



Mara Lusia, Registrar

## ONTARIO HANDSPINNING SEMINAR

375 Nickerson Drive, Cobourg, ON K9A 1A8 905-373-0439 maralu@sympatico.ca

### Spring Newsletter 2010

## MORE ON WOOL

### Back into the World of Warm, Winsome, Wacky, Wilful, Wearable, Wonderful WOOL

Friday, June 11th – Sunday, June 13th, 2010  
Queen's University, Kingston

#### **Wake up from the doldrums of winter!**

It's time to start thinking about the coming summer and its glorious weather and fun activities. Not the least of which (and for many of us the best) is the upcoming Seminar. You'll be able to establish and renew friendships, learn something new, or relearn something you wish you had not forgotten. You'll have the opportunity to browse to your heart's content among the stalls of the vendors – all of your "favourite things" available for purchase in one spot!!

All this in a relaxed atmosphere of fun and camaraderie.

Registration and room check-in will begin at 5:00 PM on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup>, in the foyer of the residence – Victoria Hall. We'll be there to greet you and accept your display and competition masterpieces and your Baggie Challenge items from last year, until 9:00 PM. Your creative wool squares will be collected and later pieced together for display of the afghan(s) that will be raffled off at lunch on Sunday.

In the lounge just behind the registration desks, you will be able to spin and socialize, and the Belleville Guild will offer refreshments at Hospitality table until 10:00 PM. This area will be available for meeting, greeting, spinning, chatting, etc., throughout the weekend. In addition, each floor of the residence has a common room, where you can also "hang out" and share tips, patterns, stories as well as a bottle of wine. Alcohol is not permitted in the lounge on the main floor of the residence.

The Registration desk will be open again from 7:00 to 8:15 AM on Saturday morning. Items for display and the 2009 Baggie Challenges (squares) will also be accepted at this time. Competition items will no longer be accepted as the judging will already have taken place.

**A few words here regarding parking.** Parking will be free **after** 5:00 PM on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> and for the weekend. You will be able to park on the streets of the campus and in surface parking lots. **BUT, before 5:00 PM on Friday, parking is by permit only. Parking violation tickets are issued with alarming efficiency.** If you expect to arrive on campus before 5:00 PM, there will be limited parking in an underground lot not far from Victoria Hall for \$15.00. You could also park on a gravel lot on the west campus and then take a shuttle to the main campus, where the Seminar will take place. Maps of the Queen's University main campus and surrounding areas will be sent out with the Registration Confirmation package.

Accommodation is in Victoria Hall. The rooms are non-air conditioned, single or double bedrooms with one or two single beds per room. Please note that there are a limited number of single rooms, which will be allotted on a first request basis once the registration starts. A few wheelchair accessible rooms are available. Each room has a desk, chair, Ethernet connection and telephone for local calls. Linens and towels are provided. Bathrooms are private, located across the hall from the bedrooms and are shared by a few rooms. Each floor has a common room, with a refrigerator and small dining table.

Please note that check out time at the residence is **11:00 AM** on Sunday. The University will charge for an extra day, if the rooms are not vacated by this time.

The Sales Room will be open from 6:00 to 9:30 PM, in Ban Righ Hall – just a short stroll from the residence. If you have friends who will not be attending the Seminar, but would just want to "visit" the vendors, Visitor Passes will be available for a small fee of \$5.00 for the evening.

Just to make sure that you are able to purchase all of those "necessities", the vendors will also be accessible in the Sales Room during the lunch break on Saturday (12:30 to 2:30). The vendors will not be open again after the Saturday afternoon workshops.

Any vendors who still wish to register for space in the Sales Room, please contact Kathryn James [amispin@ca.inter.net](mailto:amispin@ca.inter.net).

Meals will be served in Ban Righ Hall, adjacent to both the Sales Room and Display Room.

