

spinning

felting

weaving

knitting

dyeing

ashford  
75<sup>th</sup> jubilee 1934-2009

JUBILEE ISSUE

# the Wheel

ASHFORD'S FIBRECRAFT MAGAZINE – NEW ZEALAND

ISSUE 21 2009

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*How it  
all began*

SHIBORI

JACOB SHEEP

*How to ...*

Bronson lace weaves

Random dye  
handspun yarns

Double weave and  
much more

**GREAT NEW PRODUCTS AND PATTERNS INSIDE**

Editor Elizabeth Ashford

The Wheel is published annually and is available to members of the Ashford Club (see below) or from your Ashford dealer. Copies of back issues 19 and 20 are available.

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### The Ashford Club

A club for spinners, weavers, knitters, dyers and felters, the Ashford Club is a place for sharing, learning and experiencing the wonderful world of textile art. Based at the home of the Ashford company, in Ashburton, New Zealand, membership costs only NZ \$10.00 (approx A\$8, Euro5, GBP4, US\$7, Yen650). Receive a glossy, members-only edition of The Wheel sent from New Zealand and quarterly online newsletters with competitions and special offers. Pay by personal cheque or go to the club web site [www.ashfordclub.co.nz](http://www.ashfordclub.co.nz)

# Welcome

I hope you enjoy this issue of The Wheel magazine.

This has been a wonderful year for us! Our 75th birthday has been a special time of celebration and thankfulness – to founders Walter and Joy, our staff, our distributors, dealers and, of course, our customers – all whom have made it possible. It is humbling to think that it all began in 1934 with a young man struggling to survive the Great Depression (see our story on page 4).

As the world struggles today in another economic depression, demand for our spinning wheels and weaving looms is growing tremendously. As we think more carefully before we spend, folk are making wiser choices. As spinners, weavers, knitters and felters we know the pleasure and satisfaction of creating with our own hands. It seems others want to also experience that same feeling of resourcefulness, usefulness and connection – and are turning to these simpler pastimes.



*Cindy Howard-Gibbon, our USA distributor, and her husband Chris visited us during our Jubilee year*

I was very fortunate to be with Richard and David Herring, our UK distributor, at this year's Woolfest, in Cockermouth, Cumbria. What a tremendous show with five thousand visitors and over a hundred stallholders including ten Ashford dealers. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many enthusiastic and knowledgeable craftspeople. Thank you for making us feel so welcome.



*Alan Paterson, Factory Supervisor and head of the R&D team, celebrates 30 years with the company with a "wild carder" chocolate cake*



*Walter in the early days*

Less mechanical the process may be, but the results can be truly magnificent and are always unique. Originality is assured if fibre, yarn or fabric is hand dyed and in this issue there are projects on "Arashi" shibori, natural dyeing using plants, over-dyeing and random dyeing. I hope you will try these and the other patterns for some gorgeous fashion garments and smart home ware.

As well as our factory working very hard to keep up with demand, Richard has been busy designing new products, including his new Wild Carder and e-Spinner, and great accessories for your wheels and looms. See what he has been doing on page 34.



*At Woolfest 2009 with David and Bryony of Frank Herring, our UK distributor*

Richard and Kate also exhibited at Handarbeit in Cologne and enjoyed seeing so many of our European distributors, dealers and customers. Nationally, the highlight was the Creative Fibre Fest in Timaru. With a theme of "Naturally Wild" you can be assured the three day festival of the NZ Spinners, Weavers, and Woolcraft Society was a fun and fabulous celebration of fibre. Congratulations to convenor, Alison Hurley, and her team.

Thank you again for your support and birthday greetings. We look forward to the next 75 years!  
Elizabeth and Richard





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### Cover

McLeod in her new coat (see page 8) looks down from Mt Hutt onto the Canterbury Plains and Ashburton.







# *Celebrating* 75 YEARS

Our family business Ashford Handicrafts, dates from a day in 1934 when Walter Ashford sold his first product – a sturdy, well made little wooden fireside stool with woven seagrass seating. It was built in his mother's wash house from New Zealand native timber. Walter couldn't persuade any shops to stock his products so he went out and sold them door to door.

Seventy five years on, the craftsmanship, quality, value, natural materials and the strong connection to the customer embodied in that original stool remain bedrock principles of the business, values that have stood the test of time and which will ensure Ashford Handicrafts continues to thrive.

Strong locally, and exporting its wares

to more than 40 countries, Ashford Handicrafts has earned a number of awards for exporting and its founder, Walter Ashford, was honoured with a Queen's Service Order in 1986 for services to industry and his community. The business remains family-owned and run, and many of its employees have been with it for decades. In 1988 Walter's son Richard and his wife Elizabeth took over the business. Today Richard is Managing Director and chief designer. Elizabeth is a director and works with her husband in the business and publishes this magazine. Regular readers will know that Walter's wife, Joy, passed away in 1999 and that Walter himself died in October 2000.

Early days on the farm



First factory, in Rakaia



Young Richard tests the rocking horse



## *A Canterbury Tale*

Canterbury, in New Zealand's South Island, is the home of Ashford Handicrafts. It was in Christchurch, the region's principal city, that young Walter Ashford began the business. He had come out from England in 1929 to try his hand at farming but the Great Depression frustrated that ambition. Concerned for Walter, his parents returned to New Zealand in 1931, having first visited New Zealand as missionaries in 1908.

Walter, at first a hobbyist woodworker, turned out whatever would sell. His first slogan was, "If it's wood, we can make it" and alongside the stools he designed and built bookcases, nesting boxes, farm gates and wheelbarrows. Writing about it later in life, Walter believed the quality of his merchandise was a top selling point. It wasn't long before more space was needed. The family moved south to Rakaia, a small town about 60km from Christchurch where Walter set up his first real production centre and his father became the Minister of the Presbyterian Church.

The Ashford business years in Rakaia had their challenges, as well as growth and opportunities. Ready-to-assemble kitset furniture and wooden toys were big sellers,

helped by an association with a national magazine. Designing products which were able to be posted and assembled at home meant that operating from a small rural town was no handicap. World War 2 took many workmen away but it also led to an



Gay Ashford

opportunity. People wanted to knit socks, mittens and other warm clothing for the service men and women but although fleece wool was still available, woollen yarn was very scarce.

Walter, who later volunteered to serve in the air force, designed his first

spinning wheel and the business sold 3,600 before the war ended. He later said the almost instant drop-off in demand at war's end made him wary of getting back into spinning wheels when, in 1965, it was suggested that people were rediscovering the value of woollen clothing and once more interested in taking up spinning, but this time as a hobby. It wasn't until a firm order was placed for ten wheels that Walter agreed to design and build a new model, the wheel now known as The Traditional.

That wheel, and its marketing through word-of-mouth at spinning circles, developed an important foundation for the business – close contact with spinners, welcoming and reacting to their feedback and encouragement to help make the products even more useful. Overseas mail-order sales, and later, export relationships with distributors in other countries, also got going on the back of The Traditional and related textile craft equipment. The steadily increasing popularity of hand crafts also signalled a change in focus, with Ashford seeing itself more and more as providing wheels and looms to help people enjoy textile crafts as a lifestyle choice.



Joy with our first Rigid Heddle Loom



First exports to Australia



Export Award presented by Minister of Trade, Jo Walding, in 1974





*Governor General Sir Paul Reeves presents the QSM to Walter in 1986*



*MP Jenny Shipley and Vic Moss from Tradenz present another Export Award in 1994*

During the Rakaia years, Walter met and married Joy. They had three children. Richard's sisters, Gay and Heather, also own hand craft businesses and sell the Ashford range. In 1960, following a fire in the Rakaia

factory, the business moved to its present site in Ashburton. After completing a wood working cadetship, Richard worked his way up from the shop floor, spending time in each department and learning the

ropes. He helped to design and construct extensions to the factory and was its foreman for several years before being made assistant manager. Walter handed over the general management duties in 1978, but remained involved until his official retirement ten years later.

Today, the five acre Ashburton site is home to a 30,000 square foot complex of factory and showroom, timber drying and warehouse. The complex features Mill House, an attractive 1916 home in the Arts and Crafts style which now houses a showroom, spinning wheel museum, craft shop and café. The site also hosts a craft village and rooms for craft classes.



*Joy, Walter and Richard at Government House, Wellington*



*Ashburton factory, 1970s*

## Sustainable development

It is most appropriate that the 75th anniversary coincides with the United Nations' International Year of Natural Fibre, a celebration of the value and utility of traditional materials, sustainable trade and a call for more support for natural farming and its products. The UN's focus finds many echoes in efforts made by Ashford Handicrafts.

"The question of sustainability is very important to us and our customers," Richard Ashford says. "Crafts people have a strong affinity with nature and desire to minimise their impact on our environment. Most are interested in where the products and materials come from and what's involved in its manufacture. Our business philosophy is to respect nature, work ethically and ensure sustainability."

The company only uses indigenous silver beech hardwood from forests managed in compliance with Forest Stewardship Council guidelines. All Ashford's wool fibre and yarns are New Zealand grown and processed, and the company's focus on recycling and reduced energy consumption and waste was recognised with a regional



*Spinning in the Oman*

Clean Green Award. The factory has been designed and equipped to ensure healthy working conditions for the thirty loyal, dedicated and enthusiastic staff.

And while approximately 95% of today's business is with hobbyists and craftspeople in the western world, Richard and Elizabeth take great pride in their connection to communities which are less well off, where their spinning wheels, looms, carders and other equipment are vital contributors to families' wellbeing.

### **Positive outlook**

Seventy five years on from its founding in the Depression and the world is again struggling with an international downturn. Ashford Handicrafts, happily, appears to be bucking this trend. Richard thinks the international financial crisis has focused many people's minds onto more meaningful and worthwhile pursuits. Whether the urge is to take up a more holistic pastime or to find a hobby which can be pursued at home, it's been positive for the business. Orders are up and distributors are reporting strong demand for Ashford equipment, fibres and "how to" books.

Ashford Handicrafts believes quality, reliability and durability are keys to its continuing success. It uses a quality assurance system called Q Base to ensure design, manufacturing, business systems

and services are regularly measured against stringent standards in areas such as continual improvement, training, work instructions and meeting customer needs.

### **Ashford Handicrafts tomorrow**

With the interest in textile crafts continuing to grow around the world and the company focused on many new and improved products, such as the new Wild carder and electronic spinner, the future for Ashford Handicrafts looks bright.

Richard Ashford says that, growing up, "it was always understood" that he would join the business. "As a little kid, my

after-school job was to lick all the stamps to send wheels off overseas to people." Elizabeth and Richard, like his parents and grandparents before him, have two daughters and a son. Unlike his parents, they are more relaxed about the next generation's involvement in the family business.

"We're hopeful that one or all of them will put up their hand and say they want to be involved, but there's no pressure," Richard says. "I've had the most fantastic work life and we're hopeful that our example will be incentive enough. It has been a wonderful first 75 years."



*Elizabeth and Richard with Cathy, Lucy and James (and Manny)*





# Snow *Princess*





Thick and thin will surprise you – it is a great technique to create original fabric. With a block design and some added homespun texture, McLeod, now four, loves her new coat.

BY KATE SHERRATT,  
ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

### You will need:

Loom: Four shaft 80cm (32ins)  
Reed: 48/10cm (12 dpi)  
Materials for warp and weft: Tekapo yarn 8 ply/DK (100%wool, 200m/218yds, 100gm/3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs net) Teal 037 – 6 balls, Fine 2 ply (100% wool, 110/2, 450m/492yds, 100gm/3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs net) Apple Green (dip dyed in Ashford Teal Dye) 2 balls, Handspun Merino & Silk Boucle – Lagoon Merino sliver blended with hand dyed silk for weft only in the Texture Block for cuffs and collar – 60gms/20zs.

