AUSTRALIAN RUGMAKERS GUILD

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2012

Networking the Rugmakers &
Fibre Artists of Oceania
www.rughookingaustralia.com.au

Dear Guild Member:

The experiment with eNews was not successful, too many members were having trouble receiving it, therefore we are reverting back to an attachment sent via email.

The previous edition of eNews had introductions to three of the Expo Workshop Instructors – these will also be included in this edition.

The Guild's General Meeting will be held during the Expo, Saturday 20th October 2012 at 5:00pm
Election of Officers; a BALLOT FORM and Agenda will be emailed to all members.

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Susan Feller

"Working with fibers, connects me with generations of artisans' spirits. Due to the slow, repetitive process, there is time to dwell on the natural subjects in my art and the materials selected. Now living in West Virginia , I have come full circle - back to the farm, and rural lifestyle of my youth."

See Susan's workshop info on page 2

Gene Shepherd

Workshop description:
Gene's class at the workshop will focus on the techniques you need to use in order to get an even loop, crisp corners, sharp points and consistent circles. **More on page 4**

Strathalbyn Stationmaster's Gallery Rughooking Exhibition
- opens the first week of October for the month.
Opening night 12th October – speeches/wine and nibbles etc.
This is a community gallery run by volunteers, situated in the centre of town, adjacent to the Information Centre

South Australia
STRATHALBYN RUGHOOKING EXPO

OCTOBER 20th & 21st 2012
STRATHALBYN TOWN HALL, High Street

Sessions: 9.00am to 12.00 and 1.00pm to 4.00pm
Cost $60 per half day class – starter materials will be supplied
Accommodation is not provided
Internationally known rug hooking experts and authors will give workshops in their area of expertise.

Anyone is welcome to attend.

This is a unique opportunity to benefit from overseas tutors in a wide range of rug hooking/fibre art techniques.
Bookings email: rugcraftersaustralia@yahoo.com.au
Strathalbyn is located on the Fleurieu Peninsular about 45 minutes from the city of Adelaide and the Adelaide International Airport.
ACCOMMODATION: Hotels, a motel and B & B's are available in the immediate vicinity, with more B & B's not far from town. check out this link : http://www.alexandrina.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=502
or email: rugcraftersaustralia@yahoo.com.au

The number of entries is not limited. As the Exhibition is sponsored by L J Hookers (Strathalbyn) there will be no entry charge. However individuals will have to send and retrieve their rugs at their own expense and cover any insurance required during transport. All care will be taken whilst on exhibition.

A brief statement should be **attached to the rugs** – showing:
name/address/phone - title of the piece/ size/technique & any other meaningful information.....
Rugs on display may be photographed for inclusion in publicity – if exhibitors DO NOT want that to happen please indicate (NFP) on this statement. Also if you wish to sell your rug, please indicate the sale price on the statement.
A commission of 25% will be added by the gallery. **Send rugs to 20 Langhorne Creek Rd., Strathalbyn, SA 5255**

Susan Feller's Workshop:

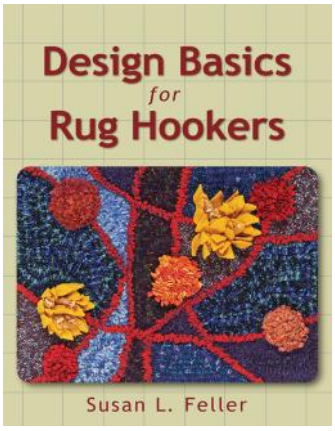
Learn to simplify a design.
Use templates of traditional motifs and create a rug pattern which tells a story.

The easiest composition can still be filled with elements and principles of design:
balance, colour, shapes, movement and value.

Susan Feller's art and history backgrounds will help her assist each student.
Students should think of a purpose such as birth, marriage or house blessing for a rug pattern or come to the workshop with an open mind.
They will go away with a paper design that will be fun to work up and be able to tell a few stories about the symbols in their chosen motifs.
Bring drawing tools, pencil, ruler, black marking pen.
Paper and design materials will be available to use.

Susan Past-President of TIGHR (2006-2009)

Author of **Design Basics for Rug Hookers**, 2011 by Stackpole Books,



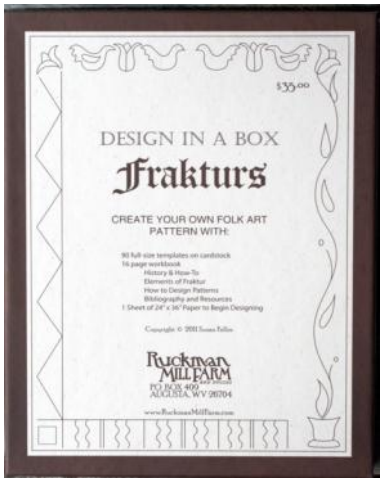
Susan Feller received a BA in Art and History from the University of Massachusetts/Boston. She is self taught in rughooking, adding this technique to the other fiber crafts learned since childhood.

