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# Etobicoke Handweavers & Spinners Guild

## Newsletter for May 2022

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## Introduction

*By Cindy O'Malley*

As Newsletter Editor, I put out a general call for content, but I also directly solicit content that I think would be of value to other members. In this newsletter, I reached out to several members that volunteer their time and skills and asked them to submit a blurb about the work they do for the Guild. Throughout this newsletter, you will see references to people that have pitched in to help out where needed, but you will also find some interesting and amusing stories along the way. You might say that this newsletter is *A Salute to Our Volunteers*, beginning with a Message from our President, Carolyn Ramos.

## A Message from our President

*By Carolyn Ramos*

Well, spring has finally arrived ... I think. My garden is bursting forth and the annual duck couple have arrived to spend time in the pond.

NPCC is open for business and members are showing up in person to connect at the guild drop-ins. Events are starting to fill in the calendar that has been very bare for months.

This newsletter continues the theme of Volunteerism that we spoke of last meeting. All that happens in the Guild is through the generous time of volunteers; from offering professional knitting tips, tricks and projects to weeding the gardens. Without you we wouldn't be who we are as a guild.

Some of what I do as President is:

- Know what's going on in all aspects of the Guild
- Liaise with NPCC and their requirements
- Interact with other Guilds' presidents
- Improve public speaking skills
- Learn from the many outside and internal discussions and topics
- Look for interesting projects to keep things fresh
- The time involved is not substantial, maybe 5-6 hours a month
- Prepare an agenda or two; chair a meeting.
- Occasionally, annual or biennial things arise - e.g. Grants.

If you have ever considered volunteering for the Guild, this is your chance. The Guild is entirely volunteer-run and needs your help to operate. We have a few different volunteer roles that allow you to put in as much time as you have available.

On the whole, this is a good way to be part of the inner workings of the Guild and connect with a great membership.

## Call for Assistance

*By Jennifer James*

### Grants

In April, we applied for an **Ontario Seniors Community Grant** to fund audio visual technology in Studio C at NPCC. If received, this grant will support hybrid meetings, and enable members to join us in person at NPCC or via Zoom! Karen Bota recently joined Jennifer and Carolyn to prepare this application and we welcome assistance from members in preparing upcoming submissions.

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For many years the Guild received a **Toronto Arts Council Project Grant** which has been used to fund the speakers at our monthly meetings and workshop leaders. Last year we were not awarded this grant but we do want to apply again. The application is due at the start of August and will be for the period of November 2022 to May 2024. Specifically we need one or more volunteers to help with:

- **Written documentation:** There is documentation for previous applications that we believe would benefit from a new perspective – and a “story” that will persuade the adjudicators that we are deserving of this grant.
- **Visual support materials:** This grant requires support in the form of a “movie” that will illustrate how the grants have been used in the past and how we as a Guild engage with the community. Pictures of the events in which we participate, meetings, open studios, shows and sales, etc., have been used in the past in the compilation of this movie. New suggestions are welcomed!
- **Metrics to measure success:** Not only are there financial metrics which much be measured (which are a subset of the Guild’s annual financial plans) but also engagement and other measures that need to be developed and monitored. This includes ongoing monitoring and reporting at the conclusion of the grant period.

Please contact Jennifer or Carolyn if you can help!

## Constitution / By-Laws

Our Constitution and Bylaws must be updated to comply with the recently updated Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. Denise Larocque has created a word version of our documentation so that we may begin to edit/update. Additionally, she has begun to look at the project timeline and resource needs to ensure that we comply with this Act. We are looking for volunteers to ensure we complete this process!

## Archivist

Carole Gay was the Archivist and recently took possession of 7 boxes of documentation from the basement at NPCC. She plans to sort through these as her time permits and determine what should be kept and what can be discarded or donated to OHS. She would love someone to work with her and transition to this role.

## Membership Update

*By Susan Lapell*

I’ve been in the position of Membership Chair since the summer of 2019. What that has meant for new members is that, most often, I’m the first, or one of the first, people you met when you inquired about or joined the EHS. I distribute the membership lists that come through NPCC. Since the pandemic, we’ve opened up affiliation with those of you who live a distance from our home base, and I’ve kept track of all of those Zoom members. Presently our membership stands at 67—46 NPCC members and 21 Zoomers. We’re investigating ways to continue with a hybrid model so that we can maintain connection with not only those who are returning to NPCC, but also with our valuable members from farther afield. While I’d been a member for a number of years before that, this position has helped me immeasurably in putting names to faces, and getting to know who you all are.

## NPCC Resident Groups Committee

For the past year I’ve represented the EHS on this committee—known as RGC. We represent the six resident groups at NPCC—Etobicoke Handweavers and Spinners [EHS—US!], Humber Valley Art Club [HVAC], The Calligraphic Arts Guild or Toronto, Etobicoke Quilters Guild [EQG], Etobicoke Rugcrafters,

and the Etobicoke Art Group [EAG]. We meet bi-monthly to learn about what's happening at NPCC, and to share our groups' activities with one another. The main project that we've been working on over the past year has been environmental awareness as part of the Centre's Strategic Plan. To that end, Rose Robertson of the Humber Valley Art Club, has designed two signs that will become part of this initiative—*Say NO to single use plastics* signs will be posted at the front door and perhaps throughout the building. And each recycling bin will have a list of what can be recycled in Etobicoke. There will also be a sign in the kitchen advising everyone that that is the Centre's source for potable water and should not be used for cleaning art or craft supplies.

