



The Weaver's Bag

Mary Meigs Atwater Weaver's Guild of Utah • February 2018 • Vol. 64 No. 2

February Guild Meeting

What: Tips and Tricks for Sewing Clothing from Handwovens, by Ann Edington Adams

When: Thursday, February 8, 6:30 p.m.

Where: South Valley Unitarian Church, 6876 South Highland Drive (2000 East)



Ann Edington Adams has a Certificate in Fashion Design from Washington University in St. Louis. She has shown three of her handwoven garments in two different Convergence Fashion Shows. If we are very lucky, she will be able to show us the garment she will be submitting for Convergence 2018!

Ann says she has been sewing "FOREVER." She says it is in her genes, passed down from her grandmother! She has at times

sewn clothing for another artist who wove the cloth and has woven and sewn many of her own garments.



At our February meeting, Ann will talk to us about things you need to consider before you ever start weaving, how to finish edges, and many other "Tips and Tricks" for sewing and designing clothing with handwoven fabrics.

For Show and Tell at 6:30, please bring your own clothing sewn from handwoven fabrics. It would be great to see examples from a number of Guild members.

President's Message

I once had a work colleague, who was an excellent potter, come to my home to see my weaving and other fiber arts. He was very interested in every aspect of the process. He admired the raw wool I was carding and spinning, my spinning wheels, the multicolored cones of yarn I had on my shelves, the warp on my warping board, the warp on my loom, the swift and ball winder and shuttles that I used for weaving, and the solid structures of the looms themselves. All of these elements of my craft felt natural to me as I showed them to him.

But he was looking at all of these fibers, tools, and pieces of equipment with fresh eyes – especially with the eyes of a potter. And when we had finished, he said something to me I have never forgotten – he said that he envied me my craft because “it was beautiful from beginning to end.”

What an insight this was for me! His craft was spent with raw clay and glazes that did not show their beauty until after firing. The tools he used were often messy and covered with clay. I love handmade pottery and greatly admire potters, but what a privilege it is to work with a craft that is beautiful from the first moment you take fleece into your hands or sit down at a loom or pick up a shuttle or admire the interaction of warp and weft on the loom.

It's just another way of looking at our marvelous art! I'm so grateful to be a fiber artist and have the opportunity to associate with such inspiring artists as all of you. Happy Weaving! *Susan Hainsworth*

Save These Dates!

We have some wonderful programs planned for the next months. You won't want to miss a single meeting! Here is a preview of what's coming up! And of course – The Fiber Festival and Tom Knisley workshop!

March 14: Juliette has arranged a **field trip to the Natural History Museum** to see the Museum's native American rug collection! We will meet at the museum at 6:00 p.m. for a private tour.

April 12: The Guild Lace Challenge revealed! Challenge participants will share their lace weaves and discuss their experiences in weaving their lace. We will also have a slide show on Maximo Laura's amazing tapestries, presented by Mimi Rodes and Sandra Sandberg. Maximo Laura is an amazing Peruvian tapestry artist with a unique style!

May 2-4: Krokbragd workshop with Tom Knisley! The workshop is currently full, but be sure to let Mimi know if you want to be on the waiting list. We often have last-minute dropouts as the workshop gets closer.

May 4-5: Bi-Annual Fiber Festival – Tom Knisley will be our keynote speaker for both Friday night and Saturday morning. During this time he will give two presentations – one on his antique collection of American textiles and another on recycled antique Japanese textiles. Both presentations sound fascinating! There will be a variety of mini-workshops offered Saturday afternoon!

June 16: Basket weaving with Connie Denton. This will be a Saturday workshop and potluck lunch – 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. *Mimi Rodes*

Fiber Festival, with Tom Knisely

Date: May 4-5, 2018 (Friday and Saturday)

Where: Utah Cultural Celebration Center
1355 West 3100 South
West Valley City, UT 84119

Time: Friday evening and all day Saturday

Tom Knisley will be our keynote speaker for both Friday night and Saturday morning. During this time, he will give two presentations – one on his antique collection of American textiles and another on recycled antique Japanese textiles. There will be a variety of mini-workshops offered Saturday afternoon!



