



The Shuttle

September 2026

kennet-valley-guild.com



@kennetvalleyguild

Kennet Valley Guild Officials 2026

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KVG Committee & Vice-Chairman

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KVG Committee & Demonstrations Secretary

Linda Scurr

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KVG Committee & Guild Equipment Coordinator

Hollie Gavin

KVG Committee & Guild Equipment Coordinator

Kat Holmes

KVG Committee & Guild Equipment Coordinator

Trixie Holmes

Show and Tell Coordinator

Jennifer Thompson

Trophies Coordinator

Jennifer Thompson

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KVG Committee & Website / Facebook / Zoom Chats

Nicky Duncan

The Shuttle Editor

Nicky Duncan

Safeguarding CPO and Guild Librarian

Sue Davies

Kennet Valley Guild Officials 2026

Programme Secretary - Speakers & Workshops

Position vacant

As you all know, this is a vital role within the Guild and we're enormously grateful to Anne and Jennifer for their hard work that has set us up with speakers and activities until March 2027.

As a job sharing role (for 2 or 3) everyone in the Guild benefits from the extra enthusiasm, skills and knowledge of our core subjects.

For the prospective job sharers, there's always someone to help out when other commitments get in the way and the joy of going out together

to discover options for speakers and activities. If you do a lot of courses and are often out and about meeting new people and learning new things, you could be just who we're looking for. If you belong to other Guilds or organisations whose speakers you have admired, you can book them for our Members to enjoy.

Anne and Jennifer are very willing to show you the ropes and the ways that they worked together to make everything happen.

Can you help?

If you're a team player and would like to get involved please let Linda know.

E: kvgchairman@gmail.com

Guild meeting dates for your diary 2026

Sat 5th September / Guild Meeting

AM & PM: A social day.

Sat 3rd October / Guild Meeting

The previously cancelled dyeing activities will be happening at this meeting.

More info to be announced.

Sat 7th November / Guild Meeting

AM: Social

PM: Our speaker is block printer and designer Sarah Burns. Find out more about Sarah on her web site:

sarahburnspatterns.com/

**Please wear
your name
badge!**

Chair's Chat

Hello Everyone,

So much has happened since I last sat down to write Chairman's Chat for the June issue of the Shuttle.

Edel gave an excellent talk at our June meeting. He told us how his spinning has evolved as a result of Covid and how he discovered a love of working with wood and now demonstrates and sells his home made spindles at festivals. Great respect Edel. I know just how hard it is doing festivals; the set up and the take down of stalls with full on interaction with the public in between.

July saw a return visit by Joyce Meader. It is always a pleasure to listen to Joyce and see all the wonderful historical garments she has made over the years.

Due to lack of take up, the planned August Dyeing in the Churchyard has been postponed until October (tbc depending on interest). A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to organise and run events such as this - please support the organisers by signing up and getting involved.

At the August meeting, it was wonderful to watch the abridged version of the making of the Newbury Coat, kindly supplied by Lynne. It was emotional to watch for a number of reasons, firstly, it was nice to revisit the weekend and secondly, sad to see so many of the Guild treasures who are no longer with us. The success of the Newbury Coat project was down to over 100 volunteers taking part in the washing, spinning, dyeing and sewing of the coat. The future of the Guild relies on its members becoming involved in all aspects of Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing and supporting workshops, the upcoming exhibition and each other to ensure the core skills survive.

On a personal note, I have been very busy. We had a very successful lambing. 8 beautiful little lambs. A total shock was the unexpected arrival of another lamb on the 2nd of August and another ewe looks wide enough to be carrying twins. Our darling ram Geoffrey has a lot to answer for. I have resumed sleeping in my van lamb guarding and being bitten by midges!

Part of the Guild's ethos is to promote and educate the core skills of weaving, spinning and dyeing and demonstrations are an important way for us to do this. It's also a good way of recruiting new members. Southern Wool and Newbury Show are two of our largest events locally. But all demonstrations are a great way to spend a day relaxing with Guild members you may be too busy to chat to at the Guild meetings.

Chair's Still Chatting

I was lucky enough to be invited by Lynne, Jenn, Anne and Jenny to take part in an exhibition at the Richard Jefferies museum in Swindon. People may be wondering why so far away from Newbury but the reality is that many of our members live outside the area and over 10% of our members are down that way. Some people are even further away down South and up North.

I managed to finish my entries for the Royal Welsh Show well in advance this year and spent a very pleasant week with Guild member Syd in Wales. I was happy to come away with rosettes for both sheep's fleeces and handicrafts. I have already started on my entries for next year. We managed to squeeze in a visit to a waffle factory and catch up with my Weaver Cerri while there. Plus of course a visit to LLangrannog for fish and chips on the beach.

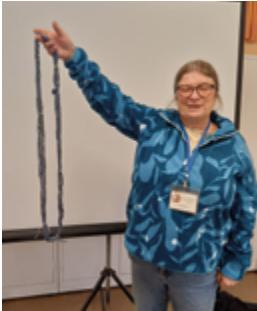
Please continue to support your Guild by signing up for workshops, demonstrating, entering the competitions, committee and event roles and coming forward with your ideas on how to keep the Guild moving forward in a positive way.

