



BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS NEWSLETTER
Number 100 - June 1987

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SPINNERS' MARKET DAY***June 21, Sunday, 11-4:30***What's happening??! Lots! The organizers behind the scenes have been very busy getting in gear for the big event. It is now up to YOU -- to come work, bring a friend, eat the good food(same folks as last year with another lamb delight plus other goodies) Participate in any way you can. As of last night we already had 16 vendors, with more probably signing up as the deadline grows closer. At least eight of them have offered a demonstration of one sort or another. Looks like a well rounded variety of animals and fibers. Should be a lovely day for sitting outside and spinning among friends. Bring your checkbook along and make it worth the vendors' time.

We still have POSTCARDS that can be sent out to people YOU think should come -- already mailed are ones to former members of last year, attendees from previous years who signed our "sneak preview" sheets and others. If you have someone specifically you think should get a postcard alerting them to come, call Jean Warholc (539-7648) between now and June 12. Be prepared to give her the person(s) name/address and she'll send out the cards. This should save on any duplications that might otherwise occur.

Some posters will be available at the June 6 meeting for posting around town. Publicity is important to the day. Jean has been doing a tremendous job, but the posters are equally important. Grab a few at the meeting to take with you on errands and post them as you go by June 14. We would appreciate your help with this. And do talk up Spinners' Market Day to friends and encourage them to come. This is our day and your participation is important!

The Afghan - If you receive this by May 30 (wishful thinking) and have the afternoon free, do call Kay Stickane (387-3687) to meet in the park to piece together and fringe the afghan. It is progressing nicely and will be a big success. This is the last step in a wonderful group effort, thanks to everyone! **SELL THOSE TICKETS!!** If you can't sell them to friends, buy a few yourself. If you need more tickets contact Jean or myself or plan to pick them up at the June 6 meeting. Some have been sent to neighboring guilds. There'll be more at Spinners' Market Day. Amy Hnatko has volunteered to concentrate on selling them at Market Day--possibly incognito! Revenue from the tickets is a big help toward defraying the costs of putting on Market Day.

YET MORE on the 4th Annual Spinners' Market Day****Tina Fenn and company will be providing music again this year. Kay tells me we still need someone to make some signs--road signs, restroom, vendor signs, etc. If you have a neat hand and some time, contact Kay(387-3687) All the peices are in place;all that's needed now is a little "heatening around the edges--posting around town, selling raffle tickets, stitching together the afghan and being there on June 21 at the 4-H acres on Lower Creek Rd, off of Rte 13.

UPCOMING MEETINGS***

- June 6, Noon at the Varna Community Building on Rte 366. After the business meeting, show and tell, and possibly some planning for June 21, we 'll be discussing the properties and intimacies of working with cotton. Bring your wheels--Pat will be bringing fiber samples to spin.
- July 11, Noon at Mary Ann Sumner's From Ithaca, take Rte 13N past the airport, left on Hanshaw Rd, third right onto Neimi Rd, second driveway on left (257-5747). She'll have a big fire going under the maple sugar shed, so bring your natural dyepots. And of course your wheels and lunch.
- August 15(third Saturday of month) Noon, at Joan Johnston's. Joan has a large carding machine, so bring your fleeces, cleaned and ready for her machine. Joan lives at 1025 Bostwick Rd, Ithaca (272-2697.)

Members, Events, May Meeting, Items of Interest***** Many thanks to Dick Corth for the wonderful program on the perception of color. Number of new faces at the last meeting--Julie and Etta from town and Cindy Aldrich from the Thistle-down guild in Norwich. Cindy brought Jean Stiber's display of natural dying--an overwhelming display of fibers dyed with many plants and bugs and many mordants. Fascinating and beautiful. RAINBOW DYERS-- there are two complete sets of rainbow-dyed fibers from Nancy Morey's workshop last year. If they belong to you, claim them NOW--they may not be there in July. Pick them up at the next meeting(they were found with the library) or call Michelle Kurz (387-6760) Interested in some weaving workshops? Kathy Halton says the Harrisville Weaving Workshops have been terrific in the past and she knows of cheap places to stay. For info: Harrisville Designs, Harrisville, NH 03450. 603/827-3991. Kathy Halton would like to invite spinners, especially beginners, to her home this summer for an informal get-together of spinning, carding, maybe fleece washing and other basic stuff. She's thinking of July. Will come up with a date at the June meeting.