An award winning artist in national shows, and participant in several travelling exhibits of hooked rugs, Feller lives in Augusta, West Virginia with Jim Lilly in the log home they built.
www.RuckmanMillFarm.com or
www.ArtWools.com

Design in a Box-Frakturs

was developed by Susan for individuals to create their own rug patterns, it covers the history of decorative arts in the eastern United States.

All images provided by Artist for publication



Frakturs = Common decorative motifs..... historical source medieval Europe, simplified in isolated Colonial America - Birds, Animals, Flowers, People, Angels, Geometrics used to tell a visual story.

Heather Ritchie's
Workshop Description:
Hooking a rug from a Photo

When designing a realistic rug with a recognisable image, Heather will often use photographs to reproduce the main elements. This is a very useful technique for anyone who is fearful of drawing freehand as it gives you the confidence to create anything and opens up a new world of design for rug makers. Heather has hooked most of her family members and pets.

In this workshop Heather will guide you through the process of transferring your photo to the backing and selecting fabrics and yarn for skin tones. She will bring some fabrics and advise participants prior to the workshop what supplies they will need to bring with them.

Students are welcome to get in touch with Heather beforehand to discuss what they propose doing, and Heather will make whatever helpful suggestions she can.

The photos of Heather and her rugs were taken by Jo Franco on her visit to the Reeth Rug Retreat in 2009.
The photo (below) of "The Parliament" was taken by Lesley Mary Close

Heather has been making rugs since she moved to Reeth, North Yorkshire, in the early 1970s. She started out by making proddy rugs for the cold floors of her home but soon moved onto using fine strips in pictorial hooky rugs. Her technique was already highly developed when she attended her first rug school in the USA: that experience convinced her to start a rug school in England and the Reeth Rug Retreat (which she runs with Cilla Cameron) was born in 2000.

In 2011 the book *Hooked Rug Storytelling: The Art of Heather Ritchie* was published by Schiffer. This book contains several rugs which Heather made using photographs as source material. Various aspects of Heather's technique, including transferring your photo to the backing, are explained in detail.

Through her social enterprise Rug Aid (Community Interest Company) www.rug-aid.org/, Heather supports a workshop in The Gambia where blind people of any age (and sighted members of their families) can learn rug hooking. Rug Aid has just taken a two year lease on a building in the grounds of the school run by the Gambian Organisation for the Visually Impaired. With the help of rug hookers in the UK, Australia, Canada and the USA - in fact around the globe - Rug Aid has made a difference to the lives of many blind people.

Gene Shepherd is Director of Cambria Pines Rug Camp, always held the first full week of June at Cambria Pines Lodge, Cambria, California as well as Director of the on-line *Internet Rug Camp.*
Gene regularly teaches private and group classes in Anaheim, CA and has also taught at the ATHA Biennial.

Known for his particular passion of introducing rug hooking to multi-ethnic children and adults, he has travelled as far as Russia, England, Canada and Australia to teach this art form. His hooked rugs have been featured several times in *Rug Hooking Magazine* and the *ATHA Magazine.*
Four of his works have been chosen to appear in A Celebration of Hand Hooked Rugs: *Fog,* in 2002, *Russian Birch,* in 2004 and *Miss Weigle,* in 2005 and *Big Momma,* in 2009.
Russian Birch was also chosen as a Reader's Choice finalist.

In 2003 he served as one of 4 judges for Celebrations XIII. Although most of Gene's work is based on his original designs, he has re-created two rugs for the US Park Service. Working with black and white archival photos he designed and hooked two rugs that had been lost from FDR's Top Cottage at Hyde Park, New York. These rugs went on display at Hyde Park in 2004.

Gene is a frequent contributor to *Rug Hooking Magazine.*
His published works include The Rug Hooker's Bible, Prodded Hooking for a Three Dimensional Effect and over 50 professionally produced instructional DVD's on various topics associated with the making of traditional hand hooked rugs. He is currently at work on his third book, Prepared To Dye, which will be released in the spring of 2013.

Gene loves combining multiple techniques and his vibrant colours to create hooked pieces that reflect his style and interest.

