

EAST SURREY GUILD CREATIVE FIBRES

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010

Chairman Janice Russell
Secretary Betty Newman
Treasurer Janet Freeman



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held on Saturday 20th March. The new committee for 2010 is:

Chairman	Janice Russell	Committee Members	Christina Coutts
Secretary (co-opted)	Betty Newman		Jennifer Hughes
Treasurer	Janet Freeman		Jean Price
Minutes secretary	Gill Blackmore		

Following the AGM there was a talk by Jim Storrar, a Surrey Countryside Ranger. Jim gave a very interesting talk on the 'Folklore and medicinal use of local wild flowers'. He suggested giving us a guided walk. We will let everyone know when this is arranged.

WEBSITE

Our guild now has it's very own website. There are two addresses which take you to the same home page. The addresses are www.eastsurreyguildwsd.org.uk and www.creativefibres.org. There is a member's page which can be accessed only by password available to members. Many thanks go to Christina for setting this up.

STITCH & CREATIVE CRAFTS FAIR, SANDOWN PARK - January 2010



Once again we had a stand at Sandown Park in January. Thank you to everyone who lent their work to make a really stunning display. Also thank you to those of you who turned out to demonstrate and talk to the public.

RECENT MEETINGS

Braiding with Shirley Berlin (April workshop)

When we settled down to this our third braiding workshop with Shirley one could say it was the beginning of the end – but in the nicest possible way! It was aimed at finishes for the braids we had been shown and made on two earlier occasions, but more of a follow on from her visit last year.

For the benefit of members who are not familiar with Shirley's workshops perhaps a little background to our braiding journey.

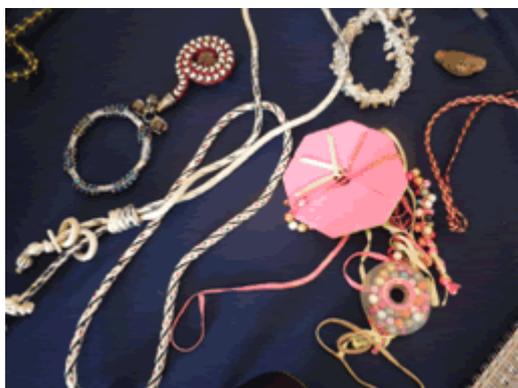
Some years ago on our first attempt she introduced us to simple braids, round ones achieved with "Fill the Gap" using seven threads, a plied and twisted cord, lucetted square braid as well as variations of the humble three strand plait. On Shirley's return visit last year we required a little more concentration when we progressed to Kumihimo – kongo gumi, a Japanese round braid using up to sixteen threads to produce more elaborate patterns, we also mastered Laramie, an attractive spiral plaited round a core of extra threads as well as a five strand plait and a flat braid. Also on this occasion Shirley touched on finishing and embellishing our finished pieces which opened up the possibility of a further workshop to be considered for a future programme. And so it came to pass, at our April meeting this year we again took up our threads. It was an opportunity to bring out any completed pieces and finish last year's samples; we also dipped into Shirley's colourful stash of yarns to make new braids to enable us to practise incorporating beads as we braided.

For the main part of the afternoon session we moved on to the final stage, deciding how best to finish the ends and the style of closure to complement our braids, for which Shirley had numerous suggestions for us to consider. Some of us also tried wire braiding using the Laramie technique with a knitting needle as the central core around which to braid, the result, a delicate hollow spiral which can be used as a jewellery feature or a decoration with the option to embellish with beads if wished.

Once again Shirley had some exquisite items on display (not all her own beautiful work) to show us what can be achieved with a little thoughtful preparation, imagination and courage to experiment.

Shirley's workshops are always a very pleasurable experience as she caters for all abilities and we are very fortunate that as much as we look forward to her tutorials she too looks forward to coming to Headley as we are such an enthusiastic group – her words not mine.

Wendy



Some of Shirley's samples

ASSOCIATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2009, LINCOLN

Felted stoles: Tutor Helen Melvin



Amanda's Stole

It seems such a long time ago now that I attended summer school to make a felted stole but my memory still tells me 'wow'. Before the course Helen sent us quite a long list of equipment to take, some of it not familiar to me as being used for felt making i.e. very fine plastic sheeting, paint brushes and very cheap plastic bags (which turned out to be very important, the thicker better bags did not work). Not a rolling pin/broom handle, bamboo mat or nylon net in sight.

Everyone who had before made felt the traditional way was wondering how you could make felt only using cold water and fine plastic sheeting.

Having met Helen on the first evening I knew that the course was going to be fun, very messy and creative.

Helen came prepared with all our fibres: 200g of 100's merino and various silk fabrics and fibres, pre mordanted with alum and cream of tartar.

We started the course by experimenting with the natural dye extracts using 100g of the merino divided into 4 so that we played with 4 different colour ways.

From these experiments we choose the colours for our stoles. Mine I later discovered all came from South America.

Next we were challenged into making very fine felt with no holes. At this point I did not think it possible as my sample was very holey. Throughout the week we kept practising and learning to make smaller items such as broaches to use as fasteners. When the time came to make the stoles the main challenge was how would we all have enough space and all use the one sink at the same time. The size of the room was very small and tables at the wrong height for comfortable working but we were all very determined and Helen was very encouraging.

