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official  
newsletter  
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Australian  
Guild of

Rugmakers

This is an additional newsletter compiled by Miriam Miller, President Emeritus

June 2018 Newsletter No.33

## NEW SOUTH WALES – Milton

Travels of Miriam and Jacqui. – When we travelled to the International Guild of Handhooking Rugmakers Conference, held in Victoria, Vancouver Island Canada in 2015, we sent emails to people who were interested. If you would like to be included in our emails re our next travels to the TIGHR Conference in Yorkshire, please let me know. We will be away from 18<sup>th</sup> September until 27<sup>th</sup> November. There will be no newsletters during that time.

## AMERICA –Ohio -Sue Lauersdorf's story of the Snapdragon Frame

How the Snap Dragon Frames came to be.

I am a mother and a lifelong rug hooker telling how a wonderful product was developed and is made today, the Snap Dragon Rug Hooking Frame. I'm very proud of my son and his efforts and really pleased that he made a frame that works so well for my rug hooking friends and community.

I would like to preface by saying that I have been doing traditional rug hooking since 1970, starting with a very old burlap rug pattern of my mothers, an army blanket and a couple of woollen skirts.

When I first started hooking, my husband built thumb tack frames for me, accompanied me to rug hooking demonstrations and cheered me on, and so it quickly developed into a teaching venue. Before I knew it, in 1975, we had purchased a needlecraft store in our town, and I was soon teaching all sorts of needlecraft classes, including rug hooking. In the late 70's I received my teaching certification from Pearl McGown, herself. And it wasn't long until I managed to purchase the most elite frame on the market at that time.... The backing Puritan Frame made by the Mayflower company. It had little spring-loaded handles on two ends which turned the frame edges outward to tighten the backing on it and the frame had grooves with carding material in them to grip the backing. I felt so lucky to have one of those frames. I hooked and hooked on it. And my arms were constantly scratched and bleeding from the grippers. But it was worth the pain to me.

However, my very thoughtful son, Stephen Schmidt, had also been scratched and bled when he walked by my hooking frame. I don't think he found the experience pleasant at all. (Stephen was also the person who patiently hauled many 30 gallon containers of old, clean woollen skirts for me when we moved from one home to another over the years. He even did a little hooking of his own in his teen years.)

In May of 1991, Stephen graduated from North Carolina School of the Arts. He spent a couple years in Design and Production at theatres, and then came home with the intention of moving to New York and working in theatres there.

However, he saw a need for his skills at home, and stayed long enough to get a good bit of finishing and improvement on our house, and then he set about designing a more pleasant and functional rug hooking frame. In 2005 he made the first prototype, which was an angled frame similar in shape to my Puritan.



After trying it, I realized that this was the most wonderful new tool rug hookers would have had since the 1950s. The stretching mechanism was a cam/lock device which had a wooden paddle on each edge of the frame. Unlike every other frame I had ever used, when the pattern was placed on top, and the paddles pulled into the vertical position, there **WAS NO** need for tugging the pattern tighter at any point. And with the wooden rails holding the gripper, there was protection for the arms. No more bleeding. And as a trained artist, Stephen would have nothing other than a beautiful finish on the wood and an overall appeal to the eye.

Stephen applied for and received his patent on and began to produce the Snap Dragon Frame. At the first workshop where the frame was shown, someone suggested making the frame flat for people who like to turn their work. Stephen acted upon the suggestion, developed the flat frame at the same height as the



front of the angled frame – the Highboy.



Later, another suggestion came from a short lady who had shoulder issues, and a lower flat frame was



made – the Lowboy.

He (and I) took the frames to a McGown National Meeting in Des Moines, Iowa in 2006. In that venue we met many rug hooking folks who appreciated the high function and the beauty of the Snap Dragon Frames. And the frame business began to grow from there.



Stephen also began to make different styles of leg and base sets to accommodate the needs of different people and to fit different stands, including the very popular Ball and Socket Frames, which turn 360 degrees and angles in all directions for convenience in hooking.

All leg and base sets for the Snap Dragon Frames are interchangeable on the frame head, therefore if someone wanted to change the style of their frame, they could simply order a different leg and base set.

Stephen also designed an alternate yoke for the frame, which keeps it from dropping below 30% - an ideal angle for hooking.

Today, as in the beginning, Stephen cuts, glues up, shapes, drills, smooths and finishes all the wooden parts for the frames. There are many parts per frame, and many are made in multiples for each frame. He is very efficient and careful

about the precision of the parts. At first he even made the aluminium legs, but he was able to find a company in North Carolina who could do it quickly and consistently. On arrival, those parts also get hand sanded and buffed before they become part of a Snap Dragon Frame. Steve tests, carefully packs and ships the frames himself. His workshop is behind our home in Ohio,



and his Snap Dragon Frames can be found at [snapdragonframes.com](http://snapdragonframes.com).

