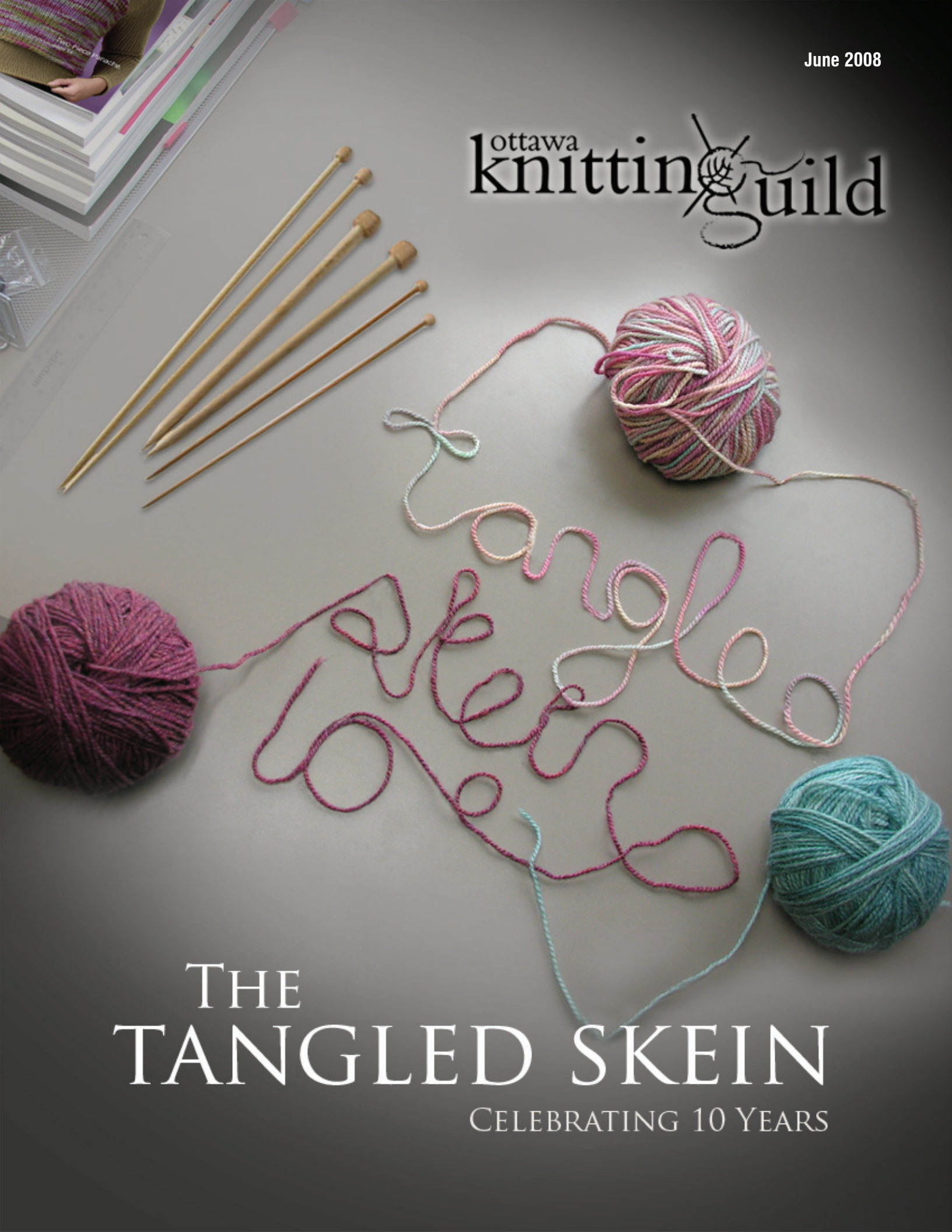


June 2008

Ottawa
knitting Guild



THE TANGLED SKEIN

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

FROM NANCY'S NEEDLES

This 10th Anniversary memento edition of The Tangled Skein celebrates the continued success of the Ottawa Knitting Guild. From a beginning of three knitters meeting in Barbara Bondar's living room in 1994, almost 200 guild members now "meet, learn and share" in the Banquet Hall of Woodroffe United Church. And what an amazing bunch of knitters we are! Women and men, girls and boys - we have members of all ages, interests and abilities. Our guild serves the greater Ottawa/Gatineau area, but also draws members from farther afield, such as Rockland to the east and Perth to the west, Brockville to the south and St-Sixte, Quebec to the north.



Nancy Moynihan, OKG President

It's always interesting to look back and see how things have developed - where we've come from and where we're going - and a review of The Tangled Skein reveals much about the Guild. I was a member of the Ottawa Knitting Guild (called The Knitting Guild (Ottawa Area) then) in February 1997 when the inaugural issue of the newsletter was published. Victoria Leslie, a co-editor of the first issue (along with Lilianne Proulx), came up with the name for the newsletter, The Tangled Skein. The first issue contained a message from the President, a request for volunteers for two sheep shearing events, information about upcoming meetings, a review of a weekend knitting retreat, a video review and some information gleaned from the internet. It is a true measure of the success of the guild that 10 years after publishing the first issue of the newsletter, Victoria Leslie is not just an active member of the guild, but part of the team putting together this memento issue.

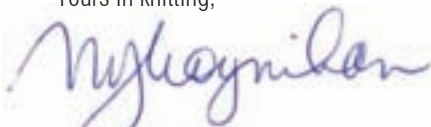
Ten years have passed, and though The Tangled Skein has changed from a quarterly print publication to a mostly monthly, mostly e-publication, much remains the same. In the recent May 2008 issue, we still have a message from the President, a request for volunteers for the Sheep Shearing Festival, a request for volunteers for the Executive Committee, information about upcoming meetings, details about Maureen Mason-Jamieson's Dorset buttons workshop and an upcoming field trip to Perth, and LOTS of information gleaned from the internet in the Web Sightings and Jana's Jems columns. Of course,

there is so much more, and over the years our newsletters have also contained numerous technical tips, patterns, knitting insights, charity knitting ideas, poems, literature quotes, local and distant knitting store profiles and even recipes from our members! One of the things I love about the new e-format is the ability to directly link from the articles about internet resources to the website content the article talks about, and the living colour pictures of knitting projects, samples and show and tell items.

Now knitting is all about numbers, and a review of the newsletters over this period reveals much about the guild. Our membership has increased from 3 to 190 knitters. We've had 4 presidents since the inception of the guild, and our founding president Barbara Bondar even came back for a second round. We've had 32 different individuals on the executive, many of them for more than one term and in more than one position. Did you know that we have had over 25 workshops during this period, given by both guild members and knitters and designers from farther afield, and we've also had over 20 guest speakers! It was interesting to take note of the fact that we've invited Lucy Neatby to present workshops and speak at the guild meeting 4 times during this period. We've had 6 knitting exhibitions and dozens of field trips. And let's not forget about the knitting challenges - there have been 7 to date, covering mug bags, bags, scarves, toys, pillows, hats and socks. We began collecting knitting books in 1999 and now we have over 300 books and magazines in our guild library.

Congratulations to the Memento Committee of Jennifer Hoy, Ann Thacker, Victoria Leslie, and Anne Goodwin for creating this keepsake edition of the newsletter, a magnificent tribute to our guild and its membership. I look forward to many more years of continued success of The Tangled Skein and the Ottawa Knitting Guild.