### Here's how:

Weave Structure: Thick and Thin  
Warp Length: 384 ends – 380cm (150ins)  
Warp colour order: Alternating Teal (thick) and Apple Green (thin) starting with Teal.  
Sett: 48/10 (12dpi)  
Other: 2 x 80cm (32ins) Stick Shuttles  
Width in reed: 80cm (32ins)  
Woven Length: 350cm (11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ft)  
Finished size: 75cm x 345cm (30 x 136ins)

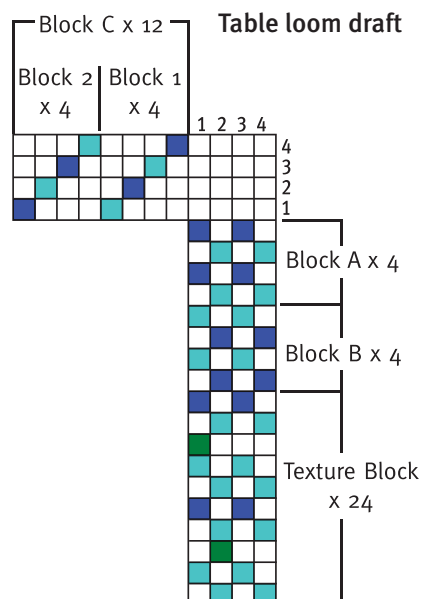
### Weaving:

Wind one shuttle each, of thick and thin yarn.  
Weave Block A.  
Weave Block B.  
Continue weaving Blocks A and B until weaving measures 3 metres (10ft).  
Weave 50cm (20ins) of Texture Block using your handspun Boucle as the texture yarn.  
Remove from loom, wash, dry and press then use your favourite pattern to make.

Thick

Thin

Texture





# Fairytale yarn

BY VINCENT D'AGUANNO, SAYVILLE, NY, USA

Vincent sits in the window of his delightful yarn shoppe, Rumpelstiltskin, creating this enchanting yarn.

## You will need:

Spinning wheel with regular and jumbo flyers.  
Ashford Merino sliver 2lbs (900gm) will yield 4150 yd (3800m) skeins.  
Silk top 2oz (55gm) fills a standard bobbin.  
One bobbin of silk plies four jumbo bobbins of wool.

Ashford dyes  
Rubber gloves  
Mixing jars  
Teaspoons  
Stirring sticks  
White vinegar  
Detergent



*Spinning the wool*



*Spinning the silk*



*Adding the dyes*







#### PLEASE NOTE

Ashford dyes comply with the strict EU regulations and the manufacturers confirm that fibre, yarn or cloth dyed with the Ashford dyes can be certified under the Oeko-Tex Standard 100. This standard is the most widely known standard for certification of ecologically-safe clothing. Detailed information can be found at [www.oekotex.com](http://www.oekotex.com).



#### Here's how:

##### Spinning:

1. Spin the silk using the small whorl to get it thread-thin. I use the short forward draft method. When that bobbin is full, set it aside.
2. Spin the Merino on a jumbo flyer using the large whorl. I vary the pinch in and out of the draft zone in order to get the thick and thin look.
3. Ply the silk and wool using the jumbo flyer. Holding the silk at a 45 degree angle, let the Merino lead onto the silk to get a nice regular bumpy look.
4. Remove from bobbin and skein.

##### Dyeing:

1. Fill a pot with room temperature water. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup white vinegar and 1 capful detergent. Undo the skeins, make sure the ties are not tight, and then put in to soak for at least one hour.
2. Squeeze out excess water and put one skein in the dye pot.
3. Mix dyes according to the instructions, then pour directly onto the skein in areas, one at a time.
4. Press each colour area with a stick until you cannot see any white.
5. Put another skein on top of the first in the dye pot, remembering to squeeze out the excess water first. Add the dye as above.
6. Cover the pot, put on top of the stove and bring up the heat till pot is boiling.

Boil at low heat for 30 minutes.

7. Allow pot to cool.

8. Remove yarn, plop into the washing machine and rinse. Don't agitate! Spin out water.

9. Hang up to dry.

#### *Editor's* **NOTE**

Vincent and his wife, Angela, are Ashford dealers in Sayville NY and as well as supplying equipment and yarns want to "bestow heirloom-quality craft skills". Their shop is open 7 days a week and offers classes and retreats. For more information see their web site [www.rumpelstiltskinyarns.com](http://www.rumpelstiltskinyarns.com)

### You will need:

Approx. 450m (500yds) super bulky  
handspun yarn  
60cm (24ins) size 10mm (US15, UK/Canada  
ooo) circular needles

### Gauge:

Approx. 2.5 sts to the inch (2.5cm) in  
stocking stitch on size 10mm needles

### Abbreviations:

k: knit  
p: purl  
pm: place marker  
sl st: slip stitch  
st: stitch  
sm: slip marker  
yf: yarn forward  
yo: yarn over

### Sizes:

s (m, l)



## *The medium is the message* **TUNIC SWEATER**

### Here's how:

(Entire piece is knitted in stocking stitch)  
Cast on 32 sts and join in the round  
(all sizes)  
Knit 18cm (7ins)

### Raglan Sleeves:

pm, k6, pm, k10, pm, k6, pm, k10  
(To create increases for the raglan sleeves,  
you will alternate between an “increase  
row” and a row of plain knit. Row 1 below  
is the increase row in which you will simply  
yarn-over one stitch before and one stitch  
after each marker. This will result in a two  
stitch “seam” flanked on either side by an  
eyelet for the decorative raglan shaping.)  
Row 1: \* Knit to 1 st before marker, yo, k1,  
sm, k1, yo\* repeat from \* to \* across row  
Row 2: Knit  
Repeat above two rows until 22 (24, 26) sts  
have been created between sleeve markers.

### Next row:

sm, bind off 22 (24, 26) loosely, k 26 (28,  
30), sm, bind off 22 (24, 26) loosely, k 26  
(28,30)

### Bust:

Knit plain, joining all remaining sts on the  
needles in the round. You should now have  
only two underarm markers at each join.  
Knit plain for three additional rows.

### Short Row Shaping Front:

\*Knit across front to 3 sts before 2nd  
marker, sl st, yf, sl st back, turn, yf, p to 3  
sts before 1st marker, yb, sl st, yf, sl st back,  
turn, yb\* repeat from \* to \* until three rows  
of short row shaping have been added.  
(This will give a more natural shape to the  
bust area without putting stress on the  
stitches.)





# Durable *design*

BY MELISSA HALVORSON, TIVOLI, NY, USA

When shaping is complete, with right side facing, continue to knit plain in the round to 5cm (2ins) before the desired length of tunic is reached. At this point, you can choose to add a rounded “shirt-tail” hem in the front and back by repeating the short row shaping. Adding rows to the bottom of a garment will result in a curved hem rather than a pocket, such as for the bust. Should you like to do this, simply repeat these instructions for the front AND back.

## Optional Shirt-tail Hem:

\*Knit across front to 3 sts before 2nd marker, sl st, yf, sl st back, turn, yf, p to 3 sts before 1st marker, yb, sl st, yf, sl st back, turn, yb\* repeat from \* to \* until three rows of short row shaping have been added. Knit across the back of the sweater to 3 sts before marker and repeat.

## Finishing:

After the final shaping is complete, if chosen, continue to knit an additional 5cm (2ins) before binding off. Bind off loosely.

## Blocking:

As with any hand knit garment, but especially those with shaping details, it is of great importance that blocking be done to achieve the proper drape and fit. Fill a sink or tub with hot water, lay the garment on the surface and allow it to sink. Once the water has cooled and the item has become fully submerged, remove it. Gently squeeze out excess water, careful not to wring, and lay flat in a towel. Roll up the towel and press out more of the water. Gently remove the garment from the towel and lay flat to dry, “sculpting” the piece into its proper shape.

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“...landfills around the globe are overloaded with fully functional appliances – freezers that still freeze and toasters that still toast – their only crime being a failure to sustain empathy with their users. Waste of this nature can thus be seen as nothing more than a symptom of a failed relationship, and the origin of the ecological crisis we face, therefore, may be said to lurk deep within one single yet profoundly universal inconsistency - consumer desires relentlessly grow and flex whilst material possessions remain relatively frozen in time. I argue that this incapacity for mutual evolution renders most products incapable of sustaining a durable relationship with their users, and that the mountain of waste this single inconsistency generates is apocalyptic...” Jonathan Chapman Emotionally Durable Design 2005

Chapman’s essential argument is that consumer goods must, in order to forestall this emotional and ecological “apocalypse”, begin to mimic the nature of the handmade.

The Medium is the Message sweater was made with this idea in mind; that there must be a way to imbue a handmade item with social and political meaning while maintaining its longevity and wearability. Completing this difficult piece did not bring rewards - personally performing every last function of its production did.

A currency-free barter agreement left me with a giant bag of no-name, white sheep’s wool from a local farm. Since I’d already avoided the use of a monetary system, I decided to create a garment using only pre-industrial techniques, in which only time had been invested.

My first obstacle was the wool’s less than desirable quality. Nice and spongy, it behaved a lot like Dorset or Cormo wool, but was so neppy, it was almost impossible

to spin. I tried everything to salvage this wool. Re-carding, spinning bulky novelties, two-ply lace weight - but it was like trying to spin couscous.

Remembering past experiments with felting handspun yarn, I decided to spin my orphan wool into 730m (800yds) of thick and thin yarn. I felted the yarn by hand before immersing it in a sink of hot water with two drops of mild soap. I then began to roll the entire length between my hands. Satisfied so far, I hoisted the whole mass above my head and violently slammed it down onto the cold surface of my bathtub. The shock of the temperature change along with the impact caused the wool fibres to contract and fuse. I repeated this procedure until the yarn became firmer and began to take on the dimpled appearance of felt.

After a natural logwood dye bath, the total length measured about 460m (500yds).

The yarn now felt smooth, soft, and had a quality that can only be described as topographical. Like the view below from an airplane. There was enough yarn for a cap-sleeved tunic with an elongated shirt-tail hem at the front and back. Using size 15 needles and the bulky yarn, the knitting took a day and a half.

There is currently a group on ravelry.com who has undertaken a “knit-a-long” using this simple pattern and handspun yarn. The rapturous descriptions of their own creations, so far, demonstrate that the emotional connection between the makers, their products and the wearer is taking shape.

As is Chapman’s wish, this relationship is certain to endure.

The link to the knit-a-long discussion follows: [www.ravelry.com/discuss/i-heart-rawfish-yarns/643958/1-25](http://www.ravelry.com/discuss/i-heart-rawfish-yarns/643958/1-25)

Year of the Goat patterns can be found at: [www.yearofthegoat.etsy.com](http://www.yearofthegoat.etsy.com)

# WINTER WARMER BERET

BY JO REEVE, TITAHI BAY, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Berets are great projects for the new hand spinner. They are quick and easy to make and fashionable, of course. I have used hand carded rolags of Ashford Merino and Corriedale slivers to create a light, airy yarn with a subtle blend of autumn colours. The rolags are fun to card and easy to spin.

## You will need:

3.75mm double pointed needles, 3.75mm circular needle

Ashford Corriedale sliver:

25gm (1oz) of Nutmeg

Ashford Merino sliver:

12gm (1/2oz) each of Bean Sprout,

Tangerine, Raspberry and Grape Jelly

## Carding and spinning:

As the fibre is already carded, a light blend is all that is needed to prepare the rolags. Place staple lengths of each colour across one carder, filling it to about the depth of the teeth. I used approximately twice as much Nutmeg as the other colours.

Brush lightly until the colours start to blend. Transfer the fibre to the other carder and brush lightly again. Roll the fibre off the carder and store ready for spinning.

Spin the rolags using the medium draw for a semi-worsted yarn. My plied yarn measured 15 wraps per inch.

## Knitting the Beret:

Cast on 8 sts and distribute on 3 double pointed needles. Place a marker to mark the beginning of the round.

Round 1: Knit into the front and back of each st (16 sts)

Round 2 and all even numbered rounds: Knit

Round 3: \*K2, yo, repeat from \* to end (24sts)

Round 5: \*K3, yo, repeat from \* to end (32sts)

Round 7: \*K4, yo, repeat from \* to end (40sts)

Continue increasing on every odd numbered round, changing to the circular needle when necessary, until there are 24 sts between each increase (192 sts). The beret should measure approximately 30cm (12ins) across.

Next four rounds: Knit

## Decreasing for the brim:

Round 1: \*K6, k2tog, repeat from \* to end (168 sts)

Rounds 2 and 3: Knit

Round 4: \*K5, k2tog, repeat from \* to end (144 sts)

Rounds 5 and 6: Knit

Round 7: \*K4, k2tog, repeat from \* to end (120 sts)

Rounds 8 and 9: Knit

Round 10: \*K3, k2tog, repeat from \* to end (96 sts)

Rounds 11 and 12: Knit

Round 13: Purl

Round 14: Knit

Repeat rounds 13 and 14 three more times. Cast off very loosely knitwise.

