

# Black Sheep Handspinners Guild Newsletter



Volume 132 - September, 1990

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## Upcoming Meetings

**Saturday, September 8, noon, Varna:** The September meeting will feature the annual garage sale, always a popular event. Bring me your tired, your poor, your unused items longing to be used! All kinds of paraphernalia are welcome, from fibers to books to tools of the trade. Come to sell, buy, trade. Rumor has it that Pat Randorf will be bringing in a portion of her stock (only a ton or two) for this garage sale. Not a meeting to miss!

**Saturday, October 13, 11:30-4, Varna: Wheels with a Difference.** Coffee/tea at 11:30, then lunch, then show and tell, and then on to our program, which will be full of surprises! It'll be a lively meeting and lots of FUN learning about *and trying* some of the more unusual spinning wheels. You'll need to bring *plenty* of well-prepared fiber for spinning, and a niddy noddy (although, since you might not get your yarn back, don't bring fiber from a precious project), and bring an unusual wheel to show if you have one. We'll also talk about the care and "winterizing" of spinning wheels so yours will be ready for some heavy-duty winter spinning. Coordinators of the day are Jean Warholic, Eleanor May, and Kay Stickane.

We'll be in the big room. Plan to bring a friend, your lunch, and stay the afternoon. Don't miss it!

## Report on August Meeting

August 11 found Guild members gathered under the trees at Yvonne LaMontagne's for a spin-in, dish-to-pass and lamburger cookout. What a beautiful day for it, and what a beautiful place to meet! Charlotte and Alissa Altmann brought samples and pictures from Alissa's 4-H Sheep to Shawl Contest, which Alissa's team won. Everyone was impressed with the lovely colors Alissa had dyed for the warp.

Also present were Debbie Benzer, Eleanor May, and Sharon Gombas, as was new member Lee Tackett, who had just moved up from Scranton, Pa. Sharon brought several handwoven items: a beautiful, narrow scarf in soft colors, made of gentle colors of (unbelievably enough) nylon. She had also made a soft and airy pastel shawl, as well as some gray twill yardage, part camel, to be used for a teddy bear.

## Dyeing for a vacation

Debbie Benzer's vacation consisted of a trip to Williamsburg, Mass. to attend a four day workshop on Shibori dyeing techniques. Horizons is a craft school that offers many different craft workshops. The school provides room and board (excellent food), well-trained teachers, and studios that are open at night.

On the first day, instructor Ellen Noble had the class prepare the indigo dye bath in a 50 gal. plastic garbage can. Students then learned the first couple of shibori stitching techniques, prepared some fabric, and began the long, laborious, dipping process: soak thirty minutes, dip, hang up thirty minutes, and repeat. With several people sitting around the can in gloves to the armpit, submerging the stitched fabric over and over again, the group became quite intimate. Each person used the 2 yds. of cotton poplin that was provided, as well as fabric they had brought with them. People went crazy, stitching away, pulling the fabric very tight.

Then their teacher taught them techniques for more instant gratification: rashi shibori, which involved sewing material into tubes and feeding the tubes onto PVC pipe, then scrunching and dyeing for a zebra effect; and folding. They also experimented with Procion dye baths, but these fiber reactive dyes don't work as well as indigo, a surface dye.

## Part I: Sheep to Shawl Warm-up

Eleanor May sponsored a gala planning meeting and dish-to-pass on Sunday, August 12. It looks more and more as if BSHG will be fielding two teams this year! The first team, consisting of Jay Miller, shearer; Ellie, weaver; and Deb Miller, Debbie Benzer and yours truly as spinners, met to spin weft for an undulating warp in blue and purple planned by Deb and Ellie. Ellie did not drive us as hard as she usually does, as she was pretty tired from full-time grandmothering for the preceding few days. We discussed our costumes, but decided against fishnet stockings and high heels to go with those great big purple BSHG shirts; Jay's never shorn sheep in heels before.

The second team, featuring Charlotte Altmann as weaver, and Sharon Gombas, Jill Lott, Nancy Wilson and Kay Stickane as spinners, met to plan their shawl and pick up a few tips on procedure. Charlotte will be ikat-dying their warp, which should be lovely.

In addition to the usual rogues, we entertained a writer and a photographer from the Ithaca Times. They're planning on doing a story on our sheep to shawl efforts.

Needless to say, when you meet at Ellie's, you eat well, and so we did. There was a scrumptious variety of dishes, and although Monty, who had the first piece, claimed that Deb Miller's blueberry pie was awful, we knew he only said it so there'd be some left for seconds. You didn't fool us, Mr. May, not for a minute.