Yours in knitting,



Nancy Moynihan
President, Ottawa Knitting Guild

We hope you enjoy this edition of The Tangled Skein, which includes newly written articles about the guild, members and activities, as well as articles extracted from previous issues. Congratulations to the Memento Committee of Jennifer Hoy, Ann Thacker, Victoria Leslie and Anne Goodwin.



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HISTORY OF THE OTTAWA KNITTING GUILD

By: Victoria Leslie

On January 31, 1994 an idea became a reality. Three women met in a living room in Nepean and our guild was born. To quote our archivist Peggy Holton: "From the beginning the guild's aim was to promote good design, creativity and use of natural fibres." Looking around today, I think that that aim has been fulfilled and continues to be a part of what the guild is 14 years later.

Today the motto is "Meet, Learn, Share" – perhaps a simpler version of the original aim, but still true to the founder's spirit and intent.

MEET

The guild started by meeting in members' homes on the fourth Monday evening of the month. The venue changed every month, with a different member hosting. Attendance grew rapidly from 3 at the first meeting to 8 at the second meeting up to 12 by November of the first year. That number made living rooms a little cramped so on October 30, 1995 we moved to spacious new digs at the Nepean Museum. The price was right as the rooms were still free and there was room for expansion into the other meeting rooms if we needed it.

The guild continued to grow. In April of 1996, at a special meeting, it was decided that the time had come for an informal executive, and to start charging dues so that professional speakers could be brought in. A more formal method of conducting the meetings was also discussed.

The first President of the guild was appointed at that time - an original founding member, Barbara Bondar (only appropriate as she had been leading the guild from its inception). Other positions in the informal executive included Treasurer, Secretary, Telephone Coordinator and Field Trip Organizer.

In September of 1996, the first dues were collected - \$1.00 from each member attending the meeting. By December 1996, the guild



*1st OKG Meeting
L to R: Elizabeth Watt, Barbara Bondar
Melaine Lukack*

had reached 30 members with an average of 25 people attending each meeting - we had outgrown our meeting place again. In March, 1997 we moved to the Heritage Lounge of the Nepean Sportsplex.

April 1998 was the first Vendor's Marketplace - a very successful meeting that led to an annual Vendor's Marketplace in the fall.

In June 1998, the guild elected its first formal executive:

President: Elizabeth Payne

Past President: Barbara Bondar

Treasurer: Gina Smart

Membership: Joan Kidd

Field Trips: Lucette da Cunha and Jacqueline Bieler

Newsletter: Victoria Leslie and Lillianne Proulx

Telephone: Agnes Fraser

Executive Assistants: Debbie Wilson, Monique Perrier, Nancy Moynihan, Roisin Hanlan

Membership dues were increased to \$2.00 per month and it was the first time we started using name tags. The original ones were hand lettered using the guild logo developed by Gaye Stretton.

In September 2000, we had to move again! This time to our present location: the Banquet Hall of Woodroffe United Church which is again bursting its capacity.

Not all the meetings were held at the "official" sites. For a few years we had a lovely potluck supper in May at Joan Kidd's where the highlight of the evening was the stroll/guided tour through her spectacular lilac garden.

The growth of the guild has continued over the years, and from the original 3 in January 1994 to 172 members in January 2008. And the number continues to rise as more like-minded people learn about our Guild.

LEARN

I have always found learning to be a fun aspect of my knitting addiction, whether it be from my own mistakes during a project, from other guild members or from the wonderful guest speakers the guild has brought in over the years.

When the guild started back in 1994 under the direction of Barbara Bondar, it was meant to be a place where knitters could expand their knowledge, and not just be a "knitting circle". From the beginning, techniques have been discussed, books and magazines have been reviewed, and when a member has hit a rather knotty problem with their project, there has been someone there to help them solve it. This emphasis on learning and helping has continued throughout our history.

The topics we have covered over the years, some of them maybe even more than once as our membership has continued to grow and expand, have been diverse. For most of our meetings, our own guild members have provided the expertise for the technique discussion and the topics have included:

- how to make a garter stitch chicken from a square
- taking body measurements to get a custom fit
- styles of ribbing
- two-handed colour knitting
- fibres other than wool
- spinning
- vests
- pockets
- intarsia
- Fair Isle knitting
- lace
- cables
- use of crochet hooks in knitting
- dying
- journals for knitters



In 1995, the guild brought in its first guest speaker, Katherine Vardy who gave an interesting and fun presentation on South American hats, their history and cultural relevance, and the great trip she had touring South America. Other guest speakers have included Shirl the Purl, Cindy Nichols of the Knitting Guild of Canada (now defunct), and Cynthia MacDougall of the Canadian Guild of Knitters,

Originally the workshops put on by the guild were modest. For example, the first workshop was held in a guild member's home using a video by Meg Swanson on pillow blankets (1996). Although we've outgrown the modest numbers these first workshops could take, the guild is still active in providing many opportunities to learn including the Knitting Retreats held at the Nepean Museum and the Knit and Learn groups. In the spirit of learning more about the craft we love, the Guild has brought in many designers for day or weekend workshops. They have then become the guest speakers for the following guild meeting. Professionals the guild has brought to us are Lucy Neatby, Jo Crivellaro, Sally Melville, Annabelle Dawson the Queen of Entrelac, Debbie New, Mabel Corlett, Maureen Mason-Jamieson, Joanne Yordanou and Sandy Terp. The topics offered and covered by these women are myriad and I have never attended a workshop where I have not had a revelation or a forehead-slapping "Why didn't I think of that - it's so simple!!!" moment. I also love the feeling of walking away from one of these workshop weekends with my head so stuffed full of ideas and inspiration that it takes a few days to settle back into the real world of work and home.



Video Workshop (1996)

The Design Challenges put on by the guild have also provided us with a chance to learn and to share. The challenges usually incorporate at least 2 categories - original design and knit from a pattern. There may also be a third category - based on a pattern but with enough changes to make it uniquely the knitter's. The creativity and imagination of fellow Guild members is sometimes humorous, often surprising, and always inspirational.

SHARE

I believe knitters are born to share - at least when it comes to the topic of knitting: what we're working on, what yarns/fibres we like to work with, what we'd like to do, and especially passing on the knowledge of our craft. The Ottawa Knitting Guild has encouraged this trait over the years. We have all stood up in front of our fellow guild members during Show and Tell with something we've accomplished. It's great to have such an appreciative audience for your work - be it your very first scarf, pair of mittens, pair of socks, an intricately cabled sweater, soft as eiderdown baby blanket or lace shawl. Our fellow knitters can appreciate the love and care that was put into every stitch as well as the agony and frustration when things didn't go smoothly.

I guess the introduction of the Newsletter in February of 1997 also falls under sharing. As the guild got larger, it became a vehicle to provide information about future meetings and events and to let people know what had gone on at the past meetings in case they had missed one.

The guild has shared our expertise and love of knitting with the general public of Ottawa through displays and events around the Valley.

