



ISSUE 17

OCTOBER 2015

the shuttle

devon weavers workshop
www.devonweaversworkshop.org

DATES for 2015/16

MEETINGS

COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 3 NOVEMBER 11.00am

AGM 2015

Saturday 14 NOVEMBER 12 noon

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Tuesday 15 December

BLACKJACK 24

Tuesday 15 MARCH 2016 10.30am

EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

BIRDWOOD HOUSE

Christmas Exhibition and sale of members' work
7 - 12 DECEMBER

COURSES

BEGINNERS - AUTUMN 2015

Tutor - Jenny Rolfe
7 to 12 November 2015
£195 (includes materials)

BEGINNERS - SPRING 2016

Tutor - Jenny Rolfe
20/21 February, 27/28 February,
5/6 March 2016
£195 (includes materials)

RULE BREAKING WEAVING

Tutor - Laura Thomas
2 - 4 April 2016

A workshop designed to encourage participants to break the 'rules' of weaving and push themselves outside their comfort zones. Participants will weave as many samples as possible and try different finishing techniques. Weavers will be encouraged to explore ideas and principles unencumbered by the restraint of functionality. Some

weft yarns and finishing materials will be supplied.

£240 non-members, £210 associate members, £190 full members & trustees

INSPIRATIONAL WEAVING

Tutor - MARGO SELBY
18 - 20 JUNE 2016

A chance for students to experiment with yarns, colour and pattern using a warp selected from her book *Colour & Texture in Weaving* - with Margo giving expert inspiration, guidance and advice along the way.

£240 non-members, £210 associate members, £190 full members & trustees

POINT TWILL REPP

Tutor - ROSALIE NEILSON
3 - 5 SEPTEMBER 2016

8-shaft looms will be threaded with 4 or 5 different colours of 8/2 cotton to design a table runner featuring a series of 4-block motifs in the centre, with a border of 2-block motifs in opposite colours. Weavers will use a series of design pages from *An Exaltation of Blocks* by Rosalie Neilson. There are 1,024 different 4-block designs. Weavers will receive enough designs in their handouts to whet their creative appetites!

£255 non-members, £225 associate members, £205 full members & trustees

BEGINNERS - AUTUMN 2016

Tutor - Jenny Rolfe
1 - 6 October 2016
£195 (includes materials)

For further details or to book a place on a weaving course please email via the DWW website

DWW AGM 2015

THIS YEAR'S AGM WILL BE HELD
AT THE WORKSHOP ON

SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER

at **12 noon**

TO BE FOLLOWED BY A BRING & SHARE LUNCH

ALL WELCOME!

DWW CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2015

Please join us at the Tally Ho Community Pub in Littlehempston (near Totnes) for this year's DWW Christmas lunch on Tuesday 15 December at 1pm. Cost - £15.95 for 2 courses or £19.95 for 3 courses. For further details or to book a place (by 2 December) contact Jacqueline Jones.



LOTTE DALGAARD

MAGICAL MATERIALS 12 - 14 JUNE 2015

Our course with the Danish weaver, Lotte Dalgaard, was both challenging and highly rewarding. Many British weavers became interested in Lotte's work when an article about her appeared in the *Journal* in 2010 (Issue 236) and about the same time her book *Magical Materials to Weave* was published.

Lotte weaves fabrics with high twist and elastic yarns that stretch, crinkle, twist, pleat and gather - shaping themselves into garments with very little sewing or cutting.

To introduce us to a wide range of materials and their potential, Lotte prepared warps for us in a variety of yarns - fine linen, merino, lambswool, high twist wools, and mixtures of each. These warps provided an initial challenge. Not only were some of the yarns lively and unpredictable but also the format of Lotte's detailed instructions were unfamiliar - drawdowns 'drew up' for instance. Both hurdles were overcome through Lotte's patient assistance. She provided a demonstration of how to create a warp and showed us how she dresses a loom using high twist yarns.



Throughout Friday and Saturday we were encouraged to move around the room and try to weave a variety of warps. For each loom there was a woven sample of the intended final fabric for that warp. However, we were also encouraged to experiment and we did - with some surprising and pleasing results.

