

# Etobicoke Handweavers and Spinners Guild

Newsletter - August 2018

## Come and Play All Day



Saturday, September 15, 2018, 10 am – 4 pm  
Etobicoke Handweavers & Spinners Guild presents  
Ontario Handweavers & Spinners  
Central Region Seminar

Bring a lunch \$7 Admission



Fibre Chats  
Featuring:  
Deborah Livingston Lowe  
Fiona Ellis  
Special presentation by Craft Ontario  
and talks on:  
Natural Dyes in Ontario  
Coverlets



Spinning Circle  
Bring your wheel  
Or try one of ours!



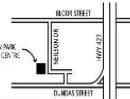
Maker Spaces  
Demos  
Try weaving in our Fibre Studio!



Alpaca Avenue  
Burr House  
GnR Alpacas  
Heartfelt Fibre Arts  
Linc Farm  
Loom Lust  
Muskoka Fibre Arts  
and more!

Nelson Park Creative Centre

56 Neilson Drive, Etobicoke



[www.neilsonparkcreativecentre.com](http://www.neilsonparkcreativecentre.com)



Neilson Park  
Creative Centre

[www.etobicokehandweaversandspinners.com](http://www.etobicokehandweaversandspinners.com)  
[ehsguild@gmail.com](mailto:ehsguild@gmail.com)

Photo courtesy Linc Farm  
Graphics by Bonnie Ballu



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS



<u>STUDIO TIME</u>	<u>SPINNING and DYEING</u>
<p><u>Fibre Fridays</u> - 9:00 - 12:30 September 7, 14, 21, 28 October 5, 12, 19, 26 November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 December 7, 14,</p>	<p>Hope you've been enjoying spinning this summer - and maybe dyeing too? We'll be doing Wednesday Dye days again - I've been doing some harvesting from our Dye garden and from my own garden at home. I have Coreopsis and dyer's chamomile flowers. Have you been harvesting too?</p>
<p><u>Friday</u> - 1:00 - 4:30 September 14 - OHS Seminar set-up</p>	<p>Have you spun your Pearl fleece yet? And made something with it?</p>
<p><u>Wednesday Spinning Days</u> - 9:00 - 4:30 September 12 October 10 November 14 December 12</p>	<p>Workshops on spinning Impressionist yarns and dyeing with Indigo are in the works - stay tuned for more info. And I now have connections for a workshop on Dyeing with Mushrooms! Dates TBA.</p>
<p><u>Sunday Open Studio Days</u> - 12:00 - 4:00 September 30 October 28 November 25</p>	
<p><u>Tuesday Evening Meeting</u> - 6:30 - 9:30 September 4 October 2 November 6 December 4</p>	<p><i>Joan McKenzie Spinning Convenor</i></p>
<p>Please continue to put \$2 in the box for half day and \$5 for full day studio time. This helps to offset our rental costs. <i>Dorothy Thomson</i></p>	<p>This year, we have made great progress on our tea towel warp. There are only two more remaining to be completed. As there are still a few people who would like to do a tea towel, we will put on another warp for more tea towels. The colour gamp warp is ready to go on the small four harness loom.</p>
<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>	<u>WEAVING</u>
<p>It's time to renew your guild membership. This can be done online or at the NPCC front desk. The fee remains the same as last year at \$130 with \$30 of that going to the guild.</p>	<p>On the 60 inch loom, we are about to put on a warp for blankets and when they are finished we can put on a warp for large shawls.</p>
<p>For our out-of-town members we appreciate your continued support for the guild with your donation.</p>	<p><u>SHOWS</u></p>
<p>An updated membership list will be sent out monthly. This list is generated by the NPCC office so if you have any corrections or updates to this list please contact the office.</p>	<p>As you know, the Central Region Seminar is only a few weeks away and our show "THIS IS US" will be going up on September 10th. If you can spare some time on that day, it would be a great help as new ideas and beautiful pieces are what make a show great. It would also be very helpful if you could let me know what you plan to submit for this show. There are insurance forms at the Guild to fill out or you can call me and I will do it for you.</p>
<p><i>Dorothy Thomson</i></p>	<p>I will be available any Friday or at the September meeting to receive your items. If you need any help please let me know.</p>
	<p><i>Karen Fowler Weaving and Show Convenor</i></p>

