

This is not the official newsletter of the Australian Guild of Rugmakers This is an additional newsletter compiled by Miriam Miller, President Emeritus

January 2016- Newsletter Number 16

NEW SOUTH WALES - BERMAGUI RUG HOOKERS.







Photos showing the hooked panels being hung. The finished result, and the sign

Story of the panels on following page written by Dawn Hollins.



Some of the hookers and strippers showing part of Rona Walker's full-size painting for the panorama. L-R Kathy Canning, Deirdre Quirk, Lindsay Potter (teacher), Caroline Wilkes, Ruth Sunderland, Anja Wetering, Sheila Cleburne (partly obscured), Rhondda Williams, Norma Gowing, Rosemary Knight, Dawn Hollins

Written

Written by Dawn Hollins.

Welcome to this celebration - the culmination of one and a half year's work by the U3A rug hooking group. This is the story of two community organisations with quite different agendas. It begins in 2013 when the Surf Club kindly allowed U3A to use their smart new building for free. We held several classes here but were frustrated by the poor acoustics. To alleviate this, and to show our appreciation for the venue I came up with the idea of wall hangings which would not only beautify the club but hopefully absorb sound and improve the acoustics.

I had done a one-off U3A rug hooking class with Lindsay Potter and put my proposal to her. To use her own words, she thought I was barking mad! I've taken on some huge challenges in the past so was not deterred by this. I convinced her to be the teacher if I managed to encourage enough members to come on board.

I advertised the community arts project in the Term 3 newsletter in 2014 and was astounded when 29 women signed up! Clearly working on a community asset held much more appeal than simply learning a craft. I had no experience whatsoever in running such a project and I'm not a keen craftsperson, but I am a competent organiser and I felt energised by the prospect of guiding a group of novices to create something useful and attractive for their community.

Taking old T-shirts and other stretch fabrics, slicing them into strips and pulling them through cheap hessian appeals to both Lindsay and myself. Reduce, reuse and recycle is a new catch-cry but we've been doing it for most of our lives!

The Surf Club were, I think, bemused by our proposal, but agreed, and told us where they wanted the panels to hang and what they wanted depicted on them. Rona Walker, Life Member of U3A and one of our most valued teachers asked to be the artist and did a small painting which was approved by the Surf Club.

I won't go into the complete process, but it's enough to say that at every step along the way we had hurdles to overcome and much to learn. For example, we asked for advice on hanging the heavy panels and while the request went out to the international rug hooking community there was nobody who had attempted such a challenging project who could advise us. As you can see, the problem was solved competently, cooperatively and cheaply by members of both community groups; Bruce McAslan,Surf Club President, and Ivan Hollins from U3A.

We realised from the beginning that we needed help to finance the cutting equipment and materials we required.

At this point we applied for a small grant from the Mumbulla Foundation. We felt encouraged and validated when we received \$2,075 in 2014. We thank the Foundation for their generosity and hope they consider the finished project worth it. We spent the rest of 2014 learning to hook from Lin and working on small hangings and cushions. Some of the original class realised that rug hooking was not the craft for them and our group, which met every Friday afternoon at the Country Club, became smaller (12). The design was drawn on the panels by Rona early in 2015 and work began in earnest.

Our U3A President at the time was Lyn Van Kampen. She was instrumental in getting the U3A Committee to fund a wall of cupboards in the Surf Club where we could store boxes of our fabrics and equipment. We were delighted to move our operation here in August 2015.

Some of the joy of this project is that we have become part of the Australian rug hooking community. In particular we have benefitted from the wise counsel of Miriam Miller and Jacqui Thomson from the Milton group.

Most of the joy has been working with the women of the Bermagui & District U3A Rug Hooking Group, the hookers and strippers. We learned so much from each other.

Like any community group we have a diversity of backgrounds, skills and experiences, but what these women have achieved, in a relatively short period, is remarkable.

From absolute novices they have become craftswomen who have worked diligently together to create a unique community asset . As Lin said recently, "We have created a wonderful thing. Not just the panels, but the group". And we have had fun doing it!



