



ISSUE 8

FEBRUARY 2010

the shuttle

devon weavers workshop
www.devonweaversworkshop.org

DIARY DATES 2010

16 MARCH

Blackjack meeting 11.00am

20 MARCH

SW Area Meeting, nr Winchester

29 MARCH

Committee Meeting 11.00am

31 MARCH

Deadline for Waistcoat Challenge

26, 27 & 28 APRIL

Margaret Roach Wheeler Course
Designing with Summer & Winter

1, 2 & 3 MAY

Margaret Roach Wheeler Course
Designing the Mahotan Way

MAY (Exact date to come)

Trip to Stroud Textiles Festival

8 - 13 JUNE

DWW Exhibition
Harbour House, Kingsbridge

11 - 13 JUNE

Contemporary Craft Fair, Bovey Tracey

21 JUNE

Trip to RHS Rosemoor to visit
William Morris Exhibition

20, 21 & 22 SEPTEMBER

Alice Schlein Course
Network Drafting on 8 Shafts or more

24, 25 & 26 SEPTEMBER

Alice Schlein Course
The Woven Pixel

23 & 24 OCTOBER

Ingrid Boesel Course
Fiberworks

26, 27 & 28 OCTOBER

Ingrid Boesel Course
Double Weave

18 NOVEMBER

DWW AGM and shared lunch

FOR SALE

LOUET 70

With stand, bench and a box of the usual bits and pieces, plus a variety of shuttles.
£395

Floor inkle loom £40.00 ono

Table inkle loom £60.00 ono

Contact: Sue Miller via DWW's website

ASHFORD TRADITIONAL SPINNING WHEEL PLUS LAZY KATE, PAIR OF CARDERS & NIDDY NODDY

All for £175.00

Bishops Tawton, North Devon

Contact: Georgie Bailey via DWW's website

WELCOME TO SHUTTLE 8

It seems impossible, but DWW has been at Coombe Park for 5 years; to me it seems like yesterday we moved into our premises. We have lost a few members during these 5 years but have gained so many more. The Full Membership category is full and we have a thriving group of Associate members. The workshop is usually used at least 4 days a week. Often on other days it is ideal to go and weave alone to finish a project. I hope to see more waistcoats exhibited for the challenge and if anyone has an idea for the next Challenge please let me know. The Blackjack group is meeting twice yearly, please feel free to come even if you are a relative beginner as this does encourage you to widen your weaving horizons.

This year there are six courses at the Workshop, covering beginners to those with advanced skills. We have Margaret Roach Wheeler coming to teach two courses in April/May. Margaret is a FANTASTIC teacher and the first course Designing with Summer and Winter is an ideal course for those who have been weaving for a relatively short time. Margaret will teach you how to weave very colourful samples, you will go away with 10 or 12 samples which you will be able to adapt into your woven items. The Alice Schlein courses are for the intermediate to advanced members. The Woven Pixel course will help with designing for the Megado loom in the workshop, using Photoshop and inserting weave structure using Patten Fill, much easier than copying a liftplan, also allowing more freedom in design.

In October Ingrid Boesel is coming to give a 2 day Fiberworks Course - a must for all of you who have Fiberworks software. She will teach how to use the programme to maximum effect and is then teaching a 3 day Double Weave Course that will be suitable for any of you. These three tutors are from Canada and the USA and are all very respected tutors worldwide; do take the opportunity to learn from them.

So 2010 will hopefully be another successful year with lots of activity.

Sue Dwyer, Chairman

TAKING RISKS

Playing safe has never produced exciting cloth. Any historical study of textiles reveals that weavers in the past were often much more adventurous with their fabric than weavers of today. Handweavers are notorious for a nervous attitude towards cutting their cloth into shaped garments, as if every cut will produce irrevocable fraying.

They are nervous of most 'finishing' even while realising that most cloths are incomplete without it. Yet the very act which is potentially ruinous to the fabric can transform it from a run-of-the-mill item to a thing of trembling beauty, as if a reward for the risk which was taken.

