

MAFA Grants Program  
Southern Tier Fiber Arts Guild Spinning Workshop  
Final Report

On May 16th and 17th, 2015, the long planned for workshop with Patsy Sue Zawistoski took place at the Dyke Street Fire Hall in Wellsville, New York. We reached out to various guilds in western New York with invitations to submit registrations for the workshop. We received 10 registrations and accepted the one application for a scholarship. Our guild members were offered assistance in developing spinning skills to ensure registrants could participate at a useful level in the workshop. Loaner wheels were available and made use of in the workshop.

Patsy presented a well-designed workshop over the two scheduled days. She had samples of her beautiful hand spinning to illustrate various techniques and their results. Over the course of the two days she provided hand outs and “decoder” tools along with ample fiber for attendees to use in various projects that would enrich our knowledge and encourage us to explore the possibilities in creating yarn. A fine system of workshop cards to track or work was employed.

We identified the make and model of our wheels and determined their drive speeds. It was very interesting to observe the various drive systems and learned about their strengths and limitations of everyone’s wheels. As we worked on our leaders, joining and the effects of adjustments to take-up via treadling, brake adjustments and drafting length our arsenal of tools began to grow. We studied S and Z twist and how to control the twist as well as the many aspects of plying. The methods of preparing fiber by carding and combing were explored. Plenty of tools and fiber were available to give everyone a true-hands on experience.

More items were added to our workshop study cards. All of these discussions prepared us for the challenge of decoding yarn samples. Patsy helped us construct her Secret Decoder device that enabled us to deconstruct the samples to reveal the direction and number of twists, plies and fiber used. We then used the provided fiber to re-create the sample yarns. Now even more items filled our workshop sample cards.

During the middle of each day we broke for lunch that each person brought and we also enjoyed some shared goodies. The workshop met our goals in enhancing each registrant’s spinning knowledge and skill. We all were able to take more a though record of our work in an organized fashion that we will refer to in our future projects. In our next guild meetings we will share our adventures with other members. Our scholarship winner has presented her write up and it is attached herewith along with the final budget report. It was a long road to this event. Thanks to MAFA’s generosity, we were able to experience a workshop offered by a recognized spinner in this very rural area.

Southern Tier Fiberarts Guild (NY)  
2015

