



# PETERBOROUGH HANDWEAVERS' AND SPINNERS' GUILD

P.O. Box 781, PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO K9H 6X8

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2005

May/June

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

### ***YEAR END CELEBRATION***

This year, to celebrate of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary the Executive decided to host our annual luncheon at Kawartha Golf Club. To accommodate everyone's busy schedules and those who will be absent for the final meeting we have chosen to have our luncheon on Monday June 6<sup>th</sup> at noon. We have chosen a fixed meal – *Club Salad (grilled chicken breast on bed of mixed greens topped with bacon and grated cheese, dessert and tea/coffee)*. The cost will be \$13.00 per person.

Payment can be made at the May meeting or by **May 30<sup>th</sup>** to Pauline Fanning. Cheques should be made payable to Peterborough Handweavers' and Spinners Guild. There will be no refunds after May 30<sup>th</sup>. The Club requires a final attendance by June 1st.

The highlight of the luncheon will be our prize draw for Show & Tell and for our 50<sup>th</sup> "Gold" Challenge.

Hope to see everyone there.

### ***ANNUAL REPORTS***

We want to remind all committees that they must submit their annual reports to Pauline Fanning before the end of May.



“The Gathering” at Port Hope on April 27<sup>th</sup>

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

### ***Guild Meetings***

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at Kawartha Artists' Gallery, 729 Park St. S.  
Library opens for 7:00 pm and meetings start at 7:30 pm.  
Next scheduled meetings: May 16<sup>th</sup>

### ***Executive***

Tentatively August 30<sup>th</sup>. Time and Place TBA

### ***Spinning Groups***

*3rd Thursday Spinners* will meet at Lois's on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Shadow Weave***

Next meeting is Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> at Doris Huffman's.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### *May Meeting*

*Sliding Through the 70's*- slide show and archive display - Lois Watson & Mary Lavery

*Dye Workshop*. Presentation by Pat Eberle, Jo Mills and Deb Vanderniet.

*OHS Conference and Spin-in* - A brief report will be given from attendees.

*Carding Workshop*. Show and Tell of attendees at the carding workshop.

### *Down the Road*

May 12<sup>th</sup> – Silk Fusion at Barbara Burbidge's. Beginning at 1:30 to make items for Autumn Treasures. Bring small beads, button, etc. Confirm attendance with Barb at 743-8020.

August 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>–The Library will have some our 'Challenge' items on display. All Challenge items need to be brought to the June meeting or arrangements made with Marcia for drop-off by the end of July.

October 1<sup>st</sup>- 'Doors Open' Anniversary at Peterborough Armouries. display. Featuring organizations in Peterborough with significant birthdays. 10-4. Mary Lavery to advise.

October 15<sup>th</sup> – "Alpaca Workshop" with Nancy Carr of Silver Cloud Alpacas, presented by our Guild. See flyer included in this issue.

## LIBRARY

Because the June meeting will be off-site, the books you take out at the May meeting will not be due until September's meeting. If you want a book brought to the June luncheon for takeout over the summer let me know by phone (652-5077) and I will bring it to the luncheon.

Don't forget, you can photocopy something from a book at Staples and bring the book back for others to use.

Many thanks to Eleanor for her donation of "Feltwork" and to Pat for her donation of "Indigo Textiles". Valuable additions to the diversity of our library.



One Llama, 20-odd sheep and 8 Angora goats made up sheep-shearing day at Lynn Hasson's farm. Toss in the Llama's guardian donkey braying, lambs baaaaing for their mama's, and a baby goat trying to climb everything in sight, including us.... well it was not exactly quiet! Bill's sense of humour got us through the day.

## MEMBERSHIP

On behalf of the Guild I would like to thank Carole for her efforts with the membership list. However would all members to make sure the information listed is correct and advise Carole of any changes or additions. This list is the basis for Diane and myself to mail/e-mail the newsletter. Contact Carole at 743-4613.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

If anyone does not want to receive their newsletter by e-mail or would prefer to have a paper copy mailed as well please advise me.



