

the seminar

The Ontario Handspinning Seminar has been sharing, promoting and educating handspinners since 1964.

www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca

Jane Steeves, Registrar, ontariohandspinningseminar1964@gmail.com

Spring Newsletter 2025



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Choose Your Own Adventure

June 6 – 8, 2025
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo Campus

**Registration Opens
April 5**
(and closes May 3)

www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca

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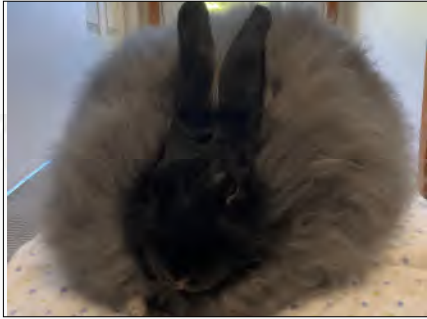
Workshop Schedule

Morning Workshops	
Jump-Start Your Spinning Adventure (full-day workshop)	Beth Showalter
Spinning for Tapestry Weaving: A New Adventure (full-day workshop)	Kitt Fisher
The Unexpected Complexity of Fibre Prep	Cat Haggert
Adventures Creating Textured Yarn	Marie-Pierre Chabot
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Drop vs Supported Spindles: Which Is Best for You?	Jane Steeves
Starting Your Spinning Adventure	Barb Fawcett
Choose Your Own Colour Adventure	Susan Delafield
Cotton! (Watch our socials and check the registration form for details)	To Be Confirmed

Photo by [Ruthie](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Adventure Down the Rabbit Hole



Items to bring:

Working spinning wheel, minimum of 3 empty bobbins, lazy kate, hand cards or blending board, travel size spray bottle 2-4" tall (to make conditioning spray to reduce static)

Do you love angora fibre but are not sure how to spin or blend it?

This workshop introduces spinners to the wonderful properties and characteristics of the four types of angora and how to prepare and use the raw fibre on its own or in a blend.

We will explore considerations if you would like to raise your own angora rabbit so you have an endless supply of fibre to spin.

Margaret Gough is a passionate hand spinner, knitter, and fibre artist who discovered her love for spinning after attending a rabbit show when her daughter was in 4H. Her spinning path led her to owning Cecily, an angora rabbit, as well as an adventure to Austria to visit a spinning friend met in an online guild. With a deep commitment to her craft, Margaret has participated in several OHS seminars and workshops, continually exploring new fibres and techniques. She has built a small home fibre arts business called Baldoon Fleece and Fiber Co to offer supplies and lessons to her local community. Her workshops to school-age children aim to plant the seeds of future fibre artists.



**Margaret
Gough**

Adventures Creating Textured Yarns



Items to bring:

Spinning wheel, (with jumbo flyer, 2 jumbo bobbins), lazy kate

Spend time creating two types of textured yarns. Learn how to incorporate different materials into the yarn and how to use different plying techniques. Art yarn anyone?

I fell in love with the art of spinning in 2019. I started with alpaca fibre. Being from Bolivia, it was in my DNA to learn how to work with fibres. Over time, I extended my knowledge base by integrating sheep fibre. I now proceed to every step of the fibre transformation starting with cleaning, carding, dyeing and all the way to the production of a finished product, be it an artistic batt for spinning or a unique artistic yarn for crochet work, knitting, or weaving. Most of the fibre I use comes from local farms in Canada.



**Marie-Pierre
Chabot**

Adventurous Blending



Items to bring:

Working spinning wheel, 3 bobbins, lazy kate, hand carders and hand combs (optional)

This workshop will explore the decision-making process regarding blending various fibres. The spinner may consider the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of a variety of fibres and how can these characteristics be successfully combined?
- What characteristics are required of the finished project?
- How might the selected fibres be combined?
- How should the fibres be spun and plied?

During the workshop the participants will explore a variety of fibres and experiment with blending different combinations.