### UPCOMING GUILD PROGRAMS

From a special look at the Aga Khan Museum's textile collection to making a willow holiday ornament, from an illustrated talk on working with variegated yarns by Kate Atherley to virtual textile visits to Japan and Iceland, our Guild meeting programs for 2018 through 2020 should be entertaining and educational. Stay tuned for details! As for weaving workshops, we're holding off until Spring 2019 due to the Guild's already crammed calendar. I think they'll be worth waiting for!

*Sharon Airhart*

### OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN MORE FIBRE SKILLS AT NPCC

*Two classes in spinning, taught by our own Joan McKenzie:*

**1. Drop Spindle Spinning - Beginner**

Sunday, November 4 (single session) 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

**2. Introduction to Spinning Wheel Spinning - Beginner**

Sunday, February 2, 2019 (single session) 9:30 am to 4:30 pm

*Learn to knit classes, taught by our own Gloria Williams:*

**1. Basic Learn to Knit - no experience necessary**

Wednesdays from October 3 - 24, 2018 (4 week course) 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

**2. Mittens - basic knitting skills required**

Wednesdays from November 7 - 21, 2018 (3 week course) 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

**3. Cable Hat - basic knitting skills required**

Wednesdays from February 6 - 20, 2019 (3 week course) 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

For more information, refer to NPCC Fall and Winter Program or speak to Joan or Gloria.

### ***KNIT NIGHT & CROCHET CORNER***

Last Wednesday of every month (except December) from 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm. Cost is \$5.

All levels of knitters and crocheters welcome. Share in an appreciation for fiber art amongst an encouraging and friendly group. Bring along your current project to work on. We all either get inspired or inspire others with the variety of projects. If in need of assistance, there is always someone willing to help. Come and join us!

### ***NEWS ON SCHEDULE FOR STUDIO C***

Something to think about: We sometimes try to plan out projects (i.e. dyeing fiber) that take more than a few hours to complete. Now we can have more than one day:

Members Open Studio: Thursday 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm \$5

Fibre Friday: Friday 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Open Studio: Friday 12:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Add to this our monthly Saturday and Sunday afternoon and we have a great opportunity to make use of this great facility!

*Moyra MacKay and Gloria Williams*



**SAVE THE DATE - NOVEMBER 24, 2018**

NPCC'S Handmade sale is taking place on November 24<sup>th</sup> and we welcome all EHS members to participate in the sale. Once again we will have live demonstrations in addition to the opportunity to sell items. A few comments:

- Last year EHS made and sold tapestry looms with a simple picture to weave. These went over extremely well and we sold out of the looms. We are interested in an idea for a guild project this year, targeted to a beginner. We would love to hear your suggestions!
- Would everyone planning to put items into the sale please indicate their intention on the sign-up sheet on the cupboard indicating what you intend to sell when you know. We are planning to change up the sale table presentation this year and this will be helpful in planning our table layout.
- We will be posting sign-up sheets for the day of the sale as well. We will need help with set up, working on the sale table, demonstrating and knock down. The sale is a one day sale so it all happens on November 24<sup>th</sup>. Come out and get involved—it is a fun day.
- Once again throughout the fall, we will be keeping Handmade top of mind and will be posting reminders of how many days until the sale date. Checkout the postings on the cupboard!

This is a very good opportunity to find new members and for guild members to sell their items and we hope you will have a productive summer and fall! November 24<sup>th</sup> will be here before we know it!

*Moyra MacKay and Gloria Williams*



**Join us for Festival 2018!**  
**Local, national, and international contemporary fibre art.**

**Sat. Oct. 13 to Sun. Nov. 25, 2018**

**Festival Opening Reception:**

**Sat. Oct. 20, 2018**

<http://www.worldofthreadsfestival.com>

*Dorothy Thomson*

## OUTREACH

As part of our financial grant application to the City of Toronto, we indicate that EHS conducts outreach to the community. One of the ways we do this is through our charity work. As in 2017, we are asking each and every member to provide one clothing item for charity to be brought to the December monthly meeting. It can be as simple as a warm hat. Last year, we provided primarily warm winter items to a street youth program, to a women's center and to a men's out of the cold program. All items were very much appreciated. We have collected a number of knit hats for preemie babies and this year will be donating items to the hospital as well.

