



ONTARIO HANDSPINNING SEMINAR

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Spring Newsletter 2009

Warm, Winsome, Wacky, Wilful, Wearable, Wonderful WOOL

Back to Wool – Lace to Lopi!

Friday, June 12th – Sunday, June 14th, 2009
Queen's University, Kingston

The winter howled long and cold. Spring is singing through the budding trees and greening fields and gardens. But the best part of this season is that the time for the Seminar is fast approaching. A time to pack your bags, hoist up your wheels and head for Kingston. Bring some of your stash to work on, if you want, but know that there will be plenty of vendors there who will be more than happy to help you find exactly what you "really need" to keep your wheels humming happily. The Seminar Committee has been very busy organizing a wonderful weekend full of inspiration, learning and camaraderie.

Registration and room check-in will begin at 5:00 PM on Friday the 12th 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. Regarding your "wearable around the neck" 2008 Baggie creations, you will be asked to please consider wearing them for the Saturday evening Fashion Show.

In the lounge just behind the registration desks, you will be able to spin and socialize, and the Kingston 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 2008 Baggie Challenges 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 12th and for the weekend. You will be able to park on the streets of the campus and in surface parking lots. Before 5:00 PM on Friday, parking is by permit only. 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 7:00 to 10:00 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 2:15) and again after the Saturday workshops (4:30 to 5:30).

Any vendors who still wish to register for space in the Sales Room, please contact Kay James, 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 hope that you will all bring the fabulous creations we know you have made, to model or have modeled for the show. Table centrepieces will be an interactive "treat", prepared by the Belleville Guild. 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.

2009 Baggie Challenge – A Community Event!

This year's Baggie Challenge has a few new twists that we hope will excite you! The theme is "community" from start to finish. We would like to invite all of this year's Seminar participants to work as a community by signing up for the Baggie Challenge. For \$5.00, you will get a baggie full of wonderful wool roving supplied by local shepherds.

The Challenge this year is for each of us to produce one or more afghan squares using the roving provided in your Challenge Baggie and the skills you've 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.

The goals: 1) have fun. 2) use your new or newly improved skills. 3) bring back one or more squares to the 2010 Seminar. This last goal is very important. We are asking that you bring your finished square(s) to the 2010 Seminar so that they can be stitched by our volunteers into what will become our "community" afghan. 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! Even better...the money we raise from our raffle ticket sales will be donated to a charitable organization in the local community.

Saturday morning will be enhanced with a Keynote Address by Fay Wilkinson of Haliburton. Her topic will be "**The Wonders of Wool – a contemporary perspective**". The talk will include a bit of history through storytelling, a look at exciting work emerging from today's fibre artists and a glimpse into how Fay uses wool in her own work.

Fay Wilkinson is a fibre artist and story teller who will be sure to inspire your own creativity for the workshops which will follow. Fay is intrigued with the creative process and works with the power of art-making for self-discovery. She is a graduate of and now instructs in the Expressive Arts Post-Graduate Programme at the Haliburton School of the Arts, where she also teaches in the Fibre Arts Programme. Her work is in collections worldwide. You can discover her beautiful creations at www.thecreativecocoon.com.

Sunday morning will further your knowledge of wool and what happens to it once it is off the sheep.

"Baa, Baa Canada Sheep-Have You Any Wool?" Yes Sir, Yes Sir – more than 3 million pounds arriving annually from every part of Canada, to be graded in Carleton Place, Ontario.

Jim McNeely of the Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers will give a short presentation on what they actually do at the warehouse and how they grade the wool that they receive.

After this presentation, you may wish to take the workshop that Jim, along with Harriet Boon, will offer to further your knowledge of this subject.

Jim McNeely was born and raised in Carleton Place and still resides there with his wife, Elenora. He started to work at the Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers as a summer student in 1971 and then as a seasonal employee after finishing school. In 1973, he became employed full time as an apprentice wool grader and has been grading ever since. His present position includes wool grading and the day-to-day supervision of the warehouse activities and staff.

Sunday morning mini-workshops will focus on the use of the yarns and fibres that you learned about on Saturday.

The highlight at lunch on Sunday will be the presentation of Awards.

REMEMBERING SEMINAR FRIENDS

Lisa Trojan died in June 2008. She was the only person brave enough to do a strip tease on the Seminar stage.
Sandra Skog died in March of 2009. She was a long time and enthusiastic supporter of and participant in the Seminar.

