



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

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ENGLAND – Reeth – Heather Ritchie.



This is a label made by Heather to sew onto the back of her rug.

NEW SOUTH WALES – Wollongong Fiona McKay

THREADS OF MY LIFE

The internet puts many distractions and dangers in our way, much of which I studiously avoid. But one day something popped up which I didn't ignore. I read something like: 'To win a week in Cambodia, all expenses paid, answer this question in a single word. **How do you nourish your soul?**' Without hesitation I wrote 'CREATE', filled in my name and contact details, sent it off and thought nothing more of it. What a surprise when I received a call telling me I'd won! I didn't even remember the competition at first, but then there was a vague memory. I was so glad I'd taken that moment, whenever it was, to respond!

I went to Cambodia for the first week in November 2018, with a friend, Gabi. We spent time in Phnom Penh and in Siem Reap. Every minute was wonderful.



Our sponsor, Elain Youn, a successful Cambodian developer and business woman, is a gracious and humble woman committed to helping her country recover from the Pol Pot years. In a dream, Elain was told by the Archangel Michael that she should begin a website called Soul Advisor which would be like Trip Advisor with a focus on wellness. It would help people access practitioners who could support their wellbeing wherever they travelled, worldwide. Elain argued she didn't have the skills needed to make that website, but was convinced and put aside money to finance it. Then she waited for the people she needed to come her way, as Michael had promised they would. And they have. That question I'd answered was part of the ongoing development of Soul Advisor (<https://www.souladvisor.com/>).

Gabi and I had a wonderful time sightseeing as well as having a number of commitments related to the work Elain is doing, some of them as difficult as having massages in Bliss Spa, one of Elain's businesses, or meals at one of the cafes and restaurants she owns. Elain supports her 400+ employees in many different ways, including with weekly English lessons and quality milk formula for their children under 2 years old, but she also does a range of work in the community at large.

On the first morning we went to the Buddhist blessing of a new school Elain has built for Khmer children. The school was opening two days later. Elain had previously established a successful International School, but wants to ensure that the everyday Khmer children whose parents can't afford International School fees can access good education too. She has some ideas for her new school, Bamboo Jaya, that are quite different from the education offered by the state in Cambodia. Ideas that are, by chance, in some ways aligned to Steiner principles, and one of the teachers at the new school, Noreen, is an experienced Steiner teacher from the US.



Then we visited a state orphanage for disabled children. In Cambodia, disability is seen to reflect badly on the parents, and disabled children are often hidden or abandoned. Children with Autism and other disabilities are not allowed to go to state schools, and often remain uneducated. In the orphanage, the state provides only for the children's physical needs and basic care. It was heart-wrenching to see how basic that care was, for children who had little opportunity for development or a future because of lack of medical, educational and occupational attention to their needs. Elain

has started filling the gap at the orphanage with some medical and educational input, both with her own money and through establishing a charity called Bravehearts (<http://braveheartsprog.org/>).

Elain also has a vision to bring singing and music back to the children of Cambodia through a program called Cambodia Sings (<http://cambodiasings.org/>). Between 1975 and 1979, the Khmer Rouge, under Pol Pot, attempted to get Cambodia back to Year Zero, a peasant existence. During this time, anything to do with culture and education was targeted. More than 1.5 million people were killed, shops, schools, monasteries, museums, libraries, banks, money, musical instruments and books were destroyed. Music, dancing, singing and storytelling were banned so many traditional songs and stories were lost. Often the people who knew them had been killed and any that had been written down, destroyed. The arts are still not taught in state schools in Cambodia. Elain hopes that Cambodia Sings will help restore in the community some of that which has been lost, emotionally as well as culturally, through the silencing of voices. So far, more than 1,000 school children have an hour a week singing with the Singing Guides Elain employs. I participated in two Cambodia Sings classes with Singing Guides Robin and Ieva, and talked with Robin about some ideas I had for Cambodia Sings, in particular for the disabled children in the orphanage (many of whom are non-verbal) about ways to draw them in to the experience of music and song, even if they couldn't actually sing. My experience as a parent and teacher of special needs children came in useful.



Out of all that, and a desire to respond to Elain's generosity to us, and to support her work, I had the idea of using some of my photos to illustrate some readers 'with an Asian flavour' for the children as they learn English which is something that Noreen had told me was lacking. So, to date, I've written 12 readers for them, including three readers that are songs. One of the songs is 'Old Man Keo', my 'Asianised' version of 'Old Macdonald had a farm'. A great way to teach children about animal names and sounds, as well as a simple song to sing.

