



### New Yarns and Designs

Julie has started experimenting with the 4-ply yarns she's trying from a new supplier.

First up is a 50:50 Merino Silk Singles yarn, twisted into a single ply which is the equivalent of a fine 4-ply at 495m/100g. In a mixture of 50% Fine Merino Wool and 50% Mulberry Silk, it's adorably soft and cuddly, perfect to wear next to the skin, and has a beautiful gloss and lustre from the silk. We've only got a few skeins of this ready so far, and these are in the webstore **here**, priced at £20 per skein. Julie will be dyeing more soon, so watch out for these.

This yarn would be ideal to knit the 4-ply version of our Eilidh Shetland shawl, originally made in a fine BFL/Alpaca blend which is no longer available - Julie is planning a new sample to try out the singles yarn.

We have several other 4-plys to try out, which we hope to add to the range during June – more news of those next month.

*Our new 50:50 Merino Silk (SOS) yarns; from top: Utterly Ultraviolet; Precious Metals; Emerald Peacock*

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### Yarn Club – “Spring into Bloom”

‘Spring into Bloom’ has proved very popular, and the second skein was dispatched last week.

Julie is already thinking about the next club, which will start in July - if you'd like to suggest a theme for this (especially any alternative to ‘summer’ - which we know won't appear in the United Kingdom until 20 August at 2.30pm!) then please email any ideas to [julie@watercoloursandlace.co.uk](mailto:julie@watercoloursandlace.co.uk).

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'A Twisted Yarn' is now well into its fourth year and we want to continue to recognise the many wonderful people that we have met over the years since Watercolours & Lace started exhibiting in 2014. Our latest 'spotlighter' is ... unknown.

Unfortunately, due to circls beyond our control, we cannot bring you a new story this month. But we are sure that there must be someone out there who would be delighted to tell the world about their hobby. Why not get in touch now ... [alan@watercoloursandlace.co.uk](mailto:alan@watercoloursandlace.co.uk) and tell us about you.

## Top of the Pops

This time in TOPS, we are looking at patterns for the last six months, ending in 31 March 2018.

We have had a very exciting twelve months, design-wise. With **Nicole** (July) and **Penelope** (December) having successful launches in 2017 and both featuring in our Top Ten, shown left.

Patterns						
2016	2017	2018	Name	Type	Order	Date
	5	1	Nicole	crochet shawl	16	Jul-17
10	1	2	Irene	crochet shawl	12	Dec-16
1	4	3	Abbey	shawl	3	Apr-14
5	6	4	Spring Equinox	shawl	4	Apr-14
	17	5	Penelope	Shrug	17	Dec-17
6	8	6	Giselle	cowl	10	Jul-16
4	2	6	Mountain Mist	shawl	6	Mar-15
7	10	8	Catriona	hat	7	Jan-16
10	12	9	Donna	cowl	9	Jul-16
2	3	9	Eilidh	shawl	11	Sep-16
14	9	11	Kelly	shawl	15	Mar-17
8	7	12	Highland Heather	shawl	2	Jan-14
12	13	12	Megan	shawl	5	Jun-14
9	11	14	Forest Flowers	shawl	1	Jun-13
13	14	14	Jessica	scarf	13	Dec-16
3	16	16	Bronwyn	garment	8	Feb-16
14	14	17	Lindsay	hat	14	Mar-17

If you factor in **Irene** – which was launched at the end of 2016 – you have all said a hearty “thank you” to our crochet designs. And Julie has promised a crochet cowl – and possibly another shawl before too long. Watch this space.

This table shows the relative popularity of our pattern designs in recent years – and also shows when they were launched. It is amazing to reflect that fewer than half of these designs were available just two years ago.

*The table (left) shows relative pattern sales from 2016-2018*

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## Show Offer

As usual, the newsletter is tailed with a list of the shows that we are planning to attend during the year. Now, we know that this list is always top heavy, in that the majority of shows are in the north of England. Or, to put it another way, there are very few yarn shows in the south. Which is why we are delighted to be featuring at the very first 'Southern Wool Show' in Newbury at the beginning of September.

