

ROVING

President's Message

As I sit and write this March has returned and chased May away. I am once again feeding the stove and enjoying the soft glow of the fire. I hope that March does not linger on into April. After the warm spell (80+ degrees in March!) we have returned to spinning weather. At this month's meeting I might even remember to bring in some show and tell, some of the yarn I have been working on for the last couple of weeks. I hope my mention spurs you into doing likewise as show and tell has been a bit sparse lately.

It gives me pleasure to see the spinning circle expanding as more people come to join us for our meetings. We must be doing something right and I congratulate you on that. That being said, there is still room for more spinners in our circle.

Remember the color workshop that is coming up in April, there may still be an opening or two left.

Jim

April's Program

April's meeting is an occasion for our Garage Sale—bring along all fiber-related items you would like to swap, sell or see the last of.

In addition, Cathy Chesnut has kindly volunteered to help us understand how to make that handspun we made with no project in mind fit a pattern. This has always terrified me, so I am looking forward to being talked through it. Please bring your pattern, and a swatch: start with your handspun and the needle size suggested, moving up or down in needle size in an effort to approximate the gauge. We will work with that at the meeting. Other knitting questions will be gladly accepted.

Sharon

President: Jim Johnson 564-7178

Vice Pres.: Sue Quick

Treasurer: Vickie Marsted

Secretary: Audrey Lowes

Newsletter Editor: Susan Sarabasha

Roc Day: Jim Johnson

Membership: Wayne Harbert

Programming: Sharon Gombas &

Marjorie Inana

Library: Ruth Allen

WebMistress: Teresa Porri

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*The Black Sheep meet from 11am-3pm
on the 2nd Saturday of each month
at All Saints Church Parish Hall,
Rte 34B, in Lansing, NY*

Shigeyoshi Osaki playing his
spider silk filament violin.



March Meeting Minutes - from Audrey

President Jim Johnson called the meeting to order and asked for a "Once-Around" to learn what everyone was doing.

Susan Sarabasha showed off her spectacular new shawl pattern and also told us of her adventure making a cap sleeved sweater, for her mom (Faukland wool) during the running of the Ididarod. She rushed to complete it in competition with the sled dog race and came in 47th - it was a squeaker! Also, her new colorway is aptly entitled "Sled Dog."

Ruth Allen spun and plied a lively colored yarn which she plans to apply to a picture frame.

Carol LaBore had a large selection of her photos for sale as well as her handmade quilts.

Mary M used a patterned sock yarn and worked up a pair of socks that matched perfectly! She had reworked the heel a few times - they sure were nice.

Lynn Anguish shared her "Member Made" granddaughter, Shana. Lynn is also in the final stages of completing a vest with her own pattern of sheep (each knit in their breed yarn) and a Shetland Sheepdog!

Sue Quick is continuing knitting squares. She is mimicking the countryside via aerial view with a sampler of stitches and colors.



Maryann Pellitier is continuing spinning quiviut/Suffolk/Border Liecester into a fine yarn.

Cheryl Germain brought two young children, Jack and Bridget, to our meeting who were just learning to spindle spin.

Priscilla sported a new sweater that fit nicely!

Teresa was spinning Blueface Liecester for a sweater and also shared three samples of her latest spinning and explained the difficulty of combining a shorter fiber with a longer one.

Mary Miller showed us a delightful little girl's dress she knit.

Elizabeth Kinney-Gosner had a shirt for sale (that didn't look good at her hipline) and wished the new owner better luck.

Wayne H. is spinning his own indigo dyed Merino.

Margaret Flowers has wool and roving for sale and is expecting to continue shearing 2 sheep a day (she had 49 sheep in total). So now is a very good time to purchase your fleece.

Christa Fallen joined us today for the first time. She is new to spinning and is homesteading with her husband and looking to get into raising sheep. She wants to learn more about the different wheels and try a few. Any help would be appreciated.

