

THE MOTHER OF ALL

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

Volume 45, Issue 7

May 2017

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MOA Deadline
15th
September - May

From the President's desk...

I always look forward to our May meetings. It is such a fun and social get-together. We get to see what our study groups have been up to and guild members who have been taking workshops throughout the year are invited to bring their samples for Show-and-Tell.

Speaking of Show-and-Tell, I received a timely update from our former member David Kish, who relocated to New Mexico last year:

The Albuquerque Fiber Art Fiesta, May 19-21 will be held at Expo New Mexico (Albuquerque Fairgrounds) in two huge buildings. One contains 60 vendors with supplies, tools and fiber crafted items. The other building will contain 670 judged entries, crafted by the members of 20 local guilds and also pieces from as far away as Brazil. I've attended this show (every other year) since it started in 1997. It's worth the drive from Phoenix (7hrs).

Here's my 'hooked' sampler that was accepted in Fiber Fiesta. I will finish it, roll and whip stitch the edges with wool I spun.

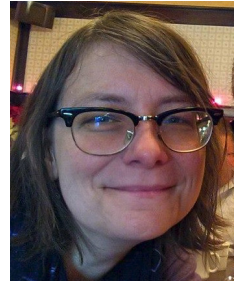
P.S. I started my position as Designing Director of the MBRcamp, to be built for Wounded Veterans and Disabled Children, in May of 2016. I joined a rag strip, rug hooking group and tutor reading at a neighborhood school. I am happy to say that at the end of this month I will finally move to the staff house at the ranch where the camp will be built. My boss and I will then take 3-4 tours, driving around the country to tour non-profit camps to get info and ideas. I kept my spinning wheels, hand-held looms and some fiber with me, but am thrilled to be getting the rest of my life out of storage after 18 months! I miss our wonderful guild meetings (very different here) and all of you 'my friends'.

Sincerely, Dave Kish. davidjetea@yahoo.com.

How nice of Dave to share his news. I'm looking forward to attending Fiber Fiesta one of these years, it sure sounds like a great event.

See you at the meeting!

Caroline



WANTED!

We are still looking for a **Workshops Assistant**. Please consider stepping up to help continue our tradition of diverse and interesting fiber arts education. Just take a look at what is in the works already! These workshops don't pick and schedule themselves... Contact Karen Stromberg for more details.

Next Meeting:
May 6th at 10 AM
Northtown Community Center
2202 E. Waltann Lane, Phoenix, AZ

MAY PROGRAM: STUDY GROUP AND WORKSHOP SHOW-AND-TELL

*POTLUCK! SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED BY THE WHOLE GUILD
DOORS OPEN AT 9 AM - COME EARLY AND MINGLE*

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

'Tis the season to renew your membership! Don't miss out and bring your membership check to the meeting or mail it to Sue Carneal:

Sue Carneal
P.O. Box 4362
Cave Creek, AZ 85327-4362

I'll do my best to include a membership form with the newsletter mailing.

WORKSHOP NEWS

PEBBLE WEAVE ON THE BACKSTRAP LOOM WITH LAVERNE WADDINGTON OCTOBER 2017

Andean pebble weave, perhaps the most easily recognized of the many pick-up weaving techniques practiced in Peru and Bolivia, is not only beautiful to behold but also a pleasure to weave. Indigenous weavers use geometric, animal, plant and human figures posed on the dotted or "pebbled" background characteristic of this weave to decorate carrying cloths, ponchos, coca leaf bags, belts and sashes. Being partly loom-controlled, it is one of the faster pick-up weaving techniques to execute. **Beginners welcome!**



Dates: Sun through Tue, October 15-17, 2017, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Location: Litchfield Park, AZ
Cost: \$150-200 (Non-guild members - add \$25)
Materials fee: \$10-15
Contact: Christine Hunt, 623-853-6081 or
hunt_christine@rocketmail.com

Secure your spot by bringing a deposit check for \$75 to the May meeting or mailing it to Sue Carneal (address above)

WARP-FACED DOUBLE WEAVE ON THE BACKSTRAP LOOM WITH LAVERNE WADDINGTON OCTOBER 2017

This warp-faced double weave structure gives weavers the ability to create sturdy bands with clean, crisp designs on backgrounds of solid color using only two simple sheds. Both faces of the bands are structurally identical with colors reversed. **This is not a class for beginning backstrap weavers.**



Dates: Fri and Sat, October 13 & 14, 2017, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Location: TBA

Cost: \$115-165 (Non-guild members - add \$25)

Materials fee: \$10-15

Contact: Christine Hunt, 623-853-6081 or
hunt_christine@rocketmail.com

A deposit of \$75 may be sent to Sue Carneal (address above)

SUMMER AND WINTER WEAVING WORKSHOP WITH ROSALIE NEILSON FEBRUARY 2018

Rosalie Neilson will teach a Summer and Winter class on February 17th and 18th, 2018. Watch for emailed announcements as we receive more details.