We are indeed fortunate to have a facility such as Neilson Park Creative Centre that gives us the space we need and affords us the camaraderie that keeps our creative juices flowing.



 **BLUE BIN RECYCLING**

- **Paper** - paper (clean, no paint), cardboard (flat), boxes
- **Glass** - bottles, jars (lids on)
- **Metal** - cans, aluminum trays + plates, (no foil wrap)
- **Plastic** - bottles, jugs (lids on), cups, plates, food containers (black)
- **Bags** - and overwrap (soft + stretchy)
- **Foam** - food trays (black) + packaging

## NPCC Land Acknowledgement

By Elizabeth Evans

*"We acknowledge our presence within this land that is the ancestral territory of the Anishinaabe, the Wendat, and more recently the Haudenosaunee peoples, and since 1805 the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, now home to many Indigenous populations.*

*The lived experiences of these nations are passed on today by the stories and teachings of ancestral knowledge keepers. Philip Cote, Young Spiritual Elder has taught us about creation and arrival stories and the Seven Grandfather teachings: Wisdom, Bravery, Respect, Honesty, Truth, Humility and Love.*

*At Neilson Park Creative Centre we respect the stories and teachings of each of these nations to guide our creativity and actions on this land. And as we acknowledge our Mother the Earth, we acknowledge the medicine wheel and its teachings. We recognize the four directions: North, South, East and West, and the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. It is these four seasons that represent the circle of life.*

*We now share a covenant with the Indigenous peoples to care for this territory and a responsibility to continue the tradition of compassionate stewardship of the land so that future generations will continue to enjoy the beauty of the lands."*

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I was the guild representative on the Land Acknowledgement Committee. Our first meeting was a workshop with Philip Cote. When asked how we should begin, he told us stories of the creation of the land and of the first human on the land. His murals can be seen in many places in Toronto. The one I'm most familiar with is underneath Old Mill subway station in King's Mill Park. The 1805 treaty with the Mississaugas of the Credit is also known as The Toronto Purchase and was settled in 2010. I am grateful for all that I learned as a participant in this process. Petra Nyendick, the Executive Director of Neilson Park Creative Centre, facilitated the meetings in a skillful, collaborative, sensitive manner where all voices and opinions were welcomed and considered. Please read the Land Acknowledgement carefully and consider where it might lead you personally, and as a member of Etobicoke Handweavers and Spinners and Neilson Park Creative Centre.

I recommend the book [Indigenous Toronto: Stories that Carry this Place](#) edited by Denise Bolduc, Mnawaate Gordon-Corbiere, Brian Wright-McLeod, Rebeka Tabobondung and John Lorinc available at Toronto Public Library.

### **Elizabeth Evans, EHS Ambassador**

I will always be grateful for the warm welcome I received from Carole Gay and Jean Linden when I first joined EHS. Inspired by their example, a few years ago I took on the role of helping new members find their way around the Guild. I would keep my eye out for them the first time they came to a Guild event, introduce them to others and show them around NPCC or find someone else to do it if I wasn't going to be there. The Pandemic, Zoom meetings, increasing memberships and the reopening of Neilson Park have presented challenges. When I get information about a new member I send an e-mail to welcome them, find out about their interests and point them towards relevant opportunities. I've met some great people who have made significant contributions to EHS.

## **Program Update**

*By Carolyn Ramos*

Sharon Airhart, who has offered such wonderful presentations over the past four years has elected to step down. This is a very interesting position for someone who has fingers in a number of textile pots and offers the ability to connect with many gifted textile artists to increase their own network of contacts.

It involves contacting interesting and currently relevant spinning, weaving, knitting, and textile people to speak with us at our meetings.

Since the domination of Zoom in the marketplace we are very lucky to be able to access fascinating topics from a global source.

Sharon has booked evenings for us until 2023 with the exception of one or two evenings. She would offer assistance in getting started and her experience in contacting, booking and assisting the presenter.

I expect many to rush vying for this position so let the race begin!

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## Spinning Update

By Joan McKenzie

### Workshops

The next workshop will be a virtual workshop again – held over 2 sessions in June.

#### [Spinning Hand-Painted Rovings into Yarns – A 2 session virtual workshop with Beth Abbott.](#)

**Description:** Ever looked longingly at beautiful hand-painted roving braids and wondered what to do with them? This is the workshop that will show you just that!

Using a full hand-painted roving from **Kim Parkinson**, a local Ontario artist, you will learn how to strip, flip, and learn various ways to spin a painted roving and get different colour effects in your yarns.

You can then decide how to spin the rest of the roving for the project you want to do! Perfect for your summer spinning!

**Dates:** 2 sessions in June 2022. Dates TBA.

**Cost:** \$50.00 plus \$25.00 for materials.

**Instructor Bio:** Beth Abbott has been studying and teaching about fibre and fabric for the past 45 years. She has taken many, many workshops and is a graduate of St. Lawrence College with a Fibre Arts Certificate. She earned her Master Spinner Certificate from Georgian College in Owen Sound. She is the author of the book "Icelandic Fleece - a Fibre for All Reasons", which is a result of her study on Icelandic fleece and its potential uses.

Beth has been teaching at Haliburton School of Art and Design for the past 30 years - both her own courses and in the Spinning Certificate program.

### Spinning Rentals

Yes – some of our equipment is available for rental. Contact Joan to make arrangements for renting any of the currently available equipment or visit the [EHS website](#) for equipment, terms and conditions.