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



Welcome to the world new lamb,
Meety - short for meteorite and
not short for lamb chops!

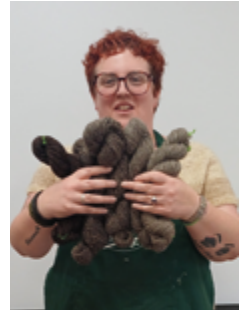
Show & Tell June & July 2026



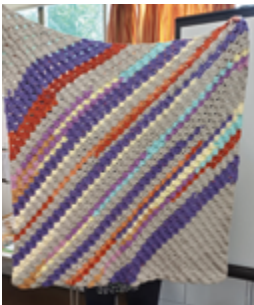
Syd's small skein of yarn spun at a spinning course at 'The Spinning Barn'.



Kat showing her latest dyeing experiments. Red from madder, blue from indigo and the green skein is an indigo, pomegranate and alkanet combination.



Trixie's skeins spun from Harting Black sliver which had a gradient to it, making a fade set.



Sally presents her corner to corner crochet blanket for Ukraine, made with a magic ball of aran yarn created from the Guild charity bag.



Trixie showing her first heddle loom weaves.



Maureen sporting her tartan inspired, woven scarf.



Hollie showing a selection of her recent nãlbindings. Impressive work for a beginner!

August Show & Tell 2026



Jenny showing her display boards from the recent Five Friends & Fibre exhibition at Richard Jeffries Museum, Swindon.



Chris with the first length of her woven fabric which is going towards a garment for herself.

Charity News - Dickie Pattern

Meg recently redesigned a pattern for a knitted Dickie. It's going to get very cold in Ukraine soon! If you would like to have a go at one of these cosy ribbed neck and chest warming knits, please ask Meg for the pattern and yarn information.



Charity News 2026

Ukraine Effort

All of this will be going at the end of the month to the group in Huddersfield who deliver aid to Ukraine.

My grandson and I were amazed when we laid it out at how much you had made. Thank you so much!

With winter coming it's all much needed. It was -25° last winter with no heating or light. There will also be a large box of paracetamol, sanitary

towels, paper handkerchiefs, nappies etc. The car will be pretty full.

For new members. We have been making things like this for the last ten years. We used to send to Christian Hope International and our things went to Syria and Afghanistan and other areas helping refugees from war torn areas of the world.

The blankets are made from 6" squares, 38" for knee rugs and 48" for blankets.

Rosie



Would you like to join in with our Charity Project?

Grab a ball of DK wool and a pair of 4mm needles and get knitting!

The pattern is really simple.

Cast on 2 sts.

Knit 2sts

Knit into front and back of 1st st, knit next st. 3sts.

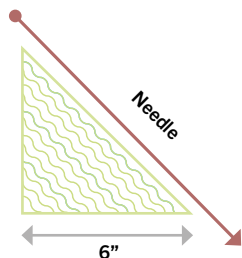
Knit into front and back of 1st st, knit to end. 4 sts.

Repeat the last row until the side edge of your triangle measures 6".

Next row: k2tog, knit to end.

Repeat the last row until you have 4 sts remaining.

K2tog twice, pass 1st over 2nd and fasten off.



There you go, one 6 inch square knitted! Easy, isn't it?

Please note: Not all DK yarns are equal, so please, always check the size of your squares as you knit.

Please darn in all ends on your squares, it helps us to get them made up into knee rugs or blankets quicker.

Meg can provide you with a printed version of this pattern.



Last week I took these to the hospital in Reading and the volunteers there were really pleased to receive them.

The knee rugs will enable them to get the elderly patients out of bed which will aid their recovery.

The little hats go to the Buscot ward for premature babies.

A very big thank you.

Rosie

Royal Berkshire NHS donations



Have a look at the RBH donations leaflet pdf to see what else they currently need and contact details. You can help so easily by getting your knitting needles or crochet hooks out.

It's on the RESOURCES page on the KVG web site.

Trophy News - get inspired and have go!

Hi Everyone,

Some information about trophies for October, November and December.

Historically the Hawkridge and Diddy trophies were in alternate years. For information for newer members the Diddy trophy is presented by Meg in memory of her mum. The Hawkridge trophy is presented by Jill and was instigated by her father in law. Last year there were no entries for the Diddy trophy so this year we will be holding competitions for both and revert to alternate years next year.



October: The Hawkridge Trophy is for ANY item made from Jacob fleece. If I remember correctly Jill's father in law wasn't convinced that anything could be made from Jacob so we just had to prove him wrong!

October: the Diddy Trophy is for an item knitted from handspun fibre and must contain cable/Aran patterns.



Meg's Mum enjoyed cable/ Aran knitting. This year Meg would like you to knit something to be worn on the leg or foot.



November: we have the Dyers' Trophy. This is a very open competition. Any item, any form of dyeing. E.g. natural, chemical, eco, cyanotype, sun, flower pounding, ice, resist, Shibori or any other type of dyeing you have been trying. We would love to see it.