The 13th reader I'm working on is about silk and silk-making, another important cultural and economic aspect of Cambodian life, almost lost in the Pol Pot regime and slowly being revitalised. Gabi and I actually booked in for a weaving workshop while we were in Siem Reap. I came home with my own bit of silk fabric which I had haltingly woven on a loom, much to the interest of passing Japanese tourists who could, instead, have been watching local women weaving with easy flow.

My books can be previewed, and even bought, through the Blurb Bookstore, (<http://au.blurb.com/bookstore>) but we're hoping Noreen can produce them more cheaply in Cambodia. Perhaps even sell them to other schools at a small profit to raise some funds for Bamboo Jaya or Bravehearts. I have loved creating those books, starting to write for the joy of writing again, but also working with my photos and finding some great public domain images that I can use for free. I have also gone back to some simple weaving I did last year with sari silk strips, now doing Kantha



stitching and other embroidery on it, soaking up the vibrant colours, all of it nourishing my soul.

That trip to Cambodia, as well as giving rest and restoration, gave my creativity a new life. I trust that my books, in turn, will give something valuable to some in Cambodia where there has been so much suffering and there is so, so much need.



Thank you, Fiona. For taking time to write this for us.
Miriam

FRANCE – Normandie -Laurence



Hello!

I send you my new craft: my daughter drew the sun in the middle and I did the rag rug with fabric and wool.

hope to see my rugs in your magazine soon !

have a good day,

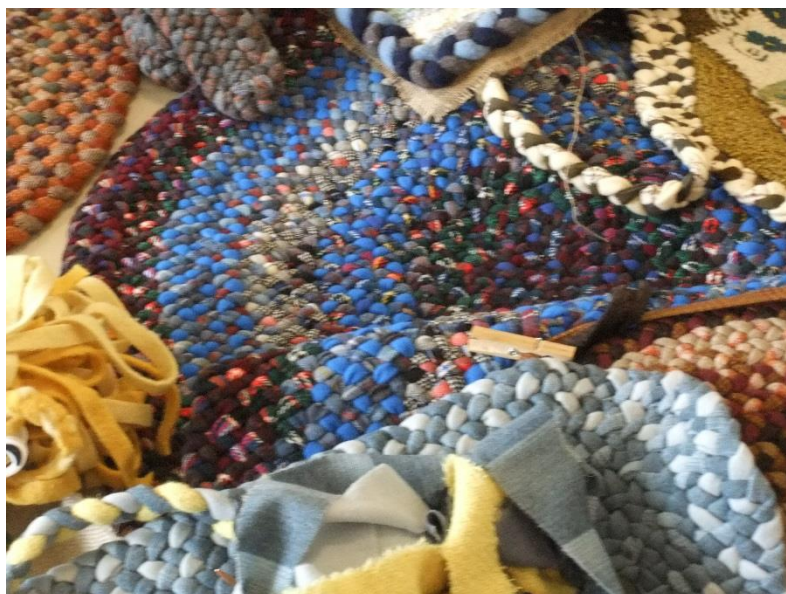
Laurence

Usketch (Hint from Pricilla Cameron) England.

Usketch

This is a fabulous FREE app that translates your photographs into pencil drawings making it possible to transfer into rug patterns/designs. Its a must.

This may only be available for Apple - go to the app store and download for free. All you do is choose a photograph from your computer add it in place on usketch and print whatever size you require.

CANADA – British Columbia. Chemainus – Val Galvin

Hi Miriam greetings from Canada. I just hosted a 3 day Braid-In here in Chemainus. Many rug hookers are enjoying adding Braid to their hooked pieces. First.....you have to master 'THE BRAID' Hope you make it to Canada again soon.. Val.



NEW SOUTH WALES – Milton –

MILTON SHOW Friday 1st and
Saturday 2nd March 2019

Carol Flynn's winning rug.

Champion of the section.

Below general view of entries and display.