The Saturday evening "banquet" will start with a cash bar at 6:30 PM, to be followed by dinner and the Fashion Show. We urge to bring the wonderful things that we know you have made over the year, to model or have modeled for the show. Following the evening's events, you will be able to relax and get spinning with your newly purchased stash in the lounges at Victoria Hall.

#### 2010 Baggie Challenge

This year's Baggie Challenge is.....well.....bagless! This year there are no actual baggies for you to take home. On the flip side there is no Baggie Challenge fee for you to pay, either. That said, the Seminar Committee is definitely challenging you to use your creativity and skills (and a wee bit of that huge stash that we know you have!). Here's the scoop on this year's challenge:

In keeping with our two-year focus on the wonders of wool, we challenge each of our Seminar participants to dig through their **wool** stash and create a project that gives homage to that great little fibre producer, the sheep! Use your imagination and bring back (in 2011) a creation that in some way applauds and honours sheep. Boundaries are wide open on this one... the design of your tribute is totally up to you.

Rules? Ok, structured as we are, we should have some rules. We can only think of one: your creation must be fashioned out of **wool**. You may use embellishments, of course, but the primary material in your creation must be wool. That's it. Can't wait to see what you bring baa...ck to us!

Just a reminder about the 2009 Baggie Challenge

The 2009 Challenge was to produce one or more afghan squares using the roving provided in your Challenge Baggie and the skills you honed during the 2009 Seminar. The rules are simple: the squares must measure 8" exactly and have four even edges to facilitate joining them to those made by others. Beyond that, they can be as simple or as flamboyant as your imagination and skill-set can produce! Your square(s) can be knitted, crocheted or woven from yarn spun from one or a combination of the natural wool rovings provided. They can be embellished but not dyed.

Bring your squares to the 2010 Seminar. This last goal is very important. We are asking that you bring your finished square(s) to the Seminar so that they can be stitched into what will become our "community" afghan(s). 2010 participants who contribute to the afghan in this fashion will be given one raffle ticket per square, to allow them a chance to win the finished product! The rest of us will be invited to dig into our purses and buy raffle tickets in the hope of 'bagging' the prize! The money we raise from our raffle ticket sales will be donated to a women's shelter in the Kingston area.

**Saturday morning** will be the start of a great day with a Keynote Address by Margot Dixon.

Her topic will be "**Back to Wool – Wool to the Back**".

**Margot Dixon** is an accomplished spinner, weaver and historical interpreter. She has been involved in the organization of local "spin-ins", St. Distaff Day celebrations, and is currently the Ontario Handweavers & Spinners Eastern Region Representative. In her role as on-site Dressmaker Interpreter at Upper Canada Village, she has developed a passion for the role of fashion and its influence on the lives of women. She has shared her passion through articles in Fibre Focus Magazine, The Costume Society's Journal and ALFHAM (Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums) publications.

Keeping with our wool theme, Margot will explore the historical use of wool fabric – why it was popular, why it faded from use, how its processing and use is presented in museums. Margot will highlight her presentation with garments from the Village collection.

## WORKSHOPS

### **Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> – Full day workshops**

All workshops will take place in Jeffery Hall – a short walk from both Ban Righ Hall and the residence. Jeffery Hall has level entrance access as well as elevators which will bring you to the classroom levels.

#### **1) Around the Whorl**

**Catherine Forbes**

In this relaxed and fun spindle-spinning workshop, the focus will be on spinning a good plied yarn, both worsted and woollen. Participants will learn how to find the right spindle, how to spin a good single and how to ply tangle free. We will discuss and evaluate several methods of winding off to prepare for plying. These include, but are not limited to, Andean plying, using a nostepinde, lazy kate and spinning wheel. Don't like small balls? We will also discuss and experiment with various methods of joining yarn while working with our fabulous handspun.

**Catherine Forbes** - A knitter for more years than she can remember, Catherine is also a passionate spinner and has been for almost 30 years. When not at work (where she spends more time than she likes), she can usually be found with needles or spindles in hand, or happily buried in a pile of wool. Quite often when she should have been tidying the house or while dinner was burning, she was eventually found, with her spindle, spinning off of the garage roof. She finds lace knitting relaxing and admits that mistakes may possibly be the key to success.