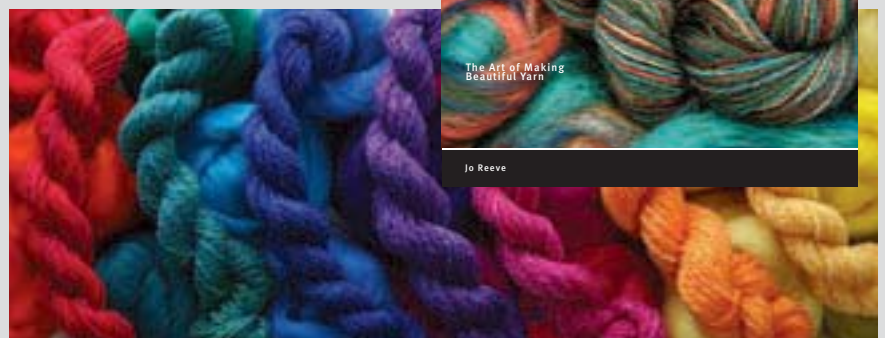
Weave in the ends and wash the beret.

Block using a large plate.



## Editor's NOTE

This pattern is from Jo's new book "The Ashford Book of Hand Spinning" available early in 2010 (see back cover for more information).











# Perfect gifts

BY TITA COSTA, VILA NOVA DE GAIA, PORTUGAL

I live in Vila Nova de Gaia, across the Douro River from Porto, and home to the famous Port houses of Portugal. I graduated as an artist in Portugal, and during my study for a Masters degree in England, I was introduced to spinning and tapestry weaving. I cherish the Otley College Spinners and Weavers Group, near Ipswich, and Lynne Curran in Scotland for teaching me.

Spinning was a love at first sight. My Ashford Traditional, after a good fifteen years, is still my wheel, pairing up with a more modern Joy wheel. I believe that spinning is not an addiction, but instead is the discipline I need to stay grounded – it is a philosophy and meditation at the same time.

I design and produce my own textiles, often from fleece, but also from tops or dog hair, using plant or commercial dyes, and this means that over the years I have collected yarn ends, spun loose wool, ends of other projects, experiments ... I tend to not throw anything away. These two projects are perfect for using up my collection and make lovely gifts.

Woven book marks, using a small embroidery frame or the rigid heddle loom with a 7.5dpi reed, have sixteen ends of commercial yarn warp and a homespun weft. The body is woven over four ends separating to 4, 8 and 4 ends for the arms and head.

The tapestry bracelets are also woven on a simple loom in geometric patterns at eight ends per inch with the slits sewn together.

At present I am devoting my time to weaving figurative tapestry, exhibiting and teaching these wonderful crafts.

[www.titacosta.blogspot.com/](http://www.titacosta.blogspot.com/)  
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*Kelemwa*

farm the worms and sell the cocoons to Sabahar with little capital input.

While Sabahar aims to produce high quality hand-woven textiles to market internationally, Sabahar's mission is also focused on process - to promote meaningful employment opportunities for as many people as possible. Silk production is very labour intensive, starting from cocoon production, to hand spinning, weaving and finally hand dyeing using natural dye material. On the Sabahar compound, ten to fifteen women spin the silk and when cocoons are plentiful a further eighty women are employed.

Women in Ethiopia have few employment opportunities but can earn \$5-8 per week as a spinner – a welcome addition to the family income when the men earn \$40 per month as a labourer or \$50-60 as a government-paid teacher.

All the women start spinning on their simple drop spindles but the company is keen to introduce spinning wheels. With a wheel, they can produce more yarn, more consistently and increase their income to \$10-15 per week. Second-hand spinning wheels have been donated and Kathy is working with the government to make a simple model for the women.

Sabahar, is named after Saba, a famous queen in Ethiopian history (also known as the Queen of Sheba), is making a difference. Spinner Wiezero Kelemwa says she feels empowered for the first time in her life. "I get to go to work, and I get to go to a place where I am needed. I can provide for my daughter, for myself. What I do feels important somehow. It has made me feel important." Today, she and her daughter live in their own home and Kelemwa is financially independent. The Queen would have approved.

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

# HAND SPINNING IS AN AGE-OLD TRADITION IN ETHIOPIA

BY KATHY MARSHALL, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Women in nearly all areas of the country grow up knowing how to spin cotton on a drop spindle. In fact, a girl's or woman's skill in spinning has a great influence on her status....or even her marriageability. Sabahar has taken advantage of these skills in their pioneering efforts to promote eri silk in Ethiopia.

Sabahar, a textile company located on the hilly outskirts of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital city, was founded by Kathy Marshall, a Canadian who first came to Ethiopia over fourteen years ago. After working as an agricultural consultant for international NGOs across eastern Africa and in Ethiopia, Mrs Marshall decided she wanted to embark on her own business based on local silk production. Though Ethiopia has an ancient tradition of weaving, with over 90,000 weavers active in the country, it seems that there has

never been actual silk production in the country. Weavers have historically worked with locally produced cotton and other imported fibres, including silk from China and India.

Despite its recent arrival, it almost seems that eri silk was destined to be produced in Ethiopia. This wild silk must be spun, thick or thin, directly from the cocoon. Ethiopian women who are experienced in spinning cotton on a drop spindle have found it simple and profitable to move to spinning eri silk on the drop spindle, as well as on spinning wheels.

In close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Sabahar has been promoting eri silk production with rural and semi-urban households since 2004. The eri silk worm eats castor leaves which are native to most areas of Ethiopia and many households have been able to





MODEL DONNA VOSS

# PAPILLON CROCHET TOP

BY LINZI MASON, ROTHWELL, UK

This lovely light and airy top is very easy to crochet. The simple style perfectly shows off the beautiful variegated colours of Ashford's Silk/Merino blend. Great for casual wear as shown with jeans; even better worn over a contrasting camisole for evening wear.



The name Papillon came to me because the lustrous sheen of the silk against the Merino made me think of butterfly wings as I was spinning it! The colour used here is Peppercorns, but any of the eleven lovely colours will work beautifully to complement the rest of your outfit.

### You will need:

Ashford Silk/Merino Blend 150gm  
(5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ozs)

Finished small size shown weighs approximately 120gm (4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ozs) and will fit a size 86-91cm (34-36ins bust)

Electronic Spinner or high ratio settings on treadle wheel

Crochet Hook - 5mm (H-8 USA)

### Here's how:

Tension

Spinning: approximately 30 wraps per inch (2.5cm) singles

Crochet: 4 shells x 9 rows = 10cm (4ins) square



### IMPORTANT – SIZING

Before you start, spin about 15gm (1/2oz) of Merino blend to check wraps per inch (2.5cm), then crochet a test piece 10cm (4ins) wide and check measurement. Crochet is very forgiving so some discrepancy will not matter. For example, if your largest measurement (bust or hip) measures 91cm (36ins), then a total of 18 shells all round will fit, so check the number of shells in your test piece and multiply pro rata to your widest measurement divided by 2 and this will give you the number of shells needed each for front and back for your size.

The size shown will fit 86-91cm (34-36ins) bust, so add a shell to front and back for each 2.5cm (1in) increment in measurement, don't forget to add a shell or two to the sleeves and consider these extra shells when following the pattern.

Length is optional and can easily be checked as you go until you reach your perfect fit.

Shell Pattern = 3 treble, 1 chain, 3 treble into middle of every 5th shell to end, 1 treble in 3 chain of previous row, 3 chain, turn work.

### FRONT & BACK (identical)

#### Foundation:

1. Make a very loose chain of 93 chains, turn.
2. Work 1 treble into 4th chain from hook, 1 treble into each chain to end, 3 chain, (90 trebles plus 3 chains), turn.
3. Commencing 3rd treble from hook \* work 3 treble, 1 chain, 3 treble into space between 3rd and 4th trebles\* (counts as 1 shell). Miss 4 trebles, work 1 shell into every following 5th treble to last 3 trebles \*. Work 1 treble into end 3 chain of previous row. 3 chain, turn work (18 shells).

#### Pattern:

Work 1 shell into the middle space of the shell on the previous row to end, 1 treble into 3 chain of previous row. 3 chain, turn. Commence working straight to underarm length 33cm (13ins).

#### Shape armholes:

Miss 1 shell at each end of next 3 rows (slip stitch up to middle of 2nd shell at the beginning of decrease rows, end the row with 1 treble in space between last 2 shells) (12 shells).

Continue straight until armhole measures 20cm (8ins) or more for larger sizes (check length of opening against a folded completed sleeve cap when completed and add another row or two if necessary).

### Sleeves:

Work a loose chain of 38 chains.

Work foundation row as for front/back pieces (35 trebles).

Work 7 shells into foundation row.

Increase by 1 treble each end of every 4th row 5 times (on last increase, convert the 5 trebles into a shell by working a shell into the middle of them).

Increase 1 treble each end of every following 3 rows, 5 times, converting the final 5 trebles into a complete shell as before.

Increase 1 more treble at each end of next row (11 shells).

Lengthen sleeve length here if necessary.

### Armhole Shaping:

Slip stitch to middle of first complete shell, work 3 chain and 2 trebles (half shell) into middle of this shell. Continue to middle of last complete shell, work 3 trebles (half shell), 3 chain and turn (10 trebles). Decrease half a shell at each end of next and every following 4th row twice (8 shells). Decrease 1 complete shell each end of next 3 rows (2 half and 1 full shells remain). Fasten off, fold sleeve and check fitting against armhole openings on front and back pieces. Increase or reduce opening if necessary.

### Finishing:

Sew up side seams of body and sleeves. Carefully join sleeves to armhole openings.

# PAPILLON CROCHET TOP

## CONTINUED



### EDGING

#### Sleeves and bottom of top:

Work over and under foundation row of trebles (to give a firm edge). Join yarn to a side seam and work 2 chains and 1 double crochet into space before 1st shell. \* Into space in middle of next full shell, work 3 trebles, 3 double trebles, 3 trebles. Work 3 double crochet into next space before next shell \* repeat to end. End with 1 double crochet into last space before seam and slipstitch to beginning 2 double crochet.

#### Neck edging:

Work 1 double crochet into every stitch all around neck.  
Wash work carefully in warm water. Dry work flat and then press work with cool iron when dry.

© Linzi Mason, The Alpaca Spinner  
[www.alpacaspinner.com](http://www.alpacaspinner.com)

# NEW

## e-Spinner



I started the 'Papillon' top on the previous version of the Electronic Spinner. My new model was on order and I wanted to do half on each machine in order to make a fair comparison.

When my new spinner arrived, I was delighted with its small size and lightness. As a sufferer from Fibromyalgia, moving equipment around can be quite a problem. But I can hold this amazing machine in just one hand!

I am a fast spinner, and the spinner was plenty fast enough for me. The Merino/silk yarn I produced was really fine and measured 30 wraps per inch (2.5cm). I have since spun much thicker yarn without any problems at all – it just does what you want! Plying is a truly a breeze.

Standard bobbins fit without any problem, and if my work is going to be fine, I tend to use these and then ply on the jumbo ones that came with the spinner.

I have eleven Ashford wheels and love them all, but the e-Spinner has to go to the top of my list for portability and consistent production – important for days when I can't face treadling for long. It also means that I can sit in any position at all to spin – great for aching backs!

If you are spinning commercially or have joint or leg problems, then the e-Spinner is a MUST for you.

Linzi Mason, Rothwell, UK

## 2010 Ashford Retreat

### A fibre indulgence!



This is a five day sensuous fibre journey based at the home of the world-famous Ashford spinning wheels and weaving looms. Discover new techniques and develop new skills with friendly and expert tutors in spinning, weaving, felting, wool and silk handling and dyeing. Visit a high country sheep farm and alpaca stud, stay on local farms and enjoy a cocktail party at the home of Elizabeth and Richard.

**The dates for 2010 are March 1-5, August 23-27 and November 1-5.**

Heather from Australia said of a recent Retreat, "A wonderful, wonderful week of learning and fun." Lyn, from NZ, wrote, "I've run out of superlatives! I've never had so much fun and learnt so much from such lovely people."

All equipment is provided and numbers are limited to ten – come and join us in 2010!



For more information please email [Nicola@ashford.co.nz](mailto:Nicola@ashford.co.nz)





## CREATIVE FIBRE FESTIVAL Whangarei 2010 8-11 April

NZ Spinners, Weavers and Woolcrafts Society's annual Creative Fibre Festival will be held at Whangarei in beautiful Northland. Exhibitions, fashion parade, workshops, lectures, competitions, trades and tours. For more information [creativefest2010@igrin.co.nz](mailto:creativefest2010@igrin.co.nz)



## Convergence 2010 Albuquerque

New Visions: Ancient Paths  
July 18-25, 2010  
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA  
[www.weavespindye.org](http://www.weavespindye.org)

Convergence features lectures, classes, exhibits, tours, special events, and a commercial vendor hall full of fibres, fibre-related equipment and an artist market.