Ann Sutton, Ideas in Weaving

DYEING DAY - 17 August '09



Above: Discussing who gets to do the washing up...
Below: Sareela with her 'Totnes Flag'



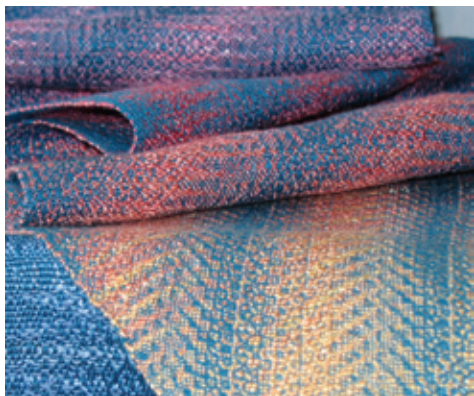
Thanks to Erdmunda's generous hospitality (yet again) we held our annual DWW dyeing day in her garden in August. We had great fun warp painting, as well as generally dyeing anything we could lay our hands on. Potions were mixed and an ever-changing range of mysterious, but impressive, hues appeared out of the Burco boiler, while the indigo dye vats got the blues. Beautiful warps and wefts (seen on the washing line below left) have since appeared in the Workshop as a result of all this activity.

Painting Warps and Wefts



Jackie kindly supplied us with our machine knitted silk squares. These were pre-soaked, folded in half lengthwise and pinned on to boards (see above). We then painted them with specially prepared dyes, applying the various colours in broad horizontal bands. The knitted pieces were then turned over and the dyes were applied again on to the reverse side to ensure complete penetration. Some of us steamed our pieces, allowed them to cool and rinsed them until no more dye came out. Some wrapped their pieces in cling film and left them to 'set' for two hours before rinsing them thoroughly in hot water. After drying they were unravelled, ready for use. The crinkles from the knitting disappeared when weaving with the yarn, only showing at the ends of fringes when it was used as the warp.

Sue Dwyer



The scarf above was woven on a 2/20 cotton warp, with a painted silk weft. The scarf below used the painted silk as the warp and had 60/2 silk as the weft.



Kay Balmforth



I used the dyed silk for the warp, and used a 16/2 pink mercerised cotton as the weft. I like the crinkly ends of the tassels. Woven in 2/2 twill at 30 epi.

Sareela James



Warp painted silk - weft was 2/16 cotton (light blue).

Ann Holl



The painted warp was set at 15 epi and the weft was overtwill wool, woven at 10 ppi, plain weave & 2/2 twill.

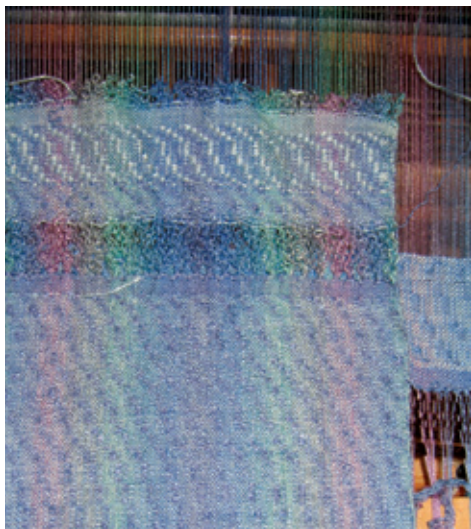
Nancy Adams



Warp in progress



Warp in progress



Sample and warp in progress

Beginners' Courses 2009

The beginners classes had seven students in Autumn 2009. They all successfully completed their first item and some are continuing as Associate Members of the Workshop. Between 7 - 11 April 2010 we have eight students booked for a five day beginners course. I am very grateful of the offers of help promised, as the first two days will be HECTIC, with eight warping mills/boards in action.

Sue Dwyer



Clockwise from left: Work by 2009 beginners - Ann Roe and scarf, scarves woven by Jean Fencott, Alison Alexander and Lesley Ferguson.

BLACKJACK 11 - next one is 16 March, 11.00am



Details of the samples produced by the Blackjacks for the September 2009 meeting. You can look at, and handle, the real things....they are kept in the files under the Reference Library. Please do consider joining us, it's only twice a year and it's a great way of trying a little bit of something different. Simply turn up at the next meeting on Tuesday 16 March. Hope to see you there!

Bits & Bobs

VISITOR WITH A DIFFERENCE

This surprise visitor (stick insect) turned up at the Workshop on Saturday 12 September 2009 - it was still around on Tuesday 15, much to the amazement of the Blackjacks. Thanks go to Sue Symons for the photograph.



WILLIAM MORRIS EXHIBITION

A William Morris Exhibition at RHS Rosemoor opens on the 29 May. We are organising a DWW day trip to see the exhibition on 21 June. All enquiries to Sue D.

