



THRUMS

Newsletter of the Syracuse Weavers Guild

President's Message

As I write this I'm looking forward to re-connecting with guild members for another year of interesting programs. We have a mix of both outside speakers to teach and inspire us and also many opportunities to share guild members' knowledge and experience. There will be some hands-on fun, another guild challenge project and lots of opportunities for sharing our fibery pursuits.

Elyse Meltz

Mission

The mission of the Syracuse Weavers Guild is to stimulate an interest in the art and craft of weaving, achieve a high standard of excellence and help encourage all persons interested in weaving.



Weaving Demos | Lauren Whitney

In July I had the privilege to educate a group of children ranging in age from 4 to 12 on Biblical weaving. We talked about weaving in Old Testament times through the time of Jesus. Starting with a quick demo of spinning on a spindle to the set up of an ancient loom. Then I gave the children (and a couple of adults) a coaster size cardboard "loom" . These children were intent on weaving and even the 4 year old concentrated on "over under and reverse" . Some of the older children stuck to it until they had finished their coaster. We had a great time and have at least one future weaving enthusiast.

Earlier this year, in March, I had the privilege to give a weaving demo and talk on mid 1800's mill weaving to the 7th grade class at the Fulton Jr. High of about 125 children. They had been reading a book called "Lydia" , about a "Mill Girl" in Lowell MA in 1840. If you can believe it they were all fascinated and quiet through the demo and had some very interesting questions to ask after. The teachers were very interested with lots of questions to understand this time in history as well. It was a great experience.

<p>Guild Officers</p>	<p>Study Groups Judy Fox</p>
<p>President Elyse Meltz 315-478-1592</p> <p>1st Vice President Sue Szcotka 607-748-9658</p> <p>2nd Vice President Judy Fox 315-685-1330</p> <p>Secretary Cynthia Pendergast 315-339-0785</p> <p>Treasurer Donna Johnson-Brown 315-696-6041</p>	<p>The small bands group is steady and strong. They meet regularly after the meeting the first Saturday of the month. New participants are always welcome.</p> <p>We welcome ideas for study groups. Groups are self-directed and designed to further an understanding of skills needed for the topic under study. Study groups are a good way to explore new areas with the support of other guild members and to keep projects moving.</p>
<p>Seen in Handwoven</p>	<p>Membership Booklets & Surveys Donna Connery</p>
<p>Hey, guild members! Have you seen the Sept/Oct issue of Handwoven yet? When you do, be sure to check out page 7 under Our Roving Reporters to see our Mayan Hands towels in their full glory! The article that Sue Szcotka wrote about our guild challenge has been printed and hopefully our guild's support of Mayan Hands will help alert other guilds about their organization.</p> <p>Christina Garton has also told Sue that the Sept/Oct 2018 issue of Handwoven will be highlighting guild challenges. Sue will be getting more information from her soon, so maybe we can be in print again!</p>	<p>Welcome back to the 33 members who renewed their SWG membership for 2017-18. Be sure to get your copy of the membership booklet, with many thanks to Nancy Smothergill and Ana Fernandez for their efforts in pulling it together. You'll notice something new this year: pictures. With so many people from all around the greater Syracuse area, these photos should help us all get to know each other a little quicker.</p> <p>Thanks to our 12 members who completed the weaving survey last year. It's clear from the results that SWG weavers have a variety of interests and skills. We use all types of looms, and every weave structure was checked off at least once. We prefer to weave with animal, metallic, plant, and novelty fibers. Home furnishings and sewing with our handwovens topped the end products list of what we create. Although you won't see a formal summary of the results, we used the surveys to help plan this year's monthly programs such as sewing with handwovens (October) and non-traditional tapestry weaving (November). There were a lot of good ideas that could easily become future study groups, so don't be bashful at the meetings.</p>
	<p>Traveling Loom Judy Fox</p>
	<p>Our traveling guild looms are set up with small projects so that members may experiment or try unfamiliar techniques. We welcome suggestions for future projects.</p> <p>The Theo Moorman loom has been launched. We will be re-verifying signups starting in September.</p> <p>Rep loom will also begin traveling early this fall. Again signups will be re-verified when it is ready to travel.</p>

Remembering Dianne Leach

Dianne Leach joined SWG in 2002, if my records are correct, and was such a vital part of the guild for those wonderful 15 years. Her zeal for exploring anything to do with fibers and meticulous attention to details made her such a valuable part of our small weaving community. As secretary, Dianne took her job very seriously, down to the very smallest detail in the notes. As VP for programming, Dianne was so conscientious in getting programs in order and making sure things ran smoothly.

