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BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD  
Ithaca, New York

Newsletter #40 -- February, 1981  
Edited by Jean Warholio  
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Spring really seems to be on its way! Even though we can expect more cold weather and snow, the signs are there -- aconite blooming, crocuses are up and blooming in the Ithaca area, the big snowdrifts are gone, and lambs are hopping about... By the time you receive this, it will be March and the worst of winter truly over!

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER if you have not renewed membership with us. A red dot on your mailing label will remind you that you have NOT paid yet. We hope you will send in your check and be with us for another good year -- many events are coming up that you won't want to miss! At the risk of sounding like a broken record, dues are as follows: \$4.00 Active, \$6.00 Inactive, \$2.00 full-time Student. Make checks payable to Black Sheep Handspinners Guild and send to: Daisy Kirkpatrick, P.O. Box 100, Slaterville Springs, N.Y. 14881. Membership runs January through December each year.

OOPS! dept. The last newsletter should have been #39, but was typed as #38. Your editor's flashing fingers were ahead of her head...

MARCH 9 Meeting. "Felting" with Nancy Leahy and Doris Brown. 10:30 a.m., Tin Can (near Stewart Park), Ithaca. Bring the following: handcarders, washed wool (card it at home into rolags if you want to), cotton or cotton-Polyester fabric (not new, old sheets will do, but it should be large enough to cover the piece you plan to make on both sides), needle, heavy-duty thread, scissors, thimble, and some ideas as to what you want to make. Your washed wool can be a poor fleece you've wondered what to do with. We will have the Guild's carding machine there to make bigger batts. This will be "hands-on" and you may want to wear old clothes. (Not that any of us look like something out of Vogue at our meetings...) If you have any felt items for show and tell, please bring them!

As usual, bring a mug and lunch -- coffee, tea provided. Anyone interested is welcome, so bring a friend!

We will also need to map out WOOL DAY -- tentatively scheduled for May 24 (Sunday) at the Stewart Park Pavilion (confirmation to be received on that). So be thinking about what you would like to do -- we need plenty of Guild members for our Big Day! One of the people who came last year and was crushed that we did not actually have a sheep-to-shawl contest, has graciously sent us some material. Let's talk about it!!!

MARCH 28 - Saturday Group Meeting. Field trip to sheep farm in Cobleskill area. (Friends of Phil Sponenberg's.) Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Eleanor May's to car-pool. Bring a lunch, hot beverage provided. Interesting sheep farm; should be great fun!

APRIL 13 Meeting. "Flax Processing and Spinning" with Ed and Dora Swart. 10:30 a.m., Tin Can. Ed will instruct us in the processing of flax from plant to fiber; Dora will show us how to dress a distaff and the spinning techniques. Emphasis on spinning. You will need to bring your wheel and, most importantly, a distaff. You can make one if you don't have one: take a 4-prong tree branch crotch, peel it, tie it together at the top so it has a slightly ballooned appearance. (They are pruning at the Cornell orchards if you can't locate a tree branch.) Insert into a sturdy dowel with a base on it -- ideally, the distaff should zig-zag upward (look at pictures of distaffs on old wheels if you don't know, or ask at the next Guild meeting), rather than rise straight up from the base. The crotch part of the distaff should be about shoulder or eye level when you are sitting down. (The way the flax is pulled from the distaff is critical to your spinning.) This should be a good hands-on session for us -- PLAN TO SPIN!!!

Bring your lunch. A friend. Anything you have relating to flax or linen for a show and tell. We will also finalize plans for WOOL DAY... Wheeeeeee!

AD SECTION

THE TABBY SHOP has information on Harrisville Design's new 40" loom. It's heavy enough for making rugs. \$480 plus shipping for the kit. For rag rug weavers and others: cutting paper, leather, vinyl. And there's the new "revolutionary" OLFA ROTARY CUTTER at \$11.90 (including mat to cut on). Replacement blades, 2 for \$3.25. Cotton and linen yarns, reeds, heddles, shuttles, warping frames, etc. always available! Mon.-Thursday, 12 to 5 p.m., 49 German Crossroad, Ithaca. (607/273-3308) 2/3

ANGORA RABBIT WOOL FOR SALE. Softer and warmer than sheep's wool! One ounce will make a baby's hat, 1-1/2 ounces will knit a pair of gloves. Colors available: white, fawn, and blue. \$2.50 per generous ounce. Very clean and without mats. Also selling Bartlett yarn: single-ply (good for warps) and 2-ply. Takes natural dyes beautifully. \$10.00 per pound. Call Erica Rowe (863-3554) or see at Saturday Group meetings. 1/3