December: we have our Christmas Fashion Show. Wear anything you have spun, woven, dyed, knitted, etc. it can be as simple as a skein worn around your neck or a complete spun, woven, knitted, dyed garment or anything in between. The fashion show is one of the highlights of our Christmas meeting and, dare I say, second only to the bring and share lunch!

Please do participate in one or more of our trophy competitions. We love to see our member's talents displayed.

Thank you, Jennifer.

Getting to know ewe - Hollie Gavin

Guild Member since 2023 and newly appointed KVG Committee Member

Core / shareable skills:

Spinning (wheel and drop spindle), Peg Loom Weaving, Nålbinding, and very basic knitting.

A little about me: I'm a 44-year-old married mum of two boys, aged 10 and 13, living in Hermitage. By day, I work in risk governance for commercial banking, so I enjoy being as creative as possible outside of work. My other hobbies include collecting Pokémon cards, listening to very loud heavy metal music, and being a full-time taxi service for football, rugby, and band practice! While I enjoy many crafts, wool spinning is my favourite. I also love a good chat, so please do come and say hello at Guild meetings or events.

What attracted me to KVG:

Shortly after losing my Grandma, who was a talented seamstress, knitter, and passionate supporter of heritage wool crafts, I saw Linda and Rosie demonstrating at a Berkshire Young Farmers event. Having always loved textile arts and heritage crafts, I was immediately drawn to the rhythmic motion of the spinning wheel and the beauty of a traditional wheel.

Linda gave me a warm welcome and encouraged me to visit the Guild. I'm so glad I did. From the start, I was met with friendly faces, encouragement, and advice that helped me begin my spinning journey.



In the few years I've been a member, I've had the privilege of representing KVG at demonstrations and sharing the craft with others. Although my yarn is far from perfect, I was incredibly proud to win the 2025 Beginners' Trophy for a skein of silk. I know my Grandma would have been proud too.

For me, spinning is relaxing, almost meditative, and it helps me feel connected to my Grandma. It's quite an emotional craft, and I'm so grateful to KVG and its members for the kindness and support they've shown me along the way Patch this October.

Projects / work in progress:

I'm currently getting to used to my recently acquired Ashford Joy and spinning up some Blue-Faced Leicester wool (what this will be used for I don't know!) and busy Nalbinding pumpkins for Berkshire Farm Girl's Pumpkin Patch in October.

Getting to know ewe - Kat Holmes

Guild Member since October 2024 and newly appointed KVG Committee Member

Core / shareable skills:

Inkle loom (very recently & still learning) natural dying, basic Nålbinding, knitting, crochet, some weaving.

A little about me: I'm a 43 year old bookshop manager for Waterstones, who owns way too many books! (No seriously, one day they might kill me) I'm married to Trixie and we have two trolls (erm daughters) and a house full of fibre, looms, spinning wheels and enough natural dye stuff to make sure nothing fibre stays white for long! I have two cats, one called Adrian who has cat-attitude (the cat not me....) and one called Flash.

I love all sorts of crafts and love learning new ones, anything to be able to fall down another rabbit hole!

What attracted me to KVG:

Its all Rosie and Hollie's fault!

Trixie, who was determined to learn how to spin sought out the guild at the southern wool show where we met Hollie and Rosie, who were both so friendly and enthusiastic that they encouraged us to come along to a Guild meeting.

I'm very glad we took her advice. From the moment we walked through the door, we were made to feel genuinely welcome. Everyone was happy to share their knowledge, offer practical tips and there's always



someone who can help and lend advice.

Projects / work in progress:

I have three inkle looms set up and ready to go, but only one shuttle, Doh! I'll soon be putting that right at the wool show.

Three stranded knitting projects, because I clearly love casting on and not continuing the project haha!

And because I think I'm possibly mad, I do blame Sue (only joking) I've just bought these teeny tiny double pointed needles that look like porcupine quills, to learn latvian knitting.

Getting to know ewe - Trixie Holmes

Guild Member since October 2024 and newly appointed KVG Committee Member

Core / shareable skills:

Spinning on a wheel, crochet, knitting and double knitting. Learning to weave, but not a teachable level... YET!.

A little about me: I'm a 42-year-old Mum of 2 girls and 2 cats. My girls are 20 and 18 and are not interested in wool in the slightest, but I'm also married to Kat and she's as wool loving as me.

I love nothing more than sitting by an open window whilst it's raining, sorry Summer but I'm not a fan, and spinning quietly. I am partial to a blanket whilst knitting or a history audiobook whilst doing anything! Oh and some Percy Pigs.. thank you, M&S!

Fun fact about me: I can get lost coming out of a toilet and my youngest has had to guide me around central London after only being there once herself. She is now my sat nav.

What attracted me to KVG:

I saw a woman online spinning and went, ooooooh that's a bit of me! I ended up saying to my family enough times how I wanted to learn to spin because it looked like fun. Cue my 40th birthday and there's an antique wheel and a box of raw wool! Steep learning curve later, plus getting a lovely second-hand Ashford Traditional called Daisy and I was off!



A couple of jumpers down and my house is now awash with wheels, looms and so much wool! Not to mention the fleeces.. shhhhh... we don't talk about the fleeces...