BIRDWOOD HOUSE 2011

Advance warning - DWW has booked a week at Birdwood House during Nov/Dec 2011 for an exhibition and sale of members' work.

BEGINNER'S COURSE

There will be a week-long beginner's course in the Workshop from 7 - 11 April. Members are welcome to use the Workshop as usual during this time, but bear in mind there may be some disruption to your normal peace and quiet!

ISMINI SAMANIDOU

Many of you know Ismeni Samanidou who is a weaving lecturer at Falmouth. Ismeni has a travelling fellowship for two months in Bangladesh and is travelling with her partner Gary, an artist who carves wood.

You can follow their travels on her blog - www.bangladeshtextileresidency.wordpress.com

It is well worth looking at as there are many wonderful photos as well as YouTube videos of wonderful complex inlay woven on pit looms.

Sue Dwyer

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Please check your contact details on the inside back page of this edition of the Shuttle. If we have got something wrong please contact Rosemary D, our Membership Secretary, with corrections as soon as possible.

BOGAN HOUSE

In September, we provided display items for the window in Bogan House. The request had been for things made from locally produced fibres, quite a challenge for us. We displayed handspun woven and knitted scarves made with fleeces from a local farm, and a jacket coloured by natural dyes, which was much admired. Thank you to all who helped with this.

Rosemary Durant

BABY MAT

Liz Sharp's beautiful baby mat in action!



Bobs & Bits

CORD WINDERS

Sue D is taking orders for cord winders (see pic below) - \$25 (£15.60 at present exchange rates) each.

If 10 or more are ordered they will only be \$20. Sue has offered to bring some back from the USA Convergence and CW Conference in July. They are difficult to get hold of in the UK, so if you think you might like one do let Sue know ASAP.



CHRISTMAS OPEN STUDIO

During our Christmas Open Studio week £1,198.45 was taken for the sale of members' work, whilst Ann and Viv took over £360 at Dart Yacht Club. Many thanks to everyone who helped in so many different ways and made these events such a success.

WONDERWOOL WALES

The 5th Wonderwool Wales will be held on 24 & 25 April 2010, at the Royal Welsh Showground, Llanellwedd, Builth Wells, Powys.

A BIT OF A CHALLENGE.....



....we could all do with one, so the closing date for entries for the Waistcoat Challenge has been extended to 31 March 2010, to allow you all to get weaving and sew up any loose ends. Somebody you know might be in need of one.....

FREE FLEECE

My neighbour has 3 fleece to give away. If any one is interested please contact Kay via the Devon Weavers Workshop website.

DWW's NEW YEAR LUNCH 2010

Lovely to see so many of you at the Royal Seven Stars, Totnes on 19 January.



DISPLAY OF ETHNIC TEXTILES

We are planning to hang a display of ethnic textiles, supplied by our members, in the Workshop during the months of February and March. If you have collected anything over the years that you think might be relevant please leave it in the Workshop by 15 February. All items should be clearly labelled - your name, plus any information you have about the textiles' origin, yarn etc. Any queries to Kay. All articles will be left at owner's risk - but we will be extremely careful with them.

TAPESTRY & TEXTILE WORKSHOPS

with Fiona Hutchison in her studio in Edinburgh.
Weekend Workshops - £100

30/31 January - Contemporary Tapestry
13/14 February - Magical Threads
27/28 February - Record and Reflect Sketchbooks
6/7 March - Piecing and Patching

International Patchwork Tapestry Summer School
19 - 23 July - Tapestry in the 21st Century £275

For further information contact the Devon Weavers Workshop website

Bobbie Kociejowski & colour

What a fun time we had!

We started each day with a lecture on colour theory, with plenty of examples from nature and art, then we tried to put it into practice with paints, mixing, matching hues, tones and much more.

Then on to wraps; lots of contrasts and we were shown an easy way of doing them.

We had put warps on our looms in advance of the course. They were composed of five colours, one of which was to be a secondary colour.

The result was some wonderful bright warps. (Are we sometimes a little too 'safe'?) We then wove, starting off with our warp colours, then muted them down with chromatic colours. We swapped looms and more and more wonderful colour mixes appeared. All the time with lots of advice from Bonnie, who was a delightful and inspiring tutor.

It was a truly fascinating and most useful course and I am sure our future weaving will have a little bit more zing to it as a result. I for one hope so!