Displays

- 1996 - our first knitting display at the Nepean Centrepointe Library
- 1997 - knitting exhibit at the library in Bells Corners (May) and Emerald Plaza (November)
- 1998 - March and held over into April - our first major exhibit at the Nepean Museum titled "Knitted Treasures Past and Present" opened by author Shirley Scott aka Shirl the Purl
- 1999 - May and June - exhibit of Entrelac in the Atrium at Ben Franklin Place
- 2000 - April - Ruth Dickinson Library and November - display of socks, mittens, scarves and hats at Carlingwood Library
- 2003 - February and March - "Contemporary Knitting" at the

Nepean Museum opened by Cynthia MacDougall, Canadian Guild of Knitters

Events

1996 - workshop for children at Nepean Museum during March Break (we taught them how to make the garter stitch chicken)

Annual participation in:

- Bytown Days (since 2001)
- The Sheep Shearing Festival at the Agricultural Museum
- Fibre Fest in Almonte (since 2001)
- Have had a table in the 2002 Inspirations Needlecraft Show
- Started sponsoring annual Knit-Outs at the Agricultural Museum in 2006
- Community Knitting - teddy bears for the Alzheimer Society, mittens for snowsuit fund, premie knits for CHEO, Project Linus and more

Knitters can't help getting together to share as shown by the Stitch Doctor sessions before meetings, the Knit and Learn groups, knitting circles for community knitting, and local get-togethers at coffee shops (and even a few bars) just because we like to.

We have also shared our passion through the field trips the guild has put together. These normally take place on a Saturday, include lunch at a local restaurant and have melted a whole lot of credit card plastic over the years. Field trips have been to local yarn shops and local fibre producers that have alpacas, Icelandic sheep and angora goats. We even had a field trip out to Canaan Farm for a pot luck lunch and get-together with a field trip of knitters from Toronto. And one trip took us to Montreal. The field trips are always fun, sometimes informative, and definitely expanding to the stash, the credit card balance, and maybe the waistline depending on the restaurant.



However, I have to admit that one of my favourite ways the guild lets me share my love of knitting is the yarn stash reduction sale. It's a great way to clean up your own stash to make room for the absolutely-must-have yarn you found in someone else's pile.

For me, it has been a wonderful 14 years in the guild. The guild has grown and changed since 1994. Each successive President has put their stamp on the guild while staying true to the original aim of Barbara Bondar, Elizabeth Watt, and Melanie Lukach. Although not one of the original 3, I have been a member since we were meeting in people's living rooms. Finding other people who shared my love of sticks and string and the endless possibilities was something wonderful those many years ago, and I hope the guild is as welcoming and inspirational to all the new members who walk through our doors for the next 114 years as it was to me back then.



SMALL ROUND FELTED BOWL

By: Paula Smith (February 2007)
www.hiredhands.ca

Yarn: 1 80 g ball (~100 m) Patons SWS

Needles: 5 mm (40 cm circular and set of double-pointed needles)

Unfelted gauge: 17 sts/10 cm; 22 rows/10 cm

Finished size (unfelted): folded in half, about 8 in (20 cm) across,
7.5 in (19 cm) long

Finished size (felted): about 4.25 in (11 cm) diameter at the top and
3 in (7.5 cm) deep

(Note: Kfb means knit into the front and back of the next stitch, aka inc 1)

CO 60 stitches. Knit 3 garter stitch ridges. (This will be 5 or 6 rounds, alternating a knit rnd and a purl rnd, depending on what cast-on you used.)

Increase: (K2, Kfb) 20 times (80 stitches).

Work 12 rounds even.

Decrease (change to dpn's when necessary):

(K6, K2 tog) 10 times (70 stitches); Knit 4 rounds even.

(K5, K2 tog) 10 times (60 stitches); Knit 4 rounds even.

(K4, K2 tog) 10 times (50 stitches); Knit 4 rounds even.

(K3, K2 tog) 10 times (40 stitches); Knit 1 round even.

(K2, K2 tog) 10 times (30 stitches); Knit 1 round even.

(K1, K2 tog) 10 times (20 stitches); Knit 1 round even.

(K2 tog) 10 times (10 stitches).

Cut yarn leaving about a 6 inch (15 cm) tail. Thread tail through remaining stitches twice, and pull tight. Sew in all ends.

Felt until done. Dry. Trim ends if necessary.



CHARITY OR COMMUNITY KNITTING

By: Nancy Moynihan

Since the guild began, members have been knitting a variety of items to be donated to charity, both within our immediate community and beyond. One or two members of the guild have usually come forward to act as Charity or Community Knitting Coordinators.



In 1999, guild members Joan Kidd and Debbie Wilson launched a project to knit caps for premature babies for Guardian Angels; blankets for children at CHEO for Project Linus; and any item of clothing for children and adults (such as mittens, socks, sweaters, hats, scarves) for the Snowsuit Fund. A table at the guild meetings was devoted to this project, and members were able to obtain information, patterns, yarn with which to knit and a place to drop off completed items. In the 1998-1999 guild year, guild members knit and donated 14 blankets to Project Linus, 16 toques for premature babies to The Guardian Angels and 1 sweater to The Snowsuit Fund. In 2003, guild President Christine Walter initiated a mitten campaign for the Snowsuit Fund, and challenged all members to knit and donate at least one pair of mittens, so that as a guild we would be able to donate 100 pairs of mittens - and we surpassed that goal. Mittens have been a mainstay ever since, and in 2007 we donated over 200 pairs of mittens to the Snowsuit Fund, mostly thanks to Daphne Edmunds, who has been a one-person mitten knitting factory!

Members of the guild have also shown that they like to knit toys! In 2001, there was a request from the Salvation Army Christmas project for members to knit bears for residents of two seniors' residences, in 2002, there was a request for teddy bear donations from the Alzheimer Society of Ottawa-Carleton, and in 2004 there was a request from "Teddies for Tragedies" (which is a division of Doctors Without Borders) so that doctors who treat children in Third World countries could give each child their own teddy to take home and keep. Members of the guild responded to these requests with an amazing array of bears

of all shapes, colours and sizes! We've also knit Izzy Dolls (small rag dolls) to provide comfort to children in war-torn countries.

In 2002, there was also a request for animal shelter blankets from the Humane Society of Ottawa-Carleton and in 2006, the guild donated two beautiful felted baskets filled with other knitted items including scarves, mittens, hats, washcloths, etc., to help the Alzheimer's Society of Ottawa annual Walk for Memories fundraiser raffle.

Reaching out beyond our borders, in 2002 knitters in the guild began knitting blankets, hats, mittens, socks, and sweaters for displaced Afghan families for the "Afghans for Afghans" humanitarian and educational people-to-people project. In 2006, we began knitting for two very special projects for The Warm Hands Network: families in Mongolia (the Dulaan Project) and the Innu of Labrador (the Next Generation Guardians). Guild members also donated two carloads of items to the Mully Children's Family in Kenya, a Christian rehabilitation centre for street children affected by abuse, abandonment and neglect, and who suffer from or have been left orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

In April 2004 guild member Carla Burns wrote a great article which encouraged members of the Guild to support the Community Knitting Program, which I have extracted here:

Do you want to get that warm and fuzzy feeling by knitting for someone



else? Consider knitting for our community - there are many worthy causes just waiting to receive your hand knit items. Knit any item that catches your fancy - this is a good chance to be creative.

How you can help:

- Knit one or more items during the year. Use yarn from your stash or from the Knitting Guild's stash of donated yarn.
- Donate your hand knit item to the Community Knitting Program. We will distribute the garments or toys to the appropriate organization.
- If you know of a group that could benefit from our Community Knitting Program, please let us know.
- Volunteer for the Community Knitting Program. We need volunteers to organize and participate in this program.