Projects / work in progress:

I'm currently losing my mind over a double knitted scarf, knitting some colour work socks and trying to turn my enormous stash of fibre into something resembling wool on my wheel! I'm also very lucky to have a new Rigid Heddle loom, name incoming, so I'm about to warp up another scarf because Christmas is coming and present making season is go go go!

Visit to Farfield Mill

Author: Julie Fraser

In July I spent a week in Cumbria to see old University friends. We had some lovely walks in the Eden Valley and one day visited Farfield Mill in Sedbergh.

The original spinning mill was built in 1836/7 by Joseph Dover, along with some workers' cottages. By 1857, local press reported that the mill employed two hundred knitters from nearby villages. In 1909 the original mill was heavily damaged by fire with only the walls remaining. It was rebuilt in 1911 and since then it has been used in many ways including spinning carpet wool, requisitioned in 1940 to make crankshafts for aeroplanes, and Pennine Tweed was woven there between 1976 and 1992, when the mill then closed for business. In 1993 the Sedbergh and District Preservation Trust was set up to preserve the mill. In 2001 Farfield Mill Arts and Heritage Centre was opened.

The mill has a museum which holds old spinning and weaving equipment, including the Witney loom, which was donated to Farfield Mill when Witney blanket weavers Charles Early & Co. went into liquidation in 2002. It is thought to date from 1702.



The Attic floor, once the fleece sorting area, now has a large working space for local weavers to come and work, together with individual units rented to local artists – weavers, spinners, dyers, felters, quilters and printmakers, amongst many others.

A lower floor has items for sale from local artists and an exhibition space which had a beautiful exhibition from the ArtyBird Carnforth School for Art & Textiles – Glimpses of the Bay.

If you are passing the area on your travels, it is well worth a visit to see the historical mill, book

yourself onto a course, see beautiful crafts and have a delicious lunch

farfieldmill.org

Our raison d'être - demonstrating Guild core skills...

... and having a lot of fun doing it!



Kennet Valley Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers, presents:

TRADITIONAL FIBRE CRAFTS - *in action!*

Get ready to share your passion! We've officially booked our venue for next year's event, and we are gearing up for a vibrant, hands-on, 3-week celebration of traditional crafts at the historic Greenham Control Tower!

Total creative freedom: show what YOU love!

We want this showcase to reflect the true heart of our Guild, which means there is NO set theme.

Whether you're a complete beginner sharing your very first finished piece or a seasoned expert showing off a master project, your work matters. We want the public to see the incredible variety of talent at every level.

KVG core disciplines

As long as your piece features weaving, spinning, or dyeing (or a blend!), it belongs in this show.

Anything goes

Spun skeins, dyed fabrics (cotton, silk, felt), custom

yarns, sample weaves, cosy blankets, hand-spun knits, intricate braids, mobiles, lace work... if you made it and love it, we want to show it off!

Love a theme?

Feel free to design your piece around your own personal theme - or just create a piece purely for the joy of it!

Need a little Inspiration?

Check out the article on pages 19-21 highlighting the recent show by Five Friends & Fibre (Linda, Lynne, Jennifer, Jenny, and Anne) at the Richard Jefferies Museum! Their brilliant range of work is a fantastic example of what we're aiming for. Plus, the Five Friends are very

happy to chat and share closer looks at their pieces to get your creative juices flowing!

Interactive weekend demos

Over three action packed weekends, we'll be bringing our crafts to life with live demonstrations!

Hands-on

Visitors will be able to try spinning, weaving, braiding, nålbinding, and drop spindling.

Kids activities

We'll have 'fill-the-gap' cards for the children to have some fun with.

Space!

The Greenham Tower team has generously offered us a second room if we need it, so we'll have



all the space we need for interactive activities.

Greenham Common, home to the Control Tower

Greenham Common has a fascinating history and it was a USA air base until 1992 when the nuclear missiles were finally removed. The Women's Peace Camp will endure in history for evermore.

It belongs to West Berks Council, and the land is managed by BBOWT. It's a wonderful place for easy walking with wide and accessible paths and is a designated site of special scientific interest (SSSI).

The common evolves and changes throughout the seasons so there's always something interesting to see like the Exmoor ponies and cattle that graze the heath.

The footfall at Greenham is high and varied. Lots of people come for dog walking, historic interest and there's a Park Run every Saturday.



The Café sells drinks, delicious cakes and other eats to help you keep your strength up!

Join the KVG Traditional Fibre Crafts - in action! Committee

To make this event an absolute triumph, we need YOU on the team! We are putting together a dedicated TFCIA Committee to help bring this vision to life.

Whether you're great at organising displays, managing logistics, spreadsheets, spreading the word, or helping co-ordinate weekend demos, your skills will make a world of difference.

If you're a historian we would love to hear from you to help with the factual content for the Weaving,

Spinning, Dyeing and Fleece to Fibre display boards. These will be used for other events so we need them to be 100% accurate.

This is a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with fellow members, share ideas, and be at the heart of the action.