Julia Lee is a graduate of the 1994-2000 OHS Spinning Certificate Program and now coordinates and instructs in the course. Through her Toronto business, Provenance Yarns and Textiles, she teaches spinning, operates a fibre club subscription service, and creates custom yarns and knits. She is a professional spinner and takes commissions to spin special fibres into unique yarns. When designing her textiles, Julia uses Ontario-grown natural fibres to create attractive garments, blankets, and knitted tapestries. She likes her pieces to be noticed while being practical, durable, and ethical. Julia was recently OHS Spinning Education Chair, and is currently an Executive member of the Toronto Guild of Spinners and Weavers and a member of Ontario Fibreshed.



**Julia
Lee**

Choose Your Own Colour Adventure



Items to bring:

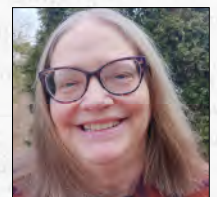
Hand cards, combs, apron, photograph or illustration for inspiration, any fibre prep tool that you might think is useful, working spinning wheel and/or spindle.

Do you love colour as much as I do? I hope so. Let's go on a colour adventure together.

Do you remember a scene that took your breath away, so much so that you want to enjoy it forever? Or a persistent idea in the back of your mind that needs articulating? Bring a favourite photo or illustration or idea with you for inspiration so you can capture it with fibre.

We will talk about ways to express colour in and with fibre, our medium of choice. We will experiment with different tools and techniques to realize your colour adventure.

Susan's lifelong dream of learning to spin started with a simple drop spindle class. She soon graduated to a wheel (or two), almost 15 years ago. Happily the Ontario Handspinning Seminar was in her home town that year and her fibre passion was kindled. A 2020 graduate of the OHS Spinning Certificate Program, Susan loves to experiment with all things fibre. She can often be found preparing fibre, dyeing, and spinning or knitting. It is her happy place.



**Susan
Delafield**

Jump-Start Your Spinning Adventure



Items to bring:

Materials needed to complete independent spinning goals such as: fibre; spinning wheel (with repair kit as needed); spinning tools; 3-5 bobbins; 1-2 lazy kates; fibre prep tools; textile construction tools (knitting needles etc.); patterns and/or ideas for end use items.

Do you have a spinning project you want to start? Do you have a spinning project that got set aside?

If that sounds familiar, this workshop will give you the time and space to jump-start your individual spinning goal(s) with the guidance of an instructor. Join us for the ultimate "spin your own adventure" workshop, where everyone brings their own ideas and fibre to spin their own destination.

During the workshop each spinner will bring a goal/idea, their own fibres and fibre tools to spin their own unique yarn with the help of the instructor, who will circulate throughout the day to give feedback and support. Each participant is encouraged to bring a technique, resource, tip, or trick to informally share with the group.

Beth Showalter completed the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Spinning Certificate Program in 2014 with distinction and is now an instructor in the program. She is a spinner who enjoys experimenting, sharing ideas, learning new techniques, teaching workshops, and following spinning tangents.



**Beth
Showalter**

Spinning Flax



Items to bring:

Spinning wheel or spindle, comb, hand carders, container for flax goo.

Learn how to take a strick of flax and dress a distaff. Using the fibre on that distaff you will learn to spin flax using the wet finger method. We will be using flax goo as a smoothing agent.

Megan Cleland has been spinning fibres for over 25 years and likes to push the boundaries. Having lived on a sheep farm in Australia, she gained an appreciation for quality wool and alpaca. Moving back to Canada she started spinning other wools as in long wools and the down breeds. Recently she has been spinning bast fibres and will be planting a half acre locally in 2025. Demonstrating flax spinning in public has been great experience to bring history to the younger generations.



**Megan
Cleland**

Spinning for Tapestry Weaving: A New Adventure



Items to bring:

Spinning wheel or spindle, scissors, darning needles, hand combs or dog combs, niddy noddy, magic marker, notebook, a kitchen fork for use as a tapestry beater and, if available, a hand steamer.

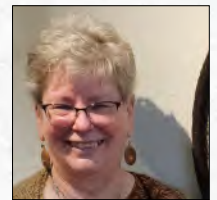
This workshop is an adventure in spinning and weaving.

We will explore blending colours and fibre to achieve a singles yarn that is not only usable but will reflect the vision of your tapestry.

One of the main challenges of using single handspun yarn is its inherent twistiness. We will demonstrate appropriate ways to set your singles to make them more manageable.