Also, we welcome donations of fiber for charity donations so if you are tidying up your stash and have fiber you no longer want, we would be happy to use it for outreach. Please see Gloria or Moyra if you wish to use donated fiber for outreach items.



## MEMORY MUFFS

You may have heard about our memory muff initiative. We received a donation of fiber last year and decided it would make wonderful memory muffs. These are given to individuals with memory loss. The muffs are knit or crocheted and then adorned with little items the individual can fidget with such as beads, figurines, keys and so forth. We plan to meet on Thursday, September 27 from 7:00 to 9:30 pm which is an open studio time to attach the little items to the muffs. Everyone is invited to participate in providing little items and coming on September 27 to finish up the muffs. Who knows, we may all need one of these in the future!!!

*Moyra MacKay and Gloria Williams*

**And another opportunity to make a contribution...**

After several years (!) of effort, a volunteer group has succeeded in bringing a Syrian family to Canada. They arrived in July. The volunteer group is hoping to have a supply of mitts and hats and scarves before winter. The family includes a grandmother, father, mother and three children – two young adult girls and a seven year old boy. If you can help, it would be appreciated. Sharon will collect contributions at the October meeting.

*Sharon Airhart*

In many discussions in the guild over the last year or so, the theme of passing on traditions has figured prominently. For example, the planning for the OHS Central Region Seminar has revolved around finding ways to engage new people in the art and craft traditions that we cherish. The articles that follow contribute to these ongoing discussions in meaningful ways:

- SharonRose Airhart reflects on the process of revival and validation of our traditions.
- Diane Martin reviews a book that explores the meaning of craft, historical and current.
- Sharon Airhart and Elizabeth Evans present the work of our guild study group, learning about early Canadian textile traditions, interpreting them in new ways, and sharing them with the larger weaving community.
- Elizabeth Evans writes about the larger world of textile activities. Embedded in her perspective is her ongoing effort to share her knowledge with others, through interpretive work at the Textile Museum and Science Centre.
- Last, but certainly not least, one of the members of the next generation of our guild family, Talan Moss (son of Helen Skelton), has two art works on display at NPCC. The next generation is blossoming!

I hope you enjoy these reflections as much as I do!

*Claudia Clipsham*

### Just like Me

*By SharonRose Airhart*

When I was getting to know my now-very-good-friend Mark, he both astounded and touched me by talking about his childhood experience of television. It was the early days of broadcasting. When a black person came onto the screen, the whole family would be called to come quick and watch the very rare appearance of a fellow African American.

When he told me that story, many years ago, I thought I understood how he must have felt. It was validation. Truth told, however, I didn't actually Get It until later.

I learned to weave during what is now known as the 1970s Craft Revival, a movement attributed at least in part to the socio-political tenor of the times. In other words, the hippies. Whether or not that's true, for me it wasn't a revival so much as an evolution. I come from a family of "makers" as we would now call them, from my father's woodworking to my mother's varied needlework to my grandmother's sewing. I was taught to embroider at seven and never looked back.

Sadly, at some point during the forty years since that "revival", we looked up from our shuttles and spindles and dye pots to find our ranks thinning. Not only were fewer people "making", the cultural understanding of the inherent value and importance of unique, made-by-hand things had slipped away. Why would you pay so much for X or Y when commercial versions were so cheap? Even our families, some have said, don't appreciate handwoven gifts.

Happily, there is talk these days of another "revival". [Research studies](#) are being undertaken. Important [books](#) about what's lost when we don't participate in the creation of our material world, are being published. Guild numbers are growing a little. I am hopeful.

