



This is not
the official
newsletter
of the
Australian
Guild of
Rugmakers

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

AUGUST 2020 Newsletter number 55

NEW SOUTH WALES – Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers – 3rd July 2020

Meeting for the first time since March

There was much show and tell and talk.



Carol Flynn's
wall hanging

Size 60cm x
100cm



Continued next page. Narrawilly Proggy Ruggers meeting 3rd July

Maggie adjusting her stretcher
frame.

Continued 3rd July



Maggie Hickey's rug depicting the bushfires. with Maggie peeping over the top.



Close up of

waratah flower and fire scene



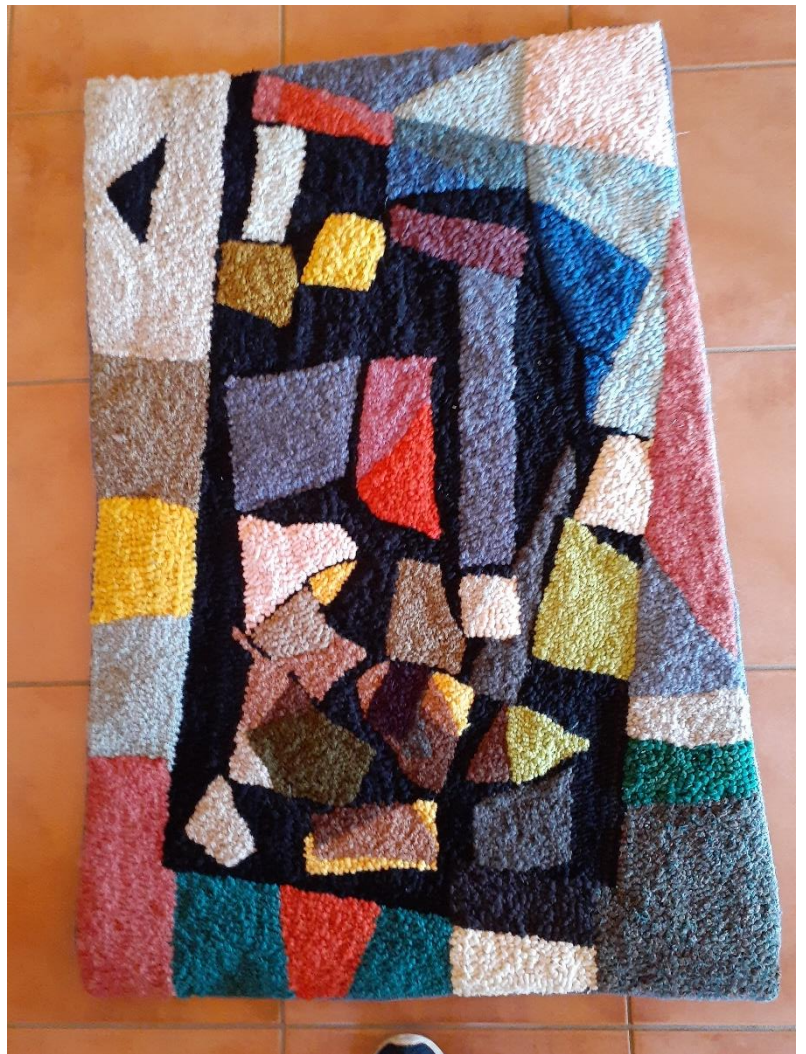
Judy, Janet and Clair social distancing on our first rug day back together. Continued next page



Christine Alexander's bag different each side.



Kay enjoying the sun and to right Maggie Hickey's geometric rug hooked with wool yarn size. 600cm x 900 cm



I asked people to write a story of how they have coped with the fires and the virus. This is Jocelyn's contribution.

NEW SOUTH WALES – Bawley Point - Jocelyn

My news is that I am coming into the home strait with my « Bushfire Evacuation » jumper. It is proving very difficult to sew up as it was largely a figment of my imagination, and seems to have rather peculiar armholes and shoulders.

Its' history is that after we were evacuated on December the first because of the threat of fires, we had few clothes so went to the Op shop.