*Cathy Ashford, pictured, is wearing handmade dreads from her range that she markets on [www.miasmahair.co.nz](http://www.miasmahair.co.nz)*



# Wool DREADS

**Wool sliver can be felted into dramatic dreads or hair extensions.** Lightweight and natural, wool dreads do not irritate the scalp and, of course, the colour combinations are limitless. Rebecca & Haley, from Sinister Boutique Christchurch,

New Zealand, recommend that long dreads should be 90cm (35½ins) long with tapered ends and approx 2cm (¾in) in diameter. Doubled over, they can be attached to your own hair or made into dread falls.

# Shibori dyeing

BY ROSEMARY FLEMING, HERVEY BAY,  
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

## **You will need:**

Silk scarves: Habutai or Paj, commercially hemmed or silk meterage

P.V.C. pipes 7.5-8.5cm (3-3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ins) diameter, approx. 35cm (13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ins) long

Pipettes or eye droppers and/or narrow sponge brushes

Thread for binding: linen, crochet cotton, knitting cotton or if a bolder 'stripe' is preferred, plastic raffia

Dye pot: deep stainless steel stockpot is ideal (but keep it for dyeing only)

Masking tape

Ashford dyes: mixed according to instructions, in jars. This recipe can be used as is, (bright) or diluted with water to shade desired

Colours used in these projects: Black, Blue, Red, Yellow, Rust, and Teal



Soon after moving to Queensland in the mid 80s, my husband and I bought a small farm. Along with a house, some gum trees, dams that never had enough water, noxious weeds galore and a horse, there was a flock of Angora goats.

With all this lovely mohair all I wanted to do was dye it! I dyed the mohair, wool and silk and then I was introduced to the wonderful world of shibori. After my very first Creative Fibre Festival in New Zealand in 1994 I tried shibori for the first time. During the Ashford Craft Tour that followed I first met Mitsuko Takada who has been a great source of encouragement ever since.

Classes from teachers Colleen Weste, Ken Smith and Margaret Barnett followed.

There are many shibori techniques which involve stitching, clamping, twisting and pole wrapping that have such interesting names as Mokume, Kanoko, Plangi, Orinui, and Itajimi. The one described here is Arashi, meaning 'the storm'. The memory of this is left in the waves or undulations on the fabric. Arashi is a cylinder wrapping technique which has many variations, depending on the type of fabric, how it is tied, thickness of thread and angle at which fabric is attached or twisted onto the pipe.

Diagram A

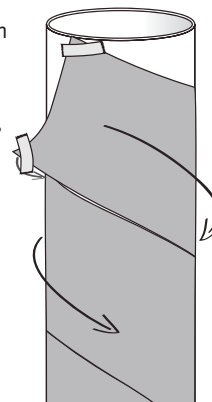
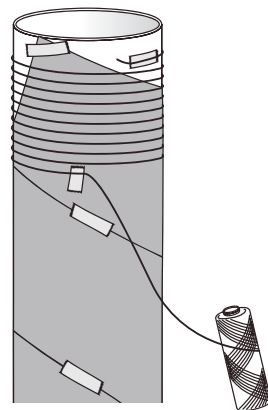


Diagram B



## Here's how:

### Basic Principle A

1. Material is wrapped diagonally around PVC pipe. Top corner is fastened with masking tape. (See diagram A).
2. Rotate the cylinder with material, full length. Fix small pieces of tape at intervals. Wind thread or string several times around pipe – distance between windings approx 1cm ( $\frac{1}{3}$ in). Fix thread with tape (diagram B).
3. Push together – threads will be touching. Remove tape. Repeat until all material is on pipe.
4. Cut thread and fix to cylinder with several pieces of tape. Tie a strip of material or place a thick rubber band on top of cylinder. This will prevent work coming off while dyeing.
5. Work is ready to put in pot of boiling dye. Ensure the dye covers all the material. Leave for a few minutes, depending on depth of colour desired. Remove and rinse under running warm water. Dip in water containing fabric softener or hair conditioner. Rinse again. \*Remove string. Dry. Your scarf is now ready to wear.

\*Rinse string well and dry. It will then be re-usable.



### Five Variations of Basic Principle A

1. Twist the material (see photo) as you push it on the cylinder. I have 'painted' the damp silk on the pole with Ashford blue, yellow and red diluted 1:1 with water. Then wrap with cling wrap, then plastic bag, and solar dye 8-12 hours or 2 days, depending on your climate. Remove from cylinder as in basic principle A.



2. To set pleats: Fold a long scarf in half. Follow basic Principle A until removed from dyepot. Dry on cylinder. Mix 1 cup white vinegar with 1 litre ( $\frac{13}{4}$ pt) boiling water. Pour over tied scarf on cylinder. Let set/dry 3 days.
3. Fold material in half before putting on pipe.
4. Iron pleats in material first.
5. Follow Basic Principle A then tape other corner on pipe. Repeat process and dye another colour. (Do not use conditioner until this second dyeing is completed.)

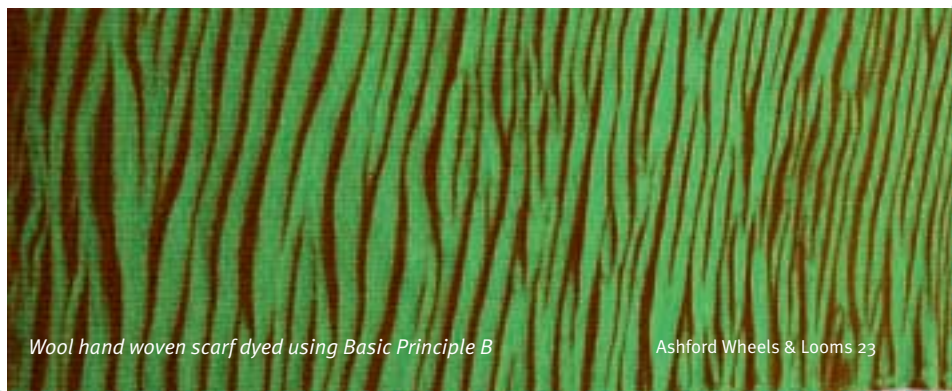
### Basic Principle B

In this method the material is placed horizontally around the pipe. In this case, cylinder diameter is 8.5cm ( $3\frac{1}{3}$ ins). Width of material is 29cm ( $11\frac{1}{2}$ ins) and hem width of 4cm = 33 cm ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins = 13ins). If material is hemmed add 3cm (1in) instead of 4cm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ins).

1. Stitch material lengthwise with tacking stitch, hand or machine.
2. Push on to cylinder, first tying a piece of material or rubber band in place as in Basic Principle A. The tighter the fold, the narrower the stripes. Loose fitting, wider stripes.



3. Place in dyepot, making sure all material is covered by dye and leave desired time. Remove. Follow rinsing procedure as in former technique or push again on to pipe and dye another colour (see Variation 5). Remove thread after rinsing. Do not iron, just dry naturally.



Wool hand woven scarf dyed using Basic Principle B

### REFERENCES

Shibori – Resist Dyeing Technique. Grethe Wellejus; Silk Painting and Shibori. Colleen Weste; Shibori, Yoshiko Iwamoto Wada, Mary Kellog-Rice, Jane Barton



# Recycled messenger bag

BY VIRGINIA “GINGER” BALCH, TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT, USA

**Two springs ago I was weaving and** listening to a show on NPR (National Public Radio) about how plastic bags were being found in the oceans and were killing birds, turtles, dolphins and other sea life. The story really bothered me and it made me think about my use of plastic bags, and what I could and should be doing with them. As I wove, my mind wandered, searching for some answers. Before I knew it I was

planning a new weaving project. The result was a tote bag, followed by more variations of that bag, as well as runners and placemats. I really liked the tote because it was surprisingly good looking while being useful. I was reminded that maybe you can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

My aunt Jan, a weaver and an avid recycler, was so impressed with the totes that she took the project a step further by

weaving up these clever and very usable window shades. The large shade is shown in her dining room window, and no one ever guesses what they were woven from. My aunt and I often do arts and craft shows where we give weaving and spinning demonstrations. Weaving with the plastic bags is always a huge hit. People literally do a double take when you explain that you are weaving with plastic bags.





## MESSANGER BAG

I prepared the plastic bags by laying them out flat and cutting off the handles and bottoms. There are ways to cut the bag into strips that will give you a more “homespun” look such as cutting from side to side and then taking the resulting loops and pulling them through each other until you have enough to fill a shuttle. I like to start at the top corner of the bag and slice the plastic with very sharp scissors into strips spiral-ways down to the bottom corner. This creates one long continuous piece. To get a finer looking fabric, I keep the strips about 2-2.5cm (3/4-1in) wide and line the tote bags for additional strength.



### You will need:

Loom – Rigid heddle 40cm (16ins)  
 Reed – 30/10cm (7.5dpi)  
 Weft – Strips cut from five to six plastic grocery bags  
 Warp and weft – 8/2 cotton, 60gm (20zs) black, 30gm (10z) each taupe, green, yellow and red  
 Lining – 50cm (20ins) denim fabric  
 Strap – 115cm (45ins) of black cotton or nylon webbing  
 Buttons – 4 x 4cm (1 1/4ins)

### Here's how:

Warp ends – 104  
 Sett – doubled ends per slot and hole across.

#### Step 1

This tote was woven on a rigid heddle loom, but can just as easily be woven on a 4 shaft loom. For the rigid heddle loom, I used the direct warping method with a warp 1.5m (60ins) long, this includes waste. Shaft looms will need to add loom waste to the finished 1m (42ins) of weaving.

#### Step 2

Warp is double strands of 8/2 cotton in the reed total 104 ends (each hole and slot for rigid heddle). The multi-coloured tote was threaded as follows:

10 black  
 6 taupe  
 4 red  
 4 taupe  
 6 black  
 4 taupe  
 12 green  
 4 yellow  
 Centre – 4 red

Reverse colour sequence from the centre, ending with 10 black.

#### Step 3

Tie warp onto loom. Weave several picks with waste yarn to spread warp. Wind shuttle with tripled ends of black 8/2 cotton. Weave 5cm (2ins) beating firmly. Weave 3 picks green (tripled), 2 picks yellow, and 3 picks red. Weave 8cm (3ins) more black cotton. Wind shuttle with plastic strips. Weave 85cm (34ins) beating firmly. Weave 5cm (2ins) beating firmly with cotton weft. Weave a few picks with waste yarn. Cut weaving off the loom.

#### Step 4

Carefully machine stitch between both waste yarn and cotton borders. Fold solid black cotton inside border to create a 20mm (3/4in) finished hem and stitch down. Using the red as your fold line, fold border of outside flap, and stitch down with a finished hem. Sew a 5mm (1/4in) seam on both sides. From the same wrong side of bag, create a boxed bottom by folding a triangle at each corner of bag and lining up the point of triangle with side seam. Stitch from one corner to the other. Turn bag right side out.

#### Step 5

Cut lining fabric 33 x 63cm (13 x 25ins). Sew side seams, and bottom seam. Sew a boxed bottom as for bag. Slip lining into the bag wrong sides together. Position straps as indicated and pin inside lining. Fold all raw side edges of lining to bag. Top stitch lining and straps in place. Place buttons on outside band and sew into place.

In Sheep's Clothing Yarn Shop and Fibre Arts Studio Torrington, Connecticut, USA  
[www.in-sheeps-clothing.com](http://www.in-sheeps-clothing.com)



# LILLIPILLI

## *reversible jacket*

BY LINDY BOSHLE, MARGATE,  
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

A new weaver creates a stunning, fully reversible woven coat with felted lining.

### Size:

Women's small to medium  
Length – 120cm (4ft)

### SPINNING

#### You will need:

750gm (26<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs) Merino sliver in  
variegated colours of lime green,  
gold and red \*  
250gm (9ozs) each of lime green, gold and  
red Merino sliver  
\* I attended this year's Bothwell Spin In, in  
Tasmania, and bought this special blend.

Spin sliver to a fine semi-worsted yarn  
measuring 7.5wpi. Ply the variegated single  
with either the single of green, gold or red.

