

**2021**

SPRING

# **SUSTAINABLE FIBRES**

Supportable, Renewable Choices  
The Options are Endless

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# **HANDSPINNING SEMINAR**



[www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca](http://www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca)



# JUNE 11 -13, 2021

*Your Living Room*

In the tradition of the Ontario Handspinning Seminar, we are creating an event that focuses on celebrating and sharing the knowledge and joy we have of handspinning. The current reality has led us to create a virtual seminar for this year. We hope it will be a temporary change and not the next evolution of this event, that soon we will be able to meet in person again.

We are keeping in mind the diversity of our attendees. Some of you rarely work on computers, for you, we are creating how-to videos and tips that will help with everything from registering for the seminar to taking photos of your work.

Then there are those of you who are spending your entire workday in front of the computer, whether in video meetings or your normal jobs because you are working from home. We know you have no desire to spend your weekend glued to your screens, for you we are making the videos available until the end of August.

We look forward to celebrating this fabulous artform that has helped keep us all sane in this last year.

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Beth Showalter - Chair  
Anna Warren - Registrar  
Angela Whyte  
Edy Marlatt  
Kitt Fisher

Joan McKenzie  
Kelley Stanczak  
Leslie Falzone  
Lis Baston

**"Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time."**

*Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

## SUSTAINABLE

adjective

1. capable of being supported or upheld, as by having its weight borne from below.
2. pertaining to a system that maintains its own viability by using techniques that allow for continual reuse
3. able to be maintained or kept going, as an action or process
4. able to be confirmed or upheld
5. able to be supported as with the basic necessities or sufficient funds



# SEMINAR FORMAT

*2021 Ontario Handspinning Seminar*



## *How Will It Happen?*

### VIDEOS

Teachers and vendors will be creating short videos to share their knowledge and wares.

These will be in a variety of formats, from interviews to farm tours and instructional videos.

### ARTICLES

Some of our instructors will present their topics in article format complete with photographs and/or videos to illustrate their writing.

### LIVE Q&A

One of the wonderful things about workshops is being able to ask the teachers questions. In order to promote this, there will be live Q&A's after the videos and articles are released.

## SOCIAL TIME

One of the best parts of the seminar is the social time with other spinners. While we can't put you all in a room together we can help you have spaces that you can chat with each other. There will be a Facebook group which all registered participants may join as well as Zoom calls where you will have time to be free to chat with each other.

Not to mention during these social times we will be giving away some pretty awesome door prizes!







## DEBORAH LIVINGSTON-LOWE

Deborah Livingston-Lowe has been involved in many aspects of textiles, both practical and academic, for about 30 years.

Her early interest in handloom weaving and spinning grew into historic weaving, historical research, textile conservation and restoration.

Her work in textiles continues to be multidisciplinary as she works with designers to create textiles for fashion and interiors, with museums to reproduce textiles and provide consultation for their collection and research into the production and consumption of hand woven cloth in 19th century Ontario.

## THE PROMISE OF LINEN

Early settlers to Ontario chose to grow flax in the early 19th century for a variety of material, cultural and financial reasons. Linen was a desirable cloth for the household: sheets and towelling and garments: underclothes, shirts and dresses, due to its beauty, durability and strength. The work involved in taking this elegant, willowy, blue-flowered plant from seed to woven cloth is a multi-stepped, laborious and not always profitable endeavour. Although government officials and businesses encouraged farmers to cultivate this plant, farmers did not often agree that there would be sufficient financial compensation at harvest time and as such, reluctantly took part in flax cultivation.

Today, there are small-scale initiatives, in a handful of areas in Canada and the U.S. led by people passionate about seeing this plant grown and processed into textiles for environmental, social and entrepreneurial reasons.

In this presentation, we will examine the challenges of working with this fibre and the desire to use this sturdy cloth in early 19th century Ontario. We will survey flax production projects in a few North American locations such as: Ontario, Nova Scotia, California and Massachusetts. In particular, we will focus on an initiative in Orillia by members of the Upper Canada Fibreshed.

To fully understand the issues of flax as a fibre, we will look at people's first use of the wild flax plant beginning 30,000 years ago when it was used as spun cord, its appearance 6,000 years ago as woven cloth for garments in the Middle East and its many uses by many cultural groups up until the present.





# The True Measure of Men's Wear in 19th century Ontario: Inspiring 21st-century Textile Production in the Upper Canada Fibreshed

BY DEBORAH LIVINGSTON LOWE

This presentation examines 19th-century menswear in Canada using evidence from period garments, the technology used in textile production and farming practices that produced these garments.



The 19th century model of textile production provides parallels with today's fibreshed movement which uses local resources to produce cloth.

Deborah will discuss current projects she is developing which blend 21st century fibreshed and 19th-century textile production principles: Ontario sourced and produced tweed suit fabric and flannel shirt fabric.

Deborah will examine the challenges and benefits of sourcing from a fibreshed. What can we learn about sustainable and ethical production from our own textile history? This talk will be illustrated with images of garments and textile equipment.

"Technique and ability alone do not get you to the top; it is the willpower that is most important."

JUNKO TABEL





# THE WORKSHOPS

Over the years people have requested time machines so that they can attend all of the workshops. In the past, we were limited by technology. But this year you will have the opportunity to partake in all of the following workshops.

## ONTARIO HERITAGE SHEEP BREEDS

By Julia Lee

This workshop will be an introduction to a few of the sheep breeds that are well suited to the Ontario environment, such as Lincoln Longwool, Shropshire, Rideau Arcott, and Border Leicester. Julia will show and discuss typical fleeces of the various breeds, demonstrate some preparation and spinning techniques, and suggest suitable end uses.