- There was a spinning wheel waiting for someone to love it. I bought it and called to see Miriam who supplied essential bits including a cone of processed but unspun wool.

The anxiety of threat of the fires was quelled by spinning in the Evacuation Centre and back at the motel where we stayed for a week or so.

Back home, and lucky to escape the fires, and to find that my son at Tabourie had saved his house (with the help of the wonderful RFS and a Southerly change), I began to knit. Patterns have always been a challenge as I am rather innumerate, therefore Miriam's pink wool has been a creative event which is about to come together.

When it is finished, I will send a photo.

Best wishes to all you fellow spinners.

Jocelyn Sussman

AMERICA – New Hampshire -Sally Gilbert

Hi Miriam,

You once asked how I began rug hooking so this is my story. It was the Fall of 2012 while attending the Tunbridge, VT Fair that I was mesmerized watching Stephanie Allen-Krauss (owner of Green Mountain Hooked Rugs) demonstrate rug hooking. I picked up a brochure with information about the Green Mountain Rug Hooking School scheduled for June 2013. My husband encouraged me to register for the school, and after some consideration, I did - not having any idea of how

consumed I would become! It was a warm sunny June afternoon when I arrived at The Vermont Technical College -my home for the next 5 days. When I registered I was asked about my "rug hooking experience " so I answered truthfully "None". I secretly imagine the teachers looking at my registration and tossing coins to see who would "teach" me but I was very fortunate to have Bev Conway assigned as my teacher. She was the perfect teacher for me!! Since I was registered as a " day student" because I would be sleeping at my son's home nearby, I arrived at "school" with only my purse, but quickly



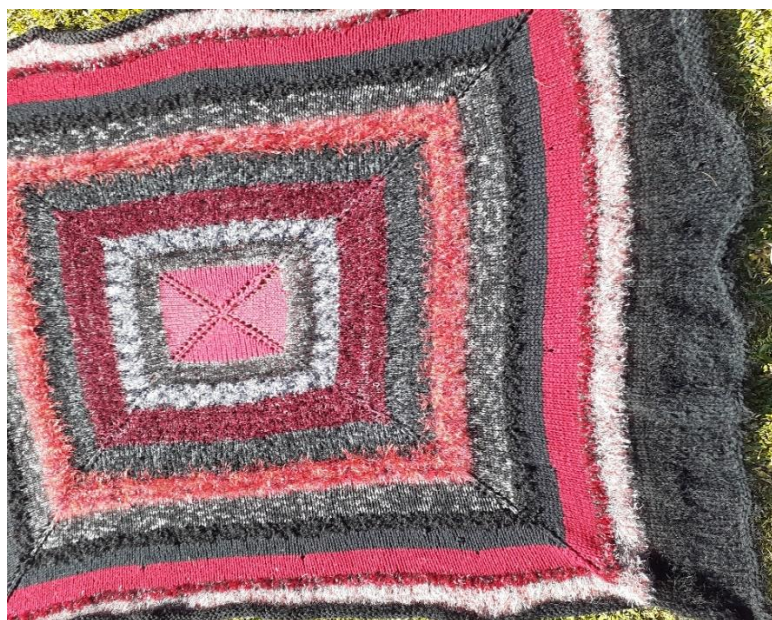
Continued next page

Continued Sally Gilbert realized everyone else was lugging huge suitcases, trolleys filled with material, overflowing bags, lamps, and frames. I called my husband in panic thinking I was way in over my head! That evening I met my classmates and teacher. Everyone was so friendly and helpful. First of all, I needed a pattern and a hook, so off I went to the store and purchased “Porter’s House” a Heart in Hand Rug Hooking pattern by Norma Batastini and a Hartman hook. The picture of a Colonial house, with sheep quietly standing in the field was exactly what I imagined hanging in my hallway. At class the next morning, Bev Conway lent me a frame and helped me chose wool for my project. During the course of the week, Bev patiently worked with me- guiding me when I got stuck but letting me experiment on my own. I learned so much, not only from Bev Conway, but also from my classmates who never over rode the teacher but who gave me hints as they worked on their projects. As it turned out, Norma Batastini artist who created my project) was a classmate but never interjected comments or opinions on my interpretation of her pattern. I was nervous that I would be overwhelmed once school ended and would not be able to finish my project, but I had taken notes and was so excited to see the finished project that I continued working even through the summer. I think everyone remembers their first teacher - I thank Bev Conway for laying the foundation for my love of rug hooking and for the many teachers I have had since then who added layers of knowledge as I strive to hook “outside of the box.”