To help you find time to do community knitting, below are some suggestions:

- Designate one day of the week, one week of the month, or one month of the year to knit for others. It's a great way to use up your stash (makes room for more yarn). One member does all her community knitting in May - find a time that works for you.
- Use your vacation time to knit mittens, hats, socks or scarves. These items are very transportable and don't require a great deal of concentration.
- Every time you finish a project, use the leftover yarn to knit an item. This is an easy way to manage your stash.
- Experiment with a new technique or pattern - this is an opportunity to expand your skill level.
- Distract yourself from a difficult project by knitting a simple pair of mittens or a hat - you'll return to your old project refreshed and more relaxed.

We hope that you are inspired to knit for our community.



PURLS OF WISDOM AN EASIER WAY TO “READ” A FAIR ISLE CHART

By: Debbie Wilson (March 1999)



This is provided by Barbara Bondar. I've often done something similar in my head but never thought to translate it to a written form. In order to make this method work, you need to know the colour of the first stitch. This method is best demonstrated with an example.

Suppose we have a fair isle chart that looks like:

XXOXXXOXO

...where X is one colour and O is another colour. You could compact this to read:

2 1 3 1 1 1

...which means, knit 1 of the O colour, knit 1 of the X colour, knit 1 of the O colour, knit 3 of the X colour, knit 1 of the O colour and then knit 2 of the X colour (*remember you read charts from right to left). If you wanted to compact this even further, write it as: 2 1 3 3.

The numbers that are underlined mean that you are knitting that number of stitches in one colour. The numbers that are not underlined mean you are alternating colours with each stitch for a total of that number of stitches. So, if we read this from right to left again, the rightmost 3 would mean to knit 3 stitches, each in an alternate colour (knit 1 in colour O, then 1 in colour X, and one in colour O). The second 3 is underlined so it says to knit 3 stitches in X. Then comes a 1 meaning knit 1 stitch in O and finally we have an underlined 2 to tell us to knit 2 stitches in colour X.

FROM THESE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS...

By: Ann Thacker



*Barbara Bondar, OKG founder
and first President*

“Do you like to knit?” Fifteen years ago, Barbara Bondar placed these words in a handwritten notice at the Nepean Public Library. After 35 years of teaching elementary school, she was looking for a new challenge in retirement. She hoped to meet other knitters who would be interested in getting together to form a guild. Two university students answered her ad, the three met in Barbara’s living room, and so the Knitting Guild (Ottawa Area) began.

At that first meeting in January 1994, Barbara laid out her plans for the group. “I didn’t want it to be just another ‘stitch and bitch’—there had to be an educational part to our meetings,” she explains. “I wanted for us to learn about different types of knitting, about design, that sort of thing. It wasn’t very democratic to start with!”

Word of mouth soon spread the news, and Barbara continued to canvas knitters wherever she found them. Every month a few more women signed up. When the membership grew to 12—too many to fit comfortably in a living room—the Guild moved to new quarters at the Nepean Museum. “They gave us a meeting room for free,” Barbara recalls. “We later put on a month-long knitting exhibit there that was a huge success. The staff told us it was their best-attended exhibit ever.”

At 24 members, the OKG moved to the Nepean Sportsplex and

formed an executive. Barbara put in two terms as President over the years. “When we started, I was sort of everything—secretary, treasurer, president—they could call me anything they wanted!” she says. Barbara notes that the average age of members has gone down, not up, as time passes. “The guild has become younger as the years go by, and it’s a different type of girl who knits now. Knitting used to be just for grandchildren and charity—we still do that, but there’s a lot more to it now. Knitting has become an art.”

It was the designer Kaffe Fassett who first kindled Barbara’s interest in this art, and her excitement about its unlimited possibilities has not wavered. She continues to expand her skills through guild activities, workshops and knitting tours (for example, to Shetland), and passes on her knowledge whenever she gets the chance: at local elementary schools, Experimental Farm “knit-outs,” and to anyone and everyone who expresses an interest in knitting. Once a teacher, always a teacher . . . and besides, with membership closing on 200, Barbara doesn’t need to recruit for the guild anymore! Her little idea has grown into one of the largest and most active knitting groups in Ontario, perhaps even in Canada.

Barbara’s advice: “Share your knitting. It’s extremely popular again—lots of people would love to learn.”





Barbara Bondar Winning Scarf



Jacqueline Bieler Winning Scarf

DESIGNER CHALLENGE SCARVES: ALL WRAPPED UP!

By: Cathy Seguin (June 2005)

Congratulations and many thanks to all who participated in the year's Designer Challenge held at our May meeting! Seventeen guild members entered twenty-one beautiful one-of-a-kind scarves. There were two categories of entries: Original Pattern and Knit From Pattern. Viewing all entries, it is clear that talent, creativity and skill are alive and well in our guild!

Members voted that evening in the two categories. Congratulations to our Peoples' Choice winners who each received a prize of \$75!

Barbara Bondar for her winning entry in the Knit From Pattern category. Barbara's scarf was knit from an Icelandic inspired pattern she found in the May/June 1995 issue of "Piecework". Using Jagger-Spun Zephyr wool and silk in a gorgeous Mulberry colour, Barbara showed her excellent knitting skills and created a scarf that everyone wanted to model!

Jacqueline Bieler for her winning entry in the Original Design category. Jacqueline's scarf, appropriately named "Homage a Kaffe" is a delightful example of Jacqueline's great eye for colour and balance. Jacqueline used Rowanspun and Rowan Yorkshire Tweed in a multitude of colours, both muted and bright, to create her beautiful scarf and cleverly lined it to give extra weight (not to mention a beautiful way to hide ends!) Next time you see Jacqueline, ask her how many sweaters and scarves she has knit using Kaffe Fasset inspired squares!

Congratulations and many thanks to all members who participated: Anna Belfie, Jacqueline Bieler, Barbara Bondar, Helen Chan, Daphne Edmunds, Joan Kidd, Gundrun Klingelstein, Jessamyn Lusignan, Marjre McCoubrey, Lynne Moore, Nancy Moynihan, Cathy Seguin, Gina Smart.

MASTER KNITTER PROGRAM AND LEARNING SUPPORT

By: Elizabeth Payne

The original Master Knitter Program was introduced by the Knitting Guild of Canada. The Program was broken into three levels and after successfully completing the three levels one received the designation “Master Knitter”. A fourth level was optional and reflected the requirements for a designer level. The three levels encompassed knitting a selection of “squares” to rather demanding specifications together with Nordic mitts and some other samples. The squares could later become an afghan which many knitters took pride in making since this was a way of showing off their precious squares, after having met the full set of tests!



Elizabeth Payne's completed Master Knitter afghan

Several current Ottawa Knitting Guild members completed this Master Knitter Program. They include Marilyn Telford, Joyce James, Diane Susak, Nancy Moynihan and Elizabeth Payne. Several other members began the task, including Victoria Leslie who passed Level I.

After the Knitting Guild of Canada ceased operation, it was followed somewhat later by the Canadian Guild of Knitters, now 5 years old, which has recently begun a new Knitting Accreditation Program. Thus far, only level one of this new program has been released. Five levels were originally proposed for the program.

