



# PETERBOROUGH HANDWEAVERS' AND SPINNERS' GUILD

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

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March/April

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

Happy end of winter to everybody. With April just around the corner the Guild "gold" challenge comes to mind. Some of us, we hear, have already finished our contributions for the display. Others may still be unsure just what is meant by "gold". Let me try to explain.

First we assume that nobody will use real gold! But to celebrate our fifty years we are asking for things that suggest it.

It is alright, but not necessary, to incorporate something metallic such as a gold thread if you wish. What we are aiming for is something gold coloured or with gold coloured accent. It should at least have a noticeable gold coloured component.

Items may be woven (including baskets), spun, felted or anything else that falls within the Guild guidelines. You may use any suitable material. The item should also be small enough to be part of an exhibit in a blanket chest/trunk. If you are in doubt speak to any executive member.

The April meeting will be devoted to the "gold" project and our display will go to the OHA Stepping Stones conference in early May.

Have fun with your project.

Barbara Burbidge

## 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: March 21<sup>st</sup> and April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Executive Group*** Meeting was held March 1<sup>st</sup> at Eleanor's. Next meeting to be determined and executive advised by phone.
- Spinning Groups*** *1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Spinners and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Spinners*  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays group will be cancelled for March but resume in April as usual.
- Shadow Weave*** Next meeting is Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at Dee's.
- Social*** March – Maria; April – Dee and ? We had Marcia and Joanne for June but that is our pot luck. Would both of you step in – one for March and one for April. I will still be away. Contact Maria.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### ***March Meeting***

*To Weave or Not to Weave.* Meg, a spinner and knitter, will discuss the process of learning to weave and how it has affected her 'way of seeing' yarn in the spinning process. Eleanor, who taught Meg to weave, will also speak about the process of teaching a new weaver. They will have a special guest, Johanna, a student of Eleanor's who took the course with Meg.

### ***April Meeting***

*Guild Challenge.* All material for the OHA Conference Guild Challenge is due at this meeting. Our program will be a group 'show and tell', followed by a discussion of the display. If you have any special items such as pictures or newspaper/magazine articles for the 'Treasure Chest' please contact Jo or Deb.

### ***6<sup>th</sup> Annual Needle Works and More Show***

We will have a table at this show, taking place March 12 and 13<sup>th</sup> at the Evinrude Centre, from 10-5 and 10-4. There will be no sales but we will be demonstrating and displaying a range of items including weaving, spinning, needle felting, and knitting. There is an entry fee of \$4. Volunteers will be reimbursed by the Guild. Contact Carole Erwin at 743-4613.

### ***Magic Tote Bag***

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Guild meeting room, Carole will be holding a workshop to make her Magic Tote Bag. This wonderful tote folds inside itself into a small zippered 'bag'. Registration will be done at the March meeting. The fee is \$10 per person and a list of supplies will be issued when you register. Lunch is brown bag. Contact Carole at 743-4613.

### ***Spin-In***

"The Gathering" – The Great Pine Ridge Spinners and Weavers and Northumberland Hooks and Needles Guild present their annual Port Hope Spin/Knit-In. It takes place Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Town Park Rec Centre, 62 McCaul Street, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. Brown bag and coffee mug required. Entry fee is \$5. *Directions: South on Hwy 28. It divides when you reach Port Hope. Keep left on Hope St. N. and down to McCaul on left. Follow McCaul around to Rec Centre.* CONTACTS: Yvonne O'Neill-905-885-4872 or Judy Parnell-905-786-2043.

### ***Carding Workshop***

This workshop will take place on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Guild meeting room. We will be using electric carders, both the guilds and those of members but feel free to bring paddle carders. This will be a brown bag lunch affair. And don't forget to bring fleece.

## **LIBRARY**

The library is open from 7:00 to 7:30 prior to each guild meeting.

### **NEW BOOKS**

Please let Lois or anyone on the Executive know what new books you would like to have in the library. We will have some ideas for you to consider at the next meeting.