Charlotte Sharkey is spinning the first coat from her Black Giant Angora. He is quite the beautiful boy - but first fleeces can be a challenge. She hopes to send this yarn into competition with the Angora rabbit breeders group she belongs to. The first Saturday in June she will be hosting a "Kaluha Making Party" it is "by-invitation-only" and we are all invited.

Becky Terwilliger showed us a Merino yarn with beads - 330 yards worth - she completed. The fiber came from Critter Ranch. About the beading - she says, "Never Again!"

Audrey Lowes showed us a purple angora neck warmer she made with yarn she purchased while on the retreat at Stella Maris. The seven members who attended had a grand time and the food was excellent!

Sharon Gombas took Vicki's hat pattern on her vacation in Vermont and wound up teaching folks in two yarn shops as well as an interested onlooker during a basketball game. She has been shearing recently and has half Hampshire/half Suffolk sheep wool FREE to whomever would like to try it!

Meeting Minutes cont'd

Kay Roscoe told us she has a [36" 4 harness loom for sale](#).

Cathy Chestnut will be teaching us how to adapt to commercial patterns at the next meeting. The key will be to try different swatches until you find a match to the gauge - going up or down one size each time. Terresa also mentioned that fitting a doubled thread of yarn through the needle size gauge also helps - but you must be careful not to force it - must be loosely matching.

Jim Johnson advised us that the May meeting is a conflict meeting (the church needs the hall for a blood drive). Sharon Gombas was asked to check into using a pavillion at Meyers Point for that meeting. The program will instruct us on the use of dyes.

Susan Sarabasha had [two Baynes wheels \(lightly used\) for sale](#). One now sold.

Charlotte has a Pat Greene [triple picker](#) for sale.

We are trying to learn the whereabouts of the 2nd rented carder. Maybe Melonie Towner has it?

Carol LaBorie reminded us that the next retreat will be at Stella Maris and we need a larger crowd to secure the beautiful wicker sunroom.

Meeting ended at approximately 12:50.



**Long sleeved mock
turtlenecks - \$20**

Short Sleeved Tee's - \$12

Want one? See [Mary](#).

Benzaiten – a needle felted wall hanging by Charlotte Sharkey. 22" x 33" Now hanging in the Watkins Glen 'Women in the Arts' show.



Just Teasing

from Wayne Harbert



No, I'm serious. The title doesn't mean what you think it does; I've been thinking about the original meaning of *tease*, "to pull or tear apart," and its connection with *teasel*. Teasel is an invasive plant—a distinctive and rather handsome weed of waste places. (There's a nice stand of it growing across the road from Walmart.) Back in the nineteenth century, though, and even into the early 20th, one variety of it was a valuable cash crop in these parts, grown, as its Latin name (*Dipsacus fullonum*) suggests, for its value in the fuller's craft. Fullers were responsible for finishing woven cloth after it was taken from the loom. Part of that process was raising the nap. The dried teasel heads were mounted in frames called *teasel frames*, or in cylindrical drums in machines called *gig-mills*. The cloth was passed between these to raise the nap and give it a nice surface. They had been used in this way for centuries. In the 19th century, Upstate New York teasel was prized as the best on the market. Many years ago, I happened upon a copy of *The Agricultural Report of the Commissioner of Patents for the Year 1850*. (It's a fascinating collection of letters from farmers from all over the country, who wrote in response to a questionnaire to report on what they grew, how they grew it, what worked and what didn't in their area.

When I read their letters I'm always impressed by how polished, formal, well ordered and correct their prose was. If only our writing

students could do as well...) One of the contributors, an upstate farmer named

Lorenzo Rouse, of Paris Hill, Oneida County, NY, wrote in to sing the praises of teasel, while lamenting its meager selling price, in an essay entitled "Teasel and its Cultivation". He says of it,

"The bulb or ball of the plant is the only part of it which is of any value, and that is highly useful, and, indeed, necessary in the manufacture of cloths and other woolen goods, being found far superior to anything else for the purpose of raising and laying the nap, and thereby enabling the manufacturer to give his goods a more perfect finish. In fact, although a great variety of experiments have been tried with other materials as substitutes, nothing has as yet been discovered that would answer the purpose equally well; the flexible hooks of the teasel being admirably adapted to the purpose, and, with proper precaution, not injuring the texture of the goods upon which they are used."