Washing Wool Fleeces***Everybody seems to have their own method for washing fleece. Joan Johnston claims hers is no-fail; many guild members agree. And if you want to send fleece through her carding machine, this is the way she likes it prepared. Also a note from Jean W--that waxy substance on your fleece is not the desirable substance you think it is. It hardens up, gets goeey, attracts dust and dirt and moths, and prevents dyeing. It is not lanolin, and she recommends washing it out before carding and spinning. I should note that some spinners like to spin "in the grease" and you may want to try it just to see what it is like. I find it very slow and sticky and it does gum up the wheel a bit.

"Here's how I wash wool. I have distilled these directions so every word is important. There are reasons for the various details, but if I wrote them all down, no one would read them anyway. So here are the essentials. I assume the fleece has already been cleaned of short cuts, grain, sticks, hoof parings, manure, and as much hay as possible.

"Important!!

1. Use HOT(150 F) water.
2. Use 1 cup JOY or DAWN for 5 lbs of fleece.
3. NEVER AGITATE.

"Put wool in large red onion bags, 2-3 lb in each. Fill washing machine full of hottest water (add boiling water if necessary.) Turn OFF machine. Stir in JOY. Push wool down under water. Close top. DO NOT agitate. GO AWAY. Come back in 2-4 hours and turn dial to Spin Dry. When done, take bags out. Fill machine with warm water. Push bags under water. Turn dial to spin dry. Spread wool out to dry.

" If no washer, follow above, using wash tub or bath tub, but hang bags up to drip, do not squeeze water out."

Dyeing Cotton***I was surprised how few people I talked to in the guild had ever attempted dyeing cotton. Here's a brief description of MarieBryhan's method. It was nice to see you back at meetings, Marie!

"Because cotton is a cellulose fiber, it requires an alkaline environment to dye successfully. If it has not been bleached or mercerized, cotton must be scoured by boiling with soap (dtergent oaky) and soda for at least 1 hour. This will remove waxes, oils and pectins and open the fibers to take the dye. It will also shrink the fiber. Rinse well to remove the soap, and mordant, dye, or dry for later use. Cotton is very resistant to alkali, but even weak acids can damage it. Strong acids will dissolve it. If you must use an acid to

neutralize a solution or as a rinse, use acetic acid (vinegar) since any remaining acetate will vaporize with time and reduce the potential for fiber damage.

"Colors from natural dyes will in general be less brilliant on cotton than on protein fibers because of the fewer number of dye sites in cotton. (Indigo is an exception.) There are several synthetic dyes for cotton -- M Series (Procion), H Series, Deka L & Ciba Vat, among others. All work beautifully and give great colors. Union dyes, like Rit and Cushing, also work well."

ADVERTISEMENTS***

For Sale: Misc. spinning/weaving magazines, books, fibers, etc. Come to our spot at the 4th Annual SPINNERS' MARKET DAY. Jean Warholic, Eleanor May, and Jean Currie. Too good to miss.... 1/1

For Sale: Brother Bulky Eight Knitting Machine. \$150 in good condition. Call Debbie 277-6830 1/3

Custom carding. Bring those fresh, washed fleeces to be well carded for easy spinning--still only \$2/pound. Dyed and natural wool, mohair & silk for mixing or spinning alone. Joan Johnston, 1025 Bostwick Rd, Ithaca. 272-2697

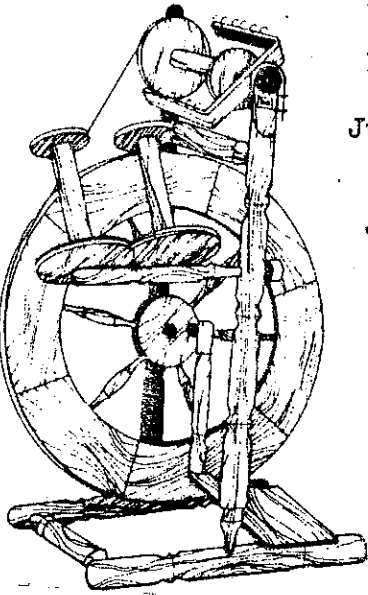
Advertising Rates: They're cheap and easy. Just send to the editor or get it to me at the next meeting.

1-3 lines, \$1 for one time. 4-12 lines, \$5 for one time.
13 lines- 1/2 page, \$10 for one time.