To make sure articles get into the newsletter on time, submission dates should be the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month of the next issue. Submissions can be sent to me at 210 Carlisle Avenue, Peterborough, K9H 1J6, or you can e-mail your article to [jomillsjo@hotmail.com](mailto:jomillsjo@hotmail.com). You can also telephone me at 705-749-3323 and leave a message if I am not in.

## THE NIDDY NODDY COLUMN

### *Is Your Niddy in a Noddy?*

Thanks for all who contributed to this season's Niddy Noddy column. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the June meeting for our next season.



### **My Journey...Fibre, Friends and Livestock!**

By Meg Russell

It all began about 10 years ago with an episode of the Carol Duvall Show about making felted mittens. I was amazed! No knitting, no special skill required, just raw wool. How hard could it be? Cool! All I needed was to find some rovings or better yet a wool-producing animal.

A trip to the Norwood Fair introduced me to a flock of Angora goats that were for sale. My first critters! Nine bred does found their way to our farm that Thanksgiving weekend. They were unbelievably cute but I soon discovered that mohair doesn't felt particularly well. No problems – I would just have to buy a sheep or two. After a little research my husband and I learned that Rambouillet sheep grew wool that would be perfect for felting. Dear hubby found a sheep breeder, Allison Brown, who had a Rambouillet ewe for sale. "Rambo" was my Christmas present that year and I was introduced to the world of spinning. Allison was kind enough to show me the art of hand spinning and even let me try her wheel for a few minutes. I was hooked. I had to get a spinning wheel.

Somehow my husband found Mary Johnson and a Louet wheel found its way to our house (Barb Burbidge's old wheel). Mary was so kind and patient with her advice...."mohair is kind of slippery to start with"- "Rambouillet is kind of fine to start with"- "maybe you should start with some prepared rovings first and work your way up to a raw fleece"- "Romney is a good fleece to start with". Did I listen? Of course not!

I started with my own raw kid mohair and worked up to the Rambouillet fleece. My hands ached from combing the kid mohair with a dog brush and Mary was right – it slid right out of my hands when I tried to spin it! The Rambouillet fleece really was good for felting. I felted an entire fleece when I washed it and ended up throwing it in the garbage! Undaunted I simply bought some Romney sheep. Why should I buy rovings when I could grow my own wool for free? Anyone who has ever raised livestock will appreciate that incredibly naïve logic.

Now I had lots of fleece and really had to figure out something to do with it. Class Connections offered a class on knitting thrummed slippers and mitts. I knew how to knit and purl (my Nana had taught me years ago) and thought this would be a great way to use up the 30 pounds of rovings I had just had processed at a mill out west. Anne Ramsay was the instructor and I had a ball! I've knitted many pairs of thrummed slippers and mitts and I still have a pound or two of the original rovings.

Still not happy with my attempts at spinning, I rented a spinning instruction video from Lois Potage at Gemini Fibres and things improved quickly. I was thrilled to see a spinning class offered at Class Connections and signed up with Lois Carter as the teacher. It was wonderful. I learned all kinds of spinning 'tips' and made two new friends – Deb Vanderniet and Lois. Feeling more confident about my spinning I soon attended a "Spin-In" at the Golden Plough. There I met Eileen Bowers who kindly shared one of the best bits of spinning advice I have ever received. She showed me how to pre-draft so that I wasn't always ending up with a fist full of short fibres and a sweaty palm. What sweetheart she was.

During a trip to The Black Lamb in Port Hope to sell a couple of my fleeces I noticed a beautiful triangular scarf/shawl. As luck would have it, Lori was taking names of people interested in learning how to make them with a cardboard loom. I signed up, spent a Saturday afternoon meeting members from the Port Hope area Guild at the instructor's farm on Lake Ontario and have since made hundreds of these little scarves and even taught a class on how to make them.

