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BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD  
Ithaca, New York

NEWSLETTER #13 - December, 1977  
Edited by Jean Warholie

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Hope you have all recovered from the Thanksgiving festivities, the turkey and all the trimmings! And may those good feelings linger on from nice visits with family and friends (the best part of the holidays!)... And for those spinners in the "outlaying" areas, hopefully things have begun to calm down from the first week of deer season...

The NOVEMBER MEETING was super -- what lovely things from handspun appeared for our "show," and too bad for you if you missed it!! Many thanks go to Susan Andrews for her helpful and constructive critiquing -- and she gave us many additional little pointers along the way that should help with craftsmanship, design and color, and sales ideas... I think, too, that our handspuns gave her some ideas too!

The November meeting was our election of officers, too. The Nominating Committee worked very hard this year and deserve a real nod of gratitude -- EXCEPT THAT WE STILL DON'T HAVE A PRESIDENT!!! We seem to have a combination of shy flowers and extremely busy people in the Guild this year -- no one seems to be willing to take the position... And it is not that hard a position to fill; being an expert spinner is not a prerequisite either... At any rate, your new officers, minus the President, are below. Their duties begin as of January 1, 1978. We have a good group of officers this coming year -- give them all the support and ideas you can.

President - ? ? ? (We will try again at the December meeting!)

Vice President - Toby Chambliss

Treasurer - Maria Steve

Recording Secretary - Barbara White

Corresponding Sec'y, Newsletter Ed. - Jean Warholie

Nominating Committee for next year - Marion Wikoff, Sharon Moen, Linda Dickinson.

The "old" officers did a fine job this year -- we all have appreciated their efforts and time expended throughout the year. Let's be sure to tell them!! Being an officer is not that difficult, but it is time consuming... Your support is always needed!!!

DECEMBER MEETING. Our Christmas party! And a talk by Ed Swart on finishing wheels. We should get some good ideas from that! Traditionally, the Guild has had its special December meeting at a member's home and this year is no exception. Linda Olds has offered to let us meet at her house. For those who went to the dye session during the summer, it will be familiar territory; for others and unsure persons: take Rt. 13 east out of Ithaca (toward Dryden), turn right at Dryden's stoplight, and go several miles to Keith Lane (lefthand turn). (It is near the Cobweb Antiques barn.) After turning left on Keith Lane, proceed to the next left turn, which is Kimberly Drive. You are warm -- the Oldses are at 15 Kimberly Drive. Call Linda (844-9672) if you get badly lost. For those coming up from Elmira and environs, you should be on Rt. 38 going north and the pest control sign tells you that you are close to the Keith Lane turnoff. For the meeting: bring a dish-to-pass, with recipe attached, and an ornament (handspun, need we say?) for exchange. (See, you can't squeak out of it again this year!) Bring a friend if you like, and plan to have an enjoyable day -- this has always been an extra special meeting! (Oh yes, bring your own table service; the fewer dirty dishes for Linda, the better...) Date of meeting, lest you've forgotten: December 12!!! 10:00 a.m.!

THE SATURDAY GROUP had a good, chatty meeting at the home of Vernice Church's in October. A fair amount of spinning even got done! In lieu of the November/December meetings, with all the holiday complications, it was decided to have a combined December 3 meeting.

This will be the Saturday Group's Christmas party, too -- bring some cookies if you are a baker, and bring your finished projects from this past year for a show-and-tell... The meeting will be at the West Hill School, Dec. 3, from 1-5 p.m. Everyone is welcome! It should be great fun!! Call Carolyn Cook (533-7297) or Averil Bell (257-1647) to let them know you are coming. Directions for the unfamiliar: from Ithaca, take Rts 96/89 to the "octopus" (once you've been through it, you will know why it got its name). At the octopus, turn a sharp left (as if you were going to follow the canal on Floral Ave. Then do an immediate right up the hill on Elm Street. From Elm you can see the school playground, turn right onto Chestnut and you are about there. For those coming from Ovid, Trumansburg, Mecklenburg areas: come down the hills on your routes (96, 89 or whatever) to the stoplight or stopsign at the octopus (before crossing the bridge over the canal to Ithaca); it's where everything comes together! Make a sharp righthand turn onto Floral Ave. (follows the canal), and another sharp right onto Elm Street. And then right onto Chestnut. Do bring your wheels (or other projects you are working frantically on), too, and a friend. Jean Warholic will bring the leftover Cochineal and Madder dye-pots from the Guild's October meeting, so bring some (mordanted) wool or fleece and we'll exhaust them. See you there!!!

IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE GETTING RIDES to any of the Guild events, please don't hesitate to call someone you know or whose address is near you -- that's what your membership list is for!!! A ride to any of our meetings should be the least of your worries! REALLY!!!

*Keep your calendar out - there is more to come!* Our annual ROCK DAY will be held at the Dryden Presbyterian Church on January 7, 10 a.m. - ? (that's a Saturday). It was decided at the November meeting to make that our Guild meeting for January, instead of having a meeting again on Jan. 9. MARK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR and don't forget -- it will be a day of spinning and good company, dish-to-pass (bring own plate, silver, cup), and the other Guilds are being invited and this is a marvelous time to catch up on news and ideas from others. (The Presbyterian Church is the one you see from the intersection stoplight in center Dryden. There will be lots of cars there and they are US!) We will probably have a souppot or two (they were extra good last year!); you might want to bring a "contribution." The SNOW DATE for the event, since we now must think about those things, will be our regular meeting day, Tin Can near Stewart Park, January 9th. What is Rock Day? Traditionally, spinners were forbidden to work during the twelve days of Christmas. Rock Day (rock being a cannibalized version of the German *roch*, for distaff) marks the day we can return to our wheels... What a good way to begin a new year!!! Resolve to be there...

SNOW CANCELLATIONS, as long as we are on the subject. The Guild's policy has been the following and so far it has worked out pretty well... First of all, keep your ears open -- if everything is closing up tight and it is an absolute blizzard out, stay home -- the meeting is probably cancelled. When in doubt, listen to the radio. The officers will decide by 7:00 a.m. that morning and get it on the radio (WHCU and WTKO). If you are still wondering (and sometimes the stations can't list everything that is cancelled), call one of your officers nearby. (And if it is a genuine Snow Day, stay home and SPIN, for heavens' sake!) In the event of a Snow Day and the meeting is cancelled, it is automatically rescheduled for the next Monday, same time and place. (Exception, this once, is Rock Day above.)

SURPRISE, SURPRISE -- and that is putting it diplomatically -- Ashford has just, without warning or inquiry, not only announced a big price increase in its wheels and supplies, but listed this Guild as one of its "stockists." It is reported that Jean Nowack has finally recovered from the backflips she did when receiving this "good news" (yes, that's what they called it!) and it was discussed, in case you weren't there, at the November meeting. The price increase is large for the wheels -- from \$49 per wheel

(the Guild added \$1 to cover handling the order, postage, etc.) to \$75 per wheel for an order of 15 or more. No price break after 15 anymore, either. This has left us *reeling* to say the least (pun intended!), for it puts the cost of a wheel out-of-reach for those who've barely been able to afford one in the past and begins to price it competitively with American-made wheels. Jean reports that in the past, on a 15-wheel order, our costs were about \$3 not including telephone calls, bank checks, hassle, etc. And since we are now listed as stockists by Ashford, we may well have inquiries coming along that we must respond to (one biggish one has come in already). Thus, we have some decision-making to do. The Ashford wheels have been, in the past, a sturdy affordable wheel, and our Guild's ability to place big orders periodically has been a plus for us in many ways. This increase in price, however, makes us wonder if we want to continue. A committee was formed at the Nov. meeting to look into the matter of other wheels, their prices, etc., chaired by Diane Record (539-7066). The committee is to report its findings and make some recommendations at the December meeting. (If you weren't at the meeting and have some ~~got~~ reactions to the matter, please call either Diane or Jean Nowack [564-9241]; we'd like to hear from you!) Diane will be in touch with those in the area having wheels from a variety of sources (Meredith Wood, Dora Swart for a start). In the meanwhile, if you are in this area and are wanting to purchase an Ashford wheel, the only person having them in stock and in hand that we are aware of is Jean Travers (P.O. Box 606, No. Norwich, NY 13815 - 607/334-5918). Incidentally, the other "stockists" listed by Ashford in this area were Thistledown and Fallbrook House, who must also be wringing their hands over this...)