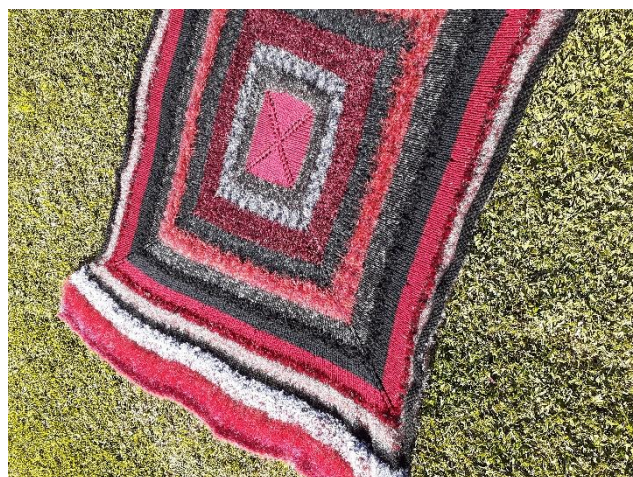
Sally Gilbert

Wolfeboro, New Hampshire

NEW SOUTH WALES – Nowra. – Clair Bruton



Rug made by Clair for her grandson, using up some of her odd balls of wool, size 1.5 m x 3 m



ENGLAND – Hastings – Jayne.



Jayne's entrepreneurial

Talent doing up old
furniture to sell during this
lock down.

ENGLAND – Cornwall.

All the rugmaking world is saddened with the death of Diane Cox, one of the brightest lights in rugmaking.

Please look up this website, sent to me by Jo Franco. You can see Diane's love of life,

talent, and creativity in her work. Diane Cox <http://raggedlifeblog.com/diane-cox/?fbclid=IwAR0SNg5qNEfXvd7uemNZbQSTOnkVoN7cciCLw2f4P1DSPd3wF1luBTQBwCg>

NEW SOUTH WALES – Braidwood -Gail Nichols.

The Road Home, new and recycled fabric hooked on primitive linen, 130 x 180 cm.

I've written a statement about this one. Here it is.

'Black Summer'—the Fire Season from Hell—began in Queensland during the winter month of June 2019. Fanned by drought, record high temperatures and ferocious winds, it raged until the following February, impacting every Australian state and territory. In New South Wales 26 lives were lost as 5.5 million hectares burnt and nearly 2,500 homes were destroyed. For us near Braidwood, big trouble began in late November with the North Black Range fire in Tallaganda, ignited by a lightning strike. It quickly expanded out of control, attacking the community of Bombay and threatening Braidwood from the west. Meanwhile the Currowan fire in the Budawangs, also started by lightning, crossed the range from the east and threatened Mongarlowe, Nerriga, Monga, Reidsdale and eventually Araluen and Krawarree, joining with the Badja and Jinden fires to the south. Ever hungry for fuel, the fires gobbled their way through all national parks in the area, spewing out over any properties that stood in the way.

Firefighting became not just a task but a lifestyle. RFS yellows were our daily wear, in escalating states of filth. Water was precious; showers and laundry were rationed luxuries. Sleep came in gulps, never enough. Smoke permeated everywhere, settling in our eyes, lungs and hair. The term 'pyrocumulus' entered the vernacular.



Our property at Budawang was threatened regularly and impacted three times in late December and early January. Around midday on New Years Eve a northwest wind brought fire across the Mongarlowe River, tore through our neighbour's property and crowned into our place, exploding trees like Roman candles. Suddenly all available grass and bush were alight, flames shooting horizontally. We were fortunate to be there and prepared, and with a massive effort managed to save the buildings, our vehicles and ourselves. Everything else on the 40 hectare property was burnt, right to the doorstep of the house. With evening came

Continued next page

Continued Gail Nichols

views of glowing embers across the property and through the smoke, a full sky of stars overhead. 2019 had ended with a catastrophic bang, for us and countless others. There was no need for New Year fireworks.