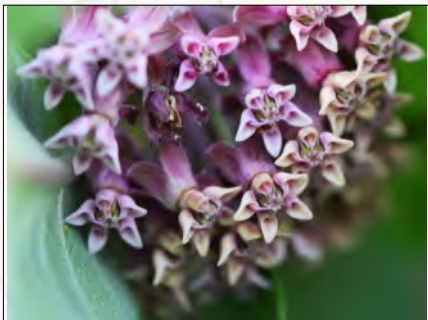
Using a small frame loom participants will start to create a small piece of Tapestry weaving using singles they have spun in the morning.

My life has spun around textiles and fibre arts since I was very young. Now, decades later, my enthusiasm for learning about and playing with all varieties of fibre, dyes, and textiles has not diminished. I continue to be fascinated with the infinite ways in which I can transform raw material into unique textile art creations. My fibre journey has rewarded me with opportunities in which to share my artistry through the facilitation of workshops and lectures ranging from spinning to natural dyeing to designing my own signature knit and woven pieces. My ideas and efforts have been acknowledged with awards, scholarships, and exhibitions.



**Kitt
Fisher**

Spinning Milkweed



Items to bring:

n/a

Useful plant fibres are all around us. Come and discover plants you can collect and spin with the main focus being spinning milkweed.

I am a science writer and educator who has a strong interest in the intersection of science and fibre arts. I am also the Outreach Coordinator for the London and District Weavers and Spinners.



**Kim
Taylor**

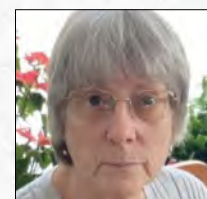
Start Your Spinning Adventure



Items to bring:

Spinning wheel or spindle, at least 3 bobbins, lazy kate, hand carders, labels or small cards, notebook and pen. Fibres for the workshop will be provided but participants may bring extra roving, batts, or top (optional).

Barbara Fawcett has lived in Haliburton County her entire life. Much of her craft is inspired by the beauty of the Highlands. As a textile artist and graduate (2020) of the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Spinning Certificate Program, Barb expresses her creativity through spinning, weaving, knitting, quilting, and sewing. She uses local natural plants as well as those specifically grown in her dye garden to create her own handspun yarns. She also grows and processes flax to spin linen and linen-blend yarns for weaving and knitting. As a teacher, she loves to share spinning knowledge with her students and celebrate their achievements.



**Barbara
Fawcett**

Supported or Suspended Spindles - Which One Works Best



Items to bring:

Please bring your spindles if you own any (both supported and suspended). Participants can ask questions about their personal spindles and we can discuss pros and cons of different spindles.

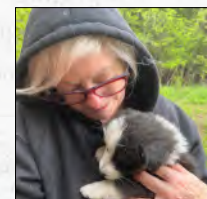
This workshop is designed for people who have spindles or have tried spindles and have questions and frustrations about using their spindles.

The goal of this workshop is to help spinners find which spindles work best for them.

The first part of the workshop will focus on suspended spindles and the second part of the workshop will focus on supported spindles.

Students will be able to try different fibres and different spindles to see what works best for them.

A graduate of the Ontario Handspinning Certificate program, Jane has been spinning for 20 years. She loves all things spindles, spinning wheels, and woolly fibre. Jane owns her own fibre company, 3dogknits, where she dyes yarns and fibres. She also teaches a breed study and other fibre arts workshops. She lives in a tiny village on Georgian Bay with her husband, three Australian shepherds, and two cats in a house filled with too much fibre.



**Jane
Steeves**

The Unexpected Complexities of Fibre Prep



Items to bring:

Bring as many fibre prep tools as you can to the workshop (hand cards, wool combs, blending board, flick cards, dog brushes/combs, drum carder, wool picker, willow wands — whatever you use). A special "Thank You" if you're willing to share with the class.

Almost as soon as you begin your creative journey you realize that the key to success is impeccable completion of every step in the process. Naturally this is true with spinning, and this workshop will explore how you can set yourself up for spinning success during the fibre prep stage.

With (very) brief nods to washing, dyeing, and blending, we will explore the best way to treat a batt, braid, or unprocessed fleece to prepare fibre for the spinning process. Topics will include fibre prep tools (source, purpose, use), how end use impacts fibre prep, and how the fibre itself guides the way you approach fibre prep.