Teasel spines were better than alternatives with wire teeth, for example, since they would bend or break before damaging the cloth. Notwithstanding that virtue, they have now been largely supplanted by such wire-toothed substitutes, which are more durable, and more at home in modern factories. In some places in England, teasel is still cultivated on a small scale, for use in fulling the finest grades of cloth.

I might have left my inquiry at that, but—too late--my inclination toward obsessing about the origins of words had already kicked in. One Old English glossary from a thousand



years ago lists *teasel* as the equivalent of the Latin word *carduus* (whose basic meaning was 'thistle'). *Karde*, the German word for 'teasel', in fact, comes from that same Latin word. But the Latin *carduus* is also the source of our own word *card*, as in 'carding wool'. And the Welsh expression for 'teasel', *llysiau'r cribwr*, means, literally, 'carder's (or comber's) herbs'. All of this makes it seem as if people at one time connected teasels not with fulling and finishing, cloth, but with carding. A Welsh book about the woolen industry in Wales which I received a couple of days ago seems to confirm this; it starts off by summarizing the traditional steps involved in getting from fleece to cloth. Step 5 goes as follows (my translation):

"5. Carding the wool, and making loose rolags out of it, for spinning. The spiky heads of the plant called, very appropriately, *llysiau'r cribwr* ['carder's herbs'] (*Dipsacus fullonum*) were used for this work. This plant was grown in gardens. The heads were placed in a square hand frame, and a pair of them was used for carding. In the fourteenth century, the 'comber's card' was invented—that is, a hand card with hundreds of iron teeth."



So according to this report, teasel heads were in fact used to card wool, back in the Middle Ages, before they were supplanted in that role by the invention of iron-toothed carding cloth six centuries ago. Geraint Jones, in his book on the Welsh woolen industry, made the same claim. On the other hand, in her authoritative book on the history of spinning, Patricia Baines asserted that you simply can't use teasel (or thistles) to card wool, and surmised that the connection between *card* and *carduus*, rather than reflecting anything about the historical uses of those plants, was simply due to the incidental similarity of appearance between the surface of the invented carding cloth and that of teasels/thistles. So who was right? Never one to let a useless controversy lie, I immediately set about testing the hypotheses, gathering up an armful of teasel heads and mounting them in frames to try my hand at teasel teasing. I have probably not given them to industrial far hasn't readily in account for whose still means carding, but why do the used for solve. It *llysiau'r* herbs' first appears in the 20th century, so it could reflect a modern misunderstanding of the original name, and the long dead medieval practice that was supposed to underlie it. But this still leaves the last puzzle; if not wool, what else could those ancient Britons have teased with teasel? My own experiments suggest that teasels are, if nothing else, very serviceable as hair combs (and do a nice job on mustaches, too). So could it be that the ancient occupants of Britain first used these 'herbs of the combs' to 'tease' their hair?



newly right? testing the them in given them to industrial far hasn't readily in account for whose still means carding, but why do the used for solve. It *llysiau'r* herbs' first

WORKSHOP WITH CAROL WOOD**COMPLEX COLOR FROM NATURAL DYES----- COLOR
BLENDING AND SPINNING**

When: Saturday, April 28, from 9-4

Where: Our regular meeting place – All Saints Church

Cost: Members \$55 Non Members \$65 (includes material fee)

Contact: [Marjorie](#)

Description:

Learn about the possibilities of color blending and color theory from fiber “dyed in the wool” exploring the dramatic differences resulting from small changes in the proportions of primary colors, black and white. Using fleece pre-dyed by the instructor with natural dyes (cochineal, indigo, weld) and natural/black fiber, students will card, spin and ply yarns in order to learn about the interactions of colors and choosing colors to blend based on the desired results. The workshop will include an overview of natural dyes and their use; topics covered will also be applicable to synthetic dyes.