Meanwhile, in the bosom of that Guild, we continue to be validated. We appreciate each other's work. We are part of larger networks, whether it's the OHS or an online community. We plot and scheme to attract new people to weaving and spinning. And, not co-incidentally, we always tell each other about weaving and spinning on television. Did you see the weaving/spinning/sheep shearing on [Edwardian Farm](#), Tudor Monastery Farm, Full Steam Ahead...? In the absence of a contemporary makers culture, these historical documentaries are the only place on television we can see people like us.

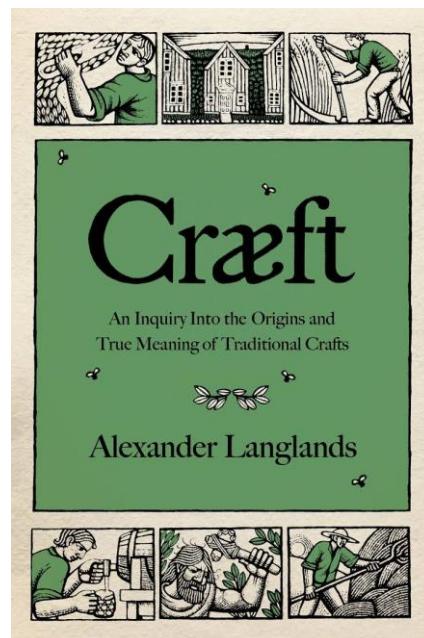
**Book review by Diane Martin**

Langlands, Alexander, *Cræft: How Traditional Crafts Are About More Than Just Making*, Faber and Faber, London, 2017, 344 pages, ISBN 978-0-571-32440-8.

The book outlines Alex Langlands' effort to find and relate the modern meaning of craft (physical skill, ability or dexterity, the "art" of making) to the Anglo-Saxon meanings of "cræft" - "making" in the context of power, knowledge, skill, ability, learning, talent, merit, and excellence, and to expand the modern meaning to include the former.

The book is divided into chapters that form a timeline for the development of the various pre-industrialization crafts as humanity moved from hunter-gatherers to more sedentary lifestyles, and Alex's adventures and misadventures in exploring these crafts. It also presents his thoughts and philosophy in tying the "making" with its underlying "cræftiness".

In short, this is a well-written, enjoyable read. A book that can be picked up and put down at logical break-points - each chapter complete in its own right.



**Handwoven Magazine, September/October 2018 - Article by Sharon Rose Airhart and Elizabeth Evans**

In this issue of Handwoven magazine, there is an article about our guild study group. Sharon Rose Airhart, our resident communicator par excellence, initiated contact with Handwoven, wrote about the group, and steered the whole project through from inspiration to publication, not a small feat! In the article, she linked our interest in historical weaving with current weaving activities. Featured are the kitchen towels woven by Elizabeth Evans, inspired by the draft she wove for the study group from Keep Me Warm One Night. Typical of Elizabeth, she kicked the draft up a notch, working with both colour and weave structure to develop a creative design, and then implementing it with consummate skill. The towels are beautifully photographed and presented in the article along with full directions.

Besides letting the weaving world know a bit about our guild and about Canadian weaving, Sharon and Elizabeth's contributions here captured the inspiration and excitement that we as weavers and spinners know well in our work with textiles. They presented this in a way that can inspire new interest as well. I can easily imagine a young (or older) person, looking at this article, thinking, "Wow! I want to try that!" Which, when you come down to it, is one of the best ways to pass on the legacy, from the weavers that Dorothy Burnham celebrated, to us in our work now, and to future generations of weavers and spinners.

Kudos to both of you, Sharon and Elizabeth!

*Claudia Clipsham*

A VIEW OF THE WIDER WORLD OF SPINNING, WEAVING, AND TEXTILES, by Elizabeth Evans

Textile Museum

*Cross Currents: Canada in the Making* is on until March 31. It is an excellent show that includes 19<sup>th</sup> century weaving and spinning and dyeing. There are two Float work (aka Overshot) Coverlets, three coverlets woven on an Ingrain Carpet Loom (aka Jacquard - punched card technology). One of the coverlets was woven on the Ontario Science Centre loom by the 19<sup>th</sup> century weaver, John Campbell. There are quilts pieced from handwoven fabric made from handspun yarn. There is clothing, Indigenous quillwork, Indigenous cedar basket weaving from the west coast, knitting and crocheting. There are several contemporary pieces including one by weaver, Amanda Rataj (known to many in the guild). Of special interest to me are some archeological needlework tools that emerged from the former parking lot south of the Textile Museum in a part of Toronto that was known as “The Ward” when it was dug up for a new courthouse.