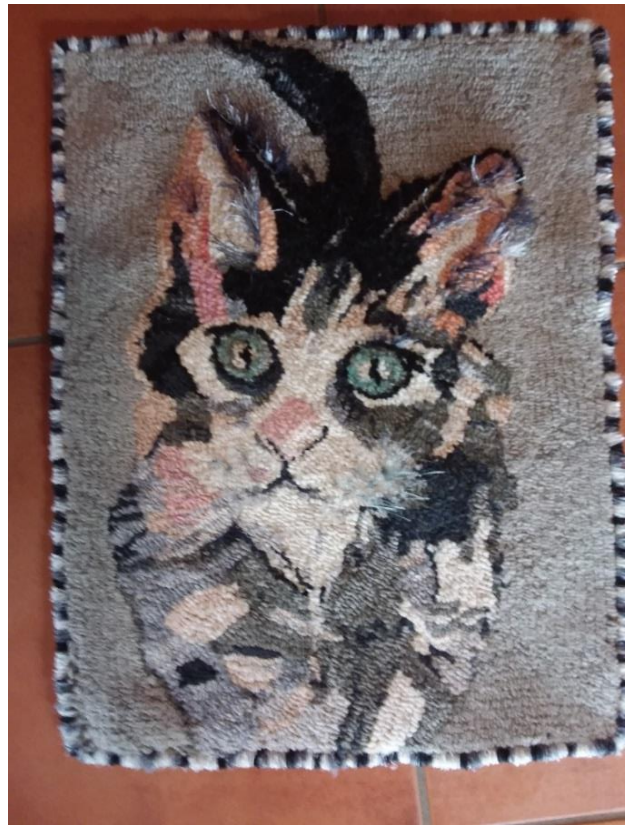


**NEW SOUTH WALES -Milton -
Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers**

Ilka Landahl.

Size 33 by 43 cm

Made with mainly Cotton, ribbon
and a little wool



**CANADA – New Brunswick –
Sussex - Sussex Tearoom
Hookers - Wendy Rogers.**

“Hello! My name is Wendy Rodgers and I am from Sussex, New Brunswick which is in Atlantic Canada. I joined the Sussex Tearoom Hookers in November 2018 and this has been my second project. I really enjoyed hooking this rug as it spoke to my Maritime roots and I loved the colors. I love rug hooking and can’t wait to start my next project! I have been very fortunate to find such a wonderful and welcoming

groups as the Tearoom Hookers. They have been very kind, encouraging and helpful.”



Here is a photo of one of the hand-printed baby quilts I have been making lately and a detail of a stamped square. How blessed to have lots of new babies in my life and how lucky to have my friend Dorothy (quilt maker extraordinaire) to do the sewing

I've been recycling old cotton sheets and printing squares using hand-made and bought stamps and a home-made gelatin plate.

<https://kimherringe.com.au/printmaking/gelatin-plate-printmaking-recipe/>

This technique also works well printing leaves and garden plants and you can just brush the ink onto the stamps if you don't have a plate and brayer.

I do have fabric inks but I have had the most success using tubes of ordinary acrylic paint mixed with Jo Sonja's textile medium. The ratio is approx. six drops of textile medium to one tablespoon of paint. When dry, the paint is fixed with a hot iron and from all reports is set fast and will withstand years of washing.



Marama <http://creativemarama.wordpress.com>

Continued from Marama

HAND EXERCISES

I find this somewhat odd video made by an Australian physiotherapist and hand spinner to be very helpful. You'll notice that you don't see her entire head in the video, which I find charming and odd. I do find the exercises are helpful and increase dexterity and strength for me.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njZcu9NeRPM&feature=share> <

QUEENSLAND – Tolga -Jennifer Walton

I've attached photo of 29cm kaleidoscope - won first prize in an earlier Royal Melbourne Show - creative embroidery, articles showing exhibitors own design. Combination stitches including. Stump work, bullion, blanket, chain, couching, french knots and long and short stitch - worked in perle 5 threads, Madeira-Decora and silk, Irish-Rayon and an array of metallic threads. (A close up of the centre)



This is a snakes n ladders quilt I make for my daughter, Elizabeth. The teddy's are smiling or sad depending on where they are standing, near a ladder - happy, near a snake - sad. The tokens are watering cans so you can water the flowers while waiting for your turn. Two dice one with numbers the other with flowers and nice plush furry bags to pack it all away. All felt - raised snakes n ladders - held together with blanket stitch.

Continued Jennifer Walton

Another photo of Jennifer's embroidery.



NEW SOUTH WALES – Mollymook. Jenny Cantrill

I made the quilt and waistcoat. for my husband Robin, with love and admiration. I called it Layer upon Layer as a reflection of Rob's love of geology and palaeontology. I admire his dedication and ability to pursue a dream. I worked on the quilt as Rob completed his PHD studies, after he retired from a lifetime of teaching.

I started by making three pieces of fabric to represent sedimentation of earth and rocks through geological ages. I screen printed fossil images and small segments of text onto hand dyed fabrics. Then I surrounded the basic shape of the fossils with a modified log cabin technique. After this I machine quilted, embellished and embroidered. For embellishment I used copper and metallic beads, Tyvac and wools. I ironed the



Continued Jenny Cantrill

Tyvac to produce a bubbled effect. I made further fossil images using Romeo and Guillette plastic over black organza machine embroidered to represent fossil fish, leaves, triobites, ammonites, and brachiopods. These I attached by hand.



NEW SOUTH WALES -Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers = Miriam Miller.



To fill a space, --showing how my rug is progressing.