All images shown provided By Artist for publication

For a gallery of Gene's work, teaching schedule, original patterns, links to companion sites or information about Cambria Pines Rug Camp, log on to his website www.geneshepherd.com

DIANE WEST

dianemwest@tiscali.co.uk

(Left) Baildon Community Link Wall hanging

Diane has been rug making since the late 1980's, she was the chairman of the West Riding Ruggers for 10 years and taught Rug Making NCFE at Shipley College. She has designed community rugs for museums, community centres and at galleries teaching a wide range of workshops and has featured on radio, TV and in local newspapers.
She is interested in all aspects of rug making, and is particularly interested in recycling unusual materials and three-dimensional creations. [*Diane has provided all images shown here for publication*.]

(Above far left) Frosty the Snowman made from knitted Nylon tights
(Above second left) Proddy self-designed name rug made from jumper cuffs and welts
(Above middle) Diane working on a vertical loom rug at the Reeth Rug Retreat
(Above right) Picture/Mirror frame examples

At the Expo… Diane will be teaching four half day workshops in which participants will design and make a small picture or mirror frame using hooking and/or proddy techniques with embellishments.
Participants should bring a range of scrap materials (ribbons, lace, plastic, chiffon, soft leather) and embellishments (such as buttons, beads, sequins etc).

A mixture of Diane's work can be seen at The Bradford Telegraph and Argus Website http://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/leisure/leisure_living/leisure_living_arts/5003182.Rags_to_riches/
www.wakefield.gov.uk (Liquorice rag rug)
http://www.flickr.com/photos/loralys/ (West Riding Ruggers 21st Birthday Exhibition)
http://www.leedstapestry.org.uk/panels.html (Environment City Panel)

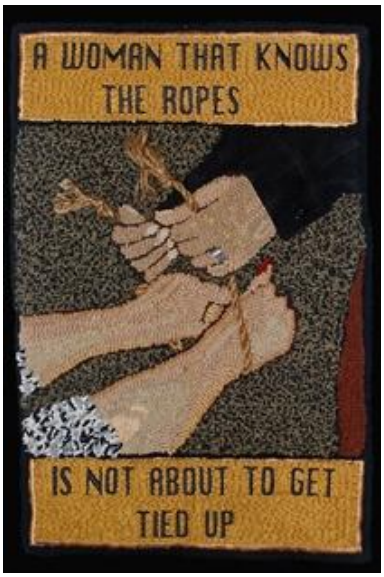
Linda Rae Coughlin (USA).

Contemporary fiber artist, author, curator, lecturer, juror, workshop leader, photographer, and rug restorer. Linda Rae, with 20 year of experience in rug hooking/fiber art, is a global traveler devoted to promoting fiber art, creativity, and the *"art"* of rug hooking.

Curator of *Art Rugs: The "Art" of Playing Cards* an international traveling rug hooking exhibit from 2004-2009. She was the recipient of numerous grants and awards for her rug hooking art, including the *Founder's Cup,* awarded to her by TIGHR in 2009, a Mid Atlantic Council on the Arts Fellowship, and a Puffin Foundation grant for her series of fiber art/rugs on "*Women's Issues*". She holds a BFA in textile art and is the author of two books, *Contemporary Hooked Rugs: Themes and Memories and Modern Hooked Rugs: Inspirational Series*. She exhibits her fiber art in juried and invitational exhibits both nationally and internationally and has lectured and taught workshops on creativity in the USA, Fiji, Canada, Japan, and Wales. Her pieces have been published in books, catalogs and magazines. Her art is held in private and public collections and can be viewed on http://www.theartrugs.com and http://www.surfacedesign.org/users/linda-rae-coughlin

Her fervor is to unleash the potential for creativity and to express the authentic self.

Class Description: *The Creative Voice: Developing ideas for original rugs and 3-dimensional items.*
In this 1/2 day workshop, students will learn to take their own ideas and turn them into future rug designs and/or 3-dimensional items.
Working separately and in small groups we will explore ways to turn meaningful thoughts into original designs. Through creative exercises, exploring, and play, students will learn how to tap into their own artistic "mind" space.
No experience is necessary, just a willingness to create original work.



Students are asked to bring some or all of the following items to class:

Digital Camera (if they have one).
A small journal or writing pad.
Images and words of interest from magazines, greeting cards, newspaper, etc.
Optional:
Future rug designs you would like to explore and/or completed rugs you would like to share and discuss, collage materials, i.e. fabric, buttons, needle and thread, etc.