On Saturday evening Lotte gave an illustrated talk about the development of her work and her career. This was followed by a fashion show - allowing some of her amazing exhibition garments to be worn and admired. Truly stunning was a two layered dress woven with a body-hugging under layer and a softly draping over layer - this had been woven in one piece as a double cloth.



We had to wait until Sunday to experience the 'magic' of the individual materials we had woven. When we cut our samples from the looms and immersed them one by one in very hot water, we were able to watch each sample form a new texture - a new shape. Although this marked the end of the course it felt like the beginning because each new sample was an inspiration to get back to the loom and try another.

Lotte was a generous instructor - sharing her knowledge and her skills. She was patient and inspirational. And all of this in a foreign language!

Mary Hildyard



LAURA THOMAS

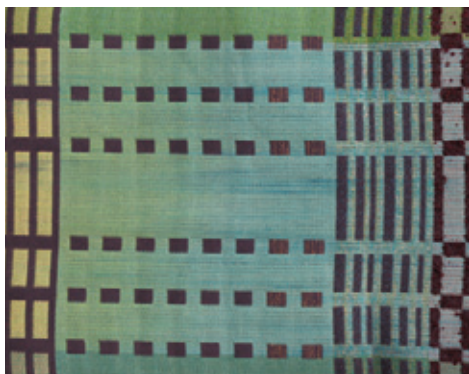
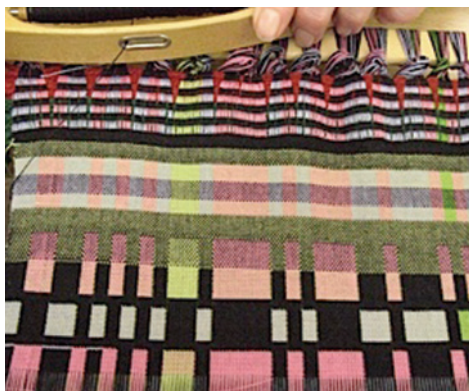
EXPLORING DOUBLEWEAVE 28 - 30 MARCH 2015

It is always a bonus when a workshop includes a look at the tutor's portfolio of work. Laura Thomas' collection of samples was very varied and inspiring: lots of different yarns and structures. Laura said she was never drawn to weaving scarves and from the beginning her samples and cloth were more geared to soft furnishings and experimental textiles.

Laura's textile designs stretch beyond fabric, she is particularly known for her sculptures, where the yarn is suspended in glass, but has also designed striking large glass canopies, where the yarn casts shadows and catches the light.

Laura brought charts from the yarn suppliers she uses for her double weave work. They have a fantastic range of wonderful colours and the charts are in the Workshop for everyone to refer to (it is difficult to limit yourself to a few colours). They are washable woollen yarns, and Laura had brought a lovely small blanket that she had made for her son when he was born, to show that the yarn was soft and supple, despite the extra thickness of the double weave.

My initial motivation for joining Sue Dwyer's Beginners Course was to understand the construction of Welsh, double weave tapestry and 19th century narrow loom blankets. During the course, Laura patiently explained how to analyse a tapestry to be able to recreate the draft. I found this fascinating and suddenly double weave drafts started to make sense.



There were some lovely samples created on the course, all very different yarns and colours, but I particularly liked Sareela's work on the Wolf loom, that looked very iridescent and sea-like (sample above).

It is partly the wonderful opportunities to play and experiment with colour that makes double weave so attractive; small changes of colour in the weave in the same warp and structure can make so much difference.

Laura was energetic, enthusiastic and generous throughout the course, and thoughtful and encouraging in her feedback. I thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and would recommend that members keep an eye out for future courses. (See page 2, Laura's next course will be 2 - 4 April 2016.)

Jacqueline Jones

Mark Cullen - Rug Exhibition



The Calstock Art Centre is situated in the Old Chapel in Calstock. It's a lovely space for an exhibition and Mark shared the venue with another Calstock weaver, Ineke Borsboom, who was displaying throws, scarves and many other small works. The exhibition took place around the August bank holiday weekend.