I had no joke

Miriam

CANBERRA- Jenny Harber

It is 50cm by 31cm. Materials used were tracksuiting (mustard) and mainly t shirting with some velour from an op shop jumper. The idea was an abstract landscape in black and white Jenny

**NEW SOUTH WALES – Eden -** Edrom Lodge

Spinning Retreat March 2019. Two birthdays were celebrated and the birthday cake and small cakes were recyclable. All knitted. They were very realistic.(Good for ones diet.)



CANADA – Ontario – Susan Sutherland.

. Here is what I have been up to. I've been 're-purposing' old rug hooking patterns and making them more contemporary for me. I can't tell you how many times I have purchased a rug hooking design with great intentions to hook it. At the time, I love the design, have the perfect spot for it or know it will be perfect for someone as a gift. But, time goes by and the purchased pattern goes into the pattern abyss and I forget about it. Well, no more. I've decided that I will honour the person who made the original design by hooking it BUT I will add a 21st century twist to it. (I've been pulling loops since 1979 so I have a lot of patterns that were once loved!). I call my new pattern a Mash-Up, similar to when disparate music genres are played together to give a new sound. I am working on my third Mash-Up,

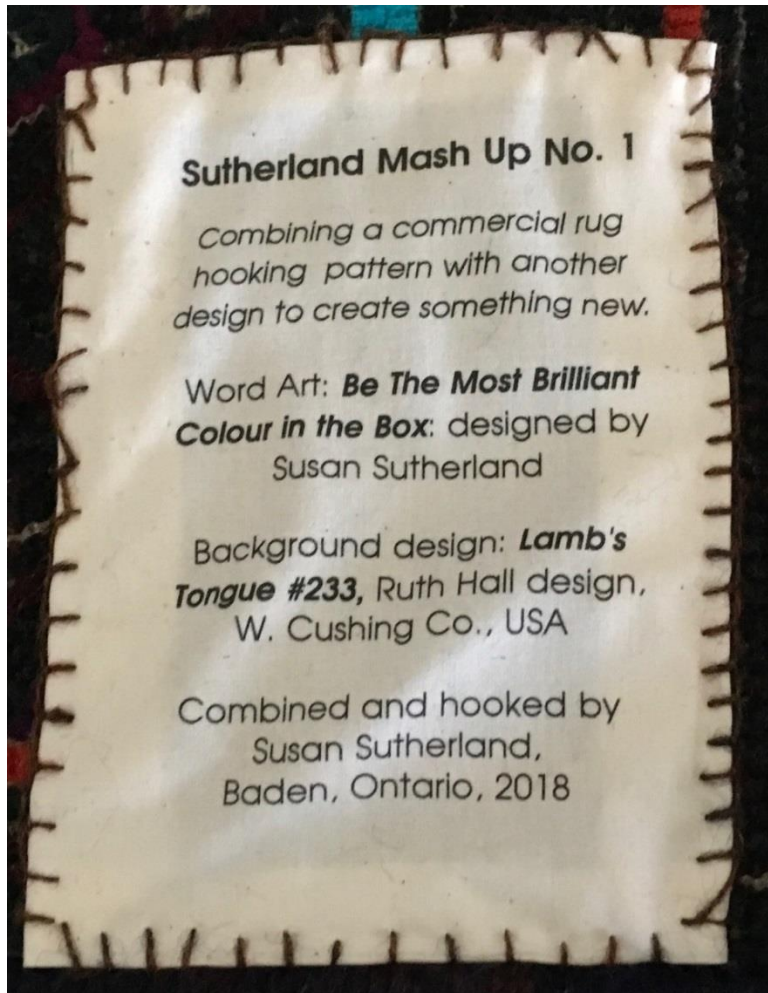


and have a couple of other ideas percolating. So far I choose a favourite phrase or word and find a specific font. I either purchase the word art or make my own. (It's a lot easier to purchase it!). Then I enlarge the word art to the size I need, print it, then transfer it to the first design. I am sending you two of my Mash-ups, I will send them in separate emails as I know the file will be quite large.

The first Sutherland Mash-up 1 shows the phrase "Be the Most Brilliant Colour in the Box". I have always enjoyed that phrase, seen it in various cards, etc but never saw it with the 'correct' spelling of colour. So I decided that I could make my own word art using the computer, which I did. I then printed it to the size I needed to fit on an old commercial pattern I had bought. That pattern

is called Lamb's Tongues #233. There was no other information about it so I searched the internet and found out that it was a pattern designed years ago by Ruth Hall for W. Cushing & Co. which is now W. Cushing and Co./ P is for Primitives. Lianne Miller is the new owner. I will send you two more photos in a separate email to show my 'colour planning'

and what the design looked like before most of it was hooked. hugs Susan



A lesson for me , to make labels to put on the back of my rugs.

Occasionally I hook my initials or the date, but a story like this is much better. Miriam

Below Susan's colour planning and the original design with the over work just started.

Miriam



THE END