What I loved best about Dianne was her passion for any kind of passementarie. We shared a strong interest in tablet weaving and other small band weaving. She was fascinated by South American back strap weaving and produced amazing crocheted items, including one fascinating bag with little houses. Her home was decorated with many colorful and intricate tassels and cords, tamari balls in a plexiglass tube in the bathroom, yarns artfully displayed in various ways throughout the living room and library nook, and multitudes of small bands of all designs draped or pinned up, others still on the many small band looms.



Dianne's workshops and hands-on programs are to be remembered with awe. Always a stickler for details in a presentation, she had everything organized and spelled out for participants. Often there was a folder for each person, with samples made beforehand as examples, threads carefully measured and cut to the necessary lengths, holes punched in the sample cards to be used, crystal clear instructions duplicated and plenty of extra supplies in case someone forgot what they were supposed to bring.

Dianne's personal weaving notebooks are amazing. Not only did she keep great records of what she did, but also recorded her thoughts about what she was trying to accomplish and the trail she took to get there. Finally, what was so endearing about Dianne was how humble she was about her skills and understanding of weaving. She would work at puzzling out a new technique and then share enthusiastically with others the short-cuts or insights she discovered. Dianne did not like taking credit in writing for what she had done, but I for one will remember most fondly all I learned from her.

Shared by Nancy Smothergill

When I came across these lines last spring, they made me think of Dianne Leach. I share them with you all in memory of her, recalling her passion for weaving and her enthusiasm for sharing that passion.

Cynthia Prendergast

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
[Tablet woven laces for sneakers,]
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

- From Marge Piercy's *To Be of Use*

Syracuse Weavers' Guild 2017-2018 Programs

September 9th

Part 1) NYS Fair Competitions-How to Enter and Possible Improvements Presenter: Elyse Meltz

Have you ever wondered how to enter weaving into the NYS Fair competition but found the rules and categories to be confusing? Here is a chance to have the process clarified and to discuss what we might propose as a guild to change and improve the way weaving is considered and exhibited.

Part 2) 2017/2018 Guild Challenge Project Presenter: Judy Fox

The guild challenges over the last two years involved using specific colors and fibers as in the Mayan Hands towels, or using colors, fibers and weave structures randomly drawn from a bag. This year all these choices will be yours....with a twist. Your challenge will involve partnering with an anonymous weaver to create a special gift for each of you.

Be sure to attend the September meeting and learn in person how you will apply your design skills to warp, weft, color, fiber and structure. If you can't attend, we will send the particulars after the meeting. The challenge projects will be shared at the April meeting.

October 14th Sewing with Handwoven Fabrics Presenter: Clara Rose Thomas Facilitator: Sue Szczotka

In addition to being an expert weaver, Clara Rose was a professional seamstress for many years. We have all admired her hand-woven coat, jackets and other clothing that she has worn to guild meetings and now she is going to share some of her tips and techniques to help us try our hands at creating beautiful clothing from our own woven fabrics. She will be showing us samples of her work and sharing information about fibers, patterns, closures, linings, interfacings and fulling. PLEASE NOTE* This program will be held at the home of Clara Rose in Baldwinsville instead of at our usual place. Directions will be emailed before the meeting.

November 4th Dimensional Tapestries Presenter: Mary Kester Facilitator: Cynthia Prendergast

Mary Kester's world travel and career as an art historian sparked her interest in Neolithic sites. Her tapestries are abstractions from human and landscape forms and Neolithic stone sites. She expands the woven grid into 3-dimensional layers and drawn depth, suggesting crevices and hollows - spaces that appear deeper than they really are. Her tapestries move away from traditional approaches by being individual objects of art, rather than pictorial depictions of scenes, themes and stories. Mary will share her methods and examples of her work with us.