The TRADITIONAL DYEPOTS program went well in October. If you weren't at the meeting, your handout is enclosed herewith. Laura Hunt also brought a lichen (*Umbilicaria populusa?*) for us to exhaust -- nice lavendars! Kay Ross wants to add the following information for your next indigo dyepot: If you have trouble getting Sodium Hydroxide, you may use Sodium Carbonate (Washing Soda) or Lye (if 100% active ingredient is Sodium Hydroxide). For the Sodium Hydrosulfite, try Tintex or Rit Color Remover - they contain Sodium Hydrosulfite, but don't know how much; you'll need to do some experimenting. If you were disappointed with your yellows from the Weld, you do get a better more lemony yellow from the fresh plant (we used dried and it gives a dull yellow).

Marion Wikoff has assumed responsibility for the Guild's carding machine -- call her if you are wanting to sign up for it (387-5410). With the vacation/holidays coming up, now is your chance to get some bats done! The price is reasonable for rent and you will need a training session on it. In the meanwhile, get some wool washed up!

CHRISTMAS EXHIBITS, SHOWS, SALES are beginning... Even though the lights weren't up on the Ithaca Commons when this writer wandered about, it wasn't hard to get into the spirit of things with all the items that the merchants have out. A few items I noticed in particular (not trying to be complete or unbiased!): Homespun Boutique has nice wooden crochet hooks, pewter buttons, etc. (they will be moving into the defunct Speidy King spot next to Gulliver's as of Dec. 1 - stop in!). Isle of You has nice knitted/woven things, incl. Marion Wikoff's shawls, coverlets, pillows. The bookstores, as usual, have a marvelous selection of books relating to various crafts and interests -- McBooks, incidently, does have in a number of Hochberg's *Handspinner's Handbook* if you've been looking for it (and that Paula Simmon's book, *Spinning and Weaving with Wool*, would be a treasure for a fiberfriend). Handworks is worth a stop, as are the other small crafts shops on the Commons. I noticed that Fantasy Craft Fair has handsome big woolly lambs for children (Suffolks and Corriedales, I would guess!). And do call Meredith Wood (539-7436 - *Merrywood* needlework supplies and MORE) and Mildred Scudder (*The Tabby Shop* - 273-3308 - weaving supplies) to see what they might have for a favorite spinner! Or weaver, or ?? ... Bosworth's is always worth a stop, too, and Bobbi's Needleworks

has had some interesting things on display. Ask around, too, for there are other crafts shops not too distant from Ithaca...

This editor did not have time to put together a tantalizing list of upcoming shows and crafts events/sales this month, but news of a few events did trickle in... Take note and, in some cases, get going, because they may well be in progress by the time you get this newsletter...

Dec. 3-4 Weick's barn on Rt. 89 (3.8 miles above Taughannock Falls?), the Trumansburg area craftsmen have their annual Christmas sale - always a delight! (No Meg Swansen's hats this year, I guess, but well worth the drive.) Hot food, as well as many other good things!

Dec. 16-17 Seven Valley Weavers' Guild sale, Pyramid Mall, Cortland, 11 a.m. - ? . Woven items, knitted/crocheted, etc., Christmas ornaments; baked goods. Details: Laurie Hahn (257-7059).