Contact Karen Stromberg at kastromberg@gmail.com if you are interested.

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 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.



TINKUY 2017 GATHERING OF THE TEXTILE ARTS IN CUSCO, PERU NOV 8 - 11, 2017

Organized by the Centro de Textiles Tradicionales del Cusco and Andean Textile Arts, this four-day event brings together textile artists and enthusiasts, art historians, anthropologists, and many others to celebrate the wealth and diversity of Andean textile traditions. Artisans worldwide will be converging for Tinkuy 2017.

The Location: Cusco, Peru, is the capital of the ancient Inca Empire, the historic capital of Peru, and a World Heritage site. It is a gateway to Machu Picchu and other important archeological sites, and enjoys a dramatic setting at 11,200 feet in the Andes near the Sacred Valley of the Urubamba River. A blending of ancient Inca stonework and Colonial architecture, important cultural museums, and a vibrant artisan culture make this a compelling destination for visitors. Tinkuy events will be held in the Cusco Convention Center in the heart of the old city.



The Program: Beginning with a festive parade of weavers up the Avenida Sol and a blessing by Q'eros shamans and Elders of the weaving communities, through four days of presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on workshops, Tinkuy 2017 offers an unsurpassed experience in indigenous textiles of the Americas and beyond. Complete with keynote speakers, artisan presentations and demonstrations, cultural performances, a fashion show, a movie night, and spinning competitions.

Most of us won't be able to travel to Peru for this event. However we can support the Tinkuy Gathering by donating to the Tinkuy 2017 Young Weavers program, set up by Andean Textile Arts. The cost for a young weaver to attend Tinkuy is \$25 which pays for their transportation, meals, and workshop supplies.

More information:

Tinkuy 2017 Website - <http://tinkuy2017.textilescusco.org/>

Sponsor a Weaver - http://andeantextilearts.org/get_involved/donate

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 3

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.

The silk industry in Gersau, Switzerland is located on one of the primary early trade routes from northern Europe into Italy where the silk industry has been thriving since the 12th century. In 1730 Sebastian Rigert applied to the Republic of Gersau for permission to degum and wash silk waste imported from Italy. By 1861 three silk mills were in operation along the stream running through the center of Gersau and in 1892 these mills became a family business known as Camenzind & Cie. It remains a family business with the 5th generation running the mills and employing about 30 local people to produce fine Swiss Mountain Silk yarns from "A1" silk top of bombyx, tussah and others silks imported from China. Most of the yarns end up as commercial knitwear. This is a spinning mill as opposed to a reeling mill.

Sericulture has never been commercially successful in the United States although the climate is good but because it is very labor intensive, the high cost of labor and other more profitable crops such as tobacco and cotton overshadowed it. However, sericulture actually began in Colonial times and was carried on in individual households. Prior to the first American silk mill established in Connecticut in 1810, American cocoons were shipped to England for processing or retained for individual use. This was by design as the English wanted to prevent industry from developing in the colonies. The raising of silk has been encouraged at a number of times during the course of US history including by Benjamin Franklin and in 1887 when the Women's Silk Culture Association urged farmers to grow mulberry trees. Around 1825 two communal societies; the Harmonists in

Pennsylvania and the Shakers in Kentucky began raising silkworms for their own use and for sale but eventually found it unprofitable to do so without protective tariffs. Even the Mormons attempted sericulture but ceased their efforts in 1905 when state bounties paid for cocoons were discontinued. By 1900 there were nearly 500 silk mills in the U.S. making "narrow and broad goods such as sewing silk, laces, braids, upholstery and dress trimmings, buttons, ribbons, veiling, millinery silks, ties, scarves, brocades, satins, and velvets of imported reeled silk from China, Italy, and Japan.