December 2nd Plaited Paper Baskets Presenter: Nancy Smothergill

Everyone can use another basket. In this hands-on program we will make a basket from the simplest of materials - paper. Using grocery bags, old maps, newspaper comics or any fancier paper, the basket is woven flat and shaped into a container. All you need besides the paper and a few simple tools is an affinity for the ancient rhythm of over-under, over-under.

Syracuse Weavers Guild

January 6th The Wide World of Narrow Bands Presenters: Small Bands Study Group

Historically, narrow bands were a necessity, essential for both work and clothing. More recently, handwoven narrow bands are used mostly for decoration, woven in a variety of techniques. Instead of being woven on a shaft-loom, bands can be made with little or only a modest amount of equipment. Remembering Dianne Leach's passion for band weaving, the Small Bands Study Group will present a potpourri of ways to weave narrow wares, including inkle, tablet weaving, rigid-heddle and pick-up back-strap weaving. There will be opportunities to try your hand at these various techniques.

February 3rd Teaching and Learning in Guatemala Presenter: Sarah Saulson Facilitator: Sue Szcotka

Many members of our guild participated in the 2016-2017 friendship towel exchange project using cotton yarns dyed by a Guatemalan women's cooperative coordinated by the Fair Trade organization, Mayan Hands. In March 2017, guild member, Sarah Saulson, traveled to their remote village in the Guatemalan Highlands to teach the same women how to paint warps with dyes for a new line of scarves. Once there, Sarah learned that their backstrap loom weaving is ideally suited to the technique. Despite the language barrier, the 20 women were fast and enthusiastic learners.

Sarah continues to work with Mayan Hands to bring the beautiful painted warp scarves to market. She will share many images of her Guatemalan workshop and discuss working with the Albany-based staff of Mayan Hands to create a viable, new product.

March 3rd Touring Through Tapestry Presenter: Mary McMahon Facilitator: Nancy Smothergill

In this talk, we will take a trip through the various elements of tapestry. This ancient technique of image making has some unusual elements that make it unique...its materials, its tools, and its methods. Mary McMahon has been exploring tapestry for almost 50 years, as a producing fiber artist and as a fiber teacher. There will be lots of things to see and examine...and opportunities for questions and concerns.

April 7th Presentation of the Guild Challenge Presenter: Judy Fox

Here is your opportunity to share the results of your guild challenge project and to marvel over the efforts of your fellow guild members! Bring your finished projects and be prepared to tell us about what you learned from this project including your inspiration, challenges, trials and triumphs.

May 5th Potluck Luncheon and Towel Exchange

The luncheon will be held at Nancy Smothergill's house again this year.

Meetings are on Saturday, starting at 10:00 a.m.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
7248 Highbridge Road
Fayetteville, NY 13066

Hostess List | Lois Koenig

September 9th

Judy Fox | Sonia Hartmann

October 14th

Donna Connery | Elaine DuBois

November 4th

Lois Koenig | Darlene Endy

December 2nd

Meg Welch | Clara Rose Thomas

January 6th

Ana Fernandez | Cynthia Pendergast

February 3rd

Linda Miller | Elyse Meltz

March 3rd

Joyce Lock | Joan Brickner

April 7th

Sally Meyers | Sue Szczotka

Substitutes

Teresa Reller | Vicky Clifton

Committees

Booklets

Nancy Smothergill 315-474-4508

Ana Fernandez 315-447-9185

Calling Committee

Carolyn Wolfson 315-449-1707

Meg Welch 315-638-4230

Membership

Donna Connery 607-657-2681

Refreshments Coordinator

Lois Koenig 315-627-0451

Program

Sue Szczotka 607-748-9658

Webmaster

Joyce Lock 315-446-8655

Special Projects

Judy Fox 315-685-1330

Library

Elyse Meltz 315-478-1592

Thrums Newsletter

Susan Mehringer 607-339-7600

Membership Form | Donna Connery

Please be sure to complete and return the registration form with your dues, or create your own form with all of the required information. This is very helpful for record-keeping! You can mail your check to Donna Connery or pay at the next meeting.

Regular dues: \$30

Senior dues: \$25

Make checks payable to: Syracuse Weavers Guild

Memberships in SWG are for one year, May-May

Mail to: Donna Connery

172 Jewett Hill Road

Berkshire, NY 13736

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____



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Susan Mehringer
11 Pheasant Way
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Syracuse Weavers Guild