If you tend to be an I.O.U.-giver, here's a good possibility for you (for yourself?): The Seven Valley Weavers' Guild (henceforth 7VWG) is reproducing a 1735 journal of weaving notes, drafts (and other pieces of advice on herbs, dyeing, medicinal plants, etc.) from the Johann Repp family of Cortland. The two-color patterns are being reproduced as well as instructions for present-day use of the original drafts. Plans for advance sales should be finalized in January. If you wish to know more about this 7VWG effort and possibly put in an advance order, write Mrs. Ruth Kerr, Main St., Homer, N.Y. 13077.

MORE NEW MEMBERS - what fun! Please add them to your membership lists...

#### Active

Barbara Bartholomew, Douglas Road - RD #2, Newfield, N.Y. 14867. (Telephone?)

M. Kay Parker, 1099 Taughannock Blvd., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (272-8285) (*Weaver; knitter, crocheter*)

Karen Smith, 1132 Snyder Hill Road, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (539-6270) (*Knitter, crocheter*)

Jane Steigerward, RD #5 - Rice Road, Auburn, N.Y. 13021. (315/253-6860) (*Weaver; knitter, crocheter; sheep*)

#### Inactive

Annita Andrick, Apt. #2, 310 Geneva Street, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (277-4871) (*Weaver; dyer; knitter, crocheter*)

Marçia Dalkert, 105 Honness Lane, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (273-3529) (*Spinnable Sheltie dog*)

Laura C. Hunt, 4 West Lake Road, Dryden, N.Y. 13053. (844-5762) (*Weaver, dyer*)

Mary Lou Phipps, RD #3, Slippery Rock, N.Y. 16057.

Welcome to the Guild -- we were pleased to see a few of these new faces at the last meeting!!

Three books you might want to check out at the Tompkins Co. Public Library the next time you have a chance... *The Sheep Dog: It's Work and Training* by T. Longton and E. Hart (1976 - in new books section to left of front door), 636.73L. *Handbook of Textile Fibres* by J. Gordon Book (1964), 677.02C. *Two Thousand Years of Textiles* by Adèle Coulin Weibel (1952), Oversize 746W. Good books to be snowed in with!

Just in case you hadn't noticed or heard, we are pleased to announce that our Guild President, Suzie Hokanson gave birth to a baby boy, Kjell Hokanson, the last of September (sorry, I don't have the exact date, Suzie)! He was late in arriving and we were all glad to see that both were able to get to the Thistledown Handspinners Seminar!!

While we don't normally relate recipes in the Guild newsletters, this one should not be passed up -- especially given the weather we've been having and the holidays ahead. It is for LAMBS' WOOL, the traditional drink still served on Twelfth Night in England. (The recipe is from the International Apple Institute, via Early American Life, 10/77 issue.)

8 large baking apples	Wrap each apple in double thickness of heavy aluminum foil; place in baking pan. Bake in 450° oven until very soft (about 1½ hrs.). Remove from foil; put apples thru food mill or sieve, resulting in 5-6 cups of pulp. Meanwhile, combine remaining ingredients in kettle; stir over low heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to boil, reduce heat, simmer 30 minutes. Strain. Combine hot cider
2 quarts apple cider	
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar	
2 Tbls. mixed pickling spices	

mixture and apple pulp; heat and serve in mugs. Stir with cinnamon sticks. Use long-handled spoons if "wool" is thick. Makes about 3½ quarts. Yum, yum!

TOO BAD if you missed the Thistledown Seminar back in mid-October. It was another excellent seminar by the Norwich Guild and all who went got a lot out of it. And the best part is, as usual, meeting spinners from a wide variety of places, seeing all sorts of wheels (working and otherwise), browsing through the sales rooms, etc. There is really something for everyone at the Thistledown seminars. If you did not get there this year, be sure to earmark it for next fall. The whole event is always a RECHARGE -- new ideas for fibers, uses of handspun, different methods of dyeing, to say the least -- *don't miss it next year!*