In an attempt to provide education and instruction through the Ottawa Knitting Guild in the absence of a Canadian Master Knitting Program, a Knit and Learn Group (recent name) was started with the help of Master Knitters. This enables knitters to do the work and meet the specifications of the original program. This group still meets regularly and while it retains its original aims, it also provides an opportunity for any guild member to exchange knowledge, experience and partake of a collaborative social environment by just knitting.

With the support of the Knit and Learn Group, several persons have completed the original Master Knitting Program to their own satisfaction. Others have completed the requirements of the stringent original specifications as reviewed and attested to by our own Master Knitters. Still others are moving forward with their work. Peggy Holton has had all her squares reviewed and has successfully completed the original Master Knitting Program.

Documentation about the original Master Knitter Program is still available for knitters eager to learn more about knitting. It is an excellent way of developing one's knitting skills. If attending Knit and Learn sessions is not possible, support can be obtained through the “Stitch Doctor” at the regular guild meetings, or simply by asking for help from any of our Master Knitters. Having completed the program with attention to meeting its specifications, knitters will have developed enough skills to begin designing on their own.



EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

Elections come up at our May meeting every year. Our Nominating Committee is always looking for guild members who are willing to put their name forward for the Executive Committee. There are all sorts of interesting positions – read through the descriptions below and see if there is an area where you think you might fit in.

Consult our website at www.ottawaknittingguild.ca for contact information.

President

Chairs guild and Executive Committee meetings, and coordinates the work of the Executive Committee and other committees.

Treasurer

Responsible for all monies received and disbursed, the treasurer keeps accurate records of all transactions, reports to the regular meetings of the Executive Committee, prepares an annual financial report and presents it to the membership.

Secretary

Prepares and distributes reports of Executive Committee and General Assembly meetings and maintains an archive of the documents, including relevant attachments.

Programme Coordinator

Plans and implements the knitting-related programme at the regular meetings.

Special Events Coordinator

Plans, organizes and coordinates workshops, special events and field trips.

Newsletter Coordinator

Produces and distributes the OKG newsletter, seeks and compiles knitting-related contributions from members and other sources and maintains contact with advertisers.

Membership Coordinator

Maintains an up-to-date membership list, collects membership data, collects members' and visitors' fees, welcomes participants at meetings and manages membership cards and name tags.

Library Coordinator

Manages the OKG library, organizes loans and returns of library materials, applies the OKG's policy concerning overdue materials, and purchases new library materials as the OKG budget allows.

Website Coordinator

Develops, maintains and updates the OKG website.

Members At Large

Assists members of the Executive Committee, as needed, and assists with the planning and implementation of projects and special events.



A typical OKG meeting

QUEEN OF FEARLESS KNITTING

By: Ann Thacker



Victoria Leslie, The Tangled Skein's first editor.

If it weren't for Victoria Leslie, you wouldn't be reading this memento issue of *The Tangled Skein*. The newsletter was Victoria's brainchild—she published the first issue with co-editor Lilianne Proulx in June 1997 and coordinated the project for the next 4½ years.

Victoria joined the Ottawa Knitting Guild “back when we were still meeting in people's living rooms,” as a way to

meet some new friends (now old friends) who shared her knitting obsession. At the time, she was a technical writer and editor with a large space engineering firm, so the job of newsletter coordinator was a natural fit.

In 2001, her computer skills landed her a knitter's dream job with Wool-Tyme, an Ottawa Local Yarn Store (LYS), working on their website and online newsletter, taking care of Internet shipping, and helping in the store as needed. Despite the constant temptation, working in a woolly candy shop has actually curbed Victoria's appetite for buying new yarns on spec. “I get to play with them in the

store as much as I want,” she explains.

Mainly a self-taught knitter, Victoria appreciates the opportunity to expand her skills through guild workshops and learning events, not to mention share ideas with other knitters at regular guild meetings.

Although she loves lace and cablework best, Victoria will tackle just about anything, including her own imagination! She is most proud of the shadow dragon sweater she designed and knit for her 14-year-old son, in dark and light denim tweed using the “shadow knitting” technique. How does one get a teenager to wear a handknit sweater, even an expertly crafted one? As Victoria explains her success, “I got Duncan involved—he picked out the dragon shapes on the Internet and chose the colours.”

Victoria is the first to admit that her imagination can run wild sometimes. “My funniest original design was a wedding sweater in Shetland Chunky I made for my kid brother and his wife: one sweater, two colours, two sleeves, two necks—to fit two very tall people in one!” Well, what *do* you get for a couple that already has everything they need?

In her non-knitting moments, Victoria enjoys reading and cycling. But with so many creations in her head still clamouring to be cast on, there's not much time for other hobbies!

Victoria's advice: “There's no wrong way to knit; just be consistent in how you do it.”



FROM THE OTHER SIDE

By: Ian Leslie (September 1998)

I don't knit. It's not for lack of trying, but I have a problem with tension control. Most of my "projects" could pass for bulletproof material by the time I am done and I have neither relaxed nor enjoyed the experience, thus I watch.

Conversely, my wife does knit. A lot, very well and a lot of times without looking, which drives some people to distraction. When commented upon, it will sometimes get you a smile and a shhh! I'm trying to read/watch TV, klik klik, klik klik.

Even more ironic - I'm not a big sweater person so I'm sort of in the position of being the tea-totalling son of the vineyard owner. So where does that get me? Well being married to a talented knitter does have its perks. I wanted a pair of long underwear, now not the ones from the stores which are so tight that they bend all the hairs on your legs backwards and then when you take them off you spend the rest of the time thinking there are ant races happening on your legs. No I wanted a nice loose pair made with large needles to trap the air. I talked it over with my resident expert and it was decided that something in a nice soft acrylic could be worked on. Voila! Light, airy, soft, warm and so comfortable you forget you have them on until you realize it's not the office temperature that is making you sweat, but you need to take off your long underwear!

As I said before I'm not a big sweater person. Now this does not mean I do not own any sweaters. I own three, all of which were made to order. You will not find these sweaters for sale at your local store and you might not be caught dead in any of them, but they are perfect for me because they are exactly what I wanted. The first sweater my wife ever made me happened only because I think she really thought it was her and not the fact that I'm not a big sweater fan. So after much talking it was made clear that generally I find sweaters too tight and too fussy to clean.




Ian and Duncan Leslie in the "made to order" sweater

She assured me that acrylic was the way to go and that it would pass my discriminating washing technique which is to wash in HOT and dry on HOT then wear. Next was the style. Now I don't get cold often but when I do I get COLD! Chilled to the bone and I want something to keep me warm, not look good. What good is a sweater that can't keep my ears, head, and nose warm and no I did not want a hood and it had to be loose ... real loose - a shoplifters dream if you get my drift. Well after much looking she came up with a base pattern that was then heavily modified. What emerged after much consultation and many "Are you sure?", is a sweater with a collar that goes almost to my waist, folded over the collar is about six inches wide. When I fold it up I can put it over my head and cover my nose. The shoulders come down to approx. my elbows and although the waist is waist length there is enough room inside to hold both me and my son even now. So being married to a devoted knitter does have its advantages.

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FROM THE "PRES"

By: Barbara Bondar (February 1997)

It has been really exciting watching the way our knitting guild has grown: and haven't we had fun these past few years!