The laying out of the fibres for the stole took many hours and I was usually in the class room by 8.30am each day and one of the last to leave at about 10pm. I was still finishing my stole on the Saturday morning when visitors were coming round as were some of the other students.

It was a very tiring week, but great fun and I am extremely pleased with my stole which weighs a little over 100g.

I am now looking forward to summer school 2011.

Amanda

Report on Afghanistan Inspiration Exhibition NEC, Spring 2010



Mary Compton's knitted piece

The Afghanistan Inspiration Challenge is the brainchild of Pascale Goldenberg, who works within a self-help project of the DAI (Deutsch-Afghanische Initiative, or German Afghan Initiative). Embroidered squares, 8" x 8", are produced by women who live in the village of Laghmani, north of Kabul, in Afghanistan. These are purchased, & incorporated into a textile of one's own making. Women in 14 European countries of Europe took part in a challenge to use any textile technique to produce an item of 1500 square centimetres for a national exhibition.

For each country a different motif, linking it with Afghanistan, was embroidered on the squares, for instance the Netherlands had tulips, which grow wild in the Afghan mountains as well as commercially in the Netherlands; the UK had teapots, as Afghans love drinking tea too; and France had birds, appreciated in both countries as the symbol of freedom. The results of using the squares create unique cross cultural pieces that unite techniques and the women concerned.

From the national exhibitions about a third were chosen for an international exhibition across Europe, which aims to promote the project, sell squares & raise money to continue paying the Afghan women for their embroidery. The income is vital to boost the self confidence of the women taking part and also the standard of living of their families.

The UK national exhibition, with 77 entries, was in East Grinstead in February 2010. From this one third were chosen to go to the first international exhibition in March at the Fashion Embroidery & Stitch Show at the NEC in Birmingham, an ICHF event, supported by Madeira.

As a small group, Creative Fibres is especially proud to have the work of two members in the exhibition: *Mary Compton's* knitted piece (previous page), & *Jennifer Hughes'* woven one (see below – top left).



The stand was an exciting exhibit, with 220 entries from 14 countries, showing such variety, imagination and flair, that it took one's breath away. The high standard of work drew words of praise from visitors. Some with a personal link, relations of those fighting in Afghanistan, were touched at the efforts to help the Afghan women. Many embroidered squares were sold each day to boost the revenue available for purchasing more squares, along with some postcards of individual pieces, and a booklet of the comments of each national entrant.

Those entries to the challenge that did not go forward to the international exhibition will tour the UK over the next year, to be shown at other fairs run by ICHF. This should raise more awareness of the project throughout the country. Squares are still for sale, and could be used as decoration for cushions, bags, cards or hangings, or as small gifts for a friend or family textile artist.

For more information about the project please go to the website www.oneearthtextiles.co.uk

Congratulations go to the national organiser, Meike Laurenson, for her hard work & the success of the challenge in the UK, and to Pascale Goldenberg for her vision in encouraging this cross cultural project.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Saturday 15th May – Making a Buttonhole Book with Viva Lloyd

This is a tutored workshop. This workshop is currently full but if you want to be on the reserve list please contact our treasurer (see “meetings” page of our website)

Saturday 19th June - General Meeting and Sales Table

Saturday 17th July – Flower embroidery on a Hand-painted Background with Jennifer Hughes

This is a tutored workshop. This workshop is full but if you want to be on the reserve list please phone contact our treasurer (see “meetings” page of our website)

Saturday 21st August - General Meeting and Sales Table

FOR YOUR DIARIES

9th May - Country Show (formerly Cowpie Rally) - Betchworth

23rd May - Bead Fair, Dorking Halls, Dorking

for more information phone 01737 841080 or online at www.beadwork.net

23rd May – Papercrafts at Biggin Hill

for tickets phone 07795 975898 or 01684 561061 or online at www.sincerely-yours.co.uk

26th – 27th June – Celebrating Surrey, Loseley Park, Guildford

various arts, crafts, music, singing & drama, for more information online at www.surrey.gov.uk

10th - 11th July – Bead & Gem Show, Farnham Maltings

15th - 18th July – Art in Action, Waterperry House, Oxfordshire

for tickets phone 020 7381 3192 or online at www.artinaction.org.uk

25th July – Beadwork Fair, Ardingly

19th – 22nd August – Festival of Quilts, NEC Birmingham

for more information phone 020 8692 2299 (for group tickets) or 01473 320407 (for groups of less than 10) or online at www.twistedthread.com

15th – 19th September – International Braid Workshops, Leicester

Tutors are: Makiko Tada – Kumihimo, Julie Hedges – Ply Splitting & Anna Crutchley – passementerie & tassels.

For more information email leicester2010@googlemail.com or write to Debbie Richardson, Spring House, Old Stone Trough Lane, Kelbrook, Lancs, BB18 6UE or online at www.braidsociety.com

If you have any comments, tips or interesting items for future newsletters please “contact us” via the website.

Janice Russell (Chairman)