

# BLACKSHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1992



The Blacksheep Handspinners Guild meets 2nd Saturday of each month from 11-3 at the Varna Community Center on Rt 366. If your coming North on 13, take a left at the sign just past NYSEG and if your coming South on 13, take a right at the sign about 3 miles past Triphammer Mall at the Treeforms Furniture Store. If coming from Center Ithaca, the community center is about a mile past the vet school on the right.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Meeting will be from 11:00 to 3:00 on Saturday, June 13th at the Varna Community Center.

## MARKET DAY PLANNING AND BOOK SHARE:

Remember to bring a fiber related book that you would recommend we purchase for the guild library.

This will be a discussion time for upcoming events. Market Day is June 28th and any last minute items will be brought up.

All those planning to attend Market Day should try and be there.

## PINS ARE IN:

If you will not be picking yours up at this meeting or on Market Day, please forward your money to Nancy Wilson.

## MINUTES OF MAY MEETING:

### MARKET DAY:

Marie Bryhan and Deb Miller will coordinate the dish-to-pass for the visiting guilds. Vernice will bring a tarp for extra cover.

**MARKET DAY:** June 28th at The Ithaca Farmers Market, Steamboat Landing off of Rt 13. Bring all unsold raffle tickets. Try to get there early. Call Celia Radke or Ellie May for details.

We are short on natural wool for afghan. If you have any left please, please bring it to us soon. Deb and Ellie need color carded wool for felt balls.

### Other Items of Interest:

The State Fair thanks us for offering our usual prize. This is \$25 for the best item made of natural colored wool.

Nancy Wilson will be teaching hand knitting at the Woolery on May 19 and 26th and June 2nd and 9.

Golden Fleece Handspinners Guild is planning a seminar for October 1993. It appears to be along the line of the former upstate seminar. It should be quite a big deal. They sent us a questionnaire. Deb Miller, Marie Bryan and Deb Benzer will fill it out and send it in.

We all know that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. BSHG members should feel pretty good about our newsletter. It has appeared in The Spinners Web and other spinning newsletters.

The budget committee concluded that as long as events pay for themselves, we are in the black so to speak.

We are having a problem getting carding cloth for the guild carder. Several sources were suggested at the meeting.

#### **Upcoming Events:**

Summer Workshop on felted knitting will be held at Jean Currie's unless we need a dryer. Guild members will need to provide a home for the teacher and her husband. Contact Deb Miller for details.

The next BSHG retreat will be held March 5th to 7th, 1993 at the Watson Homestead. After considering the alternatives, the retreat committee decided Watson offered the nicest surroundings, views, and clean rooms, (not to mention the pool). The dining hall food would be compensated by the usual wealth of goodies that members bring along.

Ithaca Festival is looking for volunteers to demonstrate spinning on the Commons, June 4th.

What date do we want for the State Fair Wool Center? Those present selected August 21 or August 24th.

#### **Abbreviated Report on Show and Tell:**

Deb Miller brought a delightful child's vest which she trimmed with I-cord she applied on the machine. Write it up for Knitters Magazine Deb!

Vernice and Marie both brought sweaters in progress.

#### **The Program:**

Karey Solomon showed us many samples of ornately knitted and tatted lace items and got everyone started on a knitted lace shawl.

#### **LETTER FROM SHIRLEY BROWSKY:**

Deb Miller received the information she was looking for regarding the July 31st workshop. Here is a section of the letter:

"Friday night we could be a little informal. I'll have a few slides and will give an overview of the workshop, hand out supplies, etc.

I thought that for those who wanted to blend the fibres, spin and ply their own - they could obtain Corriedale wool fleeces and mohair fleeces on their own - I have no plans to bring fleeces down. All fibres must be well washed. This would save them money and some of them might have this kicking around under a bed or hidden away. I will supervise the blending process along with some spinning hints and techniques. For those who don't think they can handle all of the work, they could blend and drum card their fleeces ahead of time. They would produce enough yarn to knit a hat or a pair of mitts (hats take about 6 oz. and mitts about 8 oz.) They should plan on 11 oz. washed mohair thoroughly blended with 5 oz. washed Corriedale or finer wool. This will give them one pound for spinning and should cover both the hat and the mitts. Some carded pure mohair could be brought with some fine wool singles and some silk or polyester sewing thread and I'll show them how to spin a textured yarn that can be used on the hats.

With regard to the supplies, because you want a diversity of end results, it may be better in the long run if each member purchases her supplies directly instead of including it in the workshop fees.