### WEAVING

#### You will need:

1200m (1300yds) of 2 ply handspun Merino  
150gm (5ozs) each of lime green, gold and  
red Merino sliver for 'slubs' in weaving  
Knitters Loom 50cm (20ins)  
Reed 30/10cm (7.5dpi)  
7 buttons\*  
\* I used handmade pottery buttons also  
from Bothwell.

#### Here's how:

Total warp ends – 150  
Total warp length  
Sleeves – 3m (10ft)  
Fronts/Sides – 3m (10ft)  
Back – 2m (6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ft)  
Finished width – approx. 45cm (17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ins)

### Editor's NOTE

Lindy joined us in May for our Ashford Dealer Retreat and her coat made such a wonderful impression on us all that I asked Lindy to write the pattern. Lindy is an Ashford dealer and teaches weaving

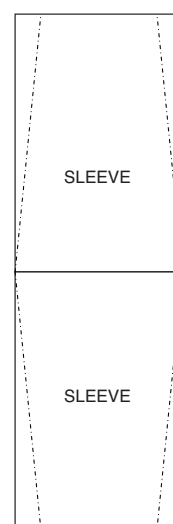
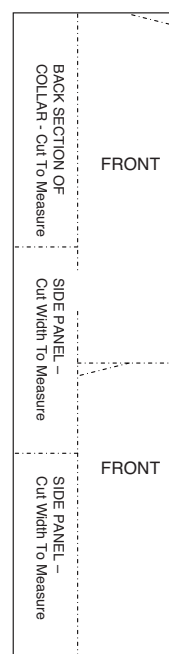
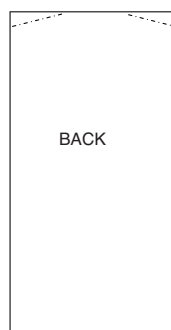
#### Warping:

Warp the complete width of reed  
(50cm/20ins) using the three colour ways  
at random.

#### Weaving:

Plain weave in random blocks of the three  
colour ways.  
Place, at random, small lengths of the solid  
green, gold, and red Merino slivers with  
the weft yarn. Pull up loops to create a  
3-dimensional 'slub' finish to the fabric.





### JACKET PATTERN

NOTE: Drawings not to scale – each piece can be cut to the individual's measurement

on the Knitters Loom, spinning, wet felting, carding, and dyeing. She is available to give classes and demonstrations. She can be contacted at lboshler@gmail.com or phone + 61 7 3883 2982

### Finishing:

Remove the pieces from the loom and secure edges with zigzag stitch. Hand wash in warm water and a little liquid soap and lay flat to dry. When still damp cover with a soft cloth and press with a warm iron. Mark, zigzag around and then cut the fabric as follows:

Back – 120cm (47<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ins) – taper shoulders slightly

Sleeves – 100cm (39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ins) – fold fabric in half and taper slightly at sleeve end

Fronts – 120 x 25cm (47<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 10ins) – taper shoulders slightly

Sides – 100cm (39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ins) x width required to fit individual – use remaining fabric from woven fronts

Back collar – use remaining fabric from woven fronts

### FELTED LINING

#### You will need:

1kg (2.20lbs) Merino sliver in red  
Small amounts of lime green, gold, silver Merino sliver and brown/black mohair for accents

14 buttons\*

\* I used metal rings and wove the spun yarn in and out of the circles to form a web.

#### Here's how:

Wet felt by hand, fine felt in red with small amounts of lime green, gold, silver Merino sliver and brown/black mohair for accents.

#### Finishing:

Place woven coat pieces on felted fabric, mark and cut out.

Sew woven pieces together to form outer coat and felted pieces together to form lining. Front and back shoulders are joined.

The remaining width of front is folded to form collar and V-front.

Place the red felted coat inside the woven coat and secure by hand stitching through the seams to join the two into one.

Attach buttons to left front of woven side of the coat.

Attach buttons to both sides of the front of the felted side of the coat and attach I-cord loops.

I have been spinning for ten years but only in September last year did I learn to weave and bought an Ashford Knitters Loom. The ideas and sleepless nights began! This woven coat, with felted lining, is reversible and features handmade buttons. I am thoroughly enjoying using my new loom and learning new techniques including lace design, pattern weaving and using the double heddle.



# Jacobs *in* Wales

In the low hills of the coastal ridge of south west Ceredigion in West Wales, live Derrick and Brenda Howell.

They breed pedigree Jacob sheep – the oldest known named breed and mentioned in the Bible, in Genesis.

The Howell's Owlscore Flock wool is well sought after by many a spinner throughout the world.

Items generated from the wool are all spun and woven by family and friends within three miles of the farm where the lambs are born. Each item, including 100% Jacob wool blankets, carries a hand sewn Owlscore Originals label.

Brenda and friends gather around a wood-burning stove in a workshop, originally a stone cow shed built in the 1840s, to spin, weave, dye and, according to Derrick, share yarns (with their tongues), as well as enjoy cakes and tea.

Historically, Jacob sheep were small, black and white “striped, speckled and spotted horned sheep”.

“Traditionally, in Britain, they were a parkland breed, which, over the centuries, has been much improved to the now upstanding, deep bodied, attractive sheep,” Brenda said.

“A well marked Jacob has fine, white fleece with well defined black patches on the body. This appeals to many spinners who enjoy using the natural colours and blends to make distinctive garments.”

Being a textile person and shepherd, Brenda culls out any young stock with kemp, and has, over the years, developed the renowned Owlscore Flock.

“Sheep from our breeding are now in Ireland, Holland, Germany, Denmark and Austria, helping others improve their stock and wool quality,” she says.

The Jacob Sheep Society of Britain, founded in 1969 to save and promote the unique breed, has hundreds of members aiming to improve the breed by following laid down characteristics - “preferably” white legs, black ears and dark horns.

All of Brenda's lambs' wool and shearing clip goes far and wide for spinning and felting, with customers often returning to order.

Brenda has been the recipient of several championship awards for both the actual sheep and a large variety of handcrafted items made from the wool of the Howells' Jacob sheep.

And she loves to spin in the “grease”. “There is nothing better for the hands, after a morning's gardening or farm work. Who needs expensive, prepared hand cream when one has natural lanolin and produces fine yarn whilst applying it too? Real multi-tasking.”

Every pedigree Jacob is lambed indoors and housed until a few days old while they bond with their milky mothers, who take great care of them.

Preparing sheep for the show ring is very complex in Britain compared to other countries, Brenda says.

“At a few weeks old, one selects a few lambs as having potential. Firstly, they must look alert, have a strong body with good square shoulders and a strong, long, flat back. Secondly, they must

BY BRENDA HOWELL, CEREDIGION, WALES

have good breed characteristics - this is where we look at the markings and many personal preferences begin to be taken into account.” The lambs then need to be halter trained, taught to make their way up a ramp and taught to walk as they will have to in front of judges.

Surprisingly, Brenda says most sheep enjoy being shampooed. “I prefer teatree shampoo as it has the added advantage of warding off flies. I always wash from a bucket of slightly warmed water but rinse thoroughly with a hosepipe on a gentle spray. I find it much easier to do these tasks thoroughly if the sheep is on a trimming stand with its head held comfortably in a headstock. A warm, windy day will see them dry in a few hours, whilst grazing a clean paddock. Otherwise, some people use an agricultural hairdryer.” The fleece then is carded upwards and outwards with a flicker and given a trim with the shears – and the sheep is ready for the show ring.

Derrick and Brenda visited Ashford's Craft Village last year. This had been a dream of Brenda's and she was thrilled to have the chance to try many different wheels and fibres.

“I have been using an Ashford Traveller for years - taking it camping, into schools and to agricultural shows throughout Britain and across Europe as far as Germany. I also have an Ashford Traditional which permanently has a jumbo flyer ready to ply wools for my tapestry weaving. In Wales, I'm a long way from Ashford's New Zealand but I'm never far from my Ashfords.”





PHOTOS BY KATE WALLACE AND DOE ARNOT.

# THE BOOKBINDER'S

## *tartan*

BY DOE ARNOT, OAMARU, NEW ZEALAND

This is a tale of two spinners and weavers and the acclaimed Oamaru bookbinder, Michael O'Brien.

Anyone who has visited the Victorian area of Oamaru and called in to The Bindery on Tyne Street, will be familiar with a dashing, bearded man outfitted in full plaid dress of the 1700s complete with traditional lovat-coloured felted bonnet.

The bookbinder fancied himself in a Jacobean-style long waistcoat with cloth spun and woven from local sheep and dyed with traditional dyes of that period. Given a piece of commercially-woven O'Brien tartan, Kate Wallace and I accepted the challenge.

Our most obvious concern was how to replicate the colours using only a small range of plant dye substances.

As you know natural dyeing is a process of colouring fibre and cloth which has been practised for thousands of years. The dye recipes were jealousy guarded and in some cases died with the dyer. Some colours were notoriously difficult to obtain from year to year as the plant is affected by the climate and time of year it is harvested. Plant dye is relatively insoluble. That's why you don't see the colours wash out onto the ground when it rains! The colour usually needs time, water and heat to be extracted and in many cases a metallic salt called a mordant to allow the fibre to bond with the dye substance.

So we decided to use the plant dyes which were readily available and were considered the most substantive (i.e. might not fade) and had a long history of use in fabric making. These were weld,

madder, safflower, onion skins and indigo. The Suffolk/Corriedale cross white sheep was shorn and the fleece spun into a fine 700gm (24 3/4ozs) two ply yarn suitable for both the warp and weft.

All the skeins were mordanted with alum ready to be dyed into the soft blue/green background colour and the red of the stripes. The green needed two separate dye baths with Kate first dyeing the yarns yellow. First she soaked and simmered the weld, safflower and onion skins to extract the colour and left overnight to cool. The dye bath was then reheated slowly with the wool and simmered for about an hour.

Then we made up the indigo vat (indigo is an insoluble dyestuff which coats the fibres rather than being absorbed through a simmer bath). We dipped the yellow skeins, recharging with fresh indigo solution twice, until we achieved the right shade of green. For the red stripes, the yarn was simmered in a dye bath of madder and left to soak overnight to obtain the lovely deep red.

Warping my Ashford Jack loom at 12 ends per inch for a straight twill – the traditional weave for a plaid fabric – we used a temple (stretcher) to keep the springy yarns under control.

The Bookbinder himself was invited to weave the final 6 inches (15cm) and cut the two metre cloth from the loom with a flourish of his very sharp dirk blade.

I fulled the cloth by folding and rubbing

in warm soapy water. The dyes stayed well, only leeching a little colour in the first wash, and not at all in subsequent rinses. I then spent three hours pushing a steam iron onto the cloth, protected by a damp cloth.

The fulling had worked adequately enough to allow the selvages to be cut without noticeable unravelling. Since this cloth is to be hand sewn by the Bookbinder himself we wanted the threads to be as integrated as possible without turning the piece into felt.

The cloth has subtle tones and shades of colour which are common to a natural dyed fabric and the Bookbinder seems to be pretty pleased. Enough to reward us with one each of his exquisitely handmade heirloom bound books!

The next challenge in the process was to naturally dye and weave the linen fabric for the back of this waistcoat so it can be completed. The linen thread has arrived and been dyed with oak gall (contains tannic acid) which has darkened the linen (much like tea stains), a mix of weld and fustic, and finally indigo. The linen glows in a soft blue green and is being woven in a plain weave as I write.

The Bookbinder himself will be weaving most of this fabric. He plans to stitch the waistcoat by hand and since he is extremely deft at wielding a needle and thread in the stitching of his beautiful books we can't wait to see the creation of this garment.

# NEW

## Silk/Merino Sliver

Damson

Spice

Poppy seed

Vanilla

Since its release last year, this sumptuous blend of 20% silk and 80% fine Merino has become very popular. Ideal for lacy, lightweight semi-worsted yarns for knitting or weaving and felting into fine, flowing fabrics, the sliver is available in one kilo bumps or in 100gm (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>oz) bags.

Four random new colour ways have been added to the range.

Damson – vivid blues with shots of raspberry and purple

Spice – rich chocolate with warm tones of gold and tan

Poppy seed – a sophisticated blend of black and silver with a touch of red

Vanilla – white on white

## NEW FLYERS FOR THE JOY

To celebrate our 75th Jubilee the Joy spinning wheel – named after Joy Ashford – has new flyers.

### Sliding Hook Flyer

From late 2009 all Joy spinning wheels will have the new sliding hook flyer as standard. With the squeeze-and-slide stainless steel hooks it is easy to fill bobbins evenly and the fibreglass arms make the flyer light and strong. The bobbins are new and bigger and will hold up to 30% more yarn.