Paterson, New Jersey became known as "Silk City" because of its dominant role in silk production in the U.S. during the latter half of the 19th century and up until approximately WWI. The area was ideal for mills as they were powered by water from the 77 foot high Great Falls and a system of raceways that provided power. The mills dyed the imported reeled silk and it was woven on Jacquard silk looms. Many of the dyers were from Lyons, France or Como, Italy. Other workers were often from areas of England, Germany, and Italy. About ½ of the employees were women, but the men dominated the best paying jobs. Although the mill owners tried to mechanize as many operations as possible, the spinning and weaving of silk needed employees with hands on experience. Paterson's most prosperous period ended in 1913 with a five month long strike for an 8 hour work day and better working conditions. After defeating the strike, employers began moving their mills to Pennsylvania. The Paterson mill area became the Great Falls National Historic Park in 2011.

During the 1920s, a lot of silk was being raised on the West Coast, especially around San Diego, with the cocoons sent to Japan for reeling.

In 1929 a load of raw (reeled) silk arrived in San Francisco on a fast steamer from Japan, having traveled under guard in the ship's steel-lined treasure room, it was then loaded into windowless cars on an express train, and pulled by a series of powerful locomotives with priority clearance across the country to New York City. On arrival in New York, the parcels of silk were transported in convoys of trucks with armed and bonded drivers to various mills. This one shipment of silk was worth nearly two million dollars or equal to \$27,660,000 today.

During 1929 alone, imports of raw silk reached \$400 million dollars or 20 percent of all imported goods. 90 percent of the silk imported from Japan was used in the manufacture of silk-stockings. In 1941, with war threatening, the United States government embargoed Japanese silk and requisitioned the entire US supply to be used for parachutes and gunpowder bags.

Cortez claimed to have brought the first silkworm eggs to Mexico from Spain in 1523. An abundance of avail-



SILK-WINDING.
(Fac-simile of a Picture in Edward Williams's "Virginia Truly Valued," 1650.)

able free labor encouraged the development of a flourishing trade in silk and for nearly a century silk was king in southern Mexico. At its peak Oaxaca saw the production of 20,000 pounds of raw silk a year. By 1600 the boom collapsed, due to competition from Chinese silks shipped in on the Manila galleons and by European plagues such as smallpox, measles, and flu which killed off nearly 95 percent of the indigenous population. By 1610 there was no one left to work the silk and the industry disappeared from Mexico. Although the native people were permitted to produce silk, they were prohibited from weaving it; this right was reserved for Spanish weaving guilds in Oaxaca, Puebla, and Mexico City. However the prohibition applied only to the Spanish floor looms and not to the native backstrap looms. 400 years later there still exist two villages in Mexico where the original Spanish-indigenous sericulture continues. Both villages are in remote corners of the state of Oaxaca. The villages are far apart; one in the highland region and the other in the Zapotec area near the Sierra Madre. In one of the villages the silk is cultivated and spun then sold to other villages for weaving. The other village has a long tradition of weaving the silk into red sashes. In addition, wild silk is still gathered in the mountains outside of Oaxaca where natives gather a fine, light-shaded silk off oak trees and hand spin and weave it into a thin crepe. It is then dyed a bright magenta and used for a wrap round belt. It is possible this use of wild silk predates the Spanish. Sericulture was also taken to Brazil where it continues to flourish today with Brazil being one of the leading producers of raw silk.



Sericulture or the Life Cycle of Silk Worms:

Silk moths lay eggs ranging from the size of poppy seeds to small lentils (depending on the variety of silkworm) which hatch into baby caterpillars. The caterpillars eat almost nonstop, increasing their body weight by 10,000 times during a lifespan of approximately approx 28 to 30 days. The worms have a very distinctive smell and can be heard as they are eating. They extract amino acids from the leaves they eat and transform it into silk.

Silkworms with the exception of Eri, extrude silk at about one foot per minute while spinning a cocoon. The continuous strand is about the length of 12 football fields and takes 3 days to complete. Silk is made from two proteins: fibroin and sericin. The caterpillar extrudes the semiliquid fibroin that is coated with the second protein sericin.