The next morning revealed a landscape familiar and yet so foreign. As if in a dream, an apocalyptic nightmare, a vista of smoking ash and an overwhelming silence. Feeling numb and yet curious I wandered, poked, breathed and photographed. Amongst the destruction the fire had left its tale in eerie poetic moments. Ghostly remnants of a missing wooden fence. Sheet metal sculpted and painted by the flames. Shimmering lacy black skeletons where trees had been. Here and there a refired pot, the icy soda glaze surface now in shades of charcoal black. Through artist's eyes these seemed oddly like revelations from the biggest kiln I'd ever fired. Except that I hadn't fired it. We had merely survived it.

Where does one go as a ceramic artist after this? Fortunately I had already answered that question back in 2014 when my career shifted into textiles. Having spent 30 years professionally studying and exploiting fire in the name of art, I could now draw on that experience to harvest the ashes around me and give them life by reconstructing images with stitches and scraps of fabric. Flooding rain in February followed by COVID-19 isolation gave me the normality I needed to return to the studio I had saved from the flames. And so I began with a hooked rug depicting my reacquaintance with landscape during the early stages of recovery. It was The Road Home.



Skeleton Trees, free machine embroidery on khaki paper and recycled fabric. 37 x 28 cm.

I will never forget seeing these tall pines burst into flame near our house on New Year's Eve 2019, or this skeleton view next morning. This image was a stitch drawing in the making from that day.

Continued next page.

Continued Gail Nichols



Here is Black Summer Skyline. Free machine embroidered on recycled fabric and netting. 72 x 86 cm. After our last horrible fire season we were left with lacy black skeleton views of the horizon. I couldn't resist recording it with free machine embroidery. Cheers Gail.



NEW SOUTH WALES

Kiama Downs

Sue Rodney.

This is Sue's first piece of rugmaking, and she is making it into a cushion.

QUEENSLAND – Annette White.



Finally, I finished a small piece of hooked and coiled for the wall. It was meant to be part of a triptych or even four pieces (I don't know the fancy word for that), but it was very fiddly to get the coils stitched onto the hessian backing. Using glue in textile crafts does go a bit against my grain. So, I'm not in a hurry to make some more for the time being.

The theme colour (a dusty jade green) is from an old woollen dress incl. buttons (already picked apart) of my mother's or even grandmother's (probably 50's) which I found last year when visiting my mother in Germany. Parts of the green material have white thread woven through, therefore the white speckles in the coils. For covering the back and rolling over the edges I found a piece of silky material in matching colour in the op shop. - Usually, my creations are rather usable and non abstract. This time I was playing around and I came up with the title "Catching Waves" (orange representing sunrise, middle row rep. low tide, bottom row rep. frothy wild waves). Now, I think I go back to making seat covers for the kitchen stools.



FRANCE – Joanna Romney

We're still living a strange life with masks being compulsory when in buildings / shops etc and no greeting kisses, I not sure France will ever go back to what it was before - before covid.

CANADA – Ontario Susan Sutherland

Here is the piece I hooked in June.