#### [Spinning Challenge for 2021/2022:](#)

So, did you do any Stash busting since December? There is still time to do it, and then submit photos of what you've done, and show and share at Guild meetings.

Here's what was handed out as a challenge in December.

**Time to Break out the Stash!** Dig as deep as you like – perhaps find some buried treasures?

Then take a photo of your fibres – the Before Picture, and make something! All pictures welcome of the process and progress along the way to some type of Finished object. Then take the AFTER picture!!

Hmm ... and make note of the date(s) of the stash ... and perhaps some goodies will be available for: Oldest stash? Most varied stash? Or ?? Time will tell!

Items and photos to be presented at the June meeting!

And – Weavers and Knitters are welcome to join in this Challenge as well! Search the Stash and find bits you've been wanting to use – or had forgotten you had!!

## Flaxapalooza 2022

*By Joan McKenzie*

On Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>, some of us gathered at Cathy Richards barn near Nobleton to do some flaxing work (as opposed to taxing work!).

After growing, harvesting, rippling, and retting flax last year, it's now time for breaking, scutching and hackling. Our merry band met up in the morning and set up the equipment to be used. Husband Drew did a great job of making a flax break, a scutching sword, and 3 (yes 3!) hackles to get the job done.



*Water tank retted on the left, dew retted on the right... notice the difference in colour!*



*Dried bundles ready for processing*

Interesting fact: the colour of flax differs depending on the method used for retting. Dew retted flax is grayish in colour, water/tank retted flax is golden-hued ... just like Rapunzel's flaxen tresses. The difference in colour was really noticeable. However, after washing a number of times, apparently the colour difference fades.

Breaking: did you ever expect Gloria to be a flax break expert? She did a fab job! The flax stalks need to be 'broken' – as in breaking the central woody core (called the 'boon') into bits so that it can be separated from the flax fibres.

Scutching: uses a 'sword' to swoop away the woody core bits (broken up by the break), and the outer stem layer (broken down by retting) to leave the flax fibres in the bundles that they grow in. Bits of boon collect on the floor – they make great compost or kindling bits.

Hackling: objective is to split the bundles of flax fibres that surround the woody core into individual fibres. Three sets of hackles are traditionally used, from coarsely set nails to finely set nails. And they are sharp, which is why we're wearing gloves. No bleeding allowed on the flax! The flax is 'passed' thru the hackles, removing leftover bits of woody core and outer stem bits and splitting the flax fibre bundles. It also leaves behind any weaker fibres – which are known as 'tow'. Nothing is wasted. The tow is collected from the hackles – it is cleaned up and can be carded and spun and/or blended with other fibres and spun.

Here's a photo of the group.



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## In the Dyepot

By Joan McKenzie

Finally – a dye pot full of onion skins – make that 2 dye pots – one for yellow skins, the other for red skins. We got some really lovely colours out of them, and then an afterbath with iron produced some lovely green hues. The Dye pots are still producing colour and will be there until the Fibre Wednesday on May 11<sup>th</sup>. The colours from exhaust pots will not be as strong as in the first use but are still lovely!

Here are photos of dyed skeins . . .



L – R: Yellow, no mordant; Yellow + Alum; Yellow + Alum + Iron AB  
Red + Alum, Red + Alum + Iron AB

. . . and potholders made with onion-skin and walnut dyed loopers. (except for the red and white loops!).



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## Weaving Update

By Karen Fowler

### In the Studio

The Guild is very fortunate to have 3 floor looms for our members to use. The projects for these looms are generally done by a group of between 4 and 6 members. As Weaving Convener, my role is to organize the groups and to give any assistance with respect to pattern, set, fibre etc.

The first loom is designated for Tea Towels. Diane has woven the first one and it looks great. This loom is available for any member who would like to weave a tea towel. If you haven't tried a floor loom before, this a good time to give it a whirl.

The smaller floor loom has the colour gamp and Denise is almost finished hers with Gloria waiting in the wings to start. This is a great project to not only see how the colours work together, but also the various weave patterns.

On the 60" loom, we have the Harrisville blankets. I have just finished the first blanket and am very pleased with the results. It has turned out even better than I had expected.

You can sign up to work on the next installments of these group projects in Studio C or send me an email.

### Shows

As you know due to COVID-19, we decided to cancel the Hallway Show for this year. Hopefully next year we will be able to put up a fabulous show highlighting all the beautiful work we have done during the lock down.

The Show Convener is responsible for communicating with NPCC, collecting the works, and inputting the details of each piece into the computer using the NPCC template. Setting up the show has always been a team effort. This is one of the best things about our Guild. We are a hands-on, help when you can type of group.

When new people get involved, it gives the show a freshness and very often new ways of hanging the works. So, if you would like to join the executive, Shows is a good place to start. I know that putting up a show can be daunting. I most certainly felt that way when I took over Shows some 20 years ago. But I soon realized that I would always have a great team to help me.

Beautiful works and lots of great helpers make for a fabulous show.

### Weaving Rentals

There are a number of looms and reeds available for rent to members. If you are interested in renting weaving equipment, contact Karen Fowler for details, pricing and availability, or check the [EHS website](#) for equipment, terms and conditions.