Some makers of the panels with Hon Dr. Mike Kelly AM MP who launched the community arts project in the Surf Club.
L-R Norma Gowing, Caroline Wilkes, Deirdre Quirk (obscured), Rhondda Williams, Carole Broadhead, Lin Potter at rear, Dawn Hollins, Ro Knight (obscured), Ruth Sunderland, Sheila Cleburne behind Anja Wetering, Kathy Canning.

'CONNECTING US' If you google <u>www.rughookingaustralia.com.au</u> -- look at the left hand side of the page and click on 'blog' and then on 'Connecting Us' You will have access to all past the issues of this newsletter. Miriam

QUEENSLAND - Daisy Hill



Claudia Forster originally from Canada.

I finally finished my Celtic people Figured out I started it in 2005! Never say never!

Have done quite a bit of finishing projects that I brought with me and so I am quite pleased with myself. However, nothing beats being with a room full of chatting ladies and having a lot of fun. Miss hooking with a group.

The story behind it is . . the woman on the left is holding a feather pen, she is the communicator between the husband and wife . . The man is a bard . . he tells the story and history of the family.

NEW SOUTH WALES -Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers Milton

Narelle Reynolds.

Narelle is starting a rug for a friend, who asked for it to include a dragon and a snake. Luckily Narelle's husband is quite an artist. Narelle is using green hessian for the background.





NEW SOUTH WALES -SYDNEY – Glebe Rugcrafters

Martha Birch wrote - I thought you might like to see my first completed project. It is a heat pad made for a friend who is a professional weaver, based on one of her designs. I started it at Helen's last Wednesday and did the last loop tonight

I used wool left over from a jumper that I knitted years ago and am backing it with an Indian rice bag.



LATER



I just finished the second heat pad and thought you might like a picture.

It was very good practice for me to do the smaller items and I learnt a lot in the process.

I will now get back to my chair seat covers with more confidence.

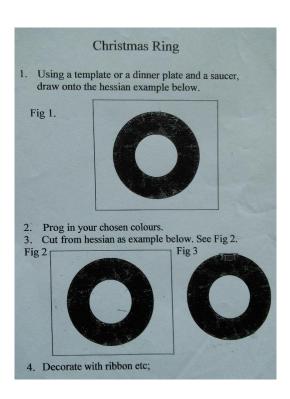
SOUTH AUSTRALIA- Strath Matters Group Kathy Saint- Adelaide.



Hi Miriam,

Here is the photo of my wreath. I made it from wool that I got from my Mother-in-law's rug hooking stash in Northumberland, England. One of the members of her rug hooking group has connections to a woollen mill where they make tartan fabrics and they get all the off cuts. I made one of these wreaths when I was visiting a few years ago and it was put in their Christmas Fair for sale. Supposedly it was one of the first to be sold! I thought I would make one for myself this year.

Kind regards, Kathy



Here are the instructions to achieve a Christmas ring. I would suggest you put some fabric glue around the inside and outside edges of the ring after you have progged, easier than trying to hem a A bit late for this year but circle. you can always save for next.



NEW SOUTH WALES - Milton

Miriam Miller

I just had to include this photo of Sunflowers Taken by Annmaree Dawson when she visited me this month. They are so joyful and are planted to the north and east of my home.

Cynthia Nicklin

TWIDDLE MUFFS.



Please Google 'Twiddle Muffs'. Amazing what people think to make, and these help people with Dementia.

ARTICLE by Cynthia

If you are a bowerbird like me, who saves broken necklaces, buttons, Suffolk puffs, who buys that dreadful fluffy "wool", gets it home and doesn't know what to do with it, here is a creative adventure for its use.

Twiddle muffs originated in England, appropriated by United States, and are now becoming popular in Australia. There are plenty of patterns on the Internet, but I use a diagonal square – you know, cast on 2, increase at the beginning of every row until the side reaches the desired length, then

decrease every row, until the final k2trog. I began with an 11" square, but have now given up measuring, and if I feel the side measurement is long enough to encompass an arm that will do.