### Sliding Hook Flyer Kit

A sliding hook flyer with one large bobbin is now available as a retro kit for all existing Joy spinning wheels.

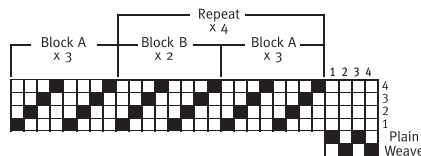
### Freedom Flyer Kit

This fantastic new flyer gives you the freedom to spin your wild carder batts into fabulous, fun and funky art yarns. With the enormous 25mm (1in) orifice and hooks you can spin and ply fibres, feathers, fabric, ribbons, cocoons and more. The open hooks make threading super fast and easy. The kit includes one jumbo bobbin and will fit all existing Joy spinning wheels.

All flyers available soon.







### Weaving:

Weave a heading using scrap yarn.

Weave 4 cm (1½ins) Merino at 4.5 p/cm (11 ppi).

Weave 2.5 cm (1in) silk at 6.5 p/cm (16 ppi). Insert pieces of inlay weft at intervals in the silk section.

Repeat the Merino and silk sections until weaving measures 180cm (70ins).

### Finishing:

Leave 10 cm (4ins) of the warp at the end of the scarf.

Cut from the loom and hem stitch the ends.

Twist or knot and trim the hem.

Immerse in very hot water with a little detergent to help the scarf absorb the water.

When the water has cooled a little, squeeze and rub the scarf until full.

### Inlay Warp Thread

A supplementary warp can be added using a second back beam or if only inserting a few additional threads use a pin (see diagram). In this project attach the inlay warp in the silk section randomly, thread through the reed dent and heddle eye. Hang the end of the yarn over the back beam with a weight.

# Delightful *distortion*

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

During a workshop with professional weaver Margaret Mecchia I became intrigued with the concept of distorted weaves. Created by the weave structure or the yarn itself, the distorted weave fabric is always unique and individual. In this scarf the wool, silk and novelty yarns all took on their own personality – puckering and pleating – when taken from the loom and washed. After always trying to create perfectly smooth and consistent fabric, it was exhilarating to allow the yarn its freedom and movement!

### You will need:

Loom – Four shaft 40cm (16ins)  
 Reed – 32/10cm (8dpi) sleyed 2 per dent  
 Sett – 16 ends per 2.5cm (16epi)  
 Warp and weft yarn – Merino 110/2 (100% wool, 1000m/1090yds, 100gm/3½ozs net) 50gm/ 1¾ozs white; silk 20/2 (100% silk, 1000m/1090yds, 100gm/3 1/2ozs net) 50gm/1¾ozs grey  
 Inlay warp and weft yarn – small amount novelty yarn

### Here's how:

Weave structure - Plain weave

Number of warp ends – 64 ends silk, 120 ends Merino and 2 ends Merino floating selvage

Threading – Warp Block A in Merino and Block B in silk. Repeat Blocks A and B x 4 and finish with one block of A

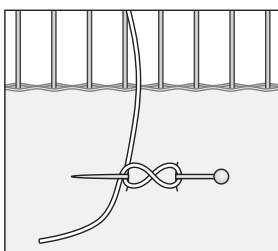
Width in reed – 30cm (11½ins)

Warp length – 2m (2yds)

Woven length – 180cm (70ins)

Finished size after washing and fulling – 117cm (46ins)

Inlay – insert novelty yarn randomly in the silk sections of the warp



## Editor's NOTE

Margaret Mecchia has been a tutor with NZ Creative Fibre for over 25 years and has taught throughout Australasia. She is also a member of the Professional Weavers of New Zealand. Margaret is taking a three day course with us, here in Ashburton, 9-11th of November on distorted weaves and painted warps. For more information please contact me at [elizabeth@ashford.co.nz](mailto:elizabeth@ashford.co.nz)

# OVER-DYEING



## You will need:

Wool skeins – 200gms (7ozs). For brighter, clearer colours use white wool. For more subtle shades use grey or moorit wool.  
Ashford wool dyes  
White vinegar – 2 tablespoons  
Stainless steel stock pot (used only for dyeing) 5 litre (9 pt)  
Bucket  
Dishwashing detergent

## Here's how:

Soak skeins in a bucket of warm water with half teaspoon of dishwashing detergent for one hour. Remove and squeeze to remove surplus water.

Put water to a depth of approx. 2.5cm (1 inch) and 1 tablespoon of white vinegar into stock pot. Arrange yarn in an M shape in pot. The top of the water must be below the top of the skein.

Heat pot until steam starts to rise but not boiling. Add the dyes. I mainly use tertiary colours as they give a wider range of combinations. For example I mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon each of red and violet in a measuring cup and add water to bring

BY ELAINE WATKINS,  
HAMPDEN, NEW ZEALAND

I love colour and I am a fan of chemical dyes because they are quick and consistent, but dyeing solid colours doesn't appeal to me. I took courses on colour and percentage dyeing with Maxine Lovegrove but it wasn't until I read the dyeing section in Lynne Vogel's *The Twisted Sisters Sock Workbook* and the colour section in *The Ashford Book of Carding*, by Jo Reeve, that I found a way to create subtle, variegated colours ideal for the modular method of knitting that I like.

the quantity up to 100mls ( $\frac{3}{4}$  fl oz). Pour across top and mid way point of the yarn. Place lid on top and simmer until colour is taken up.

Mix second colour. For example mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon each of blue and green. Add water to bring the quantity to 100mls ( $\frac{3}{4}$  fl oz). Pour over areas of the wool not dyed. It is not necessary to cover all the fibre at this stage.

Simmer until all the colour has been exhausted and remove the skein from the pot.

Add sufficient water to cover the wool. Add 1 tablespoon of vinegar. Choose a dye colour on the opposite side of the colour wheel – in this example, I choose orange. Mix 1 teaspoon of orange with 100mls ( $\frac{3}{4}$  fl oz) of water and pour into pot. Add skein and simmer until dye is exhausted.



Some beautiful and exciting effects can be achieved by this method of over-dyeing and if careful notes are taken it is possible to duplicate the results.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY:

*The Ashford Book of Carding* – Jo Reeve  
*The Twisted Sisters Sock Workbook* – Lynne Vogel  
*Dazzling Knits: Building Blocks to Creative Knitting* – Patricia Werner



# CELEBRATION SCARF

BY CHRISTINE SCHIMERL, VIENNA, AUSTRIA



Sometimes, during a spinning course, my students jokingly ask, “Can you teach us how to spin gold?” You all probably know the famous fairytale of “Rumpelstiltskin”, a dwarfish creature who was able to spin straw into this noble metal...

Well, although I haven’t succeeded yet in becoming a fibre alchemist I was very pleased with the result of a handwoven scarf, which I finished recently.

As you can see in this photo, it is a lacy weave, airy and light-weight, but it also has also a very interesting textured structure.

Because of the colours, material and pattern the fabric almost gives the impression of “woven gold” and the silky lustre shimmers beautifully in the sunlight.

So I call my creation “Celebration scarf” - very apt, too, in this Ashford Jubilee year - congratulations and best wishes from my side!

The scarf is woven on an Ashford Table Loom with 8 shafts, which is ideal for this pattern that needs 12 different “treadle” (shaft) combinations.

It is from “A Weaver’s Book of 8-Shaft Patterns” from Carol Strickler.

## You will need:

Loom: Eight shaft 60cm (24ins)

Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi)

Material: Cottolin 22/2, 600m/100g (650yds/3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs) and Tussah silk 20/2, 850m/100g (925yds/3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs)

Colours/Warp: All Cottolin, 36 Dark Red, 36 Goldbrown, 36 Copperbrown, 36 Goldbrown, 36 Dark Red, total 180 threads

Colour/Weft: Tussah silk in Gold

Other: Beads to emphasize the fringes

## Here’s how:

Weave structure: Atwater-Bronson Lace, pattern 625, page 187

Warp length: 180 ends – 2m (2yds)

Warp colour order: 36 Dark red, 36 Goldbrown, 36 Copperbrown, 36

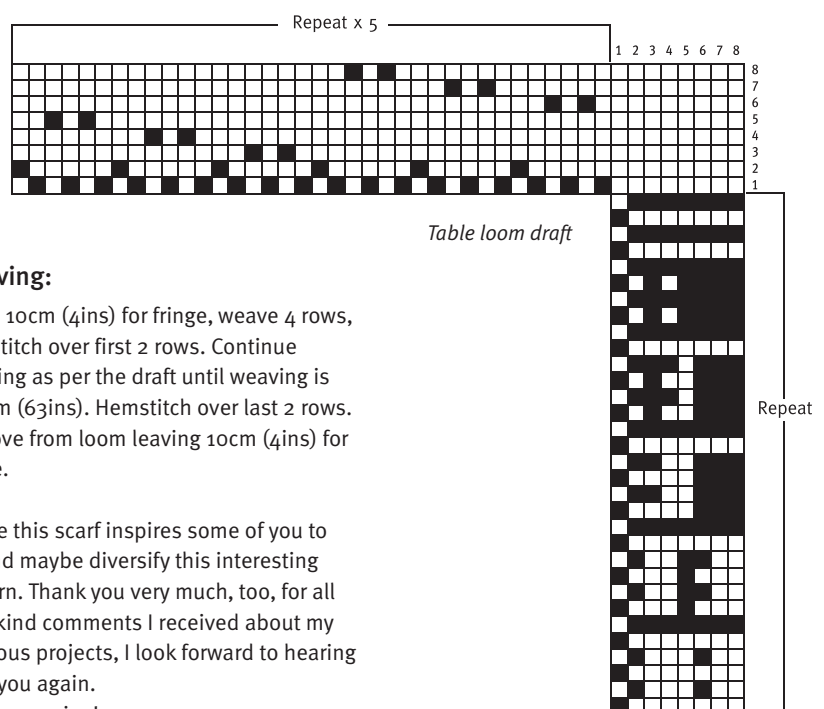
Goldbrown, 36 Dark Red

Sett: 20 ends per 2.5cm (20dpi) reed 40/10 (10dpi) sleyed 2 epd

Width in reed: 22.5cm (9ins)

Woven length: 160cm (63ins) + plus fringes

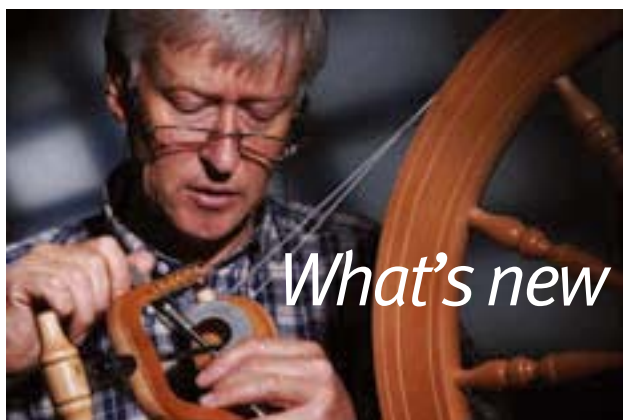
Finished size: 155 x 22cm (61 x 8 3/4ins) + fringes



## Weaving:

Allow 10cm (4ins) for fringe, weave 4 rows, hemstitch over first 2 rows. Continue weaving as per the draft until weaving is 160cm (63ins). Hemstitch over last 2 rows. Remove from loom leaving 10cm (4ins) for fringe.

I hope this scarf inspires some of you to try and maybe diversify this interesting pattern. Thank you very much, too, for all your kind comments I received about my previous projects, I look forward to hearing from you again.  
Happy weaving!



## What's new from Richard?

Recently I have been very fortunate to exhibit at shows such as VAV in Sweden, the Creative Fibre Festival in NZ, Woolfest in the UK and Handarbeit in Germany plus visiting Denmark, Holland, Canada, UK, Japan, Taiwan and the USA. I am constantly amazed at the quality and flair of the handmade clothes and home ware on display. We also have enjoyed having many of our friends and supporters visit during our 75th Jubilee year. There is so much interest and enthusiasm from spinners and weavers worldwide that I have been inspired and encouraged to design new tools and accessories and to update our range so that you will have more fun making your textiles. I gain great satisfaction and pleasure knowing that what we do here in Ashburton helps make your creative journey easier. I hope you will enjoy using these new products.