Spring Fever****It took me to this year to discover how lovely spinning outside is. Cool grass on the toes, warm sunshine on the shoulders, and the fresh view of our yard and field. It adds a whole new dimension to joy and peacefulness. And outside there are a lot more interesting things than a turning wheel for a 15 month old to play with so I can actually watch Coda and spin at the same time! Now that's joy. I hear tell that the only thing missing from this scene of relaxation is nudity and a glass of brandy or sherry.If you haven't been down to Stewart Park recently, take a trip down there -maybe bring your wheel and a picnic. And check the beautiful painting job Annie Campbell did on the carousel horses and carousel top.

The Black Sheep Weavers? The May issue of the Crafts Report tells of our sisters in name and fiber love. Phyllis Whitcomb-Packard started teaching handloom techniques to prisoners in South Dakota. The pilot project was so successful that she wrote around and got funding to continue the program. It's been running since Jan of 1986, and the name, they chose themselves.

UPCOMING EVENTS



- May 30 Piecing together of the afghan at Stewart Park. Contact Kay. 387-3687)
- Now Susan Andrews on Marshall St in Ithaca is getting rid of her yarns. Lots of stuff.
- June 5-7 Midwest Weavers Conference in Lawrence, Kansas. Featured speakers--Albertje Koopman and Lois Ericson.

June 6-7 Ithaca Festival Arts & Crafts Show. The festival is looking for folks to spin on the Commons on Sat, June 6. Contact Michelle Kurz to add your name to the sheet. Nice opportunity to sit in the sun and spin and acquaint people with spinning. Be sure to bring along posters for Market Day to hand out to interested folks.

June 13-14 Ontario Handspinners Seminar. Angora and Camel. Ontario Handspinners Seminar, Inc.; Ron Abbott, PO Box 400; Verona, Ontario KOH2WO

June 20 Thistledown Handspinners picnic at Sherbourne.

June 21 BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS' GUILD MARKET DAY. 4-H acres, 11-4:30. Do come.

June 23-24 Cherry Valley Handspinners are giving a workshop with Persis Grayson on novelty yarns. Michelle has more info on this.

July 13-17 and 27-31 Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario has an established Master Spinner program under the auspices of its School for Continuous Learning. The candidate must complete 6 levels of course work and an in-depth study of at least 20 pages on a spinning related topic. Levels I, II, and III will cover all of the basics, all fibers and all techniques. Levels IV, V and VI will cover the same thing but with more comprehensive documentation of each method and topic, more depth of knowledge, more refinement of spinning skills and sharper analytical and communication skills. The first two levels will be offered this summer. Fees are minimal. For registration info: Georgian College; School of Continuous Learning; One Georgian Drive; Barrie, Ontario L4M 3X9. 705/722-1544.

July 25 Connecticut Agricultural Sheep-to-Shawl Contest. Jill Roby; 59 John Hand Drive; Coventry, Ct 06238. 203/742-1201.

July 29, Wed Troy Fair 16th Annual Wool Day. 9:30-5. Handspun contest with former BSHG member Dora Swart judging. Sell or demonstrate (the latter for free) or exhibit on Thurs. Contact another former member, Dawn Landis; RD1 Box 279D; Monroeton, Pa 18832. Deadline July 6.

July 30- Aug 1 Upstate Crafts Fair, juried. Deadline for application without a late fee is June 30. Upstate Crafts; PO Box 173; Ithaca, NY 14851.

Aug 1 Deadline for submissions to the State Fair. Do consider this. There are prizes in the handspun category and it is a fun day. Also there was not a very good response from handspinners last year so they may discontinue the category if there's little this year. Contact N Y State Fairgrounds; Syracuse, NY 13209.

Oct 17-18 Central NY Handspinners Seminar, Cazenovia. Spin Your Rainbow; Color and Color Blending. Registration limited.

Lots of things are going on through other Guilds. I don't get a chance to list them all so check the notebook at the Guild Library for their newsletters. Or why not visit another Guild at one of their meetings and exchange ideas.

Name me

There are words I do not care for. I suppose most people have some. One is *agribusiness*. It seems to have no fun in it — and very little sun!

Someone thought it up who liked prose, and maybe profits, too much! Where's the poetry of spring rain I feel, of woods I see, and soil and grass that have been good to me?

"Agribusiness" does not ring free. It has pinched pennies and computers in it. It sounds as though some creditor could foreclose and strip my life of joy at any minute!

Name me by a word that daily glows like dawns and sunsets, that makes one think of *shepherd* and of *yeoman*, though it plods a little — a commoner's term that sometimes stops to whittle beside a barn, and listens to a bird. I am a *farmer*, and I like the word!

Helen Harrington

Thanks again for all the contributions to the newsletter!! Keep them coming--articles, cartoons, and your ideas for what you'd like to see in future newsletters.

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