### **OVERDUES:**

Fines are \$1.00 per month. Phone Lois Watson at 652-5077 if you want to renew.

## 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.

Corrections: Deb's last name should be 'i before e' – vanderniet and her e-mail should read [d\\_vanderniet@hotmail.com](mailto:d_vanderniet@hotmail.com).

## EQUIPMENT FOR SALE/WANTED

For Sale: **45" 4-Harness Fanny Loom with 23" High by 38" Long Bench - \$500**  
45" Reeds: 12, 14, 15, 16, 20 dent  
Contact Pauline Fanning at 705-743-3424

For Sale: LeClerc looms – 36" Jack - \$200 and 36" counterbalance - \$350  
45" counterbalance - \$150  
52" counterbalance - \$150  
Benches – 2 at \$100 each  
Used Reeds –reconditioned - \$20 each  
Contact Laurie Goldiuk at The Black Lamb – 905-885-0190 or by  
e-mail at [www.theblacklamb@sympatico.ca](mailto:www.theblacklamb@sympatico.ca)

Brassard Yarns- Laurie at The Black Lamb would like to put together an order but requires more than a few cones to make it worthwhile. It might be worthwhile for someone to check the Brassard website and bring a list of yarns to the next meeting to see if there is enough interest with our group.

## THE NIDDY NODDY COLUMN

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

Thanks for all who volunteered to contribute. We are looking forward to reading what you have found for us. Here is the schedule:

May 1, 2005      Meg Russell, Lorraine Skipwith, Joanne Sayers



### **Domestic Manufactures**

By Mary Lavery

In Volume 2 of Samuel Strickland's "Twenty-seven Years in Canada West" he devotes a chapter to "Domestic Manufactures".

Written in 1851 the books are remarkable chronicles of life, mainly in the Kawartha's near Lakefield in the 1830's. The following passages would, I hope, be of interest to you.

"It is quite essential that the wives and daughters of the Canadian agriculturalist should rival the fair Penelope in spinning, and even exceed her – as indeed they ought – for the Grecian lady spun with a distaff, and had never known the superior aid of the modern spinning wheel, much less the great-wheel, or big-wheel, as our American neighbours call the Irish importation, to which they have added the improvement of the patent head, which enables our fair Canadian spinsters to produce a finer thread, and make a greater quantity of yarn in any given time, than they could do previous to the introduction of Brother Jonathan's patent big-wheel.

So many home-comforts depend upon this ancient branch of feminine industry, which the use of the spinning-jenny has almost entirely superseded in the mother-country, that in Canada, the single ladies are, literally speaking, all spinsters in fact if they were not, their father's and mother's would often display Shakespear's "ravelled sleeve of care".

As this is an important part of domestic economy, it may be useful to describe the management of the wool before it is fit for the dear girls' industrious hands. As soon as the sheep are sheared, the wool must be picked and greased: after this it is sent to the carding mill to be carded – an operation which costs two pence per pound. (This part of the business can be done at home but it is very troublesome, and the expense is so trifling, that the saving is not really worth making).

When the wool is carded, it is ready for the spinning wheel, and the ladies of the family or if there are no ladies, their substitutes hired spinning girls, convert it into yarn, which is then dyed, reeled, and hanked, which process it undergoes at home. It is now ready for the weaver, who charges from fivepence to sixpence per yard for his work; many

farmer's, however have hand-loom in their own houses. For winter wear, both warp and weft of these native cloths are of wool; but for that destined for summer use, the warp is cotton. Flannels and Tweeds are also frequently made with a mixture of wool and cotton. After the weaving is finished, the cloth must be sent to the fulling-mill, where it receives its completion, unless it is of very fine quality, in which case it must be sheared and pressed.

The common Canadian grey cloth, generally worn by the settlers of the Western province, is a strong, warm, serviceable fabric, costing about four or five shillings per yard. Halifax currency (Halifax currency is less than sterling; the bank value of the sovereign is 24 shillings and 4 ½ pence. In payment of store-debts the merchant generally allows \$5).