Julie is also delighted to be offering a two-hour workshop titled "An Introduction to Knitted Lace Shawls". You can find more details and book your place via our website here. Numbers are strictly limited to ten, so to guarantee your place, book now.

The organisers are hoping for a big turn-out at the racecourse for the new one-day show and have offered us two free tickets to give away.



**Free tickets for..**  
**Southern Wool Show**  
**Sat 1st September 2018**  
**Newbury Racecourse**  
**www.southernwoolshow.co.uk**

## What you need to do ...

Please just complete the following sentence - in another thirty words or fewer - and send in via e-mail [alan@watercoloursandlace.co.uk](mailto:alan@watercoloursandlace.co.uk):

"I would enjoy seeing Watercolours & Lace at the Southern Wool Show in Newbury, because .....

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## Loyalty Card Scheme

We have just completed our eleventh group (November to April). Here's how the scheme works:

After you have asked for a Loyalty Card, the 'period' lasts for six months, and all the purchases you make will then earn points. At the end of your sixth month we will convert those points back into pounds as vouchers as follows:

50 points earns you	£2.50	100 points earns you	£6
150 points earns you	£11.00	200 points earns you	£16
250 points earns you	£22.50	300 points earns you	£30

But **YOU MUST SIGN UP!** You can do this at one of our shows or on-line at ...

[http://www.watercoloursandlace.co.uk/store/c77/Loyalty\\_Card\\_Scheme.html](http://www.watercoloursandlace.co.uk/store/c77/Loyalty_Card_Scheme.html)

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## Mystery Knit Along - OLWYN

Julie is happy to say that the fourth and final clue for OLWYN has now been posted and you can take a look at some of the posted projects on RAVELRY - here. We will have printed versions of the new pattern available by the time we head to Wymondham in mid-June. Sorry, no piccies yet - but we will feature the design in the June newsletter.

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## Did You Know - #44 - Masham

*I must confess that we were wondering what to do after the 'Glossary' had finished; we seemed to have completed all of the 'available' knitting and crochet yarns. Then, as we mentioned last month, Julie ordered several new blends of yarn and one of them happened to be a mix of Blue Faced Leicester and Masha. I confess that 'Masham' meant nothing to me. On first glance through our bible (The Fleece & Fiber Sourcebook- Robson, D & Ekarius, C; Storey Publishing 2011), 'Masham' meant nothing to them either. A little extra digging was required ...*



Mashams have been bred for over a century on the hills of Northern England. They are the progeny of a Teeswater ram out of either a Dalebred or a Swaledale ewe, both of which are well known for their hardiness and thriftiness. From these parents it gains:

- Longevity
- Hardiness
- Milking Ability
- High Prolificacy
- Strong Mothering Instincts

The Breed association was formed in 1986 by breeders dedicated to producing Mashams, from a recognised cross, of high quality for sale to buyers from local counties and much further afield. All of these lambs are backed up by a tagging system. This information enables the purchasers to trace the breeders, via the secretary, for whatever reason. The coloured tag, which is specific to the year of birth, also enables shepherds to recognise the age of the ewe when handling.

### *Description*

The Masham Ewe is medium sized and hornless. She is bred for producing quality lambs with an added bonus of a long stapled fleece, particularly as a hogg (one-year old). Masham gimmer (female) lambs and shearlings (two-year olds) are available at the Association Sales and in recent years have gone to buyers from a wide area. When crossed with a Down or Continental ram, an ideal commercial lamb is produced, with quality, lean carcasses.

The wool gives a high yield with good lustre, around 3-4.5kgs per sheep. It can be either ecru/white or a light grey-brown shade.



It was an outstanding fleece from a Masham hogg (one-year-old sheep) that put the flock in the limelight when it was awarded the Supreme Fleece Championship at a recent Great Yorkshire Show. The judge described the winning fleece as being "bright and open with a very high lustre".

