



# Newsletter

ISSUE 3/11

www.wafta.com.au

July—August 2011

## 2011 WAFTA CALENDAR

### Tuesday Night Meetings

3rd Tuesday Evenings of every Month Feb-Nov

Tuesday Night Meetings 7pm at Craft House, Clyde Street, Menora. Please sign in and pay \$4 at the door (non-members welcome; they pay \$8). Fabulous supper provided.

Tues 16 Aug Speaker:: Jill Worsley

Tues 20 Sep Speaker: Trudi Pollard—AGM

Tues 18 Oct Speaker: Pamela Gaunt

Tues 22 Nov Speaker: Tania Spencer

Dec Xmas Party: TBA

### 4th Friday Work Days

Meetings are held at Craft House, Clyde Street, Menora from 10am to 3pm on the 4th FRIDAY of the MONTH. Members and Non-members \$5 at door.

While the following dates include a 'Theme', this is not a class nor an all day workshop with the theme as the sole focus. Rather, you can come and work on whatever you 'd like to on the day. Themes are loosely structured and not designed to take up the entire day, but may be of particular interest to you.

Dates & Themes for the remainder of 2011 as follows:

Fri 26 Aug: Hand Stitch & Sewing Day

Fri 23 Sep: Knit, Stitch & Spin Workday

Fri 28 Oct: Natural Dyes (and Shibori)



### WAFTA Membership Fees

WAFTA membership runs July to June to coincide with our accounting year.

#### *Membership Fees:*

\$40 Regular Practitioner

\$35 Student/Concession

\$35 Country (Rural WA)

\$40 Affiliate, Association, Corporate

You need to be financial to receive the newsletter and to participate in workshops & exhibitions.

Remember, our Membership Secretary, Shirley Treasure is happy to help with inquiries .

[sbtreasure@bigpond.com](mailto:sbtreasure@bigpond.com) or 9562 3006.

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## 2011 Committee

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## **Report of June 21, 2011 Speaker: Jan Mullen**

**Rosie Whitehead**

Jan is originally from Melbourne, having grown up there and moved to WA. Since then Jan's been here for 22 years and has spent 15 of those years travelling quite a bit.

These days is a renowned quilter, with a Bachelor of Education in Craft and a Double Major in Textile Sculpture. In earlier days had been taught quite a lot by an Aunty in Eltham (Melbourne). And those early days saw many various construction techniques.

On show was an Alpaca blanket that had been hand spun over a core of sewing thread & hand woven. Described as Tablet Weaving, this was one of several pieces that were to be passed around to members.

Jan talked about early days, when 'patch work' was considered a 'daggy' thing to do. And then the move to Western Australia was soon followed by an opportunity to teach at Calico House. Not a traditionalist, teaching meant having to do notes for the students. So out of this the process was to make a sample, produce the notes to go with it, then get the students to make up the same samples. These samples had then become Jan's patterns.

Being Non-Traditionalist in the usual sense of quilting, each block is different. And Instructions are 'loose' and if things don't fit, well it gets trimmed down as progression advances...

Wanting to sew a 5 point star and having been told it couldn't be done, was enough to push Jan to an end result that indeed proved it 'could be done'. She said it took a few goes, but finally succeeded.



## Report of June 21, 2011 Speaker: Jan Mullen (cont...)

In the early days of pattern production, all the flyers had 'hand cut photos' applied, in the days prior to digital imaging and compilation on the computer. When this was happening, it was really a case of 'right time' and 'right place'. This meant going to the printer with an order for 100 copies, soon became orders for thousands of copies of patterns at a time, in order to supply to the US.

The images that the slide format showed, were only sections of a quilt – detail if you like. With a process of make the sample, photograph it, then produce a pattern.

In about 1988 the first trip to the US produced immediate book offers, by both major quilt making publishers. This hadn't been planned or even contemplated. Again with the 'right time' 'right place'.

There have been 3 books with the first being published in 2000. Jan told of how it used to be that a client would purchase perhaps a heart pattern and then produce a 'heart' quilt. But more recently it's become a way to 'tell your own stories' and since Jan has combined several of her patterns to do this, other are now following that idea.

A total of 18 quilts were needed to make the book complete and in the end the book 'Cut Loose Quilts' was produced, time lining the production of the 18 quilts, which were then tested in the classroom situation to see how the 'worked'. The entire process with notes meant that the book was written in 1 week!

Jan says that there are 3 books and '...that'll be it....' (sporting a wry grin as she says so....)

There has been another book produced by another group with Jan's consent, based on the heart's pattern. There's a huge compliment to her work, when someone else wants to include Jan's work.

