



ESTABLISHED 1951

September 9, 2005
Fall 2005
WEAVERS GUILD OF SPRINGFIELD

Addendum to the Fall Newsletter

Kumihimo: The November session on Kumihimo will be a hands-on one. I will give a brief lecture about the history, uses, and techniques of Kumihimo. There will be samples to view.

The hands-on session will be conducted using the disk from Braidershand. They travel well and make wonderful tools for experimenting and sampling braids. The Kumihimo Disk is six inches in diameter and made of 3/8" dense foam. It is sturdy and holds the threads firmly. The cost of the disk with instructions will be \$10 (includes floss and floss keepers).

Please let me know by September 30th if you plan to purchase a disk from as I will be ordering for the group and will bring them prepared to use at the November meeting.

Loris M. Epps

A Challenge for you:

The second floor loom at Craft Adventure was threaded with a pattern called "No Name." Many of you expressed an interest in this pattern and possible ways it could be threaded. Please find below the threading (read right to left).

2 3 4 3 2 3 4 3 2 3 4 3 4 1 4 1 2 1 2 3 2 3 2 1 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 1 2 3 2 3 2 1 2 1 **START**
4 3 2 3 2 1 2 1 4 1 4 3 4 3 4 1 4 1 4 3 4 1 4 3 4 1 4 1 4 3 4 3 4 1 4 1 2 1 2 3 2 3 4 3
4 1 4 3 4 3 2 3 4 3 2 3 4 3 2 3

The Challenge, use the above threading and come up with a possible treadling and bring it to the January meeting. Be adventurous! If you do not have a computer weaving program; there is a free one online at <http://mywebpage.netscape.com/bdkeister/winweave.html> but do not fear, drawdowns via graph paper and hands are always an option. Please bring in all attempts to share with the group.

Holiday Gift Exchange:

It is not too early to start shopping or making your item for the gift exchange—December meeting. The rules: items have to be handmade (handwoven is nice but not necessary and it does not have to be made by you); cost is \$10; please do not put your name on the outside wrapping; and gift must be wrapped. Also, remember to bring items for the gift baskets for our homebound members to the December meeting.

Yarn Sale:

Guild members can bring in items to sale at the November meeting. All items should be priced. Members can also donate items to the Guild for sale and the monies will be in the Guild's Book Fund. Again, items will be on display from 10:00 am – noon and items can be purchased at 12:30 pm. All items not sold are to be claimed by owner at the end of the sale or can be donated and will be given to a local school.

55th Anniversary

Our 55th Anniversary will be the fall of 2006. To that end, we would like to put together a cd of photographs of the past 5 years since our 50th Celebration and we are asking members to bring photos, negative, or other memory devices for compilation. We will discuss this in more detail in the spring. We are looking for someone to coordinate this activity. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Jane. Any ideas are also welcomed.

One note: as part of the 55th Anniversary Celebration we are planning a calendar with handwoven samples. The samples will be 3.5" x 3.5" and depending upon how many calendars we decide to make, the woven requirements could be 16" wide by 2 yards long. The calendar will be a perpetual calendar and there will be 2 versions. Version #1 will include member's birthdays. Both versions will include highlights of the past 55 years, photos, awards, favorite recipes, photo copy of Guild tartan, etc. Please let Loris know if you are willing to weave for this effort or have any ideas for inclusion.

Equipment:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Stored</u>
Carder (donated by Jane Devlin)	Loris
Serger (donated by Linda Simons)	Jo Ann
Belt maker (donated by Pete Galletti)	Loris
4+4 floor loom (donated by Pete Galletti)	Sheri
4-shaft Harrisville floor loom	Nancy M.
4-shaft 14" wooden Structo table loom	Lynette
4-shaft 18" wooden Structo table loom	Ute
4-shaft 8" metal Structo table loom	Jane
4-shaft 8" metal Structo table loom	(donated by Renee Sousa)
2-shaft wooden 12" table loom	Jane (donated by Ute)
Sun catchers	Loris
Fringe Twister	Guild Library

Refreshment Assignments 2005-2006:

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Member Name</u>		
September	Nancy Evans	February	Hilda Guenther
October	Laura Freeman	March	Pat Billingsley
November	Nancy Morin	April	Ute Bargmann
December	Potluck	May	Potluck
January	Lynette Douville		

Sheepgate:

Remember when you are weaving, to put on a little extra and weave an extra item (scarf, runner, placemats, etc.) to send up to Sheepgate in Blandford to sell to help raise money for the Guild. This helps support the Guild and Guild programs.

