tempting but are just not for us.

Thank you Sue, a very enjoyable and useful day.





June Meeting - Kool Aid Dyeing with Gail Evans

Report by Sue Youell

The June 2017 meeting was as usual our annual Guild dyeing day. This year however, we broke with our tradition of meeting at a members home for natural dyeing with wool boiled in pots over a fire and instead we held an indoor dyeing day in the hall using Kool Aid as our dye. This meant that we were not affected by the persistent drizzle outside. It also meant that there was no need to pre-soak or mordant the wool to be dyed the night before.

About 15 enthusiastic dyers arrived, each with an assortment of pots, pans, bowls and fibres to explore the possibilities of dyeing with the American drink, Kool Aid which is supplied as a packet of crystals to be dissolved in water. Gail brought with her several skeins of recently dyed wool to demonstrate both the colour range and the multi colours in one skein achievable by using a variety of techniques. Rita McCoy had brought a shoe-box full of small balls of wool, each with the label from the Kool Aid which had dyed it, to show the solid colours possible from the entire range of Kool Aid drinks. I personally chose to use this display in my aim for single subtle colours.

To start dyeing, we began with a container of hot water to which a few drops of clear white vinegar were added to acidify the water. Wool or silk was soaked in this for about 15 minutes. In a separate container, a packet of Kool Aid was dissolved in hot water. The wetted fibre was then added to the Kool Aid colour. From this basic start, we all began to experiment with dipping just one end of the skein into the colour and then perhaps using another colour for the other end, to gradually add the skein so that the first part of the skein was darker than the other parts. We tried putting the skein into a colour solution and the adding crystals of another colour directly onto the fibre. Silk was put into the exhaust after dyeing wool with beautiful results. Working as a group, we drew inspiration from watching each other. Linda had a supply of 9 different flavours/colours of Kool Aid, some of which came as part of the workshop and the rest available to purchase at 60p per packet.

As Kool Aid is a drink intended for children, it is perfectly safe to use in the home. I was impressed by how easy it was to dye this way and by the range of possibilities of colours and multicolours. We all had a really enjoyable workshop and returned home with bags full of dyed fibre and inspiration. Many thanks to Gail and to Rita for opening our eyes to new techniques in dyeing fibre.





July Meeting - Spinning art yarns, with Bettina Becker

Report by Helen Marriage

It was billed as 'Spinning art yarns', but Bettina liked to call it 'Spinning wild yarns', and that's what it felt like. I don't often appear with a wheel, but I'd been told this was fun by people who took part last year, and it was. Bettina is very well prepared, and brings such a wealth of fibres (some of which, as a non-spinner in general, I'd never heard of, let alone handled). Her method, of demonstrating and explaining, a process, and then making us have a go, worked very well, and we were all soon producing some very 'wild' yarns. Some of us, including my neighbour and I, kept muttering that we were way out of our comfort zones, but enjoying it all the same. I don't think my 'textile future' lies here, but it was definitely fun, and I sure enjoyed the day.





News

Royal Welsh Show

Congratulations to Caroline Lewis on her success at the Royal Welsh Show this year. Once again Caroline showed some beautiful fleeces and scooped numerous prizes:

3 x 1st

Lustre class with a Lincoln Longwool

Down & Fine class with a Dorset Down

Mule class with a Welsh Mule

1 x 2nd

Mountain class with a Welsh Mountain

Champion with Lincoln Longwool

Reserve Champion with Dorset Down

And the award for the exhibitor with the highest points overall in the Open Fleece Competition



Library

The following books have now been added to the library:

Knitting, Stitch Led Design by Alison Ellen

Shibori Designs and Techniques by Many Southan

The Colour Cauldron by Su Grierson

This and That Booklet 1997

Lichens by Jack Laundon

Dyes & Dyeing by Max Simmons

Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record Natural Plant Dyeing: A Handbook