In the next phase Jan was approached for fabric design – again didn't go looking for it, it just happened. It begins with a line drawing and painted in Gouache over the line drawing. Some effort was put into using the universal Pantone colour system on the computer with the worst results – computer variations, printer variations meant that the system didn't work for them. So painting it was the way to go. This meant 3 days to do the painting and 22 collections were produced with Marcus Bros. There are royalties received from every yard sold.... Samples would come back, which meant there was only 2 weeks to produce a sample quilt. Jan said she's retired from all that now, '...can you guess why?...'

The patterns are the backbone of her business. It's where the most money has been made, but at the same time has had to work hard to get the price point down and has had great distributors. Having a book means having an instant profile. And when you combine those two aspects with Fabric Design, all 3 components have to work together.

Another quilt was shown called Ticks & Crosses. To represent what will or will not happen in bed – said she'd never used it, sold it and that person is still single... hmmm....

There were cards made up in conjunction with Bewley Shalor (Photographer), on Jan's toy sewing machine collection. Said it's time to move on from it now and was distributing them freely at the end of the session.

A trip to India and the bill boards were something that Jan had loved, so out of that came a quilt of 'undies'.

These days Jan is dedicated to teaching, with a lot of digital prints on fabric, then embellishing them. Having previously worked in strong colours, Jan is now working in muted tones.

Her brother part owns a golf course, and they have a fund raiser every August – Barn Hill Beanie. Beanies were made to be sold, with unsold beanies being sent to charitable organisations. This has led to a 'Beanie' quilt that was auctioned off. This produced the idea that 'even more could be done', so napkins were made for charity and an entire project was made of it... The quilts were auctioned and all were based on one of Jan's designs – this all managed to raise \$25-30,000. Many people came out of the woodwork to help out however they could. Some made coffee and some would use the iron – now these people who'd claimed they couldn't sew but could make coffee, are now also sewing.... This exercise was run on free classes and free sessions and free patterns for the cause. The actual quilting was done by others who had donated their time.

The auction was at a private house in Cottlesoe with 36 quilts, most of which were hung in the house on the walls. People had said that they didn't know what a quilt was, but wanted more.... The money raised has made a big difference to **Margaret House, City Beach** – photos were shown of what the money was able to do and the difference it had made to the environment of the hospital. Progression went into 'stretched' works, wall pieces, art pieces etc.

Now Jan is getting away from some of the commercial stuff – says she was over it a while ago. So now to do the community based projects and also family requests, finds Jan absolutely loving it...

For more info: [www.stargazey.com](http://www.stargazey.com)





## Western Australian Fibre and Textile Association Members Exhibition

Opening Night Celebration

**6pm to 9pm on Friday 12th August 2011**

Moore's Building Contemporary Art Gallery  
46 Henry Street Fremantle

Exhibition Opening Hours

**Saturday 13th - Sunday 28th August 2011**  
**10 - 4pm every day**



# Report of July 19, 2011 Speaker: Martein Van Zulen

Rosie Whitehead

'I felt my life with both my hands' was the line that Martein had on her first visual for the evening. Not something that everyone can lay claim to..., this made me think about how many people out there don't 'felt', stitch, spin, weave, knit or create in any way – and just how much they're missing!

Born in Holland in the 1960's, Martein has fond memories of her Grandmother, but has no other family connections to textiles. In 1986 Martein moved to Australia and has lived here ever since.

In 1985 Martein and a friend had spent 10 months on the road in an old camper van, driving around the UK discovering a natural affinity with textiles.

Having obtained wool from a farmer, the pair set about spinning the wool - Martein showed a photo of her friend spinning in the back the old camper van. The resulting original scarf that had been hand spun and hand woven from this time, was a piece that Martein still had and passed it around for us to see. From that learning curve, she became more familiar with what would be the right materials for the end product and of course what not to use...

On these travels Martein had come across an American woman who was felting. There was an immediate attractions to the process of felting – '...this is what I want to do when I grow up...'. So at the age of 23 she had decided that she wanted to be a felter. This would be her 'First felt adventure'.

There was something about working large pieces that Martein was drawn to. Over time, her design skills have improved, to use the fibre to create 'paintings'. With a 2x2m piece finished, she had captured the concept of making fabric from scratch and was not limited by size restrictions.

Learnt new skills to set up her own studio and this had taken 2 years. Began teaching with help from her own teacher, since late 1980's.

In order to create an income Martein was working the markets, often selling smaller pieces like felt slippers that would be more affordable. During this time in the late 1980's an article about Martein, was written in a copy of Country Living,.

In the early 1990's having realised that felt makers were an appendix of spinners & weavers, Martein felt (pardon the pun) that it was high time that felters formed their own group. And so The Victorian Felt Makers was born.

During the mid 1990's, after felting for some 10 years, she was wanting to find another new thing, another new technique – always looking for a new way to work an old art form. She then realised that in fact she wanted to return to the beginnings of felt making.

So it was back to the beginnings of felt making. Travelling to the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg Russia, Martein had felt as though she had come home.