This workshop focuses on preparing fibre that grew on the backs of animals. It will include hands-on work with sharp metal tools, so please ensure your tetanus shots are up to date.

Cat Haggert has been spinning for nearly two decades. Cat is largely self-taught, but after three years in the OHS Spinning Certificate Program she is climbing her way up the graph that illustrates the Dunning-Kruger effect (i.e., she grasps how much she doesn't know and is actively trying to earn legit expertise).



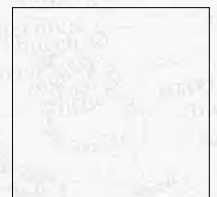
**Cat
Haggert**

Cotton!

Watch our socials and check your inbox for details about this exciting workshop on spinning cotton.



Items to bring:



Presenter TBC

Registration

Photo by [Stephan Widua](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Registration

Once again, the Ontario Handspinning Seminar will accept mail-in and online registrations. The registration window will be open from April 5th to May 3rd.

Workshops

Workshops will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. A waiting list will be created if your favourite class is sold out before you get there, so if there is a cancellation, the spot will go to the person at the top of the waiting list.

Online Registration

Visit www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca for the online registration form. Payment can be made by PayPal or credit card.

The webmaster will be available on April 5th to immediately help with any difficulties and will do her best to respond within the day thereafter. She can be contacted via handspinningseminar@gmail.com

Register by Mail

Print and complete the registration form found on the website and mail it with a cheque payable to ONTARIO HANDSPINNING SEMINAR COMMITTEE. Mail your print registration form as soon as possible. Print registrations will be processed starting at noon on April 5.

Mailing address: Ontario Handspinning Seminar; 101 Hearn Ave., Guelph ON N1H 5Y6.

Post-dated cheques will not be accepted. NSF cheques will be charged \$25.00.

For our American friends, please contact the Seminar at ontariohandspinningseminar1964@gmail.com to arrange for payment by e-transfer.

Refunds

Decisions to provide refunds will be made on a case-by-case basis. An administration fee of \$15.00 will be applied to all refunds. Due to contractual obligations, no refunds will be made after May 31, 2025.

Volunteer Opportunities Volunteers help with many tasks during the Seminar: collecting meal tickets, hosting in the Display Room, modelling for the Fashion Show. If you would like to volunteer, please check off the appropriate box on the registration form.



Accommodations

The Seminar will take place at **Wilfrid Laurier University** (Waterloo campus). The campus is conveniently compact with pleasant grounds. **We have modified our room rentals and this year activities and meals will take place in connected buildings (with interior ramps) located along Bricker Ave.**

On-Campus Lodgings A block of rooms in the Bricker Residence has been set aside for us. Each suite of rooms consists of four single bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a small kitchenette. You can specify suite-mates on the registration form or leave it up to us and make some new friends! You will be provided with a pillow, pillowcase, blanket, 2 sheets, and 2 towels. The kitchenette has functioning appliances but no utensils.

The price per room is \$62 per night (+HST). There are some accessible residence rooms for registrants with mobility needs; please book early (after registration opens) to secure these rooms. If you need one, an **overnight** parking pass for a residence parking lot will cost approximately \$5 (TBD) for guests at Bricker residence.

Off-Campus Lodgings There are many hotels near the WLU campus. Five within a 5 km radius are: Courtyard Waterloo St. Jacobs, Homewood Suites by Hilton, Hampton Inn & Suites, Delta by Marriott, and Crowne Plaza Hotel.

WLU Parking There is NO overnight parking except in residence parking lots (additional fee, see above). In other WLU parking lots you will need to pay for parking prior to 5 p.m. Friday. Starting at 5 p.m. on Friday, day-use parking is free until Sunday evening.

Street Parking During the day, street parking is available nearby (3 hr. limit strictly enforced).

Menu Descriptions and prices for the meals will be found on the registration form. WLU will accommodate those with allergies and dietary requirements – please indicate them on the registration form.