Complete information and registration forms will be available in the next few weeks. Keep the dates open!

Tom Knisely

Tom Knisely has made his career from his interest and love of textiles from around the world. Tom has been studying, collecting, and teaching others about weaving and spinning for more than four decades, making him one of the most well-versed weaving instructors in North America. In addition to teaching, Tom weaves professionally and is a frequent contributor to *Handwoven* magazine. Voted *Handwoven's* Teacher of the Year, Tom is renowned among his students for his kindness, good humor, and “seemingly infinite knowledge on the subject of weaving.”

His broad knowledge of textiles and textile equipment has brought him international recognition, and he is frequently asked to teach and lecture to groups all over.

Tom is the author of three books – *Weaving Rag Rugs*, *Weaving Baby Blankets*, and *Table Toppers* and a number of DVDs and individual projects available through Interweave (Beginning Weaving, Weave a Good Rug, The Loom Owner's Companion, etc.).

Note: The Krogbragd workshop with Tom Knisely on May 2-4 is currently full, but if you are interested in being on the waiting list, please contact Mimi Rodes.

Guild Challenge: Lace Weaving

There are just two months until the April meeting. It's not too late to weave some lace! The instructions are simple:

1. Weave any article or fabric of your choice in a lace structure, Any lace structure qualifies: Bronson, huck, leno, swedish, etc.
2. Weave a little more for a sample for the Guild.
3. Show off your creation at the April meeting and enjoy seeing everyone else's creations.

So far nine Guild members are participating. If you'd like to add your name to the list, email Michelle Pahl at michelle.pahl@gmail.com.

At the April Guild meeting, each participant will display the article and discuss their experience with their chosen weave structure. We will create handouts describing the drafts and fibers used, as well as photocopies of the lace articles or samples to be kept in the Guild archive.

Happy (Lace) Weaving! *Michelle Pahl*



January 11, 2018, Meeting—Huipils

The evening's presentation was on huipils, and weavers were asked to bring any Central or South American textile examples for the Show and Tell. They did not disappoint. Catherine brought an Argentinian poncho, Charlene brought a Guatemalan wrapping fabric, ReNee had a long huipil found at an antique store, Juliette brought a Guatemalan cape from her parent's trip, and Mimi brought a Yucatan huipil. Additionally, Jo brought her Swedish handwoven advent calendar and woven felted mittens, Judie had books on kumihimo by Roderick Owen, Jeanette showed her first doublewidth blanket, and Leslie, her handwoven silk pocket squares. We had three new or returning attendees: Katherine, Becky, Rolan, and Debra.

After socializing, we had a short business meeting on the lace challenge (don't forget to sign up with Michelle Pahl), library books on Southern and Central American textiles, Tom Knisely workshop registration, and the Fiber Festival.

Mimi then introduced Gladys Webb, the evening's presenter on huipils, promising a colorful evening. A huipil is a traditional garment worn from Central Mexico to Central America—it is a colorful, sometimes embroidered blouse. Traditional huipils, especially ceremonial ones, are usually made with fabric woven on a backstrap loom and are heavily decorated with designs woven into the fabric, embroidery, ribbons, lace, and more. Some huipils are also made from commercial fabric.

Gladys has an Art History background and is a collector of Guatemalan textiles. She has 500 pieces in her collection and brought just a fraction of it. She had a backstrap loom set up on display, stating that this is the equipment the weavers of Guatemala use to make the pieces and that the weaver is part of the loom, and that she weaves her spirit into the piece. All of her pieces are from the Guatemalan Highlands.

She started going through the pieces explaining the weave structure. Huipil designs are village specific and made up of two or three sections joined together.

The first piece she showed was from San Lucas Toliman, called a single face, with the woven design on one side only. Another one was called a two-faced weaving with a mirror design on the other side. A huipil from Tactic was made up of three panels sewn together, with beautiful inlay.



Some pieces had beautiful embroidery work along the collar. She showed an example of fine gauze lace, and sumac weaving. Some areas of Guatemala had traditional head pieces woven in the same design with ornate embroidery or inlay.