Back in January 1994, Elizabeth Watt, Melonie Lukach and I met in my living room for the first time. We decided to form a guild that would meet once a month to share our skills and knowledge of what is happening among knitters. By March, we had increased to eight members.- the whole group made our first field trip to the Real Wool Shop in Carleton Place. Ever since then we have made field trips a part of our program. We have been to Kingston, the Opinicon, Canaan Farm, Yeoman Farm, and Pointe-Claire. Some of us have gone off to workshops and special events. In September 1996, Joyce Abbot, one of our members, led a trip to Scotland. (Lucky ladies!)

In October 1995, we had become too large for the average living room. We began meeting at the Nepean Museum. Suddenly our numbers doubled. We now have over 30 names on our telephone list and it continues to grow. We are known all over Canada through our contacts with the Knitting Guild of Canada's Knitters' Forum and the various workshops conducted by Mabel Corlett in Kingston. Last January, we had a very successful exhibition at the Nepean Centrepote Library.

I wish Victoria Leslie and Lilianne Proulx luck as they launch our newsletter.

This will give us one more means to share our enthusiasm for the art of knitting.



JOANNE YORDANOU WORKSHOP REVIEW

By: Kirsti Schellenberger (May 2005)

This one is for the gals from the Ottawa Knitting Guild. During a design class I gave there, the women took notice of the wrap I was wearing. I had to take it off while we “dissected” it. We took measurements and considered ways to improve the design. I made it more casual and “unconstructed”, omitting edgings and bands. From there, I was curious to see how it would look in different yarn. I fell in love with this Fleece Artist Kiss Curl Yarn (along with the whole line of Fleece Artist). The result is a useful great-looking garment that can go dressy or casual.

- an excerpt from Joanne Yourdanou's new book, *Twelve Months of Knitting*, “Kiss Curls Snuggle Wrap”, pg 30

As a new member, I was really looking forward to my first guild workshop...even though I knew almost nothing about our instructor, Joanne Yourdanou. I am pleased to report our weekend workshop was a complete success: educational, entertaining and inspiring.

On Friday evening, a group of about 20 of us enjoyed Joanne's fascinating talk on her evolution as a knitwear designer, from her early days at craft shows to her time developing sweaters for Patons to her current role as a freelance designer. Joanne's insights into the process of designing a sweater for publication was very enlightening; particularly when she shared various successful (and not-so-successful) design proposals and showed us exactly how hard it is to create a perfect pattern.

On Saturday, we met bright and early and spent the morning sharing our design storyboards. Joanne introduced us to some of the techniques she uses to generate ideas including magazines, household items like quilt patterns, etc. I think we all came to recognize how diverse inspiration can be, as we saw how our own ideas originated from very different sources including fashion pictures or catalogues, yarn, colours, patterns, existing garments, and other miscellaneous objects.

During the afternoon, Joanne gave us a very practical and informative lesson on basic sweater design including the dreaded (at least for me!) knitters math. As we developed and refined our concepts, we shared our thoughts, questions, suggestions and inspirations. By the end of the afternoon, some of us were even far enough along to begin swatches to test out some pattern or colour ideas. As the occasion arose, Joanne provided impromptu lessons on things like sleeve design or how to use tools like tram lines to help determine increases and decreases.

On Sunday morning, Joanne introduced us to the history of the Aran sweater and we all had a great time playing with patterns and combinations. She provided some very useful tips on achieving balanced patterns, and offered suggestions about creating different looks. Once again, some of the more advanced students were well into the swatch-making stage before the morning was over.

During the afternoon, we focused on the possibilities of the yarn itself. After we heard Joanne's suggestions for creative items to knit

(especially when you're working with leftovers), and tips for mixing yarn types and colours. Joanne's lesson in colour theory came in very handy here! We had playtime for the rest of the afternoon. I honestly don't know if anyone came up with a real design from this activity, but we all had loads of fun!

To finish up, I'd like to share some of the ideas I've taken away from this workshop:

Look for inspiration everywhere. It can be colours, shapes, patterns, textures, concepts or anything at all. Don't be afraid to mix yarns and colours together to create interesting effects. Try twisting two yarns together to see how they look.

Math – at least knitting math isn't really that hard!

A cross-country poll can sort out a lot of design dilemmas. Try sharing your work with others and invite their comments. Being a full-time knitwear designer is an amazing job...but it's still a lot of hard work.



DESIGNERS WE'VE HOSTED

Jo Crivellaro

Home Base: Mountain Grove, ON

Website: joofthewoods.ca

email: info@joofthewoods.ca

Learned to knit: from her mother, Theresa Devries,
owner of Wool-Tyme

Knitter and designer

Cynthia MacDougall of the Canadian Guild of Knitters

Home Base: Barrie, ON

Website: www.cgknitters.ca

email: info@cgknitters.ca

Leraned to knit: from Grandmother

Editor and designer



Catherine Vardy

Katherine Vardy

Home Base: New Brunswick

Patterns: varied

Shirley Scott a.k.a. Shirl the Purl

author & knitter

Home Base: Toronto, ON

Cindy Nichols of the Knitting Guild of Canada (now defunct),

Lucy Neatby

Home Base: Nova Scotia

Website: <http://www.tradewindknits.com/>

email: info@tradewindknits.com

Learned to knit: unknown

Originally from Wales and member of Merchant Marine

Sally Melville

Home Base: was Waterloo, ON - soon to be Ottawa

email: smelville@kw.igs.net

Learned to knit: about 7 in Brownies

Author and designer - currently has 4 books in print

Fiona Ellis

Home Base: Toronto

Website: <http://www.fionaellisonline.com/>

email: info@fionaellisonline.com

Learned to knit: early age - taught by Grandmother

Annabelle Dawson, the Queen of Entrelac

Home Base: was Toronto, now Heaven

(hopefully a yarn filled one)

Designer, teacher, founding member of the CKDA (Canadian
Knitwear Designers & Artisans)

Debbie New

Home Base: Waterloo, ON, originally from Australia
Fibre artist, designer, and author. Debbie holds degrees in Microbiology and Education, has worked as a musician and inventor as well as in the field of biomedical engineering, and is a mother of 8!

Mabel Corlett

Home Base: Kingston, ON
email: mabel@woolroom.on.ca
Learned to knit: 12
Mabel has a Ph.D in Geology from the University of Chicago. She did research work in Zurich and taught as an associate professor at Queen's University
Designer, Owner of The Wool Room

Maureen Mason-Jamieson

Home Base: Toronto, ON
website: <http://www.kinverknits.com/>
email: maureen@kinverknits.com
Learned to knit: 12
Designer, patterns sold mostly through Shelridge Farm (www.shelridge.com) and published in Knitters' Magazine (Diamond Wrap in the Fall '00 issue, Four Corner Hat in the Winter '00 issue, and Filled Cables in the Fall '01 issue).

Joanne Yordanou

Home Base: Hatfield, PA, USA
website: <http://www.joanneyordanou.com/>
email: joanne.yordanou@sympatico.ca
Learned to knit: 14
Designer (designed for Patons for 4 years) and author (first book published January 2008)

Sandy Terp

Home Base: Hatfield, PA, USA
website: <http://www.moonriselaceknitting.com/>
email: MOONRISELaceKnitting@verizon.net
Knitting for over 20 years
Master Lace Knitter and author

Congratulations!
to the Ottawa Knitting Guild on this important anniversary. I continue to treasure our long and close association.