WORKSHOPS

Saturday, June 13th – Full day workshops

1) Back to Basics – 2 part workshop

These ½ day sessions are geared to the novice spinner or someone who wishes to revisit the basics of spinning and wool preparation. You should be able to spin a basic yarn, have control of your wheel and understand spinning terminology.

Morning: From Sheep to Spinner

Harriet Boon

Introduction to wool – a hands-on session working with variety of full fleece. Skirting, sorting, washing and preparation techniques will be covered, always with end use in mind.

Harriet Boon warns that becoming a spinner may cause other addictions such as shepherding. Harriet earned a Master Spinner certificate in 1976 and then earned a flock of sheep. Harriet has done extensive traveling and continues to learn and study different natural dyes. She has been teaching fibre and dye topics since the 1970's.

Afternoon: Novice Wool Spinning

Dorothy Hinchcliffe

First you will explore methods of preparing wool for spinning and then you will work on the spinning wheel to learn how you can control the fibre, through spinning and plying. This session will include a discussion on the finishing of skeins.

Dorothy Hinchcliffe is a Bruce County farmer and spinner/weaver who has 30 years experience with wool in many forms.

2) Icelandic

Beth Abbott

Try out fleece that will produce such a wide range of yarn styles, that it was used as the only fibre source for a whole culture. The Icelandic fleece was used for sails, ropes and straps, as well as for clothing, underwear, blankets, embroidery and lace shawls. Because it has 2 distinctly different coats, each can be spun separately as well as together. Add the variety of diameter, twist and the degree of separation of the two coats, along with the age of the animal and you have a fibre that will spin to practically any yarn you need. Learn how to separate the coats as well as to spin the more well-known Lopi style yarn. See many of the traditional and more modern uses of this yarn.

Beth Abbott Has studied a wide variety of Fibre Arts for at least 30 years, taking dozens of courses and workshops and developing her own work. She is a recent graduate of the Fibre Arts Certification Programme from St. Lawrence College, Kingston. Beth earned a Master Spinner Certificate from Georgian College, Owen Sound, in 1990 and has taught workshops in both Canada and the USA. She has won many awards for her work and is the author of "Icelandic Fleece-A Fibre For All Reasons", published in 2001.

3) Needle Art with Wool

Hazel Alexander

For centuries, cultures have used their needles to adorn themselves and their homes, to tell stories and to record history. We will look at ways the modern spinner can produce yarns to embellish garments and create decorative pieces through embroidery and needlepoint.

Hazel Alexander is a graduate of the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Spinning Certificate Course. Hazel has taught various workshops including novelty yarns and different fibres such as cotton, silk, alpaca and mohair. She enjoys spinning a wide variety of fibres and exploring new techniques to showcase them.

4) Novelty yarns – variations in plying

Barbara Scott

During this session, you will explore creating and combining novelty yarn techniques. Using woollen and worsted prepared fleece, the class will work with a selection of wools which offer a range of characteristics. While emphasis will be given to construction techniques, we will also consider the interplay of colour, lustre and elasticity.

Barbara Scott is a Master Spinner who completed the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners Spinning Certificate program "with distinction", has written published articles about spinning, and has taught in a variety of venues. To spinning, she brings curiosity, a need for technical mastery and delight in experimentation.

5) Sheep on Your Feet

Donna Hancock

You will investigate different sheep breeds and how their fibre works for socks. You will explore two ply and three ply yarns and learn which, when and why to use them.

Donna Hancock is a graduate of the OHS Spinning Certificate Programme, in 2000. Donna and her husband own and operate Wellington Fibres, which opened a spinning mill in 2006. They also have their own herd of Angora goats.

6) Shetland Diversified

Karen Richens

Following a brief introduction to Shetland sheep, you will explore fleece structure, fibre preparation, spinning techniques and various end uses. Participants will use a variety of clean Shetland fibre to practice different techniques appropriate for an assortment of end uses. A variation of Shetland articles will be shown and discussed.

Karen Richens has been a fibre and textile enthusiast for 20 years, having spent a year of travel and searching out textiles and their making in Indonesia, India, Nepal and Africa. She has raised her Shetland sheep friends for over ten years. Karen is a recent graduate of the OHS Spinning Certificate Programme. She's a spinning member of the Toronto Spiders, winners of the International Back to Back Wool Challenge in 2007 and 2008.

(Saturday Workshops, continued)

7) Spinning Wool for Weaving

Margaret Stalker

Tired of knitting? Handspun yarn works beautifully for weaving too! You'll share ideas for creating and using handspun wool yarns in handwoven articles, and spin warp and weft yarns for a small woven project in class.