#### **2) Handspun in Weaving**

**Dorothy Hinchcliffe**

This workshop will explore fibre selection, yarn design and production, sett, weave structure. Participants will spin yarn and use it for simple weave structures. More complex weave structures will be discussed.

**Dorothy Hinchcliffe** – Dorothy is a Bruce County sheep/crop farmer. She has been weaving and spinning for 30+ years and enjoys solving fibre design challenges.

#### **3) Head to Hands: transforming images in wool**

**Jennifer MacPherson**

A rainbow of coloured wool rovings will be the 'paint' with which you will transform your landscape images into reality. This will truly be an opportunity to spin for an end project. You will picture and design a sequence of coloured rovings that will be prepared, spun, plied and rolled into a single ball of yarn. Using your individual image as a starting point, you will focus on techniques of colour selection, colour blending and spinning for fulling. The afternoon will be devoted to using the yarns you have created. They will be used to knit a small landscape bag. Knitting techniques that enhance landscape details will be introduced as well as embellishment possibilities. By the end of the day your own individual bag should be ready to take home and full.

**Jennifer MacPherson** is a Kingston spinner and knitter. She has mental images of many wonderful Canadian landscapes, having been raised on the prairies, and lived on all three coasts before coming to Kingston. Determined to knit only 'useful' items, she loves to knit these landscapes into her work.

#### **4) Humble Ply: A Vehicle Through Interactions**

**Marta-Jane Spencer**

Humble Ply is a one day workshop designed for the new spinner to explore the interactions and outcomes of structure, proportion, a little colour and texture. As spinners, both novice and experienced, we have an abundance of bits of information, some organized and acted upon, some never experienced and of course, some defying comprehension. A series of interaction 'snap shots' will be produced for your consideration in the design of a yarn. To provide these snapshots, you will utilize the process of plying, a skill with which virtually all spinners have some familiarity. Knowledge of Z and S Twist and a willingness to treadle is all that is required.

Briggs and Little Singles will be used (NO SINGLES SPINNING WILL BE REQUIRED).

**Marta-Jane Spencer** completed the OHS spinning certificate program in 2006 and has taught a variety of guild workshops.

#### **5) Lace Knitting with Handspun Yarn - from Fine to Bulky**

**Sylvia Currie**

During this session you will cover the history of lace knitting and the different knitting techniques involved. You will knit a sampler trying a variety of yarns and needle sizes.

**Sylvia Currie** attributes her start in spinning to Ted Carson - on a bobbin winder! - in the 1960's. Over the years she has participated in and taught a variety of spinning workshops. Her interest in lace knitting was kindled by a trip to the Shetland Islands. The gossamer lace was a challenge that she still enjoys. But lace is not limited to wedding ring shawls, and you will explore the variety of laces possible with different size yarns.

#### **6) Polwarth – a unique fibre – the best of all worlds**

**Shirley Browsky**

We'll discuss the genetics of the Australian Polwarth and the Canadian Polwarth. You will spin the genetic breeds that make up the Polwarth, talk about characteristics, shearing, washing, dyeing and preparation of the fleece. There will be a discussion on spinning techniques, with samples of woollen and worsted spun yarn. You will have the opportunity to spin Canadian Polwarth fleece in various ways and to discuss the end uses of your Polwarth yarns.

**Shirley Browsky** is an OHS Master Spinner and currently completing her OHS Master Weaver Course. She is no stranger to the Ontario Handspinning Seminar and has taught many topics at past gatherings. She has been raising sheep near Ottawa since 1976 and after a trip to Australia to visit the foundation Polwarth flock, decided to breed her own brand. Shirley teaches spinning, weaving, dyeing, and knitting and has taught extensively at the Creative Sewing and Needlework Festivals for ten years. She is the owner of Canaan Mohair, a local yarn company. She is now retired and is reacquainting herself with the arts that she loves so much.