Linda Rae Coughlin's hooked and machine embroidered piece *No, Watch Your Back* was juried into the exhibit *Honoring Women's Rights: Visual Voices Together* by Dr. Joyce Aiken, Dr. Ruth Weisberg and Patricia Rodriguez
The exhibition will be held at National Steinbeck Center Museum, 1 Main Street, Salinas, CA from September 7, through November 25, 2012 A full color catalog was created for this exhibit.
http://www.honoringwomensrights.org

Coughlin's machine embroidered and punched piece *Women Behaving Badly* was selected for the exhibit 9x9x3: Salon des Refuses Sept 14 - November 18, 2012
Guild Gallery II of the Hudson Gallery, 119 Ninth Ave., NYC New York
http://www.hudsonguild.org

Linda Rae Coughlin, *PO Box 4616,*Warren, New Jersey 07059, Tel 908-647-8100
lindacoughlin@optonline.net www.theartrugs.com [*Images provided by Artist for publication*]

Kris McDermet

began braiding and hooking in the late 1970's, and has taught courses in both braiding and hooking in Vermont and through out the country for the last 30 years.

Her greatest interest is in combining the two art/craft forms to make interesting shapes for the wall or floor.

The colors, designs, and textures of hand dyed and 'as is' wool and silk compliment both mediums. Kris developed a joining technique to create endless design and textural possibilities, so that the delicacy of the hooking is set off by the boldness of the braiding. Her work may simply tell a story, or show diverse themes in nature, native cultures, or the arts.

Kris often incorporates open spaces and fancy embellishments in her pieces to create added interest.

After the Hooking Comes Braiding

Come and spend the day learning the beautiful art/craft of rug braiding to frame a hooked piece or be inserted into the middle of hooking. There are many steps in this process but with the skills you learn in this class, you will be able to surround any sized round or oval rug and insert 9 Loop Butted circles into your hooking.

If time permits, you will also learn to make square corners and a picot edge.

Come to class with a hooked 5 inch circle, a hooked 6 inch square and matching or complimentary wool or other fabric.

Chair pad—picot edge

See the photos examples here:

All images shown, provided by Artist for publication

Michele Wise

Michele is an accredited McGown rug hooking teacher and the current Chair of the McGown Western Teachers Workshop held annually the last week of June, in Eugene, Oregon.

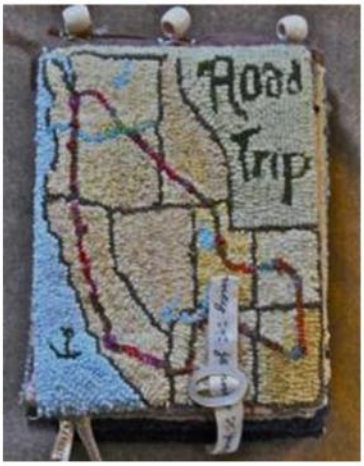
Michele lives in Washington state where she teaches rug hooking and is a Director of the Puget Sound Rug School.
http://pugetsoundrugschool.com/PUGET_SOUND_RUG_SCHOOL/Welcome.html

Michele has written articles for Rug Hooking Magazine, TIGHR's Hooking Matters, Wool Street Journal and many articles for the Association of Traditional Hooking Artists newsletter and her rugs have been published books in several books.

She is a creative rug hooker and is known for her artistic approach to this traditional craft.

At the Strathalbyn Rug Expo she will be teaching a class in constructing journals for fibre artists.

Hooking a journal - a one day class



Create a visual journal using hooking and embellishments.

The one-day workshop will include discussions on composition, colour, creative stitches, adding writing and various methods of binding.

Students will leave with one finished page of a hooked book with instructions on completing a visual hooked book.

This eight page (9" x 7") fabric book, with embellishments, is a journal of a road trip from Washington State to California.

The materials used were wool, ribbon, led lights, flannel & beads.

Michele's hooked mat adapted from a poster and is titled "Ram Tough"

This rug is 3ft x 5ft and is traditionally hooked on a linen backing using new and recycled wool strips. This rug will be featured in Rug Hooking Magazine's "Celebrations" and will be exhibited at

Rug Hooking Week at Sauder Village

August 13/18 2012

www.saudervillage.org/

All images provided by Artist for publication

Rugmakers Networking Online - NEW SOUTH WALES :

Sharon Felton, from the City of Milwaukie in the State of Wisconsin, was coming to Australia to visit her daughter; checking the internet looking for rug hookers, she found Miriam Miller who kindly invited her to come to visit on rug day in her Studio. [Sharon has given permission for her email and photo to be included in this article.]