## SPINNING SILK: FROM STASH TO TREASURE

By Rachel Smith

In this seminar, we will discuss wild silk production, natural colours available and some tips and tricks to spinning silk. With some final projects to showcase the fibres, we will discuss how these fibres fit into your spinning repertoire alongside other natural fibres!



# THE BORDER LEICESTER- ITS HISTORY AND ITS FIBRE

By Grace Clare

An informative and fun workshop to learn about this noble, heritage breed and its fibre. Let's explore the many uses, from rug yarn to hand knits, to embroidery yarn.

Border Leicester fibre also dyes beautifully and felts well. For both new and experienced spinners.



## IN THE LOOP

By Beth Showalter

Looking to meet or revisit sustainably regenerated fibre friends? In this workshop, we will look at how this group of fibres are produced in a sustainable method to create biodegradable fibres.

Look forward to exploring fibres that have a lovely sheen, soft hand, drape beautifully and blend well with other fibres. Get in the loop as you meet a group of fibres who will play nicely with the reliable favourites hanging out in your stash and what's on the horizon for spinners!



## ULTIMATELY DEMONSTRATING WHY BAST FIBRES SATISFY

By Teena Jennings

This workshop will begin by analyzing the complexities within the term "sustainability" as it relates to handspinners. As handspinners, once we understand the issues, we are able to deliberate, prioritize and ultimately decide which of these issues are likely to drive the selections that we make. Finally, an examination of several bast fibres will point to the fact that they satisfy on many fronts.





# PAINTED FIBRE WITH NATURAL DYES

By Kitt Fisher

Learn how to simply create your own painted rovings and yarns using Natural dyes.



# DESIGNING KNITS WITH HANDSPUN YARN

By Alexis Hoy

Learning to design your own knitting patterns with your handspun yarn can bring a whole new dimension to your fibre craft, but knowing where to start can be daunting. This class will present the basic tools and concepts that will give you the confidence to start creating your own designs from fibre to finished.

# PATTERNED TABLET WEAVING FOR HANDSPUN

By Catharina Forbes

This workshop will guide you in weaving a patterned band with your handspun yarn, using the double face tablet weaving technique. We will also discuss how to chart your own patterns and how this technique works.







# BUILDING A FIBRE-BASED COMMUNITY OF SUSTAINABLE FIBRES

By Rebecca Lamperd

Raising sustainable fibres in today's technology dominant world is often seen as idyllic and a dream come true - and for those who do it, it is. There is so much that goes into bringing beautiful fibres to the spinning market that it can sometimes feel lonely and isolated. While talking with other sheep farmers and shepherdesses in and around the Kawartha Lakes Region, Rebecca discovered how their relationships with each other are as equally as important as the fibre animals themselves.

## STASH DIVING FOR COLOUR

By Alanna Wilcox

This workshop will show you a few tips on how to combine different fibres from your stash with colour in mind.



## SPINNING GONE WILD

By Joan McKenzie

Spinning has ancient origins - and those folks didn't get to go to a store and purchase ready to spin roving!! So - what did they spin?? And how was it spun? Join Joan for a trip back to the past and learn spinning with your fingers, make cordage, find out what plant materials can be used and experiment with wild plant fibres that have been foraged. She will demonstrate making cordage and show you how to make a twined basket or coaster.



# DISPLAYS & FASHION SHOW

We are all lucky that we have had hobbies to fill our time when our calendars suddenly emptied. Our ability to share these creations though has been limited. Why not give your fibre friends a sneak peek at what you have been creating?

Send us photos and/or video clips of what you have made this past year so we will make them a part of the weekend!

You can submit your entries through the following link.

[www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca/displaysubmission.html](http://www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca/displaysubmission.html)

**Deadline: April 30th, 2021**



While normally we only share items once at the Seminar photos and video will only give a tantalizing taste of the items' true beauty so anything submitted this year is still able to be submitted next time we meet in person.

Those who have attended in the past know we usually have several awards that we present throughout the fashion show. We will be saving most of these awards for when we can meet in person again, this year the awards will be limited to the WOW award and First Time Registrant Award. The WOW award goes to the audience favourite, all participants will have an opportunity to vote on the entries. The First Time Registrant award goes to the first registrant who has never been to the seminar before.

If you are still working on the 2019 Baggie Challenge we will be making space at our next in-person display room but you may want to finish up as there is a new one in the works. More information to come on the Seminar weekend.





# Sales Room

We are excited to be creating a portal to help promote the fibre vendors. Not only will there be links to their websites but we will be having videos showing their setups as well as interviews with some of them.



To further support our vendors The Seminar's Board of Directors will be sponsoring a series of door prizes that will be awarded during our social activities.



# Registration

Registration will only be online this year (when we are able to gather in person we allow mail-in registrations again).

The cost to register this year will be \$50.

**Begins April 10 at 9 am**

[www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca](http://www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca)



## Board of Directors

President: Catharina Forbes

Vice President: Mara Lusi

Secretary: Anna Warren

Treasurer: Barb Ross

Members at Large:

Colleen Thomson, Beth Showalter,

Edy Marlatt, Donna Hancock

## LEGAL STUFF

The Ontario Handspinning Seminar cannot be responsible for an inability to connect due to personal internet issues or digital theft of images. We will take every precaution to ensure your content does not get shared beyond this platform. We will be hosting this event on password-protected sites and will remove them after August 31, 2021. The virtual Seminar content will be for the registered participants only and for personal use. The participants will agree not to share the content and links with others.

## 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.

[WWW.ONTARIOHANDSPINNINGSEMINAR.CA](http://WWW.ONTARIOHANDSPINNINGSEMINAR.CA)