



Embroiderers' Guild

KEEPING IN CONTACT

Sharing news and events across the Guild during this period of lockdown and shielding

CEO

MESSAGE TO MEMBERS



I would like to start by thanking all who have sent me messages following the announcement of my retirement. I very much appreciate your kind words and the thoughts behind them. It has been an interesting journey.

The Guild was an unhappy place when I was called in to address a personnel issue in 2010. This became very apparent as I delved into the issues that were causing so much distress. I was able to resolve matters for the people directly involved but their conflict was only a symptom of a much larger, deeper, organisation-wide problem.

Five months later I found myself at the AGM in Dundee walking up and down the aisles of members answering questions (as best I could at the time) but, more importantly, opening a channel of communication that would enable the Guild to move on. This was followed by years of meeting members in regional groups to explain what we were doing and invite members to ask any question on any topic.

During the four years of the 'CEO Roadshows' and my additional visits to regions and branches I met many members, opened many more channels for communication and established working relationships that have endured until today. Members wanted to tell me about their concerns and ask me many questions. I always wanted to listen and learn from what they had to say. These relationships and sometimes only fleeting encounters had the power to move mountains and have done so at times. Thank you for your ideas and complaints. They all helped focus the mind!

The Guild had to change. It could not continue as it was but change only happens if there is a will to face up to the issues and take actions that may be very uncomfortable. 'Technology' was welcomed by some but, in reality, needed and needs to be embraced by

most, if not all. Easier said than done I hear you say. Attempts at automation followed and recently instead of introducing (cost saving) solutions, we all found ourselves in an uncomfortable place... grappling with technology but for what purpose? At first glance, reducing the very high, increasingly unaffordable, costs of administration. All of this was set against a background on progressively reducing income, certainly to head office. But 'technology' offered so much more... e-books; fortnightly editions of Contact; greater insights to the Collection; project galleries such as the '1000+ item Postcards Archive'.

In parallel, the Guild (its members, branches, regions & head office) needed to come together and work together to achieve a common purpose...all encompassed in the charitable aims. By working together, making accumulated funds work harder and applying all our resources synergistically, the Guild would have had the chance to better carve out a niche contribution to the future of stitch and textile art. The reality has been considerable energy and commitment applied year after year at local, regional and national level but not in a coordinated way that could have added up to $1 + 1 = 3$.

The Guild now has yet another major challenge. It has to deal with the crippling reduction in income as a result of COVID 19. The role of CEO is no longer sustainable. Staff members and contractors who have served the Guild so well over many years face the prospect of redundancy or cancelled/reduced contracts. There is nothing left to cut. The £100,000 pounds plus of cost savings made in the last 4 years is not enough.

Everyone will have some difficult choices to make to enable the Guild to continue.

I spent 10 years with you but never picked up a needle despite your 'encouragement'. I did, however, come to appreciate and value the skill and artistry of stitch and textile art. It makes a unique contribution to the the arts but also has a place in communities, homes and the lives of individuals. For some it is a therapy. For others it makes a statement that no other art-form can achieve. I will always be an advocate for embroidery and the Embroiderers' Guild in particular.

Right now there are many individuals and organisations saying 'look what I've got'; 'buy now'; 'learn this or that' but it is the Embroiderers' Guild that asks 'what do we have to do to achieve the best future for stitch and textile art'? The Guild helps and supports its members. It reaches out to others. You are vitally important ambassadors for stitch and textiles. I would urge you to support the art of the stitch in whatever way you can. The Guild must continue on into the 21st Century. It will have much to contribute but, to do so, it will need all of your support.

With my very best wishes

Terry





LOOSE THREADS

Bath Textile Artists exhibiting at Chippenham Museum

A celebration of the heritage of Chippenham and the surrounding area, Loose Threads is a collaborative exhibition between Chippenham Museum and Bath Textile Artists. We are a group encompassing all branches of textiles which includes some Guild members, producing many forms of textile work including hand and machine stitching, dyeing, silk painting and collage.

In 2018 the group exhibited with the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution in which members interpreted items held in the Institute's archives.

Due to the current situation, Chippenham Museum are providing a virtual tour - we even had the Preview evening on zoom, opened by the Mayor. The exhibition is on until end of April, so we hope for visits in person, when possible.

The virtual tour can be obtained with this link :

<https://bit.ly/LooseThreads>

or

<https://www.chippenham.gov.uk/chippenham-museum/exhibitions/loose-threads>

<https://www.bathtextileartists.com/>



Nikki Parmenter

In addition to delivering Zoom talks and a Plastic Entrapment online workshop, Glossop EG member Nikki Parmenter is offering an exciting mixed media project based on the work of Hundertwasser. Have fun with a copper hoop, lollipop trees.....and lights!

Contact Nikki for more information via nikiparmenterartworks61@gmail.com

EMBROIDERERS' GUILD TARTAN



The Embroiderers' Guild is now the proud owner of its own tartan and an image of the official certificate can be seen above. Designed for the Guild by Emma Wilkinson, past Graduate and Scholar, a full report with images will be in the next issue of Contact.

BLACKHEATH & ILLUMINATED ARTS

Blackheath Branch are going to be working with Illuminated Arts, a South East London Community Interest company on a project to get people stitching.

The Stitch Hub project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, will involve residents of care homes, primarily for the elderly in South London through a series of web-workshops to create a collection of stitched 'Pockets'. The pockets will be based on those of the 16th-18th Century worn by women either under their skirts or outside their garments, tied around the waist and often beautifully stitched or decorated with applique. Our branch members are taking part by creating examples of embroidered pockets which will then be incorporated into the workshops and subsequently exhibited to the public. The pockets will also be incorporated into a planned fashion show in 2022.

Our online workshop on Saturday 27th March will be focussed on the history and creation of these very personal textile pieces and we would love to open the virtual doors to other embroiderers who might like to take part. They will be free to choose whether or not to contribute their work to the exhibition and fashion show. We would love to see pictures of anything they produce as a result of the workshop though for inclusion in the project's catalogue.

Free or donation tickets will be available from the 20th Feb via Eventbrite on the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/historic-pockets-stitch-workshop-tickets-141728550911>



EXQUISITE CONTAINERS - MEMBERS' CHALLENGE 2020/2021

The deadline for entries to the 2020/21 Members' Challenge is 28th February. Entries should be sent to:

Members' Challenge, Anthea Godfrey, 32 High Street, Hoddesdon, Herts EN11 8BS

If you require a copy of the entry form please email Pat Tempest on pat@embroiderersguild.com and she will email or post a copy to you.

Keep in Touch

We'd love to hear from you with news of any projects or exhibitions you are involved in.

Please email Pat Tempest on contact@embroiderersguild.com so we can share them through 'Contact' and 'Keeping in Contact'.