*Harrisville Blanket Woven by Karen by Karen Fowler on the 60" Floor Loom*

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## Some Adventures in Studio C

By Gloria Williams

As we are finally starting back into Studio C, it's great to see members in person again, and even meet a few of the newer members. I just want to stress to anyone considering coming out that we are all wearing masks and distancing while in the studio. The days of all sitting together for lunch, are not being observed. We sit at our individual tables to eat and discuss any variety of topics; just as we always did during lunch, only a little bit louder so we can all take part. We can always close the door if needed.

Time at Studio C means different things to each of us, but for me being there is as much a part of learning as taking formal classes. There is an expression:

*"You don't know what you don't know until you know it"*

I am going to tell you about some of my experiences in Studio C that explain that. I joined EHS, as a knitter (very experienced knitter) who wanted to learn to weave. It took a while before I actually got to take a beginner weaving course. Once the course was finished, I continued to use a guild table loom every Friday to work on my weaving. When something went wrong, I would either gasp or moan and someone always came over to see what my problem was. Once, a shaft was not lifting. I had probably been told, but forgotten, that when you set up the loom, look and make sure all the cords that control lifting the shafts are in the right place as they can move off the little wheels.

I eventually got to weave a tea towel with lots of assistance from Karen and Marlyn. When that run of tea towels was finished it was time to warp the loom again, of which I was involved. As I was threading the warp threads thru the heddles, Elizabeth walked over to see what I was doing. I would pick up the next warp thread, then pick up the threading hook and pull the thread thru the heddle. Elizabeth said "has anyone shown you this?" She put the first thread over index finger, 2<sup>nd</sup> thread over middle finger, 3<sup>rd</sup> thread over ring finger and 4<sup>th</sup> thread over little finger. She then picked up the hook and one by one pulled them thru the heddles ... An experienced weaver showing a novice a trick of the trade.

On the next run of tea towels, we were doing the same weaving pattern, so the discussion was "can we just tie on the new warp to the old warp and pull thru the heddles?" Somewhere, I had seen that weavers would have shafts pre-threaded with set patterns and hanging on racks, to save time when they got orders. So yes, we could do that!

Eventually the day came when we were going to wind it on. A group of us gathered around the loom with a plan. Suzanne asked me what we were doing, so I explained. She listened and nodded at the appropriate times and then said "okay, if you need me I will be over there, just call me". We did call her for assistance and I can only describe what happened as Suzanne being a conductor directing the orchestra. We had 3 people at the front of the loom controlling the warp, one on the crank winding it on, and I was at the back controlling the paper to separate the warp. Our leader pointed out when there was slack in the warp, and directed the appropriate person to tighten their grip. She had them touching the warp to realize the tension and would direct the speed at which to wind on the warp until finally, we were finished.

Now comes the bonus .....

When I went to get up off the floor, I couldn't! I was looking for something to hold onto to get up. Suzanne came to the rescue once again. She instructed me to get on all fours, with my hands flat on floor in front of me. Then from my knees, get my feet firmly on the floor, straighten my legs so my backside was in the air, then walk my hands back towards me, eventually placing them on my knees

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and straightening up. When I went home, I was so excited to show my husband what I had learned that day at the Guild.

I am sure that many members have had similar experiences relating to spinning, knitting, dying and all the other activities that take place at NPPC, Studio C. These are just a few of mine.

## **Rigid Heddle Weaving**

*By Cindy O'Malley*

The group decided to change our schedule from meeting twice to once a month – the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of every month. Many of us have embarked on various projects using the clasped weft technique and will hopefully have some marvelous results to share at the next Show & Tell.

## **Weaving 201 Study Group**

*By Cindy O'Malley*

Jennifer James set up this study group to enable the relatively new weavers to enhance their knowledge and skills with 4 harness weaving. I'm proud to say that I've completed my first project by making a set of napkins using various twill motifs.

I wanted to use up some crochet cotton that I had in my stash that I knew I would never crochet. The grey and blue were #5 Crochet Cotton and the black was 4/8 Cotton given to me by Gloria. I took advantage of a Sunday open studio to use the warping mill to make my warp. Much to my chagrin, I was 9 warp threads short on the black, however, Karen checked her stash and came to my rescue.

I rented a Leclerc Meco table loom from EHS that comes with a stand turning it into a 22" floor loom. This was my first time setting one up at home, but after a little trial and error, I was weaving like a pro, or at least my husband thought. My napkins look great but not so much the hems. After receiving advice from Joan on what to do next time, this will hopefully improve.

At our last meeting, Jennifer invited Claudia, Karen and Sharon to talk to us about Summer & Winter. Now I'm looking forward to my next project – perhaps some placemats to go with the napkins?



## **Guild Resources**

### **EHS Website**

*By Vanessa Crandall*

Updating the website is a very minimal commitment but it's a useful reference for Guild members. I try to keep the calendar updated as quickly as possible with information about drop-ins and events, and the Members page updated with relevant zoom links and copies of recent presentations. If you ever have any suggestions for something that should be on the website, I'm all ears!

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Please **email me** if you have any events or items you would like to have added to the site! I also welcome any feedback and ideas you have to make the site a more useful tool!

## Instagram Feed

*By Helen Skelton*

We have an Instagram feed at [Instagram.com/ehsguild/](https://www.instagram.com/ehsguild/) which everyone should be able to access online without signing up for an account. On this feed I post pictures of members work and list activities and meetings that we have coming up.

Pre-COVID, I would attend the monthly evening meetings and the Sunday open studios and roam with my camera taking pictures of the projects guild members were working on, as material to post. Now, I have to rely on the monthly "Show and Tell" presentations, and any images that members want to share.

