



# The Shuttle

## June 2026

[kennet-valley-guild.com](http://kennet-valley-guild.com)



@kennetvalleyguild

# Guild meeting dates for your diary 2026

## **Sat 6th June / Guild Meeting**

**AM:** Social

**PM:** Our speaker is Guild Member, Edel Izquierdo, who will be telling us all about his Summer travels with his spindles.

## **Sat 4th July / Guild Meeting**

**AM:** Social

**PM:** Our speaker is Joyce Meader, who will be giving us a talk about knitting from the Crimea to the present day.

## **Sat 1st August / Guild Meeting**

**AM:** Social

**PM:** Activity: **Dyeing In The Churchyard** is being resurrected and more details will be available nearer the time. No need to book, just come and enjoy the day. There will be demonstrations and the chance to have a go.

## What to expect

### The typical agenda for a Guild meeting is:

10.00 am	Hall open for sociable crafts
1.00 pm	Guild Business Meeting
1.30 pm	Show & Tell
2.00 pm	Speaker

Some meetings run differently, and as such are noted above. Please check to avoid disappointment.

Members are requested to follow any requests with respect to social distancing, masks and similar. Please help your Committee by putting your own and your neighbour's chair away at the end of the day.

**Thank you**



## Chairman's Chat

*Hello Everyone,*

*Sometimes I engage my mouth before I engage my brain and having said back in March that the Christmas shared lunch was lacking in bread and salad, the April buffet was full of bread and salad and it was wonderful! I had feedback from so many people saying how much they enjoyed it. I must remember to say in November that the April lunch was missing gin and chocolate. No harm in hoping we may get a few goooney chocolate puddings!*

*We had a lovely meeting in May with so many of our members demonstrating some of the more unusual skills we can teach. Thank you to everyone and of course our ever reliable organisers for their coordination skills. It was a very busy meeting so sadly Meg and I had no room in the hall to demonstrate spinning and Inkle loom warping. No idea what the new people that came along thought but they were given a warm welcome and have signed up as members.*

*Most of our new members have met us at demonstrations. Demonstration season is in full swing now and I want to thank everyone who gets involved. Demonstrations are such an important part of what the Guild does. If you haven't been out demonstrating please consider it. You don't need to be an expert you just need to turn up and chat to people.*

*Thanks as well to everyone that took part in the competitions. There was a good turnout. Well done to the worthy winners. Keep listening out for information about upcoming competitions.*

*Lastly it is a strange world we live in now. As I reflect on this I realise that we are so lucky to be a large group of people that mostly get along. For one day a month we can relax and enjoy our crafts and the company of like-minded friends.*

*I did say at the May meeting that EVERYONE is welcome at Guild. I think I made a hash of it by saying I didn't mind what flavour you are or which planet you come from. Hopefully you all understood what I meant. Kennet Valley is your Guild. All members are valued and your ideas and feedback are always welcome.*

**Linda Scurr - Chairman, Kennet Valley Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers.**

# AGM Report

*Dear Members,*

*We held our AGM at the April meeting. There was a good turn out. Sue Davies was awarded the June Young trophy which is awarded annually to a Guild member who has made a significant contribution to the Guild over the years. Sue has contributed so much it would be difficult to list everything she done and continues to do! Thank you Sue for all the hard work you put in.*

*We thanked Lynne, Jenn and Anne too for their dedication to organising a full programme of talks, courses, speakers and competitions. Sadly for us, the trio have decided to stand down so we are now looking for volunteers to replace them. The official title is Programme Secretary but there's no reason why it can't be one, two or three members who are willing to share the job. The current programme has been filled up until March 2027, so anyone prepared to give it a go will be eased in gently. It goes without saying that Lynne, Jenn and Anne will be on hand to guide you.*

*Financially the Guild is in a very good position; thank you Julie Fraser for your expertise as our Treasurer. A show of hands agreed that we should donate the raffle takings for the April 2026 AGM meeting to the local Air Ambulance at Christmas. This will be in addition to the December 2026 raffle proceeds.*

*In 2025 we decided to donate the December raffle proceeds to Rosie Meadows, daughter of Guild member Gill Meadows. Oversight! We forgot to tell Gill this so she was surprised and delighted to receive a donation in excess of £60. Rosie ran the London Marathon in a really decent time and raised a worthwhile amount of money for a dementia and children's charity. Well done Rosie!*

*Lastly a very small Committee does a lot on behalf of all of you. We do need your help. If you would like to join the Committee, please let me know. It's vital to the running of the Guild that we have more than six Committee members to make important decisions that affect the membership.*

*It is your Guild so your contributions, ideas for courses speakers or places to visit and things to do would be very welcome. You are the future of the Guild so please help to move it forward in a really good direction.*

*Please do continue to enjoy Guild. The skills you learn and the friendships you build are special and can last a lifetime.*

**Linda Scurr - Chairman, Kennet Valley Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers.**

## Guild Talks & Workshops

**Hello Everyone,**

As you know, Anne and team have now stood down from the Programme & Workshops role. However, the Programme is looking absolutely fantastic right through until March 2027.