Ann Holl



Experiments with Felt

I have always been interested in making felt but have never particularly enjoyed making hand-made felt. I tried knitting and then felting in the washing machine which produced a thick and rather uninteresting felt which for my purposes was unworkable. Then one day whilst looking at the Handweavers Studio website I spotted some wool described as supersoft - ideal for fulling. (Not to be confused with super wash which is designed to prevent fulling) I decided to try some samples using the supersoft wool in a plain weave. I set up the loom at 10epi. My first effort was not very satisfactory as it was too heavily beaten and produced a dense, thick, weft faced fabric. I then tried beating very lightly giving an even weave fabric of 10 epi and 10 picks to the inch. This produced an airy, open weave fabric. I worked several samples and then started felting. One sample I felted by hand (very hard work!!) which produced a lovely soft sample, possibly suitable for a scarf, however the weaving was still visible and I wanted to produce a slightly thicker fabric. After several efforts I had some satisfactory results. I washed the fabric on a coloureds, rapid wash at 40 degrees. At last success and I was ready to get on with cushion covers, bags, etc etc.



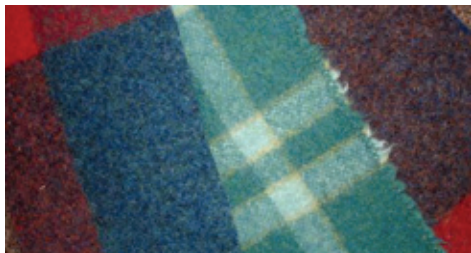
I am continuing to sample and having worked specifically on plain and check pieces I am now working on some summer and winter designs to try to get some pattern into my felt.

However, I have discovered that felting in a front load washing machine is by no means an exact science, despite using the same washing cycle and temperature, and the same wool and sett each piece seems slightly different. The shrinkage of each piece is not uniform and it is difficult to estimate the size of the finished piece. I am restricted on size because of the width of my loom, I think that each piece probably shrinks by about a third, and so it is not possible to make large pieces. In spite of these difficulties I am keen to continue to discover more about felting and so my shopping list now starts - top load washing machine, or twin tub and larger loom!

Jane Gould



Some of Jane's lovely woven/felted pieces



INKLE WEAVING at SUMMER SCHOOL 2009

Being my first summer school experience I had everything to look forward to and discover so it was with great enthusiasm that I boarded various trains and headed for the city of Lincoln: the city with its cathedral stands on a hill which is clearly visible on the rail approach. I arrived at the college hosting the event on the Sunday afternoon in time to settle in before the evening meal: it would seem a good moment to mention the dedicated catering team who consistently produced meals of a high standard whilst trying to please all of our nutritional needs. It was wonderful to spend a week immersed in the course and not have to think about cooking, despite the fact that I also enjoy creating in the kitchen!

As I am new to weaving and was also to inkle weaving, when our tutor Anne Dixon started to demonstrate and talk us through even the most basic techniques I had the sensation of being like a dry sponge that is suddenly immersed in water; would I drown during this full immersion? Anne's patience and enthusiasm would not allow that to happen as she guided us through her very full and challenging programme and even for the more experienced weavers there was still a lot to be learnt.

Floor inkle loom - additional warp length possibilities.



Ann Dixon demonstrating to students.

We started with a warp of two contrasting colours using a 3 x 2/16 cotton yarn and most of us did continue to use this same yarn for the duration of the course: Anne had brought along a good selection of colours prepared for us so as it is a strong and smooth option it lends itself very well for sampling. This first warp allowed us to explore basic weave, repp, slits, some adding of beads, fringes and Anne's technique of lettering with warp manipulation using both pick up and drop downs, in order to compensate, so that the reverse would still appear as neat as the front side: I did not struggle alone on this one!

We then moved on to a second warp designed to allow us to explore Baltic-Style patterning which also gave us a chance to learn to read patterns and create some of our own. I found this to be a great relief after the lettering experience: the essence of this style was to draw in so as to keep the pattern together and was quite in contrast to the third warp for South American Pebble patterns which requires a spreading out of the warp in order for the pattern to emerge. For this latter style I opted for 11 threads rather than the 21, which allows for more decorative motifs to be achieved, but this was for me the moment when I reached some kind of understanding about where the week's journey had brought me. I do hope to be able to consolidate some of what I have learnt in the coming months, as doing this course was for me a golden opportunity and one that was given

to me through the bursary fund (watch the Journal space in the autumn for more about bursaries).