Another village, Nebaj, had a huipil that was a red background with geometric designs, and a matching headdress with tassels, that is worn twisted and wrapped like a turban. Another design from Lake Atitlan contained woven ikat with ornate embroidery of birds and flowers. Their headdress is worn wrapped like a disk, giving a halo effect. Gladys showed several more huipils with geometric design from Santa Maria de Jesus, and a wedding huipil made on black commercial fabric. There were more villages and more pieces shown. The pieces were beautiful, colorful, and we got a chance to look at them close up. *Maureen Wilson*

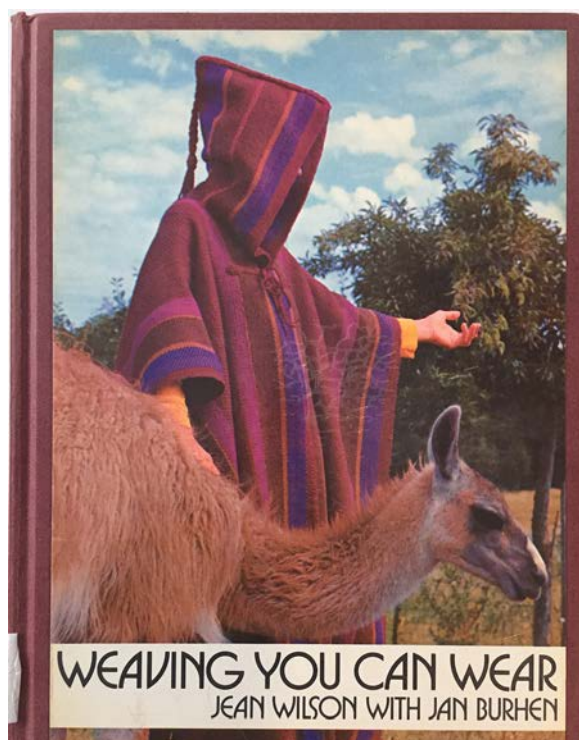
Reader's Corner

Unraveling Strategies for Handwoven Clothing

Unravel is an unusual word; it is one of the few words where the “un” prefix does not affect the root word’s meaning. Compare to unusual – without the “un” it becomes usual. Raveling (or unraveling) is also a key issue with sewing clothes from handwoven fabric. This month’s column focuses on our Guild library’s holdings on converting handwoven cloth into clothing, and I have organized the six reviewed books by the strategies they use to deal with potential (un)raveling. Of course, one strategy is to simply use yardage to adorn the wearer. Some examples of this were included in the Guatemala presentation last month (e.g. head-pieces and skirts), and also saris, turbans, or the keffiyeh worn by Arab men. Two more strategies are to construct clothing from rectangles, thereby avoiding cut edges, and to avoid cutting the fabric by shaping it on the loom. The first book reviewed is a champion of these later two strategies.

Weaving You Can Wear, by Jean Wilson, with Jan Burhen (1973)

Though I had never before opened this book, I was familiar with its iconic cover photo, featuring a person garbed in a large-hooded poncho-like robe that we later learn is called a Burhenoose, and



resting her right hand on a guanaco. The book’s first chapter is a brief review of ethnic garments, which then serve as inspiration for many of the presented handwoven garments. Chapter 2 has general garment specifications – including suggested sizes for armholes, neck openings, and sleeve diameters – and advice on laying out pattern pieces. Importantly, this chapter also provides a key to the hand-drawn layouts shown throughout the rest of the book. Chapter 3 shows a wide range of ethnic-inspired garments sewn from handwoven cloth, including the Guatemalan huipil, African pants (two rectangles + a square), ponchos, tunics, and even a harem gown! The weaving itself is the topic of chapter 4, and includes how to shape fabric on the loom (e.g. by inserting slits or narrowing the warp during weaving), and using double weave to generate tubes (e.g. for sleeves). Accessories, including bags, umbrellas, and parasols, closures, and embellishments are detailed in chapter five.