The current programme list is available online. Please use the QR code to view the Diary and Events page on our web site, or view it via [kennet-valley-guild.com/diary-and-events](http://kennet-valley-guild.com/diary-and-events)



**Vounteer/s Needed!**

If you would like to be our new Programme Secretary (Programme & Workshops), perhaps with a fellow Guild friend or small group, please let Linda or anyone on the Committee know.

Anne, Lynne and Jenn will be very happy to tell you more about the job and what's required.

**Many thanks.**

*welcome*

### **to our new Guild members**

A very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined the Guild since the last Shuttle was published.

Please look out for Caroline, Jo, Yolanda and Andrea at Guild meetings, introduce yourself and have a chat.



**Caroline Cole**

**Jo Lloyd**

**Yolanda Mundz**

**Andrea Nott**

# Trophy News

We were absolutely delighted to have so many entries this year. Thank you to all who entered and grateful thanks to the four people I roped in as judges on the morning! I really appreciated your expertise and the thoughtful summing up you gave and the reasons for your choices. So thank you again to Rosie, Marion, Meg and Linda.



**Beginner Spinners**



**Spinners - best 3ply skein**



**Beginner Weavers**



**Weavers**



▲ Trixie was the winner of the beginner spinners trophy

▶ Syd was the winner of the beginner weaving trophy



◀ Sue and Linda were joint winners of the spinners trophy

▶ Jenny was the winner of the weaving trophy



# March Show & Tell 2026



Chris with her woven scarf.



Jane with a hat knitted from handspun.



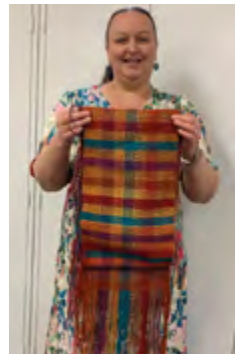
Maureen with more of her weaving.



Tricia with a beginner piece of weaving intended to be used as part of a headdress for a church nativity pageant.



Ruth with her boro bag started at the January mini- workshops.



Michelle with her woven scarf.

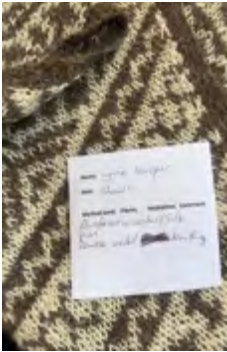


▶ Kat with more of her 'beginner' knitting.



▶ Linda with a selection of items. A scarf knitted from fibre from her flock. Examples of 3ply spinning. Felting examples for a workshop she is running and a little felted ball requested by me (Jenn) because I couldn't work out how to make a hollow felt ball!

# April Show & Tell 2026



Double sided knitting with handspun blue faced Leicester.



Linda with wool spun from pencil rovings from her flock.



Syd with the sampler from the beginning weaving course. 8/12 cotton on four shafts.



Tricia wearing Syd's felted coat. Extra fine merino with a variety of silks and textured yarns.



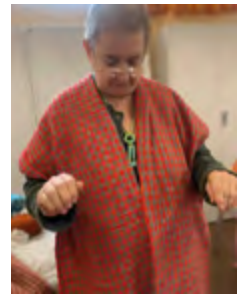
Vivela with her crocheted scarf in handspun alpaca. Long draw.



▶ Maureen brought two pieces of this fabric. One felted and one unfelted to show the difference in size after felting.



Another piece of Maureen's weaving.



A jacket made of pieces experimenting with a fine slubby yarn in warp and weft.

# May Show & Tell 2026



Sue with her handspun Manx Loughton wool. 2ply spun on a spindle.



Pat with her experimental dyeing using cow parsley with various mordants and additives.



Linda and Jenny showing double sided knitted cafetière covers. Knitted with wool from Linda's flock to a pattern designed by Lynne and proof knitted by Jenny.



Linda with her dyeing experiments on wool donated to Guild by our November 2025 speaker Daniel Harris. There were a few hairy stories about needing to be careful since the wool must have been moth treated and that reacted with the dyes. Ask Linda for details.