On October 10 a new beadwork show will be opening.

The museum has also started a program of “Textile Teach-Ins” usually on the second Saturday and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday evening of the month. You can see the website for further information on programs. I was involved in a successful Float work/Overshot program in July. There seems to be a lot of interest in weaving in Toronto.

ROM

I attended all three lectures in the series that started in June. Each one was excellent. I was most surprised by the lecture on spider silk. Several spiders are set up in an apparatus, their stomachs are touched in a spot that stimulate the reflex to let down the strong filament that can support their weight. The spiders are set free afterwards and the liquid that forms the filament in their abdomen regenerates. The speaker included all the details of the number of strands twisted together to make warp threads, etc... The silk is ready to use right away. It is clean and doesn't need any further processing. There is a spider silk cape on display at ROM in the spider exhibition that is well worth seeing.

The ROM's lecture series is going to continue beginning October 19. It's not up on the website yet.

A Podcast

I have been watching Anna from Dunklegrun <https://dunkelgrun.com> on YouTube. Anna is chemist who knits, spins and dyes. She is very informative and takes on subjects such as: what are the processes in superwash and why does it absorb more readily than non-superwash (as they call untreated wool nowadays)? She has found a more environmental friendly superwash wool that is processed in Europe. She explains natural dyes, mordants and the chemical structure of cotton and wool in a clear way. She has done various experiments including making a homemade wool wash out of ivy leaves.

Inspiration

I continue to be inspired by our guild's 50 Mile Coat Project and have taken on a personal project of trying to use what I have on hand. I have accumulated a lot of scraps of handwoven cloth of different sizes and have wanted to do something with them, but what. Earlier this year I read a book called Slow Stitch: Mindful and Contemplative Textile Art by Claire Wellesley-Smith. There is an idea in the book for improvisational log cabin piecing where you start with a small piece of cloth and look for a next piece to put with it. After you sew those together, you look for something else. It's unplanned and spontaneous. I've seen quilt show at the Textile Museum several times this summer called Color Improvisations 2. It has nothing to do with log cabin quilting, but all of these inspirations were lingering at the back of my mind as I looked at my crazy pile of handwoven scraps. Seemingly out of the blue, the idea came to me that I could piece them together in an improvisational, wonky fashion and that it what I did and it was fun.



**Talan Moss, Sunflower**

The blossoming of the next generation!

Congratulations to Talan and all the other young artists in this show!

**imagineTHAT!**

**Exhibition Duration: August 14 - September 9, 2018**

**Exhibition Duration: August 14 - September 9, 2018 | [Facebook Event](#)**

ImagineTHAT! features artworks from the young artists of Neilson Park Creative Centre. The exhibition showcases their creativity in thinking and artistic expression through personal and instructor-guided projects. An installation piece created by our summer camp staff will also be on display.

Join us for the closing reception of imagineTHAT! on Saturday, September 8 from 2 – 4pm with refreshments and family friendly activities. This is a free event and all are welcome! [For more information click here](#)

Membership in Neilson Park Creative Centre gives you:

- discounts on entry fees for NPCC Exhibitions
- Present your membership card for a 10% discount on supplies purchased from selected local arts retailers:
  - [AboveGround Art Supplies](#)
  -  
  - [Currys](#)
  -  **THE JAPANESE PAPER PLACE**  
In store only, by appointment.
  - [Romni Wools](#)
  - More to come.
- the opportunity to participate in member events such as Winter Artfest
- studio drop-in privileges whenever a studio space is available
- the opportunity to add the url of your art-related website to our Members' Websites page
- one vote at the NPCC Annual General Meeting of Members

Ontario Association of Art Galleries reciprocal program admission. For details and restrictions see [here](#).