So that's how the Snap Dragon Frames came about and how they continue.

Sue Ellen Lauersdorf

Ohio, USA

May, 2018



**CANADA – New Brunswick –** Mary Alexander

I had great pleasure finishing the bag, my late sister designed a few years ago Mary





## WESTERN AUSTRALIA Patricia Shultz



Made by Patricia for her daughter. Size 36in by 36in made with carpet wool

## NEW SOUTH WALES – Braidwood – Gail Nichols.



Thought I'd send you a photo of my latest creation: Mystery Bay. New and recycled fabric hooked on hessian backing. 133 x 87 cm.

My husband and I enjoy camping at Mystery Bay, south of Narooma, when we want to just get a way for a few days. The rock formations on the beach conjure up a range of imagery, represented in this work

. This rug will be added to the others going into my exhibition at the Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra. (Kingsley Street, Acton ACT). From Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> July. Wednesday to Sunday 10-5p.m



## GUERSEY –CHANNEL ISLES

## Guernsey Rug Group.



Photo no. 1 "Abstract" by Linda Proggy worked with fleeces.

Photo No. 2 "Fireflies" by Stevie hooked with various fabrics.

Stevie made this a while ago but she attached little lights onto the rug to look like the fireflies.

Photo no. 3 "Crazy Patchwork" punch needle rug made with rug wool



An exciting thought- adding lights to our rugs  
Miriam





**MYSTERY SOLVED.-** Maxine from Bellingham asked if anyone knew what the Pole Fleece clamp was used for, and Christine has the answer.



The pole fleece clamp is for preparing fleece, you lock the staples under the pole and then use the flicker on them. This equipment was handmade by a man in Orange and the idea was that you could prepare staples without constantly pricking your fingers! They were very popular in the eighties when we all just spun raw fleece, prepared sliver was practically unheard of in those days. Look after yourself, warm thoughts, Christine.

### AMERICA – Springfield Missouri – Rita Hood

I am sending a couple of my original rugs that I have done.



I started doing rugs back in Virginia about 20 years ago but did not pick it up here in Missouri till about 4 years ago. I am not a primitive hooker, I love bright colors too much☺. Because of this I had to learn to dye the colors that I liked to work with. Me and dying is an ongoing process, I kept learning every day. I have a background in color and art and have used this in my dying and color planning in my Hooking.



## Continued Rita Hood

The two abstract rugs are my exploration into multi-medium hooking. I used wool, roving, hand spun yarns and stone beads, as well as using some needle felting in the pieces. I had been working on this idea in my head for a while and this is what I finally came up with. They were a lot of fun bringing to life

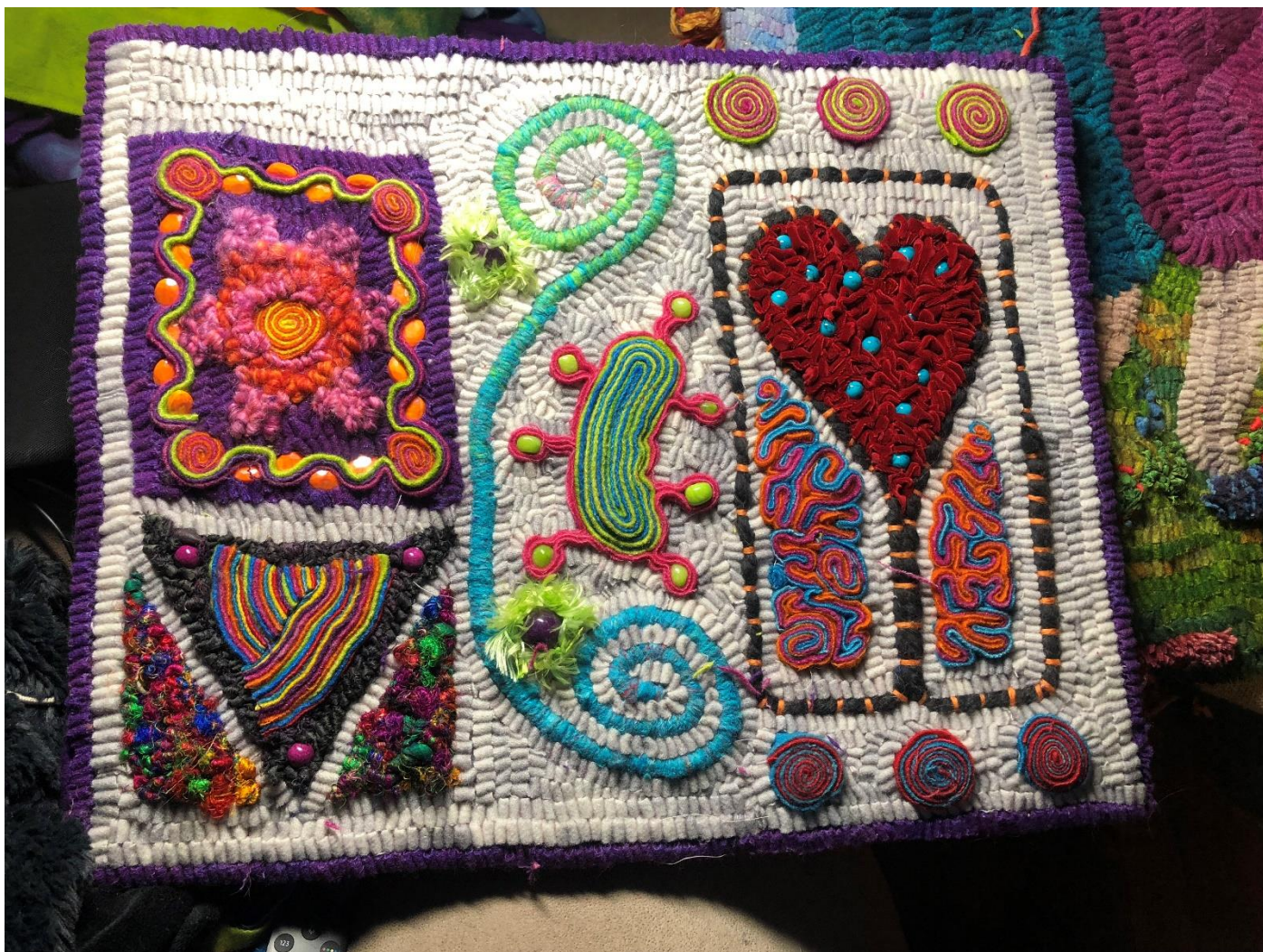
I am leaving the photos large so we can see the detail. Miriam