## May 2026 - Casual Demonstration Day

**As a Guild we know that we have many talented members and May's meeting was a great opportunity to see some of these talented members in action.**

The hall was buzzing as people wandered round watching our demonstrators and having a go at many of the crafts on offer. My thanks go to all of the Guild members who were willing to demonstrate.

My apologies to those I didn't manage to get photos of, including Meg with her demonstration of how to make up knitting neatly and Anne with her 13 strand braiding.

If there is a craft that you would like to demonstrate or one that you would like to have demonstrated please let me or Linda know.

**Jennifer Thompson**



Angela with one of her looms.



Serena with her distaff spindle.



Hollie with her drop spindle.



Maureen demonstrating Nåhlbinding. She also demonstrated back strap weaving - attached to the pillar.



Lynne with her split ply braiding.



Theresa in the sunshine with her knitting machine.

## May 2026 - Casual Demonstration Day



Edel, also in the sunshine, with his drop spindle.



Marian stitching a raffia basket. An old technique used to make bee skeps.



Chris showing how to do Tunisian crochet.



Cath with the Guild Kakadai and an Marudai also hidden at the side!



Jenny demonstrating double sided knitting.

## Ukraine Effort

As you know we send items to Ukraine for refugees and for soldiers. There is a desperate need for amputee socks both for arms and legs.



I will be printing out and bringing some patterns to the Guild meetings but in the meantime you can find a pattern at <https://suzies-yarnie-stuff.blogspot.com/2009/11/amputees-residual-limb-covers-aka-stump.html>

Although we ask for dark coloured, woollen socks for soldiers on the front line, for the amputees, we ask for the softest, brightest acrylic yarn you have please.

Thank you for everything that you donate. It is very gratefully received.

Jennifer Thompson



### Dickie Pattern

Meg recently redesigned a pattern for a knitted Dickie. If you would like to have a go at one of these ribbed neck and chest warming knits, please ask Meg for the pattern and yarn information.



## Royal Berkshire NHS donations

RBH elderly patients really like big thick knitted or crocheted blankets. Approx. size 35/40" x 50/55". They also like thick rectangular shaped shawls to help keep them warm when out of bed. Approx. size 35 x 15".

For babies, we are in need of knitted or crocheted baby blankets. Blankets should be soft with no holes. Approx. size 30" square.

Have a look at the RBH donations leaflet pdf to see what else they currently need and contact details. It's on the RESOURCES page on the KVG web site.



## Articles & Reports

### A trip to Blotz

Author: Kim Wakeham

For my birthday last year, I was gifted a natural dyeing day with Blotz ([blotz.co.uk](http://blotz.co.uk)) in Cirencester.

I was a bit nervous as I haven't really got any experience with natural dyeing but Blotz owner Sue soon put me at ease. We were given a skein of yak / wool mix, 10 skeins of sock yarn and 5 skeins of silk with the choice of dyeing them with indigo, madder, weld, alder cones and safflower.



Sock yarn dyed (top to bottom) with indigo (blue), weld overdyeed with indigo (green), safflower overdyeed with indigo (green), safflower (light yellow), alder cones (slightly brown yellow), madder overdyeed with safflower (orange), weld overdyeed with madder (peach) and madder (red).

After a Health and Safety introduction and a short lesson about the materials we were using, I spent a glorious day learning the basics of natural dyeing including exploring how to prepare the dye baths, how warm the water needs to be, how long the wool or silk needed to be in the water, which mordants to use



The elusive purple – silk dyed with madder, overdyeed with indigo.

and how to overdye. I found the preparation of the indigo vat fascinating and tried hard to develop the knack required to keep the oxygen out of the indigo vat.

It was magical to watch the different colours take to the yarn, and even more exciting to then overdye the

yarn to create other colours. I managed to create a range of colours ranging from oranges through



Yak dyed with madder.



My cat George helping me to sort out the dyed skeins for the photographs.

to greens. I even managed to dye a silk purple by dyeing it first in madder then overdyeing it with indigo.

Apparently, purple is a tricky colour to achieve but it was most likely probably beginner's luck!

Sue's knowledge of dyes, and her wonderful hospitality made for perfect day. It has also sent me into a vast rabbit hole of all things natural dyeing. I now look at the plants and trees growing in my garden and think 'I wonder what colour that would be?' Watch this space!

While Wingham's currently limits visits to click and collect orders, Ellie is working with their local Gloucester Guild to trial small group visits similar to the one we enjoyed.

We're hopeful that our Guild will be next in line for this exclusive experience - and we'll be sure to keep you updated.