Please feel free to send me images of any of your work to so we can share. It's great to get a variation of roving, dyeing, spinning, weaving, felting, sewing and any other creativity you can come up with.

Now that things are beginning to open up, I'm hoping to see some of you back on Sunday studio time with wonderful things to photograph.

## EHS Facebook Group

In addition to our Facebook page, did you know that we have a private EHS Guild [Facebook group](#) set up and moderated by Joan McKenzie? Here you will find posts intended for sharing with other members. This is open to all members to join.

## Library

The library is located in Studio C at NPCC. Suzanne Wylie and Karmen Steigenga have been busy organizing all the books into, what is affectionately known as, the Wylie Decimal System. What this means is that all the books are being catalogued and stored by subject matter which makes it very easy to locate a book for referencing at NPCC or to check out for home reading. There is also 2 years worth of magazines to sort and organize. If you would like to help out with this task, contact Carolyn or Suzanne.

## Basement Storage

Helen Benninger and team continue to work on organizing the basement storage area. Sometimes equipment shows up without warning. We ask members that if you are putting any items in this area to tag the item with your name and intention (e.g., donation to the guild, temporary storage, etc.) and advise Helen via email. If you are removing items, also notify Helen so that we know the items didn't develop legs and walk away.

## Workshop Review

*By Elizabeth Evans*

### African Fashion Workshop at Neilson Park Creative Centre with Jamila Kyari

This workshop on Zoom exceeded my expectations. Jamila was very engaging and knowledgeable. She emphasized that there were many diverse cultures in Africa with their own textile traditions. Among others Jamila spoke in detail about Bark Cloth from Uganda, indigo-dyed Adire Cloth produced by Yoruba people in Nigeria and colourful strip woven Kente cloth produced in Ghana. Jamila took us through the process of producing the colourful printed cottons inspired by traditional Batiks that many of us think of as African cloth. Although they are inspired by African textiles, most of these are

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industrially produced in Europe or China. One of the best known companies, Vlisco, has been producing African prints in the Netherlands since 1846. In Jamila's opinion the African textile industry is not thriving.

Jamila then introduced us to the work of a few of many contemporary Canadian designers who are working in African fashion.

Jamila has written a brief, but more detailed summary of the workshop on her website where you can also see examples of African inspired-textiles that might inspire your own work.

<https://jamilakyari.com/event-recap-african-fashion-workshop-with-neilson-park-creative-centre/>

## Knitting Update

*By Cindy O'Malley, Gloria Williams, and Diane Martin*

Of all the Guild activities that we are involved with, hosting the bi-weekly Knit Night is probably the most time consuming, but also, the most rewarding. Our goal is to share knowledge, but most of all, to instill confidence in participants to try new things with their knitting. We all feel very proud when someone shows their latest accomplishment, especially when it incorporates one of the recently learned techniques.

Gloria and I were thrilled when Diane joined our team for this past season. Diane's knowledge of knitting is surpassed by very few that I know of, and even though we are both very experienced knitters, we learn something new from Diane on a regular basis. We all agree that our favourite sessions are those where everyone gets involved in relating their experiences, posing problems for suggested resolutions, sharing techniques, and of course, Show & Tell. We are always open to suggestions for topics and to anyone that would like to demonstrate a technique.

Diane designed the Knit-a-long bag that utilized several knitting techniques. Some actually made the bag to completion, while others personalized their project, which the group affectionately refers to as "going off road". Here's an example of Friedl's off road project – a beautiful blanket made with the various pattern motifs from the bag project.



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On average, 18 – 20 people attend Knit Night which is telling of how important this craft is to our members. At the end of every session, Helen Benninger leads us in Chair Yoga exercises that not only help to work out the kinks, but makes for a relaxing end to the evening.

Over the summer, we will be working away at developing the next KAL project for the new season. In the meantime, Knit Night will continue throughout the summer.

## Project Spotlight

*By Annette Barnie*

### A Solution to a Single Ball of Self Patterning Yarn

Knitting is my lifeline to friends, fun, learning, creativity and somewhat mysteriously to calm. There's something about the rhythmic repetition of making the stitches and feeling the yarn flow through your fingers. I'm sure there is some science behind it but I don't care what it is. I just know it works and I have something to show from my form of "medication"... I mean meditation...

Thanks to the generous work of many people and to technology, I have been able to maintain that connection to friends, fun, learning and creativity during the pandemic. And, because of the pandemic I really, really needed the calm so thanks to an embarrassingly large stash, I was never concerned about not having the yarn to do a project. The thing is, when I'm nearing the finish of one project I get "next project anxiety"...I don't want to be without something on the needles (or the loom).

What's my process for choosing what my next project will be? Well, that depends... as I mentioned it all starts when I'm nearing the end of a current project. Sometimes a particular pattern has caught my eye; leafing through any site, book or magazine and looking at all the items that have been created by talented people is also a favoured activity. Sometimes it makes me think I might want to make it and sometimes it gives me ideas. Or, I might want to be doing a very specific project based on all the wonderful opportunities to learn new techniques which we have been given with our online learning. At other times there is a specific person (sometimes even me) for whom I want to make something. And then there are times that I have been checking in with "my precious" aka "my own mini store (embarrassing but true) aka "the stash", and I've come upon a ball of yarn that I had purchased because I fell in love with the colours or sometimes the price. I may not have known what I would someday make with it but now I have a clearer idea of what it could grow up to be.