This book is fun, in part because it is quite dated. Most featured outfits speak to the sensibilities of the 1970s, and the models, their poses, are a flashback. But, as we all know, fashion is cyclic; who knows when these styles might become popular once again? And there is inspiration. For me, it is that robe on the cover, which is most appealing. I am thinking that if constructed from a light and soft fabric, it might make a great bathrobe!

A Cut Above, by Virginia West (1992)



Virginia West calls designing clothing an *elegant experimentation*, and in my opinion, her experiments are elegant indeed. Her major strategy for dealing with the (un)ravel potential is to avoid cutting by using squares and rectangles, but she achieves a better draping garment by using the cloth on the bias. Included are instructions for 23 different items made using a minimum of cuts. The book starts with finishing tips, including the predictable hem stitching, but also others, including the Hong Kong finish (single and double), which is a great method for joining narrow bands of fabric. I find myself especially attracted to the Josephine's Coat of Many Colors, and this book makes me think my sewing skills might be up for it.

Traveling Weaver's Wardrobe, by Anita Luvera Mayer

All of us who attended Anita's spring 2017 workshop will never forget her cleverly-produced clothing. This pocket folder contains nine sheets with diagrams illustrating construction of sweaters, jackets, shirts, dresses, and multiple ways to wear a scarf; her strategy for ravel control is to mostly use rectangles. As a short person, I suspect many of these items look best on Anita's tall and lean frame, but there is something for everyone in her presentation of simple approaches and versatile styling.

Handwoven Clothing Felted to Wear, by Anita Luvera Mayer (1988)

When an outfit woven of wool is the goal, another strategy for dealing with potentially raveled edges is to felt the cloth. Felting entails agitating wool fabric in water, often with detergents and high temperatures, to encourage the wool fibers to lock together. The process can produce considerable shrinkage, while at the same time profoundly stabilizing the fabric, even to the extent of making its original woven structure disappear. In this book, Anita Mayer presents a comprehensive review of felted cloth and its use.

A historical perspective on felting, and use of felt for garments, is presented in chapter 1. Felting cloth was an important industry in biblical times (referenced in the Old Testament), and its usefulness for garments can be seen by its widespread use in cold regions, including Serbia, Russia, and Scandinavia, and even Canada, where first-nation people built clothing from Hudson Bay blankets. Chapter 2 presents Ms. Mayer's approach to garments—simple lines, few darts, use of narrow strips, and embellish, embellish, embellish! Chapter 3 presents a fascinating and detailed description of the felting process, and the included alternative strategies would allow anyone to undertake felting in their own

home. Dealing with the edges of felted fabric is covered in chapter 4; this includes how to secure the edges prior to felting and how to enhance edges after felting for decorative or stability reasons. Surface embellishment, the topic of chapter 5, is in true Anita Mayer form, covering many of the approaches she taught us in the workshop she recently presented to our Guild. Finally, there is an important table on pages 95-96 – it presents details on producing felted fabric using 17 different commercially available yarns. This table gives us recommended setts, weave structures, fulling approaches, and the anticipated shrinkage. This is an incredibly useful table, though I suspect that the shrinkage data for Brown Sheep and Berga Tunagarn yarns were mixed up for the different setts.

I really loved this book. Its margins are filled with amusing or heartfelt quotes, the felted clothes are modeled by Anita herself, and it has a lot of very useful content. I don't know that this book convinced me to felt my handwoven fabric, but I am happy to know that this is the place to turn should I ever decide to do so.

Leftovers and What to Do with Them, by Daryl Lancaster (2006)

This 40-page monograph fills a special need for anyone sewing with handwoven fabric: It provides suggestions for all those precious scraps. It has the appearance of a printed PowerPoint presentation, and includes ideas for making Christmas ornaments, baskets, boxes, bags, postcards, refrigerator magnets, and more. Approaches include wrapping cording with strips of handwoven fabric, stuffing flat pieces sewn together, and making bias tape. There are prominent roles for fusible interfacing, ultra suede, and the sewing machine. The many ideas presented here could be the jumping-off point for lots of creativity.