In the meantime, if you are in need supplies for your own projects, Wingham's have a comprehensive website: [winghamwoolwork.co.uk](http://winghamwoolwork.co.uk)

**Ed:** Thank you very much to everyone who submitted an article (or two) for this edition of The Shuttle. It's been an absolute pleasure to read them and your photos have brought the pages to life.

If you haven't submitted anything to The Shuttle recently, please consider telling our Members about any weaving, spinning, dyeing or craft related adventures you've been on in the September edition.

See the back page for details of how to submit your article.

Thank you!

# Beltain at Butser

Author: Kat Holmes



Saturday 2nd  
May 2026 after  
we left guild that  
afternoon, Trixie and  
I welcomed in the  
summer at Butser  
ancient

farm for their Beltain (also spelled Beltane or Bealtaine) celebrations.

This is an ancient Iron Age precursor to May Day celebrations, celebrated by Celtic peoples in Ireland and the UK.

The afternoon started at 4pm with live folk music,

morris dancing, storytelling and living history!

We saw performances by the UK's premier drumming troupe Pentacle Drummers, met the Green Man and May Queen, and watched combat displays. Plus we saw master craftsfolk at work with traditional skills, and explored encampments of



reenactor battles, local craftsfolk and the burning of a 40ft wickerman,

reenactors bringing 10,000 years of our ancient past to life!

There was storytelling in the Neolithic hall by Jason Buck dressed as a Satyr which we enjoyed very much, Mildreth the wulwif (woolwife) who gave a talk called 'sheep to spindle' in Saxon Britain (who also does a demonstrations on wool combing) in the Saxon halls.

I did buy some lovely hand dyed yarns from Osthyrth Sews who uses traditional plant dying techniques, the yarns I bought were dyed with Madder and Indigo (see image o/l of the Lucet). I turned mine into a nice new cord for my Guild name badge. (On Instagram as **Osthyrth.Sews**)



There also was Torie from **Ferral fibers** (Instagram **Ferralfibers** or **ferralfibers.com**) and her beautiful wool, fibers, sheep skin rugs, weaving kits, wooden and antler buttons, and a Lucet made by Monk at **MonksMarvels** (**MonksMarvels** on Instagram and Etsy) in the shape of a small dragon.

Once the rain blew over it was a marvellous day and we're already looking forward to 2027!

**butserancientfarm.co.uk**



## It Wasn't Hamish's Fault!

Usually P's family grave is visited around Christmas when the grave stone is cleaned, the surrounding area is tidied up and a wreath is placed. For some reason this didn't happen in 2025 so P decided that he and Hamish should go down at the end of April. Arrangements were made to meet with friends for dinner and trips to the coast were planned. The weather was amazing, particularly for Wales, so shorts and tee shirts were packed and they headed off.



Friday morning dawned with the sun lighting up the mountains and making Ebbw Vale look lovely. At breakfast Hamish found himself surrounded by members of the local running club who were stocking up on carbs prior to setting off for London to take part in the London Marathon. Being prepared to make a donation Hamish asked which charity they were running in aid of but it turned out they were running for the fun of it! A lovely day was had visiting Oxwich Bay and Mumbles

although Hamish was very good and didn't call in on Swansea Bay Yarns [swanseabayyarns.wales](http://swanseabayyarns.wales) - otherwise known as "a beautiful woolly oasis" on Trip Advisor. Dinner for 9 old friends gave everyone a chance to catch up on how children, grandchildren and aches and pains were all doing and meant for a pleasant Friday evening but Hamish needed his beauty sleep ready for Saturday morning.

Again the day dawned with clear skies and sunshine. When he decided that this would be the date to come



down to Wales, P had not realised that Wonderwool Wales was also happening this weekend. It was P's decision and it wasn't Hamish's fault! Driving past P's parents' old home they set off over Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons) to head to Builth Wells. The views of the mountains were fabulous and very clear which is not always the case! Although P had been to the Royal Welsh Showground many times he had never been to WonderWool but as he needed to get back for work first thing Sunday there

was no option but for him to attend the event as it was too far to drive back to Ebbw Vale again.

As usual there was so much to see. Hamish had just two things on his shopping list, some Polwarth fibre and a cone of cotton weaving warp thread. His first visit was to the Welsh Air Ambulance stall to drop off some items to be sold there then he was free to wander around.

There were many stalls of beautifully dyed yarns and fibre as well as live

and Polwarth/yak fibre, warp thread and a book Hamish bought a few Welsh cakes for P who had never seen such a selection of different flavours and settled on traditional and cherry and almond.