Recently, with a great nephew on the way, I decided to knit a little sweater after completing the woven baby blanket made as a result of our online study in colour and weave on a rigid heddle loom. I was under a bit of a time crunch because of all the other projects on the go and I lost track of how close it was to the arrival of the new baby. I wanted it to look like Fair Isle but didn't think I had the time. Stranded knitting was one of the topics covered in the knitting study group with some very helpful tips and tricks being shared. Even though I had done some stranded knitting before, I didn't think I would be proficient enough to churn it out quickly. To the rescue, I found a beautiful ball of Wacki Saki; a superfine 50% Merino superwash wool, 25% bamboo and 25% nylon in "the stash". Bingo, machine washable (certain to be appreciated by the new mom) and this stuff makes you look like you're a whiz with the needles. It doesn't matter what pattern you choose to use, it's self-patterning and will knit up looking similar to Fair Isle to the untrained eye. I now knew what this particular ball was going to be.





For this project, I had picked the yarn first so now I needed to find a pattern to go with the gauge of 28sts x 36 rows = 4". Off to Ravelry I go and at the same time texting my friend Cindy to see if she had a tried and true pattern that she used for a baby sweater. I had identified "Sweet Baby Sweater", a free pattern on Ravelry, but wasn't sure it would work. I still struggle sometimes with the math of gauge and the landing page for the pattern stated 26sts = 4" but the "Opal" yarn suggested in the pattern was a gauge of 28sts = 4". Why the discrepancy? Anyway, as it turned out Cindy had gone on Ravelry as well and suggested the same pattern, reassuring me that it would work. Bingo again! Only now I needed to go back to "the mini store" and pick out a solid colour that would go with it. I

chose, a super soft Loops and Threads Woolike (85% acrylic, 15% nylon).

Now, because I only used about 25g of a 100g ball of the Wacki Saki, and with many more solid colours in my stash, I still have enough to make at least 3 more Sweet Baby Sweaters for any more babies in my ever expanding family. And, by using different colours on the lower part, they will look similar but different ... just like family.

The pattern also made the suggestion "don't forget to add some cute buttons". Well guess what .... thanks mostly to my mother; I have a stash of them too.



**Fake-Isle Sweet Baby Sweater made by Annette Barnie with Wacki Saki and Loops & Threads**

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## Book Review

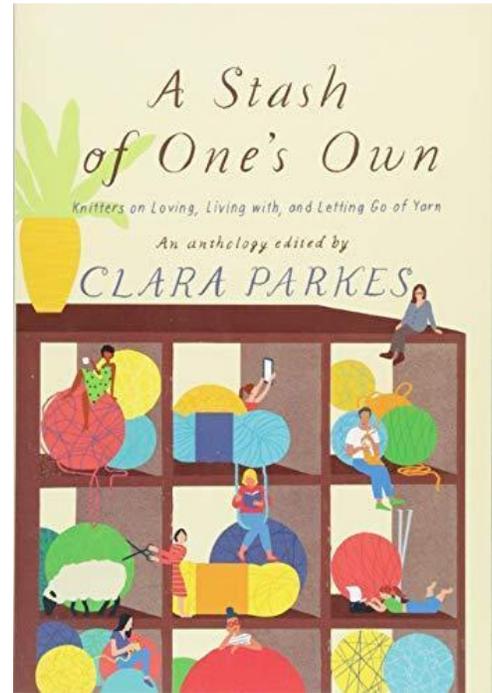
By Susan Lapell

### A Stash of One's Own

An anthology edited by Clara Parkes. Abrams Press, New York 2017

Clara Parkes is the author of five books on yarn and knitting. In *A Stash of One's Own* she turns to twenty two fellow knitters to examine the subject near and dear to all our hearts—the stash. In this book she concentrates on the yarn stash, but contributor Jillian Moreno speaks to her spinning stash. So it could just as well be your books or your patterns. Oh yes, as we discussed at Knit Night ... let's not forget needles! Kay Gardiner points out that 'Matisse had a lot of canvasses; many tubes of paint.'

Clara has included people with whom knitters are all familiar—Meg Swansen, Stephanie Pearl-McPhee, Gudrun Johnston, and Clara herself, to name a few. The articles focus on large stashes, small stashes, and even no stash. Where one keeps their stash—is it out in the open for all to admire or hidden away from prying [and perhaps critical] eyes. It was fascinating to learn about the relationship these contributors have to their knitting staple.



I felt relieved to know that there are knitters just like me who get jittery when their stash gets too big—too big being the size of the stash that makes us jittery. Then we have to cull the herd.

I learned from contributor Lela Nargi that the largest Ravelry stash is 11,839 skeins of yarn. Another, Ann Shayne, declares that 'Marie Kondo doesn't ever discuss that category that knitters hold in a super-special, 99% irrational and deeply felt place—yarn. Anna Maltz' stash is both a diary and a sketchbook. Mine includes yarn collected from the many places I've traveled, replacing a photo album. We can all take heart from Sue Shankle, who finds no shame in loving her stash. None. Debbie Stoller points out that a yarn stash makes a pretty large statement ... that a woman is planning to spend hours—nay, years—of her life engaging in something that doesn't promise to make her skinnier or look younger or give her a tighter butt.

*A Stash of One's Own* is a short, easy to read book. It doesn't contain any patterns. It doesn't contain tips on casting on and off. What it did for me was draw me closer to these fellow knitters who, through their stashes, emanated a friendship and camaraderie one doesn't find outside the making community.