### *East Atlantic Only*

It is unlikely that you will find any Mashams on the western side of the Atlantic – mainly because the ewe breeds (Swaledale or Dalebred) are not found there. However, Masham fleece does find its way to fibre shows in North America. The fleece is lustrous, without kemp and largely free from coloured fibres but the length and diameter can vary widely.

#### *Note*

**Kemp** is generally a chalky-white, brittle, weak fibre which may be mixed with normal fibres in a sheep's wool fleece. Kemp fibres are often detached from the skin. This hair is not desirable in a fleece, as it does not accept dye, minimising both the quality and the value of the wool.

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## On the road ...

The last few weeks have been a little bizarre – and the next few likely to be even stranger! We made a second excursion to Staffordshire, but it was not a heartening experience because there were far too few people. The organisers had doubled the numbers of vendors on display – and doubled the price of the ticket. The effect on our sales was catastrophic.

And we have been learning about the impact of deciding to travel to a show in Ireland for the first time. We began heading for Dublin for the Woollinn show last Tuesday, and aside from the matter of having to take payment in Euros instead of sterling, and the consequent ramifications of that on accepting credit card payments, we also were told – with just a few days' grace – that we would have to charge Value Added Tax at the rate of 23%, even though we are not a large enough business to qualify for VAT registration in the UK – and subsequently make a payment of the VAT to the Irish Revenue! Luckily, the payment was not a necessary pre-condition of being allowed to travel home!



Looking further ahead – beyond the summer which now hovers just beyond the horizon - we do have some good news to tell you about forthcoming shows – especially for our friends north of the border. Despite being unable to establish a regular place at Edinburgh – and the ‘iffishness’ of the proposed show in Dundee which has now been cancelled- we can confirm that we will be heading north to the Perth Festival of Yarn on 8 – 9 September, a week after the new Southern Wool Show in Newbury (looking forward to that) and the privilege of a fifth visit to Skipton for Yarnale (at the end of the month). And then, the icing on this cake, is a second visit to Scotland – this time all the way up to Inverness, for the Loch Ness Knit Fest at the end of October.

## On the Road ... in 2018

1	15-17 Feb	Craft 4 Crafters	Westpoint Arena, Exeter
2	11 Mar	Essex Lacemakers' Fair	Chelmer Valley HS, Chelmsford
3	17 Mar	Weald Suppliers Fair	Collyers College, Horsham
4	7-8 April	Spring Into Wool	The Grammar School, Leeds
5	28-29 April	Wonderwool Wales	RWS Showground, Builth Wells
6	12-13 May	Wool @ Junction 13	Lower Drayton Farm, Penkridge
7	25-26 May	Woollin	ASAA Centre, Dublin
8	16 Jun	Wymondham Lace Day	Wymondham College
9	14-15 Jul	Yarningham	Uffculme Centre, Birmingham
10	28-29 Jul	Fibre-East	Redbourne College, Ampthill
11	10-11 Aug	British Wool Show	Auction Mart, York
12	1 Sep	Southern Wool Show	Newbury Racecourse
13	8-9 Sep	Perth Festival of Yarn	Dewars Centre, Glover St, Perth
14	15 Sep	Suffolk Lace Day	Woodbridge Community Hall
15	29-30 Sep	Yarnale	Skipton Auction Mart
16	6 Oct	Fenland Fair	Burgess Hall, St Ives
17	20-21 Oct	Loch Ness Knit Fest	Inverness Leisure Centre
18	10-Nov	Festiwool	The Priory School, Hitchin
19	17-Nov	Southern Counties Lace Fair	Leisure Centre, Havant
20	01-Dec	Lace, Quilt & Needle Xmas Fair	Cranmore Park, Solihull

All shows confirmed

Yarn and Wool Show

Lace and Needlecraft Show

And into November, we can confirm our attendance at Festiwool as our last yarn shows of the year. We do, of course have two fantastic lace shows to close with – as we have done for the last two years.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to attend Yarnporium in London at the beginning of November.

The table left, now shows all the shows we are attending in the rest of 2018.

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