In the Sheep Show area where the stallholders fashion show took place there were a group of ladies working on Wales' version of the Red Dress Project [reddressembroidery.com](http://reddressembroidery.com), their embroidery was fabulous. On one side of the hall was a stall selling



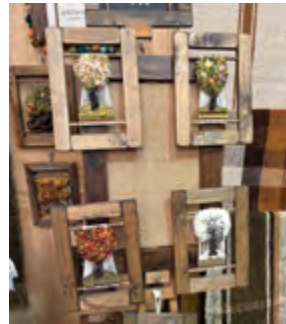
sheep to show from where the various fibres came. Vendors with whom we are familiar were there, John Arbon, Wingham Wools, Adelaide Walker, Wonky Weavers, Janie Crow and Ian Tate to mention but a few. Hamish had to walk past Ian's stall quickly as there was a large selection of zebra wood spindles on display and Hamish hasn't got any of those.

Near the entrance several of the local spinning groups were demonstrating and these were encouraging several visitors to "have a go". P carried the bags as Hamish filled them and in addition to purchasing yarn, Polwarth

kits for an interesting variation on tapestry weaving where the warps were

pilled in to give a special effect. Also in this hall there were examples of crocheted animals and Hamish was particularly taken with a pangolin but at £2,200 it was out of his budget.

It was a long drive home, 165 miles but it had been a lovely, if expensive, day.





## **Alpacas - A Closer Look**

**Author: Trixie Holmes**

**At February's guild meeting we had a very informative talk by Nick Harrington-Smith, the owner of Alpaca Evolution.**

Over in Sussex, Nick has been running his farm since 1998 and I think the only thing I knew about alpacas when I sat down, was that they were related to llamas. A fact which I was pleased to hear confirmed.

Facts that I didn't know were many, but I was fascinated to hear that there are 3.5 million alpacas in the world and 5 to 10% of these are suri alpacas, the ones that Nick described as Rastafarian due to their long dreadlocks.

Alpaca's give us hair and not wool and the yarn has a high thermal quality and also wicks moisture away from the skin, making it perfect for socks, dog beds and duvets! Nick sends any poorer quality fleeces over to Poland to be made into duvets. Yes, I did sit there daydreaming about how I could turn a fleece into a duvet myself as I'm all about warmer bedding!

I didn't realise that alpacas came in so many shades and that when grading a fleece, even what looks white, can be classed as beige!

There are 22 natural shades of alpaca within their colour range and shearing can look brutal due to the fact the animal is held down in a prone position, but you're not able to shear them like you would a sheep

due to their long neck and their head which is as hard as any hammer if it hits you. They're also much happier and calmer when held down to shear.

You can't just not shear an alpaca either, its done for their welfare as much as for their fleece as if flies get into them, they burrow to the base of the fleece and start eating them alive!

When an alpaca is sheared the blanket area comes away first, then they take the neck and legs and then each fleece is graded as it comes off the animal.

Alpaca fibre isn't hollow, its between 20 and 30 microns in thickness and a human hair is between 60 to 80 microns. The scale height on a strand of alpaca fibre is about half of what a sheep is, making it softer.

Farms breed their alpacas from around 12 months of age as a minimum and a male can't breed until he's 24 months. A female has to be receptive to the male, they don't

force breed them and the female will make it very clear she's not interesting by kicking, spitting and running around.

Females endure a 335 to 365 day gestation period and they give birth standing. They'll always give birth between first light and mid afternoon, if they're still in labour after this then they've encountered a problem. Because of the timings, you don't normally encounter a birth, you normally just see a baby on the ground near mum and twins are very rare.

Alpacas are a lifestyle as well as livestock and they can live for around 15 to 20 years, especially the castrated males, but Nick does have a 22 year old female on his farm and they're described as having a personality like a cat!

Well that's settled then, I'm sure my cat would love a new Alpaca friend!

[alpacaevolution.com](http://alpacaevolution.com)

## Artweeks Oxfordshire

**Author: Linda Scurr**

Every year about 450 Oxfordshire artists open their doors for a three week event called Artweeks. You pick up a catalogue and wander about in and out of shops, galleries, houses and studios looking at some amazing art and some you don't quite understand. But that is ART!

I came across one exhibit which just said:

*In order to avoid offending anyone, this work of art contains absolutely no images, comments or ideas whatsoever.*

What a great Idea!