## Charity Outreach

By Gloria Williams

As part of our outreach programs we donate warm items to a variety of charities. We do not pick a specific item and ask members to make that item. We recognize that members enjoy a variety of skills, and like to try new patterns or techniques. With that in mind, we will accept all wearable items that you would like to donate.

Items are collected all year and can be turned in at the Guild for storage or be kept at home and turned in during the fall drive, ready for distribution as the cold weather is approaching.

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As Committee Chair, I remind members about the Charity Donations and collect the items donated. In November or early December, I gather some volunteers to help sort and count the items, and take photos which help when applying for grants.

During the winters of 2020 and 2021 we donated an average each year of 120+ items. Some members were unable to drop off their items so they were donated to charities in their own neighbourhoods, which was great. We donated to the Salvation Army, Youth without Shelter, and to Haven on the Queensway over the last 2 years. During early winter of 2021, EHS member Denise Larocque, who volunteers at Haven, reported that they were desperate for warm items for infants and toddlers. We pulled the suitable items from our donation supply and a few of the members quickly knit hats, mitts and neck warmers for the little ones.

## Handmade Sale

*By Denise Larocque*

### Save the Date – Saturday, November 19th, 2022

On behalf of the Handmade Sale Committee, I would like to thank all those members who participated by contributing and/or donating items for sale and for volunteering their time. It is greatly appreciated.

Nine Guild members contributed a total of 82 items for the Sale, with 20 items (or 24.4%) being sold for gross sales of \$500. Payout to members was \$336. Guild commission and proceeds from donated items equaled \$164.

Once again, we were able to use the new EHS Square which has allowed us to significantly streamline our sales process and reporting. All items were preloaded and inventoried which streamlined the checkout process and the subsequent reporting. It proved to be immensely helpful and will be a great tool when comparing sales and years.

The breakdown of items sold is as follow:

Category	Items Sold	Gross Sales
Bag	1	\$50.00
Cowl	1	\$75.00
Dryer Balls	8	\$40.00
Scarf	1	\$80.00
Socks	2	\$70.00
Tea Towel	5	\$175.00
Trivet	2	\$10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>

Seventy-eight percent of items sold were woven, 14% were knit and 8% were felted.

We are asking all members to consider volunteering their time and talent by providing an item for the November 19th Sale. The money raised by EHS at this sale goes directly to our programs and Guild activities.

Look for more info to come!

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## The Value of EHS and Volunteering

I must admit that I am a 'newbie' to knitting and weaving so there is no lack of being able to learn new things as a volunteer on the Handmade Committee. But that is not the essence of why I volunteer.

I have had the privilege of meeting not only incredibly gifted, but incredibly kind and generous people. The spirit of the Committee and their commitment to EHS and their skill is remarkable. Sharing new ideas and developing plans has, for me, been fun and exciting. Just having a place like NPCC where we are able to meet and practice our art is a huge advantage.

Since Neilson Park has relaxed COVID restrictions, we have been cautiously meeting in person, masked and distancing. I personally, have really enjoyed my time on this Committee! If you think you might like to join us, please do! You can contact myself (Denise Larocque) or Gloria Williams.

## How Not to Make Peanut Butter Cookies

*By Diane Martin*

Diane shares her latest misadventure. The original recipe is from a recipe collection published just before the end of WWII.

### The Original Recipe

- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup peanut butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 cups flour, sifted with
  - 1 teaspoon baking soda
  - ½ teaspoon salt

Cream shortening until light and then cream in peanut butter. Gradually cream in brown sugar. Beat eggs slightly and add to the creamed mixture and continue beating until mixture is light and fluffy. Add vanilla and vinegar.

Sift together flour, baking soda, and salt and gradually blend this into the first mixture.

Form into balls and place on greased baking sheet. Flatten cookies with a fork. Bake in a hot oven (400° F) for 8–10 minutes.

NOTE: Dough is very "oily". It would make a great "crumb" pastry for banana cream pie.

### What Actually Took Place

Oven heated to 400F: Done

Parchment paper on cookie sheets: Done

Sift & blend flour, salt and soda: Done

Beat eggs: Done

Dig peanut butter and shortening out of fridge: oops! Add both to the shopping list.

Ponder: shortening + peanut butter = 1½ cups fat

Dig out butter: only 1 cup: add butter to shopping list.

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Brown sugar: less than ⅓ cup: add to shopping list

### **Go Ahead Anyway**

*Possible Substitutions:*

Leftovers from Christmas Baking: 1 quart molasses and 1 quart mincemeat

Back of Meat Drawer: jar with approx ½ cup maple butter

### **Final mix of ingredients:**

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup mincemeat
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 cups flour, sifted with
  - 1 teaspoon baking soda
  - ½ teaspoon salt

Cream shortening until light and then cream in peanut butter. Gradually cream in brown sugar. Beat eggs slightly and add to the creamed mixture and continue beating until mixture is light and fluffy. Add vanilla and vinegar.

Sift together flour, baking soda, and salt and gradually blend this into the first mixture.

Drop by teaspoonful onto parchment papered cookie sheet. Bake at 400F for 8–10 minutes.

### **The Result**

5 dozen soft, fluffy, moist cookies. To be consumed quickly before they stick to each other in the cookie jar.

6 dozen – if you don't count the tray that went into the oven without setting the timer, and which got thoroughly burnt.