For those of you who want to by-pass the

spinning part, I will bring down boxes of yarn spun to the proper grist and twist (sounds like a song). They would also make a hat or mitts. (The yarn is \$8.00 for a 100 gram ball (a little less than 4 oz.) For those of you who are raring to go with the knitting machines, I think this would also be the best way for you to go. This way someone who wants to hand knit a hat won't be subsidizing someone with a knitting machine who wants to make a vest. Think about it.

### Some equipment required:

- \* drum carders for the handspinners.
- \* Spinning wheels and usual spinning paraphernalia.
- \* For hats, two circular knitting needles, one cable size about 6" long (I think these are cuff size) and one cable size about 12". Anyone who has the exchangeable circular needle kits by *Denise* or *Boyle* are away to the races. (Four double pointed needles are fine), size US 15, 13 and 11.
- \* For those only knitting mitts, size US 6 or 7 circular needles, cuff size cable length.
- \* Some garbage yarn to be used as stitch holders.
- \* One each of small and medium sized crochet hooks.
- \* As many foam wig stands or heads as you have people making hats and a towel for each head.
- \* A washing machine with a regular cycle and a delicate cycle.
- \* A good supply of hot water.
- \* Detergent.
- \* Tapestry needles and some slippery yarn - polyester weaving thread is great.
- \* Everyone with knitting machines should have a vest pattern of some sort.
- \* Bulky knitting machines and all the junk for them (I use the *Bond* with great success) Let me know if you need one and I'll bring mine.

Depending on how fast things go with the machine knitters, you might want to have sewing machines waiting in the wings - if they are "felted" Saturday, they could, conceivably, start

cutting and sewing Sunday.

These are only some things I have thought up off the top of my head. As we get closer to the date, I'll send down a more detailed list, but I can't see anything else.

As for an outline, basically, Friday night to get set up, yarns bought, everyone will decide what style hat they are going to make (there are a couple). We will go over the vest patterns for suitability, generally get to know each other. I can show some slides of the garments (and will have some on hand) that can be made using this technique. Lots of talk is encouraged. I think 7-9:30 or 10 will do it.

Saturday, 9-4 we will start the blending and spinning for those who wish, the knitting for those who don't and setting up for the knitting machines for the rest. Everyone will be on their own with me over their shoulder. Sometime during the weekend, I will give a little talk on design and construction techniques in general. It doesn't have a direct relationship to the workshop, but most people will be knitting and chatting and maybe I have some ideas not previously thought of. Slides of the process will be shown either Saturday or Sunday. Of course, all of this depends on how fast or slow everyone produces. (The hats can be knit in about 4 or 5 hours, the mitts take much longer). The machine knitters are at a disadvantage because they can produce so quickly, so there might be some spare time here, but I have some things to keep them busy. We may be able to "felt" them by the end of the day.

Sunday, 9-?, hopefully, we can start the felting process. This will have to be staged on a "as finished" basis because I don't want too many pieces in the washing machine at one time.

As for fee, my teaching fee is \$500 for the weekend plus room and board so you are looking at about \$35 per student (based on 15). Supply

costs will range between \$16 for hats to \$60 or \$70 for a vest depending on the size. If the vests are to be completed on the weekend, suitable thread, lining and zippers will have to be purchased Saturday sometime after they have chosen their yarn.

Shirley

Debbie Benzer or Deb Miller suggested a kitty of some kind where we could have some pre-purchased wool and mohair blended by FINGER LAKES WOOLLEN MILLS. The cost might be cheaper than the time.

Ellie suggested adding on an additional fee to cover food costs to be incurred by whomever hosts Shirley and her husband.

#### **GENESEE COUNTY MUSEUM SPIN-IN:**

Celia, Sharon and myself had a delightful afternoon at the Genesee Country Museum in Mumford, NY on May 17th. We took the scenic route through Utica by way of Syracuse to get to Rochester and arrived late but in plenty of time to find a comfortable spot among many other area spinners.

We promoted Market Day in Ithaca and had quite a few spinners interested in taking in the pretty surroundings at Steamboat Landing.

Sharon Gombas joined us later and we all took turns strolling around the restored pioneer buildings and watching demonstrations by museum volunteers in period costumes.