PUT A LITTLE CLASS IN YOUR LIFE... Luxuriously beautiful white and tussah silk in combed and carded rovings. Send SASE for our new price list and free samples. Cocoons, waste silk, silk hankies, spindles, and MORE. Silk is perhaps the most beautiful fiber of all... FALLBROOK HOUSE, RD #2 - Box 17, Troy, Pa. 16947. (717/297-2498) 7/9

REMEMBER US for all your fiber needs -- spinners, weavers, quilters, knitters, and rug hookers alike! The new little "mini" Louet wheel is finally in and be sure to try it! Lots of spinnable fibers: alpaca, Karakul, low camel, mohair, rayon, silk, flax, yak, pima cotton, and wool. Sheep stamps, posters. Moshimer rug patterns, quilters' stencils, templates, leather thimbles, marking pens. Knitting patterns, notions, yarns. Dyes for any fiber. Books galore. THE HERITAGE CRAFT SHOP, Dryden, N.Y. (607/844-4381) Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. \*3/3\*

YARN TO EWE has new hours: evenings, 5-8 p.m., and Sat./Sun. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We have yarns for weavers, fleeces, carded New Zealand wool, Beka looms, and other supplies to tantalize you! Our shop also features old and antique items. Handcrafted consignments accepted. Genegantslet Road, Greene, N.Y. 13778. (607/656-8359, Gloria Alamo) \*3/3\*

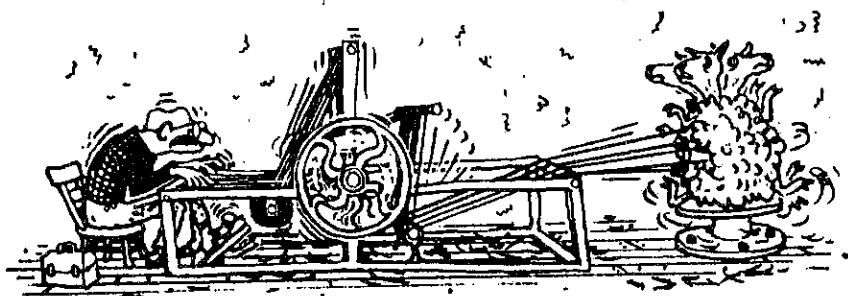
(Asterisks around your ad's number means this is the last run. We appreciate your patronage and hope you will continue advertising with us! Your ad reaches over 120 spinners in the central New York area!)

DON'FORGET - the Guild carding machine and spinning wheel (Ashford) may be rented by members for a nominal charge (or borrowed for demonstrations). Sign-ups for both may be made by calling Marion Wikoff (607/387-5410). And be sure to check out the wonderful books and periodicals in our Guild library, available at each meeting... (BSHG ad)

SPRING HAS SPRUNG, and if you have spinning related items to part with, our ads are CHEAP!!! Costs are 50¢ each or 3 runs/\$1.00 for a four-line ad. Deadlines are the second Monday of each month. Make check payable to Black Sheep Handspinners Guild and send with your ad copy to: Jean Warholic, 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. (Or call for further information, 607/539-7638 evenings.)

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APRIL 25 Meeting - Saturday Group. This will be a field trip to the Fibers '80 Show in Rochester! We will meet at Joyce Scott's in Canandaigua (map to appear in next newsletter), then car-pool it to the show. Doris Mamroe will provide a delicious lunch (!). Joyce will then give us a mini-workshop on color. Sounds like an extra special day!!! (If you need to car-pool from Ithaca, call Jean Currie at 564-9346.) Hope you can come!



Cartoonist: BOOTH. Contributed by Clyde Martin of Phoenix, Maryland.

IF YOU HURRY (see left!), you may still get your entry(s) in for The Mannings' 8th Annual Handweavers' Show to be held April 11 through May 3. At this late date, you may want to call them for the details (717/624-2223), but the entries must be received March 16-30. Show opens April 11. Mailed entries to be returned May 6-10. There are eight categories: weaving in colonial times; comb. of handspun/handdyed/handwoven; handwoven rugs; weaving you can wear; tapestry; weaving for home interiors; reed and splint basketry; fiber manipulation.

**IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE** in the Thistledown Handspinners Seminar -- TAKE NOTE!! It will be October 24 and 25, instead of in September as originally announced. To avoid conflicting with other events (Natural Colored Wool Growers and The Eastern Great Lakes Fiber Conference), as well as to see as many of our beaming, eager faces as possible, they have made this date change... (Thank you, Thistledown! This promises to be a BUSY fall; that date change will help. We will pray for good weather as suggested!) Various programs will be given on Saturday, with Sunday being the flax and fashion show day. More information will be out in early summer -- we are sending them our BSHG mailing list (so that even some of you who don't renew will reap the benefits!) and you should receive a copy. As in years past, it is a wonderful way to learn from all sorts of programs and people as well as to meet spinners from all over the Northeast...

**THE TED CARSON WORKSHOP**, sponsored by Cherry Valley Country Spinners, is slated for May 12 and 13. Workshop will be limited to 20-22 participants. CVCS members may begin registering now; non-CVCS members may register after April 1 -- first come, first served. Fees: CVCS members, \$32.00 plus \$9 materials. Non-CVCS members, \$38.00 plus \$9. A \$10 deposit will hold your spot; refundable if cancellations received by April 5. Ted Carson is a fabulous spinner/artist. The workshop will be on **EXOTIC FIBERS!!!** Make checks payable to Cherry Valley Country Spinners and send to: Sunny Bixby, Lowell-Greenway Road, Verona, N.Y. 13035.

There is a possibility that Thistledown will also have a day or two with him as a workshop -- a general spinning workshop dealing with different kinds of yarns, blending, etc. Plans are being formulated -- possible dates are May 14-15 -- fee looks like about \$5-8 with T-down Guild picking up the balance. If this sounds more like the speed you are going, call Jean Steiber immediately (607/334-3089) so that they know they can count on you. If they don't get a positive response, they can't afford to bring him down.

**WELCOME BACK** to Jean Currie from her glorious skiing trip to Romania!! It was somewhat subdued, thanks to bouts with the flu, but she and her husband seem to have survived admirably!

**IS ANYONE PLANNING TO GO TO THE MidAtlantic Fiber Conference** in July/August? Please let Jean know when you know (oops, Jean Warholic, that is). We'd like to have some reactions from you when you get back... If you are still pondering, but haven't written for your detailed information yet, **DO SO**: Lois Breslauer, 657 Shadowlawn Drive, Westfield, NJ 07090. It definitely sounds exciting! Unfortunately, for many of us with farms, gardens, etc., it is not a time of leisure...

THE SPRING 1981 listing for Ithaca Area Textile Groups and Events is now out. If you have not seen a copy, Jean Warholic will have them at our next meeting. Or send an SASE #10 (business size) envelope to her at 280 Ringwood Road, Freeville, N.Y. 13068. The list gives you dates and events for the spinning guild, quilters, weavers, etc.

WE DID WELL at the INSULATION show on Feb. 28/Mar.1. Hope you had a chance to get to it and look around. All the textile guilds in the area got together and presented it, thanks to sponsorship of the Ithaca Textile Arts Guild (and in particular, Liese Bronfenbrenner and Edith Johnston). There were some GORGEOUS pieces, and what a good opportunity for all of us to see what others have been doing...

YOU MUST, YOU MUST go see the fabulous exhibit, "Our Shining Heritage," at the Roberson Center in Binghamton. The last day is March 15. Admission is free (except for a few events where a modest fee is charged). March 8 (Sunday) afternoon is the Polish Festival, with people wearing costume, dancing, films, crafts, etc. March 15 is the Slav Festival, with the same emphasis, plus food and goodies. It is a WONDERFUL exhibit, with many pieces you will probably never have a chance to see again in your lifetime, and some very special photographs of activities (including flax preparation, spinning, etc.). The bobbin lace is exquisite. The colors are spectacular. There are a variety of techniques shown in the making of the textiles. And it has to be one of the best displayed shows you will see in a long time...

If driving in Binghamton gives you heart failure, the museum is easily found: take Rt. 81 south, take Exit 5 (Front Street) and stay on Front Street until you see the big banner outside the Roberson (perhaps 15-20 blocks off Rt. 81?). If you miss it, you come to a stoplight and Front Street dead-ends. If Jean Warholic, who is timid about driving anywhere bigger than Ithaca, can do it, YOU CAN. The whole trip will take you about 1-1/4 hour from Ithaca. AND IT IS WELL WORTH IT -- TRULY, TRULY!!!

It was good to see Alice Wood at the INSULATION show -- she seems to be feeling better and was glad to hear from all her friends...