2025 Competition and Displays

The Display Room is a wonderful way to share what you have been working on with people who understand the love and time that goes into making it! It can also be a time to receive feedback from experienced spinners. Members of the Seminar community have been working together to update the entry and feedback forms to facilitate this. The new versions of the forms were used last year and we took the feedback from entrants and judges to update them further. You will see on the forms that spinners in the competitions will be rewarded for completing more components/stages in the creation of their item. There are three options to consider when you submit your item(s) to the display room - you will choose one:

- **Display only:** Your item to be displayed for everyone to see.
- **Display and Evaluation:** Your item to be displayed for everyone to see and entered into one of the categories for official judging.
- **Display and Feedback:** Your item to be displayed for everyone to see and included in one of the categories for informal feedback, but not officially judged (so you can get feedback about your spinning/project and hopefully in future years feel comfortable about submitting an item into one of the competitions for official judging).

We have posted the entry and feedback forms on the site under [Display and Competitions](#) so you can see what they look like ahead of time. We hope that by sharing this information more people will be interested in submitting their spinning in the various competitions. We can't wait to see what everyone has been spinning!

Competition Categories

Simple 2-ply skein; 3 or more ply skein: Your goal is to produce a consistent, balanced yarn.

Novelty skein: Your goal is to construct a yarn which boasts a decorative element. This may be a spinning technique (crepe or bouclé for example) or it may consist of additions to your spun yarn (beads, feathers etc.). The choice is yours ... so have fun!

Spindle-spun skein: The 2-or-more-ply yarn

must be spun and plied on a hand spindle.

Garments: Projects may include sweaters, vests, jackets, shawls, etc.

Accessories: Projects include what you'd expect: hats, scarves, socks and so forth, but don't limit yourself!

Unfinished Symphonies: A project that didn't quite get finished before the Seminar.

Other: Projects can include dolls, tea cozies, placemats, household items, abstract art, rugs...

Seminar Schedule: Friday

Seminar Registration 2:00 to 9:00 p.m. Bricker Residence lobby.

Residence Check-In 4:00 to 9:00 p.m. Bricker Residence lobby.

Tools and Equipment Consignment Sale Drop-Off 2:00 to 9:00 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic. What better place to sell tools that aren't earning their space in your workroom?

Stash Exchange Drop-Off 2:00 to 9:00 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic. Do you have unwanted items in your stash? Reference books you hardly look at? Bring them to the Seminar to be re-homed (we'll charge a Loonie to drop off the items.) Label your donation(s) with the fibre type, source if known, and approximate weight. Funds will be donated to Food4Kids Waterloo.

Fleece Silent Auction Viewing 2:00 to 9:00 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic. At this year's Seminar we will again be offering a Fleece Silent Auction with both wool and non-wool fibre.

Vendor Marketplace 3:30 to 9:30 p.m. Atrium, Science Building. The Vendor Marketplace takes place only on Friday. If you are unable to attend the Seminar itself but would like to visit the Vendor Marketplace, you can purchase \$5 admission tickets to the Marketplace at the door.

Dinner 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. (time TBC) Atrium, Science Building.

Spin-in 7:00 p.m. to ? Atrium, Science Building (near the elevator bank).

Photo by [Matt Seymour](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Seminar Schedule: Saturday

Breakfast 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. Location to be announced.

Seminar Registration (also Consignment & Stash Drop Off) 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic.

Welcome 9:00 to 9:45 a.m. Atrium, Science Building.

Morning Workshops 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bricker Academic.

Lunch 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Atrium, Science Building.

Display Room Open 12:30 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic.

Tools and Equipment Consignment Sale Open 12:30 to 4:45 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic. Tools will be sold on consignment and sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Complete guidelines will be displayed at the registration desk.

Afternoon Workshops 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. Bricker Academic.

Display Room Closes 4:45 p.m. Room 111 Bricker Academic. Voting ends for Baggie Challenge, Founder's Award.

Please Silent Auction 5:30 p.m. to 15 min. after Fashion Show ends. Atrium, Science Building.

Stash and Book Exchange Charity Sale Opens Room 111 Bricker Academic. This year we have revised the order of the sale. Those who donated to the sale will have first crack at purchasing from the Exchange. It will cost a Loonie to pick up an item. Funds donated to Food4Kids Waterloo.

5:30 p.m. Ticketholders (those who donated to the Stash Exchange)

6:00 p.m. Non-ticketholders (anyone who would like to purchase from the Exchange)

Banquet 5:30 Cash Bar Science Building Foyer; 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Banquet. Atrium, Science Building.