Mark showed 15 rugs made over the last few years (a few illustrated here), displaying the progression of his work over those years. All were weft faced wool on linen warps, some including other fibres for highlights. Mark dyes much of his weft wool, preferring natural dyes, though he does include pre-dyed wool in his stock. His current work is woven using shaft switching techniques, which he says gives him much more flexibility in pattern design.

The inspiration for his designs comes from nature and he works out his patterns in sketch and paintings, which he also had on display.

Mark tells me the exhibition went well with good sales for both weavers. I was impressed by all the work there and found the later, shaft switching rugs particularly interesting and beautiful.

Steve Newsham



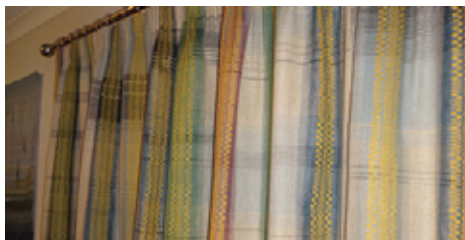
DIPPING A TOE INTO THE WORKSHOP

Moving house is like a military operation! But sadly, when out with the old to down-size includes loss of an over-large but well-used loom, and in with the new means lack of curtains that fit there was a mismatch somewhere.

The Workshop came to the rescue. The Mighty Wolf was available so it chose me. We exchanged a few choice words while getting acquainted, but after that we rubbed along pretty well. It's an old-style loom, but that has its advantages: less to go wrong!

My approach to weaving yardage for curtains is to avoid the need to match lengths, in this case 3 per curtain. I used a striped warp overlain by 3 bands of supplementary warp that would create a Monks Belt pattern. I varied the colour combinations in the lengths by switching colours round while winding the warp rather than winding 3 separate warps. Don't do this at home – especially if you are using a slubby yarn! The knots snagged on the heddles. Fortunately no-one else was present while I was rectifying the problem!

I used 3 yarns in the weft, rotating them in what I hoped was a random way to look intentional rather than a mismatch when



the fabric was cut and pieced. Some 11 days passed, by which time I'd got acquainted with the loom and woven some 15 yards: more than I really needed, but at least I didn't have to worry about the snagging section too much.

I decided to steam and press the length to finish rather than wash it. This avoided the inevitable creases when trying to wash and dry linen yardage at home. It also helped to retain the finish on the cloth.

There was scope to change the order or reverse the lengths to get the best arrangement when making up the curtains. I inter-lined with flannelette sheets that had not been used for years and lined with fabric rescued from curtains that did not fit the current windows. As the yarn was from stash, I felt I was downsizing and recycling all in one. Well done Mighty Wolf!

Norah Ball



NANCY HOSKINS

THE MAGIC EIGHT 12 - 14 September 2015

I had no idea when I signed up to it what a Magic Eight course might involve! I did get a chance to look at Nancy's very detailed book, *Weft-Faced Pattern Weaves: Tabby to Taquete*, before the course started - it looked exciting to be able to produce so many patterns from one straight-threaded warp, but I was still confused.

Our course tutor, Nancy, hailed from Eugene in Oregon, USA to teach us her MAGIC EIGHT formula and enable us to understand the structures described in her book, and design a wide variety of patterns using only eight shafts and a straight threading.

Workshop members were very pleased to welcome course participants from Ottery St Mary, East Sussex, Chesterfield and last, but not least, Sweden. Val from Chesterfield had brought with her a lovely selection of My Fine Weaving Yarns 5/2 threads for us to use.

By lunchtime on day one we were beginning to grasp the relevance of 'THE FORMULA'. Once we understood it we were able to use it as a basis to carry on experimenting with other tie-ups and treadlings. We had been warned at the outset that this was not a speedy technique by



any stretch of the imagination, but we soon discovered the delight of tiny flowers and geometric patterns gradually making an appearance as we wove.

Sessions of explanations with drawings were interspersed with looking at and handling Nancy's numerous samples as pictured in her book - lovely to be able to see and feel the real thing as well as look at the pictures.

These samples had been woven by Nancy in the logical order demonstrated in the book so that the course, whether in person or from the book, would follow a logical sequence. We also had the opportunity to study photocopies of

Various samples produced during Nancy's course





some very long samplers woven by earlier students. Another useful technique we learned was the use of the Coral Knot Stitch to start and finish pieces of weaving - this gives a firm but different finish to the more usual hemstitching.

