



BLACK SHEEP HANDSPINNERS GUILD

P.O. Box 6701
Ithaca, NY 14851

Newsletter 84 - Dec. 1985

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A short newsletter to end the year. Everyone - your editor included - is too busy at this time of year to bring up much "news". Our guild has seen many new members this year. The craft & art of handspinning are far from dead and many are turning what was first a hobby into a business. It still seems to me that the key to success as a spinner is 1/ in making yarns that are entirely different from what is available commercially (i.e. different texture, color or fiber blend) and 2/ in marketing!

There also appears to be more and more interest in natural fibers other than wool. Considering the prices of yarns made of various wool blends or of other natural fibers, there a is a real opportunity there for the handspinner, a better way for her to compete, at least price-wise, with commercial yarns. Taking this into account we have ourselves added other fiber animals (angora rabbits & angora goats) to our sheep flock. If you or your friends have successfully integrated other fiber animals on your farm and/or marketed "exotic" yarns, let us know about it. It would make interesting reading for all members.

DECEMBER BSHG MEETING

Saturday, December 14 at Varna. This will be our annual holiday party with a dish-to-pass lunch and will be held from 10AM-4PM. Please bring your own table service, a dish-to-pass, your wheel & lots of show & tell. We will have the big room and as an added feature Tina Fenn, her husband, & Kathy Bishop will provide chamber music! We are looking forward to a large turnout! We'll also have our elections during the meeting.

A REPORT ON THE TWO NOVEMBER BSHG MEETINGS

On Saturday, November 16, a group of guild members went to the Cornell Sheep Barns. Brian Magee, the Cornell Sheep Farm Manager answered many questions and took our group on a thorough tour of the barns which everyone found interesting and enjoyable in spite of the cold weather.

On Monday, November 18, 8 spinners went to Helen Kiker's and had an enjoyable show & tell and spin and chat.

ADVERTISEMENTS

SPINNERS: Did you know that a properly restored antique flax wheel can spin wool as well as or better than many of the new wheels? The cost of a restored antique flax wheel is no more and sometimes less than a quality new wheel. Antique wheels not only retain their value but appreciate considerably in value over the years and can later be sold to non-spinners as valuable decorative antiques. The heart of any Saxony type spinning wheel is in the flyer assembly. A new, balanced flyer, in appearance like the original, and custom-built to fit an old spinning wheel costs less than \$100. Talk to us about antique wheels for spinning. Bill and Vicky Ralph, Rome, Pa. 18837. Tel. 717/247-7175. 10/12

Wool Picker for sale: \$125.00. Almost new, includes doffer. Call 315/685-5529. 1/3

Come to THE WOOLERY for your spinning, weaving & knitting needs. We have Charkha wheels from India in stock again: \$49 for the book-size & \$55 for the Attache. We have Ashford, Louet & Peacock spinning wheels, Clemes & Clemes & Louet drumcarders, many accessories, natural dyes, mordants & Kiton dyes in 12 colors, many books. Looms from Beka, Harrisville, Leclerc & Olimakra. Studio knitting machines. Wool, cotton & linen yarns. Fleeces & fibers ready for spinning: domestic wool top, domestic carded wool, angora wool, mohair, alpaca, silk, flax, ramie & cotton. Gifts for the sheep lover include sheep stamps, T-shirts, slippers (all sizes), buttons, tote bags & much more. Also fencing & sheep supplies: Electronet, "Quik" fence, hi-tensile & New Zealand energizers; sheep chairs, shepherd crooks, hoof trimmers, elastrators, marking harnesses & more. For sale: 1 very nice twin-born registered Border Leicester ram lamb w/long lustrous wool; 1 triplet white reg. Finn ram lamb. Marianne & Tim Horchler, THE WOOLERY, R.D. 1, Genoa, NY 13071. 315/497-1542. 3/3

Black second generation ram lamb for sale, purebred Corriedale. Very friendly and good natured. \$50.00. Call 315/685-5529. 1/3

WOOL PROCESSING SYSTEMS

The wool industry consists of two major divisions, apparel and carpet. The apparel trade is quite separate from the carpet trade. Apparel wool is generally much finer than carpet wool and would not be suitable for use in carpets. On the other hand carpet wool generally would not be suitable for use in most forms of apparel. Most of the wool produced in this country is apparel wool.

There are two systems used in the manufacture of apparel wool fabrics. The two systems, known as worsted and woolen, differ with respect to raw materials used, manufacturing processes, and the types of yarn and cloth produced. Below are two diagrams which show the difference in the manufacturing process between woolen and worsted.

Worsted yarn is tightly woven into strong, smooth yarn. This yarn is then manufactured into products such as men's suits. Woolen yarns are typically manufactured into softer types of cloths such as sweaters and blankets.

The effect of woolen and worsted yarns in fabrics may be best demonstrated through the charts below.

WOOLEN

Yarns have medium to low twist.
Less strength and bulkier.
Softer, rougher texture.
Fuzzier surface.
Do not hold shape as well as worsteds.
Becomes saggy at areas of stress.
Breaking point relatively low.
Widely used for blankets and other soft fabrics.

WORSTED

Yarns have medium to high twist.
Lighter weight.
Smoother surface.
Do not sag.
Takes and holds a press better.
Longer wearing and stronger.
Widely used for suiting for men and women.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Carbonizing: Removal of burrs or foreign matter from raw wool by immersing the wool in sulfuric acid, drying, baking and then neutralizing.

Carding: A process which lays fibers nearly parallel to form a soft rope called sliver.

Combing: A process which separates short and long fibers. This process ensures that the fibers are laid parallel to produce a combed sliver called top.

Drawing: A process which blends the wool to ensure even quality.

Finish: A general term which covers the treatment of a fabric to give it a desired surface effect such as napping.

Knitting: Produces fabric by interlocking a series of loops of one or more yarns.

Piece-dyeing: Dyeing of fabrics in the piece after weaving or knitting.

Scouring: A washing process that removes impurities such as wool grease in a mild detergent solution followed by clear-water rinses.

Sliver: A continuous strand or rope of parallel wool fibers with no twist applied.

Spinning: Insertion of twist into yarn in order to give strength to the finished yarn.

Stock-dyeing: Dyeing of fiber prior to yarn spinning.

Top: A continuous, untwisted strand of combed-wool fibers of equal length running parallel to one another. It comes in clubbing or sliver form and is wound in a ball effect at least a foot in diameter.

Twisting: 2 or more yarns plied together to increase the diameter, tensile strength and quality of the yarn for a particular use.

Weaving: Produces cloth by interlacing two sets of yarn at right angles. Threads running lengthwise are the warp, while threads running crosswise in the loom form the weft.

Yarn-dyeing / Dyeing: Dyeing yarn in skeins before or weaving, usually in a solid shade.

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