The Lion was a rug I designed for Lucy Richard's Song Challenge. I like the idea of designing a rug around a song and started to listen to songs of the 70's. Once I heard "The Lion Sleeps Tonight", the rug started forming in my mind and I started to put it down on paper and the rug is my finished vision. I had tons of fun bring this rug to life.



Continued Rita Hood.



I will tell anyone do not be afraid of taking courses, even if the style might not be your taste. You might get a few techniques that you can use in your style of hooking, I have in almost every class I have taken. I am always open to learning and am constantly learning every day, whether it is through an article I read, a video I watch or a class I take. There is always something out there that I might not know. Rita Hood.

## JOKE

An Irishman went into a pub one Friday, and asked for three Guinness. He sat at a table in the corner and had a drink from each in turn, until he had drank the three.

The next week he did the same. When he again came in a week later, the barman suggested he just buy one drink and he would keep an eye on him, and when he was nearly finished the first drink the barman would bring him another. No need to order three at once. No the Irishman said, he wanted the three at once as he had promised his two brother he would have a drink with them each week.

Well this went on for many weeks, and then one Friday the Irishman ordered only two Guinness. When he did this a second week, the barman wondered and then asked, 'Has something happened to one of your brothers?'

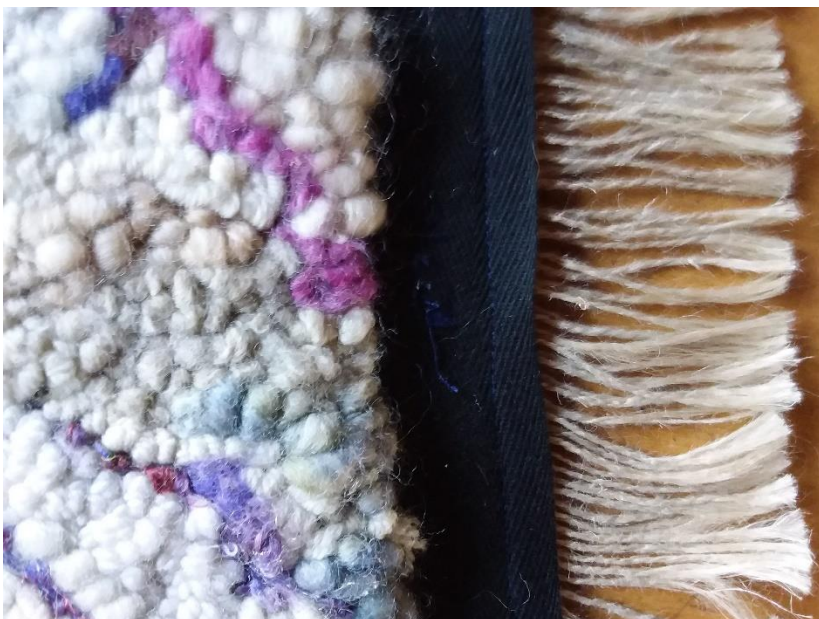
"Oh no replied the Irishman, my brothers are fine. It is me, I have decided to give up alcohol."