On Sunday evening many of us enjoyed a meal out together at Rumours in Totnes. At the end of the course Marianne very kindly presented both Nancy and Devon Weavers Workshop with copies of *Vav and Weave*, a book written in both Swedish and English.

I would like to thank those members who organised, sorted, lifted and shifted and helped in any way for enabling the smooth running of the course.

Yvonne Hawkins

My New Octado

In August, I took delivery of an Octado Dobby Loom, identical to that at the Workshop. I had not used this type of loom previously. Many thanks to Kay and Sareela for assembling it.

The second warp beam did not stay on for long. In spite of Louët's chain and spring system, every time the pedal was depressed the back of the loom crashed to the floor, upsetting my neighbour. However, this warp beam could be fitted on the Workshop Octado, if anyone needs it.

I decided on a forgiving cottolin warp for my first Octado weaving, with varying patterns to force me to use the dobby bars. Warping was a dream, everything is at the right height. I had difficulty finding a stool which would fit close to the heddles because the front bar is too high for most stools.

Then came the exciting part, putting the pattern pegs into the pattern bars. I'd ordered extra of both, so set up 12 bars in tabby for permanent use. I sat at a table, and worked out 3 patterns with 12 to 14 bars in each, separating each pattern with an empty bar.

This has all worked really well, and already I'm thinking "what if". It takes no time to add extra bars and extra pegs, to make new patterns. There is no more crawling under the loom.

Weaving is fine. The moving breast beam is identical to that on the Louët Spring. I have labelled the shafts above 'the knife' 1 - 8. As my pattern draft is on the shelf immediately above, I can check each line as I weave.

I have an artificial hip, and found the footrest a nuisance. It was easier for me, to use both feet to push down the main pedal bar, and similarly, both heels to kick down the second bar. Having my feet slightly apart seemed to balance the treadle.

So far I am delighted with my Octado. Three cottolin towels are now completed and a new tencel scarf is being warped. If you have not yet tried the Workshop Octado, give it a go. It may surprise you.

Rosemary Durant



Above: Sareela using DWW's Octado

TRAVELS WITH THOMAS

AN EVENING WITH JENNY BALFOUR PAUL AT DEVON WEAVERS WORKSHOP - JUNE 2015

In June we welcomed Jenny Balfour-Paul, President of the Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers. She had been invited to speak about Thomas Machell, the subject of her new book, *Deeper than Indigo*.

A renowned authority on indigo, she outlined the role this fascinating topic has played in her life. First 'discovering' indigo in India as a young woman, she returned to England and began an association with Susan Bosence, a fabric printer and dyer who was to become her mentor.

She gradually became more and more involved in studying and researching indigo worldwide. Perhaps her more recent partnership with cellist Yo-Yo Ma in the Silk Road Connect educational initiative demonstrates most clearly how indigo can provide a huge and inspiring educational resource linking disparate subjects and disadvantaged students. (See the *Journal for Weavers, Spinners & Dyers* issue 240, pp8-10.)

Thomas Machell, a Victorian explorer, was brought to her attention by a librarian who had chanced upon a reference to indigo in a manuscript volume on display in the British Library. This proved to be one of five of Thomas's Journals held by the Library, though it transpired that two later volumes had been written, but their location was unknown.

Dipping into the volumes Jenny identified many 'coincidences' that seemed to point to her, as well as parallels with her travels on the hippy trail in 1970. Her appetite was whetted. She began a new journey that was to take her to India, the Far East, Pacific islands and America as she tried to unravel his interesting and varied life.