# Magical Leamington

Author: Jenny Gribble

**In April, Bernie and I spent a leisurely 2 weeks, working 59 locks and negotiating 2 tunnels in order to move our narrowboat to Blisworth marina near Northampton.**

One of the stops along the way was mooring up to spend 2 days in Leamington Spa, a favourite stopping place for us, my particular focus this time was to visit the haberdashery shop close to All Saints Church. I wanted to weave some fabric using strips of material as the weft. I was inspired by the chapter 'Rag Bag Threesome' in **The Weaver's Idea Book - creative cloth on a rigid heddle loom**, by Jane Patrick.

Below is their description of how Cafe Tisto came into being.

*In 2022, war broke out in Ukraine. Amongst the millions fleeing, a group of young people arrived in Warwickshire under the Government Ukraine Scheme. They were musicians, journalists, tattoo artists, but the war forced them to leave their lives behind.*

*Together, they decided that they wanted to share Ukrainian culture through the medium of delicious food, and thanks to hard work and perseverance, Cafe Tisto was opened!*

*Cafe Tisto strives to support the integration of young Ukrainians newly arrived in the UK, with the belief that employment and entrepreneurship is the best path towards familiarisation with British culture, work norms and the English language.*



Bernie decided to go and find a place to drink coffee as he anticipated, correctly, a long wait. I emerged from the shop with a cutting board, cutting wheel and fabric to find him sat in the back of All Saints church with coffee and cake. What a wonderful experience, comfy chairs, Ukrainian food, brightly coloured displays, lots of flowers.

At the entrance to the cafe there is a wonderful floral display advertising fundraising for ambulances for Ukraine. In return for a donation you can help yourself to a beautifully hand knitted brooch.

After this magical experience we wandered down to the canal and continued our journey.



## Weaving & Dyeing in Egypt

Author: Ruth Bradd

In mid-April I went on a fantastic holiday discovering the sights of Egypt. What struck me was all the different materials and elements of our Guild that were used all those thousands of years ago. From weaving shoes and baskets with Papyrus, a lot of linen (from flax) for wrapping bodies ready for the afterlife, then there were the dyes used in hieroglyphics and daily scenes in tombs and temples. Given the heat of the country (36-38° Celsius), it's no wonder I only saw camels out & about in the heat of the day!

# A Visit to Orkney and the Hoxa Tapestry Gallery

Author: Julie Fraser

During my last visit to Orkney in June 2025, I visited the Hoxa Tapestry Gallery, near St. Margaret's Hope on South Ronaldsay. I was on a trip with two friends I made at university more than 40 years ago, neither of whom had been to Orkney before.

If you have not had the opportunity to visit the Orkney Islands before, then I would highly recommend a holiday there. It has a wealth of archaeology, with Skara Brae and the Ring of Brodgar, much Viking and World War II history, a magnificent cathedral founded in the 12th Century, stunning coastal scenery, bird watching and a wealth of crafts to explore.

It is easy to drive all around the mainland, with good roads and the southernmost islands connected by the Churchill Barriers, erected in the early 1940's, as a naval defence against enemy submarines. Ferries to the other islands are also easy to book and, apart from an interesting time having to reverse down the ramp onto the ferry to Rousay, the ferry trips were without incident! You can also fly to North Ronaldsay, the most northerly island, which is an enjoyable way to get there. On a previous trip to Orkney, I did fly to North Ronaldsay to see the seaweed eating North Ronaldsay sheep. With



a bit of forward planning, I also managed to get a private trip to the small spinning mill there (I did buy some fibre too!)

Having been to Orkney before I was aware of the Creative Orkney Trail. Annually, a booklet is produced highlighting art and craft makers throughout the islands, from jewellery, pottery, painting, glasswork, brewing, food, tapestry weaving, and knitwear design to name a few. Sometimes the weather was a bit unpredictable, so this trail was invaluable to get us up and out and give us something interesting to do for the day.

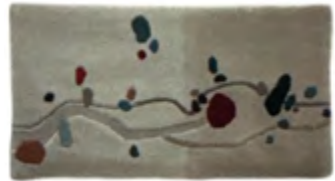
This visit I took one of my friends to the Hoxa Tapestry Gallery to see the tapestry weaving of mother and daughter, Leila and Jo Thomson (sadly Leila died in 2022 after a battle with cancer, but her work is still exhibited in the gallery). The first time I visited I was fortunate enough to see the recently completed "Eynhallow" tapestry weaving made by Jo Thomson, which took my breath away. Having previously stood



at the Broch of Gurness looking across the sound to Eynhallow island, I felt that the tapestry beautifully depicted the landscape and the movement in the clouds and sea. Having chatted to Jo, I discovered that the tapestry took a year to weave, on an enormous loom made using scaffolding poles.