Sharon said …… she first started rug hooking when she was pregnant with her 1st baby, 35 years ago. She had walked into a rug hooking class and was enthusiastically greeted by a small handful of little grandmas who were thrilled to bits to have her, one very pregnant young woman, learn from them.
That first project was to be a chair pad of strawberries on a vine with some blossoms. They very kindly dyed the recycled wool to give a beautiful variegated strawberry

But sadly it was not finished - it got rolled up and stored in a box with unfinished needlework projects. Then one day 25 years later, she rediscovered her little project and sought out some help which was not an easy thing to find. However her project was finished and was turned it into a footstool. She painted the legs to match and gave it a pretty trim, then painted a rocker that her Mom had given her when she was pregnant with that 1st baby so now she has a treasure to keep always.
Sharon was a decorative artist for walls, and furniture in residential and commercial and has a fondness for painted furniture combined with hooked rugs. In a painting class she met a woman who was a rug hooker who told her about a rug hooking group called McGown. Sharon went along and relearned the art of "painting" with wool. She then met Joyce Kruger, an awesome lady says Sharon, who held rug hooking classes in her home not too far away from where Sharon lived. At that point she was in heaven! and still is.
Sharon decided to create her own designs and hook them. She says, "Joyce has been so wonderful in teaching me just how to do that - my current rug hooking project will be to cover a bench, the frame is from my great grandmother - it will look lovely sitting next to my vanity table in my bedroom".
She was excited to meet up with rug hookers in Australia and found the hospitality of Miriam's group was wonderful and inspiring and she left with a head full of ideas for many projects.

Helen Orr (from NSW) attended the Milton Rug Retreat in March/April 2012 and wrote to say what a wonderful time she had. She also thought the following information was interesting and wanted to pass it on to other rug makers:-

for visitors to Sydney, a fun place to visit is Reverse Garbage, at -
8/142 Addison Road, Marrickville
http://www.reversegarbage.org.au/aboutus.html

It is a not-for-profit cooperative which collects unwanted materials from local businesses and industries to reduce waste. Helen found a wealth of fabrics there for rug making - swatches of suitings from tailors, rolls of fabric from canvas to silks from manufacturers, printed street banners, etc.
Her advice is to take along a large carry bag and stuff it full of fabrics for $5.
Editors Note: Apparently there is also a branch of "Reverse Garbage" in Brisbane, QLD, and a similar company in Perth - addresses will follow in the next newsletter.

Joanne Wild from Tasmania advises that her group, Happy Hookers who have been meeting at Elizabeth Town Bakery from 11:00a.m. thru lunch; on the last Sunday of the month, also meet at the British Hotel at the Top End of Deloraine on Thursday mornings ($2 includes a cuppa) 10am-midday. Visitors are welcome, especially from Interstate.
Joanne is keen to travel Interstate to facilitate Latch Hook Rug Workshops with her Starter Hook Rug Kits ($40 pp).
http://lasting-impressions-letterpress.blogspot.com/

www.aussierugmakers.ning.com is the private networking site for members of the Australian Rugmakers Guild.
www.rughookingaustralia.com.au is the Guild's public website, the newsletter is published on both websites.

NETWORKING - FROM SWITZERLAND TO NSW - by Ruth Hassall

Ruth is an Australian now living in Switzerland. Miriam Miller emailed news of her visit and passed on Ruth's email address (with Ruth's permission). After a couple of emails back and forth, Ruth has now become a member of the Australian Rugmakers Guild and has agreed to share her story of discovering rug hooking and her visit to Miriam's. Ruth says……

Networking is a funny thing. Last year, around August I decided to return to Australia for 3 months from Switzerland; my marriage having dissolved and a feeling of needing to return to my roots over-came me. I have an Aunt in America and she has been rugging for years, infecting us with the rugging fever through her effervescent enthusiasm and creative results. Time worked its magic - and I began to think about how best to make my return to Switzerland more successful. I decided that "bringing" something with me, some skill, or point of interest would be a far easier way to help me "connect". I had no idea where to start so I called my Aunt in the States. She gave me the contact numbers of a few people who rugged here in Australia.

In Switzerland, with 4 languages and many dialects to these languages, communication and connections can become a tricky process. So I was amazed after having left a message at 9.00am on Sue Lange's answering machine in South Australia, that one hour later I had a call back, giving me details of two other ladies in the vicinity and Miriam Miller's number in NSW. By lunch time I had spoken to three enthusiastic and friendly ruggers all over Australia and had organised myself to go to Miriam's for a workshop weekend to learn the basics, which would enable me to bring back skills to Switzerland!