This winter Class Connections offered a course on introductory weaving using a Dorothy table loom. I had purchased Eileen Bower's loom earlier and with the help of instructor Elinor Iussa I learned enough to be a little less intimidated when looking at the 45" Fanny Loom I have sitting in my basement (someday I WILL put that thing together). During this class I met a young girl, Johanna, who is natural at all things fibre. She took to weaving immediately and is learning how to spin on my old Louet. And by the way Mary, I suggested Johanna start with prepared rovings, preferably Romney.

So here I am, ten years after watching that first Carol Duvall show and I still haven't made those felted mitts! The closest I have come is needle felting a little sheep and knit and felt mitts – not always on purpose! I'm so glad I watched that episode. I've made so many new friends and learned so many things. My husband and I count ourselves very fortunate to have made wonderful "sheep people" friends as well as my "fibre people" friends.

Funny how one little thing in life can take you on a long and wonderful journey.

## **A Book Review**

By Doris Huffman

The Lady and the Unicorn, by Tracy Chevalier (also the author of Girl with a Pearl Earring).

*As a spinner, weaver and dyer I found this book very interesting. It is a fictional tale about the making of six very large tapestries toward the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These tapestries, after years of neglect, found a home in the Musee National du Moyen Age in Paris where they hang today, restored in a specially-appointed room.*

The story begins in 1490 with a young artist, Nicholas des Innocents, being commissioned by Jean LeViste, a friend of King Louis XI, to make drawings for tapestries that are to cover the bare walls of the Grand Salon in his Parisian house. A middleman, Leon Le Vieux has been hired to draw up the contract, provide initial money and materials and to make sure the work gets done.

Jean wants the tapestries to reflect his place at the heart of the court with scenes from the famous Battle of Nancy. Enter the story, Claude, Jean's beautiful teenage daughter and her mother, Genevieve. Claude and Nicholas encounter each other. Nicholas, who has a penchant for young women and not knowing she is Jean's daughter, tries to seduce her. He confides to her that he would like to be a unicorn, which has a mystical sexual connotation. The mother, Genevieve, is against having battle scenes in the tapestries and, having overheard the conversation between the artist and her daughter, decides to promote the theme of a virgin taming a unicorn. Jean Le Viste agrees to this plan as long as his coat-of-arms appears in all the tapestries.

The drawings with Leon Le Vieux in charge and accompanied by Nicholas, are taken north to Brussels, the centre of the tapestry weaving industry to the family of Georges de la Chapelle where they are to be enlarged into cartoons by an employee, Philippe.

Much haggling takes place. Leon, the middleman, wants the tapestries finished in two years, an impossible task. He also wants to pay them as little as possible. At last the terms are reached and the family, including the weaver's blind daughter, his son, an apprentice, his wife, and two hired weavers being the weaving. It involves the warping, the winding, the tension, the buying and sorting of wool. They work constantly during the daylight hours for two years. Tension mounts as the time approaches when the tapestries are to be finished – the penalty being no pay and disgrace.

*There are many, often humorous, side issues told from the perspectives of the main characters that keep the story lively and interest. You'll like this book.*

## **ONLY SIX MORE MONTHS TO GO!**

With only six more months before Autumn Treasures, and only two more meetings left, we need to start thinking about ideas for "guild" sales items and personal contributions. We are just getting started on ideas but need everyone's input. The following are some of the suggestions so far. **WE NEED MORE IDEAS.**

### **GUILD ITEMS**

- small items, quickly made, with a minimum of expense, to sell for \$2-10.
- "Ethel's cards" with silk fusion insert
- Xmas ornaments; felted shapes, little lambs, cookie cutter shapes (see Spin-Off)
- little knitted stockings from handspun (pattern available)

Look at your scraps of handspun and handwovens and be creative! Think cute! Contact Barbara Burbidge with your ideas at 743-8020.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS**

*Clothing* – How did your items sell last year? How much time did they take? Would they sell again this year? In what Colours? Use your yarn stash to try and make sure the colour combinations are current. Some suggestions include the following:

- ponchos's* (Martha's "Freedom" crocheted poncho with handspun); see Internet for ideas and patterns; also Handwoven Designer collections 7, 19 (enter Handwoven's poncho contest while you're at it; McCall's and Simplicity sewing patterns.
- shrugs* are the newest trend in small elbow-length with texture
- shawls* are always popular whether knitted, crocheted or woven

The latest issue of Handwoven has an article on the new colours for fall through to 2006.