### **7) Spinning essentials**

**Barbara Scott**

Working with washed fleeces and commercially-prepared wools, this workshop designed for novices and those wanting a refresher, will focus on helping spinners make the yarns they have in mind. You will spend time exploring fibre preparation methods, reviewing a variety of spinning techniques, improving twist and diameter control, and perfecting the construction of simply plied yarns.

**Barbara Scott** is a Master Spinner. She has taught for conferences, guilds and colleges, and written for a variety of publications. To spinning, she brings curiosity, technical mastery and delight in experimentation.

### **8) Tools of the Trade**

**Harriet Boon**

We'll discuss equipment and 'test drive' many before developing a 'must have' versus a 'wish ' list. We will cover essentials, tool criteria, spindles, wheels, fibre preparation and skeining tools. This is a hands -on session, so bring items and ideas you consider Tools of the Trade

**Harriet Boon** – Harriet's spinning interests began in the early 1970's and since then she has followed the threads through workshops and travel, both as a participant and instructor, always learning along the way.

**General Equipment List:** Spinning Wheel, of course, with a minimum of 3 bobbins (When bringing your spinning wheel, please include your usual repair kit with such useful items as extra drive-band materials, lubricating oil, elastic bands for tensioning, etc.); Lazy Kate; apron; medium or fine hand carders, and flick carder if you have them; small niddy-noddy; notebook and pencil

Optional: dust mask, lint brush, ball winder.

**If there are specific equipment requirements for some of the workshops, they will be sent to you along with the Registration Confirmation package, after the close of registration.**

## **Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Morning Activities**

### **1) Spinapaloosa**

**Coordinated by Susan Alain**

This promises to be an entertaining morning for those who want to break out of their habits - an event where the unexpected always happens.

Participants (any number) will begin by spinning up some fibre, using either a wheel or spindle, and then using that yarn, will start to create a knitted piece. There will be a time limit allotted to this step. At the end of that time, all of the pieces will be passed along in a clockwise direction. The recipient will assess how the piece should be continued and will spin more yarn and then use it to carry on with the construction of the piece. Again, there will be a time limit on this step.

The spinning, knitting and passing will continue until the Coordinator announces that the time has run out.

At this point, the knitted items will be passed once more and the final recipient will no doubt cherish this treasure since it will be the result of the creative genius of many minds and hands. If desired, any final embellishments (feathers, beads, ???) can be added now or later at home.

For this activity, you will need to bring some fibre from your stash (a good way to use up all of those odd bits of fibre that we all have and cannot bear to throw out) and embellishments, if you plan on using them, as well as a selection of knitting needles that are well marked as your own.

### **2) Batts to Hats**

**Coordinated by Esther Grav**

In this abbreviated version of the popular spinning competitions held at shows, festivals, fairs – teams of three (3) will start with prepared wool fibre and spin, then knit (or crochet, or weave) a hat/toque/cap. The wool will be provided and each team will receive an equal weight of fibre. The hats will have to meet certain minimum sizing requirements and there will be a time limit for the completion of the competition. Judging of the completed "head coverings" will be by audience acclaim at the lunch to follow. Winners will receive the admiration of adoring throngs and the satisfaction of great teamwork.

No need to form a team now to practice your competition skills – it won't help. Teams will be formed by picking numbers as the contestants arrive for the event. The teams that are formed can then designate a spinner, pleyer and construction engineer (knitter or crocheter or weaver). Even if you don't knit or crochet or weave, you can participate as the spinner or pleyer.

### **3) Shepherding and Beyond**

**Moderated by Kathryn James**

On a slightly more serious note, we want to give those of you who are involved in raising fibre animals and those of you who are interested in doing so, the opportunity to meet and discuss the inherent joys, satisfactions and also the trials and tribulations of this occupation.