Leila Thomson's tapestry weaving is also inspired by nature, and I particularly loved the piece "In the Beginning" which showed the meeting of sand, sea, and air with seabirds. The design styles of mother and daughter were quite different, although inspired by the same landscape.

I am sure I will be back visiting Orkney and Hoxa Tapestry Gallery again soon!



All work shown is © hoxa tapestry gallery and permission to use them in this publication has been granted by the owners.

[hoxatapestrygallery.org](http://hoxatapestrygallery.org)

## Balls & Brewery

Author: Syd Beeton

**Sometimes, you just have to go on a jolly and this is what Rosie, Linda and myself, did earlier in the year.**

One evening, I was greeted by Linda stating there was a sale of weaving supplies from a teacher of weaving. My ears pricked up to this — the magic word weaving had been mentioned. The next thing she said was that it was only 20 miles further to the Oakhaven charity craft shop in Lymington. This had to be a day out. Rosie was persuaded to come, so early one morning we met at Linda's who drove while Rosie knitted and I navigated. In truth, this involved

repeating what my SATNAV said.

On arrival at the weaving sale, we were surprised to see the equipment was rather high priced. However, the yarn was a different matter. Balls and cones were priced individually but a tub could be filled for £25 and a large plastic bag for £50; the tubs were better value. I grabbed a tub to fill and chose some rather nice wool yarn which would make a piece of tweed. Then I grabbed some thick cotton for rugs and some nice things. Rosie and Linda had some small balls which were wedged into the ends of cones and any small spaced between cones so that they came into the price of a tub.

We all met up with people we knew



which was great. I caught up with Janine Rees who I met years ago on a felt course or two, Linda with the people she was going to teach felt bowl making and Rosie with everyone.

Next, we set off for Lymington. Rosie became quite puzzled after we had driven a lot more than 20 miles. I'd already had the conversation with Linda. It went something like this.

*“Linda, I think you might have mis-calculated the distance. My route finder says it is around 60 miles from the Weaving Barn to Lymington.”*

*“The round trip is only about 20 miles further than a return journey to Lymington.”* replied Linda.

Once I had explained this to Rosie, we tried to stop for lunch somewhere and ended up settling for an M&S sandwich, later on.

As we approached Lymington my two eagled-eyed travelling companions noticed the brewery at the same time and a debate ensued. Do we stop now or visit the charity shop first? As we were in need of the M&S sandwich

which we knew could be found almost opposite the charity shop we headed there.

Now for the real conundrum of the day. Do we buy the beautiful 4 shaft loom in the window then make it available to someone at Guild? We are still kicking ourselves over that one as the following day by the time we let one of the new weavers know about it, it was gone. We did make some purchases there and at M&S. However probably the most expensive purchase was the sparkling beer from the brewery.

Yes, we visited the establishment on our way home, Pig Beer, where Linda and Rosie sampled the wares. Not being a beer drinker, I didn't bother. They chose their bottles and were then seduced by the sparkling beer in a champagne bottle. This beer worked out at over £14 a pint! I did eventually buy some craft cider, which did not taste like the sample.

All in all, a good day was had by all even though it rained heavily, food involved a long wait to be seated — hence the M&S sandwich and we didn't buy the loom.

**Ed: As you'll see from the Guild Programme on Page 2, we're going to be Dyeing In The Churchyard in August.**

**My 94 year old Mother was a Guild Member back in the day when Albert and Linda Moss were very active in the Guild, and she absolutely loved this workshop. We still talk about it even now and I'm the proud keeper of the samples she dyed.**

**Give it a go, it's such a fascinating subject.**



## Nålbinding Demonstration

**Author: Hollie Gavin**

Our May meet was a delight with such a broad range of crafts being demonstrated by our members with skill, expertise and care.



As some of you know, I'm new (ish) to spinning but I don't really knit or crochet, and as such I was keen to see what other crafty goodness I could try next.

Maureen was kindly demonstrating Nålbinding; something I knew little about. Maureen explained the tools needed with hints on technique - I



was totally inspired and thought I'd give it a go!

With the assistance of a couple of YouTube videos I am gaining confidence every time I have a little go. This ancient textile technique dating back to the Mesolithic era, predating both knitting and crochet by thousands of years, has piqued my interest and I'm really excited to see where I can go with Nålbinding.

Thank you so much Maureen for the inspiration!

P.S. I used a Wool & The Gang 100% wool yarn for my nålbinding, bought from Hobbycraft.