Just in time for dessert Nancy Morey and her husband drove by and, seeing all the cars, stopped to see what was up. Nancy had in tow her new "babies" of the lepidopteran order, domestic silkworms. One had just spun a cocoon, and the other, a fat, 3 in. green caterpillar, was slowly chomping on some maple leaves.

By the way, if you haven't seen the Mays lately, you'll have to look closer to find them, as they're looking pretty slim and trim this summer.



## Part II: The Contest

As we go to press, the Sheep to Shawl is only days away. Excitement is mounting as preparations continue. Stay tuned for the results, or, better yet, be in the Sheep Barn on Sunday, September 2 from noon to four and see for yourself!

## The Winners

Guild member **Mary Lynch** won the BSHG Special Award for the best garment of undyed, colored wool. The other prizes in Section 13 (Handspun Yarn) were won as follows:

Class 71 (Proficiency of Spin): 1st: **Thomas Coe**; 2nd: **James Sweet**; 3rd: **Debbie Benzer**.

Class 72 (Yarns for Clothing): 1st: **Vernice Church**; 2nd: **James Sweet**; 3rd: **Kay Stickane**; 4th: **Debbie Benzer**; Honorable Mention: **Shelly Reif**.

Class 73 (Novelty Yarns): 1st and 2nd: no award; 3rd: **James Sweet**.

Class 74 (Garment for Infant or Child): 1st: **Marilyn Brown**; 2nd: **Mary Lynch**; 3rd: **Shelly Reif**; Honorable Mention: **Patricia Henward**.

Class 75 (Adult Hat & Scarf/Hat & Mittens Set): 1st: **Cindy Fitzgerald**; 2nd: no award; 3rd: **Marilyn Brown**; Honorable Mention: **Marie Fittz**.

Class 76 (Adult Sweater): 1st: **Marilyn Brown**; 2nd: **Juan Dickinson**; 3rd: **Diane Coe**; Honorable Mention: **Vernice Church**, **Thomas Coe**, **Marie Fittz**.

Class 77 (Any Other Adult Garment): 1st: **Juan Dickinson**; 2nd: **C. Fitzgerald**; 3rd: **Diane Coe**.

Class 78 (Any Other Non-Wearable Functional or Decorative Article): 1st: **Marilyn Brown**; 2nd: **Diane Coe**; 3rd: **Betsy Walker**.

## Four Days at the Fair, or How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Yours truly had the chance to spend Aug. 24-27 in the Wool Center. Ever spin from 10am to 10 pm? It was incredible; I even learned to use the Great Wheel. Every Guild member that was there on Aug. 27 knows what lovely Border Leicester fleecethy had, and how much fun it was to sit and spin and talk to the people passing through. Mark your calendars for next year. This is not one to miss!

## More New Members!

Lots of new guild members! Please add the following to your membership list.

Joline Francoeur  
725 Sheldon R.  
Freeville, NY 13068  
898-4053



Virginia Barker  
960 Snyder Hill Rd.  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
539-6514

Lee Tackett  
PO Box 4822  
Ithaca, NY 14850



Jeanne Cocuzza  
659 Old Wilder Rd.  
Hilton, NY 14468  
392-3235

Lynne Cassella-Blackburn  
263 West Dryden Rd.  
Freeville, NY 13068  
H:844-3442  
W: 273-3223



And we welcome back Amy Brill,  
212 Hudson St.  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
H:277-3634  
W:273-8287

Amy writes that she has been hard at work designing, spinning, knitting, and SELLING(!) on a national level.

With all these new members, if you see someone you don't know at the next meeting, step up and introduce yourself. I haven't yet met a guild member that bites.

### Preparation for Rock Day

Yes, Rock Day! Eleanor May says that on those lovely autumn walks you'll soon be taking, be sure to find and save 2 forked sticks, one wide and taller, one skinny, for use at Rock Day. Bring an extra pair if you can.

## Calendar of Events

**Sept. 8:** Allegheny Plateau-Central New York Sheep and Wool Festival, Norwich.

**Sept. 15-16:** Natural Colored Wool Growers Association National Show. Altamont Fairgrounds, Altamont, NY (near Albany). Features a sheep show, fleece competition and skein competition, as well as commercial booths. Contact Mary Williams, Box 89, Route 32, Greenville, NY 12083, 518-966-8944.

