

“A Twisted Yarn”

“A Twisted Yarn” was launched in October 2014, and we are now comfortably into Volume 6. This is the sixty-first edition of the newsletter. We would like to thank those stalwarts who weathered our “sulky reaction” last time, when we moaned because no-one had responded to our request for feedback!

Your Projects

Mandy Griffiths sent us this picture of her beautiful “Galadriel's Mirror” shawl, designed by Susan Pandorf and knitted in our Cashmere Silk Fine Lace in Lavender Blue. It weighs 78g and is 200cm wide. Mandy described the yarn as “wondrous”.

We think it’s a stunning result and are sure Mandy will get lots of compliments when wearing it.

If you’ve completed a project using our yarns, do please email a picture or post it in the Ravelry forum, and you might be featured in our next newsletter!



2016	2017	2018	2019	Name	Type	Release Order	Release Date
			1	Trinitas	cr-shawl	21	Mar-19
	5	2	2	Nicole	cr-shawl	16	Jul-17
10	1	1	3	Irene	cr-shawl	12	Dec-16
		18	4	Rhiannon	cr-cowl	20	Oct-18
6	8	4	5	Giselle	cowl	10	Jul-16
1	4	3	6	Abbey	shawl	3	Apr-14
7	10	5	7	Catrina	hat	7	Jan-16
8	7	6	8	Highland Heather	shawl	2	Jan-14
2	3	7	9	Eilidh	shawl	11	Sep-16
10	13	8	10	Donna	cowl	9	Jul-16
5	6	10	11	Spring Equinox	shawl	4	Apr-14
4	2	8	12	Mountain Mist	shawl	6	Mar-15
	11	12	13	Olwen	shawl	19	Jun-18
			14	Sorcha	shrug	22	Nov-19
	15	12	15	Lindsay	hat	14	Mar-17
9	12	11	16	Forest Flowers	shawl	1	Jun-13
	18	12	17	Penelope	shrug	17	Dec-17
3	17	20	18	Bronwyn	garment	8	Feb-16
	9	12	19	Kelly	shawl	15	Mar-17
		16	20	Quentin	Vest	18	Apr-18
13	15	18	21	Jessica	scarf	13	Dec-16
12	14	17	22	Megan	shawl	5	Jun-14

Top of the Pops

This month we are looking at patterns – in particular, our pattern sales in 2019.

Julie has already produced over 20 different designs in various formats: shawls, shrugs, cowls, hats etc and although most of the designs are for knitting patterns, the sales table is dominated by no fewer than four crochet patterns!

But – as you will see from the next item – we have not forgotten our knitters.

New Mystery Knit-along

Julie is still finalising the design for her next MKAL, the Ulyana Shawl, which she hopes to launch next month - but for those of you who'd like to get prepared and choose your yarn, we can provide the following details.

Ulyana is a wide triangular shawl and is worked in bands of lace patterning in two colours, which can either be subtle toning shades or more obvious contrasts. It could also be worked in a single colour if preferred. Beads can be added to the edging but this is optional - bead numbers will be confirmed when the pattern is released.

There will be both laceweight and 4-ply versions to choose from. The laceweight is worked with one 800m/100g skein in each colour and Julie is using our Alpaca Silk Lace for this version. She's working the 4-ply sample in two skeins of our British Suri Alpaca Silk blend, each of which has 450m/100g. Our British Alpaca Silk and British Alpaca Wool blends will also work perfectly for this design, and Julie will be adding more skeins of all these yarns in suitable colourways to the website shortly.

The design will be launched on Ravelry as soon as it is ready, so keep an eye out for more news on our forum page here ...

New Yarns

Continuing our trawl through the darker corners of the stockroom, we've found some fine lace in a blend of 90% Wool and 10% Cashmere. This is a very fine and soft yarn giving 1,400m/100g and we're offering this in 50g skeins - ideal to knit the small size of our Abbey shawl design - at £11 per skein. We only have a few kilos of this so it's bound to go quickly. The first skeins are in the webstore here.



Do You Know - #61 - Lincoln Longwool

The Lincoln, sometimes called the Lincoln Longwool, is a breed of sheep from England. The Lincoln is the largest British sheep, developed specifically to produce the heaviest, longest and most lustrous fleece of any breed in the world. Great numbers were exported to many countries to improve the size and wool quality of their native breeds. The versatile fleece is in great demand for spinning, weaving and many other crafts. It is now one of Britain's rarer breeds, categorized as "at risk" by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust since there are fewer than 1500 registered breeding females in the United Kingdom.



Mature rams weigh from 250 to 350 lb (110 to 160 kg), and mature ewes will range in weight from 200 to 250 lb (91 to 113 kg). Fleece of the Lincoln is carried in heavy locks that are often twisted into a spiral near the end. The staple length in Lincolns is among the

longest of all the breeds, ranging from 8 to 18 in (20 to 46 cm) with a yield of 65 to 80%. Lincolns produce the heaviest and coarsest fleeces of the long-woolied sheep with ewe fleeces weighing from 12 to 20 lb (5.4 to 9.1 kg). The fleece has a numeric count of 36's - 46's and ranges from 41.0 to 33.5 microns in diameter. Although coarse and somewhat hair-like, the fleece does have considerable lustre.

The Lincoln Longwool Breed Association, established in 1892, was founded in order to maintain the breed standard and protect and promote this important British sheep. The Lincoln Longwool is our largest native sheep, originating mainly in the eastern counties, with its roots centred in the county of Lincolnshire. The 'Lincoln' is a dual purpose breed (for meat and wool). However, the breed was especially developed for its

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large, heavy fleece of lustrous wool. Nowadays, there are very few remaining flocks of Lincoln Longwools and they are consequently a 'vulnerable' rare breed on the Rare Breed Survival Trust (RBST) watch-list.