Networking is not always easy. It requires the courage to reach out. At certain times in life, I find it hard. Going through such a change in my life where all my dreams had dissolved and I was faced with rebuilding my life, I felt moments of vulnerability that made networking quite daunting. I arrived at Miriam's and had just such a moment and shared with her my concerns. We overcame the moment with a peaceful glass of wine on her verandah that looks out over the dairy plains of coastal Australia and I remembered I was "home" and the fear abated long enough for me to forge on.
In all honesty, I had little success at my first rugging attempts, and Miriam's patience was exceptional as I sprinkled yet more dye over bits of old blanket and hung out yet another piece of dyed art work, creating jeweled canvases that shone with dappled sunlight. I am a visual artist, and my medium is painting, so I got a bit side tracked with the colours and forms of dying! However, on my return to Switzerland, I contacted a girlfriend and told her I was on a mission: I was bringing Rugging to the Swiss! She was enthused, and on the 10 February 2012, we had our first rugging day in the Schwyz.
Before I had found Miriam I had contacted Deanne Fitzpatrick in Nova Scotia, Canada who I think thought I was a bit of a loon, as I had said I was willing to come all the way to Canada to learn if she would give me a lesson! However, I was able to send her a photo of my first and second attempt made in the last two months since my return and she enthusiastically wrote back "you are doing great", which I found very motivating!

Networking is extraordinary. One phone call can bring new worlds of experience and connections through your doors.
I am determined to find a way to connect not just with the Swiss, but with an international community of creative people. By the end of this year, I will have a house with a workshop space, open for people to come for rugging days, I hope not only the Swiss begin to find their way to this craft form, but that those of you who are travelling through, will also find a cup of tea, or a soothing glass of wine and the shared excitement of creating worlds and connections in rugging.

: www.ruthhassall.com : Ruth Hassall on facebook

QUEENSLAND: Creating a Prodding Tool by Judi Tompkins

I was interested to see how easy and useful some of the old -time traditional prodders would work, so when I was given a cow's horn I thought I'd see if I could make something useful (in keeping with the "thrift" philosophy of the time). At the time, I didn't realise how useful this "old fashioned" DIY tool would actually become!

My realization that I might need a different kind of prodding tool occurred when I was making replicas of traditional prodded rugs where I was using the stiffer backing fabrics like hessian/burlap/feed sack.

Suddenly I found that prodding through two layers of stiff backing along the edges required so much effort to create a sensible sized hole for the wide cuts that I was tempted to give it up. I had carpel tunnel surgery on both hands a few years ago and I know from experience that I tend to use such a "death grip" on my tools that my hand tends to cramp and my shoulder really feels the effort after a short time. This joint strain and cramping became a real issue when I tried to use a typical small handled prodder for this project and was working with wide cuts (for me, anything over a #6 is wide).

Before I tossed the whole project out, I decided that if I was going to continue to prod with these wide cuts, I would have to move away from the elegant wood handled, burnished metal prodder and use my ergonomic cow horn as a "heftier" prodding tool.

No. 8 size wool strip and hole

To my delight, I found that not only was my new prodder able to make a large hole with very little effort in stiff backing fabric but it made prodding with lighter weight backings a real breeze!
My cow horn is has a padded "handle" (wool wrapped with deer hide left over from my taxidermy days) large enough to make a palm-sized grip with a truly ergonomic shape. I used a knife to carve and shape the horn into the shape I wanted; sanded it lightly and burnished it with light coat of oil.

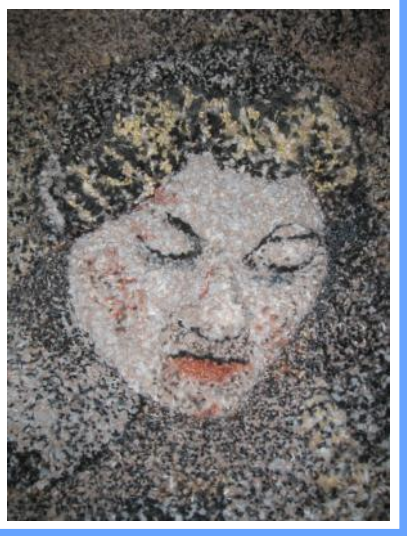
Now I'm looking for some deer antlers!

Seen recently in the Sunshine Coast Council Newsletter : -

101 Things to do at your library

Rug Hooking is the art of rug making by hand.