The Warholics included a day's visit to Upper Canada Village in their vacation earlier this fall. (It is between Morrisburg and Cornwall, Ontario; open May 1 through Oct. 31 each year; admission is \$4.00 per adult, children less.) The trip up there is about 3½ hours from the Ithaca area and we would strongly urge you to work it so that you have a full day at the Village. The displays are marvelous and most of the demonstrators are too -- don't miss the cabinetmaker, and of course don't miss the weaving/spinning house! The cold, almost-rainy day we were there the bakers had just unloaded their oven(s) and the warm whole wheat bread smell wafted through the village, making us weak in the knees. The cheesemakers could not get milk that day so we did not see that process (regrettably) but maybe you will have better luck. Don could easily have spent the day at the cabinetmaker's; Jean could have spent it at the Woolen Mill. The Woolen Mill was our first stop and almost two hours later, Don was beginning to despair that he would ever get Jean to the other 30 buildings at the Village. The machines at the Woolen Mill are not run constantly, but usually a few are run at different times of the day. We were lucky in that the weaver was trying to get the last of a warp off the mechanized loom and was running it more than usual. They were not running the napping machine (with its long rows of teasels), nor the picker. But the two carding machines were fun to watch and the spinning jack (which is like the spinning jenny but about eight times bigger) was stupendous. That spinning jack spins 140 bobbins simultaneously and it is really something to watch! Back to the mechanized loom: it was particularly gratifying to me (as a beginning weaver) to see that despite all the mechanization of that machine, he still must stop everything and hand-tie those blasted broken warp threads! Anyway, Upper Canada Village is well worth seeing and add it to your list for this coming year...

I would like to mention one more addition to your list of places to stop. We also went to Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, on the vacation. (Open all year except Christmas and New Year's Day; give yourself at least 3-4 hours there; we felt admission was a bit pricey at \$5.00/adult, children less but not by much.) Several of our favorite stops: the scrimshaw exhibit; the figureheads display (complete with a lovely big-bosomed lady [bare-bosomed, need we say?] figurehead who seemed to be everyone's favorite!); the wooden whaleship, built in 1841, that you can walk through; the sailmaker's. As far as Jean is concerned, as a spinner, THE most interesting building was the Plymouth Cordage

Company (ropemakers). The whole process of spinning rope (and different types of rope for various uses) is on exhibit and very interesting -- spinning wheels that look like super-big walking wheels, spool racks 6-feet high with bobbins the size of those big wooden paper towel racks, huge hetchels for the tow, and so on, not to mention the length of the building (since the spinners had to produce rope hundreds of feet long in one continuous spin and/or ply). And the rope-walk part of the building is only 1/3 of its original building; they couldn't fit the whole building onto the museum grounds and keep their "floor plan" for the other buildings. (Again, Don began to despair that he could get me to see the rest of the exhibits!) Just amazing! What a contrast all these spinning-related industries are, but how similar too -- and, in many ways, how little they have changed over the years...

Come to think of it, here's another good item for a spinner/weaver friend for Christmas: *International Handspinning Directory and Handbook* by Doloria Chapin. Order from her (\$7.50) at 2178 Pompey-Fabius Road, RD #1, Fabius, N.Y. 13063. Good reference, too, if you are going to be doing some traveling -- in the States and elsewhere -- and want to locate spinners in the area where you will be visiting...

We finally heard from faraway Cindy Smith in England (where they are for a year) and, despite Doloria's book, they are having trouble finding spinners around the London area. If you know of any "leads," do let Cindy know -- plus I am sure she would love to have some Ithaca news: Cindy Smith, Basement Flat, 32 Gratton Road, London W14 0JX, England. Other than that, they seem to be doing well and having a good time...

A few more tidbits... Doris Wolf (315/539-8302) is looking for a handsome ram to match up with her newly purchased Sufflok yearling ewe, as well as looking for someone who purchased a brown Angora rabbit from her (hers did not make the move to Waterloo) so that her black male Angora can do his stuff and make more brown bunnies! Would also like to purchase a Lincoln fleece if anyone has one to spare... Doloria Chapin has Romney sheep for sale, as well as Angora goats, if you are interested.