Handwoven, Tailormade: A Tandem Guide to Fabric Designing, Weaving, Sewing and Tailoring, by Sharon Alderman and Kathryn Wertenberger (1982)



This is the ultimate book for sewing clothes from handwoven fabric. It is written in two parts: the first half, by Sharon Alderman, focuses on producing fabric suitable for sewing into clothes, while the second half focuses on using these fabrics to make well-tailored clothing. Although the book is organized around six specific outfits, it is not a project book: these outfits were carefully selected to illustrate specific sewing principles, which can be applied to any sewing.

This book truly starts at ground zero; it asks you to consider the type of clothing you want to make, including the sort of climate in which it will be worn, and then instructs you in how to select a pattern and the appropriate fiber. It next progresses to color theory designing the fabric, and includes garment-specific considerations, such as stripe proportions and determining which colors are flattering for the wearer. It progresses to weave structures and sett, always in reference to the fabric as used for clothing, and emphasizes the importance of sampling and keeping good records.

The next section starts with consideration of the size of your woven fabric, figuring out needed yardage for your fabric (and loom's) width, and then yarn calculations, even including how to calculate yarn

needed to weave plaids. The weaving processes is fully covered, starting from measuring the warp, and progressing to dressing the loom and checking for errors. The weaving process is also covered, and includes use of items such as temples, and different types of shuttles. It also provides a whole set of strategies for dealing with various problems that might arise. Another section introduces correcting errors in weaving, and then fabric finishing, including brushing, de-gumming silks with seracin, and other similar considerations. Sharon's section ends with a section on small equipment, and how to organize your space for efficient weaving. The comprehensive nature of this book, and its inclusion of information for beginning weavers, makes this book really stand out.

Separating sections I and II is a 20-page section with color plates that show the fabrics and the final sewn garment. It also has an author's note, which discusses the set of criteria that led to pattern selection, color and fabric choices, and then details about each garment's fabric and its assembly. I found this section particularly interesting.

Part II gives a comprehensive treatment of sewing and tailoring. As with Sharon's section, Kathryn starts big picture, describing the sewing studio, the conditions and supplies necessary for good sewing, and how they should be organized. It goes on to deal with measurements, pattern alterations, fittings, pressing, and the various other steps necessary for putting together a stylish and highly tailored outfit. Important steps such as pattern layout have considerations specific to handwoven fabric, and to my eye, these are all well thought out. Ms. Wertenberger promotes use of hand stitching on handwoven fabrics, and presents a 3½ page section describing various stitches and their uses.

Sewing machine use is also covered, including setting stitch parameters (e.g. stitch length and zig-zag width), adjusting thread and bobbin tensions, etc. Seams are presented in glorious detail, including plain, flat fell, slot, corded, and French seams. At this point in the book, a new and extremely useful section starts to appear. It is called *What to do when things go wrong*. Clearly this author has seen me trying to sew! These sections appear regularly, advising the hapless handweaver on dealing with problems such as very ravelly edges, ripping out seams, and buttonhole disasters. This book feels very complete and is likely indispensable for sewers of handwovens.

A few other features of this book are worth noting. It has a lovely spiral binding that lies flat when open. The major text lies within the interior three-quarters of the page, and headings in bold float at the outer one-fourth section. Between this layout, and the very clear diagrams, one can quickly find and understand the supplied information.

*These interesting books will be available at our **February Guild meeting**.
And for those of you desiring a different title from our collection, just contact Sonya Campana
(by phone or email). We are extremely lucky to have such a broad collection of weaving books in our library,
and I urge my fellow Guild members to show their appreciation by using them. **Leslie Seiburth***

Shuttle-Craft Bulletin: Weaving with Linen

Mary Atwater stated in the December 1930 and March 1932 Shuttle-Craft Bulletin issues that weaving with linen was on the minds of many Guild members.

In 1930, Mary systematically responded to questions about linen and using it to weave towels, the difficulties in using it, how much would be needed for towels, what weaves were most satisfactory, what about color and how should handwoven linens be finished.

Linen has no stretch and is easier to work with if kept damp. Mary would wrap the warp beam in a damp cloth for 24 hours before weaving and then dampen the warp with a sponge from time to time while weaving. She recommended releasing the warp tension while not weaving and to use several light blows to pack in the weft. She also specified to take care to not let the warp draw in to avoid broken selvedge threads.