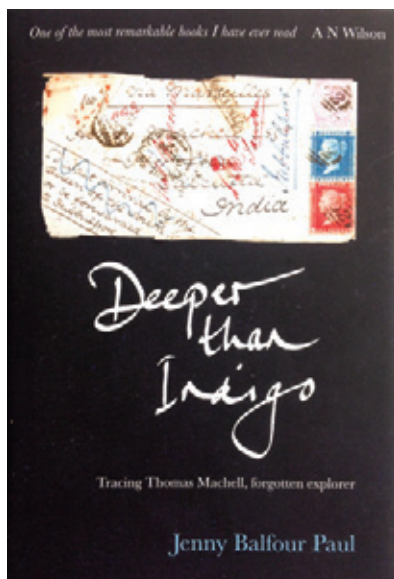
Deeper than Indigo is truly a detective story, but it is one with a twist as some of the missing threads are brought to light by somewhat unconventional means and fortuitous coincidences. It is a remarkable story, well told and worthy of reading.

Norah Ball



Above: Jenny signing books after her talk at Devon Weavers Workshop in June 2015.

Below: Jenny's latest book, now in DWW's lending library.



A Weaver's Date

Compiled by Jill Davies

From 23 to 25 October 2015 Cheltenham Town Hall will be host to **Select Showcase** - 'a celebration of the handmade'. Organised by *Stroud International Textiles*, there will be workshops, talks, demonstrations and exhibitions from over 130 participating artists and more than 70 outstanding makers and designers, including weavers *Ismini Samanidou, Jilly Edwards, Jacy Wall, Sophie Zajicek and Nadia Ricketts*, among others. Details can be found at www.sitselect.org

Among the exhibitions there, will be **seam Collective – shiftWorks**. Nine textile artists/designers – including weavers *Penny Wheeler and Angie Parker* - showcase contemporary textile design with nine shift dresses.

This exhibition will move to **Trowbridge Town Hall** at the **beginning of November** until Christmas, and is coming to the **Devon Guild of Craftsmen** in Bovey Tracey, March 2016. <https://seamcollective.wordpress.com/shiftworks-the-idea/>

The **SELVEDGE FAIR** will be on **12 December 2015**, in the afternoon, at **The American Museum in Britain, Claverton, Bath BA2 7BD**. <http://www.selvedge.org/events/fairs/about/?event-id=302>

The **SELVEDGE FAIR** will also be in London at **Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road SW3 5EE** on **3 and 4 December**.

Exhibitions in London which have caught my eye are:

THE FABRIC OF INDIA at the **Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL**.

This is billed as the first major exhibition to explore the rich and fascinating world of handmade textiles from India from the 3rd to the 21st century. It sounds like an amazing exhibition and it will probably be advisable to book in advance. The exhibition runs from **3 October 2015 to 10 January 2016**. Find out more at <http://www.vam.ac.uk/> and follow the blog at <http://tinyurl.com/vam-fabric-india> and -

LIBERTY IN FASHION at the **Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, SE1 3XF**, from **October 2015 to 28 February 2016**.

The exhibition celebrates the 140th anniversary of the company, and charts Liberty's history as 'the' fashionable place to shop, as well as its impact on British fashion. <http://www.ftmlondon.org/ftm-exhibitions/liberty-in-fashion/>



Cleaning the Workshop

Many thanks to all of you who have done so much to keep the Workshop ship-shape down the years. Your efforts make a big difference, especially before and after courses. We are hoping that we'll have plenty of enthusiastic, volunteer cleaners again during 2016. A new sign-up sheet is now on the notice board in DWW. The cleaning doesn't take long if we work in pairs and hopefully, if enough of us show willing, our turn only comes around once a year!

Helping Laura...

When Laura Melhuish-Sprague contacted us in March 2015 she had recently graduated from Loughborough University, having studied woven design. She did not have her own loom but wanted to carry on weaving and was due to exhibit her work at *New Designers One Year On* in London in June, where she hoped to be able to show some new weaves. Within the final collection for her degree she had painted fine cotton warps which she wove as warp-faced cloths - a technique she now hoped to develop using a loom at DWW.

Laura used our Megado for her first attempt. Things didn't turn out as well as we hoped due to shafts sticking and causing weaving errors. This has proved to be an ongoing problem with the loom - a mechanical fault which occurs when just a few heddles are used on a shaft. The shaft is too light to drop properly back into place after it has been raised and then gets caught up with the shafts raised for the next pick (or picks).