Margaret Stalker is a graduate of the OHS Spinning Certificate Programme. Margaret divides her time between her vocation as a veterinary pathologist and her avocations of spinning, weaving, natural dyeing, botany and Irish traditional music. She has a lifelong love of learning and sharing with others.

8) Thick to Thin

Dianne Lamb

Revisit the lumpy, bumpy yarn you made when you first learned to spin. This workshop will show you how to actually control your spinning to reproduce a regular Thick and Thin yarn. You will spin wool into thick, medium and thin singles and experiment with the plying of different grist combinations to produce unusual yarns.

Dianne Lamb is a graduate of the OHS Spinning Certificate Programme. She is retired and now has extra time to pursue her fibre interests. There is also a growing collection of spinning wheels in her home. She loves to spin and knit with wool and finds great satisfaction in producing items from sheep to end product.

Sunday, June 14th – Morning mini-workshops

1) Canada's Wool to Market

Jim McNeely and Harriet Boon

This workshop will follow up on Jim McNeely's morning presentation. It will be a hands-on workshop which will include discussions on grading fleece, micron count, shearing and marketing.

2) Earth, Water, Sky: Landscape Canvas Bags

Jennifer MacPherson

Plan and knit a 'landscape canvas' in the form of a small shoulder bag. The bag will be embellished in class, or later, with your memories or imagination, using needle-felting and/or embroidery techniques.

Take it home to full it and fill it!

Jennifer MacPherson is a Kingston spinner and knitter of usable items - bags, slippers, scarves - especially ones that use up the remains of previous projects!

3) Felt a Pocket

Bridget Lewis

In this workshop you will be using a combination of needle and wet-felting to make a small piece that can be used as a pocket or bag front. Needle felt a design onto a commercial soft felt background and then wet-felt to create a stable fabric.

Bridget Lewis loves to use colour and texture in her felt and woven pieces. She has studied needle felting with Sharon Costello. Bridget has completed both the Master Spinner Certificate in Owen Sound and the OHS Master Weaver Certificate.

4) Finger-Tip to Cuff - Sampler Glove Workshop

Danny Ouellette

Traditional glove patterns start at the cuff and work up to the tips of the fingers. This class presents one method of working in the other direction. The class will learn different methods for casting on the tips of the fingers and go through the making of a sample glove that shows all the construction techniques needed for a full sized glove. Students will be given hand-outs outlining how they can design their own gloves and also instructions for the various cast-ons.

Danny Ouellette is a hand knitting designer in Toronto. He has had a love of crafts and fibres all his life. His current interests are in knitting and knit designs, spinning, dyeing and weaving. He has been spinning and attending spinning conferences for the last six years, and has also recently completed his first year in the OHS Spinning Certificate Program.

5) Lace Knitting with Handspun

Sylvia Currie

This workshop will start with the history and an overview of lace knitting, with a special emphasis on the art of Shetland lace, using Shetland fleece. You will explore lace knitting techniques by knitting samples and learn how to select a pattern and then appropriate needles and yarn for a project.

Sylvia Currie says that weaving and spinning have been her hobby and friends for 35+ years. She was one of Ted Carson's early students. Following a trip to Scotland and Shetland in 1996, she became intrigued with lace knitting. She has tried a variety of fibres and grists, and always finds herself coming back to fine Shetland lace. It is not the most sociable or quickest type of knitting, but the satisfaction of the finished product is worth all the time and effort.

(Sunday Workshops, continued)

6) Swatch and Beyond

Dorothy Young

"Taking the guesswork out of knitting and crocheting with handspun". This session will include a discussion of knitting and crocheting as well as how to properly finish a swatch so that it provides you with as much information as possible. This information can then be used to adapt a commercial pattern for use with handspun yarns. Participants will be provided with a simple sample pattern; however, they are free to bring their own choice of pattern for adapting. Participants should bring handspun yarns to this workshop.

Dorothy Young's main focus as a fibre artist has been one-of-a-kind, handwoven fashion. She first learned to weave in the early 1970's in California. This was followed by studies at the Edinburgh School of Art. Weaving and spinning workshops sponsored by the Kingston handloom Weavers and Spinners further developed interests and her skills. In recent years, she has broadened her outlook and skills at St. Lawrence College and the Haliburton School of the Arts, where she has taken classes in drawing, painting, spinning, dyeing, textile printing and fashion design. Dorothy's significant interests now include spinning and knitting, with sweater design as a focus. She has taught workshops in colour theory for knitters, sweater design and knitting with handspun yarn.