## NEW SOUTH WALES. – Moruya- Ruth Hassall.



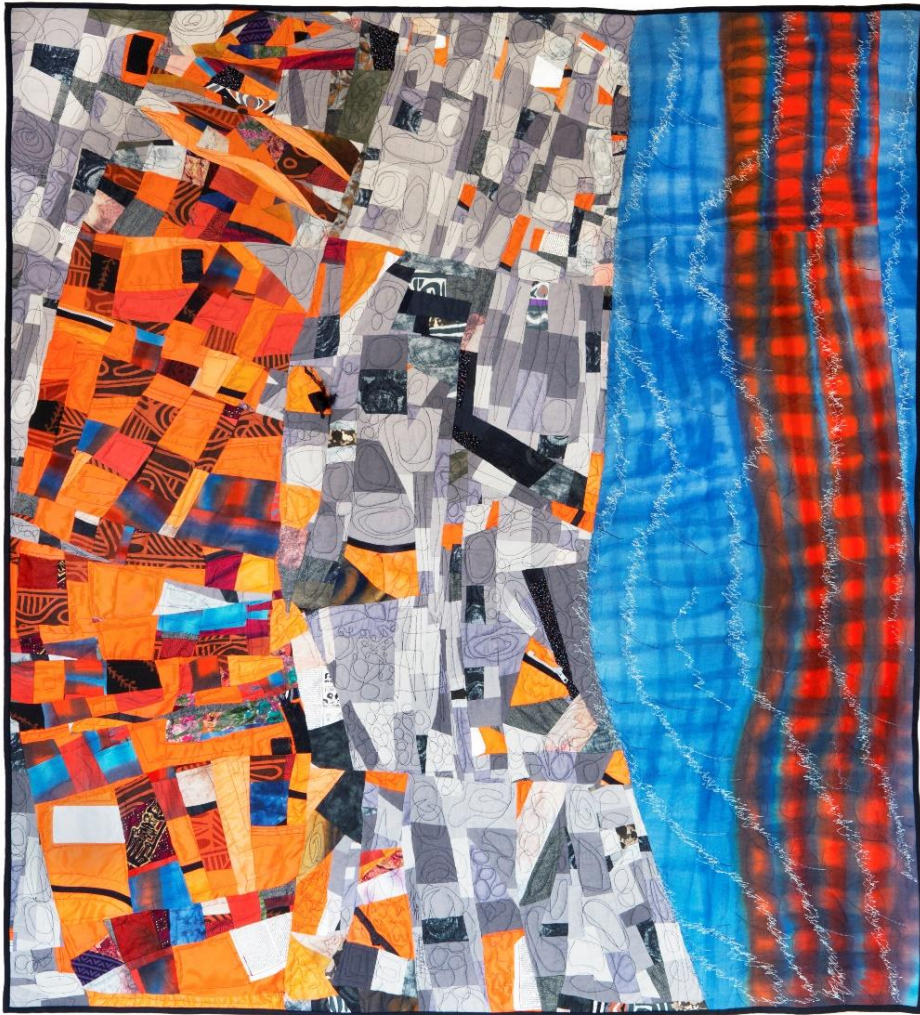
This is made with recycled wool yarn. Ruth finished the edges by sewing black tape on both sides and then fringing the backing which extended beyond the tape. Ruth is a very talented and innovative artist and her recent works include very large fascinating abstracts.



Ruth comments“

"Rugging to me is a special activity. Crafts like rugging somehow connect people on levels that are difficult to explain and that somehow bring these people together from all different backgrounds and lifestyles. It's a leveller. Yours and Jacquie's upcoming world trip is all connected to rugging and the people who share this similar passion. It only reinforces this extraordinary phenomenon as I hear of the various countries you will be going to and all of them are because of the craft and its connections. My rug "a Swiss Cow" was made when I was reaching out to try to make connections while I was living in Switzerland and in the end, it's found me with connections back in my own country of origin. A special bond. A humble craft, and yet a way to connect people and communities across the globe."



**NEW SOUTH WALES. –SYDNEY –** Dianne Finnegan

A quilt by Dianne made from lifejackets used by refugees titled.

"Discarded lifejackets on a beach in Lesbos"

Please read more about Dianne by Googling

Dianne Finnegan Australian Quilt Artist.

To look up previous newsletters Google 'rughookingaustralia.com.au' then click on 'blog' on left hand side. When this comes up, click on 'Connecting Us' Miriam Miller. And all the newsletters are there.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU NO LONGER WANT TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER.

THE END.