Other ideas include wide, long scarves with pockets; narrow, long fancy scarves in unusual yarns and textures; gloves, mitts and headbands as a set; baby booties (the ones last year were lovely); shoe bags (one shoe bags sold as a pair); children's clothing such as small poncho, hat w/mitts sets; felted handbags with embellishments.

"Designers Corner" could be an area for one-of-a-kind custom clothing such as jackets, vests, skirts, etc.

## OTHER STUFF

Some of the following ideas might make a great workshop for a small or large group.

- pillow covers using small and medium pillow forms
- doggy sweaters – cute, especially if we can get a small stuffed toy dog to display
- spun yarns – skeins of 50/100 gm or 50/100 yards
- soft afghans – various sizes, some could be lap rugs
- felted items – knitted from commercial yarns, then felted; handbags, booties, mittens, cell phone bags, glass cases, etc
- gift bags – some in Christmas colours, various sizes for other purposes

## THINK ABOUT

### *Designer look*

- for a bag start with a handle and go from there
- embellishment – beads, embroidery, special fasteners, fringes (Blue Sky Beads on Water Street between Hunter and Simcoe will give you lots of ideas)

## Resources

- new library books – rep weave, shadow knitting, needle felting, Color Works (try some new combinations), Thick and Thin, Fabrics that Go Bump (great for fancy scarves), Compendium of Finishing, Knitter's Stash, Twisted Sisters Sock Workbook, and on and on....
- what you learned at study groups – double weave, shadow weave, spinning silk and dye workshops
- what you learned at program/workshops – fringes, tote bags, small items from handwoven scraps, silk fashion, needle felting and basketry
- nuno felting – talk to Doris Huffman
- yarn's from Ethel's sale – we have some in stock for members – ask Jo
- use of novelty yarns when on sale – Yarn Ewetopia always has something

## AFTER THE SHOW

The Peterborough Art Gallery usually accepts what we have left over from our sale but their commission is 30% rather than 20%. But it is another venue to give us publicity for free.

**BRING YOUR IDEAS TO THE MAY AND JUNE MEETINGS.**



## Peterborough Handweavers and Spinners Guild

Invites you to attend

**What:** "Alpaca Workshop" with Nancy Carr of Silver Cloud Alpacas  
As instructor – [carralpacas@sympatico.ca](mailto:carralpacas@sympatico.ca)  
- [www.silvercloudalpacas.com](http://www.silvercloudalpacas.com)

**When:** Saturday October 15, 2005 – 10:00AM to 3:00PM  
Registration and set up at 9:30AM

**Where:** Kawartha Artists' Studio – 420 O'Connell Street – corner of Park St.  
- enter by the **red door**. on O'Connell St.

**Bring:** - spinning wheel, carders etc; notebook and pen  
- **bag lunch** – tea and coffee provided

**Register:** - Payment on registration by cash or cheque -made out to  
- Peterborough Handweavers and Spinners Guild  
- Cost \$20 (non refundable unless workshop cancelled by organizers).  
- Payment for materials to Nancy Carr – approximately \$15 to \$20.00

**Deadline For Registration: - September 01/05**

**Send Registration** and PAYMENT TO

Mary Lavery, 279 Dainton Drive, Peterborough K9H 7N6 – phone 705-743-3939  
Email: [mary.lavery@nexicom.net](mailto:mary.lavery@nexicom.net)

**Everyone Welcome!**

**Come And Enjoy The Day!**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

PETERBOROUGH HANDWEAVERS' AND SPINNERS' GUILD