For linen towels she recommended huck, Ms and Os, Bronson, summer and winter, and crackle weave structures, as well as twill, particularly birds eye and goose eye twills. As far as color, she wrote that linen is resistant to color and unless a commercially dyed linen is available, it is best to stick to the natural or bleached options.

As far as finishing linen woven towels, she gave detailed instructions to soak the woven piece several hours, allowing it to hang until it stops dripping and pressing until it is dry. This is a big investment in time, but she wrote that the change that results from this treatment is well worth it. Handwoven linen pieces are known to become softer and more attractive with repeated washings. Drying the linen in the dryer is not recommended to extend the life of the piece. Mary did not write this last recommendation, but it is what I have been told.

Mary goes on in the 1930 issue to give proportions for woven towels. For example, guest towels should be 16" x 26," while large towels should be 20" x 32" in size. The best way to plan them is to cut a paper pattern to size, marking off the hem and border to see if the size works.

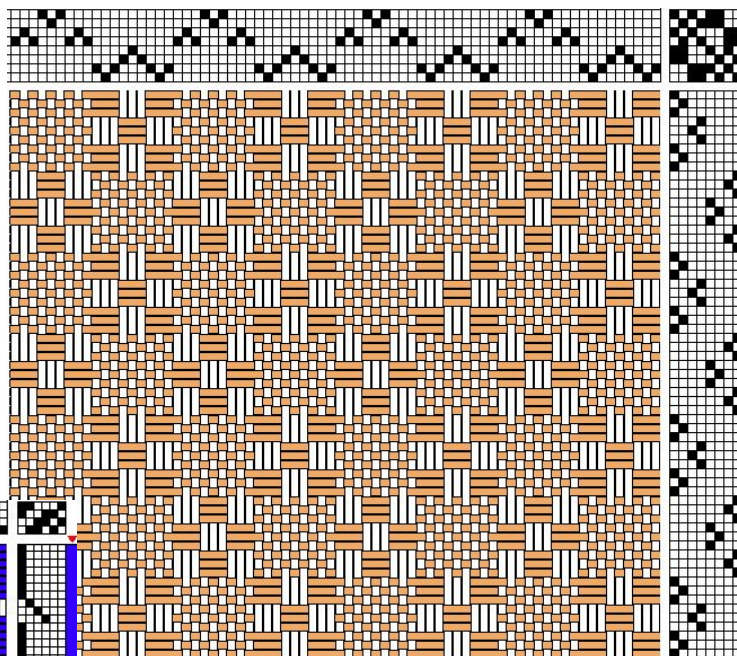
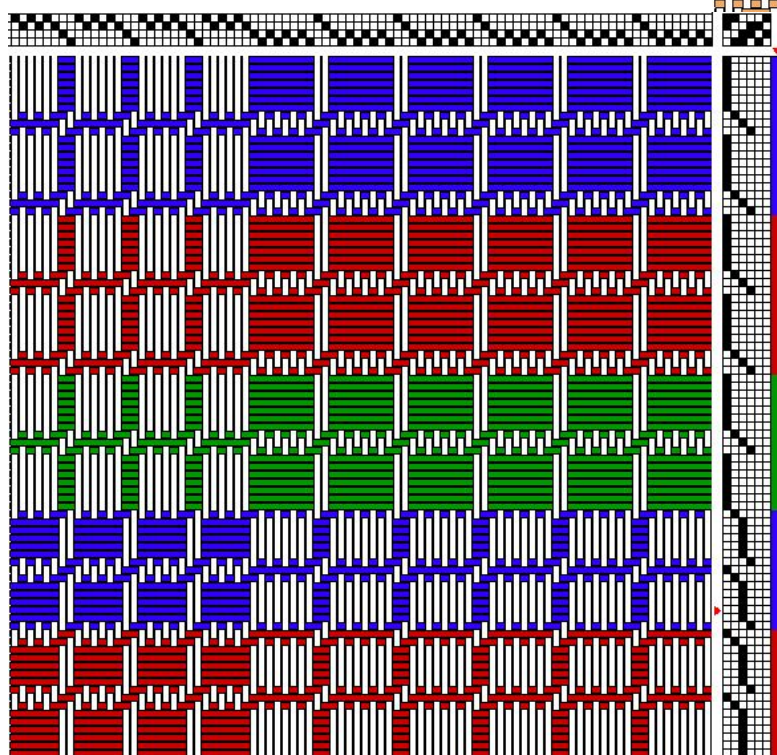
Mary wrote in 1932 that six factors contribute in varying degrees to the success of a piece. They are listed in the text box.