We welcome job collaborations so if you and a friend (or two) would like to get involved together to share the work, please contact Linda at kvgchairman@gmail.com or Nicky at kvgwebmaster@gmail.com or 0772 555 4987 for information.

Let's fill the space with colour, texture, and craftsmanship. It's going to be fun!



Jenny

Linda

Lynne

Jenn

Anne



Anne, Linda, Lynne, Jenny and Jenn have enjoyed demonstrating at various events at Richard Jefferies Museum over the years. They have great music and cream tea events on Sundays during the Summer and others such as the steam weekend and apple pressing day in the Autumn.

Apart from its standard displays, which are all very interesting, they have one room which is kept as a display space for exhibitions, and they have a different exhibition each month. We have always enjoyed going upstairs to this space



to look at the various exhibitions while we demonstrated our skills in a gazebo in the grounds.

In spring this year Jenny was asked if our team would like to hold an exhibition in their space during July. We all discussed the matter and



decided that we would say yes. All of us felt honoured and flattered that they would actually ask us to do this. Careful consideration was given to the format of

the exhibition, and, in the end, we decided that we would each follow our own interests. A group name also seemed like a good way of creating a unit identity, and after some brainstorming, we came up with the name 'Five Friends and Fibre' which seemed to completely describe our group.

Our individual preferences resulted in an exhibition in which our core skills of spinning, weaving and dyeing were clearly evident, while showing our different approaches to those skills. Interestingly this gave a resulting display that both showed our individuality, but also had a continuity that visitors seemed to appreciate.

When Jenny was deciding what she could display she thought of what a person coming into the room might like to see and came up with 'How to make a scarf'. She included the notes that she made for later reference, wound shuttles, the threads used and the completed scarf. The natural world is what the Richard Jefferies museum is all about so the stick woven snails and dragonflies were an obvious choice and the woven willow antlers that Linda found at Thatcham Family Day were perfect for displaying them.



Jennifer found that the exhibition was a great opportunity to show not only the skills she'd learned since joining Guild, but others acquired during the

whole of her life.

Her Nan taught her to knit when she was 5 and, by 10, was knitting jumpers for both her and her sister.

Her Nan had been a tailoress so Jenn

would take a length of fabric and take it to her Nan who would make a pattern according to a picture. Jenn would go home and sew, making most of her clothes and

a lot of her sister's too. Through the years learning to crochet, make lace, tat, dye, spin, weave and embroider all enabled her to enhance clothes and other items made for her, her sister, her children and her

grandchildren. Some of the items made through the years were displayed in the exhibition.

Anne and Jennifer also displayed the various results of natural dyeing,

with some dye plants and also their interest in historic textiles.

Linda has her own flock of sheep and enjoys using their fleeces both in natural colours and dyed. As Jenn and Anne were displaying dyed wool Linda focused on the full range of natural colours by having a display of

different coloured and textured skeins, hand woven scarves and a felt picture. She also had a row of felt bowls in complimentary colours.

Lynne concentrated on the use of hand spun yarn for weaving and embroidering, showing some of the embroideries that have been done for past Guild exhibitions, but also a new one, which had been designed with the 2025 exhibition in mind, but was only completed just the week before we set up at Richard Jefferies!

During the Weekend days that the museum was open we demonstrated our skills outside, while we rotated the task of sitting in the exhibition room to explain the exhibits to the visitors.

To sit under a gazebo in the copse with the miniature railway running alongside was a very relaxing experience. People from all walks of life wandered round the garden, listening to music, eating cream teas and coming over to chat about all manner of subjects including our crafts.

Our demonstration marquee in the copse was a place that we could encourage people to have a go at an activity that we had on display in the museum. One person, after having a go at doing some weaving on the



Samplelt loom, was so intrigued by weaving that she came back to see us on all three Sundays. The last day she brought her friend along.

Another lady came the first week and was asking about Lacemaking (one of the items was a bobbin lace scarf) she was hoping we'd be

demonstrating that as well as she was trying to teach herself and was having problems. We said we could do so the following week if she was able to return – she was! Lynne had to rush

to put something on a lace pillow to demonstrate, and the following Saturday ended up giving a bobbin lace tutorial, along with the more usual weaving demonstration.

As usual we had a lot of young people who came and had a go at completing a Fill the Gap braid.



It was a lovely exhibition at a very friendly venue. Talking with visitors to the exhibition was, as always, a pleasure. Lots of people were genuinely interested and left nice comments in the visitors' book. It was good fun.

Anne Reddan, Linda Scurr, Lynne Harper, Jennifer Thompson and Jenny Gribble

East Ilsley Sheep Fair

Author: Hollie Gavin



Earlier this year, I was contacted to ask whether any members of our Guild would be interested in demonstrating at the East Ilsley Sheep Fair. Myself—a spinner of just a few years—Trixie, who has been spinning for two years, and our highly skilled Chairperson, Linda, had the absolute honour of attending. We were the first wool spinners to take part in the fair for some 60 years!