She'd spent the next 2.5hrs in a room with no other visitors – not even a guard, and was looking at felt that was 2,500 yrs old. In the early 1900's graves were looted and textiles were not considered valuable and this meant that the pieces were perfectly preserved. We were treated to some photos of these oldest pieces, which marked a place to begin her next journey.

The journey turned to her attention to Mongolia. In 1997 the wish was realised, after teaching in the USA to help finance the Mongolian trip. She saved enough money to join a textile tour to see historical Mongolian felt, and how a Yurt (traditional nomadic house/tent) is made.

Now she saw the imperfections to be the beauty of a piece. All that training at school to be so perfect and stitching to be invisible, and here, the imperfection was celebrated.

The simplicity of a nomadic Mongolian lifestyle, meant that the studio was an open steppe. To make the Yurt wall, the carded and still greasy fleece was laid out – no dye and no other treatments. Cold water (not hot) and no soap, wetted and rolled up into a 7m long roll.

The roll was wrapped in leather skins, which was 'blessed with mares milk', as too was the horse – the blessing for a 'good job'... With a rope around the felt package, attached to 2 horses, it was rolled for about 1.5hours, was then opened up and it was done.

As a Yurt is much like a tent, the frame is assembled first, then felt is wrapped onto the frame and covered with canvas to protect the felt. A Mongolian family on the move, fit all their possessions, including the Yurt, onto a couple of horse drawn carts.

Martein realised the combination of function and beauty, were not separated as they are here in the West. In Mongolia every day items are functional and beautifully made and decorated and used every day.

Upon her return to Australia, Martein halved her possessions in 6 mths – her lifestyle was profoundly changed from this experience.

She's set about establishing the Australian National Yurt Project and in the process travelled for 4 mths across Australia.

Large pieces were made in various states, fleeces were donated by breeders in their respective state/territory. In Melbourne on an indoor squash court, 4 pieces were sewn together to make the Yurt roof – all done without instructions. The only documentation at hand were Martein's notes that she'd taken and any photos and sketches, during her time in Mongolia.



## Report of July 19, 2011 Speaker: Martein Van Zulen (cont...)

Next, 21m of felt were needed for the walls and even a horse was provided to help with the heavy work. The project ran for 6 months and things just fell into place.

Felt rugs were made during the last week of the project and these were hung inside the Yurt. The Yurt slept some 14 people and a couple of dogs, and was complete with a pot belly stove inside. Our own Peggy Buckingham had participated by plaiting rope, to go around the Yurt to hold the felt in place.

The Yurt continues to travels the country.

After completing the Yurt Project, she decided to return to study, and she is now doing a PHD in Anthropology.

Martein decided to do her field work in Australia, mostly working with Aboriginal people, exploring the process of making and making do which often comes from the women in the family.

Martein had spoken about some other artists – Ilka White, Holly Storey, Nalda Searle and some of the statements that these people have made about their work practices.

2010 saw Martein take long service leave from her PHD and travel to the USA. During this time, she found the need to create again. While engaged in textiles research, she was not practising or creating and this saw Martein fall into a hole – something was missing.

Martein returned to teaching felt making and found ‘joy’ and the skills were still there.

The Mandala felt mat is some of her latest works, with stitching in pre-felt, where stitching can be done at different stages within the work, then felted down further.

Continuing with her PHD, she has found the balance between academic life and the need to create.

While one hand is making, the other hand is writing “...when I’ve had too much writing, I make beanies for the Kalgoorlie Beanie Festival...”

For more information, visit Martein’s web site:

[www.martienvanzulen.com](http://www.martienvanzulen.com)



## WAFTA One Day Workshops

Your committee is hard at work, planning for a couple of workshops, just in case you're felling like there's something missing after the exhibition deadline panic has worn off....

**A One-Day workshop is planned, with Anne Williams, for October 30, 2011**

### **Basketry Techniques with Natural and Found Materials**

If you're into re-cycling, then this workshop is for you...



Dyeing Discharge & Shibori Methods on Silk with Kate Jones  
Using Acid Milling Dyes and discharge processes to create beautiful unique pattern and colour contrasts on silk.

For November 20, 2011.



Please register your interest by calling

Louise Wells on 9271 5796

or email [louise@eftdownunder.com](mailto:louise@eftdownunder.com)

## Report: 4th Friday Workday

**July 22, 2011**

Author: Kate Jones

With everyone's focus on the up coming exhibition, it was a quiet workday for July.

A total of 7 were in attendance, and each worked on their own particular projects at hand.

A pleasant day for all, but sadly on this occasion there were no photos .

## Coming up...

**Tuesday August 16: Meeting...**

**Jill Worsley** will be speaking about her collection of South East Asian Textiles.



**Tuesday September 20 Meeting...**

**Trudi Pollard** will be speaking about her recent trip to France for a Colour Conference and the 'Cambodian'Connection' on her final leg home from Europe.