The strand then solidifies to become a thread of silk when it comes into contact with air. The caterpillar changes from pupa or chrysalis to moth inside the cocoon. The fully formed moth emerges from the cocoon by releasing an enzyme rich juice that loosens the thread, enabling the moth to leave the cocoon by pushing the filaments to one side. The filaments that have been touched by this juice become weak and are more likely to break during reeling or spinning. Those cocoons that are to be reeled are stifled by being quickly plunged into boiling water to kill the pupa. The female moth holds 200 to 500 eggs in her body. The moth's body contains reproductive organs only – no digestive system so the moth lives only 5 to 7 days, just long enough to mate and lay the eggs before dying of malnutrition. The cycle then begins again after the eggs go through a rest period.

Types of Silk

Reeled silk is made from the outer layers of *Bombyx mori* cocoons with pupa or chrysalis still contained.

Spun Silk is made from the weak filaments of the transparent silken envelope remaining from the reeling process, the damaged, discolored, or imperfectly shaped cocoons or cocoons with openings from which the moths have hatched. The cocoon waste must first have the sericin removed (be degummed) with soap and water. The silk is then cut into uniform lengths and carded to remove the short tangled bits, combing also

lays all the fibers parallel in a sliver that is spun into a lustrous fiber but not as shiny as reeled silk.

Tropical tussar caterpillars from India spin a hard silk which is wound around a branch of the food tree and formed into a stem on which they begin to spin the brown cocoon that hangs from the branch. The stems are cut off the cocoons and put aside for making a course yarn with the cocoons sorted for stifling and reeling or mating. Other types of tussar caterpillars are raised in temperate areas of India and surrounding countries.

---continued on page 6

Muga Silk is from the Assam area of India and other northern states. The golden cocoons produced by this silkworm are rare and treasured coming only from the trees indigenous to the Brahmaputra River valley. The cocoons, once wild, now like the tussar are semi-domesticated and are raised on plantations.

Eri Silk is the name for the silk raised mainly in the northeastern area of India and a few other states. It is known as poor man's silk because it is not the same quality as other silks and therefore not as costly. The caterpillar spins intermittently until finished resulting in a cocoon that has tangled filaments. These cocoons cannot be reeled, only spun.

Tensan silk from the Japanese oak silk moth is highly prized in Japan and has been cultivated for over 1000 years. The cocoons were introduced into Austria in the 1860s and although not used economically in Europe today, the species became established and has spread throughout the oak forests from lower Austria into northern Italy with a pest status in some areas. In Asia, the moth is found throughout Japan, as well as on Taiwan, on mainland China, and in parts of Russia; however is used mainly in Japan.

Documentation mentions at least 25 kinds of wild silks from around the world but it is possible there have been more through the years which have had only local importance. Because of cultural significance certain wild silks continue to be produced and marketed in Africa mainly in Nigeria, Botswana, and Madagascar, but not on a large scale production basis. Although silk moths can be found in other parts of the world they have no commercial value.

This is only a brief history of silk as there is even more information than I had access to and there is a considerable variation in dates amount the various sources resulting in disparities at times. *Val Hilburgh*

Demonstrating at the Folk Music Festival in Glendale



(photo by Val Hilburgh)

Call for Entries for the 2017 Fiber Arts Competition for the Flagstaff Wool and Fiber Festival

Entries categories include handweaving, spinning, knitting, crochet, needlework, felting, surface design, basketry, and sewing.

Deadline for entry is Saturday, June 3 at 10 am

The festival dates are June 3 and 4, 2017 (9 am - 4pm). Kristine Vejar, author of *The Modern Dyer* will be the guest speaker following activities on June 3.

Please visit www.flagwool.com for more fun details on the fiber competition and festival. *Jeanne Trupiano*



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

CALENDAR EVENTS

- Jun 3-4, 2017 **Flag Wool and Fiber Festival** - Flagstaff - <http://www.flagwool.com/>
- Jul 25-27, 2017 **Intermountain Weavers Conference** - Durango, Co. (Registration is open) - <http://www.intermountainweavers.org/>
- Thru Aug 20, 2017 **Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera** - Heard Museum, Phoenix - <http://heard.org/exhibits/frida-kahlo-diego-rivera/>
- Thru Oct 29, 2017 **Dressing Downtown** - Rosson House, Phoenix - <http://heritagesquarephx.org/learn-2/exhibits/>

MOA DEADLINE

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

First Class

c/o Caroline Wise
18660 N Cave Creek Rd. #244
Phoenix, AZ 85024