Fortunately there was just enough time for us to get a second attempt underway for Laura, this time on the Louët Spring which we had recently bought from Rosemary for the Workshop - perfect timing as it turned out. Laura worked extremely hard to

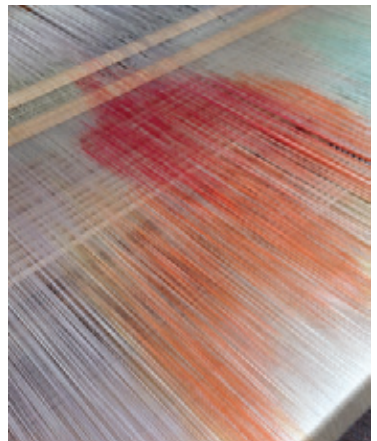


complete many yards in fine cotton yarn which she was able to use in her display at *New Designers*.

This was a welcome opportunity for us to use our skills and equipment to support a new weaver/designer - something we had hoped to do when first setting up DWW.

We all wish Laura the very best of luck in her future career in textiles and hope to see her back again to show us what happened next.....

Photos: Sareela Salter



Members' Day - 6 September

I work with wool and I am sure this and my love of weaving, particularly rugs, goes back to my childhood and my fascination with the all the stages of production at the Wilton Royal Carpet Factory. So I was very interested to hear about Malcolm Weir's apprenticeship in a northern woollen mill. As he said, things have changed enormously since 1953 when he started and commercial looms today are automated and incredibly fast.

The focus of the session was 'finishing' and Malcolm, with a lifetime of working with wool, was able to give us lots of tips which I am sure all of us there will find invaluable. Such as he always leaves his finished articles to 'rest' once they have come off the loom, as until that point the yarn has been under constant tension. Also, if you gently felt the tassels of a

woollen scarf you can cut off the knots, which improves the look enormously. He lightly felt his scarves to get rid of inconsistencies in the weave, such as the effect of uneven denting.

After lunch we talked generally about finishing and Kay and Sareela demonstrated various finishing methods, including how to tie a Cavandoli Knot. Mirja had also provided written advice on using linen, which was much appreciated.

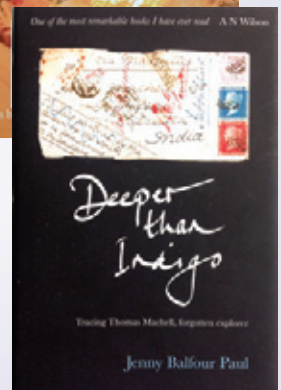
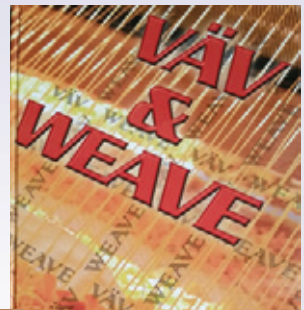
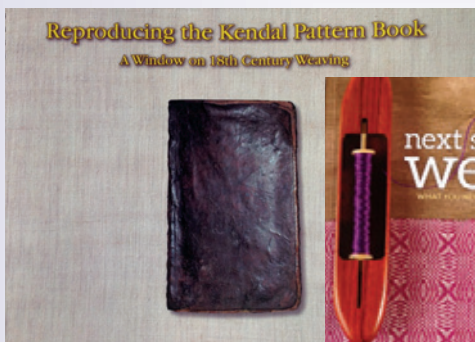
It was a good meeting, with plenty of sharing of knowledge and information. There were 10 of us there, including two new members for us to meet, which seemed a real bonus to me.

Thanks go to everyone who contributed and especially Malcolm, Kay, Sareela and Mirja.

Anne Bulleid

THE DWW LIBRARY

Here are a few of the new books now in the DWW Library. We also have Nancy Hoskins' new book Universal Stitches. Please let our librarian, Sareela, know of any other books or magazines you would like to see in the reference or lending libraries.



devon weavers workshop

www.devonweaversworkshop.org

TRUSTEES & COMMITTEE 2015

(Trustees marked with an asterisk)

Chairman, Intermediate
& Advanced Courses

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Secretaries

Jacqueline Jones & Jill Davies*

Treasurer

Colleen Pope*

Beginners Courses

Jenny Rolfe*

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