*Editor's Note: I tried one and they were really good!*

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## Upcoming Events

### EHS Calendar of Zoom Events

**Monthly Meeting:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month

**Friday Drop-In:** Every week from 10:00am – 12:00

**Fibre Wednesday:** Every 2nd week from 10:00am – 12:00

**Knit Night Study Group:** Every other Thursday from 7:00pm – 9:00pm

**Rigid Heddle Weaving Study Group:** 1st Monday of every month 7:30pm – 9:00pm

**Weaving 201 Study Group:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month 7:30pm – 9:00pm

### EHS Studio Dates

#### Friday Mornings 9:00-12:30

May 6, 13, 20, 27

June 3, 10, 17, 24

July 8, 15, 22, 19

August 5, 12, 19, 26

#### Wednesday All Day 9:00 -4:30

May 11

June 8

#### Sunday Afternoon 1:00-4:30

May 29

June 19

The participant cost for Friday and Sunday is \$5 and \$10 for Wednesday.

NPCC does offer other open studio times on Thursday evenings and Friday afternoons. Please check their webpage for specific dates and times. These dates have also been updated in the Calendar of the [EHSGuild.com](http://EHSGuild.com) website.

### Local Events

#### [NPCC Doors Open](#)

##### **Saturday and Sunday May 28, and 29th, 2022**

EHS have Sunday afternoon booked, and some of us will be in Studio C. Weather permitting, Joan is planning to do flax processing out of doors that day.

This may be a good opportunity for any of the Zoom members who live close enough to NPCC to come and check out the studio.

#### [Grilled Cheese Challenge](#) - Saturday June 11<sup>th</sup>

Come out and sample some gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches on the Lakeshore.

#### [World Wide Knit in Public Day](#) – Saturday June 11<sup>th</sup>

#### [Etobicoke Artsfest](#) - Saturday June 25, 2022 from 11am - 7pm

The first ever Etobicoke Artsfest is a community event to celebrate the incredible art community of Etobicoke and Toronto. EHS will have a canopy set up to promote the Guild along with a few of our wares to sell. Anyone who would like to participate in this event can contact Carolyn or Joan.

#### [NPCC Adapt Online Auction](#) - June 20 – July 17, 2022

NPCC is excited to present "ADAPT", our second online silent art auction! We invite you to donate up to four pieces of art or craft, enabling the Centre to raise funds to benefit its charitable activities. If the work is sold, we will issue a tax receipt for the value of the work (fair market value).

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## [NPCC Impact 2022 - July 29 – August 5, 2022](#)

This exhibition will be held in the Art Space Connect and Parkview galleries at NPCC from July 19 to August 5. NPCC invites emerging and established artists to apply.

### **Fibre Festivals**

[Sunshine Fibre Fest](#) – Saturday May 7<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 am - 4 pm

Odas Park, Orillia, ON

[Peterborough Fibre Arts Festival](#) - Saturday May 14 @ 10:00am – 4:00pm

[Kawartha Yarn & Fibre Festival](#) – Saturday June 11 @ 10:am – 4:30pm

Fenelon Falls, ON

### **Interesting Sites**

[Kimberley Valley Farms](#)

We're lovers of animals and all things outdoors. Striving to be better every day. Better to our planet and to each other. Looking for a simpler, healthier life and trying to savour every moment. [Read more](#)

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[Thousand Islands Art Centre](#)

**The Thousand Islands Arts Center ~ Home of the Handweaving Museum** is a nonprofit educational institution concerned with preserving the skills of traditional artists and artisans and supporting the heritage arts. [Read more ...](#)

## **Acknowledgements**

### [EHS Executive](#)

**President** Carolyn Ramos

**Vice President** Joan McKenzie

**Treasurer** Dorothy Thomson

The treasurer does the bookkeeping for the Guild, recording all monies coming in and going out. Some examples include bank deposits of Fibre Day fees, payments to monthly speakers and workshop leaders and renewals of magazines. The treasurer is also responsible for making the bookings for our studio time at NPCC.

**Secretary** Cheryl Michalson

As an active member of many groups and organizations, my 5 year membership with NPCC & EHS has been the best. I've learned a great deal about spinning and knitting. The members are not only friendly, but are very approachable. I don't feel shy about asking for help! By taking on the secretary's position, I felt I was giving back to the Guild and not just taking. My primary role as secretary for the last 3 years is to take minutes of the meetings, which are submitted to the President for distribution to the members.

**Past President** Jennifer James

### [Committee Chairs](#)

- Membership - Susan Lapell
- Programs – Open
- Shows - Karen Fowler

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- Spinning & Spinning Education - Joan McKenzie
  - Weaving Convener - Karen Fowler
  - Weaving Education – Open
  - Handmade Sales - Denise LaRocque & Gloria Williams
  - Charity Knitting – Gloria Williams

#### Other Roles – to name a few

- Newsletter Editor – Cindy O’Malley
- Ambassador – Elizabeth Evans
- NPCC Resident Group Representative – Susan Lapell
- Website Administrator – Vanessa Crandall
- Librarian – Suzanne Wylie.

Want to get involved in EHS activities? Contact anyone in the list above or send an email to [EHSGuild@gmail.com](mailto:EHSGuild@gmail.com).

Thank you to everyone who submitted content for this newsletter. If you have something that you would like published in an upcoming newsletter, submit your article in writing to Cindy O’Malley with Newsletter Content in the subject line.

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