

# THE MOTHER OF ALL

Newsletter of the Arizona Desert Weavers and Spinners Guild, Inc.

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MOA Deadline  
15th  
September - May

## *From the President's desk...*

First of all, Since I mentioned our upcoming anniversary at the last meeting I was informed that the guild was founded in 1948, which makes 2018 the year of our 70th, not 75th anniversary.

This gave me some relief because now we have a lot more time to work towards our 75th anniversary in 2223. 75 years should be a reason for celebration, shouldn't it? But what could we do?

I have received a couple of ideas from guild members so far, from weaving (or otherwise crafting) 75 items that could be auctioned or raffled off for charity (or donated directly), to publishing a book showcasing our guildmembers' artistry and artisanship. What are your ideas and opinions? Is the anniversary important? How would you like to see us celebrate?

Please give this some thoughts. While it is too early to have an all-out discussion I would like to get your gears going. Consider also that whatever comes to mind will require the efforts of volunteers. We might need to form an organizing committee and whatever we decide on doing will require helpers to see things through successful completion. We will only be able to do so much (or little) without help from the membership.

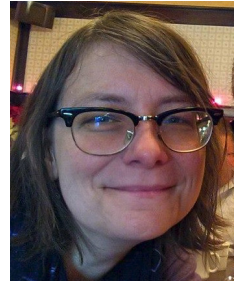
I will bring back the suggestions box and would like you to write down your ideas and submit them. If you'd like to be involved in the anniversary planning please include your name, but if you would like to leave anonymous comments that's ok too.

Speaking of volunteers, we need you. Elections are coming up in April. While it looks as if most of our officers will continue for another year we have board members in need of help. Pauline Schultz, our program chair, is planning to take a greater role in her other guild next year and would love it if someone were to step up and start by becoming her assistant and that is just one example.

Our guild cannot survive without volunteers. Getting more involved ensures that our group stays active and vibrant in our community. As our nominations committee process gets underway our secretary Lisa Takata would welcome a call or email from anyone who is thinking about it, to provide more details.

See you at the meeting!

Caroline



**Next Meeting:**  
March 4th at 10 AM  
Northtown Community Center  
2202 E. Waltann Lane, Phoenix, AZ

## **MARCH PROGRAM: CATHARINE ELLIS, WOVEN SHIBORI**

*SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED BY THE GUILD MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT IN A STUDY GROUP  
DOORS OPEN AT 9 AM - COME EARLY AND MINGLE*

### **ABOUT CATHARINE ELLIS**

Catharine Ellis is a weaver and shibori artist who led the Professional Fiber Program at Haywood Community College for 30 years before retiring in 2008. She is now devoted to studio work and traveling to teach workshops. Her original training was in traditional woven techniques, which led her to weave functional fabrics for many years, often incorporating ikat resist dyeing. Her work is defined by the discovery and exploration of the woven shibori process. Most recently, Ellis explores applications of Jacquard and industrial weaving in combination with hand dyeing.

Ellis states, "Woven shibori has challenged all that I know about weaving and has led me to investigate new materials, resists, dyes and finishing processes. The fabrics I have produced include combinations of dyed cellulose fibers, wool felting and resist, permanent shaping with thermoplastics, and woven steel with heat treatment. Continued exploration of woven shibori and its applications will define and my guide my work for many years to come."

*From: <http://www.craftcreativitydesign.org/catharine-ellis/>*

### **UPCOMING DEMONSTRATION: GLENDALE FOLK & HERITAGE FESTIVAL MARCH 2017**

Our next assignment is the Glendale Folk & Heritage Festival. Fun demonstrations, lots of music and good food. Dates are March 18th and 19th, 2017.

Signup sheet will be at the meeting, or contact Diane Wilson at [weavebskts@aol.com](mailto:weavebskts@aol.com) or 613-376-6452 if you want to join the excitement.

### **EDUCATIONAL GRANT**

**The deadline for the educational grant applications is the March meeting!**

The grant, \$250.00, is available to members to further their study in a fiber art of choice. It could be used for a workshop or materials or in other ways that help you further your knowledge and expertise. All we ask in return is to hold a program in 2018 to share what you have learned.

Just write down how you are planning to spend the funds and hand your application to any board member.

### **ARIZONA FEDERATION OF WEAVERS AND SPINNERS NEWS**

The Federation is seeking nominations for President and Secretary, with elections to be held in April. Nominations do not have to come from within the existing board. Please consider getting involved.

We are also seeking volunteers to help with the planning and staffing of the next Federation Day which is scheduled for February 2018.

The next Federation board meeting is on April 25th, at a library in the Phoenix area. The exact location will be announced soon.

We are also compiling a database of Arizona educators and lecturers to be available to all member guilds. If you teach or speak on a subject, we would like to know about it! If you have given a talk to your guild on a pet interest or passion, think of the time you have devoted to developing your talk - the work is already done - won't you share it with others? You are among like-minded friends.

For any Federation questions, please contact Christine Hunt or Caroline Wise.

## INTEREST GROUPS

### ***TAPESTRY AND BEYOND***

Meets after the monthly general ADWSG meeting at Northtown Community Center, 2202 E. Waltann Lane, Phx, 85022. Bring your luncheon/beverage along with any type of loom with warping yarn and various types of yarn for tapestry weaving, or other projects. For more information, contact Mary Conti at [mariaconti@cox.net](mailto:mariaconti@cox.net) or 425-788-5012. All are welcome.