An Introduction to the Study of Spinning by WE Morton and GR Wary

Mauve by Simon Garfield

Show and Tell

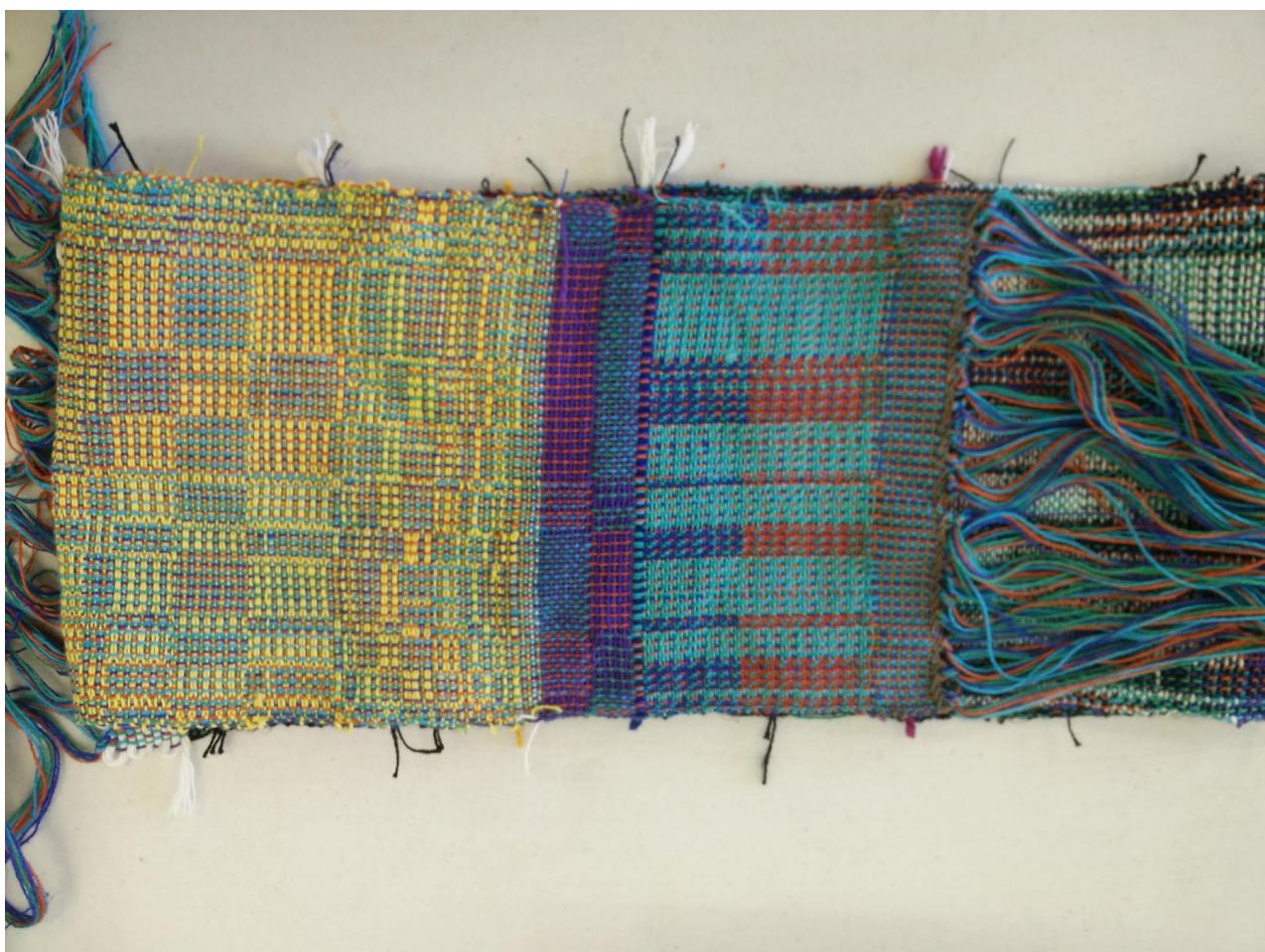
Here are just a few items from the show and tell table over the last few guild meetings:











Next Meetings

12th August

Activity Day - Poppies

16th September

AGM

14th October

Equipment Day

Remember: If you have any news, achievements or upcoming events you'd like to share with the everyone please let me know.

END