Note: Participants must be comfortable with spinning and plying on a wheel or a handspindle. Dye work will be described but is not the focus of the class.

Participants need to bring: hand cards, drum carder (optional) spinning wheel or handspindle, knitting or crocheting equipment for swatches (if desired) notebook, and specific project ideas (optional).

Please contact [Marjorie](#) if you want to sign up.

Looking Ahead

Fall Retreat: October 5 -7 at Stella Maris Retreat Center in Skaneateles. We arrive in the late afternoon on Friday and depart by noon on Sunday. Mark your calendar now, and e-mail or call Carol LaBorie to sign up (tusweca_winan@yahoo.com or 277-9108).

Abby Franquemont:

November 3 & 4 2012, Country Inn & Suites, Rt 281, Cortland
Four half day workshops will be offered. There are 16 seats available for each session. Workshop fee of \$45 member/\$50 non-member per session must be paid at registration and is non-refundable. Full descriptions of each class will be posted in the April newsletter.

Guild member registration will begin at the May meeting and run through the September meeting.

FIBERY EVENTSBeginning Weaving

Williamsburg Spinners & Weavers
Guild

April 23 – 27

West Point, VA

Coverlets & Conservation Exhibit

North House Museum

Lewisburg, WV

Until the end of May

MD Sheep & Wool Festival

Sat & Sun, May 5th & 6th

W. Friendship, MD

Coggeshall RI Fiber Festival

Saturday, May 19, Bristol, RI

CNY 2012 Fiber Arts Festival

CNY Fiber Artists & Producers

June 9 & 10

Bouckville, NY

Endless Mtns Fiber Festival

Sept 8 & 9, Harford, PA

Fiber Fallout 2012

Sept 28-30

North Country Spinners, NJ

If you have not already filled this membership info form out, please print it, do so and return it at a guild meeting **or** to Vickie Marsted, 29 Lincoln Ave, Cortland, NY 13045. Thank you.



Membership Form

Please type or print

Date: _____

DUES Record:

2011 2014

2012 2015

2013 2016

Joined guild in _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

preferred email: _____

preferred phone # _____ birthday month (opt) _____

Please list your wheel(s)

We welcome spinners of all skill levels.
How long have you been spinning? _____

Do you: Knit? Weave? Crochet? Dye - (Natural or chemical) ?

Which of your skills might you be willing to share with a member or the group?
ie: teach beginning spindling or spinning or dyeing; teach a spinning / knitting /
crocheting skill, etc

If you raise any fiber animals, please list them here _____

Which committee(s) are you interested in joining?

- Roc Day ° Library
- Membership ° Education
- Programming ° Website
- Charity Works ° Nominating Committee (occasional)
- Outreach including Events & Activities Schedule for non guild members
- Newsletter - advisory & review
- None

Would you be interested in chairing or co-chairing one of these groups? If yes,
which one(s)?



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To place an ad

A check for \$5.00 made to BSHG for an ad to run three times for members; \$5/month for non members should be sent to our treasurer: Vickie Marsted, 29 Lincoln Ave. Cortland, NY 13045.

Send the ad to the newsletter editor, Susan S. sarabasha@earthlink.net

If you have a question for her or others, you can email us through the links on page 1.

B&W Business card ads are free for Current members.

Convert your Baynes hook flyer to a SLIDING PINCH HOOK FLYER for \$32.00 including rebalancing. See Jim Johnson at a meeting or call 607-564-7178 or email hilltoppaddles@earthlink.net.

*We are a talented group.
Please support our members.*



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<http://chemungvalleyguild.wordpress.com/>

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