The Run of the Mill book that was described in the last newsletter (and you saw at Rock Day) is still available. Jean Warholic located four copies and will bring them to the Monday meeting (9th). The first four people that press \$15 into her hot little hands get the book... (Or call her and reserve your copy.) If there is enough of a demand, she will order again.

LIST OF OVERDUE BOOKS is diminishing. Please do bring in yours on time! Jean Currie has volunteered to be librarian (hooray!) and we should get in gear with that system quickly... Get recommendations for books, renewals to Jean for our collection!

DO GET TO "The Way They Looked: Visual History of Dress in Tompkins County" -- a lovely exhibit at the DeWitt Historical Society, in the Clinton House on Cayuga Street. The curators for it were Elsie McMurry and Mary Ryan and they certainly did a good job! Hours for the museum: 12:30-5:00 p.m., Tues. thru Sat.

TWO MORE IMPORTANT DATES COMING UP -- keep your calendar out... Saturday, March 28, from 10:00 to 3:00, there will be an open house at Sunny Bixby's. There will be a shearer there from Maryland working on Sunny's sheep. Bring your wheels if you'd like to. And take a gander at that terrific carding machine! Then, on April 3 and 4, Sunny will have a rainbow day. From 10:00 until 4:00, you may bring dyed or colored fleece of less than the 20-lb. minimum and have it carded on Sunny's machine. (She says that less than a pound will be lost on the carders, so please think ahead! You have ample dyeing time, between now and then!)

THE NATURAL CLOTTED WOOL GROWERS ASSOCIATION's annual meeting will be held Sept. 26-27 near Albany, N.Y. Sheep and fleece shows and sales, sheep dog trials, guild demonstrations, and sales of handspinning supplies will be featured. Erica Rowe will keep us

posted and we will relay information along... It is good to see how active the group is becoming and the meeting in this area should give it a sizable boost!

THE GUILD'S BOX of extra handouts, newsletters, etc. will be at the Monday meeting -- do check to see if you need any extra copies of things. If you know of anyone who would like to receive a sample newsletter and membership information, please tell Jean Warholic and she will send it out promptly. (We will get the box to a Saturday Group meeting too, before long.)

DEMONSTRATION REQUESTS are beginning to trickle in (it must be spring!)... Please help out and when Marion Wikoff or Maria Steve call you to demonstrate, say yes! It is always more fun to spin with someone else, so team up with someone (and car-pool?) and have an extra nice day of it...

THE 1981 MEMBERSHIP LIST is enclosed. If you have any corrections or whatever, please see Jean Warholic. An up-date will come out sometime after Wool Day. Keeping up with 100 people is no mean feat, although Daisy Kirkpatrick and Jean made a real effort to make this one accurate, and so check your listing to make sure...

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER: April 13 meeting. It should go into the mail sometime shortly after that (in time for the Saturday Group's map and meeting information).

See you at the felting session on Monday!!! Sorry this newsletter is so late in getting out -- February was a very hectic month for your editor...

-- Jean Warholic

P.S. It was good to see Sally Marx at the last meeting. Hope we see her again soon!

P.S.S. Almost a year ago, we ran a brain-teaser of a puzzle that Gretchen Sachse sent in for the newsletter. Gretchen and Erica Rowe were the only ones to have gotten the answer (shame, shame to the rest of us!). We are re-running it herewith, but with the answer, too, for us weak-minded individuals. (This was an 1845 school exercise, by the way.)

PUZZLE: A Farmer, being asked how many sheep he had, answered that he had them in five fields. In the first, he had 1/4 of his flock; in the second, 1/6; in the 3rd, 1/8; in the 4th, 1/12; and in the 5th, 450. How many had he?

ANSWER: 1200 sheep.

Let N be the total number of sheep in the farmer's flock. They were in five fields as follows: 1st = 1/4N, 2nd = 1/6N, 3rd = 1/8N, 4th = 1/12N, 5th = 450. The sum of all these must be total N. Hence

$$N + \frac{N}{4} + \frac{N}{6} + \frac{N}{8} + \frac{N}{12} + 450 = N$$

Solve for N:  $5/8N + 450 = N$  or  $3/8N = 450$ . Hence  $N = \frac{450 \times 8}{3} = 1200$  sheep

To check: 1st field, 1/4(1200) = 300	=	300
2nd field, 1/6(1200) = 200	=	200
3rd field, 1/8(1200) = 150	=	150
4th field, 1/12(1200) = 100	=	100
5th field, = 450	=	450
1200 total		

See! Easy -- and your children probably had it figured out long before you did!