We have assembled a panel of local fibre producers and processors who will address the raising, processing and marketing of fibre animals and their product. This will be an interactive discussion where you will be able to ask questions and address issues that have long been on your mind.

### **4) Just Sit, Spin and Enjoy**

If none of the above activities appeal to you, you can come along to the competition area – spin, knit or just relax and enjoy the fun & frolic going on around you.

These activities have no maximum number of participants. On the registration application, we are asking you to indicate which you would prefer to participate in simply so that we can plan for the space we will need.

## **Competitions and Awards**

We hope you have spent the long, cold winter wrapped in the warmth and satisfaction of spinning some fabulous wool fibre and perhaps using the yarn to fashion a glorious wool creation. Even if you just have skeins of wonderful wool yarn, sitting in a basket or layered in a glass bowl – we want to see them.

Please read through the competition and display criteria below. We have changed things from previous years to encourage more of you to show off your fabulous creative talents.

### **Fashion Show**

If you will want to model your creation or have it modelled in the Fashion Show, a special form will be available at registration for you to fill out.

### **Here are the categories for submission to the 2010 Seminar Display**

#### **Only # 1 and # 2 will be judged !!**

1. **Skein competitions:**
  - a) 2 ply – novice or advanced
  - b) 3 or more ply – novice or advanced
  - c) Spindle spun – novice or advanced
2. **Special projects:**
  - a) Wearables for the human body - 100 gms and under  
- over 100 gms
  - b) Not wearable on the human body - 100 gms and under  
- over 100 gms
3. **Just for Fun**

Entries for the 2010 competitions will require 2 sheets of documentation: a form for the judges and one for display. These forms will be sent out with your registration acceptance package.

### **2010 Skein Competition Criteria**

You are encouraged to submit skeins in any or all of the three categories.

If you have been spinning for less than two years, enter as “novice”; for more than 2 years, enter as “advanced”.

1. **Simple 2-ply skein:** Your goal should be to produce a consistent, balanced yarn that is appropriate for the end use suggested in your documentation.
2. **Creative 3-ply or more:** Construct a yarn which has at least 3 plies and which boasts a decorative element. This may be a spinning technique (crepe or boucle, for example) or it may consist of additions to your spun yarn (beads, feathers, etc). The choice is yours...so have fun with it. Remember, however, that the yarn must be stable and suited to the end use recorded in your documentation.
3. **Spindle-spun skein:** This skein must be spun on a spindle, not a wheel, and consist of 2 plies. It will be critiqued on the same basis as the wheel spun 2-ply skein...grist, twist balance and appropriateness of end use.

### **Guidelines for submitting a skein and to be eligible for judging**

1. All skeins must be a minimum of 10 meters and a maximum of 15 meters in length.
2. Skeins must be correctly tied in four places with figure eight ties made from thin cotton and must not be twisted. The beginning of the skein should be tied to the end of the skein.
3. All entries must be handspun 100% wool fibre and include the following in order to qualify for judging:
  - a. sample(s) of the wool fibre(s) used, before and after preparation. If using commercially prepared fibre, include a sample of the unspun fibre
  - b. an explanation of how the fibre was prepared, including blending
  - c. full explanation of yarn construction techniques
  - d. describe the purpose for which the spinner intends the yarn to be used and why that technique was chosen
  - e. prepare a 2"x2" sample swatch

### **2009 Skein Competition Winners**

<b>Simple 2-ply skein</b>	<b><u>Novice</u></b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup>: Linda Dunn</b>
		<b>2<sup>nd</sup>: Hilary Omichinski</b>
		<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: Elaine Horemans</b>
		<b>Honourable mention: Linda Dunn</b>
<b>Creative 3-ply or more</b>	<b><u>Novice</u></b>	<b>Marion Smith</b>
		<b>Honourable mention: Elaine Horemans</b>
	<b><u>Advanced</u></b>	<b>Linda Helms</b>
		<b>Honourable mention: Sharon Robinson</b>

### **2010 Special Projects Criteria**

We are challenging you to create a finished article in any of the following categories:

1. **Wearables** for the human body
  - a. 100 gms and under
  - b. over 100 gms
2. Not wearable on the human body
  - a. 100 gms and under
  - b. over 100 gms

All projects will be weighed at the submissions desk to determine their weight category.