**FYI**

<http://institution surfacedesign.org/index.php>  
username: 8784 password: 8784pass

## Workshops

### Capture precious memories

with Textile Artist Michele Eastwood  
ph 9201 9380.

Eemail: [micheleandken@bigpond.com](mailto:micheleandken@bigpond.com).

### "Bene Silks"

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### Crochet

With Megan Sheard

E-mail: [grannyfunk.com.au](http://grannyfunk.com.au)



## Advertisements

The following individuals &/or organisations conduct regular fibre/textile workshops or offer other services. For more information about their programmes and activities please contact them directly. Listing in our newsletter on this page is **free for members**. If you would like to be included in this free listing, or if you would like a greater presence in the form of an advert or business profile contact the Editor (see p.3) Advertising fees are 1/4 page \$30, 1/2 page \$60 and full page \$100 .



**FIBRES WEST 2011: October 9-15**

[www.fibreswest.com.au](http://www.fibreswest.com.au) **DON'T MISS OUT!!**

**It's not too late to enrol!**

Fibres West 2011 will provide a wonderful opportunity for you to develop new skills, or work on your favourite textile/fibre technique for a whole week, with a renowned Australian or International tutor. There are still vacancies in some workshops including hand embroidery, machine embroidery, eco-fashion, fabric printing, sculptural works and creativity. Don't miss out as the event is only held every three years. For more information download a brochure from the website, or contact Convenor Iris Whitelock tel. 0407 855 656, or email [info@fibreswest.com.au](mailto:info@fibreswest.com.au).

# Positions Vacant:

## Chairman

At the previous AGM, it was agreed that Louise Snook would retain the position of Chairman, as a temporary measure until such time as this vacancy could be filled..

The position of Chairman is still open and we will be needing to fill this vacancy **URGENTLY**.

Many of you may already know that Louise will soon be unable to remain as Chairman, as her baby is due in October.

A new Chairman will be strongly supported.

**These positions that are currently available, are vital for WAFTA to be able to continue.**

**Without new committee support WAFTA will cease to be!**



## Administrator

Lisa Repsevicius has done such an amazing job in this role, but due to family commitments will no longer be available to carry out this important role..

There are many hats for the Administrator to wear, and as such the position can be broken into more manageable areas with a focus on strong communication within the committee.



## Committee Members

The committee is a small group who constantly strive to bring about all the fabulous events, workshops, exhibitions and speakers for all members to enjoy.

The committee is in great need of expansion, so that WAFTA can continue to grow and deliver all those fun and entertaining aspects that we all love.

It's true that some committee members are really good at some of the jobs that need to be done and while there may be small details to take care of, the contribution of the individual is invaluable to the 'whole'.

So, while there are many areas that require attention, many hands make light work..

So, don't be shy, there's something that you will be able to contribute, that may seem small to you, but will be greatly appreciated and at the same time creates an extension of one's social network., with a group that are only full of support for each other.

## Exhibitions and Events

Remember to check the website, [www.wafta.com.au](http://www.wafta.com.au) regularly for updates in the news section on what's hot in textile art.

### Felt Convergence 2011

2-7 Oct 2011

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School.

Go to [feltconvergencebunburywa.blogspot.com](http://feltconvergencebunburywa.blogspot.com)

### Fibres West 2011

9-15 October 2011

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School.

For brochure send your postal address to PO Box 1405, Booragoon WA 6954

or e-mail your postal address to [info@fibreswest.com.au](mailto:info@fibreswest.com.au)

### Remix - WA Contemporary Art

Art Gallery of Western Australia

Perth Cultural Centre, Perth

Exhibition Opening: Friday 15 April at: 6.30 - 9PM

April 16 - August 15, 2011

For more information:

<http://www.artgallery.wa.gov.au/exhibitions/remix.asp>

### Scarf Festival 2011: Rhythm of Life

National Wool Museum

Geelong, Victoria

Australia

June 24 - August 21, 2011

[www.geelongaustralia.com.au](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au)

### Unique Perspectivess:

Two Solo Exhibitions – Felted work by Helen O'Hare (Ireland), and Joomchi

Paper Works by Jiyoung Chung (USA/Korea). Brilliant, expressive, inspiring work representing the diversity of textile and fibre art across the world.

### Bunbury Regional Art Galleries

September 23 – November v13 2011

in partnership with Fibres West 2011,

## Suppliers

### Treetops Colour Harmonies

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### The Thread Studio

Dale Rollerson

ph: (08) 92271561).

Email: [mail@thethreadstudio.com](mailto:mail@thethreadstudio.com)

Online textile workshops: [www.thethreadstudio.com](http://www.thethreadstudio.com)