## NEW PRODUCTS & UPDATES

### Wild Drum Carder

This carder was designed for spinners who want to make fabulous, fun and funky art yarns. The extra long teeth, packer brush, 6:1 carding ratio and adjustable drum clearance allow you to create unique blends with differing fibres, fabric, ribbons, feathers, noils, paper and more. It's small, portable, weighs only 3.5kg (7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>lbs) lacquered and assembled and includes a cleaning brush and doffer (awl) which are stored conveniently on the carder.



Carding width 10cm (4ins)  
Batt size 60 x 15cm (24 x 6ins)

Batt weight 40gm (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs)  
Weight 3.5kg (7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>lbs)

### e-Spinner

After over 18 months of research and testing I am very pleased to offer our new CE approved e-Spinner. It is designed to be quiet, convenient and simple to use. It comes complete with 12v transformer, interchangeable wall plugs, jumbo sliding hook flyer, 3 jumbo bobbins and lazy kate with a yarn guide. The optional 12v car cord allows you to spin in your car, caravan, RV or boat. It's so portable because it weighs only 2.8kg/6lbs and is very compact. This is a production machine that can spin fine to textured yarns with a speed range of 0-1200rpm. It also makes learning to spin very easy as you only concentrate on using your hands to draft the yarn. The e-spinner is assembled and lacquered.



Orifice 15mm (5/8in)  
Motor 12 volt DC 6 amp  
Speed 0-1200rpm  
Bobbin capacity 225gm (8ozs)  
Weight 2.8kg (6lbs)



### Learn to Weave on the Table Loom

This helpful booklet with full, step-by-step instructions and colour photographs shows how quick and easy it is to prepare a warp and thread your loom.

### Table Loom Raddle

Simple to attach to all Ashford table looms, the new wooden raddle has metal pins with 1/2in (12mm) spacing to ensure warping is controlled and smooth.

### Ball bearings

To ensure all our wheels are smooth and effortless to treadle, the Traditional, Traveller and Country Spinner are now made with ball bearings. They really make spinning a pleasure. The Elizabeth, Joy and Kiwi wheels already have ball bearings.





### Needle Felting Starter Kit

Our new Starter Kit is a great way to begin exploring the possibilities of this popular craft. The kit includes The Ashford Book of Needle Felting by Barbara Allen, sliver, needles, foam, wash away fabric and instructions.

### The Beagle and Butterfly Kits

These kits contain all the materials to enable you to make these delightful projects featured in Barbara's book.



### The Ashford Book of Needle Felting Revised Edition by Barbara Allen

This very popular book is being reprinted and due to popular demand includes detailed instructions of the gorgeous Beagle dog. This revised edition will be available end of 2009. Please note kits of some of the projects including the Beagle are now available and include wool, needles and instructions.

### Knitters Loom Double Heddle Kit

Create very fine fabric and weave beautiful patterns such as Summer and Winter, Taquete and double weave on the Knitters Loom with this double heddle kit. Simply replace the reed support blocks with the new double reed supports. Plus this kit includes instructions for your first double heddle project.



### Sliding Hook Flyers

Due to a customer's suggestion, we are now including a bobbin with larger gomm ( $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins) whorls on both ends with the standard single & double drive flyers. These new bobbins hold up to 30% more than the standard bobbin.

### Sampler Niddy Noddy

To make it easier to count the yardage on this handy niddy noddy it now makes a 1 yard/90cm skein.

### Warping Mill and Warping Frame

Both now feature extra pegs so you can easily and conveniently wind warps with both the threading and raddle crosses in place.

### Luxury Fibres – mulberry and tussah silk, linen and bamboo

We have added to our range of luxury fibres ready for spinning. Try our delicious mulberry and tussah silk sliver, silk caps, linen and bamboo.

### Packer Brush

If you already have or are about to buy an Ashford Drum Carder – either fine or coarse – this is a “must have” accessory. The adjustable packer brush will smooth, control and pack more fibres onto the large drum to make a thicker batt. And it helps control fine and low crimp fibres such as angora, alpaca, bamboo, mohair and silk. It's easy to fit – no holes to drill – just attach the brackets, fit the brush and start carding!



This is what Francine Denot, for the UK Journal for Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, Summer 2009, wrote about the first edition:

“In The Ashford Book of Needle Felting, painter Barbara Allen takes you on a learning journey....you'll be able to felt small pieces, to decorate clothes with needle felted pictures, to use carded wool (or other fibres) to create wall hangings

that look like paintings and to work in three dimensions as if you were a sculptor. The explanations are precise, specific and deep...Both projects and book are of high artistic quality and the knowledge shared is not just the basics. This book is appropriate for a beginner but will also please someone who wants to explore the craft further and discover that wool can nearly be used as paint or clay.”



## *Editor's* **NOTE**

Betty has a NZSWWS Quality Mark for Weaving and her linen hand towels, table linen and wall hangings can be found in homes in New Zealand, USA and Japan. She has taught weaving for twenty-five years.

# Bronson *Woven* UNTRADITIONALLY

BY BETTY BOOTH, BALCLUTHA, NEW ZEALAND

Bronson, one of the lace weaves, has lovely definition when woven in linen or cottolin but is stunning as a frame for focus yarns as in this wall hanging.



Bronson lace is a popular weave structure because you can create lovely patterns on quite simple looms – in this example, on a four shaft loom.

Traditionally the warp and weft in Bronson weaves are the same thread or, at least, threads of the same grist and colour (see first photo below) but in these projects I want to show the versatility of the technique. The lace effects are beautiful when woven in fine threads with an open sett. And eye-catching texture is achieved when woven with thicker, focus threads and a closer sett, as in the wall hanging. The open structure of the lace weave allowed the thicker silk weft to sit up on top with great effect.

Different effects can be achieved by using different yarns in both the warp and weft.

*Traditional Bronson lace in 20/ 2 Linen  
Sett 24epi  
Crossbarred*



*22/ 2 Cottolin & Silk  
Doubled Sett 12epi  
Every 6th thread silk*



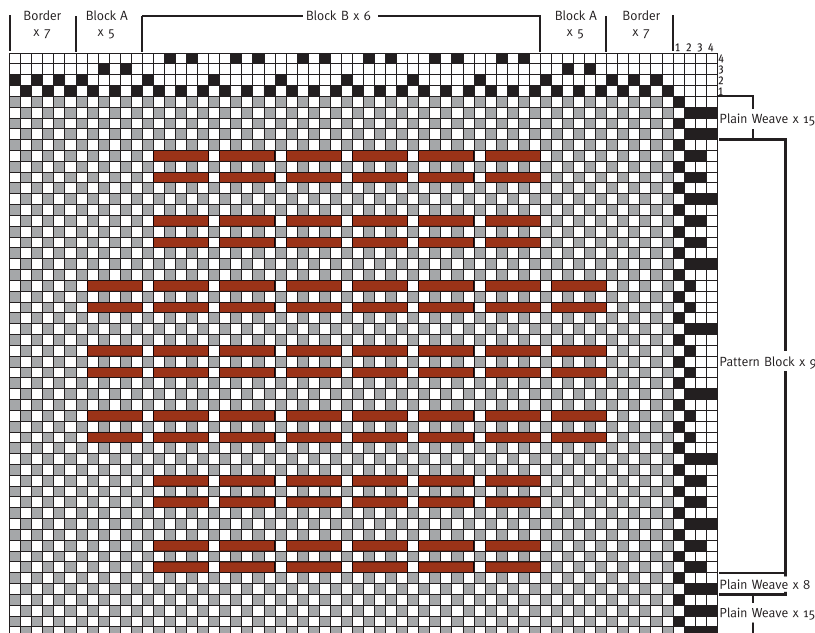
*22/ 2 Cottolin & Waikiki*



*Handspun*

The peculiarity of a Bronson threading is that half the warp – every other thread – is threaded through one shaft. The remaining shafts are used for the pattern. In this pattern every alternate thread is on shaft 1. The Bronson lace blocks are made by repeating the six thread unit to the desired width with a plain weave border.

Try changing the size and order of the blocks. Experiment with the weaving sequence lifts. To get lace you need to weave the block sequence more than once.



## WOVEN GARDEN

### You will need:

Loom – Four shaft loom 80cm (32ins)  
Reed – 57/10cm (12 dpi)  
Warp and weft  
Cottolin 22/2 Black (60% cotton, 40% linen; 1600m/1749yds; 250gm (8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ozs) 1 cop  
16/2 Linen Black (100% linen; 2157m/2360yds; 125gm/4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs) 2 cops  
Noro Silk Garden Colour 230 (45% silk, 45% kid mohair; 10% lamb's wool; 100m/109yds; 50gm/1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ozs) 2 balls  
Fine gold metallic thread 200m(218yds)

### Here's how:

Warp length – 2m/80ins (includes hems and loom waste)  
Width – 75cm/30ins  
Warp ends – 360  
Sett – 12 ends per 2.5cm (12dpi)  
Finished size – 140 x 75cm (55 x 30ins)

### Weave Structure:

Bronson Lace

### Warping:

Refer to draft  
The black linen and cottolin are wound together and used as one thread.

### Weaving:

Refer to draft. 12ppi  
Weave background in black linen and cottolin and use together as one thread.  
Weave 12cm (5ins) plain weave at top and bottom of wall hanging – tabby (a) shafts 234 and tabby (b) shaft 1

### The Bronson Pattern:

The Bronson pattern weft sequence is woven throughout with the black cottolin and linen wound together. On the two pattern rows in each unit the Noro silk doubled and the metallic thread are thrown in the same shed as the black pattern rows entering and exiting after and before the plain borders. Weave nine pattern sections with 3cm (1 1/4ins) spacings of plain weave between each pattern group. Finish with 12cm (5ins) of plain weave.

### Finishing:

Cut from the loom and steam to set the threads. Sew hems top and bottom. Insert rods into the hem plackets.

Reference:  
New Key to Weaving by Mary Black  
The Weavers Book by Harriet Tidball



# Spin me a yarn

BY INNES CARMICHAEL, INVERCLYDE, SCOTLAND

**My name is Innes Carmichael. I am a spinner living near Greenock in Inverclyde, Scotland. I am part of a Gaelic singing group Sgioba Luadh Inbhircluidh (Inverclyde Waulking Group) who perform women's waulking songs – songs sung to keep time and to keep spirits up while fulling or waulking tweed.**

Waulking is the final stage in the production of homespun cloth. When the tweed cloth comes off the loom the feel is harsh, the weave loose and the colours dull. The cloth is of uneven width and needs fulling or waulking to shrink it, fluff it up, close the weave and to brighten the colours. Historically, the cloth was also soaked in stale urine, known in Gaelic as maistir, to soften and make the dyes fast – but we don't do that today!

Waulking is done by machinery now but, especially in the Hebridean Islands of Scotland up until the early 1950s, the task was performed by groups of women sitting around a table.

Tweed lengths were anything up to eight metres (nine yards) long and there could be many tweeds to finish at a waulking so the Gaelic women used songs to give rhythm to the process and to lighten the work. Thus it became an enjoyable social occasion with plenty of fun and gossip to balance the hard work. Waulking was a widespread practice but it seems that only in Scottish Gaelic culture was it accompanied by singing. We are unique in Scotland, having a vast treasure trove of these songs that have survived but are mostly unknown to others.

The songs are all from women's points of view and cover most subjects: from battles and pillage to stealing another girl's boyfriend; from humorous contemporary songs to songs that originated hundreds of years ago. The songs are straight from the heart but without sentiment and provide a great way to express emotion and release tension.





Our group is twelve strong and ages range from 13 to 80. Our programmes cover many eras and we have Victorian, 16th century and 1940's costumes (some of which I have made) that add to the fun and provide interest. We illustrate our shows and workshops with slides and translations to bring the songs to life and I spin on my Traveller wheel (well named as I have taken it all over Scotland and England on my travels with the group).

We have performed and given workshops in many places including town halls, schools, festivals (including Woolfest) and the Auchindrain Museum, Argyll.

When not involved with Sgioba Luadh Inbhircluaidh, I spin (special thanks to Aunt Helen who encouraged and supported my spinning from Dunedin, NZ!), dye and knit, often with our local knitters and spinners group "Gourock Stitch n Bitch" (who, incidentally, use Ashford Kiwi, Traveller and Traditional wheels), and I am working with local farmer, Kenneth Barbour of Murdiestone Farm, Greenock, to promote the viability and quality of local wool.

My two passions come together neatly in Sgioba Luadh - Gaelic culture and fibre craft. It is a real privilege to pass on my knowledge and culture - but most of all it is such fun!