There are many different techniques of rug hooking.
If you would like to learn how, register your interest and we will arrange sessions .
Judi Tompkins hooked piece (pictured right) has created an interest in reviving this lost craft form from Australia's pioneering days.



WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Perth Craft Fair - by Jo Franco

Expertise Events Craft and Quilt Fair held each May in the City of Perth is a big attraction. The Fair runs for five days and crafters and quilters travel great distances from country areas to attend workshops, view Exhibitions and avail themselves of all the wonderful supplies which come in from "the Eastern States" for this show.

This year, Rug Hooking made it's debut at the Fair - with the Australian Guild's information booth. Because so little is known about rug hooking here in Australia, this was a wonderful opportunity to show the various techniques our guild members use.
Prior to the Craft Fair, on the first weekend in May , one of the large proddy rugs created by a local community group was exhibited at an Arts Festival in Mandurah, south of the city of Perth. On that occasion the oversized frame on which this large rug had been created was set up so the public could "have-a-go". While the huge amount of interest shown that weekend gave some indication of what to expect at the Craft Fair, it was nothing compared to the five days that the Craft Fair was open.
During the Fair, a second large community rug was exhibited along with images showing the project's progress from beginning to end.

The Guild's booth was set up to exhibit both traditional rug hooking and proddy(proggy). Members of the Guild demonstrated the two different techniques, and also gave impromptu lessons to the many interested people. A long table was piled high with examples of small hooked projects, Guild newsletters, as well as some of the many rug hooking books from my personal rug hooking library. As rug hooking books are not readily available in Australia I always add to my collection whenever I travel and meet up with other rug hooking artists.
Miriam Miller the Guild's President, is the author of the only rug hooking book published in Australia.
Miriam's book is now in the West Australian library system and it was great to see it receive so much publicity during the course of the Fair.

Although it was quite an undertaking to set up our display, it was worth it. At all times the area was crowded and overflowing into the walkway. The Fair opened at 9:00am and each day we talked to interested crafters non-stop until the doors closed at 4:30pm. It was very satisfying to hear people walking passed saying - "this is the most interesting thing at the Fair" the reason expressed by most was that it was the "newest" thing there.

It seemed funny to hear this old traditional craft being described as something so new!
A large number of Guild membership applications were completed during those five days, more are still coming in via email along with requests for presentations and workshops.
The "have-a-go" experience was popular with everyone from 4 to 84.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA - Continued

The Craft Fair was a catalyst for the formation of rug hooking groups and the discovery of rug hooking teachers in Western Australia - there are now rug hooking teachers scattered from Esperance and Albany, on the south coast and in Donnybrook and Mount Barker in the southern region of Western Australia to Lancelin , a coastal town north of Perth. A workshop was given in Albany in January 2012 - the following email received from one of the participants, is published with her permission and that of the school where she teaches, and the students.

My name is Audra, the Home Economics teacher at Mount Barker Community College, a Kindy to Year 12 school in a farming and wine making community in Southern Western Australia.
I recently attended a course on Rugmaking (hooking and proddy) at Vancouver House in Albany, Western Australia and loved it! I have vague memories of my Grandmother in the north of England making a proddy mat that was used in the bathroom and wanted to learn more about it. It was a wonderful course and I have been happily, if slowly, ruggmaking since then!

I have been hoping to introduce the craft to some of my students and the opportunity arose this week, the final week of Term 2 which we call BUZ week. BUZ stands for Build Up Zone. It is a week that keeps students engaged with fun learning right up until the last day of term, aiming to build up their resilience and self esteem, a time to socialise with others in the school and do activities that are not academic but educational all the same. My favourite part of BUZ week is that teachers are encouraged to run a session on something that they do not usually teach. The students respond fantastically to us working with them in unusual contexts!
I decided to teach the students how to do proddy and ran a session I called "Crazy Hats and Proddy Mats".
I first introduced the students to Hooking and Proddy, followed by a brief history and showed some samples before each student made a colourful brooch using Hessian and colourful netting. They then made quick hats using the overlocker and attached their brooches to the hats. It was a fun session which all enjoyed. . Talia Simmons, made her proddy headband the following night – doesn't it look fantastic and I am told she has not stopped progging since, even teaching her older sister at home. I have attached a couple of photos for your interest -

Warm regards,
Audra Guy
Home Economics
MountBarker Community College
Woogenellup Road,
Mount Barker 6324,
Western Australia

Millicent Grahame

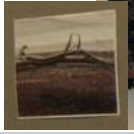
Tailia Simmons

Millicent Grahame & Jeanette Gordon

To: audphil@hotmail.com
From: Talia Simmons
My material flowers that you showed us how to in Buzz week! Thankyou!!!!!

