

ONGOING HISTORY

CHERRY VALLEY COUNTRY SPINNERS 1983-1994

The Cherry Valley Country Spinners met at Liberty Ridge in the Fall of 1983 with Doloria Chapin and had a workshop in Felting. She has worked in Felting and made some beautiful outfits, so she was able to give us expert help in creating articles in felt. Sunny Bixby had plenty of wool to work with at her farm. We are fortunate to have the expert leadership of mother and daughter.

We spun into 1984 with a special program "A Wooly Tale" in color and stereo by Harlan and Shirley Howe, a truly great program on sheep and Australia

New officers at the helm were Irene Libby, Alice Mapstone, Carol Denman, and Shirley Howe. A TV tape made in 1980 by Dee Atkinson and crew for local and public television was shown and we saw ourselves doing our spinning and how we work with fiber. We participated at the New York State Fair in the wool building, and members entered competition and won awards.

We had a mohair workshop and learned about spinning that lustrous fiber, as well as seeing all those kids and goats at leader Sue Mane's farm. The spinners traveled to Cooperstown Farmers Museum to attend the first spin-in. The Bixby's went to Wool Congress in New Zealand and presented a very interesting program. Finishing up the year we had a very excellent workshop with Ted Carson of Canada.

We started the year of 1985 with the traditional Rock Day. This was the day for the maids to go back to spinning after Christmas. Men didn't go back into the fields to work until the maids went back to spinning. They would tease the maids and tangle the flax on the distaff. A good time was had by all.

We started planning the seed money for our spinning seminar by having a bake sale. Following were these activities: Marguerite Hickernall did a slide show on silk weaving in Thailand and talked about her visit to a silk factory. Jill Everest visited us from Canada and did a cotton workshop. Sue Beevers hosted us at her shop in Clinton and demonstrated weaving with handspun. Shirley and Harlan did a Sheepy New Zealand mini slide show.

We did a very successful fund raising lamb dinner to help the seminar. Our trip to Highland Forest was a picnic for fun, and the auction of wooly things to benefit our treasury. We made a quilt to raffle off under the direction of Doloria Chapin. The quilt had all different wheels which were very beautiful. We closed the year with our annual sale at the Lincklaen House, with proceeds to go to the seminar fund.

The year of 1986 brought a new slate of officers. Martha Williams, Jan Metzger, Marion Tallman and Carol Denman. The spinning seminar was headed by Irene Libby, general chairman and mistress of ceremonies. The first Seminar of Handspinning in Central New York was held at the Sheraton Hotel, Syracuse, New York, with the theme suggested by Edith Cook, "Design From Fiber To Finish"

Learning experiences this year were knitting a handspun sock, with Debbie Farrell blending color in fiber and dyeing fiber at Liberty Ridge. Also, ideas on spinning and weaving handspun at Longview Weaving Barn.

We had a very successful Central New York Spinning Seminar in October of 1986, with over 200 people registered from all over the state, and a few from other states. Yea, Seminar team! We finished the year with a Christmas party and making homespun ornaments for a tree.

The year of 1987 began with a video tape of the 1986 fashion show at the Seminar, done by Gerri Carman's husband. We started planning our second seminar, "Color Your Rainbow." This theme was suggested by Tisha Lock. We emphasized color in handspinning. The conference was held at Thornfield Conference Center at Cazenovia Lake.

Gale McGregor of Canada presented a nationally known program and we also had eight other workshops. Seminar leaders were Carol Denman, Marguerite Hickernall, Irene Libby, Tisha Lock and crew.

Cherry Valley Spinners worked this year with angora rabbit fur as well as Australian Locker Hooking, taught by our well known teacher Sunny Bixby. We traveled to Seneca Falls Knitting Mills to see how commercial socks are spun. The well known teacher Persis Grayson presented a workshop on spinning that was fun and very helpful. Again we had a fantastic seminar with over 100 people attending from all over the country. We decided not to give a seminar next year as everyone had worked very hard with great success and we needed a rest.

Leading us into 1988 were Shirley Howe, Don Manion, and Doris Holdridge. We again viewed Video shows taken at the "Color Your Rainbow" seminar. We concentrated on working on different aspects of dyeing and color this year. We traveled to Greene, N.Y. to the ribbon factory, to see how ribbon is made. Millie Bankert, one of our members, was running the wool building, so some members participated at the State Fair and we had quite a few winners in the spinning entries. Each year we have had winners in the spinning competition.

The Zoo has become a popular place to spin with all that exotic animal fiber. This was the year of the vest pattern for the

guild and we all made the same vest pattern with some very interesting colors and stitches,

In 1989 we concentrated on working on dyeing techniques and knitting homespun. As we do at each meeting we had a "Show and Tell". Our members are very artistic as these programs revealed. In October we had a dye workshop on Lichen with well known Karen Casselman. We got some beautiful colors in the purple family at this very successful workshop.

We started a new decade with Marguerite Hickernall, Joan Kad, Blanche Marsella and Carol Denman as officers. Rock Day was at Fayetteville Methodist Church because Lorenzo was unavailable due to repairs. A memorial tree was a donated to Baltimore Woods garden section in memory of our own Dee Atkinson. The book "Yarn Design", by Ross, with Dee's poem 'Spinster's Life' in the front, is in Cazenovia Public Library. Marguerite and Edith represented us at the dedication service.

We have received permission to use Alice Mapstone's original design Logo, that was done for Seminar '88. This was placed on canvas bags for sale. We had a wonderful workshop with Sue Beevers on refining our spinning in 1990.

During 1991 we traveled to the Canal Museum in downtown Syracuse. We also participated in the New York State Fair, and went to Everson Museum to view and help with demonstrations. At the end of the year we were privileged to have the renowned Rita Buchanan for an educational and fun workshop on spinning with different techniques.

Spinning into 1992-1993-1994, our officers were Joan Kad, Carol Laubli. Suzanne Osio, Carol Denman, and Historian Marion Diehl. Shirley Koester took over as treasurer in 1994, and when she moved Buena Manion became our new officer.

We moved into the computer world, as Joan Kad is on internet. We have been able to glean some very interesting information on fiber arts. As our treasury became low, Joan and Buena suggested a trickle down fund. Each month we brought something to sell, the guild receiving the profits.

We decided to work on perfecting our skills in knitting projects with our handspun. Some very unique creations were brought in. This was all done under the leadership of our resident expert, Carol Laubli.

Jacobine Cordes invited us to her farm for a felt workshop. We learned how to make felt hats. With soap and water and lots of rolling we made beautiful creations. Jacobine is a true artist in this media and has been teaching it for many years. A follow-up workshop in 1994 was held at her home to learn more about the

process of felting.

We continued participating at the State Fair with more emphasis on working with the youngsters in 4-H, to teach and help them with spinning techniques. They have done Sheep to Shawl contests and judges and mentors from our group have assisted them. Over the years we have done many Sheep to Shawl projects, so it is very rewarding to be able to help these young people get started in the art of hand spinning. We give hand knitted items and food to CazCares each year to help those in need.

In our twenty-first year we preserve and perpetuate the art of hand spinning. We meet the first Thursday of the month to spin. We educate, do demonstrations, give talks, display and play. The art of hand spinning is most relaxing and a truly wonderful stress reliever in the busy world of today.