**Sept. 22:** Fiberfest at the Cobleskill Fairgrounds, sponsored by the Schohairie County Sheep Producers Assn.

**Sept. 23-30:** SOAR, Silver Bay (Lake George). According to Nancy Morey, you can take advantage of the sales room even if you aren't registered for SOAR.

**Oct. 20-21:** New York Sheep and Wool Festival at Rhinebeck.

**Nov. 2-4:** North East Handspinners "Gathering", Lower Shaker Village, Enfield, NH. Registration packets: SASE (.45) to Peg Rearick, RR1, Box 100, Hebron, ME 04238. Features Joan Cummer, Sue Beevers, Rita Buchanan, Karen Casselman, Rachael

### From the Editor's Desk:

We were sorry to hear of the death of Eleanor May's father.

These days our thoughts are with Jean Warholic during her husband's continuing illness. Hang in there, Jean.

Ellie has insisted that I announce my engagement to my Big Sweetie. There, Ellie, I did it, but not without considerable embarrassment. No date set yet.



## ADVERTISEMENTS \* \* \*

Advertising rates:

3-6 lines: \$1 for one time, \$2 for 3 times.

7-24 lines: \$5 for one time

25 lines- 1/2 page: \$10 for one time

**For Sale: Macomber 72" 4 harness loom** with sectional beam, bench, reed, push shuttles. Perfect for rugs or coverlets. Delivery can be arranged. \$2200. Joan Koster, 692-4398, RD 1 Box 32, Itaska, Whitney Point, NY 13862. (7/7)

Again available, a few fully-restored, late 19th century Canadian foot treadle wool wheels. Excellent spinners and valuable antiques. Call now for best selection. Bill Ralph, (717) 247-7175.

**For Sale: Skein winder.** Handmade of red oak, \$125.00. Jill Lott, 656-7535. (3/3)

**Harrisville Designs 36" 4-harness, 6 treadle loom.** Includes reed and bench. Perfect condition. \$500.00 firm. Laurel Schuman, (717) 563-1042. (3/3)

What you need is a few good sheep! Selling Romney cross lambs & ewes, Romney ram, and Border Leicester cross lambs. White and colors. Come see and feel! Shelly Reif, 387-6760. (3/3)

**Louët "Spring" 36" 4-harness, 6 treadle counter-march loom.** Includes reed and bench. Perfect condition (never used), \$700.00 firm. Laurel Schuman, (717) 563-1042. (3/3)

**Does anyone have one of Rachel Brown's "Rio Grande" wheels?** I'd like to be able to see one. Debbie Serviente, 347-6631.

**Ashford spinning wheel, ex. condition, \$95. Glimakra loom, ("Standard"), 8-harness, 10-treadle, countermarche, 60".** Includes bench, 2 reeds, lease and warp sticks. Ex. condition, 5 yrs old, \$1600.; also yarn ("Christopher Sheepfarm Wool"), 2-ply, variety of colors, 48 lbs., \$6/lb., \$288. Liza Lamb, 273-6694.

**Grease wool for sale: 2 Oxford, 4 Oxford/Romney, 1 Oxford/Romney/Corriedale (black).** Vince Sgambati, Otisco Lake, (315) 636-8090.

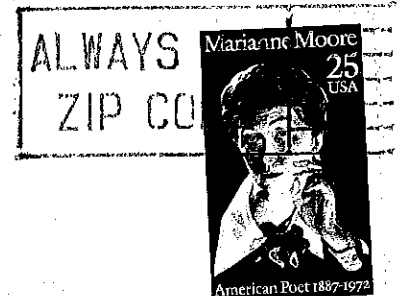
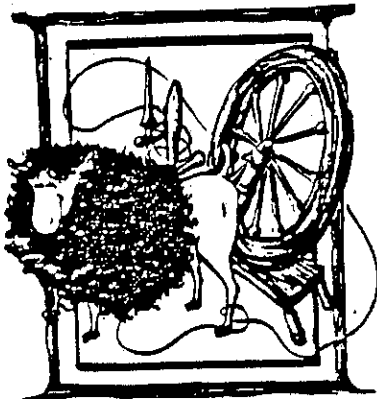
**Mohair fleeces for sale.** Ernest Edwards, Jr., 1-854 So. St. Rd., Pavilion, NY 14525, (716) 584-3947.

**60" 4-harness Glimakra counterbalance loom for sale.** Wonderful loom, overhead beater, string heddles, perfect for rugs and coverlets as well as small projects. A bargain at only \$1200. Eleanor May, 272-8224.

## Black Sheep Handspinners Guild

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6341 Willow Creek Rd  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Submissions for October newsletter are due by September 25..