## The Grey Sheep Co. An Open Day Visit

Author: Trixie Holmes

**On a slightly cloudy Saturday in April, Kat and I popped along to the Grey Sheep Co. in Hook, Hampshire for their open day.**

We started off with cake, which is always a must when we go anywhere! We were then treated to a talk about the sheep they have on their farm, the ones we saw were Steins but they also have Gotlands as well. The babies were adorable but apparently I wasn't allowed to tuck one into my dungarees.

Once we were dragged away from the pen we were treated to a sheep dog demonstration, which was fascinating and the shepherd was more than happy to answer everyone's questions.

What's lovely about the open day is that there is a small mill and shop as well, so obviously we had to go shopping and came away with some gorgeous yarn and roving.

If anyone is local to Hook, look out for their next open day when its announced on either their website at [thegreysheep.co.uk](http://thegreysheep.co.uk) or Instagram at [@thegreysheepco](https://www.instagram.com/thegreysheepco)



## More Lambing 'Tails'

Author: Linda Scurr

**A little knowledge is a dangerous thing! When I put my Manx Loaghtan sheep together with a Shetland ram last year I had some beautiful black lambs. These lambs slowly turned brown and the sun bleached the tips a nice caramel colour. So far so good. I wanted brown fleeces.**

The brown colouring started to turn a slightly unusual brownish colour which I discovered was called Moorit.

My lightbulb moment was realising that there is a breed of sheep called Castlemilk Moorit. Castlemilks were a breed created by Sir John Buchanan Jardine in the 1900's by crossing Manx ewes with a Shetland ram with a hint of Mouflon. Mouflon being thought to be the

founding sheep for so many modern day sheep. Castlemilks were bred to look good on his estate in Dumfriesshire.

What I didn't know was that in order to get a nice brown colour you need to use a brown Shetland ram. Geoffrey our darling ram is not brown and has stamped his mark on his offspring as they slowly take on a silvery colouration just like their Dad. By the time you read this we will hopefully have finished lambing and will have another crop of lambs that also won't stay brown.

We planned our lambing very carefully but Geoffrey had plans of his own and broke loose in the winter to meet up with some of our elderly ewes. To our surprise Maxine, one of our favourite ewes who should have been old enough to know better, gave birth to Buster, an adorable cuddly and very friendly little lamb.



# Craft Socials

## Weavers' Chat

The Guild weavers normally meet at Speen Parish Hall, Newbury, RG14 1RJ on the 4th Saturday of the month.

It is called "Weavers' Chat" but braiders are welcome with inkles, marudai etc and lace makers with pillows, as these are all forms of weaving.

All Guild members are very welcome to come along to see what we are doing and find out what weaving is all about.

All meetings run from 9.30am -1.30pm.

Subs: £4.00 towards the hall hire fee.

Dates for 2026:

June 27th, July 25th, September 26th, October 24th all 9.30-1.30 and November 28th 9.30-4.30.

Please let me know if you are coming so that there is enough milk, biscuits and maybe cake!

Many thanks.

**Rosie Price.**

## Aldbourn Braid Days

Dates for 2026 are June 7th, August 16th, October 4th and December 6th. All are Sundays.

The cost is £8.00 per head per day. Biscuits, cake and hot drinks are provided free of charge.

Contact Sally before coming to check availability, or speak to her at Guild.

Aldbourn Memorial Hall SN8 2DQ

For info please contact Sally Shepherd.

## Moulsford Spinning & Craft Group

We meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month at Moulsford Pavilion from 6.30pm - 10pm.

There are usually spinners, weavers, felters, a basketmaker and knitters there so do come and join us.

Moulsford Pavilion, The Street, Moulsford, OX10 9JD


**For info, contact Linda Scurr or Rosie Price.**

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## Newbury Crafters

Newbury Crafters normally meet on the 3rd Saturday of every month at Speen Parish Hall, Newbury, RG14 1RJ from 2 - 5 pm. Come along to this social afternoon with your own craft project and meet people with other craft interests for an exchange of ideas.

**For more details contact Sue Davies.**



**The copy deadline for the September issue of The Shuttle is Monday 7th September 2026.**

**Please send your articles about Guild talks, workshops, your weaving, spinning and dyeing projects, travels, yarn, fibre and subjects that you think would interest Guild members to Nicky Duncan at [kvshuttleeditor@gmail.com](mailto:kvshuttleeditor@gmail.com)**

**Photos should be high resolution and sent as separate files.**

**Many thanks!**

**Front and back cover images:  
Natural dyed skeins by  
Kim Wakeham.**