The East Ilsley Sheep Fair is steeped in history. Established by at least the 13th century, it developed as a key trading centre on historic drovers' routes across the Berkshire Downs, where large flocks were brought for sale. Its significance grew alongside England's medieval wool economy, with sheep valued not only for meat but especially for their fleeces, which formed a vital raw material for the country's thriving textile trade. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the fair was one of the largest in southern England, with thousands of sheep traded—supplying fleece that would be shorn, spun into wool, and processed for both domestic use and export. Although its role as a commercial livestock market

declined in the 20th century, due to changes in transport and agriculture, the fair has since been revived as a heritage event, celebrating the area's longstanding connections to sheep farming, fleece production, and the wider spinning tradition.

We were delighted to offer both wheel and drop spindle demonstrations to engaged fair-goers of all ages, promoting our Guild and championing the use of British wool—this most wonderful and versatile commodity. We met a number of individuals who are now keen to visit the Guild and see what we are all about, highlighting just how important demonstrations are in welcoming new members and helping to sustain the traditional crafts of spinning, weaving, and dyeing.



The day was fantastic, with everything one would hope for in a traditional village fair: maypole dancers, folk singers and live music, a produce tent, traditional games, and, of course, a tempting array of homemade bakes alongside a well-supported BBQ and bar. With the added bonus of my sheep bunting made from rare breed wool placing first and Linda and I both winning brilliant prizes on the raffle!

Oxford Regional day

Hamish is a member of the Knitting and Crochet Guild (KCG) and normally attends the Reading branch which meets on the second Saturday of the month but there is another nearby branch at Oxford. Unfortunately for Hamish this branch meets on the first Saturday of the month, the same day as Kennet Valley Guild. Oxford does, however, hold an annual Regional Day and in early July Hamish attended this event. This year it was held at St Anne's College. The day consists of a keynote speaker, some short talks and, after lunch, workshops.

The 2026 keynote speaker was Alison Ellen (author and knitwear designer) whose topic was "Fibres, Materials and Stitches". Her talk explored how both knitted stitches and different fibres can shape fabrics and enable garments to be made seamlessly. Alison also illustrated this with slides as well as physical examples showing how these can suit everyone. She ended with a question and answer session.



The first of the short talks was "Pattern and Place" from Emma Vining (author whose designs are featured regularly in The Knitter and Knitting magazine) who took her visit to St John's College at last year's Regional Day as inspiration. Emma showed us how the architecture and gates she saw on a walk through the campus inspired her designs including the Beehive Shawl (on Ravelry) which was inspired by the students accommodation building.

Carolyn McKee (joint editor of the KCG's magazine Slipknot) then talked to us about "Becoming a Master Knitter". She decided to follow the Knitting Guild Association's Master Hand Knitting Program. This programme is through America's Knitting Guild and Carolyn talked

us through what it involved and what she learned along the way. Again she showed us slides and examples of her work. Hamish was stunned at the amount and quality of the work required in order to complete the programme.

The final talk was by Dr Jim Nicolle (Oxford Biocolours) who posed the

question “Why are most colours still made from polluting chemicals”. Dr Nicolle and his colleague Dr Darren Leneghan, both biochemists, have been researching plant based dyes that can truly replace synthetic dyes producing colours that are colour fast, don’t run in the wash or rely on toxic chemicals. Oxford Biocolours is the yarn company that has resulted from this research and after the talk Hamish headed to see the yarns produced and squish them.

oxfordbiocolours.com

After a buffet lunch the attendees had a choice of five pre booked workshops to attend: Knitting two socks at a time with Alison Brindle, Exploring knitting stitches for shaping with Alison Ellen, How to make a chart for your design in the direction

you choose with Lesley O’Connell Edwards, Brioché Crochet and short row techniques with Jacky Ridgill, Kihnu (Estonian) colourwork with Rachel Lemon. It was the last of these that Hamish chose to tackle and he set to work with three colours of Estonian yarn - similar to Shetland - and five 2mm double pointed needles. Sadly time was limited so Hamish only managed about 7 rounds of the wrist warmers that were the example but he tried a few more of the patterns with which Rachel supplied us when he got home.

Hamish thoroughly enjoys these Regional Days and takes the opportunity to try new techniques as well as to meet up with friends some of whom travel great distances to be there.



From Hospitality to Handcrafted Spindles

Author: Sue Carter



Our 6th June meeting treated us to a fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable talk from one of our

own Guild members, Edel Izquierdo. His story revealed a remarkable journey of creativity, resilience and a willingness to embrace new opportunities wherever they appear.

Edel kindly shared how his love of making, nature and traditional crafts has developed over the years, taking him from a career in hospitality to life as a craftsman. Along the way, we were treated to wonderful photographs, entertaining stories and a glimpse into a lifestyle that I could only dream of.

Edel was born in Granada, Spain and moved to the UK eleven years ago, he grew up with knitting in the background, thanks to his grandmother's ever-busy needles. However, it wasn't until much later that he discovered fibre crafts for himself.

In 2019, while working in hospitality, Edel accompanied his partner, Hannah Green, to the Newbury Drunken Knitwits. There he began learning to crochet, creating delightful amigurumi animals, moths and

bugs using patterns from @lalylala_amigurumi. He brought along some of his creations to show us and they were absolutely lovely, complete with tiny clothes and wonderful details. The frog was a particular favourite!