CITY of WANNEROO - Community Projects .....by Jo Franco

On the last Saturday in June a group of rug hookers in the City of Wanneroo was pleasantly surprized to receive a visit from the Mayor, Tracey Roberts. She had come in to see how the group was progressing with rugs being prodded for use in two cottages built in Wanneroo in the mid 1800's.
Ten core members of the community group where there and had hung both of the large rugs (5' x 4') Prior to these rugs being finished it was decided that they were not appropriate; due to size, colour and lack of serviceability. So two more traditions rug were completed and are now ready to be installed in the old homes. These were also on display as well as rugs hooked and prodded by group members . Everyone was busy working on the new project - prodded circles for children to sit on at the library story-time sessions; 30 circles in bright colours with large images of fruits and veg. A group member (a professional costume designer/maker) was there with her industrial electric cutter, and was busy churning out short fabric pieces to be prodded from a bag of recycled materials. It was a hive of industry and conversation as the Mayor arrived around noon. She was most impressed with the large rugs. A brief explanation was given as to how the group was formed and how the rug were created, also a brief description of the art/craft of rughooking (those of you who know me will laugh at my use of the word "brief")
I have to say the Mayor was definitely hooked!
she recognized the value of the large pieces both for their artistic appeal and the way in which they were created. I suspect that at least one (Market Garden) will finish up hanging in the Council Chambers. These rugs were designed by local artist Lyne Franke, inspired by photos she took in the area.



Market Garden (left) and Lakeside - Joondalup (right) Images by Barbara Phillips

The Wanneroo group approached this community project differently than the usual group project. Instead of each person being assigned a piece of the rug and passing it from one to another to complete; the rugs were made by volunteers working as a group. Three members on each side of two oversized stretcher frames engendered a feeling of camaraderie.
It took two attempts to come up with a suitable frame. Once work started on the second frame a re-think was required. Instead of working from the outside in as planned, the sides were rolled in and the group worked from both sides starting in the middle, unrolling the rug and working out. The benefit of this was that it could be viewed by all as they worked. We thought we'd come up with a unique idea of enlarging a typical stretcher frame, not so, one of the group members on a visit to the UK, discovered in a local newspaper an article about the traditional craft of rug hooking which showed a photo dated 1906 of a group of men sitting rug hooking at a similar large frame, the only difference was that they were working from only one side…. and dressed in suits and ties.

The frames were set up in a ground floor meeting room between Museum & coffee shop, at the Library and Cultural Centre. With an open door to the centre atrium, and the activity easily visible from the upstairs Library and Galleries, it was a natural way to create interest. Over a period of almost two years it attracted the attention of many residents as they walked through the centre and who were then waved in to talk about the project – learn some of the local history and be part, if even in only a small way, in the creation of the rugs. Many returned to help out when they could, staying only as long as the rest of the family were exchanging books or at nearby sporting events. The most important aspect of this project is it is a community activity involving residents of various age groups and cross cultures in a project that not only encourages community spirit and learning, but has resulted in the creation of several important pieces of art that will benefit both Community members and a City that was recently recognized as the fastest growing city, not just in West Australia but in the nation!

Judy Germano (left) showing Mayor, Tracey Roberts how to prod on one of the library circle rugs.

Members of various organizations who have heard about this group and recognise the beneficial aspect of this type of interaction are eager to find out how they can set up something similar in their communities.
Although rug hooking techniques are old and were practiced in Australia in pioneer days up until the 1950's, they are now seen as something new covering a broad spectrum – art, craft and therapy.
During her visit, the Mayor was shown how to make a "Chiffon Flower" a simple project used to demonstrate how to prod - the flowers are easy to create without any equipment, are quick to finish and useful ..... pinned to clothes, bags or worn in the hair etc. Mayor Roberts latched on to this concept and it sounds like the group will soon be involved in making a large number of these for a project with which the Mayor is involved.

(below left) Group members discuss a hooked rug started a week earlier by Anna, who had never done any rug hooking before but after seeing the display at the Craft Fair, went to the library and borrowed a book by Deanne Fitzpatrick, then purchased a piece of hessian and a crochet hook, found a favourite picture, and got to work enlarging and transferring her drawing to the backing and hooking with all manner of recycled fabric, before showing up and introducing herself to the group the following Saturday morning.

(above) Kath Smith working on a "library story-circle" rug.

(Right) Prodded rugs to be installed in Buckingham House and Cockman House.