Evening Keynote 7:30 p.m. Room N10011 (off of Science Building Foyer). Mel Ramsay has had many experiences with raising fibre animals on her farm in Southern Ontario. She produces products from the fibre, and is very active in promoting Ontario and Canadian wool and fibre products. She is one of the main organizers of the Hamilton Fibre Festival which happens in March in Hamilton every year. Mel will be sharing some of her experiences of her journey with her animals, producing fibres, and promoting Canadian wool.

Fashion Show 8:45 p.m. Atrium, Science Building.

Spin-in 9:15 p.m. to ? Near the elevator bank in the Atrium, Science Building.

Auction and Consignment Sale Pickup 9:15 p.m. Atrium, Science Building.

Seminar Schedule: Sunday

Breakfast 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. Location to be announced.

Sunday Keynote 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. Room N1001, Science Building. Barbara McLean is the shepherd of Lambsquarters, the farm where she raises beautiful Border Leicester sheep and spins their wonderful fleeces. She has written two books about the joys and hardships of her chosen lifestyle and will be talking to us about the pleasures and challenges of her 50-year adventure tending her flock and working with their wool.

Activity 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Room N1001, Science Building.

Awards Presentation & Closing Comments 11:00 a.m. Room N1001, Science Building. The following awards will be awarded to those who entered items into the competitions and display:

New to the Seminar Award: This award goes to the first person to register who is attending the Seminar for the first time. The award will be the registration fee, along with \$50.

Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Award: This award for \$100 is presented by the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners. The award is given in recognition of an article on display that demonstrates the best use of handspun yarn in a handwoven article. Judges are provided by the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners.

President's Award of Excellence: This award of \$100 is given in recognition of an item of 100% handspun yarn using a textile construction method which embodies a unique interpretation; demonstrates a fresh, individual approach; and expresses personal creativity as judged by the President of the Ontario Handspinning Seminar Board of Directors.

Barb Patterson Award: This award of \$25.00 honours Barb Patterson, one of the founding members of The Grand River Spinners and Weavers Guild. It is presented for the "Best Skein by a Novice Spinner" as judged by the Display Committee.

WOW Award: This \$50 award is also judged by the Display Committee and given to the item which makes them say Wow! All articles submitted for display are eligible.

Founders Award: The \$100 award is presented to the person with the best article on display made from 100% handspun.

Baggie Challenge Award: The \$50 award recognizes the best item created from the items received as a 2024 Baggie Challenge (plus additional fibre).



Ontario Handspinning Seminar Code of Behaviour

The Ontario Handspinning Seminar strives to promote and establish a safe, respectful, and positive atmosphere: for shared knowledge; for respect of ideas, cultures, and values; and in a common space for learning. We also respect the policies of the facilities where we hold the Handspinning Seminar and the support services that make this annual event a success.

Seminar 2025 Committæ

Abigale Miller: Residence Coordinator, Consignment Sale

Barbara Fawcett: Treasurer

Betty Trach: Competitions/Awards/Display

Cat Haggert: Newsletters, Venue

Donna Hancock: Board Rep/Liaison

Eileen Land: Speakers and Workshops

Jane Steeves: Registrar, Baggie Challenge, Fleece Auction

Joan Ang: Social Media

Margo Murley: Vendors

Marion Jenkins: Vendor Assist, Fashion Show Assist

Merrin MacRae: Fashion Show, Advertising

Pat Shaver: Chair, Stash/Book Trading Post

Seminar 2025 Board of Dirçetors

President: Edy Marlatt

Vice President: Beth Showalter

Secretary: Anna Warren

Treasurer: Catherina Forbes

Directors at Large: Donna Hancock, Grace Clare, Bridget Misener, Carol Blue



Photo by Migle Siaucilyte on Unsplash

Legal Stuff

The Ontario Handspinning Seminar Inc. is not responsible for damage to or loss of personal property. We do take every precaution to protect your equipment and materials on display. Workshop and display rooms will be secured at all times when Seminar participants are not in attendance.

Find us on Social Media

www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca

www.facebook.com/ontariohandspinningseminar/

www.ravelry.com/groups/ontario-handspinning-seminar-fans

www.instagram.com/thespinningseminar/