These days, Edel spins his own yarn, knits with it, and is learning the many skills involved in preparing, dyeing and processing fleece.

In 2019, Edel decided to leave hospitality and join Hannah, a puppeteer, in her creative work. Through working with Hannah, he discovered how much he enjoyed making things with his hands, particularly working with metal.

One of their early projects together was creating a giant squid lantern for 101 Outdoor Arts in Newbury. Since then, they have been involved in an impressive range of projects. Working with artist Anna Berry, they helped create the remarkable Breathing Room installation; they are part of the team setting up the Christmas lights at Kew Gardens; they have made giant fish from recycled CDs to hang in festival trees; and they have created props for children's shows exploring the cycle of life which involved designing props that could all fit neatly into a single case for easy transportation.

Then, in February 2020, everything changed. The arrival of Covid and the subsequent lockdowns brought many projects to an abrupt halt. With work cancelled and income reduced,



Hannah and Edel had to think creatively about how to earn a living.

Fortunately, creativity is something they have in abundance. Hannah had inherited her grandfather's woodworking tools, and Edel began teaching himself new skills. He started making miniature models and games from reclaimed and recycled wood to sell at craft fairs. Around the same time, he discovered a video by Allan Brown about spinning nettle fibre and decided to give it a try. True to form, he even made his own spindle from branches and twine! While the nettle-spinning experiment may not have been an overwhelming success, his willingness to tackle new challenges certainly was. He has also experimented with spinning donkey fibre – something many of us had never even considered!

Edel's spindle-making and workshop business really

began in 2022, almost by accident. Hannah was working as Stage Manager at FolkEast in Suffolk and Edel asked the organisers whether he could bring along some of his handmade spindles and perhaps demonstrate spinning to interested visitors. At that point, he was still very much learning the craft himself.

The response was fantastic. Visitors loved having a go at spinning fleece, and although he only took four handmade spindles with him, he sold three of them as demand was high. Recently, he met a lady who had purchased one of those original spindles and was still using it!

Over the past few years, Edel has demonstrated at numerous festivals and events. In 2026, you can find him at Woolly Weekend, Priddy Folk Festival, Green Gathering, FolkEast and Between the Trees. He has undoubtedly introduced spinning to a whole new audience.

Along the way, he has taught himself how to source, season and prepare wood according to its species and characteristics. He makes his own beeswax and linseed oil polish and, although he uses a lathe and bandsaw when needed, he much prefers working with traditional hand tools.

It was impossible not to come away feeling inspired by Edel and Hannah's story. Their determination to build a life centered on creativity, craftsmanship and a love of the natural world has clearly involved hard work, courage and no small amount of ingenuity.

The audience was captivated from start to finish, enjoying not only Edel's enthusiasm but also the fascinating insights into his many projects. His story was a wonderful reminder that new skills can be learned at any stage

of life and that sometimes the most rewarding journeys begin quite by accident.

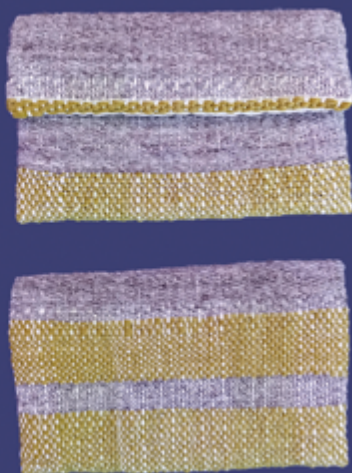
Our sincere thanks go to Edel for sharing his experiences so generously with us. We wish both him and Hannah every success in their future adventures and look forward to hearing where their creativity takes them next.

If you would like to see more of Edel's work, do take a look at his online shop, **Edelectic Crafts**. From beautifully crafted handmade spindles to nalbinding needles, crochet hooks, stitch markers and niddy-noddies, his creations reflect the same care, skill and attention to detail that shone through in his talk. The photographs alone are worth a visit, often capturing his work against some truly stunning landscapes.

Thank you!

I just wanted to say thank you Lynne and Rosie for your patience and care throughout my recent weaving course with you. Basic numeracy is, I'm now aware, helpful and something I always struggle with. However, with your encouragement and allowing myself a more, ' chuck it in and see' attitude, this little purse has to come to fruition.

Carrie Hinton



Westhope Weekend

Author: Lynne Harper

Westhope Craft College is in a small village in the Shropshire countryside, near Craven Arms. It is reached by a single track road and is a sanctuary of peace and quiet surrounded by a beautiful garden. The Braid Society hold their Weekend Retreat there, and this year I attended for the first time.

The session started on Friday evening with a barbeque at the bottom of the garden. There was a large marquee containing a selection of salads and desserts, while the barbeque itself was just outside. The food was excellent and boded well for similar excellent catering for all the meals to come.

There were two tutors for the weekend, and three half-day sessions. Jean Leader ran the two workshops on Saturday, involving two different braids from the Andes. The morning saw us learning how to make Andean Sling braids. This was interesting, and



relatively easy (compared with what was to follow!) One of the great points in their

favour was the lack of any equipment needed other than the yarn and a pair of scissors to cut the yarn. We only did the simplest version on the morning, but Jean left us with enough



instructions to take the next steps.