I usually begin a new colour on the same side, leaving a tail, and this becomes (along with any other short lengths) a fringe. Have you any of those lengths of cast on stitches which refuse to unravel? Incorporate them; the rings come from plastic milk bottles; wool is all gauges and plys, and need I mention single earrings. If I could see better, I'd use all those sequins I have saved. I have now knitted my way through two plastic bags of donated tapestry wool – wonderful feeling! Yesterday I found some saved buckles - enough said.

Creation is yours, and you are keeping old people with dementia occupied and content.

IRELAND — NEVILLE SMITH. Neville sent me this information about the rug making tools he makes, and I thought it good to share it. Please contact Neville for prices and postage costs except in U.S.A. where you contact Dorr Mill Store. — In my next newsletter I hope to have photos and information about the rug tools made by Les Ritchie. Both Neville and Les make exceptionally lovely tools to use. How fortunate are we.



THE IRISHHOOK

Neville Smith,
Ballincur,
Clogh,
Gorey,
Co. Wexford Y25 Y521
Republic of Ireland
Tel: 00353 87 2781873
Email:nevillesmith@eircom.net



About The Irish Hook:

In 1988, a customer first came to me to ask if I could make hookies. I was living in Dumfriesshire, Scotland, and a couple of years previously had left my job making reproduction furniture to take on the business of a retiring spinning-wheel maker. For a while I was making fine reproduction wheels and spinning accessories; this had given me the skills to work both metal and wood, and of course an introduction to people involved in fabric crafts.

Rug hooking was entirely new to me, but from early and crude beginnings and with useful feedback I came up with the 8mm Ball-handled hookie and progger. There seems to have been a revival of the craft in the UK at the time, and over the next few years hookie-making left less time for spinning wheels, and became my main source of income.

The mid-nineties saw us move as a family to South-East Ireland, and after a couple of years we bought the rural property that is still our home and place of work. And this time also saw the beginning of a relationship with Cindy Hartman as a distributor of my tools in the USA; between us we developed a wider range of tool sizes and handle shapes, and introduced bent and curved hooks. Cindy did such a good job of marketing that my tools are known in America as the "Hartman Hook", with their reputation for quality; this name wasn't by my choice, and I trade these days as "The Irish Hook", but it's hard to shake the old name! In Australia our special thanks are due to Miriam Miller, who has done so much to introduce the craft there. My son Rick has been working with me for the last seven years, doing most of the woodturning; he is, I'm glad to say, as perfectionist as I am.

Rick

at



Nev at the the Victorian era (late 1800's)

woodturning

lathe

Metal working lathe that is still in daily use

the

Now something about the tools we make: **Timber:**

I use locally-grown yew wood for the handles. I have made handles out of exotic and other native hardwoods in the past, and could do so again by

request, but the feedback I have had is that no other wood feels as good to hold as the yew; it is a very slow-growing tree (a few years ago I had a batch from a tree over 1000 years old!), with dense and close-grained timber that feels beautifully smooth when brought to a fine finish. Which is why I don't use a varnish or oil on the wood, as it spoils that tactile quality and anyway would wear off with handling. In addition to this it is a very pretty wood, predominantly an orange or salmon pink colour, with white sapwood, occasional streaks of dark brown and purple, and a varied grain which means no two handles are alike. The wood eventually darkens to a chocolate-brown colour with age. Each handle is hand-turned to perfection.



Handle Shapes:

The "Ball" handle was the first I made, nothing original...a classic shape for a tool handle in fact (I have a couple of old awls in my workshop with similar handles), because it fits comfortably in the palm, and works as a good shape to grip for pushing or pulling.



The "Ergo" handle, however, is original...a shape which allows for a thumb indent in the right place to get a positive grip on the tool. This has become the best seller, and I see there are some copies out there, which I guess is a form of flattery! I usually make the indent in line with the barb of the hook.

The "Pear" handle is the same shape as the "ergo" but without an indent.



The "**Slim**" handle is longer and thinner than the above. (The pictures at right are near enough to scale). It's really down to individual preference as to which handle feels most comfortable to use.