Kim

#### **COMPUSERVE CRAFT FORUM:**

For all spinners who have access to personal computers, you should try and tie into COMPUSERVE's craft forum (type GO CRAFTS, after logging onto COMPUSERVE). It is one of the most popular forums going for the

data network. You can communicate with spinners not only within the US, but the Isle of Mann, Japan, Ireland and other countries.

Some samplings from the various libraries are: A how-to guide for spinning silk from silkworms, Dyeing with ammonia, pennies and eucalyptus, weaving shareware, a trading post for trading raw materials, services or equipment, spinning and weaving guild lists in US and Canada and fibers to swap.

You pay by baud rate on your modem (the apparatus which connects your PC to the network) and by minute. The trick is to go in at a normal baud rate of 6400, explore around the posted messages and libraries for a few minutes, then attend a forum at a low baud. Uploading and downloading should be done at 6400. There are several publications now on how to maximize your time on COMPUSERVE.

One of the stories in COMPUSERVE MAGAZINE this month was about a contingent of Craft Forum spinners who attended the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival in May and fielded a team at the Sheep to Shawl contest. They had a heck of a time logistically considering they came everywhere from Hawaii to Texas to the Northeast and most had never laid eyes on one another, let alone spun together. But they were an intrepid bunch, laptops ever at the ready with late-breaking news for members who couldn't come or taking pictures for scanning and uploading as GIF images later. Virtual reality meets Rumpelstiltskin and Sleeping Beauty at the wheel!

#### **CLASSIFIEDS**

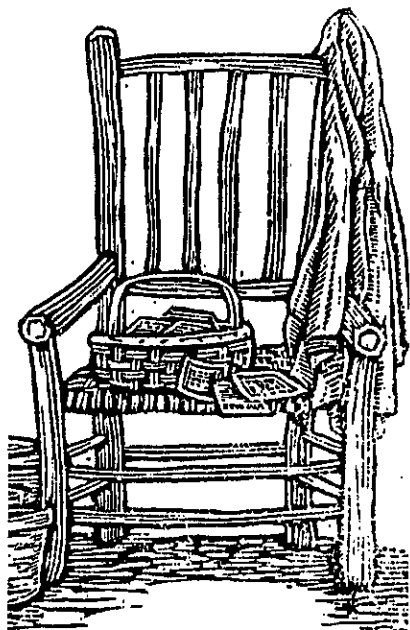
Ad Rates: 3-6 lines --- \$2 one time for 20 words or less and \$1 for additional 10 words or less.

**FOR SALE:** The Louet S39 Ultimate is here! Special guild price \$370 shipping included. Regular price is \$439. Louet yarn blocker and warping mill, \$100. Lisa Ann Merian, SPINNER'S HILL SHOP, RD#1, Box 118, Brackett Lake Road, Bainbridge, NY 13733, 843-6276 (15/15).

**FOR SALE:** Used Ashford Spinning Wheel. Phone 607-869-5429. Evenings.

**FOR SALE:** Loom Craft Floor Loom and Bench. Cherry 26" wide, four harness. Warping board. Negotiable. Eileen Wilson 607-273-8813.

**FOR SALE:** Great wheel restored \$200. Early Ashford wheel, used very little \$140. Spool rack \$35. Kathy Houck, Cortland. 1-756-6438. Let ring long time.



## COMING EVENTS

**CAPITAL CONVERGENCE:** July 23-26 1992. Information available in the library.

**ONTARIO HANDSPINNING SEMINAR:** June 12, 13, 14, 1992. Wilfred Laurier Union. Waterloo Ontario. Information in Guild Library.

**FIBER FOCUS II:** September 11-14, 1992 at Touchstone Center for Crafts, PO Box 2141 Uniontown PA 15401 (412-438-2811). Many workshops to participate in. A complete course description and registration information plus discount coupons will be available at the Guild library.

**FARMERS MUSEUM SPECIAL EVENT:** August 9, Cooperstown NY. We are invited to come and spin for a day at a living museum of rural 1800 New York. Talk to Debbie Benzer for more information.

**Flax Demonstration & Spin-In:** July 12, 1-4 p.m. All spinners welcome. Bement Billings Farmstead Museum. Rte 38, Newark Valley, NY

**THE GATHERING:** At Lower Shaker Village, NH, Nov 6 to 8 in beautiful setting with great workshops. Contact Deb Gile, 154 Old Henniker Road, Hillsboro, NH 03244.

**LODI FARMERS MARKET SPIN-IN:** August 15, 9 to 12. A good time and William Bartlett, Dryden weaver will be there! Call Shelly Marion for details.