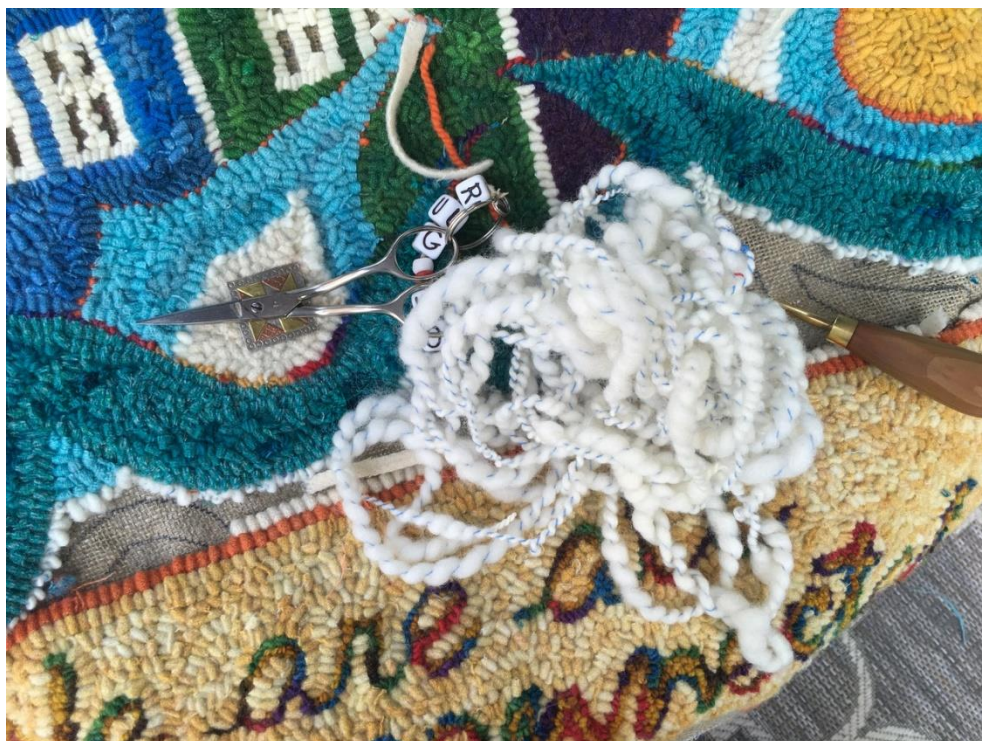
The rug is a Words and Waves design by Deanne Fitzpatrick. Each person uses a phrase that speaks to them. I chose the phrase 'we are all connected'. I decided on this after a lovely meditation by my yoga teacher during one of our Zoom yoga classes in April or May. I was telling her that I was feeling disconnected from everyone so she spoke to that. I love the bright colours of houses in the Atlantic provinces so decided that would be my colour palette. I have a skein of yarn that has the primary colours in it so used it as my starting points for colour. (see photo) Since I was

organizing this in June and June is Pride month I thought my colour selection would fit with the Pride flag. The design, however, only has five house and the Pride flag has six colours, so I added the sixth colour in the other design elements.

Coincidentally the original design had a small half circle drawn on it and that immediately said to me to make it the Pride flag colours.

Around the white waves I used the lovely hand-spun white and blue yarn you gave me. I hope you can see where it is hooked. Ken made me the frame and we used small finishing nails to anchor it. I started the piece on June 15 and finished the hooking June 30. I used an 8-cut for the wool fabric and yarn for

outlining the letters and other shapes. I can't believe I hooked it so quickly but it was so much fun to hook that I just did it. I looked at it for about a week after it was hooked and fixed areas that needed tweaking. It is now displayed prominently in our family room. Susan



Continued next page.

Continued Susan Sutherland.



NEW SOUTH WALES Bawley point. Jocelyn (The finished jumper)



Continued Gander Newfoundland.



CANADA, Tancook island.

Hope you enjoy this short video of rug hooking from Tancook Island.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXtk0-Ve-LQ&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3y_w-MAxW1IZ876obmCAaa3y1KzwtIQskO4bRdpF7cldqIYq2do7wV61g

NEW SOUTH WALES. -Nowra. Clair Bruton.



Clair's first piece of weaving, depicting the blackness in the aftermath of the fires, then through regrowth and colour and blue sky, which is unseen at the top.

QUEENSLAND Kingaroy – Judith Brook

This design came into my mind when I was thinking of making a stash bust, then I realised it was because I'd been watching Monty Don in the gardens of the Middle East and it's like part of a mosaic. Even incorporated some velvet.

Didn't make much of a ding in my stash lol

Took me ages to get it finished (whipped and backed) as the cat took a liking to it and. Every time I wanted

Size

94cm x 58cm



to work on it, she was asleep on it.

Continued next page.

Continued Judith Brook

Made this tea cosy after the trip to Woodgate beach. The pattern was in an English knitting mag, now I'm going to do variations.



Also working on this Punch needle of Totoro. From the Japanese anime. master Miyazaki. .



THE END