*The end of this Newsletter...* We hope to see you at the meetings coming up!!! A gentle reminder that DUES ARE DUE as of January 1st. (\$4 Active; \$6 Inactive; \$2 Student.) If you joined the Guild after Sept. 1st, you are in for the next year with our blessings. Send your check (payable to Black Sheep Handspinners Guild) to Jean Nowack now before you spend all your money (RD #1, Spencer, N.Y. 14883) or pay at the next meeting. Please make note of the Newsletter deadlines below, too...

Hope you have a lovely Christmas, with good friends and family around you!!! We have a whole new exciting year coming up!!!

-- Jean Warholic

#### Deadlines

#14 - January 10 (depending on new officers, etc.)

#15 - February 25 (programs, membership list, etc.)

Forthcoming in the next newsletter or so: list of library acquisitions of the Guild's, and list of handouts to date that you should have as a member...

*Good spinning!*

AD SECTION

SMILING LAMB T-SHIRTS. Photo of lamb on white or yellow T-shirt, adult sizes M, L, XL. 100% cotton (hoorah!). Price is \$6.00 ea. (add 50¢ if I must send order to you), plus NYS residents add 7% Sales Tax. Fun Christmas present! Send check with order to: Jean Martin, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, NY 13068. \*3/3\*

FLOOR LOOMS FOR SALE: New, \$163.50 to \$260; used, \$150-200. Looms for rent: \$5 per week or \$20 per month. Also, shuttles, reeds, heddles, bobbin winders, threading hooks, jute, cotton, linens, loom plans, lessons, etc. THE TABBY SHOP, 49 German Crossroad, Ithaca, New York 14850. (607/273-3308) \*3/3\*

NATURAL DYE BOOKLET by M. Adkins. Mimeographed, with many yarn samples. Booklets may be either stapled and bound or punched for notebook - your choice. Page sizes are 5½x 8½. WOOLHAVEN, RD #2 - Box 144, Oswego, N.Y. 13126. 3/2

CHRISTMAS IS GETTING CLOSER -- *less than 25 days to go!!!* Our Ad Section should give you some good ideas for presents -- keep reading on down... And say you saw it here!

MAIL ORDER WOOLS: We have 8 kinds of wool from many countries - over 50 colors; also unbleached, natural wool in many weights & shades. Bulk-order discount on local Finger Lakes Finest (good for dyeing!), 2 & 3-ply, cream and oatmeal. Books, original designs & circular needles. Samples & booklist, 50¢. Meg Swansen, Pittsville, WI 54466. \*3/3\*

FOR SALE: "Tools of the Trade" 36" jack-type floor loom, 4-harness, wire heddles, 12-dent reed. Bench is included. \$520 as is, includes sales tax. This is no flimsy-flopsy thing, this is a STURDY loom. Please call between 1-5 p.m., any afternoon. 272-2525. 3/2

KEEP WARM AND COZY with an Australian merino handspun, crocheted shawl (white), \$35 -- or, if you prefer, a vest in natural handspun, also crocheted, \$35. Phone Averil Bell, 257-1647. 1/1

CHEAP CHEAP CHEAP - That's what our ads are - 50¢ per issue or \$1/3 issues, maximum of four typewritten lines (as above) per ad for that price. Support your Guild and its Newsletter. If you have something to sell or swap, put it in an ad HERE! Deadline for ads: 25th of each month. Send payment with ad copy (checks payable to Guild): Mrs. Jean Warholic, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. (607/539-7648, evenings.)

BARTLETT YARNS - Natural 3-ply fishermans, \$7/lb. 3-ply Sheep Grey, \$8/lb. Bulky - natural light grey, medium grey, black - \$9/lb. Shearing done. Gjeter Wool Company - Libby Martin, RD #2, Locke, N.Y. 13092. (315/497-9545) 3/1

ASHFORD SPINNING WHEELS -- see page 2 of the Newsletter for information.

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The Mountain sheep are sweeter,  
But the valley sheep are fatter;  
We therefore deemed it meeter  
To carry off the latter.

--The Misfortunes of Elphin,  
1829, Thomas Love Peacock.