All entries must be 100% handspun wool. You may use any appropriate construction technique and include the following in order to qualify for judging:

- a. Sample of the fibre(s) used, before and after preparation. If using commercially prepared fibre, include a sample of the unspun fibre.
- b. An explanation of how the fibre was prepared
- c. Description of the spinning technique used
- d. Sample skein (minimum 1 metre) of the final yarn used in the project must be included.

## 2009 Special Projects Winners

<u>Novice</u>	Elaine Horemans
<u>Advanced</u>	1 <sup>st</sup> : Linda Helms
	2 <sup>nd</sup> : Barb Ross
	3 <sup>rd</sup> : Dianne Lamb

## 2010 "Just for Fun" Submissions

These creations will not be judged.

If competitions are not for you but you wish to share your achievements with your peers, bring your skeins or projects along for Display Only. There is only one criterion in this category; all "Just for Fun" submissions must at least 51% wool.

Think outside the box !!!! Stretch your imagination !!!! Challenge yourself !!!!

These submissions will require only a form for display. Forms will be sent out with your registration acceptance package.

## 2010 Competition Awards

**(Any article submitted for Competition is eligible if appropriate guidelines are followed)**

### **Founders Award**

This award honours the founders of the Ontario Handspinning Seminar: Edna Blackburn, Ted Carson and Dorothy Kirk. The award of \$100 is presented to the person with the best article on display, made of 100% handspun yarn. It is judged by the Seminar attendees, who cast ballots for their favourite.

**2009 Winner – Catherine Forbes**

### **Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Award**

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

**2009 Winner – Esther Grav**

### **Handweavers' Guild of America**

This award of a gift certificate and handwoven ribbon is presented by the Handweavers' Guild of America in recognition of "a work of handweaving, spinning, dyeing or basketmaking which embodies a unique interpretation, demonstrates a fresh, individual approach and expresses personal creativity", as judged by an appointee of the Ontario Handspinning Seminar Board of Directors.

**2009 Winner – Jennifer MacPherson**

### **2010 WOW!! Award**

This award is judged by the Ontario Handspinning Seminar Display Coordinators. It is in recognition of an article that inspires the viewer to say "WOW!!" **All articles submitted for display are eligible.**

**2009 Winner – Catherine Forbes**

### **Barb Patterson Award**

This award of \$25 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"

**2009 Winner – Linda Dunn**

**2009 Scholarship Award:** No applicants

## **2010 Scholarship Award**

**Please take note !!!....** The Ontario Handspinning Seminar Inc. has money available for an annual Scholarship that provides the applicant with a chance to go on that extra course to learn more about a special technique in spinning or dyeing. If you would like to explore new fibres, study old or new techniques, we would like to give you some help. A specific plan of study must be included with the application, and it is the intention that you share your experience within 3 years of receipt of the scholarship with the participants of an Ontario Handspinning Seminar. For more information on the requirements and to make an application, contact Dianne Lamb, 265 Knox Rd. East, Wasaga Beach ON L9Z 2T6 or email [aanddlamb@sympatico.ca](mailto:aanddlamb@sympatico.ca) or visit our website at [www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca](http://www.ontariohandspinningseminar.ca)

### **Some final notes about Special Projects and Awards:**

- Seminar participants are limited to one entry per category
- Entries in the Projects Competition are eligible for the Founders Award if they meet the criteria that the item is made totally of handspun yarn
- Entries in all categories must have been completed within the past year
- Seminar participants who act as judges may not submit entries in the competition
- Novice = less than 2 years spinning experience; Advanced = 2 or more years spinning experience