So, all in all a very intensive week with our inkle looms and although there was a half day on the Wednesday to go and explore Lincoln I chose to continue with the work and try to keep up! Many of us continued to work late into the evenings, after the talks in the early part of the week and after our meal towards the end of the week when the trade fair was on as well.

It is more than rumoured that the next summer school in 2011 will be north of the border and, as a group, we would have appreciated the chance of some kind of formal feedback just to give the organiser/s of such an event something for future reference.

If anyone would like to see some more of my photos of the samples that Anne brought along or of our work please try to catch me on Mondays in the Workshop.

Susan Dudley



Above: Using tablets on an inkle loom

Below and left: Some of Ann's sample braids



COURSES UPDATE

BEGINNERS COURSE

7 - 11 April
8 booked/full

MARGARET ROACH WHEELER

26, 27 & 28 April
Designing with Summer & Winter
4 places left

MARGARET ROACH WHEELER

1, 2 & 3 May
Designing the Mahotan Way
4 places left

ALICE SCHLEIN

20, 21 & 22 September
Network Drafting on 8 shafts or more
3 places left

24, 25 & 26 September
The Woven Pixel
13/full

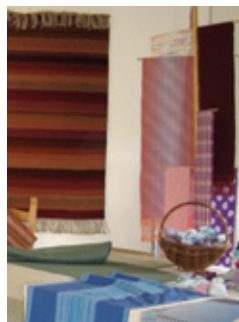
INGRID BOESEL

23 & 24 October
Fiberworks - Booking forms to come

26, 27 & 28 October
Double Weave - Booking forms to come

DWW EXHIBITIONS 2009

Many thanks to members, friends and relations who gave their time, equipment and materials so freely during 2009 to make all the DWW events, and the Workshop itself, such a success and such good fun.



ATHENA AND ARACHNE

The Greek myth of Athena and Arachne is a myth of a wonderful contest in which the skills of a goddess were matched against the skills of disrespectful mortal Arachne. The young Arachne was of a very low status in society, and for this reason the goddess Athena took pity on her and taught her the art of weaving. Arachne was a very quick learner and soon she became a master weaver. So talented had Arachne become that the nymphs would gather to see her beautiful designs.

Soon questions began to appear, "Arachne who taught you how to weave so beautifully?", "No one" would reply Arachne. Arachne had become so engulfed in her self-conceit that she could not even give credit to her teacher. Athena was saddened by the disrespect of her pupil so she decided to pay her a visit in the hope that she could make Arachne realise the folly of her ways. Athena came to her in the form of a very old woman with ragged and torn old clothes. She told Arachne that she should respect the gods as even the wise do, because true skill comes with age and wisdom. Arachne would have none of this - why should she respect someone who in her eyes did not help her? She proceeded to mock the goddess and challenged her to an open contest.

Such disrespect Athena could no longer handle. From out of the shadow of the old woman appeared the god of wisdom and war, Athena. All who were present trembled in fear and bowed down to the goddess Athena -

except Arachne. The competition then began and each competitor proceeded to weave beautiful masterpieces. Athena wove the story of how she won the competition with Poseidon for the naming of Athens. The story told how Poseidon had struck the ground of Athens with his trident and brought forth salt water, whereas Athena struck the ground with her staff and brought forth an olive tree. The people of Athens chose Athena as their patron goddess over Poseidon as they found her gift more useful to their city. Along with this creation she created images of mortals being transformed to hideous beasts as a result of their disrespect.

Arachne's disrespect was magnified in her marvellous designs, a clear mockery of her teacher and the gods - she wove scenes of the brutality of the gods showing them in compromising situations. Athena quickly became angered, but when looking for fault in the girl's work she found none. Athena's anger grew and she rose up hitting Arachne in the face with a tool. Upon being struck Arachne realised the magnitude of her arrogance and hung her self.

On seeing the death of the girl Athena became saddened and decided that Arachne should continue to weave, as should her descendants for all time. She sprinkled her with a magic potion and transformed her into a spider..... and to this day we can find her descendants spinning and weaving their magnificent webs throughout world.

devon weavers workshop

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TRUSTEES

Kay Balmforth, Rosemary Durant, Sue Dwyer,
Ann Holl, Colleen Pope, Erdmunda Symon

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Ann Holl & Jill Davies

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