In the afternoon we tried another Andean braid, a ñavi awapa braid, or 'eyes on a cloth' braid. This was a lot more complicated and required very careful and detailed steps.

The resulting circular braid with 'eyes' look is very pleasing, but all of us attempting to follow the instructions found it a lot more difficult than the sling braid of the morning. Jean's instructions were excellent, and it was very much due to them that we managed to create the braid.



Sunday morning saw the third workshop, brocaded tablet weaving. This was led by Chas Field who is a Viking re-enactor, and he included information on the Viking's use of

braids in his session. This style of tablet weaving was different from that I was expecting. Normally I would expect patterns in a tablet woven to be caused by the differing colours in the warp. However, all of the warp threads were the same colour, and the pattern was achieved by a supplementary weft.

The workshops officially finished with Sunday lunch, but several of the attendees, including me, were staying over until the Monday morning. I spent the Sunday afternoon carrying on with the braids we had started earlier.



The weekend was great; good company, interesting crafts, superb food and the surroundings were inspiring, I certainly hope that I will get the chance to go again in the future.

I need to find Maureen!

Author: Trixie Holmes

A few weeks back I went to pick up a spinning chair from a woman on Facebook. I parted with my cash and was disappointed to find, I'm probably A, too fat and B, not from the 1800s, so the chair didn't work out for me. I now have it sitting sadly in a corner of my living room.



I digress.. the lady handed over the chair and asked me if I wanted a free loom or it was going to the tip. Well obviously I can't have that, so never having woven anything in my life, I said yes please and excitedly took it home with me.



Lucky for poor Maureen, I pinned her down at the next Guild meeting to see if she could check it over and make sure everything was there before I went any further. She was very helpful and agreed it was mostly all there and I just needed some bits that she could pick up for me on her next shopping trip!

As I was due to meet Maureen at **The Dene Rally in Ropley**, a couple of weeks later, she said I should bring

it along and we could see if we could warp it up.

I don't think she realised what she was letting herself in for!

So, I get to the rally on the Saturday morning and pull up to a random man in a high vis jacket. Instead of telling him I was there to exhibit and could he tell me where to go, I opened my window and just said, "*I'm looking for Maureen*". He looked at me quizzically, I panicked and proceeded to tell the poor man my life story, or what felt like it to him I'm sure! I again ended my story with, "*so I'm looking for Maureen?*"

Turns out I was talking to the wrong bloke! I needed to pull up to the next set of people and he couldn't help me at all! Amazing!



Up I go to the next set of people and, now starting to panic, I again just



look at someone and say, "*Please, can you help me find Maureen! She weaves things!*" He looked suitably confused and I just said in response, "*Maureen? She's an archaeologist?*" Like that would in any way help!

I began to feel for the man at this point as someone else had to come and try to get sense out of me! Turns out they knew who Maureen was so started to give me directions so I could find her and unload the car then park up later.

Anyone who knows me, knows I can get lost coming out of a toilet, so I was doomed from the start and I hadn't listened to a word he'd said to me as I was in full panic mode! Off I go, in what I hoped was the right direction..... it wasn't!

I ended up in with all the classic cars, almost ran over all the marker flags

and in an absolute panic called out to a poor woman and just said, ***“CAN YOU HELP ME FIND MAUREEN?!”***

I should have given up at this point, but she directed me over to where the rest of the craft people were. I drove off, two old men stared at me, I panicked... talking to myself the entire time at this point, and was waved down by another woman telling me I can't go this way, its a pedestrian route! What did I say back to her?! That's right, *“Sorry, do you know where Maureen is?”*

Eventually I parked the car, rang Maureen and carried my wheel and other bits in on foot. But this did lead to a moment where I'm clutching my wheel to my chest like a child with a teddy and this woman that tried to help me at the beginning asks me if I'm ok and do I need her to walk me to Maureen! I said,

“no thank you, she's meeting me here,” continuing to hug my wheel. She then nods at me like I have one brain cell, which at this point I can completely understand, and says she'll walk with me to find her.

After this hellish experience I actually had a lovely day, Maureen laughed at my ridiculousness and made me a tea. Suitably calmed down we spun some wool for a while before she taught me how to warp up my old loom and got me going on actually weaving! I cannot thank her enough for her patience and not shouting at me when I called it looming and not weaving for about the 5th time in a row!

Thanks Maureen! You're a legend.

Moral of the story...

I shouldn't be allowed to leave the house without Kat supervising me!

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:

September 26th, October 24th all 9.30-1.30 and our final meeting for 2026 is November 28th 9.30-4.30 with a shared lunch.

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

Many thanks.

Aldbourn Braid Days

Dates for 2026 are October 4th and December 6th. Both 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

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

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.



The copy deadline for
the December issue of
The Shuttle is Monday
9th November 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

Photos should be high resolution
and sent as separate files.

Many thanks!

Front and back
cover images:
Woven fabric
with twisted
fabric fringing.