Long-wool sheep appear to have ancestry from white-fleeced sheep imported to England from the European continent during the Roman occupation. Evidence of this body-type of sheep with similar fleece exists as figurines from the continent dating to the second century. The next evidence of long-wool sheep comes from Lincolnshire, appearing as a detailed illustration in the 'Luttrell Psalter' written between 1320 and 1340. In approximately 1460, a brass memorial with a curly-fleeced sheep was placed on the Northleach Church, Gloucestershire.

The "old" Lincoln was first identified and depicted in the 1700's. Robert Bakewell (1725-95), a famous livestock breeder, used the "old" Lincoln with other native stock while creating his "new" Leicester sheep by using inbreeding. Later, Lincolnshire sheepmen used "new" Leicester rams on "old" coarse-wool Lincoln ewes to begin development of the "improved" Lincoln using selective crossbreeding.



Many of the 'longwool' breeds likely have a similar developmental history involving Lincoln and Leicester foundations. The distinctly hardy "improved" Lincoln evolved during the 1800's toward the dual-purpose breed we have today. The "improved" Lincoln combined more quality meat with a higher quality of wool than the "old" Lincoln. Although the wool was of a finer diameter, it took dye very well and retained its strength for the combing and worsted spinning processes used at that time. It was this "improved" Lincoln that led to the accumulation of great wealth in Lincolnshire and surrounding counties for many decades.

Uses

Historically, the Lincoln Longwool is one of our most important native breeds of sheep. A large dual-purpose breed developed to carry a heavy fleece of strong, lustrous, lanolin-rich wool combined with a substantial mutton carcass providing both meat and tallow. Lincolnshire was already famous for its sheep in the Middle Ages when the wool trade was crucial to Britain's economy and Lincoln was one of the seven 'staple' (official exporting) towns of England.

The Lincoln Longwool can be used as a crossing sire to produce half bred ewes. Like the Leicester Longwool, the Lincoln can be used on commercial ewes to sire heavyweight lambs and hoggets.



In the latter 1800's, the value of using the Lincoln in crossbreeding programs was recognized. Lincoln breeding sheep were exported worldwide for upgrading local breeding stock. Breeds eventually developed by using Lincoln parents included Corriedale, Polwarth, Columbia, Bond, Armenian Semi-Course Wool, and Panama. From these breeds, second-generation breeds were subsequently developed in the US, such as Montadale and Targhee.

The Lincoln Longwool is an impressive, multi-purpose, heavily built, rugged, adaptable sheep with a calm and gentle disposition. The Lincoln yields a very long, lustrous, coarse and strong fleece. The fleece is either white or coloured. The coloured fleece tends to have the darkest wool on the shoulders and legs and silver grey to black on the body.

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Spring into Wool

We mentioned last time that we have two Complementary Tickets to one of our favourite shows of the year: "Spring into Wool" in Leeds, our first yarn show of 2020.

If you would like one of these tickets, please let us know why you will be coming to Leeds on 18-19 April. The Closing Date for entries is next Monday, 2 March.

On the Road ... 2020

We have just returned from our first show of the year – the Ware Lace Day. This was a new one for us and we enjoyed visiting Hertford for the first time.

We have another two lace shows next, before we start our yarn shows in April. The full programme is shown on the panel below, which stretches into next December. However, we are yet to have two yarn shows confirmed, so keep your fingers crossed for Yarndale and Bakewell.

We are delighted to report that we have been successful in applying to **WoolFest** and will be returning to Cocker mouth in June for the first time for several years.

We are really looking forward to our two 'Great Escapes' weekends – one for knitting in May and the other (covering Crochet) in November. Places are still available so sign up now!

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On the Road ... 2020

All shows confirmed, except those marked (TBC)

[YarnLace](#)

1	22 Feb	Ware Lace Day	Sele Farm Community Centre, Hertford
2	14 Mar	Fenland Lace Day	Burgess Hall, St Ives
3	15 Mar	Essex Suppliers' Fair	Chelmer Valley HS, Chelmsford
4	18-19 April	Spring Into Wool	The Grammar School, Leeds
5	25-26 April	Wonderwool Wales	RW Showground, Builth Wells
6	2-3 May	Knit & Stitch	Rheged Centre, Cumbria
7	9 - 10 May	Cornish Fibre Festival	R Cornwall Showground, Wadebridge
9	6-7 June	Fibre Rocks	Dela Warr Pavilion, Bexhill
10	20-21 Jun	Woolly Weekend	Dilham Village Hall
11	26-27 Jun	Woolfest	Mitchell's Auctions, Cockermouth
12	25-26 July	Fibre East	Redbourne College, Ampthill
13	15 Aug (TBC)	Appleyard Fayre	Appleyard Farm, Banham
13	5-6 Sep	Southern Wool Show	Newbury Racecourse
14	26-27 Sep (TBC)	Yarndale	Skipton Auction Mart
15	3 Oct	Fenland Fair	Burgess Hall, St Ives
16	10-11 Oct (TBC)	Bakewell Wool Gathering	Agric Centre, Bakewell
17	23-24 Oct	Loch Ness Knit Fest	Inverness College UHI Campus
19	14 Nov	Suffolk Lace Day	Kesgrave Community Centre
20	21 Nov	Aragon Lacemakers' Day	Addison Centre, Kempston
21	5 Dec	Lace, N'craft and Quilting Christmas Fair	Cranmore Park, Solihull

Great Escape Weekends

8	15-17 May	Knitting Weekend	Gorse Hill Hotel, Hook Heath Rd, Woking
19	6-8 Nov	Crochet Weekend	Moor Hall, Cookham, Maidenhead

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