

Northern Branch of the Handweavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild
AGM Report- Kathy Littlejohn Coordinator 2015

2015 was a special year for the Northern Branch of the HWSG Guild as we undertook a move to new premises.

For some time members had been on the look-out for suitable premises to move to as the Uniting Church Hall in Chant Street was possibly being sold.

Jenny McDonald suggestion of the Harry Abbott Scout Hall was followed up. The committee running the hall were happy for us to move our 'Yarn Store' (housed in several filing cabinets) and equipment cupboard into one of the rooms. The rent of \$25 per session was very reasonable, so on a Saturday morning in May members and their very helpful husbands moved the filing cabinets etc into the hall. As I was absent at the time, (attending my daughter's wedding in Queensland) I would like to thank all concerned for a job well done.

Once we were settled a sorting of the library was carried out by members and a stock take of the yarn store. A new cupboard was purchased and put to good use holding the library and equipment which would fit. Some equipment such as carders, are still housed in members homes but available for members to hire and use.

A new teardrop banner was purchased to put outside the door and for use at workshops etc. to draw attention and hopefully bring in new members.

The first day meeting in the new premises was very well attended which was very encouraging.

A decision was made to add an extra day session each month. It was suggested by Di Kearney that we advertise our meetings in the Community Corner of the Examiner newspaper, so the following information appears each week:

Handweavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild

Evening meetings, 1st & 3rd Wed. of each month 7:30pm-9:30pm Day meetings. 2nd & 4th Wed. of the month 1pm-3:30pm. Harry Abbott Hall. Cnr. Arthur and St Georges Square. All welcome Contact Kathy on 63271957

During the year we have approx. 5-6 spinners attend each session. The 'donation' by those attending was increased to \$3 per person to cover rent etc.

Di Kearney has hosted the weavers at her Studio at Lanina during the year. These Friday sessions have been attended by a dedicated group of weavers that share information and encouragement. I would particularly like to thank Di for all the work, cooking, purchasing, lending of equipment and sharing of her vast knowledge.

Di, once again, organised the weaving retreat at Poatina in May. Weavers came from all over the state to attend. Di was also on the 2015 organising committee for the Bothwell Spin- in. Several members of the Northern Branch attended, staying at the Grange Hotel together and having a most enjoyable time attending 'The Blessing of the Fleece' and other events and taking part in the 'Longest Thread' competition, with the Northern Branch well represented receiving first and second prizes!

During the year we 'lost' a long standing member, Lynne Heathcote, who decided to move with her husband Greg to Victoria. Lynne has contributed much to the Northern Branch and State Guild over many years. She has chosen to continue being a member of The HWSG Guild and we hope she stays in touch.

Northern members have attended different events throughout the state: West Coast Fibre at Tullah, Ross Summer Day, Camp Clayton, Bicheno and Spin Open Days at Devonport, Burnie and Ulverstone and the Guild birthday party in Hobart to mention a few.

Di Kearney helped other members of the Guild organise a stall for the State-wide HWSD Guild at the Deloraine Craft Fair. Several members of the Northern Guild contributed items for sale and Wendy Billing demonstrated needle felting animals.

Jenny McDonald and a committee of Northern Branch members took on the task of being the 'feature craft' at the St Helens Arts Festival. Members demonstrated the crafts of spinning and weaving from fleece to finished article. Despite the inclement weather it was very successful with the members of the public showing a keen interest and buying items offered for sale. Wendy once again demonstrated needle felting animals and was asked to hold a workshop for interested people at St Helens which she did.

A 'Cultural Afternoon' was held by the Northern Branch in October of 'Silk Knot Tying' by a grand master from Japan-Mrs Okuda, and a performance by a world master Japanese harpist, Etsuko Sakai. This event was very well attended. I would like to extend my thanks all the members of the Northern Branch that attended and helped make and serve afternoon tea at this event, and made it such a success.

Our Open Day was held in November. Again this was very well attended by members of the Guild travelling from all over the state to attend. Pam and Di manned the Yarn Store throughout the day, successfully selling a large quantity of stock. Other members organised and contributed to beautiful raffle prizes and a highlight was the excellent talk on traditions of Christmas given by our guest speaker- Lucille Gee. It was a real team effort and once again I would like to thank each and every member for their contribution.

The year concluded with a wonderful Christmas 'Pizza Party' at Cheryl's home at Swan Bay. Thank you Cheryl and Bob for all the work you put in to hosting us and making it such a wonderful conclusion to the year.

2016 brings new challenges as we are organising the State wide 'Bicheno' weekend but with such a willing team of members in the Northern Branch of the HWSD Guild I am sure it will be as successful as past events.

I would just like to take this opportunity to thank Michelle for taking on the office of secretary and faithfully sending out the minutes each month and Cheryl for also faithfully taking care of the finances in such a diligent way.

Finally I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support, friendship and encouragement. It is a privilege to be part of such a group as this.