The use of the fabric may determine the importance of one of these over another. For example, the design of the figure may be more important in a coverlet woven in overshot, while for upholstery fabric, color may have more weight in the planning. Mary wrote that good workmanship applies to all weaving and should be taken for granted.

1. *Pattern, in the sense of figure*
2. *Design, in shape and dimension*
3. *Color*
4. *Texture*
5. *Workmanship*
6. *Finish*

Using linen as the weaving material has characteristics that must be considered. It lacks elasticity, but has a cool firm hand and beautiful sheen. Mary described two classes of linen: (1) round or ply and (2) singles or line linen. Round linen is made up of several strands twisted together, while line linen is a single strand, drawn out and slightly twisted. Fabrics woven in line linen are softer than those done in plied linen. Winding on the warp with consistent tension and getting the correct sett will help. If line linen is used as warp, it should be dressed or sized and kept damp during warping and weaving, as Mary wrote earlier in 1930.

Mary included a few weaving drafts for linen, to include a spot Bronson weave, bird's eye twill, and a lace pattern.

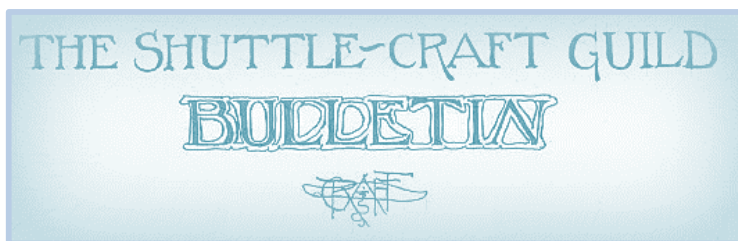


She also provided instruction on weaving table linens with an overshot border, using Monk's Belt or a two-block pattern such as Sugar Loaf or Window Sash. This draft is found in Mary's book *The Shuttle-Craft Book of American Hand-Weaving*, and shown here in 3 colors.

Sugar Loaf or Window Sash Overshot

Maureen Wilson

The Shuttle-Craft Bulletin Study Group



The next meeting of the Shuttle-Craft Bulletin study group is scheduled for **February 13, 2018**. The meeting will be held at Mimi Rodes's home, and the topic of discussion will be Linen Weaves, from the February and May 1926 issues. If you are interested in joining the discussion, let Maureen Wilson (maureenmwilson@yahoo.com) know.

The Shuttle-Craft Bulletins study group meets to discuss Mary Atwater's work as described in the Shuttle-Craft Bulletins. This is a very informal group. If you have not participated, try a meeting and see if you want to join. The meetings usually start with a reading from Mary Meigs Atwater's biography.

The topics, Bulletins, and tentative schedule for the Guild year are listed below:

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Bulletins</i>	<i>Meeting Dates</i>
Linen weaves	Feb 1926, May 1926	February 13, 2018
Rugs	Mar 1926, Nov 1939	April 2018
Curtains	April 1926, Mar 1937	June 2018
Clothing/Coat Fabric	June 1926, Aug 1927	August 2018

**Mary Meigs Atwater
Weaver's Guild of Utah**

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The newsletter is published 10 times a year.

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Guild meetings are generally held the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Unitarian Church 6876 South Highland Drive (2000 East)

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Guild Calendar 2017–2018

February 8, 2018

Sewing Clothing from Handwovens
Ann Edington Adams

March 14, 2018

Field Trip, Natural History Museum
Native American Rug Collection

April 12, 2018

Guild Challenge Results – Lace!

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Fiber Festival

June 16, 2018

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