The "Pencil" handle as pictured is for hooks of 5mm or less; these are usually held like a pencil and best suited for accurate finer work. I have made them for 6mm and 8mm tools, and they had to be a bit fatter at the business end to accommodate the bigger ferrule and the shaft of the hook, and tapered towards the back end; but really the pushing and pulling involved in coarse hooking is better done with a palm-held hookie.



Handle	Lengtl	h	Diamet	ter
Ergo	31/8"	80mm	1"	25mm
Ball	2½"	64mm	13/16"	30mm
Slim	35%"	92mm	7∕8″	22mm
Pencil	45%"	117mm	1/2"	13mm
Yew Progger	5"	127mm	11/8"	29mm

Ferrules:

For tools of 6mm diameter and upwards I use premade brass ferrules that curve over the end of the handle. I do take the trouble to mount each one on a lathe and smooth them off (and file off the ridge left by the stamping process at the back end) before use, which other hookie-makers don't. For tools of 5mm diameter or less, there are no ready-made ferrules with holes in the end to suit the size of the brass shaft...and a thin tool shaft set in a mismatched ferrule with too big a hole, and a gap all round, looks untidy to me. So for these finer tools I fashion my own ferrules from thick-walled brass tube, making sure the edge is well rounded over.



Hooks:

Brass, and available in any size from 2mm to 10mm (though 7mm is a size I never get asked for). The most popular size is 8mm, for "coarse" hooking. The length of tool sticking out from the handle is detailed in the table below; this can of course be adjusted (as can the shape or size of handles) on request. Each hook is individually fashioned and carefully smoothed to leave no sharp edges. Pictured are 3mm, 5mm and 8mm hooks.

This, I believe, has always been the other selling point of the Irish/Hartman Hook...the smoothness, and therefore ease of use, of the business end of the hookie. No machine-made flats behind the hook, no sharp edges on the hook itself.

Bent and Curved hookies: are available in sizes up to 6mm (picture: I-r: 5mm Bent, 6mm Bent, 5mm Curved, 6mm Curved). I make these the same length as the equivalent straight hookies, and also in a ½" longer version. They can be done with any handle; some customers for these hooks with an Ergo handle like the indent turned 90° to the side, so that if you hold the hook upright your thumb is towards you, as on the 5mm Long Bent Ergo hookie below; these obviously come in L/H and R/H versions.









Short hookies: Recently I have been making some hookies with a shorter, stubby tool end that are proving popular, especially in the 8mm size. Less far to push the tool through the hessian, I'm told!

Proggers with a brass tool end are like an 8mm hookie, but with a blunt point instead of a hook; a little cheaper than a hookie as there's less work involved. These can be made with any handle shape, but the "Ball" seems the most popular. I also make a yew-only "**Wooden Progger**", an elongated teardrop shape with a smooth blunted end, as a cheaper alternative to the brass tool.



Brass diameter	Tool length outside handle					
	Regular		Short		Long Bent	
2mm	7/8"	22mm				
3mm	1¼"	32mm				
4mm	1½"	38mm	1"	25mm		
5mm	1½"	38mm	1"	25mm	2"	50mm
6mm	1½"	38mm	1"	25mm	2"	50mm
8mm	2"	50mm	1¼"	38mm		
9mm	2"	50mm				
10mm	2"	50mm				

* * * * *

Post and Packaging:

I don't supply the tools in ready-made packaging, firstly to keep the cost down and secondly because they are in any case better displayed in a basket so customers can get a feel of the tools (which sells them!) and pick out a favourite handle.

An aside...brass, by its nature, tarnishes, especially where it's been handled and then left unused for weeks, and I've seen a couple of pictures of my hooks online not looking their shiniest! Brass cleaning compounds are ok but liable to stain the wood if you're not very careful; my preferred way of removing tarnish is to grip the ferrule and shaft with some very fine (0000 grade) steel wool and twirl the tool with the other hand. The last thing I do to every tool as I pack it is to give it an all-over vigorous rub with cloth to shine it up and remove any finger marks from the wood and brass.