For more information: [www.geocities.com/luadh](http://www.geocities.com/luadh)

# ROSIE'S COSY TOES

BY ROSE JOHNSTON, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

## You will need:

Ashford Tekapo 8ply/DK yarn (100% wool, 200m/218yds, 100gm net) 1 ball  
Needles 1 pair 4mm (US 6, UK 8) 1 pair  
5.5mm (US 9, UK 5)  
Sheepskin soles 1 x pair

## Size:

Birth to 6 months

## Here's how:

With larger needles, cast on 50 stitches.  
Work 1 row knit. Change to 4mm needles & knit 8 rows.

## Instep:

Next row k3o, k2tog, turn, p11, p2tog, turn, k11, k2tog turn.

Continue in this manner until 36st remain.

Knit across row.

Make ribbon holes:

K1, m1, k2tog across row.

Now continue in rib k1, p1, or garter stitch to length required.

(Either turned over top or just straight.)

Cast off.

## To finish:

Sew sole on using blanket stitch.

Laces – crochet, knit, finger knit, plait or twisted yarn.





### You will need:

Loom – Four shaft loom 40cm (16ins)  
 Reed and sett – 48/10cm (12 dpi) sleyed 1, 2, 1, 2 etc = 18 ends per 2.5cm (18 epi)  
 (Alternative reed: 36/10cm (9 dpi) sleyed 2 per dent)

Warp yarn – Cottolin 22/2 and/or cotton 8/2, four mixed green shades, 31gm (10z)  
 Weft yarn – Tabby: Cotton 8/2, light green, 24gm (10z). (Instead of cotton 8/2, you can use cottolin 22/2)

Weft yarn – Pattern: Cotton 16/2, bleached white, 6 ends wound together on the bobbins, 42gm (1½ozs)  
 (Instead of 6 ends of cotton 16/2, you can use 2 or 3 ends of cottolin 22/2)

### Here's how:

No. of ends: 302 (the first 2 and the last 2 ends = floating selvage, not shown on drawdown). Please note that in both sides there is one extra warp end inside the floating selvages, which is not part of the pattern repeat.

Width in reed: 40cm (16ins)

Finished size: 44 x 35cm (17 x 14ins)

Warp length for one placemat: 65cm (25½ins)

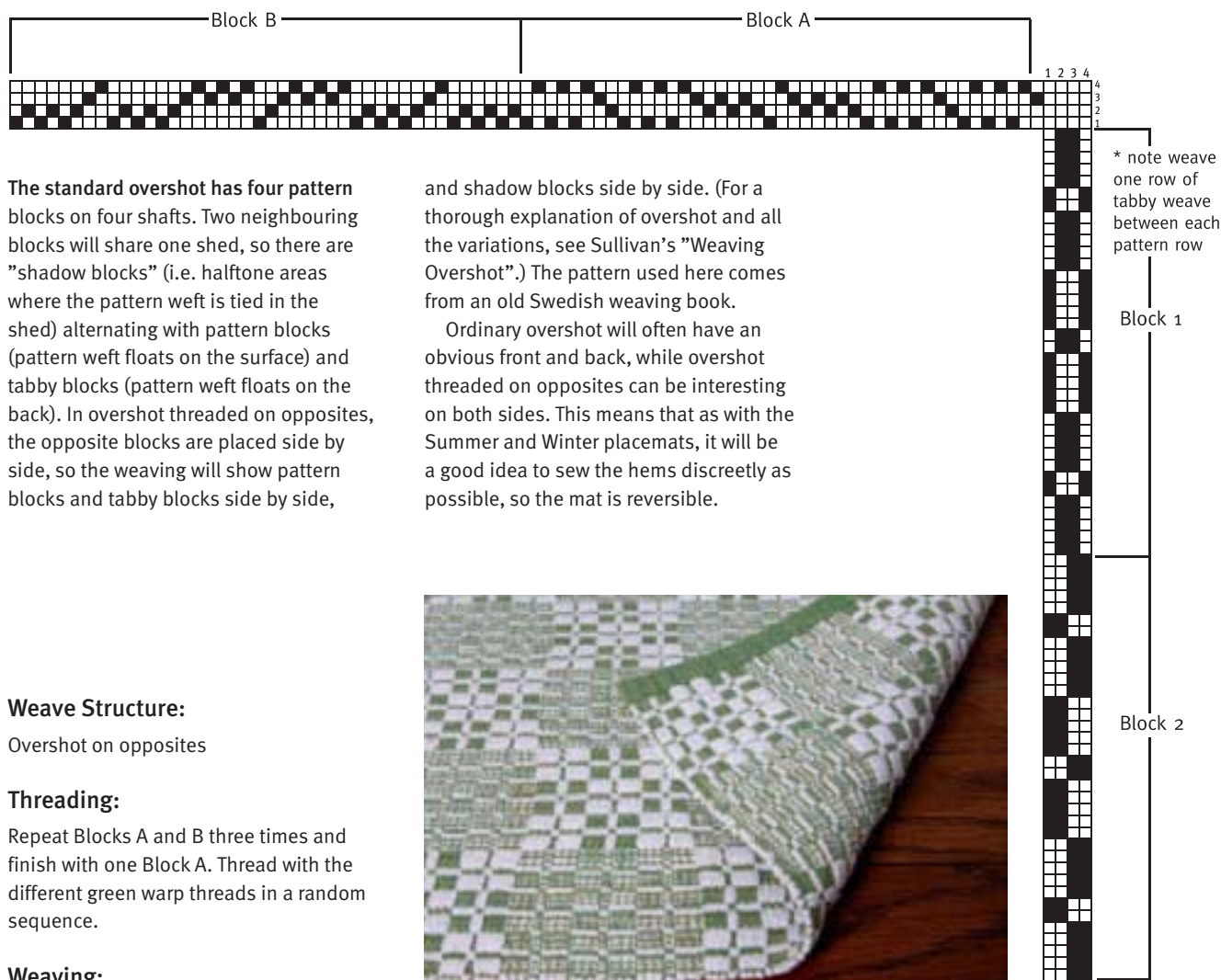
When calculating the total warp length, multiply the 65cm (25½ins) by the number of placemats you want to weave, and remember to add loom waste (the extra warp needed for tying on and thrums).



# Overshot on OPPOSITES

Stylish reversible placemats with border.

BY ELSA KROGH, MARIAGER, DENMARK



The standard overshoot has four pattern blocks on four shafts. Two neighbouring blocks will share one shed, so there are "shadow blocks" (i.e. halftone areas where the pattern weft is tied in the shed) alternating with pattern blocks (pattern weft floats on the surface) and tabby blocks (pattern weft floats on the back). In overshoot threaded on opposites, the opposite blocks are placed side by side, so the weaving will show pattern blocks and tabby blocks side by side,

and shadow blocks side by side. (For a thorough explanation of overshoot and all the variations, see Sullivan's "Weaving Overshot".) The pattern used here comes from an old Swedish weaving book.

Ordinary overshoot will often have an obvious front and back, while overshoot threaded on opposites can be interesting on both sides. This means that as with the Summer and Winter placemats, it will be a good idea to sew the hems discreetly as possible, so the mat is reversible.

## Weave Structure:

Overshot on opposites

## Threading:

Repeat Blocks A and B three times and finish with one Block A. Thread with the different green warp threads in a random sequence.

## Weaving:

Begin and end with 4.5cm (1½ins) plain weave (shafts 1 and 3, 2 and 4) for hem allowance with the tabby weft yarn with 9 p/cm (23 ppi).

Weave pattern as shown in the draft, with a tabby pick (shafts 1 and 3, 2 and 4) between each pattern pick. The pattern areas are not square, as the small units are slightly higher than wide.

Note: All overlaps of the pattern weft should be placed in halftone sections, while the first and the last ends can be tucked into the following tabby shed.



## Editor's NOTE

Elsa, who for over 20 years distributed Ashford products and who already has written two popular titles for us is currently working on a new book. Provisionally titled "The Ashford Book of Patterns for the Four and Eight Shaft Loom" Elsa has woven beautiful and exciting shawls, scarves, cushions, towels, table runners, table mats and fabric material using a variety of techniques from twill to summer and winter and modern backed weaves. Many of the patterns are sourced from archival material from local museums and bring a wonderful sense of continuity as well as smart Danish style! We will have this new book available early in 2010.





# COMFYcushion

*Comfy cushion for a recliner in Tekapo Purple, Dark Red, and the random colours of Sunset, Foxglove and Gemstone with a novelty yarn, Mt Pisa by Touch Yarn*



BY DELAND LIAO, TAIPEI, TAIWAN

## Comfy cushion in double weave.

### Double weave is a fascinating technique.

On a four shaft loom it is possible to either double the width or, as in this project, produce a two-layered fabric, ready to stuff and create a padded cushion.

When double weaving both layers are woven simultaneously: two shafts create the top layer and two shafts create the bottom. To weave the top layer, the shafts are alternated as usual. To weave the bottom layer, the shafts are also alternated as usual, but the top layer must be out of the way, and so it is raised.



Comfy cushion

### Here's how:

Weave structure: Double Weave  
Warp length: 288 ends – 125cm (50ins)  
Warp colour order: Alternate Berry and Royal, starting with Berry  
Sett: 12dpi (2/dent in a 6dpi reed)

### Dimensions:

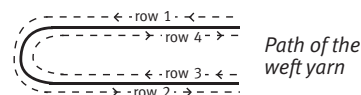
Width in reed: 60cm (24ins)  
Woven length: 70cm (28ins)  
Finished size: 55cm x 55cm (22 x 22ins)

### Weaving:

Weave 4 rows plain weave (shafts 1 & 3 then shafts 2 & 4 repeat) hemstitch over first 2 rows.

Double weave folded cloth i.e. two layers of plain weave with a fold on the left edge. Block 1 is two separate layers with Berry showing on top and Block 2 is two separate layers with Royal Blue showing on the top. When you change between Blocks 1 and 2 the layers join creating a pocket.

As per below drawdown, begin on the right, weave the first row of “Block 1” right to left, (top of the top layer), weave the second row of Block 1 left to right (bottom of the bottom layer), weave the third row of Block 1 right to left (top of the bottom layer) and the last row of Block 1 will be left to right (bottom of the top layer). See diagram.



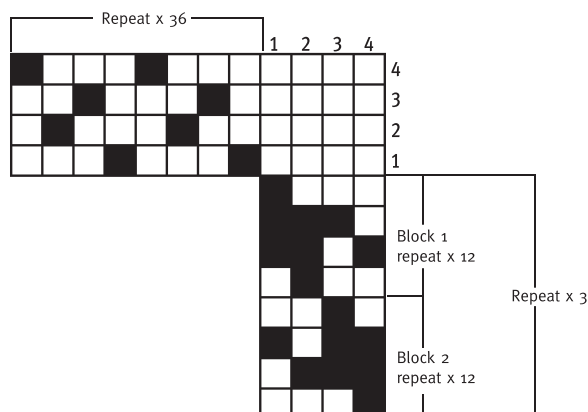
Continue weaving Block 1 for 10cm (4ins). Change to Block 2. (Make sure you have finished a complete Block 1 before you swap to Block 2.) Continue weaving Block 2 for 10cm (4ins). Alternate Blocks every 10cm (4ins) until work is 70cm (28ins) long. Weave 4 rows plain weave and hemstitch over the last 2 rows. Remove from loom. Hand wash, dry and then stuff each pocket with Corriedale sliver and sew side seam with Tekapo yarn.

### You will need:

Loom: Four shaft 60cm (24ins)  
Reed: 25/10cm (6 dpi)  
Material: Tekapo yarn 8 ply/DK (100% wool; 200m/218yds, 100gm/3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ozs net)  
Royal Blue 066 – 1 ball, Berry 057 – 1 Ball, Tekapo Random Gemstone 074 – 1 ball  
Colours/Warp: Tekapo Royal Blue, Berry  
Colour/Weft: Gemstone throughout  
Other: Corriedale sliver for stuffing approx. 1 kg (2.2lbs), darning needle to sew up open edge.



Fill the pockets with sliver





The Ashford Book of

# Hand Spinning

The Art of Making  
Beautiful Yarn

The Ashford Book of Hand Spinning

By Jo Reeve

Learn to hand spin with fibre artist Jo Reeve. Jo, the author of the very popular Ashford Book of Carding, has twenty-seven years of spinning experience and will show you how to spin from the beginning through to advanced techniques. Learn how to create unique yarns using different techniques and fibres and make five easy projects using your handspun yarn. Step-by-step instructions and gorgeous colour photographs will take you on a new journey of creativity. 116 pages. *Available early 2010*