### ***FIBER ARTISTS GROUP***

The Fiber Artists meet on the **second** Wednesday of the month at Northtown Community Center, 2202 E. Waltann Lane, Phx 85022 at 10:00 am. Members bring lunch and beverage.

The Fiber Artists were born when the Weaving Study Group merged with the Daytime Spinners Group. From now on, spinners, weavers, and all fiber artists are welcome. The group's co-chairs are Judy Lukas (602-361-7339) for the months October - May and Paula Rudnick (814-769-1675) for the summer months.



## WORKSHOP NEWS FOR 2018

**Rosalie Neilson** is traveling in Arizona during February 2018 and is available to us at AZ Desert Weavers to offer a 2 day workshop on February 10 and 11, 2018. We have two choices for workshops and need your input!

**First option** is **Color & Design in Huck Lace Towels** on a 4 or 8 shaft loom.

**Second option** is **Introduction to Kumihimo: Braiding on the Marudai**.

More details will be available at the guild meeting. For more information prior to that contact Karen Stromberg at [kastromberg@gmail.com](mailto:kastromberg@gmail.com).



### **ADWSG Jewelry**



Silver logo pins and earrings are available for purchase at the monthly meetings. The "sheep with the woven coat" pins are \$20, and earrings are \$40. See Elaine Rowles for availability.





# HISTORY OF SILK SPINNING PART I

*This is Val Hilburgh's presentation on silk spinning, held on February 4th, 2017. Since there was so much information to absorb we thought it would be a great idea to publish it as a serial in the MOA.*

I received the guild education grant last spring to study silk. Originally I planned just to expand my knowledge of spinning silk but found the history of silk so interesting that it became the subject of my presentation.

Chinese legend is that a silk cocoon fell from a Mulberry tree into an Empress's cup of tea and she began to unwind it, thus discovering the reeling of silk. Silk has been raised in China for at least 5,000 years with fragments of Chinese silk found in a bamboo basket at a site in Zhejiang province dated from about 2800 BCE. These remains included a postage stamp sized fragment of plain-weave fabric, a braided sash, and a mass of reeled silk, all from cultivated silkworms.

We do know that silk production and weaving began in northern China and reached industrial proportions by the bronze age. In the Shang dynasty (1600 - 1000 BCE) weaving for common domestic purposes was done on a backstrap style loom with hemp warp; however evidence suggests silk weaving technology had surpassed cottage industry to the point of being a workshop or factory industry using many-heddled looms with pattern rods to produce fabrics with complicated decorative patterning.

In China, silk was a royal prerogative, used as payment or reward to aristocratic families and could take the form of thread, fishing lines, bird nets, bolts of cloth, undergarments, outer clothing, bedding, or flags. Patterned silks were much more valuable than plain weave and fragments of intricate textiles have provided information about the weaving technology of the period. By 1000 BCE, during the Zhou Dynasty, the exchange rate for a horse and a single hank of silk was five slaves. Silk had become so abundant in China by the Han dynasty (200 BCE To 200 CE) that silk fabric was often part of a soldier's wages.

Although China guarded the secret of sericulture or the cultivation of silk worms (the word "ser" is Latin for "silk"), the knowledge eventually spread to Korea, Japan, through India to Persia and thence to Europe and the West as well as parts of Africa. In India, the epic Mahabharata, written in Sanskrit, is thought to be from at least 4000 BCE and mentions woven silk cloth.

The Japanese managed to acquire the technology in

the 3rd century CE. Japanese records indicate a Chinese emperor exchanged gifts with Japan including silk worm eggs; soon afterwards an exiled Chinese prince fled to Japan with his entourage where they took up silk weaving as their livelihood.

Today with world silk production at a height, Japan produces about 20,000 tons of raw-reeled silk a year and actually uses more than can be produced within the country.

The establishment of the Silk Road (a six thousand mile caravan route from China to the Mediterranean) was opened in about 125 BCE expanding the knowledge and use of silk to the Middle East and eventually to Europe. Caravans returned to China with wool and Roman glass. Pieces of woven silk have been found along the desert overland routes. The Persians soon established themselves as the middlemen between East and West in the silk trade.

Silks sold in Greece and Rome were often unraveled and rewoven in other patterns which were then sent to markets in the East. Silk became the most desired fabric of the Romans and it is recorded that in the 3rd century CE, a pound of silk in Rome was worth its equal weight in gold.

It was interesting to learn the Chinese so valued sericulture and the manufacture of silk that during World War II, Chinese fleeing inland from invaded coastal provinces had taken apart entire factories which they carried (often on their heads) to the interior to be reconstructed, this included refugees carrying developing silk worms along with mulberry leaves to feed them, and the equipment for reeling or spinning the cocoons.  
*...to be continued*



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**ADWSG WEBSITE:**  
<http://www.adwsg.org>

## CALENDAR EVENTS

- **March 4-5, 2017 56th Annual Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair & Market** - Heard Museum - <http://www.heard.org>
- **March 11, 2017 Ancient Technology Day** - Pueblo Grande Museum - <http://www.pueblogrande.org>
- **June 3-4, 2017 Flag Wool and Fiber Festival** - Flagstaff - <http://www.flagwool.com/>
- **July 25-27, 2017 Intermountain Weavers Conference** - Durango, Co. (Registration is open) - <http://www.intermountainweavers.org/>

### MOA DEADLINE

15th of every month From September to May  
Visit our guild's website: <http://www.adwsg.org>

First Class

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