No two parcels are the same so I make up my own boxes from recycled materials, tailor-made for each individual order, to pack the tools tightly and with padding between each tool...if they can't rattle around, they'll arrive in perfect condition.

I send the tools by regular airmail; a parcel of more than thirty or so tools I send by registered post; both usually arrive within 5-7 days. The maximum size of parcels sent as a "small packet" is 2kg. I don't charge for packaging, and I just charge the postage at cost...in Australian dollars this might vary a little with the exchange rate,



which I look up as I make out an invoice; the costs below in AUD are at today's rate.

Orders and Payments:

-When ordering or otherwise communicating by email, including the word "rugtools" in the subject line will direct the mail to the right folder and reduce the risk of it getting mislaid among the spam!

ONLY -For customers in the USA, the Dorr Mill Store is the exclusive distributor for The Irish Hook, and you will need to contact them directly at contact@dorrmillstore.com

For other countries contact Neville direct at. nevillesmith@eircom.net

- -Terms of payment: I don't ask for payment with an order, but appreciate payment by return post when the tools have arrived. We are a two-man band, not a multinational, and can't afford to wait weeks for payment.
- -Methods of payment:
- <u>1-Cheque</u>: for those who still have chequebooks, and until they are history, posting me a regular cheque made out in Australian dollars (as you would to a local supplier) is the easiest way to go, and incurs minimal bank charges at either end.
- <u>2-Bank transfer</u>: your bank may or may not charge for sending international transfers; at my end there is no charge for transfers of less than €127 (around AUD190, or just nine hookies) from outside Europe, above that I get charged about AUD9.50 which I have to add to the bill.
- <u>3-Paypal</u>: easy, but they charge 3.4% which again I would have to pass on as I don't factor these costs into the wholesale tool prices.

Happy hooking!

NEW SOUTH WALES. -Sydney - Jill Yates.



This is Jill's first rug. It is a proggy rug made entirely with material left over from patchwork projects.

Very impressive.

CANADA – Nova Scotia - Mary Alexander

Mary thought we may like to see some photos of a cooler place. It is 38C in Milton today as I put this newsletter together.





.A.C.T. Canberra - Maggie Whyte.

In June last year I went to the' Beanie Festival' in Alice Springs which was a wonderful experience having heard about it from my friends and had always wanted to attend.

While there I visited some amazing red centre scenery and picked up some small stones; as you do.

Back in Canberra I thought "why did I do that; what will I ever do with them".

Then I decided that goodness knows' when I will ever go back to Alice Springs' I really should do something with these stones. After much procrastinating, I decided to make a small wall hanging and place the stones into the hanging.

I first placed the stones where I wanted them in the hanging and drew around them, when with odds and ends of different coloured materials I just hooked randomly. After the hooking was finished I then couched the stones into place. It has turned out to be a happy experiment. Maggie.



To renew or apply for Membership of the Australian Rugmakers Guild. Please use the form below. .Note-

Narrawilly Proggy Rugger members are automatically members of the Australian Guild, so you do not need to pay or send in a renewal .

Australian Rugmakers Guild Membership/Renewal* Application

www.rughookingaustralia.com.au

https://www.facebook.com/australianrugmakersguild

NAMEPHONE (.....)

ADDRESS
CITYSTATE
POST CODE EMAIL ADDRESS
SKYPE NAME
Membership fees: \$20 per year due 1st January each year. (If you require receipt, please include/send a stamped addressed envelope)
Cash: \$
*Online payment (Electronic Fund Transfer) Account Name: Australian Rugmakers Guild BSB Number: 065 515 Account Number: 1008 4911 Reference: (Your Name)
Renewal Applications please complete <u>all</u> details
<u>Privacy Notice</u> : Please note your email address, street address and phone number is listed in the Membership Directory. Information from the Directory is available, upon request, to Australian Rugmakers Guild members. Please mark with an (*) any of your information you do not wish to have provided to other members.
Mail application to – Jo Franco, PO Box 2212 Clarkson, Western Australia 6030 or rughookingaustralia@gmail.com
Are you interested in forming, or being part of a rug hooking group in your local area? Yes [] Please indicate your suburb or the distance you're willing to travel to join a group - our Membership Chair will endeavour to connect you with other Guild members in your area.

CONTACTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

MILTON

Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers. Meet 1st and 3rd Fridays every month.

Contact Miriam Miller Email narrawillyfarm@shoal.net.au. Phone 02 4455 6870

Website www.shoal.net.au/~narrawilly/index.html

BRAIDWOOD

CONTACT Maggie Hickey. Email maggie.hickey@bigpond.com phone 0419 841 819

BELLINGEN, North Coast

Bellingen Rag Rug Group

Contact Maxine Keys at email baznmax@bigpond.com Phone 02 6655 0591

Group meets 1st Friday of the month from 10am until no set time.

BERMAGUI

Bermagui Rug Hookers. Contact Dawn Hollins at email pigeontree@live.com

SYDNEY -

Glebe Rugcrafters Currently meet in Glebe on a Tuesday. Ring for dates and further details.

Contact Helen Orr 02 96601010 or email orrstrat@bigpond.net.au

Australian Capital Territory

CANBERRA

Contact Maggie Whyte at email maggieandfish@hotmail.com Phone 02 6281 0988

Mobile 0488747953 Name of group not decided yet, but they are to meet every fourth Sunday afternoon of the month at The Village hall, Straithnairn.

AINSLE- Spinners and Weavers Rooms- 'Kurrajong" Cnr Angas and Sherbrooke Streets, Anslle contact Jenny Harber phone 02 6230 2429

South Australia

STRATHALBYN

Strath Matters. Meet 1st and 3rd Fridays

Supper room of the Strathalbyn Town Hall

Contact Judy Stephens at email studioblue20@gmail.com Phone 08 85363451

Western Australia

DONNYBROOK

Donnybrook Hookers - meet every Wednesday 10am to 2pm

Old Blue Guide Hall, Cnr Ramsay Terrace & Marmion St, Donnybrook-

Contact Robin at email robin.inkpen22@gmail.com Phone 08 9731 2874

WANNAROO

The Wannaroo Rugmakers. Meet every Saturday morning 10am to 1pm at the Library and Cultural Centre in Northern Suburb of Wannaroo. https://wanneroorugmakers.com

Contact Jo Franco at email josephinefranco1@gmail.com

Queensland

KINGAROY

Red Earth Ruggers Meeting at 17 Fairview Drive, Kingaroy on 2nd Monday each month from 11th April Time 9-12 Contact Judith Brook at email <u>judylbrook@gmail.com</u>

SUNSHINE COAST

The Sunshine Coast Rug Crafters meet twice each month at the Beerwah Library, 25 Peachester Road Beerwah. Map info about the library location at http://library.sunshinecaost.qld.gov.au/sitePage.cfm?code=libraries-map

The group meets the Second Friday and the third Tuesday of each month from 2.30 – 5.30p.m.

New members are always welcome

Contact Judi Tompkins -- Email judi.tompkins@bigpond.com or skype juditompkins

Meetings

2nd Monday 3rd Tuesday

NORTH TAMBORINE The Happy Hookers North Tambourine

contact Bec Andersen email info@becandersen.com

Tasmania

DELORAINE

The happy Hookers, Deloraine contact Joanne Wild email wildjoanne@gmail.com

VICTORIA

YARRA VALLEY RUGMAKERS

Meeting days vary, so please check on blog.

Look on blog for more information http://victorianrugmakers.blogspot.com.au
contact Christina Noorbergen email jerryandchris@hotmail.com
Phone 03 56596127

Joy Marshall email themarshalls@optusnet.com.au

Anne Schafer email a.schafer@bigpond.com

WODONGA- WANGARATTA-BENALLA

Bobby George – phone number 0357 662732 (Lone Rugger Seeking Same)

Email beeg3675@gmail.com

Please advise me at narrawillyfarm@shoal.net.au if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter

THE END.