The Wool Room

Mabel Corlett,
Proprietor

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Kingston, K7L 1K9

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MEMORY LANE

“A few years ago, Council members felt the need for something knitted to display at public venues when the Guild was represented or participating. This eventually took the shape of a group project, where guild members would design and knit up an afghan square (to given specifications!); these would be sewn up and serve to demonstrate a variety of lace and texture stitches. At the time, I had just finished the Master Knitter Afghan (from the Knitting Guild of Canada, no longer active) where just such an afghan is the main requirement, so I agreed to organize this project. Some notable obstacles to be overcome were the natural timidity of knitters and poorly-timed snowstorms. After almost two years (one more than was foreseen at the beginning), 48 squares were ready; they were sewn up during one evening (another group exercise). I then added a plain crocheted border and the afghan was put on display. I like to think the neutral colours chosen helped to focus attention on the intricate texture and lacework. It seems this afghan has been displayed in public a number of times, but I myself have never seen it again! It was a great experience and I would repeat it in a minute. Maybe a floral theme next time?”

Diane Susak



Knit Out 2007

“I arranged the guild’s field trips up until a couple of years ago. I remember one where they had a llama named McGuinty who liked to creep up behind you and give you a nuzzle around your ear... cute! I also have fond memories of another one, where a baby angora goat raised by humans would climb up your leg, wanting to be held. When you picked him up, he would let you cuddle him in your arms. We had a great time on these trips, and knitters learned a lot about the yarn they knit with.”

Lynne Moore

“My recollection is that at one of the early Needlers’ Retreats, Barbara Bondar went from table to table at Sunday breakfast or lunch, picking out the Ottawa knitters, and saying ‘Don’t you think that we should have a knitting guild?’ Obviously, her idea has really taken off, and I’m glad to have played a small part by sponsoring the fall retreat at The Opinicon where it all began.”

Mabel Corlett

owner of “The Wool Room” in Kingston, Ontario

"I love the warmth and support of the guild. When I organize the annual Knit-Out, I have no trouble getting volunteers to help with either the preparation or to be on site for the day. We all have diverse knowledge and skills and no problem sharing them. It is such a treat to work with wonderful, giving people. I, personally, will never forget learning to spin with the help of Paula Smith and Lucette da Cunha! Thank you for contributing to my new addiction!"

Wendy Steinbach

"As a long-time knitter, knitting has brought me many opportunities and successes including being the President of the Guild for four years, having my designs published in Vogue and other publications, and being invited to teach at venues in Canada and the States—all things my grandmother would never have dreamed of as she taught me to knit and crochet ages ago. Hers was a gift to me that keeps on giving, and I wish you all much success as you explore your own gifts of knitting."

Christine Walter

President of the Ottawa Knitting Guild from 2002 to 2006

"I'll never forget the first time I attended a guild meeting. It was held in Gina Smart's home, and there were seven or eight ladies present when I arrived, including Barbara Bondar whom I had known for many years already. It was very informal—I remember Victoria Leslie sat on a cushion on the floor—and so enjoyable that I've been going ever since! I used to host a potluck dinner along with the May meeting every year. The meeting was timed to match the lilac blooms in my garden—I had about 30 different lilac plants on a one-acre lot. We didn't get a lot of knitting done at those meetings—after dinner, we'd all go outside to admire the flowers. We did this up until about four years ago when the Guild grew just a little too big for my garden!"

Joan Kidd

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Do's (also called clean snacks)

- Pretzels
- Vegetable sticks
- Grapes
- Baked potato chips
- Smarties or M&Ms
- Pistachio nuts in the white
a.k.a. natural shells
- Water, white wine, or
clear pop

Don'ts (also called messy snacks or accidents waiting to happen)

- Cheezies
- Nacho chips
- Strawberries, raspberries, or
blackberries
- Pistachio nuts in the
red shells
- Cheese cubes
- Regular potato chips
- BBQ any snack (e.g. peanuts,
chips)
- Grape juice, Koolaid (unless
you're having a yarn dying
party), red wine, most pop

HOSTING A STITCH AND BITCH: SNACKING DO'S AND DON'TS

By: Christine Walter (June 2005)

Are you thinking of hosting a small Stitch and Bitch for a few of your close knitting friends this summer? If so, here are a few tips on what to and what not to serve at your event.

Not that any of the items on the don't list aren't any good to eat but they would interrupt the flow of knitting and talking as people got up to wash their hands to get rid of stains or oils before they can continue knitting. And the risk of spilling bad beverages on your lovely cashmere shawl or white cotton tank top would be just too great, if you served coloured drinks.

Except for maybe getting a bit of water or salt on your fingers while consuming the items on the do list, your stitching and bitching can go comfortably on sans interruption much to everyone's enjoyment. Salt and water are easily wiped off on napkins which a good hostess will make sure that there are plenty of on hand for her guests.

So go ahead, host a stitch and bitch, maybe discuss the two hip books by the same title, while indulging in safe snacks and getting some wonderful social time in with like-minded friends.

THE DOCTOR IS IN

By: Ann Thacker



Elizabeth Payne, OKG program coordinator and Stitch Doctor

only their knitting sides? Our lives are as multifaceted as the intricate fabric we create with two sticks and a piece of string.

Take Elizabeth Payne, for example: we know her as OKG program coordinator, Stitch Doctor and Master Knitter. She doesn't talk much about her professional background (financial analyst, university lecturer, federal executive) or her athletic career. So to most of us at least, the fact that Elizabeth was once a champion logroller may come as a bit of a surprise!

Elizabeth grew up in a logging and sports family in Greenfield, a small village near Liverpool, Nova Scotia. When her lumberjack parents began to participate in logging demonstrations as show performers, Elizabeth joined in the fun. "The sport of logrolling

We start with simple tools (sticks) and minimal materials (string). We knit, we purl, manipulating these two stitches in a multitude of ways. The product—infused with our vision, skill and experience, sometimes our love—is complex, beautiful, functional, even three-dimensional... In the knitting community, we admire each other's work, share knitting secrets, make new acquaintances and friends. But do we really know our fellow knitters when we see

derives from the log drive down rivers," she explains. "Competitors face each other on the floating, rolling log, and the last person standing wins." By the time she was 20, she had travelled across the continent several times on the competitive and show circuit. In her third year of university, Elizabeth won the World Women's Logrolling Championship!

Elizabeth learned to knit at the age of 5, but as an adult was more interested in sewing than knitting—until she joined the OKG in the mid-90s. "Prior to retirement I had heard of a knitting guild somewhere in Canada," she recalls. "When I found out that Ottawa had one, I became associated with a whole new world of knitting that I knew nothing about." She began to develop her skills as both a knitter and a designer.

Elizabeth has Master Knitter certification from the Knitting Guild of Canada. She served as OKG president for two years and now organizes our annual program, Stitch Doctor sessions, and "Knit and Learn" get-togethers at the Nepean Museum. While all members benefit from the wealth of experience she is happy to share, Elizabeth credits the guild as the source of her knitting know-how. "It's through the guild that I've become as accomplished a knitter as I am," she says. "Contributing substantially to this knitting community is my way of returning the favour."

Elizabeth's advice: "Experiment with your knitting. Try your hand at mixing non-primary colours to see what effect you can produce."