Newspaper Article:

Photo caption (photo will be available at meeting)

Betsy McKee weaves a new towel for her kitchen. McKee was one of the several members of the Weavers Guild of Springfield whose work was featured at Craft Adventure 2005 last weekend. The Longmeadow resident purchased her first loom several years ago after spying one in an attic of an old Vermont home. (Photo by Dale Oleksak)

Search for new home leads to passion for weaving

By DALE OLEKSAK

Staff Writer

Longmeadow -- When they were searching for a new house that would complement their growing collection of antiques, one Longmeadow family never dreamt that an ordinary house tour could turn into a life-changing experience. The couple, Al and Betsy McKee, who were living in Vermont at the time, had arranged to visit an old farmhouse that had recently been put on the market.

As part of the tour, the real estate agent took them upstairs into the attic. There gathering dust was humongous old loom.

"We started collecting old coverlets at a time when quilts were really hot and we couldn't afford them," said Betsy; remembering the early years of their marriage. As often happens with collectors, they found themselves branching out into related areas. Soon their collection contained not just coverlets, but an assortment of tools from the textile industry.

When the McKees saw the loom, they decided to make an offer; not for the house; but for the loom instead.

The large barn-frame loom was built sometime around 1790. It is, said Betsy, about the size of a king size canopy bed.

"We bought it and put in storage for a couple of year." That is, until they moved to Longmeadow and much larger home.

Even though the loom had been disassembled and packed away in a closet, said Betsy, "My husband was able to figure out how to put it back together."

For the next few years it stood in the master bedroom like a giant piece of sculpture. Although it was beautiful, no one in the family had a clue how to use it. A chance conversation with a woman attending a forum,

however, got Betsy started in something that quickly blossomed into a passion.

"The woman sitting next to me (turned out to be) a weaver from Connecticut. She was a weaving instructor from Guilford. She came to my house and showed me how to use it."

Unlike those used by most modern-day weavers, the McKees' loom is much too large to be considered portable. Its heddles (loop through which every other warp of the warp is thread) are not made of wire, but rather of linen. Trying to learn to weave on a 200-year old machine whose heddles kept breaking became a real challenge. Eventually, the loom became a conversation piece; just something pretty to look at. That is until the McKees' daughter decided that she would like a chenille scarf for Christmas. "I thought, 'I could do that'," said Betsy. With guidance from the weaver from Connecticut, the young Longmeadow mother was able to make four scarves that year – she was hooked.

"I kept making more than I could give away to family, so I decided to do a craft show. Then someone said I should join a guild."

She did.

Today, Betsy McKee is one of 35 area residents that belong to the Weavers Guild of Springfield. The group meets one day a month from about 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The day is divided into two sessions: a morning program that runs from 10 a.m. to noon and an afternoon program that meets from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The group breaks an hour for lunch (12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.). All meetings are held at The Landmark at Monastery

Weavers Guild of Springfield, Fall 2005 Addendum (revised)

Heights, 110 Monastery Avenue, West Springfield. The guild was established in 1951.

An accomplished weaver, McKee currently has six looms in her house.

“People say they follow you home,” she said with a laugh.

What does her family think of her hobby?

“My husband thinks it’s great. He’s my loom mechanic. My kids think it’s a little strange.”

Joining the Guild, she said was a good decision. They are always trying new techniques and learning new things. McKee is especially looking forward to the group’s October 8 meeting when Guild member and Longmeadow resident Eunice Smith is scheduled to offer a program on doubleweaving.

“I keep getting more and more yarn. It’s like getting a new box of crayons. It’s fun to put colors together.”

For more information about the Weavers Guild of Springfield visit their website at www.weaversspring.com or send an e-mail to weaversspring@netscape.net.