The dyestuffs in general use are indigo, logwood, red-wood and copperas, and the bark of the butter-nut tree.

The soil in Canada is capable of growing both hemp and flax of good quality; but the produce has not been yet applied for the manufacture of fine linen cloths. Some settlers grow both these plants for furnishing them with bags, sacks, and ropes; but, as the population of the colony increases, these neglected articles will, no doubt, not only be extensively cultivated, but form a valuable branch of commerce.

Our wives, daughters and sisters, besides spinning yarn for our garments, provide us with warm stockings, socks, gloves, Guernsey rocks, and comforters, of their own knotting, and furnish us, in their leisure time, with many useful and ornamental articles.

They provide us, too, with carpets of a strong, useful kind, the best of which are made of yarn of their own spinning and dyeing, whilst others are contrived by an ingenious economy, which collects odd pieces of rag or cloth, cuts them into long strips, joins and forms them into large balls for the weaver, who makes use of a warp made of strong twine: the material on the balls forms the weft in manufacturing the carpet. The ladies call this article a rag-carpet, and it serves the purpose very well till it can be replaced by a good yarn one."

## **Alpaca and I, Part I**

By Barbara Burbidge

On first handling Alpaca anyone might expect it to be a charm to weave. So last fall I cheerfully prepared a warp to weave a couple of simple striped Alpaca scarves. Winding the warp and warping the loom presented no unusual problems. Alpaca is soft and pleasant to handle and not inclined to tangle. But three problems soon surfaced.

Problem #1. After I had woven a few inches the fun began. By then the warp yarns had been manipulated enough that they were getting sticky – i.e. they stuck to their neighbours as the shed was changed or the beater moved.

Problem #2. It soon became apparent that for some reason the green warp yarns were becoming quite slack compared to the rest. In other words uneven tension developed.

Problem #3. I discovered an error about two inches back and took out the weft threads to go back and correct it. This was a poor idea for the twice handled threads get furrer and look different afterwards.

After assessing each problem and by some trial and error I was able to deal with each of these problems as follows:

Problem #1. The stick yarns do slow you down. But if the shed is always changed with the beater forward and if one harness at a time is moved (e.g. if #1 and #3 are to be raised, lift #1 first, then #3) it is much easier. Also, pulling the beater most of the way forward before completely closing the shed to beat is quite helpful. In other words anything that gives the adjacent yarns a bit more elbow room is a good thing. For that matter, a warp as widely spaced as possible in the first place is easier.

Problem #2. I attached weights to the slack yarns by strings looped around the groups. Luckily my colours were in groups (not distributed singly across the scarf, which I now know is a thing to avoid). Tying the warp onto the back beam by the shoe string method could have been helpful once the back of the warp was uncovered and accessible.

Problem #3. This is the most difficult problem once it has happened and been well passed by. If the tension is evenly regulated so that each shed opens nicely, and, if the work is constantly checked as each few rows are completed, mistakes can be avoided or at least kept under control. Ripping back a row or two is not a big problem. If you do discover a mistake too late it is probably best to correct it later by cutting and darning or ignore it if it is small.

For all its frustrations Alpaca is easier than furry mohair and the results are rewarding. I hope to use it again.

*Editors note: I wonder if a separate back beam would be advantageous. Moorman technique suggests two back beams, one for main warp and one for fine threads as there is substantial difference in stretch. Alpaca could be put on one beam and the rest of the warp on another.*

## 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 – March 1 and May 1. However I tend to leave a couple of days between receipt of articles and final printing so there is a bit of leeway after the deadline.

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) or to [jo.mills@sympatico.ca](mailto:jo.mills@sympatico.ca) (note...this is a new e-mail address).

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You can also telephone me at 705-749-3323 and leave a message if I am not in.

By the time you get this I will hopefully be in sunny Mexico. But I will have my not-so-trusty old laptop with me and will be checking in on a regular basis.



Our next Challenge...."what I did with Ethel's yarns"?