7) Traditional Rug Hooking with Hand Spun Yarn

Anne Buckley

The project will be a 4 inch by 4 inch mug rug with a choice of two patterns, your initial or the Ontario Handspinning Seminar Logo. You will use handspun yarn in your favourite colours.

Anne Buckley has been weaving & spinning for almost 30 yrs. She began traditional rug hooking in 1993. Anne has attended courses instructed by local and international teachers in both the USA and Canada.

8) Triangular Woven Shawl

Jackie Sylvester

Learn to weave a triangular shawl using your handspun yarns. You will make a doll or teddy bear size shawl, so everyone will learn the technique. You will learn to design your own project, calculate the yarn yardage needed and how you can make your own rigid frame loom. It is a great way to use your handspun yarn with no loom wastage. No previous weaving experience is needed.

Jackie Sylvester learned to weave as a teenager in a summer work project. The next few summers she wove for Design Senior. She has recently returned to weaving and felting as a member of Kingston Handweavers and Spinners.

General Equipment List: a spinning wheel in good working order, with a minimum of 3 bobbins; Lazy Kate; apron; medium or fine hand carders (or mini combs); small niddy-noddy; notebook and pencil; emergency kit for spinning wheel;
optional: dust mask, lint brush, flick carder, 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, in May.

Competitions and Awards

We hope that last year's theme, Beyond Wool, has provided you with much creative inspiration and that you are working on items to submit for competition and/or display at the 2009 Seminar. Please remember that all skeins and projects must be based on the 2008 Beyond Wool theme, therefore making use of camelid fibres, chiengora, flax, seacell, seawool, seasilk, soy, luxury fibres, paper or tussah silk. **Be bold** and enter something...anything...into our displays! We can't wait to see what you've done. If you're feeling a bit more focused (and maybe just slightly competitive) enter one of our competitions. If you're just a bit less confident or just don't care to compete, submit your work in the "Just for Fun" category to receive our judges' critique of your work. But please.... **do create** and do bring it with you!

2009 Skein Competition

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 20 meters and a maximum of 25 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 and include the following in order to qualify for judging:
 - a. sample(s) of the fibre(s) used, before and after preparation. If using commercially prepared fibre, include a sample of the unspun fibre
 - b. percentage of each fibre (if using more than one) in the skein
 - c. an explanation of how the fibre was prepared, including blending
 - d. full explanation of yarn construction techniques
 - e. describe the purpose for which the spinner intends the yarn to be used and why that technique was chosen
 - f. prepare a 2"x2" swatch

2009 Special Projects

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

1. Wearables for the human body
 - a. 50 grams or less
 - b. 51 - 250 grams
 - c. 251 grams or more
2. Not wearable on the human body
 - a. 50 grams or less
 - b. 51 - 250 grams
 - c. 251 grams or more

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

All finished articles in both categories must show the techniques you learned from last year's seminar.

All entries must be 100% handspun, and at least 20% of the fibre must be from among the 2008 workshop topics.

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. The fibres used, as well as the percentage of each fibre in the project must be identified.
- c. An explanation of how the fibre was prepared
- d. Description of the spinning technique used
- e. Sample skein (5 metres) of the final yarn used in the project must be included.

2009 "Just for Fun" Submissions

If you're busy creating but competitions aren't your thing, bring your skeins and projects with you anyway!! In addition to our regular Seminar Display, we invite you to submit either skeins or projects to our "Just for Fun" category. These items will need to meet the same criteria as skeins and projects submitted for competition, but the purpose of our judges' critique will be solely to give you the constructive criticism that you've been "wanting but were afraid to ask for" in order to help you move forward.

2009 Competition Awards

(Any article submitted for Display 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.

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.

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 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.**

NEW FOR 2009!!

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"

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

More important Details worth noting about competition entries:

- Please take a minute to re-read the requirements and be sure you have fulfilled them.
- A blank entry form will be included in your registration confirmation package. Each entry must be accompanied by an entry form (photocopy if needed).
- In order to ensure impartiality, do not write your name on the entry form. Each entry will be identified by a number which will be attached to your item.
- We are assembling a panel of knowledgeable and enthusiastic judges who will provide written comments on your entries.
- Entries may be handed in from 5pm – 9 pm Friday, June 12th in the Registration area.