PURLS OF WISDOM: KNITTING TIPS AND TRICKS

(November 2004)

Raised Increase

By: Elizabeth Payne

To increase a stitch in your knitting which is almost invisible, do the following:

Insert the right hand needle into the right side of the stitch below the stitch normally knitted next. Slip this loop to the left hand needle and knit. Knit the stitch normally knitted next. This right slanted increase can be modified to become a left slanted increase instead by picking up the left side of the stitch below the last knitted stitch.



Stash Management

By: Carla Burns

I have a confession. I'm the person that Suzanne Atkinson referred to in October's article on community knitting – the one who has managed her stash down to two boxes of yarn. Some avid knitters consider this to be a rather dubious achievement. Many fellow knitters have admitted to having bags of yarn tucked in every closet, under every bed and stacked in the "guest" room. If collecting yarn is your other hobby, this article probably isn't for you. But for those who would like to find the guest bed, I hope these tips inspire you to tame the "Stash Monster" lurking in your home. I reduced my stash from 6-7 very large garbage bags full (probably 7 times what I have today) to a more manageable two boxes using the following guidelines:

Establish a due date. I gave myself five years to reduce my stash to its current level.

Use this simple strategy: use it, donate it or sell it.

Go through your stash several times a year to evaluate and re-acquaint yourself with your yarn (often we forget the hidden gems in the back of a closet).

UFOs – finish them, unravel them or get rid of them.

Buy some new knitting books that will inspire you to knit from your stash. Adding new books to your collection is almost as fun as buying new yarn and it doesn't take up as much space.

Give away or sell yarn that doesn't excite or inspire you. Very similar to the clothing rule – if you've had no desire to knit with it for two seasons, give it to someone who will.

Give yarn to The Canadian Red Cross, hospital volunteer groups, schools, nursing homes, religious groups, and other volunteer organizations. Many schools teach knitting as part of their arts and crafts program: they would be thrilled to receive your yarn and you will help create the next generation of knitters.

Sell yarn at a garage sale or at the guild's annual Yarn Swap. Just make sure you sell more than you buy.

PEGGING DOWN OUR PAST

By: Ann Thacker



Peggy Holton, OKG archivist.

It all started with a handknit sweater Peggy Holton wore to the Canadian University Women's Club Christmas party 15 years ago. Over cocktails, Barbara Bondar admired the sweater. It was Peggy's own design. Barbara invited Peggy to an upcoming meeting of the newly formed Ottawa Knit-

ting Guild. The rest is history—or as Peggy would say in her soft English accent, "It's all in the archives."

Originally from Yorkshire, she came to Canada in 1947 as a war bride. After living in the Renfrew area for a number of years, the family eventually moved to Ottawa, where Peggy worked for the federal government for 25 years, retiring from Environment Canada in 1985.

In February 1994, Peggy joined seven other knitters in Barbara Bondar's home for the second meeting of the Knitting Guild (Ottawa Area). For a couple of years, she put together the guild's annual program and still helps Elizabeth Payne with this task. However, her most notable input has been as guild archivist. When Barbara Bondar retired after six years as President ("it's in the archives"), Peggy began to record the early history of the Guild before it became lost to memory.

Peggy learned to knit at school. "They started teaching knitting to schoolgirls in England in the early 1900s," she explains, "I made my first pair of socks at 9." Since then she has knitted hundreds of pairs of socks (her two daughters and five grown granddaughters each get a pair for Christmas), as well as everything else under the sun.

In the winter months, you may see her at guild meetings in her famous sheep vest: a stranded Mabel Corlett design in Shetland wool. "Actually, I knitted that vest twice," Peggy recalls, "because I lost the first one!" Although the vest is indeed worthy of admiration, Peggy is most proud of an assortment of knitted squares—her sample swatches for the now defunct Knitting Guild of Canada. Working under the guidance of the guild's four accredited Master Knitters, Peggy completed Level III of the old program and earned the equivalency of Master Knitter.

Peggy's advice: "Relax and have fun with your knitting. If you've knit something twice and it hasn't worked out, don't beat it into the



CAUGHT IN “THE WEB”

By: Jennifer Hoy

Remember when finding a new knitting pattern meant buying a magazine or going to your local yarn shop? When it was easier to learn about new techniques and trends by word of mouth? When a listserv that lacked pictures of any kind completely revolutionized the way we communicated with each other about our obsession with yarn? And look where we are now...

Today, the flood gates are open and the fibre world is yours to explore on your own time, at your own pace.

From the comfort of your own computer, you have the world of knitting at your fingertips. You can find out what your local shops have on offer, order yarn, needles, notions and patterns and find out about and reserve places for workshops.

You can learn new techniques and answer burning questions that may be holding up a project that is in jeopardy of becoming a UFO. Want to try a short-row heel? Look it up. Need a generic top-down raglan pattern for a sweater you'd like to knit for your mother? You can find it. Blown your knitting allowance on yarn and need a free pattern to download? There are plenty to choose from.

Can't find what you're looking for locally? You can shop from another town, province, or country (anywhere in the world). You can go to the companies you like or look around for indie shops that make one-of-a-kind gems that will be sure to make your guild compatriots drool.

You can pose questions to other knitters via forum sites set up by knitters for knitters about knitting. Connect at the speed of your keystrokes with designers and writers and every other kind of knitter. Or like me, you can blog your stories of progress and/or woes, boast about your accomplishments, post pictures of your work(s) in progress and wax lyrical about the projects you'd like to try.



Suddenly it seems that 24 hours a day you could be surfing, trawling, reading, lurking, commenting, shopping, chatting, writing, investigating and commiserating about knitting. What once was, more often, than not a solitary pastime partaken of in the comfort of your own home, when you looked forward to Guild Night or Knit Night as your only opportunity for a chance to sit and chat with other like-minded people, is now a whole culture revolving around the still simple basics of needles and some yarn.

We've become more informed about the greater knitting world: about the books and other resources available to us, about the latest fibre offerings from every corner of the globe, about the beloved items that are being discontinued (and are hopefully therefore going on excellent sale), about the dearly departed colourways that we had not purchased enough of to complete our languishing UFOs, and

about the venues in which we can make our fibre requests to the universe in the hopes of finding 2 more balls of X yarn in Y dyelot from Z province or country.

We have become potentially connected to knitters from every walk of life from all parts of the country and the world with whom we can share our joys and sorrows in this consuming knitting world that we have discovered since those early days of Web exploration.

And when our eyes tire of the words on the screen, and our families (or our ovens) send us smoke signals that we must return to everyday life, we are given the ultimate control over this exciting and ever expanding world of knitting to simply log off, turn off the computer and return to the sock in progress in the comfy chair or where ever we like to knit. And ponder where we'll go next.



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It is with great pleasure that we are able to couple the release of our 10th Anniversary memento issue of *The Tangled Skein* with the release of our new Ottawa Knitting Guild logo. For many years, we have enjoyed the artwork logo created by Gaye Stretton. Her logo graced our newsletter, name tags, and membership cards. We have been grateful for her efforts.

As we move forward and achieve greater membership across all age demographics, we want to give the Guild a new, fresh look—a look that solidly brands the Ottawa Knitting Guild as one of the premier fibre arts guilds of Canada.

Look for our new logo on the newsletters, our website and signage to be used at upcoming events.

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